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NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Cimatu cites ‘cooperation’ in Cebu City’s fight vs COVID

By: Morexette Marie B. Erram - Multimedia Reporter - CDN Digital|August 31,2020 - 08:23 PM



DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu and retired Major General Mel Feliciano of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Visayas inspect several potential locations in Cebu City that can be utilized as public cemeteries in this July 2020 photo. | Photo courtesy from IATF-Visayas

CEBU CITY, Philippines — Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu on Monday, August 31, officially capped his two-month stay here in Cebu City to oversee the government’s coronavirus response.

Cimatu, in a press conference on Monday, announced that he was expected to arrive in Bacolod City tomorrow, Tuesday (September 1).

But a day before his departure, Cimatu congratulated the Cebuano community for bringing the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak here to manageable levels.

“I (would) like to congratulate the Cebuanos. We did it. The number of active cases has gone down because we have more recoveries,” said Cimatu.

The chief implementer of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-MEID) in the Visayas pointed to ‘cooperation between local officials and private individuals’ as the contributing factor in Cebu City’s success in flattening the curve.

“It’s the people themselves. They themselves already (did) the things taught to them, especially on our health protocols and guidelines,” said Cimatu.

He also particularly stressed the importance of cooperation at the barangay level.

“Success of the containment of the virus is in the barangay. And if the barangay officials have the will, the people will follow,” said Cimatu.

Cimatu, together with IATF-Visayas Deputy Chief Implementer and Retired Major General Melquiades Feliciano will be leaving Cebu to help Bacolod City, Negros Occidental, and Iloilo City with their fight against COVID-19.

For his part, Feliciano said ‘collaborative efforts’ made by personnel manning Cebu City’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC) also contributed to the success in pushing down the city’s epidemic curve.



“May naging sistema and practices na-establish and they were effectively implemented dahil sa pagkakaisa nang mga clusters...” said Feliciano.

(There’s already a system and established practices, and they were effectively implemented because of unity among the clusters.)

In the meantime, Cimatú also reminded Cebuanos to always comply with health protocols if it meant sustaining the gains and efforts made in addressing the virus outbreak here.

“While we have done that (flattening the curve) already, we should not be complacent. Hindi pa tapos ito. Marami pa tayong baguhin (It is still not done. We have a lot to change),” he added.

It can be recalled that last July, President Rodrigo Duterte directed Cimatú to intervene and oversee Cebu City’s outbreak response when a spike in COVID-19 cases here led the national government to revert its quarantine status back to enhanced community quarantine (ECQ).

Cebu City was downgraded to a more relaxed general community quarantine (GCQ) last August 1 and is expected to last until today, August 31. /dbs



CDN Digital

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LOOK: Environment Secretary and IATF-Visayas Chief Implementer Roy Cimatu is expected to arrive in Western Visayas tomorrow, September 1. But a day before his departure, Cimatu cited cooperation between local officials and private individuals that led to the success in bringing the COVID-19 outbreak here to manageable levels. #CDNDigital



I (would) like to congratulate the Cebuanos, and the people of Cebu City. We did it... But while we have done that already we should not be complacent. Hindi pa tapos ito. Marami pa tayong baguhin.

SEC. ROY CIMATU
DENR SECRETARY AND IATF-VISAYAS
CHIEF IMPLEMENTER

shortly before departing to
Western Visayas to oversee
COVID-19 response there

AUGUST 31, 2020



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Mindoro loses 2nd tamaraw to poachers in 4 months

By: [Maricar Cinco](#) - Reporter / [@maricarcincoINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:17 AM August 31, 2020



SLAUGHTERED Forest rangers found a sack full of tamaraw meat being dried up into tapa (buffalo bush jerky) in the Mt. Iglit-Baco National Park in Occidental Mindoro province on Aug. 28. Three poachers shot and slaughtered the tamaraw, an endangered species. —GREGGYAN/CONTRIBUTOR

SAN PEDRO CITY, Laguna, Philippines — A subadult tamaraw (*Bubalus mindorensis*) was slaughtered by hunters in Occidental Mindoro province, the second one killed during the coronavirus disease pandemic lockdown that has seen a surge in poaching and wildlife trade.

But it was “the first time in many years” that conservationists came across hunters who were after the meat of the critically endangered animal, said Neil del Mundo, coordinator of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources’ Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP).

Meat trade In the past, tamaraws were hunted down mainly for sport.

“We were surprised there was actually a market [for the meat]. [The hunters] also said they carried borrowed guns, which means there were more people behind them,” Del Mundo said in a phone interview on Sunday.

The last known tamaraw population in 2019 was about 600, mostly in the 106,655-hectare Mt. Iglit-Baco National Park in the central interior of Occidental Mindoro.

The TCP was not able to conduct a population survey this year because of movement restrictions due to the pandemic.

Del Mundo said a team of 12 unarmed forest rangers and wardens learned about the unwanted guests inside the conservation site on Aug. 26, certain that they were hunters since tourists were prohibited at this time.

After two days of trailing, authorities found 35 kilos of fresh meat being dried under the sun near the base of Magawang hill, at the boundary of Calintaan and Sablayan towns within the park. The head and intestines of the animal, believed to be around 6 years old, were already discarded.

Rangers’ supportThe rangers apprehended two male hunters but a third one managed to escape. Confiscated from them were two “pugakang,” or homemade shotguns.



The hunters told the authorities they shot the tamaraw dead for “pangkain” (food) and for trade. Del Mundo said they did not have any idea yet how much the meat was being sold.

Sun-drying into tapa, or buffalo bush jerky, could be the hunters’ way to preserve the meat for a four-to-seven-hour trek down to the town proper of Calintaan, Del Mundo said.

As they neared the highway, the two hunters escaped and reportedly ran back into the forests. “The rangers tried to chase them but they were gone fast. Our rangers were already tired from days of patrolling the mountains,” he said.

In April, a tamaraw yearling was also shot dead by poachers.

Environmental groups and individuals have since been raising funds for the salaries of forest rangers, as they called for an increased support to the 56 tamaraw rangers and wardens patrolling the park.



Dolphins, ‘butanding’, ‘dugong’ sighted in Sarangani Bay

Published August 31, 2020, 12:39 PM

by [Nonoy Lacson](#)

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Several Risso and spinner dolphins have been frequently seen at the Sarangani Bay, near Malapatan and Alabel in Sarangani Province, which could be an indication that the bay has remained safe for such mammals to thrive.



Photo of dolphins sight BFAR-12, DENR-12, and personnel of Sarangani Governor’s office at Sarangani Bay in Sarangani province. (Nonoy E Lacson/ MANILA BULLETIN)

According to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in Region 12, its personnel, who have been tasked to conduct surveys in the area, were the ones who first reported seeing the dolphins swimming in Sarangani Bay.

Local residents living near the coastal area of the bay also said the dolphins would sometimes leave the bay, but would return to the area after a few hours.

Jesriel Pantaleon of the Fisheries Management Resources Division of BFAR 12 said the presence of the dolphins in the area was an indicator that the bay was still healthy for the dolphins to live in.

Pantaleon said food sources could also be a reason why dolphins were being frequently sighted in the bay since last year.

Pantaleon added these species were frequently sighted along Malapatan and Glan coastal bay because these areas were rich in squids and fishes that dolphins like to eat.

Other species that can be sighted in the bay include the “butanding” or sperm whale and dugong.

BFAR 12 conducts monthly monitoring of the marine mammals in the area in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-12).

Funded by the governor’s office, the activity was undertaken in order to “know the frequency of the species of marine mammals, their usual sighting and location, estimate their population and density, and observe their behavior and activities within the Bay.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/31/dolphins-butanding-dugong-sighted-in-sarangani-bay/>



Dolphin, butanding, dugong namataan sa Sarangani



August 31, 2020 @ 4:56 PM 14 hours ago

Zamboanga City – Ilang mga Risso at spinner dolphin ang namataan sa baybayin ng Sarangani malapit sa Malapatan at Alabel sa Sarangani Province na indikasyon na ligtas at malinis pa ang nasabing baybayin.

Ayon sa Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) sa Region 12, ang empleyado na ipinadala nila para magsagawa ng survey ay kasama sa mga nakakita ng mga nasabing mammal.

Sinabi naman ng mga residente sa nasabing lugar na minsan ay umaalis din ang mga dolphin pero agad namang bumabalik.

Ayon naman kay Jesriel Pantaleon na mula sa Fisheries Management Resources Division of BFAR 12, ang presensya ng mga ito ay indikasyon na ligtas pa rin ang baybayin na maaaring tirahan ng mga dolphin.

Aniya, isa sa mga dahilan kaya nananatili ang mga ito ay dahil sa pagkain simula pa noong nakaraang taon.

Maliban dito, makikita rin ang butanding o sperm whale at mga dugong sa naturang lugar.

Nabatid na ang BFAR 12 ay nagsasagawa ng monitoring kada buwan sa mga marine mammal sa lugar sa pakikipagtulungan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-12). RNT/LF



19 new whale sharks spotted in waters of Ticao-Burias Pass Protected Seascape

Published August 31, 2020, 11:13 AM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Nineteen new individual whale sharks, locally known as “butanding,” have been spotted in the waters of Ticao-Burias Pass Protected Seascape (TBPPS) off the coast of Bicol since the start of 2020, according to conservation group World Wide Fund for Nature-Philippines (WWF-Philippines).

It also reported 50 returning individuals, for a total of 69 unique whale sharks spotted since the start of the year. This makes for a total of 733 whale sharks documented in the region since monitoring began in 2007.

The whale sharks were identified as part of WWF-Philippines’ ongoing effort to protect the TBPPS ecosystem, a marine corridor that covers the provinces of Masbate, Sorsogon, and Albay and home to numerous endangered marine species, including the whale shark.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature or IUCN currently lists the whale shark as endangered species.

The organization pointed out that the area is rich in marine biodiversity but development work in the surrounding provinces poses a threat to local ecosystems.

WWF-Philippines has operated sustainable tourism activities in the region since 1998, in a tripartite partnership with the local government of Donsol and the Department of Tourism-Bicol Region. Whale shark populations have risen since then, and the municipality of Donsol has developed into a third-class municipality.

Tourism activity in the TBPPS remains on hold under ongoing lockdown measures, but the group continues its daily whale shark monitoring operations.

“It’s important that we continue our whale shark monitoring efforts despite the lockdown. It’s our obligation as WWF-Philippines to continue monitoring activities, and to let the world know of the whale sharks of Donsol and their importance to their ecosystem,” WWF-Philippines Donsol project manager Jun Narvadez said in a statement.

“Our Butanding Interaction Officers, our spotters, they all help us monitor the whale sharks. This is a community effort that helps both the whale sharks and the people of Donsol. Hopefully by November, we’ll be able to restart our tourism activities again,” he added.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/31/19-new-whale-sharks-spotted-in-waters-of-ticao-burias-pass-protected-seascape/>



DENR-Region 2 donates forest hardwood to DepEd

By **Jonathan L. Mayuga**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 2 has donated a total of 15,000 board feet of forest products to the Department of Education (DepEd) in Nueva Vizcaya province.

The turnover of the confiscated common hardwood lumber was formalized on August 28 through the signing of the Deed of Donation between DENR Regional Executive Director Gwendolyn C. Bambalan and Schools Division Superintendent Rachel L. Llana represented by Roscoe N. Gacusana, senior education program specialist.

The forest products were turned over by mining firm, FCF Minerals, which recovered the forest products in its mining area.

Other government agencies can avail of the confiscated forest products provided they a submit request and indicate the purpose of which the forest products will be used, Bambalan said in a news statement.

“We just make sure that all requirements are in place before disposal,” she said.

The lumber will be utilized by 12 recipient elementary and secondary schools for infrastructure projects and school building improvement.

Meanwhile, the DENR Cagayan Valley region recognized uniformed personnel in the province for their assistance in the campaign for intensified forest protection and anti-illegal logging.

Six Philippine National Police (PNP) officers in Sta. Fe town led by Police Capt. Ernie C. Cruz received a certificate of recognition for the apprehension of undocumented 139 pieces of Narra and Rosewood lumber with a total volume of 472.18 board feet in Barangay Tactac. The police officials apprehended the forest products on August 23 while manning a Covid-19 checkpoint.

The PNP officers in Bambang town were also recognized for the apprehension of undocumented Gmelina lumber and knockdown furniture in three incidents in barangays Sto. Domingo and Mauan.

According to the Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer Giovannie M. Magat, the team apprehended on March 8 undocumented 272 board feet of Gmelina lumber loaded in a Toyota Hiace Van while monitoring compliance against the African swine fever in Barangay Sto. Domingo.

Three days later, another apprehension of 1,100 board feet of knockdown Gmelina furniture loaded in an Isuzu Elf was recorded in the same barangay. On March 27, the PNP also apprehended 263.5 board feet of Gmelina lumber in Barangay Mauan.

With the chiefs of police committing full support in the campaign, Bambalan pinned her hopes to prevent illegal logging at source. “*Sana sa bundok pa lang, mahinto na ang cutting,*” she said.

The DENR Cagayan Valley chief explained that trees are allowed to be cut if these are planted species in a private lot. “The cutting, however, should be covered with the necessary tree cutting permits from the DENR,” Bambalan said as she instructed the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources and Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Officers of Nueva Vizcaya to facilitate submission of requests for permits to avoid unauthorized transport of forest products.

During the awarding ceremony, Bambalan requested the police to include the protection of wildlife and other natural resources in their surveillance activities. She also announced her plan for a virtual orientation on environmental laws for police officers.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/08/31/denr-region-2-donates-forest-hardwood-to-deped/>



Officials quash plan to develop Philippines' biggest copper mine

The US\$5.9 billion project has faced opposition since mineral reserves were discovered there in the '90s, with pushback coming from indigenous communities, the Catholic church, environmentalists, and even communist rebels.



Site of the Sagittarius Mines, Inc's Tampakan mining operation in Mindanao, Philippines. Image: Sagittarius Mines, Inc Tampakan Facebook page/ Bonifacio Gallego

By Bong Sarmiento, Mongabay.com
Aug. 31, 2020

Officials in the southern Philippines have canceled a \$5.9 billion project to exploit Southeast Asia's largest known undeveloped copper and gold reserves, but have left open the possibility of the venture being revived.

The municipal council of Tampakan, home to 40,000 people in the province of South Cotabato, alleges that Sagittarius Mines, Inc. (SMI) failed to honor its side of the agreement governing the development of the mine. That deal, the municipal principal agreement (MPA), is supposed to be reviewed and updated every four years, but this hasn't been done since 2009. There were attempts to review the MPA, but the mayor and other municipal representatives were excluded from the negotiations, the council said.

"After scrutiny, there are provisions in the MPA that are considered vague, disadvantageous to inhabitants of Tampakan and unduly tie the hands of the local government unit [LGU] of Tampakan," the council said in a resolution dated August 10 but made public on August 14. "As such, the LGU cannot sit and fold its arms not to intervene in any action initiated by its people if, indeed, their rights have been violated contrary to some provisions of the agreement."

The MPA was already a done deal rather than being negotiated with the government, the resolution said.

Municipal legislators say they're no longer interested in reviewing or updating the 2009 MPA with the company but are open to creating or formulating a new agreement, which means SMI could still pursue the mammoth Tampakan project under a new municipal agreement.

The resolution has been sent to relevant government agencies but SMI has yet to issue a statement as of the time this article was published. Mongabay sought comment from SMI officials but did not receive a response from the mining firm.

The local government unit cannot sit and fold its arms not to intervene in any action initiated by its people if, indeed, their rights have been violated contrary to some provisions of the agreement.

The municipal council of Tampakan

'Lopsided,' 'no justice'

If approved, the Tampakan project would be the largest copper mine in the Philippines and among the largest in the world. The site is predicted to yield an average of 375,000 tons of copper and 360,000 ounces of gold in concentrate per year over a 17-year period. In 1995, the Philippine government granted the Tampakan project the contract to explore and develop the area's mineral deposits through a financial or technical assistance agreement (FTAA).

The MPA took effect in 1997, and since then SMI has paid Tampakan municipality at least 40 million pesos (\$822,370 at current rates), or an average of 2.5 million pesos (\$51,400) a year as part of its financial commitments, according to a 2013 state audit. But the terms of the deal are "lopsided," the council noted in its recent decision

Days before the council published its resolution, Tampakan Mayor Leonard Escobillo criticized the rental rate that SMI was set to pay for the ancestral lands of the Blaan, the ethnic tribal group whose mountain home will be affected by the project.

Escobillo said the mining firm was set to rent the Indigenous lands for 160,000 pesos (around \$3,300) per hectare for 25 years, which works out to 6,400 pesos (\$131) a year or 533.33 pesos (\$11) a month.

Escobillo, who succeeded his father, Leonardo, a staunch supporter of mining during his three terms as the town's mayor, said the land rental rate was part of the negotiations for obtaining the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of the affected community — one of the major requirements for the company to proceed with the project, along with local government endorsements.

"I believe there's no justice in that [price]," Escobillo said on Aug. 12. "You rent one hectare of land and you'll use it for 25 years, that's only 500 pesos a month. How will a family live with such [an amount]?"

Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM), a national advocacy group whose name translates as Alliance Against Mining, lauded the Tampakan municipal council for terminating the deal with SMI. It also urged President Rodrigo Duterte, who vocally banned open-pit mining in 2017, to order an executive review of the Tampakan contract.

"[Tampakan officials] have exercised the spirit and substance of local autonomy in ensuring the general welfare as well as ensuring a safe and sound environment of their constituents," Jaybee Garganera of ATM said in a statement. "The people of Tampakan and the Blaan Indigenous communities affected deserve to be heard in their rejection of this massive and potentially destructive mining project."

Pushback from clergy and communists

Nestled some 1,300 meters above sea level, the proposed mining site remains untapped in the mountains of Tampakan more than three decades after the discovery of copper and gold reserves there.

Its ownership has changed hands several times. Australian firm Western Mining Corp. (WMC) made the original discovery in 1994, before selling the mining rights to SMI. The national government approved the transfer of the FTAA from WMC to SMI in 2001. Exploration activity resumed in 2002 with investments from Indophil Resources NL, also an Australian company, and the Mindanao-based conglomerate Alsons (Alcantara and Sons) Group.

Multinational miners Xstrata Copper and Glencore Plc. later became SMI shareholders; Glencore would go on to acquire Xstrata in 2013. In 2015, Alsons Group gained control of the Tampakan project after Glencore pulled out, and by December 2017, SMI's company structure is "100 percent Filipino," according to the Philippine government's Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB).

The cancellation of the municipal agreement is the latest setback for the Tampakan project, already [blocked by a ban on open-pit mining](#) imposed by the South Cotabato provincial government since 2010.

SMI and its supporters have challenged the legality of the ban, saying the extraction method doesn't violate national mining laws. A local court has yet to render a decision in the case.

The project faced trouble even before the ban came into force a decade ago. These include security threats from communist rebels and opposition from the local Catholic church, environmentalists and some members of the Blaan tribe.

On New Year's Day in 2008, communist rebels stormed and burned the SMI base camp in the village of Tablu in Tampakan municipality. The rebels fled with several firearms taken from company guards. The church, meanwhile, has long rejected the mining project, citing its potential environmental hazards as well as concerns over food security and the human rights of the Indigenous peoples in the affected area.

In 2017, the late former environment secretary, Gina Lopez, canceled the Tampakan project's environmental compliance certificate (ECC) "due to environmental and social concerns." But in July 2020, the MGB regional office revealed that Duterte's office had restored the ECC, a decision that was in effect as early as May 6, 2019.

In a similar move, the firm's 25-year FTAA, which was set to expire on March 21, 2020, was [extended for another 12 years](#) in an order that was dated June 8, 2016, but only made public in January 2020. The 12-year extension will allow SMI to operate the mine until 2032, with the possibility of a renewal through 2057.

Gearing up for extraction

Prior to the termination of the municipal agreement, the firm had been gearing up for the commercial production phase. In the past two years, SMI has spent at least 103 million pesos (\$2.1 million) on repairing 17.4 kilometers (10.8 miles) of roads in at least two villages in the area, according to the 2019 company report.

The company calls itself a "responsible miner," citing the commendations it received from the Presidential Mineral Industry Environmental Awards in 2006, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013.

Local radio advertisements have been running in recent months repeating this "responsible miner" tag and touting the economic boost that the mine would have in transforming poor communities and changing thousands of lives through job creation.

Power supply lines, a major support facility for the mining operation, have already been put in place in the mountains of Tampakan, along with canals and gabions, while exploration studies to determine the stability of the ground for other support facilities are still underway.

On a slope near the SMI base camp in Tablu village, workers were seen in January putting in place soil erosion blankets made from coconut husks.

Escobillo said that month that SMI targets to start mining operations in three years if it can acquire the needed permits from the relevant government agencies, including the ECC from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and FPIC from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP).

Indigenous opposition and bloodshed

While some Indigenous leaders support the project, others oppose it. Blaan tribal leader Daguel Capion, who used to lead an armed group against the project and has admitted to killing at least three construction workers on the site in 2011, warned of [chaos and more bloodshed](#) should SMI proceed with excavating the vast mineral deposits.

In 2013, SMI scaled down its operations, retrenching about 1,000 workers as part of a revised work plan that sought, among other things, to get approval from various government levels and agencies to move the project to the commercial production stage.

“In the years leading to and during the exploration phase, the company would approach and consult with us,” Capion told Mongabay in January. “But nowadays, there are no more negotiations; the community is being kept blind. I hope the company will be more transparent to us.”

At least six of Capion’s immediate family members and relatives, including his wife, Juvy, and their two children, were killed in separate instances within the Tampakan project area. Juvy and the children were killed in October 2012 during a military operation aimed at arresting Capion, who was then facing murder charges for the deaths of three people working for a road project funded by SMI the year before.

Capion, who used to work as a community relations officer for SMI before taking up arms in opposition to the Tampakan project, was subsequently arrested in 2015 in neighboring Sarangani province but released almost a year later due to insufficient evidence.

Before his arrest, he had admitted to killing the construction workers and had been linked to several other alleged murder and attempted murder cases targeting government troops and company guards in the mine development site.

Capion, who is highly regarded by his clan and for years has been recognised by environmentalists and the local Catholic church as a legitimate community leader until his group’s disgruntlement turned violent, warned that “more lives will be lost if the large mining project will be allowed to proceed” on the Blaan ancestral land.

This story was published with permission from [Mongabay.com](#).



2 dead, 21 arrested in Antipolo quarry skirmish

Published 14 hours ago on August 31, 2020 04:04 PM

By [John Roson](#)



Two persons were killed and 21 others, including some policemen, were apprehended during an armed confrontation at a quarry site in Antipolo City, Rizal, Sunday afternoon.

Killed were Arnaldo Pangilinan and a still unidentified male, who are both believed to be part of a “squatting syndicate” at the quarry site, according to a report from the Calabarzon regional police.

Two of those apprehended were identified as SMSgt. Ronald Antonio Abbariao and SSgt. Henry Balmaceda, both assigned at the PNP’s Police Security and Protection Group.

Also apprehended were Rodolfo Rillorta and Jolit Custodio, who both have ranks of staff sergeant. It was not mentioned in the report if they are also policemen.

The incident occurred around 2 p.m. in Zone 7A, Brgy. Cupang.

MSgt. Remegio Alea, a member of the city Police, was sent to the area along with a tanod of Brgy. Cupang to verify information from Hard Rock Aggregates a commotion was occurring at its quarry site.

Upon arriving, Alea was told by one of the company’s guards that some of those involved were armed and in position for any assault.

Alea, the tanod, and that guard walked uphill to check but shortly another guard warned them not to proceed, a gunshot rang towards the policeman, according to the report.

This prompted Alea to call for backup.

Abbariao and Balmaceda tried to escape amid the commotion but were apprehended during dragnet operations.

The two slain suspects and 19 others arrested, including Rillorta and Custodio, appear to be involved in a squatting syndicate and tried to occupy the land of Hard Rock Aggregates, the report said.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/08/31/2-dead-21-arrested-in-antipolo-quarry-skirmish/>

Quezon church leaders seek to stop new coal plants in the province

By **BusinessMirror**

August 31, 2020



Protesters, led by Church leaders, urge officials of Quezon province to withdraw their support from the proposed 1,200mw coal-fired power plant in Atimonan and the expansion of two existing coal plants in Mauban and Pagbilao.
(Photo: Atimonan Catholic Church)

The Diocese of Lucena on Monday called for the cancellation of three coal-fired power plant projects set to be built by SMC Global Power Holdings and Meralco's Atimonan One Energy (A1E) in Quezon province.

In a statement that was signed by over 100 members of the clergy, including Lucena Bishop Mel Rey Uy, the clergymen said: "We call upon these corporations and their power subsidiaries to listen to the cry of the Earth and cancel their plans to set up this dirty, deadly, and costly source of energy. We appeal to the local and national government and their respective agencies to listen to the cry of the people of Quezon and disallow these projects and any further coal plants in our beloved province."

Municipalities under the Diocese of Lucena are already home to an installed coal capacity of at least 1,644 MW. The proposed projects would triple this with an additional 3,330 MW of coal.

"Already, the people of Quezon have suffered respiratory and skin diseases associated with toxic coal plant emissions. They have been robbed of their land, their livelihood, and their rights from pollution, development aggression, and exclusion from decision-making processes," the statement read.

The Diocese's issuance of the statement also coincides with the beginning of the Season of Creation, an annual period of prayer and action to address looming ecological issues, especially the climate crisis.

"We oppose these coal-fired power plants also because they are entirely inconsistent with the care of our Common Home so desperately needed today. Their cancellation not only prevents massive greenhouse gas emissions but will stand as a decisive rejection of all unsustainable and carbon-intensive practices here in Quezon and the rest of the country," they said.

In recent years, coal use has been declining globally due to its contributions to climate change, destructive environmental impacts, and investment risks.

Climate-vulnerable Philippines, however, has continued to expand its coal fleet.

"The Power for People Coalition stands in solidarity with communities in Quezon in their bid to abandon coal, and we commit to support this through all means available to us. No new coal project must stand in Filipinos' way to clean and affordable energy for all," said Gerry Arances, Convenor of P4P.



P4P along with the Quezon Church and community members filed a petition against the Atimonan coal plant at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in November 2019 for A1E's failure to adhere to environmental and community education requirements.

P4P has also supported various initiatives against SMC's proposed coal projects.




Coal-fired power plant na itatayo sa Quezon pigilin – Church leaders

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Aug 31, 2020

METRO



Naglabas ng pahayag ang Diocese of Lucena nitong Lunes na nananawagang kanselahin ang coal-fired power plant na balak itayo sa Quezon, na dadagdag pa sa pagkasira ng kalikasan dulot ng mga planta ng coal na kasalukuyan nang tumatakbo dito.

 Ad Asia Banner – below 1st paragraph

Ang pahayag na ito, na pinirmahan ng higit 100 mga pari kasama si Lucena Bishop Mel Rey Uy, ay ipinadala sa Atimonan One Energy (A1E) ng Meralco at mga tanggapan ng lokal na pamahalaan.

“Nananawagan kami sa mga korporasyong ito at sa mga subsidiariya nila na pakinggan ang tinig ng kalikasan at kanselahin ang planong ipatayo ang mga planta ng mahal, marumi, at nakamamatay na enerhiya mula sa coal. Nananawagan din kami sa ating lokal at pambansang pamahalaan na pakinggan ang mamamayan at huwag hayaang makapasok pa ang anumang dagdag na coal sa minamahal nating probinsiya,” sabi ng mga pari sa kanilang pahayag.

Ginawa ang panawagang ito sa pagsisimula rin ng “Season of Creation”, ang taunang selebrasyon na binubuo ng mga aksyon at panalanging pangkalikasan, lalo na sa usapin ng krisis sa klima.



“Nakikiisa ang Power for People Coalition sa mga komunidad ng Quezon sa kagustuhan nilang iwanan na ang coal, at maasahan nilang patuloy ang pagsuporta namin sa panawagang ito. Hindi dapat maging hadlang ang anumang bagong coal plant sa pagkakaroon ng malinis at murang kuryente para sa mga Pilipino,” sabi ni Gerry Arances, Convenor ng P4P. Ang grupong P4P, kasama ng mga kinatawan ng simbahan at komunidad sa Quezon, ay nanguna noong Nobyembre 2019 sa pagpepetisyon sa Kagawaran ng Kalikasan at Likas na Yaman (DENR) laban sa proyekto ng A1E dahil sa paglabag sa mga patakarang pangkalikasan at pang-edukasyon ng mamamayan. Sumusuporta rin ang P4P sa iba’t ibang gawain laban sa mga proyekto ng SMC ng coal. (Dolly B. Cabreza)



Church wants end to new coal projects

posted August 31, 2020 at 07:45 pm

by [Alena Mae S. Flores](#)

The Diocese of Lucena on Monday called for an end to new coal projects in Quezon province, claiming they would add to the environmental degradation caused by similar power plants.

“We call upon these corporations and their power subsidiaries to listen to the cry of the Earth and cancel their plans to set up this dirty, deadly, and costly source of energy. We appeal to the local and national government and their respective agencies to listen to the cry of the people of Quezon and disallow these projects and any further coal plants in our beloved province,” the group said in a statement, which was signed by over 100 members of the clergy.

Municipalities under the Diocese of Lucena are already home to an installed coal capacity of at least 1,644 megawatts. Proposed projects in Quezon are expected to add 3,330 MW.

“Already, the people of Quezon have suffered respiratory and skin diseases associated with toxic coal plant emissions,” the statement read.



Coal-fired power plant na itatayo sa Quezon, pigilin - Church leaders

(Pilipino Star Ngayon) - September 1, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Nanawagan kahapon ang Diocese of Lucena na kanselahin ang tatlong coal-fired power plant na balak itayo sa Quezon na dadagdag pa umano sa pagkasira ng kalikasan dulot ng mga planta ng coal na kasalukuyan nang tumatakbo dito.

“Nananawagan kami sa mga korporasyong ito at sa mga subsidiariya nila na pakinggan ang tinig ng kalikasan at kanselahin ang planong ipatayo ang mga planta ng mahal, marumi, at nakamamatay na enerhiya mula sa coal. Nananawagan din kami sa ating lokal at pambansang pamahalaan at na pakinggan ang mamamayan at huwag hayaang makapasok pa ang anumang dagdag na coal sa minamahal nating probinsiya,” pahayag ng mga pari sa pangunguna ni Lucena Bishop Mel Rey Uy.

Kasalukuyang mayroon nang 1,644 MW na coal sa mga munisipalidad sa ilalim ng Diocese of Lucena. Kung maitayo ang tatlong bagong planta, madadagdagan ito ng 3,330 MW pa.

“Ngayon pa lamang, nagdurusa na ang mamamayan ng Quezon sa mga problemang pangkalusugan dahil sa lason na ibinubuga ng mga planta ng coal. Ninakawan din sila ng karapatang magamit ang lupa at kalayaang makapaghanapbuhay nang masagana, pinahirapan ng polusyon, nakaranas ng agresyon, at naisantabi sa mga proseso ng pagpapasiya,” sabi sa pahayag.

“Nakikiisa ang Power for People Coalition sa mga komunidad ng Quezon sa kagustuhan nilang iwanan na ang coal, at maasahan nilang patuloy ang pagsuporta namin sa panawagang ito. Hindi dapat maging hadlang ang anumang bagong coal plant sa pagkakaroon ng malinis at murang kuryente para sa mga Pilipino,” sabi ni Gerry Arances, Convenor ng P4P.



Environment group: Stop dev't projects, illegal structures in Negros forest

[ERWIN P. NICAVERA](#)

August 31, 2020

AS IT expressed alarm over "clear link" of forest and biodiversity loss to the emergence of future pandemics, environment group Green Alert said violations on environmental laws remain prevalent in Negros.

The group, in a statement, said there are violations and negligence on the part of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), particularly on allowing development projects and illegal structures like private resorts and concrete road inside the Northern Negros Natural Park (NNNP).

It is like virus-infectious and capable of killing the flora and fauna in park and destroying local communities, it added.

The Green Alert, in a statement, said "a little virus has shutdown global economy, restricted our mobility, altered the way we live and snuffed the livelihoods of millions."

"This pandemic, like climate change is not a natural, rather anthropogenic or caused by human activities which driven by economics and politics of greed," it added.

Green Alert reiterated that those structures at the NNNP are illegal because they were constructed inside a protected area as provided under Sections 3 and 4 Republic Act 7586 or the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992.

"The structures are also illegal because they can be categorized in Section 20 or the Prohibited Acts of Republic Act 7586 such as squatting, mineral locating or otherwise occupying any land and constructing or maintaining any kind of structure, fence or enclosures, conducting any business enterprise without a permit," it said.

The environment group recalled that in 2018, it filed a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman, charging the DENR for allegedly failing and refusing to act or continue to refuse to take action against the proliferation of illegal structures with the areas of the NNNP totaling to 94 at that time.

The complaint, it said, was based on the alleged inaction of the DENR in 2014 after the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (Penro) head Andres Untal issued a cease and desist orders (CDOs) to 89 illegal structures owners inside the NNNP.

In the same year, former governor Alfredo Marañon Jr. said the DENR is ready to demolish the illegal structures at the protected area specifically in Salvador Benedicto.

"However, not a single illegal structure with a CDO was demolished. It has been observed that several structures issued with CDOs completed construction. New structures and new clearings inside the NNNP are also observed," Green Alert said, adding that it submitted letters to the DENR several times asking for a dialogue "but no response or action were taken."

The statement further stated that "while both the DENR and the Protected Area Management Board (Pamb) purposively disrespected the CDO by not acting on it, the latter has added to its callousness by allowing the road projects in Calatrava, Cadiz City and Barangay Patag in Silay City."

These projects are believed to pass through the NNNP and affect portions of its protected area.



The Green Alert feared that the said project is "a done deal because the Pamb approved the creation of the Patag Management Development Council (PMDC) instead of acting against the 36 establishments illegally operating in the area."

"In full finality and with no doubt, the structures are deemed illegal and CDOs were issued against the owners of the structures," it said, adding that "the CDOs and actions taken by the Penro were duly transmitted to the DENR regional director who is also the Pamb chairman."

Green Alert coordinator Elmeer Meeynard Calimpos said that to date, illegal structures are still mushrooming and expanding inside the NNNP and owners of these illegal structures are raking profits out of their business but not a single centavo goes to the coffer of the local government.

"Worst, it simply manifest the ineptness of the agency, the DENR and Pamb, and the political irresponsibility of local leaders to safeguard the environment for the enjoyment of its people which right is enshrined in no less than the Philippine Constitution," Calimpos said.

Green Alert demanded the Ombudsman to finally decide on the complaint by invoking appropriate judgment to the respondents, he added.

In a separate statement over the weekend, the Group of Environmental Socialists (Goes) said though there is already a CDO, there should be a resolution as to what is the next concrete plan whether to demolish the identified establishments at Barangay Patag, Silay City or just "legalize" them.

"We are hoping that what the Pamb is organizing will not be their means in justifying the act of legalizing the illegal inside the NNNP," the group said, adding that "no one is above the law."

The DENR and Pamb have yet to be reached for comment on this issue.



ANGAT DAM MALAPIT NA SA MINIMUM OPERATING LEVEL



September 1, 2020 @ 12:10 AM 7 hours ago

NITONG huling dalawang Linggo ng Agosto 2020 ay tatlong bagyo ang pumasok sa Philippine Area of Responsibility ayon sa Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, sina tropical storm Helen (Higos), Igme (Bavi) at Julian (Maysak).

Sa kabuuan ng Pacific typhoon season ay mayroon na tayong labing-isa (11) simula noong May 2020.

Si TS Helen ay apat na oras lang na namalagi sa PAR noong August 16, 2020 pero nagdulot ito ng pinsala sa Hong Kong, Macau at Vietnam kung saan pito ang namatay at umabot sa halagang US\$ 2 million (45 VND billion) ang pinsala nito.

Sumunod si TS Igme na bagamat nabuo malapit sa PAR ay nagdulot ng bahagyang pinsala sa Jeju Island sa South Korea at sa North Pyongan Province, North Korea mula August 22 hanggang 27, 2020.

Nagsimulang mabuo si TS Julian nitong August 28, 2020 pero habang isinusulat natin ang artikulong ito, siya ay nasa Okinawa, Japan na. Bagamat sa kabuuan ay may anim na bagyong pumasok sa PAR, batay sa monitoring ng National Water Resources Board ay walang naitalang rain measurement ang Maputi at Talaguio dahil depektibo, pero ang normal record nito ay 358.7 millimeters at 493.1mm, habang ang Talaguio ay 225.0mm at ang Angat ay 259.0mm, lubhang malayo sa normal na 571.9mm at 442.5mm.

Kaya naman, kahit pa nasa 49 cubic meters per second ang alokasyong aprubado ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) para sa Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), nasa 46.35 cms lang ang nailalabas na tubig mula Angat Dam patungong Ipo Dam, kapos ng 1.65 cms. Mula Angat Dam patungong Bustos Dam ay nasa 9.79 cms lamang dahil maganda naman ang record ng rainfall water sa Bustos Dam na umabot sa 148.58 mm, na siyang ibinabahagi ng National Irrigation Administration sa mga sakahan sa Bulacan at Pampanga.

Malaking hamon talaga sa NWRB ang kakulangan natin sa normal rainwater fall kahit pa nga panahon ng tag-bagyo sa ating bansa. May mga nabubuo ngang sama ng panahon, pero hindi sapat ang lakas at dalang ulan nito para mapunan ang kakulangan sa antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam.



Wala rin namang puwedeng gawin ang PAGASA, sila ay nagbabantay lang sa posibleng mamuong sama ng panahon pero sadyang kalikasan lang ang siyang nakapagbubuo ng mga bagyo.

Hangad din lang natin at ng mga ahensya ng pamahalaan ay katamtamang bagyo na may sapat na dami ng ulan, mahirap din naman ang lubhang malalakas na bagyo, marami itong hatid na pinsala.

Ayon kay Dr. Seville David, Jr. Executive Director ng NWRB, sa ngayon, ang lebel ng tubig sa Angat Dam ay malapit na sa minimum operating level na 180 meters.

Base sa ulat na ibinigay sa inyong lingkod, ang antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam ay nasa 181.68 metro noong ika-28 ng Agosto, 2020, 8:00 ng umaga. Kinakailangan ang pagtitipid sa paggamit ng tubig.



Build back better to overcome COVID challenges — CCC

Published August 31, 2020, 1:49 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

National and local leaders have been urged to integrate climate resilience and sustainability as core strategies and principles to build back better and ensure a safer and more secure future for Filipinos.

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasized that building back better should be the country's way forward to overcome not only the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic but also the threats brought about by the global climate crisis.

Citing a study titled "Will COVID-19 fiscal recovery packages accelerate or retard progress on climate change?" conducted by Oxford Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment, the commission highlighted that the COVID-19 crisis represents a dramatic shock to the global economy that will affect progress on climate change in multifaceted ways.

It underscored that economic recovery from COVID-19 crisis must be centered on ecological investment and climate resilience-building programs, such as supporting low-carbon technologies, eco-construction, eco-design policies and investments in research and development for ecological purposes, investment in education and training to address immediate unemployment from COVID-19, and natural capital investment for ecosystem resilience and regeneration.

The CCC cited the statement by the Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA) — signed by world leaders, including former United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa, and House Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda — urging countries to build back better from the pandemic and to incorporate climate resilience into economic recovery packages.

It expressed support to the GCA's call for accelerated progress in seven areas: Locally-led adaptation, urban resilience, water resources management, social safety nets, food security, nature-based solutions, and disaster prevention. They also highlighted the call to "seize the opportunity to transform how we understand, plan, finance, and respond to risks" and to "integrate climate resilience into decisions at all levels of government and by businesses, communities, and households."

With this, the climate body emphasized that the climate and environmental policies and laws in place must be enforced and inform the crafting of the country's economic recovery packages to address the present and anticipate future challenges to the climate and environment, while promoting better health and wellbeing for all Filipinos.

The CCC encouraged public and private sector leaders to foster a more people-centered approach to governance, promote inclusiveness, especially to the vulnerable and marginalized, and scale up sustainable initiatives to ensure that no one gets left behind.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/31/build-back-better-to-overcome-covid-challenges-ccc/>



Climate body calls for adoption of green Covid-19 recovery plans

By Jonathan L. Mayuga

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has underscored the need to integrate climate resilience and sustainability as core strategies and principles to build back better in the post-pandemic era.

Hence, national and local leaders are being urged to adopt a green Covid-19 recovery plan to be able to secure a better for all Filipinos, the CCC said in a news statement.

Emphasizing that building back better should be the country's way forward to overcome not only the challenges of the pandemic but also of the threat of a global climate crisis, the CCC cited a study conducted by Oxford Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment.

Through the study "Will Covid-19 fiscal recovery packages accelerate or retard progress on climate change?" the CCC highlighted that the Covid-19 crisis represents a dramatic shock to the global economy that will affect progress on climate change in multifaceted ways.

The CCC therefore underscored that economic recovery from Covid-19 crisis must be centered on ecological investment and climate resilience-building programs, such as supporting low-carbon technologies, eco-construction, eco-design policies and investments in research and development for ecological purposes, investment in education and training to address immediate unemployment from Covid-19, and natural capital investment for ecosystem resilience and regeneration. The CCC also cited the statement by the Global Commission on Adaptation—signed by world leaders, including former United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa, and House Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda—urging countries to build back better from the pandemic and to incorporate climate resilience into economic recovery packages.

The CCC supported the GCA's call for accelerated progress in seven areas: locally-led adaptation, urban resilience, water resources management, social safety nets, food security, nature-based solutions, and disaster prevention.

They also highlighted the call to "seize the opportunity to transform how we understand, plan, finance, and respond to risks" and to "integrate climate resilience into decisions at all levels of government and by businesses, communities, and households."

With this, the climate body emphasized that the climate and environmental policies and laws in place must be enforced and inform the crafting of the country's economic recovery packages to address the present and anticipate future challenges to our climate and environment, while promoting better health and wellbeing to all Filipinos.

In these challenging times, the CCC encouraged public and private sector leaders to foster a more people-centered approach to governance, promote inclusiveness, especially to the vulnerable and marginalized, and scale-up sustainable initiatives to ensure that no one gets left behind.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/08/31/climate-body-calls-for-adoption-of-green-covid-19-recovery-plans/>



Beverly Longid, global coordinator of International Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation and international officer of Katribu, during the Liyang Network international forum on Monday, Aug. 31, 2020. Screenshot from forum

Heighten vigilance, militance to honor slain environmental, land defenders —IP rights activist

Published August 31, 2020 1:59pm **Updated** August 31, 2020 2:48pm

By ERWIN COLCOL, GMA News

An activist for the rights of indigenous peoples on Monday urged the public to heighten its vigilance and militance against abuses as a way to honor the "heroism" of environmental and land defenders who died while fighting for their causes.

Beverly Longid, global coordinator of International Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation and international officer of Katribu, made the call as she spoke at an online forum on environmental and land defenders on National Heroes' Day.

"Today, as we celebrate National Heroes' Day, we need to heighten our vigilance and militance. Because aside from the terror law, there are many other policies implemented and are still being implemented that infringe on our basic human rights," Longid said.

"Our vigilance and militance, I think, is the best honor and tribute that we can give to the martyrs and heroes for freedom and self-determination," she added.

During the forum, Longid discussed the report of international NGO Global Witness on their findings on the plight of environmental and land defenders.

She said that in 2018, the Philippines ranked first on the list of countries with the most number of killings of land and environmental defenders.

"Since Global Witness started publishing its data in 2012, the Philippines has consistently recorded the highest number of killings in Asia of people, of activists who oppose illegal logging, destructive mining, or corrupt agribusiness," she said.

"It adds to the alarm that very few or not at all of the perpetrators have ever been prosecuted," she added.



Citing the report, Longid said corporate greed is "driving attacks against Filipinos."

She added that the "broken promises" of President Rodrigo Duterte, such as supporting marginalized and indigenous communities on combating corruption and protecting the environment, also played a role in the killings of environmental and land defenders in the country.

"These broken promises, in the end, turned into threats, and threats turned into killings," she said.

With this, Longid said the public should further oppose and expose the "selling out" of the country's patrimony and sovereignty to China, the United States, and other foreign interests.

"We also need to expose and oppose its corruption, its incompetence and incapacity to lead the country," she said.

"We need to aggressively campaign to stop the killings and end impunity in the Philippines. And we also need to actively support the campaign to defend the Cordillera against plunder and state terrorism, to defend Negros, and to defend the Lumad against state terrorism," she added.

In a separate statement, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) also honored Filipino heroes who dedicated their time, effort, and even their lives to uplift the welfare of others amid the health crisis the country is currently facing.

"Ngayong krisis pangkalusugan ang ating binabaka, mahalagang bigyang pugay natin ang mga frontliners na araw-araw bumabangon upang magligtas ng buhay at sinisigurong malayo sa anumang kapahamakan ang mga mamamayan," said CHR spokesperson Atty. Jacqueline De Guia.

"Hindi rin matatawaran ang pagtugon ng iba't ibang indibidwal na patuloy na itinataguyod at dinedepensahan ang karapatang pantao ng mga bulnerable at marginalisadong komunidad, lalo na sa panahong maraming pagtatangkang patahimikin ang pagpuna't sikilin ang batayang kalayaan ng mga mamamayan," she added.

De Guia urged the public to let the spirit of heroism and camaraderie be their guide in their daily interactions with other people.

"Kinakailangang hindi mawaglit sa ating kamalayaan na ang mga karapatan at kalayaan na tinatamasa natin ngayon ay produkto ng iba't ibang yugto ng kabayanihan na kinakailangang patuloy nating pangalagaan at ipaglaban," she added. —**KG/KBK, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/753614/heighten-vigilance-militance-to-honor-slain-environmental-land-defenders-ip-rights-activist/story/>



Worms in Hinatuan Mining to prove success of mine rehabilitation

By ... -August 31, 2020



Rosemarie Macawile, a resident of HMC's host barangay – Talavera – and a landscaping aide at the mine site, shows off the healthy soil at HMC's rehabilitated area.

Hinatuan Mining Corp. (HMC) has been invited to France for a poster presentation on a study on the presence of nematodes to prove the healthy condition of the soil in the rehabilitated area at the mine site.

Nematodes are microscopic wormlike organisms abundant in the upper soil layers that are a major component of the soil's ecosystem. At the mine site, nematodes are like “soil engineers” – the miners' partners in the restoration of the virility of the soil.

“(O)ne of the biggest challenges for miners is to prove the success of our rehabilitation programs in bringing back life in the mined-out areas,” said Manuel Torres, Mine Environmental Protection and Enhancement manager at HMC. HMC spends at least P80 million yearly for rehabilitation programs.

The study by Dr. Joey Genevieve Martinez, DSc., associate professor in the Department of Biological Sciences (CSM) at the Mindanao State University – Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) will be presented at the International Congress on Nematology in Paris. He used the soil environment at HMC for his academic research to prove that nematodes are ecological indicators of soil condition.

Current indicators of a successful mine rehabilitation are above ground such as vegetation.

Some of the results of the study that will be presented to the conference in Paris indicate that the chemical, physical and biological properties of the soil found in the “undisturbed areas” at the mine site are similar to the soil found in the rehabilitated areas.

Francis Arañes Jr., HMC resident mine manager, said the study underscores the company's success in its mine rehabilitation programs.

Mining companies such as HMC – subsidiary of Nickel Asia Corp. (NAC) – are mandated by law to conduct rehab programs that will establish a sustainable agricultural life for the communities after the mine life.

Earl John Gascon, HMC's dedicated company forester is excited to see the growth of various plants and crops all over the mine's rehabilitation area but even more proud to share with the communities around the mine site the news about the study on the nematodes.

Source: https://malaya.com.ph/index.php/news_special_feature/worms-in-hinatuan-mining-to-prove-success-of-mine-rehabilitation/



106th anniversary sa probinsiya ng Cotabato sinimulan sa tree planting

By **Bombo Garry Fuerzas** -August 31, 2020 | 2:24 AM

CENTRAL MINDANAO – Sinimulan ni Cotabato Governor Nancy Catamco ang pagdiriwang ng 106th Founding Anniversary ng lalawigan sa pamamagitan ng launching ng Food Security Program sa bayan ng Alamada Cotabato.

Sentro ng programa ang pagsisimula ng tatlong araw na “Taniman 106” kung saan full force ang provincial government sa pangunguna Gobernadora katuwang ang LGU-Alamada sa pamumuno ni Mayor Jesus “Susing” Sacdalan, Vice Mayor Leonigildo Calibara, SP Members, mga Barangay Kapitan at iba pang mga stake holders at organisasyon sa pagtatanim ng 106 na puno ng iba’t ibang uri ng prutas.

Sinabi ni Catamco na ang aktibidad na ito ay bahagi ng kanyang komprehensibong programa upang siguraduhin na mayroong sapat na pagkain sa hapag kainan sa gitna ng pandemyang nararanasan.

Ang Taniman 106 ay ginanap rin sa bayan ng Mlang at sa ngayong araw Agosto 31 ay sa bayan ng Magpet.

Isang payak ngunit makabuluhang culmination day ang gagawin sa kapitolyo sa September 1 bilang pagdiriwang ng araw ng probinsiya at dineklarang Special Working Day.

Source: <https://www.bomboradyo.com/106th-founding-anniversary-sa-probinsya-ng-cotabato-sinimulan-sa-tree-planting/>



Tree-planting sa Daang Kalikasan, isinagawa ng APO

By **Bombo Radyo Dagupan** -August 30, 2020 | 4:31 PM



APO tree planting sa Daang Kalikasan

Naging matagumpay ang ginawang service to the nation as fully participating ng Joint APO~PANGASINAN sa pangunguna ng ALPHA PI ALUMNI ASSOCIATION sa pamamagitan ng kanilang Presidente na si Atty. Mageryl Shay De Guzman at Wilbert De Vera, Alumni President ng Alpha Gamma Chapter jasama si Angelo Tandoc, VP ng CAFDC sa ginawang tree planting activity na may themang “PLANT A TREE, MAKE AIR COVID FREE” sa Daang Kalikasan, Mangatarem Pangasinan.

Sinabi pa ni Mar De Guzman, Bombo International Correspondent na naka base sa Hong Kong at nakikipag ugnayan sa APO~PANGASINAN ay dinaluhan din ito ni Mario Bustamante, Presidente ng APO~Eastern Pangasinan Alumni Association at Rodolfo Milles, Presidente ng APO~ Western Pangasinan Alumni Association.

Humigit kumulang na halos limang daan na seedling na nasa ibat~ibang puno ang naitanim nitong Agosto 30, 2020 sa nasabing tree planting activity ng APO.

Pinuri naman ni Mr Christopher Illumin, Presidente ng CHRISMELBERRY AGRI FARM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION na syang namamahala sa nasabing lugar ang APO dahil sa ginawa nilang activity.

Sabi nya ay hindi matatawaran ang ginawang tree planting ng APO dahil sila ay magiging bahagi ng kasaysayan ng Daang Kalikasan sa pamamagitan ng pagtanim ng mga puno na magbibigay karangalan sa buong Probinsya ng Pangasinan at sa buong mundo dahil sa taglay nitong tourist attraction site na ngayon pa lang ay dinarayo na ng mga turista at lalo na kapag tuloyan ng napaganda ito.

Ang pagtanim ng mga puno saang man parte ng lugar sa Pilipinas ay pakiki~isa din ng APO sa sangkatauhan para labanan ang pagkasira ng kalikasan dahil sa Global Warming.

Magugunita na ang APO na nanatiling matatag dahil sa paninindigan sa kanilang sinumpaan layunin at ito tobe a Leader, tobe a Friend and be of Service to Humanity.

Source: <https://www.bomboradyo.com/tree-planting-sa-daang-kalikasan-isinagawa-ng-apo/>



Duterte keeps Metro Manila under GCQ until Sept. 30

By: [Darryl John Esguerra](#) - Reporter / [@DJEsguerraINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 11:26 PM August 31, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — Metro Manila will remain under a less restrictive general community quarantine (GCQ) from Sept. 1 to 30 as the country's total COVID-19 cases reached 220,000, President Rodrigo Duterte said Monday night.

In a taped speech, Duterte said the provinces of Bulacan and Batangas and cities of Tacloban and Bacolod would also be under GCQ for a month.

Iligan City will be under a modified enhanced community quarantine or MECQ, while the rest of the country will be under the most lenient modified general community quarantine (MGCQ), Duterte added.

The government usually imposes varying degrees of the coronavirus lockdown restrictions in different areas for only 14 days.

But the government's COVID-19 task force earlier said it was looking at implementing one-month community quarantine periods instead of the current two-week durations.

There were currently [220,819 confirmed coronavirus infections nationwide](#) as of Monday, of which, 157,562 have recovered while 3,558 died.

More than half of the total cases nationwide were recorded in Metro Manila
[atm]



16 agencies face budget cuts in 2021 as govt recasts priorities to respond to Covid-19

By **BusinessMirror**

August 31, 2020

By Bernadette D. Nicolas and Cai U. Ordinario

THE Executive branch is proposing that the budgets of 16 state departments and agencies be cut next year as the government tightens its belt to finance its spending requirements for the Covid-19 pandemic.

Under the P4.506-trillion proposed 2021 budget submitted by the Executive branch to Congress, the Department of Housing Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) led the list of those facing the biggest budget cuts.

Under the Executive's proposed 2021 budget, the DHSUD will receive only P632.601 million this year, 29.16 percent down from its budget this year of P893.06 million under the 2020 General Appropriations Act.

Trailing DHSUD is the Department of Budget and Management, which may see its budget drop by 18.15 percent to P1.908 billion next year from P2.331 billion this year.

Also set to suffer a lower budget next year are the Office of the Ombudsman (OMB) and the Department of Finance (DOF).

The budget of OMB is being slashed by 18.08 percent to P3.36 billion from P4.1 billion this year.

The DOF has been allocated a lower budget of P17.476 billion for next year, a 12.51-percent decline from this year's budget of P19.974 billion.

Budget Secretary Wendel E. Avisado told BusinessMirror that most of the budgets cut are on expenses on travel, conventions, among others, while the budget increases are being proposed to support government's efforts related to the pandemic.

"Generally, the cuts are in the MOOE (Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses), especially Travels, Conventions, Seminars etc.; and the increase are all Covid-19 related and to support the economic recovery efforts of the government," Avisado said in a message.

Budget Assistant Secretary and spokesperson Rolando U. Toledo said the budget increases and decreases were necessary as officials had to "reprioritize the FY 2021 Budget towards containing the spread and mitigating the effects of Covid-19 virus, restarting the economy to be able to create jobs and attract investments and transitioning to the 'new normal' environment post pandemic."

The goal, Toledo told the BusinessMirror, "is to save lives and protect communities while making the different sectors of the economy stronger and more agile."

Other departments and agencies which may have to deal with budget cuts next year are Presidential Communications Operations Office with a drop of 9.67 percent), National Economic and Development Authority (-9.48 percent), Department of Foreign Affairs (-9.33 percent), House of Representatives (-8.71%), Department of Energy (-8.02 percent), Department of Agrarian Reform (-7.09 percent), Commission on Human Rights (-6.54 percent), (Department of Tourism (-5.33 percent), Office of the Vice President (-3.99 percent), Department of Trade and Industry (-3.57 percent), Department of Information and Communications Technology (-3.66 percent), and Office of the President (-0.14 percent).

Comelec budget up

On the other hand, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) topped the list of agencies with the biggest budget increases.



Recognizing Comelec's need to prepare for the 2022 elections, the Executive proposed a P14.565-billion budget for it next year, more than a three-fold increase from its budget this year of P4.043 billion.

The Department of Labor and Employment is also eyed to get 53.74 percent more than the amount it received this year. From only P17.9 billion this year, it will get P27.53 billion for 2021.

Following DOLE is the Department of Transportation, seen to receive P143.562 billion, a 42.64-percent surge from the P100.65 billion it received this year.

Amid the pandemic, the Executive is also eyeing a bigger allocation next year for the Department of Health at P131.72 billion from P104.49 billion in 2020, reflecting an increase of 26.06 percent.

Aside from DOH, the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) is also set to benefit from the proposed 16.41-percent budget increase to P23.89 billion next year from P20.52 billion this year.

As one of the government's main infrastructure agencies, the Department of Public Works and Highways is also a step closer to receiving P667.32 billion this year, a 14.72-percent hike from its budget this year of P581.67 billion.

Data also showed DSWD's proposed budget increased 4.38 percent to P171.22 billion in 2021 from P164.02 billion in 2020.

The DSWD is the primary agency tasked to finance the social programs of the government, including the Social Amelioration Program (SAP).

The DND, meanwhile, saw its budget increase by 8.85 percent to P209.05 billion in 2021 from P192.06 billion in 2020. The services of the military personnel have been used to man checkpoints, particularly during the lockdowns.

The data also showed the DA budget saw an increase of 2.64 percent. The proposed budget of the government reached P66.38 billion in 2021 from P64.66 billion in 2020.

The DA is tasked to help boost farmers incomes. The Agriculture sector is one of the "bright spots" of the economy during the pandemic.

Other departments/agencies lined up for budget increases are the Department of Education (+9.43 percent), Department of National Defense (+8.85 percent), State Universities and Colleges (+7.71 percent), The Judiciary (+5.6 percent), Department of Social Welfare and Development (+4.38 percent), Commission on Audit (+3.68 percent), Department of Agriculture (+2.64 percent), Department of Justice (+2.63 percent), Department of Interior and Local Government (+1.88 percent) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (+0.37 percent).

The proposed budget for next year is nearly 10 percent higher compared to the P4.1-trillion national budget this year. The proposed 2021 budget is also equivalent to 21.8 percent of the country's GDP.

Housing gap

Meanwhile, the lower outlay for the shelter sector is deemed insufficient.

"The budget for 2021 is not enough for us to accomplish our mandate of addressing the housing gap. However, we understand that the national government needs to prioritize responses to contain COVID-19 pandemic and subsequently steer our country to immediate recovery," DHSUD Secretary Eduardo del Rosario told BusinessMirror.



The National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) and its attached agencies saw a near double-digit decline in its 2021 budget.

Data obtained from the National Expenditure Program (NEP), NEDA's budget reached P10.98 billion in 2021, a 9.48 percent decrease from the P12.13 billion this year.

Other agencies that suffered budget cuts included the Department of Tourism (DOT), which has been badly affected by the pandemic, and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), which is helping small and medium enterprises.

The DOT's budget for 2021 contracted 5.33 percent while the DTI budget declined by 3.57 percent next year. For 2021, DOT's budget will only reach P3.84 billion from P4.06 billion in 2020 while DTI's budget will reach P20.59 billion from P21.36 billion.

3-pronged recovery plan

Earlier, Acting Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Karl Kendrick T. Chua said the government's recovery plan consists of the Bayanihan 2; Build, Build, Build; and the 2021 proposed national budget.

Chua said the lockdown and the low confidence of Filipinos in recent months has caused transportation to decline by 60 percent; people going to work by 40 percent; and basic shopping by 30 percent.

Neda Undersecretary for Planning and Policy Rosemarie G. Edillon said the government is already working on the Recharge PH and that Filipinos do not need to worry in case these economic bills are not passed.

Recharge PH seeks to refocus, sharpen the design and accelerate the implementation of programs under the 2020 General Appropriations to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and help get the Philippine economy recover from the sharp decline in the second quarter of the year.

Recharge PH builds on the work of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases Resolutions Technical Working Group for Anticipatory and Forward Planning, also led by Neda, which produced the We Recover as One report containing the initial assessment of the socioeconomic impact of Covid-19.

Recharge PH is to be implemented within 2020 and into 2021 and will be incorporated in the Updated Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/08/31/16-agencies-face-budget-cuts-in-2021-as-govt-recasts-priorities-to-respond-to-covid-19/>



'Naninilaw pa': Bentahan ng 'recycled' face masks naiulat, DOH nagbabala

Maan Macapagal at Vivienne Gulla, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Aug 31 2020 07:35 PM

MAYNILA — Natuwa si alyas "Rochelle" nang makitang kalahating porsiyento ang diskuwento kada kahon sa itinitindang surgical mask sa palengke nila sa Baguio City kaya naman di siya nag-atubiling bumili para iuwi sa kaniyang pamilya sa Itogon, Benguet.

Pero nabulaga si Rochelle nang buksan na ang mga nabiling murang face mask.

Marumi ang ilang surgical mask, may mantsa, at naninilaw pa. Tingin ni Rochelle, gamit na at ni-recycle na lang ang nabili niyang surgical mask.

"Madumi po tapos yung nasa gitna parang gusot-gusot na tapos yung cuttings po nila is hindi po pantay pantay. Yung kulay din po ng surgical masks is magkakaiba din po," ani Rochelle.

Nag-viral din ang post ng isang netizen kung saan nakita raw niya mismo nang pulutin ng isang mangangalakal ang mga itinatapon face mask. Nagsabi pa ang isa na ibebenta nila ito.

Ayon sa Department of Health (DOH), nakarating na sa kanila ang mga impormasyong baka nire-recycle nga ang mga disposable face mask pero wala pa silang nakukuhang kumpirmasyon.

"We have received this kind of information yesterday and pinag-uusapan nga namin pero gusto lang namin iparating sa ating mga kababayan na simula't sapul meron po tayong guidelines na pinalabas... regarding the safety disposal of PPEs including the masks so kailangan lang po especially sa household na ilagay lang po natin sa separate na plastic bag ito pong mga masks na ito," ani DOH spokesperson Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire.

Sabi naman ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), dapat ihiwalay sa mga bahay at opisina pa lang ang mga gamit na face mask, gloves, face shield, tissue at iba pang basurang puwedeng makahawa ng COVID-19.

Komento ng ilang netizen, kailangang gupitin o sirain ang face mask bago itapon para hindi ma-recycle.

Pabor ang DOH na sirain ang face masks bago itapon.

"At the same thing when you cut it, gumamit ka ng gunting sa masks na yan, linisan mo yung gunting mo, disinfect mo siya at maghugas ka nang maigi ng kamay,"

Nababahala naman ang Ecowaste Coalition sa mga nagkalat sa merkado na disposable face mask na hindi aprubado ng Food and Drug Administration.

"May mga false claim pa na may nakalagay dito na nagbibigay talaga ng 99 percent na proteksyon... Papaano kung yung ating mga frontliners or yung mga healthworkers gumamit nitong mga hindi notipikado, hindi rehistradong mga face masks? Magdudulot pa ito ng pinsala sa kanilang kalusugan," ani Thony Dizon ng Ecowaste Coalition.

Payo ng DOH, bumili lamang ng face masks sa mga botika at medical supplies stores.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/08/31/20/naninilaw-pa-bentahan-ng-recycled-face-masks-naiulat-doh-nagbabala>



AGAWAN-AWAYAN AT KRISIS SA EDUKASYON



August 31, 2020 @ 12:08 PM 19 hours ago

Malinaw na magbubukas pa lang ang klase sa mahal kong Pinas sa Oktubre 5, 2020.

'Yun bang === nasa ilalim ng Department of Education, lalo na.

Pero kahit nasa ilalim ng DepEd, may mga pribadong eskwela na ang nagbukas at nagsimula nang magkaroon ng klase.

Sa kolehiyo, mayroon nang State Colleges and Universities na nagbukas ng klase at kasabay ng mga ito ang mga pribadong kolehiyo at unibersidad na dalawang Linggo nang nagkaklase.

Ngunit saan kaya patutungo ang edukasyon ng mga kabataan?

AGAWAN, AWAYAN NG MGA TITSER AT ANAK

Sa dumarating na mga ulat sa ULTIMATUM, nagkakaroon na pala ng agawan ang mga magulang at estudyante sa mga gadget.

Kabilang sa mga nagugulo ang pamumuhay ang daan-daang libong public school teacher sa ilalim ng DepEd.

Lumalabas na marami pala sa mga teacher ang may anak na nag-aaral sa lahat ng antas mula elementarya hanggang kolehiyo, pampubliko man o pribado.

Ang mga mayayamang guro, oks lang dahil may kanya-kanya silang gadget pati ang kanilang mga anak na nag-aaral.

Pero higit na nakararami ang may iisa o dadalawa lang ang gadget na akma sa kailangan sa eskwela.

Kwento nila, panay ang webinar para sa training ng mga titser sa DepEd at kasabay nilang gumagamit ang kanilang mga anak sa iisa o dalawang gadget lamang.

Lumilikha tuloy ito ng kiskisan o away sa pagitan ng mga titser at mga batang estudyante.

AGAWAN NG MGA MAGULANG AT ANAK

Karamihan sa mga obrero ng Pinas ang nagtatrabaho sa small and medium enterprises na hindi kayang magpasahod ng katulad ng iilang higanteng kompanya, bukod pa ang katulad ng mga tsuper ng mga pampublikong sasakyan, mangingisda, magsasaka at vendor.

Kaya naman, higit na nakararami ang walang kakayahang bumili ng mga tamang gadget para sa pag-aaral ng kanilang mga anak dahil mahal ang mga ito.



Mamahaling gadget ang kailangan ng mga bata, lalo na mula sa high school at senior high school hanggang sa kolehiyo.

At dahil marami ang nagwo-work from home dahil sa mga kwarantintang pinaiiral ng pamahalaan, andiyan na ang agawan at awayan din ng mga magulang at estudyante sa paggamit ng mga gadget.

Nasisira ang oras at trabaho sa pagtatrabaho ng mga magulang at pag-aaral ng mga estudyante.

KRISIS SA EDUKASYON?

Sa kabuuan, mga Bro, tanging ang kakaunting pamilya, 'yun bang === mayayaman lang ang magkakaroon ng maayos na pag-aaral sa online learning na pinaiiral ng pamahalaan at mga pribadong eskwela.

Magiging atrasado naman sa pag-aaral ang mga mahihirap na pamilya.

At kung magpapatuloy ang pandemya, hindi lang atrasadong edukasyon ang daranasin ng higit na nakararami kundi krisis sa edukasyon.

Sa ngayon nga lang, milyon-milyon pa rin ang hindi nakapag-reenrol dahil sa pandemya at mula sa mahigit 27 milyong inaasahang papasok, 23.6 milyon pa lang ang malinaw na nakapag-enrol.

At habang tumatakbo ang panahon, maaaring marami sa mga nakapag-enroll ang aalis din mismo sa mga eskwela dahil sa kagipitan at kakapusan ng panggastos na dulot ng pandemya at kawalan ng sapat na gamit para sa online learning.

Tunay na problema ang krisis sa trabaho at kita ng mga magulang at panggastos maging sa mga load at mantinansya ng mga gadget na nagloloko rin.

May mga humihiram nga lang ng mga gadget habang ang iba ay nakikigamit sa mga katulad ng wifi ng mga kapitbahay na lumilikha ng awayan din ng mga magkakapitbahay.

Ang pagkawala ng milyon-milyong estudyante sa pag-aaral ang isang matinding krisis sa edukasyon.

MGA KALUTASAN

Sa ngayon, batay sa mga ulat sa atin ng mga guro, kung meron mang suplay sa kanila na tig-isang gadget mula sa DepEd, problema namang malaki ang kawalan ng maraming estudyante ng gadget o tamang gadget dahil nga sa krisis sa ekonomiya sa mga pamilyang kinabibilangan ng mga ito.

Ipagpalagay na nating nasa 1 milyong titser at iba pang tauhan ng DepEd na may kakayanan nang magturo, paano ang nakararami sa halos 24 milyong estudyante na walang gadget o kung may gadget man ay hindi akma sa sistemang teknolohiya ng mga guro at DepEd?

May mga local government unit naman na kayang magbigay ng mga gadget sa mga bata ngunit malinaw na hindi lahat ay kayang bigyan.

Higit na nagkakaproblema ang mga mahihirap na lalawigan, lungsod at bayan sa pamimigay ng mga kailangan ng mga bata.

Mayroon ding mga pribadong kompanya, indibidwal na opisyal ng pamahalaan o pribado na gumagawa ng tulong subalit lubhang kulang na kulang ang magagawa ng mga ito sa pagtugon sa pangangailangan ng mga kabataang mag-aaral.



Paano nga kaya lutasin ang dambuhalang problema sa teknolohiya ng milyon-milyong mag-aaral?

Kung pupwede lang sana ang face-to-face o in-person na pag-aaral, hindi sana ganito ang kinahaharap natin sa edukasyon.

Ano nga kaya ang mga susunod pang gawin ng pamahalaan para malutas ang problema at krisis sa edukasyon?

May nagmumungkahi ngayon pa lang na sa Enero 2021 na lang magbukas ang klase dahil maaaring sa panahong ito, may bakuna na laban sa coronavirus disease-19 na pinag-ugatan ng lahat.

At maaaring nakapanumbalik na sa normal na pamumuhay ang higit na nakararami upang hindi na sila pasanin pa ng pamahalaan at may kakayahan nang magpaaral ang mga magulang.

Ano sa palagay ninyo, mga Bro?



Show some spine

posted September 01, 2020 at 12:25 am

"Anger at Chinese incursions into our territory should not be seen as a pro-Washington stance."

Should a person do business with a company that helps a third party encroach on his or her property? If a farmer found that on the fringes of his property, a neighbor had built a wall to lay claim to land that was not his, would it make sense for the farmer to do business with the company that built that wall?

The answers to these questions seem self-evident. Yet, there is still disagreement when applied to our foreign policy.

The neighbor in question, of course, is China, our giant neighbor to the north, and the property in question are areas of the West Philippine Sea that clearly belong to us. We are not the only ones saying this. The Permanent Court of Arbitration, a United Nations tribunal, said as much in 2016.

In that landmark decision, the tribunal clearly stated that China had violated Philippine sovereign rights.

"Having found that certain areas are within the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines, the tribunal found that China had violated the Philippines' sovereign rights in its exclusive economic zone by (a) interfering with Philippine fishing and petroleum exploration, (b) constructing artificial islands and (c) failing to prevent Chinese fishermen from fishing in the zone," the tribunal statement said.

"The tribunal further held that Chinese law enforcement vessels had unlawfully created a serious risk of collision when they physically obstructed Philippine vessels," it said.

President Rodrigo Duterte, who came to power shortly before the decision was released, has chosen to shelve the tribunal's decision in favor of friendlier ties to—and more investments from—China. He said this pivot toward Beijing was a part of his new "independent" foreign policy that moved the Philippines out of its diplomatic lockstep with Washington.

But how has this "independence" paid off for Filipinos? Chinese investments have most prominently been in real estate and online gambling, neither of which has benefited low-income or middle-class Filipinos.

For example, Chinese real estate investments have taken away office spaces from the business process outsourcing or BPO sector, which took 65 percent of office space in Manila in 2016. When Chinese investors started buying up these spaces the following year, the BPO share shrank to 39 percent.

Unlike BPOs, which provide jobs to the English-speaking Filipino workforce, the Chinese online gambling companies do not generate the same kind of employment for Filipinos. These companies import Mandarin-speaking Chinese back-office workers to cater to offshore Chinese clientele. Some Filipino women find employment hosting gambling tables and Filipino companies also provide third-party cleaning or other maintenance service to these offices, but that's about it. As of March this year, some 80 percent of workers in these online gambling outfits were Chinese nationals.

In the meantime, the Chinese have continued to encroach on territories that we own, building artificial islands and installing surface-to-air missiles on them, breaking their own commitment not to militarize the South China Sea.

Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin now recommends that we cancel contracts with Chinese companies that have helped in this buildup. It is a reasonable suggestion, and one that has won over some members of Congress.

Still, others say this goes against the President's stated independent foreign policy and accuse Locsin of being in bed with the Americans. One pro-administration senator has, in fact, urged caution, saying we should "just put up with China's activities for now until we have other solutions."

But anger at Chinese incursions into our territory should not be seen as a pro-Washington stance, simply because the occupant of the White House happens to be at odds with Beijing. To paint with this "amboy" brush is an intellectually lazy way to dismiss the valid arguments that Locsin brings to the table. Being "independent" should never come to mean "spineless."

Source: <https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/332913>



Typhoon Julian bahagyang bumilis, patungo na ng Japan – PAGASA

By Ulat ng Bandera at Radyo Inquirer August 31, 2020 - 02:05 PM

Bahagyang bumilis ang kilos ng Typhoon Julian na nananatili sa karagatan ng Pilipinas.

Ang bagyo ay huling namataan sa layong 710 kilometers East Northeast ng Basco, Batanes.

Taglay ng bagyo ang lakas ng hanging aabot sa 150 kilometers bawat oras malapit sa gitna at pagbugsong aabot sa 185 kilometers bawat oras.

Kumikilos ang bagyo sa direksyong nort northwest sa bilis na 30 kilometers bawat oras. Ayon sa PAGASA kumikilos na ang bagyo patungong Miyako at Okinawa Islands.

Inaasahang mamayang gabi o bukas ng umaga ay lalabas na ito ng bansa.

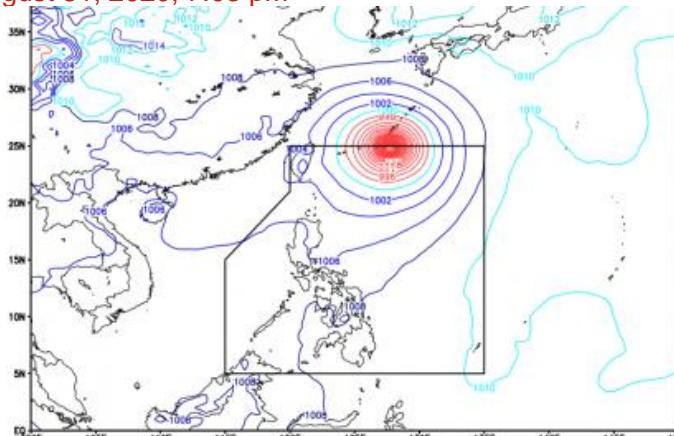
Ngayong araw, ang Habagat ang magppaulan pa rin sa northern portion ng Palawan kabilang ang Calamian at Cuyo Islands gayundin sa Batanes at Babuyan Islands.

Source: https://bandera.inquirer.net/263020/typhoon-julian-bahagyang-bumilis-patungo-na-ng-japan-pagasa?utm_term=Autofeed&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR17T8KfHqj_4mGpfdYzjCV-TnVaNfNWHWSRAk_23jqF_OMPpc7gM_2_Dkc#Echobox=1598854899



New TD spotted outside PAR; 'Julian' may exit Monday night

By Ma. Cristina Arayata August 31, 2020, 7:03 pm



(Image grabbed from PAGASA's Facebook page)

MANILA -- A new tropical depression (TD) was spotted outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR), Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) weather specialist Ariel Rojas said Monday afternoon.

The TD was tracked 2,550 east of extreme Northern Luzon.

"It is almost stationary, and is far from the Philippine landmass," Rojas said.

He added that in case the TD enters PAR, it is likely to exit immediately and would not have a direct effect on the country.

Meanwhile, Typhoon "Julian" was last spotted 700 km northeast of Basco, Batanes

It slightly intensified as it now packs maximum sustained winds of 155 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 190 kph.

Julian is still moving north northwest at 35 kph, and Rojas said it would likely exit PAR on Monday night.

Scattered rain showers and thunderstorms are expected over Ilocos Region, Zambales, and Bataan due to the southwest monsoon affecting Central and Southern Luzon.

Visayas and Mindanao will have warm and humid weather, with isolated rain showers caused by localized thunderstorms, Rojas said.

Moderate to strong winds, and moderate to rough seas will prevail over Luzon.

Gale warning remains in effect for the seaboard of Batanes and Babuyan Islands. Sea travel is risky due to rough to very rough seas over these areas.

Moderate to rough seas will be experienced over the seaboard of the rest of Luzon and Visayas. Those with small seacraft are advised to take precautionary measures, PAGASA said. (PNA)



Intensity 5 felt from magnitude 4.8 Davao del Sur quake

By Ma. Cristina Arayata and Eldie Aguirre August 31, 2020, 11:22 am



TEMBLOR. The tectonic quake struck 8 kilometers southwest of Kiblawan town at 1:44 a.m. It had a depth of 21 kilometers.
(Image grabbed from Phivolcs' Facebook page)

MANILA – A strong intensity was felt from the magnitude 4.8 quake that jolted Davao del Sur early Monday, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) reported.

The tectonic quake struck 8 kilometers southwest of Kiblawan town at 1:44 a.m. It had a depth of 21 kilometers.

Phivolcs earlier logged this as magnitude 5 earthquake, and later downgraded it to magnitude 4.8.

Intensity V, which Phivolcs describes as "strong" and generally felt by people indoors and outdoors, was felt in Kiblawan and Malungon, Sarangani province.

Moderately strong Intensity IV was felt in Davao City; Digos City, and Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur; Tupi, South Cotabato; and the Island Garden City of Samal, Davao del Norte.

Intensity III was recorded in Koronadal City; Bansalan and Magsaysay, Davao del Sur; and Columbio, Sultan Kudarat; and Intensity II in Kidapawan City; General Santos City; Antipas and Makilala, Cotabato.

The following instrumental intensities were also recorded:

Intensity V - Malungon, Sarangani

Intensity IV - Koronadal City; Tupi, South Cotabato

Intensity III - General Santos City; Alabel, Sarangani; Kidapawan City

Intensity II - Kiamba, Sarangani

Phivolcs said it is not expecting damages and aftershocks from the quake.

No major damage had been reported following the tremor.

The latest recorded strong earthquake that hit Davao del Sur was the 6.9 magnitude earthquake on December 15. Due to liquefaction at that time, a three-story commercial building in Padada town was swallowed by the ground.

Early this month, Digos City Mayor Josef Cagas initiated the first-ever tsunami drill for the residents living in four coastal villages of the city in preparation for future earthquakes.

"Despite the fact that we are facing this Covid-19 pandemic, we must not forget that some parts of the city are vulnerable to tsunami that could be triggered by strong earthquakes, flooding, and other catastrophes, hence we have to prepare for the worst so that the lives of those who are at stake could be saved by giving them the knowledge on how to react in those kinds of calamities," Cagas said.

Barangays in Digos City are establishing safe evacuation centers in their respective areas to accommodate residents and other evacuees from affected areas in the event of a tsunami or flooding. (PNA)

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1113884>



China's resort island promotes garbage sorting

By Xinhua

September 1, 2020

HAIKOU: Fruit peels, vegetable leaves, deserted clothes, used plastic bottles and bags — an eco-awareness center in south China's island province of Hainan is trying to find an alternative destination for these items other than trash cans.

In Baishamen eco-awareness center, Haikou City, Zhao Yueying uses a sewing machine to turn secondhand garments donated by local residents into cloth bags, which she will gift to residents and tourists to replace their plastic bags.



XINHUA PHOTO

“The more cloth bags I make, the less plastic bags will be used. It's a contribution to the society,” said 83-year-old Zhao, who makes four or five bags a day.

China's campaign to establish an urban garbage sorting system has given the center an extra educational function: here, visitors can explore how common trash can have a second life. In its yard, dozens of sealed blue tanks contained rotten fruits and deserted vegetables collected from local markets.

Jiang Fujun, Zhao's son and director of the center, said such kitchen waste, after mixing with water and brown sugar, will turn into “eco-friendly enzymes” after three months. The fermented juice would be used to clean stains, grow flowers and deodorize toilets.

The second floor of the center is an exhibition hall displaying exquisite cloth bags, aprons and sachets made from waste cloth. A large stool was made of hundreds of plastic bottles, each stuffed with colorful plastic bags. Jiang said the furniture reuses the waste that would otherwise contribute to the white pollution.

The center is playing a central role in the local drive to raise public awareness of garbage sorting. Last year, the center received more than 23,000 visitors, including residents, students and staff of public institutions seeking inspiration in garbage sorting. It also sent out over 24,000 cloth bags and 30,000 bottles of enzyme for free.

To encourage more people to participate in garbage sorting, Jiang built three more eco-awareness centers with the support of the government of Meilan District.

One center built this July became a summer vacation hotspot, where children play “garbage-sorting games” and are trained to be volunteers to promote garbage sorting knowledge in the neighborhood.



Having been there less than a week, 12-year-old Mao Zhisen was already conversant in garbage sorting rules and took pride in his volunteer work.

“Trashes have polluted the earth we are living on, so every one of us should take an active role in protecting the environment,” he said.

Wang Caili, a local resident, took a bag of waste paper boxes to the center with her three-year-old son. “My son enjoys playing here and he has learned a lot, including dropping trash in the right bins,” said Wang, noting it is important to teach children to form habits of garbage sorting.

Residents who brought sorted, recyclable garbage here receive rewards from soaps and bottled enzymes to cloth bags. Jiang said such rewards are particularly popular among the elderly residents. “Some even mobilized their family members to join them,” he said.

The aroused enthusiasm may pave the way for the government’s plan to fully enforce household garbage sorting in four cities in Hainan starting Oct. 1 this year.

“Promoting garbage sorting and eco-awareness will benefit future generations,” said Jiang. “It’s my dream to build 1,000 eco-awareness centers around the island.”



Huge Indonesia mine resumes operations

Published 23 hours ago on August 31, 2020 06:50 AM

By [Agence France-Presse](#)



The Grasberg mine is expected to produce 110,000 tonnes of copper ore per day in 2020. PHOTO: AFP

TIMIKA, Indonesia (AFP) — Operations have resumed at the world's biggest gold mine in Indonesia, the company that runs it said Saturday, after workers blocked access to the site in protest at being stopped from visiting their families over virus concerns.

The miners at the Grasberg complex in the country's easternmost Papua region reached an agreement with the US-based operator Freeport, which said it would resume bus services for workers to return home.

This week more than 1,000 employees demonstrated at the mine's main entrance over the decision to cancel bus services to the city of Timika in response to fears about the spread of coronavirus infections.

Many workers had been unable to leave the site — a high-altitude open pit that is also a major copper mine — for six months.

Freeport spokesman Riza Pratama told AFP Saturday that the roadblock had been removed after a long negotiation period.

Several buses departed from the mine late Friday, carrying some workers who had been granted a leave of absence, local company spokesman Kerry Yarangga said.

These bus services will be run with stringent health protocols including Covid-19 testing, Yarangga said.

In May, Freeport said it would reduce the number of staff at the mine, which employed about 25,000 people, after infections rose in the area.



Rich north owes 'ecological debt' to south: Pope Francis

Agence France-Presse

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VATICAN CITY - Pope Francis berated rich northern countries Monday which he said "owed an ecological debt" to the south for exploiting their natural resources.

In a short video address, the head of the Catholic Church warned that the planet's resources were being exploited "as if it was an orange."

"Let us pray that the planet's resources are not plundered, but shared in an equitable and respectful manner," the Pope said on his Global Prayer Network.

Ecological debts were being incurred "when multinational corporations do outside their countries what they are not allowed to do at home," the Pope said.

Such a situation is "revolting", said Francis, the former archbishop of Buenos Aires, the first Pope from the Americas and the southern hemisphere.

He did not mention any countries by name.

Known for his outspoken views on poverty and the environment, the Argentine-born Jorge Mario Bergoglio back in 2015 blamed developed economies for an impending environmental catastrophe.

The Pope then described the position of the south in the global capitalist system as "structurally perverse."

Earlier this year, the Pope was quick to link mankind's disregard for the environment to the coronavirus pandemic as it swept across the world.