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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Revised wildlife protection bill hurdles House panel

Published December 1, 2020, 10:33 PM

by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

The House Committee on Natural Resources has taken a huge step toward improving protection for Philippine wildlife.



MANILA BULLETIN FILE PHOTO

This, after the committee chaired by Cavite 4th district Rep. Elpidio Barzaga Jr. approved the substitute bill to a measure seeking to amend Republic Act (RA) No.9147, or the “Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.” The law is 19 years old.

The substitute measure originally represented the consolidation of House Bill (HB) Nos. 265, 3351, and 4860, also known as the revised Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.

But Barzaga recommended including salient features from two more bills, namely HB Nos.1684 and 3614, into the substitute measure since they were closely related. Camarines Sur Rep. Lray Villafuerte and Quezon City Rep. Alfred Vargas penned the bills, respectively. The latter two bills bat for the regulation of the catching, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, importation, and exportation of all sharks, rays, and chimaeras and any part thereof in the country.

“Actually these House Bills have been approved during the previous (17th) Congress. But unfortunately it was not approved in the Senate. The subject matter of these two bills are actually related with the substitute bill that we have just approved...the suggestion is that we shall incorporate the pertinent provisions of these two bills to the draft substitute bill,” the solon from Dasmariñas said.

This was ultimately moved and approved by a panel member after Deputy Speaker Rufus Rodriguez, author of HB No.4860, gave concurrence to it. The invited resource persons, including Theresa Tenazas of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources’ (DENR) Biodiversity Management Bureau, supported it.

Rodriguez’s bill states that the Philippines has a very diverse wildlife. “We have famous species like the Philippine Eagle, the Tamaraw and the Philippine Tarsier,” he wrote in his measure’s explanatory note.

“According to the Biodiversity Management Bureau, the Philippines has about 133 terrestrial mammals, 230 birds, 244 reptiles, and 97 amphibian species occurring nowhere else in the world. We also have over 120 fishes that can be found only in Philippine inland and marine waters,” the Cagayan de Oro congressman said.



Referring to RA No. 9147, Rodriguez said: “We need to improve and strengthen this law to meet the demands and problems we have today. This will ensure that our environment would be protected not only for us but for future generations as well.”

Rodriguez bared during the panel discussion that he was happy with the substitute bill’s penal provision, which would give teeth to the eventual law.

“We have discussed this thoroughly and I’m very happy because of the penalties (in the substitute bill). We’re going to imprison for reclusion temporal those who will inflict or undertake against species listed as critically endangered. That is good. That is almost life imprisonment,” he said.

He also approved of the proposed P2-million fine for violators.



To help rehab 44,000-hectare watershed, DENR opens hanging bridge in Nueva Ecija

Published December 1, 2020, 11:52 AM

by [Ellalyn de Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has opened a 55-meter-long hanging bridge in Nueva Ecija, which will be essential to the rehabilitation of the 44,000-hectare Pantabangan-Carranglan Watershed.



(DENR via PIA / MANILA BULLETIN)

According to DENR-Central Luzon Executive Director Paquito Moreno Jr., the bridge was funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) as an Agroforestry Support Facility subproject under the 10-year Forest Land Management Project (FMP) in the Pantabangan-Carranglan Watershed.

He explained that the bridge will connect farm areas to market towns, reduce transport cost of agricultural products, minimize post-harvest losses and, most of all ensure easier access to social services, such as health and education.

Moreno pointed out that “this 55-meter Calaoacan hanging bridge, which traverses the Deguireg river, will be of great help not just in the conduct of developmental activities within the watershed, but will likewise be fundamental in uplifting the lives of the local communities as this will serve as a channel to increase local trade and productivity.”

He said the completion of the hanging bridge is one of the DENR’s strong commitments to uplift the socio-economic well-being of local communities while conserving and protecting the environment.

The FMP was launched in 2012 and has already rehabilitated 14,133 hectares of denuded forest lands in the Pantabangan-Carranglan watershed.

Last year, the project was able to construct a 3.7-kilometer farm-to-market road at Barangay Conversion in the municipality of Pantabangan, which benefitted some 350 upland farmers and their families.

FMP is a 10-year reforestation project that aims to rehabilitate the Pantabangan-Carranglan watershed, one of the biggest protected areas in Central Luzon, through collaborative and comprehensive community-based forest management strategies.

It also integrates conservation and development-oriented activities with participation and capacity-building of local communities to rehabilitate degraded forestlands in three critical river basins, including Upper Magat and Cagayan in Cagayan Valley, Upper Pampanga in Central Luzon, and Jalaur in Iloilo.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/12/01/to-help-rehab-44000-hectare-watershed-denr-opens-hanging-bridge-in-nueva-ecija/>



Clearing ops sa forest lands sa Boracay, tuloy pa rin: DENR

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Dec 01 2020 05:00 PM

MAYNILA - Patuloy ang kampanya ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) para ipatupad ang batas laban sa pag-okupa ng lupang nasa ilalim ng forest land na klasipikasyon.

Ito ay kasunod ng pag-aresto ng National Bureau of Investigation sa 10 indibidwal kabilang ang mga Pilipino, Belgian, Filipino-Australian, at Britons na ilegal na omukupa sa mga area sa ilalim ng forest land sa Boracay.

“Naisyuhan natin sila ng notice to vacate at saka na warning na sila na dapat mag self demolish na sila doon at the same time, either umalis sila or face arrest. Ito yung nangyari noong Nov. 24, talagang inaresto na sila dahil talagang nagmamatigas silang umalis doon sa forest land at yung iba naman nagba-violate ng easement rule natin,” ayon kay DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones.

Sa panayam sa TeleRadyo Martes ng umaga, sinabi ni Leones na hindi maaaring magamit ang forest land kung walang permiso sa gobyerno o kung hindi pa naisasailalim sa klasipikasyon bilang alienable and disposable.

“Ito ang atin kampanya dahil nakita natin talagang dapat may mga permiso sila sa atin kung mag occupy sila ng forest land dahil ‘di naman talaga dapat matituluhan yan,” sabi niya.

Matagal na umanong inookupa ng mga arestadong indibidwal ang lugar. Pero paliwanag ni Leones na wala pang klasipikasyon noon.

“They ran the risk of being ejected kasi ‘di naman sa kanila ‘yan at ‘di pa yan A (Alienable) and D (Disposable) at the time,” aniya.

Paliwanag niya, ang regulasyon aniyang sinusunod ay kung wala pang klasipikasyon ang lugar lalo na sa Boracay, ang polisiya dito ay tatratuhin itong forest land.

“Hindi po nangangahulugan na may karapatan sila sa area lalong-lalo na po kung classified as forest lang yung area,” giit niya.

Nang magkaroon na ng proklamasyon sa ilalim ni dating pangulong Gloria Arroyo, ang DENR pa umano ang kinasuhan dahil kinuwestiyon nila ang paglalagay nito sa ilalim ng forest land.

Sabi ni Leones, nanalo naman ang gobyerno nang iakyat ang kaso sa Korte Suprema.

“Nagdesisyon na po ang ating korte na talagang yan po ay classified as forest land kaya tayo po ipinapatupad lang po natin. Malinaw naman po naipakita natin sa kanila nung kinasuhan natin sila, nakitaan po talaga ng probable cause yung kanilang pag-violate sa ating forestry laws at saka sa violation ng easement,” sabi ni Leones.

Sabi ni Leones, 40 percent ng lupa sa Boracay ay forest land at 60 percent naman ang alienable and disposable land.

“Talagang kailangan nating ipatupad ang batas. Ito po ang ginawa ng ating mga kasama sa NBI po,” sabi niya.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/12/01/20/clearing-ops-sa-forest-lands-sa-boracay-tuloy-pa-rin-denr?fbclid=IwAR2bUFzHO-BcUZzoIRWcP92UHmP-DGTDwWBAUhXbGI6Y9K8BKcNcLaD8kGo>



DILG and DENR join forces to stop illegal logging and quarrying

By DILG Published on December 2, 2020

QUEZON CITY, Dec. 2 -- The Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) are joining forces to implement the crackdown on illegal logging and illegal quarrying earlier ordered by the President in the wake of massive flooding in Cagayan and Isabela.

DILG Undersecretary and Spokesperson Jonathan Malaya said the National Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force created under Executive Order No. 23 will be called to a meeting by the DENR to implement new strategies to protect our remaining forest cover and protect threatened habitats across the country. The Task Force counts the DILG, PNP, and the Armed Forces of the Philippines as members.

He said that both Secretary Eduardo M. Año and DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu have agreed to mobilize all resources to stop the further destruction of our remaining forest resources.

Malaya said that the DILG also committed to support the National Greening Program (NGP) of the DENR which aims to rehabilitate some 1.2 million hectares of denuded forest lands by 2022.

"The DILG commits to mobilize the LGUs, the PNP, BFP and BJMP to meet the goal of the NGP to rehabilitate the unproductive, denuded, and degraded forest lands of the country by engaging local communities in the DENR's reforestation program. We will also work with Civil Society Organizations to plant more seedlings for our forests to grow again," he said.

He said that there is no better time than now to protect our remaining forest cover and do serious reforestation. "I know we are still in a pandemic but this program cannot wait otherwise we are sowing the seeds of our own destruction as a planet. Climate change is here and we have to face it," he said.

The DILG Spokesperson said that from January to October 2020, the Philippine National Police has conducted 6,710 anti-illegal logging operations and has arrested some 3,336 illegal loggers across the country.

"The 6,710 PNP operations have led to the recovery of 3,663,173 board feet of lumber illegally cut from our remaining forest cover. We have filed 1,145 cases in court against the suspects. There are still many violators of our environmental laws," he said.

He said that the PNP may effect the arrest even without warrant of any person who has committed or is committing in his presence the offense of illegal logging under P.D. 705.

The PNP has been directed to set up more checkpoints in all forest areas in cooperation with the PENRO and CENRO of the DENR. (DILG)

Source: <https://pia.gov.ph/press-releases/releases/1060713>



Rizal quarry suspension may hurt Metro projects, says DENR exec

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:31 AM December 02, 2020



MAJOR SOURCE Quarry sites in Rizal province, like this area near the Montalban (Rodriguez)-Marikina Watershed, are among Metro Manila's major sources of building materials for infrastructure projects. Gov. Rebecca Ynares, however, has ordered the suspension of quarrying in Rizal following the massive flooding that hit the province last month. —PHOTO COURTESY OF EDGARDO MANDA

Suspending quarry operations in Rizal could hurt public and private infrastructure projects in Metro Manila, where the province supplies the bulk of aggregates extracted from its mountains, an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

According to Isidro Mercado, the DENR director for Rizal, only the environment secretary may cancel the mineral production sharing agreement (MPSA) granted to quarry and mining companies, although the provincial government may suspend permits issued to small-scale operators (at most 5 hectares of quarry area).

In a memorandum order dated Nov. 26, Gov. Rebecca Ynares ordered a “stoppage ... on all quarrying and mining operations and related activities” in Rizal.

The order, a copy of which was furnished the office of Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, “strongly urges the DENR to cause the immediate stoppage of all mining tenement agreements that it granted covering a total land area of 4,964.3162 ha ... including all crushing plant operations.”

“Likewise, all local government units (city and municipalities) ... are strongly advised to cause the immediate stoppage of all land development activities, including subdivision development,” Ynares said.

Losses

The Inquirer on Tuesday tried to reach Mayor Tom Hernandez of Rodriguez town, where most quarrying firms are operating, but he had yet to reply.

Mercado and Police Col. Joseph Arguelles, provincial police director, whose offices were tasked with implementing the stoppage order “immediately,” said they had not yet formally received Ynares’ order as of Monday.

Rodriguez and San Mateo towns were the hardest-hit by Typhoon “Ulysses” (international name: Vamco) that dumped heavy rains and triggered widespread flooding in Rizal and Metro Manila last month.



“Time and again, the losses of lives and limbs, and millions of pesos in terms of property damage ... ushered by Typhoon Ulysses have been repeatedly attributed to quarrying and mining operations and related activities,” Ynares said.

On Nov. 18, the governor also wrote President Duterte to appeal for a “general moratorium” on land development, mining and quarrying in Rizal. She said this had been the provincial government’s plea since the administration of then President Benigno Aquino III.

Too small

But Mercado said quarrying was not solely to blame for the floods, stressing that it was a problem too complex and compounded by heavy rainfall, saturated watersheds and heavily silted tributaries.

Quarry sites in Rizal occupy a total of 278 ha of land, or a small portion of the province’s total land area, Mercado said. Provincial government data, however, showed only a total of 39.24 ha. “[Rizal] supplies mainly to Metro Manila and [the suspension] may affect the [national government’s] ‘Build, Build, Build’ [project] and other local infrastructure projects,” he said.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) in Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) region said 29 companies in Rizal had been issued with MPSA, of which only 17 were operational. Twelve companies are operating with permits issued by the local government.

In 2019, Rizal produced P202 million worth of mineral products, mostly aggregates, and basalt. The MGB said Rizal’s quarrying industry produced P324 million worth of minerals as of the third quarter of 2020. INQ

Source: https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1366990/rizal-quarry-suspension-may-hurt-metro-projects-says-dnr-exec?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR0MHf-Fw4G5MFySsa9k6crYhwxOUEDn1bD_71zjYoY8-jFIBQP6reBwu_E#Echobox=1606861284



Confirmed: Illegal logging in Samar

By NESTOR L. ABREMATEA

December 2, 2020

TACLOBAN CITY, Leyte: An official of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Samar has confirmed continued rampant illegal logging in the mountains of Samar.

Baldomero Nuñez, Cenro officer of the DENR in Sta. Rita, Samar, in an interview with The Manila Times identified the towns of Hinabangan and Marabut as the hot spots of such unabated practice.

The two towns fall under his jurisdiction.

He told The Times that the illegal logging is being done in the mountain barangay (villages) of the two municipalities.

Nuñez said his office had not been remiss in its campaign against illegal logging as shown by the arrest and conviction of violators of the Forestry Code of the Philippines.

He appealed for support from various sectors, particularly the local government units in the nine municipalities of Samar under the jurisdiction of the Cenro-DENR Sta. Rita to help them in their campaign against illegal logging and for preservation of the forests in their areas.

“We are not armed, we have only a few forest guards and we need the active support of the local government units and the law enforcement agencies in this drive to protect our forests,” Nuñez also told The Manila Times.

He, however, denied reports that he and his men are in connivance with the illegal loggers and some policemen assigned at the San Juanico Bridge in the smuggling of “hot” lumber and furniture into Tacloban City at midnight or in the wee hours of the day.

Last year, Cenro Officer Crisostomo Badeo Jr. resigned from his post after DENR 8 Regional Executive Director Crisaldy Barcelo exposed unchecked illegal logging activities in his area of jurisdiction.

Nuñez, then Cenro officer in Pambujan, Northern Samar, replaced Badeo.

Meanwhile, DENR 8 Assistant Regional Director Arturo Salazar hailed a directive of Secretary Eduardo Año of the Department of the Interior and Local Government on the campaign not only against illegal logging but also illegal mining.

Salazar said the directive would boost their campaign against illegal logging and illegal mining as he underscored the vital role of mayors in Samar in the drive to protect and save the environment.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/12/02/news/regions/confirmed-illegal-logging-in-samar/803646/>

Flood-prone town needs ₱250 million to widen portion of Cagayan River

By [Eimor Santos, CNN Philippines](#)

Published Dec 1, 2020 9:37:56 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, December 1) — The municipality of Alcala in Cagayan is seeking the national government’s help in solving its perennial flooding problem.

Alcala [was among the towns submerged in floodwaters](#) when Typhoon Ulysses hit the country in mid-November. More than 10,000 residents had to evacuate while thousands more stayed in their flooded homes.

“We are uniquely situated in a not-so-good-way with respect to flooding,” Alcala Mayor Cristina Antonio told CNN Philippines’ “Front and Center.”

The town of Alcala is separated by the Cagayan River, the country’s longest river. It is also where the Pared River, a tributary, meets the Cagayan River.

“Even during the dry season, there is an increase in water level at that junction,” Antonio said.

The mayor added that the river channel, which goes as wide as 400 meters, constricts to a width of 150 to 180 meters in Alcala, from Barangay Tupang all the way to Barangay Magapit in Lal-lo, spanning 37 kilometers.

According to a study conducted by the University of the Philippines’ Marine Science Institute at the local government’s request, a major solution would be the widening of the river channel from Tupang to Magapit. Covering the Alcala segment alone would cost ₱250 million, Antonio said.

‘A pittance compared to what we suffer’

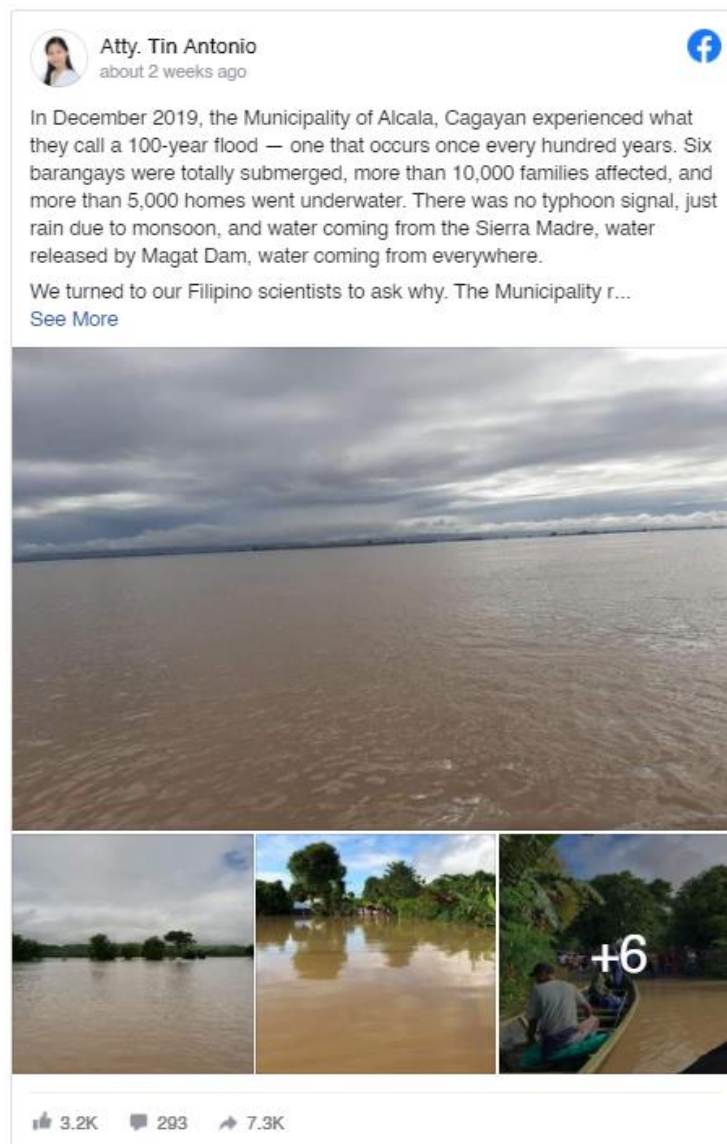
“I believe that this amount is a drop in a bucket,” the mayor said. “It’s a pittance compared to the damage that we experience, that we suffer, that the people of Alcala, and the people of Cagayan all the way to Isabela suffer.”

“It is a massive intervention that the LGU cannot do alone,” she added.

Antonio asked the UP Marine Science Institute to look into the town’s situation in December 2019, after it suffered a “100-year-flood” — an event that only has a 1% chance of taking place each year.

“The flood that is supposed to happen only every one hundred years happened again after 11 months,” Antonio wrote on her Facebook page on Nov. 15, as residents once again reeled from devastating floods.

To help control flooding for now, the municipality is conducting massive tree planting to build a “green wall.” Antonio said the project is in response to the lack of native trees due to illegal logging and other activities in Cagayan Valley.



The Environment Department [is investigating the logging and mining activities in the region](#) as ordered by President Rodrigo Duterte. He stressed the need to strengthen forest protection efforts after Typhoon Ulysses [left at least 73 people dead](#).

Cagayan River Basin Project

In an earlier interview, Public Works Secretary Mark Villar, [who leads the recently formed task force on typhoon rehabilitation](#), cited the ongoing Cagayan River Basin Project, but stressed that revetments – sloping structures placed on banks to absorb the energy of incoming water – cannot be done in the entire 800-kilometer river.

The ₱2.1-billion flood control project was funded under a loan agreement between the Philippines and the Japanese government through the Japan International Cooperation Agency. It covers a 940-meter revetment project in Barangay Alibago, Enrile, as well as a 970-meter spur dike and 1,400-meter revetment in Barangay Cataggaman, Tuguegarao City.

“We really have to pick areas and we have to be strategic in what infrastructure programs (to do),” Villar said.

Experts are calling on the government to declare a state of climate emergency for a whole-of-government response to the crisis. It is [now being tackled](#) at the House of Representatives.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/12/1/alcala-cagayan-flooding-.html>



Ex-DENR chief Defensor's quarry blamed for floods

[GOTCHA](#) - [Jarius Bondoc](#) (The Philippine Star) - December 2, 2020 - 12:00am

Former environment secretary Mike Defensor might wish to react. Mainstream and social media are blaming his hillside quarry for last month's destructive floods in east Metro Manila and suburbs.

Defensor's quarry is in the Marikina Watershed, Rodriguez, Rizal. Majestic Earth Core Ventures Inc. is the largest of 16 quarries there. As conservation zones, watersheds are off-limits to woodcutters, miners and dwellers. With Marikina Watershed denuded, typhoon waters and mud cascaded down the slopes unimpeded.

Folk in the valley below want answers. Loved ones perished in the flash floods. Homes were deluged with muck and water up to second floors. Evacuating to rooftops, residents endured cold winds and hunger till the storm subsided. Shops, cars, appliances, cookware, clothes were lost. Victims are contemplating multibillion-peso damages.

Congress is planning inquiries on why the great flood caused by 2009's Storm Ondoy recurred. Defensor is a party-list congressman, representing Anakalusugan. Netizens are decrying abuse of power. Trending online are photos of the denudation and flooded communities.

Defensor is chairman and president of Majestic. The firm quarries and markets aggregates, sand and gravel in Barangay San Rafael, Rodriguez. It also operates a crushing plant on-site, Majestic's website states. The quarry output is used in construction. Defensor headed the Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources from August 2004 to February 2006.

A successor at DENR a decade later, Gina Lopez continually warned against watershed deforestation. An aerial inspection of Marikina Watershed in September 2017 distressed her. Showing images of bald hillsides and gaping excavations, she said: "It is important that we rehabilitate this watershed because it is the first line of defense of Marikina, Quezon City, Antipolo, Pasig, Cainta, San Mateo against rainwater surging from the uplands of Luzon."

Miners opposed Lopez's closure of 73 destructive extractions. Quarry men claimed that the watersheds she was seeking to rehab were not even officially declared as such, so they could not be evicted. Lopez countered that "a watershed is a watershed, and no law can make or unmake it as such."

Congress refused to confirm Lopez's appointment as DENR chief. Still she insisted: "As long as there is quarrying and Marikina Watershed is denuded, the Pasig River waters will be brown and will become more and more shallow. It will cause flooding in Metro Manila. It is imperative that the Marikina Watershed is reforested."

Lopez left the Cabinet. She succumbed to cancer in August 2019.

She was the eldest of the second generation of the Lopezes who controlled giant broadcaster ABS-CBN. Defensor led its disenfranchisement last July.

Defensor is being contrasted to Lopez. His company profile states: "Majestic is a corporation existing under Philippine laws engaged primarily in quarrying," the website says. "The company is committed to apply only the best practices in quarrying, always taking into consideration the environment and community. Although the company was only established in 2012, it is already the grantee of various Operating Agreements in several quarry sites in the Rizal area."



Aside from Rodriguez, Majestic has other extractions. It “is constructing another mobile crushing plant in Barangay San Joaquin, Calbayog City, Western Samar, while conducting exploration work for aggregate resources.”

Defensor is also CEO of Pax Libera Mining Inc. Controversies surround its operations in Bukidnon. As Cabinet member under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, he was publicized as lead man of mining firms Nihao and Geograce. The two tied up with a Chinese miner in Zambales. People in that province denounced the many mines that leveled their mountains, polluted the air, choked the rivers, despoiled food sources and ruined their health.

Defensor also signed as witness in the grant to ZTE International Corp. of gold mining rights in Mount Diwalwal and North Davao, Mindanao. Along with ZTE’s national broadband network bribery scandal, the mining grant was investigated at the Senate. The Constitution forbids foreigners from natural resource extraction, except in financial or technical assistance.

President Rody Duterte has blamed recent deadly floods on illegal logging and mining, including quarries. DENR has been tasked to investigate in Cagayan Valley, Albay in Bicol and Marikina Valley.

Forest denudation by illegal loggers in the Cordillera Range caused the Cagayan floods, DENR U-Sec. Jonas Leones told Sapol-DWIZ Saturday. Slash-and-burn corn farming in the Sierra Madre range contributed too.

People in Albay blamed on 106 quarries the lahar slides from Mayon Volcano. Homes were destroyed in Guinobatan, Ligao City, Camalig, Daraga, Tiwi, Tabaco, Malilipot and Legaspi City. Fifteen quarries were suspended, nine for operating outside their concessions and six for expired permits, Leones said.

Defensor’s quarry area of 200 hectares is supposedly too small to have caused the great flood. Leones said unplanned development is more to blame.

* * *

My second compilation of selected columns is now available as e-book and print-on-demand. “Gotcha: An Exposé on the Philippine Government” zeroes in on corruption scandals and China’s sea aggression.

Chapters: (1) Beijing’s Bullying and Duplicity; (2) MRT-3 Fiasco; (3) (Dis)Trusting Comelec, on the faulty poll automation; (4) Leveling Lush Mountains, via illegal mining; (5) Smuggling Unabated; (6) Police Chopper Scam; (7) Surrender of Sovereignty; and Epilogue: The Philippine Government Exposed.

Foreword by patriots Supreme Court Justice Antonio T. Carpio and former Secretary of Foreign Affairs Albert F. del Rosario.

Get a FREE copy of “Chapter 1, Beijing’s Bullying and Duplicity.” Simply subscribe, also FREE, to my newsletter at <https://jariusbondoc.com/>

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2020/12/02/2060839/ex-dnr-chief-defensors-quarry-blamed-floods>



House leaders call for united, multi-national legislative approach to climate crisis

By House of Representatives PPAB Published on December 2, 2020

QUEZON CITY, Dec. 2 -- In the aftermath of the typhoons that devastated the country, House leaders stressed at the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) Global Parliamentarians Meeting the necessity to unite legislative efforts to address and mitigate the worsening effects of climate change.

The CVF Global Parliamentarians Meeting, held November 25, 2020, was an international webinar organized by the CVF in collaboration with the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Global Center on Adaptation. The meeting explored practical steps that parliamentarians can engage in to combat climate change through more urgent and ambitious actions and international outreach.

House Speaker Lord Allan Velasco highlighted that parliamentarians must speed up efforts towards climate resilience amid the pandemic and the worsening impacts of climate change.

"The increasingly violent typhoons, hurricanes, and floods caused by climate change are becoming the new normal all over the world and the Philippines has been on the unfortunate receiving end of the worst of them. As parliamentarians of the world's most vulnerable countries, we need to set enabling policies that will accelerate our transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient economies notwithstanding the COVID-19 pandemic... The need for climate action is as urgent as the need for a vaccine against COVID-19," Speaker Velasco said.

Speaker Velasco added that he looks forward to working together with the parliamentarians of the CVF in developing a common legislative agenda that will ensure a world united in pursuing sustainable practices.

"Together, let us deliver the much-needed policies that will usher a new era of economic development that is founded on sustainability, environmental protection, better risk governance, and climate justice," he said.

As a keynote panelist at the event, Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda stressed that it falls on developing states—most especially those that are hardest hit by the climate crisis—to unite and push for large-scale reductions in carbon emissions.

"In light of these intensifying impacts of the climate crisis, we are required to do much more. If countries historically responsible for the climate crisis will not act with urgency, we in the developing world must act in concert to take action, to take the lead in deep and drastic cuts in carbon emissions. There is no greater weapon to wield the righteousness of our cause than raising our own climate ambitions. Enhancing our nationally determined contributions is critical in demonstrating our climate leadership," Deputy Speaker Legarda said.

Meanwhile, House Committee on Climate Change Chair Rep. Edgar Chatto (1st District, Bohol) noted that the House recently adopted House Resolution 1377, declaring a climate and environmental emergency, ensuring enhanced and coherent climate actions in the executive and legislative agenda of the government.



“The House Committee on Climate Change under my leadership is in full support of this promotion of sustainable and renewable energy. In fact, the House Resolution on environmental and climate emergency calling on all the major carbon emitters, global industries and local government units to pursue renewable and sustainable energy sources was adopted by the House of Representatives today at 7:02 PM. This is the first climate emergency declaration that is national in scope in the country,” Chatto said.

The CVF is the foremost international cooperation body for nations most threatened by the climate emergency. It has 48 member states from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Pacific. Its meeting on November 25 tackled enhanced governmental ambition under the Paris Agreement in 2020, the launch of parliamentarians’ program of climate threatened nations, and ensuring climate resilience amid the coinciding challenges of the pandemic and climate-related disasters. (HOR PPAB)



CCC lauds House' adoption of resolution to declare climate emergency

By Jonathan L. Mayuga

December 1, 2020



Poultry farm workers unload chicken feed for egg-laying chicken at a poultry farm in Barangay Bulusan in Calumpit, Bulacan, one of the areas heavily hit by flooding due to Typhoon Ulysses.

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) on Tuesday lauded the move to adopt the climate body's resolution to declare a climate and environmental emergency in support of the effort to address the worsening impacts of climate change.

In a statement, the CCC said House Resolution No. 1377 called for the declaration of a climate and environmental emergency, ensuring enhanced and coherent climate actions in the executive and legislative agenda of the government.

The resolution was introduced by House Committee on Climate Change chair and Bohol 1st District Representative Edgar Chatto; Deputy Speaker and Antique Representative Loren Legarda, the late Cebu City 1st District Representative Raul Del Mar; Lanao del Sur 2nd District Representative Yasser Alonto Balindong; Masbate 2nd District Representative Elisa Kho; Negros Oriental 1st District Representative Jocelyn Sy Limkaichong; Bayan Muna Representative Eufemia Cullamat; and CWS Representative Romeo Momo, Sr.

"A global campaign to declare a "Climate Emergency" started as early as 2003, in recognition of the intensifying complications, brought about by global warming and climate change, and of the corresponding needs and implications to accelerate actions, including investments and mobilization of resources. The key elements of the campaign include the building of public awareness as acknowledgement of the threats of such emergency, the declaration of a climate emergency by governments to trigger societal actions, and demand for mobilization at a sufficient scale and speed, considering the urgency of implementation of such actions," HR No. 1377 reads.

"In declaring a climate emergency, the government admits that global warming exists and that the measures taken up to this point are not enough to limit the changes brought by it. The decision stresses the need for the government and administration to devise measures that try and stop human-caused global warming," it added.

As the lead policy-making body of the government for coordinating, monitoring and evaluating climate change programs and policies, the CCC underscores the need for the Philippines, being one of the most climate-vulnerable nations, to heighten the capacity of its people to survive amidst the climate emergency by mobilizing its people, institutions and resources.

HR No. 1377 gave full recognition to the CCC's National Panel of Technical Experts' (NPTE) call to shift from using the term "climate change" to "climate emergency" to pursue immediate action against global warming.



The NPTE, currently chaired by Dr. Carlos Primo David of the University of the Philippines National Institute of Geological Sciences, had recommended that “as one of the most climatically vulnerable countries in the world, the Philippines should mobilize its people, institutions and resources to enhance its ability to prepare and even prosper amidst the climate emergency.”

Further, HR No. 1377 mandates itself to:

- Encourage that climate urgency be placed at the center of all policy decision-making from local to national level;
- Encourage local governments to issue Climate Change Declarations within their respective jurisdictions;
- Call on the Climate Change Commission to spearhead the collection and consolidation of relevant data with national government agencies as well as local government units, in collaboration with the National Panel of Technical Experts, to come up with a climate risk assessment of the country, to produce baseline studies that consider future scenarios and impacts of climate change, to perform sustainable development and resilient investment planning, programming and financing at the national, sectoral, and local levels;
- Call on the major carbon emitters, locally and abroad, to take responsibility for climate change and to reinvest in renewable and sustainable energy;
- Call on local governments to adopt a “No to Coal” or “No to New Coal Policy” within their respective jurisdictions;
- Call on local industries and local government units to pursue renewable and sustainable energy sources;
- Conduct an audit of relevant national government agencies and local government units in relation to their compliance to existing environmental, climate, disaster risk reduction and management and appropriation laws, and international agreements in light of the climate and environmental emergency with the end in view of ensuring an enhanced national monitoring and evaluation system for the implementation of these laws and warranting the accountability of government officials, private entities and other involved stakeholders; and
- Enjoin national government agencies to promote convergence of efforts toward strengthening data science, technology development, and research for climate change adaptation and mitigation, including the establishment of a national integrated risk information system and a national loss and damage registry, to support science-based policy formulation and risk governance at national and sub-national levels.

Image credits: [Roy Domingo](#)

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/12/01/ccc-lauds-house-adoption-of-resolution-to-declare-climate-emergency/>



Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng Quezon nagpasa ng resolusyon laban sa Kaliwa dam

Balita | Ulat ng Bandera at Radyo Inquirer | December 01, 2020 - 09:05 AM



Nagpasa ng isang resolusyon an Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng Quezon para bigyang kapangyarihan si Governor Danilo Suarez na magsagawa ng agarang hakbang upang ipahinto ang konstruksiyon ng P12-bilyong Kaliwa dam project sa bayan ng Infanta.

Ipinasa ang nasabing resolusyon noong Nobyembre 27, 2020 ng 11 sa 13 miyembro ng Sangguniang Panlalawigan sa pamumuno ni Bise Gobernador Samuel Nantes.

“Hindi ko gusto ‘yang Kaliwa dam. Ako’y kaisa nyo... at ‘pag itinuloy pa rin ang pagpapatayo nyan ay magkikita-kita kami sa korte,” pahayag ni Suarez sa harap ng mga grupong kumontra sa naturang proyekto, kabilang ang mga miyembro ng Save Sierra Madre network.

Ayon kay Suarez, habang siya umano ang gobernador ng lalawigan ay hindi niya pahihintulutang maitayo ang joint venture project ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System at China Energy Engineering Corporation dahil sa malinaw na mapanira ito sa kalikasan, magtataboy sa karapatan ng mga katutubong daan-taon nang naninirahan sa lugar napagtatayuan ng proyekto, maliban pa sa panganib na hatid ng Kaliwa dam project sa mga mamamayan na nakatira sa mga kapatagan, o low-lying communities.

Iginiit din ng mga lider ng Simbahang Katoliko sa lalawigan ang kanilang pagtutol sa multibillion-peso mega-dam project, at sinabing ang laban ay para sa kaligtasan ng mga tao.

Ayon kay Bishop Bernardino Cortez ng Infanta, ang Kaliwa dam project ay may nakaumang na panganib sa lowland agricultural at fishing communities na may kasaysayan ng flash flooding. Ang prelature, na sumasakop sa hilagang bahagi ng mga lalawigan ng Quezon at Aurora, ay nasa Sierra Madre Mountain Range at sa silangan ng Pacific Ocean. Tahanan din ito ng libo-libong Dumagats, isang indigenous community sa bulubunduking bahagi ng Infanta.

“So you will understand that, by geography, our very survival depends on the care of our mountains, forests, rivers, protection of mangroves and seashores. We hope and pray that our people in this ‘Jubilee for the Earth’ will develop a new mindset and a paradigm shift in our care and use of the common home,” sabi ni Cortez.

Kaugnay nito ay hinikayat ni Cortez ang gobyerno na maghanap ng alternatibong mapagkukunan ng tubig tulad ng watershed rehabilitation at ayusin ang mga umiiral na dams at water facilities.

“We hope and pray that our people in this ‘Jubilee for the Earth’ will develop a new mindset and a paradigm shift in our care and use of the common home,” ayon kay Cortez.

Source: [https://bandera.inquirer.net/270964/quezon-nagpasa-ng-resolusyon-laban-sa-kaliwa-](https://bandera.inquirer.net/270964/quezon-nagpasa-ng-resolusyon-laban-sa-kaliwa-dam-)

[dam-project?utm_term=Autofeed&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1bp_hhd7RxemByBHBPOwBM4klDzFjaAUFyNChKsaHxKuE_49jIrwUoQx8#Echobox=1606790563](https://bandera.inquirer.net/270964/quezon-nagpasa-ng-resolusyon-laban-sa-kaliwa-dam-project?utm_term=Autofeed&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1bp_hhd7RxemByBHBPOwBM4klDzFjaAUFyNChKsaHxKuE_49jIrwUoQx8#Echobox=1606790563)



P12B Kaliwa dam project hinarang

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Nov 30, 2020

FEATURED NEWS



Photo courtesy of aveasia.wordpress.com



52 0

Isang resolusyon ang pinagtibay ng Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) ng Quezon para bigyan ng kapangyarihan ang kanilang gobernador na ipatigil ang Kaliwa dam project sa probinsya nila.

Nabatid na inaprubahan ng SP ang naturang resolusyon sa kanilang sesyon noong Biyernes sa pamumuno ni Vice Governor Samuel Nantes. Labing-isa umano sa 13 miyembro ng SP ang bomoto pabor sa resolusyon kontra Kaliwa dam project.

Ang Kaliwa dam ay proyekto ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) kasama ang China Energy Engineering Corporation.

Nabatid pa na nakipagpulong umano si Quezon Governor Danilo Suarez sa Save Sierra Madre Network, isang grupo na tutol sa Kaliwa dam, kung saan inihayag nito ang kanyang pagtutol sa proyekto.

Base sa Facebook post ng naturang grupo, sa ipinasang resolusyon ng Sangguniang Panlalawigan ay binigyang pahintulot ang kanilang gobernador para gawin ang mga kaukulang hakbang upang ipatigil ang pagtatayo ng P12 bilyong Kaliwa dam project na magdudulot umano ng perwisyo sa mga tao at sa kapaligiran.

Sinabi pa ng grupo na noong Nobyembre 17, sa isang pulong sa Infanta, Quezon ay inihayag ni Suarez ang kanyang pagtutol sa Kaliwa dam project at pinahiwatig na handa itong magsampa ng kaso kapag natuloy ang pagtatayo nito. (Eileen Mencias)

Source: <https://tonite.abante.com.ph/p12b-kaliwa-dam-project-hinarang/>



Green sea turtle freed in Tayabas Bay

By: [Delfin T. Mallari Jr.](#) - Correspondent / [@dtmallarijrINQ](#)

[Inquirer Southern Luzon](#) / 11:55 AM December 01, 2020



Local authorities freed the green sea turtle back to Tayabas Bay with a tag that indicated it was found in General Luna shores. The green sea turtle is just one of the many turtles that come to shore there to lay eggs from October to December. Photo courtesy of General Luna LGU

LUCENA CITY — A female green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) was released into Tayabas Bay fronting the coastal town of General Luna in Quezon province Tuesday morning.

Mayor Matt Florido, in a post on his Facebook, reported that barangay residents found the turtle at 9 a.m.

“I immediately dispatched the Menro (municipal environmental and natural resources office) to proceed to the area and returned the turtle into the sea,” Florido said.

The sea turtle’s curved carapace is 33 inches long and 24.5 inches wide.

Florido said the authorities put a tag on the turtle indicating that it was found in their locality, which he described as “the town with a heart.”

Authorities examined the turtle before it was returned to the bay.

Jay Lim, project officer of environmentalist group Tanggol Kalikasan (TK), said the turtles usually climb up to the shore to lay and hatch their eggs from October to December.

He urged local authorities to search for the turtle nesting sites along the coasts and protect the area.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources listed the green sea turtle as “endangered (facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild).”

Green sea turtles have an average life span of up to 80 years and can grow up to five feet and weigh up to more than 300 kilos.

Republic Act No. 9147 (Philippine Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act) prohibits the hunting, selling, and killing, as well as collecting of the eggs, of endangered species.

LZB

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1366762/green-sea-turtle-freed-in-tayabas-bay>



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Source:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCR0yzzj0cY&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=ESMETVKo



representation's earlier manifestation is nonsense, I beg to disagree," Pangilinan said.



DUMP gives this boy a lifeline as he collects recyclable materials to sell.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANALY LABOR FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE



Mining firm spends P54-M for Surigao Norte Covid response

December 1, 2020, 10:13 pm



COVID-19 RESPONSE. Representatives of the Taganito HPAL Nickel Corporation turn over an iChroma II antigen testing device to the municipal government of Claver, Surigao del Norte, on Nov. 23, 2020. The company has released over PHP54 million from March to August to assist local government units in their respective coronavirus disease response.

SURIGAO CITY--The Taganito HPAL Nickel Corporation (THPAL) has released PHP54.1 million from March to August this year to help Surigao del Norte's local government units (LGUs) contain the coronavirus disease (Covid-19).

Eric Macabenta, THPAL public relations officer, said Tuesday the amount was sourced from its Social Development and Management Program (SDMP) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds, following a directive from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) for the mining sector to realign their budgets to assist the government's pandemic response.

Based on its recent report to the MGB-Caraga, THPAL said it has so far disbursed PHP51.4 million from its SDMP fund and PHP2.7 million from the CSR budget for relief goods, protective personal equipment, vehicles, and various equipment to LGUs, front-liners, and residents in various municipalities.

"Apart from these, we recently donated RAT (rapid antibody testing) kits, antigen, multicabs, and motorcycles for medical staff to the LGU," Macabenta said, referring to Claver town where it operates.

Last week, Macabenta said THPAL gave the Claver LGU an iChroma II antigen device, which has a higher accuracy rate in detecting Covid-19 than the standard rapid diagnostic equipment. The company also donated 2,000 antigen testing kits to the municipal government.

He said THPAL also hired five nurses to buttress the local government's health personnel who are involved in the Covid-19 response.

In June, THPAL also donated PHP15 million to the Philippine Red Cross to build Surigao del Norte's first molecular testing laboratory.

Based in the city, the facility is expected to open this month and is seen to boost the province's testing and contact tracing capability.

"THPAL will continue to share its resources to support local government initiatives in fighting Covid-19," Macabenta said.

THPAL is a hydrometallurgical processing plant that uses the "high-pressure acid leach" method to convert the low-grade nickel laterite ore to produce nickel and cobalt mixed sulfide. The product is exported to Japan, where it is processed further to manufacture medical tools and equipment, electronic batteries, and other industrial materials. (PR)



Shoppers take a selfie with a Santa Claus decoration on November 30, 2020.

The STAR/Michael Varcas

Philippines records 1,298 new COVID-19 cases; total hits 432,925

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - December 1, 2020 - 4:03pm

MANILA, Philippines — The country's confirmed coronavirus increased to nearly 433,000 Tuesday as the government decided to keep Metro Manila and seven other areas under general community quarantine until the end of the year.

The Department of Health reported 1,298 new infections, raising the country's caseload to 432,925.

The highest daily rise in infections was seen in Ilocos Norte with 84 cases. It was followed by City of Manila with 61, Quezon province with 55, Laguna with 50 and Negros Occidental with 47.

Tuesday's tally did not include data from 15 laboratories that failed to submit their results on time.

The DOH also logged 135 new recoveries, bringing the total number of COVID-19 survivors in the country to 398,782. Meanwhile, the death toll rose to 8,418 after 27 more patients succumbed to the disease.

Of the total recorded cases, 1,298 or nearly 6% are active. Majority or 84% of these are mild cases, 7% are asymptomatic, 0.3% have moderate symptoms, 3% are severe cases and 5% are in critical condition.

The Philippines still has the second most number of COVID-19 cases in Southeast Asia after Indonesia.

Researchers studying the outbreak in the Philippines said that COVID-19 cases in the country may reach up to 500,000 by the end of December. OCTA Research Team in its latest report projected that there will be 470,000 to 500,000 coronavirus cases in the country by December 31, with a mean of 485,000 cases.

Christmas in quarantine

President Rodrigo Duterte kept outbreak epicenter Metro Manila under GCQ until the end of the year to prevent the transmission of COVID-19.



Aside from the capital region, Batangas, Iloilo City, Tacloban City, Lanao del Sur, Iligan City, Davao City and Davao del Norte will be under GCQ from December 1 to 31. The rest of the country, meanwhile, will be under modified GCQ.

Worldwide, more than 63 million COVID-19 cases have been logged, with nearly 1.46 million deaths.



“Lagundi” or the common and widely distributed *Vitex negundo* L., traditionally used to treat insect and snake bites, ulcers, rheumatism, sore throat, cough, fever and clogged sinuses.

Philippine Council for Health Research Development

LIST: Progress of possible Philippine COVID-19 treatments

[Ratzel San Juan](#) (Philstar.com) - December 1, 2020 - 7:09pm

MANILA, Philippines — Local researchers join the rest of the world in finding effective treatments against COVID-19 pending the availability of a vaccine.

Philippine Council for Health Research Development executive director, doctor Jaime Montoya, gave updates on the progress of these different local treatments in a Monday briefing.

Here’s how far along some of them are, according to the Department of Science and Technology official.

Virgin coconut oil

Virgin coconut oil (VCO), extracted from fresh coconut meat, is known to have anti-viral properties.

According to Montoya, a community trial for VCO has already been completed in Laguna, with the data currently being reviewed and studied. A separate press briefing will be held to present the results of the study.

Meanwhile, another study at a hospital with moderate COVID-19 cases is still ongoing. This is expected to finish early next year.

Melatonin

Melatonin, a common and inexpensive sleep-aid supplement, is known for its anti-inflammation, anti-oxidation and immune-enhancing effects.

Montoya said that melatonin has been approved to undergo clinical trials by the Food and Drug Administration two weeks ago.

The recruitment of patients and volunteers for melatonin is already starting, the official said.

Lagundi

“Lagundi” is a common term for the common and widely distributed *Vitex negundo* L., traditionally used to treat insect and snake bites, ulcers, rheumatism, sore throat, cough, fever and clogged sinuses.



Montoya said that Lagundi has finished Phase 1, the stage that determines the dosage or amount of the medicine to be consumed.

It is currently under Phase 2, which will test its effectiveness on those with COVID-19. The official said this stage is expected to last two to three months depending on how fast volunteers will be recruited.

Tawa-tawa

“Tawa tawa,” also known as *Euphorbia hirta* or gatas-gatas, is a hairy herb grown in open grasslands, roadsides and pathways. It is a popular folkloric treatment for dengue in the Philippines.

Montoya said that Phase 1 is only just beginning.

“Hopefully po ay kung iyan ay mabilis po ang kanilang pagkuha ng mga volunteers, baka po by next week or two weeks from now ay magsisimula na po ang Phase 2, iyong titingnan po natin kung epektibo po iyong Tawa-tawa o makatutulong para sa mga may COVID-19,” he said.

Similarly, Phase 2 for this treatment is also expected to last two to three months.



“First of all, if we can finish it this Friday we need four or five days to encode those changes, and then we also have seven days to print the book. So, before Christmas the General Appropriations Bill will be on the President’s table, if he wants to sign it,” he said.

Robinson Ninal Jr/Presidential Photo

Duterte may sign 2021 budget before Christmas

[Delon Porcalla](#) (The Philippine Star) - December 2, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Senators and congressmen comprising the bicameral conference committee may be able to settle their conflicting positions in the proposed P4.5-trillion national budget soon enough to allow President Duterte to sign it in time for Christmas.

Rep. Eric Go Yap of party-list ACT-CIS, chairman of the House appropriations committee, said both the Senate and the House contingent that he heads expect a fine-tuned budget document on the President’s desk by the “third week” of December or before Christmas.

“First of all, if we can finish it this Friday we need four or five days to encode those changes, and then we also have seven days to print the book. So, before Christmas the General Appropriations Bill will be on the President’s table, if he wants to sign it,” he said.

Deputy Speaker Mikee Romero of party-list 1Pacman, who sits as vice chairman of the House contingent, shared the same target date and estimated that both the Senate and the House may be able to finish the bicam by Dec. 8.

“Before Christmas is our target. Hopefully, we finish this bicam latest on Monday (Dec. 7),” the president of the 54-member Party-list Coalition Foundation Inc. said, reassuring the public that the General Appropriations Bill will have “zero pork.”

Yap made the same assurance to reporters while emphasizing that at least P5 billion or maybe even more would be allocated for the purchase of vaccines for COVID-19.

As far as they are concerned, Yap said congressmen are lobbying for funds that will help their constituents recover from the effects of recent typhoons.

“The most important thing for us is to have those calamity funds, particularly those congressmen whose districts have suffered because of Super Typhoons Rolly and Ulysses where crops and houses have been severely damaged,” he said.

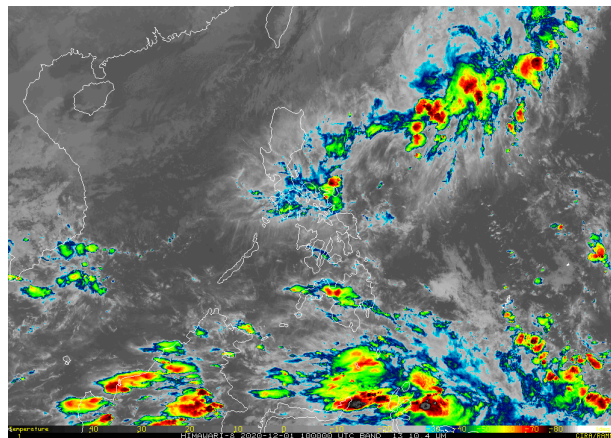


“And of course, we also have our own allocation for our COVID-19 response,” Yap added.

Meanwhile, the Public Attorney’s Office (PAO) yesterday hit the move of Sens. Franklin Drilon and Sonny Angara to insert questionable provision in the 2021 budget of the PAO forensic laboratory.

“It is an illegal, despotic, whimsical, vindictive and unconstitutional provision in the PAO budget,” PAO said.

The provision inserted by the two senators would reportedly prevent PAO employees from receiving their salaries and from using the budget for laboratory operation. –
Rhodina Villanueva



This satellite image shows the low pressure area which was last seen at 115 km east of Borongan City in Samar
RAMMB

PAGASA: 1-2 more storms could hit the country before year ends

(Philstar.com) - December 1, 2020 - 6:51pm

MANILA, Philippines — At least two tropical cyclones may still enter the country this December, state weather bureau PAGASA said, capping off what has been a year for the Philippines dealing with a pandemic and reeling from three consecutive strong typhoons.

The agency in its 5 p.m. update on Tuesday said the storms will be named "Vicky" and "Warren" once they enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility and are likely to hit Bicol Region, Visayas, Northern Mindanao and MIMAROPA.

"Bilang guidance kung saan puwede tumama, kadalasan ay landfalling at sa gitnang bahagi ng bansa tumatama ang bagyo. Just in case makapaghanda na rin 'yung ating mga kababayan," said weather specialist Ariel Rojas.

(For guidance, these storms normally make landfall over the central part of the country. This is just so the public living in these areas could be prepared.)

PAGASA in November projected one to three [weather disturbances](#) to hit the country that month — with "Ulysses" (international name Vamco) battering Luzon and leaving a trail of destruction that had left the entire island under a state of calamity.

Latest figures by the NDRRMC showed that showed that the cost of damage from Ulysses alone had reached a combined P19 billion, more than Super Typhoon Rolly (international name Goni) left at over P17 billion.

The onslaught of these storms had left groups calling for a climate emergency declaration, which had been backed by Congress in a [resolution](#) that only urges — not compels — local governments and agencies to adopt policies to mitigate climate change's impact.

The weather bureau said the low pressure area currently inside PAR was last seen at 115 kilometers east of Borongan City in Samar.

While it is not expected to intensify, it could still bring isolated rains over central parts of the country such as Eastern Visayas and Bicol, along with the tail end of a frontal system.



Eastern parts of Luzon will also see the same weather condition tomorrow due to the tail-end, particularly in Cagayan, Aurora, Quezon and Bicol Region.

The remaining areas in Mainland Luzon including MIMAROPA will see generally fair weather but could expect slight chances of rain and colder mornings due to the northeast monsoon or the Amihan.

PAGASA added that colder weather should be expected by the second half of December, which will prolong until January to February, still brought by the northeast monsoon.

Visayas will experience rainy weather condition still due to the LPA, while Mindanao will have fair weather with the possibility of localized thunderstorms.

Gale warning, meanwhile, is up over the seaboard of northern and central Luzon, eastern seaboard of Quezon including Polilio Islands, as well as the northern and eastern seaboard of Bicol and Eastern Visayas due to the Amihan.

Ulysses was the 21st tropical cyclone to hit the Philippines this year, with PAGASA in October declaring the onset of the La Niña, where above normal rainfall conditions will be seen at least until March 2021. — **Christian Deiparine**



Albay prepares for flood, lahar flows, landslides as LPA dumps rains over Bicol

By: [Mar S. Arguelles](#) - Correspondent / [@msarguellesINO](#)

[Inquirer Southern Luzon](#) / 11:48 AM December 01, 2020

LEGAZPI CITY -- Disaster councils in Albay were activated on Tuesday as the province braced for possible flooding and lahar flows in low-lying areas and landslides in mountain slopes, due to a low-pressure area (LPA) spotted some 375 km east of this city.

Albay Gov. Al Francis Bichara issued a provincial disaster advisory on Tuesday directing all 15 towns and three city disaster councils to be on high alert as the LPA brings moderate to heavy rains.

Cedric Daep, Albay Public Safety Emergency and Management Office (APSEMO), said in an interview that the cold front and the northeast monsoon is bringing moderate to heavy rains. Once it breaks the rainfall threshold, it would cause floods, lahar, and landslides.

Daep said the wind and coastal condition would also trigger moderate to the strong northeast wind, producing a moderate to rough (1.2 to 4 meters high) coastal water rise endangering small sea crafts.

A no-sailing policy has been raised due to the rough seas prevailing at the eastern flank of the province, while village disaster authorities were directed not to allow fishermen to sail and go out to fish.

Residents living in coastal villages in the eastern seaboard were warned of possible strong waves to hit the coastal shores.

Local disaster councils were alerted to activate their disaster mitigating measures and initiate preemptive evacuation once the weather conditions worsen.

LZB

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1366758/albay-prepares-for-flood-lahar-flows-landslides-as-lpa-dumps-rains-over-bicol>



Dams in the news in wake of floods

Published December 1, 2020, 11:29 PM
by [Manila Bulletin](#)



Two dams were in the news last week – or rather, an old established dam in Isabela and a proposed one in Quezon Province.

The Magat Dam in the Magat River, the largest tributary of the Cagayan River, the longest river in the Philippines, was built in 1975-1982 primarily for irrigation, flood control, and power generation. One of Asia's biggest dams today, it irrigates about 85,000 hectares of agricultural land in Isabela and Cagayan today.

When super-typhoon Ulysses lashed Luzon last November 11-12, its rains fell all over Northern, Central, and Southern Luzon, and the Bicol region. The biggest floods were in Isabela and Cagayan, along the route of the Cagayan river.

After the flood waters subsided, the people started returning to their homes. Then Magat Dam officials found they had to release some of the huge volume of water which now threatened the dam's structure. This caused a new flood in the downstream areas, and people demanded an investigation into the actions of the dam officials.

Meanwhile, in Quezon Province, residents of Real, Infanta, and General Nakar, and the indigenous communities in the area renewed their opposition to the proposed construction of the P12-billion Kaliwa Dam in their area in a meeting with Gov. Danilo Suarez, citing the harm to the environment and to the people of the area.

The Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Quezon, led by Vice Gov. Samuel Nantes, passed a resolution authorizing the governor to take all steps needed to stop the proposed dam. It would inundate a wide area of the province, including the traditional lands of the indigenous people.

Bishop Bernardino Cortez of the Catholic Church joined the opposition. Citing the geography of the area, he said, "Our very survival depends on the care of our mountains, forests, rivers, protection of our mangroves and seashores."

At the back of everyone's mind was the flooding caused by Magat Dam's release of excessive water last November, hitting the towns just when they thought the danger was all over. Magat Dam released more water last weekend, causing new floods, as rains continued to fall. It could well also happen to Quezon if the Kaliwa Dam is built in their midst.



Deforestation of Amazon hits 12-year high

By [Agence France-Presse](#)

December 2, 2020

SAO PAULO: Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon surged again over the past year, hitting a 12-year high, according to official figures released on Monday (Tuesday in Manila) that drew a chorus of condemnation of President Jair Bolsonaro's government.

A total of 11,088 square kilometers (4,281 square miles) of forest was destroyed in Brazil's share of the world's biggest rainforest in the 12 months to August, according to the Brazilian space agency's Prodes monitoring program, which analyzes satellite images to track deforestation.

That is equivalent to an area larger than Jamaica, and was a 9.5-percent increase from the previous year, when deforestation also hit a more than decade-long high.

"Because of such deforestation, Brazil is probably the only major greenhouse gas emitter that managed to increase its emissions in the year the coronavirus pandemic paralyzed the global economy," said the Brazilian Climate Observatory, a coalition of environmental groups.

Forests such as the Amazon play a vital role in controlling climate change because they suck carbon from the atmosphere. However, when trees die or burn, they release their carbon back into the environment.

Bolsonaro, a far-right climate-change skeptic, has presided over rising deforestation and wildfires since taking office in January 2019.

His government is pushing to open protected lands to mining and agribusiness, and has slashed funding for environmental protection programs. Environmentalists say those policies fuel the destruction of the Amazon, about 60 percent of which is in Brazil.

"The Bolsonaro government's vision of development for the Amazon is a throwback to the rampant deforestation of the past. It's a regressive vision that's far from the effort needed to deal with the climate crisis," Greenpeace spokeswoman Cristiane Mazzetti said in a statement.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/12/02/news/world/deforestation-of-amazon-hits-12-year-high/803710/>

Deforestation in Brazilian Amazon surges to 12-year high

By Shasta Darlington, CNN

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(CNN) -- [Deforestation](#) in the [Brazilian Amazon](#) surged to a 12-year high in the year between August 2019 and July 2020, according to the country's National Institute for Space Research (INPE).

Over that time, 11,088 square kilometers (6,890 square miles) were destroyed -- up 9.5% from the previous year-long period, and the highest level of destruction since 2008, INPE said during a news conference to release their annual data on Monday.

Deforestation has soared since far-right President Jair Bolsonaro took office in January 2019. Bolsonaro has encouraged the development of the Amazon and has defunded the agencies responsible for preventing illegal logging, ranching and mining in the rainforest.

Fires are often lit in the Amazon to clear vegetation from parts of the forest that have already been cut down -- all in preparation for illegal pasture planting and cattle raising.

Environmentalists have criticized Bolsonaro's outspoken support for logging and development in the Amazon as signaling encouragement for illicit land-clearing operations.

In August, Bolsonaro called official data and news reports about fires in the Amazon ["a lie."](#)

The President has faced pressure to take action to preserve the Amazon. In 2019, a group of 34 international investors threatened to divest from Brazilian companies unless steps were taken to curb the destruction and put out fires raging in the region.

His government has taken some steps to do so, periodically banning fires and allocating military personnel to help control the blazes.

But the new figures are damning. Environmental NGO Greenpeace has [documented the destruction](#), releasing photos from an August 16 flyover of southern Amazonas and in Rondônia -- including protected areas which cannot legally be exploited for commercial purposes -- showing flames and smoke.

In September's presidential debate, Joe Biden said the "rainforests of Brazil are being torn down," adding that he would be "making sure we had the countries of the world coming up with \$20 billion to say 'here's \$20 billion, stop tearing down the forest and if you don't, you are going to have significant economic consequences.'"

Bolsonaro slammed Biden after his remarks, saying it was "difficult to understand such a disastrous and unnecessary declaration."



The Amazon is the world's largest rainforest and an indispensable resource in the battle against global warming. When the rainforest is healthy, its trees and plants pull billions of tons of heat-trapping carbon dioxide from the atmosphere each year, making it is one of the planet's best defenses against climate change.

It is not the only biodiversity hotspot on fire this year. [South America's Pantanal region](#) has been hit by the worst wildfires in decades. The blazes have consumed about 28% of the vast floodplain that stretches across parts of Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay.

Wetlands like the Pantanal are Earth's most effective carbon sinks -- ecosystems that absorb and store more carbon than they release, keeping it away from the atmosphere. At roughly 200,000 square kilometers, the Pantanal comprises about 3% of the globe's wetlands and plays a key role in the carbon cycle.

This story was first published on CNN.com, ["Deforestation in Brazilian Amazon surges to 12-year high"](#)



Climate dries Cyprus olives, citrus



By Global Times

December 2, 2020

The first of several heat waves in 2020 descended in May, the flowering season for her 2,500 olive and citrus trees. “This year the heat wave struck at the exact time that the olive trees were flowering, and it was not just a heat wave of a couple of days,” said the 38-year-old Greek Cypriot. “We were watering, watering, but we didn’t manage to save the blossoms,” Sampson said.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/12/02/news/world/at-a-glance-world/climate-dries-cyprus-olives-citrus/803699/>