

DATE : 01-04-20

DAY : Saturday

**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



## DENR eyes outright semis in UNTV Cup

Games Sunday (Paco Arena, Manila)  
3:30 p.m. - DENR vs PhilHealth  
5 p.m. - Malacanang-PSC vs Agriculture

Denied the last time to nail the second outright semis berth, Department of Environment and Natural Resources tries again tomorrow when it battles PhilHealth in the 8th UNTV Cup at the Paco Arena in Manila.

The crucial match is set at 3:30 p.m. with the DENR Warriors out to leave behind a stinging 74-64 defeat to the streaking PITC Global Traders in their bid to secure a Final Four slot in the annual event reserved for public servants.

DENR's defeat two weeks ago put an end to an impressive six-game winning streak and gave Judiciary, National Housing Authority and PITC slim hopes of advancing automatically to the semis.

On the strength of their 100-96 win over the PhilHealth Plus, the Benneth Palad-mentored Builders finished the second round with a 6-3 mark, slightly ahead of the streaking Judiciary Magis and Malacañang-Philippine Sports Commission Kamao.

Both the Magis and Kamao are sporting 5-3 records in the event offering P4 million to the chosen charity of the champion team with the chosen charity of the runner-up team getting P2 million.

Already in the semis is defending champion Armed Forces of the Philippines with a 7-1 mark.

The Kamao can draw level with the Builders if they beat the also-ran Department of Agriculture Food Masters at 5 p.m.

The third to sixth placers will play another round in the quarters with the top two finishers completing the semis cast while 7th and 8th placers will be eliminated outright in the event organized by UNTV president and CEO Dr. Daniel Razon.



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# UNTV: Warriors out to nail second outright semis berth

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5 p.m. – Malacañang-PSC  
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**JULIUS Casaysayan hopes to lead the Department of Agriculture Food Masters to victory against the Malacañang-PSC Kamao when they clash on Sunday in the UNTV Cup at the Paco Arena.**



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# Manila eyes strict garbage segregation

**By Pat C. Santos**

After resolving the issue of obstruction in crowded areas in Manila, such as Divisoria, C. M. Recto Avenue and Quiapo, Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso now focuses on garbage collection, particularly waste segregation.

The mayor said the implementation of this campaign will initially cover establishments that contribute to the huge amount of garbage being collected on a daily basis.

He reiterated his earlier call for business owners and residents to practice "waste sorting" by segregating their wet and dry trash, as well as those that are recyclable and not.

Domagoso said he will be meeting with the concerned city offices, such as the Department of Public Services and the Barangay Bureau, to discuss a program of information dissemination for huge establishments down to the grassroots level on the importance of waste management.

Garbage classification is the most difficult tasks in a congested city like Manila. Reports said its wet markets produce the highest volume of trash, while households owners fail to be responsible for their garbage by not separating them.



# Moreno to implement waste segregation plans

By **ITCHIE G. CABAYAN**

**PLANS for the strict implementation of the waste segregation in Manila are in the works.**

This was learned from Mayor Isko Moreno, who said that the implementation will initially cover establishments in the city which contribute to the huge garbage being collected in the city on a daily basis.

Moreno also reiterated earlier calls for establishment owners and residents

to practice 'waste sorting' by separating their wet and dry trash and those that are recyclable and not.

According to Moreno, he will be meeting with concerned departments such as the department of public services and the barangay bureau for the ample information dissemination from the huge establishments down to the grass-roots level about the importance of waste segregation.

Moreno said the city government is appealing specially to establishments which produce huge

amount of wastes to comply with the waste segregation scheme.

Having been used to eking out a living and finding food by going through garbage in his younger years, Moreno said it would be a lot easier for scavengers to just pick up the recyclables that have been put together in a single garbage bag, even as it would also be less messy.

'Mas madali 'yung kukunin na lang nila 'yung mga pakinabangan kesa kakalkalin ang basura tapos iiwanan ang pinagkalkalan,' he said.



**Mayor Isko Moreno and Vice Mayor Honey Lacuna discuss plans for Manila for the year 2026.**

*Photo by Jerry S. Tan*



## Food waste cut to spur growth pushed

**THE** chairperson of the House Committee on Economic Affairs has stressed the role of food-waste reduction in spurring economic growth and improving agricultural production.

Citing the recently published 2019 State of Food and Agriculture Report by the Food and Agriculture Organization, AAMBIS-OWA Party-list Rep. Sharon Garin underscored that Congress must create an enabling environment for private actors that would encourage them to invest in the effective implementation of food waste management and reduction.

Garin said public-private partnership investments are vital to reduce food loss and waste as she pushed for the immediate passage of House Bill 3370, which aims to reduce the country's food waste through donations and waste recycling.

The bill calls for the mandatory donation of edible food surplus for charitable purposes and the creation of food banks.

"Upon its enactment, owners of covered establishments such as restaurants, cafes, diners, fast food chains, or hotels; supermarkets with at least 500 square meters of selling space; and culinary schools will be required to segregate their edible and inedible food surplus," Garin said.

"The food surplus shall then undergo inspection of the LGU (local



government unit) based on the standards to be set by the NNC (National Nutrition Council) and FDA (Food and Drug Administration). Only upon the certification of edible food surplus can it be donated to accredited food banks and distributed among food-insecure Filipinos," she added.

The bill also seeks to create a system that would effectively address the problem of food wastage in the country through a proposed education-

information-communication campaign, with a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach.

"We remain optimistic that provisions that can help bolster economic growth can still be added to this bill," the lady partylist lawmaker added.

She said the proposal is in line with numbers 2 and 12 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to eliminate hunger and foster responsible consumption and production, respectively.



## WASTE SEGREGATION ISTRIKTONG IPATUTUPAD SA MAYNILA — ISKO

**ISTRIKTONG** ipatutupad sa Maynila ang waste segregation scheme.

Ito ang inihayag ni Mayor Isko Moreno kung saan sakop sa alintuntunan ang mga establisimiyento sa siyudad na nakapag-aambag sa malaking bulto ng basura na kinukolekta araw-araw.

Una nang nanawagan si Moreno sa mga may-ari ng establisimiyento at mga residente na magsanay na sa paghihiwalay ng mga basura kung saan dapat na ihiwalay ang basa at tuyong basura at iyong ibang recyclable at hindi na basura.

Ayon kay Moreno makikipagpulong siya sa Department of Public Servi-

ces (DPS) at Barangay Bureau para sa sapat na information dissemination para sa mga business establishments hangng sa mga kabahayan para sa waste segregation campaign.

Gayundin, umapela si Moreno sa mga establisimiyento na lumilikha ng maraming basura na sumunod sa waste segregation scheme.

Base sa kanyang karanasan bilang nangangalakal ng basura, sinabi ni Moreno na mas madali sa mga basurero kung ang kolektahin nilang basura ay iyong mapapakinabangan pa kesa kalkalin ang samasamang basura at pagkatapos ay iiwanan na lamang.

(Andi Garcia)



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# It's a go for Baguio redevelopment

Rehab of city's sewage system, century-old Burnham Park are first projects in 2020

**By Vincent Cabreza**  
@vincentcabrezaINQ

BAGUIO CITY—Barely six months in office, Mayor Benjamin Magalong bared on Thursday redevelopment projects for Baguio for 2020 that would include a cable car system linking the city with La Union province and the towns of Tuba and La Trinidad in Benguet province.

The first projects would fix the city's sewage system and overhaul the century-old Burnham Park, Magalong said, adding that these would be launched between January and March using funds from various tourism agencies.

He said big developers had offered to build a new Baguio public market while transport firms had presented their unsolicited engineering plans to develop new bus terminals outside the downtown area.

These projects would be presented on the second week of January to Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu and Interior Secretary Eduardo Año.

### Overcrowding

Once these projects were completed, it would increase Baguio revenues, Magalong assured city officials.

While Baguio is suffering

from urban problems attributed to overcrowding, its impact on neighboring towns is ultimately what most of these projects aim to solve, Magalong earlier told a forum organized by the Department of Tourism (DOT).

He cited as an example the city's outdated sewage system that had been contributing to the pollution of rivers.

### Sense of urgency

"Bued River [which joins the La Union river system via Kennon Road] has a coliform level of 380 billion mpn. (most probable number) per 100 milliliter. Balili River [which discharges into La Trinidad where straw-

berries are grown] has 1.6 trillion mpn/ml," he said.

"We look at these things with a sense of urgency. It has nothing to do with politics ... All our projects to address these environmental issues are strategic. We are looking at 50 years from now. We determined what would happen if we do not act now," he said.

Magalong said the city's P2.2-billion budget for 2020 would not be enough to shoulder the cost of improving or modernizing its public infrastructure.

The DOT, he said, promised to spend P500 million for repairing and upgrading the sewage system.

Tourism Undersecretary Arturo Boncato Jr., who spoke at the forum, said the agency had been funneling resources into repairing the sewage systems of top tourist destinations following the rehabilitation of Boracay Island in Aklan province.

### Burnham, Mines View parks

The Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (Tieza) had authorized Magalong to start bidding out the rehabilitation project for Burnham Park, a popular tourist destination, for which it allocated P400 million.

Magalong also said the DOT and the Tieza had expressed interest in bankrolling a P317-million

rehabilitation of Mines View Park, another popular destination.

He said private developers had also proposed the construction of an integrated transport terminal system that would link a northbound transport hub with southbound and westbound vehicle terminals.

The city government is reviewing plans for a cable car system that will be financed by the Department of Transportation, which is piloting a low carbon urban transport system in Baguio.

The pilot projects include monorails, air quality programs, sophisticated pedestrian walkways and modern jeepneys suited for Baguio terrain. INQ



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DISADVANTAGEOUS TO GOV'T

# 'ONEROUS' PROVISIONS OF KALIWA DAM PROJECT BARED

By DJ Yap  
@deejayapINQ

After Malacañang' vowed to review the terms of the China-funded Kaliwa Dam project in Quezon province, Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate on Friday listed down all the provisions he considered to be "onerous and disadvantageous" to the Philippine government.

The questionable terms, according to the Makabayan lawmaker, "are very apparent on its face that cannot simply be ignored by Malacañang."

"Presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo should have done some research on these onerous provisions of the China-funded Kaliwa Dam project, especially after we exposed it early last year which also then prompted the Department of

Finance (DOF) to make public the terms of the deal," he said.

Zarate was reacting to Panelo's remark that those who drafted the agreement "know exactly whether or not these provisions will be disadvantageous to the government."

The House deputy minority leader proceeded to enumerate the "onerous and disadvantageous provisions" as follows:

- Under Article 5.7, the Philippines or any of its assets, unless prohibited by the laws and public policies, are not entitled to any right of immunity on the grounds of sovereign or any legal process.

- Under Article 8.1, the Philippines irrevocably waives any immunity on grounds of sovereignty.

- Under Article 8.4, the agreement shall be governed

by and construed in accordance with the laws of China.

- Under Article 8.5, the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre will conduct the arbitration in case of dispute.

- Under Article 8.9, the terms, conditions and the standard of fees of loan agreement will be confidential.

The loan agreement was only released to the public later on by the DOF due to the public outcry for transparency and accountability, Zarate noted in a statement.

On May 9, 2019, Bayan Muna along with other progressive party list groups filed a petition before the Supreme Court questioning the constitutionality of the loan agreement between China and the Philippines for the construction of Kaliwa Dam.

"We, along with other organizations, coalition and advocates, like the Stop Kaliwa Dam Coalition, questioned the above onerous provisions of the loan agreement. It would be well if Secretary Panelo can also read the petition," he added.

Zarate argued that solving the water crisis in Metro Manila could be done without building a large dam near a fault line "that will dislocate thousands of indigenous peoples, destroy the environment and further bury the country in debt."

"For starters, Manila Water and Maynilad should drastically reduce their water systems loss because billions of gallons of water are wasted daily from leakages in the existing distribution infrastructure of Maynilad and Manila Water," he said. INQ



## Increased irrigation allocation from Angat Dam sought

MALOLOS - Bulacan farmers have appealed for increased allocation for irrigation as the water level in Angat Dam continues to rise.

Data from the Bulacan provincial disaster risk reduction and management office (PDRRMO) showed that the dam's water elevation was recorded at 203.71 meters as of 8 a.m. yesterday, an increase of around one meter compared to Thursday.

The PDRRMO said monsoon rains until Monday are expected to fill Angat Dam.

Bulacan Gov. Daniel Fernando set a dialogue of farmer leaders and officials of the National Irrigation Administration yesterday in response to the request of farmers to intercede on their behalf with the National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

Fernando said it is likely that the NWRB would in-

crease its allocation for irrigation from 10 cubic meters per second to 20 cms. The normal allocation is 40 cms.

"We are reviewing current rainfall data with the continuing increase in the water level in Angat Dam. This should give us some basis on how much increase can be considered on top of the current allocation," NWRB executive director Sevillo David Jr. told **The STAR**.

Only farms in Baliwag, parts of Calumpit, Pulilan, San Ildefonso and San Rafael in Bulacan as well as San Simon, Apalit, Candaba and San Luis in Pampanga are currently receiving irrigation allocation from Angat Dam.

The dam supplies the bulk of water to irrigate 12,000 hectares of rice fields in Bulacan and 9,000 hectares in Pampanga.

- Ramon Efren Lazaro



# Income tax recovery from tariffs in water deal allowable - ex-DOF exec

By IRIS GONZALES

The recoverability of corporate income taxes from tariffs in the country's water concession agreements (CA) is allowed and is not onerous.

This is the position of former finance undersecretary Romeo Bernardo who explained why the CAs should not be dismissed as grossly disadvantageous to the government.

Bernardo served as finance undersecretary during the terms of former presidents Cory Aquino and Fidel Ramos.

A director in Ayala-led BPI and Globe Telecom, Bernardo said the framers of the CA allowed investors to "explicitly recover business taxes, as well as capital maintenance and investment expenditures efficiently and prudently incurred, and payments corresponding to debt service on the MWSS loans and concessionaire loans as part of its expenditures."

The CA also allowed the companies to earn a rate of return after tax that is com-

parable to those of operators of long-term infrastructure concession arrangements in other countries having a credit standing similar to that of the Philippines.

"This rate of return, called "appropriate discount rate" or ADR under the concession agreement, is a weighted average of the cost of borrowing and the return to equity, is reviewed and reset every five years and arrived at using internationally accepted methodologies," Bernardo said.

Bernardo argued that the 1997 water privatization contract with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and the water concessionaires as well as its extension has been thoroughly reviewed by government and has been deemed legal.

"The extension of the original contract is allowed under the CA and by law. This has been the subject of analysis and review in government for over a year in 2008 to 2009: at MWSS all the way to the board; by the Department of Finance under former

secretary Margarito Teves, assisted by then undersecretary Jeremiah Paul and director Soledad Cruz; by the Department of Justice under former secretary Raul Gonzales and government corporate counsel Al Agra.

It was also presented to the full Cabinet and went through public consultations before final approval by then president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo," Bernardo said in a paper sent to **The STAR** last month.

He said the rationale for the extension was compelling because of new waste water requirements set by the Clean Water Act and later by Supreme Court mandamus which required 100 percent or full sewerage coverage for the concessions.

Water concessionaires needed to make more investments because of the new requirements.

Furthermore, tariff rate impacts had to be mitigated at the time.

"By extending the contract through 2037, there is a longer period of recovery of these

long life investments, and thus lower annual tariff adjustments," he said.

Bernardo said if the government disregards its obligations under the CA, banks would need to protect deposits by suspending disbursements of loans to the water concessionaires.

"This will inevitably disrupt construction of projects meant to address looming water shortage. Down the road, it will compound the burden on the tax paying public of future snowballing arbitration awards. And much worse, it will devalue the worth of government's contractual commitments," he said.

President Duterte has been criticizing water concessionaires Manila Water and Pangilinan-led Maynilad Water Services Inc. for the onerous provisions in their contracts with the government.

In a speech before quake victims in Digos City, Duterte renewed his attack on the two utility firms and their owners, saying their contracts violated Philippine anti-corruption laws.



## Farmers seek water irrigation supply

**BULACAN:** Some 200 farmers from the south zone service area in this province appealed to the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) to allocate irrigation water from Angat Dam.

The farmers on Friday met with Gov. Daniel Fernando and officials of National Irrigation Administration (NIA) led by Central Luzon regional director Josephine Salazar.

The governor confirmed that the water elevation of Angat Dam had been improving.

With this development, Fernando said he immediately appealed to Seville David Jr., NWRB executive director, to grant the request of the farmers.

Fernando said there was a chance the NWRB would increase the irrigation water allocation to Bulacan farmlands at 20 cubic meters per second (m3) and possibly to its normal 30 m3 provided the water elevation continues to improve.

For this January, the NWRB

allocated only 10 m3 instead of the normal 30 m3 for irrigation purposes and 40 m3 to Metro Manila's domestic water needs from its normal 46 m3.

The 10 m3-irrigation allocation was only provided to the NIA's north zone service areas covering the towns of Baliwag, parts of Calumpit, Pulilan, San Ildefonso and San Rafael in Bulacan; and San Simon, Apalit, Candaba and San Luis in Pampanga.

**FREDERICK SILVERIO**



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## FOUR-YEAR LEGAL STANDOFF ON ROAD-WIDENING PROJECT ENDS

# COURT LIFTS ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ORDER ON 26 UNCUT TREES IN NAGA CITY

A judge in Bicol has lifted the temporary environmental protection order (Tepo) on the remaining 26 uncut trees that are within a road-widening project in Naga City, as the parties agree to an amended compromise to end their four-year legal standoff.

In a consent decree issued on Dec. 16, Judge Soliman Santos of the Regional Trial Court Branch 62 approved and adopted for his final decision the compromise agreement reached by plaintiff Allan Reiz Macaraig and the Department

of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). Santos earlier issued the Tepo against the DPWH to prevent the implementation of a special tree cutting permit (STCP) along the San Felipe-Panicuason Road.

### Adopted

The decree adopted the deal's provision that the DPWH "need not cut for now" 15 trees that are within the 20-meter road right of way, but are outside the 15-meter width of the road project.

Among the tree species

saved were agojo, santol, talisay, pine, mahogany, avocado, kakawate and mango.

The remaining 11 trees, including mango, acacia and other species, are now deemed okay for cutting to expedite the project.

### New permit needed

Before the DPWH could cut down the trees, however, it must renew the STCP earlier enjoined by the court and which has now expired. The new STCP must no longer include the 15 trees that they have agreed not

to cut down anymore.

Santos said the settlement "showed that there is a viable, alternative way to resolve environmental disputes with due respect and regard for, and with fair balancing of, the interests of the concerned."

In his decree, Santos also noted that the government might have avoided protracted litigation by anticipating significant environmental impacts, "rather than merely being reactive to these conflicts."

"It should be clear that for the plaintiff and the other en-

vironmental advocates, the conceding of those five trees for cutting, is a sacrifice ... that should not be in vain, [and] can only be justified or compensated for by the concerned government agencies giving due and serious consideration to the proposed streetscape master plan," Santos wrote.

### Environment friendly

Macaraig said he agreed to compromise after they came up with the plan with the help of a technical group of architects, environmental planners,

and an arborist.

He said the new plan could pave the way for a "pedestrian and environment-friendly" four-lane road that would include a drainage that would double as a bike lane and tree-strip and sidewalk on both sides.

He also said the compromise was the way to move forward with their advocacy of having green-oriented and pedestrian-friendly road designs.

—REPORTS FROM KRIXIA SUBINGSUBING, REY ANTHONY OSTRIA AND MAR S. ARGUELLES INQ



# Didipio mine still without new license

BY LEANDER C. DOMINGO

**WHILE** it has been cited for its best practices in health and safety, the operation of the Didipio Underground Mine in Kasibu town in Nueva Vizcaya province remains grounded.

OceanaGold's Didipio Gold and Copper Project's 25-year financial and technical assistance agreement (FTAA), which was the company's mining license with the Philippine government, has not yet been renewed since its expiration on June 20, 2019.

David Way, OceanaGold (Philippines) Inc. (OGPI) general manager, said their underground mine in Didipio village utilizes a world-class ventilation system compliant to Australian standards, ensuring suitable quality and quantity of air to maintain a safe and healthy environment

for workers.

"Our underground mine is equipped with safety features and installations which can be used by employees in cases of emergencies including modular polyethylene ladder tubes as escape, impact-resistant refuge chambers supplied with water, oxygen, radio, portable toilet, and food bars," Way said.

He said ground support measures are also installed to blasted sections with shotcrete, wire mesh, and rock bolts. Also, stopes extracted are backfilled with paste to ensure ground stability.

"We implemented the first underground tracking system, enabling real-time monitoring of personnel and equipment engaged in underground activities. We also use remotely controlled loaders underground to avoid exposing personnel to unacceptable levels of risk," Way said.

However, the long-delayed renewal processes of the mine's FTAA remains unresolved.

On June 25, the Nueva Vizcaya provincial government led by Gov. Carlos Padilla did not recognize the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Mine and Geosciences Bureau's authorization as their permit to operate, is pending approval of their FTAA with the Office of the President.

On July 1, Didipio village officials with a few individuals with anti-mining sentiments also started a blockade, closing access to and from the mine site in response to Padilla's order. After the Regional

Trial Court in the province denied the writ of preliminary injunction prayed by OGPI on July 25, to enjoin the enforcement of the order pending the determination of the case with the local court, the company went to the Court of Appeals on July 29. There have been no new developments in the legal front.

OGPI officials said a total of 1,546 employees were affected by the situation.

Way said the blockade also affects the community from the suspension of over P300-million worth of social development management and corporate social responsibility projects covering 11 beneficiary villages with more than 15,000 residents.

Also, major community development projects are also on hold such as the Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino road network, Didipio water system, Kasibu sanitary landfill, and Didipio gymnasium.



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*Pinagbabaklas kahapon ng mga tauhan ng City Environment and Natural Resources Office ng Parañaque ang mga naglipanang tarpaulin ng mga city councilors na kaalyado pa mismo ni Mayor Edwin Olivarez. Kahit ang tarpaulin ng kapatid ng mayor na si Rep. Eric Olivarez ay hindi nakatiglas matapos alisin ng mga kawani ng CENRO.*





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**CASTELO AIDS QC FIRE VICTIMS.** A woman in Barangay Vasra, Quezon City is comforted by Acting Mayor Bobby Castelo after her house was razed by fire during the New Year's Day celebration. A top performing councilor in district 6, Castelo was appointed by Mayor Joy Belmonte to perform her duties while she's away on a foreign mission. Castelo called on personnel of the QC SSDD and QC DRRMO to ensure the safety of the victims while they are sheltered at the DENR evacuation center which the acting mayor also visited to personally look into their plight.