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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service

Jerry Treñas welcomes Roy Cimatu to Iloilo City

Last updated Aug 27, 2020



Iloilo City could be hitting danger levels soon for COVID-19 infections, so these officials are coming to the rescue.

Mayor Jerry Treñas welcomed Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu and Presidential Adviser to the Visayas Sec. Mike Diño to the city after they were sent there by Malacañang to check on the local coronavirus situation. With him was Iloilo Governor Art Defensor, who needed to consult the province-wide status with these envoys.

“We discuss the rise of the cases in Iloilo City and the plans and guidelines set by the local government to ease the rise of the numbers. The 3,000 specimens which are backlogs of Iloilo City and the province shall be forwarded to Cebu to fast track the releasing of the results,” Treñas said.

Jerry Treñas on Wednesday

I, together with the COVID Team, met with Secretary Roy Cimatu of DENR, Presidential Adviser to the Visayas Sec. Mike Diño, IATF Deputy Chief Implementer for the Visayas Melquiades Feliciano, OPAV Assistant Secretary Jonji Gonzales, Regional Vice President of Philhealth Atty. Valerie Anne H. Hollero, and Gov. Arthur "Toto" Defensor of the province of Iloilo.

We discuss the rise of the cases in Iloilo City and the plans and guidelines set by the local government to ease the ris... See More

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Iloilo City covid response gets help

By THE MANILA TIMES

August 28, 2020

THE national government's coronavirus response team came to the rescue amid climbing confirmed cases in Iloilo City. Mayor Jerry P. Treñas met with coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) team led by Secretary Roy Cimatu, chief implementer for Covid response in Visayas, and Sec. Michael Lloyd Dino, presidential assistant for the Visayas during their visit on August 26. They discussed concerns on returning overseas Filipinos (ROFs) and locally stranded individuals (LSIs), support to the operations of the local government unit such as assistance to the Department of Health, medical personnel needs and other equipment requirements. A total of 349 active cases including 322 local cases and 27 ROFs/LSIs and authorized persons outside of residence as of August 27 were recorded in Iloilo City. Covid Team spokesman Jeck Conlu noted some 3,000 backlogs of Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) tests of Western Visayas Medical Center Sub-National Laboratory (WVMC-SNL). In its Advisory 12, WVMC-SNL stated that specimens received from Aug. 21-26 are pending. Releasing of RT-PCR tests encountered delays earlier following infection of several medical technologists manning the lab. Cimatu was first sent to Cebu when the cases there were increasing.

ILOILO CITY PIO

Military front-liners to help in W. Visayas' fight vs. Covid-19

By John Rey Saavedra August 27, 2020, 7:56 pm



HELPING FIGHT COVID-19. Presidential Assistant for the Visayas Sec. Michael Lloyd Dino (second, left) discusses with Bacolod City Mayor Evelio Leonardia (right, in blue-green shirt) the plan to bring Cebu City's best practices in fighting Covid-19 on Thursday (Aug. 27, 2020). Dino said the Central Command will send two teams of military medical front-liners to help both Bacolod and Iloilo Cities in their efforts to address the health crisis. *(Photo courtesy of Asec. Jonji Gonzales)*

CEBU CITY – This city's experience in handling the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic will be shared with the cities of Bacolod and Iloilo by assigning the chief response implementer here to Western Visayas, Sec. Michael Lloyd Dino said on Thursday.

"We are able to stabilize the Covid-19 cases in Cebu City. Our brothers and sisters in Bacolod and Iloilo need our help as their Covid-19 cases are going up. Gen. Mel (Melquiades) Feliciano will be staying in Bacolod and Iloilo to replicate our best practices," he told the Philippine News Agency in an interview.

Dino, head of the Office of the Presidential Assistant for the Visayas (OPAV), said Feliciano offered to set up an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) similar to the one that Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu established here to synchronize all efforts in the fight against Covid-19.

He also confirmed that Central Command chief, Lt. Gen. Roberto Ancan, committed to sending two teams of military front-liners to augment healthcare workers in different Covid-19 hospitals in Bacolod and Iloilo.

OPAV Assistant Secretary Jonji Gonzales said each team of military front-liners will be composed of one doctor, three nurses, and three aides.

Dino also said his office will take care of the logistical needs in setting up new systems in addressing the Covid-19 situation in the two key cities in Western Visayas.

"Gen. Feliciano will be in both Iloilo and Bacolod daily to assist the LGU (local government unit) in their fight against Covid-19," he said.

The decision to help Region 6's Covid-19 response came after the Department of Health (DOH) in Central Visayas reported the downward trend of Covid-19 cases in this city, citing the interventions done by Cimatu and Feliciano.

Feliciano is daily communicating with Mayor Edgardo Labella, other city officials, and barangay captains in finding solutions to the then rising number of coronavirus cases here.

Apart from establishing an EOC here, Cimatu and Feliciano also supervised the granular lockdown in selected villages as well as helped attend to the concerns of medical front-liners.

Dino brought Feliciano, Ancan, and Department of Health-7 Director Jaime Bernadas to meet with Bacolod City Mayor Evelio Leonardia to assess the Covid-19 situation and discuss Leonardia's appeal to Duterte to send an augmentation of doctors, nurses and medical technologists and help them cope with the pandemic. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1113624>

Visayas Covid-19 Czar goes to W. Visayas

August 28, 2020

AFTER institutionalizing Covid-19 response protocol in Cebu City, Inter-Agency Task Force Deputy Implementer for the Visayas for Covid Response Melquiades Feliciano is now bound for Western Visayas.

Feliciano, a retired general, was asked to help the cities of Iloilo and Bacolod in their response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) after new cases were logged in the two areas recently.

President Rodrigo Duterte sent Environment Secretary Roy Cimatú and Feliciano to Cebu City to address the increasing number of Covid-19 cases in the city in June.

Feliciano said he will be in Western Visayas by Tuesday, Sept. 1, 2020, but he will still be closely monitoring the Covid-19 situation in Cebu City.

“As of the latest monitoring, the transmission of the virus has slowed down. At times, tumataas (there was an increase) because of the close contacts of people found positive for the virus,” Feliciano said.

For the first time in more than two months, the number of active cases of Covid-19 in Cebu City fell below 1,000 on Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2020.

The Department of Health (DOH) 7 reported that as of Aug. 26, the city had just 626 active cases, which refer to patients who are still admitted in hospitals and quarantine facilities undergoing treatment.

The last time Cebu City had active Covid-19 cases numbering less than 1,000 was last June 5 when it had 995 active cases.

Conscious residents

Feliciano said Cebu City residents are more conscious now in observing the minimum health standards that helped in containing the spread of the

coronavirus.

He reminded Cebuanos to take extra effort in keeping themselves safe as there would be more movement if the city’s general community quarantine (GCQ) status is downgraded to modified GCQ. Cebu City is on GCQ status until Aug. 31.

Feliciano is confident that the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) can sustain the efforts and enforce the health measures properly. The EOC is monitoring the Covid-19 situation in Cebu City.

Recoveries

Cebu City had a total of 9,565 Covid-19 cases as of Aug. 26, of which 8,298 were recoveries and 641 were deaths.

This comes after the city logged 621 new recoveries, 37 new Covid-19 cases and 16 new deaths.

The active cases on Aug. 26 constituted 6.5 percent of the total cases. A tad higher was the city’s Covid-19 death rate, which was at 6.7 percent.

Cebu City’s Covid-19 recovery rate as of Aug. 26 was 86.75 percent.

16 barangays

The new Covid-19 cases came from 16 barangays in Cebu City, according to City Councilor Joel Garganera, EOC deputy chief implementer.

Garganera, in an online press conference on Aug. 27, disclosed that the EOC had logged 39 new cases as of Aug. 26, higher than the 37 new cases reported by the DOH 7.

Among the new cases were three police officers.

He said contact tracers were deployed to the barangays on the morning of Aug. 27.

At the time of the interview with Garganera, 23 households had been placed under lockdown.

Last Aug. 22, Garganera said 36 of the city's 80 barangays now had zero Covid-19 cases. He corrected himself yesterday, saying there were only 35 barangays.

Garganera said the number of barangays that have zero Covid-19 cases and transmission has now decreased to 33.

"This is our message. Everything is so fragile. Yesterday (referring to Aug. 25) we had a one-digit figure, and today we have 39 (new cases)," he said.

Workplace transmission

Garganera also said the result of the contact tracing activity conducted last Aug. 26 showed that workplace-related transmission rose to 51 percent.

Last Aug. 25, Cebu City had only 49 percent of workplace-to- household transmission.

However, Garganera emphasized the city is "flattening the curve," but that there are still "spikes within the flat area."

Garganera said the DOH 7 and the EOC, together with the Cebu City Health Department, are continually harmonizing their data to attain uniform

figures. They are now working on the remaining 151 variants of the EOC's and DOH's data.

He said there will be another round of data harmonization on Aug. 28.

Garganera said the EOC and the police department support the plan of Cebu City Mayor Edgardo Labella to still implement strict restrictions should the city be placed under modified GCQ in September. / **MVG, JLL**

Perspective
with Matè Espina

Game of the generals

A public health crisis will now be left at the hands of the generals as our city government deemed it wise to seek the assistance of the higher-ups in arresting the rising COVID cases in our locality.

Retired Gen. Roy Cimatu arrived yesterday along with Ret. Gen. Mel Feliciano. They were sent to oversee the Task Force COVID-19 in Cebu when it became the epicenter of the coronavirus in our country. With Negros Occidental placing second nationwide in COVID cases, the generals were deployed here, along with Presidential Assistant for the Visayas, Michael Dino, to assess our situation.

What we feared the most is now here. We probably never imagined months ago that what happened in Cebu can happen here. Alas, it is very real. And with our health system on the brink of collapse, there is nothing we can do but leave it up to the generals.

National IATF chair, Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. is expected to come in the coming days and with him will be medical personnel from the government and military to augment our dwindling medical teams in almost all hospitals here.

This is quite ironic and a slap on our faces because months ago, when the crisis in Cebu was at its worse, we thumbed down the call to send them medical augmentation. And now, here we are crying for help before our health system bogs down.

There are so many “ifs” and “whys” but at this point, though many cringe at the thought of giving it all up to the generals, I find their presence comforting especially since Cimatu was able to deliver Cebu out of quagmire. If the generals can make the people heed the lockdown, that is way better than what has been happening.

The biggest “if” that is thrown at our officials was ignoring the call of a two-week timeout by the medical community because of the strong opposition from the business sector. If they listened to the medical experts, will we be in this situation?

It’s all water under the bridge though and right now, I will take my chances with the generals even if it means eventually seeing military tanks roaming around our city if the rise in cases will not be arrested.

Will the national government give in to Mayor Bing Leonardia’s request for 20 doctors, 150 nurses and 30 medical technologists? I doubt so since Iloilo City also needs augmentation and they have far more cases than Bacolod. But any help will do.

We cannot also fault with the medical frontliners who either resigned or gone AWOL even if it initially seems preposterous considering we are in a public health crisis. However, I was dumbfounded to learn from Dr. Leonard Baraquia who was interviewed yesterday, that among the reasons was that health workers are not automatically covered for hospitalization if they get infected, unless you are under a government health facility.

Dr. Leonard said that regular nurses take home P480 daily wage plus a ten percent hazard pay of P48. If one gets stricken by COVID or other illness and gets hospitalized for three weeks or so, their salaries cannot even cover their total bill. No wonder many of them resigned.

My niece, a medical technologist, is among those who is contemplating resigning, or may have resigned already. As she pointed out, they have not even asked for increase in compensation but they were simply hoping they would be covered. Apparently not so and it is suicide for them to continue exposing themselves when they know that at the end of the day, they will not be covered.

Dr. Leonard said that this is not just a medical issue but a social one and psychologically as well, for those assigned in COVID isolation areas as it can “get depressing.” He also advocates for stratification of patients and preventive treatment rather than the planned mass testing.

The rationale being, where will you isolate those who tested positive? Where is the center for asymptomatic and for the symptomatic? Where will the mild or the moderate cases be placed? Dr. Leonard is right in saying that we have a low mortality rate and if we can prevent admission level for our COVID cases, we will be able to surpass this.

These ideas have been thrown out in the open by medical experts before. However, because our officials have to look at the macro view rather than just the medical aspect, their recommendations have been set aside.

And now, we are in this state wherein we are at the mercy of the generals. But again, if our city has reached the point that it cannot anymore address the crisis without intervention from the national government, I welcome the generals to play their game and may they be successful in curbing the spread here.

Tomorrow we go on lockdown. What was initially two days for Bacolod may now turn into four days based on the latest advisory. With or without the prayer resolution that the city took so much time to debate about, it is time to really pray hard. God bless us all.*

Trash traps put in place in 2 Caloocan creeks

Published August 27, 2020, 11:32 AM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has installed trash traps along two creeks in Caloocan City to complement the local government's efforts in keeping the city's waterways clean.



(DENR / MANILA BULLETIN)

Through its National Capital Region (NCR) office, the DENR installed the two trash traps in Tamban Creek and Lapu-Lapu Extension Canal.

It was formally turned over to the officials of Barangays 8, 12, and 16 of Caloocan City through a simple ceremony and virtual signing of memorandum of agreement officiated by the Manila Bay Site Coordinating and Management Office.

DENR-NCR Regional Executive Director Jacqueline Caanca pointed out the trash traps are simple engineering solutions to the problem of urban pollution.

“Trash traps, as the name indicates, traps or captures trash from our drainage systems, preventing them from flowing out into open seas or, in our case, Manila Bay,” Caanca explained.

This kind of waste management was proven to be extremely effective and hygienic too, with most barangays usually removing trash that clog these waterways by hand.

The DENR-NCR, in coordination with the city and municipal governments of Metro Manila and other stakeholders, has been installing both floating and permanent trash traps in strategic areas of the three major river systems of Metro Manila to prevent trash from reaching Manila Bay.

In 2019, the DENR collected 2,337,455.35 kilograms of wastes around the Manila Bay area through cleanups, trash boats, and trash traps.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/27/trash-traps-put-in-place-in-2-caloocan-creeks/>

Nestlé PH, CEMEX partner for waste management in Cebu

Published August 27, 2020, 2:30 PM

by [Bernie Cahiles-Magkilat](#)

Nestle Philippines and CEMEX Holdings Philippines have partnered to help waste management in Cebu, the Philippines' second largest city.

The partnership, forged just before the COVID-19 quarantine was imposed in the country, seeks to divert plastic waste laminates away from landfills in Cebu province by collecting and co-processing them in cement kilns.

The agreement is one of the initiatives of Nestlé Philippines under a long-term plastic waste collection and recovery program.

Nestlé Philippines Chairman and CEO Kais Marzouki and CEMEX Holdings Philippines President and CEO Ignacio Mijares Elizondo signed the agreement.

Under the partnership, Nestlé Philippines, through its program partners and authorized transportation provider, will collect post-consumer soft plastics, and pre-process and transport these to the APO Cement Corporation's plant in Tinaan, Naga City in Cebu. APO Cement, a subsidiary of CEMEX Holdings Philippines, will in turn co-process the post-consumer soft plastics.

The waste plastic laminates will be sourced from different cities and municipalities in Cebu.

In April 2018, Nestlé announced its global commitment to make 100 percent of its packaging recyclable or reusable by 2025. Nestlé's vision is to achieve a waste-free future with none of its packaging, particularly plastic, going to landfills, the oceans, or as litter.

"We welcome this new agreement and we thank CEMEX Holdings Philippines for making it possible for us to further intensify our actions to address plastic waste. We are happy to extend this initiative beyond the National Capital Region to Cebu in our efforts to reach various areas of the country," said Marzouki.

For his part, Elizondo said, "We're very excited to jumpstart our partnership with Nestlé, the largest food and beverage conglomerate in the world. We recognize and gladly support Nestlé's commitment to tackling plastic waste. CEMEX and Nestlé have a shared vision to make a significant difference and contribute to the economic, social and environmental growth of the Philippines. A green environment will always be at the center of CEMEX's 'Build A Nation Together' CSR efforts. Our advocacies are dedicated to uplift lives, communities, and protect the environment."

CEMEX is a leading global company in the construction materials industry that manufactures and distributes cement, ready-mix concrete and aggregates in more than 50 countries. CEMEX operations in the Philippines started 23 years ago in 1997. Today CEMEX Holdings Philippines, with its cement manufacturing subsidiaries Solid Cement and APO Cement and its brands APO, Island and Rizal, is one of the top cement producers in the country based on installed annual capacity.



Nestlé PH, CEMEX partner for waste management in

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As a method of waste disposal, co-processing is permitted by local environmental laws and regulations, and is practiced in various countries. In the Philippines, cement kiln co-processing is preferable to landfilling and physical treatment, since energy and minerals from waste are almost completely used up.

In 2018 CEMEX won its second Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) Award for its waste management solutions and for the Tamang Segregasyon Para Sa Kalikasan program services that are being offered to communities across the CALABARZON region. “Even as we are engaged in finding new packaging solutions, we recognize the urgent need to divert waste, especially plastics, from landfills, waterways and oceans. Thus we at Nestlé Philippines are actively pursuing our partnership with CEMEX and other stakeholders who share our journey toward a waste-free future,” said Marzouki.

Army, DENR ink pact to beef up coastal, marine protection

By Jason De Asis August 27, 2020, 10:15 pm



PACT SIGNED. Aurora Governor Gerardo Noveras delivers his message during the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Philippine Army and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Wednesday (Aug. 26, 2020). The MOU intends to beef up efforts on the coastal and marine protection in the province. *(Photo by Jason de Asis)*

BALER, Aurora – The Philippine Army’s 91st Infantry Battalion and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) have teamed-up to beef up the implementation of the law on the coastal and marine protection.

Lt. Col. Reandrew P. Rubio, commanding officer of 91st IB and Alfredo B. Collado, provincial environment and natural officer, led on Wednesday the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that would strengthen efforts in protecting the coastal and marine ecosystems.

The MOU also covers the mutual cooperation in the development support and disaster relief efforts.

“We will continue our mandated duty to help and do everything that is right with good and effective governance and good management to strengthen the implementation of law for peace, rescue and relief efforts and the protection and conservation of our natural resources,” Rubio said.

The event was highlighted by the donation of a motorized banca by the DENR to the 91IB.

Governor Gerardo A. Noveras, who witnessed the MOU signing, said that he is very grateful to be invited to the noble activity.

“I hope the good relationship of different government agencies will remain and will get stronger to maintain peace and development in our province. I am extending my sincerest thanks to the Philippine Army for being industrious and really working on a way to develop what they want to do for the people,” Noveras said.

Collado, for his part, cited the importance to secure and protect the province especially in times of disasters and emergencies.

The activity was also witnessed by the personnel of Philippine National Police and the Philippine Coast Guard. **(PNA)**

PAGBANGON DAHIL SA CACAO TREE



August 28, 2020 @ 12:17 AM 6 hours ago

HABANG isinusulat ito ng inyong Agarang Serbisyo Lady, nasa 698 na ang naitatalang positibong kaso ng Coronavirus Disease 2019 sa Cagayan Valley Region, pangalawa sa pinakamababa sa mga rehiyong bumubuo sa Luzon area kabilang ang Metro Manila.

Saklaw nito ang mga lalawigan ng Batanes na hanggang ngayon ay 'zero case' pa, ang Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya at ang Quirino na nakapagtala lang ng kauna-unahang kaso nito lang August 10, 2020.

Pero pagdating sa ekonomiya, pangalawa ang Region II sa may pinakamataas na unemployment rate sa buong bansa na nasa 27.3% o katumbas ng 2.34 milyong manggagawa na nawalan ng trabaho.

Malaki ang epekto sa mga pangunahing tourist destination na Peñablanca protected landscape and seascape, Paluai Island, Anguib beach, Marlboro Hills, Northern Sierra Madre National Park at marami pang iba.

Pero makalipas ang halos limang buwan ay unti-unti nang bumabangon ang mga kababayan natin sa Cagayan Valley Region, isa na rito ang Green Valley Bical-Baliuag Upland Farmers Association (GVBUFA), isang people's organization na nakabase sa Barangay Baliuag, Peñablanca, Cagayan, na siyang nangangalaga at benepisyaryo ng 105-hectare plantation ng cacao at may tanim ding saging bilang hedgegrow o natural barrier.



Kamakailan ay personal na binisita ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources regional executive director of Region II Gwendolyn Bambalan ang plantation at nakipag-usap sa GVBUFA sa pagunguna ng chairperson nitong si Editha Manuel.

Si RED Bambalan ay nitong June 2020 lamang naitalaga sa nasabing rehiyon ni DENR secretary Roy Cimatu. Nagsilbi siyang assistant regional director for management services of the National Capital Region, naging ARD for technical services of region I, regional technical director for protected area, wildlife and coastal zone management of MIMAROPA region (Mindoro island, Marinduque, Romblon at Palawan) at officer-in-charge of the finance and administrative division, Forest Management Bureau.

Taong 2017 nabuo ang partnership sa pagitan ng DENR regional office at ang GVBUFA sa ilalim ng National Greening Program.

Limang taon bago lumago at magbunga ang cacao tree (*Theobroma cacao*) na mahalagang sangkap sa paggawa ng chocolate liquor, cocoa solids, cocoa butter at ang paborito ng maraming chocolate.

Taon-taon, nasa 5.3 million cocoa beans ang nasa international market. Ang Pilipinas ay mayroon lang 20,000 hanggang 25,000 ektaryang taniman ng cacao na mayroong 10,000 hanggang 12,000 metrikong toneladang produksyon.

Bukod sa kita mula sa pagsasaka, karagdagang kita pa ang naibibigay ng mga saging na ginagawa nilang banana chips na naibebenta sa pamilihan.

House approves tree planting measures on final reading

Published August 27, 2020, 10:47 PM

by [Ben Rosario](#)

The House of Representatives approved on third and final reading two bills making tree planting mandatory for expectant parents and graduating students.

House Bills 6930 and 6931 registered unanimous votes when presented for third and final reading on Wednesday.

Both bills have previously been passed in the Lower House in the previous Congress but failed to get Senate approval.

HB 6930 requires parents to plant two trees for every child born to them. This bill consolidated four separate bills filed by Reps. Olga Kho (PDP-Laban, Masbate) and Tyrone Agabas (NUP, Pangasinan), among other authors.

Meanwhile, Reps. Rufus B. Rodriguez (CDP, Cagayan de Oro City), Joel Mayo Almario (PDP-Laban, Davao Oriental) and Mark Go (NPC, Baguio City) are among the authors of HB 6931 that mandates graduating students to plan at least two tree saplings as a prerequisite for graduation.

HB 6931 covers students in the elementary, high school and college levels of education.

The two bills were endorsed for immediate approval by the Special Committee on Reforestation chaired by Apayao Rep. Elias Bulut Jr.

Kho said the Family Tree Planting bill encourages tree planting as part of the family's concern and responsibility.

HB 6930 seeks to develop awareness of Filipinos to climate change and environmental concerns.

"This bill makes the basic social unit an important and powerful magnet of change against the threat of global warming," said Kho.

HB 6931 or the "Graduation Legacy for Reforestation Act" provides that planting 10 trees should be a mandatory requirement for graduation.

Under the bill, students are required to plant trees in areas designated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources or the concerned local government unit where the school is located.

Almario said the bill aims to promote and pursue environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation and food security.

"Through this bill, the boundless energy of the youth will be maximized while allowing them to leave a legacy for the environment," Almario explained.

"More importantly, it will instill the importance of caring for the natural resources early on in life and encourage younger children to likewise take on this social responsibility of caring for the ecosystem," he added.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/27/house-approves-tree-planting-measures-on-final-reading/>

Panukalang mandatoryong pagtanim ng tig-2 puno bawat estudyante, lusot sa Kamara



August 27, 2020 @ 6:23 PM 12 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Pasado na sa ikatlo at huling pagbasa sa House of Representatives ang dalawang panukala na nagoobliga ng pagtanim ng puno.

Sa botong 222 Yes at walang pagtutol ay lusot na ang House Bill 6930 o “Family Tree Planting Act”, layon ng panukala na obligahin ang mga magulang sa bansa, kasal man o hindi, na magtanim ng dalawang puno sa bawat sanggol na ipapanganak.

Ang mga puno ay itanim sa kanilang mismong bakuran ng tahanan o kaya ay sa designated area sa kanilang mga barangay.

“These trees shall be planted within the premises of their own home or in the area to be designated by the Barangay Council where they reside, with the approval of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR),” nakasaad sa panukala.

Samantala, ang House Bill 6931 ay sinang-ayunan din ng 224 mambabatas, sa ilalim nito ang mga graduating senior high school at college students ay kailangan na magtanim ng tig-dalawang puno bilang bahagi ng kanilang civic duty para protektahan ang kalikasan.

Sa ilalim ng Graduation Legacy for Reforestation Act ay pre requisite ang pagtanim ng puno bago makagraduate ang isang estudyante.

Inaatasan naman sa panukala ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at ang mga Local Government Units na tukuyin ang mga lugar na maaaring pagtaniman ng puno ng mga estudyante. **Gail Mendoza**



Fight rages on to save centuries-old giant Philippine rosewood tree

by [Bong S. Sarmiento](#) on 26 August 2020



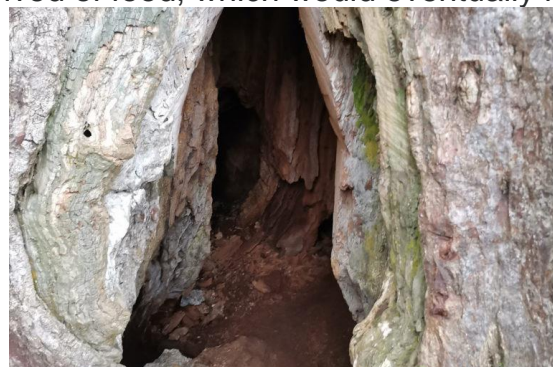
- Officials in the southern Philippines have decided to cut a centuries-old Philippine rosewood tree (*Petersianthus quadrialatus*) that's believed to be the oldest and tallest of its species.
- The decision comes after assessments showed extensive fungal rot and termite damage in the trunk, presenting a risk of the 56-meter (184-foot) tree falling over onto a nearby highway.
- Experts, however, say there is still hope for the giant tree through a regimen of tree surgery, fungicide treatment and regular checkups, which they accuse officials of failing to do in the past.

MINDANAO, Philippines — For centuries, a giant Philippine rosewood tree has stood as an iconic landmark along a stretch of the Pan-Philippine Highway that runs outside the rustic southern town of San Francisco.

Known locally as *toog*, and formally as *Petersianthus quadrialatus*, this particular specimen is believed to be 300 years old, dating back to the Spanish colonization of the Philippines. It survived a strong typhoon in 1942 here in the village of Alegria in what is today the province of Agusan del Sur, on the southern island of Mindanao, and is considered the oldest and tallest tree of its species: it stands at 56 meters (184 feet), the height of a 13-story building, and its diameter close to the base is nearly 4 meters, or 12 feet, or about the length of the average car.

It holds significant cultural value and has become an iconic representative of a species that is losing ground in the Philippines. Threatened by illegal logging and *kaingin*, the traditional practice of slash-and-burn agriculture, the *toog* is included in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species due to habitat loss and unsustainable harvest. Its sturdy ruby-tinged wood is prized for making furniture and musical instruments, among others.

While it has survived the test of time and the fury of nature — from floods to typhoons to earthquakes — the Alegria *toog* tree could soon become a thing of the past: it's threatened with a slow death after officials decided to cut its upper half. Without its crown, where the leaves thrive, the tree would be deprived of food, which would eventually kill it.



The decay of the Philippine rosewood in San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, Philippines led to a hole large enough for a person to enter. DENR CARAGA file photo



Fight rages on to save centuries-old giant Philippine

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The decision to slash the height of the Alegria toog came after experts confirmed that it's infested with fungi and termites. Having been left unchecked and untreated over time, the problem has led from a small cavity in the trunk to a hole large enough for a person to enter.

In April 2019, Marcelina Pacho, a pathologist and tree surgeon who assessed the health of the Alegria toog, noted that a basal cavity measuring 1.5 meters (5 feet) wide and 3 meters (10 feet) high had formed at its base.

"The presence of few mycelia, the vegetative part of fungus, and the fungal odor are indicators or signs of wood decay," said Pacho, who was formerly associated with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB). "Rotting wood can be crumbled as well as the presence of moisture further indicated that the decay is in the advance and active phase."

Pacho didn't recommend that the tree be cut down; instead, she suggested a course of fungicide treatment and the extraction of the decaying wood, which could then be filled in with concrete mix reinforced with gravel, cinder block and rebar.

Following Pacho's assessment, the ERDB's Forest and Wetland Research, Development and Extension Center (FWRDEC) conducted a biomechanics and structural analysis of the Alegria toog.



Photos of the inner trunk of the Alegria toog tree, a Philippine rosewood in San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, Philippines, showing decay. DENR CARAGA file photo

The agency reached a different conclusion, recommending the cutting down of the tree due to the high risk it posed to residents, commuters and surrounding properties. (It stands 9 meters, or about 30 feet, from the highway.) In its findings released in July last year, the FWRDEC said the trunk structure was continuously deteriorating due to mycelial infection and only two of its eight buttresses were holding it steady.

"The mechanical and structural strength and stability of the toog tree has already been compromised," said Conrado Marquez, the FWRDEC head.

The decision to cut down the Alegria toog triggered an outcry from local residents, conservationists and tree lovers across the country. It's considered sacred by the Indigenous Manobo tribe, who believe it houses the spirits of their ancestors. Over time, it has also become a major tourism draw for the town of San Francisco.

In September 2019, the iconic tree was saved from being cut down after officials yielded to public appeals to allow treatment for the decaying tree.

But almost a year later, the local government said it hadn't seen any improvement in the toog's health and scheduled it to be cut down, for a second time, on Aug. 7. Again, the decision sparked protests that forced officials to suspend the activity and call for a stakeholders' dialogue.

Fight rages on to save centuries-old giant Philippine

August 28, 2020

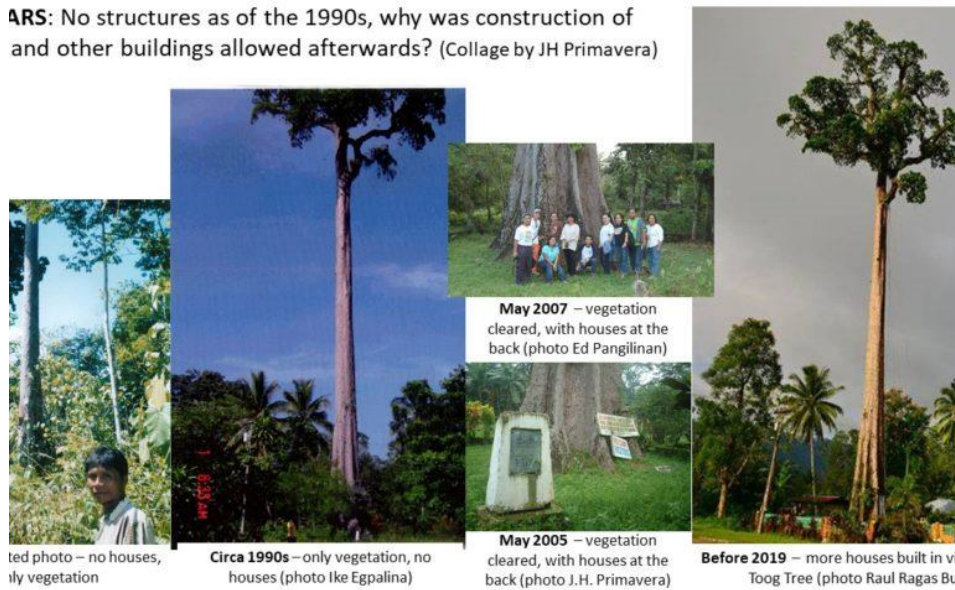
TITLE: rosewood tree

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TOOG TREE *Petersianthus quadrialatus* OF AGUSAN THROUGH

AGUSAN DEL SUR: No structures as of the 1990s, why was construction of houses and other buildings allowed afterwards? (Collage by JH Primavera)



Collage courtesy of Jurgenne Primavera

By Aug. 10, officials headed by Solomon Rufila, the mayor of San Francisco, and members of the municipal council, following the stakeholders' consultative meeting, changed tack. Instead of cutting down the tree entirely, they decided to reduce its height by cutting off the top half, including its leaf canopy.

Leaves produce food for their host plant through photosynthesis, so scalping the crown of the Alegria toog is a sure death sentence, albeit a slow and painful one, according to scientists and officials. Amando Palijon, a renowned tree surgeon and former forestry professor at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), said the tree would gradually die if the upper portion is cut, according to a report by news portal MindaNews.

"If you notice the tree is devoid of lateral branches from the base to the general crown level which is normal architecture of the tree," Palijon said. "This means that this will not assure the tree will produce sprouts that will develop into branches that will subsequently form the crown that is needed to make it function physiologically."

Lawrence Tinampay, a spokesman for the San Francisco municipal government, told Mongabay that officials had decided to trim the tree — the actual amount to be cut is still unknown — so the public can still see the legacy tree (or at least its trunk) at its exact location as part of a municipal landmark.

He agreed with the assessment that because the leaves of the tree, all on the topmost portion, would be cut off, the tree would eventually die.



DENR personnel checking the Philippine rosewood tree in San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, Philippines. DENR CARAGA file photo



Fight rages on to save centuries-old giant Philippine

August 28, 2020

TITLE: rosewood tree

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“The toog tree will be cut off to a considerable height that it will no longer pose a danger to the lives of residents and commuters, and their properties,” Tinampay said. He denied allegations the government had been negligent about conserving the tree. The “time has come to choose between safety and heritage, and with the decision to cut it to a considerable height, local officials have achieved both ends,” he said.

Jurgenne Primavera, a renowned marine scientist and native of Agusan, blamed officials for their failure to curb the deterioration of the tree, which the municipal council recognized as a “protected tree” through a 2012 ordinance. “It’s a result of poor governance,” she told Mongabay.

Primavera, a pioneering member of Philippine Native Tree Enthusiasts, a social media group with some 14,000 members, said that up until the 1990s, there was still a wide swath of vegetation surrounding the tree. In 2005, the community had begun to encroach on the area as people cleared away the vegetation to build their houses, she added.

Leonilo Tandog Jr., the San Francisco disaster risk reduction officer, said there are proposals to retrofit the tree with a support structure that will not only prevent it from falling over but will also double as viewing decks to keep the tourists coming to San Francisco. The town offers views of Mount Magdiwata and Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary, a protected area spanning 15,000 hectares (37,000 acres) of complex freshwater marshes and watercourses with numerous shallow lakes and ponds.

But “we cannot compromise public safety,” Tandog told Mongabay.



Toog tree (*Petersianthus quadrialatus*). Image by Albert Balbutin/Haribon Foundation

The local consortium Save the TOog tree Please (STOP), headed by Mauro Bravo Jr., urged the government not to cut the Alegria toog and instead allow the recommended scientific treatment to save it. The group called for a third-party scientific reassessment of the state of the health of the Alegria toog.

Primavera said she believes the tree can still be rehabilitated, citing the case of a *bitaog* tree (*Calophyllum inophyllum*) in the town of Magallanes, in neighboring Agusan del Norte province. Declared a Philippine centennial tree in 1998, the bitaog’s two big branches broke down due to fungal rot in June 2017.

Through a regimen of tree surgery, fungicide treatment and regular checkups, the bitaog tree is still alive today. Primavera said officials in San Francisco should do the same for the Alegria toog. “The toog tree can be saved, no need to cut it,” she said, adding it’s also important to conduct further studies to improve its physical and structural stability.

Officials have not yet set a date for cutting the tree “to a safe height,” pending further instruction from the DENR. For now, the STOP local consortium and Filipino tree conservationists say they’re committed to keeping the flame of protest glowing to save the centuries-old Alegria toog from being destroyed.

Source: <https://news.mongabay.com/2020/08/fight-rages-on-to-save-centuries-old-giant-philippine-rosewood-tree/>

Cops seize hot logs hidden in bunches of bananas in Surigao Sur

By Alexander Lopez August 27, 2020, 8:38 pm



ILLEGALLY-CUT LUMBER. A total of 1,984 board feet of ironwood lumbers worth PHP218,240 are seized by police and Department of Environment and Natural Resources personnel at a quarantine checkpoint in Barangay Payasan, Lianga, Surigao del Sur, on Thursday morning (Aug. 27, 2020). Authorities arrested the driver and the helper of the truck carrying the illegally-cut forest products. *(Photo courtesy of PRO-13 Information Office)*

BUTUAN CITY – Authorities seized on Thursday illegally-cut "magkuno"(ironwood) lumbers at a quarantine checkpoint in Lianga, Surigao del Sur.

Maj. Renel E. Serrano, the Public Information Officer of Police Regional Office in Caraga Region (PRO-13), said police operatives from Surigao del Sur 1st Provincial Mobile Force Company, the Lianga Municipal Police Station (LMPS) and personnel from the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office of Lianga (CENRO-Lianga) flagged down on Thursday morning a Fuso aluminum wing van truck to check its cargoes.

Serrano said the driver of the truck refused at first but when the van was opened, it turned out that illegal logs were hidden inside covered with crates and bunches of bananas.

"The operating officers arrested the driver and the helper of the truck after their failure to present pertinent papers on the loaded logs," Serrano said in a statement Thursday.

Brig. Gen. Joselito T. Esquivel Jr., PRO-13 director, identified the two suspects as Wendil Barrientos Marato, 29, truck driver, and Jesmei Tonggian Macasan, 19, a helper. Both are residents of Barangay Lapasan, Cagayan de Oro City.

A total of 1,984 board feet of ironwood lumbers worth PHP218,240 were confiscated by authorities, he said.

"This success is attributed to the combined efforts of the police, the DENR, and the community in protecting and conserving the forests in the Caraga region. This is also a manifestation of our strengthened preventive measures against environmental destruction," Esquivel said.

He added that the suspects will be facing charges in violation of Presidential Decree No. 705, otherwise known as the Forestry Code of the Philippines.

In a separate interview Thursday, Herzon Gallego, information officer of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Caraga Region (DENR-13), said the suspects will also face charges of qualified theft for stealing forest products inside government-owned timberland.

Gallego sai DENR-13 Regional Executive Director (RED) Hadjah Didaw D. Piang-Brahim has extended her commendation to the police and CENRO personnel who performed their tasks while manning the said quarantine checkpoint.

"RED Piang-Brahim has alerted all DENR field enforcement personnel to intensify their monitoring activities to thwart attempts by unscrupulous persons to transport illegal forest products through wing vans posing as carriers of foods with markings as food trucks," Gallego said.

The confiscated forest products were turned over to CENRO-Lianga for proper disposition while the suspects are now under the custody of the Lianga police for the filing of charges. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1113627>

Suspect selling rare agarwood chips nabbed in Fairview

Published August 27, 2020, 3:35 PM

by [Jeffrey Damicog](#)

A person selling wood chips sourced from an endangered tree species was arrested in Quezon City by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Tuesday.

NBI Officer-In-Charge Director Eric Distor identified the arrested suspect as Rafael Fabia.

Distor said Fabia was arrested during an entrapment operation conducted by agents of the NBI's Environmental Crime Division (NBI-EnCD) in North Fairview, Quezon City.

During the operation, NBI-EnCD operatives posed as buyers seeking to buy P40,000 worth of wood chips from the suspect.

“The operatives seized 6.46 kilograms of Agarwood chips with an estimated market value of Php 1,055,557.54,” the NBI said in a statement.

The NBI said Argarwood is “a forest product categorized as an endangered species.”

The Bureau said the operation was conducted after receiving intelligence information about a group trading Agarwood in North Fairview.

Following his arrest, the suspect was presented for inquest before the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office for violating Presidential Decree 705 or the Forestry Reform Code of the Philippines as amended by Executive Order 277; Republic Act 7161, the Wildlife Forestry Code of the Philippines; and RA 9147, Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.

The suspect faces fines amounting to P10,555,575.40 which represents the market value, forest charges and environmental damages of the forest products possessed and transported without permit.

NBI arrests trader plying endangered wood species

Published 5 hours ago on August 28, 2020 01:00 AM

By [Alvin Murcia](#)



The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has in its custody an individual it caught plying Agarwood, an endangered wood species, Tuesday in North Fairview, Quezon City.

NBI officer-in-charge Eric Distor identified the suspect as Rafael Cericos Fabia, who was found to be in possession of some 6.46 kilograms of Agarwood chips with a total estimated value of P1,055,557.54 during the arrest.

Distor noted that the operation was stemmed from an intelligence report received by the agency's Environmental Crime Division (EnCD) regarding a group of individuals involved in the selling of Agarwood, mainly used as an ingredient in perfume making, in the said locality.

NBI-EnCD agents immediately conducted surveillance at the area identified by their informant and were able to get hold of Fabia's contact number enabling them to establish communication for a possible buy-bust operation.

Operatives on 25 August 2020 contacted the suspect and agreed to buy Agarwood chips worth P40,000.

With the deal sealed, NBI agents, along with personnel from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources -Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB) and DENR-National Capital Region (DENR-NCR), on the same day proceeded to their set meeting place for the entrapment operation.

Two undercover agents posed as buyers, contacted the suspect informing him of their exact location and upon reaching the agreed area for the transaction, the undercover agents spotted a man waving, later identified as Fabia.

The suspect instructed the "buyers" to park the van inside the compound and showed them a bulk of wood chips confirmed to be Agarwood.

This signaled the operatives to swoop down on the compound and effect the arrest on Fabia.

Distor stated that the estimated environmental fee which represents the market value, forest charges and environmental damages of the forest products possessed and transported without permit is P10,555,575.40 million, which is ten times its market value.

Fabia was presented before the Office of the City Prosecutor of Quezon City for inquest proceedings on 26 August 2020, for violation of Section 77 (formerly Section 68) of P.D. 705, as amended by EO 277 and RA 7161, otherwise known as "Wildlife Forestry Code of the Philippines; and violation of Section 27 (e) and (f) of RA 9147 otherwise known as "Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act."

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/08/28/nbi-arrests-trader-plying-endangered-wood-species/>

Man nabbed for selling agarwood in QC

By Benjamin Pulta August 27, 2020, 3:44 pm



AGARWOOD SEIZED. Agents of the NBI Environmental Crime Division (ENCD) seize 6.4 kgs. of agarwood from suspect Rafael Fabia in an entrapment in Barangay North Fairview, Quezon City on Tuesday (Aug. 25, 2020). Agarwood, also known as ‘the wood of the Gods’, is classified as an endangered wood species. *(Photo courtesy of NBI)*

MANILA – The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on Thursday announced the arrest of a man engaged in selling agarwood which is an endangered wood species.

In a statement, NBI officer-in-charge (OIC)-director Eric Distor said Rafael Fabia was arrested in an entrapment by the bureau's Environmental Crime Division (ENCD) on Tuesday, in response to information regarding a group of individuals in North Fairview, Quezon City allegedly trading and in possession of agarwood.

ENCD operatives contacted Fabia and agreed to buy agarwood worth PHP40,000.

On the same day, NBI-ENCD together with the Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources proceeded to the target area.

Two undercover agents posed as buyers and were taken by Fabia inside a compound and showed them a bulk of wood chips confirmed to be Agarwood.

The operatives nabbed Fabia and seized 6.46 kgs. of agarwood chips with an estimated market value of over PHP1 million.

Agarwood, also known as ‘the wood of the Gods’, has a variety of uses in Asia from incense for religious ceremonies, perfume, medicinal wine in Korea and China.

The wood is also processed and either turned into oil or chips ground into powder which is used as the raw material for incense making or traditional medicine for asthma, hypertension, hepatitis, among other ailments.

Fabia underwent inquest proceedings at the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office on Wednesday, for violation of Section 77 (formerly Section 68) of Presidential Decree. 705, as amended by Executive Order 277 and Republic Act (RA) 7161, otherwise known as “Wildlife Forestry Code of the Philippines; and violation of Section 27 (e) and (f) of RA 9147 otherwise known as “Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act”. **(PNA)**



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NBI ARRESTS 1 FOR SELLING ENDANGERED WOOD SPECIES

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) today announced the arrest of an individual engaged in the selling Agarwood which is a forest product categorized as an endangered species.

NBI Officer-in-Charge (OIC) Director Eric B. Distor identified the subject as Rafael Fabia y Cericos.

OIC Director Distor said the operation stemmed from an intelligence report received by the NBI - Environmental Crime Division (NBI-EnCD) regarding a group of individuals in North Fairview, Quezon City allegedly trading and in possession of "Agarwood". NBI-EnCD agents conducted a surveillance in North Fairview, Quezon City, where the informant gave the operatives the contact number of the Subject to establish communication for a possible buy-bust operation.

On August 25, 2020, NBI-EnCD operatives contacted the subject and agreed to buy Agarwood worth Php 40,000.00. Thus, on the same day, NBI-ENCD together with DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB) and DENR-National Capital Region (DENR-NCR) proceeded to the target area to hatch an entrapment operation. Two (2) undercover agents posed as buyers and called the subject and informed him of their whereabouts. Upon arrival in the street where the transaction would take place, the undercover agents spotted a man waving, who was later identified as Subject Fabia. The subject instructed the undercovers to park the van inside the compound and showed them a bulk of wood chips confirmed to be Agarwood. The joint operatives immediately swooped in on the compound and apprehended Subject Fabia. The operatives seized 6.46 kilograms of Agarwood Chips with an estimated market value of Php 1,055,557.54. OIC Director Distor stressed that the estimated Environmental Fee which represents the market value, forest charges and environmental damages of the forest products possessed and transported without permit is Php10,555,575.40, which is ten times its market value.

Subject Fabia was presented before the Office of the City Prosecutor of Quezon City for inquest proceedings on August 26, 2020, for violation of Section 77 (formerly Section 68) of P.D. 705, as amended by E.O. 277 and R.A. 7161, otherwise known as "Wildlife Forestry Code of the Philippines; and violation of Section 27 (e) and (f) of R.A. 9147 otherwise known as "Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act".

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Otters in Turtle Islands produce 3 pups

By Teofilo Garcia, Jr. August 27, 2020, 7:59 pm



ISLAND OTTERS. The smooth-coated otters surprised residents in the municipality of Turtle Islands, Tawi-Tawi when they surfaced from their den together with three pups. The pair of otters was first seen on the island on May 14. *(Photo courtesy of the Turtle Islands Municipal Police Station)*

ZAMBOANGA CITY – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said the pair of smooth-coated otters (*Lutrogaleperspicillata*) reported in May in Turtle Islands, Tawi-Tawi, surprised the residents last week when they emerged from their den accompanied by three pups.

DENR-Region 9 executive director Crisanta Marlene Rodriguez said it was the first time that the otters, locally known as “HanjingLaut”, were seen outside their normal area of distribution.

“Studies indicate that smooth-coated otters are originally from Malaysia and Indonesia and it is just surprising to know that they have now reached Taganak Island,” Rodriguez said in a statement Thursday.

The municipality of Turtle Islands, called Taganak by locals, is located within the Sulu Sea at the south-western tip of the country and at the edge of the international treaty limits separating the Philippines and Malaysia.

Rodriguez said Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary (TIWS) Protected Area Superintendent Minda Bairula reported to her that the residents spotted the otters with their pups frolicking in the sand.

Bairula said it was on July 31 that a resident living near the shoreline reported to their office that she heard sounds of newly-born animals coming from the den of the otters.

It was only on August 17 that a Protected Area Management Office (PAMO) staff spotted the baby otters coming out from the den.

Rodriguez said with the help of the Turtle Island policemen, DENR personnel managed to video-document the parent otters and the pups playing along the shoreline.

“I have also instructed Bairula, who is on site, to record the biology, habits, and behavior of the otters and continue coordinating with our office as we are also consulting with experts from the Biodiversity Management Bureau and the International Union on the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Otter Specialist Group,” Rodriguez said.

She also said her office is constrained from sending technical experts to Turtle Islands to conduct further studies on the otters because of the limited trips, transportation, and quarantine protocols due to the prevailing coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic.

The residents in Turtle Islands first reported the sighting of two smooth-coated otters playing in their shoreline on May 14, which stirred curiosity as it was the first time that they have seen the animals on their island.

Turtle Islands or Taganak is part of the Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary, which is Southeast Asia’s largest marine turtle sanctuary and a declared protected area under Republic Act 11038, otherwise known as the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Law. **(PNA)**

TINGNAN: Pares ng 'Hanjing Laut' otter, 3 pup,
namataan sa bihirang pagkakataon sa Tawi-Tawi

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TINGNAN: Pares ng 'Hanjing Laut' otter, 3 pup, namataan sa bihirang pagkakataon sa Tawi-Tawi

Josiah Antonio, ABS-CBN News

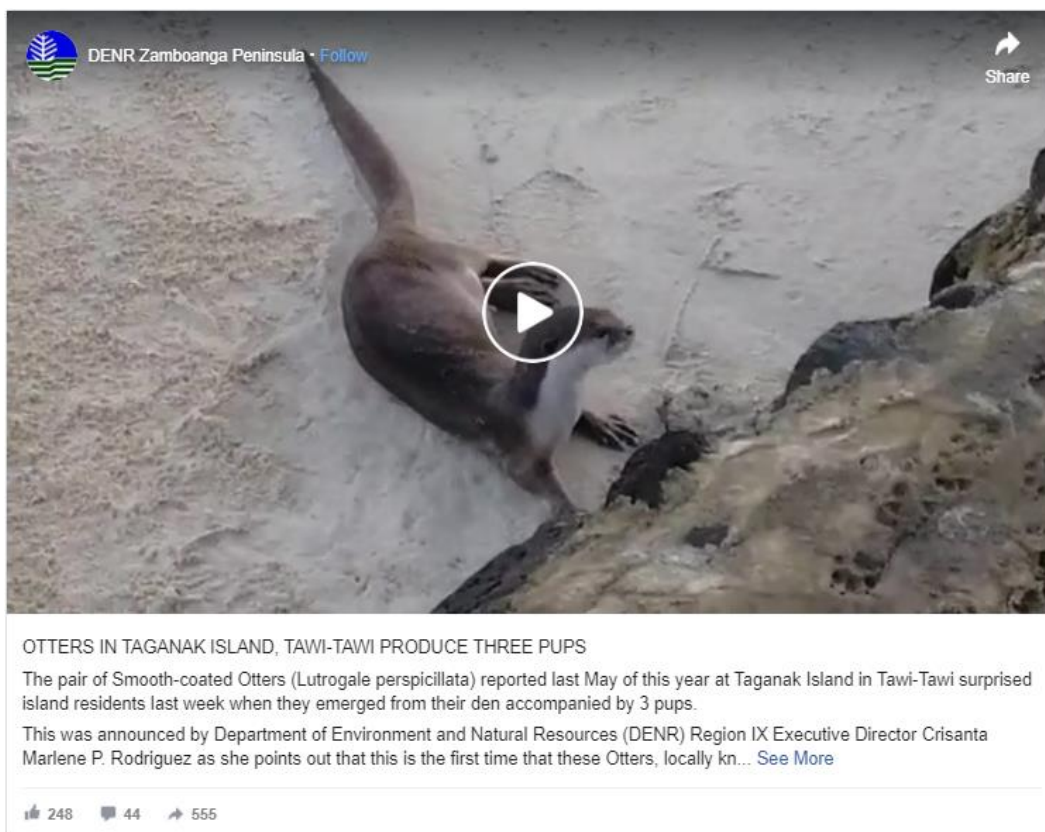
Posted at Aug 27 2020 04:40 PM

MAYNILA — Namataan sa pambihirang pagkakataon ang pares ng otter kasama ang 3 bagong pup nito sa Taganak island sa Tawi-tawi nitong nakaraang linggo, ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources office sa Zamboanga Peninsula.

Ayon kay executive director Crisanta Marlene Rodriguez, nakakuha sila ng ulat mula kay Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary (TIWS) Protected Area Superintendent Minda Bairula na nakita ng mga residente ang mga hayop sa lugar.

“The report narrated that it was on July 31 that a resident living near the shoreline reported to their office that she heard sounds of newly-born animals coming from the den of the otters,” sinabi ng ahensya sa pahayag.

“On August 17 a Protected Area Management Office (PAMO) staff spotted the baby otters coming out from the den. With the help of personnel from the Philippine National Police Taganak Municipal Station, they were able to video-document the parent otters and the pups playing along the shoreline,” dagdag pa nila.



Sinabi ni Rodriguez na kasalukuyang nagtutulungan ang mga awtoridad para mapag-aralan ang sitwasyon. Aniya, may kahirapan sa pagpapadala ng mga eksperto sa lugar dahil sa coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

“I have also instructed [Protected Area Superintendent] Bairula, who is on site, to record the biology, habits and behavior of the otters and continue coordinating with our office as we are also consulting with experts from the Biodiversity Management Bureau and the International Union on the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Otter Specialist Group” she said.

Sinisigurado naman ng ahensya na ligtas ang mga otter sa naturang lugar.

“DENR, through PAMO, regularly conducts information campaigns among the residents to help take care of the otters and avoid close contact during this maternity period as the parent otters get very protective of their pups,” sinabi ng ahensya.

TINGNAN: Pares ng 'Hanjing Laut' otter, 3 pup,
TITLE: namataan sa bihirang pagkakataon sa Tawi-Tawi

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Ang Taganak Island ay bahagi ng Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary, ang pinakamalaking marine turtle sanctuary sa Southeast Asia at isang protected area sa ilalim ng Republic Act 11038 (Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Law), ayon sa DENR.

Ayon kay Rodriguez, bihirang makita ang mga hayop na mas kilala bilang “Hanjing Laut,” sa lugar. Ang mga ito ay orihinal na mula sa Malaysia at Indonesia.

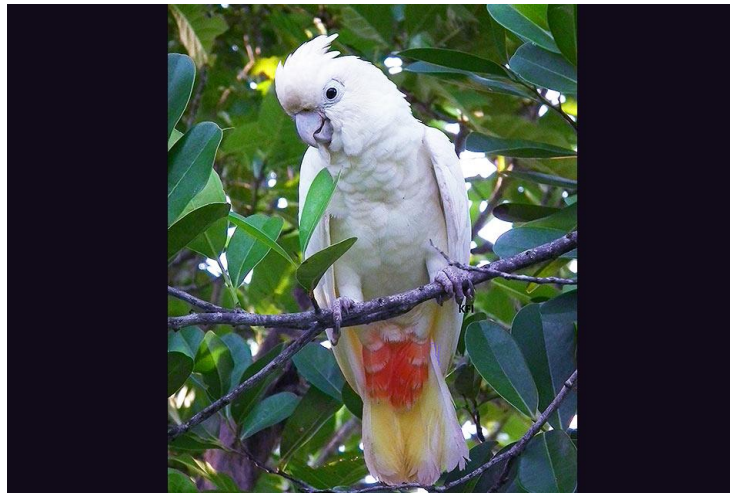
“Studies indicate that smooth-coated otters are originally from Malaysia and Indonesia and it is just surprising to know that they have now reached Taganak Island”, sinabi ni Rodriguez sa isang pahayag.

Una nang namataan ang dalawang otter sa probinsya noong Mayo 15 hanggang 22.

Philippine cockatoo 'Gold' raises new hatchling in Palawan

Josiah Antonio, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Aug 27 2020 05:39 PM



'Gold' A Philippine cockatoo Photo from Katala Foundation Inc.

MANILA — Four years after its rescue, the Philippine cockatoo 'Gold' is now raising its new hatchling in Palawan, the Katala Foundation Inc. said Wednesday.

"Gold, after rescue in 2016 due to starvation, was able to successfully re-integrate into the wild and survive but what is the peak of this success is that after four years when it was released to the wild, was able to breed in the wild and had a successful hatchling this year," chief operations officer Indira Dayang Lacerna-Widmann told ABS-CBN News.

This is good news for wildlife, as Philippine cockatoo's population has "drastically declined" due to poaching for the pet trade, direct persecution (hunting) and most importantly loss of lowland forest as its habitat, said Lacerna-Widmann.

"The stronghold of the population is in Palawan of which it holds up to 90% of the global population. Global population is between 820-1,230 individuals left in the wild," Lacerna-Widmann said.

"Having said that, [International Union for Conservation of Nature] and the Philippine Red List list it as critically endangered, the highest threat status before getting extinct in the wild," she added.

The chief operations officer said that animal only breeds once a year and deforestation threatens its ability to populate.

"Cockatoos are cavity-nesters. They breed once a year and usually a clutch has 2-3 eggs. If weather is good, all might survive into successful fledglings but if not like enhanced or extreme dry season, in some cases breeding season fails due to lack of food," the chief operations officer said.

"The trees used by cockatoos as nest trees are also equally threatened due to forest destruction e.g. kaingin, opening for settlements and agriculture or road development etc," she added.

Keys to breeding

Lacerna-Widmann said nest protection or warden scheme remains a top factor in keeping the breeding process successful.

"For us, the nest protection or warden scheme is very important. This is where we hire ex-poachers and or kaingineros as wildlife rangers and they guard the nest trees 24/7 during its breeding season. Without [their] work, monitoring is impossible," Lacerna-Widmann said.

She said that "community awareness" and the involvement of the local government also helped them raise Gold.

Philippine cockatoo 'Gold' raises new hatchling in

August 28, 2020

TITLE: Palawan

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“You combine that with community awareness – meaning the community in Dumaran where it was released back to the wild, are vigilant and aware and report immediately to officials and to Katala personnel their sightings of cockatoos in their surroundings,” the chief operations officer said.

The chief operations officer added that some support from environmental offices helped them achieve their goal.

“There is a culture of cockatoo conservation among the local populace we are working with. LGUs of Dumaran and Narra do not only commit their actions but also commit their yearly appropriation to provide incentives for our wildlife wardens all year round instead of just getting seasonal income from poaching,” Lacerna-Widmann said.

“The government agencies who are working closely with us like the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development and the (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) are all in support. When everyone works together, conservation of species and habitats are efficiently done,” she added.

The chief operations officer said that having Gold’s new hatchling is a big step for the species.

“It was already a relief to monitor that Gold successfully integrated with the wild population, but to be able to breed and contribute to its increasing population is a very good development. The supplementation to the natural population is a strategy that should be pursued to help increase remnant population and also for genetic diversity,” she said.



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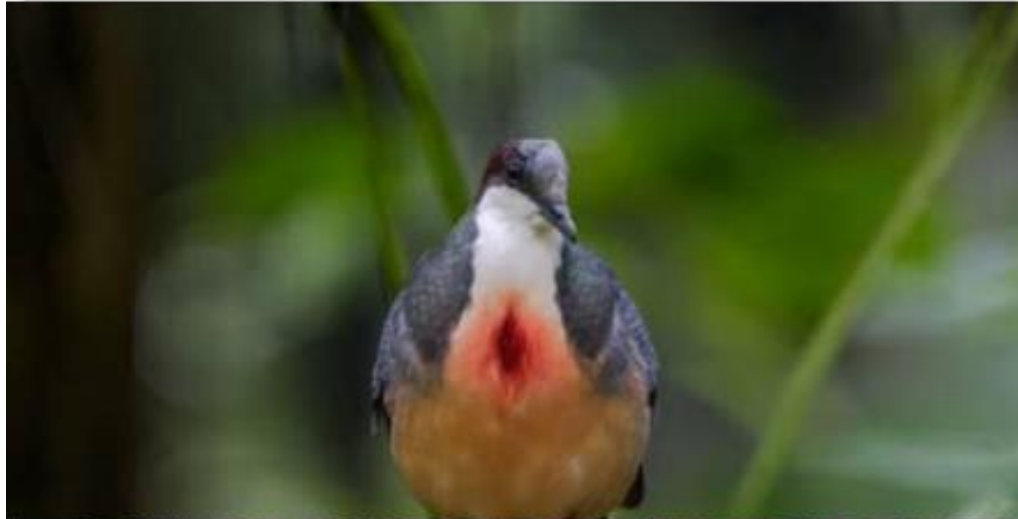
LOOK: Rare Philippine doves 'Luzon Bleeding-Hearts' were repatriated last week after a conservation breeding agreement with Singapore in 2012.

Earlier last week, Philippine Ambassador to Singapore Joseph del Mar Yap attended a symbolic handover at the Jurong Bird Park in Singapore.

The Luzon Bleeding-Heart is a dove species that are ground-dwellers and endemic to the rainforests of central and southern Luzon, and in the neighboring Polillo Islands in the Philippines

(📷 Wildlife Reserve Singapore: DFA)

via JP Soriano/GMA News



JP Soriano

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LOOK: Rare Philippine doves 'Luzon Bleeding-Hearts' were repatriated last week after a conservation breeding agreement with Singapore in 2012.

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COMP rolls out 'sustainable' mining program in

TITLE: Mindanao

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August 28, 2020

DATE

COMP rolls out 'sustainable' mining program in Mindanao

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

August 28, 2020

Saying it is determined to improve mining operations, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) has recently launched Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) initiative among member-companies in Mindanao.

TSM, a set of social and environmental performance measurement tools, will also be launched in Luzon and the Visayas in mid-September.

The Canadian mining model was adopted by COMP with the hope of convincing the Duterte administration that it is willing to go beyond mere compliance as part of its commitment to responsible mining.

At the onset of the Duterte administration, the mining industry's operations suffered huge setbacks with various policies put in place by then Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez.

During her short stint, Lopez, an environmentalist, ordered the suspension, or closure, of 26 large-scale metallic mines, cancellation of 75 inactive Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) in areas within or near watersheds, and imposed a ban on open-pit mining method.

The launching of TSM was participated in by Canadian Ambassador to the Philippines Peter MacArthur, Mines and Geosciences Bureau regional directors Glenn Noble of the Caraga region, Hernani Abdon of Region 9, and Felizardo Gacad Jr. of Region 12 who have all expressed their encouragement and support for mining industry's big players in Mindanao.

Some 80 representatives of mining and exploration projects in the country's second-largest island group have committed to implement TSM in their respective projects.

"TSM has produced a decade and a half of reliable performance information which we can show governments and international organizations...continued significant improvements in the way mines are managed in terms of their environmental and social aspects," MacArthur said in a news statement.

TSM was established by the Mining Association of Canada in 2004 and adopted by COMP in 2017, making the Philippines the first in Asia to subscribe to this self-assessment system coupled with external verification that is rapidly evolving into a global standard for best practices in sustainable mining.

COMP has made compliance with TSM mandatory to all its members. Apart from Canada and the Philippines, other countries that have adopted TSM are Argentina, Botswana, Brazil, Finland and Spain.

"Our industry, and how each of us performs, has been under tremendous scrutiny for some time now," COMP Chairman Gerard Brimo said. "We not only need to get things right, but we have to prove it to our stakeholders, and even beyond. TSM will help us achieve that. It is the commitment of our member-companies to essentially ensure best practices in what we do, and to demonstrate that annually. It is also our way of demonstrating that we go beyond mere compliance, which again means employing best practices in everything that we do."

Noble, for his part, said the adoption of TSM in the Philippines is "a great milestone for the Philippine minerals industry...this is what we need so much. Implementing TSM will greatly improve [the industry's] image and ensure that mining will be conducted in the most socially, economically and environmentally responsible manner."

COMP rolls out 'sustainable' mining program in

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"I am very happy to see that the national mining association here is using TSM, including a Community of Interest [COI] advisory panel to allow a cross section of society as stakeholders to be involved, to be consulted," MacArthur added. "This [panel] not only oversees development and implementation but it provides an interesting dialogue for transparency and disclosure and a strong consultation so everybody realizes the efforts being made to ensure that the mining process is responsible."

The COI is a multi-stakeholder group composed of 15 individuals from various sectors of society that provides guidance to COMP in the implementation of TSM.

The TSM launching—conducted via a videotelephony platform hosted by The Embassy of Canada—came after nearly three years of substantial review of the program's various components to assure applicability to conditions in the Philippines.

Mining industry adopts sustainability initiatives

[Louise Maureen Simeon](#) (The Philippine Star) - August 28, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — After nearly three years, the local mining industry is finally adopting the Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) initiative, one of the global benchmarks in the extractive minerals industry developed by the Mining Association of Canada.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) recently launched the TSM initiative among its members in Mindanao.

Established in 2004, TSM is a set of tools and indicators to drive performance and ensure that key mining risks are managed responsibly. It aims to enable mining companies to meet society's needs for minerals, metals and energy products in the most socially, economically and environmentally responsible way.

"TSM has produced a decade and a half of reliable performance information which we can show governments and international organizations continued significant improvements in the way mines are managed in terms of their environmental and social aspects," Canadian Ambassador to the Philippines Peter MacArthur said.

COMP adopted the TSM in 2017, making the Philippines the first in Asia to subscribe to the self-assessment system coupled with external verification that is rapidly evolving into the global standard for best practices in sustainable mining.

Apart from Canada and the Philippines, other countries that have adopted TSM are Argentina, Botswana, Brazil, Finland and Spain.

COMP chairman Gerard Brimo said the industry, which continues to be scrutinized, would greatly benefit from the TSM.

"It is the commitment of our member companies to essentially ensure best practices in what we do, and to demonstrate that annually. It is also our way of demonstrating that we go beyond mere compliance, which again means employing best practices in everything that we do," Brimo said.

For his part, Mines and Geosciences Bureau-Caraga director Glenn Noble said the TSM is a milestone for the Philippine minerals industry.

"Implementing TSM will greatly improve the industry's image and ensure that mining will be conducted in the most socially, economically and environmentally responsible manner," he said.



In an interview with "The Chiefs" on One News/TV5 on Wednesday, mathematics professor Guido David urged the public to maintain the momentum to prevent a resurgence of cases.

Edd Gumban

'Battle vs COVID-19 not over despite flattening of curve'

[Janvic Mateo](#) (The Philippine Star) - August 28, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The coronavirus disease pandemic is far from over even with the apparent "flattening of the curve" of new cases in the country, an expert from the University of the Philippines said.

In an interview with "The Chiefs" on One News/TV5 on Wednesday, mathematics professor Guido David urged the public to maintain the momentum to prevent a resurgence of cases.

"The truth is we're already seeing the flattening, but we were just being a bit more conservative (when we said that we will see it) by the end of the month," said David, a member of the OCTA Research team that regularly releases projections on the pandemic.

"I have to caution our viewers that flattening does not mean that the pandemic is over. It's just the start of the recovery period," he stressed.

David said it would take several months to bring down the average of new cases in the country, particularly in Metro Manila where most cases are reported.

He warned against the possibility of reversing the decreasing trend if containment measures are not sustained.

"This is just the start of the recovery period, it take us a while to get down... to 1,000 cases," he said. "We have to remain cautious and be on the conservative side of this pandemic... We should try to maintain this momentum."

Citing the case of Cebu, the UP professor said he is optimistic that the decreasing trend would continue despite the easing of the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) in Metro Manila last week.

"In Cebu they relaxed to GCQ (general community quarantine) and they were able to continue the trend," he said. "(But) we have to be on the alert to make sure that we can immediately make changes if some things are not working."

'Battle vs COVID-19 not over despite flattening of

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Last week, the OCTA Research group warned that the number of cases in the country may reach 230,000 by the end of August if Metro Manila and nearby provinces revert back to GCQ after just two weeks of MECQ implementation.

The Department of Health reported 3,249 new cases yesterday, bringing the total to 205,581. Half the number already recovered from the deadly infection.

Based on DOH data, 566 additional recoveries brought to 133,990 the total number of COVID-19 patients who got well.

National Capital Region (NCR) still accounted for the biggest number of newly reported cases with 1,180, followed by the Calabarzon with 515. Repatriates posted 253 or 10 percent of the total newly recorded cases.

The DOH also reported 97 additional deaths, bringing to 3,234 the total number of COVID-related deaths. Most or 51 of the newly reported deaths occurred in July while 40 happened in August. The case fatality ratio is at 1.57 percent, which is lower than the global average of 3.36 percent. – **Mayen Jaymalin**

Dinapuan ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas umabot na sa
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Dinapuan ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas umabot na sa 205,581, ayon sa DOH

By [James Relativo](#) (Philstar.com) - August 27, 2020 - 4:08pm



Workers at Sasha Collection in Taytay, Rizal that manufactures dresses try on their reusable personal protective equipment to be delivered in provinces on August 26, 2020.

The STAR/Michael Varcas

MANILA, Philippines — Nadagdagan pa kasi nang 3,249 ang bilang ng nahahawaan ng nakamamatay na SARS-CoV-2 virus, bagay na nag-aangat sa kabuuang local infections sa 205,581.

Higit na mas kaunti ang bilang na 'yan kumpara sa mga daily increase nitong mga nakaraang araw. Kahapon lang nang mahigit 5,000 ang itinalon nito.

"There were 29 duplicates that were removed from the total case count. Of these, 12 recovered cases have been removed," paliwanag ng DOH sa isang pahayag.

"Moreover, there were [24] cases that were previously reported as recovered but after final validation, they were deaths."

Ang mga nasabing pigura ay inianak ng isinagawang 2.24 milyong COVID-19 tests na sa iba't ibang dako ng bansa as of August 26, 2020.

Lumalabas sa pag-aaral na pinakamarami ang mga panibagong mga kaso sa:

- National Capital Region (1,584)
- Cavite (147)
- Laguna (143)
- Negros Occidemntal (140)
- Batangas (123)

Nadagdagan naman nang 97 ang panibagong COVID-19-related deaths sa bansa, dahilan para sumipa na sa 3,234 ang binabawian ng buhay sanhi ng karamdaman mula Wuhan, China.

Dinapuan ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas umabot na sa
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Nananatiling Metro Manila ang nangunguna sa bilang ng mga may sariwang casualty sanhi ng pandemic na pumatak sa 63, habang tig-iisa lang ang nakitang namatay mula sa Western Visayas at Region 11.

Sumatatal, nasa 133,990 na ang tuluyang gumaling mula sa sakit. Mas malaki 'yan nang 566 kung ihahambing sa mga numero noong Miyerkules.

Sa huling taya ng World Health Organization (WHO), lumalabas na 23.75 milyon na ang tintatamaan ng nasabing sakit. Sa bilang na 'yan, 815,038 na ang sinasabing namatay sa virus.

Possible main sources of coronavirus in PH identified

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Aug 27, 2020 4:21:43 PM

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, August 27) — Filipino researchers have found [three possible main sources of coronavirus infection](#) in the country.

In a paper published in the [medRxiv preprint](#) website on Tuesday, the Philippine Genome Center said the following groups could probably be the primary sources of the virus:

- The foreign tourists with travel history to China's Wuhan City - the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak early this year -- whose samples were collected in January
- Repatriated seafarers from the coronavirus-hit M/V Diamond Princess in Japan whose samples were taken in March
- Evacuated tourists and overseas Filipino workers who arrived in May from Europe and the Middle East whose samples were collected in June

The [first three confirmed cases](#) in the Philippines were Chinese tourists from Wuhan. They were found to be positive for coronavirus in late January. Two of them flew back to China, while the [other one died of COVID-19 in the country in early February](#).

In a study released last week, the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine said that the gene sequence of the three Chinese tourists was different from the rest of the samples that they studied. Sequence data are used to determine how the virus spreads in the community, RITM explained.

But Department of Health spokesperson Maria Rosario Vergeire was quick to clarify that this finding is not "conclusive" and should be interpreted with caution as it is based on a small sample of positive cases.

"We need to further study so that we can accurately say that the Chinese [tourists] weren't the ones who spread [the virus] and that we had other sources of our infection," she added.

From three cases, the number of infections in the Philippines reached 100 in mid-March.

[On February 26](#), the government brought home 440 crew members and passengers from the cruise ship, who went through a 14-day quarantine at the Athlete's Village in New Clark City, Tarlac.

The genome center said they saw cases of community transmissions in patients admitted to the Philippine General Hospital whose swab samples were taken between March 22 to 26, 10 days after the evacuated seafarers and passengers completed their quarantine.

It pointed out that the PGH patients have had no known travel history to a country with cases of community transmission, and no known exposure to a confirmed case in March. The genome center said that these suggest that they may have acquired the infection from undetected cases among the repatriated seafarers.

The findings, which were based on the analysis of 1,335 SARS-CoV-2 sequences, have not undergone peer review, a process that vets study results.

But PGC underscored the need to "continually review and improve the quarantine, testing and tracing measures being employed to adapt to the current pandemic situation."

Earlier this month, the PGC detected a mutated strain of coronavirus in a small sample of positive cases taken from Quezon City in June. The new mutation of the SARS-CoV-2 virus called [G614](#) was found by international researchers to be more infectious but does not make people more severely sick. G614 has been previously found in parts of Europe.

The country now has over 200,000 cases, with 3,137 deaths and 133,460 recoveries.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/8/27/Possible-main-sources-of-coronavirus-in-PH-identified.html>

China fires missiles into South China Sea, sending US a message

Steven Lee Myers and Keith Bradsher, *The New York Times*

Posted at Aug 27 2020 11:13 PM



A Chinese Coast Guard ship near the Scarborough Shoal, a reef in the South China Sea claimed by both China and the Philippines, on June 18, 2016. *Sergey Ponomarev, The New York Times/file*

China has fired a barrage of medium-range missiles across considerable distances into the South China Sea, Beijing's latest move to demonstrate its strategic dominance and sovereignty over the disputed waters, an American defense official said.

The missile launches on Wednesday punctuated a series of military exercises that China has conducted this month at a time of rising tensions with the United States over its territorial claims in the South China Sea and its attempts to pressure Taiwan, the self-governing island democracy that Beijing claims as its own.

Senior Col. Wu Qian, a spokesman for the Chinese Ministry of National Defense, did not mention the missiles on Thursday but confirmed that China had carried out long-planned drills over an area that stretched from Qingdao in northeastern China to disputed islands in the South China Sea known as the Spratlys.

"The above exercises are not directed at any country," Wu said at a regularly scheduled briefing in Beijing.

China had signaled its plans to test the missiles by declaring a travel exclusion zone in a part of the South China Sea this week. American forces in the region detected the launch of four missiles from the mainland to that area, the American defense official said.

The Pentagon is now assessing the types of missiles involved. Among the medium-range missiles in China's growing arsenal are the DF-26 and the DF-21, which can attack moving targets at sea.

"The growing frequency of exercises and the new types of capabilities displayed demonstrate the progress China has achieved in its military modernization drive over the past two decades," said M. Taylor Fravel, an expert on the Chinese military who is the director of the Security Studies Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Tensions over the South China Sea and Taiwan have risen sharply in recent weeks as part of the broader deterioration of relations between China and the United States. The U.S. military has recently stepped up operations in the area, including the deployment of two aircraft carriers in July in the waters China claims.

The State Department also declared last month that China's expansive maritime claims across most of the South China Sea were illegal, siding more clearly than ever before with other nations in the region, including Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

The Trump administration further raised the stakes on Wednesday when the Commerce Department banned purchases from the United States by two dozen Chinese companies that played a role over the past decade in China's construction of an archipelago of artificial islands on coral reefs.

The tests also came a day after China accused the Americans of flying a U-2 spy plane over one of the exercises, calling it a "naked provocation."

China fires missiles into South China Sea, sending US

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The United States has been conducting its own biannual naval exercise off the coast of Hawaii this week, involving forces from 10 nations.

Vice Admiral Scott D. Conn, the commander of the U.S. 3rd Fleet and leader of the exercise, said in a telephone conference call on Thursday that China had the right to carry out military drills “within international laws and norms.”

Asked about the missile launches on Wednesday, he emphasized that the United States would not be deterred.

“In terms of launching ballistic missiles, the U.S. Navy has 38 ships underway today in the Indo-Pacific region, including in the South China Sea,” he said. “And we continue to fly, sail and operate anywhere international laws allow us to demonstrate our commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific and reassure our allies and partners.”

Such exercises are nonetheless studied for insights into new military advances. Fravel noted that China had previously tested the DF-21, an anti-ship missile known as a carrier killer. If effective, it could put at risk operations like those conducted last month by the two U.S. carriers, the Ronald Reagan and the Nimitz.

He said that it was not clear if the missiles were fired at fixed or moving targets, adding that the latter would be “a better test of the overall system, to include identifying, tracking, and destroying a moving ship at sea.”

Chinese who ruined Phl reefs still raking in govt projects

[GOTCHA](#) - [Jarius Bondoc](#) (The Philippine Star) - August 28, 2020 - 12:00am

America has blacklisted the China state firms that concreted and helped militarize Philippine reefs. In the Philippines those malefactors continue to bag juicy government contracts.

China Communications Construction Company and 24 subsidiaries were banned from dealing with US businesses. Persons linked to CCCC and their family members will be denied US visas. The US State department said they are “responsible for, or complicit in, either the large-scale reclamation, construction, or militarization of disputed outposts in the South China Sea.” As well, in China’s “use of coercion against Southeast Asian claimants to inhibit their access to offshore resources.”

State Sec. Mike Pompeo announced the sanctions Wednesday in Washington (Thursday in Manila). Briefing reporters thereafter, a State official mentioned The Hague court ruling in 2016 that outlawed China’s unfounded “nine-dash line” claim over the entire SCS.

Cited was the Philippines’ Mischief Reef among the sea features that China has concreted into island fortresses. Mischief and two other Philippine reefs, Subi and Fiery Cross, have been fitted with missile silos, airstrips, and naval bases. Four others – Hughes, Johnson South, Gaven and Cuarteron Reefs, have also been cordoned off. All are within the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone and extended continental shelf.

About 1.9 million kilos of fish are killed per year due to China’s reef ruin. Lost too are resources like precious metals and new medicines. Citing international conservation standards, Filipino marine scientists conservatively estimate the damage at P231.7 billion in the seven years that China has occupied the reefs. From Mischief, Chinese gunboats menace Filipino exploration vessels in oil- and gas-rich Recto Bank, also in Philippine EEZ.

“Since 2013 China has used its state-owned enterprises to dredge and reclaim more than 3,000 acres on disputed features in the SCS – destabilizing the region, trampling on the sovereign rights of its neighbors, and causing untold environmental devastation,” Pompeo said.

“CCCC led the destructive dredging of China’s SCS outposts and is also one of the leading contractors used by Beijing in its global One Belt-One Road strategy,” he added. “CCCC and its subsidiaries have engaged in corruption, predatory financing, environmental destruction, and other abuses across the world. China must not be allowed to use CCCC and other state-owned enterprises as weapons to impose an expansionist agenda.”

CCCC and subsidiaries are involved in or eyeing several of the Philippine government’s P8.4-trillion “Build, Build, Build” infrastructure projects. Among those are reclamations, piers, shipbuilding facilities, industrial parks, and a power plant in Davao City. As well, the Mindanao railway in that city and Davao region, President Duterte’s political home base.

Subsidiaries CCCC Dredging Company and China Harbour Engineering Company have been reported in reclamations, dredgings, and port works in the Visayas.

Chinese who ruined Phl reefs still raking in govt

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In Luzon last December, CCCC was awarded the contract to dredge, reclaim, and construct an airport in Sangley, Cavite, as alternative to the Manila International Airport. It was also mentioned in a Manila Bay reclamation plan.

Another subsidiary, China Road and Bridge Company, is building a span across Pasig River for free. To do it, the company demolished a newly finished one between Makati and Mandaluyong Cities.

That company also plans another bridge from Binondo to Intramuros, Manila. Conservationists oppose the project that will ruin historical and heritage sites like Fort Santiago, Manila Cathedral, and parts of the Spanish-era walled city.

In 2011 the World Bank banned CCCC and all subsidiaries from its road and bridge works in the Philippines. The international development funder discovered rigged biddings among them, and bribery to collect fees despite punishable work delays. Specifically mentioned for shoddy work style was China Road and Bridge Company.

CCCC is implicated in Kenya's controversial multibillion-dollar "Railway to Nowhere". Recently a court declared illegal the Kenyan government's deal with China Road and Bridge Company.

CCCC also built the seaport that China took over under a 99-year lease when Sri Lanka defaulted on stiff repayment terms.

The new US sanctions followed Pompeo's rejection last month of China's claims beyond the 12-mile territorial area around the Spratly Islands. That statement cited Beijing's aggression in the waters of Vanguard Bank, Vietnam; Luconia Shoals off Malaysia; the area within Brunei's exclusive economic zone; and Indonesia's Natuna Besar Island.

In the new statement Pompeo said: "The US will act until we see Beijing discontinue its coercive behavior in the SCS, and we will continue to stand with allies and partners in resisting this destabilizing activity."

* * *

Catch Sapol radio show, Saturdays, [8 to 10 a.m.](#), DWIZ (882-AM).

My book "Exposés: Investigative Reporting for Clean Government" is available on Amazon: <https://tinyurl.com/Amazon-Exposes>

Paperback: <https://tinyurl.com/Anvil-Exposes> or at National Bookstores.

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Gotcha archives: <https://tinyurl.com/Gotcha-Archives>

LPA east of Luzon may become tropical depression in

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LPA east of Luzon may become tropical depression in next 36-48 hours — Pagasa

By: [Gabriel Pabico Lulu](#) - Reporter / [@GabrielLuluINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 08:09 PM August 27, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — State meteorologists are continuously monitoring the low-pressure area (LPA) east of Luzon as there is a chance it develops into a tropical depression in the next 36 to 48 hours.

Weather updates from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) on Thursday afternoon showed that as of now, the LPA intensifies the southwest monsoon or Habagat, which would then bring rains in Visayas, Mindanao, and the northern tip of Northern Luzon.

The LPA remains inside the Philippine area of responsibility, at a distance of 1,045 kilometers east of Baler, Aurora.

“Ang nabanggit nating low pressure area sa loob ng 24 oras ay maliit pa ang tsansang maging bagyo pero patuloy tayong magmomonitor dahil inaasahan na for the next 36 to 48 hours ay posible po itong maging isang tropical depression or bagyo,” weather specialist Chris Perez said.

(While the low-pressure area that we mentioned has a small chance of becoming a storm in the next 24 hours, we are continuously monitoring it because we are expecting it to be a tropical depression after 36 to 48 hours.)

“Yong hangin na associated with the low pressure area [...] with the potential weather disturbance ay halos nagiging mabagal ang pagkilos dito nga sa parteng ito ng Philippine Sea. So hanggang sa Sabado po ay inaasahan natin mamomonitor pa rin natin itong potential weather disturbance,” he added.

(The windflow associated with the low-pressure area or the potential weather disturbance is moving slowly over the Philippine Sea. So this means we can expect to monitor this potential weather disturbance until Saturday.)

Despite the LPA and the southwest monsoon, weather in most parts of Luzon for Friday would continue to be warm and humid, with temperatures ranging from 26 to 33 degrees Celsius in Metro Manila, 24 to 33 degrees in Tuguegarao, and 25 to 33 degrees in Puerto Princesa.

Meanwhile, the Bicol Region may also see rains, which would lead to slightly lower temperatures in Legazpi, at 26 to 31 degrees.

Hot and humid weather is also expected in the Visayas, but occasional rain showers and thunderstorms brought by the monsoon and the LPA may be felt in Tacloban and Cebu, which may register temperatures of 26 to 31 degrees Celsius

Davao and Cagayan de Oro’s temperature may peak to just 32 degrees Celsius due to expected rain on Friday.

LPA east of Luzon may become tropical depression in

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A gale warning is still raised over the seaboards of extreme northern Luzon and the provinces of Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur. This means that small boats are not allowed to set sail for now.

Waters west of Ilocos Region and east of Cagayan Valley will be moderate to rough and moderate over west of Central Luzon and Palawan, and west of Bicol Region and Western Visayas.

Meanwhile, sea conditions for the rest of the country would be slight to moderate.

La Niña, posibleng magsimula sa Setyembre o Oktubre – PAGASA

By Jan Escosio August 27, 2020 - 11:04 PM



May posibilidad na magsimula ang La Niña sa bansa sa huling linggo ng susunod na buwan o sa Oktubre, ayon sa PAGASA.

Ayon kay weather specialist Ariel Rojas, maaaring 60 porsyento ang posibilidad ng La Niña o ang pagkakaroon ng mas maraming pag-ulan.

“Hindi naman ibig sabihin agad agad makatatanggap ang ating bansa ng malalakas na pag-ulan. Wala tayong makikitang malawakang pagbaha. Ibig sabihin lang mas mataas sa normal, di naman walang humpay na mga pag-ulan,” paliwanag ni Rojas.

Aniya, ang La Niña ay maaaring tumagal ng isang taon o aabot ito sa 2021.

Noong buwan pa ng Marso, sinimulan ng ahensiya ang pagsubaybay sa posibleng pagkakaroon ng naturang weather phenomenon sa taong 2020.

Climate change behind bush fires

By [Agence France-Presse](#) and [Global Times](#)

August 28, 2020

SYDNEY: Australia's devastating 2019 to 2020 bushfires were "clearly" fueled by climate change, a government inquiry reported following some of the largest forest fires ever recorded worldwide.

With 2020 fire season already underway, authorities recommended urgent action to limit the impact of extreme blazes, expected "to become more frequent" in the future.

The deadly bushfires raged for nine months to March and were most severe in New South Wales state, where 11,000 fires burned over 5.5 million hectares — the size of many countries.

After months of consultation and expert testimony, the New South Wales (NSW) government on Tuesday published a 436-page report on the crisis that destroyed more than 2,400 homes in the state and left 26 people dead.

The text included dozens of recommendations and featured a blunt rebuke of those who insisted the fires had nothing to do with climate change.

"Climate change as a result of increased greenhouse gas emissions clearly played a role in the conditions that lead up to the fires and in the unrelenting conditions that supported the fires to spread," it read.

The report noted it was impossible to say what precise role climate change had played in producing the complex range of climatic conditions that helped fuel the fires.

Antarctica's glacier-damming ice shelves at risk of

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Antarctica's glacier-damming ice shelves at risk of crumbling

Marlowe Hood, Agence France-Presse

Posted at Aug 27 2020 05:45 AM

PARIS - More than half the ice shelves ringing Antarctica that prevent huge glaciers from sliding into the ocean and lifting sea levels are at risk of crumbling due to climate change, researchers said Wednesday.

Meltwater running into deep fissures caused by warming air is undermining the structural integrity of these natural barricades, they reported in Nature.

"If the ice shelves fill up with meltwater, things can happen very quickly," said co-author Jonathan Kingslake, a glaciologist at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory.

"There could be major consequences for sea levels."

Scientists are especially concerned about the weakened state of ice shelves holding back West Antarctica's Pine Island and Thwaites glaciers which could, if destabilized, raise global oceans by more than three meters.

The two glaciers cover an area larger than Germany.

Up to a kilometer thick, ice shelves are the solid ice extension of land-bound glaciers.

Because they are already floating on ocean water, they do not add to sea level when huge chunks break off as icebergs.

But the far more massive glaciers -- part of the Antarctic ice sheet -- they block from sliding toward the sea have already become a major contributor to sea-level rise.

The United Nation's science advisory panel for climate change, the IPCC, has forecast that oceans will rise up to a meter by the end of the century, and even more after that.

Hundreds of millions of people live within a few meters of sea level.

Ice shelves are often wedged between land formations such as at the mouth of a bay, which helps them resist the pressure of the glaciers pushing toward the sea.

But climate change is eroding them in more ways than one.

Earlier research has shown that warming ocean water is seeping past the grounding line -- where the ice shelf begins -- and below the underbelly of the glaciers, lubricating their movement toward the sea.

The new findings show that atmospheric warming is attacking ice shelves from above as well.

VIOLENT FRACTURING

Earth's average surface temperature has gone up by one degree Celsius since the last 19th century, enough to increase the intensity of droughts, heatwaves and tropical cyclones.

But the air over Antarctica has warmed more than twice that much.

One of the consequences has been the appearance of long crevasses parallel to the shoreline -- up to tens of meters deep -- on the top of ice shelves.

As surface ice melts, water pours into these fissures and increases the likelihood of a process called hydrofracturing.

When this happens, water -- which is heavier than ice -- "violently forces the fractures to zip open and cause the shelf to rapidly disintegrate", the researchers said in a statement.

The Antarctic Peninsula, which has warmed more than any other part of the continent, has shown in dramatic fashion what this can lead to.

Antarctica's glacier-damming ice shelves at risk of

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Major chunks of the Peninsula's Larsen Ice Shelf -- which had been stable for more than 10,000 years -- disintegrated within days in 1995, and again in 2002. This was followed by the breakup of the nearby Wilkins Ice Shelf in 2008 and 2009.

Hydrofracturing was almost certainly the main culprit in both cases.

To find out what regions of the continent are most vulnerable, Kingslake and his colleagues used a machine-learning algorithm to analyze satellite images and compile the first complete mapping of Antarctica's ice shelves, and their crevasses.

They estimate that 50 to 70 percent of the areas buttressing glaciers are prone to hydrofracturing.

"Taken together, the author's findings pinpoint the portions of ice shelves that are most vulnerable to atmospheric warming," Jeremy Bassis, a scientist at the University of Michigan, wrote in a comment, also in Nature.

"They show that large sections that are currently stable could collapse as atmospheric temperatures continue to rise."

LOOK: Female penguin couple welcomes adopted

TITLE: baby penguin they hatched together

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LOOK: Female penguin couple welcomes adopted baby penguin they hatched together

INQUIRER.net / 07:13 PM August 27, 2020



Same-sex penguin couple Electra and Viola with their baby. Image: Facebook/@oceangraficvl

A pair of female penguins became first-time mothers to a baby penguin in an oceanarium in Spain. Electra and Viola hatched another couple's egg and are now taking care of the baby penguin, as per Oceanogràfic València's Facebook post on Aug. 17.

The wildlife park pointed out that over 450 species in zoos and in nature have same-sex couples. It is, however, the aquarium's first time to have such a couple, which made the occurrence extra special.

Oceanogràfic València
about 2 weeks ago

Electra y Viola, dos pingüinos hembras del Oceanogràfic València 🐧❤️🐧 han incubado el huevo de otra pareja y ahora cuentan con su primera cría 🐧.

Aunque la formación de parejas del mismo sexo es habitual en más de 450 especies tanto en zoológicos como en la naturaleza, es la primera vez que esto sucede en nuestro acuario ❤️🐧.

Así que...¡Bienvenido al mundo, pequeño! 🐧... See More

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According to the oceanarium's website, Electra and Viola are Gentoo penguins. This breeding season, only three baby chicks have been born, and Electra and Viola made up the third couple to raise the younglings.

Much like a female and male penguin couple, the aquarium observed that the two female penguins had the same actions prior to reproduction, such as building their own nest out of stones.

After observing the phenomenon, the couple's keepers gave Electra and Viola a fertile egg and they were able to carry out its entire breeding process.

The parents usually take turns in incubating the egg on their nest every day. The egg normally hatches after 38 days, according to the [wildlife park](#).

The park also considers Electra and Viola an "exceptional pair," as per CBS News last Monday, Aug. 24.

In 2018, two male penguins in Australia welcomed their own baby as well. Much like Electra and Viola, Spheh and Magic started collecting pebbles to form a nest during the breeding season, the report stated.

The staff members of Sea Life Sydney Aquarium then gave the couple a chance to nurture their own egg after they showed their dedication to take care of a dummy egg. Spheh and Magic took turns incubating the egg daily until it finally hatched. **Cha Lino/JB**

Animals are picky eaters too – we’re trying to discover if

August 28, 2020

TITLE: parents teach them what’s safe to eat

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Animals are picky eaters too - we’re trying to discover if parents teach them what’s safe to eat

By [Camille Troisi via The Conversation](#) - August 27, 2020 - 5:34 PM



Image by giovani_canoas20110 via Pixabay

The internet is filled with blogs and articles offering advice for parents who are trying to coax children into eating greens. Anyone with kids can relate to stories of mealtimes becoming a succession of attritional confrontations, where you cycle through ineffectual strategies before accepting the reality of the situation and plead with your toddler to simply “take one bite of broccoli”. In the end, it doesn’t matter how much gravy you pour on fish, or cheese you melt on cauliflower - fussy toddlers know what you’re up to.

If we could converse with animals, they would also relate to these stories, as many species have a seemingly irrational dislike of anything unfamiliar and are more likely to eat new food after watching other individuals try it. Fussy eating can be an important way of avoiding toxic food, as witnessing other individuals eat new foods might tell them that it’s safe.

But fascinatingly, fussy eating may also indicate the presence of teaching in animals. Despite 30 years of research on the topic, there are still few examples of teaching in other species, making it difficult to understand how such behavior might have evolved. My colleagues and I recently [conducted research](#) in the Atlantic forest of Brazil that provides new evidence that some animals may effectively teach their young what foods are safe to eat.

There are plenty of examples of fussy eating among animals. [Young marmoset](#) monkeys are slow to eat new food when alone, but are more willing to take a risk and try it if they are surrounded by family. Similarly, [capuchins](#) eat more unfamiliar food when group members also do so.

There are instances where food handling is linked to teaching in animals. The way in which meerkats show their young how to safely handle scorpions for eating is [one well-known illustration](#). At first, young pups are given dead scorpions to familiarize them with the dangerous insect. As the meerkats grow up, adults remove the sting from live scorpions so that the pups can learn how to deal with the prey. Then intact animals are gradually introduced.

As a behavior, this meets the three criteria [scientists use](#) to identify teaching in animals. An individual changes its behavior in the presence of an observer, at a cost or no benefit to themselves, and this change leads to learning in another individual. In the case of the meerkats, although an escaped scorpion might represent a lost lunch, the exercise leads to learning in the young observer.

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This kind of research has helped challenge the long-held assumption that teaching is a uniquely human practice. But the overall dearth of evidence means there is still debate.

In particular, it’s not always clear that instances where animals learn to eat new foods because of other individuals around them really meet the criteria for teaching. For example, there is limited evidence that adult golden lion tamarin monkeys, which are known to have a varied diet that includes insects and fruits, might teach their young about diet by sharing and [transferring food](#).

If such food transfers do have a teaching function, we would expect them to meet the three criteria I mentioned before. The tamarins would transfer more unfamiliar food than familiar food because this would create the opportunity for learning.

On two recent visits to Brazil, [we studied](#) this behavior by introducing familiar and unfamiliar foods to wild groups of tamarins. Initially, we introduced these foods when young tamarins were dependent on their family, enabling us to look at how adult tamarins transferred food within their family group.

Six months later, when the young tamarins were independent, we returned to find that their food choices were influenced by their parents. The tamarins did not, as we had expected, transfer more unfamiliar food than familiar food. But they did transfer more food they had grown accustomed to than the food they had never tried.

Looking for teaching

Despite not clearly demonstrating teaching because it doesn’t meet all the criteria, this evidence appears to show that adult tamarins assess new food first before passing it on to others. This is still significant for juveniles, as they learn about what to include in their diet from the food that they receive from adults.

It is possible that food transfers in golden lion tamarins serve several functions simultaneously, depending on the identity of the individual receiving the food, and the food type being transferred. Further research could look at how tamarins transfer insects to see if there is a general pattern.

We also need to investigate whether adult tamarin gain any benefit, such as decreased harassment or increased social bonds, by transferring food to their young. Such information would help us come closer to understanding whether some animals really can be taught to overcome their fussy eating.

[Camille Troisi](#), Postdoctoral Researcher in Behavioural Ecology, [University College Cork](#). This article is republished from [The Conversation](#) under a Creative Commons license. Read the [original article](#).

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18 whales die in Mauritius stranding

Published August 27, 2020, 6:25 AM

by [Agence France-Presse](#)

Eighteen melon-headed whales washed up on the shores of Mauritius on Wednesday, the country's fisheries minister said, dismissing any link to a devastating oil spill earlier this month.



Some of the whales appeared to have injuries (AFP/ MANILA BULLETIN)

The whales, some of which were still alive when they were found and later died, were stranded on the south-eastern beaches of Grand Sable, and some of them had injuries.

Fisheries minister Sudheer Maudhoo told a press conference that all 18 of the whales, a member of the dolphin family, had died, but that there was "no trace of hydrocarbons on them or in their respiratory system".

An autopsy of the animals was being carried out on Wednesday evening.

Local government official Preetam Daumoo told AFP that he, like many residents who found the bodies, feared the stranding was a result of the island's recent oil spill.

Earlier this month a Japanese-owned bulk carrier ran aground on a coral reef around 10 kilometres (six miles) from Grand Sable, spilling over 1,000 tonnes of fuel into the pristine waters.

The broken stem of the vessel was sunk in the open ocean on Monday.

However experts said it was too soon to say what had caused the deaths of the animals.

Owen Griffiths of the Mauritius Marine Conservation Society told AFP "it is probably a very unfortunate coincidence", referring to a similar stranding in 2005 when 70 melon-headed whales stranded in the same area.

"Likely they followed a school of fish into the lagoon, got confused, could not find their way out to sea again and tried to head out to sea directly over the coral reef instead of finding the pass. In their panic and stress they collided with corals, became exhausted and died," he said.

"At this stage we have no idea of cause of death. An autopsy with stomach content analysis and lung examination -- to look for oil traces -- needs to be done."

- 'Stress to the corals' -

Greenpeace called in a statement for an "urgent investigation" into the cause of the strandings.

Authorities and experts from Japan and Britain are still investigating the true extent of the ecological damage to an island whose economy depends heavily on tourism.



Initial reports suggest no major damage to the ocean floor or coral reef, however the remaining wreck is still grinding against the reef where it ran aground.

“If this situation continues, it could cause stress to the corals and could kill them,” said Noriaki Sakaguchi, an ecosystems expert with Japan International Cooperation Agency.

The team of Japanese experts said Tuesday that the spilled oil has also reached the soft soil of mangrove forests along the coastline.

While there is no evidence of mangrove death yet, the oil could kill plants in the protected area in coming months, the team warned.

Mga nase-stress na elepante sa Warsaw Zoo bibigyan ng medical marijuana

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Aug 27 2020 06:00 PM

WARSAW, Poland - Sisimulan ng Warsaw Zoo ang pamimigay ng medical marijuana sa kanilang mga elepante, bilang parte ng kanilang pilot project na masuri kung gaano nito napapababa ang stress sa mga naturang hayop.

Nagagamit na umano ang medical cannabis sa paggamot sa mga aso at kabayo pero ito na umano ang pinakaunang pagkakataon na gagamitin ang hakbang sa mga elepante, ayon kay Agnieszka Czujkowska, ang beterinaryong nangangasiwas sa proyekto, ayon sa Agence France-Presse.

Bibigyan ng liquid doses ng mataas na concentration ng cannabinoid CBD ang tatlong African elephants ng mga zoo sa kanilang mga trompa.

Giit naman ng veterinarian na hindi naman magkakaroon ng euphoria at wala naman itong maidudulot na side effect sa mga atay o bato ng mga elepante.

"It's an attempt to find a new natural alternative to the existing methods of combating stress, especially pharmaceutical drugs," ani Czujkowska.

Ang proyekto aniya ay gagawin matapos mamatay ang alpha female elephant ng grupo ng mga hayop.

Tinitingnan ng zoo ang stress levels ng mga elepante sa pamamagitan ng pagsuri ng kanilang mga hormone levels. Inoobserbahan din kung paano ang pag-uugali ng elepante.

Aabutin ng dalawang taon bago makakuha ng makabuluhang resulta ang research team ni Czujkowska.

Kung magtatagumpay aniya ito ay maaari itong gawin sa iba pang hayop sa mga zoo.

"Contrary to what some would imagine, the elephants won't be using cannabis pipes nor will they be getting huge barrels of it" ikinwuento ni Czujkowska nang tumatawa.

Ang intial dose ay katumbas ng kung iilan ang ginagamit sa mga kabayo: isang vial ng CBD oil 2 hanggang 2 beses sa isang araw.

Nabawasan na umano ang insidente ng pagpo-poach sa mga elepante sa Africa, na ngayong nasa 400,000 na lang mula sa iilang milyon noong ika-19 siglo.

— **Isinalin mula sa ulat ng Agence France-Presse**