

Meanwhile, Corazon T. Jimenez, Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Undersecretary and General Manager, also said that she expects the harvester to be permanently stationed in Pasig River to collect hyacinths that flow from the Marikina River.

“I thank the DOST and the MMDA for choosing the City of Taguig as their pilot site in the testing and demonstration of another innovative and breakthrough project,” Taguig City Mayor Lani Cayetano enthused. “This machine solves the problem of the tedious and time consuming manual harvesting water hyacinths that have clogged our waterways.”

Known locally as water lily, water hyacinth is infamous for clogging irrigations and water systems. As the plant multiplies rapidly, it depletes entire water reservoirs, damages fishing activities, and reduces biodiversity. It also holds vectors, or disease-carrying organisms, and hinders water transport.

Among the country’s hyacinth-infested waterways are the Liguasan Marsh in Central Mindanao, the Pasig River in Metro Manila, and Laguna de Bay.

On the other side of its otherwise notorious reputation, the water hyacinth can actually be a very

good raw material for novel products that can churn in income for individuals and communities.

Among these products are handicrafts, pieces of furniture, and tablewares.

Meanwhile, the DOST continues to develop several technologies that specifically use water hyacinth. These are biogas, animal feeds, and geotextiles that prevent soil erosion.

Also, the Philippine Textile Research Institute (DOST-PTRI) recently held a fashion show that showcases fabrics from water hyacinth fibers. (*George Robert Valencia III*) [Photos may be viewed at

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