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Typhoon 'Basyang' leaves 26 dead, 26 missing

Power consumers to pay more



CITIZENS ARROYO — Former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, and Camarines Sur Rep. Dato Arroyo line up at the immigration counter of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 2 before boarding a Philippine Airlines flight for Hong Kong yesterday, July 15, 2010. (Anjo Perez)



BASYANG'S WRATH — Fishermen in Mariveles, Bataan, look at what is left of their motorboats after a barge slammed them while typhoon 'Basyang' was unleashing its fury across Luzon Tuesday night, July 13, 2010, and Wednesday morning, July 14, 2010. The typhoon pummeled Northern, Central, and Southern Luzon, leaving 26 persons dead and property losses worth several millions of pesos. Other provinces which suffered heavy losses were Laguna, Quezon, Cavite, Rizal, Bulacan, Catanduanes, and the Cordillera region. (Ali Vicoy)

Public may shoulder typhoon damage

By **MYRNA M. VELASCO**
and **FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD**

After the yoke of punishing blackouts, electricity consumers will be saddled with higher electricity bills with the plan of the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) to pass on the costs of repairing damaged power transmission facilities.

As in previous filings it made with the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), the transmission firm hinted that it will again invoke "force majeure" in its bid to recoup typhoon-induced repair costs on damaged facilities from consumers.

"In the past, yes, we did (cost recoveries) like in the typhoon Milenyo. But it is subject to ERC approval and anybody can intervene," NGCP senior technical adviser Guillermo Redoblado said.

The transmission firm noted it has to sum up the total cost of damage-repair intended for recovery.

But this early the ERC is being cautioned to exercise prudence in evaluating NGCP's filing for cost (Turn to Page 4 col. 3)

Binay appointed HUDCC Chairman

By **MADDEL R. SABATER**

After rejecting several other posts offered to him, Vice President Jejomar Binay has accepted the position of Chairman of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC).

In announcing yesterday his acceptance of the HUDCC chairmanship from President Aquino, Binay said, "After a discussion with the President, I am following his request to take charge of the housing sector as chairperson of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC)."

"I have always maintained that I (Turn to Page 4 col. 1)

Lacson is new GSIS Chairman

By **GENALYN KABILING**

President Aquino yesterday said he has appointed former Negros Occidental governor Daniel "Bitay" Lacson as new Chairman of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) and directed him to improve delivery of service to the system's members.

The President said he signed the appointment of Lacson last Wednesday and will soon fill up the other top posts at the GSIS.

Lacson, former president of the Philippine National Bank during the term of the late President Corazon Aquino, replaces Bernardino Abes who served as GSIS Chairman since 2004.

Speaking to reporters during his visit to Isabela and Cagayan, the President said he ordered Lacson to address the problems raised by government employees regarding the dismal service of the state pension agency.

Aquino said he has received numerous complaints from government employees, especially teachers, about the delays in the processing and delivery of their benefits.

"I want to know the true condition of the GSIS and I am not satisfied with the reason that GSIS members are not being served well because the computers have bogged down," he said.

With the appointment of Lacson, the President said he will try to finish the interview of candidates to replace GSIS President Winston Garcia. Among those rumored as next GSIS (Turn to Page 4 col. 3)

**7 sections,
80 pages today**

Today's issue of the Manila Bulletin has seven sections with a total of 80 pages. The third up to seventh sections carry part of Lifestyle, Travel & Tourism, Entertainment, Comics, Movie & TV Guides, The Groove, Drive, Students & Campuses, and Style Weekend.

Arroyos leave for Hong Kong

By **ANJO PEREZ**

The former first family left for Hong Kong yesterday afternoon for a vacation.

Unlike their previous trips, however, former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, and their son, Camarines Sur Rep. Dato Arroyo, did not avail themselves of the Very Important Person (VIP) assistance accorded to previous heads of state and their families.

The Arroyos were booked at the Presidential Lounge of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 2 with public assistance staff waiting to assist them as early as 10 a.m.

The airport staff was surprised when they heard that the former first family was already in the departure area checking-in by themselves.

Trying to catch up with the Arroyos, they rushed to the check-in area but when they got there, the Arroyos politely turned down the assistance. (Turn to Page 4 col. 3)

Noynoy nearly falls prey to text scam

By **GENALYN KABILING**

He was nearly victimized by a text scam, he doesn't eat chicken, and he loves driving fast cars.

These are among the interesting facts about President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III, who still enjoys his high popularity rating after winning the presidency in the country's first automated elections.

In an up-close and personal chat with journalists last Tuesday, the President disclosed he was among the many people who receive unsolicited text messages from groups seeking car loans as well as other text scams. (Turn to Page 4 col. 1)

Rights of suspects to be reviewed

By **GENALYN KABILING**

President Aquino is seeking a review of the law defining certain rights of persons arrested or under investigation in a bid to help the police force in tracking down criminal suspects without violating their rights.

The President assigned the Department of Justice (DoJ) to undertake the study after a trial court judge in Bicol ruled that including a picture of a wanted suspect in police posters is a violation of human rights.

"I have ordered a review on the matter. If needed, we will seek an amendment," Mr. Aquino said last Tuesday at the Palace, warning that any manhunt for suspects may be hampered by such interpretation of the judge.

"Suppose we are looking for a suspect but you cannot display a picture. How can you find him if it is not allowed," he said.

The President said there might be an amendment on the protection of the rights of citizens since those wanted by law enforcement authorities are still presumed innocent.

"An amendment could be a suspect is defined as the one in custody as opposed to one who is being arrested," he said.

At present, Republic Act No. 7438 provides the rights of persons arrested, detained, or under custodial investigation, including the right to have counsel.

The law, signed in April, 1992, also states penalties for an arresting or investigating officer who fails to inform (Turn to Page 4 col. 5)

weather forecast
The whole country will experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.
Manila Bay will be slight to moderate.
Temp. range: 25.0°C - 33.4°C
Tides: High: 1:14 p.m. 1:24 m
Low: 5:23 a.m. 0:50 m
Sunrise — 5:35 a.m. Sunset — 6:29 p.m.

'Basyang' leaves 26 dead, 26 missing

By **AARON B. RECUEÑO**

The death toll from typhoon "Basyang" rose to 26 as extensive search and rescue operations were intensified to account for 26 others, mostly fishermen, who are still missing.

So far, Office of Civil Defense (OCD) Administrator Benito Ramos said the country is already safe from the fury of "Basyang" since it has already weakened into a storm and is gradually moving away from the Philippines.

Ramos said the Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon) region has the most fatalities with 20, most of them in Laguna.

The three other fatalities are from Bataan and three others are in Camarines Norte, not six as earlier reported by new Interior and Local Government Secretary Jessie Robredo.

"The search and rescue operations are ongoing. We are zeroing in on the case of a group of fishermen in Catanduanes and the crew of a fish- (Turn to Page 4 col. 1)

8 CEU graduates top Optometrist Exams

Eight Centro Escolar University (CEU) graduates lead 50 examinees who passed the Optometrist Licensure Examination given by the Board of Optometry in Manila this month, the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) said yesterday.

The 10 top examinees are: 1. Justin Guzman Divinagracia, Centro Escolar University-Manila, 88.81; 2. Angela Czarina Tardecilla Villalobos, CEU-Manila, 88.32; 3. Trina Sabrina Tiongson Allas, CEU-Manila, 87.55; 4. Roden Evangelista Natnat, CEU-Manila, 87.42; 5. Fortunato IV Bayani Arevalo, CEU-Manila, 86.26; 6. John Paul Chua Lam, Cebu Doctors University, 86.11; 7. Clint Aldean Keh (Turn to Page 4 col. 3)

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