

# PH sovereignty was lost in ‘onerous’ water deals: PRRD

**MANILA** -- The Philippines “lost” its sovereignty when the government entered into alleged onerous water concession agreements with Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Co., President Rodrigo Duterte said on Thursday night.

Duterte lashed out anew over the deals made between state regulator Metropolitan

Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and the two water concessionaires in 1997, which were disadvantageous to the government and the public.

“Alam mo ‘yung contracts, ‘pag nabasa mo (You know the contracts, if you read them), our country surrendered everything to Manila Water and Maynilad. Everything includ-

ing the sovereignty,” Duterte said in a situation briefing he presided over in Legazpi City.

“We have lost the sovereignty. We bargained it away,” he added.

The President said that the owners of the two water concessionaires allegedly have committed “economic plunder” by making the government pay them billions of

pesos for damages.

“This is a classic case of economic plunder. Wala lang nakasilip nito e (Nobody noticed it),” Duterte said.

“Nilaro ninyo ‘yung Pilipino sa pera. Sabi ko (You played Filipinos with money. I said), I will pursue this. If this is the only thing that I can achieve in this --- in my administration, ito na lang. Bibirahin ko talaga (just this. I will run after them) economic plunder,” he added.

He also slammed the owners for making consumers shoulder the corporate income tax.

ents. It’s government money that was used to pay for your income tax),” he added.

**Non-bailable offense**

The Permanent Court of Arbitration in Singapore has ordered the government to pay Maynilad about PHP3.6 billion in damages for the company’s losses over the refusal to implement tariff adjustment for 2013 to 2017.

Recently, the court also asked the government to pay PHP7.4 billion to the Ayala-Manila Water as compensation for losses and damages from delayed water rate increases since 2015.

agreements.

**Drilon’s text message**

Duterte, meanwhile, bared that Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon has denied involvement in the crafting of the irregular water contracts.

Drilon earlier warned the President against reviewing the contracts because the government will end up paying billions.

“He (Drilon) sent a text to Bingbong (Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea), binasa niya kagabi sa akin (he read it to me last night),” Duterte said.

# PH labor market ‘vibrant’ under Duterte admin: Palace

**MANILA** -- Malacañang described the Philippine labor market under the Duterte administration as “vibrant” after a report from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed that more Filipinos were employed in October this year.

The result of the PSA’s latest Labor Force Survey (LFS) found that the employment rate was estimated at 95.5 percent in October, higher than 94.9 percent in the same month last year while the unemployment rate declined to a 14-year low at 4.5 percent from the 5.1 percent recorded in October 2018.

Underemployment, or having part-time jobs, dropped to 13 percent from 13.3 percent in 2018.

PSA said unemployment and underemployment rates in October were the lowest since 2005, the year that the employment metrics were adopted.

inclusive” due to Duterte’s independent foreign policy direction which allowed more foreign direct investments and ultimately provided Filipinos with more jobs.

He also assured that the government would provide better knowledge and skills training to the public as part of efforts to strengthen the labor market.

“As our domestic economy continues its upward trajectory, the Filipino people are assured that the Duterte administration will continue to strengthen the labor market with better knowledge and skills training to our people to equip them with tools for various kind of jobs that are in demand at present

and in the near future,” Panelo said.

Meanwhile, Panelo also welcomed how committed investments registered with the Board of Investments (BOI) breached its PHP1-trillion 2019 investment target as of October.

Trade Secretary and BOI Chair Ramon Lopez said the biggest investment approved by BOI in October was that of the Dito Telecommunity Corp., formerly Mislattel Consortium, the country’s third major telecommunications service provider.

Aside from telecommunications, investments in energy and manufacturing added to the increase in investments to some PHP1.1 trillion. (PNA)

# 'Tisoy' crop damage reaches P2-B mark

**MANILA** -- More than PHP2 billion worth of crops in five regions were damaged due to Typhoon Tisoy.

In its 6 a.m. update on Friday, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) said crop damage reached PHP2,096,564,965.50 in the Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Bicol, and Eastern Visayas regions.

The report signed and released by NDRRMC executive director Ricardo Jalad, said damaged were rice, corn, and high-value crop plantations, as well as fishery, livestock, and agriculture infrastructure.

Houses damaged by "Tisoy" were placed at 78,691, of which 10,765 were destroyed and 67,935 were damaged, in Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Bicol, and Eastern Visayas and Caraga.

The number of schools damaged was placed at 2,193 and these were recorded in the Cordillera, Caraga, Ilocos, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Bicol, Western Visayas, and Eastern Visayas regions. (PNA)



**GOV. REMULLA LED THE DISTRIBUTION OF ONLINE SCHOLARSHIP AND EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR CAVITEÑO YOUTH:** Governor Jonvic Remulla has been very optimistic on the impact that it could generate to the Caviteño youth as he led the distribution of online scholarship and educational assistance to 5,922 students on November 28, 2019 at the provincial gymnasium in Trece Martires City. More than 17.3 million were granted to the scholars who have shown perseverance on their education. On his speech, Governor Jonvic ensured the learners of the benefits that they can get on the modernization being done in the whole province as free wifi connectivity has been established. He emphasized that the innovation on information technology can help the youth on their studies, entrepreneurs for access in homebased business, and the entire community in terms of public safety. Aside from the good news on internet connectivity, he also promised that additional funds on scholarship and educational assistance will be implemented next year so that more students can avail of the educational assistance. Present during the distribution were Provincial Administrator for Community Affairs Alvin Mojica, Vice Chairman on Provincial Scholarship Committee Ben Golfo, PCLEDO head Atty Khervy Reyes, Amadeo Mayor John Redel Dionisio and some employees from the provincial government of Cavite. --- Gina Perlado Pereña