

08 OCTOBER 2020, THURSDAY



**DENR**

# NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



The DENR clarified on Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2020 that photos showing part of the Manila Bay's 'white sand' beach with the crushed dolomite supposedly 'washed away' actually show an area under construction. Tina Panganiban-Perez

## DENR: Photos of supposedly 'washed away' dolomite beach show area under construction

Published October 7, 2020 4:52pm

By TINA PANGANIBAN-PEREZ, GMA News

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Wednesday clarified that photos of the Manila Bay "white sand" beach project where the crushed dolomite was seemingly washed away actually show an area under construction.

“Hindi po na-wash away 'yan. 'Yan po ay construction area na kung saan 'yan po 'yung lalagyan natin ng HDPE pipe, yung ating storm drain. Kasi kapag merong tubig-ulan, diyan dadaan sa storm drain palabas ng Manila Bay,” DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda told GMA News.

In the area, black sand is visible outside barriers set up around the crushed dolomite, while a rusted vessel and trash boom are seen in the water.

“Yun po namang sa front, sloping 'yan. Talagang ang white sand natin is a topping. Hindi sa sloping 'yan pababa ng dagat. Yung nakikita nilang medyo may grayish sa harap, 'yan naman po, 'yung mantsa galing din po sa dagat. Kasi alam naman natin meron pa ring mga silt, may mga burak pa rin, may mga dumi pa rin yung dagat na umaakyat po dito sa ating beachfront,” Antiporda added.





Antiporda again said that the DENR go after the contractor if it fails to deliver the project.

“Hindi pa po tapos 'yan. If in case naman po na may pagkukulang ang atin pong contractor, meron pa hong one-year na warranty' yan kung tapos na po 'yan. Puwede ho nating habulin diyan 'yung magiging contractor po niyan kung sakali po hindi nila maayos 'yan,” he added.

The controversial dolomite beach is part of a P389-million Manila Bay "beach nourishment" project, and has been hit by critics as an unnecessary expense during a pandemic and a ["cover-up" of the pollution in the bay](#). — **BM, GMA News**



# Mga kumakalat na litrato na tila ‘inaanod’ ang dolomite sand sa Manila Bay, bahagi ng lugar na nasa ‘under construction’ – DENR

By [RadyoMaN Manila](#) - Oct. 8, 2020 at 5:35am



Nilinaw ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na ang mga litratong kumakalat sa social media kung saan ang lugar na mayroong dolomite ‘white sand’ na bahagi ng beach project sa Manila Bay na tila tinatangay na ng alon ay ‘under construction’ pa lamang.

Ayon kay Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, hindi inaanod ang mga buhangin.

Aniya, lalagyan ang lugar ng storm drain kung saan dadaan ang mga tubig kapag umulan palabas ng Manila Bay.

Dagdag pa ni Antiporda, makikita ang black sand na nakapaligid sa dolomite sand.

“Yun po namang sa front, sloping ‘yan. Talagang ang white sand natin is a topping. Hindi sa sloping ‘yan pababa ng dagat. Yung nakikita nilang medyo may grayish sa harap, ‘yan naman po, ‘yung mantsa galing din po sa dagat. Kasi alam naman natin meron pa ring mga silt, may mga burak pa rin, may mga dumi pa rin yung dagat na umaakyat po dito sa ating beachfront,” dagdag ni Antiporda.

Muling nagbabala ang DENR na hahabulin ang contractor sakaling mabigo itong isagawa ang proyekto.

Ang kontrobersyal na dolomite beach ay bahagi ng ₱389-million Manila Bay “beach nourishment” project.

Source: <https://rmn.ph/mga-kumakalat-na-litrato-na-tila-inaanod-ang-dolomite-sand-sa-manila-bay-bahagi-ng-lugar-na-nasa-under-construction-denr/?fbclid=IwAR3fFzKTQI-RhLs7frKTCeDzyVPsWnq8Sl2AVPOZbNVngTvDbkLSf4pqnF8>



24 Oras: Tila panginitim ng ilang bahagi ng dolo...

Watch later Share Info

**4** **MANILA BAY PROJECT**  
TILA PANGINGITIM NG ILANG BAHAGI NG DOLOMITE BEACH, DAHIL DAW SA MARUMING DAGAT SA MANILA BAY, AYON SA DENR

PM PINAKASARIWANG BALITA SA INYONG CELLPHONE, I-TYPE ANG GMANEW

0:00 / 3:35 YouTube

Tila panginitim ng ilang bahagi ng dolomite beach, dahil daw sa maruming dagat sa Manila Bay, ayon sa DENR

Uploaded on Oct 07, 2020 09:05 pm

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Video link: [https://youtu.be/BSsGQ\\_L8dTo](https://youtu.be/BSsGQ_L8dTo)

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/video/24oras/542232/tila-pangingitim-ng-ilang-bahagi-ng-dolomite-beach-dahil-daw-sa-maruming-dagat-sa-manila-bay-ayon-sa-denr/video/>



## WINGED VISITORS

By The Manila Times

October 8, 2020



*Migratory birds surround fishermen in Manila Bay on Oct. 7, 2020. The migration period for the birds that descend on intertidal areas and fishponds started in August. PHOTO BY RENE H.DILAN*



## Letter from Rep. Atienza

[SHOOTING STRAIGHT](#) - [Bobit S. Avila](#) (The Philippine Star) - October 8, 2020 - 12:00am

Last week I got a nasty letter from former three-term Manila mayor and former DENR secretary Lito Atienza, now Buhay party-list, responding to my Sept. 15 column entitled, "Cimatu has done right for Manila Bay."

In his letter dated Sept. 15, 2020 Rep. Atienza wrote, "Dear Mr. Avila, I read your column entitled 'Cimatu has done right for Manila Bay' which came out today. I could not believe that you wrote those statements. It saddens me that you seem to have believed the lies and misinformation being peddled by paid propagandists and trolls. I'm very proud of what my administration has done during our nine years as mayor of the City of Manila. This is why I am sending you two books, which will show you exactly what I with the support of all Manileños did to restore our beloved rightful place as the country's premier city."

I then checked my notes last Sept. 15 and this is what I wrote: "Former DENR secretary Lito Atienza, who is a party-list rep of Buhay, found the cost of putting white sand along Manila Bay too extravagant! A lot of those interviewed remarked questioning what former mayor Atienza has done to clean up the Manila Bay during his three terms as mayor. Mind you, there are so many poor people in Manila who cannot afford to enjoy the luxury of seeing the white beaches of Boracay or Bantayan Island in Cebu."

Anyway Rep. Atienza sent me a book entitled "Light from my Father's Shadow (A son celebrates a Legacy of public service)." The other one was a brochure entitled "Mahal Kong Maynila" complete with colored photos of what he has done during his term as Manila mayor... one of them the Baywalk, including the street lighting that I remembered seeing before. Finally the last one was a coffee table book entitled "Maynila City Reborn," which to me was the mayor's propaganda on what he was doing for the City of Manila. Unfortunately I don't have the time to read all the books Rep. Atienza sent me.

But there is a huge difference in what DENR chief Roy Cimatu is doing to Manila Bay these days, which to my mind is a total environmental cleanup of the bay that once was filled with garbage and the addition of Dolomite sand from Alcoy, Cebu that has made this project look like an expensive resort. From the way I scanned the pamphlets that Rep. Atienza sent, they were merely decorative and wonderful to look at. But what is happening in Manila Bay today is a totally different scheme.

Mind you, last year when my dear friend Bobby Joseph was voted Commodore of the Manila Yacht Club, it was my first time to enter that area of Manila Bay. During my interview with Joseph at the MYC, I challenged him to help be a catalyst for change and support the groups that are cleaning up Manila Bay – and he accepted that challenge; this was with Senate President Tito Sotto.

The last time I was in Manila was during the official launching of the Clean-up Manila Bay project where I brought my camera crew from MyTV to cover the historic event. I even interviewed my good friend environmentalist lawyer Antonio Oposa who is, like me, a Cebuano, while Joseph was given the title of Honorary Cebuano by Gov. Gwen Garcia. So in a sense the clean up of Manila Bay was also a Cebuano affair.



Before going to Manila for the clean up grand opening, the last time I was in Manila was for dinner with candidate for mayor Isko Moreno at a luxurious hotel near Quirino Grandstand. This was upon the invitation of Deedee Siytangco. I really wanted to meet with Moreno because I heard so many good things about him, so I supported his candidacy for mayor of Manila. Incidentally last July 29 we had a Zoom interview with Moreno on my talk show Straight from the Sky, which is shown in Metro Cebu and Parasat Cable in Cagayan de Oro. My staff just texted me that this show has gotten 12,000 views on our Youtube channel.

These days when we could not travel to Manila we relied on what we saw on YouTube, where hundreds of thousands of Manileños trooped to Roxas Blvd. so they could see the transformation of Manila Bay into what the DENR has done under Sec. Cimat. Rep. Atienza calls them paid propagandist or trolls, but for me they gave me an idea of what they saw happening to Manila Bay, including the fabulous sunset that makes Manila Bay a destination for foreign tourists. This is not to deny that Rep. Atienza did something for Manila in his nine years as mayor. But as I said, it is incomparable to what Cimat has done for Manila Bay!

\* \* \*

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# VERA FILES FACT CHECK: Post comparing Manila Bay rehab budget to multiple gov't projects NEEDS CONTEXT

AUTHOR VERA FILES

DATE OCTOBER 07, 2020

Facebook (FB) page VOVph posted on Sept. 5 an image with misleading budget figures of the on-going Manila Bay rehabilitation and recent government projects.

The post stated the Manila Bay clean-up and rehabilitation program costs "P397 million," and the following Aquino administration projects as having these price tags: "P295 million" for the Kayo ang Boss Ko toilet project, "P12 million" for a collapsed wooden footbridge in Zamboanga, and "P250 million" for the Labo Bypass Road Project.

These figures are inaccurate and need context.



Manila Bay clean-up, rehabilitation

Multiple news reports say Manila Bay's "beach nourishment" program, which aims to rehabilitate part of Manila Bay with artificial white sand, costs P389 million and not P397 million.

But the whole program actually has a much larger budget. For this year alone, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) was allotted P1.3 billion from the General Appropriations Act to implement the Manila Bay Coastal Management Strategy.

DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda previously said the program may take up to seven years to finish, and was given a P47-billion budget by the Duterte administration.

The Manila Bay photo used in the post is from a Sept. 3 ABS-CBN report about the dumping of crushed dolomite in the bay.

Kayo ang Boss Ko Toilet

On the other hand, the photo showing three toilets without dividers in VOVph's post needs context.

The "weird" comfort room was one of several facilities constructed under former President Benigno Aquino III's P295-million program launched in 2012 meant to build 1,000 toilets for the Department of Transportation and its attached agencies. A state audit in 2017 found that the project was unfinished and that its inventories were unsubmitted.



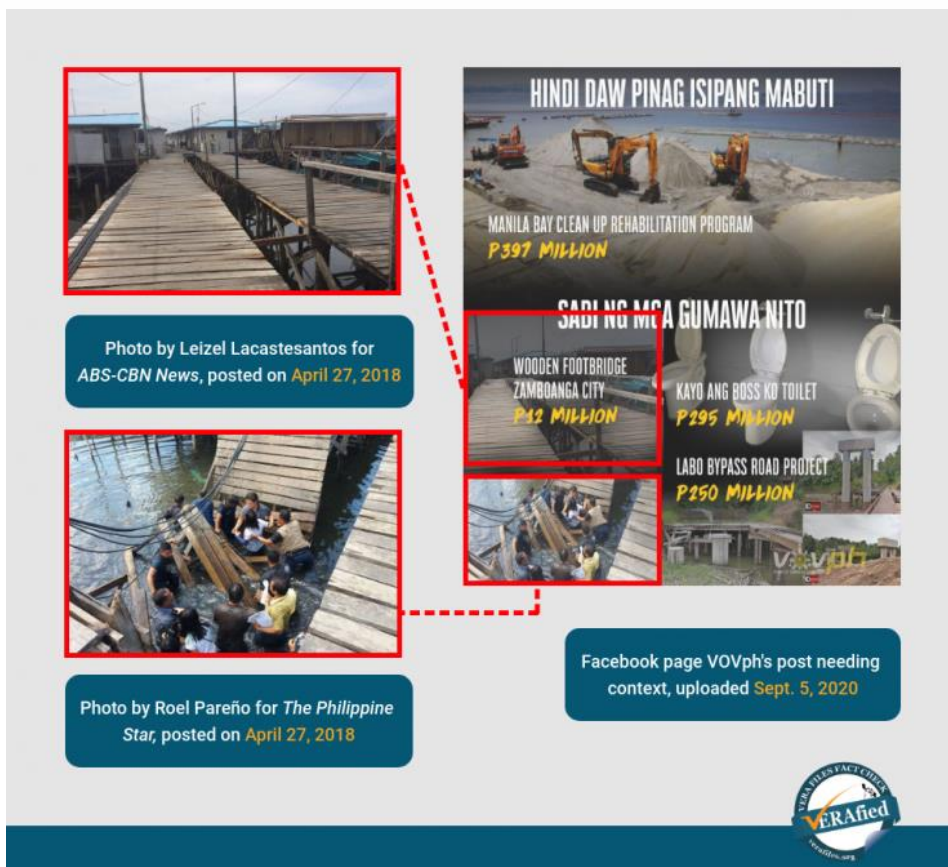
The image used in VOV.ph's post was [a thumbnail grabbed from an Aug. 3, 2018 report by ABS-CBN](#) on the 3-in-1 toilets.



### Zamboanga wooden footbridge

The claim about “P12 million” being the price tag for a collapsed wooden footbridge in Zamboanga likewise needs context. This amount was the cost of the whole two-kilometer footbridge, and not only the portion that collapsed while government officials were standing on it during an inspection of a housing project in April 2018.

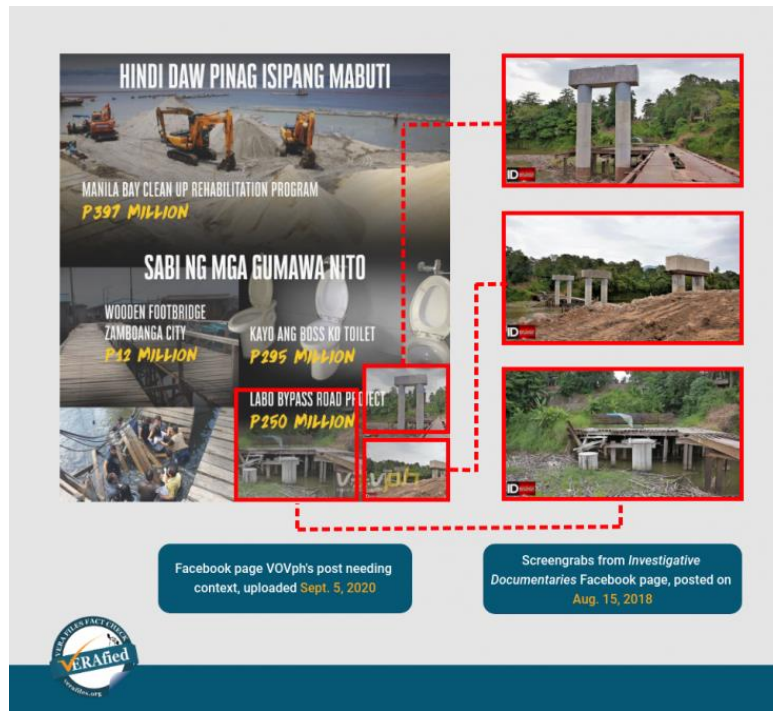
The picture of people who had fallen from the footbridge was first uploaded in an Apr. 27, 2018 The Philippine Star article. The picture of the empty walkway was from an ABS-CBN report the same day.





## Labo Bypass Road Project

An [April 2018 post on the FB page of the GMA Public Affairs show Investigative Documentaries](#) supports VOVph's claim that the Labo Bypass Road project in Camarines Norte was allocated P250 million. The photo of the bypass road in VOVph was also taken from the program's FB post.



Construction of the road began in February 2012 under Aquino but it progressed very slowly for over six years, according to the GMA documentary on the project. It was continued under the Duterte administration.

According to [a Jan. 24 press release from the Department of Public Works and Highways](#), less than two kilometers of the 5.16-kilometer road is unfinished. The project now costs P683 million.

The misleading collage of government projects was shared after [environment groups, politicians](#), and a [bishop](#) raised concerns over DENR's dumping of crushed dolomite on Manila Bay as part of rehabilitation efforts.

VOVph's upload has received over 1,100 interactions. FB page No to Liberal Party also re-uploaded the post, which has now gained over 9,200 interactions. According to social media monitoring tool CrowdTangle, the posts' top traffic generators are public FB groups MARCOS PA RIN and Mindavote Community.

VOVph was created in June 2016, while No to Liberal Party was created in July 2015.

(Editor's Note: VERA Files has partnered with Facebook to fight the spread of disinformation. Find out more about this partnership and our methodology.)

Source: <https://verafiles.org/articles/vera-files-fact-check-post-comparing-manila-bay-rehab-budget>



Undated file photo shows families of seafarers who perished at sea, accompanied by members of the Philippine Coast Guard, holding a wreath-laying ceremony at Manila Bay.

The STAR/Edd Gumban

## Coast Guard 'concerned' with Manila Bay reclamation projects

[Franco Luna](#) (Philstar.com) - October 7, 2020 - 1:46pm

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Coast Guard voiced out its misgivings with Manila Bay reclamation projects Wednesday, citing their effects on vessel traffic and the surrounding maricultural areas.

Speaking at the "Marine Spatial Planning and Coastal Reclamation: A Focus on Manila Bay Area" webinar organized by Oceana Philippines and the National Academy of Science and Technology, Philippines, Captain Xerxes Fernandez of the PCG outlined a number of the coast guard's concerns with the reclamation projects in the bay.

The forum was also attended by representatives from the Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, and the National Center for Coral Reef Research Center at the University of Miami.

"We are very much concerned about the effects of reclamation projects within Manila Bay especially since there are a lot of maricultural areas in the bay that depends on the equal distribution of nutrients so that it can be sustainable," he said, pointing out the abundance of fisheries and fish pens in the area.

"We also have concerns about vessel traffic. We noted that there are several projects near the Manila harbor, especially the north and south harbor. We need to study this carefully as we know that these harbors are the lifeblood of the Philippine economy," he added.

Among the PCG's recommendations presented by Fernandez in his presentation entitled "Water Circulation and Vessel Safety" were:

- Mapping of critical habitats
- Mapping of fisheries and maricultural areas
- Will not affect water circulation within the bay
- Ensure river can properly drain into the bay
- Will not restrict vessel movement



**NAST Philippines** @nastphl · Oct 7, 2020

Replying to @nastphl

Villanoy: Pollution in Manila Bay tends to have difficult way to exit within one tidal cycle.

#PilipiNAST #SPIFMarine

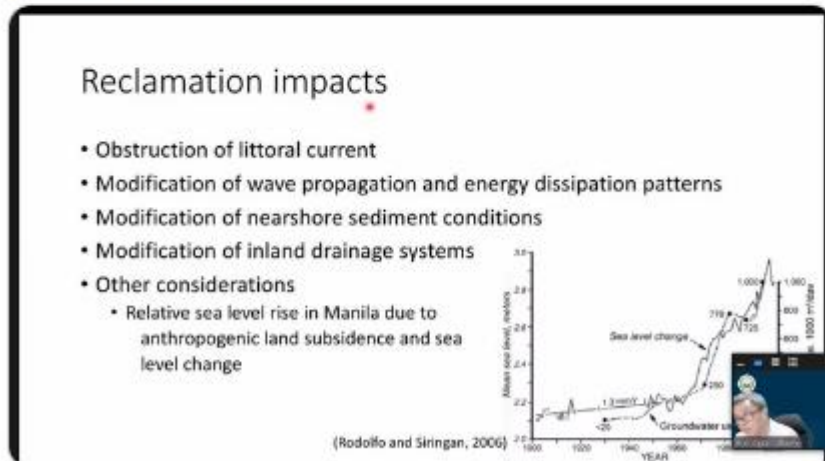


**NAST Philippines**

@nastphl

Acc. Villanoy shows the reclamation impacts.

#PilipiNAST #SPIFMarine



8:49 AM · Oct 7, 2020

1 See NAST Philippines's other Tweets

The PCG is mandated to ensure vessel safety and assist government agencies in protecting the marine environment.

"There are a lot of rivers draining into Manila Bay. There is some speculation that the perennial flooding occurring in Bacoor is a result of the reclamation project undertaken to create the Cavite area. It seems the water coming from upland is not draining properly into the bay," Fernandez also said.

[According to a 2019 briefer](#) by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, there are three river systems draining into the bay in the National Capital Region, namely: "the MANATUTI River System (Malabon–Navotas–Tullahan–Tinajeros River); the MUNTIPARLASPIZAP\* River System (Las Piñas–Parañaque–Zapote River); and the PAMARISAN River System (Pasig–Marikina–San Juan River)."



The various rehabilitation and reclamation projects along Manila Bay continues to be a topic of concern despite the coronavirus pandemic. Urban poor families in September cast fear that the hotly-contested "white sand" beach project meant possible eviction for them mid-pandemic.

After the government-sponsored opening of the "Manila Bay White Sands" baywalk in late September drew crowds that violated the quarantine ban on mass gatherings, the Philippine Coast Guard sent out patrol boats along the shores to keep any passers-by away.

The PCG has been on full alert status and has been enforcing a no-sail policy in the waterway due to the coronavirus lockdown.

"The Philippine Coast Guard as a regulatory agency needs to have ample information when it comes to granting permits or letter of objections, and basically giving input on the natural resource management on bodies like this," Fernandez said.

— **Franco Luna**





# Public urged to report 'plantitos, plantitas' gathering wild plants sans DENR permit

By Jonathan L. Mayuga

October 7, 2020



*File photo: The forest of Coron in Palawan is considered home to a diverse species of flora and fauna. The forest is considered by indigenous people communities as nature's pharmacy because of the abundance of plants used for traditional medicine.* The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is calling on the public to report individuals who illegally collect wild plants from the forest without the mandatory permit from concerned DENR offices.

An official of the DENR noted the alarming trend of illegal trade of endemic and threatened wildlife plants amid the Covid-19 pandemic, hence, the reminder to the public to report those who venture into trading rare species of plants gathered in the wild.

The community quarantines implemented since March made urban gardening popular, with some enterprising Filipinos taking advantage of the trend to cash in. Called plantitos and plantitas, these individuals include those who lost their jobs and are now venturing in trading rare plants to hobbyists.

The trading of rare plants is now being done via social media, with rare plants being sold from P500 to as high as P20,000 per plant.

“Cutting, collecting and gathering wild plants in the forest is a violation of Republic Act 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act,” DENR 7 Regional Executive Director Paquito D. Melicor said in a news statement.

According to Melicor, while DENR wildlife enforcement officers are working closely with partner enforcement agencies in the region, they also seeking the help of the public to report violators in their respective areas.

The DENR 7 Wildlife Enforcement Officers under the monitoring units in seaports and airports and all the deputized wildlife enforcement officers in the four provinces in Central Visayas were also directed to intensify monitoring and surveillance activities.

“We want to remind everyone that collection and trade of threatened species are prohibited unless such acts are covered by a permit issued by the DENR, please help us protect our wildlife by not patronizing and reporting these illegal activities,” he said.





Melicor added that the increasing demand for unattended and unregulated trade of wild flora/wild plants in the market result to the detriment of the number of endemic and threatened wildlife plants in our forests, or loss of biodiversity.

Because of the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, some communities in rural areas resorted to poaching of wild plants as an alternative source of income and have these sold to interested buyers.

Under RA 9147, the penalty depends not only on the act committed but also on the conservation status of the wildlife.

For hunting and trading, the penalty ranges from two to four years of imprisonment and/or fine of P30,000 to P300,000 for hunting and P5,000 to P300,000 for the trading of wildlife. For the mere transport of wildlife, the penalty is six months to one-year imprisonment and/or P50,000 to P100,000 fine.

To report wildlife-related crimes, please contact the DENR- Community Environment Offices nearest you through the following numbers: CENRO Cebu City – 254-2565; CENRO Argao – 367-7387; CENRO Tagbilaran City – (038) 412-1026; CENRO Talibon – (038) 416-0156; CENRO Dumaguete City – (035) 422-4367; CENRO Ayungon – (038) 404-0829.

Image credits: [Gregg Yan/Best Alternatives](#)

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/10/07/public-urged-to-report-plantitos-plantitas-gathering-wild-plants-sans-denr-permit/>

# DENR Central Visayas alarmed at reports of illegal trade of wildlife plants

Published October 7, 2020, 10:49 AM

by [Minerva Newman](#)

**CEBU CITY**—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Central Visayas (DENR-7) is alarmed at the rising trend of illegal collecting, gathering and trading of endemic and threatened wildlife plants amid the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

DENR Central Visayas  
on Monday

Public urged to report poachers, collectors of illegal wildlife plants

With the alarming trend of illegal trade of endemic and threatened wildlife plants amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) 7 has reiterated its call to the public to immediately report illegal poachers and collectors of wildlife, whether plants or animals.

"Cutting, collecting and gathering wild plants in the forest is a violation of Republic Act 9147 or the ... See More

**THREATENED PLANTS OF THE PHILIPPINES  
CRITICALLY ENDANGERED**

Photos by: DN Tandag | ES Fernando | DS Balino

Biodiversity

204 likes, 25 comments, 1K shares

DENR-7 Regional Director Paquito Melicor has warned the public, and reiterated his call for them to immediately report illegal poachers and collectors of wildlife, whether plants or animals to the nearest DENR office or the local government units.

Because of the economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic, communities in rural areas have resorted to poaching of wild plants as alternative source of income and have them sold to interested buyers.



“Cutting, collecting and gathering wild plants in the forest is a violation of Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act,” Melicor added. Under RA 9147, the penalty depends not only on the act committed but also on the conservation status of the wildlife.

The DENR is responsible for the protection of wildlife from poaching and illegal commercialization, and while DENR wildlife enforcement officers are working closely with partner enforcement agencies nationwide, they also seek the help of the public to tip or report violators in their respective areas, Melicor said.

Melicor also said that DENR-7 Wildlife Enforcement Officers under the monitoring units in seaports and airports, and all the deputized wildlife enforcement officers in the four provinces in Central Visayas were also directed to intensify monitoring and surveillance activities.

He reminded everyone that collection and trade of threatened species are prohibited unless such acts are covered by a permit issued by the DENR. “Please help us protect our wildlife by reporting to us and not patronizing these illegal activities,” Melicor added.

The increasing demand of unattended and unregulated trade of wild flora/wild plants in the market results to the detriment of the number of endemic and threatened wildlife plants in our forests or loss of biodiversity, he bared.

For hunting and trading, the penalty ranges from two to four years of imprisonment and/or fine of P30,000 to P300,000 for hunting and P5,000 to P300,000 for trading of wildlife. For the mere transport of wildlife, the penalty is six months to one-year imprisonment and/or P50,000 to P100,000 fine, Melicor said.

To report wildlife related crimes, please contact the DENR- Community Environment Offices nearest you through the following numbers: CENRO Cebu City – 254-2565; CENRO Argao – 367-7387; CENRO Tagbilaran City – (038) 412-1026; CENRO Talibon – (038) 416-0156; CENRO Dumaguete City – (035) 422-4367; CENRO Ayungon – (038) 404-0829; PENRO Siquijor (035) 377-2419.



## DENR: Iligal na kalakalan ng wildlife i-report



October 7, 2020 @ 6:49 PM 12 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Dahil sa nakaaalarmang kalakalan ng illegal trade ng endemic at nagbabanta sa wildlife plants sa panahon ng COVID-19 pandemic, nagbabala ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources -Region 7 sa publiko na iulat ang illegal na manghuhuli at manongolekta ng wildlife na halaman o hayop.

Ayon kay DENR 7 Regional Executive Director Paquito D. Melicor, isang paglabag sa Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act ang pamumutol, pangongolekta at pagkuha ng wild plants sa kagubatan.

Ayon kay Melicor, ang DENR ang responsible para protektahan ang wildlife mula sa mga nanghuhuli at illegal commercialization habang ang mga tauhan ng DENR wildlife enforcement officers at iba pang na enforcement agencies sa rehiyon ay katuwang sa pagbabantay sa sinomang lalabag sa naturang batas.

Nabatid sa ulat na mahigpit na mino-monitor ng DENR 7 Wildlife Enforcement Officers ang mga seaport at airport at nagtalaga ng wildlife enforcement officers sa apat na lalawigan sa Central Visayas.

Aniya, ang patuloy na pagtaas ng demand at 'di nababantayang kalakalan ng wild plants sa panahon ng COVID-19 pandemic ay nagresulta sa pagkaubos ng mga wild plant sa kagubatan at kawalan ng biodiversity.

Sa ilalim ng RA 9147, ang pagbebenta at panghuhuli ng wildlife ay may kaparusahan na dalawa hanggang apat na taong pagkabilanggo o multang P30,000 hanggang P300,000 habang ang pag-transport nito ay may kaparusahang anim na buwan hanggang isang taong pagkakulong at multang P50,000 hanggang P100,000. **SANTI CELARIO**



## Editorial: Plantitos, plantitas warned



Editorial Cartoon by Enrico Santisas

October 7, 2020

THE otherwise quiet ornamental plant community suddenly gets the limelight as waves of initiates, now dubbed as “plantitos” and “plantitas,” scamper into the hobby in the thick of quarantines in this pandemic. The psychic gratification one gets from plant caring is a welcome coping mechanism these days. For some, though, the hobby also becomes a way to carry on financially amid the crisis.

Unfortunately, though, the community has been mired recently with reports of plant poaching, trading of endangered wildlife and unbridled profiteering.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Central Visayas has again emphasized its call for the public to immediately report unscrupulous individuals and groups engaging in illegal selling and collection of wild and endangered ornamental plants.

DENR-CV Executive Director Paquito Melicor warns the public against collecting and gathering of wild plants, citing Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.

Melicor said it is his agency’s office that is responsible for the protection of these wildlife species from illegal commercialization. They have deployed their wildlife enforcement officers to monitor illegal activities in areas such as seaports and airports, but the agency is asking the community’s help in monitoring for suspected violators in their respective areas. Collection and trade of endangered plant or animal species must be covered by a DENR permit, Melicor said.

The current crisis has sent not a few people in the rural communities resorting to hunting wild plants as alternative source of income as the plant community and trading expands. The craze threatens wildlife plants and diminishes biodiversity in forest areas.

Climate action advocates warned of potential extinction of ornamental flowers that support pollinator species for mutual survival. Reports said a good number of ornamental plants that are now flooding the market have only been recently declared as endangered. An unwitting initiate into the plant community may not be aware of wildlife species in his collection and may face the consequences of the law.

It is, therefore, important as well that the DENR plays an active role in educating the community if it also intends to seek its help in monitoring against poaching.



RA 9147 provides both imprisonment, ranging from two to four years, and/or penalty for violators from P30,000 to P300,000 for hunting and P5,000 to P300,000 for trading. A mere transport could result to a penalty of six months to a year of imprisonment and/or P50,000 to P100,000 fine.

Imagine the sudden incarceration of clueless plantitas and plantitos in the time of the pandemic, a possibility they could never have imagined while trying to achieve the desired psychic rewards amid troubled times.



# DENR reminds LGUs, hospitals to ramp up efforts in proper disposal of medical waste

Aileen Cerrudo • October 7, 2020



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) reminds local government units (LGUs) and hospitals to ramp up their efforts in disposing medical waste amid the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and LGUs Concerns Benny Antiporda issued the reminder after reports of medical waste such as face masks and gloves were dumped along the bicycle lane on EDSA last Monday (October 5).

“LGUs must take medical waste management seriously during this time of pandemic. We can’t afford to be lax on this issue. We cannot sacrifice the lives of our people just because of our negligence,” he said.

Antiporda also warned criminal charges and penalties await individuals and establishments proven to be found violating Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act.

The official also reiterated LGUs would also need to provide personal protective equipment (PPEs) to garbage collectors to prevent them from coming into contact with waste items potentially contaminated with the virus.

“After the health workers, garbage collectors are the second most important human shield against coronavirus, that’s why it is important for us to make sure they are protected,” he said. **AAC**



# DENR, nagbabala sa mga pasaway na LGUs at ospital na hindi maayos sa pagtatapon ng mga medical waste

By [RadyoMaN Manila](#) - Oct. 7, 2020 at 11:32am



Kasunod ng mga ulat ng pagkatapon at pagkalat ng medical waste sa panahong may COVID-19, nagbabala ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa mga lokal na pamahalaan na mananagot ang mga ito sakaling hindi maayos ang kanilang pamamahala sa pagtatapon ng mga medical waste.

Ito'y upang matiyak ang kaligtasan sa kalusugan at kapaligiran sa gitna ng Coronavirus pandemic.

Sinabi ni DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and LGUs Concerns Benny Antiporda, na mananagot ang mga Local Government Unit (LGU) sa ilalim ng Republic Act 9003 o Ecological Solid Waste Management Act.

Kasunod naman ito ng pagkatapon at pagkalat ng medical waste tulad ng face mask at gloves sa bicycle lane sa EDSA malapit sa White Planes sa Quezon City noong nakalipas na araw.

Maging ang mga hospital at iba pang health care facilities ay pinaalalahanan din ng DENR sa kanilang obligasyon.

Dapat pinaghihiwalay ang kanilang basura gamit ang color-coded bags at pagdisinfect sa medical waste.

Maging ang publiko ay hinimok din na makipagtulungan upang maiwasan ang pagkalat ng anumang nakakahawang sakit.





# Plastics still top pollutant in Metro Manila coastal clean-up

Published October 7, 2020, 2:41 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Amid growing calls to regulate the use of single-use plastics, these materials still topped the list of most common trash collected in Metro Manila during the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) Day held last month.



(DENR-NCR / MANILA BULLETIN)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region (DENR-NCR) released an infographic on Wednesday showing the top 10 items recovered from 214 cleanup sites last Sept. 19.

Food wrappers (76,516 pieces), grocery bags (67,986 pieces), “other trash” 65,320 pieces; take-out containers (49,100 pieces), plastic beverage bottles (47,036 pieces), straws/stirrers (35,151 pieces); styrofoam take-out containers (32,847 pieces), plastic bottle caps (25,566 pieces), beverage sachets (23,545 pieces), and beverage cans (17,707 pieces) composed the top 10 commonly found items along coasts and other water bodies in the metropolis.

Other trash are “usually biodegradable waste like twigs, branches, leaves, coco parts, which are not specifically cited in the list of wastes indicated in the monitoring tool.”

The DENR-NCR list showed some 610,812 trash items with a combined weight of 28,767 kilograms were collected by 1,765 volunteers during the whole day cleanup.

## Phase out of single-use plastics pushed

“The data generated from the latest coastal cleanup drive underline the need to actively enforce the provisions of Republic Act 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, and related local ordinances requiring the proper management of all discards and prohibiting arbitrary waste disposal that leads to environmental degradation and pollution,” said EcoWaste Coalition zero waste campaigner Jove Benosa.

“The fact that plastic accounts for most of the waste collected validates the urgency of addressing this ubiquitous land and marine pollutant at source,” he emphasized.

“It’s high time for Congress to enact a comprehensive legislation phasing out single-use plastics (SUPs) such as plastic grocery bags, food containers, straws and stirrers and other problematic disposables,” he suggested.



Benosa also urged manufacturers and entrepreneurs to switch to alternative product packaging and delivery systems that will cut the unsustainable production and consumption of throw-away plastics.

### ***Bigger picture***

Greenpeace campaigner Marian Ledesma said “the number of plastic waste collected during DENR’s waste audit is staggering, but in truth, it’s only a fraction of the problem.”

“With an estimated 5 trillion plastic particles floating in our oceans, the plastic crisis is more than a mere waste management issue. We have to address the problem at its source, examine plastic’s entire lifecycle with its health and environmental impacts from the extraction of raw materials up to its disposal as waste,” Ledesma said.

She pointed out that national policies regulating the production and use of single-use plastics is crucial “if we want to stem the tide of plastic waste,” while at the same time, “corporations must also do their part.”

“If you look at the waste audit results, plastic food packaging and beverage bottles are in the top 5. Companies have to change single-use plastic packaging with reusable alternatives, while also implementing refill and reuse systems to deliver their products. Corporations committing to changes like these will make a significant impact,” Ledesma said.

### ***Long overdue mandate***

Oceana Philippines vice president Gloria Estenzo Ramos inquired from the National Solid Waste Management Commission, chaired by the DENR, on whether it would finally implement a ban on single-use plastics nationwide by including it in the list of Non-Environmentally Acceptable Products and Packaging (NEAPP) under RA 9003.

She is hoping the Commission will have a clear answer as to when it will be implemented. “Records in the deliberations of the bill which became Republic Act 9003 show that DENR was not ready then with that list, as declared by then Senator Loren Legarda. Thus, the mandate was eventually given by RA 9003 to the Commission— sadly, it is also sleeping on it,” Ramos said.

She pointed out that 15 local governments have called on the NSWMC to have the NEAPP list and include single-use plastics, and more will be forthcoming.

“It is unfair to make the LGUs the scapegoats for the voluminous unmanageable plastics in our landscape and oceans. The Commission has to perform this mandate – now,” she added. The NEAPP list, Ramos noted, will “automatically prohibit the production, usage, distribution and trade of the goods—this is in accord with RA 9003 to prioritize reduction of the waste at source.”

“The Commission early this year in a resolution came up with a list of ‘non-essential’ single-use plastics banned in the government sector. It could have exercised political will by including these items as NEAPP and consequently prohibited nationwide,” she stressed.



# Face masks, gloves among thousands of trash recovered during PH ocean cleanup

Published October 7, 2020, 1:27 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Face masks and surgical gloves were among the trash that have found their way to the oceans and collected during this year's International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) Day in Metro Manila.



(Glyn Kirk / AFP / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

According to an infographic material released by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region (DENR-NCR), 7,919 pieces of face masks and gloves were notably collected from 219 cleanup sites in Metro Manila along with commonly collected beach trash food wrappers and grocery bags during the worldwide activity last month.

The EcoWaste Coalition noted that the collection of discarded personal protective equipment (PPE), such as face masks and hand gloves “provides damning evidence to the alarming improper disposal of soiled PPE amid the coronavirus health emergency.”

The problem on the disposal of medical wastes from households and hospitals had prompted the DENR to call on local government units (LGUs) anew to ramp up efforts in handling and disposing of medical waste to ensure health and environmental safety amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The DENR reminded the LGUs of their duty to ensure compliance with Republic Act 9003, the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, which includes the safe and environmentally sound management of health care waste.

The department also reminded hospitals and other health care facilities of their obligation to segregate their trash using color-coded bags, disinfect medical waste, and make sure proper transfer procedures are observed.

EcoWaste also recommended the adoption and implementation of city and municipal ordinances banning and penalizing the littering and dumping of used PPE as well as strengthening the enforcement of proper waste segregation as it “is very crucial now more than ever.”

Under the Republic Act 9003, the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, LGUs are primarily responsible for the effective and efficient solid waste management, particularly garbage segregation and disposal.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/10/07/face-masks-gloves-among-thousands-of-trash-recovered-during-ph-ocean-cleanup/>



# Gov't reviews mining assets: DOF chief

By Joann Villanueva October 7, 2020, 5:04 pm



Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III

**MANILA** – The government is firm on reviving its mining assets to boost job opportunities and lift economies around the mine sites, Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III said.

“Definitely, we are pushing for the revival of the mining industry,” he said during the press conference of the two-day Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry’s (PCCI) 46th Philippine Business Conference and Expo that started Wednesday.

Dominguez said the mining sector “provides jobs in areas where there are no other alternative jobs”.

He said the Privatization Management Office (PMO) completed a few days ago the review of the mining assets held by the government.

He, however, did not disclose the results of the review.

Dominguez said he has asked for the revival of the privatization of Nonoc Nickel Mines in Surigao City and the copper mines in Basay, Negros Oriental, among others.

“We are also working very closely with the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) and the MGB (Mines and Geosciences Bureau) to really push mining to operate,” he added.

Aside from these two mining areas, the government also has stakes in the pyrite and copper mines of Philippine Pyrite Corp. in Bagacay and Hinabangan, Western Samar, and the Sta. Inez and Batong Buhay mines of the Maricalum Mining Corp. in Sipalay, Negros Occidental.

The government has ordered an audit of the various mining areas around the country to address the impact of mining operations on the environment.

In 2018, the inter-agency Mining Industry Coordinating Council (MICC) tapped experts from the mining industry and the academe to audit 26 firms that were ordered closed by then Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Regina Lopez. **(PNA)**



# Gov't to sell mining assets as mine sites reopen

Published October 7, 2020, 12:55 PM

by [Chino S. Leyco](#)

The Department of Finance (DOF) wants to revive the mining industry to create jobs in rural as well as generate revenues for the government's efforts in rebuilding the economy hit by the pandemic. At the virtual Philippine Business Conference and Expo, Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III said that along with the revival of mining sector, the government also plans to sell all state mining assets.

Dominguez said the DOF is "very closely" working with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) to "really push" for the reopening of the country's mines.

"We are pushing the revival of the mining industry," Dominguez said during the virtual forum. "As I keep on mentioning, the mining industry provides jobs in areas where there are no other alternative jobs."

Describing mining as a provider of "good jobs," Dominguez said the DOF had "a complete review" of government-owned mining assets that could be privatized.

"I have asked them [the Privatization Management Office (PMO)], to really push the revival... the privatization of Nonoc mines, Basay mines and all the other mines that are held by the government," the finance chief said.

PMO is an agency under the DOF mandated to oversee the government's privatization program. Meanwhile, Nonoc Mining and Industrial Corp. is a nickel mine in Surigao island. It was reported in 2013 that diversified conglomerate San Miguel Corp. eyed to secure a controlling stake in the company.

Basay Mining Corp., on the other hand, is a copper mine site partly owned by the government in Basay, Negros Oriental which stopped operations in 1984.

In July, the DENR announced that it will reopen some of the closed mining sites to help the government's struggling revenues amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Among the companies being eyed to be allowed resume operations are the mine sites shuttered by the late staunch environmentalist and former DENR Secretary Regina Paz Lopez.

Environment Undersecretary Juan Miguel Cuna said the DENR was reviewing the operations of select suspended mining companies to see if they can operate again.



# Mining revival eyed to generate rural jobs, says Dominguez

By: [Ben O. de Vera](#) - Reporter / [@bendeveraINQ](#)

[Inquirer Business](#) / 03:31 PM October 07, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — The government plans to privatize at least a couple of its mining assets to not only raise revenues but also revive the sector and provide “good” jobs in the countryside, Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III said Wednesday.

During the 46th Philippine Business Conference and Expo, Dominguez told members of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) that the government was “pushing for the revival of the mining industry.”

Specifically, Dominguez said mining operations will benefit rural areas where there were no alternative employment among the locals used to mining jobs.

Dominguez said the Department of Finance (DOF) through its attached agency, the Privatization and Management Office (PMO), recently completed a review of the government’s mining assets.

The PMO’s website showed four mining assets transferred to the government: mining claims for Basay Mining Corp., Hercules Minerals and Oils Inc., and Marinduque Mining and Industrial Corp.; as well as mining claims, pieces of machinery and equipment of Nonoc Mining and Industrial Corp.

These mining assets were included in the list of various public assets, including land properties and shares of stocks in corporations, which were in the PMO’s disposition pipeline.

“I have asked them [the PMO] to really push the privatization of Nonoc mines, of Basay mines, and all the other mines that are held by the government,” Dominguez said.

The valuations of these mines were currently being updated, Dominguez later said on Viber.

Dominguez said the DOF was working closely with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as well as the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) to “really push mining to open again.”

Pending in Congress was a DOF-backed legislation to put in place a new mining fiscal regime aimed at increasing public tax revenues and attracting more private investments.

Last month, Dominguez said the government by late 2021 or early 2022 will look for additional revenue sources “to pay for the heavy indebtedness that we are incurring this year” to finance the COVID-19 response.

As of Oct. 2, the DOF secured \$9.91 billion in loans and grants from multilateral lenders and bilateral development partners as well as offshore commercial borrowing to fight the health and socioeconomic crises inflicted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

So far this year, the DOF also raised \$1.55 billion from loans extended by Japan and South Korea for various big-ticket infrastructure projects under the ambitious “Build, Build, Build” program, which Dominguez had said will help the economy rebound from the pandemic-induced recession.

Source: <https://business.inquirer.net/309013/mining-revival-eyed-to-generate-rural-jobs-says-dominguez>



## DoF: Mining industry in PH must be revived

By Mayvelin U. Caraballo, TMT

October 8, 2020

The Philippine mining industry should be revived to create more jobs amid the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic, Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez 3rd said on Wednesday.

During the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry's 46th Philippine Business Conference and Expo, the head of the Department of Finance (DoF) said the sector would provide good jobs in rural areas or "areas where there are no other alternative jobs."

The department is also working closely with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau "to really push mining (industry) to open again," he added. As part of its support for the industry, the DoF finished reviewing the mining assets held by the government through its Privatization Management Office, according to Dominguez.

"I have asked them to really push [for] the revival, [for] the privatization of [the] Nonoc [and] Basay mines, and all the other mines that are held by the government," he said, referring to Nonoc Mining and Industrial Corp. in Surigao City, Surigao del Norte province, and Basay Mining Corp. in Novaliches, Quezon City.

Asked how much revenue the government could raise once these mines were privatized, Dominguez said their valuations "are being updated."

### **Ready to support airline industry**

He also assured of the government's readiness to support the airline industry, which was heavily affected by the pandemic and the restrictive measures aimed at curbing its spread.

The government is in talks with industry players and is prepared to assist the affected airlines, according to the Finance chief.

"[W]hatever assistance we have or...going to provide will [only be a part] of the entire process. The private sector banks have to cough up the majority of [the] assistance," Dominguez said.

"Because the government is not in a good position to evaluate credit risks, we will rely on the participation of private banks; and we will support their efforts to help revive the industry" but not to the point the government ends "up owning the airlines," he added.

In line with this, Dominguez said innovation in both the public and private sectors was needed to build resilience against, and guarantee quick recovery from the pandemic, as well as future crises.

"This is why our aim has been to pursue a safe new normal while we strive for a better normal. We cannot completely lock up ourselves to avoid Covid-19 at the expense of other vital dimensions of our lives. We should take less costly but effective measures," he told conference participants.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/10/08/business/business-top/dof-mining-industry-in-ph-must-be-revived/777781/>



## Mining eyed as revenue source

Definitely, we are pushing for the revival of the mining industry.

Published 3 hours ago on October 8, 2020 03:00 AM

By [Joshua Lao](#) @tribunephil\_lao



The next focus of the government will be on spurring the latent mining industry as a source of needed revenues following Department of Finance (DoF) Secretary Carlos Dominguez III's remark about a recovery plan that will mainly benefit the rural areas.

"Definitely, we are pushing for the revival of the mining industry. As I keep on mentioning, the mining industry provides jobs in areas where there are no other alternative jobs," Dominguez said during yesterday's 46th Philippine Business Conference and Exposition on Wednesday.

"We are pushing the revival of the mining industry because they provide good jobs in the rural areas. In fact, just a few days ago, we had a complete review of the mining assets held by the government through the Privatization Management Office (PMO)," he added.

According to him, he had asked the PMO to push the revival and privatization of mines held by the government, including the Nonoc nickel mine and Basay copper mine.

Still, the DoF chief said the agency is working closely with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Bureau of Mines and Geosciences for the reopening of local mining operations.

Government's demand for clean processes in extracting minerals and the frequent protests from rights groups have resulted to the poor development of the industry.

### Talks for airline aid

The Cabinet official then said that discussions with the airline industry have been ongoing to determine how the government can help in their recovery.

"They have prepared at least four or five plans for their finances and really, the reason they say is (that) the situation is changing so quickly, that they have to keep on revising their plans," Dominguez explained.

He ruled out, however, government acquisitions in the industry.

"I would like to point out that the government does not want to end up owning the airlines," he added.

"We are in deep discussions with them and we are prepared to participate in assistance to the airline industry. But let me point out that whatever assistance we have, or we are going to provide will be part only of the entire process," he added.





According to him, private banks have to “cough up the majority of the assistance” for the airlines as the government is not in a good position to assess credit risks of the industry.

“The government is not in a good position to evaluate credit risks. So we will rely on the participation of private banks and we will support their efforts to help revive the industry,” he said.



## Revival of mining industry pushed

October 8, 2020 | 12:34 am



*A piece of raw gold is weighed and sold to a dealer in Mount Diwata, Diwalwal on Mindanao island in this Feb. 24, 2008 file photo. — DAVID GREEDY/BLOOMBERG NEWS*

THE Finance department is looking to revive the mining industry through the sale of state mining assets and the passage of a long-awaited tax measure, in order to create jobs and generate revenues amid the economic slowdown.

“Definitely, we are pushing for the revival of the mining industry. As I keep on mentioning, the mining industry provides jobs in areas where there are no other alternative jobs. So we will be pushing for revival of the mining industry because they provide good jobs in the rural areas,” Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III told the Philippine Business Conference & Expo organized by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI).

The Finance chief said he has asked the Privatization and Management Office (PMO) to proceed with the plan to sell Nonoc Mining and Industrial Corp. and Basay Mining Corp., among others, after reviewing all of the government-owned mines.

Mr. Dominguez said the government hopes to raise revenues through the privatization of its mining assets, whose valuations have yet to be determined.

“I have asked them to really push the revival, the privatization of Nonoc mines, of Basay mines and all the other mines that are held by the government and we are also working very closely with the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) and the MGB (Mines and Geosciences Bureau) to really push mining to open again,” he said.

The mining industry has been struggling since President Benigno S. Aquino III signed in June 2012 an executive order imposing a moratorium on new mining permits “until a legislation rationalizing existing revenue-sharing schemes and mechanisms shall have taken effect.”

When President Rodrigo R. Duterte took office in 2016, he ordered a crackdown on erring mining firms and tightened environmental rules for the industry.

The proposed tax measure aimed at raising the state’s share in mining revenues has yet to be approved by Congress.



A proposed revenue measure on mineral products nearly made it out of the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress that ended in June 2019, as the Senate adopted House Bill No. 8400 with minor amendments. The bill sought to lower the royalty on large-scale mining within mineral reserves to three percent of gross output from five percent currently and introduce a 1-5% margin-based royalty on those outside mineral reserves.

For the current Congress, House Bill No. 6135 which provides a fiscal regime for the mining industry has been approved by the House Committee on Ways and Means. Meanwhile, its counterpart measure, Senate Bill No. 313, is still pending at the committee level.

Data from the MGB showed the production value of metallic minerals fell 14.4% to P53.88 billion in the first half of 2020, following disruptions to mining operations during the pandemic.

## **NO BAILOUT FOR AIRLINES**

Meanwhile, Mr. Dominguez reiterated the government's willingness to assist the airline industry, which has been battered by the pandemic.

"We are in deep discussions with them. And we are prepared to participate in the assistance to the airline industry. But let me point out that whatever assistance we have, or we are going to provide will be part only of the entire process, the private sector banks have to cough up the majority of the assistance," he said.

The Air Carriers Association of the Philippines (ACAP) last month said about P700 million had been allocated for local airlines from the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act, on top of the P10 billion they expect from state financial institutions to lend to or invest in the industry.

ACAP is composed of Philippine Airlines, Inc., Cebu Air, Inc., Philippines AirAsia, Inc., Air Philippines Corp., and Cebgo, Inc. Airlines have earlier announced cost-cutting measures and retrenchment programs, as operations have been affected by travel curbs. — **Beatrice M. Laforga** with inputs from **Charmaine A. Tadalán**



# Revival of mining pushed

By [Angela Celis](#) -October 8, 2020



*A view of nickel-ore mine SR Metals in Tubay, Agusan del Sur. (Reuters file photo)*

The Department of Finance (DOF) is pushing for the revival of the mining industry for job generation, while also eyeing to privatize mining assets.

Carlos Dominguez, DOF secretary, said at the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry's 46th Philippine Business Conference and Expo yesterday the DOF is working closely with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau to push mining to open again.

"The mining industry provides jobs in areas where there are no other alternative jobs," Dominguez said.

In July, the DENR said some mines shut down by the previous leadership of the agency have been allowed to reopen after complying with corrective measures.

Dominguez said he has asked the Privatization Management Office (PMO) to work on the privatization of state mining assets after complete review of the mining assets held by the government.

"I have asked them to push the revival, the privatization of Nonoc mines, of Basay mines and all the other mines that are held by the government," he added.

Listed under the PMO's "assets for sale" in its website are mining claims on Basay Mining Corp., Hercules Minerals and Oils Inc., Marinduque Mining and Industrial Corp. and Nonoc Mining and Industrial Corp., with the latter also including machineries and equipment located in Surigao.

In the same event, Dominguez said government is willing to provide assistance to the airline industry, which has been reeling from the impact of the corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

But he noted private banks are expected to shoulder a big chunk of the support.

"We are in deep discussions with them and we are prepared to participate in the assistance to the airline industry. Whatever assistance we have or we are going to provide will be part only of the entire process. The private sector banks have to cough up majority of the assistance," he said, adding "government does not want to end up owning airlines."



“They have prepared at least four or five plans for their finances,” he added.

Dominguez expressed confidence that the country could regain its growth momentum by next year should the government and businesses work together to revive consumer confidence and domestic demand.

“On the part of the government, I can assure you that we will continue to maintain a pro-business environment for our enterprises to prosper. Together, we will overcome the challenges of this year and provide our people the inclusive economy they deserve,” Dominguez said. (A. Celis)



## Debt-laden government eyes privatization of mines

By [Bernadette D. Nicolas](#)

October 8, 2020



*An environmental management staff member from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, dressed in protective gear, takes water samples from one of its stations on Manila Bay on Roxas Boulevard. The department's Environmental Monitoring and Enforcement Division regularly conducts water quality sampling and monitoring of the bay in all its identified outfalls, including tributaries leading to it, as part of the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program.*

THE Department of Finance is eyeing the privatization of mines held by the government to raise more revenues as the country is still grappling with the impact of the pandemic.

Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez said on Wednesday he has already asked the Privatization Management Office (PMO) to push for the privatization of the Nonoc and Basay mines, among other mining assets of the government.

“In fact, just a few days ago, we had a complete review of the mining assets held by the government through the Privatization Management Office and I have asked them to push the privatization of Nonoc mines, of Basay mines and all the other mines held by the government,” Dominguez said during the 46th Philippine Business Conference by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the country’s largest business organization.

He also said he has been pushing for the revival of the mining industry “because they provide good jobs in the rural areas.”

He added, “We are also working with the DENR [Department of Environment and Natural Resources] and MGB [Mines and Geosciences Bureau] to push mining to open again.”

Sought to clarify how much would be raised from the planned privatization of mines, Dominguez told reporters: “Valuations are being updated.”

Dominguez’s remark comes just almost a week after he expressed readiness to work on the privatization of gaming activities of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (Pagcor) and Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) to generate more funds for the government.

Instead of the government imposing new taxes to shore up funds, Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon urged the government to privatize the gaming industry and sell public assets such as Camp Aguinaldo and Camp Crame.

### Need to pay debts

Dominguez earlier told the Senate that by late 2021 or early 2022 they “will start looking at additional revenues to pay for the heavy indebtedness that we are incurring this year.”



By the end of this year, the national government expects its outstanding debt to reach P10.16 trillion, up by 31.42 percent from last year's amount.

As of end-August, the country's debt stock has already swelled to P9.6 trillion as it secures more borrowings to finance its spending needs amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

For this year, gross borrowings of the national government from January to August have also reached P2.47 trillion, equivalent to more than 80 percent of the all-time-high P3-trillion borrowing program set by the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) this year amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Attracting investments

ON the same forum, Dominguez also took a swipe at the Board of Investments—the investments promotion arm of the Department of Trade and Industry—for not doing its job to proactively bring in investments into the country.

Under the proposed Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises bill (CREATE), Dominguez said they even gave the BOI the ability to tailor-fit the incentives for a particular industry.

Dominguez said the BOI should identify the industries that the country wants and offering them packages of incentives rather than passively waiting for investments to come, which he said is “not the role of BOI.”

According to the DOF chief, “I said the most important thing is to directly talk to these companies who have the potential of moving out and offer them [package of incentives]. Unfortunately, and you know I don't want to criticize the BOI or anything, but the BOI does not see itself as a marketing organization. They do not identify which industry should come in,” he said.

If passed into law, the CREATE bill will bring down corporate income tax to 25 percent, from 30 percent, on one hand. On the other hand, it will rationalize incentives, including the 5-percent tax on gross income earned paid in lieu of all local and national taxes, granted to investors.

Image credits: [Roy Domingo](#)



## Finance bares plan to sell state-owned mining assets

posted October 07, 2020 at 09:40 pm

by [Julito G. Rada](#)

The Department of Finance said Wednesday it plans to revive the mining industry by privatizing the mining assets held by the government.

Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III said during the 46th Philippine Business Conference held online that reviving the mining industry would raise more export and tax revenues.

“Just a few days ago, we had a complete review of the mining assets held by the government through the Privatization Management Office. And I have asked them to really push the revival, the privatization of Nonoc Mines, of Basay Mines and all the other mines that are held by the government,” Dominguez said.

PMO is an agency under the DOF tasked to oversee the government’s privatization program.

Dominguez responded to the question on how the government could raise additional tax revenues, especially as tax receipts from Philippine offshore gaming operators were declining because a number of the Pogo firms started leaving the country.

“Definitely, we are pushing for the revival of the mining industry. As I keep on mentioning, the mining industry provides jobs in areas where there are no other alternative jobs,” he said.

Dominguez said the DOF was working closely with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau on the issue.

Nonoc Mining and Industrial Corp. owns a nickel mine in Surigao City. San Miguel Corp. in 2012 proposed to reopen the Nonoc nickel mine.

Basay Mining Corp. owns a copper mine site partly owned by the government in Basay, Negros Oriental that ceased operations in 1984.

The DENR announced in July 2020 its intention to reopen some of the closed mining sites to help the government raise revenues amid the pandemic.

Meanwhile, Dominguez said he wanted private banks to participate in extending assistance to the airline industry, which is one of the sectors badly hit by the pandemic.

He said while the government was prepared to participate in the assistance to the industry, private banks should do their share.

“Let me point out that whatever assistance we have, or we are going to provide will be part of the entire process. The private banks have to cough up the majority of the assistance,” Dominguez said.

“I don’t want to be in a position... because the government is not in a good position to evaluate credit risks. So we will rely on the participation of private banks,” he said.

Dominguez said “the government does not want to end up owning airlines.”





# Dominguez bats for revival of mining industry to generate jobs

Warren de Guzman, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 07 2020 12:44 PM



Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III during a press briefing at the Imperial Palace Botique Hotel in Seoul, Republic of Korea on June 5, 2018. *Alfred Frias, Malacanang Photo/File*

MANILA - Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III said Wednesday the mining industry in the country must be revived to generate jobs especially in rural areas.

During the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry's 46th Philippine Business Conference & Exposition, Dominguez also called out the Board of Investments of the Trade Department for not doing enough marketing to bring in more businesses leaving China.

"Definitely we are pushing for the revival of the mining industry. Mining provides jobs in areas where there are no other alternative jobs. So we are pushing for the revival of the mining industry because they provide good jobs in rural areas," Dominguez said.

"We are also working very closely with DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) and MGB (Mines and Geosciences Bureau) to really push mining to open again," he said.

Former DENR Secretary [Gina Lopez](#) targetted illegal mining activities in the country during her short stint in office.

Mining operations have also been hampered by coronavirus restrictions. However, a recent directive released by the Department of Trade and Industry has allowed the sector to operate at 100 percent capacity.

## FOREIGN INVESTMENTS

Dominguez also called out the Bureau of Investments for not doing enough marketing to encourage companies moving out of China to transfer to the Philippines.

Dominguez said the BOI should talk directly to these companies to help them set-up shop in the country. The CREATE bill, which intends to lower corporate income taxes, could help them, he said.

"What are trade attaches doing, have they identified companies moving out of China. I said the most important thing is to talk directly to these companies. I do not want to criticize the BOI but the BOI does not see itself as a marketing organization," he said.

The BOI should identify which companies should come in, especially in industries that still do not have a presence here, he said.

"Why doesn't the BOI go out and say this is the industry we want to come in...BOI should go out and say these companies are the ones we want to come in," Dominguez said.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/business/10/07/20/dominguez-bats-for-revival-of-mining-industry-to-generate-jobs>



## Mindoro Oriental bans mining

By Joe V.C. Laurente

October 8, 2020

**CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro:** The Sangguniang Panlalawigan (Provincial Board) has approved and passed a 25-year moratorium on large scale mining and a ban on small scale mining for 15 years.

Believing that achieving development should not be at the expense of the environment, the 10th Sangguniang Panlalawigan upheld the propriety and legality of Provincial Ordinance 001-2002 the moratorium of mining in the province.

Presiding officer and Vice Gov. Antonio S. Perez Jr., who also authored the resolution, said that the approval of the resolution of all the members of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan during its 59th regular session on Monday, October 5) is “a reiteration of the stand of the members of the board and a reflection of the over-all sentiment of Mindoro residents against mining in the province.

“Gayunpaman, ang Sangguniang Panlalawigan ay kailanma’y hindi humahadlang sa mga programang pangkaunlaran para sa Oriental Mindoro. Bagkus, kaagapay ang lahat ng mga miyembro nito sa pagpapasa ng mga ordinansa at resolusyon na magbibigay ng kaganapan sa mga adhikain ng nasyunal at mga local na pamahalaan ukol dito (The Provincial Board is not opposing development, we are one in fulfilling the advocacy of the national and local governments regarding this),” Perez said in a statement sent via SMS to the Manila Times.

With the resolution, it is the intention of the board members to ensure the security of the rich natural resources of the province for the benefit of the next generation of Oriental Mindoro, Perez added.

The 25-year mining moratorium was passed during the 4th Provincial Board amidst the application of then Mindex Mining Corporation, a Canadian-owned mining firm for a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The company had since then changed management until today with Intex Minerals ASA. They are applying for an exploration and production permit to more than 9,700 hectares of mountainous area in the central portion of Mindoro Island.

The small-scale mining moratorium meanwhile, was passed in 2013 after the onslaught of several typhoons during that year capped by Typhoon Yolanda in November that inundated parts of the province’s mountain areas blamed on mining and quarry operations in the province.



# NAKAAMBANG KAKULANGAN SA TUBIG HANGGANG 2022 PINANGANGAMBAHAN

written by [Lyn Aurora Legarteja](#) October 8, 2020



Nagbabala ang National Water Resources Board (NWRB) sa posibleng water supply shortage sa Metro Manila at kalapit na mga probinsya hanggang 2022.

Sa isang panayam, sinabi ni NWRB Executive Director Dr. Seville David Jr., hamon ngayon ang pagkakaroon ng stable na suplay ng tubig dahil sa patuloy na pagtaas ng populasyon sa bansa.

Bukod dito, tumataas din aniya ang demand sa tubig gayong mayorya ng mga tao ay nasa bahay lamang bunsod ng pandemyang COVID-19.

Aniya, sakaling hindi maka-recover ang Angat dam ay hindi malayong makaranas muli ng water shortage sa Metro Manila, Bulacan, Rizal at Cavite hanggang sa 2022.

Gayunman, nagdedevelop na aniya ngayon ang pamahalaan ng mga karagdagang suplay ng tubig upang hindi lamang sa Angat dam aasa ang mga consumer.

Una nang nagbawas ang NWRB ng alokayson ng tubig sa Metro Manila at ilang karatig na lugar dahil sa pagbaba ng lebel ng tubig sa Angat dam.



# Angat Dam water still below normal level — NWRB

**Published** October 7, 2020 4:38pm

By JOVILAND RITA, GMA News

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) targets a water level of 212 meters in Angat Dam by the end of the year to ensure sufficient supply in Metro Manila in 2021, executive director Dr. Sevillo David said Wednesday.

David told GMA News Online that the normal water allocation of 46 cubic meters per second (m<sup>3</sup>/s) in Metro Manila can still be maintained, which is vital amid the pandemic.

“We have to closely monitor the situation for any significant changes and conserve water to attain targeted end of the year level of around 212 meters to have sufficient water for next year until summer,” he said.

As of 6 a.m. on Wednesday, David said the water level in Angat Dam is recorded at 178.17 meters. This is still below the dam’s minimum operating level of 180 meters.

For October, the NWRB **reduced** the water allocation of Metro Manila from the regular allocation of 46 m<sup>3</sup>/s to 44 m<sup>3</sup>/s.

David noted that the state weather bureau PAGASA projected above normal **rainfall** for the last quarter of 2020 and early months of 2021 due to the onset of La Niña.

With this, David said near normal to above normal rainfall is expected to improve the water level in Angat Dam.—**LDF, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/758844/ang-at-dam-water-still-below-normal-level-nwr-b/story/>



# 16 academic institutions tapped to assist LGUs on climate change action plan

Published October 7, 2020, 12:26 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has tapped 16 academic institutions to provide technical assistance to their respective local government units (LGUs) on the development of Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAP).



(CCC / MANILA BULLETIN)

CCC has slated several sessions this month for the Accelerated Climate Action and Transformation (ACT) online conference to orient representatives of 16 higher education institutions (HEIs) on climate science, issues, vulnerabilities, and risks, as part of the agency's Communities for Resilience (CORE): Convergence Initiative.

The participating HEIs have previously partnered with the Commission and expressed interest and support by providing technical assistance to their respective LGUs on the development of risk-informed local plans, including the LCCAP.

They are the Bulacan State University, Visayas State University, University of the Philippines Los Banos, Sulu State College, Palawan State University, Aklan State University, University of Antique, Northwestern Visayan Colleges, University of the Philippines Visayas Tacloban College, Eastern Visayas State University, Leyte Normal University, Philippine Science High School Eastern Visayas Campus, Palompon Institute of Technology, Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture, Mapua University, and Baliuag University.

The CCC-led conference will feature experts who will orient the 16 participating HEIs on climate science; CORE Initiative; Rationalized Planning System and Enhanced Local Climate Change Action Plan (ELCCAP) development; Greenhouse Gas Inventory; Climate Change Expenditure Tagging; and accessing the People's Survival Fund.

The schedule of the conference will be held every Tuesday of October (October 6, 13, 20, and 27).

The first session last Oct. 6 featured discussions from the members of the CCC's National Panel of Technical Experts, Dr. Carlos Primo David and Dr. Glenn Roy Paraso.

The ACT program aims to formalize a sustainable partnership between the national government, academe, and the private sector in providing technical and/or financial resources to LGUs on climate action.

Through this, CCC said relevant stakeholders will be capacitated to assist and contribute to efforts that will generate information, boost capacity development, promote cooperation and convergence, facilitate vertical and horizontal alignment for development planning, and access to climate financing windows toward climate resiliency.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/10/07/16-academic-institutions-tapped-to-assist-lgus-on-climate-change-action-plan/>



## ASEAN nations must finance \$3.1-trillion climate-tweaked infrastructure

By [Cai Ordinario](#)

October 8, 2020

SOUTHEAST Asian countries need to invest \$3.1 trillion for climate-adjusted infrastructure in the region by 2030 to recover from the pandemic, according to a new report from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

In the report titled *Green Finance Strategies for Post-Covid-19 Economic Recovery in Southeast Asia*, ADB said the investments are needed to develop and grow green economies and create jobs for around 650 million people.

However, ADB said these investments must be financed by innovative, environmentally sustainable, and climate-resilient financing instruments such as green and transition Covid-19 bonds, blue credits, and green securitization efforts.

“A green recovery for Southeast Asia is needed to encourage long-term, sustainable job creation in a region with more than 650 million people,” said ADB Vice President Ahmed M. Saeed, who will speak at the forum on October 9.

“It will boost equitable growth, protect the environment, and help governments meet the Paris climate agreement targets. This timely book shows how green finance can spur growth in the region and overcome the challenges of climate change and a global pandemic,” he added.

ADB said green finance refers to all financing instruments, investments and mechanisms that contribute to climate and environmental sustainability goals.

These aim to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions, boost climate resilience, and improve environmental protection, such as air and water quality, ecosystems and biodiversity.

These have been in demand given climate-change efforts are in need in regions such as Southeast Asia. For one, cities and rivers in the region are among, if not, the most visible manifestation of the impact of overusing and polluting natural capital resources.

The report said over half of the plastic entering the world’s oceans can be traced back to five growing economies, four of which—Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam—are in Southeast Asia.

It also noted that Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam ranked in the top 10 countries most affected by extreme weather due to climate change in the last 20 years, according to the Global Climate Risk Index.

With this, ADB said governments should also use green finance to build upon national green targets and programs and steer away from fossil fuel or carbon-intensive investments.



While some countries have embarked on green projects and bonds, ADB said much more needs to be done to help Southeast Asia's economies meet their large financing needs and accelerate economic recoveries in a sustainable manner.

The Philippines, ADB noted, has embarked on the Green Program which aims to provide P2.5 billion in assistance to make 145 cities more livable and sustainable.

The program is already part of the "Build, Build, Build," the national infrastructure development program of the government of the Philippines.

"[The report] aims to emphasize the critical role that such instruments can play in leveraging scarce public sector funds to mobilize green funds from all sources, such as private pension and insurance funds, commercial banks, and the capital markets. Blending such funds will be critical to Southeast Asia's recovery from Covid-19 amid the worsening infrastructure financing gap, which was at more than 60 percent before the pandemic hit," said Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Catalytic Green Finance Facility (ACGF) Unit Head Anouj Mehta.

The ACGF is an ADB-administered fund and is part of the Manila-based multilateral development bank's support for green infrastructure, including thematic bonds, national green finance vehicles, green projects, and other initiatives.

With a growing green finance market in developing Asia, ADB committed \$6.5 billion in climate finance from its own resources in 2019.

ADB aims to reach a cumulative \$80 billion from 2019 to 2030 in climate financing under its Strategy 2030, with a commitment to make 75 percent of all ADB projects climate relevant by 2030.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/10/08/asean-nations-must-finance-3-1-trillion-climate-tweaked-infrastructure/>



## 'Climate injustice'

By: [Neni Sta. Romana Cruz](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:00 AM October 07, 2020

It does sound like a doomsday scenario. Humanity consumes 1.75 earths a year, using 75 percent more resources that can be replenished. The Philippines is the country most vulnerable to natural disasters in the Asia-Pacific as of 2018. And time is running out on us as we continue to abuse natural resources.

At a recent Season of Creation lecture series sponsored by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines and Focolare, Richard B. Tantoco, president and chief operating officer of Energy Development Corp., sent out a distress call with those facts and figures. He stressed that "we are mortgaging the future we give our children if we do not take resolute action to alter the course we are on."

It was not too long ago when the call was for sustainability and corporate social responsibility. But sadly, times have radically changed, and those buzzwords are now inadequate.

While COVID-19 has disrupted our lives and now occupies much of the world's attention, it is really climate change that will be more vicious and more destructive in the coming years. Ultimately, it will also lead to further inequality among social classes. We are witnessing this in the frequency and increasing magnitude of typhoons the country is enduring. Think Ondoy in 2009, Yolanda in 2013, Urduja in 2017.

In the Global Risk Index of INFORM, a multi-stakeholder forum for developing quantitative analysis relevant to humanitarian crises and disasters, the Philippines was shown to have the highest hazard risk in Asia in 2018, followed by Japan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, China, and Indonesia. What makes the country and especially the poor most vulnerable? There's the natural hazard itself becoming more powerful with climate change; our poor institutional capacity to respond, and our poor infrastructure.

Tantoco described how climate change drives poverty. Consider these: The ones most affected are those who experience the disaster and do not have the resources or savings to resume normalcy in their lives again. Most likely, debts are incurred because of basic needs like food and medicine. Food and shelter are the expected priorities. Lamentably sacrificed is education, that great equalizer that gives the promise of a better life. As statistics reveal, college graduates earn 30 percent more at the beginning of their career than those with no degree. Yet only 23 percent of students finish college. What an impact a college degree can have on a family's poverty level — 2 percent, as against 42 percent for families with no college graduate.

This pattern is repeated again and again. "The suffering is amplified in the short term while inequality is multiplied in the long term," said Tantoco, who called the situation "climate injustice." Those sectors and countries generating the most carbon, contributing to climate change, are the least adversely affected by it, while those who do not have access to carbon-generating comforts are the most ravaged.

The world's target is to keep temperature rise to 1.5 Celsius by 2100. With this year's pandemic causing a slowdown in human and vehicular activities, an 8-percent reduction in carbon emissions is predicted. Tantoco put it in graphic terms: We would need a pandemic of COVID-19 magnitude every year until 2050 to achieve this target. Barring that horrific scenario, the world needs to reduce carbon emissions by 6 percent each year.





We have not had a sterling record as far as carbon emissions from coal power plants are concerned. We have slid in the use of renewable energy from 40 percent to 25 percent, while our use of coal has increased from 50 percent to 75 percent. Where is our sense of accountability when our people are the most at risk from the impact of climate change?

What can ordinary citizens do to pursue a regenerative way of living? Tantoco's advice: Go beyond thinking of doing less harm, and think of doing more good. Elevate one's actions. If you hurt something, repair it. Take a hard look at our habits of consumption; consume only what you really need. And, just as important, extend a hand to those who have lost their jobs and are most vulnerable to the compounding disasters of the pandemic, social inequality, and natural disasters.

\* \* \*

*Neni Sta. Romana Cruz (nenisrcruz@gmail.com) is founding director of the creative writing center, Write Things, and former chair of the National Book Development Board.*



# Water hyacinths ground Pasig River Ferry ops

By Raymond Carl Dela Cruz **October 7, 2020, 7:18 pm**



**COLLECTING WATER HYACINTHS.** A trash skimmer boat of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) collecting water hyacinths -- mistakenly called by many as water lilies -- along the Pasig River. The MMDA on Wednesday (Oct. 7, 2020) suspended indefinitely since Saturday the Pasig River Ferry Service due to the water hyacinths clogging the waterway of the Pasig River. (Photo courtesy of MMDA)

**MANILA** – The Pasig River Ferry Service (PRFS) has been suspended indefinitely since Saturday as the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) works to remove tons of water hyacinths that clog the Pasig River.

In a message on Wednesday, MMDA Assistant Secretary Celine Pialago said their personnel collect an average of 150 cubic meters or five to seven truckloads of water hyacinths per day, with no end yet in sight.

“*Ang haba ng Pasig River is 27 kilometers (km). Pero wala pa po kaming specific km kung ilan ang may water [hyacinth]. Iba-iba ang situation bawat Pasig River station (Pasig River is 27 km in length. But we don’t know yet how much is filled with water hyacinths. Each PRFS station has different situations),*” Pialago said.

She noted that most of the collected water hyacinths are sent to a drying area that can be picked up and used by local weavers to create baskets, bags, and other crafts.

“They allow LGUs (local government units) and NGOs (non-government organizations) to pick up as much as they want for their livelihood program. There’s no cost but they have to transport it themselves,” Pialago said.

Sharon Gentalian, MMDA public affairs director, said the MMDA has been collecting water hyacinths non-stop, with about 770 cubic meters collected from Oct. 1 to 6, and 7,235 cubic meters collected from July to September of this year.

The clogging of water hyacinths, an invasive aquatic plant, has been a perennial problem along the Pasig River due to the high nutrient content of its waters. (**PNA**)



# Operasyon ng Pasig River Ferry, pinigilan ng water lily

By [Danilo Garcia](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon)

- October 7, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Napilitang suspendihin ng Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) at Pasig River Ferry Service ang kanilang operasyon dahil sa napakakapal na mga water lily na sumakop na sa malaking bahagi ng Ilog Pasig ngayong tag-ulan.

“Suspended (ferry operation) po since Saturday until further notice po,” pagkukumpirma ni MMDA public information head Director Sharon Gentalian.

Ito ay dahil sa panganib na dulot ng water lily lalo na kapag kumapit na ito sa propeler at sa motor ng ferry na maaaring ikasira ng sasakyan. Nabatid na ekta-ektarya nang bahagi ng Pasig River ang sinakop ng mapaminsalang water lily na nag-umpisang dumami mula pa noong Hunyo.

“From June to November, sobrang dami po ang bilis po mag-produce ng water hyacinth during rainy season so hindi po namin kontrolado ‘yon,” ayon kay Pasig River Ferry central administration officer Irene Navera.

Hindi naman umano nagpapabaya ang MMDA na nagsasagawa ng regular na ‘clearing operations’ sa Ilog Pasig para tanggalin ang mga water lily at iba pang nakalutang na debris.

“However, hindi na enough due to large volume of water hyacinth on the river,” pag-amin naman ng MMDA sa problemang kanilang kinakaharap.

Bukod sa balakid sa maayos na biyahe ng mga ferry at mga banka, tinatangalan din ng mga water lily ng suplay ng ‘dissolve oxygen’ ang ibang nabubuhay sa ilog tulad ng mga isda, suso at iba pang napapakinabangan na lamang-tubig.



## MMDA hauls water hyacinths from Pasig River

[Marc Jayson Cayabyab](#) (The Philippine Star) - October 8, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) hauled this week 770 cubic meters of water hyacinths as the Pasig River ferry service remains suspended due to the invasive plant species.

According to the MMDA public information office, 7,235 cubic meters of water hyacinths were collected from the Pasig River from July to September.

MMDA spokesperson Celine Pialago yesterday said the agency resorted to using its one trash skimmer, backhoes and trash boats to collect the hyacinths, which choked the Napindan dockyard.

Pialago said the delivery of the MMDA's second trash skimmer was delayed due to the pandemic.

She said the agency collects an average of 150 cubic meters of water lilies daily using a trash skimmer.

The MMDA has proposed in its 2021 budget the procurement of another trash skimmer with a capability to grind the plants, Pialago said.

Pasig River ferry service administrator Irene Navera expressed hope the river would be cleared of hyacinths by next week to be able to resume operations.

A trash trap was also installed at the mouth of Laguna de Bay near the Pinagbuhatan ferry station to contain the entry of water hyacinths, Navera said.

In 2017, the ferry service was suspended for six months due to the water hyacinths.



## MMDA clears Pasig River of lilies

An average of 150 cubic meters of water lilies are being recovered daily by the agency's skimmer.

Published 5 hours ago on October 8, 2020 01:20 AM

By [Alvin Murcia](#) @tribunephil\_alvi



The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) is clearing the 27-kilometer stretch of Pasig River of water hyacinths to pave the way for the resumption of the Pasig River Ferry service.

Assistant Secretary Celine Pialago, MMDA spokesperson, said skimmers will be used to declog Napindan Channel to clear it of water lilies that prevent the smooth navigation of the ferryboats.

The operation of the MMDA's seven ferryboats was suspended indefinitely due to this occurrence.

"Pasig River is 27 kilometers long, though we don't have specific kilometers of how many of these areas have water lilies. The situation in every Pasig River station is different," Pialago said. She said an average of 150 cubic meters of water lilies are being recovered daily by the agency's skimmer.

One dump truck is equivalent to 12 cubic meters, while one long dump truck can hold 32 cubic meters. The skimmer recovers anywhere from five to seven trucks a day.

The collected water hyacinths are trucked off to a drying area, where local government units and non-governmental organizations pick them up for their livelihood programs.

She said, "There's no cost, but they have to transport it themselves."

Pialago revealed the agency has already hauled 30 truckloads of water lilies since the clearing operations started.

However, it would take some time to complete the task, because the MMDA has only one operational skimmer, she explained.

However, she expressed confidence the Pasig River would be cleared of water lilies in no time.

The water hyacinth fills up most of the Pasig River during the rainy season.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/10/08/mmda-clears-pasig-river-of-lilies/>



# BREAKING: Mga tinamaan ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas, umabot na sa 329,637

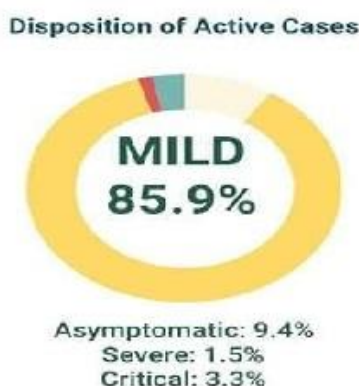
By Angellic Jordan October 07, 2020 - 04:07 PM



**2,825 newly-reported cases**

**Top Provinces by newly-announced cases**

NCR	1,031
CAVITE	243
BATANGAS	238
BULACAN	173
RIZAL	159



Note: 12 labs were not able to submit data to the COVID-19 Data Repository System (CDRS) on October 6, 2020.

f OfficialDOHgov    @DOHgovph    doh.gov.ph    (02) 894-COVID / 1555

Hindi muli lalagpas sa 2,000 ang panibagong kaso ng Coronavirus Disease o COVID-19 sa Pilipinas.

Sa huling datos ng Department of Health (DOH) bandang araw ng Miyerkules (October 7), umabot na sa 329,637 ang confirmed cases ng nakakahawang sakit sa bansa.

Sa nasabing bilang, 49,989 ang aktibong kaso.

Sinabi ng kagawaran na 2,825 ang bagong napaulat na kaso ng COVID-19 sa bansa.

85.9 porsyento sa active COVID-19 cases ang mild; 9.4 porsyento ang asymptomatic; 1.5 porsyento ang severe habang 3.3 porsyento ang nasa kritikal na kondisyon.

Nasa 60 ang napaulat na nasawi.

Dahil dito, umakyat na sa 5,925 ang COVID-19 related deaths sa bansa.

Ayon pa sa DOH, 437 naman ang gumaling pa sa bansa.

Dahil dito, umakyat na sa 273,723 ang total recoveries ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas.



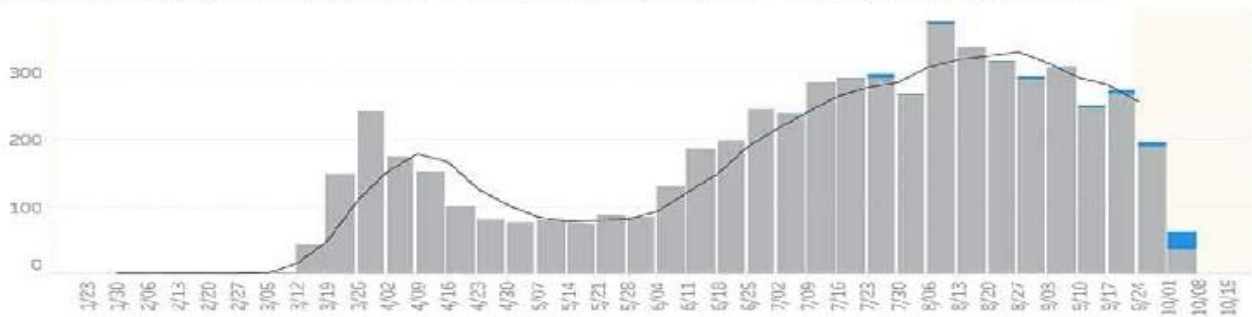
# DOH COVID-19

CASE BULLETIN # 207 | October 7, 2020



### Confirmed Deaths by Week of Death (Nationwide)

■ Reported on October 7, 2020 ■ Previously Reported - 4-week Moving Average



\* 14 cases were previously tagged as recoveries but upon further validation have been removed from the list of recoveries.

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## WHO hopeful vaccine out by end of the year

posted October 08, 2020 at 01:10 am

by [Willie Casas](#)

The head of the World Health Organization remains hopeful that a vaccine to protect the public against the highly-infectious coronavirus may be ready before the end of 2020.

“There is hope that by the end of this year, we may have a vaccine. There is hope,” Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in final remarks to the WHO’s Executive Board on Tuesday (Wednesday in Manila).

Ready, however, does not necessarily mean the vaccine will be available immediately in the Philippines. The country’s regulatory agency sees that the vaccine may be ready only by April 2021 — if everything goes as planned.

Food and Drug Administration Director General Eric Domingo has said that this timeline is the “best case scenario” if clinical trials, including the WHO Solidarity Trial, will be completed in the shortest time possible.

Domingo added that this is only possible if the manufacturers pass all the requirements and submit proper documents to Philippine agencies.

For Secretary Fortunato dela Peña of the Department of Science and Technology, the “very early forecast” is the second quarter of 2021.

Dr. Socorro Escalante, COVID-19 incident manager of the WHO Western Pacific region, mentioned the same timeline as the DOST Chief, but said the COVID-19 vaccine could come in as late as the end of 2021.

### Funds set aside for 20m poorest

Malacañang said Wednesday it has set aside funds to buy a vaccine against COVID-19 for the 20 million poorest Filipinos if it becomes ready by yearend, as the World Health Organization hopes.

“We have set aside the budget for COVID-19 vaccine. We know the mechanism,” Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque told government-run PTV.

“We will buy 2 dosages each for our 20 million poorest compatriots. The poor will come first,” he added.

The Philippine International Trading Corp will buy the vaccine, which will be financed by the LandBank and the Development Bank of the Philippines, Roque said.

The government has allotted an initial budget of P2.4 billion for COVID-19 vaccines, the Department of Health said earlier.

WHO Director-General Ghebreyesus on Tuesday called for solidarity and political commitment by all leaders to ensure equal distribution of vaccines when they become available.

Nine experimental vaccines are in the pipeline of the WHO’s COVAX global vaccine facility that aims to distribute 2 billion doses by the end of 2021.

### PH ready for vaccine trials

The Department of Health (DOH) on Wednesday assured the public the country can immediately start COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials as soon as the WHO initiates the so-called Solidarity Trial.

“We are finalizing our preparatory activities already. So that when WHO signals that we start we are already ready for these trials,” Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said during a virtual briefing.

She said the study proponent from the University of the Philippines’ Philippine General Hospital already submitted a clinical trial protocol, which has already been approved.





“Clinical trial sites in the Philippines have also been identified, together with the WHO. This was studied. There are criteria set to determine which sites will be included in the clinical trial process,” Vergeire said.

More flexible ‘NAP 3’ plan: Galvez

The government will intensify the fight against COVID-19 through proactive case surveillance as well as the Oplan Kalinga’s isolation strategy under the third phase of the National Action Plan (NAP Phase 3).

During a Laging Handa public briefing on Tuesday, National Policy against Covid-19 chief implementer, Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr., said the implementation of NAP Phase 3 will focus on preventing the spike of Covid-19 cases while increasing recovery rate and lowering the mortality rate posed by the disease.

“Here in NAP Phase 3, it is important that we continue the success that we achieved in the last six months,” Galvez, also the presidential peace adviser, said.

The government will also impose stricter health standards within workplaces and business establishments, Galvez said.

“We will also strengthen the healthcare system with the help of several interventions under the PDITR [Prevention-Detection-Isolation-Treatment-Reintegration] strategy,” Galvez said.

‘Undermined by simplification, drama—expert’

Efforts to curb COVID-19 in the Philippines are undermined by President Rodrigo Duterte’s simplification and dramatization of the crisis, an expert said Wednesday.

Discussing his study on Duterte’s pandemic response, Dr. Gideon Lasco, senior lecturer at the University of the Philippines Diliman’s department of anthropology, in an interview on ANC, said that Duterte employed a political style called medical populism often used in health emergencies.

“Leaders tend to dramatize their responses to the pandemic to show they are in command, to show they are doing something about it,” Lasco said on ANC’s “Matters of Fact.”

To illustrate his point, Lasco said the septuagenarian president offered “common sense” solutions or quick fixes to a complex problem.



## EDITORIAL - Airborne transmission

(The Philippine Star) - October 8, 2020 - 12:00am

With analysts seeing a deeper economic contraction for the country this year, President Duterte is expected to discuss with his Cabinet next week the reopening of the economy even as the COVID pandemic rages with no vaccine or cure available.

People are going hungry and millions have lost their jobs and livelihoods, and economic activities need to resume. Seven months is a long time to lose one's source of income. As other countries that reopened earlier are showing, however, the coronavirus can resurge, causing more illnesses and deaths and forcing a return to crippling lockdowns.

In discussing economic reopening, policy makers must factor in a report this week from the US Centers for Disease Control. In an advisory on Monday, the CDC confirmed that aerosolized transmission of the coronavirus is possible, and that under "limited, uncommon circumstances," the virus can infect someone six feet away, or linger for hours even after the spreader has already left the space. Researchers report that aerosolized transmission has occurred when infected people shout, sing, or even talk and breathe heavily while exercising.

These reports add urgency to compliance with the basic health protocols for preventing virus transmission: wearing masks and physical distancing. Researchers have already pointed out that the three days of easing of distancing rules on public transportation last month led to a jump in new COVID cases.

Health experts cannot emphasize enough that wearing face masks properly – meaning with the mouth and nose covered, and with no vent in the mask – protects the wearer from catching the virus, and minimizes the risk of transmission.

People have gotten used to wearing masks in public, and are getting used to adding a face shield. Physical distancing, however, remains a challenge as more businesses reopen. The CDC advisory merits bearing in mind. While there is undoubtedly a need to reopen more sectors of the economy, no one can afford to disregard the basic health protocols.



## TRABAHANTE TAYO NG MAMAMAYAN; HUWAG MAGKORAP – DIGONG



October 7, 2020 @ 3:11 PM 16 hours ago

TRABAHANTE tayo ng mamamayan, magtrabaho lang tayo!

Huwag magkorap!

Ito lang ang sinasabi ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa lahat ng itinatalaga niya sa pwesto na nasaksihan ng Ultimatum.

Simple ngunit tagos sa dibdib.

Tagos sa dibdib dahil siya mismo ang gumagawa ng kanyang mga habilin.

Sino ang hindi susunod?

### NAKASENTRONG SA TAUMBAYAN

Sa mga kontrobersya, higit na kapakanan ng taumbayan kaysa ano pa man ang malinaw na inaalala ng Pangulo, lalo na sa oras ng krisis o kagipitan.

Isa sa pinakahuli rito ang Beep card para sa EDSA busway na pilit na pinababayaran ng mga kompanyang may-ari nito sa mga pasahero.

Halagang P80 ang nasabing card ngunit dapat na magbayad ang pasahero ng dagdag na P100 para sa pamasahe nito.

Pero kung ang P100 ay nagamit na at may natitirang P65 na load ng Beep Card, stop na ang biyahe ng pasahero.

Kailangang magdagdag ang pasahero ng load ngunit magbabayad siya ng P5 para rito.

Ayon sa mga komyuter, napakabigat ang paunang P180 sa gitna ng krisis sa kita ng mga pasahero bunsod ng coronavirus disease-19 at inireklamo ang patakarang ito na ayaw pakinggan ng mga may-ari ng Beep card.

Dito na umentra si Pang. Digong at iniutos na agad gawing libre ang card.

Paglililaw ng Pangulo, normal na magbayad ng pasaha ang mga pasahero at hindi ito libre.



Sa totoo lang, hindi lang ang P80 Beep card ang pabigat kundi ang pagtaas din ng pasahe upang hindi malugi ang mga pampublikong sasakyan na kakaunti ang pasahero dahil sa pagpapairal ng social distancing laban sa COVID-19.

Pero sa kabuuan, malaking kaginhawaan ang libreng Beep card na kung hindi nasawata ng Pangulo ay hindi makukuha nang hindi dudukot sa bulsa ang pasahero ng P180.

Pero teka, anak tokwa, ano itong gusto ng mga may-ari ng Beep card na P25,000 lang ang ibibigay nilang libre?

## **KATAKOT-TAKOT NA PANINIRA**

Sa kabila ng pagsusumikap ng Pangulo at ng kanyang administrasyon na magkaroon ng mga pagbabago, kasama ang pagkabuwag ng korapsyon sa bisa ng pagsibak sa mga malinaw na korap at ng kahit kaunting ginhawa ang mamamayan, naririyang pa rin ang mga katakot-takot na paninira ng mga kritiko.

Halimbawa, pinalalabas na puno't dulo ang Pangulo at administrasyon nito ang mga korapsyon sa PhilHealth kahit ang totoo'y nagsimula sa mga naninira o kritiko mismo ang napakalalang problema gaya ng pagkabuo ng P15 bilyong maiskam na Interim Reimbursement Mechanism na nilikha nila noong 2013 na panahon ni Noynoy.

Pinalalabas din nilang masama sa kalikasan at paglustay lang ng salaping bayan ang pagbuhay at paglilinis ng Manila Bay sa paggamit ng dolomite na isa sa mga sangkap dito at nakalilimutan nilang sa kanilang napakahabang panahon ng panunungkulan, naging pasama nang pasama ang lawa sa itinatapong lason, basura at iba pa.

Pilit din nilang pinalalabas na higit na masama ang pagkakaroon ng ilang kamatayan sa mga sangkot sa droga kaysa pagsagip ng milyones na Filipinong naging adik na gawa ng mga nagpapakalat ng droga.

Ipinagdirin din ng mga ito ang malaking kabiguan umano ng pamahalaang Duterte sa pakikipaglaban sa COVID-19 at hindi pakikinig sa kanilang mga panukala at ginagawa na siyang higit umanong epektibo laban pandemya.

## **NAGKAGULATAN**

Sa huli, nagkagulatan ang lahat sa panibagong pagbibigay ng grado ng mamamayan sa mga performance o pagganap ng tungkulin at pagtitiwala sa mga lider ng bansa.

Lalong tumaas ang grado ng Pangulo sa 91% sa performance at pagtitiwala mula sa 87% sa huling sarbey na isinagawa ng Pulse Asia noong Disyembre 2019.

Nakuha naman ni Senate President Vicente Sotto III ang gradong 84% para sa performance at 79% para sa pagtitiwala at ni Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano ang 70% at 67%, ayon sa pagkakasunod.

Nakakuha naman si Vice President Leni Robredo ng mga alanganing grado na 57 para sa performance at 50 para sa pagtitiwala at naungusan lang nito si Chief Justice Diosdado Peralta na mababa ang grado dahil hindi ito gaanong kilala kaya may gradong 44 sa performance at 39 sa pagtitiwala.



Katwiran ng mga kritiko, naging mataas ang grado ng Pangulo dahil umaga, tanghali at hapon ang mga press release na naglalabas ng mga magaganda umanong nagagawa nito, bukod pa umano ang paninira rin mismo ng mga pro-Digong laban kay Robredo.

Sa kabilang banda, inosente ba ang mga kritiko sa kanilang mga bintang ng paninira at nagkulang ba sila sa paglalabas ng mga balita sa maghapon ukol sa nagagawa nilang pawang magaganda?

Ang masasabi natin, mga Bro, huwag maliitin ang mga mamamayan sa kanilang kaalaman, kamalayan, pananaw at paninindigan sa pagbibigay nila ng karampatang pagkilala sa mga ginagawa at pagtitiwala sa mga lider ng bansa.

Malamang kaysa hindi na ang karanasan o kalagayan nila sa buhay na konektado sa mga ginagawa ng mga lider ng bansa ang kabilang sa mga pangunahing pinaghuhugutan nila ng desisyon na magbigay ng grado at hindi sa mga paninira o propaganda laban sa isa't isa.

Pinakamahalaga siguro, ramdam ng mga mamamayan ang sinseridad ng Pangulo sa mapagkumbabang pagsasabi na trabahante lang siya ng mga mamamayan at sinasabayan naman nina Sotto at Cayetano.



# Refresher: Why reviving the Bataan Nuclear Plant is controversial

By Catalina Ricci S. Madarang

- October 7, 2020 - 5:11 PM



This December 19, 2011 photo from Wikimedia Commons shows Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. (Jiru27 / CC BY-SA via <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>)

The **Bataan Nuclear Power Plant** has been one of the most controversial construction projects in Philippine history, and plans for it to run have been revived.

President Rodrigo Duterte recently ordered public consultations with residents of Bataan province on whether they would approve of the reopening of the plant, constructed in 1976 but has not run even for a day.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque bared the details of Duterte's meeting with Environment Secretary **Alfonso Cusi** on October 1.

“Ibalik sa ground level, tatanungin ang taumbayan ng Bataan kung ano ba talagang gusto nila. Hindi pupuwede na sa taas nanggagaling ang desisyon. Iyon pala iyong statement ng Presidente na dapat i-share ko lalung-lalo na sa aking mga kababayan dito sa Bataan. Tayo daw po ang unang konsultahin kung mabubuksan muli ang Bataan Nuclear Power Plant,” Roque said.

The national government had been considering the possibility of using nuclear energy as a power source for years.

Last July, Duterte signed **Executive Order 116** that created an inter-agency committee tasked to assess the feasibility of operating the nuclear plant.

This 11-member committee will comprise officials from the energy, science, finance, foreign affairs and environment departments. Members will also represent the **National Economic and Development Authority**.

This EO required the committee to submit an initial report by January 2021. There were several reasons why the property has remained a 30-year-old dud.

In February 1986, late dictator **Ferdinand Marcos'** dark regime collapsed. The Chernobyl disaster, considered the worst nuclear accident in history, also took place in northern Ukraine in April.

In 2011, an earthquake in Japan caused a leak in the country's old Fukushima nuclear plant. This revived concerns over the Bataan plant.



## Concerns and fears

In a video posted on October 2 on Facebook, Bataan Rep. **Geraldine Roman** opposed the reopening of the Bataan NPP due to safety and environmental risks.

The position, she said, is based on a small online survey among her constituents.

Sen. **Risa Hontiveros** and Bishop **Ruperto Santos** of Balanga also [opposed](#) the rehabilitation of the BNPP.

### 1. Safety risks

The past decades that the plant was not being used may have left the facility in a poor condition. Roman said there could be a greater risk of a radioactive leakage.

“Baka obsolete na ang kanyang technology. Baka may mga cracks and fissures na yan. And of course, pag merong ganon, if there’s a slightest risk of danger para sa aking mga kababayan dito sa Orani and of course para sa aming mga nakatira and bahagi ng komunidad ng mga Bataeño, ay syempre di naman po ako papayag,” the lawmaker said.

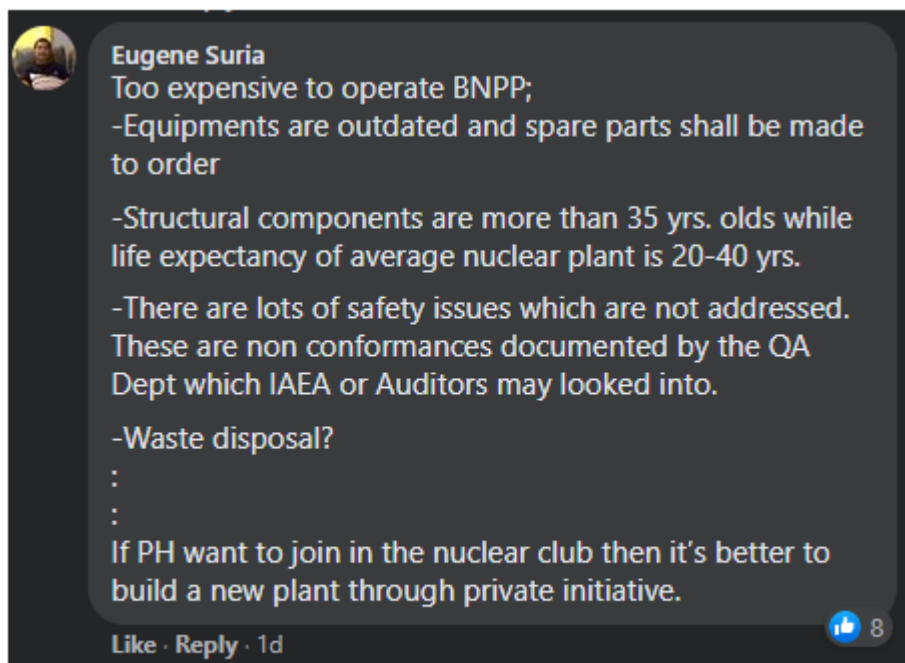
However, by the end of the video, Roman still expressed willingness to listen to more discussions about the matter.

### 2. The costs

Sen. **Risa Hontiveros**, meanwhile, raised concerns to the additional costs the government have to invest should the BNPP restart its operations again.

“Reviving BNPP will pose greater risks and costs on the environment as well as in the health and livelihood of our people,” Hontiveros [said](#).

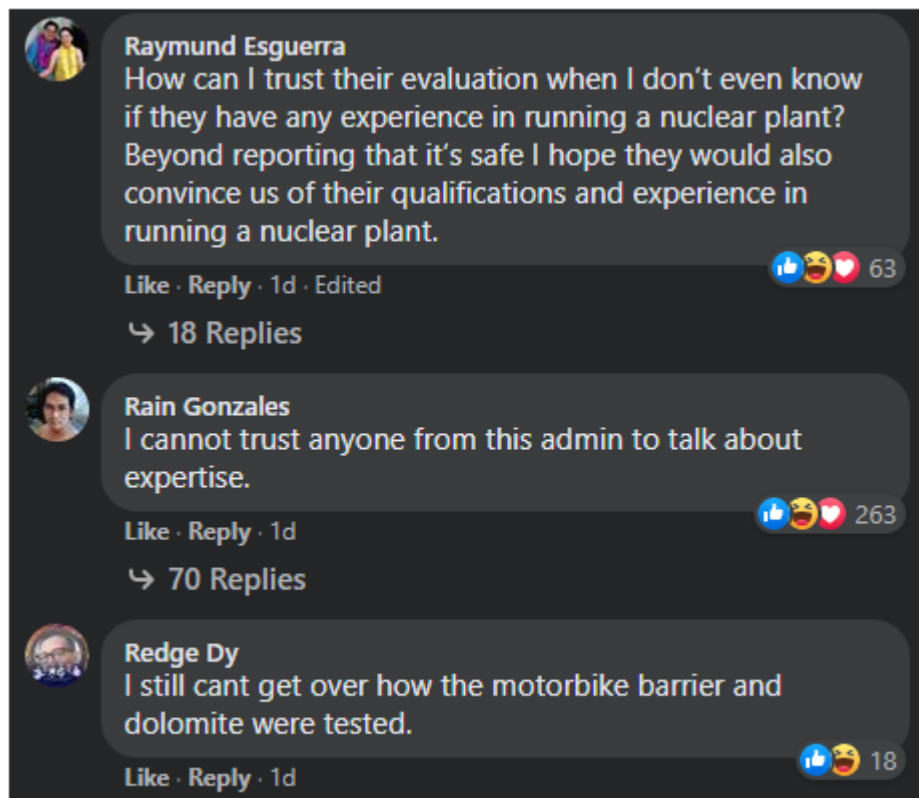
This was also echoed by some Filipinos who noted on the large amount of money needed for the facility’s rehabilitation.





### 3. *Lack of expertise and mismanagement*

Several questions on social media are raised about on whether the Duterte administration is capable of managing the age-old property given past issues that suggested its lack of credibility in dealing with technical matters and procedures.



Screenshot by Interaksyon





File photo

The STAR/Andy Zapata Jr.

## Cloudy skies, scattered rains due to LPA, southwest monsoon

[Christian Deiparine](#) (Philstar.com) - October 7, 2020 - 10:32am

MANILA, Philippines—State weather bureau PAGASA said it is monitoring a low pressure area seen to bring scattered rains in different parts of the country on Tuesday.

In its early morning forecast, the agency said the LPA was last spotted at 320 kilometers in Daet, Camarines Sur.

Cloudy skies and rains, strengthened by the Habagat or southwest monsoon, are expected in Metro Manila, Central Luzon, CALABARZON, Mimaropa, as well as in Western and Central Visayas.

PAGASA has also raised the Yellow warning in Cavite, Laguna and Rizal, which means flooding is possible in low-lying areas.

Light to moderate rains are expected in Bataan, Bulacan and Pampanga over the next three hours.

Metro Manila, Batangas and Quezon Province may also see light to moderate with occasional heavy rains which may persist within the next few hours.

State weather forecasters are also monitoring a tropical storm outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility with the international name Chan-hom.

It was last seen at 1,600 kilometers northeast of extreme Northern Luzon but with reduced chances of entering the country.

PAGASA had announced on October 2 the onset of La Niña in the country which will drag on until March 2021, where "near to above normal rainfall conditions" may be experienced beginning this month.

It has a 75% chance of developing into a full-blown La Niña and is seen to bring five to eight tropical cyclones with most expected to make landfall.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/10/07/2047826/cloudy-skies-scattered-rains-due-lpa-southwest-monsoon>



# Pandemic downturn offers path to address climate change – IMF

By [Agence France-Presse](#)

October 7, 2020

**WASHINGTON, D.C.:** The global downturn caused by the coronavirus pandemic offers an opportunity for governments to implement new policies that could simultaneously address climate change and boost the economy, the International Monetary Fund said on Wednesday.

The right mix of carbon taxes to dampen consumption, and subsidies to help consumers and boost green technology research could create jobs and soften the blow as countries transition to greener energy sources, the IMF said in its World Economic Outlook.

“Fiscal stimulus — which will likely be needed in the aftermath of the pandemic — can be an opportunity to boost green and resilient public infrastructure,” the report said.

IMF research showed there is still time to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 but the window “is closing rapidly,” and advanced economies alone cannot reach the goal. “Joint action by the largest economies is critical to avoid the worst outcomes of climate change,” the fund said, singling out fast-growing countries like India.

“An initial green investment push combined with initially moderate and gradually rising carbon prices would deliver the needed emission reductions” while rebates or subsidies to low income households would soften the blow from higher energy prices, according to the proposal.

Most of the costs are offset by the expected 120 percent growth in global GDP by 2050, and by the absence of negative impacts that climate change is likely to have, including on the health of populations due to worsening pollution. AFP



## Efforts to achieve climate target to pay off – EU

ByXinhua

October 8, 2020

**BRUSSELS:** Energy ministers of the European Union (EU) agreed on Tuesday (Wednesday in Manila) that the new climate target of cutting at least 55 percent of carbon dioxide emissions by 2030, compared to 1990 levels, demands lots of efforts but the efforts will ultimately pay off.

The consensus was reached at an informal ministerial meeting convened by German Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy Peter Altmaier and European Commissioner for Energy Kadri Simson to discuss the target set by the European Commission.

Addressing a press conference following the meeting, Altmaier and Simson highlighted that the EU had already made lots of progress regarding the green transition, and that it was time to switch gears for a more ambitious target.

“The European Commission’s proposal was widely expected and welcomed,” said Simson. But EU member states expressed their worries about the impact on competitiveness brought up by the new target. Altmaier said the economies need to be supported as the transition is in progress.

An assessment showed that the necessary investments and efforts to achieve the green transition will eventually pay off in terms of job creation, competitiveness and growth, according to Simson, who added that green hydrogen could play a key role in developing climate-neutral energy and maintaining industrial competitiveness at the same time.

Reducing greenhouse gas emission by 55 percent by 2030 would “require a massive effort from everyone,” said Simson.

The commissioner said while the EU is on track and even over-delivering the 32 percent renewable share target, it was lagging behind in terms of energy efficiency. Innovation will be needed to work on this.

The EU member states have different starting points, and different kinds of efforts will be needed from them, but guidance will be provided, according to Simson.

Simson stressed the “unique opportunity” of the commission’s proposal to spend 37 percent of the Recovery and Resilience Facility on green investments, or about 250 billion euros (\$293 billion), to support the green transition.

The informal meeting of the energy ministers took place as the European Parliament’s plenary discussed the ambitious proposal of cutting emission by 55 percent by 2030 and becoming climate neutral by 2050 set by the commission’s President Ursula von der Leyen in her State of the Union speech in mid-September.

European lobbying efforts have been intensified as China announced in late September that it aims to have carbon dioxide emissions peak before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/10/08/news/world/efforts-to-achieve-climate-target-to-pay-off-eu/777722/>



# 14 million tons of microplastics on sea floor: Australian study

Agence France-Presse

Posted at Oct 07 2020 12:41 PM



A plastic bag is seen at the bottom of the sea, off the island of Andros, Greece, July 20, 2019. *Stelios Misinas, Reuters/File*

SYDNEY - The world's sea floor is littered with an estimated 14 million tons of microplastics, broken down from the masses of rubbish entering the oceans every year, according to Australia's national science agency.

The quantity of the tiny pollutants was 25 times greater than previous localized studies had shown, the agency said, calling it the first global estimate of sea-floor microplastics.

Researchers at the agency, known as CSIRO, used a robotic submarine to collect samples from sites up to 3,000 meters (9,850 feet) deep, off the South Australian coast.

"Our research found that the deep ocean is a sink for microplastics," principal research scientist Denise Hardesty said.

"We were surprised to observe high microplastic loads in such a remote location."

The scientists, who published their findings in peer-reviewed journal *Frontiers in Marine Science*, said areas with more floating rubbish generally had more microplastic fragments on the sea floor.

"Plastic pollution that ends up in the ocean deteriorates and breaks down, ending up as microplastics," study lead Justine Barrett said.

"The results show microplastics are indeed sinking to the ocean floor."

Hardesty called for urgent action to find solutions to marine plastic pollution, which affects ecosystems, wildlife and human health.

"Government, industry and the community need to work together to significantly reduce the amount of litter we see along our beaches and in our oceans," she said.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/spotlight/10/07/20/14-million-tons-of-microplastics-on-sea-floor-australian-study>