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Marikina River dredging enters second phase

He noted the target is to have Phase 2 completed within the term of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte.

Published 4 hours ago on August 4, 2021 02:30 AM

By [TDI](#) [@tribunephil](#)



With the completion of the first phase of dredging operations in Marikina City, Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said Task Force Build Back Better (TF BBB) is now ready to commence the second phase of the project in Pasig City.

Cimatu, who is TF BBB chairperson, said, “The challenge is to double the effort in Phase 2 of the project, involving the downstream portion of Marikina River in Pasig City, given the bigger area that needs to be cleared of debris and other obstruction.”

“It’s wider here in Marikina, but when it comes down there, it gets narrower up to 45 meters, which is why the challenge is to continue dredging downstream,” he explained.

He noted the target is to have Phase 2 completed within the term of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte.

Phase 2 of the project covers the clearing of untitled and reclaimed areas in Barangay Santolan in Pasig City covering 12,830 square meters.

The TF BBB is also studying the inclusion of another 34,560 square meters covering the stretch from Ortigas Avenue to Bridgetowne in Barangay Rosario (26,417 square meters) and Barangay Ugong (8,143 square meters).

The first phase of the Marikina River restoration and dredging project in Marikina City included the removal of chokepoints at the Olandes Sewage Treatment Plant, BF City, Riverbanks and SM Marikina.

The Department of Public Works and Highways reported that a total of 67,425 cubic meters — equivalent to 27 Olympic-size swimming pools — have been dredged from three sites, covering a total of 6,936 square meters.

It also recovered some 20 to 30 meters of the river’s width, resulting in its widening from 70 meters up to 90 to 100 meters and an additional depth of two meters.

Meanwhile, Marikina City Mayor Marcelino Teodoro vowed to preserve the gains from the project through the maintenance of the river’s width and the establishment of a bamboo tree nursery for the propagation and planting of different species of bamboo along the river as part of the city government’s river restoration program.

Source: https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2021/08/04/marikina-river-dredging-enters-second-phase/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=marikina-river-dredging-enters-second-phase



More challenging: Phase 2 of Marikina River dredging starts soon

AUG 3, 2021, 5:24 PM

Santiago Celario
Writer

The agencies responsible for the dredging of the Marikina River basin are now ready to move downstream for the "more challenging" phase 2 of the Marikina River project, aimed at solving the problem of flooding at the river.

ENVIRONMENT Secretary and Task Force Build Back Better (TF BBB) Chairperson Roy Cimatu said that with the completion of the first phase of dredging operations in Marikina City, the TF BBB is now ready to commence the second phase of the project in Pasig City.

"The challenge is to double the effort in Phase 2 of the project, involving the downstream portion of Marikina River in Pasig City, given the bigger area that needs to be cleared of debris and other obstruction," the DENR chief pointed out.

"Maluwag na nga dito sa Marikina, pero pagdating sa baba, kumikipot ito up to 45 meters which is why the challenge is to continue dredging downstream," Cimatu said, noting the target is to have Phase 2 completed within the term of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte.

The phase 2 of the project covers the clearing of untitled and reclaimed areas in Barangay Santolan in Pasig City, covering 12,830 square meters.

The TF BBB is also studying the inclusion of another 34,560 square meters covering the stretch from Ortigas Avenue to Bridgetowne in Barangay Rosario (26,417 square meters) and Barangay Ugong (8,143 square meters).

Meanwhile, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Undersecretary for Regional Operations in Visayas, NCR and Region IV-B Roberto Bernardo said all its fleet of equipment and human power deployed for Phase 1 will also be deployed for Phase 2 including an additional brand-new amphibious excavator, which is due for procurement and delivery in August and deployment for Phase 2 either in September or October.

For Phase 1, the DPWH deployed 17 pieces of equipment consisting of one amphibious excavator, one loader, two backhoes, one boom truck, and 12 dump trucks.

Bernardo added that the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has deployed a backhoe and loader, including five dump trucks, and seven operator-drivers to help in the dredging efforts.



The first phase of the Marikina River restoration and dredging project in Marikina City included the removal of chokepoints at the Olandes Sewage Treatment Plant, BF City, Riverbanks, and SM Marikina.

The DPWH reported that a total of 67,425 cubic meters, or equivalent to 27 Olympic-size swimming pools, have been dredged from three sites covering a total of 6,936 square meters. It also recovered some 20 to 30 meters of the river's width, resulting in its widening from 70 meters up to 90-100 meters and an additional depth of two meters.

Cimatu also noted that through the DENR's riverbank stabilization and watershed restoration efforts within the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape (UMRBPL), at least 16,728 bamboo trees have been raised, planted, and maintained in river easements covering 82 hectares.

This was accomplished with 11 peoples' organizations composed of cultural communities located inside UMRBPL.



DENR drives out illegal occupants from Marikina watershed

By: [Ihesset O. Enano](#), [Meg Adonis](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#) Philippine Daily Inquirer / 04:58 AM August 03, 2021



HIGH WATER ON CLEAR DAY Vehicles parked along Marikina City's Riverbanks are submerged as Marikina River overflows despite clear skies on Monday. Local officials say water from upstream areas, particularly Antipolo City and its nearby towns, raised the river's water level to 15.8 meters. —NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has issued stoppage orders against 123 illegal structures within the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape in its campaign to keep encroachers out of the area.

As of July, the DENR regional office in Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) said it had issued 80 show-cause orders and 43 cease-and-desist orders against those illegally occupying parts of the watershed, including operators of piggeries, resorts, camps and retreat centers.

Owners of private houses, including those constructed along river easements, were also served with cease-and-desist orders.

DENR Calabarzon Executive Director Nilo Tamera warned against the construction and establishment of structures that were not covered by the necessary permits under the National Integrated Protected Areas System and the amending law that expanded its coverage.

Violators may face fines of up to P5 million on top of jail time of up to 12 years.

With a total land area of over 26,000 hectares, the Upper Marikina watershed was declared a protected landscape in November 2011 under Presidential Proclamation No. 296.

But by then, there were already illegal structures within the area. Quarrying and logging companies were also reported to be operating inside the watershed, leading to massive deforestation and environmental destruction.

On July 24, two forest rangers working in a reforestation site of the Masungi Georeserve Foundation were shot by still unidentified assailants. Although both survived, the incident prompted environmentalists to clamor for more security for forest workers within the Upper Marikina watershed.

The DENR Calabarzon said it was already working with the Philippine National Police and Philippine Army to identify the suspects and strengthen monitoring and patrolling activities in the area.

Flooded streets, clear skies

Near the Marikina River, residents woke up to a startling sight on Monday morning: knee-deep flood in the streets, leaving their vehicles submerged in water despite clear skies.

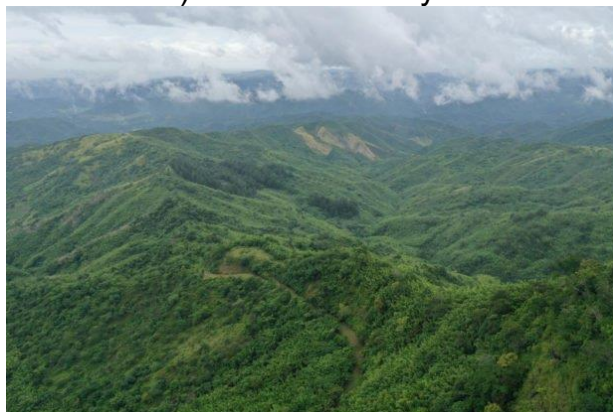


The city government earlier raised the first alarm as the river's water level went up to as high as 15.8 meters despite the good weather.

Marikina Mayor Marcelino Teodoro said the river's swelling was not caused by the nonstop rains experienced by Metro Manila in the past two weeks but the rainwater coming from upstream areas, particularly in Upper Antipolo and other nearby towns.

"Marikina River is a downstream river ... There was no weather disturbance but water from the upstream areas flowed to Marikina River. That was the cause of the sudden rise in the water level," Teodoro told the Inquirer.

"This very seldom happens to us," he said, noting that the last time residents experienced sudden flooding due to water coming from upstream areas was in 2020, or before Typhoon "Ulysses" (international name: Vamco) battered the city.



FRAGILE ENVIRONMENT Conservationists have been raising the alarm over the continuous illegal encroachment in huge portions of the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape in Rizal province.

—PHOTO COURTESY OF MASUNGI GEORESERVE FOUNDATION

The flood subsided after two to three hours, but the water may have been blocked by silt in the Laguna de Bay, which catches water coming from the Marikina River, Teodoro said.

He also cited the denuded forests in the upstream areas as the main cause of the flood, as well as "unabated quarrying activities," climate change and erratic rainfall.

Sandwiched between "problems in the north and problems in the south," Marikina River became swollen, causing minor flooding, he said.

Although nonstop rains triggered floods in the city last week, Teodoro explained that no severe flooding was recorded due to continuous dredging activities and improvements in drainage systems.

Heavy rainfall caused by the southwest monsoon, locally called "habagat," forced at least 3,000 families to evacuate from their houses to avoid casualties.

But after a few days, around 1,000 of them returned home after observing that there was no heavy flooding in their areas.

The dredging of silt in Marikina began as early as late 2020 after the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses, which residents said had reminded them of their ordeal under Tropical Storm "Ondoy" (Ketsana) in 2009. Ondoy brought heavy rains to many parts of Metro Manila and caused massive flooding in the city, leaving scores dead. INQ

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1468057/denr-drives-out-illegal-occupants-from-marikina-watershed>



Illegal occupants sa Marikina watershed pinaalis ng DENR



August 3, 2021 @ 1:04 PM 17 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines — Nag-isyu na ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ng stoppage orders laban sa 123 illegal structures sa Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape.

Nitong Hulyo, sinabi ng DENR regional office in Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) na naglabas na sila ng 80 show-cause orders at 43 cease-and-desist laban sa mga umookupa sa watershed, partikular na ang operator ng piggeries, resorts, camps, at retreat centers.

Kasama na rito ang mga nagmamay-ari ng private houses at iba pa.

Nagbabala naman si DENR Calabarzon Executive Director Nilo Tamoria sa mga konstruksyon na hindi sakop ng kaukulang permit sa ilalim ng National Integrated Protected Areas System. **RNT/FGDC**



Editorial Cartoon August 04, 2021



BY BUSINESSMIRROR EDITORIAL

AUGUST 4, 2021



Image courtesy of Jimbo Albano



DENR conducts environmental education for community leaders



DECLOGGING EFFORT. Workers of a steel firm in san Simon town remove weeds and trash to preserve the free flow of floodwaters along drainage systems in Quezon Road. (Chris Navarro)

[IAN OCAMPO FLORA](#)

August 02, 2021

LOCAL government leaders from 89 villages in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija actively participated in a series of environmental education lectures conducted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in partnership with the Liga ng mga Barangay to engage local communities in solid waste management and river protection.

Donaver Guevarra, regional information officer of the DENR, said the massive information campaign was critical in the ongoing cleanup and rehabilitation of Manila Bay, since Nueva Ecija is the upstream portion of the 260-kilometer Pampanga River that drains into the bay.

"Waste disposal, especially single-use plastic management, remains to be a challenging part on the cleanup of Manila Bay areas in the region. Educating people on proper waste segregation, importance of our river system and its connectivity to Manila Bay are important, so that household wastes may be prevented from reaching waterways and river systems," Guevarra said.

For his part, Christopher Lee, president of the Association of Barangay Chairman in Cabanatuan City, vowed to support the program of the DENR and will intensify their solid waste management efforts, including river cleanup.

Amid the pandemic and strict quarantine measures, Guevarra said the DENR will continue to conduct information, education and communication (IEC) activities among local leaders about their roles on promoting and implementing ecological solid waste management and river protection, especially during this Habagat season where garbage are often washed away in river system and other waterways.

This year, the DENR-Central Luzon has already conducted 37 environmental education lectures using a blended approach of online platforms and face-to-face interaction participated in by more than 1,200 local government leaders and members of peoples' organizations in Central Luzon.

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1902773/Pampanga/Local-News/DENR-conducts-environmental-education-for-community-leaders>



Phase out of single-use plastic nationwide soon to become a law

AUG 3, 2021, 12:54 PM

Rose De La Cruz
Columnist

House Bill No. 9147 authorizes commercial establishments to charge P5 for every single-use plastic bag, up from the current P2 charge.

IN every natural calamity like floods and storms, the phenomenon of plastic pandemic becomes a national concern—until it is completely forgotten after things subside.

But with House Bill 9147—a measure seeking to phase out single use plastics in 2 to 4 years—nearing passage, the superficial concern for the destructiveness of plastics to the ecosystem will soon be given permanent focus.

Rep. Lawrence Fortun, 1st District Agusan, said the House of Representatives has approved the bill on 3rd and final reading which hopefully will result in “producer responsibility schemes” and mandate reusable, compostable alternatives to single-use plastics.

HB 9147 also authorizes commercial establishments to charge P5 for every single-use plastic bag as per customer’s request.

Currently, groceries charge P2 per plastic used in packing groceries of customers and the collection goes to the environment fund of the local government.

This new fee would be aside from other fees local government units may impose.

“There are two Senate bills, SBN 40 and SBN 557, on single-use plastics. It is our hope that the Senate will consider these and HB 9147 as urgent because of the severe impact of plastics on flooding, public health, and the environment,” said Fortun, its principal author.

“We strive to be comprehensive and pragmatic on how to deal with the ‘plastics pandemic’ and we always had in mind how plastics kill wildlife, worsen floods, and heighten health risks. The phaseout in 2 to 4 years is doable. This is not some unrealistic wishful thinking. It can be done,” he added.

Fortun also said, it is now up to the implementing agencies and watchdog groups to make sure the implementing rules and actual execution are *consistent with the provisions of the law Congress will approve.*

“We must protect the bill as it goes through the Senate and when same gets sent to President Duterte. Plastics is a billion-dollar industry and there may still be people, businesses, and powerful interests who can stand in the way of the phaseout of single-use plastics,” Fortun said.

“We call for vigilance against those opposed to this bill,” Fortun concluded.

Source: <https://opinyon.net/national/phase-out-of-single-use-plastic-nationwide-soon-to-become-a-law#title>



IPM-CDC to impose garbage collection at night in main, secondary roads



BACOLOD. IPM-CDC is now conducting a one week dry-run for the one-time garbage collection at night in the main and secondary roads in Bacolod City, which will be fully implemented next week. (File photo)

[MERLINDA A. PEDROSA](#)

August 03, 2021

THE IPM-Construction and Development Corp. (IPM-CDC) will implement the one-time garbage collection at night in the main and secondary roads in Bacolod City starting next week.

Horace Yap, consultant of IPM-CDC, said Tuesday, August 3, that they are now conducting a one week dry-run for the one-time garbage collection at night in the main and secondary roads in the city, and they will implement it starting next week.

He said there will be no collection of garbage along the main and second roads in daytime from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"The garbage should be disposed in the designated areas only from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., the garbage disposal time," he added.

Yap said the IPM-CDC trucks will pick up the garbage only from 9:30 p.m. onwards for the main and secondary roads.

Yap noted that the schedule for subdivisions, markets and interior barangays will remain the same.

Yap said they provided additional trips for the collection of garbage during nighttime in the main and secondary roads.

"We already sent flyers to the affected barangays so they can also inform their constituents of the new schedule of garbage collection in the main and secondary roads," he said.

He added this will be advantageous to the city to reduce traffic congestion and eyesores on streets.

Neil Marcelino, project supervisor of IPM-CDC, earlier said they acquired additional dump trucks and other equipment from Manila and has a total of 220 garbage collectors to improve their services in the city.



He said they now have a total of 71 units of dump trucks and compactors to collect all the garbage in the 61 barangays.

He added that in previous years, they encountered some problems in their operations that affected the garbage collection in some areas in Bacolod.



Pandemic showed gaps in food waste handling, supply chain—UN report

 BYCAI ORDINARIO

AUGUST 3, 2021



In file photo: Ana Patricia Non, second from right, arranges donated food with village workers before they distribute it at a makeshift stall called “Community Pantry” beside a road in Quezon City, Philippines, on Monday, April 19, 2021. Non started the Community Pantry in Maginhawa Street by placing food on a makeshift stall for people who need it as many have lost jobs due to quarantine measures set by the government to curb the surge in Covid-19 cases in the country. The theme “Give what you can, take what you need” has spread to several communities which have placed their own makeshift stalls to support people struggling to make ends meet.

THE pandemic exposed gaps in handling food waste and other long-standing institutional gaps in the food supply chain in Metro Manila, according to the United Nations (UN).

In a Policy Brief titled Urban Food Systems and the Pandemic, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Food Programme, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (Ifad) found issues and gaps in food systems in Metro Manila, especially at the height of the lockdowns.

These issues also included food supply bottlenecks especially at the start of the lockdown last year; information gaps within the food system which bared ineffective ICT systems; and capacity gaps in food provisioning.

“The Covid-19 crisis has shown how the transport and logistical disruptions and the lack of information in the shifting market dynamics contributed to massive food losses from the oversupply of highly perishable agricultural commodities, especially high-value vegetables and fishery products,” the policy brief stated. “This meant income loss for farmers and fisherfolk and reduced availability of produce for consumers.”

The report said efforts to address these losses also means avoiding food waste in households and adopting measures to mitigate food losses in the country’s food supply chain.

However, as to the magnitude of the losses, FAO Representative Kati Tanninen said in a briefing on Thursday no baseline was created to measure food loss in the country.

The report said in Metro Manila, Food Loss and Waste (FLW) is a “blind spot in finding solutions to hunger.” The UN said even before the pandemic, poor Filipinos who have no money to buy would scavenge food from garbage cans.

This was happening, the UN said, while restaurants dumped their unsold produce in garbage cans and consumers stockpiled food without a consumption or meal plan.



“I think there should be a baseline assessment to really get the understanding of what (are) the amounts we are talking about and that would be very helpful for the planning purposes and for the development of any programs in this area,” Tanninen said when asked how much food waste there is in Metro Manila.

Rise Against Hunger Philippines Chairperson Paulyn Ubial said this is why “food rescue” or “food banking” is important. Even before the lockdown, she said their nongovernment organization (NGO) rescued food through partnerships.

Ubial said under their partnerships with hotels and manufacturers, they retrieve excess food supplies then use these in the soup kitchens in Tondo and Taguig that they support.

Ubial said through these facilities, local communities can get clean and nutritious meals.

“[We] just bring in the excess food of our partners to these areas so that the local communities can actually benefit from what would have been waste for these companies and these establishments. I think that is really the concept that we would like to introduce in the Philippines, it’s the concept of food rescue,” Ubial said at the briefing.

Ubial cited as an example of a food rescue the community pantry effort created this year to help poor Filipinos get access to nutritious food during the lockdown.

The UN report said the emergence of community pantries highlighted the “inability of government support to keep pace with the growing needs in Metro Manila.”

A community-based program such as community pantries which started in Maginhawa Street in Quezon City and replicated nationwide, was self-regulating. This means those who are in need can just get food while those who can spare food can donate.

“Food as the main component of relief operations happens all the time especially during disasters but responding to the need for food has required a stronger cooperation among locals,” the report stated.

Institutional standpoint

However, experts believe food security should be addressed from an institutional standpoint. It should be part of the Disaster Risk Reduction Measures (DRRM) of countries, especially in urban areas.

ADB Philippines Country Director Kelly Bird said a food security plan should be part of the DRRM efforts of local governments. This means including efforts to ensure that food distribution lines are accessible for families and that financing is available to rehabilitate critical public utilities that support food security.

Bird noted that not all people can become farmers and be self-sufficient by planting their own food. This means countries like the Philippines will need an efficient, adaptable, and resilient agricultural sector.

In order for this to happen, the agriculture sector should strengthen extension services. These must be delivered to farmers with the help of the private sector.

The country, Bird said, should also invest in skills development of farmers not only through schools or technical vocation facilities but at the workplace and farms.



“There should be continuous skills training throughout the life of workers in agriculture. We are now working with DTI, DOLE, and the Department of Tourism and we are now preparing a pilot project which we hope to launch this year and its going to be designed to train workers, continuously reskill them,” Bird said.

Image courtesy of AP/Aaron Favila



Groups urge gov't to stop 'dump-and-fill' reclamation projects

By: [Zacarian Sarao](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 01:20 AM August 04, 2021



Students and residents protest against a proposed reclamation project that will affect 174 hectares along the coastline of Dumaguete City. (Photo courtesy of MATTHEW VINCENT TABILOG)

MANILA, Philippines — The government should stop “dump-and-fill” reclamation projects that had “disregarded environmental safeguards” prescribed by the Constitution and various laws and regulations, at least 80 civil society organizations said in a collective statement issued on Tuesday.

“We call on the Philippine government to immediately halt the irregular approval of these projects that will destroy the rich biodiversity in coastal and marine ecosystems of the country, our source of life and livelihood, particularly for the undernourished and impoverished coastal communities among our people,” the statement said.

The groups called out all local government units that “hastily” approved “without adherence to the requirements of regularity, transparency, accountability, and participation by public and private proponents” the following large-scale reclamation projects:

- 174-hectare reclamation along the coastline of Dumaguete City
- 230-hectare reclamation in Consolacion, Cebu
- 100-hectare reclamation in Minglanilla, Cebu
- 23 reclamation projects at Manila Bay that are in various stages of development

According to the groups, the social justice provision in the Constitution gives small-scale fisherfolk preferential access to marine resources. And yet, similar projects in the past were still able to push through and these destroyed fishing grounds and displaced fisherfolk and their families.

The groups said these projects had already devastated thousands of hectares of mangroves, seagrasses, and coral reefs.

The Philippines is known as the center of marine biodiversity as it lies at the apex of the Coral Triangle.

However, this reputation may soon be lost with the wholesale approval of large-scale reclamation, aptly described as dump-and-fill projects all over the country,” said the groups said.



“At direct risk in all these dump-and-fill projects are the food security and self-sufficiency of coastal residents, especially the municipal fisherfolk and other sectors whose livelihood are directly dependent on the fisheries and aquatic resources of their prime fishing grounds,” they said.

“These projects will literally decimate their means of survival and adds to their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, which have to be factored in this time of the covid-19 pandemic and the climate crisis,” they added.

The statement was also sent to the following government agencies:

- Philippine Reclamation Authority
- Department of Agriculture
- Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
- Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- Biodiversity Management Bureau
- Department of the Interior and Local Government
- members of the House of Representatives and the Senate
- League of Cities of the Philippines,
- League of Municipalities of the Philippines



This 2019 file photo shows mangroves that had been cut down in Barangay Taliptip in Bulacan, Bulacan.

Philstar.com/EC Toledo IV

Groups call for halt to 'hasty, irregularly approved' reclamation projects

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - August 3, 2021 - 5:36pm

MANILA, Philippines — Environmentalists, fishers and scientists have called on the government to stop the “hasty and irregularly approved” reclamation projects in different parts of the country, which are seen to devastate coastal communities and ecosystems.

In a statement sent to government agencies, over 80 organizations urged authorities to impose a moratorium on the approval of large and small dump-and-fill projects.

They cited the large-scale reclamation projects in Manila Bay, Dumaguete City, and Consolacion and Minglanilla in Cebu province.

“These projects lead to dumping and filling of materials that devastate further and kill our once-rich coastal and marine ecosystems. These not only have negative and irreversible impacts on our coasts, but also to the areas, where the filling materials are sourced,” the groups said.

The organizations also called for an investigation into the “highly irregular and questionable processes” undertaken by government agencies in approving massive dump-and-fill projects. They also urged local officials to strictly follow environmental safeguards in approving coastal land reclamation projects.

They stressed the “willful destruction of biodiversity” violates the Constitutional right to a balanced and healthful ecology and the following environmental laws:

- Amended Fisheries Code
- Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System
- Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act
- Clean Water Act
- Environmental Impact System Act
- National Cultural Heritage Act
- Local Government Code
- Climate Change Act



Impacts on fishers

Similar reclamation projects in the past have already destroyed thousands of hectares of mangrove forests, seagrass meadows and coral reefs, and displaced fisherfolk and their families, the organizations stressed.

“What are at direct risk in all these dump-and-fill projects are the food security and self-sufficiency of coastal residents, especially the municipal fisherfolk and other sectors whose livelihood are directly dependent on the fisheries and aquatic resources of their prime fishing ground,” they said.

“These projects will literally decimate their means of survival and adds to their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, which have to be factored in this time of the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate crisis.”

The groups also criticized the lack of public consultation, calling it an “alarming indication” of the local officials’ propensity for railroaded approval process.

“The road to recovery from this pandemic must not be paved by ill-through of intentions by a few. Rather the path chosen must be those agreed by and for the benefit of the majority of the people. We should also veer away from false, short term benefits but look into nature-based, sustainable solutions,” they said.

The statement was sent to the Philippine Reclamation Authority, Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Biodiversity Management Bureau, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate, League of Cities of the Philippines, and League of Municipalities of the Philippines.



In plenary session, an overwhelming majority of congressmen voted to pass on third and final reading the bills granting another 25-year franchise to both firms.

STAR/Michael Varcas, file

House OKs Maynilad, Manila Water franchises

[Edu Punay](#) (The Philippine Star) - August 4, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives yesterday approved the renewal of the legislative franchises of water concessionaires Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Co. Inc.

In plenary session, an overwhelming majority of congressmen voted to pass on third and final reading the bills granting another 25-year franchise to both firms.

Voting 206-7 with no abstention, the Lower House approved House Bill 9423, or “An Act Granting Manila Water Co., Inc. A Franchise To Establish, Operate and Maintain The Waterworks and Sewerage System In The East Zone Service Area of Metro Manila And Province of Rizal.”

With the same vote, the chamber also approved House Bill 9422 or “An Act Granting Maynilad Water Services, Inc. a Franchise To Establish, Operate, And Maintain A Water Supply And Distribution System And Sewerage and Sanitation Services In The West Zone Service Area of Metro Manila and Province of Cavite.”

The six members of the Makabayan bloc, along with Deputy Speaker and Buhay party-list Rep. Lito Atienza, voted against both measures.

Under the approved bills, Maynilad and Manila Water will be allowed to develop, finance, construct, install, maintain and operate, as their operations may require, water sources, including new raw water sources, including deep wells, dams, aqueducts, tunnels, treatment plants, reservoirs, pump stations and facilities for transmission, conveyance and distribution of water including pipelines, machineries and other waterworks for the purpose of supplying water in their franchise areas, for domestic, commercial, industrial and other purposes.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/08/04/2117418/house-oks-maynilad-manila-water-franchises>

Climate change threatens food security of 65 nations

Scientists estimate that millions of people in 65 nations could face increased malnutrition as climate change and overfishing take their toll on fisheries.



Communities work together to bring in catch in Gentuma Raya, Gorontalo, Indonesia. A new study reports that climate change threatens fisheries. Image: Asian Development Bank via [Flickr](#). [CC BY NC-ND 2.0](#)

[SciDev Net](#)

Aug. 3, 2021

Scientists have projected that millions of people in 65 nations globally, particularly those in Africa and South-East Asia and the Pacific, could face increased malnutrition as [climate change](#) and overfishing take their toll on [fisheries](#).

According to a [study](#) that analysed over 800 fish species from more than 157 countries, climate change and overfishing could lead to acute shortages of vital micronutrients from the oceans.

Countries whose fisheries are at increased risk include those in Sub-Saharan Africa such as Mozambique and Sierra Leone, and East Asian and Pacific countries including Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Timor-Leste, according to the study published this month (20 July) in *Current Biology*.

“Countries with nutrient-dense catches are more vulnerable to climate change, mostly tropical nations from East Asia, Pacific, and Sub-Saharan Africa where micronutrient deficiencies are particularly prevalent,” says Eva Maire, the study’s lead author and a senior research associate at the Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, England. “This suggests unmet potential for fisheries to help close [nutrition](#) gaps, especially amongst coastal communities.”

Maire says that the study found a clear impact from climate change on the overall availability of micronutrients for 65 nations, and consequently threatening the [food security](#) of millions of people living in these countries could be threatened.

She explains that fish is a good source of protein and many vitamins, minerals, and fatty acids that are often missing in the diets of coastal populations throughout the world.

“Making fish more accessible locally could have a huge impact on global food security and combat malnutrition-related diseases in millions of people globally,” she adds.

Researchers analysed the combined influence of climate change and overfishing on micronutrient availability using fish catch [data](#) from 157 countries for the years 2010 to 2014.

“Our analysis highlights the need to consolidate fisheries, climate, and food policies to secure the sustainable contribution of fish-derived micronutrients to food and nutrition security,” the study says.



Maire tells *SciDev.Net* that an earlier [study](#) found that climate change could lead to large-scale redistribution of global fish catches with a drop of up to 40 per cent.

“We need to find a way to put human nutrition at the core of fisheries policies. Food security policymakers should acknowledge that fish is nutrient-rich food and work on what can be done to increase access to fish by malnourished people. Effective climate [change] mitigation is a high priority,” she says.

Edward Kimani, chief research scientist, fisheries and aquatic ecology at the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute, says that economic impacts of reduced fishery production include reduced employment and household incomes as well as other fisheries support activities, and reduced trade and exports.

“Fish production is dependent on the aquatic environment and climate change directly impairs productivity,” he explains, adding that the study’s findings could inform policymakers of the impacts of overfishing and climate change on one key source of food and nutrition in Africa.

“It is an early warning towards preparing mitigation by reducing the impacts as well as developing alternative sources of food and economic activities to cover the loss due to overfishing and climate change,” he says.

Strategies for mitigating overfishing, according to Kimani, include the development of other economic activities such as coastal and marine tourism to reduce the number of people who directly depend on fishing, and the development of fish [farming](#) to reduce dependence on harvesting of fish in their natural habitat.

This article was originally published on [SciDev.Net](#). Read the [original article](#).



Explainer: What is deep-sea mining?

Prized rare metals sitting at the bottom of the sea could play a key role in creating an environmentally sustainable future on land, but scientists worry that deep-sea mining could irreversibly damage a vast and largely pristine ecosystem.



Relicanthus sp.—a new species from a new order of Cnidaria collected at 4,100 meters in the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone (CCZ) that lives on sponge stalks attached to nodules. Image courtesy of Craig Smith and Diva Amon, [ABYSSLINE Project/NOAA](#).

By [Gillian Parker](#)

Aug. 3, 2021

What is deep-sea mining?

Deep-sea mining technology is still in development, but the general idea is that a submersible craft, about the size of a tractor, equipped with giant vacuum cleaners will draw sediment laced with precious metals from the seafloor, below 200 metres beneath the surface.

Collection vehicles creep across the bottom of the ocean in systematic rows, scraping through the top five inches of the ocean floor. The sediment is carried up several kilometres of pipes back to the operations' mother ships, where metallic objects the size of potatoes, known as polymetallic nodules, will be extracted. Unwanted sediment is flushed back into the sea.



Deep-sea mining machines manufactured by Nautilus. Image: Nautilus Minerals

How did it all start?

The first discovery of polymetallic nodules took place during the voyage of the Challenger warship tasked with exploring the world's ocean and seafloor from 1872-1876. On 7th March 1873, a dredge hauled up on its deck "several peculiar black oval bodies which were composed of almost pure manganese oxide".

In the century that followed, oceanographers continued to identify new minerals on the seafloor – copper, gold, silver, platinum, nickel and gemstones – with an economic interest in the deep-ocean polymetallic nodules developing as a result.

How is it regulated?

The International Seabed Authority (ISA), established under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, is an independent organisation based in Kingston, Jamaica. Unlike the majority of UN bodies, it is classified as "autonomous" and falls under the direction of its own secretary general which convenes delegates from the 168 member states annually.

It is tasked with drafting technical and environmental standards that sit under the [Mining Code](#). The Mining Code is the set of rules, regulations and procedures that will regulate all aspects of deep-sea mining – prospecting, exploration and exploitation – on the international seabed.

The exploitation regulations, including environmental issues, are not the only part of the framework that still needs to be developed: the ISA also needs to further develop proposals on the level of fees and royalties that contractors will have to pay, according to Aline Jaeckel, lecturer at the school of Global and Public Law, University New South Wales, Australia.

Members have struggled to agree on the regulatory framework that will govern this nascent industry and legal experts say that there is a lot of work to be done before the standards are adoptable.

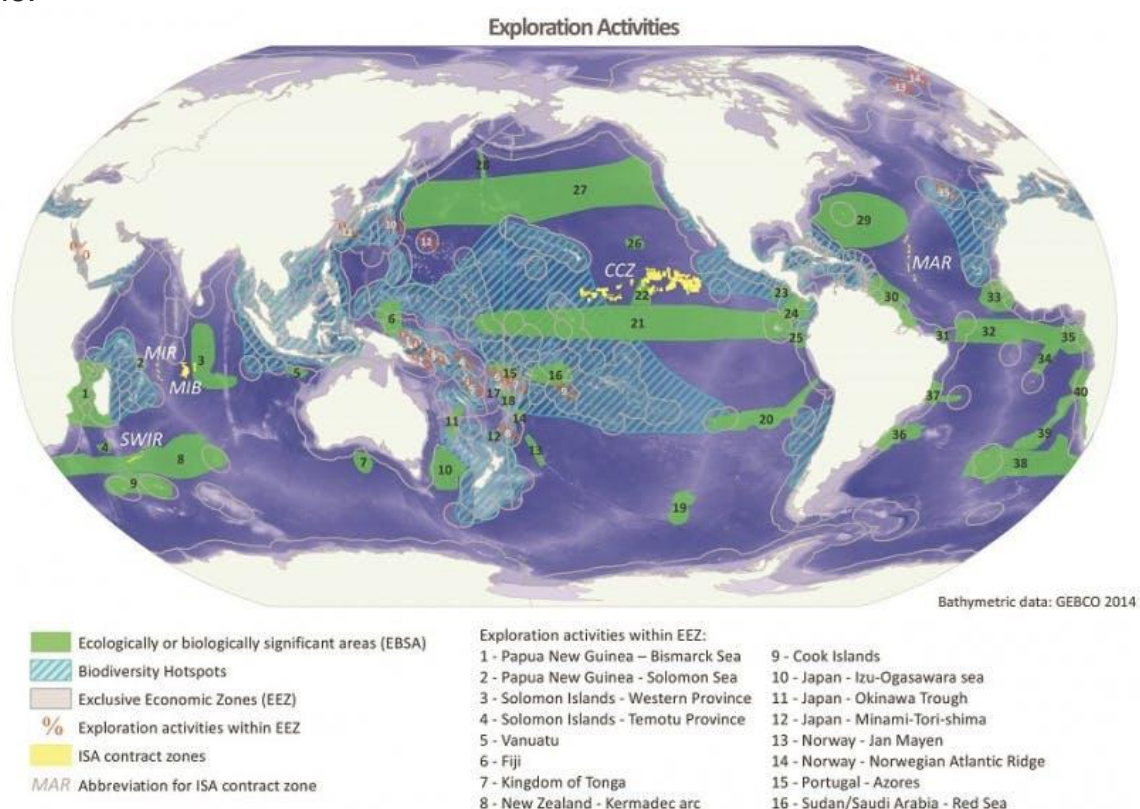
What is the current state of play?

Deep-sea mining in international waters that do not belong to one nation, known as the Area Beyond Natural Jurisdiction (or The Area) – is currently at exploration stage until the exploitation regulations are established by the ISA.

The ISA has granted about [30 exploratory permits](#) around the world with the majority issued for the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone (CCZ), a six million square kilometre region of the Pacific Ocean between Mexico and Hawaii that is thought to host trillions of metal nodules containing manganese, iron, cobalt, nickel, copper and traces of rare earth elements.

Once the Mining Code has been approved, more than a dozen companies that have raised vast sums of venture capital, will accelerate their explorations in the CCZ to industrial-scale extraction.

In June, the small Pacific island nation of Nauru, roughly 4,506 km northeast of Australia, notified the ISA of its intention to start deep-sea mining. Nauru's President Lionel Aingimea [asked the ISA to approve its plan within two years](#) meaning that the agency will have to consider any application for a deep-sea mining license under the regulations that are in play at the time.



Some of the largest mineral corporations in the world have underwater mining programmes in territorial waters of certain countries.

De Beers, a diamond company, searches for the jewels around 120-140m below sea-level in the Atlantic ocean off the Namibian coast in Africa. Marine diamond recovery now produces more in annual volumes than the country's land-based diamond mining operations, according to the company's site.

Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corp (JOGMEC) has successfully deployed excavators to extract ore rich in zinc, gold, copper and lead from depths of 1,600 metres in waters close to Okinawa within the Exclusive Economic Zone of Japan.

But this frontier in ocean industrialisation is fraught with technical, environmental and financial issues.

A project to mine sulphides from hydrothermal vents in Papua New Guinea's waters by Canadian company Nautilus Minerals Inc, was beset with repeated setbacks and spiralling costs that halted progress and led the company to file for insolvency months before operations were supposed to begin. The subsequent Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea described the arrangement as "a deal that should not have happened."

What is driving demand for these metals?

In a [report](#) published earlier this year, the International Energy Agency found that achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 would require six times more of certain minerals by 2040 than are being mined today.

The metals found in polymetallic nodules are critical for clean energy technologies such as wind turbines, solar panels, electric vehicle batteries and other energy storage devices.

The [World Bank](#) estimates that more than three billion tons of these metals will be needed to deploy the wind, solar and energy storage technologies required to keep global warming below 2°C.

Electric vehicles use at least four times the amount of metals found in petrol and diesel cars. A single electric vehicle with a 75 KWh battery needs 56 kg of nickel, 12 kg of manganese, 7 kg of cobalt, and 85 kg of copper for electric wiring.

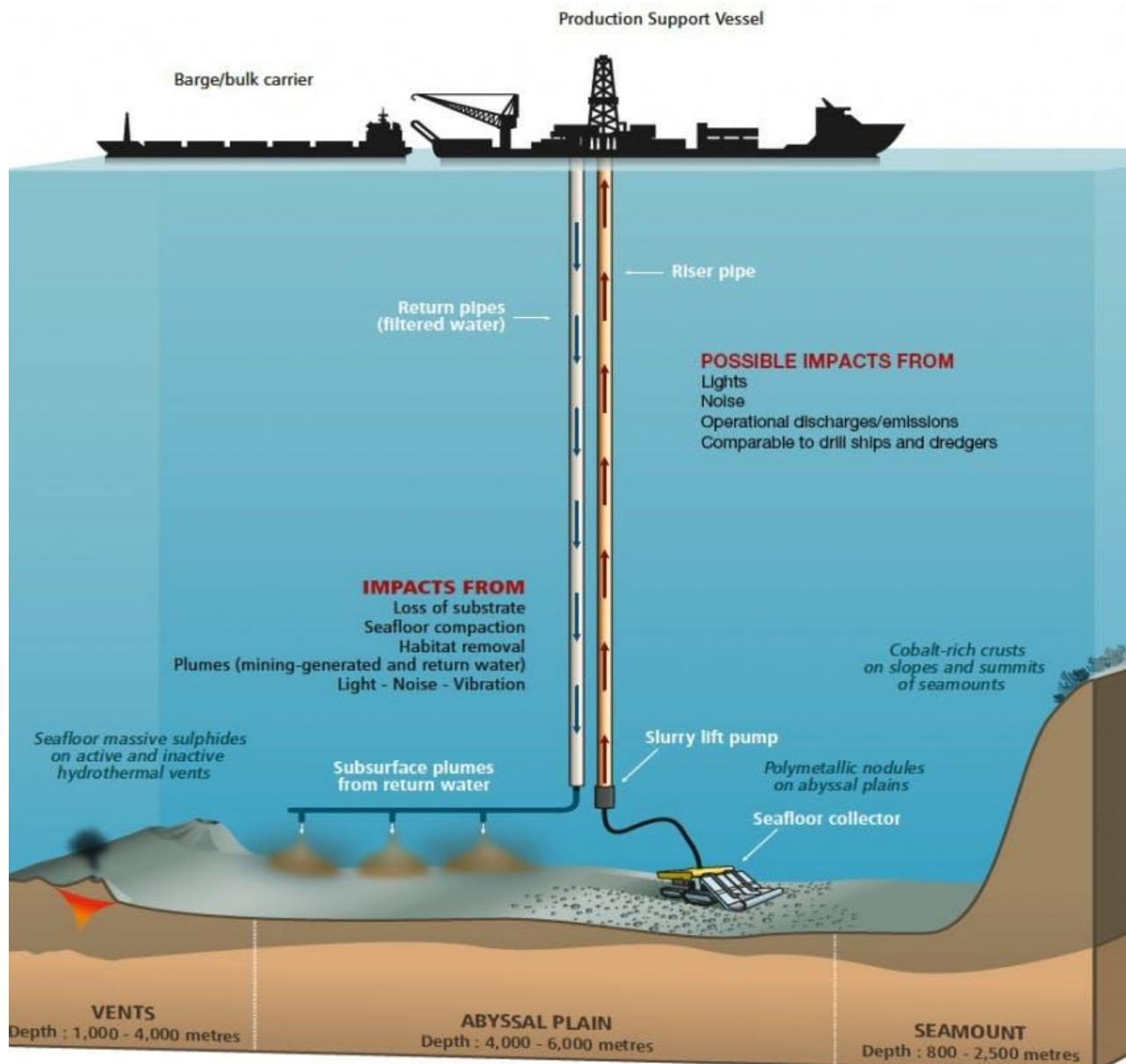
What are the possible impacts?

A scientific [analysis](#) published in 2018, indicates that biodiversity loss from deep sea mining will be unavoidable. The authors also point out that the ecological consequences to deep sea biodiversity are unknown and will have inter-generational consequences.

The scraping of the ocean floor by machines can alter or destroy deep-sea habitats, leading to the loss of species and fragmentation or loss of ecosystem structure and function.

Many species living in the deep sea are endemic – meaning they do not occur anywhere else on the planet – and physical disturbances in just one mining site can possibly wipe out an entire species, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

"Seventy to 90 per cent of species being discovered in the CCZ are new to science. That biodiversity is directly linked to many ecosystem functions and services that life on the planet relies on like climate regulation, links to fisheries, carbon sequestration, nutrients. And yet, we really don't understand these species very well," said Diva Amon, a deep ocean biologist and executive at the Deep Ocean Stewardship Initiative.



As the deep sea remains understudied and poorly understood, there are many gaps in our understanding of its biodiversity and ecosystems. This makes it difficult to thoroughly assess the potential impacts of deep-sea mining and to put in place adequate safeguards to protect the marine environment. Image: International Union for Conservation of Nature

“We need to learn more about how CCZ species and the functions they provide impact us, how those communities may be impacted by mining, and what may be the best mitigation measures. And all of these are still very, very big question marks,” Amon told Eco-Business.

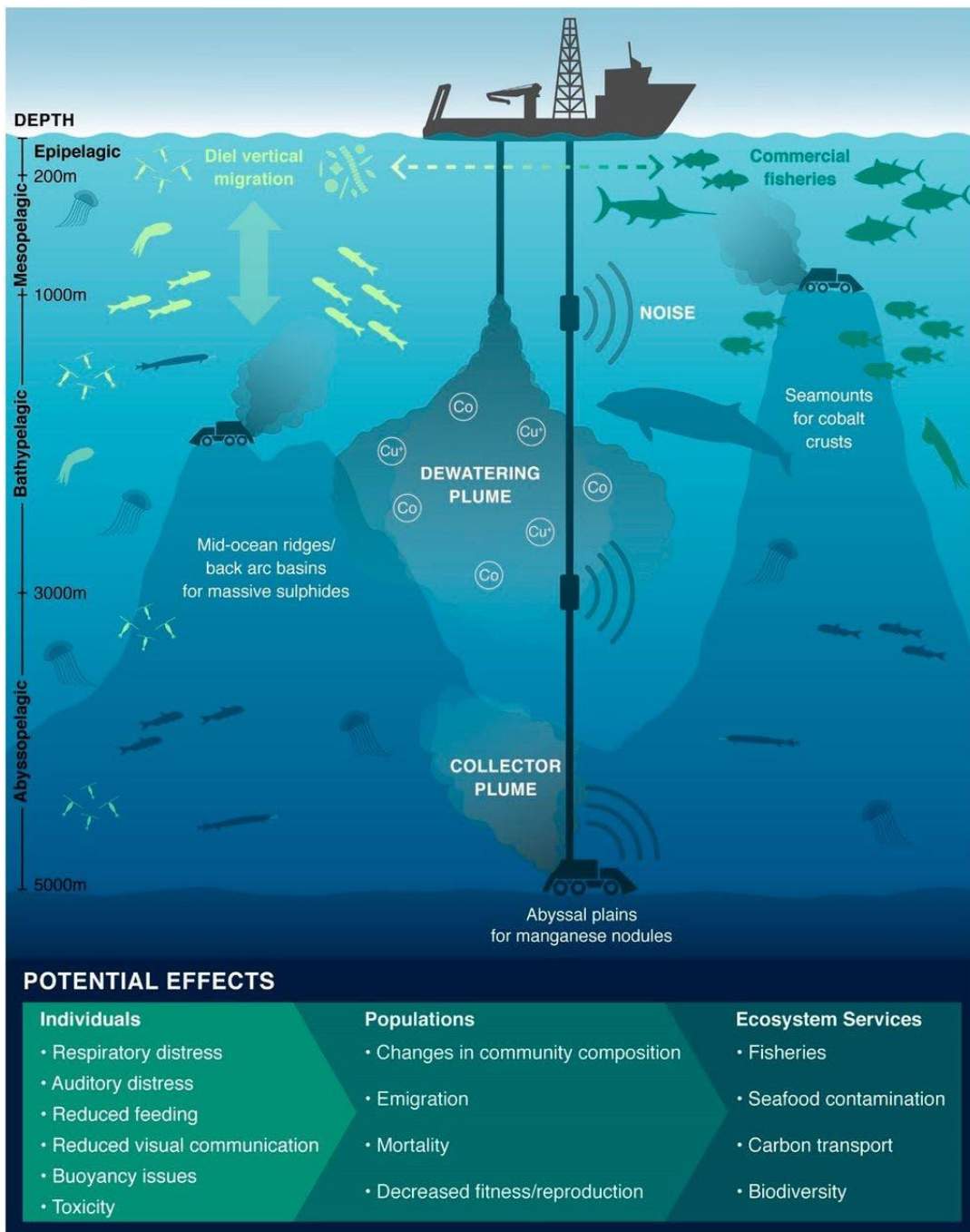
The extent of the sediment plumes and their impact on ocean-life is a key part of the environmental questions surrounding deep-sea mining. Some [scientists](#) fear that the slurry dumped back into the ocean could pose significant risks to midwater ecosystems.

The ISA believes that sediment released near the surface will travel no more than 100 km. However, a compilation of [academic research compiled by Greenpeace](#) concludes that “depending on where the plumes are released, this pollution could travel hundreds or even thousands of kilometres.”

There is also concern around how robust the ISA is and if it can adequately protect marine biodiversity.

“The ISA is designed to prioritise resource extraction, lacks expertise in protection, and its key Legal and Technical Commission meets behind closed doors; it is also unable to protect the seabed from cumulative threats beyond mining,” charged Greenpeace in a 2019 [report](#).

Cross-party British MPs have also raised concerns over “a clear conflict of interest” that the ISA, as the body that is supposed to regulate the industry, “stands to benefit from revenues” during an Environmental Audit Committee in 2019.



Mining-generated sediment plumes and noise have a variety of possible effects on pelagic taxa. (Organisms and plume impacts are not to scale.) Image credit: Amanda Dillon (graphic artist). Source: <https://www.pnas.org/content/117/30/17455>

An environmental gamble

Scientists and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are concerned that the drive for deep-sea mining is happening too quickly and could unleash severe and irreversible environmental disasters to deep sea ecosystems.

Deep-sea mining advocates believe that the prized metals at the bottom of the sea are vital to creating a sustainable future on land. Deep-sea mining company, the Metals Company, also known as Deep Green, has claimed that there is enough metal in the sea-bed to supply the planet’s electric vehicles and clean energy needs while avoiding the problems associated with land mining such as biodiversity loss, toxic pollution and exploitive labour practices.

By reusing the metals already in circulation, and through urban mining, there’s no need to mine the deep-sea, according to the [paper](#) by the Institute of Sustainable Futures.



“Industry wants us to think mining the deep sea is necessary to meet demand for minerals that go into electric vehicle batteries and the electronic gadgets in our pockets. But it’s not so,” Jessica Battle, leader of World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)’s No Deep Seabed Mining Initiative [said](#), following the publication of [new research](#) in February.

“We don’t have to trash the ocean to decarbonise. Instead, we should be directing our focus toward innovation and the search for less resource-intensive products and processes. We call on investors to look for innovative solutions and create a true circular economy that reduces the need to extract finite resources from the Earth,” Battle said.

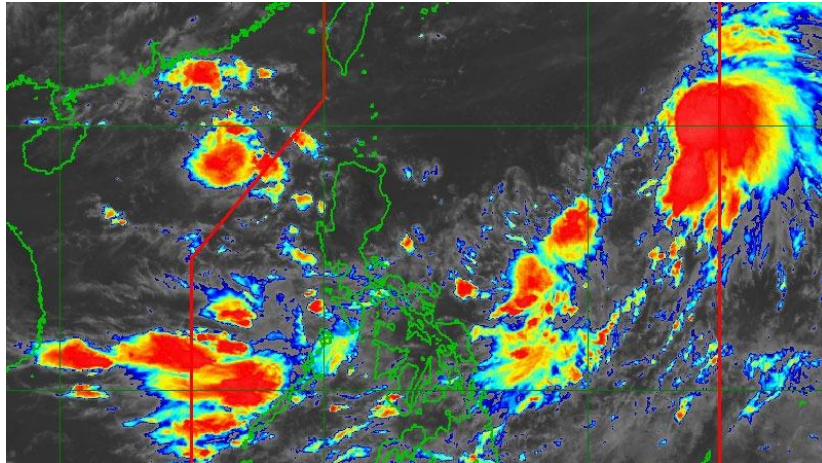
Terrestrial mining experts believe that it is unlikely deep-sea mining will replace mining for the same metals on land but both will continue in tandem. Moreover, Nautilus’ failed venture in Papua New Guinea echoed many of the problems of land-based mines.

However, with the prospect and promise of significant economic and social benefits, decision-makers in the Pacific face a dilemma. Until commercial mining starts, there is little way to assess the social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts.

The lure of making money from the sea-bed’s riches may prove to outweigh any fears about the damage to delicate ecosystems.



LPA sa Batanes posibleng maging bagyo sa loob ng 48 oras-PAGASA



August 3, 2021 @ 5:20 PM 13 hours ago

MANILA – Posibleng maging tropical depression o bagyo ang namuong low pressure area (LPA) malapit sa extreme northern Luzon sa susunod na 48 oras, ayon sa Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) nitong Martes, Agosto 3.

Ayon kay weather specialist Benison Estareja, tatawagin itong bagyong “Gorio”.

Sa tala ng PAGASA, namataan ang bagyo sa tinatayang 550 kilometro, hilagang-silangan ng Itbayat, Batanes kaninang 10:00 ng umaga at inaasahang gumalaw patungo sa hilagang-silangan patungo sa hangganan ng Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) sa loob lamang ng ilang oras.

Pinalalakas din nito ang hancing habagat na maaaring magdulot ng katamtaman hanggang mabigat na pag-ulan sa lalawigan ng Ilocos Norte; Ilocos Sur; La Union; Pangasinan; Zambales; Bataan; Abra; Apayao; Benguet; Batanes at Babuyan group of islands sa susunod na 24 oras.

Mahina hanggang katamtamang pag-ulan naman ang mararanasan sa Metro Manila; Tarlac; Pampanga; Bulacan; Occidental Mindoro; Batangas; Cavite; Ifugao; Kalinga; Mountain Province; ilan pang parte ng Cagayan; Isabela; Quirino, at Nueva Vizcaya.

Nag-abiso rin ang PAGASA sa posibleng maranasang pagbaha at landslide na maaaring idulot ng mabigat at matagal na pag-ulan lalong higit sa mga lugar na posibleng makaranas ng mga trahedyang ito. **-RNT/Ethel Mangao -trainee**

04 AUGUST 2021, WEDNESDAY



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NEWS ALERTS

COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



PH Covid-19 recoveries rise by 6.3K to 1.5M

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor August 3, 2021, 5:56 pm



MANILA – The nation's total number of recovered coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) cases has reached 1,521,263 after 6,337 new recoveries were reported on Tuesday.

In the latest case bulletin of the Department of Health (DOH), the accumulated recovery tally accounts for 94.3 percent of the total 1,612,541 infections since the start of the pandemic last year.

Meanwhile, 6,879 new infections brought the total number of active cases to 63,137 or 3.9 percent of total cases.

About 94 percent of these active cases are mild, 1.3 percent are asymptomatic, 1.2 percent are critical, 2.1 percent are severe, and 1.46 percent are moderate.

A total of 48 new deaths were also reported, pushing the country's total number of Covid-19 fatalities to 28,141 or 1.75 percent of the total cases.

According to DOH data on August 1, about 17.5 percent of 37,302 who were tested turned out positive for Covid-19.

"About 100 duplicates were removed from the total case count, and of these, 98 are recoveries. Moreover, 12 cases previously tagged as recoveries were reclassified as active cases and 18 cases that were previously tagged as recoveries were reclassified as deaths after final validation," the report added.

One laboratory was not operational on July 30 and nine laboratories were not able to submit their data to the Covid-19 Document Repository System.

The DOH noted that the nine non-reporting laboratories contribute, on average, 3.7 percent of samples tested, and 3.6 percent of positive individuals based on data in the last 14 days.

To date, 62 percent of 3,700 intensive care unit beds, 52 percent of 19,400 isolation beds, 50 percent of 12,600 ward beds, and 41 percent of 2,800 ventilators are utilized by patients with Covid-19 nationwide.

Meanwhile, 57 percent of 1,200 intensive care unit beds, 51 percent of 4,500 isolation beds, 46 percent of 3,700 ward beds, and 41 percent of 1,000 ventilators are in use in the National Capital Region. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1149249>



Philippines possibly has 2k cases of Delta variant —OCTA

By CONSUELO MARQUEZ, GMA News

Published August 3, 2021 6:08pm

The Philippines could have as much as 2,000 infections of the highly contagious Delta variant amid the low ability of genome sequencing, OCTA Research Team expert Dr. Guido David said on Tuesday.

David stressed they based their projection on the current genome sequencing abilities of the country, which only account for 100 samples per day out of 8,000 COVID-19 cases. This means this is only less than 2% of the country's total number of virus infections.

"So what we are really showing is the percentage of Delta variants in the samples but if this percentage was applied in the entire number of cases this is what we would see," David said in an online forum hosted by the Federation Of Filipino Chinese Chambers Of Commerce & Industry, Inc.

"As of the latest data, we see 26% of cases sampled were the Delta variant and if that were the case that could be as much as 2,000 cases of Delta variant in the whole Philippines," he added.

"This is just a projection based on the sampling. There is a fairly wide range of sampling error here but this is what is possible," he further pointed out.

Due to its high infection rate, the Delta variant could also become a "strong replacement factor" for other variants.

"The relevance here is that Delta variant has strong replacement factor, meaning it tends to replace other variants because it is more infectious, 50% more infectious compared to the previous variants," said David.

Philippines so far [registered](#) 1,856 Alpha cases, 2,146 Beta cases and 216 Delta cases.

Earlier, the health department said it is seeing that the highly contagious Delta variant could be [contributing to the surge](#) of COVID-19 cases.—LDF, GMA News



Palace hopes Aug. 6-20 ECQ will be Metro Manila's last one

By Azer Parrocha August 3, 2021, 4:22 pm



File photo

MANILA – Malacañang is hopeful that the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) that will be placed in Metro Manila from Aug. 6 to 20 will be the region's last one.

Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said the more Filipinos get vaccinated against Covid-19, the higher chance for the decline in the number of active cases.

"Inaasahan po natin na bagama't ang numero ay tataas pa, bagama't tumataas din ang ating mga nababakunahan na ay iyong mga nangyayari sa mga bansa kagaya ng Israel at Estados Unidos ay mangyayari rin dito maski tumaas pa ang numero, hindi na po sila nagkakasakit ng seryoso o hindi na namamatay (Even if numbers increase, we expect the number of vaccinations to rise just like in Israel and the United States where even if they have higher numbers, they were able to prevent serious illness and death)," he said in a Palace press briefing.

Roque said he expects fully vaccinated individuals to only suffer from mild Covid-19 symptoms once the country reaches its goal of achieving population protection in Metro Manila and nearby areas.

"Kung ma-achieve natin ang (If we can achieve) population protection, it's the number of critical and serious cases that will matter, and the death rates *dahil kapag bakunado na po* (when vaccinated), Covid-19 can become an ordinary cold," he said.

He dismissed criticism that the national government was late in declaring an ECQ in Metro Manila which in turn caused a spike in Covid-19 cases.

"Hindi po siya (It was not) reactive; we had foresight, we were guided by science and we are preparing for what we hope to be our last ever lockdown. *Pero nakasalalay po iyan doon sa pagbabakuna natin ng ating mga kababayan* (But it would still depend on the vaccination numbers of our citizens)," he added.

Roque defended anew the national government's Covid-19 response, saying the Philippines had significantly lower deaths compared to other countries.

"We are only 86[th] in the whole world as far as *iyong mga namamatay* (deaths are concerned). One death is too much... All those *na nagsasabi na mali at mahina ang Covid response* (All those who say we are wrong and we have a weak Covid response), I am sorry, you're wrong; and the data will support us," he added.



Metro Manila, which is currently under a week-long general community quarantine (GCQ) with heightened and additional restrictions until Aug. 5, is scheduled to shift to the strictest ECQ on Aug. 6-20 to prevent the spread of the Delta Covid-19 variant.

The Department of Health (DOH) said the total number of Covid-19 cases in the Philippines has breached 1.6 million.

DOH spokesperson and Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire earlier said she believes there is Delta variant community transmission in the country despite the absence of evidence.

To date, there are a total of 216 cases of the Delta Covid-19 variant in the country.

The Delta Variant, which was found to be 50 to 60 percent more transmissible compared to the original variant of Covid-19, was responsible for the sudden surge in the cases in India and other countries. **(PNA)**



WHO prescribes 'voluntary ECQ'

Published 3 hours ago on August 4, 2021 04:00 AM

By [Jom Garner](#)



Enhanced community quarantine (ECQ), hard lockdown Philippine version, is a term no longer alien to World Health Organization (WHO).

This as the WHO on Tuesday urged Filipinos to do "voluntary ECQ" amid the threat of the highly contagious Delta strain of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) causing a surge in cases in the country.

"It is critically important not only to wait for the government to impose ECQ if we individually start voluntary ECQ," Dr. Rabindra Abeyasinghe, WHO's representative in the country, said in a #LagingHandaPH media briefing.

Abeyasinghe said self-imposed ECQ can be done by "reducing movements, going out only for essential activities, avoiding large-scale gatherings or getting together in enclosed spaces."

He added the country is not alone in the world in dealing with Covid-19 and its virulent Delta variant being blamed for global surges in the number of people infected.

"We are seeing as much as an 80 percent increase in Covid-19 cases in the past four weeks globally, particularly in the Asia Pacific region. A lot of this is driven by the Delta variant," he said.

He blamed mass gatherings, particularly in the Asian region, for the increase in cases just when countries are getting their people vaccinated against the virus.

Earlier this week, the Department of Health said half of the provinces and cities in the country are now reporting more cases of Covid-19.

Data from the National Vaccination Operations Center showed that as of 1 August 2021, a total of 2,884,325 senior citizens have already received their first dose while 2,616,273 are now fully vaccinated.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2021/08/04/who-prescribes-voluntary-ecq/>



Stop Delta variant thru vaccination: NTF

By Lade Jean Kabagani August 3, 2021, 5:21 pm



UK DONATION. National Task Force Against Covid-19 chief Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. (right) and British Ambassador Daniel Puce place the 'Resbakuna' seal on the shipment of 415,040 doses of United Kingdom-donated AstraZeneca at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 in Pasay City on Monday (Aug. 2, 2021). The first tranche of the AstraZeneca delivery is part of the UK's commitment to provide 100 million vaccines for developing countries, including the Philippines. *(PNA photo by Avito C. Dalan)*

MANILA – Beating the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic is possible with more vaccines and participation in the inoculation program.

National Task Force (NTF) Against Covid-19 Chief Implementer, Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr., is thus optimistic that the Philippines will be able to surpass the challenges brought by the more transmissible Delta variant as long as vaccines continue to arrive.

"*Kinaka-usap na po natin ang ating mga kababayan na* (we are asking our countrymen that) we need to act together and we can beat the Delta variant when we act together," Galvez said during a meeting with President Rodrigo Duterte on Monday.

The national vaccination program, Galvez said, is made possible by the services of the Department of Health (DOH) and local government units (LGUs).

The Philippines has so far administered 20,863,544 doses nationwide.

"I am very proud to present that we were able to breach 20 million doses administered. With the help of our DOH and LGU, *nakita po natin na-break natin 'yung record natin at saka objective natin* (we have seen that we broke the record and beat our objective)," he said.

Galvez said there has been a significant increase in the daily vaccination rate, with up to 523,081 doses and a total of 3,661,123 jabs used up for the past seven days.

Vaccine hesitancy among senior citizens and persons with co-morbidities still persists, according to data, but the government continues to address the issue through an information campaign, Galvez said.

To date, the Philippines has received 34,275,740 doses of Covid-19 jabs from Sinovac, Pfizer-BioNTech, AstraZeneca, Gamaleya Research Institute, Johnson&Johnson, and Moderna, both donated and procured by the government and the private sector.

Over 22.7 million doses are expected in August.

"It would be a huge step to meet the growing demand for vaccines within the regions and provinces nationwide," Galvez added. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1149231>



Follow transpo protocols, APOR told

Aside from APOR, people with vaccination schedules may use public transportation.

Published 3 hours ago on August 4, 2021 04:00 AM

By [Maria Romero](#) @tribunephil_mbr



Public utility vehicles such as buses and jeepneys are allowed to operate at 50 percent capacity on a “one-seat-apart” setup in Metro Manila during the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) on 6 to 20 August, Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade confirmed Tuesday.

Tugade said that the latest Omnibus Guidelines issued by the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) has allowed the continued operation of public transportation at capacities set by his department.

“Restrictions will be applied on passengers. There will be stricter enforcement to ensure that only APOR (authorized persons outside residence) are permitted to use public transport, as mandated by the IATF,” Tugade said.

“APOR are reminded to be ready to present to transport marshals identification cards issued by the IATF or other documents or ID as proof that they are authorized to travel,” he added.

Aside from APOR, people with vaccination schedules may use public transportation, government said the other day.

While the Department of Transportation was given the authority to decide on the number of public transport vehicles to be allowed during the ECQ period, as well as on the number of commuters to be allowed in public transport, the IATF may make changes, Tugade added.



Velvet gloves vs ECQ violators

Eleazar orders cops to be firm but respectful at checkpoints and curfew operations during Metro Manila hard lockdown.

Published 6 hours ago on August 4, 2021 12:30 AM

By [John Roson](#)



The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Tuesday tasked lawmen to strictly implement border controls and curfew hours in Metro Manila once the strictest quarantine status takes effect, but reminded them to be courteous and respectful.

PNP chief Gen. Guillermo Eleazar ordered the National Capital Region Police Office to ensure the strict implementation of the two measures when the metropolis undergoes enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) from 6 to 20 August.

“The strict border control and the longer curfew hours are but some of the necessary interventions to help prevent the spread of the Delta variant of Covid-19,” he said.

According to Eleazar, the longer curfew hours earlier announced by local governments in Metro Manila will prevent mass gatherings in communities.

“We can stop mass gatherings from happening, like drinking sessions and parties, which pose big possibilities of becoming super-spreader events,” Eleazar said in a mix of English and Filipino.

Eleazar directed policemen to coordinate with barangay officials in enforcing Metro Manila’s uniform curfew from 8 p.m. to 4 a.m.

Liquor ban
Police will also help enforce the liquor ban that will be implemented by some local government units in the capital, he said.

In an interview with the Daily Tribune’s morning show Gising Na, PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Ronaldo Olay said 66 quarantine control points have so far been set up along the borders of the NCR Plus bubble.

Olay said restricting people’s movements through border controls and curfews will bolster efforts to locate persons who might have already contracted Covid-19, as well as their close contacts.

“This is like a preemptive strike and this is for the citizens,” Olay said, adding lawmen who will enforce ECQ rules have been reminded by Eleazar to be courteous and respectful of human rights.



Olay stressed cops have been told not to punish people who commit “minor” violations.

The lists of businesses allowed to operate under the ECQ have also been disseminated to ground units to prevent misunderstandings like those that happened last year when the strictest quarantine status was first imposed, he said.

Policemen who will be enforcing ECQ rules have also been told to avoid, as much as possible, making physical contact with people crossing borders and even the documents that they will be presenting.

“If possible, there may be sticks that may be used to check documents so there’d be no need for close contact,” Olay said.

No close contacts
He said the police-led Joint Task Force Covid Shield came up with that measure amid an increase in the number of lawmen who contracted Covid-19, particularly after conducting security operations for President Rodrigo Duterte’s recent State of the Nation Address.

Ground commanders, on the other hand, have been tasked to conduct daily checks on the health of their personnel, Olay said.

Eleazar reiterated his previous calls for the public to follow health protocols and quarantine guidelines.

“We have seen the effects of the Delta variant in India and we have noted reports how strong this virus is from other countries hit by it. So, it is just right that our government has acted fast so there’s no blame-laying in the end,” Eleazar said.



Vendors and other individuals working at the night market queue for their second dose of the Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine in Divisoria, Manila during the night vaccination program of the local government on Aug. 2, 2021.

The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

P13.1 billion aid allotted for 10.7 million ECQ residents

[Alexis Romero](#) (The Philippine Star) - August 4, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The government will set aside more than P13 billion as aid for affected residents as the National Capital Region (NCR) is placed under the strictest enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) from Aug. 6 to 20, presidential spokesman Harry Roque announced yesterday.

“The total amount of aid to be given to 10.7 million residents of Metro Manila is P13.1 billion. If we need to provide other forms of financial assistance because of the ECQ, we would get it from the windfall collected by the Bureau of Treasury,” Roque said.

Each beneficiary will receive P1,000 while a family can get as much as P4,000.

Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) spokesperson Irene Dumlao said local government units (LGUs) in the NCR are allowed to manually distribute the cash assistance.

Earlier, the government announced that it would distribute P1 billion aid to one million residents of Iloilo province, Iloilo City, Cagayan de Oro City and Gingoog City, areas that are on lockdown until Aug. 7.

For his part, Sen. Bong Go praised President Duterte for approving a new round of ‘ayuda’ for affected families in lockdown areas.

“I thank President Duterte for responding to our appeal to provide assistance to the poorest who will be affected by the ECQ in NCR from Aug. 6 to 20,” Go said.

He also appealed to concerned government authorities to ensure the prompt delivery of financial aid. “Since the funds will be downloaded directly to the LGUs in NCR, my appeal to the local leaders is to ensure that the assistance is provided immediately to the right beneficiaries in an orderly, fast and safe manner without corruption,” Go said.

Public transport

There will be no changes in the current public transport capacity and supply in NCR during the two-week ECQ, Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade assured yesterday.



Tugade, however, said only authorized persons outside residence (APORs) would be allowed on public transport services, according to omnibus guidelines approved by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF).

He added that APORs should be ready to present their IDs and documents to transport marshals.

During the ECQ, public utility vehicles such as buses and jeepneys are allowed to operate at 50 percent capacity, one-seat-apart and without standing passengers. Motorcycle taxi services and transport network vehicle service operations are also allowed.

Tricycle operations can continue under LGU supervision, but only one passenger is allowed. All trains of the Philippine National Railways, LRT-1, LRT-2 and MRT-3 will remain operational, with passengers mandated to undergo health protocols and temperature checks.

Meanwhile, domestic flights and sea travel in NCR will continue, subject to the quarantine restrictions of destinations. – **Romina Cabrera, Cecille Suerte Felipe, Richmond Mercurio, Paolo Romero**



NASA 800 DOKTOR PATAY SA DELTA VARIANT SA INDIA; PINAS MAGHANDA



August 3, 2021 @ 7:39 AM 23 hours ago

Noong una tayong nag-ulat ukol sa mga patay na doktor at nars sa India na inaatake ng Delta variant ng COVID-19, nasa 400 lang ang patay na doktor.

Pagdating ng Hulyo 1, 2021, umabot na ang patay sa nasa 800.

Walang gaanong rekord sa mga nars na patay maliban lang ang 116 at 90 rito ang namatay noong 2020.

Nasa 200 ibang health worker naman ang nasawi

Hindi naman malinaw kung kasama na sa rekord ang 415 pari at madre ng Simbahang Katolika na namatay karamihan noong Abril-Mayo, ayon sa Vatican News.

Marami ang nakakalat na Catholic hospital ng mga pari at madre sa India at tiyak na may mga doktor o nars na mga pari at madre na maaaring namatay rin.

SA PINAS?

Pigil ang mga ulat ukol sa mga namamatay na doktor, nars at iba pang health care workers sa Pilipinas.

Pero mismong si Dr. Rustico Jimenez, presidente ng Private Hospitals Association ang nag-ulat noon pang Abril 2020 na may 21 doktor na namatay..

Ngayon naman, sinasabi ng Department of Health na may 100 namatay na health care workers simula noong 2020.

At kabilang ang mga ito sa mahigit nang 20,000 tinamaan ng COVID-19.

DELTA VARIANT HIGIT NA MABAGSIK, NAKAHAWA

Paulit-ulit nating sinasabi na higit na mabagsik at nakahahawa ang Delta variant kumpara sa orig na COVID-19 at iba pang mga variant nito gaya ng Alpha o UK variant, Beta o South Africa variant at Gamma o Brazil variant.

Makaraang dumale ang Delta variant ng nasa 4,000 hanggang 6,000 patay araw-araw sa India noong Abril-Mayo 2021 hanggang sa nasa 500 na lang sa mga araw na ito, dinadale naman nito ngayon ang Indonesia na may patay araw-araw na humigit-kumulang sa 2,000.

Sa Pinas, kung iisipin, ang orig na variant pa rin ang pinakamabagsik at pinaka sa panghahawa dahil mahigit 1.5 milyon na ang dinale nito, kabilang na ang 28,000 patay.

Ang Alpha at Beta variant ay mahigit libo pa lang bawat isa ang mga biktima at iilan pa lang ang napapatay ng mga ito, gayundin ang Delta na ilang daan pa lang ang biktima at siyam pa lang din ang napapatay nito.



Pero narito na ang Delta variant at paano kung mananalasa ito gaya ng pinaggagawa nito sa India at Indonesia?

ECQ, HEALTH PROTOCOL, BAKUNA

Kung iisipin ngayon, nabigla tayo noong nakaraang taon, nangapa tayo kung ano ang mga dapat gawin at tanging inasahan natin ang pagpapairal ng iba't ibang uri ng mga community quarantine at health protocol bilang panlaban laban sa COVID-19.

Pagdating ng Disyembre 2020, dumating na ang mabisang panlaban sa pandemya, ang bakuna.

Subalit hanggang ngayon, mahigit 9 milyon pa lang ang may doble bakuna at nasa 12 milyon pa lang din ang may single dose mula sa 33.8 milyong bakuna meron tayo simula nitong nakaraang Pebrero.

Kokonti na lang ang natitira at anomang araw, ubos na ito.

Kapos tayo sa bakuna dahil inuuna ng mga gumagawa nito na hatiran ang mga bansang mayayaman lalo't pinapakyaw ng mga ito ang mga bakuna gaya ng United States, United Kingdom, European Union, China, Canada at iba pa.

At dahil pumasok na rin ang Delta variant sa mayayamang bansa, nagsimula na silang magkaroon ng booster shots kaya aasahan na rin natin ang pagbabawas ng mga bakuna patungo sa atin.

Kaya naman, aasa pa rin tayo nang husto sa health protocol, mga community quarantine at kaunting bakuna bilang panlaban sa Delta variant.

PARAMEDICS AT OXYGEN

Nakaalarma na ang mabilisang pagdami ng mga biktima ng Delta variant.

Kaya naman, pinairral na ng ECQ, MECQ at General Community Quarantine with restrictions mula Metro Manila hanggang sa iba't ibang lugar ng bansa para maagapan ito.

Malaking katanungan: Posible bang matulad tayo sa India at Indonesia?

Ang sagot ng mga awtoridad?

Hindi na natin mapipigilan ang pagragasa ng Delta variant. Whew!

Kaya hayan ang ECQ at kauri nito at paspasang pagbabakuna sa Metro Manila at iba pang lugar.

Dito natin naiisip ang pangangailangan ng mga medical oxygen at maraming health worker.

Kakulangan ng medical oxygen at maraming namamatay na health worker na mag-asikaso sa mga may COVID-19 ang kakosa ng Delta variant sa pagpatay sa India at Indonesia.

Naiisip natin, kung sakaling kulangin tayo ng mga doktor at nars, maaaring mapagkunan natin ng health workers ang mga pulis at sundalo.

Kaya dapat magsanay na ang mga pulis at sundalo mismo sa laban sa COVID-19 at Delta variant kahit paremedics man lang.

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/nasa-800-doktor-patay-sa-delta-variant-sa-india-pinas-maghanda/>

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