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DENR

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Sampulna Revs Up Implementation of DENR's Top 10 Priority Programs



Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) OIC Secretary Jim O. Sampulna asserts the DENR will accelerate actions towards the sustainable development of the country's environment and natural resources through the continued implementation of the agency's 10 priority programs. These include improving Manila Bay's water quality and completing the beach nourishment project, increasing sanitary landfills, and managing motor vehicle and industrial emissions. It shall also pursue protecting the country's 8.7 million hectares of forests, preserving protected areas and biodiversity, addressing climate change, ensuring responsible mining, and shall replicate the Boracay Island rehabilitation in other prime ecotourism sites, among others. Sampulna held a media briefing at the [DENR](#) Central Office on February 28.



Phl wildlife conservation efforts take center stage in World Wildlife Day 2022 celebration



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, through its Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), will lead the Philippine celebration of the 2022 World Wildlife Day (WWD) with the theme, “Recovering key species for ecosystem restoration.”

DENR OIC Secretary Jim O. Sampulna said this year’s WWD celebration “seeks to draw attention on the state of the most critically endangered species of wild flora and fauna, their role in the ecosystem, and the importance of conservation efforts to save them.

He said the event also “aims to drive the discussion towards imagining and implementing new solutions to conserve and sustainably use wildlife.”

In keeping with this year’s theme, the DENR will be hosting a webinar to showcase the country’s conservation efforts on key species such as the rufous hornbill (*Buceros hydrocorax*), tamaraw (*Bubalus mindorensis*), Philippine cockatoo (*Cacatua haematuropygia*), and dugong (*Dugong dugon*), and other threatened species.

A webinar on conservation programs will also be conducted to drive discussions toward implementing better conservation programs with more resilient impacts.

The DENR-BMB will lead the “Make Your Own Storybook” contest in recognition of the role of youth in biodiversity conservation efforts.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, through its Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), will lead the Philippine celebration of the 2022 World Wildlife Day (WWD) with the theme, “Recovering key species for ecosystem restoration.”

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“Wildlife law enforcement, protection and management of wildlife habitats and species conservation programs are being implemented to protect and recover these threatened species,” Bernardino said.

The population of key Philippine species, for example, the tamaraw and Philippine cockatoo have been showing a steady uptrend mainly due to the collective efforts of the DENR and its conservation partners, conservation organizations, local government units and the private sector.

Celebrated every 3rd of March, WWD is an annual event aimed at raising awareness about the world’s wild animals and plants, the threats to their survival, and their benefits to people and the planet.

Since being adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2013, it has become the most important annual event dedicated to wildlife.

On 3 March 2022 also marks the signing of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora or CITES in 1973.



DOLOMITE BEACH AT PAGLALAGAY NG CANNON REPLICA, TATAPUSIN NG DENR



SINABI ng bagong Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Jim Sampulna na ipagpapatuloy niya at tatapusin ang kontrobersiyal na Dolomite Beach project ng Kagawaran dahil ito ay kanilang commitment kay Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte at magiging bahagi ng legacy report nito.

Nasa *limang daan* hanggang *anim na daan meters* na lamang ng Manila Bay ang kinakailangang lagyan ng dolomite.

Bawat araw simula nitong January 2022 ay bukas sa publiko ang pagpasyal sa bahagi ng Manila Bay pero kinakailangan ang advance na pagpapalista online.

Nauna namang nagbigay ng babala ang mga health expert na makakasama sa isang tao ang pagkakasinghot ng dinurog na dolomite.

Nakapanayam ng inyong Agarang Serbisyo Lady sa isang press conference via zoom si Secretary Sampulna, walang katotohanan na ito ay nakakasama sa kalusugan.

Si Sampulna ay pumalit sa posisyon ni dating DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu makaraang magbitiw ito dahil sa isyung pagkalusugan.

Bilang tanda ng mga hamon at mga nakamit sa “Battle for Manila Bay” rehabilitation program ay nakipagsanib puwersa ang DENR at Department of National Defense (DND) para sa paglalagay ng cannon replica sa kahabaan ng Roxas Boulevard Baywalk sa Manila.

Magtatayo ang DENR at DND ng replica ng Fort Drum Island cannon malapit sa Remedios drainage outfall sa Maynila upang ito ay mag “serve as a physical reminder of the DENR’s commitment and willpower in our battle to rehabilitate Manila Bay.”

Ang Drum Island na kilala rin sa tawag na El Fraile Island ay isa sa apat na isla na matatagpuan sa bunganga ng Manila Bay na nagsilbing matinding depensa na nagprotekta sa capital city na Manila mula sa naval invasion ng Spanish colonial rule hanggang noong World War II.

Ang cannon replica ay 19.04 cubic meters habang ang orihinal na barrel ay 37 feet at may bigat na sampung tonelada. Ito ay itatayo sa 251.1-cubic meter concrete platform sa kahabaan ng Remedios area.

Inaasahan ng DENR at DND na agad na matatapos ang proyekto at magkakaroon ng inagurasyon ng canon replica sa Abril 9, 2022 kasabay sa pagdiriwang ng Araw ng Kagitingan (Day of Valor).

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/dolomite-beach-at-paglalagay-ng-cannon-replica-tatapusin-ng-denr/>



DENR to honor outcome of consultations on South Cotabato open-pit mining ban

MAR 1, 2022, 3:41 PM

Santiago Celario



ENVIRONMENT and Natural Resources (DENR) office- in-charge Secretary Jim O. Sampulna has assured the residents of South Cotabato that the national government will respect the outcome of the public hearing called by the provincial board on the proposed amendments to the Environment Code, specifically on the provision lifting the ban on open-pit mining in the municipality of Tampakan.

Sampulna was invited by South Cotabato Vice Gov. Vicente De Jesus to the multi-sectoral consultation forum in Koronadal City last February 24 to provide technical information that will help the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) members decide on whether or not to lift the ban on open-pit mining.

"We are here to shed light upon the invitation of Vice Governor Vicente De Jesus," Sampulna said before the audience-packed auditorium representing all concerned sectors, including all the mayors in the province and former board members who framed the ordinance.

"We respect your rights," he said, even as he assured stakeholders that the general good of the people of South Cotabato is of utmost importance to the provincial government.

He expressed optimism that the DENR could contribute to a better appreciation of the advantages and disadvantages of the project, as well as help the SP members reach an informed decision when they cast their respective votes.

Meanwhile De Jesus, who also sits as the SP's presiding officer, said the board unanimously agreed to conduct the public hearing before voting for amendments on the provisions of Ordinance 04, Series of 2010, entitled "An Ordinance Providing for the Environment Code of the Province of South Cotabato."

The ordinance was approved on June 9, 2010. It was affirmed by the SP on June 30, 2015, through the "South Cotabato Environment Code" or "A Resolution Affirming the Validity of Section 22(b) of Ordinance No. 04 Series of 2010.

Sampulna was joined by DENR-Mines and Geosciences Bureau Director Wilfredo Moncano, DENR-Environmental Management Bureau Director William Cuñado, and DENR-Region 12 Executive Director Felix Alicer during the consultation forum on February 24.

Source: https://opinyon.net/national/denr-to-honor-outcome-of-consultations-on-south-cotabato-open-pit-mining-ban?fbclid=IwAR2-ml2quZyLeiQuw7UcZ4mZX6VIIF9G99OtLjm2dO0dcSeN7FI1b-j-6_Y



DENR to honor LGU's decision on mining



Stalled. The Tampakan prospect is one of the largest undeveloped mineral deposits in Southeast Asia.

The national government will respect the outcome of the public hearing called by the provincial board of South Cotabato on the proposed lifting of the ban on open-pit mining in the municipality of Tampakan, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The DENR was invited by the local government unit (LGU) of South Cotabato at last month's multi-sectoral consultation forum to provide technical information that will help the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) members decide on whether or not to lift the ban on open-pit mining in the province.

While recognizing the LGU's rights to decide on whether to allow a mining project in the province or not, DENR officer-in-charge Secretary Jim Sampulna said the DENR helps in contributing a better appreciation of the advantages and disadvantages of the planned mining operations in the province.

"On the legality of the provincial ordinance, it is well settled that ordinances enacted by virtue of the general welfare clause are valid," Sampulna said.

The DENR added it also helped SP members in reaching an informed decision when they cast their votes.

The DENR recently lifted the open pit mining ban that was first implemented back in 2017.

However, its effect does not automatically apply for the provincial government of South Cotabato's Environment Code issued in 2010 that stops any open pit mining ban projects in the area.

South Cotabato's local environmental code has effectively stalled the Tampakan prospect which is said to be one of the largest undeveloped mineral deposits in the entire Southeast Asia with estimated reserves of 15 million tons of contained copper and nearly 18 million ounces of gold or 375,000 tons of copper and 360,000 ounces of gold in concentrate annually, over the proposed 17-year mine life.

Industry stakeholders also claim that total taxes and royalties that the Philippine government can gain from the Tampakan project would be at around P346 billion.



DENR chief vows NG support on outcome of South Cotabato hearing on open-pit mining

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Officer-in-Charge Secretary Jim O. Sampulna said the National Government (NG) would respect the outcome of the public hearing called by the Provincial Government of South Cotabato on the proposed amendments to the province's Environment Code.

Specifically, the proposed amendment aims to alter the policy banning open-pit mining in the town of Tampakan, the site of the multibillion-dollar Tampakan Copper-Gold Project.

South Cotabato is the first local government unit (LGU) that imposed a ban on open-pit mining to protect its watershed.

The late and former DENR Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez, in 2017, put in place a policy that bans open-pit mining methods for copper, gold, silver, and complex ores when she signed DENR Administrative Order No. 2017-10.

This was however reversed by former DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu four years later when he signed DENR Administrative Order No. 2021-40.

Sampulna has been invited by South Cotabato Vice Gov. Vicente De Jesus to the multi-sectoral consultation forum in Koronadal City on February 24 to provide technical information that will help the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) members decide on to lift the ban on open-pit mining.

Sampulna said before the audience-packed auditorium that includes LGU officials in the province, as well as former board members who framed the ordinance that the NG will respect their rights.

He also assured the stakeholders that the general welfare of the people of South Cotabato is of utmost importance to the provincial government. "We are here to shed light upon the invitation of Vice Governor Vicente De Jesus. We respect your rights," the DENR chief said.

On the legality of the provincial ordinance, Sampulna explained, "it is well settled that ordinances enacted by virtue of the general welfare clause are valid."

He expressed optimism that the DENR could contribute to a better appreciation of the advantages and disadvantages of the project, which promises to boost local economic development and provide much-needed jobs and livelihood opportunities to the people, as well as help the SP members reach an informed decision when they cast their respective votes.

De Jesus, who also sits as the SP's presiding officer, said the board unanimously agreed to conduct the public hearing before voting for amendments on the provisions of Ordinance 04, Series of 2010, entitled "An Ordinance Providing for the Environment Code of the Province of South Cotabato."

The ordinance was approved on June 9, 2010. The SP affirmed it on June 30, 2015, through the "South Cotabato Environment Code" or "A Resolution Affirming the Validity of Section 22(b) of Ordinance No. 04 Series of 2010."

DENR-Mines and Geosciences Bureau Director Wilfredo Moncano, DENR-Environmental Management Bureau Director William Cuñado, and DENR-Region 12 Executive Director Felix Alicer joined Sampulna during the consultation forum on February 24.



A public hearing was also held on February 18 in Tampakan town, which hosts the multi-billion-peso gold-copper project touted as the largest undeveloped copper and gold mine in Southeast Asia.

The Tampakan project of the Sagittarius Mines Inc. or SMI has the potential to yield an average of 375,000 tons of copper and 360,000 ounces of gold in concentrate per annum over the proposed 17-year life of the mine.



Duterte appoints ex-DENR exec as new Napolcom commissioner

Published March 1, 2022, 3:06 PM
by [Aaron Recuenco](#)

President Duterte appointed former Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Edilberto Dela Cruz Leonardo to become one of the commissioners of the National Police Commission (Napolcom).

Leonardo will represent the law enforcement sector of the Napolcom and will have a six-year fixed term. He replaced former Commissioner Felizardo M. Serapio, Jr. whose term of office ended on February 11.

“The Napolcom welcomes the well-deserved appointment of Commissioner Leonardo and we assure him of our support and guidance. His vast experience in law enforcement and in the DENR will definitely be an asset to the Commission,” said Napolcom Vice Chairman and Executive Officer (VCEO) Vitaliano N. Aguirre II,

Prior to his appointment, Leonardo was the Undersecretary for Protected Areas and Special Concerns of the DENR while serving as the concurrent Executive Director of the Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force.

He also served as the former Regional Chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group Regional Field Unit of Police Regional Office 11 until his retirement from the police service on September 29, 2020.

“From this day onwards, I will work vigorously with the same zeal and dedication I have done in my previous professional engagements despite of the demanding and challenging tasks ahead of me,” Leonardo said.

At present, the Napolcom is chaired by DILG Secretary Eduardo M. Año with Aguirre, Commissioners Job M. Mangente, Zenonida F. Brosas and Leonardo, as regular members, and PNP Chief Police General Dionardo B. Carlos as ex-officio Commissioner.



Duterte appoints Leonardo as new Napolcom commissioner

President Duterte has recently appointed former Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Edilberto Dela Cruz Leonardo as commissioner of the National Police Commission (Napolcom). Leonardo, who represents the law enforcement sector, shall serve a six-year fixed term.

Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary and Napolcom Chairman Eduardo M. Año said that the appointment was issued to replace former Commissioner Felizardo M. Serapio Jr. whose term of office ended on February 11, 2022.

Napolcom Vice Chairman and Executive Officer (VCEO) Vitaliano N. Aguirre II said that prior to his appointment to Napolcom, Commissioner Leonardo was the Undersecretary for Protected Areas and Special Concerns of the DENR while serving as the concurrent Executive Director of the Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force.

Leonardo also served as the former Regional Chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group Regional Field Unit of Police Regional Office 11 until his retirement from the police service in September 2020.

In the course of working full-time in the Philippine National Police (PNP), he took up classes at Rizal Memorial Colleges in Davao City where he completed his Master of Arts in Educational Management in 2009 and consequently obtained his Executive Doctorate degree in Leadership-Public Management at the University of Makati in 2019.

During his oath taking, Leonardo expressed a mixed feeling of enthusiasm and eagerness to take on the challenge as the newly appointed Napolcom commissioner.

“All I can say is I will do my best at least to approximate the gold standard set by Napolcom under the good leadership of Secretary Año and able stewardship of Vice Chairman Aguirre II. From this day onwards, I will work vigorously with the same zeal and dedication I have done in my previous professional engagements despite of the demanding and challenging tasks ahead of me,” Leonardo said.

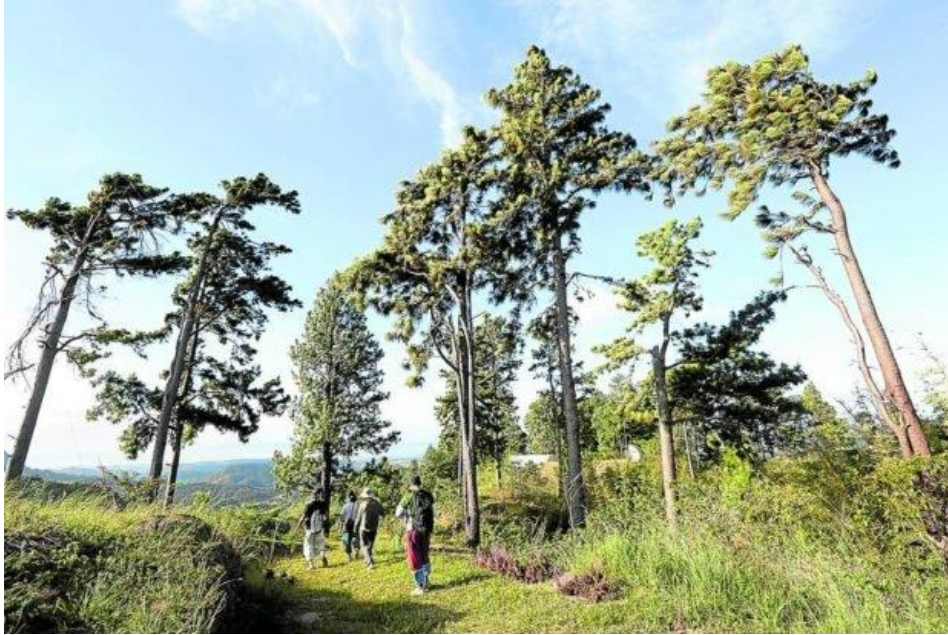
He also stressed his respect in government service, regardless of form and substance which, he believes, should be carried out with a deep sense of honor, pride, and commitment.

At present, the Napolcom is chaired by Secretary Año with VCEO Aguirre II, Commissioner Job M. Mangente, Commissioner Zenonida F. Brosas and Commissioner Leonardo, as regular members, and PNP Chief Police General Dionardo B. Carlos as ex-officio commissioner.

“The Napolcom welcomes the well-deserved appointment of Commissioner Leonardo and we assured him of our support and guidance. His vast experience in law enforcement and in the DENR will definitely be an asset to the commission,” Vice Chairman Aguirre said. 30



House probe of Masungi Georeserve attacks sought



A team of scientists, conservationists, forest rangers, and volunteers sets out on a biodiversity research expedition in Masungi Georeserve in Rizal province, in this photo taken on Jan. 25. The project is carried out amid the increasing dangers faced by the rangers from groups linked to illegal construction projects in the area. (INQUIRER FILE PHOTO / NIÑO JESUS ORBETA)

MANILA, Philippines — Lawmakers have condemned the recent attacks on forest rangers at the Masungi Georeserve in Rizal province and sought an investigation.

In House Resolution No. 2499, Bayan Muna Representatives Eufemia Cullamat, Carlos Isagani Zarate, and Ferdinand Gaité cited the acts of violence against forest rangers of the protected rainforest reserve last month and in July 2021.

“These continuous attacks and violence against our forest defenders are the result of the [Department of Environment and Natural Resources](#)’ (DENR) failure to evict illegal occupants [from] the reforestation site, which is our duty as supposedly agreed with Masungi Foundation last 2017,” the lawmakers said in their resolution.

“[The] DENR’s loose judgment and lack of action over matters concerning its responsibilities and functions to protect the environment and the people, and the illegal occupants’ harassment and violence against the foreign defenders in pursuit of their various self-interests should be rightfully condemned and prosecuted,” they added.

On Feb. 18, two forest rangers were hurt after alleged residents of Sitio San Roque in Baras town mauled them. The victims and five other forest rangers were eating at a carinderia when the suspects ganged up on them.

The lawmakers cited a statement from Masungi Georeserve, which said the attackers were “linked to illegal resorts in the Upper Marikina Watershed” that the DENR supposedly failed to evict from the area.



EDITORIAL

KRISIS SA TUBIG NOONG 2019, TINIYAK NA HINDI MAUULIT

TINIYAK ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) na hindi na mauulit ang nangyaring krisis sa suplay ng tubig sa Metro Manila at kalapit na mga lalawigan noong 2019 sa kabila nang nararansang patuloy na pagbaba ng tubig sa Angat Dam.

Ito'y magandang balita dahil ayaw na nating mauulit ang naranasan problema sa suplay sa tubig matapos namang umabot sa kritikal na lebel ang tubig sa Angat Dam noong 2019.

Inamin ni MWSS chief regulator Patrick Ty medyo mababa na ang lebel ng tubig sa Angat Dam.

Nauna nang nanawagan ang MWSS sa publiko na magtipid ng tubig para maiwasan ang posibleng shortage ng suplay.

Iginilit naman ni Ty na hindi na mauulit ang nangyaring dalawang linggong pagkawala ng tubig sa ilang lugar sa Kamaynilaan noong 2019.

Idinagdag ni Ty na inatasan na ng MWSS ang Manila Water at Maynilad na gawin ang nararapat para madagdagan ang pagkukunan ng tubig.

Ayon kay Ty, magkakaroon lamang ng pagbabawas sa suplay ng tubig ngayong summer para matiyak na sasapat ito.

Sinabi pa ni Ty na 24 oras na may lalabas na tubig mula sa gripo ng mga kabahayan.

Aniya, babawasan lamang ang water pressure kayat posibleng hindi aakyat ang tubig sa ikalawa at ikatlong palapag ng mga bahay.

Inatasan na rin ng MWSS ang Manila Water at Maynilad na buksan ang mga pinagkukunang tubig mula sa deep well.

Ipinaliwanag ni Ty na bagamat bawal ang pagkuha ng tubig sa mga deep well, pinapayagan ito ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) para sa emergency.

Aniya, handa na rin ang Cardona Water Treatment Plant para sa pangangailangan ng mga sineserbisyuhan ng Manila Water.

Galing sa Laguna Lake ang tubig mula sa Cardona Water Treatment Plant.

Magandang balita na bagamat paparating na ang tag-init, mas handa na ang pamahalaan para sa pangangailangan ng mga mamamayan sakaling patuloy na bumaba ang tubig sa Angat Dam.

Sa kabila naman ng pagtiyak ng MWSS at NWRB, kailangan pa ring tumulong ang lahat na hindi magsayang ng tubig at tipirin ang paggamit nito kung kinakailangan.



NARANASANG KRISIS SA TUBIG NOONG 2019, HINDI NA PWEDENG MAULIT NGAYONG TAG-INIT

Tiniyak ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) na hindi na mararanasan ng publiko ang krisis sa tubig na naganap noong 2019.

Ayon kay Patrick Ty, Chief Regulator ng MWSS, bagama't aminado siyang bumaba ang lebel ng tubig sa Angat Dam na siyang nagsu-suplay ng tubig sa malaking bahagi ng metro manila, tiyak naman niyang hindi na ito mauulit.

Una nang sinabi ni National Water Resources Board (NWRB) Director Dr. Seville David Jr. Na mas handa na ngayon ang bansa sakaling makulangan sa tubig ngayong tag-init. – **Sa panulat ni Abigail Malanday**



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Mababang water level ng Angat Dam; alokasyon para sa patubig, binawasan

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196.29 meters above sea level ang antas ng tubig ngayon sa Angat Dam. Unang linggo pa lamang ng Pebrero ay below normal na ang level nito.

Dahil dito ay binawasan na ang alokasyon ng tubig sa irigasyon na ang tatamaan ay ang mga magsasaka sa Bulacan at Pampanga.

Kaugnay ng issue na ito, nakapanayam ng Mata ng Agila si Engineer C'zar Sulaik, National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Deputy Administrator for Engineering and Operations.

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Sapul sa video ang pagguho ng lupa sa gilid ng highway sa Barangay Tapia, Montevista, Davao de Oro Linggo.

Ayon sa Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, anim na lanes sa national highway ang hindi nadaanan dahil sa landslide.

Nakaranas ng pag-ulan ang maraming lugar sa Davao Region hanggang Martes dahil sa trough ng low pressure area. (👤: Vanesse Escano) | via Hernel Tocmo

Panoorin ang kaugnay na ulat: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-MsnZhoDvg>

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Apat na tauhan ng truck na illegal na nagtatapon ng basura sa Maynila, kalaboso | 24 Oras
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Huling-huli ng pulisya ang iligal na pagtatapon ng mga basurang nanggaling sa mga cruise ship na nakadaong sa Maynila.
Ang na-hulicam na mga salarin, itinambak lang sa tabing kalsada ang mga kinolekta nilang basura mula sa mga barko!
Yan ang tinutukan ni Emil Sumangil, exclusive!

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Koronadal gets recycling facility

By Franz R. Sumangil

MAYOR Eliordo Ogena of Koronadal City, South Cotabato said the recycling facility given by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (Unido) will help the city solve its garbage problem.

Ogena said it will also lead to Koronadal becoming a green city.

Included in the P4-million facility were a bottle crusher, generator set and plastic armchair molder that can decrease 70 percent of waste garbage disposal in the city.

Ogena said the facility shall be used for the recycling of bottles and plastics.

Unido industrial development officer Dr. Carmela Centeno, who came from Austria where the organization was based, spearheaded the turnover of the facility to the city.



Most Filipinos support goal to protect 30% of land and oceans by 2030 — poll

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) - Philstar.com



This February 7, 2021 photo shows Masungi Georeserve in Baras, Rizal. The georeserve, known for its 60-million-year-old limestone formations, was restored after 20 years of protection.

MANILA, Philippines — A vast majority of Filipinos back efforts to protect at least 30% of the world's land and oceans by 2030, a new survey suggested.

An online poll of more than 1,150 people found that 95% of Filipinos support a proposed "30x30" nature protection target, which is designed to help address biodiversity loss and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Ninety-one percent said they were highly or somewhat aware of talks on a nature protection goal.

Eighty-five percent of Filipino respondents want the government to back the "30x30" target.

The same poll was also conducted by firm Vase.ai in Malaysia and Indonesia—other biodiversity-rich nations. Ninety-six percent of Malaysians and 98% of Indonesians support the pledge.

According to the survey commissioned by Malaysia-based Atri Advisory, 95% of Filipinos said they were extremely or very concerned about the biodiversity crisis.

While the Philippines is among the world's megadiverse nations, it is tagged as a biodiversity hotspot with at least 700 threatened species. The Philippines is also one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change.

A coalition of more than 80 countries called High Ambition for Nature and People have already backed the "30x30" target. So far, only Cambodia is a member of the coalition from Southeast Asia.

"Southeast Asia comprises just three percent of Earth's landmass, but it contains almost 20% of the world's biodiversity," said Tony La Viña, associate director for climate policy and international relations of Manila Observatory.

"This poll shows that people in the region fully appreciate the value of this biodiversity to our own development and appreciate the role we can play in preserving it. This poll is a public mandate for the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia to embrace the 30x30 goal," the former environment undersecretary added.



Nearly 190 countries are expected to finalize a global strategy that is designed to stave off a biodiversity crisis in United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP15) that will be held in Kunming, China in April.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-environment/2022/02/28/2163984/most-filipinos-support-goal-protect-30-land-and-oceans-2030-poll?fbclid=IwAR3goc13hGdJc1mYp8Onn6PSb0ZjuVOQRUvN60n3APIsLyfUmQMPZYTXAdg>



Prospective candidates cannot ignore the climate

THE most concerning thing about last Sunday's presidential debate organized by CNN was something that was not said by the nine candidates present. A wide range of relevant topics was discussed, but virtually nothing about the environment and climate change. This omission was a disservice to the public as the topic is perhaps the most important broad issue the next administration will face.

The blame for this should fall on the debate organizers and expert panel posing the questions to the candidates, rather than on the candidates themselves. Even though none of the candidates, including the one who declined to participate, has yet to present anything that even remotely resembles a coherent and actionable environmental policy, all of them have acknowledged the topic on a number of occasions, and offered various suggestions of specific areas they might pursue if elected.

Not encouraging the candidates to elaborate further was a missed opportunity, but the debate did cover a great deal of other matters of interest to voters, so the best thing to do at this point would be to make a positive contribution to the public conversation by filling in what was missed.

Climate response in its two forms — climate adaptation and climate mitigation — has become, whether some stubborn "climate skeptics" like it or not, a key part of virtually every aspect of overall national policy. Even if an incoming administration does not consider climate response a top priority for its own sake, every other policy area, government finance, infrastructure, agriculture, social development, calamity readiness and response, and everything in between, is significantly affected by it.

As just one familiar example, investments in coal power are now being shunned for their environmental unsustainability by most public sectors and even many private sector funds. The Philippines' near-term energy growth plan still relies primarily on the expected construction of more than a dozen coal plants; facilities for which funding, if already secured, is likely to be more expensive than anticipated, and in some cases, perhaps not available at all.

The Philippines' environmental policy, we believe, should have three basic objectives. First, the country should fully adopt the principles of "just transition" in ensuring energy security. That means, in simple terms, finding the best formula of energy that is reliable; has an environmental footprint that is as minimized as it possibly can be; can be created from the country's own resources; and is accessible and affordable for all Filipinos.

It is important to note that "just transition" applies to all aspects of development, such as expanding transportation and making it more sustainable, and expanding agricultural productivity. Progress is important, and is in fact a necessity, but no solution is worthwhile if someone is left behind.

Second, the country must focus on pollution reduction, harmful emissions — primarily from transportation — on the one hand, and other forms of land and sea pollution, most particularly plastic pollution, on the other. There are two reasons for this. First, it is an obvious quality of life issue; reducing emissions, for instance, reduces incidence of respiratory ailments and their corresponding burden on the health system. Second, there is a clear risk-reward formula in pollution reduction. If the Philippines is making an appropriate effort to manage its own contribution to global emissions and pollution, it is entitled to and can demand support for its climate adaptation and mitigation efforts from nations with far larger contributions to the global



problem. If the Philippines does not do what its capacity allows, however, it stands to be penalized for not doing its part, no matter how small that part may be in the bigger scheme of things.

Finally, the third objective must be to prioritize ecological and environmental preservation in any development activity. Again, this is partly a quality of life issue; the Philippines has a unique environment, and one that also happens to be a substantial source of income by simply existing, thanks to the tourism sector. Another reason is purely practical; conservation efforts also serve to address climate mitigation needs without requiring additional programs or resources. Restoring natural mangrove forests that protect coasts against storms and act as natural carbon dioxide collectors is one well-known example.



Campaign season marks rise on attacks vs environmental defenders—group

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

The number of environmental defenders experiencing human rights violations has increased tremendously after the start of the campaign season in February, the Kalikasan-People's Network for the Environment said.

Leon Dulce, national coordinator of Kalikasan-PNE also raised the concern that election-related violence may have been deliberate aimed at environment defenders.

The group has been monitoring attacks against environment defenders in the Philippines and noted that the attacks have quadrupled or increased four fold in the first month of the election season.

"There is a 483 percent spike in the number of environmental defenders under attack and a 350 percent increase in incidents after the formal electoral campaign season started. We urge the Filipino public to demand both current and future government leaders to address the plight of our heroic defenders obscured by the election's fog of war," Dulce said.

The recent arrest of community health practitioner, Dr. Naty Castro and the massacre of five Lumad advocates Chad Booc, and the rest of another group of human rights violation victims dubbed "New Bataan Five" were among the incidents monitored by the group.

The victims of these attacks worked against large-scale mining projects in the Caraga region, the country's so-called "mining capital region" because of the numerous mining projects in the area.

The attack against forest rangers of the Masungi Georeserve on February 18, wherein suspected land grabbers intruding into the world-renowned conservation area physically assaulted seven of the environmental defenders, were also recorded by the group.

Meanwhile, on February 23, the protest camp of 236 agrarian reform beneficiaries in a 200-hectare agricultural land area in Concepcion, Tarlac was burned down in an arson attack. The group noted that standing to gain from the attack is the land cooperative disputing the area affiliated to the local Villanueva political clan.

On February 27, a gun attack seriously injured outgoing Infanta municipality mayor Filipino Grace America, a staunch opponent of the controversial Kaliwa Dam Project.

Environmental groups and Indigenous Peoples in the area to be affected by the project oppose the multibillion-peso project believing it will submerge thousands of hectares of forestlands and the thousands of indigenous Dumagat families residing in them.

The group said the latest incident happened on February 28 involving Agnes Mesina, a church lay worker and political activist who was arrested by authorities allegedly for no apparent reason.

Mesina has long been involved in anti-mining campaigns in the Cagayan Valley region, the group noted.

International watchdog group Global Witness recently noted the growing trend across "Global South" countries holding national elections this 2022 like the Philippines, Brazil, and Colombia where environment and climate issues are urgent electoral concerns, but where land



and environmental defenders working to resolve these crises are suffering the worst human rights abuses, Dulce said.

“We hope the current electoral hopefuls walk their talk of environmental and climate concern by standing with our embattled defenders. We should call out the worsening violence they face and demand accountability from the outgoing public authorities,” Dulce said.



Group presses urgent government action on climate shock after IPCC report

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA



Residents dry their clothes at the shore as their houses were torn apart by the strong winds of typhoon Odette. Greenpeace/Jilson Tiu

Greenpeace Philippines on Tuesday renewed the call for urgent climate action following the recent release of the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

At an online news conference, Greenpeace Philippines Country Director Lea Guerrero said the report paints a bad picture of what is to happen in the future with the government's inaction.

"It doesn't paint a good picture of what climate impacts are going to be in the future. It's bad. It talks about how far into the climate crisis we have already plunged and how much worse it can get," Guerrero said, referring to the report's projected impacts to people, environment, and biodiversity.

She said the summary for policymakers said there should be no delay on the action both on adaptation and mitigation, and it needs to happen now, to have a livable planet.

The IPCC report, compared to their assessment a few years back, she said, only proves that things are happening faster than expected.

The good news is that keeping global temperature increase below the 1.5 degrees centigrade threshold will keep the world more adaptable, she said.

The Working Group II report of the IPCC is the most comprehensive assessment to date regarding climate impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability. The report lays out the severity of the impacts of climate change causing widespread losses and damages to people and ecosystems around the world, which is projected to escalate with every bit of further warming.

According to Greenpeace Philippines, since the previous assessment, climate risks are appearing faster and will get more severe sooner. The report finds that mortality from floods, drought, and storms was a staggering 15 times higher in highly vulnerable regions during the last decade, compared to regions with very low vulnerability.

The report also acknowledges the crucial importance of fighting the interconnected climate and nature crisis together.



For her part, Greenpeace Campaigner Virginia Benosa-Llorin said inaction, or even half-hearted action by governments, is no longer an option for the next president of the Philippines.

“The report says that the risks are far greater than originally thought. And the reality is that, even as we have tried to cope, we are still not prepared,” she said in a statement released to the media after the online news conference.

“We need to start asking our future leaders what they plan to do during the six years allotted to them at this crucial juncture when the climate crisis urgently needs to be addressed. Without urgency, and without a bold, coherent plan of action, Filipinos stand to lose more loved ones, homes, and livelihoods,” she added.

In Asia, IPCC identified key risks as:

Urban infrastructure damage and impacts on human well-being and health due to flooding, especially in coastal cities and settlements

Biodiversity loss and habitat shifts as well as associated disruptions in dependent human systems across freshwater, land, and ocean ecosystems

More frequent, extensive coral bleaching and subsequent coral mortality induced by ocean warming and acidification, sea-level rise, marine heatwaves and resource extraction. Decline in coastal fishery resources due to sea-level rise, decrease in precipitation in some parts and increase in temperature

Risk to food and water security due to increased temperature extremes, rainfall variability and drought

According to Greenpeace, the report also affirms that while the climate crisis will affect everyone, it will disproportionately impact those who are already vulnerable and marginalized.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/03/01/group-presses-urgentgovt-action-on-climateshock-after-ipcc-report/>



UN body weighs a global treaty to fight plastic pollution



A man walks on a mountain of plastic bottles as he carries a sack of them to be sold for recycling after weighing them at the dump in the Dandora slum of Nairobi, Kenya on Dec. 5, 2018.

The UN Environment Assembly is expected to propose an international framework to address the growing problem of plastic waste in the world's oceans, rivers and landscape.

NAIROBI, Kenya — Delegates from United Nations member countries are considering proposals for a binding global treaty to curb plastic pollution.

The UN Environment Assembly, meeting Feb. 28 to March 2 in Kenya's capital Nairobi, is expected to propose an international framework to address the growing problem of plastic waste in the world's oceans, rivers and landscape.

"For the first time in history, we are seeing unprecedented global momentum to tackle the plague of plastic pollution," said UN Environment Program Executive Director Inger Andersen.

During preparations for the session, Andersen implored member states to take the opportunity to reshape humanity's "relationship with plastic once and for all" by developing a comprehensive global agreement to combat the problem.

Two major proposals have emerged during years of international discussions about ways to reduce single use plastic.

The first, by Peru and Rwanda, calls for a full spectrum approach to plastic pollution, covering raw materials extraction, plastic production, as well as plastic use and disposal. It urges creation of "an international legally binding agreement ... to prevent and reduce plastic pollution in the environment, including micro plastics."

The proposal is co-sponsored by Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Norway, the Philippines, Senegal, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Uganda along with the European Union.

A second proposal, sponsored by Japan, calls for an international agreement "to address marine plastic pollution covering the whole life cycle and promoting resource efficiency and circular economy," including reuse.



The key difference is that Japan's approach concentrates on marine plastic pollution, while the Peru-Rwanda proposal covers plastic pollution in all environments.

Both proposals envision establishment of a negotiating committee to complete the new plastic treaty by 2024.

If such a plastics treaty is endorsed by the U.N. Environment Assembly, Andersen said it "would be the most significant global; environmental governance decision since the Paris (Climate) Agreement in 2015."

The environmental group Greenpeace supports the Peru-Rwanda proposal's full lifecycle approach to addressing plastic pollution.

"Over 140 countries have declared support for opening negotiations on a global plastic treaty," said Erastus Ooko, the plastics engagement lead for Greenpeace Africa.

"However, support for negotiations is not enough," Ooko said. "These countries should be calling for a legally binding treaty that will match the scale and depth of the plastics crisis."

Coastal cities seen unprepared as IPCC flags climate risk hotspots



Drastic policy measures are likely to become necessary as cities and coastal areas face a growing risk of climate-linked losses, scientists say.

Indonesia plans to move its sinking, flood-prone capital to a remote jungle. Tuvalu is trying to safeguard its very existence as a state as rising seas caused by climate change threaten to submerge the Pacific island nation.

Such drastic steps will likely become increasingly necessary as cities and coastal areas face a heightened threat of climate change-linked losses, 270 leading climate scientists [warned](#) on Monday, adding that many high-risk areas were ill-prepared.

“It clearly shows we’re not prepared at all,” Harjeet Singh, a senior advisor with Climate Action Network International, a network of more than 1,500 groups, said about the scientists’ [report](#) for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

“The message has been extremely strong,” he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone from New Delhi, noting that developing countries faced the biggest risks and often lacked the financial resources to deal with such growing threats.

More frequent and intense heat, heavy rain, drought and other climate change impacts are damaging nature, people and the places they live, the IPCC report warned.

Cities - where more than half of the world’s population lives - are set to become climate change hotspots, with urban hubs lying in coastal areas at particular risk from rising seas.

The number of coastal-dwellers at risk of a flood so severe it can be expected only once every 100 years would increase by about 20 per cent with a sea-level rise of 15 centimetres (0.49 feet) and double with a rise of 75 cm, the IPCC report estimated.

‘Complex’ risks

Globally, urban populations have grown by more than 397 million people between 2015 and 2020, with more than 90 per cent of the increase taking place in less developed regions, according to the IPCC report.

At the same time, the fastest rise in urban vulnerability has been in unplanned and informal settlements, as well as urban centres in low- and middle-income countries where residents' ability to adapt to climate change is limited.

Debra Roberts, co-chair of the working group for the [latest IPCC report](#), said urbanisation and climate change have created “complex” risks, especially for cities already facing poor urban planning, high levels of poverty and unemployment.

“But cities also provide opportunities for climate action,” she added, from green buildings to more sustainable transport systems that connect urban and rural areas, which could help build a more inclusive and fairer society.

Such large-scale adaptation has yet to take place across cities, however, said researcher Alex Edney-Browne, partly constrained by a lack of funding and technical know-how.

“(It) requires a significant amount of finance dedicated to adaptation and climate-resilient development, and added government capacity which we’re not seeing at the moment,” said Edney-Browne, head of research and investigations at Greenpeace Australia Pacific.

“There is a real shortfall in climate finance available in the level of adaptation that’s needed”, particularly in climate-vulnerable developing countries, she added by phone.

‘Tip of the iceberg’

Parts of Africa, South Asia, Central and South America, small island states and the Arctic are most vulnerable to the accelerating climate risks, the IPCC report said.

It called for a shift to a new model of “climate-resilient development”, but warned that would become harder to achieve if global warming exceeds 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius (2.7-3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) this century.

The planet has already heated up by about 1.1C - and a 1.5C rise could be reached over the next two decades, scientists predict.

“What we have seen of climate change impacts in Asia Pacific is just the tip of the iceberg,” said Sandeep Chamling Rai, a Singapore-based senior advisor on global climate adaptation policy at conservation group WWF International.

He said most cities were aware of rising climate threats but could do better on preparing to protect people, such as planning for residents to be relocated when needed.

Ensuring that poor and marginalised inhabitants are not adversely affected will be vital, said Indonesian campaigner Arti Indallah Tjakranegara.

“Climate policy could exacerbate inequality, the poorest ones are the ones who are most affected,” said Tjakranegara, a manager at Yayasan Humanis dan Inovasi Sosial, a Jakarta-based non-profit working on climate change issues.

For example, people living in slums and informal settlements often receive no government assistance or lack the means to move when they are hit by floods, she added.

For some coastal regions, the need to adapt fast to worsening climate risks is an existential question.

“This matter now exceeds urgency,” said Maina Talia, secretary of [Tuvalu](#) Climate Action Network. “Expressions of concern, fear, or sorrow are inadequate at best, insulting at worst. We need action, and we need it now.”

Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/coastal-cities-seen-unprepared-as-ipcc-flags-climate-risk-hotspots/>



Tech giants strive to attain carbon neutrality

BEIJING: China's leading technology companies have been exerting efforts to reduce their carbon footprint, aligning with Beijing's pledge to peak the country's carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060.

Research predicts that, by 2040, information and communications technology would account for 14 percent of global emissions, up 1.5 percent in 2018.

Tech giants are in the vanguard of China's net-zero shift.

Last week, Tencent announced its plan to achieve carbon neutrality in its operations and supply chain by 2030, committing to using green power for 100 percent of all electricity consumed by that year.

Tencent's plan includes reducing carbon emissions from powerconsumption in data centers and buildings, according to Xu Hao, the company's vice president for sustainable social value. This also includes cutting indirect carbon emissions from the supply chain, such as infrastructure materials, purchased servers and energy use in company-leased data centers, he said.

Meanwhile, other tech companies are trying to drive change toward achieving a low-carbon society by fostering open innovation and knowledge-sharing and leveraging the reach and influence of their platforms and products.

Lenovo, the world's largest personal-computer (PC) manufacturer, has developed a liquid cooling technology for data centers. It can reduce energy consumption by up to 40 percent while maintaining performance.

At its manufacturing base in Hefei, Anhui province, where one out of every eight PCs sold globally is made, the technology giant deploys a system to improve production efficiency and reduce idle time, saving more than 2,696 MWh of electricity yearly.

This annual saving of electricity translates to an emission reduction of 2,000 tons of carbon dioxide, which is comparable to planting 110,000 trees a year.

Carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS), or carbon capture and storage, is a set of technologies used to strip carbon dioxide from industrial waste gases or directly from the atmosphere.

Tencent is rolling out a pilot CCUS project in China with Iceland's Carbfix, which provides a natural and permanent storage solution by turning carbon dioxide into the stone underground in less than two years. The project will also be the first in Asia.

At last year's Mobile World Conference Shanghai, Huawei released its zero-carbon network, which is designed to help telecommunications operators reduce their energy costs, increase green power generation, and realize carbon neutrality in their daily service.

Tencent Chairman Pony Ma has said promoting carbon neutrality shows high-tech companies take up social responsibilities. Its meaning goes beyond the reduction of the company's carbon



footprint. It is about encouraging sci-tech companies to step up innovation to push forward the net-zero shift in China.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/03/02/business/foreign-business/tech-giants-strive-to-attain-carbon-neutrality/1834781>



Thousands of Aussies told to flee floods



SINKING FEELING People waded through flood water as they relocate in Chinderah, Australia on Tuesday, March 1, 2022. Tens of thousands of people had been ordered to evacuate their homes and many more had been told to prepare to flee as parts of Australia's southeast coast are inundated by the worst flooding in over a decade. AP PHOTO

CANBERRA, Australia: Tens of thousands of people had been ordered to evacuate their homes by Tuesday and many more had been told to prepare to flee as parts of Australia's southeast coast are inundated by the worst flooding in over a decade that has claimed at least 10 lives.

Scores of residents, some with pets, spent hours trapped on their roofs in recent days by a fast-rising river in the town of Lismore in northern New South Wales state.

The body of a woman in her 80s was found by a neighbor in her Lismore home on Tuesday, a police statement said. There were no details of how she died.

There were concerns that householders who climbed into their roof spaces through ceiling manholes could become trapped by rising waters.

A police rescue officer had saved an elderly woman from such a roof space that was almost filled with water, Lismore State Emergency Service Commander Steve Patterson said.

"He dived in through a window, noticed the manhole cover was open, when he checked, found a 93-year-old lady with about 20 centimeters (8 inches) left of space before the water hit the top," Patterson told the Australian Broadcasting Corp.

Dozens of cars were trapped on a bridge in the nearby town of Woodburn over Monday night with both the bridge's approaches submerged.

Up to 50 people were rescued from the bridge early Tuesday, officials said.

"We had no capabilities to get them off in the dark, so we just had to make sure that they bunkered down and we went in this morning and got them all out," Woodburn State Emergency Services Commander Ashley Slapp said.



The floodwaters are moving south into New South Wales from Queensland state in the worst disaster in the region since what was described as a once-in-a-century event in 2011.

New South Wales Premier Dominic Perrottet said there had been 1,000 rescues in his state by Tuesday and more than 6,000 calls for authorities to help.

Perrottet said 40,000 people had been ordered to evacuate, while 300,000 others had been placed under evacuation warnings.

"We'll be doing everything...we can to get everybody to safety and get these communities right across our state back on their feet as quickly as possible," he said.

Government meteorologist Jonathan Howe described the amount of recent rainfall in northern New South Wales and southern Queensland as "astronomical."

Eight of the nine deaths of the current disaster were in Queensland.

Queensland Police Commissioner Katarina Carroll said emergency services held grave concerns for a man in his 70s who fell from his moored yacht in the state capital Brisbane into a swollen river on Saturday and for a 76-year-old man who disappeared with his vehicle in floodwater northwest of Brisbane on Sunday.

The extraordinary rainfall comes as the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (UN-IPCC) reported this week that vast swathes of Australia have already lost 20 percent of its rainfall and the country's fire risk has gone beyond worst-case scenarios developed just a few years ago.

Australia's hottest and driest year on record was 2019, which ended with devastating wildfires across southeast Australia. The fires directly killed 33 people and another 400 people were killed by the smoke.

The fires also destroyed more than 3,000 homes and razed 19 million hectares (47 million acres) of farmland and forests.

But two La Niña weather patterns have since brought above-average rainfall to the same regions.

Lesley Hughes, an Australian academic and former lead author of the UN-IPCC assessment reports in 2007 and 2015, said climate change was expected to overwhelm government systems such as flood responses.

"We can see that our emergency services are struggling already to cope with the floods in northern New South Wales with people stranded on roofs without food for more than 24 hours," Hughes said.

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DENR chief vows NG support on outcome of S. Cotabato hearing on open-pit mining

DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Officer-in-Charge Secretary Jim O. Sampulna said the National Government (NG) would respect the outcome of the public hearing called by the Provincial Government of South Cotabato on the proposed amendments to the province's Environment Code.

Specifically, the proposed amendment aims to alter the policy banning open-pit mining in the town of Tampakan, the site of the multibillion-dollar Tampakan Copper-Gold Project.

South Cotabato is the first local government unit (LGU) that imposed a ban on open-pit mining to protect its watershed.

The late and former DENR Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez, in 2017, put in place a policy that bans open-pit mining methods for copper, gold, silver, and complex ores when she signed DENR Administrative Order No. 2017-10.

This was however reversed by former DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu four years later when he signed DENR Administrative Order No. 2021-40. Sampulna has been invited by South Cotabato Vice Gov. Vicente De Jesus to the multi-sectoral consultation forum in Koronadal City on February 24 to provide techni-

cal information that will help the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) members decide on to lift the ban on open-pit mining.

Sampulna said before the audience-packed auditorium that includes LGU officials in the province, as well as former board members who framed the ordinance that the NG will respect their rights.

He also assured the stakeholders that the general welfare of the people of South Cotabato is of utmost importance to the provincial government. "We are here to shed light upon the invitation of Vice Governor Vicente De Jesus. We respect your rights," the DENR chief said.

On the legality of the provincial ordinance, Sampulna explained, "it is well settled that ordinances enacted by virtue of the general welfare clause are valid."

He expressed optimism that the DENR could contribute to a better appreciation of the advantages and disadvantages of the project, which promises to boost local economic development and provide much-needed jobs and livelihood opportunities to the people, as well as help the SP members reach an informed decision when they cast their respective votes.

Jonathan L. Mayuga



DENR to honor LGU's decision on mining

THE national government will respect the outcome of the public hearing called by the provincial board of South Cotabato on the proposed lifting of the ban on open-pit mining in the municipality of Tampakan, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The DENR was invited by the local government unit (LGU) of South Cotabato at last month's multi-sectoral consultation forum to provide technical information that will help the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) members decide on whether or not to lift the ban on open-pit mining in the province.

While recognizing the LGU's rights to decide on whether to allow a mining project in the province or not, DENR officer-in-charge Secretary Jim Sampulna said the DENR helps in contributing a better appreciation of the advantages and disadvantages of the planned mining operations in the province.

"On the legality of the provincial ordinance, it is well settled that ordinances enacted by virtue of the general welfare clause are valid," Sampulna said.

The DENR added it also



Stalled. The Tampakan prospect is one of the largest undeveloped mineral deposits in Southeast Asia.

helped SP members in reaching an informed decision when they cast their votes.

The DENR recently lifted the open pit mining ban that was first implemented back in 2017. However, its effect does not automatically apply for the provincial government of South Cotabato's Environment Code issued in 2010 that stops any

open pit mining ban projects in the area.

South Cotabato's local environmental code has effectively stalled the Tampakan prospect which is said to be one of the largest undeveloped mineral deposits in the entire Southeast Asia with estimated reserves of 15 million tons of contained copper and nearly 18 million ounces of gold

or 375,000 tons of copper and 360,000 ounces of gold in concentrate annually, over the proposed 17-year mine life.

Industry stakeholders also claim that total taxes and royalties that the Philippine government can gain from the Tampakan project would be at around P346 billion.



DENR to respect S. Cotabato's Tampakan mine decision

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

THE National government will respect the outcome of the public hearing called by the South Cotabato provincial board with regards to the provisional lifting of the ban on open-pit mining in the municipality of Tampakan.

This was the assurance made by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Officer-in-Charge (OIC) Secretary Jim O. Sampulna to the residents of South Cotabato after he attended the recently-held multi-sectoral consultation forum in Koronadal City.

South Cotabato Vice Gov. Vicente De Jesus invited Sampulna to the forum to provide technical information that will help the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) members decide on whether or not to lift the ban on open-pit mining.

Sampulna told the resi-

dents that they respect their rights and assured that the general good of the people of South Cotabato is of utmost importance to the provincial government.

"On the legality of the provincial ordinance, it is well settled that ordinances enacted by virtue of the general welfare clause are valid," Sampulna explained.

He expressed optimism that the DENR could contribute to a better appreciation of the advantages and disadvantages of the project, as well as help the SP members reach an informed decision when they cast their respective votes.

Meanwhile, De Jesus, who also sits as the SP's presiding officer, said the board unanimously agreed to conduct the public hearing before voting for amendments on the provisions of Ordinance 04, Series of 2010, entitled "An Ordinance Providing for the Environment Code of the Province of South Cotabato."

The ordinance was ap-

proved on June 9, 2010. The SP affirmed it on June 30, 2015, through the "South Cotabato Environment Code" or "A Resolution Affirming the Validity of Section 22(b) of Ordinance No. 04 Series of 2010."

Sampulna was joined by DENR-Mines and Geosciences Bureau Director Wilfredo Moncano, DENR-Environmental Management Bureau Director William Cufiada, and DENR-Region 12 Executive Director Felix Alicer during the consultation forum.

A public hearing was also held on Feb. 18 in Tampakan town, which hosts the multi-billion-peso gold-copper project touted as the largest undeveloped copper and gold mine in Southeast Asia.

The Tampakan project of the Sagittarius Mines Incorporated or SMI has the potential to yield an average of 375,000 tons of copper and 360,000 ounces of gold in concentrate per annum over the proposed 17-year life of the mine.



FOREST RANGERS MAULED

HOUSE PROBE OF MASUNGI GEORESERVE ATTACKS SOUGHT

By Julie M. Aurelio
@JMAurelioINQ

Lawmakers have condemned the recent attacks against forest rangers at the Masungi Georeserve in Rizal province and sought an investigation.

In House Resolution No. 2499, Bayan Muna Representatives Eufemia Cullamat, Carlos Isagani Zarate and Ferdinand Gaite cited the acts of violence against forest rangers of the protected rainforest reserve last month and in July 2021.

"These continuous attacks and violence against our forest

defenders are the result of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) failure to evict illegal occupants [from] the reforestation site, which is our duty as supposedly agreed with Masungi Foundation last 2017," the lawmakers said in their resolution.

"[The] DENR's loose judgment and lack of action over matters concerning its responsibilities and functions to protect the environment and the people, and the illegal occupants' harassment and violence against the foreign defenders in pursuit of their

various self-interests should be rightfully condemned and prosecuted," they added.

On Feb. 18, two forest rangers were hurt after alleged residents of Sitio San Roque in Baras town mauled them. The victims and five other forest rangers were eating at an *carinderia* when the suspects ganged up on them.

The lawmakers cited a statement from Masungi Georeserve, which said the attackers were "linked to illegal resorts in the Upper Marikina Watershed" that the DENR supposedly failed to evict from the area. INQ



MAGING RESPONSABLE ANG BAWAT ISA SA PAGGAMIT NG TUBIG

PATULOY na nakikipag-ugnayan ang National Water Resources Board (NWRB) sa mga ahensya ng gobyerno, mga water concessionaire, higit sa lahat, sa mga kababayan natin na kinakailangang mapamahalaang mabuti ang limitadong suplay ng tubig sa Angat Dam.

Sa pagpasok ng panahon ng tag-init, maigting ang panawagan ni Dr. Seville "Bill" David, Executive Director ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB), na maging responsable ang bawat isa sa paggamit ng tubig.

Ang panawagan ni Executive Director David, hindi lamang sa mga nasa bahay at tanggapan o opisina.

Mas maraming tubig ang ginagamit sa mga industriya at shopping mall sa Metro Manila at sa mga karatig-probinsya, kaya, gamitin nang tama ang tubig at mag-recycle kung kinakailangan.

Sa aking panayam kay Executive Director David, kanyang ibinahagi na patuloy ang pagbaba ng antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam.

Base sa ulat ng Department of Science and Technology (DOST) – Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), ang antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam ay nasa 196.28 metro sa araw ng Marso 1, 2022.



REMATE OPINION

ANGINYONG LINGKOD

NI DR. HILDA C. ONG

(6:00am), bahagyang bumaba ang water level sa Angat dam, pati na rin sa Ipo Dam nasa 98.55 mtrs, mas mababa sa maintaining level na 101 meters.

Noong buwan ng Disyembre 2021 hanggang Enero 2022, akin ding nalaman mula kay Dr. David na ang pagpapadala ng tubig sa mga nasalanta ni bagyong Odette mula sa water refilling stations sa Metro Manila ay karagdagan kabawasan sa supply ng tubig na nagmula sa Angat dam.

Kahit pa NCR ang pangunahing gumagamit ng tubig mula sa Angat Dam, mahalagang tulungan ang mga kababayang natin naapektuhan

ni Bagyong Odette mula sa Visayas at Mindanao. Malaki man ang epekto nito sa water demand, mas angkop na tugunan ang kani- iyang pangangailangan sa malinis na tubig.

Hindi kaila sa NWRB ang pangangailangan ng katagdagang water sources o pagkukunan ng tubig. Kaakibat ang pribadong sector, may planong bumuo ang pamahalaan ng mga water infrastructure project, ngunit maaari itong tumagal nang mula 3 hanggang 5 taon. Kapag nasimulan ang mga proyektong ito, malaki ang maitutulong nito sa seguridad ng tubig sa NCR at karatig-probinsya.



Campaign season marks rise on attacks vs environmental defenders—group

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

@jonlmayuga

THE number of environmental defenders experiencing human rights violations has increased tremendously after the start of the campaign season in February, the Kalikasan-People's Network for the Environment said.

Leon Dulce, national coordinator of Kalikasan-PNE also raised the concern that election-related violence may have been deliberate aimed at environment defenders.

The group has been monitoring attacks against environment defenders in the Philippines and noted that the attacks have quadrupled or increased four fold in the first month of the election season.

There is a 483 percent spike in the number of environmental defenders under attack and a 350 per-

cent increase in incidents after the formal electoral campaign season started. We urge the Filipino public to demand both current and future government leaders to address the plight of our heroic defenders obscured by the election's fog of war," Dulce said.

The recent arrest of community health practitioner, Dr. Naty Castro and the massacre of five Lumad advocates Chad Booc, and the rest of another group of human rights violation victims dubbed "New Bataan Five" were among the incidents monitored by the group.

The victims of these attacks worked against large-scale mining projects in the Caraga region, the country's so-called "mining capital region" because of the numerous mining projects in the area.

The attack against forest rangers of the Masungi Georeserve on Feb-

ruary 18, wherein suspected land grabbers intruding into the world-renowned conservation area physically assaulted seven of the environmental defenders, were also recorded by the group.

Meanwhile, on February 23, the protest camp of 236 agrarian reform beneficiaries in a 200-hectare agricultural land area in Concepcion, Tarlac was burned down in an arson attack. The group noted that standing to gain from the attack is the land cooperative disputing the area affiliated to the local Villanueva political clan.

On February 27, a gun attack seriously injured outgoing Infanta municipality mayor Filipino Grace America, a staunch opponent of the controversial Kaliwa Dam Project.

Environmental groups and Indigenous Peoples in the area to be affected by the project oppose the

multibillion-peso project believing it will submerge thousands of hectares of forestlands and the thousands of indigenous Dumagat families residing in them.

The group said the latest incident happened on February 28 involving Agnes Mesina, a church lay worker and political activist who was arrested by authorities allegedly for no apparent reason.

Mesina has long been involved in anti-mining campaigns in the Cagayan Valley region, the group noted.

International watchdog group Global Witness recently noted the growing trend across "Global South" countries holding national elections this 2022 like the Philippines, Brazil, and Colombia where environment and climate issues are urgent electoral concerns, but where land and environmental defenders working to resolve these crises are suffer-

ing the worst human rights abuses, Dulce said.

"We hope the current electoral hopefuls walk their talk of environmental and climate concern by

standing with our embattled defenders. We should call out the worsening violence they face and demand accountability from the outgoing public authorities," Dulce said.



UN REPORT

TORRENT OF CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT TO HIT PEOPLE LIVING IN CITIES

PARIS—From searing “heat islands” to flash floods and rising seas, an increasing torrent of climate change impacts threatens half of the world’s population living in urban areas, a major report by UN experts said Monday.

Cities will have to adapt to protect people, property and crucial infrastructure in an intricately interconnected world economy where shocks can ripple across global supply chains.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change enumerated some of the impacts, vulnerabilities and adaptation in its report:

- The climate risks faced by the 4.2 billion people in urban areas are increasing, as are threats to property and infrastructure

- The main threats are heat stress and flooding, as well as “cascading impacts” of climate change-driven extreme events that can reverberate through supply chains and disrupt food, water and other resource flows.

- By 2050, the world’s urban population is expected to grow by 2.5 billion people, mostly in areas “highly exposed” to climate change on the coasts and in Africa, Asia and small islands.

- More than a billion people living near the world’s coasts in low-lying cities and settlements are predicted to be at risk of flooding by 2050 as climate change drives sea level rise, bigger tropical storm surges and

more frequent and intense rain.

- With 2 degrees Celsius of warming, losses to physical infrastructure are estimated at \$4.2 trillion by 2100.

- Between half and three quarters of the global population could be exposed to life-threatening conditions from extreme heat and high humidity by 2100, depending on the level of warming. The threat is particularly high in tropical areas of the global south.

- Urban heat stress is projected to reduce labor capacity in hot months 20 percent by 2050, from 10 percent now.

- Urban areas exposed to floods and droughts “very likely” to more than double between 2000 and 2030.

- An additional 350 million people are expected to be exposed to water scarcity from severe droughts if temperatures rise 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels, and 410.7 million at 2 degrees Celsius.

- Many cities are exposed to multiple climate hazards. Out of 571 cities analyzed in Europe, more than 100 were found to be vulnerable to two or more climate impacts.

- At 2-2.5 degrees Celsius warming, at least 25 megacities will be impacted by rising sea levels.

- Even just a 15-cm rise in sea levels would increase the number of people at risk of a once in a 100-year coastal flood by around 20 percent. —AFP



Editorial

Prospective candidates cannot ignore the climate

THE most concerning thing about last Sunday's presidential debate organized by CNN was something that was not said by the nine candidates present. A wide range of relevant topics was discussed, but virtually nothing about the environment and climate change. This omission was a disservice to the public as the topic is perhaps the most important broad issue the next administration will face.

The blame for this should fall on the debate organizers and expert panel posing the questions to the candidates, rather than on the candidates themselves. Even though none of the candidates, including the one who declined to participate, has yet to present anything that even remotely resembles a coherent and actionable environmental policy, all of them have acknowledged the topic on a number of occasions, and offered various suggestions of specific areas they might pursue if elected.

Not encouraging the candidates to elaborate further was a missed opportunity, but the debate did cover a great deal of other matters of interest to voters, so the best thing to do at this point would be to make a positive contribution to the public conversation by filling in what was missed.

Climate response in its two forms — climate adaptation and climate mitigation — has become, whether some stubborn "climate skeptics" like it or not, a key part of virtually every aspect of overall national policy. Even if an incoming administration does not consider climate response a top priority for its own sake, every other policy area, government finance, infrastructure, agriculture, social development, calamity readiness and response, and everything in between, is significantly affected by it.

As just one familiar example, investments in coal power are now being shunned for their environmental unsustainability by most public sectors and even many private sector funds. The Philippines' near-term energy growth plan still relies primarily on the expected construction of more than a dozen coal plants; facilities for which funding, if already secured, is likely to be more expensive than anticipated, and in some cases, perhaps not available at all.

The Philippines' environmental policy, we believe, should have three basic objectives. First, the country should fully adopt the principles of "just transition" in ensuring energy security. That means, in simple terms, finding the best formula of energy that is reliable; has an environmental footprint that is as minimized as it possibly can be; can be created from the country's own resources; and is accessible and affordable for all Filipinos.

It is important to note that "just transition" applies to all aspects of development, such as expanding transportation and making it more sustainable, and expanding agricultural productivity. Progress is important, and is in fact a necessity, but no solution is worthwhile if someone is left behind.

Second, the country must focus on pollution reduction, harmful emissions — primarily from transportation — on the one hand, and other forms of land and sea pollution, most particularly plastic pollution, on the other. There are two reasons for this. First, it is an obvious quality of life issue; reducing emissions, for instance, reduces incidence of respiratory ailments and their corresponding burden on the health system. Second, there is a clear risk-reward formula in pollution reduction. If the Philippines is making an appropriate effort to manage its own contribution to global emissions and pollution, it is entitled to and can demand support for its climate adaptation and mitigation efforts from nations with far larger contributions to the global problem. If the Philippines does not do what its capacity allows, however, it stands to be penalized for not doing its part, no matter how small that part may be in the bigger scheme of things.

Finally, the third objective must be to prioritize ecological and environmental preservation in any development activity. Again, this is partly a quality of life issue; the Philippines has a unique environment, and one that also happens to be a substantial source of income by simply existing, thanks to the tourism sector. Another reason is purely practical; conservation efforts also serve to address climate mitigation needs without requiring additional programs or resources. Restoring natural mangrove forests that protect coasts against storms and act as natural carbon dioxide collectors is one well-known example.



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US Supreme Court hears climate case as UN issues stark warning

WASHINGTON AFP – A divided US Supreme Court heard arguments on Monday in an environmental regulation case with potentially far-reaching implications for the Biden administration's fight against climate change.

The case concerns the authority of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from coal-fired power plants, which produce nearly 20 percent of the electricity in the United States.

As the Supreme Court was hearing arguments, the United Nations issued a landmark report containing dire warnings over climate change.

While the three liberal justices on the nine-member Supreme Court appeared largely to support arguments that the EPA was operating within its brief, several of the conservative justices appeared skeptical.

"This agency is doing greenhouse gas regulation," said Justice Sonia Sotomayor, one of the liberal members of the court. "This is in, you know, exactly in its wheelhouse."

Jacob Roth, arguing for The North America Coal Corp., said the EPA is going beyond its remit.

"The agency is asking questions like: Should we phase out the coal industry? Should we build more solar farms in this country? Should we restrict how consumers use electricity in order to bring down emissions?"

"Those are not the types of questions we expect the agency to be answering," Roth said.

In 2007, the Supreme Court, by a narrow majority, ruled that the EPA has the power to regulate carbon dioxide emissions from power plants under the Clean Air Act of 1970.

In 2015, Democratic president Barack Obama unveiled his Clean Power Plan, which was intended to combat global warming by reducing carbon dioxide emissions from coal- and gas-burning plants and shifting energy production to clean sources such as solar and wind power.

The Clean Power Plan was blocked in the Supreme Court in 2016 and repealed by former Republican president Donald Trump, who replaced it with his own industry-friendly Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) rule.

Trump, a climate change skeptic hostile to government regulation of industry, also nominated three justices to the Supreme Court, giving conservatives a 6-3 majority.

The US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia threw out Trump's ACE rule on the last day of his presidency, setting the stage for the case currently before the Supreme Court: West Virginia vs EPA.



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BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION. Metro Pacific Investments Corp., the country's leading infrastructure investment company and the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity, sign an agreement to collaborate toward biodiversity conservation, social development and nature-based solutions in Southeast Asia following the triple bottomline approach. MPIC and ACB will provide the needed support for each other's initiatives and promote the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity in core business processes. The partnership aims to implement joint programs that communicate the values of biodiversity and ecosystem restoration.



Greening the economy

We are already feeling it – the sweltering hot days of summer, hotter now than the summers of our childhood.

Indeed, climate change is real – hot days are getting hotter, cold nights are fewer, and extreme weather conditions are more common.

A report by the World Meteorological Organization, released during the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference or COP26 detailed the many ways our planet is changing.

“Global mean temperature in 2021 (January to September) is around 1.08 ±0.13 °C above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial average, and the year is likely to be between the fifth and seventh warmest year on record,” it said.

EYES WIDE OPEN



IRIS GONZALES

It also highlighted the drastic increase in the atmospheric concentration of major greenhouse gases (GHG) in the last two years.

GHG emissions are one of the main causes of climate change and these emissions partly come from the industrial and energy sectors due to the burning of fossil fuels for heat and electricity.

Against this backdrop, the global community is strengthening the call to transition from a brown economy to a green economy, or one which is “low carbon, resource efficient, and socially inclusive.”

The role of renewables

Can we actually do it? This is where renewables can play a major role.

Renewable energy (RE) can change the situation. This is perhaps the reason why renewables are also on an uptrend in terms of supply and capacity; the share of renewables in global electricity generation rose to 29 percent in 2020 from 27 percent in 2019, according to the International Energy Agency.

Locally, RE accounted for 21.2 percent of the total power generated in the country in 2020, slightly higher than 20.8 percent in 2019, says the Department of Energy.

The DOE targets to increase the share of RE in the Philippine energy mix to 35 percent by 2030 and 50 percent by 2040.

Many conglomerates, including the country’s oldest – Ayala Corp., are also now trumpeting their pivot to RE.

Solar energy, in particular, has become a very promising alternative to fossil fuels. It’s no surprise that Solar Philippines Nueva Ecija Power Corp. (SPNEC) and Ayala’s AC Energy have become stock market darlings in recent months. The newly listed CREIT, sister company of Megawide, also made a strong debut in the market, rising 11.37 percent from its offer price of P2.55 per share.

Growth opportunities in solar energy development

Expect more companies to get into solar as ESG (environmental, social governance) investors look for cleaner investment options and as the government pushes for more renewables in light of the worsening situation of our planet.

As a reporter who covered the energy beat, I recall that pursuant to the Renewable Energy Act of 2008, the DOE established the Feed-in-Tariff scheme that grants early adopters of renewable technologies the right to contract with the government for 20 years.

It’s a tariff structure that protects investors from sudden volatility in inflation and foreign exchange and was designed as an incentive to spur the development of RE projects in the country.

And it is bearing fruit

Raslag Corp., owned by the Nepomuceno family of Angeles, Pampanga, was one of the first companies to respond to the government’s push for RE.

The company is a pioneer in the country’s grid-scale solar energy development. In 2015, its maiden project, the 10.046 Megawatt-peak (MWp) Raslag-1, was the second solar plant to be included in the first round of FIT for solar with a P9.68 per kWh base tariff, while in 2016, the 13.141 MWp Raslag-2 was the first solar plant that qualified for the second round of FIT for Solar with a P8.69 per kWh base tariff.

This essentially assured Raslag of guaranteed payment from the government, with annual adjustments for inflation and forex.

“These assured payments are expected to give Raslag a total of at least P300 million in gross annual sales and annual net income of approximately P100 million for the next 20 years,” the company said.

I learned about this as I combed through Raslag’s prospectus filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission recently for its planned P700 million initial public offering slated on March 28.

Raslag is also gearing up to start the commercial operations of its third solar project, the 18.011 MWp Raslag-3, by May 2022, plus two more solar power projects to commence in the next three years.

These projects will expand Raslag’s total generation capacity nearly six-fold, according to its prospectus.

Big renewables pie

Raslag is quickly positioning itself to be a major player in the solar energy industry.

It hopes to power more industries and communities with clean energy as it joins the ranks of other RE companies in pushing for a green economy and a cleaner and brighter planet.

Raslag will list in the stock market under the ticker symbol ASLAG, the *Kapampangan* word for brightness. Its future certainly looks bright in an industry that is, indeed, hot – literally and figuratively.

Iris Gonzales’ email address is eyesgonzales@gmail.com. Follow her on Twitter @[eyesgonzales](https://twitter.com/eyesgonzales). Column archives at eyesgonzales.com



Germany eyes hydrogen as PH source of energy

THE German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry said it is exploring the potential of the Philippine market for green hydrogen as a future source of energy.

"The German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection, is currently assessing the market potential of green hydrogen and fuel cell applications in urban and remote areas in the Philippines," GPCCI said.

GPCCI executive director Christopher Zimmer said the technology know-how of Germany on green hydrogen can help the country in increasing the share of renewable energy in its energy mix, as well as reducing the greenhouse gas emission.

"We are convinced that German technology providers can contribute greatly to the country's energy transition," Zimmer said.

Currently, coal accounts for 48 percent of the total energy mix, renewable sources at 26 percent, and natural gas at 21 percent.

He added the amendments to the Foreign Investments Act and Public Service Act would facilitate opportunities between German and Philippine

businesses to partner in exploring and investing in this sector.

German hydrogen technology firm H2 Core Systems GmbH vice president of energy systems Mark Shiels said the Philippines should take advantage of investing in hydrogen technology as this plays a major role in climate protection.

"In the Philippines, a geographically dispersed country, the use of green hydrogen and fuel cell technology can be an environmentally friendly alternative to diesel generators, whose use is widespread as backup power in urban areas and as power source in remote off-grid areas," Shiels said.

Green hydrogen is part of Germany's goal of zero greenhouse gas emission by 2050 by investing in research and technology development, as well as hydrogen trade cooperation and partnership with other countries.

Meanwhile, the Department of Energy has been pursuing hydrogen as an alternative source of energy that would significantly help in reducing the country's carbon emission.

It recently partnered with firms from Australia and Japan to explore the potential of hydrogen as the country's future energy source.

In January last year, the DoE partnered with Star Scientific Ltd., a research and development firm from Australia, to study hydrogen as a potential source of power and fuel for electric vehicles.

The Australian firm has a breakthrough technology called Hydrogen Energy Release Optimizer, which converts hydrogen into heat without combustion.

The department signed a memorandum of understanding with Tokyo-based Hydrogen Technology Inc. in early April last year to explore the potential of hydrogen as an energy source in the future.

Cusi and HTI president and chief executive officer Yasuhiro Yamamoto signed the MoU that aims to study hydrogen production in the country.

HTI is the second partner of DoE in studying hydrogen as fuel for power generation.

"With the assistance of HTI and through the signing of the MOU, we are hopeful that the development of hydrogen energy will eventually be realized," Cusi said.

He added that through the partnership with HTI, the DoE hopes to bring in Japanese technology in hydrogen power generation to the country.



Govt agencies back on 100% workforce

MALACANANG has ordered all agencies and instrumentalities of the government to "adhere to 100 percent on-site workforce" regardless of the coronavirus alert level in their areas of responsibility, especially in the National Capital Region (NCR or Metro Manila) and 38 other areas set to de-escalate to the lowest alert classification.

Cabinet Secretary and acting Palace spokesman Karlo Alexei Nograles said that Memorandum Circular 96, released on Feb. 28, 2022, seeks to "ensure that government agencies and instrumentalities remain fully operational regardless of the alert level of the area where they are located."

"This issuance is consistent with the de-escalation of certain areas in the country to Alert Level 1, and the release of updated alert level system guidelines," Nograles said.

Based on the circular, agencies and instrumentalities in areas under Alert Level 2 must adhere to at least 80 percent on-site workforce.

Those in areas Under Alert Level 3 will be allowed to field at least 60 percent on-site workforce, while 40 percent workforce will be permitted for those under Alert Level 4.

"The aforesaid issuance is intended to balance health consider-

ations and the continuous delivery of public services, consistent with the updated alert level system," Nograles said.

The downgrading to the lowest alert level in the NCR and other areas on Tuesday saw the Bureau of Immigration (BI) going back to 100 percent worksite capacity.

Immigration Commissioner Jaime Morente said the new work scheme will be adopted in all immigration offices in Alert Level 1 areas.

Other BI offices situated in areas that are under other alert level categories shall continue to adhere to their existing on-site work capacities.

Morente said strict health protocols, such as wearing of mask and physical distancing of all officials and employees, will have to be observed in these offices.

While fully vaccinated individuals will be allowed entry to BI offices, those who are unvaccinated and not fully vaccinated need to secure their slots from the bureau's online appointment system.

"As we transition to the new normal, the public can be assured that the services of the BI will remain unhampered," Morente said.

**KRISTINA MARALIT AND
WILLIAM B. DEPASUPIL**



Duterte appoints Leonardo as new Napolcom commissioner

PRESIDENT Duterte has recently appointed former Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Edilberto Dela Cruz Leonardo as commissioner of the National Police Commission (Napolcom). Leonardo, who represents the law enforcement sector, shall serve a six-year fixed term.

Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary and Napolcom Chairman Eduardo M. Año said that the appointment was issued to replace former Commissioner Felizardo M. Serapio Jr. whose term of office ended on February 11, 2022.

Napolcom Vice Chairman and Executive Officer (VCEO) Vitaliano

N. Aguirre II said that prior to his appointment to Napolcom, Commissioner Leonardo was the Undersecretary for Protected Areas and Special Concerns of the DENR while serving as the concurrent Executive Director of the Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force.

Leonardo also served as the former Regional Chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group Regional Field Unit of Police Regional Office 11 until his retirement from the police service in September 2020.

In the course of working full-time in the Philippine National Police (PNP), he took up classes at Rizal Memorial Colleges in Davao City where he completed his Master of Arts in Educational Management

in 2009 and consequently obtained his Executive Doctorate degree in Leadership-Public Management at the University of Makati in 2019.

During his oath taking, Leonardo expressed a mixed feeling of enthusiasm and eagerness to take on the challenge as the newly appointed Napolcom commissioner.

"All I can say is I will do my best at least to approximate the gold standard set by Napolcom under the good leadership of Secretary Año and able stewardship of Vice Chairman Aguirre II. From this day onwards, I will work vigorously with the same zeal and dedication I have done in my previous professional engagements despite of the demanding and challenging tasks ahead of me," Leonardo said.



SBMA chair Eisma steps down, cites 'health, family'

By Ansbert B. Joaquin

OLONGAPO City—Wilma Eisma has stepped down as chairperson and administrator of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA).

Eisma said she resigned to “focus on my health and family.” It can be recalled that Eisma had earlier submitted a letter of resignation in October for the same reason but the resignation was not accepted by Malacañang.

“At that time, President Duterte did not acquiesce to my decision, but at this time, thankfully, he favored my renewed request,” Eisma said in a statement.

Former Olongapo Mayor Rolan Paulino, who took his oath before Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea this afternoon in Malacañang, replaces Eisma.

The Supreme Court (SC) meanwhile appointed Raul Villanueva as the new

court administrator of the SC. He took his oath before Chief Justice Alexander G. Gesmundo at the Dignitaries Lounge of the SC.

Villanueva started his judicial career in 2002 when he was appointed Presiding Judge of Branch 255 of the Las Piñas City Regional Trial Court. He was at one point the Acting Presiding Judge of Branch 267, Taguig City RTC, and Acting Presiding Judge of Branch 4, Manila RTC. He also served as Executive Judge of the Las Piñas City RTC.

On March 2, 2010, he was promoted as Deputy Court Administrator (DCA), a position he held until his recent appoint-

ment as Court Administrator.

Prior to joining the Judiciary, Villanueva worked for various government institutions and served all three branches of the government: the Executive, the Legislative, and the Judicial departments. He was actively involved in the Philippine Judges Association (PJA) where he served as executive vice president.

In another appointment, President Duterte named former Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Edilberto Dela Cruz Leonardo to become one of the Commissioners of the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM).

Leonardo, who represents the law enforcement sector, shall serve a six-year fixed term. His appointment was issued to replace former Commissioner Felizardo M. Serapio, Jr. whose term of office ended on February 11, 2022.
With Rey E. Requejo



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METROLINE

New Napolcom commissioner named

President Duterte has appointed former environment undersecretary Edilberto Leonardo as a commissioner of the National Police Commission (Napolcom).

Leonardo, appointed on Feb. 14, will serve a six-year term representing the Napolcom's law enforcement sector. He replaced Felizardo Serapio Jr., whose term of office ended on Feb. 11, Interior Secretary Eduardo Año said.

Prior to his appointment as Napolcom commissioner, Leonardo served as undersecretary for protected areas and special concerns for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources while serving as the executive director of the DENR's Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force.

Leonardo completed his Master of Arts in Educational Management at the Rizal Memorial Colleges in Davao City in 2009 and obtained his executive doctorate degree in Leadership-Public Management at the University of Makati in 2019.

— Emmanuel Tupas



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES BOARD
8th Floor NIA Bldg., EDSA, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines 1100

BP WATERWORKS, INC.,
Applicant, Case No. 22-1238
x-----x

NOTICE OF HEARING

Applicant, an authorized operator of the waterworks system within Deca Homes Mactan 3 Subdivision, Barangay Basak, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu, applies for the renewal of Certificate of Public Convenience and authority to increase water rates as follows:

PROPOSED TARIFF

Public Tap						
Pipe Size	0-5 m ³ (min.)	6-10 m ³	11-20 m ³	21-30 m ³	31-40 m ³	Over 40 m ³
1/2"	₱ 244.00	33.60	58.50	68.30	78.00	82.90

Residential and Institutional						
Pipe Size	0-5 m ³ (min.)	6-10 m ³	11-20 m ³	21-30 m ³	31-40 m ³	Over 40 m ³
1/2"	₱ 252.50	56.60	62.90	64.40	68.70	77.10

Commercial and Industrial					
Pipe Size	0-15 m ³ (min.)	16-30 m ³	31-500 m ³	501-1000 m ³	Over 1000 m ³
1/2"	₱ 1,462.50	121.90	146.30	146.30	146.30

This application will be initially heard by the Board on **21 March 2022**. The hearing will start at **9:00 o' clock in the morning** at the NWRB-WTID Conference Room, 8th Floor, NIA Building, EDSA, Quezon City, at which time applicant shall present its evidence.

At least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled hearing, applicant shall publish this notice once in a newspaper of general circulation in the province of Cebu and serve by personal delivery or registered mail a copy of the (i) application and its attachments, and (ii) this notice, to all affected parties appearing on page 2 hereof.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition supported by documentary evidence on or before the above scheduled date of hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant.

Failure on the part of any person affected to file its opposition on time and to appear at the hearing will be construed as a waiver of their right to be heard. The Board will proceed to hear and decide the application based on the evidence submitted.

Likewise, failure by the applicant to appear at the hearing shall amount to lack of interest on its part and the instant application shall be dismissed accordingly.

Witness the Honorable Executive Director of the National Water Resources Board this 24th day of January 2022.

By Authority of the Board:
Dr. SEVILLO D. DAVID, Jr., CESO III
Executive Director

Affected Parties:

The Secretary Sangguniang Panglungsod Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu	The Homeowners Assn. President Deca Homes Mactan 3 Subdivision Barangay Basak Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu
The Barangay Chairman Barangay Basak Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu	The General Manager Metro Cebu Water District

02 MARCH 2022, WEDNESDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

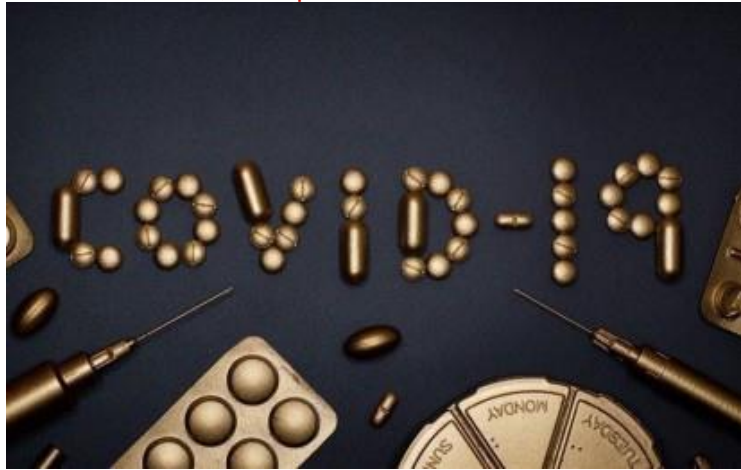
COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



PH logs 1,067 new Covid cases, 1,652 more recoveries

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor [March 1, 2022, 5:19 pm](#)



MANILA – The Department of Health (DOH) on Tuesday recorded 1,067 new cases of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) and 1,652 more recoveries.

Of 51,592 active cases, 46,609 are mild, 2,779 are moderate, 489 are asymptomatic, 1,417 are severe, and 298 are critical.

The figures pushed the overall tally of confirmed infections to 3,663,059 and recovered cases to 3,555,016.

Tuesday's cases mark a slight uptick from Monday's 951 new infections, the lowest number of daily cases so far this year.

“Of the 1,067 reported cases today, 652 (61 percent) occurred within the recent 14 days, February 16 to March 1, 2022,” the DOH reported.

The regions with the most cases in the recent two weeks were the National Capital Region (NCR) with 144 or 22 percent, Calabarzon with 92 (14 percent), and Central Luzon with 72 (11 percent).

The death toll stood at 56,451 as no fatalities were reported, representing 1.54 percent of overall cases.

According to the February 27 data, about 4.3 percent of 18,766 who were tested turned out positive for the coronavirus.

About five duplicates were removed from the total case count as three of those were recoveries.

All laboratories were operational on February 27 but nine were unable to submit their data to the Covid-19 Document Repository System.

The DOH said the laboratory contributed, on average, 1.4 percent of samples tested, and 1.4 percent among positive individuals based on data in the past 14 days.

“Please note that lower reported numbers and positivity rate today are because these are Sunday laboratory outputs, which traditionally have the lowest outputs per week,” it added.



To date, 26 percent of 3,700 intensive care unit (ICU) beds, 22 percent of 20,500 isolation beds, 15 percent of 14,300 ward beds, and 13 percent of 3,200 ventilators nationwide are in use by patients with Covid-19.

In the NCR, 26 percent of 1,300 ICU beds, 23 percent of 4,500 isolation beds, 24 percent of 4,000 ward beds, and 16 percent of 1,000 ventilators dedicated to patients with Covid-19 are in use. **(PNA)**

CSC urges gov't offices to register to Safety Seal, follow health protocols

March 1, 2022



Public commuters line up to get a ride on Commonwealth Avenue in Philcoa, Quezon City on Monday (Feb. 28, 2022). The volume of passengers is expected to balloon after the government approved on Sunday to place the National Capital Region and 38 other areas under Alert Level 1 from March 1 to 15. (PNA photo by Joey O. Razon)/ FILE

By Alec Go

As government offices expand their on-site operations to 100% under Alert Level 1, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) on Tuesday, March 1, called on offices to ensure compliance with health protocols and Safety Seal standards.

In the Laging Handa briefing, CSC Commissioner Atty. Aileen Lizada said agencies and offices should register for Safety Seal certification for their facilities to be inspected.

“While we see under Alert Level 1 everything is okay outside, ang kailangan nating tanungin sa iba’t-ibang heads of offices, heads of agencies – okay na po ba ang inside ng ating opisina,” she said.

“It is to the head of agency to determine whether the office is safe and whether compliant tayo sa Occupation Safety and Health Standards at ang inyong opisina ba ay pumasa na sa Safety Seal,” she added.

Lizada also called on employees association and unions, together with offices’ human resources divisions, to ensure that their agencies are observing minimum public health standards such as proper ventilation and distancing.

The official said during the same briefing “other alternative work arrangements are still in place,” as they finalize “flexi workplace” which may be released in a few weeks. This is in a bid to institutionalize working arrangements covering the pandemic, calamities, and disasters.

Meanwhile, over 60% of 1.7 million employees are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and more than 30% are unvaccinated.

Lizada said the mandatory RT-CPR testing for workers may be shouldered by the office through their Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) “subject to auditing and budgeting rules and regulations.”

Based on the Office of the President’s Memorandum Circular No. 96, all government agencies and instrumentalities shall adhere to 100% on-site workforce.

Cabinet Secretary and acting presidential spokesperson Karlo Nograles said this is “to balance health considerations and the continuous delivery of public services, consistent with the updated Alert Level System.” – **bny**

Source: <https://ptvnews.ph/cscurges-govt-offices-to-register-to-safety-seal-follow-health-protocols/>



Self-regulation

[SKETCHES](#) - [Ana Marie Pamintuan](#) - The Philippine Star March 2, 2022 | 12:00am

There are four basic measures for preventing COVID infection: vaccination, wearing a face mask, hand hygiene and physical distancing.

The vaccination program is shifting to a house-to-house search for the holdouts. Mask mandates remain in public places as Metro Manila and several other areas de-escalate to the most lenient Alert Level 1 from March 1 to 15.

Alcohol dispensers for customers' use will also likely remain in place in most commercial establishments; practicing hand hygiene will be every person's lookout.

What could disappear under Alert Level 1 is distancing. All mass transport facilities, including the light railway services, now allow 100 percent capacity. Health experts worry that this could be allowed to reach even 150 percent in vehicles such as buses where passengers can stand along the aisles.

With fuel prices soaring, transport operators will want to maximize each trip. Passengers packed like sardines can be a joyful sight for transport operators.

The government pandemic response team is hoping this will not happen, and that people will have enough sense to practice self-regulation. The coronavirus, after all, is still around, killing 56,451 people in the country so far and infecting 1,067 others as reported yesterday (with nine laboratories not submitting their weekend data).

Unfortunately, there are people who might find the government's messaging confusing. They think that if it's safe enough to de-escalate to Level 1, with all businesses allowed to reopen at full capacity, the pandemic must be over. Acrylic dividers are no longer needed in restaurants. More and more schools are resuming in-person classes.

Health officials are even saying the coronavirus has now become endemic. Doesn't that mean it has become just like the flu and dengue virus?

* * *

Endemic, however, doesn't mean the virus has disappeared. And if a considerable segment of the population remains unvaccinated, new COVID-causing SARS-CoV-2 variants may still emerge.

The highly infectious Omicron variant is also still here. Because of underreporting of cases due to people's preference for cheaper antigen testing, wherein positive results are not recorded by the government, the OCTA Research group believes the actual infection numbers could be up to 10 times greater than what is being officially reported.

Pulmonologist Maricar Limpin, president of the Philippine College of Physicians, points to the resurgent Omicron-driven spikes in COVID cases in Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand.

Hong Kong, which like the Chinese mainland has followed a zero-COVID policy, saw daily infections surge from just over 100 at the start of February to a dizzying 34,000 last Monday as Omicron penetrated the city's defenses. Panic buying was reported across Hong Kong yesterday amid reports of a looming total lockdown.

New Zealand, until a few weeks ago also with only a handful of COVID cases since the start of the pandemic, saw new daily infections rise with the arrival of Omicron, soaring to 19,588 as of Feb. 28. That's a lot of people in a country with a population of only 4.88 million.



The fully vaccinated and boosted are mostly asymptomatic or have mild symptoms when they suffer breakthrough infections. But the unvaccinated and even the vaccinated elderly and immune compromised who have not been boosted can still need critical care hospitalization. Death is still possible.

Doctor Limpin told us on One News' "The Chiefs" last Monday that people living with HIV now account for a large number of critical COVID cases. With Omicron, she has also noted a prevalence of people dying not directly of COVID, which usually causes lung collapse and a cytokine storm that leads to multiple organ failure, but of underlying illnesses, with the patient succumbing to a heart attack or a stroke, for example.

COVID can also cause long-term brain fog, and can aggravate Alzheimer's among the elderly.

So the jubilation over the de-escalation to Alert Level 1 must be tempered with great caution. Limpin told us that health professionals are bracing for a possible spike in COVID hospitalizations beginning later this month as they watch crowding particularly in mass transport.

* * *

The doctors do acknowledge the need for people to get their livelihoods back. Even medical practice has been disrupted by pandemic restrictions. Many people have put off non-essential visits to dermatologists, dentists and ophthalmologists, for example. And not all afflictions can be treated through telemedicine.

My mother's cardiologist caught COVID twice over the past two years and closeted herself at home. But doctors are beginning to live with the virus; the cardiologist returned to her clinic for the first time last week, with my mother as her second of only four patients accepted for the day.

Other countries are doing the same. New Zealand, despite the ongoing surge – its first since the pandemic – is easing its restrictions on travelers. Resident Kiwis returning from abroad no longer need quarantine in a hotel guarded by the military. But the country, which has one of the world's strictest border controls, is targeting a full reopening to foreigners only in October.

New Zealand neighbor "Fortress Australia" reopened its borders to vaccinated tourists beginning Feb. 21. Israel, with one of the highest vaccination rates in the world, also reopened to all tourists including the unvaxed beginning yesterday, but a negative RT-PCR test result is required prior to entry and another RT-PCR test is needed upon arrival.

* * *

It looks like microbiologist-theologian Nicanor Austriaco, the Dominican priest in OCTA, was right after all in saying Omicron heralded the shift for COVID from pandemic to endemic stage.

The operative phrase in reopening is to proceed with caution, and to continue observing basic health safety protocols.

Yesterday, the first day of Alert Level 1, traffic was bad along my long route to the office. Video footage showed worrisome crowding in mass transport. But at a mall supermarket where I made a brief stop, the guard still sprayed alcohol on the hands of all customers upon entry. Everyone still wore masks, and several still wore face shields.



Among those whose households have suffered illness and death from COVID, there is surely high awareness of the need to continue observing the minimum COVID safety protocols. They will be self-regulating long after the alert levels are gone, wearing masks in crowded public places and keeping alcohol sprays in their purses.

Endemic state doesn't mean COVID has disappeared for good. It will continue to lurk, like the flu, waiting to infect particularly the vulnerable. It can still kill.



EDITORIAL - Ingat pa rin kahit nasa Alert Level 1

(Pang-Masa) - March 2, 2022 - 12:00am



“NEW normal” na ang takbo ng buhay sa Metro Manila at 38 lugar dahil nasa ilalim na ng Alert Level 1. Maluwag na maluwag na ang galawan ng mga tao at maaari nang lumabas kahit sino. Sa ilalim ng Alert Level 1 papayagan na ang lahat ng aktibidad at 100 percent na ang capacity ng mga establisimento gaya ng mga restaurant, sinehan, gym, barber shop, spa, at maski mga simbahan. Ang pagsasailalim sa Alert Level 1 ay inaprubahan ng Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases sa rekomendasyon ng mga mayor ng Metro Manila at maging ng Department of Health (DOH).

Ang pagsasailalim sa maluwag na alert level ay ginawa dahil sa patuloy na pagbaba ng arawang kaso ng COVID-19. Ilang linggo nang mababa ang kaso ng COVID at sabi ng OCTA Research Group, posibleng maging 500 na lamang ang arawang kaso ngayong Marso. Sabi pa ng mga eksperto, posibleng mag-exit na ang COVID ngayong 2022. Magpapaalam na umano ang sakit na nagbigay nang mabigat na problema sa buong mundo.

Ganunman, nagpaalala ang IATF na kahit nasa maluwag na alert level ang Metro Manila at 38 lugar, kailangan pa ring sumunod sa minimum public health standards ang mga tao. Ipatutupad pa rin ang pagsusuot ng face masks at ang physical distancing. Ang Alert Level 1 ay tatagal hanggang Marso 15.

Mag-ingat pa rin kahit nasa maluwag nang alert level. Huwag magkampante at laging isaisip na narito pa ang virus. Mag-face mask sa mga matataong lugar at ugaliin ang paghuhugas ng kamay. Umiwas sa kumpunan ng mga tao. Ipagpatuloy naman ng pamahalaan ang pagbabakuna. Marami pa ang hindi nababakunahan. Unahin ang mga senior citizen lalo ang mga nasa liblib na lugar.

Posibleng kumalat muli ang virus kapag hindi nag-ingat. Hindi na dapat maulit ang masamang bangungot na hatid ng pandemya. Tama na ang mahigit dalawang taong pamamayagpag ng COVID-19.



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**Covid-19
Situation and Response**



DOH COVID-19 CASE BULLETIN # 717

MARSO 1, 2022

Para sa kumpletong detalye at impormasyon,
bisitahin lamang ang aming pampublikong site:
<https://ncovtracker.doh.gov.ph/>

PORSYENTO NG AKTIBONG KASO

1.4%

TOTAL NG AKTIBONG KASO
51,592

PORSYENTO NG GUMALING

97.1%

TOTAL NG GUMALING
3,555,016

PORSYENTO NG NAMATAY

1.54%

TOTAL NG NAMATAY
56,451

MGA BAGONG KASO **1,067**

MGA BAGONG GUMALING **1,652**

MGA BAGONG NAMATAY **0**

KABUANG BILANG NG KASO **3,663,059**

MGA NAGPOSITIBO HULING PEBRERO 27

DATOS NGAYONG MARSO 1
AYON SA REPORTS NOONG PEBRERO 27

4.3%

PORSYENTO NG MGA
NAGPOSITIBO

18,766

BILANG NG
TINIST

HALOS
91.3%
ANG MILD AT
ASYMPTOMATIC
NA KASO!

BAWAL
WALANG
FACE MASK

KABUANG PILIPINAS

PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

ICU BEDS (3.7K TOTAL BEDS)
26% Utilized

ISOLATION BEDS (20.5K TOTAL BEDS)
22% Utilized

WARD BEDS (14.3K TOTAL BEDS)
15% Utilized

VENTILATORS (3.2K TOTAL VENTILATORS)
13% Utilized

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

ICU BEDS (1.3K TOTAL BEDS)
26% Utilized

ISOLATION BEDS (4.5K TOTAL BEDS)
23% Utilized

WARD BEDS (4.0K TOTAL BEDS)
24% Utilized

VENTILATORS (1.0K TOTAL VENTILATORS)
16% Utilized

KALAGAYAN NG MGA AKTIBONG KASO

489 Asymptomatic

46,609 Mild

2,779 Moderate

1,417 Severe

298 Critical

DOH HOSPITAL HOTLINES

For health concerns and emergencies, you may access
here the DOH hospital hotlines across the country:

bit.ly/DOHHospitalHotlines

DOH ONE HOSPITAL COMMAND CENTER (OHCC) HOTLINES

• 1555 • 0915-777-7777
• 02-886-505-00 • 0919-977-3333

bit.ly/OHCCHotline

DOH TELEMEDICINE CONTACT DETAILS

bit.ly/DOHTelemedicine

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at pumunta sa Staysafe.ph



Walang internet or load?
Report via SMS

2158-5779 (for Globe users)
225-655-779 (for other users)



May tanong ukol sa COVID-19?
I-chat na si KIRA!

VIBER: Kira Kontra COVID by DOH
MESSENGER: Department of Health PH
KONTRACOVDPH: kontracovid.ph

MAYROON PANG KATANUNGAN? SUMANGGUNI LAMANG SA SUMUSUNOD:

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[\(02\) 894-COVID / 1555](tel:(02)894-COVID)

02 MARCH 2022, WEDNESDAY



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


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