

# Balog-balog dam, beneficial or to cause misery?

By Nelson Bolos

Tarlac City - - Dreaming for a nightmare?

This came as some people aired their reservation on the Balog-balog dam during the time capsule laying marking the construction of the P5.7 Billion "mega project" at Barangay Maamot here last Monday.

A source says, in the feasibility study of the Balog-balog it will take 12 to 18 years to fill-up the dam's reservoir of 560 Million cubic meters of water.

This is because the "length of the water source river is "relatively thin, short and low-lying" compared to other dams in Luzon such as the San Roque dam, the Ambuklao, Ipo, Pantabangan and Casecnan dams, among others, which are all located in the Caraballo-Sierra Madre mountain range.

The Zambales Range on the western part of Luzon is "comparatively a much

smaller and lower mountain chain" than Caraballo-Sierra Madre which "fences" the Pacific Ocean side of Luzon.

This means, within 12 to 16 years, the dam will not supply any water to the targeted irrigable agricultural lands. And worse, the down stream river will dry-up for 16 years which will severely affect flora and fauna below the dam.

The same source who used to work at the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) also

said that, contrary to the claim of the proponents, "Balog-balog will not mitigate flooding because the river itself does not cause flood".

The BBMP dam proper, which has a budget of P7.9 Billion, is touted

as one of the country's most expensive dams, was designed to irrigate more than 34,000 hectares of agricultural lands in Tarlac Province and will also produce 43.5 Megawatts of electricity

Last Monday, "time capsule laying" was held at the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Project Management compound in Barangay Maamot, San Jose, signaling the commencement of the dam's construction.

The ceremonies was led by Cabinet Secretary Leoncio Evasco and NIA

administrator Ricardo Visaya.

Balog-balog was first proposed by former Senator Benigno Aquino and was about to be constructed by former president Corazon "Cory" Aquino but the project was shelved because of the 1990 earthquake and the 1991 Mt. Pinatubo eruption which inundated most of the province with massive lahar flows.

However, during the presidency of Cory, some structures were already put up including the offices of

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Time capsule laying of the Balog-balog Multit Purpose (BBMP) dam last Monday, July 17, 2017, led by Cabinet Secretary Leoncio Evasco (in barong with corsage) and NIA Administrator retired gen. Ricardo Visaya (Red shirt with sleeveless denims). Also present is Tarlac Police Provincial Director PSSupt Ritchie Posadas.

## Magsumbong sa Weekender!

>Meron ba kayong issue na matagal nang pinaabot sa mga liderato natin ngunit di kayo pinapasin?

>Meron ba kayong sumbong ngunit di niyo alam kung paano at kung kanino ito ipaaabot?

Mag text lang sa 09175061005 (Globe) or 0932-907-9810 (Sun), mag e-mail sa tarlacweekender@yahoo.com, o di kaya ay mag PM sa ating Facebook account na Tarlac Weekender!



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# NOLCOM unveils Northern Maritime Frontier Landmark

TARLAC CITY - Armed Forces of the Philippines Northern Luzon Command (NOLCOM) unveiled its 17ft. Northern Maritime Frontier Landmark inside its headquarters in Camp Servillano Aquino.

NOLCOM Commander Lieutenant General Romeo Tanalogo said the marble-landmark was conceptualized to highlight the Northern Maritime Frontiers and the significant geographical points in its area of responsibility.

Emphasizing the "Whole

of Nation" approach, he said that the landmark serves as a reminder not just for the military but also for all the Filipinos to be united in facing the maritime challenges.

"The landmark is a reminder for all of us to think bigger, to act bolder, to be consistent, and be one in thought, in words and in action," Tanalogo stressed.

Coinciding with the unveiling was a photo and static display of the Philippine Air Force and Philippine Navy. (CLJD/CJVF PIA-3)

# Phl Army in need of 200 new soldiers

CAMP O'DONNELL, Capas, Tarlac - Philippine Army is currently in need of 200 soldiers to strengthen its forces.

In a statement, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Commander Brigadier General Casiano Monilla said it is open to applicants aged 18-26 years old, at least 5'2" in height, single, has at least one year in college related to security and education courses, interested in serving the country, and interested to be part of the Philippine Army.

Requirements for the said recruitment include certification of good moral character, medical and physical tests, and other basic requirements.

"Public Affairs Office and TRADOC Recruitment Office will help those who are interested and qualified to comply with all the requirements," Monilla said.

Recruitment process is up to September 2017.

"Those who are qualified and interested may visit the TRADOC Recruitment Office and Public Affairs Office in Camp O'Donell, Capas, Tarlac to secure a copy of application form and for further details," Monilla furthered.

They may also contact 09508862772, 09052553944

or 09162541399 for more information. (CLJD/CJVF-PIA 3)

# 240 kilos 'hot meat' confiscated in Tarlac City



*While the consumers are appreciative of the random crackdown, they are wondering what happens to the perpetrators. Are they just being measly fined? Why not cancel their business license to give them a lesson?*

TARLAC CITY - At least 240 kilos of hot meat (botcha) were confiscated in an inspection conducted on Wednesday at City Uptown Market here by the City Meat Inspection Office and Tarlac City Police Office.

The routine operation, supervised by city meat inspector Dr. Julieta Parairo, is part of the intensified crackdown against the proliferation of "hot meat" or meat products that have not passed the government's inspection standards.

"The move is part of the city

government's efforts to keep the residents safe from products that were not properly inspected and lack proper clearance from the city's abattoir," Parairo said.

She said the confiscated hot meat were incinerated and disposed off properly.

Meanwhile, she advised the public to be vigilant in purchasing underpriced meat because some vendors tend to mix fresh meat with the "botcha" to take advantage of unsuspecting customers. (Eden Gutierrez/PNA)



*Thanks for your concern on our cats and dogs - The Office of the City Veterinarian, led by Dr. Julieta Parairo, conducted free mass anti-rabies vaccination and free spaying and neutering for pet cats and dogs at Brgy. San Vicente on July 18. Spaying and neutering would control unwanted cats and dogs population. The procedure costs a lot if done by private practitioners.*

# Trike driver arrested for marijuana, shabu in Mayantoc

MAYANTOC, Tarlac - Small towns now target of drug suppliers?

This question came as this town's police arrested a tricycle driver possessing marijuana and shabu at a check point in Barangay Rotrottooc yesterday morning.

In his report to Tarlac Police Provincial Director Ritchie Medardo Posadas, PInsp Romulo Quibuyen identified

the apprehended trike driver as Roderick Arpa y Castro, 47, of Barangay Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac.

Quibuyen disclosed Arpa was apprehended after he tried to evade a police check point and was found in possession of 3 sachets of shabu and 2 sachet of marijuana.

"For the past several months, we have no known drug pusher here until we arrested

him (Arpa) in our checkpoint. We are now re-assessing the situation to determine if other pushers have infiltrated our municipality," said Quibuyen.

This town is a "remote but a very peaceful 3rd class municipality" lying in the hinterlands of the Zambales Mountain Range west of Tarlac province. It has around 33,000 registered voters.

It is very seldom that there are detainees at the police station detention cells.

"We have no idea that he was carrying illegal drugs. But when we arrested him for trying to run away from our checkpoint, he yielded marijuana and shabu", added Quibuyen.

Upon being accosted, Arpa yielded 3 plastic sachets of Methamphetamine hydrochloride (Shabu) with a total weight of 1.758 grams and 2 sachets of Cannabis sativa (Marijuana) weighing 3.134 grams.

Arpa, however, refused to reveal his source nor the people to whom he will deliver the illegal drugs.

After being submitted for inquest at the Tarlac Provincial Prosecutors office, Arpa was committed at the Camiling Bureau of Jail Management and Penology.

Arpa, who is a native of Barangay Abanon, San Carlos City, Pangasinan, was charged of 2 counts of violation of Section 11 of RA 9165 (possession of illegal drugs)./Nelson Bolos

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# Arroyo wants aeroponics in agriculture to boost food security

MANILA - Former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo is pushing for the development of aeroponic technology to boost the country's agricultural production and enable farming in urban areas.

Arroyo has filed House Bill No. 3977, otherwise known as the Aeroponics Technology in Agricultural Production Act of 2016, which seeks to promote the use of aeroponics technology to be applied in the production of high value-added crops and vegetable farming.

The bill aims to address the country's food security concerns and judiciously utilize scarce fertile land resources.

Aeroponics is the process of growing vegetation in an air or mist environment without the use of soil or an aggregate medium. Aeroponics is considered to be safe and ecologically friendly for producing natural and healthy plants and crops.

Arroyo pointed out that the main ecological advantage of aeroponics is the conservation of water and energy, with growers claiming they can produce fresh local food in half the time as conventional growing with 90 percent less water and 90 percent less space.

"One area where the State can devote more research and development is in the use of state-of-the-art technologies aimed at improving agricultural production and ensuring food security," Arroyo said in her explanatory note.

"Specifically, the adoption of aeroponics technology is widely perceived as an innovative measure to increase agricultural productivity," Arroyo added.

The Pampanga lawmaker said the aeroponics system is cost-effective because of reduced volume of solution input, less water, and fewer nutrients needed.

Under the bill, the Department of Agriculture is mandated to conduct a comprehensive research

and information drive on aeroponics technology applied to agricultural production.

The bill provides that idle government lands shall be considered for growing crops and vegetables using aeroponics agriculture.

Furthermore, the use of aeroponic technology will be integrated into the curriculum of high school and college students in all courses related to Agriculture, Practical Arts and Home Economics, and subjects related to agriculture.

"With aeroponics, the deleterious effects of seed stocks that are infected with pathogens can be minimized due to the separation of the plants and the lack shared growth matrix," she said.

"In addition, due to the enclosed, controlled environment, aeroponics can be an ideal growth system in which to grow seed stocks that are pathogen-free," she added. (*Filane Mikee Cervantes/PNA*)

mean they are did not take part in the crime.

Ibanez, in his admission regarding his participation on the gruesome killing, mentioned alias "Inggo" (Rolando Pacinos) and alias "Tony" (Anthony Garcia) as his cohorts in perpetrating said crime.

The two other POIs Roosevelt Serema alias "Ponga" and Alvin Mabesa were mentioned by confidential informants.

Pacinos, Serema and Garcia were found dead one after the other recently.

Meanwhile, City Mayor Arthur Robes of San Jose Del Monte commended Caramat and Macariola and the Bulacan PNP for the speedy resolution of the said case following the result of the DNA test that pinned down Ibanez as one of the prime suspects.

He said that the arrest of Ibanez has strengthened the confidence of the people of

## More consumer complaints received in CL in first half of 2017

More consumers in Central Luzon filed their complaints before the offices of the Department of Trade and Industry, mostly on gadgets and appliances. In the first half of 2017, the DTI regional and provincial offices in Region 3 have received a total of 316 consumer complaints as compared to only 286 in the same period last year.

While the number of cellphone related complaints decreased, 56 in 2017 as compared to those in 2016 (60), cellphone concerns still remained as the most frequent subject of consumer complaints, followed by refrigerators (24), television (4), motorcycle (22), vehicle (17) and aircon (11).

Of the 316 complaints received,

301 or 95% have been resolved through mediation between the complaining and the complained parties, while 12 complaints have to go through adjudication.

As of June 30, 2017, Bulacan consumers had the most number of complaints filed with 76, followed by Zambales with 75, Bataan with 50, Tarlac with 39, Nueva Ecija with 29, DTI-3 Regional Office with 25, Pampanga with 21 and Aurora with only 1 complaint received.

According to the Consumer Protection Division of DTI-3, it has filed 14 motupropio formal charges against sellers who allegedly violated fair trade laws./ *WT Serrano (DTI)*

## Crime incidents in Nueva Ecija decreased, says PNP

PALAYAN CITY -- Crime incidents in Nueva Ecija have decreased by 5.5 percent from January to mid-June of this year, a ranking police official said.

Supt. Angel Bondoc, deputy director for operations of the Nueva Ecija Police Provincial Office (NEPPO), said police have recorded 978 crime incidents as against the 1,036 incidents in the same period of last year.

Bondoc made the report amid the province's relentless drive against hard drugs in response to President Rodrigo Duterte's all-out drug war.

Of the crimes reported, Bondoc said, theft was the highest with 231, followed by physical injuries with 230 and robbery, 200.

Carnapping was placed at 134; rape, 90; murder, 81 and homicide

12. Cabanatuan City, the most urban locality in Nueva Ecija, has the highest number of incidents, followed by San Jose City and the municipality of Talavera, police reported.

Police observed that theft usually happen in the afternoon in unattended apartments and subdivisions.

Senior Supt. Antonio Yarra, provincial police director, said theft incidents may be rising because drug pushers who can no longer continue in their illicit trade are "doing everything to get money."

But police, he said, will not take them sitting as measures are being done to address such crimes. (*Marilyn Espiritu-Galang/PNA*)

## Central Luzon's first cancer center soon to open in Pampanga

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga - The first cancer center in Central Luzon will soon be opened in this province.

This came as Mother Theresa of Calcutta Medical Center (MTCMC) and TE Asia Healthcare based in Singapore inked Wednesday afternoon a

pact for a PHP500-million cancer center facility.

In an interview with TE Asia Healthcare CEO Eng Aik Meng, he said that the first cancer center outside Metro Manila will be opened in two years' time in the province which will cater to three stages of cancer treatments.

Meng said the cancer center will offer a combination of various treatments focused on chemotherapy, radiation therapy and surgery on the hospital side.

He also said that TE Asia Healthcare is committed to work closely with

## Cops tracking down another Bulacan massacre suspect

CITY OF SAN JOSE DEL MONTE, Bulacan -- Police are still tracking the other person of interest (POI) in the killings last month of five members of a family inside their house in Northridge Royal Subdivision, Barangay Sto. Cristo here.

This, despite forensic evidence has already pinned down construction worker Carmelino Ibanez alias "Miling" as the prime suspect in the murder of the members of Carlos family.

Supt. Fritz Macariola, San Jose Del Monte City police chief, said that he is talking to the family of another witness to convince and coordinate with them in identifying the participation of other suspects.

"We are still making follow-up investigation since the forensic examinations also showed that two weapons were used in the multiple murder case," he

said.

Based on the DNA tests conducted by the Bulacan PNP-Crime laboratory technicians, only the four victims Auring, Estrella, Ella and Dexter Jr. matched the DNA profile from the recovered murder weapon, meaning that another knife was used to kill victim Donni that also showed that two or more perpetrators did the crime, Macariola said.

"The case is not yet closed. The investigation is still ongoing and we are talking with other witness to pin down the other suspects," Macariola added.

Bulacan PNP acting provincial director Sr. Supt. Romeo Caramat Jr. on Friday released the forensic DNA test result which showed Ibanez raped Estrella.

The four other "persons of interest" (POIs) were all negative from the DNA test found at the crime scene but Caramat said it does not

San Jose Del Monte's on the police's capability in swiftly resolving heinous crimes.

Robes also ordered the immediate release of the PHP100,000 cash reward he offered for the immediate arrest of the massacre suspects. (*Emil G. Gamos/PNA*)

## The silent hero behind the Philippines' case vs China

Days after the Philippines won its case against China on July 12, 2016, seasoned diplomat Henry Bensurto Jr recalled a touching email from a junior officer of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

The junior officer, whose name Bensurto withheld, thanked him for being the once "lonely voice" that pushed for a case against China over the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea).

"Oh, I cannot describe to you the pain," Bensurto said in an interview with Rappler in August 2016, when asked to explain why he was called a "lonely voice."

Bensurto, 52, was the silent hero behind the blueprint of the Philippines' case against China at The Hague, in the face of naysayers in his own department. His work led to the Philippines' historic victory against China, the first anniversary of which was marked on Wednesday, July 12. (READ: Rally world around Hague ruling, experts tell PH)

Former foreign secretary Albert del Rosario told Rappler on Friday, July 14, "I would consider Henry as a quiet hero and a true patriot for his expertise, for his conviction, and for his courage."

### Editorial

"Without his important contributions, we may not have succeeded to the extent that had been achieved in obtaining a positive arbitral tribunal outcome to benefit the Filipino

people and the world," Del Rosario added.

Journalist Bill Hayton, in his book *The South China Sea: The Struggle for Power in Asia*, also wrote that Bensurto "is the brains behind the Philippines' policy in the South China Sea disputes."

Bensurto's role in the case is widely known, too, among diplomats in the region. In fact when we did our interview at the Manila Hotel lobby in August 2016, an Indonesian official passed by, greeted Bensurto, and congratulated him: "I remember this is your idea to bring the case to court."

#### 'In my nature to take risks'

Bensurto, who has been Philippine consul general to San Francisco since June 2014, has been an achiever since his youth.

When he was 25 years old, he took two of the Philippines' hardest exams in the same year.

Bensurto ended up passing both the Bar Exam and the Foreign Service Officer Exam in 1991.

"Maybe it's in my nature to take risks," he said.

When the results of both exams came out, "it was a dilemma, because when you study law, you always have the instinct to litigate in a court."

"But I decided, at that time that there were few diplomats, maybe I can put to good use the legal skills in the context of diplomacy as well," he said.

Attorney Bensurto then entered the foreign service, and a few years later studied public international law at Oxford University under a Chevening scholarship.

An alumnus of both the University of the Philippines and San Beda College, he graduated from Oxford with distinction in 1996.

#### No 'pass your paper' mentality

At the DFA, Bensurto was the kind of diplomat whom his bosses often wanted to keep in the Philippines because they needed his skills.

His batchmates, for instance, got their first international assignments after 3 years as junior officers based in the Philippines.

It took Bensurto 9 years before he got posted abroad.

"The reason for that is because my boss asked me to stay put and help," he explained.

One of the projects he handled was the development of the Roppongi property in Japan, which the Philippines got as reparation from Japan after World War II. Bensurto and his colleagues finished this project in the late 1990s, and now "one of the most beautiful embassies we have overseas is the one in Roppongi, Japan."

Looking back at these experiences, Bensurto said he has no regrets even if he was often stuck in the Philippines.

"I think there's a saying in the department: Don't make yourself indispensable, because when you make yourself indispensable, you get stuck," he said.

In his case, Bensurto said, "I just have this mentality that when you're given work, you have to do the best that you can, because you owe it not only to your government and to your country."

Bensurto said he resists a "pass your paper" mentality.

# KABATAAN, KARAPATAN MONG MAKIALAM!

#SOanoNA



### KAKAMPI MO ANG BATAS

US\$10,000 allotted for  
public toilets of Aetas



BY: ATTY. BATAS MAURICIO

LIFE'S INSPIRATIONS: "...  
'Greater love has no one than  
this: to lay down one's life for  
one's friends'..." (Jesus Christ,  
our God and Savior, in John  
15:13, the Holy Bible).

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**A DAY OF THANKSGIVING, AND OF ACCEPTING CHALLENGES:** It was a day of thanksgiving alright, but it turned out to be a day likewise of bravely accepting challenges to continue the great service that Rotarians do for the poor and the needy for the next 365 days.

And everybody was thankful that this thanksgiving and facing up to the challenges of continuous "service above self" for the next one year or so took place at the 37th Handover and Induction Ceremonies of the Rotary Club of Intramuros on Thursday, July 20, 2017, at the Champagne Room of the Manila Hotel.

My wife, the outgoing All Star President Angelina Mauricio of the Rotary Club of Intramuros of Rotary International District 3810, was profuse in her expression of gratitude in her valedictory address, after serving as president for Rotary Year 2016-2017, under the capable stewardship of District 3810 All Star Governor Ernest Yuyek.

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**RECOGNIZING GOD'S HELP FOR ROTARY:** God of course topped the list of those she thanked, of course. Then, she also thanked the following: Governor Ernest and his wife Anna, the members of the Rotary Club of Intramuros, other Rotary Clubs both here and abroad and government and private agencies who all acted selflessly to give "service above self", with "Rotary serving humanity".

The newly-inducted president who will serve until June 30, 2018, young business entrepreneur Aries Balanay (the president too of the International Academy for Continuing Education, or IACE), on the other hand left no doubt of the readiness of his team to serve under the theme "Rotary: Making a difference". He said he and his team are ready and committed to continue doing the good things that the Club has become famous for.

Lawyer Jamairy Concon Domado from Marawi City, the president of the Club from 2018-2019, talked about the bigger, better, and bolder actions of the members of the Club in helping all those in need, thereby establishing the "architectural framework" and brand of service that Club members discharge year in and year out, from its chartering in 1981.

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**US\$10,000 ALLOTTED FOR PUBLIC TOILETS FOR AETAS:** Incumbent District Governor Emmanuel "Loy" Cosico, meanwhile, assured the readiness of District 3810 to assist the Rotary Club of Intramuros in continuing its flagship projects, particularly in enabling native Filipinos like the Aetas of Pampanga and Tarlac to avail of basic health facilities like public comfort rooms in places where people defecate on roadsides, and just outside their homes.

Noting that the Club put up eight modern toilets costing about P350,000.00 in Sitio Babo, a village inside the posh Clark Freeport Zone in Clark, Pampanga under All Star President Angelina Mauricio, Cosico disclosed he already released some US\$10,000.00 to the Rotary Club of Intramuros so it could build more public comfort rooms for the Aetas.

At the end of the turnover of the presidency from Angelina to Aries, the Club awarded three fine arts students from schools in Metro Manila as the winners in its "Rotary Art Painting Contest", in recognition of the 100 years that the Rotary Foundation has been doing good for the world. The winning paintings and the other entries are available for sale. Contact me through my email and numbers below.

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**First partnership with Del Rosario**

Bensurto brought this work ethic with him when he was finally assigned to Washington DC in 1999. He worked there as consul and legal officer.

It was in Washington DC that he first worked with Del Rosario, the Philippine ambassador to the US from 2001 to 2006.

In the US, Bensurto faced one of his toughest tests, when the US justice department "tried to assume criminal jurisdiction" over executives "of all the telecommunication companies in the Philippines," including PLDT. This was for the alleged violation of the US anti-trust law.

Del Rosario requested him to address this problem.

Bensurto said he thought of arguing the Philippines' case in a court of law, even if private lawyers felt pessimistic "because the batting average of the US Department of Justice in terms of anti-trust violations was almost 100% at that time."

"But I never wavered in that," Bensurto said.

And the Philippines won. "It was also an 'impossible' undertaking, an 'impossible' task," he said.

Referring to Del Rosario, he also pointed out, "This is our first partnership."

**'It's ADR and myself'**

Years later in Manila, Bensurto and Del Rosario worked together again by 2011, when the former ambassador became secretary of foreign affairs.

Bensurto said Del Rosario "wanted a more creative solution" to the South China Sea dispute "because we were like talking to a wall."

Back then at the DFA, Bensurto was the most equipped to tackle this issue.

On top of his studies in Oxford, where he took as many electives as possible on the law of the sea, Bensurto also went to the Rhodes Academy of Oceans Law and Policy in Greece.

In 2007, he became the first secretary general of the Commission on Maritime and Ocean Affairs.

Bensurto later helped in passing the Archipelagic Baselines Law of 2009, for which he received the Presidential Award of Gawad Mabini (with the Rank of Commander), according to a profile uploaded by the National University of Singapore.

He also conceptualized a blueprint to address all of the Philippines' maritime concerns. In 2010, he finalized what he called the Philippine Maritime Security Strategy that aimed to create a Zone of Peace, Freedom, Friendship, and Cooperation (ZOPFFC) in the South China Sea.

Armed with his expertise, Bensurto was convinced of bringing China to court, particularly to a legally-binding compulsory arbitration on the sea dispute.

Bensurto discussed this with Del Rosario, and later the two of them brought this proposal to then president Benigno Aquino III.

"But I wouldn't want to grab credit on my own because from my perspective, I always understand the issue as a collective partnership of different people, and I think it was critical that ADR and I were on the same page," he said.

Aquino ended up deciding to file a case against China. The Philippines won this on July 12, 2016.

Bensurto said: "We don't call it ZOPFFC now. We call it the tribunal decision. What we have achieved in the arbitration is precisely ZOPFFC."

Asked if he alone presented the winning strategy to Aquino, Bensurto also referred to Del Rosario, whom he called by his initials ADR. "I would like to look at it as ADR and myself, because the truth of the matter is, ideas will not prosper if you don't have the right champion."

**'Work has a higher meaning'**

Bensurto, of course, had to face a number of challenges. "We had to overcome a lot of resistance, even from within," he said. "If not for ADR, I would have been a lone wolf."

In the face of his critics, the diplomat also credited his colleagues at the Commission on Maritime and Ocean Affairs - "the people who believed in me and →

**US Lawmakers' Ignoble Act**



BY: CLYDE B. SACPA

What would you feel if one of your distant neighbor looks at your house or hear a story about your house and launches an inquiry or give a comment about it as if they are living in the house too? Most of us will agree that we would be darn furious especially if the comments are baseless or at best it is nonsense. We wouldn't want other people to meddle on how we run our house and of course other people would not like the same thing happening to them.

Knowing that such act is not acceptable, and knowing their reactions when they found out that Russia might have interfered in their last national election, it still baffles me to hear that a US lawmaker is meddling with the way our government try to solve problem that they are failing to eradicate in their country. Perhaps these US lawmakers still thought that the Philippines is still colony of the US or perhaps they thought that the Philippines is a state of the US. It also made me wonder why these people have the audacity to say things like these when in fact their country has committed a lot of human rights violation to their black citizens and in general to all US citizens when they tried to scrap their health care or the Obamacare.

These honorable lawmakers of a country on the other side of the world must set their priorities straight. They don't have jurisdiction over the Philippines and if they want to meddle in our business here how about they atone the tons of abuses they have done to our country first. They have used the Philippines and now they are using it again for grand standing to show the world that they have high regards to human rights.

Well, we might need to iron out things here on how we solve the drug problem of our country but I think, as a sovereign nation, we are the one who have the word about it. We are the ones who knows what is really happening.

*worked with me all the way."*

*Del Rosario himself said Bensurto is "a man of conviction who stood up at all times to promote the national interest, notwithstanding difficult challenges which we had to surmount."*

*At the same time, Bensurto also pointed out "trade-offs" in his personal life. For one, because of the West Philippine Sea issue, he got stuck in the Philippines for more than a year after his last foreign posting, unlike many of his colleagues. "I was here for about 7 years."*

*He said this was difficult because Filipino diplomats get lower salaries when they stay in the Philippines. For diplomats, "your opportunity to help yourself financially is when you're posted abroad," he said.*

*"It had a lot of practical consequences for me and my family, because to give up a foreign assignment is not easy, in a sense, because you give up the opportunity to help yourself and your family, the financial ability to make your financial standing a little stable," he said.*

*Still, Bensurto said, "I have no regrets because it's for the country."*

*In the end, Bensurto said he draws his convictions from something deeper. "For me, work has a higher meaning."*

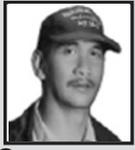
*Work, he said, "is something that you're able to do to help yourself, to help your family, and to help others."*

*"But more than that," he added, "and I have to apologize, and pardon me for this, it's something that you can offer to God. It's something that you can sanctify yourself with."*

*"Work is something that can be used as a raw material to get closer to God, to get closer to others, and at the same time help others," said the diplomat, lawyer, and silent hero named Henry Bensurto Jr./Rappler.com*

**MAGKASANGGA TAYO**

- *Publisher ng jaryo na-tokhang?*
- *Kahit sinong gunggong pwede maging publisher- Part 1!*
- *(reprint from last week)*



BY: NESTOR "PAKEN" CASTRO

Pasensya na muna kayo mga dear readers sa kolum ko ngayon at kailangan ko na munang mag-blind item hinggil sa kung sino itong aking tinutukoy na isang publisher ng isang lokal na pahayagan na na-tokhang daw. Sa kasalukuyan ay aking pang biniberipika ang aking nakalap na impormasyon at kapag atin nang na kompirma ay makasisiguro kayo na aking ilalabas ang identity ng Baboy este tao na ito.

Bagama't kompirnado na natin na gumagamit itong si Mr/Ms Publisher na ito ay mas maganda pa ring malaman kung siya ay nabigyan ba talaga ng friendly "tokhang" view ng PNP (friendly pala ang tokhang, Hi! Hi! Hi!

Alam niyo mga dear readers, sa tutuo lang ay kahit na sinong gunggong or kung sabihin ay any Tom, Dick and Harry ay maaring maging isang publisher basta't mayroon lang siyang ipupuhunan para sa gagastusin sa pag-publish ng isang pahayagan, bagama't hindi kahit sino ay maaari o kuwalipikado para maging isang editor o kahit na isang writer o manunulat.

Katulad ko halimbawa ay isa lamang akong kolumnista. Itong aking isinasagawa ay madali lamang ito sapagkat ito ay aking opinyon lamang, bagama't kung ako ay sabihin mo na mag-edit ng isang pahayagan ay walang wala tayong kuwalipikasyon at kakayahan na maging isang editor o writer of straight news, more so investigative pieces. Kaya malaki ang respeto at paggalang ko sa magagaling na editors and writers of in-depth investigative pieces.

Ngayon, hinggil dito kay small boy-tokhang-user publisher, ang mapapayo ko lang sa 'yo Mr Publisher ay pakatatandaan mo, bilog ang mundo. At ma-ishare ko lang ang ilan sa aking nakalap na mga kasabihan, una dito ay: "those who come to court should come with clean hands" at ang isa pa ay "those who live in glass houses should not throw stones." Ang isa pa ay "nakita mo yung langaw nakatungtung lang sa kalabaw akala na niya mas malaki na siya sa kalabaw." Bow! Hi! Hi! Hi! (Ingles 'yan mga dear readers, paminsan-minsan ay kaya ko rin).

Akala mo kung sino kang naggagaling-galingan ka, pero sa tutuo lang ay BORNOK NAMAN ITONG SI MR. TOKHANG -PUBLISHER! PWEEEEEE.....

oOo

Sa susunod kong kolum ay aking tatalakayin ang hinggil sa mga sumusunod na topic tungkol sa mga local at national na pahayagan: Una dito ay kung paano kumikita o nalulugi ang mga pahayagan na ito. Pangalawa ay ano ba ang benepisyo (kung mayroon man) sa pagiging isang publisher o nagmamay-ari ng isang pahayagan. Pangatlo ay ano kaya ang future na ating nakikita para sa mga langaw press este mosquito press (isang termino na ginamit ni dating strong man President Ferdinand Macoy Marcos in reference to the local press). Pang-apat ay anu-ano ang mga gastusin (costs) at requirements para maglabas o mag-publish ng isang pahayagan. Panglima ay gawan natin ng konting comparison ang mga nakakasakop ng quad - media o sinasabing social media, TV, Radio, and Print. Panganim, ang isang estratehiya ng pahayagan na ito kung bakit nagiging epektibo siya sa propaganda.

The PH Economy... from page 8

decline of underemployment is encouraging, as is the (less pronounced) decline of unemployment. However, in a recent study, researchers at the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) warned of the possible unintended consequences of the initiatives to prohibit “endo” or employment contractualization: they say that such a policy could increase the ranks of the unemployed and underemployed, as well as hurt small enterprises.

4) Weaker peso

**What happened:** The peso-dollar exchange rate has now fully breached the P50/USD mark, reaching levels not seen in 11 years. But the graph shows that this is

(4) THE PESO FURTHER DEPRECIATED AGAINST THE USD



Source: fixtop.com. Period covered: January 2005 to July 2017. Figures refer to maximum per month. An increase means a depreciation of the PHP relative to the USD. The orange segment marks President Duterte's term.

part of a longer-term depreciation of the peso that started in 2013.

A major reason for this is the US Federal Reserve's 3 interest rate hikes since December, which have made US investments more profitable in the eyes of local investors. (They flood the market with pesos whenever they migrate their funds, thus lowering the peso's value relative to the US dollar.)

**Where we are headed:** The US Federal Reserve expects another interest rate hike this year, and 3 more in 2018, as it tempers a stronger US economy. Hence, a further depreciation of the peso toward P53/USD should not come as a surprise in the coming months. While this is likely to raise the price of imported goods, such depreciation will boost the country's dollar-earning sectors (such as exports, tourism, BPO, and OFW services).

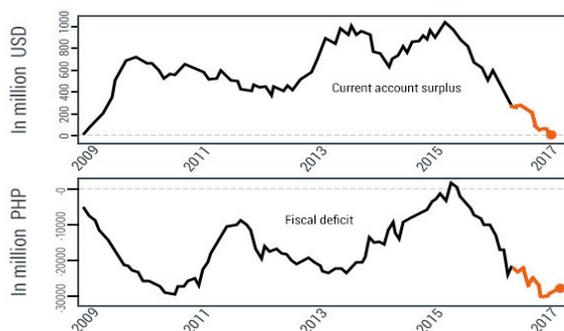
More worrisome is the possibility that the peso's depreciation is partially borne by some degree of capital flight, due to increasing political uncertainty in the country. Experts are unsure how true this is, but it's definitely worth watching out for.

5) Twin deficits

**What happened:** This year the economy is expected to record the first annual current account deficit since 2002. It roughly means that we are becoming more of a net borrower from the rest of the world, on account of imports growing faster than exports.

At the same time, we are heading toward a larger government budget deficit, which means that the government's spending is outpacing its income. The graphs above show that both these trends started even before the Duterte administration came in.

(5) HEADING TOWARD TWIN DEFICITS



Sources: BSP, Treasury. Figures show 12-month moving averages. The orange segments mark President Duterte's term.

FAKE NEWS! OF THE WEEK  
FAKE NEWS - BE FORWARDED  
'WAG KANG TANGA! GAMITIN ANG COMMON SENSE!'

YOUTH RALLIES: FUTURE DRUG PUSHERS TO STAGE AN-

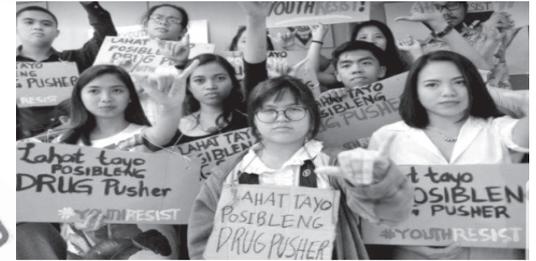
TI-DUTERTE PROTESTS

**M**ANILA, Philippines (The Adobo Chronicles, Manila Bureau) – Youth groups are not happy that Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte is getting in their way of being the country's future drug pushers.

At a recent press conference, the #YouthResist, a movement formed by youth groups Millennials Against Dictators [MAD], Student Council Alliance of the Philip-

pines (SCAP), Akbayan Youth and some campus- and community-based youth groups, said they are planning to hold anti-Duterte rallies in July 18, just days before the president's July 24 State of the Nation Address (SONA).

The youth sentiment was quite obvious in the message they wrote on their protest placards. "We all are possible drug pushers," their signs proclaimed.



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"The president must respect the fact that we, the youth, are the country's future. We are tomorrow's senators and congressmen, mayors and governors, bank presidents and multi-

national CEOs. But we are also the future drug pushers, so we must resist everything that Duterte is doing to fight illegal drugs," the youth group said.

**Where we are headed:** Current account and budget deficits are not bad per se. The foreign funds that accompany a current account deficit could be channeled to finance domestic investments. At the same time, a larger budget deficit is okay as long as the government ensures high returns from the things it spends on, such as the projects under Dutertenomics.

However, to ensure that we have enough wherewithal to pay for accumulating debt, the government must ensure that economic growth remains robust (and must therefore avoid policies that could impair it).

Also, it will help to show the people that public funds are being spent well. For instance, with over P6 billion worth of discretionary funds, greater fiscal prudence by the Office of the President could make it easier to justify imposing new taxes via tax reform.

Beyond the indicators

In conclusion, the Philippine economy seems to have weathered well the eventful and controversial first year of President Duterte – a testament to the country's sound macroeconomic fundamentals.

But as we enter #DuterteYear2, we need to be wary of (and prepare for) emergent economic trends: massive government infrastructure spending, higher future inflation, labor policies that could worsen unemployment and underemployment, US Fed rate hikes that could further depreciate the peso, and increasing twin deficits.

We also need to talk more about the economic repercussions of President Duterte's favorite and most con-

sequential policies, namely the war on drugs and the Mindanao-wide declaration of martial law.

Only time will tell the impact of such sweeping policies on growth, inflation, and unemployment. But before they cause any irreversible damage to our

economy, their rationale and effectiveness should not escape scrutiny today.

It's one thing to blame outsiders for the state of the economy. But it's another when our very own leaders implement reckless, ill-thought policies that bring economic hardships to our people. – Rappler.com

The author is a PhD student at the UP School of Economics. His views are independent of the views of his affiliations. Follow him on Twitter: @jcpunongbayan

Balog-balog Dam... the NIA BBMP- PMO.  
from page 1

During the time of former presidents Joseph Ejercito Estrada and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, irrigation canals and other appurtenant downstream components were constructed.

More component projects were also put up during the administration of former president Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino, but due to insufficient funding, the construction of the dam itself was put on hold.

The dam construction project was awarded to the joint venture of the Quezon City based ITP Construction and the Chinese firm Guangxi Hydro-Electric Construction Bureau Lmted. for P5.86 Billion and is expected to be finished in 3 years or in 2020.

(The BBMP's total project cost is P13.7 Billion the bulk of which was already spent for the downstream components and administrative facilities and manpower.)

The same source who requested his name withheld added, "right now the flooding caused by the Tarlac River is controllable save for damaged dikes which causes spillways. But construction of the dam's 560 million cubic meters reservoir poses a great risk. Massive flooding is now possible if the Balog-balogdam breaks up due to deficient construction".

In a separate interview, NIA BBMP Public Affairs and Information Services (PAIS) chief Edgar Ubaldo denied that it will take 12 to 16 years to fill up the dam's reservoir saying "depende 'yan sa ulan".

Sought for comment, Jaime Ocampo whose family tends to a small farm land said, "Maganda sana ang Balog-balog project, pero dapat nagkaroon ng sufficient public consultation. At dapat ang NIA sabihin sa mga tao ang totoong mga data. Hindi dapat ipagwalang bahala ang kapakanan Cont. on page 7

# DepEd launches ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum

PASIG CITY — The Department of Education (DepEd), through the Bureau of Curriculum Development (BCD), recently launched the ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum.

According to DepEd, the move was made to ensure that the Alternative Learning System (ALS) curriculum is aligned with the K to 12 Program, and to provide learning opportunities that will empower out-of-school youth (OSY) and adult learners to improve their quality of life and become more effective contributors to society.

Like the K to 12 Curriculum, the ALS-K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum is expressed in content standards, performance standards, and learning competencies. It also defines the minimum competency standards for learners an alternative pathway of learning and certification parallel to the formal school system. DepEd Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs Service and ALS G.H. Ambat underscored the importance to adjust the previous ALS curriculum that would help dispel notions of disparity between ALS graduates and graduates from the formal system, "We are true to our mandate that no learner [will be] left behind. With this new curriculum, we hope that the ALS learners would have the same quality of education that would avail them of the four exits of K to 12: higher education, employment, entrepreneurship, or middle level skills development.

BCD Director Jocelyn Andaya explained that the revision of the curriculum took two years because the office, as well as the former office handling the program, the Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS), undertook a comprehensive review

and revision process involving a series of consultations and workshops with curriculum experts in formal and non-formal education from within and outside the DepEd. The outputs of workshops were further reviewed by national and international consultants, DepEd subject experts, and ALS learning practitioners, supervisors, and other ALS stakeholders.

Comparable to the formal school curriculum, the ALS reflects the set of knowledge, skills, and competencies that learners should develop to meet the minimum requirement of basic education. The curriculum includes both the formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.

Andaya further explained the menu of possible learning interventions and pathways responsive to the needs, context, circumstances, and diversity of learners that the refined ALS Curriculum provides.

To erase the notion that ALS is an "inferior" curriculum, the new curriculum gives equivalency options and alternative programs similar to formal schooling, such that a learner can move and transfer seamlessly from one education system to another. For example, a learner can have formal education from Kindergarten to Grade 3, then shift to non-formal education for Grades 5 to 6, and reintegrate seamlessly into the formal system for Junior High School (JHS) because the essential skills are covered by both curriculum.

Assessments are in place to ensure readiness of learners for the next level of schooling. The use of flexible learner options helps ensure this fluidity and permeability from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The essential skills are the same for both

formal and non-formal curriculums and can be delivered through many means and strategies. These curriculums hold into account the prior learning of its learners, which is a very important feature in the ALS Curriculum, and reflect the indicators of functional literacy.

ALS utilizes learning modules. Each module is complete in itself and contains the description of the module, objectives, learning activities, and pre- and post-tests.

Each strand has a schematic diagram which describes the relationship of the parts to the whole strength.

For ALS to be truly parallel with the formal education system, same standards and competencies are set for both

## Accreditation papers of Uber and Grab missing

MANILA - The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has lost the accreditation papers of transport network companies (TNCs) Uber and Grab.

LTFRB board member and spokesperson Aileen Lizada said Friday, July 21, that the documents are nowhere to be found in their offices.

"Ever since we assumed office last year, we tried to locate the accreditation folders of both Uber and Grab. However after searching the office of the Executive Director and the Chairman, they are nowhere to be found," Lizada said in a text message to reporters.

According to the LTFRB official, the in the K to 12 Curriculum to achieve the goal of producing holistically developed Filipinos with 21st century skills.

Although the framework is organized in strands, the intention is that instruction should be created around topics of importance to learners. This is the basic difference between the K to 12 Curriculum and the ALS Curriculum. The topics should provide an opportunity for the integration of skills.

Andaya added that during the alignment and finalization process, many learning competencies from the formal school curriculum were adopted

in the ALS Basic Education Curriculum. There was significant expansion of the content scope to ensure alignment with the formal K to 12 school curriculum. The number of competencies included in the curriculum increased from 776 existing learning competencies to 2,046 enhanced learning competencies. (DepEd/RJB/SDL/PIA-NCR)

accreditation papers are supposed to be under the safekeeping of former executive director Roberto Cabrera but his staff said they were not holding the documents.

The LTFRB is set to convene its technical working group that will tackle various concerns such as accreditation and pending applications, accountability and dynamic pricing scheme.

In its order dated July 11, the board imposed a fine of PHP 5 million each for Uber and Grab for its violations and ordered them to deactivate more than 40,000 colorum Transport Network Vehicle Service (TNVS) drivers.

Starting July 26, Grab and Uber drivers without franchises will be fined PHP 120,000 and their vehicles will be impounded for three months should they continue to operate.

Both TNCs filed their separate motions for reconsideration (MR) Thursday to stop the LTFRB order which bans TNVS units without certificates of public convenience (CPC) or provisional authority (PA) to operate.

The filing of the MR temporarily puts on hold the order as the LTFRB seeks to resolve the appeal and come out with a ruling within the next 15 days. (ABP/PNA)

## Central Luzon's First... from page 6

MTCMC, and to bring-in the latest equipment like imaging equipment for diagnostic purposes.

"Our team aims to provide service and do something for the community. We also work to keep prices as affordable as possible to cater to patients who cannot afford treatment fee," Meng said.

He stressed that they will also focus on renovation works like investing in cancer and diagnostic state-of-the-art equipment.

For their part, MTCMC chief operating officer Rhais Gamboa said their international partnership with TE Asia Healthcare can now bring world class facilities in Central Luzon, particularly in Pampanga in their effort to bring health services in the community.

Gamboa said their partnership will provide additional services to people, particularly cancer patients in nearby provinces.

"Partnering with international institutions is always an aspiration of local entities because of exchange in knowledge and access to the new technology," he added.

MTCMC owner Vilma Caluag, in her speech, welcomed the partnership with TE Asia Healthcare as a dream come true to provide state-of-the-art services to cancer patients.

Caluag said patients in the region can now avail chemotherapy, radio therapy and PET scan at MTCMC once the facility opens within the next two years. (Marna Dagumboy/PNA)

## Kakampi Mo Ang Batas ...from page 5

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## Balog-balog Dam... from page 6

at kaligtasan ng mgatao". In a related development, a San Jose Municipal councilor Eliazar Dupitas disclosed that their municipality issued a "cease and desist order" to the NIA strongly opposing the construction of the dam.

"Pinipigilan namin ang construction ng Balog-balog dahil hindi nagko-comply ang NIA sa mga legal requirements. Halimbawa ang BBMP Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) ay 1992 pa. By law, expired na ang ECC after 5 years na hindi ito nagamit. Wala silang municipal construction permit, etc, etc. So, tingin namin, illegal ang construction ng dam".

"Parang ginagawa lang ang Balog-balog para magkaroon ng pagkakakitaan ang mga nasa gobyerno", also said source.

San Jose Mayor Jose "Pengoy" Yap, Jr, who is leading the opposition to the dam's construction cannot be reached for comment.

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# The PH economy under Duterte's watch (Year 1) - By: J.C. Punongbayan (www.rappler.com)

Only time will tell the impact of such sweeping policies on growth, inflation, and unemployment.

But before they cause any irreversible damage to our economy, their rationale and effectiveness should not escape scrutiny today.

With the State of the Nation Address (SONA) fast approaching, there's no better time to take stock of President Duterte's first year in office.

In this article, we focus on the economy's performance under his watch, as gleaned from key economic indicators.

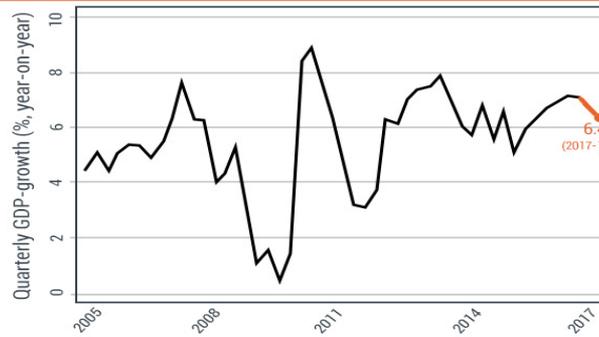
Note that the following trends are not wholly attributable to the President's policies. Many are influenced by domestic and foreign events that lie beyond the government's control. Some could even be the result of policies adopted long ago.

## 1) Robust but slower economic growth

**What happened:** The growth of Philippine GDP (or the value of total output) has slowed down from a peak of 7.1% in mid-2016. In March 2017 the economy grew by 6.4% – still respectable but weakest since October 2015, and lower than most analysts' forecasts. This slowdown was

borne by weaker spending in general, investment spending in particular. Net inflows of foreign direct investment (FDI) also took a hit recently.

(1) GROWTH HAS BEEN FALLING SINCE THE 3RD QUARTER OF 2016



Source: PSA. Period covered: 2005-1 to 2017-1. GDP figures in constant 2000 prices. The orange segment marks President Duterte's term.

**Where we are headed:** Philippine economic growth is likely to remain robust and exceed the average for ASEAN-5. But many think tanks have downgraded their growth forecasts to somewhere between 6.5% and 6.8% this year. The “golden age of infrastructure” promised by Dutertenomics is likely to boost growth in the short and medium runs. But with many of its projects yet to start in 2018, it will take some time for such boost to materialize.

## 2) Higher inflation, but still within target

**What happened:** Inflation (which measures how fast prices are rising) rose for 9 consecutive months since President Duterte took office. It peaked at 3.4% before declining in the past 3 months due to lower global oil prices. Despite these movements, inflation remains well within the Bangko

(2) INFLATION ROSE STEADILY BEFORE FALLING RECENTLY



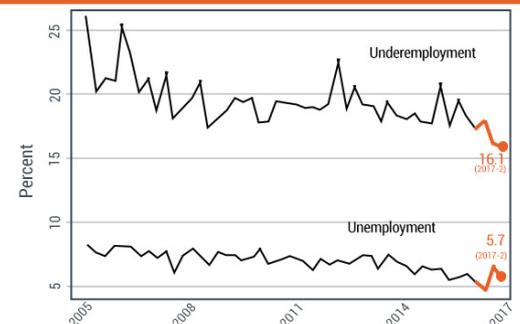
Source: PSA. Period covered: January 2005 to June 2017. The orange segment marks President Duterte's term.

Sentral's target of 3±1%.

**Where we are headed:** Economists anticipate a faster rise of prices in the coming months. First, with tax reform in the works, the new taxes on petroleum, automobiles, and sugary drinks are likely to bump up inflation, at least momentarily. Second, once Dutertenomics kicks in, it will likely boost aggregate demand and “overheat” the economy in the short run. In any case, the Bangko Sentral is there to temper runaway inflation.

## 3) Erratic unemployment, but record-low underemployment

(3) ERRATIC UNEMPLOYMENT, LOWEST UNDEREMPLOYMENT



Source: PSA. Period covered: April 2005 to April 2017. Due to typhoon Yolanda, data for January 2014 to January 2015 exclude Region VIII. Data for April 2014, July 2014, October 2014, and April 2015 exclude Leyte. April 2005 is the earliest comparable month. The orange segment marks President Duterte's term.

**What happened:** Many economists were concerned by the unusually high unemployment rate recorded in January 2017 – the highest in 9 quarters – before it went down to 5.7% in April. Meanwhile, underemployment (comprising those with work but still need or want more work) reached 16.1% – the lowest since the earliest comparable data in 2005.

**Where we are headed:** The steady Cont. on page 6

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