

DATE : 09-29-19

DAY : Sunday

**DENR**

**IN THE NEWS**

**Strategic Communication and Initiative Service**

# DENR seeks 2020 budget augmentation

The proposed budget increase would bankroll some of the agency's new initiatives such as the creation of Enforcement Bureau

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is requesting an additional budget of P3.036 billion to fund the programs it intends to implement next year.

"We are hopeful the budget augmentation will be included in the final version of the 2020 General Appropriations Bill (GAB) to be passed by Congress – the House of Representatives and the Senate – and signed into law by

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte," DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said.

The proposed budget increase would bankroll some of the agency's new initiatives such as the creation of Enforcement Bureau, the full implementation of the Republic Act 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (E-NIPAS) Act of 2018; and land titling.

The environment chief made the appeal days after Bienvenido Veguilla Jr., a DENR forest ranger, was killed by suspected illegal loggers in El Nido, Palawan.

Cimatu stressed that with its own Enforcement Bureau, the DENR could effectively enforce environmental laws and protect its workers from violent encounters with illegal loggers.

DENR – through Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and International Affairs Jonas Leones – submitted the proposed augmentation budget of the agency last 16 September 2019 to the House.

In a letter addressed to House

Deputy Speaker Luis Raymund Villafuerte, Leones said DENR would need P1.2 billion for the establishment and initial operation of the proposed Enforcement Bureau in 2020.

Leones said the agency would also need P1.8 billion for the full implementation of E-NIPAS law, and P36 million to fast track the issuance of titles for alienable and disposable public lands.

According to Leones, the creation of an Enforcement Bureau within the DENR is in line with the Duterte administration's 10-point socioeconomic agenda, particularly peace and order. It would enable the department to "fully implement and enforce laws on environment and natural resources (ENR) with full authority to police illegal loggers and ENR violators."

The DENR official also cited the need for "full logistic support" for the implementation of the E-NIPAS law and the acceleration of public land distribution.

"Still, under the 10-point agenda

of the president, to be specific is to 'ensure the security of land tenure' to encourage investments and address bottlenecks in land management and titling," Leones pointed out.

**Maria Romero**



DENR would need a bigger budget to manage a broader range of protected areas safeguarded under the law.



## Cimatu: No one is above the law

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

**"I HAVE made it clear from Day 1 that no one is above the law!"**

This was stressed by Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu following the issuance of an interim Cease and Desist Order (CDO) against the Boracay Tubi Systems, Inc. (BTSI) for discharging wastewater in the waters of Boracay Island.

Atty. Ramar Niel Pasqua, DENR-Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) Western Visayas regional director, issued the CDO after the wastewater discharged by the BTSI was tested positive for fecal coliform.

The CDO shall be effective for seven days unless confirmed by the Pollution Adjudication Board in such case it shall become a regular

CDO.

Cimatu said all environmental laws have to be strictly enforced because their primary purpose is to protect our environment and natural resources.

"We will appropriately deal with the people responsible for this violation," stressed Cimatu who is chair of the Boracay Inter-agency Task Force created by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte through Executive Order 53 to reverse the degradation of Boracay Island.

In an inspection conducted by personnel of EMB, an outfall pipe was seen to be discharging a large volume of yellowish water.

The wastewater discharge was traced from BTSI's one (1) kilometer outfall pipe from Lagutan area in Bgy. Manoc-Manoc in the island to Sibuyan Sea. Sinkers were placed on the outfall pipe to secure it and prevent it from floating.

It was found to be almost 13 kilometers below the water surface.

Laboratory Analysis results revealed that fecal coliform and phosphate from the water sample and residue taken have exceeded the General Effluent Standards maximum allowable limit for Class SC marine water body per DENR Administrative Order No. 2016-08 or the Water Quality Guidelines and Effluent Standards of 2016.

The sample collected had a fecal coliform of 3,500 most probable number per 100 ml (MPN/100ml) against an effluent standard for Class SC water of 400 MPN/100ml. On the other hand, Phosphate was at 2.250 mg P/L against the standard of one (1) mg P/L level.

Earlier, a video of a pawikan or sea turtle sticking its head into the pipe outlet was posted in social media by a Korean diving instructor.



**Cimatu**

On Aug. 14, 2019, Cimatu ordered the cordoning of the beachfront area in Station 1 after two female foreign nationals-- one allowing child to defecate in Boracay's waters and the other burying a used diaper in the white sand-- also circulated on social media.

President Rodrigo Duterte ordered the closure of Boracay Island in April 2018 after he described its water as a cesspool. The famous island reopened in October 2018 after a six-month rehabilitation.



## Cimatu seeks bigger budget to fund three vital programs

By Joel dela Torre

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Roy Cimatu has expressed hope that the Department will receive the P3.036 billion additional funding it needed to bankroll three crucial programs the agency will start to implement next year.

The proposed funding increase includes P1.2 billion for the creation of an Enforcement Bureau, and the full implementation of Republic Act 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (E-NIPAS) Act of 2018 and the P36 million for land titling.

"We are hopeful the budget augmentation will be included in the final version of the 2020 General Appropriations Bill (GAB) to be passed by Congress—the House of Representatives and the Senate—and signed into law by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte," Cimatu said.

Both the Majority and Minority blocs of the House threw their support behind Cimatu's plans to create an enforcement bureau during the budget deliberation last September 6.

Cimatu explained that with its own Enforcement Bureau, the DENR could

effectively enforce environmental laws and protect its workers who have been the vicious targets of illegal loggers and other environmental criminals.

He made the appeal a few days after Bienvenido Veguilla Jr., a DENR forest ranger, was brutally killed by suspected illegal loggers in El Nido, Palawan.

The deliberation likewise tackled the need for the additional funds for the full implementation of and the acceleration of land titling and distribution of public lands.

Last Sept. 20, the House approved on third and final reading the P4.1-trillion national budget for 2020, including the P25.5 billion allocation for the DENR which is 16 percent higher than the P21.96 billion it got for this year.

The Senate had already started its own review of the government's spending plan for next year and is expected to come up with its own version of the GAB.

"We are hoping that the DENR would get the same extent of support from the senators just like their counterparts in the House when they meet at the bicameral conference committee," Cimatu said.



# Senators eye removing housing component from Pasig River body

By VANNE ELAINE P. TERRAZOLA

**T**he Senate is considering to cut by more than half the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission's (PRRC) ₱261.2-million 2020 budget so it could focus on cleaning up the Pasig River.

The Senate finance subcommittee B on Friday discussed the PRRC's proposed budget for next year wherein Senator Cynthia Villar, finance committee vice chair, decided to remove the ₱9.2 million allocated to the commission for housing and resettlement.

Before this, Sen. Francis Tolentino

questioned the competence of the PRRC over housing matters, especially that the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) has already been created.

Tolentino, who chairs the Senate committee on housing, urban development and resettlement, earlier called for the consolidation of housing funds lodged in various agencies to the DHSUD's 2020 budget.

"I believe, madam chair, that the Pasig [River] Rehabilitation Commission has no core competency in so far as housing is concerned. We have a newly-created department of housing under General [Eduardo] del

Rosario, and it is but appropriate to lodge all housing budget in one department for purposes of efficiency," Tolentino told Villar.

"I propose you relieve them of the responsibility of having a housing component kung di naman nila kaya at di nila dapat gawin (if they cannot perform and should not be doing it)," he appealed, saying the PRRC's mandate is to clean the Pasig River.

PRRC officials said the agency does not distribute housing units, but is only conducting "social preparations" before the transfer of informal settler families living along the Pasig River.

But Villar, agreeing with Tolentino, found the "social preparations" unnecessary.

"Ang gusto lang ng mga squatter 'yong lilipatan doon sa NHA (National Housing Authority). Iyon lang ang gusto nila. And then bibigyan mo ng pera to cover yong kanilang mawawalan sila ng trabaho... Wala na yan social preparation nako naman, (Squatters' are only after the houses where they will be transferred by the NHA. That's what they only want. And then we will give them money to cover their expenses since they would be losing jobs when they move)," Villar, who will sponsor the PRRC's 2020 budget, said.

Aside from the ₱9.2 million housing funds, Villar also moved for the deletion of the ₱136.3-million allocation for the "design/riverbanks development and flood control program" of the PRRC.

The item, she said, falls under the mandate of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

This way, Villar said the PRRC will focus on its public information, advocacy and tourism program, and more importantly, rehabilitating the Pasig River.

Villar has requested for a meeting with PRRC officials to specify its programs for rehabilitating the Pasig River.

Should the two items be deleted in their budget, the PRRC will be left with some P116 million in the 2020 budget.

Tolentino, for his part, said the DPWH, Department of Interior and Local Government, Department of Transportation, among other agencies, have agreed to realign their 2020 housing funds to the DHSUD.



# 554 families now landowners – DENR

BY LEANDER C. DOMINGO

**B**AYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya: At least 523 land titles were distributed, entitling a total of 554 beneficiaries in Cagayan Valley (Region 2) as absolute owners of the land they have been occupying, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Lawyer Antonio Abawag, DENR Region 2 executive director, said the land titles under the

DENR's Handog Titulo Program (HTP) were distributed on separate occasions in the different

provinces, highlighting the Lands Anniversary in September of this year. There were 31 patents awarded earlier this year.

Earlier, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu ordered all DENR regional offices and the Land Management Bureau to conduct a nationwide HTP in September in partnership with local government units (LGUs).

Abawag said 337 free patents were distributed in Nueva Viz-

caya province, 80 land titles in Isabela province, 43 in Quirino province and 55 in Batanes island province.

He said the DENR will continue the partnership with the LGUs in the region to facilitate the processing of land titles.

"We commit to strengthen the DENR-LGU partnership in providing secure property rights for every landowner," Abawag said.

Corie Corpuz, DENR Region 2

information officer, explained the HTP aims to expedite the processing and issuance of public land patents to qualified individuals.

She said the DENR's HTP also seeks to achieve security of tenure for poverty alleviation and economic development, and through the land titles, revenue collection in the form of real property taxes increases providing inclusive economic growth.

Citing Republic Act 10023 or

the "Residential Free Patent Act," Corpuz said any Filipino citizen who has continuously possessed and occupied land, either by himself or through his predecessor-in-interest for at least 10 years, may qualify as a beneficiary.

The law provides for the judicial disposition of untitled public alienable and disposable lands through the more efficient and less costly free patent process, she added.



## **SAKO-SAKONG PANGOLIN, SEAHORSE SINAMSAM NG DENR**

SINUGOD at sinamsam ng mga tauhan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources at Palawan Council for Sustainable Development ang sako-sakong pangolin at pawikan at pinatuyong seahorse sa isang paupahang bahay sa Brgy. San Pedro, Puerto Princessa City kamakailan.

Inaalam pa kung sino ang may-ari ng bahay at kung sino-sino ang sangkot sa paghuli, pagbenta at pagbili ng mga nasabing wildlife products.

Ayon sa DENR, mahal ang bentahan ng mga ito sa abroad dahil gamit ang mga ito bilang pagkain o gamot.

Kakasuhan agad ng mga awtoridad ng paglabag sa Republic Act 9147 o Wildlife Resources, Conservation and Protection Act ang sinomang makikita nilang sangkot dito.



# BASURA NG KOREA IBABALIK NA

**NAKATAMBAK** pa-rin sa isang planta sa Misamis Oriental ang mga basura mula sa South Korea.

Ayon sa mga awtoridad, noong Hunyo pa nakatakang ibalik ang mga basura ngunit kahapon lamang nagsimula ang paghahakot ng mga ito.

Aminado naman si Mis-

amis Oriental Second District Representative Juliette Uy na napatagal ang pagbabalik ng mga basura dahil kulang ang pondo para gawin ito.

Mayroon lamang isang pribadong kompanya na nagalok ng libreng serbisyo para unti-unti itong maibalik sa SoKor.

Nangako naman ang port collector ng Mindanao container terminal na si John Simon na sisikapin nilang maibalik ang mga basura sa Oktubre.

Matatandaang nagbalik na rin ng basura sa Canada at ilan pang bansa ang Filipinas matapos itambak ang mga ito sa ilang pantalan.





## Iba't- ibang sektor sa Batangas City lumahok sa International Coastal Cleanup

**NI JOJO C. MAGSOMBOL**

**BATANGS City** — Naki-isa ang Batangas City sa 34<sup>th</sup> International Coastal Clean Up (ICC) kama-kailan, na may temang "Bayanihan para sa Malinis na Karagatan at Katubigan."

Ang malaking kooperasyon ng lungsod dito ay bunsod na rin ng imbitasyon at panawagan ni Mayor Beverley Dimacuja sa lahat ng sektor ng komunidad na bigyang pansin at maglaan ng personal na oras para sa pagpapantili ng kalinisan ng baybaying dagat.

Sinimulan ang paglilinis bandang ala-sais ng

umaga sa mga coastal areas na pinili ng mga lumahok dito kagaya ng Sitio Itluga, Bgy. Cuta na napiling linising lugar ng city government employees sa pangunguna ng City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO).

Nakatulong ng mga empleyado ang barangay at Sangguniang Kabataan officials ng Cuta

Pinangunahan ng barangay officials ng coastal barangays ang paglilinis sa mga dalampasigan at baybaying kanilang nasasakupan. Naglinis naman ng mga kanal, estero at ilang pampublikong kalye ang barangay officials at residente sa urban at rural barangays.



Ang mga guro at mag-aaral ay nakiisa rin sa cleanup sa pamamagitan ng paglilinis sa kanilang mga silid-aralan, bakuran ng paaralan at pakikilahok sa paglilinis ng barangay. At ang mga industriya at business establishments ay naglinis sa kanilang paligid.

Layunin ng internation-

al coastal cleanup na mapantili ang kalinisan ng mga dalampasigan at mahikayat ang mga mamamayan na pangalagaan ang karagatan kung saan ang isang paraan ay ang pag-iwas sa pagtatapon ng mga basura dito. *With Marie Lualhati, Batangas City PIO*



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**Good and the bad** Siblings enjoy a perfect morning at the not so perfect Baseco beach where garbage mixes with the sand.



# DoTr leads mangrove cleanup drive

The Department of Transportation (DoTr) and the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) worked together in a massive clean-up of the mangrove area in Barangay Ubihan in Meycauayan, Bulacan last 27 September.

This is part of the concerted efforts of the Philippine government in line with the International Coastal Clean-Up Day, a campaign which aims to care and maintain cleanliness of shores around the world.

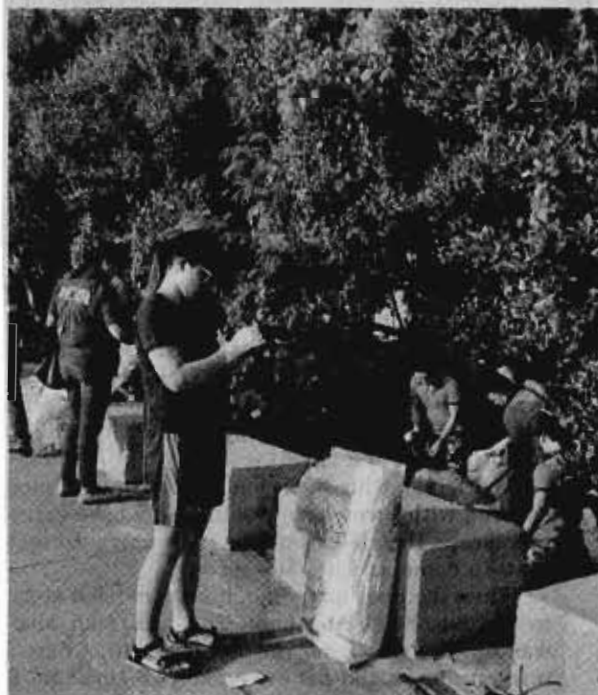
Members of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Public Works and Highways, Philippine National Police, local government of Bulacan and some other volunteers from the private sector also joined the activity.

Numerous sacks of trash such as plastic, styrofoam, tarpaulin and other waste materials were removed from the mangrove area.

The DoTr is one with the goal to care for the shores and raise awareness and discipline of Filipinos to foster love for the environment.



MANGROVE cleanup.





## SPORTS YANG

## Trahedya sa Boracay



**Yang Mollare**

TWITTER: @arionnemollare

Isang nakapanlulumong balita ang bumungad sa buong dragon boat community nitong nakaraang Setyembre 25 nang masawi ang 7 paddlers ng Boracay Dragonforce club team sa Sitio Lingganay, Manoc-Manoc sa Boracay Island.

Dalawampu't isang (21) katao ang lulan ng champion boat bago ito hampasin ng

mga higanteng alon na nagresulta ng trahedya sa Boracay.

Nitong Biyernes, nakasama ko si NSA Affairs office head Ms. Annie Ruiz sa utos ni Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) Chairman William 'Butch' Ramirez, na personal na magpaabot ng tulong pinansiyal at pakikiramay sa mga pamilya ng mga namatayan sa Kalibo, Aklan at personal din naming nakilala ang 5 out of 14 survivors mula sa nasabing trahedya.

Kasabay namin ni Ma'am Ruiz sa aming pagbisita doon sina Philippine Canoe Kayak Dragon Boat Federation President Jonne Go at National Team Head Coach Len Escollante na nagbigay din ng tulong at suporta sa mga naulilang pamilya.

Bagama't isang araw lang ang aming naging pananatili doon, tagos sa puso ang mga istorya ng pakikipaglaban at kabayanihan ng Dragonforce mula sa mga kuwento ng mga survivor.

Ano ang take ko dito? Una, safety first.

Palagiang magsuot ng life vest kahit ikaw pa ang pinakamagaling na swimmer sa buong mundo. Hindi mo masasabi kung kailan darating ang trahedya.

Ito kasi ang pangunahing dahilan kung bakit may mga hindi nakaligtas dahil wala silang suot na life vest.

Pangalawa, huwag mag-panic. Mahirap sabihing huwag mag-panic lalo na't wala ako sa sitwasyon. Pero bahagi na rin siguro na kanilang panic mode, ang hindi pagsunod sa No. 1.

Pangatlo, strategy.

Kung ligwak na sa No. 1 at No. 2, malamang hindi ka na rin makakaisip ng epektibong istratehiya para ma-apply itong pangatlo.

Salamat kay Chairman Ramirez sa initiative niya at nagkaroon ako ng pagkakataong makilala ang mga survivor at marinig ang kani-kanilang istorya.

Maganda rin ang take ng PCDBF dito lalo't regular silang nagco-conduct ng seminars at trainings para sa National team at kanilang affiliated club teams.

At least, mas magiging maingat na at disiplinado ang ibang clubs para hindi na maulit itong insidente.

Muli po, taos po akong nakikiramay sa mga pamilya ng 7 paddlers na nasapul sa Boracay incident.

Sa mga survivor naman po, magpagaling po kayo at magsimulang muli.

Kaya n'yo 'yan!

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Susulitin ko na rin po itong natitirang espasyo para magpasalamat sa Abante sa pagbibigay ng oportunidad sa akin para maging rookie columnist. Maraming-maraming thank you po sa aking editor na si Sir Ferdz Delos Santos, salamat po siri!

Ang pagsusulat po ng kolum ay way of expression ng sarili at saloobin ng isang writer. Salamat po dahil nagkaroon po ako ng pagkakataong magkaroon ng boses sa malayang pamamahayag at salamat po sa oportunidad na mapabilang sa pamilya ng Tunay na Tabloidista!

Sa YANGsters po, salamat kasi kahit iilan lang po ang nakakabasa ng aking kolum tuwing Linggo, ay atleast may nagbabasa!

Kaysa sa wala, 'di ba? Hahaha!

Ito na po ang aking huling kolum sa Abante, hiling ko po ang success ng pahayagang ito at babautin ang magagandang kuwento ng mga atleta.

Hanggang sa susunod po, salamat po sa inyong lahat. Mabuhay po kayo!

YANG MALLARE is now signing off!



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## Phl corruption cost

I agree 100 percent with *Yorme* Isko Moreno when he said that discretion by government employees in concluding government transactions ultimately leads to corruption

It seems that no amount of threat and saber rattling by our President Rodrigo Roa Duterte (PRRD) has curbed corruption in this present administration. Corruption goes on as usual in government offices as if the threats and the frustration of PRRD have not instilled fear among corrupt government officials. Our antiquated system of running the various government offices breeds corruption to unprecedented levels. No wonder, according to Transparency International, the Philippines ranks 99th out of 175 countries in terms of corruption. We are a far cry compared to our ASEAN neighbor Singapore which ranks third out of 175 countries. Ranked 175 as the most corrupt country in the world is Syria.

According to the Presidential Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC), the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is the most corrupt government agency in the Philippines. Second most corrupt are the government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCC). Followed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Fourth is the Department of Finance composed of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and the Bureau of Customs (BoC) and tied for fifth are the Department of Transportation (DoTr) composed of the Land Transportation Office (LTO) and the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), Department of Agriculture and the National Commission on Indigenous People.

It takes two to tango in order for corruption to take place. There has to be a face-to-face meeting between the parties involved in this nefarious activity. Remove the face-to-face meeting in concluding government transactions and you will see a significant drop in corruption.

I agree 100 percent with "Yorme" Isko Moreno when he said that discretion by government employees in concluding government transactions ultimately leads

to corruption. With the removal of face-to-face transactions and discretions in concluding government transactions, corruption will be greatly minimized.

If our government is dead serious in curbing corruption, it should use tools of modern technology that will do away with face-to-face transactions and discretion among government employees. It was reported that in 2018 alone, our government lost around \$10 billion due to corruption. What could have gone to funding infrastructure, education, health and social services ended up in the pockets of corrupt government employees and politicians. \$10 billion translates to P500 billion.

**With the removal of face-to-face transactions and discretions in concluding government transactions, corruption will be greatly minimized.**

Our national budget for 2019 is P 3.75 trillion. P500 billion pesos that we lost to corruption in 2018 is equivalent to 13 percent of our 2019 national budget! If we are to transition from a developing country to a developed country, we need to seriously address and solve our problem of corruption in government.

I am almost sure that the top five corrupt government agencies are fully computerized. These agencies should be able to conclude government transactions via online applications and platforms. By doing so, you avoid face to face transactions and discretions in providing government services to the public. You also help decongest the heavy traffic situation in the metropolis by allowing



**TRANS-ITIONS**

Boying Soriano



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Phil corruption cost

online transactions. No need to travel from your home to the government office to transact with the government.

For example, renewal of drivers' licenses and registration of vehicles can easily be done through online transactions by the LTO. This is one surefire way of getting rid of fixers in the LTO and the LTFRB. Same is true for the BIR, businesses and individuals should be able to settle their tax obligations online.

The BoC is a special case. Face-to-face transactions cannot be avoided due to the required visual inspection of goods coming from abroad. I would like to take you back to 1986 when our government engaged the services of Societe Generale de Surveillance (SGS) to conduct pre-inspection of goods being shipped to the

Philippines from the country of origin.

The SGS pre-inspection services involves the inspection of the goods, measurement of quality and quantity and most importantly certifying the actual cost of the goods about to be shipped to the Philippines. This move by our government at that time professionalized the operations of the BoC.

You cannot import anything from abroad until you secure a certification from the SGS of the country of origin that the goods are legal to import and the right price and quantities are declared. Once the goods arrive in Manila, all you have to do is to pay the right taxes according to the pre-inspection report of the SGS.

Face-to-face transactions with customs personnel were avoided, the right taxes were collected and the shipments were released on time.

In 2007, the BoC headed by Commissioner Napoleon Morales thumbed down the proposal to renew the services of SGS due to budget constraints before the House of Representatives. What a flimsy reason to reject the proposal to renew the services of SGS! It is my belief that the

contract of SGS was not renewed because face-to-face transactions in the BoC were eliminated and taxes to be paid are already predetermined even before the shipment arrives in the Philippines, thus eliminating discretion in the part of customs examiners.

**It will be strong political will, love of country and the use of modern technology that will solve our problem of corruption at all levels of government.**

SGS pre-inspection has virtually stopped smuggling and corruption in the BoC. And this hurt smugglers, customs personnel and politicians alike. SGS pre-inspection of goods bound for the Philippines will discourage drug smuggling. This is a major bonus in our fight against illegal drugs.

By engaging SGS to conduct pre-inspection of all cargoes bound for the Philippines, it will be its responsibility that illegal drugs bound for the Philippines are flagged by SGS in its country of origin. Smuggling in all of its forms is stopped with the SGS pre-inspection system.

India, through its current prime minister, Narendra Modi, took a bold step in using modern technology to curb corruption. Today, all government transactions in India are done online and payment of fees emanating from such transactions are paid via credit or debit card. Cash transactions are prohibited. By eliminating cash payments and using the internet to conduct government transactions, corruption in government has been greatly minimized.

At the end of the day, it will be strong political will, love of country and the use of modern technology that will solve our problem of corruption at all levels of government. These proposals will amount to nothing if nothing will be done to prevent corruption from happening. Political will and love of country go hand-in-hand. We cannot claim that we love our country if we do not exercise political will in running the affairs of our country.