



ROMAN CATHOLIC PRELATE OF INFANTA
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NO TO KALIWA DAM, YES TO ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF WATER

“In the heart of this world, the Lord of life, who loves us so much, is always present. He does not abandon us, he does not leave us alone, for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. Praise be to him!” (Laudato Si, 245)

Our country has been blessed by God with an abundance of natural resources especially water, but for many factors, we are now faced with the concrete reality of managing our water especially for the next generation.

After listening to the strong opposition to the construction of the New Centennial Water Source Kaliwa Dam Project, we too express our opposition to the said project and strongly recommend to look for alternative sources to the Kaliwa Dam for the following reasons:

1. It will inundate the ancestral domain of the Dumagat-Remontados, uprooting them from the Sierra Madre where their ancestors lived for centuries enjoying a symbiotic relationship with the earth like the children to their mother. Undeniably, until now the indigenous people have not given an FPIC (Free Prior and Informed Consent) to the Kaliwa dam project as required by R.A. 8371.
2. Kaliwa dam to be constructed over the Infanta Fault will be a “sword hanging over the head” of 100,000 people living downstream the Kaliwa River. Etched in their memory is the 2004 flash flood that left 1,000 killed and over million worth of properties destroyed.
3. Climate change and its ill-effects are the ‘new normal’ that could no longer be ignored yet we do not know of any study made on climate and the Kaliwa dam. The ambivalent nature of climate change can cause random and sudden flooding. Japan with its highly advanced technology was devastated by the earthquake in 2011. The catastrophic collapse of the dam in Laos last July 25, 2018 has a message to all of us.
4. Global warming was 0.8 degree centigrade when Yolanda struck us with 315 kph winds. This year we have reached 1 degree centigrade. How much rainfall can this dam hold when another Yolanda comes in Quezon? About the landslides?

5. NEDA has kept the data on Kaliwa dam secret with the word “confidential” despite the much publicized Freedom of Information E.O. No. 2, series of 2016.
6. This project which is connected with the Laiban dam has been in the pipeline for 30 years, yet until now it does not even have the necessary Environment Compliance Certificate (ECC) as mandated by R.A. 7586.

In 2000 the World Commission on Dams (WCM) mandated by the World Bank and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) reported that while "dams have made an important and significant contribution to human development, and benefits derived from them have been considerable... in too many cases an unacceptable and often unnecessary price has been paid to secure those benefits, especially in social and environmental terms, by people displaced, by communities downstream, by taxpayers and by the natural environment."

Angat and IPO dams supply Metro Manila with 4,000 MLD of water but a big percentage of this is lost due to leaks. With the P18 Billion budget for constructing Kaliwa Dam, there can be alternative sources of water, many of which are being advocated now:

1. Launch a massive education campaign to convince the 13 million Metro Manila residents to learn “water management”. This would reduce water consumption significantly. This could be bad news for business but best for the environment.
2. Harvest rain water which flood us perennially and implement the pertinent provision of the National Building Code of the Philippines (RA 1096).
3. Fast track the recovery of the NRW (non-revenue water) through fixing leaks;
4. Rehabilitate the Pasig-Laguna River Basin which would cost only P13 Billion (estimated by Dr. Esteban Godilano, an environmental scientist).
5. Adopt the Singapore New Water technology which treats wastewater to become potable.
6. And most importantly, protect and expand our dwindling forests that serves as our largest watershed and these would refill our underground aquifers which are now over extracted.

All of us – government and the people - have to work together to resolve our water issues. Hence as pastors of the faithful we


1. Support a transparent dialogue with MWSS and NEDA and the stakeholders of the Kaliwa dam making available all the pertinent documents;
2. Support the initiative in Congress and Senate to make an inquiry into the Kaliwa Dam; and

3. Encourage all to “rethink how to use water” in terms of the demand-side and consumption and protect our environment.

World Commission on Dams sees that “the future for water and energy resources development lies with participatory decision-making, using a rights-and-risks approach that will raise the importance of the social and environmental dimensions of dams to a level once reserved for the economic dimension.”

Pope Francis warns that: “Caring for the ecosystems demands farsightedness, since no one looking for quick and easy profit is truly interested in their preservation.” (Laudato Si #36)

For the Clergy of the Prelature of Infanta:


+BERNARDINO C. CORTÉZ, D.D.
Bishop-Prelate of Infanta
26 July 2018
Feast of Sts. Anne and Joachim

With the support of the bishops in the Philippines:

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