

DATE : 24 MAY 2019

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**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



# DENR warns 'negligent' outgoing LGU execs

By Rio N. Araja

**T**HE Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Thursday warned "negligent" outgoing local executives were not yet off the hook over failure to revoke mayor's permit of violating establishments in El Nido, Palawan.

"There are only a minimal number of local government units who followed the instruction to temporarily revoke the mayor's permit of violators, that's why there is a need to show some force on irresponsible local executives," Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny Antiporda said.

The DENR earlier issued cease-and-desist orders to 10 hotels and restaurants found polluting Bacuit Bay in El Nido, one of the country's tourism hotspots undergoing massive rehabilitation along with Boracay

Island, Aklan and Manila Bay.

"There are only a minimal number of local government units who followed the instruction to temporarily revoke the mayor's permit of violators, that's why there is a need to show some force on irresponsible local executives," Antiporda said.

The response of local governments to temporarily suspend the mayor's permit of erring establishments in their respective political jurisdiction once the DENR has submitted its lists of violators is crucial to prevent further contamination of waterways.

"We're expecting full support coming from our local government once we have submitted our lists of violators in their respective areas. We expect them to act by temporarily suspending the mayor's permit so as to prevent the wastewater discharge from contaminating our waterways," Antiporda said.

A week ago, DENR's Region 4B issued cease-and-desist orders to El Nido Sea Shell Resorts and Hotel, Doublegem Beach Resort and Hotel, Buko Beach Resort, Panorama Resort (Mangonana Inc.), Four Seasons Seaview Hotel, Stunning Republic Beach Resort, Sava Beach Bar/Sava Nest Egg Inc., El Nido Beach Hotel, and The Nest El Nido Resorts and Spa Inc. for violation of the Clean Water Act.

The enforcement of the Clean Water Act applies not only on the establishments in Palawan, but on other

establishments nationwide.

Antiporda called on the local government units to act immediately on establishments issued with cease-and-desist orders by the DENR by temporarily canceling their permits to compel them comply with environmental laws and avoid further degradation of the environment.

"If the outgoing officials still have the chance to prove their worth to their constituents before they leave, then they should do it. Otherwise, we will file cases against them if they have neglected their duty to enforce environmental laws," he said.

According to Antiporda, once the establishments are found discharging wastewater not in accordance with prescribed standards, he said both the sources of water and of the discharge will be sealed, but said this cannot be done without the action from the local government.





## Antiporda warns execs who failed to implement environment laws

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

**YOU are not yet "off the hook!"**

Thus Benny Antiporda, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns, warned outgoing local executives who have failed to implement the environmental laws.

Antiporda issued the warning after issuing cease-and-desist orders (CDOs) against 10 hotels and restaurants found polluting Bacuit Bay in El Nido, Palawan.

El Nido is one of the country's tourism hot spots undergoing massive rehabilitation along with Boracay and Manila Bay.

"There are only a minimal number of local government units who followed the instruction to temporarily revoke the mayor's permit of violators, that's why there is a need to show some force on irresponsible local executives," Antiporda said.

Antiporda stressed that the response of local government to temporarily suspend the mayor's permit of erring establishments in their respective political jurisdiction once the DENR has submitted its lists of

violators is crucial to prevent further contamination of waterways.

"We're expecting full support coming from our local government once we have submitted our lists of violators in their respective areas. We expect them to act by temporarily suspending the mayor's permit so as to prevent the wastewater discharge from contaminating our waterways," Antiporda said.

Last week, the DENR-Region 4B issued CDOs to El Nido Sea Shell Resorts and Hotel in Bgy. Buena Suerte; Doublegem Beach Resort and Hotel, Buko Beach Resort, Panorama Resort (Mangonana, Inc.), Four Seasons Seaview Hotel,



**Antiporda** and Stunning Republic Beach Resort, in Brgy. Corong-corong; and Sava Beach Bar/Sava Nest Egg Inc., El Nido Beach Hotel, and The Nest El Nido Resorts and Spa, Inc. in Bgy. Masagana for violation of the Clean Water Act.

Antiporda clarified, however, that the enforcement of the Clean Water Act applies not only on the establishments in Palawan, but in all parts of the country.





## MPIC joins Manila Bay rehab program

MAYNILAD Water Services Inc. and Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for the Adopt-an-Estero Program under the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program.

The partnership, valid and effective for five years, was brought about by President Duterte's call for the need to launch integrated efforts to clean and rehabilitate Manila Bay as well as the inland waters that eventually drain into Manila Bay. MPIC and Maynilad recognized the deteriorated condition of most of the water bodies in Metro Manila and understood that the communities, even with government's help, can no longer address this issue effectively without help from others.

"MPIC has always been committed to protecting and preserving the natural environment, as well as promoting the health and safety of the general public," said Jose Maria Lim, MPIC president and chief executive officer. "Upon acknowledging the objective of the DENR to promote stewardship among the private sector, MPIC through Maynilad is set on assisting government agencies in improving water quality parameters of the country's water bodies."

Apart from Maynilad, other MPIC companies namely Meralco, Metro Pacific Tollways Corp., Metro Pacific Hospital Holdings Inc. and Light Rail Manila Corp. (LRMC) will also be involved in adopting the assigned esteros.

To support the government's efforts at environmental improvement MPIC will be adopt-

ing and restoring the following creeks (esteros) as stated in the MOU: Estero de Vitas, Estero de San Lazaro, Estero de Kabulusan, Estero de Magdalena, Estero de Binondo, Estero dela Reina, Estero de Sampaloc, Estero de San Sebastian, Estero de San Miguel, Estero de Valencia, Estero de Quiapo, Estero de Uli-Uli, Estero de Paco, Estero de Pandacan, Estero de Tanque, Estero de Balete, Estero de Provisor, Estero de Concordia, Estero de Sunog Apog, and Estero de San Antonio Abad. The corporation will work in close coordination with the DENR, local government units, other concerned government agencies, and stakeholders in implementing the recommended interventions.

MPIC will also support the

clean-up of the adopted esteros by providing logistical support and assisting in mobilizing neighboring schools and communities to participate. In addition, Maynilad will fast track some of the wastewater plans and programs under their existing business plan which include rehabilitation of sewer lines, intensify efforts to connect domestic, including non-domestic customers to the existing sewage network, install collector pipes at easements cleared by the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission, accelerate sewerage coverage and conduct information and education campaigns relating to wastewater treatment and disposal.

MPIC, Maynilad, and the DENR recognize that the concerted efforts of both the public and private sectors to clean Manila



Lim (right) and DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu shake hands after the signing of the MOU.

Bay's riverine tributaries will have beneficial effects on the health and well-being of the public, promote

environmental sustainability, and allow for flexibility in a climate of global warming.





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NO HABITATION ZONE

# LEAVE LANDSLIDE-PRONE VILLAGES, AETAS TOLD

By **Tonette Orejas**  
@ttorejasINQ

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Some 260 Aeta families have been advised to permanently move out of harm's way as the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) tagged their villages as prone to landslides after the 6.1-magnitude earthquake on April 22.

Noel Lacadin, chief geologist of MGB in Central Luzon, recommended that Sitio Tagak at Barangay Nabuklod in Floridablanca town and Barangay Diaz in Porac town be considered "no habitation zone."

"Severe ground shaking occurred [in the villages]," Lacadin told the Inquirer on Wednesday.

### Hazards assessment

Both villages are within the 10-kilometer radius of Mt. Pinatubo, which last erupted on June 15, 1991 after a strong earthquake in July 1990.

Lacadin said he issued a landslide threat advisory to the local governments after the MGB and the Philippine Institute

of Volcanology and Seismology conducted hazards assessments following the April 22 temblor.

Porac Mayor Condralito dela Cruz said 110 Aeta families from Barangay Diaz had moved to Barangay Babo Pangulo and then to Sitio Pangaralan there, about 3 kilometers away.

"They refused to return to Diaz. They claimed seeing a family buried by the landslide," De la Cruz said.

Lacadin said cracks already formed on the only road in Barangay Diaz. The 150 Aeta families in Tagak refused to leave their village, opting to build sheds as they awaited relocation, according to Roberto Delgado, head of the local disaster risk reduction and management office.

A signboard has been put up in Tagak to remind the indigenous folk that the place is highly prone to landslides, Delgado said.

### Evacuation assistance

The Philippine Air Force at Basa Air Base in Barangay San Jose is on standby for evacuation assistance.

The provincial government has negotiated to buy a 28,000-square-meter land as a relocation site for the displaced Aetas, according to Angelina Blanco, executive officer of the Pampanga Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office.

The Aetas of Mt. Pinatubo used to roam the Zambales mountain range, changing abode after a death, illness or bad luck in the family or clan.

Lacadin confirmed that damming or ponding of water has occurred at a tributary of the Porac-Gumain River on the side of San Marcelino town in Zambales province. The water could flow toward Floridablanca should it burst open. INQ



**QUAKE DAMAGE** An Aeta resident in Floridablanca, Pampanga, checks his house after it crumbled when a 6.1-magnitude earthquake struck in April. —GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE





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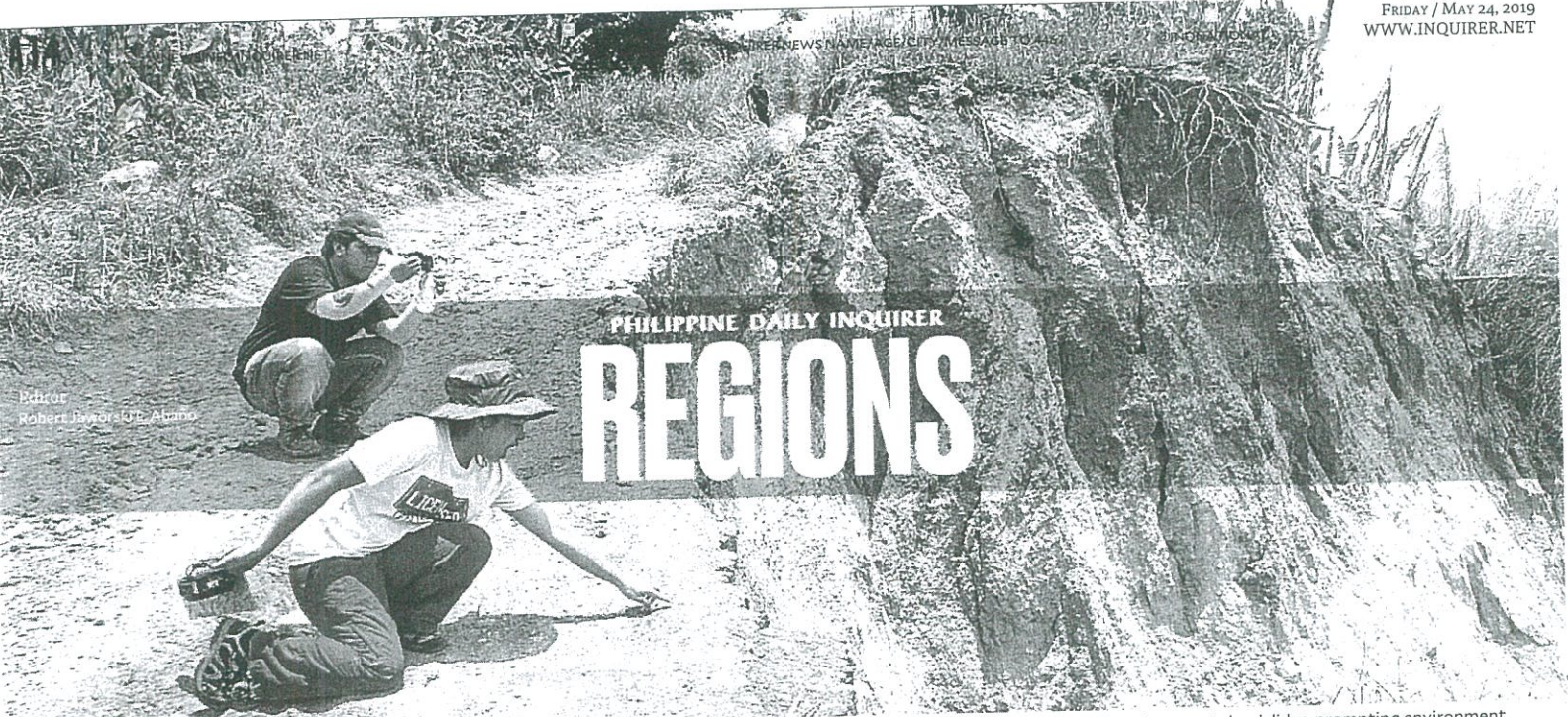
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Editor  
Robert Joseph ALVAREZ

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER  
**REGIONS**

**DANGEROUS PATH** The road leading to Barangay Diaz in Porac, Pampanga, is accessible only by motorcycles and carabaos. The upland village is prone to landslides, prompting environment officials to recommend the relocation of Aeta families living there after a strong earthquake hit the province last month. —PHOTO COURTESY OF MGB CENTRAL LUZON





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## MAGKAPE MUNA TAYO ULIT ni Jera Sison

**MAGANDANG balita. Ang Metro Pacific Investments Corporation (MPIC) at ang Maynilad Water Services ay nagbigay suporta sa paglilinis at rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay sa pamamagitan ng 'Adopt-an Estero Program'.**

Nagpirmahan ang dalawang malalaking kompanya at ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ng isang kasunduan upang tumulong sa paglilinis ng mga estero sa Maynila na sumasangay ang daloy ng tubig papalabas ng Manila Bay. Ang nasabing kasunduan ay tatagal ng limang taon.

Ayon sa MPIC, kasama na sa kanilang corporate social responsibility o CSR ang protektahan at pangalagaan ang ating kalikasan. Kasama na rito ang pagtulak ng maayos na kalusugan at kaligtasan ng ating lipunan. Kaya naman ang nasabing kasunduan ay magbibigay ng dagdag na lakas sa programa ng ating pamahalaan sa rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay.

Sa totoo lang, malaking bagay ang suporta ng pribadong sektor sa mga ganitong hakbang.

Ilang dekada na ang nakalipas at ang mga estero natin ay patuloy na nagiging tambakan ng basura ng mga nakatira sa mga gilid nito.

Ang lokal ng pamahalaan, katulong ang Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), ay regular na taon-taon na naglilinis ng ating mga estero at kanal bilang pag-agap ng baha pagdating ng tag-ulan. Subalit taon-taon din,

## METRO PACIFIC INVESTMENTS CORP AT MAYNILAD SUPORTADO ANG PAGLILINIS NG MANILA BAY

ang mga residente sa tabi ng estero ay patuloy ang pagtatapon ng basura. Marahil nasa isip nila ay nandiyan ang ating gobyerno upang linisin ito. Haaaay. Anong klaseng pag-iisip naman ito?

Umaasa ako na ang MPIC at ang Maynilad ay makatutulong din sa pamamagitan ng pagbigay-edukasyon sa mga residente sa mga masasamang asal na gawain tulad ng pagtatapon ng basura sa ating mga estero.

Si dating DENR Sec. Gina Lopez ay inumpisahan ang rehabilitasyon ng ilang estero sa Maynila. Ang mga iba na dating tambakan ng basura ay nagawa niyang isang maganda at maaliwalas na parke na maaaring pasyalan ng mga residente roon.

Sana ay kasama ito sa plano ng MPIC at Maynilad. Sa ilalim ng kasunduan ng MPIC at DENR, aayusin nila ang mga sumusunod na estero: Estero de Vitas,

Estero de San Lazaro, Estero de Kabulusan, Estero de Magdalena, Estero de Binondo, Estero dela Reina, Estero de Sampaloc, Estero de San Sebastian, Estero de San Miguel, Estero de Valencia, Estero de Quiapo, Estero de Uli-Uli, Estero de Paco, Estero de Pandacan, Estero de Tanque, Estero de Balete, Estero de Provisor, Estero de Concordia, Estero de Sunog Apog, at Estero de San Antonio Abad.





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# Palace rejects Canada timeline for trash return

By Julie M. Aurelio  
@JMAurelioINQ

Malacañang on Thursday rejected Canada's offer to take back "by the end of June" the tons of trash it illegally shipped to the country years ago and said the Philippines could not wait that long.

Presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo said he did not expect President Duterte to agree to Canada's gesture.

"They said [the removal of the trash] will take until the end of June. The President will not agree to that. I understand from [Finance] Secretary [Carlos] Dominguez that it will be sent back [to Canada] soon," Panelo said at a press briefing.

"I don't know how [soon]. It could be this week or [the] week after. Definitely, not [by] the end of June. We don't want that, that's too long," he added.

The Palace reacted to the statement of Canadian Environment Minister Catherine McKenna that Ottawa would take back the garbage "by the end of June."

McKenna said the Canadian government had awarded a contract to French shipping giant Bolloré Logistics for the return of 69 containers filled with electronic and household waste, including plastic bottles and bags, newspapers and diapers.

Two containers were impounded at Manila International Container Terminal while the rest were moved to a secluded yard at Subic Bay International Terminal Corp., according to the Bureau of Customs.

McKenna said the company would begin preparation for the shipping in the coming days as the waste must be safe-

ly treated to meet Canadian safety and health requirements.

## 'Inordinate delay'

On Wednesday, Panelo said Mr. Duterte had ordered officials to ship back the trash to Canada immediately even if the Philippines shouldered the cost.

He said the President was "so upset" about Ottawa's "inordinate delay" in taking back the trash and ordered the hiring of a private shipping company to return the trash to Canadian territory.

"If Canada will not accept [its] trash, we will leave the same within its territorial waters or 12 nautical miles (22.2 kilometers) out to sea from the baseline of any of [its] country's shores," Panelo said.

Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. last week recalled the Philippine ambassador and consuls in Canada over Ottawa's failure to comply with Mr. Duterte's May 15 deadline to take back the garbage.

The President also warned that Manila may cut diplomatic ties with Canada.

## Offer deemed too late

Aileen Lucero, national coordinator of EcoWaste Coalition, said Canada's latest offer was "way too late for the unwanted garbage to leave our land."

The environmental group has been at the forefront of protests demanding that Canada take back the trash.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Wednesday said Ottawa was working with Philippine officials to resolve the problem and hoped to strike a resolution quickly, though he gave no time frame.

"This is a situation that is unacceptable and has gone on too long," Trudeau said.

McKenna said the Canadian government would hold the responsible parties to account, including the company that exported the garbage to the Philippines. She identified the exporter as Chronic Inc., a company based in Whitby, Ontario.

## 'As quickly as we can'

Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland on Wednesday said she spoke with Locsin last week to reiterate "Canada's firm commitment" to promptly repatriate the waste.

"I think we have taken a big step with the announcement today and we are moving as quickly as we can, bearing in mind the need to take due care to get this resolved once and for all," Freeland said.

A total of 103 containers of Canadian trash arrived in the Philippines in batches in 2013 and 2014. The contents of 34 containers were later emptied in a landfill in Capas, Tarlac province.

Also on Thursday, Panelo said the Palace was "offended" after seven containers of shredded municipal waste imported from Australia were intercepted by the customs bureau in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental. (See related story in Regions, Page A14.)

"We are offended by that. We will not allow it. We'll send them back," Panelo said.

According to customs officials at Mindanao Container Terminal, Holcim Philippines Inc. was the consignee of the shipment. —WITH REPORTS FROM JEROME ANING, TONETTE OREJAS, ANNA ROSE AGLIBOT, TINA G. SANTOS AND AP INQ





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**RAISING A STINK** Members of the environmental group EcoWaste Coalition picket the Canadian Embassy in Makati to demand that Ottawa immediately take back the tons of trash it illegally exported to the Philippines years ago. —GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE





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# Canada to remove garbage in June

By **ROY C. MABASA** and **GENALYN D. KABILING**

Canada will complete the removal of the tons of garbage it shipped to Manila six years ago and safely send it back to its port by the end of June, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change in Ottawa said in a statement on Thursday.

"The removal will be complete by the end of June, as the waste must be safely

treated to meet Canadian safety and health requirements. The safe and environmentally sound disposal in Canada of the waste material will take place before the end of summer 2019. The costs associated with the preparation, transfer, shipment, and disposal of the waste will be assumed by the Government of Canada," the Ca- ►9

## Canada to remove...

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nadian government agency said.

The decision to ship back the waste to its shores was made after Minister of Environment and Climate Change Catherine McKenna announced that her government awarded a contract to Bolloré Logistics Canada to safely bring the waste back to Canada "as soon as possible."

Accordingly, Bolloré Logistics Canada will begin preparation for the shipping procedure in the coming days.

The Canadian government further said it maintains ongoing discussions with the government of the Philippines to ensure a positive outcome to this issue in a timely fashion.

Last week, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland spoke with Foreign Affairs, Teodoro Loesin, Jr. to reiterate Canada's firm commitment to promptly repatriate the waste to Canada.

The conversation between the two officials came shortly after Canada missed the May 15 deadline set by President Rodrigo Duterte for Ottawa to ship back the tons of garbage it illegally exported by tranches from 2013 to 2014.

While the export of such material was allowed under Canadian regulations at the time, the import of mixed plastics and household waste is prohibited under Philippine regulations.

In 2016, a Philippine court ordered the importers to ship the containers back to Canada at their expense. The local importer, however, did not comply with the court order and has since ceased to operate.

The garbage issue has created a diplomatic spat between Manila and Ottawa and led to the Philippine government recalling its top diplomats in Canada last month in protest of Canada's failure to meet the deadline.

Despite the unprecedented recall of the Philippine ambassador and several other consuls in Canada, the government in Ottawa emphasized that it values its deep and longstanding relationship with Manila and will continue to work "to ensure a swift resolution to this important issue of promptly repatriating waste exported to the Philippines by a Canadian company."

"Canada values its deep and longstanding relationship with the Philippines and has been working closely with Filipino authorities to find a solution that is mutually acceptable. Canada is pleased to announce that it has awarded a contract to bring the waste back promptly and to ensure its safe and environmentally sound disposal. Canada has amended its regulations to prevent this from happening again and is looking at ways to hold the responsible parties to account," McKenna said in a statement.

Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri on Thursday expressed backing for President Duterte's move to ship back to Canada the containers of garbage dumped in the Philippines six years ago.

"We support the President's move on sending back the Canadian trash back to Canada as the Philippines is not a 'basurahan.' We are not a trash can where other nations can just wantonly violate our environmental laws and our sovereignty," the Senate leader said in a statement.

"As one of the principal authors of the Solid Waste Management Act, I am in full support of our President in returning the trash back to Canada and to do the same for any country who does this to us in the future," he added.

Several senators have also slammed Canada for its inaction on the 69 containers of garbage that have been rotting in the country for six years.

## Australia garbage

The government is "offended" by the reported dumping of garbage from Australia and will ask the concerned importer to bring the trash back to that country.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said the government would not allow the country to be a dumping site of foreign garbage.

"It will be offensive to this government to be [a] recipient of trash. We are offended by that. We will not allow it. We will send them back," Panelo said during a Palace press briefing amid reports of Australian trash shipped to the country.

"We will [not] allow ourselves to be a dumping ground of trash," he insisted.

Reports said several containers of garbage from Australia have been recently shipped to the country. The containers, reportedly filled with shredded municipal waste, were reportedly put on hold at the Mindanao Container Terminal in Misamis Oriental.

A cement company reportedly declared the shipment containing processed engineered fuel that will be used for operations.

Panelo said they would ask the private company to ship back the trash to Australia. If the firm misdeclared the shipment to evade customs inspection, he said they would face prosecution.

"We will tell them to take it back," he said in Filipino.

"In the first place, I am puzzled how they entered the country. We should know if it is garbage or not and immediately stop it unless they are misdeclared to evade detection," he added. "They should be prosecuted," he said if the importer committed misdeclaration of shipment.

If there are other foreign imports shipped to the country, Panelo said the government will have the "same procedure, same stance" to send them back. (With Vanne Elaine P Terrazola)





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## Phl losing patience on Canada garbage

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ and EVELYN MACAIRAN

Malacañang maintained yesterday it has lost patience with Canada and rejected anew Ottawa's assurance that it would get back the tons of garbage dumped in the country several years ago.

And while the issue on trash from Canada remains unresolved, garbage from South Korea and Hong Kong also came into the country and would have to be shipped out.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo dismissed the announcement of Canadian Minister of Environment and Climate Change Catherine McKenna that Ottawa awarded a contract to Bolloré Logistics Canada to safely bring the waste back to Canada as soon as possible.

"Hindi ba ang sabi nila (Didn't they say) it will take about end of June pa," Panelo noted. "The President will not agree to that. And I understand from Secretary (Carlos) Dominguez... that the trash will be sent back the soonest."

He said Manila would push through with its plan to tap a private contractor to do the job. On Wednesday, Panelo had warned that the government might just dump the trash on Canadian shores.

According to McKenna, preparation for the shipping of the garbage will begin in

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the coming days and "the removal will be complete by the end of June, as the waste must be safely treated to meet Canadian safety and health requirements."

McKenna said the costs associated with the preparation, transfer, shipment and disposal of the waste will be assumed by the Canadian government.

"Canada values its deep and longstanding relationship with the Philippines and continues to work with that country to ensure a swift resolution to this important issue of promptly repatriating waste exported to the Philippines by a Canadian company," the statement said.

Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland said the two countries have a deep and valued relationship underpinned by the hundreds of thousands of Canadians of Filipino descent. She said the Filipino-Canadian community has made huge contributions to Canada.

In 2016, Canada amended its regulations to prevent future exports of such material without a permit. Canada is also looking at ways to hold the responsible parties to account.

Panelo said he does not see Filipinos in Canada getting affected by the spat over garbage, while Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez expressed hopes that the political issues will not destroy the two countries' trade relations.

### Trash from South Korea, Hong Kong

Meanwhile, the Department of Finance (DOF) said yesterday South Korea committed to take back 5,176.9 metric tons of waste materials illegally imported into the country by the Cebu-based Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corp. last year.

In a report to the DOF, Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero said the South Korean government is willing to retrieve the waste should the importer fail to follow the order of re-exportation issued by the Port of Cagayan de Oro.

Guerrero said an initial batch of the waste materials consisting of plastic flakes was shipped back to South Korea in January, while 5,176.9 MT are still stored at the Verde Soko compound within the

PHIVIDEC Industrial Authority premises in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental.

Bureau of Customs-Mindanao International Container Terminal collector John Simon also said yesterday that one container van of e-waste arrived from Hong Kong at their port last February.

Simon said the container was intended to be a "test case," meaning "if one container successfully entered the port, there would be 70 other containers that would be delivered to the country."

He said that the e-waste, such as computer and gadget parts that are grinded, is the worst kind of garbage because it is "hazardous to the people's health."

"When they learned that we stopped their one container, they aborted their plan to bring in 70 other container vans into the port," Simon said.

### Do it soonest

Panelo said the Philippines wants the garbage from Canada removed from Philippine shores soonest and "definitely not the end of June."

"Ayaw natin 'yun. Ang tagal tagal na masyado (It's too long)," Panelo said, noting Duterte is upset and disappointed.

On Wednesday, Panelo said the President is not thinking twice on the plan to dump the waste on Canada's shores.

"If Canada will not accept their trash, we will leave the same within its territorial waters or 12 nautical miles out to sea from the baseline of any of their country's shores," Panelo said.

Asked on the possibility that Canada might use the Basel Convention against the Philippines, Panelo said Manila is not a signatory to the agreement aimed at controlling transboundary movement of hazardous wastes.

But reports said the Philippines became signatory to Basel Convention on March 22, 1989. It was ratified by Manila on Oct. 21, 1993 and came into force on Jan. 19 of the following year.

In a hastily called a press briefing at Malacañang on Wednesday afternoon, Panelo said the expenses for the return of 69 of the 103 container vans of garbage from Canada will be shouldered by the Philippines.

"We do not mind," he said. —  
With Pia Lee-Brago, Rhodina Villanueva, Mary Grace Padin





## PALACE REJECTS CANADA'S END-JUNE TRASH SHIPMENT

By BERNADETTE D. NICOLAS

[@BNicolasBM](#)

**M**ALACAÑANG has rejected Canada's move to ship back by end of June truckloads of hazardous waste it illegally shipped to the Philippines five years ago, saying the President cannot wait that long as he wants the trash to be sent back immediately.

This, after the Canadian government announced that it has already hired shipping firm Bollore Logistics Canada to safely bring back the waste to Canada as soon as possible.

However, the timeline given by Canada to ship the waste back completely by the end of next month did not sit well with the Palace.

"Didn't they say it will take them [until] end of June? The President will not agree to that. And I understand from [Finance] Secretary Dominguez that the trash will be shipped back soon," said Presidential Spokesman and Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador S. Panelo in a briefing on Thursday.

Sought for clarification on when they expect the 69 waste containers to be shipped back, Panelo said: "Soonest. We don't

know what do they specifically mean with 'soonest.' It could be this week or a week after. Definitely not end of June. We do not want that. That is too long."

On Wednesday, President Duterte had again expressed outrage over Canada's "inordinate delay" in retrieving the waste, prompting him to order concerned agencies to look for a private shipping firm that will ship the waste back.

Malacañang said the Philippine government is even willing to shoulder the expenses.

Last week, the Philippine government recalled its ambassadors and consuls in Canada after Ottawa failed to comply with the May 15 deadline to take back the garbage.

### Australian waste

IN a related development, Malacañang said it will ask those responsible for shipping the seven waste containers now on hold in Mindanao Container Terminal in Misamis Oriental to send the waste back to Australia.

Panelo said the Philippine government is taking offense at the move, reiterating that the country should not be treated by other countries as a dump.

"It will be offensive to this

government to be a recipient of trash. We are offended by that. We will not allow it," Panelo said.

Reports said the shipment was declared as processed engineered fuel (PEF) and municipal waste which was shipped by cement company Holcim Philippines Inc.

Holcim said in the same report that it has long been using PEF as an alternative fuel in making the cement from processed waste.

The broker of the said shipment, the report stated, was the same broker responsible for the 1,000 tons of waste from South Korea from July to October 2018.

The shipment is being tested to determine whether this is PEF or just municipal waste. The result will be used as basis by the Bureau of Customs to know who should be held liable.

Panelo wondered aloud how the shipments were able to enter the Philippines, surmising that these were probably misdeclared.

If proven that these shipments were misdeclared, the Palace spokesman said, those liable should be prosecuted.

The Palace then vowed to apply the same policy of sending the waste back to its origin if other countries are also found to be doing this to the Philippines.





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## No deal, Palace rebuffs Canada

By Kristina Maralit and Elmer N. Manuel

A strong nudge from President Rodrigo Duterte made the federal government of Canada announce yesterday that the removal of the exported waste from the Philippines will be completed by the end of next month.

Mr. Duterte, however, is not buying the Canadian pledge as the move was "too late."

The President also directed his administration

**Turn to page 6**







# No deal, Palace rebuffs Canada

**Canada's Ministry of Environment and Climate said a contract has been awarded to Bolloré Logistics Canada to recover the heaps of trash**

*From page 1*

to halt negotiations with Canada unless the trash will be picked up immediately.

Mr. Duterte's spokesman Salvador Panelo said the Palace is not waiting until the end of June for the refuse to be picked up.

Canada's Ministry of Environment and Climate said a contract has been awarded to Bolloré Logistics Canada to recover the heaps of trash dumped in the country in batches back in 2013 and 2014.

Panelo said the Palace's patience had ran out and it is contracting its own shipping line to haul the trash back to Canada, which will be dumped in its territorial water if these are refused.

Canada said the company tapped to take back the garbage will comply with "the safe and environmentally sound disposal" of the containers that "will take place before the end of summer 2019."

Panelo stressed that the "President will not allow it."

"It's been too long already," he said in a press briefing.

He bared that Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez indicated a local private shipping company will soon transport the tons of garbage back to Canada, the cost of which will be shouldered by the Philippine government.

**Soon not June**

"The trash will be sent back

the soonest. We just don't know how soon, but definitely not the end of June," stated the official.

Last Wednesday, Panelo announced that Mr. Duterte is "upset" over Canada's "inordinate delay" and "neither here nor there pronouncements" regarding the retrieval of the cargo sent by a private Canadian firm to the country several years ago.

Mr. Duterte, according to Panelo, lamented how Canada is "not taking this issue nor our country seriously" and felt insulted that it is "treating this country as a dumpsite."

**Not exactly pleasing**

"Canada is pleased to announce that it has awarded a contract to bring the waste back promptly and to ensure its safe and environmentally sound disposal," Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, said in a statement.

"Canada has amended its regulations to prevent this from happening again and is looking at ways to hold the responsible parties to account," she said.

According to the official website of the Canadian government, the company will begin preparation for shipping in the "coming days."

**Trash for treatment**

"The removal will be complete by the end of June, as the waste must be safely treated to meet Canadian safety and health requirements. The safe and environmentally sound disposal in Canada of the waste material will take place before the end of summer 2019," it said.

Prior to this announcement, Malacañang said it is willing to shoulder the shipping expenses. As of posting, the Department of Foreign Affairs has yet to comment on this development.

Canada said it will shoulder the costs of preparation, transfer,

shipment, and disposal of the waste.

Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland said she has already spoken with Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. last week, to reiterate Canada's commitment to promptly repatriate the waste.

**The trash will be sent back the soonest. We just don't know how soon, but definitely not the end of June.**

**Relations based on trust**

"As I mentioned to their Foreign Secretary last week, we are committed to resolving this issue as quickly as possible. Today is an essential step forward in accomplishing that," she said.

Both McKenna and Freeland emphasized that Canada values its relations with the Philippines.

"Canada values its deep and longstanding relationship with the Philippines and has been working closely with Filipino authorities to find a solution that is mutually acceptable," McKenna said.

**The Palace said its patience had ran out and it is contracting its own shipping line to haul the trash back to Canada.**

Freeland, meanwhile, highlighted the people-to-people ties of both nations.

"Canada and the Philippines have a deep and valued relationship underpinned by the hundreds of thousands of Canadians of Filipino descent. The Filipino-Canadian community has made huge contributions to Canada," she said.

In 2013 and 2014, Canadian company, Chronic Inc., exported containers labelled as recyclable plastics to two importers in the Philippines. It was found out that these also contained household wastes.





## PH wants Canada to retrieve waste soon

BY ASHZEL HACHÉRO  
and JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

CANADA has hired a shipping firm to bring back all 69 container vans of garbage shipped to the Philippines in 2013 by the end of June but Malacañang wants the retrieval completed sooner.

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo said Canada's time frame is too long and the

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### PH WANTS

Philippines would proceed with the hiring of a private shipping company, as ordered by President Duterte, to send the garbage to Canada at the "soonest" time possible which he said could be "this week or the week after but definite(ly) not the end of June."

Canadian Environment Minister Catherine McKenna, in a statement, said Bollare Logistics Canada has been hired for \$1.14 million to prepare and ship the trash.

"The company will begin preparation for shipping in the coming days.

The removal will be complete by the end of June, as the waste must be safely treated to meet Canadian safety and health requirements," McKenna said.

"The safe and environmentally-sound disposal in Canada of the waste material will take place before the end of summer 2019. The costs associated with the preparation, transfer, shipment, and disposal of the waste will be assumed by the government of Canada," she added.

McKenna said Canada values its

deep and long-standing relationship with the Philippines and has been working closely with Philippine authorities to find a solution that is mutually acceptable.

She said Canada amended its regulations in 2016 to prevent export of waster materials without a permit and "is looking at ways to hold the responsible parties to account."

The 69 container vans of trash were part of some 100 containers that were mis-declared as containing plastic scraps and brought to the Philippines from 2013 to 2014.

Some of the garbage had been buried in a landfill in Tarlac.

Panelo the other day said President Duterte was upset and disappointed over the delay in Canada's taking back of its garbage after Canada failed to meet the May 15 deadline imposed by the Philippines

He said due to "offending delay, the President instructed government offices to look for a private shipping company to send the trash back and leave the shipment within Canada's territorial waters if Canada refuses to accept it.





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## International dumpsite

**F**ILIPINO environmentalists were the first to be annoyed, then angered, when the news broke out that a Canadian company with a local affiliate in Valenzuela, Metro Manila has shipped some 50 container vans of household and office garbage to Manila.

This was in June to August 2013, and the government then headed by President Benigno Aquino III failed miserably to resolve the problem, despite the fact that his own Bureau of Customs classified the shipment as hazardous waste under Republic Act 6969, the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste and Control Act.

**'We have heard the voices of protest from environmental activists, from legislators and local officials, but it looks like only President Duterte is seriously fighting those who would like to turn the country into an international dumpsite.'**

The most the Aquino government did was to file charges in court against Adelfa Eduardo, owner of Chronic Plastics in Valenzuela, Metro Manila, and its licensed customs brokers Leonora Flores and Sherjun Saldon, for smuggling contraband. Even separate visits by two Canadian prime ministers to Manila did not result in any substantial high-level discussion on the problem.

Until President Rodrigo Duterte came around, and bolstered his strong talk with equally strong action, urging Canada to respond or else he will ship back the garbage and dump it somewhere near Canada's shores. Filipino diplomats in Canada were also ordered to go home.

As this developed, another news broke out about a similar incident of garbage smuggling, this time in the Port of Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental. The trash shipment came from Australia, and the importer, a big cement plant, explained that they will convert the thrash into fuel and energy in their cement operations.

Similar garbage from South Korea had been reported to be smuggled to the Philippines, but these reports have yet to be verified.

The Philippines' inability to properly enforce its environmental and customs laws, perhaps because of inefficient and corrupt officials, has encouraged the illicit importation of garbage, especially now that China has closed its borders on this otherwise profitable trade.

We have heard the voices of protest from environmental activists, from legislators and local officials, but it looks like only President Duterte is seriously fighting those who would like to turn the country into an international dumpsite.

All those who are in a position to help, even just to issue verbal and written statements of support, should rally behind the President on this issue.





# Canada to complete trash removal by end of June

By ROY C. MABASA

Canada will complete the removal of the tons of garbage it shipped to Manila six years ago and safely send it back to its port by the end of June, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change in Ottawa said yesterday.

"The removal will be complete by the end of June, as the waste must be safely treated to meet Canadian safety and health requirements. The safe and environmentally sound disposal in Canada of the waste material will take place before the end of summer 2019. The costs associated with the preparation, transfer, shipment, and disposal of the waste will be assumed by the Government of Canada," the Canadian government agency said.

The decision to ship back the waste to its shores was made after Minister of Environment and Climate Change Catherine McKenna announced that her government awarded a contract to Bollore Logistics Canada to safely bring the waste back to Canada "as soon as possible."

Accordingly, Bollore Logistics Canada will begin preparation

for the shipping procedure in the coming days.

The Canadian government further said it maintains ongoing discussions with the government of the Philippines to ensure a positive outcome to this issue in a timely fashion.

Last week, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland spoke with Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro L. Locsin Jr. to reiterate Canada's firm commitment to promptly repatriate the waste to Canada.

The conversation between the two officials came shortly after Canada missed the May 15 deadline set by President Duterte for Ottawa to ship back the tons of garbage it illegally exported by tranches from 2013 to 2014.

While the export of such material was allowed under Canadian regulations at the time, the import of mixed plastics and household waste is prohibited under Philippines regulations.

In 2016, a Philippine court ordered the importers to ship the containers back to Canada at their expense. The local importer, however, did not comply with the court order and has since then ceased to operate.

The garbage issue has created a diplomatic spat between Manila and Ottawa when the Philippine government recalled its top diplomats in Canada last month in protest of Canada's failure to meet Duterte's deadline.

Despite the unprecedented recall of the Philippine ambassador and several other consuls in Canada, the government in Ottawa emphasized that it values its deep and longstanding relationship with Manila and will continue to work "to ensure a swift resolution to this important issue of promptly repatriating waste exported to the Philippines by a Canadian company."

"Canada values its deep and longstanding relationship with the Philippines and has been working closely with Filipino authorities to find a solution that is mutually acceptable. Canada is pleased to announce that it has awarded a contract to bring the waste back promptly and to ensure its safe and environmentally sound disposal. Canada has amended its regulations to prevent this from happening again and is looking at ways to hold the responsible parties to account," McKenna said in a statement.





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## Duterte wants garbage back in Canada ASAP

**PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte wants the trash to be returned to Canada the soonest possible time and not by the end of June, Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo said yesterday.**

Panelo made the statement after the Canadian government said their Minister of Environment and Climate Change awarded a contract to bring the trash back to Ottawa to Bollere Logistics Canada.

The Canadian government said the company will begin preparations for the shipping of the trash in the coming days which will be completed by the end of June.

"No. Di ba sabi nila it might about take end of June pa, hindi papayag si Presidente dun," Panelo said during the press briefing.

Panelo added Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez said the trash will be sent out soon.

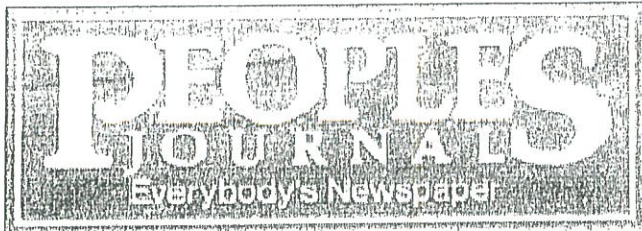
"The trash will be sent back the soonest. Hindi ko alam kung ano ang soonest, either this week or week after but definitely not the end of June. Ayaw natin 'yun ang tagal masyado," Panelo said.

Malacañang earlier said the President has ordered government agencies to look for a private company that would ship the trash back to Canada. **Efren Montano**





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## CANADA HIRES SHIPPING FIRM TO TAKE BACK TRASH BY END OF JUNE

THE government of Canada yesterday said it has contracted a shipping company that will take back until the end of June the 69 containers of trash sent to the Philippines.

Minister of Environment and Climate Change Catherine McKenna made the announcement after President Rodrigo Duterte ordered her government to hire a private company that will ship back the garbage to Canada.

McKenna said: "Canada values its deep and long-standing relationship with the Philippines and continues to work with that country to ensure a swift resolution to this important issue of promptly repatriating waste exported to the Philippines by a Canadian company."

She announced that the government of Canada awarded the contract to Bolloré Logistics Canada to safely bring the waste back to Canada as soon as possible.

"The company will begin preparation for shipping in the coming days. The removal will be complete by the end of June, as the waste must be safely treated to meet Canadian safety and health requirements," she said.

McKenna added: "The safe and environmentally sound disposal in Canada of the waste material will take place before the end of summer 2019."

The costs associated with the preparation, transfer, shipment, and disposal of the waste will be assumed by the government of Canada.

Earlier, Canada said the garbage exported to the Philippines between 2013 and 2014 was a commercial transaction done without the government's consent.

In 2016, Canada amended its regulations to prevent future exports of such material without a permit.

Canada is also looking at ways to hold the responsible parties accountable.

Canada missed the May 15 deadline set by Manila to take back the shipment, prompting the Philippines to withdraw top diplomats from Canada last week.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said Filipinos were insulted by Canada's apparent failure to take the trash issue seriously and for treating the country as a dump site.

**Cristina Lee-Pisco**





# CANADA, HAKOT- -BASURA

## Panelo: End of June? Ipapadala na Istorya sa Pahina 3

NI ROY C. MABASA, GENALYN D. KABILING, AT VANNE ELAINE P. TERRAZOLA

Tatapusin ng Canada ang paghakot sa tone-toneladang basura nito na ipinadala sa Manila anim na taon na ang nakalipas at ligtas itong ibabalik sa kanyang daungan sa katapusan ng Hunyo, sinabi ng Ministry of Environment and Climate Change sa Ottawa sa isang pahayag kahapon.

"The removal will be complete by the end of June, as the waste must be safely treated to meet Canadian safety and health requirements. The safe and environmentally sound disposal in Canada of the waste material will take place before the end of summer 2019. The costs associated with the preparation, transfer, shipment, and disposal of the waste will be assumed by the Government of Canada," saad ng Canadian government agency.

Nabuo ang desisyong ibiyahe pabalik sa kanilang bansa ang basura matapos

ipahayag ni Minister of Environment and Climate Change Catherine McKenna na iginawad ng kanilang gobyerno ang kontrata sa Bolloré Logistics Canada para ligtas na ibalik ang basura sa Canada "as soon as possible."

Ayon dito, sisimulan ng Bolloré Logistics Canada ang paghahanda sa shipping procedure sa mga susunod na araw.

"Canada values its deep and longstanding relationship with the Philippines and has been working closely with Filipino authorities to find a solution that is mutually acceptable," saad sa pahayag ni McKenna.

**NGAYONNA!**

Hindi naman tinanggap ng gobyerno ng Pilipinas ang alok ng Canada na sa Hunyo pa aalisin ang mga basura nito.

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo na kumikilos na ang pamahalaan para kaagad na maipabalik sa Canada ang mga basura nito, batay sa impormasyon mula kay Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III.

"Sinabi nila it will take about end of June pa. Hindi papayag si Presidente doon and I understand from Secretary Dominguez that malapit nang padala. The trash will be sent back the soonest," aniya sa press briefing sa Palasyo.

"It could be this week or week after. Definitely not the end of June. Ayaw natin 'yun ang tagal-tagal masyado 'yun,' dugtong niya.

Suportado ni Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri ang utos ng Pangulo na ibiyahe pabalik sa Canada ang mga basura dahil ang Pilipinas ay hindi "basurahan".





### **Alok ng Canada na hakutin ang basura sa Hunyo 30 tinanggihan ng Palasyo**

Tinanggihan ng Malacañang ang alok ng Canada na sila na ang mag-uuwi ng kanilang basura sa katapusan ng Hunyo.

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo, hindi na makapaghintay si Pangulong Duterte sa katapusan ng June bago makot pabalik ng Canada ang itinambak nitong tone-toneladang basura.

Magugunita na kamakalawa ay iniutos ng Pangulo ang paghahanap ng private shipping company upang ibalik sa Ottawa ang nasabing

basura at ang gobyerno na lamang ang gagastos para rito matapos mabigo ang Canada na hakutin ito sa itinakdang May 15 deadline.

Nagpahayag kahapon ang Canadian government na sila na lamang ang kukuha ng basura pero baka raw abutin pa ng katapusan ng June.

Nagbanta pa ang Pangulo na kapag hindi tinanggap ng Canada ang kanilang basura ay itatapon ito sa kanilang karagatan, malapit sa beaches ng mga ito. *(Rudy Andal)*





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### *Sa isyu ng basura* **Alok ng Canada** **tinanggihang ng Palasyo**

**TINANGGIHAN** ng Palasyo ang alok ng Canada na ibalik sa kanilang bansa sa katapusan ng Hunyo ang basurang limang taon nang nakatambak sa Filipinas.

"They said it will take end of June. The President will not agree with this. I understand from Secretary [Carlos] Dominguez that it will

be set the soonest. The trash will be sent back the soonest," sabi ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo kahapon.

Ang pahayag ni Panelo ay tugon sa sinabi ng Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), na matatapos nila ang pagbabalik sa Ottawa ng basura sa katapusan ng Hunyo.

Kamakalawa ay sinabi ni Panelo na iniutos ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na agad ibalik sa Canada ang mga basura kahit sagot ng Philippine government ang gastos.

(ROSE NOVENARIO)





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### **DU30 TINANGGIHAN ANG ALOK NG CANADA SA PAGBALIK NG BASURA**

Hindi na umano makapaghintay si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte kaya't tinanggihan ang alok ng Canada na sila na ang mag-uwi ng kanilang basura sa katapusan ng Hunyo.

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo, inip na ang Pangulo sa pangako ng Canada na nabigong hakutin ang tone-toneladang basura noong May 15 deadline.

Kaya't kamakalawa ay iniutos ng Pangulo ang paghanap ng private shipping company upang ibalik sa Ottawa ang nasabing basura at ang gobyerno na lamang ang gagastos para rito.

Nagbanta pa ang Pangulo na kapag hindi tinanggap ng Canada ang kanilang basura ay itatapon ito sa kanilang karagatan malapit sa beaches ng mga ito. *-Rudy Andal-*





## Digong puno na! Basura ng Canada gagastusan ng 'Pinas

Hindi na makapag-hintay pa ang Malacañang na hintayin ang sinasabing oras ng Canada para maibalik sa kanilang bansa ang tone-toneladang basura na dinala sa Pilipinas, kaya uunahan na ito ng pamahalaan.

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo na hindi papayag si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na patagalin pa ang basura ng Canada kaya isasakay sa barko ang tone-toneladang basura sa lalong madaling panahon para maibalik sa nasabing bansa.

Ayon pa kay Panelo, galit na umano ang Pangulo kaya gobyerno na umano ang kikilos para maibalik ang basura ng Canada.

Inaasikaso na aniya ng mga ahensiya ng pamahalaan ang pag-sasakay ng mga basura ng Canada sa barko at malapit na itong ipadala.

"Ang sabi nila it will take about end of June pa. Hindi papayag si

Presidente doon. And I understand from Secretary Dominguez that malapit nang ipadala. The trash will be send back the soonest per the Usec of—parang may nag-report sa kanya na ginagawa na nila," ani Panelo.

Kaugnay nito, naglabas ng pahayag ang Ministry of Environment and Climate Change ng Canada na nag-award na sila ng contract sa isang pribadong kompanya para hakutin at ibalik sa kanila ang basurang itinambak sa Pilipinas.

Iginiit ni Panelo na matagal pa ang katapusan ng Hunyo at ayaw ni Pangulong Duterte na patagalin pa ang nakatambak na basura sa Port of Manila at Port of Subic.

Matatandaan na higit 100 container ng basura mula sa Canada ang dinala sa bansa sa pagitan ng 2013 at 2014, 26 mula sa mga ito ang binaon na sa Tarlac landfill. **(Aileen Taliping)**





## Canada basura sa Hunyo pa hahakutin

SA susunod na buwan pa makukumpleto ng bansang Canada ang paghahakot sa kanilang basura sa bansa.

"Canada is pleased to announce that it has awarded a contract to bring the waste back promptly and to ensure its safe and environmentally sound disposal," ayon sa ipinalabas na statement ni Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

"Canada has amended its regulations to prevent this from happening again and is looking at ways to hold the responsible parties to account," dagdag nito.

Ayon kay McKenna nai-award na ng Canadian

government ang kontrata sa paghahakot sa mga basura sa Bolloré Logistics Canada para ligtas na ibalik sa kanilang bansa sa lalong madaling panahon.

Nakasaad din sa official website ng Canadian government na sinisimulan na ng nakontratang kompanya ang pagbiyahe sa mga basura.

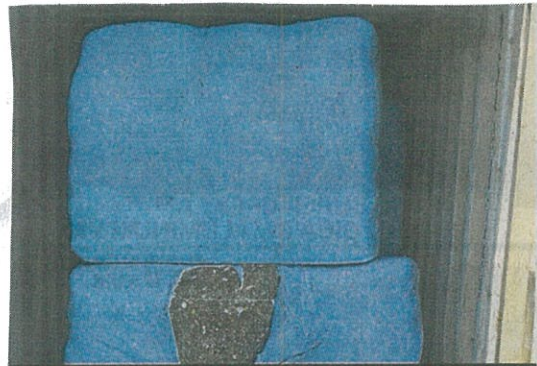
"The removal will be complete by the end of June, as the waste must be safely treated to meet Canadian safety and health requirements. The safe and environmentally sound disposal in Canada of the waste material will take place before the end of summer 2019," ayon pa sa Canadian official.  
(PNA)





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**REGIONS**

## BOC: Trash from Australia not toxic

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—A shipment of trash that arrived in Misamis Oriental from Australia early this month will be used as fuel for cement plants in Mindanao, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) said. A BOC official said the imported waste materials, packed in nine containers, had been processed and contained items such as plastic, rubber, wood and paper, which would not pose any public hazard. — STORY BY JIGGER J. JERUSALEM

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# Trash from Australia not toxic, says BOC

Customs exec notes waste materials already processed, to be used as fuel in cement plants

By Jigger J. Jerusalem  
@inqmindanao

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Nine container vans that arrived in Misamis Oriental province from Australia early this month did not contain toxic garbage but processed materials that will be used as fuel for a cement company's manufacturing plants, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) said on Thursday.

The contents of the nine container vans were declared by the importer as "processed engineered fuel" (PEF), said lawyer Roswald Joseph Pague, BOC deputy customs collector for Northern Mindanao.

The materials arrived on May 3 at the Mindanao Container Terminal (MCT) in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, some 26.9 kilometers from this city.

## Municipal waste

Pague allayed fears that the materials might be hazardous and were purely garbage, like the trash from Canada that arrived in 2013 and 2014 in Luzon and those from South Korea that was shipped to Misamis Oriental last year.

He said that the imported PEF contained items from municipal

waste, such as plastic, rubber, wood and paper, which would not pose any hazard to the public.

"The evil that we're trying to avoid—[that] it might cause seepage to the water tables or whatever contamination—is totally absent considering that it will be directly fed to the furnace," Pague said.

He was referring to cement manufacturer Holcim Philippines Inc., a member of the Lafarge Holcim Group, the company that imported the materials.

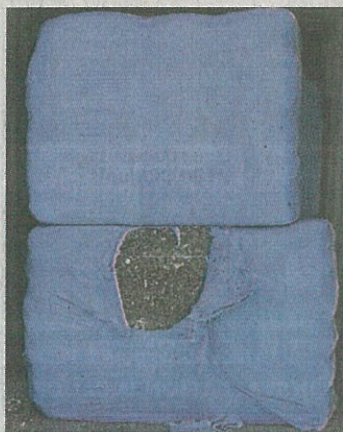
## No objection

The PEF will be used by Holcim's cement plants in Davao and Lugait, Misamis Oriental.

Pague said the regional office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) had cleared Holcim to import PEF for cement manufacturing.

The Singapore-based ResourceCo Asia Pte. Ltd. and EMB have exchanged letters that signified the government's approval of PEF importation, according to copies of these letters furnished the Inquirer.

In 2017, ResourceCo sought EMB's approval to export PEF and to supply these to cement



FUEL FROM TRASH

Containers of processed waste materials from Australia are stored in an industrial estate in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, pending clearance for its release. A cement manufacturer says it will use the trash as fuel for its plants. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

manufacturers in the Philippines.

In his letter to EMB, Pavel Cech, ResourceCo managing director, said "the cement manufacturers in the country have been continuously exploring the use of green and alternative fuels and raw materials for use in their cement manufacturing process as part of their sustain-

ability programs."

In an Oct. 30, 2017 letter, Metodio Turbella, EMB regional director, said his agency had no objection to the importation of PEF to be used as alternative fuel in cement kiln.

In March this year, Turbella said the EMB's approval of ResourceCo's bid to export PEF to the Philippines was "technically binding until such time that there will be updated legislation or policy on the importation of recyclable materials prohibiting the importation of PEF."

The imported materials are stored at the Phividec Industrial Estate compound in Tagoloan.

The issue about the Australian waste reaching the Philippines was first raised by MCT collector John Simon in a television interview on Wednesday. Simon accused the broker of the shipment, the same one who handled the importation of waste from South Korea last year, of infraction and should be held answerable for the entry of the materials.

But Alan Cuyno, technical manager of Holcim Philippines Inc., said in the same interview that what the firm had imported was "not garbage" but "low-grade fuel." INQ





## BOC recommends seizure warrant vs Aussie 'trash shipment'

By EVELYN MACAIRAN

The Bureau of Customs-Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service (BOC-CIIS) has recommended the seizure of nine 40-footer shipping containers that are suspected to contain garbage from Australia.

In the report submitted by BOC-Mindanao International Container Terminal collector John Simon to the agency's head office yesterday, the BOC-CIIS said it made the recommendation on the suspicion that the declared processed engineering fuel was "shredded municipal waste."

The BOC said this might be in violation of Republic Act 8749 or "An Act Providing for a Comprehensive Air Pollution Control Policy and for Other Purposes" and the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA).

The shipment, which arrived on board the container ship *Maria Katharina 917S* on May 7, was consigned to Holcim Philippines Inc.

The shipper was identified as Cleanway Resources Co. Ltd. on behalf of Resource Asia Pte LTD.

The shipment came from Australia and was intended to be delivered to the MCT-Phividec in Misamis Oriental.

Last May 10, Simon informed the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) that they

have placed the shipment on alert and asked if it was covered by an import permit. Simon then asked the agency to conduct a waste analysis.

Last May 14, the BOC conducted a spot check on one of the nine containers with representatives from Holcim and the DENR-EMB present.

In its report, the DENR-EMB said "the plastic-wrapped bales" could be generally described as "shredded municipal waste" and that closer examination indicated "pieces of assorted scrap plastic, cellophane, wrappers, chunks of hard plastic, textile, fibers, wood chips, glass cullet, stones, soil, paper and other shredded waste materials" were in the containers.

The DENR-EMB said the composition appeared "more of residual waste or items which could not be readily recycled or easily removed or separated for recycling." The BOC said they have received information that municipal waste is burned by Holcim to serve as fuel in the process of making cement.

"When asked if this process has clearance with the DENR, broker representative could not confirm or deny having such clearance," the BOC-CIIS said.

It also raises more questions on whether they comply with the country's environmental laws after learning that the burning is done during nighttime, the BOC-CIIS added.





## PH as garbage dump? Aussies follow suit after Canada, SoKor

**By Vito Barcelo and Rio N. Araja**

THE Bureau of Customs intercepted seven container vans of trash from Australia that were wrongly declared as processed engineered fuel and

municipal waste in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental.

At the same time, Canada said that by June, it would ship back 69 containers of trash that were illegally shipped to the Philippines by a private Cana-

dian company in 2013 and 2014—but President Rodrigo Duterte rejected the commitment date as too late.

On Thursday, a TV news report said seven container vans with shredded municipal waste were being held in the

Mindanao Container Terminal.

BOC collector John Simon said the waste from Australia was consigned to the Verde Soco Philippines, the same consignee that imported tons of trash from South

*Next page*

### PH...

From A1

Korea in July and October 2018.

The shipment, abandoned by Verde Soco, was declared to contain “synthetic flakes.”

Simon said both the broker and the consignee would be held accountable for the wrong declaration.

Representatives of Holcim Philippines, a maker of cement, were present during the inspection of the shipment and said their company has long been using PEF instead of coal fuel.

“For us, this is really not garbage. This is low-grade fuel, this is processed engineered fuel,” Alan Cuyno, technical manager of Holcim, said.

Customs officials, however, said the shipment still included trash.

“Whatever the reason or declaration they made, the shipment is still considered garbage and a banned item,” said Joel Pinawin, supervisor of the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service-CDO.

The Canadian government vowed to complete by June this year the repatriation of its tons of trash shipped to the Philippines in 2013 and 2014.

This came after Ottawa through Minister of Environment and Climate Change Catherine McKenna revealed that it has chosen the company that will be in charge of bringing the garbage back to Canada.

In a statement, the Canadian government said McKenna has awarded a contract to Bollore Logistics Canada.

“Canada is pleased to announce that it has awarded a contract to bring the waste back promptly and to ensure its safe and environmentally sound disposal,” McKenna said.

“The company will begin preparation for the shipping in the coming days,” the Canadian government said. “The removal will be complete by the end of June, as the waste must be safely treated to meet Canadian safety and health requirements.”

But the Palace rejected the June 30 target as being too late.

In a Palace press briefing, Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo insisted the Philippine government will ship the trash back to Canada on its own.

He said the government could not wait until the end of June, as the repatriation has been stalled long enough.

“They said it will take about the end of June. The President will not accept that,” Panelo said.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Thursday said the shipment of tons of trash to Canada must secure a clearance before it could

be sent back through China.

“There is quite a delay (in the shipment) because of some processes,” Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny Antiporda said.

“First of all, the trash (shipment) will have to pass through... The shipment from the Philippines cannot just go straight to Canada. There has to be a stopover in China,” he said.

“We need to secure some clearances from China also since this has been in the Basal Convention that a clearance must be secured to enable the shipment,” he said.

The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal or the Basel Convention is an international treaty that controls the transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal.





## Palace: PHL to send back Australian trash

MALACAÑANG on Thursday said the government wants the trash recently dumped in Misamis Oriental shipped back to Australia.

A shipment of trash from Australia was intercepted recently in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, according to GMA's 24 Oras exclusive report last Wednesday.

In a press briefing at the Palace, Presidential Spokesperson Salvador S. Panelo said regarding the trash from Australia: "It will be offensive to this government to be a recipient of trash or '*basura*.' We are offended by that. We will not allow it. We'll send them back."

According to Mr. Panelo, the government will order the private firm responsible for the shipment to send the garbage back to Australia.

"*Ipapabalik natin sa kanila* (We will ask them to ship [the garbage] back)," he said.

Asked what measures should be taken to avoid the same incident from happening again, he said the policy is to send all the trash back to their countries of origin.

"*Aba eh di* (Of course), as soon as we discover that, then we will have the same procedure. We'll have the same stand."

"We will not allow ourselves to be [a] dumping ground of trash."

On the trash from Canada, Mr. Panelo said it will be transported by the Philippine government "soon" despite the Canadian government's announcement that it has hired a private firm for the shipment.

"*Sabi nila* (They said) it will take about end of June *pa. Hindi papayag si Presidente roon* (The President will not allow that). And I understand from [Finance] Secretary [Carlos G.] Dominguez [III] that *malapit nang ipadala* (the trash will be shipped back soon)," Mr. Panelo said. — **Arjay L. Balinbin**





# Trash from Australia not toxic, says BOC

**CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY**—Nine container vans that arrived in Misamis Oriental province from Australia early this month did not contain toxic garbage but processed materials that will be used as fuel for a cement company's manufacturing plants, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) said on Thursday.

The contents of the nine container vans were declared by the importer as "processed engineered fuel" (PEF), said lawyer Roswald Joseph Pague,

BOC deputy customs collector for Northern Mindanao.

The materials arrived on May 3 at the Mindanao Container Terminal (MCT) in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, some 26.9 kilometers from this city.

Pague allayed fears that the materials might be hazardous and were purely garbage, like the trash from Canada that arrived in 2013 and 2014 in Luzon and those from South Korea that was shipped to Misamis Oriental last year.

He said that the imported PEF contained items from municipal waste, such as plastic, rubber, wood and paper, which would not pose any hazard to the public.

"The evil that we're trying to avoid—[that] it might cause seepage to the water tables or whatever contamination—is totally absent considering that it will be directly fed to the furnace," Pague said.

He was referring to cement manufacturer Holcim Philippines Inc., a member of the Lafarge

Holcim Group, the company that imported the materials.

The PEF will be used by Holcim's cement plants in Davao and Lugait, Misamis Oriental.

Pague said the regional office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) had cleared Holcim to import PEF for cement manufacturing.

The issue about the Australian waste reaching the Philippines was first

raised by MCT collector John Simon in a television interview on May 22. Simon accused the broker of the shipment, the same one who handled the importation of waste from South Korea last year, of infraction and should be held answerable for the entry of the materials.

But Alan Cuyno, technical manager of Holcim Philippines Inc., said in the same interview that what the firm had imported was "not garbage" but "low-grade fuel." —  
*Inquirer*





## Gobyerno, nainsulto sa basura ng Australia

Nainsulto ang gobyerno sa iniulat na pagtatapon ng basura mula sa Australia at hihilingin ang kinaaukulang importer na ibalik ito sa bansang pinagmulan.

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo na hindi papayagan ng gobyerno na maging tapunan ng basura ng ibang nasyon ang bansa.

"It will be offensive to this government to be recipient of trash. We are offended by that. We will not allow it. We will send them back," sinabi ni Panelo sa press briefing sa Palasyo sa gitna ng mga ulat ng Australian trash na ipinadala sa bansa.

"We will allow ourselves to be a dumping ground of trash," giit niya.

Ayon sa mga ulat, ilang containers ng

basura mula sa Australia ang ipinadala sa bansa kamakailan. Ang mga ito ay naglalaman diumano ng shredded municipal waste at naka-hold ngayon sa Mindanao Container Terminal sa Misamis Oriental.

Isang kumpanya ng semento ang iniulat na idineklara ang shipment na naglalaman ng processed engineered fuel na gagamitin sa mga operasyon.

Sinabi ni Panelo na hihilingin nila sa pribadong kumpanya na ibiyahin pabalik sa Australia ang basura. Kapag nag-misdeclared ang kumpanya ng shipment para makaiwas sa customs inspection, sinabi niya na mahaharap ang mga ito sa parusa.

"They should be prosecuted," aniya.

**Genalyn D. Kabiling**





## Australia ginawang trash can ang Pilipinas

Hindi pa man natatapos ang problema tungkol sa mga basura na galing sa Canada, may panibagong basura na naman ang nakarating sa Pilipinas na nagmula sa Australia.

Sinabi sa report na nakahimpil ngayon sa Mindanao Container Terminal sa Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental ang pitong container na naglalaman umano ng mga hindi ordinaryong basura na galing Australia.

"Ito ang nakapasok sa ating basura galing Australia. Kayo ang humusga kung ito ba ay makabubuti o hindi sa ating bayan, straight from Australia," ayon kay John Simon, collector, Port of Tagoloan, Bureau of Customs (BOC).

Napag-alaman na ang broker ng naturang shipment ay siya ring broker ng mahigit

1,000 toneladang basura mula naman sa South Korea na dumating din sa Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental noong Hulyo at Oktubre 2018.

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo na nakakainsulto ang ginagawa ng ibang bansa dahil ginagawang tapunan ng basura ang Pilipinas.

Hindi aniya papayagan ng gobyerno na masalaula ang bansa tulad ng ginawa ng Canada kaya't ipapabalik din ang mga basura ng Australia.

Nagtataka si Panelo kung paano nakapasok sa Pilipinas ang mga basura ng ibang bansa dahil mahigpit na ipinagbabawal ito ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

"That will be our stance. It will be offensive to this government to be a recipient of trash or 'basura'. We are of-

fended by that. We will not allow it. We'll send them back," ani Panelo.

May duda ang kalihim na hindi idineklara ang totoong laman ng mga container van kaya nakalusot ang mga basura ng Australia.

Ipinatataka ni panelo kung bakit nakapasok na naman sa Pilipinas ang mga ganitong uri ng kontrabando gayong ipinagbawal na ito ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Hinala ni Panelo, posibleng hindi idineklara ang totoong laman ng mga container van na pinaglalagyan ng mga basura kaya dapat na maparusahan ang mga nag-import nito.

"As soon as we discover that, then we will have the same procedure. We'll have the same stand. They should be prosecuted," dagdag pa ni Panelo. **(Aileen Taliping)**





STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE



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EDITORIAL

CARTOON

24 MAY 2019

# BASURA NG AUSTRALIA IBALIK

## Utos ni Duterte

INIUTOS kahapon ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa mga kinau-ukulang ahensiya ng gobyerno na ibalik sa Australia ang pitong container van ng basura na dumating sa bansa.

**SUNDAN SA PAHINA 15**

## Utos ni Duterte

# BASURA NG AUSTRALIA IBALIK

*Mula sa pahina 16*

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo na malinaw ang paninindigan ng Pangulo na hindi basurahan ang Filipinas.

Nakaiinsulto umano ang ginawa ng Australia at pambabastos sa ating soberanya. Kamakailan lang ay nagalit ang Pangulo at iniutos ang pagpapabalik sa Canada ng mga basurang dinala sa Filipinas noong pang 2013.

Batay sa ulat nitong Miyerkoles, nasa Mindanao Container Terminal sa Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental ang pitong container na naglalaman ng mga basura ng Australia.

Nagtataka si Panelo kung bakit nakapapasok

sa bansa ang mga basura gayong mahigpit ang pagbabawal dito ng gobyerno.

Posible umanong misdeclared cargo ang mga basura kaya nakapasok sa bansa.

Tiniyak nitong managot sa batas ang sinumang nasa likod ng pagpasok ng panibagong mga basura.

Ang naturang shipment ay siya ring broker ng mahigit 1,000 toneladang basura mula naman sa South Korea na dumating din sa Tagoloan,

Misamis Oriental noong mga buwan ng Hulyo at Oktubre ng 2018.

Sa pagsusuri ay natuklasan na ang laman ng mga container ay "shredded municipal waste" o pinagpipirasong basura na sinasabing nakadeklara sa Customs bilang "processed engineered fuel" o PEF, at municipal waste na ipinasok ng cement company na Holcim Philippines Incorporated.

Ang PEF ay alternative fuel sa paggawang semento na mula sa

pinrosesong basura. Matagal na umanong gumagamit ng PEF ang Holcim kapalit ng coal fuel.

Sinabi naman ng Holcim na ang basura ay hindi maituturing na tala-gang basura dahil ito ay "low-grade fuel o processed engineered fuel."

Isasailalim sa scientific test ang naka-hold na shipment para malaman kung ito ba ay PEF o ordinaryong municipal waste lamang.

Ang magiging resulta ng pagsusuri ang magiging basehan ng Bureau of Customs upang matukoy kung mayroong dapat managot sa pagpapapasok ng mga basura galing Australia.





## Nestlé teams up with Valenzuela City to address plastic waste

1/2

By: Anton delos Reyes

THE worsening state of climate change in recent years has highlighted the need for people to be fully aware of how our lifestyles impact the environment. The world is approaching an environmental catastrophe. Air pollution is choking cities while solid wastes are clogging waterways and harming marine life.

There are initiatives both in the private sector and the government to address pollution, from cleanup drives to banning plastic bags. But sustainable solutions with a multi-faceted approach have yet to be fully implemented.

Nestlé Philippines has partnered with Valenzuela City, the Department of Education, and Green Antz Builders, Inc. to implement a citywide plastics recovery and repurposing program targeting specifically plastic laminates such as sachets and used beverage cartons (UBCs) — plastics that are rarely recycled and left unsegregated.

The partnership is one of Nestlé's initiatives to minimize ecological impact with a goal of plastic neutrality -- recovering plastics equal to what it produces. Countries and governments are finding ways to bring in infrastructure needed to recycle or process their current waste. Meanwhile, industries are exploring alternative delivery systems, other types of packaging that can be used.

Notwithstanding these developments, there is a need to accelerate action to address the waste crisis. Among other things, for Nestlé that means diverting wastes, especially plastics that would otherwise go to landfills and possibly leak into the oceans and waterways.

Barely a month ago, Nestlé Philippines representatives first met with Valenzuela City Mayor Rexlon Gatchalian to share the company's vision that none of its waste ends up in landfills or as litter, recognizing the importance of ensuring that post-consumer plastic waste is recovered and ultimately kept from entering the environment.

Nestlé Philippines had approached Valenzuela City because of the progressive stance the city has taken towards solid waste management. The city utilizes over 70 trucks in its door-to-door trash collection which goes to the transfer station to be segregated. Plastics and other recyclables are collected while one model barangay's biodegradable



A street sweeper at work in Valenzuela City.





2/2



**Nestlé launches May BALIK! Sa PLASTIK! with Valenzuela City.** Signing the MOU formalizing May BALIK! Sa PLASTIK! are (left to right) Rommel Benig, president of Green Antz Builders, Inc.; Rexlon Gatchalian, city mayor of Valenzuela; Kais Marzouki, Nestlé Philippines chairman and CEO; and Dr. Benjamin D. Samson, assistant school division superintendent of DepEd Valenzuela.

waste is turned into compost in their materials recovery facility either for distribution to residents or trade for more biodegradable waste.

The company wanted a city partner to run a pilot program with and provide proof of concept that can be replicated in other cities. Thankfully, Valenzuela City welcomed the Nestlé proposal.

Under the program, dubbed *May BALIK! Sa PLASTIK!*, public school students and street sweepers of Valenzuela City will be able to exchange their collected plastic laminates such as sachets for school supplies and Nestlé goods respectively. Laminates and UBCs with straws will be collected. All they have to do is for these to be cleaned and dried and placed in any used container for weighing. The schools and

the barangays will have their own designated booths. Students and barangay street sweepers can go to these booths to receive incentives for every kilo and half-kilo that they collect.

Beyond incentives, what the program seeks is a change in the behavior of consumers as to what they do about wastes in daily life.

Valenzuela Mayor Rexlon Gatchalian welcomes the initiative, noting that Valenzuela is home to many of the plastics manufacturing companies in the Philippines.

"I don't think I should ban plastics in Valenzuela and neither will the city council. You have to remember that a big chunk of the industries in Valenzuela are actually plastic manufacturers. Passing an ordinance that will totally ban plastics in the city would result in the loss of thousands of jobs and loss of tax revenues," he said.

"So my approach has always been not about banning plastics, but promoting the reuse and repurposing of plastics, recycling it for other things. We never really had a solution for the smaller plastics before. Segregation is too time-

consuming for trash personnel to see the value in laminates and other residual plastics. In order to change that mindset, we have to incentivize by exchanging collected laminates for something people can use. We are now also teaching people at an early age that there is value in recycling, reusing, and repurposing. It has to start with a culture change and we are thankful to Nestlé for coming into the picture. We now have a trusted brand that could help get us out of the dilemma of plastic waste management," he added.

A portion of the collected laminates and other residual plastics will be put to use by Green Antz, an innovative social enterprise that uses these materials to manufacture alternative construction materials such as eco-bricks which are much stronger and more economical to use than traditional hollow blocks. Nestlé has also partnered with Republic Cement, which will co-process the bulk of plastic wastes collected under the program.

"We are creating a collaborative platform where everybody

can help in addressing this huge waste problem. The good thing about this program is that it creates an incentive system which will eventually influence people to treat waste as a resource," president and CEO of Green Antz Rommel Benig said.

For Nestlé, plastics are necessary in ensuring the high quality and safety of its products. The company is deeply aware, however, that it has to do its share in caring for the environment. With the launch of the *May BALIK! Sa PLASTIK!* campaign, the company aims to decrease its waste footprint while teaching the younger generation the value of recycling and reusing materials.

"We want to find a way to create or test how we can make a circular economy, a circular movement of people finding value in the collection and reuse of plastics. We believe that working with partners is imperative in successfully shaping a waste-free future," Nestlé Philippines chairman and CEO Kais Marzouki said.



# High hopes for 'Palit Plastic' program

The Philippines generates 2.7 million tons of plastic waste annually and 20 percent — or half a million tons — of that leaks into oceans which make the country the world's third largest ocean polluter despite a waste management act coming into effect 18 years ago.

Despite this tag, steps are being taken or programs being formulated to ensure that the nation and its people will be educated regarding the proper disposal of plastic wastes.

In Nagcarlan, Laguna, its Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) kicked off an awareness and incentive program, dubbed as "Palit Plastic Bottle Sari-sari Store," which aims to regulate plastic usage and encourage proper disposal of waste through recycling.

**The youth council's project has then received cheers and praises online, amassing more than 5,000 Facebook reactions and above 10,000 shares.**

The project is set to give residents school supplies in exchange for 1.5-liter and 1.75-liter plastic bottles. According to the SK council of

Barangay Banilad Facebook page, the green initiative is meant to help provide students in the community with school materials as the opening of classes for the new academic year draws near.

"*Proyektong pang-educasyon at pangkalikasan! Kapalit ng plastic bottle niyo ay mga school supplies para sa nalalapit na pasukan,*" the group announced.

The youth council explained that two plastic bottles can be exchanged for one notebook, one bottle is enough for a sharpener, a pair of plastic bottles is required to get a pencil, and four plastic bottles can be exchanged for a box of eight crayons.

The youth council's project has received cheers and praises online, amassing more than 5,000 Facebook reactions and 10,000 plus shares.

But this is not the first time such a program was formulated, as in February, Barangay Tartaria in Silang, Cavite also came up with a project that would give locals a kilogram of rice in exchange for a kilogram of plastic, which also quickly went viral.



A WORKER sorts out assorted recyclable plastic at a junk shop in Manila. Programs are already being done by local government units to reduce plastic wastes in the country that cause serious damage to the environment both during its production and disposal. AFP





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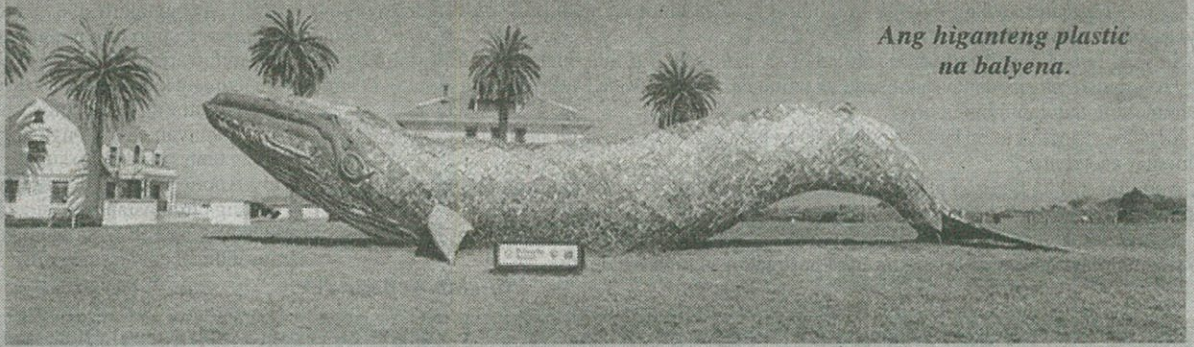
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**MGA PANGYAYARING  
KAGILA-GILALAS**  
Ni Arnel Medina

**PLASTIC NA BALYENA,  
PINAKAMALAKING RECYCLED  
PLASTIC SCULPTURE SA MUNDO**

**I**SANG life-size na istatwa ng isang balyena na matatagpuan sa Monterey Bay Aquarium sa San Francisco, California ang kini-lala bilang pinakamalaking recycled plastic sculpture ng Guinness World Records.

Ang istatwa, na ginawa upang ipakita ang dami ng plastic na naitatambak sa karagatan, ay gawa sa recycled materials na binubuo ng plastic bottles, mga pinaglumaang laruan, at iba pang mga karaniwang kalat. May habang 84 talam-



*Ang higanteng plastic na balyena.*

pakan at 11.6 pulgada ang balyena; 26 talampakan at 5.8 pulgada naman ang lapad nito

at aabot sa 13 talampakan at 9.6 pulgada ang taas nito.

Ang mga artist na sina

Joel Dean Stockdill at Yustina Salnikova ang nag-disenyo sa plastic na balyena at sinigura-

do nilang magiging katulad ng itsura nito ang itsura ng tunay na balyena.





## 'MOST EXPENSIVE RESORT IN THE WORLD' UNDER D.I.L.G PROBE, FACES CLOSURE

By MA. STELLA F. ARNALDO

[@akosistellaBM](#)

Special to the BUSINESSMIRROR

**B**ANWA Private Island, touted as the "most expensive resort in the world," is facing the possibility of closure if found operating without the necessary government permits.

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) will also be looking into the culpability of local officials in Roxas, Palawan who may have allowed Banwa to open its doors to guests, even without accredi-

tation from the Department of Tourism (DOT).

DILG Undersecretary for Operations Epimaco V. Densing III told the BUSINESSMIRROR he had already instructed his staff to check with the Mayor of Roxas, Palawan why Banwa was issued a business permit to operate without the DOT requirement.

"We will have this investigated and give due notice to explain, to the mayor. If found true, and if the resort has a permit without the required DOT accreditation, we will direct the LGU (local gov-

ernment unit) to suspend the permit to operate," he said. The current mayor of Roxas, Palawan is Maria Angela V. Sabando. Her husband, Dennis Sabando, is taking over from her after winning in the recent elections.

The DOT earlier confirmed they have not accredited Banwa, although an official said the resort is now working to complete certain documentary requirements. **(See, "No DOT accreditation for costliest resort," in the BUSINESSMIRROR, May 21, 2019.)**

SEE "EXPENSIVE RESORT," A2

### Expensive resort. ♦ ♦ CONTINUED FROM A1

The resort's "most expensive" tag came after international publications reported it was charging \$100,000 (P5.25 million) a night, with a minimum stay of three nights. This amounts to about to some P15.75 million for a three-night stay, excluding transportation charges. The island can accommodate 48 persons.

The Aquos Foundation, which is headed by veteran Aman Resorts Executive Janet Oquendo, supposedly owns the resort. **(See, "Former Aman exec, partners run 'most expensive resort,'" in the BUSINESSMIRROR, May 23, 2019.)**

Meanwhile, Densing reminded local government officials to keep to the sustainable tourism goals of the Duterte administration.

"With the midterm elections over, may we remind our local

chief executives, whether new or reelected, of their responsibility to implement laws that protect the environment and ensure tourism sustainability, especially to those LGUs who house primary tourist destinations," he stressed.

The DILG, DOT and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) are currently monitoring several islands, known to be tourist havens, for their possible risks to environmental pollution. The resort establishments on these islands are also being checked for their adherence to local ordinances and national laws on the issuance of business permits and accreditations.

These islands include El Nido and Coron in Palawan, Panglao in Bohol, and Siargao in Surigao del Norte. Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat has repeatedly railed





MOST EXPENSIVE...

against the mayors of El Nido and Panglao for being stubborn and for their failure to address environmental and easement violations in their municipalities. **(See, "El Nido, Panglao LGUs face punitive actions if rehab not implemented—DOT, DILG chiefs," in the BUSINESS-MIRROR, February 28, 2019.)**

El Nido Mayor Nieves Cabunaldarosento was unseated in the recent elections by Edna Lim, while Panglao Mayor Leonila Montero retained her post. The latter owns Alona Tropical Beach Resort, which the DENR had earlier tagged as one of the violators of the 20+10 meters easement ordinance. Both mayors were given six months to address their environmental issues, which is supposed to end this month. **(See, "Swimming ban slapped on 2 Panglao, El Nido sites," in the BUSINESSMIRROR, November 30, 2018.)**

To further strengthen national laws such as the Tourism Act of 2009,

the DILG issued in February a memorandum circular reminding LGUs to grant business operating permits only after primary tourism enterprises such as hotels and resorts secure an accreditation from the DOT. In Banwa's case, it opened in April, without the proper DOT permit.

The Duterte administration closed Boracay Island for six months last year to give way to government rehabilitation efforts, and instituted strict procedures for its establishments to be allowed to reopen. These included securing an environmental clearance certificate, necessary licenses such as a fire inspection certificate to get a business operating permit, and DOT accreditation.

On Tuesday, the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force closed down 11 firms allegedly owned by Chinese and Korean nationals for operating without the necessary business permits and local government requirements.





# Solar panels to be placed in 146 public schools in QC

By **CHITO A. CHAVEZ**

Quezon City (QC) Mayor Herbert M. Bautista plans to install solar panels in all of the city's 146 public schools to save on utility bills.

With the utility bills expected to soar due to the additional classrooms built by the city government, Bautista said expense saving measures should be in the offing.

He issued the statement during the Local School Board meeting where it was reported the city government had already constructed an adequate number of classrooms and buildings to cope with the increasing number of enrollees in public schools.

"Because of the number of school buildings and classrooms we've built and we'll be building, tataas din yung electricity bills (our electric bills will rise). That's why it is also a thrust to solarize the 146 schools in QC so that when the electricity bill is reduced, their savings can be used for other education programs," Bautista said.

The plan is in line with the city's initiative to be "greener" by

using alternative and renewable sources of energy such as solar power.

In 2017, the Quezon City government installed solar panels in three buildings in Commonwealth High School.

Last November, the C40 cities Finance Facility – a network of cities committed to taking action against climate change – pledged to help QC install solar panels in 50 public schools.

"Undeniably, that is the future of Quezon City. I hope that happens in the next administration," he added.

The city has initiated various programs for climate change mitigation such as the creation of the Local Climate Change Action Plan that identified sectors that emit more greenhouse gases (GHG) and consume more energy.

The city also started to promote green transport by purchasing electronic tricycles and electronic jeepneys and is set to build its own waste-to-energy plant as part of its green waste management program.





## EDC seeks perks on geothermal projects

GEOTHERMAL leader Energy Development Corp. urged the government to grant incentives to the development of geothermal energy to provide not only clean and reliable power but also jobs and livelihood to local communities.

"The Philippines has vast geothermal potential. To spur the development of this untapped geothermal potential, we urge the government to incentivize the development of geothermal," EDC president Richard Tantoco said.

Tantoco said geothermal is "the holy grail of renewable energy" being the cleanest, most reliable and readily available.

He said in contrast, coal power generation was identified as the greatest contributor to climate change with almost 61 percent of global carbon emissions coming from energy and industrial processes.

He said a simple pivot to renewable energy sources could mitigate the climate change problem.

"As much as 93 percent of total car-

bon emissions and greenhouse gases in the atmosphere can be addressed if the energy sector moves toward power generation from cleaner sources," he said.

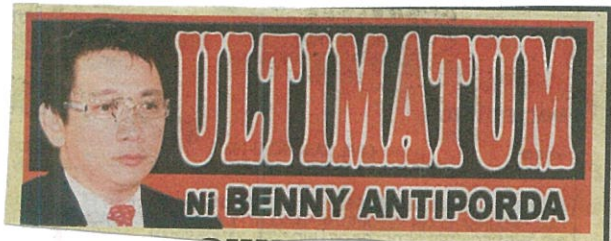
Coal accounted for more than 50 percent of the country's energy mix in 2018, he said.

"For the longest time, coal has been the baseload power of choice, due to the misconception that it is cheap. The truth is coal has externalities in addition to the ex-plant price and these have not been priced into the illusory 'least cost' equation," said Tantoco.

He said that as much as 90 percent of coal utilized in Philippine energy production was imported, placing the country under the mercy of volatile foreign currency movements.

Tantoco said the growth in demand and advancements in technology such as energy storage had led to renewable energy becoming increasingly cheaper. **Alena Mae S. Flores**





## METHANE, NATURAL GAS NG PINAS

mga methane at natural gas sa atin.

### LIGUASAN MARSH

Sa Liguasan Marsh na nasa paligid ng Maguindanao at kalapit na mga lalawigan, matatagpuan ang sinasabing malaking deposito ng methane gas at sa katunayan, hindi na kailangang bumili ng LPG, gaas at gumamit ng kahoy ang mga residente para magluto.

Nasa 583 bilyong bariles o halagang \$1 trilyon ang methane gas dito at halos katumbas ng deposito ng bansang Dubai.

Salin-lahi ng sambayanang Filipino ang makikinabang dito at hindi mauubos sa ating mga panahon kahit gamitin pa nating lahat ito.

### PHILIPPINE RISE

Bukod sa nasa Liguasan Marsh, nariryan din ang mas malaki pang deposito ng methane gas at natural gas sa Philippine Rise na bahaging mga lalawigan ng Isabela at Aurora.

Atin, teritoryo natin ang Philippine Rise na may 40 metro ang pinakamababaw na bahagi at may 2,000 metro ang pinakamalalim.

Ayon sa mga pag-aaral na sinalihan na rin mismo ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources, napakalaki ang deposito natin ng methane at natural gas sa Philippine Rise at kung makalkal natin ito at magamit para sa mga planta ng kuryente, pampaandar ng mga sasakyan, paggawa ng plastic at organic chemical, ang Pilipinas ang isa sa mga pinakamayaman sa mundo.

At maraming henerasyong Pinoy, mula ngayon hanggang sa ating mga apo sa ulo ang makikinabang, bukod pa ang pagkakaroon natin ng malinis na kapaligiran at armas laban sa global warming o pag-iinit ng panahon.

oOo

Anomang reaksiyon o reklamo ay maaaring iparating sa 0922840-3333 o i-email sa bantiporda@yahoo.com.

### KALKALIN ANG NATURAL GAS

Kahapon, tinalakay natin ang sinasabi ng mga siyentista at researcher na sa loob ng 80 taon mula ngayon, tataas na ang lebel ng tubig sa buong mundo sa 1-2 metro.

Ang pangunahing dahilan: pag-iinit ng mundo dahil sa paggamit natin ng mga uling sa paglikha ng kuryente, langis gaya ng bunker oil, aviation oil, diesel, gasolina at gaas sa pagpapaandar ng mga planta ng kuryente at mga makina at mga gas gaya ng natural gas, methane gas at cooking gas o liquified petroleum gas.

Dahil sa pag-iinit ng mundo, pabilis nang pabilis na umangong natutunaw ang mga bundok ng yelo sa Greenland na karugtong ng bansang Denmark sa north at Antarctica na malapit sa Australia sa south.

Bagama't may carbon dioxide o maruming hangin mula sa tatlo, ang mga gas ang sinasabing clean fuel o kaunti lang ang ibinubugang carbon dioxide.

Ibig sabihin, mga Bro, kung walang ibang pagkukunan ng mas malinis pang pampaandar ng mga planta ng kuryente at pampaandar ng mga generator at makina gaya ng nuclear fuel, dapat nang simulan ang pagkalkal ng





## Climate change can be reversed, DiCaprio's 'Ice on Fire' claims

By Hazel Ward

"WE don't need advanced technology, Mother Nature has seaweeds and shellfish which sequester five times more carbon than land-based plants," said Bren Smith, winching a glistening haul of glossy brown kelp out of the sea.

A fisherman turned "steward of the sea" who runs a restorative ocean farm growing seaweed and farming shellfish, Smith is one of dozens of characters who appear in "Ice on Fire," an eye-opening environmental documentary at Cannes film festival.

Produced by Hollywood star Leonardo DiCaprio and directed by Leila Conners, who worked together on 2007 climate documentary "The 11th Hour," the film offers a fascinating look at the innovations and people

working to significantly reduce carbon in the atmosphere.

Take kelp. Not only does it soak up five times more carbon than plants on land, it is one of the fastest growing plants on earth and can be widely used for everything from food to fertilizer and even animal feed.

"If you provide a seaweed diet to cows, you get a 90 percent reduction in methane output," said Smith, in what could play a key role in reducing the huge quantities of methane produced by livestock, a greenhouse gas that is 25 times more potent than CO2.

For Conners, it was learning about the properties of kelp and other innovations that provided the biggest surprise in putting together the film.

"If you plant kelp in 9 percent of global waters, you can reduce global emissions by 50 percent," she told

reporters in Cannes, flagging other innovations like the development of biochar [charcoal produced from plant matter] and a Swiss-made direct air capture machine.

"And that's completely doable."

### There are solutions

Even though warnings about climate catastrophe grow ever louder, the film argues, the world is still spending hundreds of billions of dollars every year to subsidize the very fossil fuels that are causing the planet to overheat.

"Excess carbon creates climatic disruption, it changes the weather patterns and life support systems that society relies on to survive," said the voiceover by DiCaprio, long an environmental activist.

But the film goes beyond the current narrative.

Turn to A5

## Climate change...

From A4

"Climate change can be reversed if we act now," DiCaprio said.

There are two ways of doing that: either stopping greenhouse gases entering the atmosphere, or bringing CO2 levels back down through photosynthesis, by which carbon is extracted from the air and put it back into the earth in a process known as "drawdown."

And "Ice on Fire" focuses on the latter.

"How we get out of this is by very practical action," said Conners.

"We went to people who were practically solving this rather than just talking about it," the American director added.

In California, enormous redwood trees, which absorb more carbon than any trees on Earth, play a key role in a reforestation project that also creates biochar, a form of charcoal that can store CO2 for long periods, enhancing soil quality and helping it retain water, in a major boost for agriculture.

And a small Swiss company has developed a "direct air capture" machine which extracts carbon dioxide from the air which can then be reused as energy.

### We need to grow up

"We have two stories right now, we

have accelerated climate disruption because of the melting of the Arctic and we have the rapid innovation to address this problem," Conners said.

"But are we going to take these technologies to scale in time to avert the worst of what can happen?" she wondered.

"There are solutions, the question is: will we use them?"

As well as the narration, DiCaprio had constant input into the film's production, "giving notes, scene by scene", Conners told AFP, but declined to give further detail.

And change won't cost the earth -- although the price of stalling might.

"We need to grow up and become adults as a human civilization. It's like being diagnosed with a disease, you get the medicine and you say: 'Well, I don't really want to take it, it's too much money.' And you just die."

But the main message to get across was that many people were already helping.

"There are millions of people who are solving this problem," she said.

"That's what's so fascinating about drawdown. It would be great if governments participated but we don't need them necessarily.

"And that, to me, is the first really helpful sign." AFP





## Climate change is reversible, says 'Ice on Fire' documentary

CANNES—"We don't need advanced technology, Mother Nature has seaweeds and shellfish which sequester five times more carbon than land-based plants," said Bren Smith, winching a glistening haul of glossy brown kelp out of the sea.

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"Climate change can be reversed if we act now," DiCaprio said.

There are two ways of doing that: either stopping greenhouse gases entering the atmosphere, or bringing CO2 levels back down through photosynthesis, by which carbon is extracted from the air and put it back into the earth in a process known as "draw-down." **AFP**





STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE



24 MAY 2019

TITLE:

# DOST chief remains highest paid Cabinet secretary

By ELIZABETH MARCELO

Science and Technology Secretary Fortunato dela Peña has retained his spot as the highest paid member of President Duterte's Cabinet, a report by the Commission on Audit (COA)

showed.

Based on the COA's "Report on Salaries and Allowances" or ROSA of government officials for 2018, Dela Peña received P4.138 million, consisting of P2.378 million as basic salary, P24,000 as additional compensation

and honorarium, P888,768 in allowances, P496,463 in bonuses, P336,000 as discretionary funds and for miscellaneous expenses, and an additional P14,432 from "prior years' adjustment."

Dela Peña also topped the ROSA list for 2017 with total pay of P3.292 million.

The 2018 ROSA list includes 8,625 officials from 989 national government agencies (NGAs), government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs), state universities and colleges (SUCs) and water districts.

Turn to Page 10

## DOST From Page 1

Excluded from the report were elected government officials such as the president, senators and congressmen.

Closely behind Dela Peña was Education Secretary Leonor Briones with total pay of P3.95 million from P2.68 million in 2017 when she placed 20th on the list.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III landed in third spot with P3.715 million from P1.757 million in 2017.

Duque replaced former health secretary Paulyn Ubial in November 2017.

In fourth spot was Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III with a total pay of P3.706 million from P2.730 million in 2017 when he was in 17th place.

Meanwhile, despite a slight increase in his pay as energy secretary, Alfonso Cusi slid to fifth place with P3.529 million from second in 2017 when he took home a total of P3.209 million.

The COA report, however, showed that Cusi also received additional compensation from the National Electrification Administration (NEA) amounting to P312,800 as its board chairman and from the National Transmission Corp. (TransCo) amounting to P353,000 as board vice-chairman.

Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade was sixth highest paid Cabinet member for 2018 with P3.527 million, while Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea and Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III got P3,492,189.18 and P3,492,144.97, respectively.

Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol landed in ninth spot with P3.491 million, followed by chief presidential legal counsel and spokesman Salvador Panelo with P3.489 million.

Duterte's other Cabinet members and the salaries and allowances they received in 2018 are:

11. Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez - P3.468 million
12. Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno - P3.442 million
13. Agrarian Reform Secretary John Castricones - P3.434 million
14. Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana - P3.412 million
15. Public Works Secretary Mark Villar - P3.371 million
16. Economic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia - P3.35 million
17. Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu - P3.329 million
18. National Security Council (NSC) director general Her-

mogenes Esperon Jr. - P3.321 million

19. Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) Secretary Martin Andanan - P3.292 million

20. Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chairman Danilo Lim - P3.140 million

21. Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza - P3.081 million

22. Information and Communications Technology Acting Secretary Eliseo Rio Jr. - P2.928 million

23. National Anti-Poverty Commission secretary Liza Maza - P2,890 million (January to November 2018); Noel Felongco - P437,737.10 (December 2018)

24. Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra - P2.866 million (April to December 2018); Vitaliano Aguirre - P995,066.89 (January to March 2018)

25. Political Adviser (former) Francis Tolentino - P2.764 million

26. Former Cabinet Secretary Leoncio Evasco Jr. - P2.723 million

27. Former presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr. - P2.706 million (January to October 2018)

26. Former foreign affairs secretary Alan Peter Cayetano - P2,702,099.33 (January to September 2018); Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. - P812,049.16 (October to December 2018)

27. Interior Secretary Eduardo Año - P2.65 million

28. Former presidential assistant Christopher Go - P2.632 million

29. Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat - P2.115 million (May to December 2018); former secretary Wanda Tulfo-Teo - P1.192 million (January to April, 2018)

30. Higher education secretary (former) Julian Prospero de Vera III - P923,942.89 (October to December 2018)

31. Technical Education Secretary Isidro Lapeña - P501,293.04 (November to December 2018); Guiling Mamondiong - P2,786,972.00 (January to October 2018)

32. (Former) Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor chairman Noel Felongco - P1.792 million (January to October 2018); Alvin Feliciano - P232,217.36 (November to December 2018)

33. Social Welfare Secretary Rolando Joselito Bautista - P368,055.74 (November to December 2018)





## A LAW EACH DAY

[Keeps Trouble Away]

JOSE C. SISON

### Suspicious and intriguing developments

People cannot really help but be intrigued and somewhat exasperated at the recent incident involving former Supreme Court Justice and ex Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales. Based on reports in the papers and on her own account, Justice Morales was detained by the Hong Kong Immigration authorities for more than four hours during her recent trip there together with her family. No reason at all was given by the Immigration people, although some HK airport officials said that it was an "instruction" from somebody they did not identify. According to the former Ombudsman herself, she kept asking the HK Immigration people the reason for her detention and they only answered ambiguously, "for immigration reason."



It is quite obvious however that such move is due to the complaint filed by Morales and former Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario, last March 13, 2019 together with a group of fishermen against China's President Xi Jinping before the International Criminal Court (ICC) for "crimes against humanity" or for the massive and environmental destruction in the West Philippine Sea in connection with China's reclamation activities in said area.

Morales and Del Rosario filed said case against Xi Jinping apparently because of the inaction of the Philippine government itself regarding such environmentally destructive activities. It is quite clear that there is really a cause for such action which the government itself should have pursued. The very least the government could have done here is that when Morales and Del Rosario filed said case, it should have joined them and assisted them. Such inaction once more confirmed Duterte's fear of China and its military might that he first manifested when he refused to enforce the decision of The Hague Court declaring the Scarborough Shoal as part of the Philippine territory despite China's claim that it is in the South China Sea. People are likewise concluding that Duterte is really favoring China at the expense of the country's own interest as shown by the influx of numerous Chinese workers without the necessary permits to work here.

This conclusion or observation of our people about Duterte's favorable treatment of China is again shown by seeming indifference and lack of reaction from Malacanang on the detention of the ex Ombudsman and former Supreme Court Justice Carpio-Morales in HK without any known and valid reason. It must be pointed here that the former government official involved here had previously occupied highly important and quite powerful positions. Aside from being a former justice of the Supreme Court, Morales also became an Ombudsman which has the rank of chairman of a Constitutional Commission. In fact the Ombudsman is considered as the "Protector of the People" against public officials for abuse or impropriety in the performance of their duties or for inefficiency, mismanagement, fraud and corruption in government among others (Please see Article XI Sections 8,9,10, 12 and 13 Constitution). Hence the President himself should have at least expressed his indignation or file a diplomatic protest for such rude treatment of the former Ombudsman. Malacanang's silence and apparent indifference to this shameful and disgusting incident are indeed quite reprehensible and highly deplorable.

The positive aspect of this bullying incident is its opposite effect on Morales. As she said, such incident "keeps us more resolved to pursue the case, to bring the level of the case to crescendo." It is indeed encouraging to note here that this HK incident has brought to limelight and has aroused the interest of the people in the case filed by Morales and del Rosario. A lot of people will now really follow up and find out what will happen to the case.

On another note, while I am writing this column, news have come out of social media that Peter Joemel Advincula, the self confessed "Bikoy" who first dared to expose the involvement of the Duterte family in illegal drugs, has once more come out of hiding and is now in police custody. My immediate reaction to this latest news is the complete turn around of "Bikoy" from his previous revelations. He is now telling us that the opposition is behind the series of videos which went viral and that the same was for the purpose of ousting Duterte before his term ends. He even claimed





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# The Manila Times

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EDITORIAL

CART

24 MAY 2019

DATE

Dear PAO,  
My mother obtained a free patent covering a certain land in 1985. When she was still alive, she allowed her cousin to stay on a portion of the land. After the demise of her cousin, the latter's heirs claimed that they were the real owners of the land and wanted me to reconvey the land to them. They presented a tax declaration issued in the name of their mother in 1970; they also have a certification from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) stating that the records pertaining to the application of my mother cannot be found. According to them, the tax declaration was enough to prove their ownership and that the said certification was also sufficient to prove that my mother's title was fraudulently obtained. Are they correct?

Betilda

Dear Betilda,

The free patent or original certificate of title issued in the name of your mother is conclusive against all persons. This finds

support under Section 31 of the Presidential Decree 1529 or the "Property Registration Decree," which states that:

"The decree of registration shall bind the land and quiet title thereto, subject only to such exceptions or liens as may be provided by law. It shall be conclusive upon and against all persons, including the national government and all branches thereof, whether mentioned by name in the application or notice, the same being included in the general description 'to whom it may concern.'"

The tax declaration issued in 1970 is not an evidence of ownership. This is in consonance with the case of *Palali vs Awisan* (GR 158385, Feb. 12, 2010, *Ponente*: Associate Justice Mariano del Castillo), where the Supreme Court declared that "xxx. Tax declarations, by themselves, are not conclusive evidence of ownership of real property."

Further, the DENR certification stating that no records were found in that office is not enough to



DEAR PAO

PERSIDA ACOSTA

prove the allegation of fraud. In the case of the *Heirs of Teodora Loyola vs Court of Appeals and Alicia Loyola* (GR 188658, Jan. 11, 2017), the Supreme Court through Associate Justice Marvic Mario Victor Leonen stated:

"However, these certifications contain no explicit statement that respondent did not comply with the requirements for patent application. What was certified, rather, was that the requested documents were not to be found in their particular office. Some of these certifications even refer to other offices where the documents may be found. There is no categorical statement that the documents do not exist.

"Such certifications are not enough to prove respondent's al-

leged fraud and irregularity.

"Fraud and irregularity are presupposed in an action for reconveyance of property. The party seeking to recover the property must prove, by clear and convincing evidence, that he or she is entitled to the property, and that the adverse party has committed fraud in obtaining his or her title. Allegations of fraud are not enough. Intentional acts to deceive and deprive another of his right, or in some manner injure him, must be specifically alleged and proved. In the absence of any proof, the complaint for reconveyance cannot be granted.

"Furthermore, we sustain the Court of Appeals' finding that petitioners failed to adequately prove their claim over the property against respondent. The testimonies of their witnesses and the tax declaration issued in 1948 without tax receipts are not sufficient to overcome the presumption of validity of patents and titles as well as the presumption of regularity in the performance of official duties

of the government offices responsible for the issuance."

Applying the above-quoted decision in your situation, the statement of the heirs of your mother's cousin is not correct. In fact, they cannot substantiate their ownership or claim over the land, which you inherited from your mother. The tax declaration they presented is not a conclusive proof of ownership, while the certification issued by the DENR that no records were found in that office is not enough to prove that the free patent issued to your mother was fraudulent.

We hope that we were able to answer your queries. This advice is based solely on the facts you have narrated and our appreciation of the same. Our opinion may vary when other facts are changed or elaborated.

*Editor's note: Dear PAO is a daily column of the Public Attorney's Office. Questions for Chief Acosta may be sent to [dearpao@manila-times.net](mailto:dearpao@manila-times.net)*

## Proof of ownership





# Malaya Business Insight

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STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

24 MAY 2019

DATE

Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

**Mangrove tree planting.** Representatives of M Lhuillier's OPEC Norte region participated in a mangrove tree rehabilitation activity in Sta. Rosa, Ollango Island in Cebu early this year. This mangrove tree rehabilitation was done in collaboration with the Ollango Island Eco-Tour Association (OIETA). Environmental protection and awareness remains to be a key component in M Lhuillier's mission in improving the lives of the Filipino people. Key employees of M Lhuillier's OPEC and officials of the OIETA participated in the activity to aid in coastal protection during strong winds and typhoons.

