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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



DENR chief assures smooth union, management relations

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Roy Cimatu assured a continued harmonious relationship between the agency's employees' union and management.

Cimatu made the commitment when he signed the new Covenant Negotiation Agreement (CNA) which will provide additional benefits to DENR workers for the next three years.

Cimatu and Kalipunan ng mga Kawani ng Kagawaran ng Kalikasan (K4) national president Jose Isidro Michael Padin signed the CNA during the celebration of the DENR's 32nd founding anniversary last June 14. It was the second CNA signed between DENR and K4.

Cimatu said he was honored the new DENR-K4 deal was signed under his watch.

K4, which has a total of 16 regional chapters nationwide, is duly accredited by the Civil Service Commission and has been recognized as the sole and exclusive negotiating representative of

all DENR rank-and-file employees for almost one decade already.

"This CNA is a recognition of the fact that the DENR's strength relies on the unity and well-being of its workers," Cimatu pointed out.

Cimatu also thanked the K4 officers and members of the Board of Directors who helped make the CNA signing possible.

Under the new CNA, the DENR and K4 agreed to extend mutual cooperation and assistance to each other "with the end in view of improving the welfare and well-being of the workers."

At least four new employees' benefits have been added in the agreement, which will take effect until June 2022.

These benefits include provision of hazard pay and accident insurance, establishment of a wellness program, and formulation of a comprehensive health insurance.

Those covered by hazard pay and accident insurance are workers engaged in

law enforcement activities against illegal logging, mining, and illegal trade and poaching of wildlife species.

The wellness program includes provision of free maintenance medicine for, but not limited to, cardiovascular diseases and hypertension.

It also includes annual medical, optical and dental examination; stress management program; and immunization and screening for tuberculosis and Hepatitis B.

The CNA also calls for formulation of a comprehensive health insurance for workers in addition to the benefits available under the Employees Compensation Commission, the Phil-Health Insurance Program, and other applicable programs and policies of the government.

The CNA was a product of a month-long negotiation, which ended last June 7. The final agreement was presented to the DENR Executive Committee on June 10 or four days before the actual signing.



TITLE: _____

PAGE 1/ _____

DATE _____

DENR eyes Panay as bamboo production center

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is eyeing Panay Island as the country's center for bamboo production, as it envisions bamboo as an alternative to high-value forest products. Some P10 million has been initially earmarked by the DENR in its 2019 budget for planting materials and capacity building for farmers. The DENR plans to plant 13,500 hectares of industrial bamboo species by 2020. These species include the bamboo "tinik," giant "buho," bolo and "bayog." Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu has directed Francisco Milla Jr., DENR Western Visayas regional executive director, to conduct an inventory of all existing bamboo plantations in Panay, where bamboo is naturally abundant. At present, there are over 6,100 ha of such plantations across the island. Milla was also ordered to fast-track the establishment of bamboo processing plants that would produce engineered bamboo products. "We will adopt the latest technology in producing lumber and timber out of the bamboo strands," Cimatu said in a statement. "This can usher in inclusive development in the island and provide income and livelihood." —JHESSET O. ENANO



TITLE:

P-1

PAGE 1/

'Lowly' bamboo takes center stage in Iloilo climate-change confab

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

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OFTEN ignored and set aside with preference for hardwood, or good lumber, it is now time for the lowly bamboo to rise and shine.

This giant grass species is now the subject of various research and development to enhance its potential as a viable alternative to expensive wood species often imported by the Philippine wood industry players to sustain business activity.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) gears up for the country's hosting of the First Asean Bamboo Congress for Climate Change Adaptation towards Environmental Sustainability and Economic Resiliency from August 12 to 16, 2019, at the Iloilo International Convention Center in Iloilo City.

To be spearheaded by the Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB) of the DENR, the event will convene more than 200 researchers, academics, policy-makers, professionals, and representatives from business groups within the Asean region to discuss and exchange information on bamboo and sustainable environmental strategies.

The congress will also be attended by officials from International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR) based in Beijing, China, and World Bamboo Organization, as well as representatives from other non-Asean countries, like Australia, US and China.

ERDB Director and National Coordinator of the Bamboo Plantation Development Project (BPDP) Dr. Sofio B. Quintana said the international confab recognizes the importance of bamboo in adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change.

Valuable economic resource

"BAMBOO is considered as a valuable economic and environmental resource, and ERDB hopes to continue to innovate ways on increasing awareness on the promising potentials of bamboo especially in attaining environmental sustainability and economic resiliency," Quintana said in a statement.

Through the congress, ERDB hopes to strengthen partnership with other countries in enhancing science-based research and development on bamboo to support the bamboo industry, and how the industry can contribute to sustainable economic growth and environmental sustainability, according to Angelito B. Exconde, assistant national coordinator of BPDP and the lead



BAMBOO grass species thrives in most parts of the Philippines.

coordinator for the event.

Known for its resilience, versatility, beauty, and strength, bamboo has been used for different purposes for ages.

Construction material

FOR one, bamboo is a popular construction material in the countryside.

It can be used for poles, scaffolding, rafts and bamboo splits. Recent developments made it possible to have panel boards, plywood, plyboard and laminated board made out of bamboo. Aside from construction purposes, it is also used for furniture like sala and dining sets, cabinets, benches, tables, beds and chairs.

The culms can also be made into handicrafts like brooches, wall décors, vases, fans and lampshades. Novelty items like the bambike (bicycle made of bamboo) and motorcycle were also crafted out of bamboo. As a source of food, bamboo shoots of kawayan tinik, giant bamboo, machiku, and oldham are healthy sources of protein and carbohydrates.

With the integration of bamboo in agroforestry, it can also contribute to poverty reduction and help address the issue of hunger in the countryside.

Defense vs calamity, carbon sink

BAMBOO forests are a natural defense against calamity, as well as a carbon sink.

During windy and stormy conditions,

bamboo serves as a windbreak because of its well-developed system. Moreover, it helps prevent soil erosion and has a high capacity for catching and conserving water which makes it an ideal preventive measure for flash floods.

Bamboo is also recognized for its potential in sequestering carbon.

In 2013 to 2014, ERDB assessed the carbon sink potential of bamboos for mitigating the effects of climate change. The study revealed that bamboo can store 39.8 percent to 44.3 percent of carbon in its total biomass.

The study is the first local attempt to determine the biomass and carbon sequestration of at least three economically important bamboo species in the country—kawayan tinik (*Bambusa blumeana*), giant bamboo (*Dendrocalamus asper*) and bolo (*Gigantochloa levis*).

Bolo (*Gigantochloa levis*) effectively stores carbon in its biomass, and the poles are used for building construction, basketry, scaffolding and fish pens.

The carbon sequestration ability of bamboo is almost comparable to trees, which make it an ideal element in the reforestation efforts of the government.

It makes bamboo ideal carbon storage for greenhouse gases.

The recommended way to use bamboo as a carbon sink is to harvest poles and turn them into useful products like furniture and handicrafts for continuity of carbon storage.



TITLE:

PAGE 1/

lowly 'bamboo' takes center stage in Iloilo Climate-change Confab

P 2

Bamboo R&D

THE ERDB has been doing research on bamboo since 1987.

It has developed various technologies on bamboo, including propagation methods, plantation establishment and harvesting techniques.

In 1990, ERDB established a Bambusetum at the Los Baños Experimental Station to conserve and preserve more than 40 different rare and endangered bamboo species.

ERDB maintains the Bambusetum to serve as an avenue for spreading knowledge and sparking people's interest in bamboo conservation, propagation and utilization. Additional Bambusetums have also been established by ERDB in Baguio City, Bukidnon, Davao, Albay, and in some other parts of the country. Under Executive Order No. 26 dated February 24, 2011, the National Greening Program (NGP) targeted 300,000 hectares to be planted with various bamboo species in different parts of the country from 2011 to 2016.

In 2017, under the expanded NGP, ERDB was assigned to lead four BDPDP that focused on rehabilitating degraded areas, riverbanks, watersheds, and open public areas using appropriate bamboo species to support the development of Philippine bamboo industry.

To further promote the importance of bamboo, the Bureau also established the bamboo and rattan gallery at the ERDB Main Office in Los Baños, Laguna. To date, it contains a collection of more than 250 bamboo products showcasing the Philippine native bamboos, and their production and influence to the Filipinos' way of life.

Promising future

THE future of the bamboo industry is very promising. With its economic and ecological potentials, the demand on bamboo has increased in the domestic and international markets resulting in a scarcity of its supply.

The ERDB has been at the forefront of discovering research and information in developing bamboo plantations to help address the scarce supply of bamboos.

"We foresee this [Congress] as a relevant and leading avenue for the improvement of bamboo information not only in the Asean region but globally. Climate change is a pressing issue, but there is strength in numbers. I believe that if various stakeholders will strongly collaborate, we can respond fully to this problem," said Dr. Quintana.



A need for unlearning

COMMENTARY

GERALD M. NICOLAS

I recently obliged myself to respond to a request to support an online petition directed at the Office of the President and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. It was a call to cancel the permit of a large mining company that has been extracting gold and copper from a small barangay in Nueva Vizcaya. Groups opposing what they claim as irresponsible mining by the Australia-based firm said the project has destroyed the environment and led to violations of human rights. For example, in 2009 private security forces allegedly evicted local villagers and burned their houses. Three years later, a community leader was killed by unidentified gunmen. As of this writing, the campaign has gathered at least 2,800 signatures out of its target of 5,000.

Intriguingly, another group was sponsoring a parallel petition on the same platform, calling for at least 2,500 supporters for the renewal of the same mining company's contract. The petition comes with a photo and list of (supposed) benefits of the mining activity, such as employment for at least 800 locals, educational assistance for more than 300 students, upgrading of roads and community facilities and financial assistance to small enterprises and cooperatives. It boasts that the company has paid almost P7 billion worth of taxes, fees and charges in the last five years. The petition, as of this writing, needs only 200 signatures to hit its target.

Although I doubt the impact of online petitions on the decision of the President, I'd be curious to know which of the two petitions would get the support of locals in the affected rural barangay. But the cynic in me thinks many would size up the issue based on concrete benefits they see, regardless of whether these came at the price of destroying a mountain, polluting a river or taking the life of one fellow human being. The "development" a mining project brings may,

for them, compensate for the government's neglect in providing them the means for a better way of life. Such reasoning (which needs to be proven empirically) is often invoked if one is to understand where people are coming from when they see no problem in things that have far-reaching consequences on the environment.

Never has this kind of reckoning been most demanded as in the last three years. I, for one, am perplexed by the high satisfaction and trust ratings of President Duterte. Despite the killings happening left and right in urban poor communities because of the government's "war on drugs," his net satisfaction rating stayed "very good" for those belonging to Classes D and E (+68 versus +58 among Classes ABC). More astonishing is his high satisfaction rating among women which, despite his many sexist remarks during his public speeches, has been increasing in the last two quarters—from +57 in December 2018 to +65 in March 2019 and +69 in June 2019. Per the latest Pulse Asia survey, he remains the most trusted national government official (85 percent versus the Vice President's 52 percent), notwithstanding his disregard for human rights and his inability to assert our rights and protect our territorial sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea.

Convinced that local pollsters will not risk their reputation by manipulating survey results, I want to understand the prevailing narrative by reaching out to ordinary people among the 80 percent or so who are satisfied with the way things are going—those who welcome safety and security delivered to their communities through fear and vio-

lence, those women who laugh at rape jokes, those Catholics who follow God's commandments but favor the death penalty and give their quiet support to the drug-related killings, those parents who love their children but also want offending children to be locked up in jail, those who fall victim to fake news and disinformation and those who are poor but continue to support a regime that is willing to sacrifice them in the name of development and peace and order.

There is a lot of unlearning needed. Those who believe that there are alternatives to the current narrative, and nongovernment organizations like ours that have been trying to influence policies to make them work for the poor, the marginalized and the vulnerable, are not getting certain things right. They are confronted with the challenge of coming to terms with the reality of those who, probably as a result of alienation from our political and economic institutions and of social exclusion, have pinned their hopes on "saviors" that can lift them out of their miserable situation.

Those "saviors" can be a large mining company that provides jobs and improves roads, or a President who promises radical change, even if only delivered in rhetoric and propaganda. People need to see working alternatives to destructive livelihood, to the violent crime prevention, and to silence in the face of fear and oppression. This is difficult to achieve, given the prevalence of disinformation and the demonizing of a critical civil society. But as Martin Luther King Jr. put it, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."

Gerald M. Nicolas is a project officer in the John J. Carroll Institute on Church and Social Issues.



NECROPSY REPORT

PLASTIC, MARINE TRASH KILL ANOTHER WHALE BEACHED IN DAVAO CITY

By Jhesset O. Enano
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Plastic and marine litter were once again found as the culprits behind the death of another whale found beached in a coastal village in Davao City over the weekend, underscoring anew the detrimental impact of plastics on marine life.

On Sunday morning, an adult pygmy sperm whale (*Kogia breviceps*) was discovered in a coastal road construction in Barangay Matina Aplaya.

Weighing around 200 kilograms, it was the fifth dead

cetacean recovered by the team from D'Bone Collector Museum, a natural history museum in Davao City, for this year alone.

The whale was emaciated and dehydrated, and could have been dead for at least two days, said Darrell Blatchley, the museum founder who performed the necropsy.

Nylon rope, plastic cup

From its intestines, the team recovered pieces of nylon rope and a broken plastic cup, which Blatchley described as similar to the single-use cups used by

street food vendors.

"Its stomach and intestines were empty. [It only had] plastic ... that was lodged in the intestines' entrance that caused the dehydration and starvation," he said in an interview on Monday.

With squid, fish and crabs as their main diet, Blatchley said it did not take much to kill a pygmy sperm whale, considered rare due to the limited information available about the species.

Its intestines are only finger-wide and about 20 meters long. "So once the plastic blocks it, it creates a sense of being full ...

That's when it becomes weaker and [later] dies," Blatchley said.

Since the museum opened 10 years ago, it has recovered 63 dead whales and dolphins from the Davao Gulf. Nearly 50 of these were killed due to ingestion of plastic and other marine debris, which they mistake for food.

In March, a beached Cuvier's beaked whale that eventually died in Compostela Valley was discovered to have some 40 kg of plastic trash in its stomach.

The trash included 16 rice sacks, four "banana plantation-

style bags" and multiple shopping bags, which Blatchley said were the most plastic garbage ever found in a whale's guts.

Greenpeace call

Following the discovery of yet another dead marine mammal, the environmental group Greenpeace reiterated its call to reduce plastic production and for people to be more mindful of their throwaway lifestyle.

Earlier this year, the group had also documented a tiny crab trapped inside a disposable cup in the Verde Island Passage, a

1.14-million hectare strait within the Mindoro-Calavite-Tablas triangle dubbed the "center of the center of marine shore fish biodiversity."

Their photos also showed sachets of condiments settling on coral beds, conveying the serious extent of plastic pollution in the oceans.

"One piece of plastic found in the stomach of a whale or a dolphin is one piece of plastic too many," Abigail Aguilar, campaigner for Greenpeace Southeast Asia-Philippines, said in an earlier statement. INQ



LPA may intensify into tropical cyclone

By ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

A low pressure area (LPA) that has a potential of intensifying into a tropical cyclone will enhance the southwest monsoon or "habagat" over the country.

Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) weather specialist Ariel Rojas said the location of the LPA was 380 kilometers west of Dagupan City, Pangasinan on Monday.

The LPA is already inside the Philippine area of responsibility but is moving generally west towards the West Philippine Sea or away from the country, Rojas said.

It is possible that the weather disturbance will develop into a tropical depression when it is already outside the country's vicinity, he added.

Due to the LPA's enhancement of the habagat, light to heavy monsoon rains are expected over Oriental Mindoro, Occidental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan, Cavite, Batangas, Bataan, and Zambales.

Isolated monsoon rains and thunderstorms will affect Metro Manila, Laguna, Rizal, Quezon, Aurora, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Pampanga, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Pangasinan, Abra, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, Apayao, Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Sorsogon, Masbate, Visayas, and Mindanao.

Meanwhile, Batanes, Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, and Quirino will experience isolated rain showers due to localized thunderstorms.

PAGASA warned that sudden rains due to severe thunderstorm activity especially in the afternoon or evening may cause flash floods or landslides in low-lying or mountainous areas.

Citing the PAGASA's historical record, Rojas said two to four tropical cyclones may enter or directly affect the country in August. Most tropical cyclones cross the landmass of Northern Luzon, but some may loop or move away from the country.

Due to incessant rains in the afternoon or evening in the past few days, Angat Dam's water level increased anew by almost one meter on Monday.

Based on the PAGASA's monitoring, the water level at Angat Dam rose to 163.34 meters on Monday from 162.40 meters last Sunday. It is slightly above the 160-meter critical level for domestic water supply.

Authorities have been pinning their hopes on the arrival of tropical cyclones that may help in the full recovery of the Angat Dam, which is likely by next month.



editorial

Best defenders against poachers

DESPITE intensifying global efforts, our government agencies are having a hard time tackling the growing poaching crisis that threatens to wipe out our critical wildlife species, like the Philippine pangolin and marine turtles.

According to a recent story published in this paper (*See, Philippine Marines: Easier to find rebels than pangolins,* in the **BUSINESSMIRROR**, July 17, 2019), the population of the Philippine pangolin (*Manis culionensis*) has plummeted as much as 95 percent since the 1980s, making it critically endangered—one step above extinction.

There were 667 illegally trafficked Philippine pangolins apprehended by authorities from 2001 to 2017, with 10 live animals recovered at a checkpoint in Tagaytay City in June.

In April 2013, a Chinese poaching vessel rammed into the Philippines' famed Tubbataha Reefs. Found aboard were 2,870 dead pangolins.

There are only eight known pangolin species in the world—four are in Africa and four in Asia, including the Philippines. The Palawan or Philippine pangolin is the least studied among pangolin species in the world. As its name suggests, it is endemic to Palawan Island, considered the country's last ecological frontier.

Hunted for their meat, scales and internal organs, pangolins are believed to be miracle cures for various ailments, with China and Vietnam being major buyers. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has also received numerous reports about the resurgence of marine turtle poaching, particularly in Palawan and Mindoro.

The Philippines is a migratory pathway of marine turtles and hosts many of their nesting sites. Five of the seven known marine turtle species are found in Philippine seas. These are green, hawksbill, olive ridley, loggerhead and leatherback turtles. Most marine turtles are on the list of threatened species, according to the Red List of Threatened Species of the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Hawksbill turtles are in demand by jewelers for their shell. Green turtles are hunted for meat, while olive ridleys (also known as Pacific ridley sea turtle), which are abundant in the West Philippine Sea, are also hunted for their meat, shell and internal organs.

Republic Act 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, prohibits wildlife trade, especially wildlife that are on the brink of extinction. The Philippines is also a party to several international treaties aimed at protecting and conserving wildlife, such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna, and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals or the Bonn Convention, an environmental treaty under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Program. But poachers and illegal traders are taking advantage of poor law enforcement and are conniving with locals to skirt these laws and regulations.

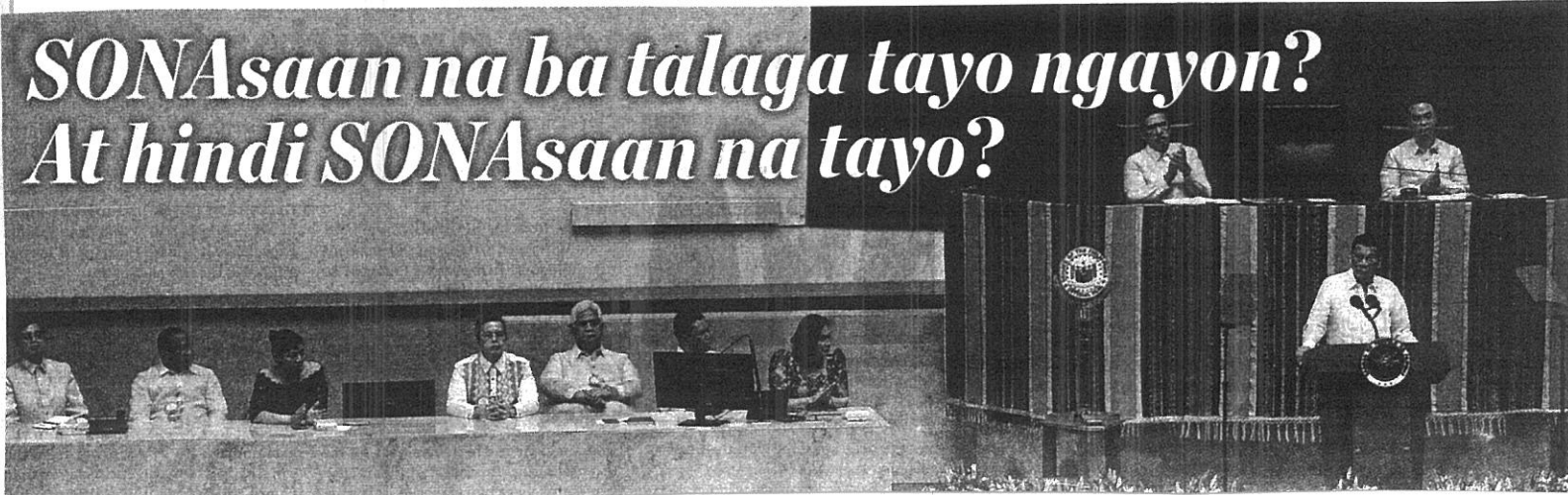
Congress should provide government agencies mandated to protect our wildlife and marine environment with more funds to do their jobs well. More funding would not only provide for better law enforcement and regulation but also boost our resource managers' capability to help propagate endangered species and protect their habitats.

Poaching is no longer a small-time activity confined to locals looking to make a quick side income to tide things over. As the confiscation of multimillion-pesos worth of marine and wildlife contraband has shown, poaching has gone big-time, an export industry in itself, and the big businesses behind it seem unafraid of our laws with their measly fines and penalties.

The government needs stronger laws and policies to deal with the illegal and organized activities of these big-time transnational poachers. It needs to detect and document their environmental plunder with the objective of seeking their conviction either in local courts or even internationally.

However, the No. 1 enemy of all conservation efforts is poverty. It is said that hungry people don't care about conservation. It's no coincidence that most crimes against the environment take place in poor communities.

Every effort should be made to ensure that the people in these communities, especially those living in or near the biodiversity areas, stand to gain economically and socially from conservation efforts, thus providing them incentives to protect local wildlife and marine species. They are our best defenders against poachers.



SONAsaan na ba talaga tayo ngayon? At hindi SONAsaan na tayo?

(First of two parts)

I admit I did not watch the State of the Nation Address (SONA) live on July 22. But I had to see it because I teach Politics and Governance in the Loyola School of Social Sciences in the Ateneo de Manila University.

I heard the President was one hour late to the event. If my ears did not deceive me, I counted 39 bursts of applause and 22 of laughter interrupting the President's 93-minute speech. And, as expected, I also counted at least 10 curses.

It is interesting to note that was there was no applause nor laughter when the President talked about the West Philippine Sea and China and about corruption (except maybe one laugh?).

"So where are we (the Philippines) really now today?," he asked.

I will now quote parts of the President's speech and give my own (right or wrong) unsolicited insights.

1. "But the landslide victory of the Administration candidates as well as the latest survey results show that my disapproval rating is at 3%"

True, the Administration candidates won by a landslide. The conduct of the recent automated election, like all other Philippine elections, was not without criticism, however. First, the Liberal Party, known as the legitimate opposition, was not recognized as such. The election watchdog NAMFREL

withdrew at the last moment because they would not to be given the data for its open election data website. After 25 minutes of counting by the Transparency Server, everything stopped for the next seven hours. More 500 SD chips were replaced a few days before the election. It would be good for an independent IT organization to analyze and determine what actually happened during this last election and conclude what the effects of these events were.

Some would also argue over the accuracy of the 3% disap-

proval rating reported by the Social Weather Station (SWS) and similarly by Pulse Asia, particularly when the former also reported that 90% of respondents do not trust China and three of five would like the International Human Rights team to investigate the spate of killings in the country. But both reports give the President bragging rights and emboldens his officials to do what he commands — rightly or wrongly.

2. "It has been three years since I took my oath of office, and it pains me to say that we have not learned our lesson. The illegal drug problem persists... I respectfully request Congress to reinstate the death penalty for heinous crimes (applause) related to drugs as well as plunder."

A far cry from his earlier declaration "I will resign if I do not eliminate drugs in six months," the President now admits illegal drugs continue to pour in, even near Malacañang Palace. Where are the drugs coming from? How is the supply — mostly coming from China as Senator Ronaldo "Bato" dela Rosa once said during the campaign — able to pass through Customs?

BLUEBOARD BENJAMIN ROBERTO GOMEZ BARRETTO



2/2

What lessons have we not learned? That *Tokhang* that has killed 24,000 people including children, but the big time drug lords (Peter Lim, Kenneth Dong, etc.) as identified by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency have not been arrested nor prosecuted? Will the death penalty stop such shipments when no big time drug lords have been arrested?

Interestingly, President Duterte has a former president, Joseph Estrada, a senator, Ramon Revilla, Jr., and maybe one or two others found guilty of plunder, among his friends!

3. "Our warped loyalty to family, friends, and tribal kin continue to exact a heavy toll on our programs designed to uplift the poor and reassure our investors, our foreign investors local, and the business sector in this country."

If one ties this up with the many controversial political dynasties (the President's family included) in the country (although it's the people who voted for them) and friends (Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Ramon "Bong" Revilla, Juan Ponce Enrile, Jinggoy Estrada, and Imelda Marcos who has been

convicted but remains free, the Tulfos, and Bong Go who's family is cornering big government projects in Davao) and the President may have a point here.

4. "I have fired or caused the resignation of more than a hundred officials and appointees of government without regard to relationship, friendship, and alliance."

While a number of high officials have been fired or forced to resign by the President, a good number have actually just been "promoted" or "assigned" to other government positions after being "fired." Take the case of former Philippine National Police General and Bureau of Customs (BOC) Chief Isidro Lapeña who was fired when a P11 billion (\$533 million) drug shipment was released in Manila in 2018 — he was transferred to a harmless cabinet post as head of the Technical Skills and Development Agency. The same thing happened with another former BoC Commissioner Nicanor Faeldon who resigned as customs chief following congressional hearings into the smuggling of P6.4-billion worth

of *shabu*. He was first appointed deputy administrator in the Office of Civil Defense and is now Director General of the Bureau of Corrections.

5. "We are long on rhetoric but short on accomplishments... That is why I implore those who occupy positions of power and authority to let your deeds and accomplishments do the talking. Lead by example. Words ring hollow when not followed by positive and prioritized actions."

Walk the walk as they always say. It's nice to hear promises like "Give me six months, I will eliminate drugs or else I will resign." Or "I will jetski to Panatag Shoal and plant the Philippine flag," or "solve traffic" or "I will stop corruption..." Especially during the campaign period.

6. "As of July 9, 2019, we collected more than P61 billion from GOCCs or government corporations, 32% of which, or P16 billion, from PAGCOR. [applause] This is more than the P36 billion collected in 2017. My salute to Andrea Domingo. [applause] *Maggpasugal ka pa, ma'am, nang marani* (Gamble some more, ma'am, a lot). [laughter]"

Gambling is illegal in China. The news media has recently been flooded with stories on the influx of Philippine Offshore Gaming Operations (POGO) with 100,000 Chinese workers who are allegedly not paying taxes. Would the Roman Catholic Church accept such money if the majority of the gamblers are foreigners? Just asking.

7. "Simplify and make your services responsive to — client-friendly. Your client is the Filipino, our employer — from where the money in our pockets come from, from our salaries."

My own experience getting passports for myself and my children in an offsite facility in Marikina in 2018 was highly positive and worth thanking the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Duterte Administration for.

8. "Equipped with political will, the government ordered the closure of Boracay Island for six months to prevent further deterioration. We cleaned and rehabilitated the island and I allowed it to heal naturally."

It was highly commendable of government to clean Boracay Island. But news of the influx of Chinese business establishments and tourists during its opening, a mountain flattened during the closure, and recent flooding (which normally happens when trees are cut — a no brainer) at the height of Typhoon Falcon somehow negates such high commendation. ■

(To be continued.)

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He was the former Executive Director of the Jesuit Volunteers Philippines Foundation Inc. and was a former Administrator of the Ateneo School of Government.



Govt set to issue rules on motor vehicle emissions

THE government is tightening its regulatory measures on emissions of motor vehicles—both private and public utilities—as it is close to issuing the procedural guidelines of the National Motor Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance Program (NMVIMP).

In a draft joint administrative order (JAO), the Departments of Transportation (DOTr), of Trade and Industry (DTI) and of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) delineated their roles in the implementation of the NMVIMP.

The Clean Air Act, passed two decades ago, mandates implementation of the program.

Under the draft JAO, the DTI's Consumer Protection and Advocacy Bureau is mandated to formulate the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of the NMVIMP.

It is also tasked to update existing rules and regulations on the accreditation of service and repair shops, and to develop and implement an advocacy campaign on the regular maintenance of motor vehicles to ensure safety.

On the other hand, the DTI's Philippine Accreditation Bureau is obliged to certify public and private Motor Vehicle Inspection Centers (MVICs) based on applicable international standards.

The DTI's Bureau of Philippine Standards will issue Philippine National Standards for motor vehicles. The Fair

Trade Enforcement Bureau and the Regional Operations Group, for their part, are mandated to accredit private service centers for maintenance and repair in accordance with existing rules and regulations.

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) is tasked to train and certify teachers who will educate inspectors and technicians on motor vehicle emission control and vehicle systems.

The Tesda is also responsible for the training and accreditation of competency assessors who will evaluate motor vehicle emission technicians, vehicle inspectors and automotive experts. It is further obliged to award a national certificate or certificate of competency to technical personnel who have been found competent in automotive servicing, including motor vehicle emission control.

The Land Transportation Office (LTO) will formulate and enforce rules and regulations for the authorization of private MVICs.

It is also mandated to inspect private in-use motor vehicles, vehicles with enhanced engines whose chassis are pre-registered with the LTO and public-utility vehicles (PUVs) prior to renewal of registration. The LTO will also conduct periodic monitoring of all private MVICs to check compliance.

The DENR is tasked to develop,

adopt and update standards for emission, as well as regulate the specifications of the emission-testing equipment to be used by all public and private MVICs.

The MVICs are mandated to conduct mandatory inspection of motor vehicles based on existing LTO rules and regulations as prerequisite for their renewal of registration. They must also ensure that all machines and equipment used for inspection are properly calibrated.

Under the draft JAO, MVICs are required to possess these minimum test equipment: testers for headlight, roller, sideslip, speedometer, emission, among others, for light vehicles and motorcycles.

Motor vehicle owners are mandated to enroll their in-use units in a mandatory inspection process to be undertaken by the LTO or any authorized private MVIC within 60 days prior to renewal of registration. The inspection points shall include but are not limited to odometer and sealing of diesel fuel management system.

Units that passed the inspection will have their motor vehicle registration renewed, while those that failed will undergo repair in a DTI-accredited service and repair shop and will be returned for inspection after.

Elijah Felice E. Rosales



No climate crisis

WASHINGTON, DC — The various presentations at the Heartland Institute’s 13th International Conference on Climate Change (ICCC-13) on July 25 in this city reiterated what many scientific papers from the fields of meteorology, geology, climatology, physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, etc. have found — there is no climate crisis or climate emergency.

Global warming is true, climate change is true, but they are largely natural, nature-made and not man-made (or anthropogenic), and cyclical. What is termed and called by others as “extreme weather” has no baseline period as basis of comparison. So when asked, “extreme weather compared to when, 200 or 800 or 10,000 or 10 million years ago?” the answer is often the sound of silence.

The fact is that there was “extreme weather” during the Roman warm period, Medieval warm period, until the current modern warm period, and in the next hundreds and thousands of years into the future.

Dr. Roy Spencer, a climatologist at University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) observed that the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (CMIP) of the World Climate Research Program (WCRP) models are “warming about twice as fast as both UAH satellite temperatures and the average of four global reanalysis datasets. And even if observed warming is due to increasing CO₂, it is too weak to notice in our lifetime.”

Dr. Nir Shavi, a physicist at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, argued that “actual evidence points to a strong solar climate link and a low climate sensitivity, future warming will be benign,

and that solar activity should be taken but it is ignored by the UN IPCC (United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change).”

Dr. Jay Lehr, a hydrologist and famous author of a thousand-plus scientific articles, noted that there are at least 12 climate variables — changes in seasonal solar irradiation, energy flows between the air and land, etc. — that people should look into and study before declaring with certainty that there is indeed a climate emergency.

Governments, upon the prodding of the UN, make policies based on wrong “climate crisis” scenario of “unprecedented, unequivocal global warming.”

Thus in the Philippines, we enacted the Renewables Energy (RE) Act of 2008 (RA 9513) which gives plenty of special privileges to solar/wind/biomass/hydro power producers,

like the feed in tariff (FIT) or guaranteed price for 20 years, to “help save the planet.” The higher oil, diesel, coal taxes under the TRAIN law (RA 10963) is also done along this goal.

There were two reports in *BusinessWorld* in July 29 related to this:

1. “NGOs call for more aggressive moves to adopt renewable energy”;

2. “Deputy Speaker vows ‘big push’ on department bills, pay hikes.”

Pushing for more intermittents like solar/wind power will further raise electricity prices. Expanding some existing bureaus into full Departments will further require more taxes to finance more Departments and bureaus.

Many East Asian economies hardly pay attention to injecting more solar/wind into their national electricity grid. In

MY CUP OF LIBERTY BIENVENIDO S. OPLAS JR.

To create more climate-related agencies on top of having the DENR and the Climate Change Commission, etc. and they will create more regulations to “fight” less rain and more rain, less flood and more flood, less cold and more cold.

particular, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore, Vietnam, Taiwan, and Hong Kong have a solar and wind share of only 2% or lower of their total electricity generation. And these economies generally have high per capita income (*see table*).

To create more climate-related agencies — the Department of Disaster Reduction and Department of Water Resources — on top of having the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Climate Change Commission, etc. and they will create more regulations to “fight” less rain and more rain, less flood and more flood, less cold and more cold.

We should not further expand bureaucracies but instead, expand conventional energy sources to significantly expand our electricity production, which will help bring down energy prices and make electricity supply become more stable. ■

BIENVENIDO S. OPLAS, JR. is the president of Minimal Government Thinkers. minimalgovernment@gmail.com



Electricity generation TWh, 2018

Economy	Solar	Wind	Total Gen.	(S+W)/ Total	Per cap GDP, \$
China	177.5	366	7,111.8	7.6%	9,608
India	30.7	60.3	1,561.1	5.8%	2,036
Japan	71.7	6.8	1,051.6	7.5%	39,306
South Korea	9.3	2.4	594.3	2.0%	31,346
Taiwan	2.7	1.7	273.6	1.6%	24,971
Indonesia	^	0.2	267.3	0.1%	3,871
Vietnam	0.1	0.3	212.9	0.2%	2,551
Thailand	4.7	0.8	177.6	3.1%	7,187
Malaysia	0.5	-	168.4	0.3%	10,942
Philippines	1.2	1.2	99.8	2.4%	3,104
Singapore	0.3	-	52.9	0.6%	64,041
Hong Kong	^	^	36.7	0.1%	48,517
Total World	584.6	1,270	26,614.80	7.0%	

SOURCES: (A) BP STATISTICAL REVIEW OF WORLD ENERGY 2019; (B) PER CAPITA INCOME, IMF-WEO 2019.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

30 JUL 2019

TITLE :

PAGE 1/

DATE

Europeans bike vs climate change in Bohol

By Daniel Yap

TAGBILARAN CITY – Delegates from the European Union (EU) joined local bikers for three days and took an environmental ride around the province of Bohol to promote friendships, international relations and culture.

The EU delegation was led by European Ambassador to the Philippines Franz Jessen.

Jessen joined a mangrove planting activity, which is also joined by Marc Rooijackers of the Asian Development Bank, and Foreign Affairs of France officer Jerome Riviere.

Local bikers from various places in Bohol

also joined the activity held at the island paradise of Panglao.

In a message to participants, Jessen stressed the need to counter climate change and underscored EU's commitment to lower carbon emissions.

The ambassador also met with Tagbilaran City Mayor John Geesnell Yap and Bohol Gov. Arthur Yap.

Yap and Jessen discussed vital issues about the province.

Riviere and Rooijackers held a discussion about the EU at the Holy Name University. Riviere talked about EU-Philippines relations with political science students of the university.



Kalat, harang sa Taguig winalis

PINAIGTING ng lokal na pamahalaan ng Taguig ang mga clearing operations upang matanggal ang mga iligal na istruktura, tindahan at nakaparadang sasakyan sa mga kalsada.

Ani Mayor Lino Cayetano, kailangang masiguro ang "pedestrian at vehicular mobility at access sa mga serbisyo publiko gamit ang mga pampublikong daanan at kaparehong imprastraktura."

"Aside from the space occupied by roads, transport system, buildings and infrastructures, the associated pedestrian and vehicular movement invariably shapes the urban forms of the city," dagdag pa ni Cayetano.

Paliwanag ng alkalde na kailangan ding masig-

uro ang kaligtasan ng mga pedestrian.

"As it is, Taguig is already a pedestrian-centered city, but we want to make it even more so. We want to make Taguig an even more walkable city and a safe and healthy city," aniya.

Sa kanyang ikaapat na State of the Nation Address, inatasan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang lahat ng lokal na pamahalaan na bawiin ang mga pampublikong lugar.

Inutusan naman ng Department of Interior and Local Government ang mga LGUs na "linisin ang kanilang mga bakuran" sa loob ng 60 araw kundi ay mahaharap sa suspensyon ang mga pinuno.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
INITIATIVES
SERVICE



30 JUL 2019

DATE

TITLE:

Environment group warns of toxic lipstick

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA

As the country observed "National Lipstick Day" yesterday, an environmental group warned women against toxic lipstick that can damage their health.

"Although prohibited as an ingredient in cosmetic products, we find some lipsticks, particularly those without market authorization, containing high levels of lead," Thony Dizon of EcoWaste Coalition said.

Dizon said that lead-containing lipsticks are also laced with other toxic chemicals such as arsenic, cadmium and mercury that are above the allowable limits set by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

According to the ASEAN guidelines on the limits of contaminants for cosmetics, lead should not be directly added to the cosmetic product formulations.

The trace amount limit of lead in cosmetics should not be more than 20 parts per million (ppm).

Dizon described as unethical the unlawful sale of cheap lipsticks that contain lead above the regulatory limit.

Of the 75 lipsticks that the group bought on July 26 and 27 for P26 to P50 apiece, 26 were found to contain lead way above the prescribed limit.

The items were purchased in Divisoria, Paco and Quiapo in Manila as well as in Pasay City.

Using a handheld X-ray fluorescence (XRF), the group detected atrocious levels of lead ranging from 112 ppm to a dangerously high 44,400 ppm in the lipsticks.

"The lead contaminant in these lipsticks may be due to the use of impure and low quality raw materials and poor manufacturing processes," Dizon said.

"While it is most detrimental to young children's health, especially to their developing brains, lead exposure in adults can damage their kidneys and increase the risk of high blood pressure," he added.

According to a US-based campaign for safe cosmetics, a chemical-like lead builds up in the body over time, so low but repeated exposure increases the risk.

"Exposure of pregnant women to high levels of lead can cause miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth and low birth weight," according to the World Health Organization, which listed lead among 10 chemicals of major public health concern.

To protect consumers' health, EcoWaste urged the FDA to issue an urgent public health advisory and stop the sale of toxic lipsticks and other unsafe cosmetic products like skin whitening creams laden with mercury.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
INITIATIVES
SERVICE



30 JUL 2019

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

DATE

Earth's 2019 resources 'budget' spent by July 29 – report

PARIS (AFP) – Mankind will have used up its allowance of natural resources such as water, soil, and clean

air for all of 2019 by Monday, July 29, a report said.

The so-called Earth Over- ▶9

Earth's 2019 resources... ◀1

shoot Day has moved up by two months over the past 20 years and this year's date is the earliest ever, the study by the Global Footprint Network said.

The equivalent of 1.75 planets would be required to produce enough to meet humanity's needs at current consumption rates.

"Earth Overshoot Day falling on July 29 means that humanity is currently

using nature 1.75 times faster than our planet's ecosystems can regenerate. This is akin to using 1.75 Earths," the environmental group, which is headquartered in Oakland, California, said in a statement.

"The costs of this global ecological overspending are becoming increasingly evident in the form of deforestation, soil erosion, biodiversity loss, or the buildup

of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The latter leads to climate change and more frequent extreme weather events," it added.

Calculated since 1986, the grim milestone has arrived earlier each year.

In 1993, it fell on October 21, in 2003 on September 22, and in 2017 on August 2.

"We have only got one Earth — this is the ultimately defining context for human existence. We can't use 1.75 (earths) without destructive consequences," said

Mathis Wackernagel, founder of Global Footprint Network.

Maria Carolina Schmidt Zaldivar, Chile's environment minister and chair of the Climate COP25 scheduled this December in Santiago, said a major cause of the date falling earlier and earlier was

growing amounts of CO2 emissions.

"The importance of decisive action is becoming ever more evident," she said.

Individuals can get involved by calculating their own ecological footprint at <http://www.footprintcalculator.org>.

Earth's 2019 resources 'budget' spent by July 29

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► **Budget'A2**

■ 'BUDGET' FROM A1

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AFP



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

TITLE:

PAGE 1/

Earth's supply empties fast

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AFP



TITLE:

DATE

NOONG nakaraang ika-17 Kongreso, ipinasa ng mga kongresman ang parusang bitay ngunit binawi nila makaraan samantalang nakararami sa mga senador ang umayaw.

Batay sa nasagap ng ating Uzi mula sa hanay ng mga kongresman at senador, lumaban-bawi ang mga kongresman dahil pilit na isinasama ng mga pabor sa batas sa bitay ang pandarambong.

Ganito rin ang sa hanay ng nakararaming senador.

Pero meron silang ginawang rason para makaiwas-pusoy sa batikos ng madlang pipol na inililigtas lang nila ang kanilang sarili mula sa mabigat na parusa.

Lihis umano ang parusang bitay sa karapatang-pantao, lalo na ang karapatang mabuhay.

KONTING KASAYSAYAN

Pasadahan natin saglit ang parusang bitay sa mahal kong Pinas.

Noong naghahari ang mga prayle o pari, garrote o pagbigti gamit ang hinihigpitang bakal sa leeg na may panusog sa bandang likod ng ulo ang gamit, gaya ng ginamit kina Padre Mariano Gomez, Jose Apolonio Burgos and Jacinto Zamora (GOMBURZA).

Sinundan ito ng firing squad noong nagsimula nang mauso ang barrel gaya ng ginawa kay Gat Jose Rizal.

Nang dumating ang mga Kano, electric chair naman ang pambitay gaya ng ginawa kina Julio Guillen, Baby Ama at naisama na rin ang rapists ni actress Maggie dela Riva noong Mayo 1972 sa panahon ni Manong Ferdie.

Firing squad ang ginamit noong martial law sa mga druglord gaya ni Lim Seng noong 1973.

KONSTITUSYONG 1987

Nang mabuo ang Konstitusyong 1987, ipinagbawal ang parusang bitay pero nagbigay ng panunumbalik nito sa pamamagitan ng batas pero para sa heinous crimes.

Kaya naman, nabuo ang Republic Act 7659 noong panahon ni Manong Eddie Ramos na ibalik ang parusang bitay noong 1993 ngunit lethal injection na ang paraan laban sa krimen.

Nasampulan si Leo Echegaray noong 1999 na panahon ni Erap sa panggagahasa sa sarili niyang anak ngunit pina-tigil ang pagbitay noong taong 2003 ni Aling Clo-



ULTIMATUM

Ni BENNY ANTIPORDA

HUWAG MANDAMBONG PARA HINDI MABITAY

ria Arroyo.

Noong 2006, pinalabas ang RA 9346 na nagpawalambisa sa RA 7659, at sa RA 8177 na nagtatakda ng parusa na lethal injection.

Nagbunyi ang 1,230 na nakapila sa bitayan at nagbubunyi sila hanggang sa mga araw na ito.

Kaya, tuloy ang kanilang ligaya na gumawa ng krimen pag-rape na may pagpatay, paggawa, pag-import at pagpapalaganap ng droga at pandarambong.

Pandarambong ang pagkakaroon ng nakaw na yaman mula sa P50 milyon pataas.

BINUBUHAY MULI

Binubuhay muli ang death penalty sa bagong Kongreso, ang 18th Congress, at isinulong ito mismo ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa kanyang ika-apat na State of the Nation Address kamakailan.

Sa Kamara, pabor sina Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano at Minority Leader Cong. Bienvenido Abante.

Pabor din sina Senate President Tito Sotto at iba pang mga senador na sina Bong Go, Manny Pacquiao, Panfilo Lacson, Ronald 'Bato' dela Rosa at iba pa.

Sangkot sa droga, pandarambong, pagtatanim ng ebidensya ng pulis at iba pang awtoridad, karimarinim na krimen, terorismo at iba pa ang mga panukalang sasakupin ng batas sa bitay.

Pagbigti sa lubid, firing squad at lethal injection ang panukalang paraan.

Magiging alive na alive o madugo umano ang mga debate sa panukalang bitay at paraan ng pagbitay.

Ito ang sinasabi nina Speaker Cayetano at Senate President Sotto.

Magiging alive na alive at madugo dahil tiyak na sasali muli ang Simbahang Katolika at iba pang kakampi ng mga ito, ang mga nagsusulong ng karapatang-pantao na lokal at dayuhan at iba pa.

Sasali rin sa mga usapan ang mga pamilya ng mga namatayan sa giyera sa droga at ang mga biktima ng droga na namatayan din.

TRUMP NAPRANING

Kaugnay ng usaping

tin ang pagkapraning ni American President Donald Trump sa rami ng siraulo, nangmamasa-ker at nagpapatayan o namamatay dahil sa droga sa kanyang bayan.

Pinayagan na ng Federal Court ang pag-arangkada ng parusang bitay sa mga nakakulong sa mga tinatawag na federal prisons o katulad ng New Bilbid Prisons natin.

Kulang-kulang sa 70 convict ang may parusang bitay sa federal prisons at iniskedyul agad ng Department of Justice nila ang pagbitay sa darating na Disyembre.

Sabi ng DOJ nila, naubos na ang mga ligal na hakbang ang mga convict para makaiwas sila sa bitay.

'Di ba nakabase sa Amerika ang maraming maingay na naglalakad ng human rights at nakikialam sa mahal kong Pinas ukol sa parusang bitay at giyera sa droga?

Ano ngayon ang masasabi nila sa katotohanang sa nakalipas na 10 taon na nasa 200 na ang binitay sa 14 estado ng Amerika at magsimulang bitayin na rin ang nasa federal prisons?

PUSAKAL NA KRIMAL

Kabubuking lang ang pandarambong ng taga-Bureau of Internal Revenue sa Pasig City ng P75M sa isang kompanya.

Vineto naman nitong Abril ang P95 bilyong pork barrel ng mga senador at kongresman at naisalba rito ang P19 bilyong komisyon ng mga mambabatas mula sa nasabing pork barrel.

Kung malilinis ngayon ang mga bagong kongresman at senador, malaking hamon sa kanila ang pag-apruba ng bitay bilang parusa sa pandarambong.

Kung titigbakin nila ang parusa, dahil sa pagkakasama ng pandarambong sa maparusahan ng bitay, mag-isip-isip na ang taumbayan.

Anomang reaksyon o reklamo ay maaaring iparating sa 0922840-3333 o i-email sa banti-