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**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



## Zero Waste Month, ika-20 taon ng Ecological Solid Waste Management Act ipagdiriwang ng DENR-EMB



January 8, 2021 @ 5:59 PM 11 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Upang ipaalala ang tamang pagtatapon ng basura ipagdiriwang ng Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ngayong Enero ang Zero Waste Month kasabay sa paggunita sa ika-20 taong anibersaryo ng Republic Act (RA) 9003 o ang Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

“Solid waste management ranks among the priority programs of the DENR especially in the context of our cleanup efforts in Manila Bay,” sabi ni Secretary Roy A. Cimatu.

“Proper disposal of solid waste will avoid the clogging of tributaries and prevent trash from being washed into the rivers and seas that affect aquatic ecosystems, livelihood and health,” ayon pa sa DENR chief.

Base pa sa DENR, isa rin sa pangunahing tinututukan ng ahensya ngayon ay ang tamang pagtatapon ng household healthcare waste dahil na rin sa COVID-19 pandemic.

Nabatid pa sa DENR na naglabas na rin ng Resolution No. 1364 series of 2020 ang National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) na pinamumunuan ng DENR Secretary na may pamagat na “Interim Guidelines on the Management of COVID-Related Health Care Waste” noong Abril 2020.

Kabilang sa sakop nito ay ang tamang pagtatapon at pangangasiwa sa lahat ng healthcare wastes na may kaugnayan sa COVID-19 mula sa mga kabahayan at iba pang pasilidad. Tinitiyak din nito ang kaligtasan at seguridad ng waste workers.



## Zero Waste Month, ika-20 taon ng Ecological Solid Waste Management Act ipagdiriwang ng DENR-EMB

Kaugnay nito, sinabi naman ni DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units (LGUs) Concerns at NSWMC Alternate Chair Benny D. Antiporda, ang tamang pangangasiwa sa solid waste ay nabibigyan na ngayon ng kaukulang pansin at prayoridad.

Aniya, patuloy rin ang mga aktibidad katuwang ang LGUs at iba pang government agencies maging ng stakeholders.

“We will shatter the notion that solid waste management is the last and the least. Its relevance to the environment, our natural resources, and well-being of the people is primary,” lahad ni Antiporda.

Ang month-long celebration ay sinimulan sa pamamagitan ng pagkakaroon ng virtual at face-to-face seminar tungkol sa pangangasiwa ng household health care wastes at special waste nitong Enero 8.

Magkakaroon naman ng lecture na Guide on the Conduct of Waste Analysis and Characterization Study (WACS) at sa gabay or guidelines sa waste to energy para sa local government units (LGUs) sa Enero 13.

Magsasagawa rin ng public consultations para sa buwan ng Enero sa posibleng listahan ng Non-Environmentally Acceptable Products (NEAP).

Kaugnay na rin ito ng RA 9003 na ang NSWMC “shall, after public notice and hearing, prepare a list of non-environmentally acceptable products as defined in the Act that shall be prohibited according to a schedule to be prepared by the Commission. The NEAP shall not be prohibited until the Commission finds there are alternatives available to consumers at a cost that is no more than ten percent (10%) greater than the disposable product.”

Bukod dito, gaganapin din ngayong buwan ang konsultasyon tungkol sa Policy on the Procedural Guidelines for the Clustering of Materials Recovery Facilities (MRF) Among LGUs to Cater Household Hazardous Wastes (HHWs) and Health Care Wastes (HCWs) in an Environmentally Sound Manner.

Kabilang sa saklaw ng “procedural guidelines” ay ang mga pasilidad na itinuturing na ligtas para sa mga front liners maging ang residential units na kasama sa “generation, management at handling” ng healthcare wastes at household hazardous wastes.

Magiging magkatuwang naman ang EMB at ang Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) sa paglunsad ng TESDA E-Learning Material on Practicing Solid Waste Management in the Workplace sa Enero 25. Ang mga gagamiting materyales dito ay binuo ng EMB-Solid Waste Management Division at ng TESDA.

Plano ng EMB na makapagbigay ng tag-isang unit ng naturang gamit sa 178 LGUs na bahagi ng Manila Bay region ngayong 2021. (Santi Celario)



## Ilocos Norte town waste recycling facility to open this year

By Leilanie Adriano January 8, 2021, 5:39 pm



**GROUNDBREAKING.** Gov. Matthew Joseph Manotoc on Friday (Jan. 8, 2021) leads the groundbreaking ceremony of the model cluster plastic recycling and recovery facility in Barangay Imelda, Marcos, Ilocos Norte. The facility will cater to the biodegradable and residual wastes generated in the second district of Ilocos Norte.

*(PNA photo by Leilanie G. Adriano)*

**MARCOS, Ilocos Norte** – Job opportunities await local residents of Marcos town as they witnessed on Friday the release of the time capsule to signal the construction of the pioneering model cluster plastic recycling and materials recovery facility here that is expected to be operational this year.

Situated in a three-hectare lot owned by the municipal government of Marcos, the facility will process all biodegradable and residual wastes generated including in the towns of Solsona, Dingras, Nueva Era, Pinili, Currimaog, Badoc, San Nicolas, Wanna, Paoay and Batac City in the second district of Ilocos Norte.

In his speech during the groundbreaking ceremony at the project site attended by the different mayors and other officials and representatives of various government line agencies, Governor Matthew Joseph urged local authorities to strengthen the waste segregation at source, which is crucial in the successful implementation of the project.

“The segregation at source is very important so I urged the mayors to strictly implement and maximize our investment in this facility,” said Manotoc.

Funded by the Environment and Management Bureau (EMB) under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the PHP25-million project will provide livelihood in the municipality of Marcos.

According to Joel Lubong, village chief of Barangay Imelda, his constituents derived their income mainly on farming but with the opening of the project, some villagers will soon be hired as laborers in the facility.



## Ilocos Norte town waste recycling facility to open this year

“We are grateful for the project and we trust that under the leadership of our governor, more livelihood opportunities will open up in our place through the facility,” said Lubong in Ilokano dialect.

While watching the release of the time capsule from afar, Emiliana Dumlao, a resident of Imelda village said she is optimistic the facility will do more good for the locals.

“During the dry season, most of us are jobless because we depend on rainwater to nurture our crops -- mostly vegetables and tobacco. They told us, they will be needing workers at the facility once it will be completed,” she said in an interview Friday.

Estrella Sacro, head of the Environment and Natural Resources Office under the Ilocos Norte government, said Friday that residents will be prioritized in the hiring of laborers for the construction of the facility and once it is fully operational.

“As of the moment, we are in need of construction workers for the construction of the housing then we will train more workers to operate the equipment which includes a sorting table, multi-purpose shredder, plain shredder, hammer mill, and the composting facility,” said Sacro.

Sacro said the facility was initiated by the provincial government because the majority of the established Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs) in the barangays are just being used as storage of mixed waste at source.

She said this happens because the barangays have limited financial capability to maintain manpower in the facility operation hence, there are no composting systems and the MRFs apparently do not serve their purpose.

Sacro hopes that with the cluster plastic recycling and materials recovery facility, the problem of solid wastes will be reduced and at the same time, generate employment for the host community.

The housing is expected to be completed by March followed by the installation of the pre-fabricated facility to operate within this year. (PNA)





## GLOBAL GOALS

# Cleanup intensifies in Tullahan River

We extracted about 600 metric tons of waste daily from the Tullahan, and at this rate, we expect to extract 100,000 metric tons in a month's time.



Published 5 hours ago

on January 9, 2021 02:30 AM

By [Elmer Navarro Manuel @tribuneph1 lmer](#)



photograph courtesy of SMC Dredging operation is now being intensified to ensure the safety of the residents near the Tullahan River.

Multinational conglomerate San Miguel Corporation (SMC) is now setting its sights to intensify its dredging operations at the Tullahan-Tinajeros River System in the first two quarters of the year before the rainy season sets in.

This is to help reduce flooding at areas near the 27 kilometer-long tributary stretching from La Mesa Dam to the Manila Bay.

It comes after SMC president and chief operating officer Ramon Ang announced that the company was able to extract 83,600 metric tons of silt and solid waste from the river in 2020, despite limitations brought on by the Luzon-wide lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The dredging complemented the flood mitigation measures implemented by the cities of Navotas and Malabon.

“We extracted about 600 metric tons of waste daily from the Tullahan, and at this rate, we expect to extract 100,000 metric tons in a month's time. The relatively dry months of January to May give us an opportunity to intensify the cleaning, deepening, and widening of the river so that more areas can avoid flooding risks during the rainy season,” Ang said.



## Cleanup intensifies in Tullahan River

Launched together with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in early 2020, the project is a P1 billion corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative of SMC to help address flooding in parts of Metro Manila and Bulacan.

SMC resumed the P1 billion dredging project in June, following the lifting of strict quarantine restrictions.

“Although we resumed only last June, we were able to gradually expand our operations even during the rainy season. By conducting operations during rainy season, we were able to immediately see the benefits of the dredging and even determine the areas where more dredging need to be done. We will cover more areas in the coming months,” Ang said.

SMC is currently dredging the initial 5.25-kilometer Tullahan River section from Barangay Tañong in Malabon City, to the mouth of the river leading to Manila Bay in Navotas City. In two years, SMC is looking to dredge a total of one million cubic meters from the Navotas-Malabon section alone.

To further increase the river’s capacity to receive the heavy volume of rain water, Ang said the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) said the Tullahan River’s depth should be increased to five meters as many parts of the river’s depth has been greatly reduced to only one to two meters.

“With Navotas and Malabon, we found out that the greater handling capacity of the Tullahan River — the result of our dredging activities — has allowed water from these cities’ pumping stations to be easily channeled to the river going to Manila Bay. This has reduced large-scale flooding in these areas even during the previous typhoons that inundated many parts of Metro Manila and Luzon,” Ang said.

The SMC chief said that to further improve dredging output, SMC is adding dump trucks and excavators and will also purchase special equipment to handle sections of the river with very shallow waters and solid riverbed.

Earlier, SMC also announced that it will employ former residents of Barangay Taliptip in Bulacan for the Tullahan dredging project to further hone their skills in preparation for its Bulacan river systems and Pasig cleanup initiatives.

These former Taliptip residents recently graduated from heavy equipment courses funded by SMC under the Technical Education and Development and Skills Authority and are looking to be employed in the upcoming construction of P740-billion Manila International Airport project.

As flood mitigation is major component of the airport construction, Ang said the former Taliptip residents who graduated from the heavy equipment courses will be utilized in the river channel improvement project for tributaries belonging to the Marilao-Meycauayan-Obando River System in Bulacan.

SMC plans to dredge, clean, widen and deepen the Alipit or Taliptip River Sta. Maria River and the Meycauayan River as part of its flood mitigation strategy for the Manila International Airport that will also benefit the whole of Bulacan.



## SMC rids Tullahan of 83,600 MT of trash and silt, to intensify cleanup before rainy season

[January 8, 2021](#) 4 min read

MANILA — San Miguel Corporation (SMC) eyes to accelerate its dredging operations at the Tullahan-Tinajeros River System in the first two quarters of the year, before the rainy season sets in to help reduce flooding at areas near the 27 kilometer-long tributary stretching from La Mesa Dam to the Manila Bay.

This, after SMC president and chief operating officer Ramon S. Ang reported that the company was able to extract 83,600 metric tons of silt and solid waste from the river in 2020, despite limitations brought on by the Luzon-wide lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The dredging complemented the flood mitigation measures implemented by the cities of Navotas and Malabon.

“We extract about 600 metric tons of waste daily from the Tullahan, and at this rate, we expect to extract 100,000 metric tons in a month’s time. The relatively dry months of January to May gives us an opportunity to intensify the cleaning, deepening, and widening of the river so that more areas can avoid flooding risks during the rainy season,” he said.

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SMC is currently dredging the initial 5.25-kilometer Tullahan river section from Barangay Tanong in Malabon City, to the mouth of the river leading to Manila Bay in Navotas City. In two years, SMC is looking to dredge a total of 1 million cubic meters from the Navotas-Malabon section alone.

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## Labella: Garbage collection is barangay's responsibility



SunStar File

**JERRA MAE LIBREA**

January 08, 2021

IT IS the job of the barangays to collect their garbage, and filing a complaint over this concern is a “cheap shot.”

This is what Cebu City Mayor Edgardo Labella had to say after Inayawan Barangay Captain Kirk Bryan Repollo filed a complaint against him and Department of Public Services (DPS) head John Jigo Dacua over the problem of uncollected garbage in Inayawan.

Labella said it is the responsibility of the village chiefs to act on the obligations mandated under the Section 10 of the Republic Act 9003 otherwise known as the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, while the City Government will only provide assistance.

Labella said, “My first comment, it coming from a lawyer, I consider it a cheap shot, a very cheap shot because it came from a lawyer.”

Repollo responded, “As a lawyer, I abide by the rule of law. Seeking refuge to tribunals by filing a case is upholding and respecting the rule of law. By his comments, somewhat it goes without saying that resorting to the Office of the Ombudsman is a cheap one.”

Repollo filed his complaint before the Ombudsman on Jan. 7, 2021 for the alleged failure of Labella and Dacua to implement some provisions under the RA 9003 and the General Welfare clause under the RA 7160 or the Local Government Code.

Labella said, “Because barangays are not supposed to file a complaint for collection of garbage because they are the ones who are primarily responsible for that in the Solid Waste Management Act.”



## Labella: Garbage collection is barangay's responsibility

Repollo said that under the same law, it mandates the City's responsibility to provide "adequate facility" for the disposal of the collected garbage, which the present administration has failed to do following the expiration of the contract between the City and the private hauler managing the transfer station in Inayawan.

Repollo said earlier that the contract between the City and the operator of the transfer station was terminated in December 2020.

The expiration of the contract forced Brgy. Inayawan to dispose of its garbage in Brgy. Binaliw, he said.

Asked why the contract was terminated and why it was not extended, Labella said he has to ask Dacua on the matter.

Reporters tried to reach Dacua a number of times, but to no avail.

Labella referred Repollo's concern to the City Legal Office.





## ‘Cheap shot move,’ Labella slams village chief over garbage issue

By: Delta Dyrecka Letigio - CDN Digital Multi-Media Reporter | January 08, 2021 - 06:08 PM



Mounds of uncollected garbage in Barangay Inayawan in Cebu City since mid-December 2020.

CEBU CITY, Philippines — Cebu City Mayor Edgardo Labella has slammed Inayawan Barangay Captain Kirk Bryan Repollo for filing charges against the city government for the uncollected garbage in their barangay.

The mayor and Department of Public Services (DPS) head, Lawyer John Jigo Dacua, have been sued for gross negligence of duty in connection with the Solid Waste Management Act over the uncollected garbage in Barangay Inayawan since mid-December 2020.

Repollo, who is a lawyer, filed the charges in the Office of the Ombudsman on January 7, 2021. The village chief is hoping for the resolution of the garbage problem.

Labella, who is also a lawyer, said the case can be considered politically motivated as Repollo is a member of the opposition party, Bando Osmeña Pundok Kauswagan (BOPK).

He said that for charges to come from a fellow lawyer, it was a cheap shot and inappropriate.

“Coming from a lawyer, it’s a very cheap shot. He is supposed to know Section 10 of Republic Act 6003 or Solid Waste Management Act, specifically and categorically mandates that it is the job of the barangays to collect the garbage,” said the mayor.

The mayor noted that all barangays have been given P3 to P10 million depending on the population for the purchase of the garbage trucks for a more efficient collection.

Labella urged Repollo to read again the Solid Waste Management Act and be reminded that the barangays have the responsibility to collect the garbage as well.

The city government has provided the necessary assistance such as third-party haulers where the garbage will be disposed, in this case, a private facility in Barangay Binaliw.



## ‘Cheap shot move,’ Labella slams village chief over garbage issue

“I have not received a complaint from other barangays of uncollected garbage. Barangays should not file complaint for collection of garbage since they are primarily responsible for the collection of garbage,” said Labella.

Still, the uncollected garbage in Barangay Inayawan should be looked into and the mayor ordered the City Legal Office to look into the liabilities of the barangay for the garbage.

The mayor said he will not file charges against the village chief in his own capacity, but has delegated the City Legal to look into the violations incurred by the barangay, which they blamed the city government for.

As for Repollo, he said that as much as the barangay has the responsibility to ensure collection is conducted, the city government must provide adequate facilities for the disposal as well.

“What happened is that, the present admin has no clear program re: Solid Waste Management. And addressing my legal move as a cheap shot.. As a lawyer, I abide by the rule of law.. Seeking refuge to tribunals by filing a case is upholding and respecting the rule of law.. By his comments, somewhat he goes without saying that resorting to the Office of the Ombudsman is a cheap one,” said the village chief in a text message.

“To a fellow lawyer who is also a City Mayor and to a fellow lawyer who is also the Head of the DPS, how can seeking legal refuge becomes a cheap move? Upholding the rule of law is the bread and butter of lawyers, and now it is a cheap shot?” added Repollo. /rcg



## Vizcaya gov still opposes Didipio

posted January 08, 2021 at 10:40 pm

by [Brenda Jocson](#)

Bayombong—Nueva Vizcaya Governor Carlos Padilla on Friday reiterated his opposition to the renewal of the mining contract of OceanaGold Philippines Inc. in his province, saying even President Rodrigo Duterte expressed concern over the gold-copper mine's resumption of operations.



STILL NO. Nueva Vizcaya Province Governor Carlos Padilla speaks in front of a collage of the Didipio mine being operated by OceanaGold Philippines Inc. and local protesters who have blocked entry to the gold-copper mine.

“We strongly oppose the renewal of the FTAA (Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement) of OceanaGold. We believe that the protection of the environment is more paramount than the interest of OGPI,” said Padilla in a text message.

“No less than President Duterte expressed this concern when he visited Cagayan Valley immediately after typhoon Ulysses,” he added.

The governor was responding to the November 7 press release of OGPI, saying the firm will soon finalize the renewal of its FTAA with concerned government offices.

OGPI's 25-year contract with the Philippine government to develop and exploit the minerals in Didipio, Kasibu town expired June 20 last year.

Residents of Didipio, supported by the local governments from the barangay to the province, put barricades up in July 2019 to prevent the company from operating after its FTAA expired. The action was instrumental in forcing the company to halt its operation back in October.

Padilla also issued a cease and desist order against the company in June 2019. OGPI refused to acknowledge the order and filed a petition before the local court to nullify the directive. On July 25, the local court upheld the order.





## Vizcaya gov still opposes Didipio

Meanwhile, the Bugkalot indigenous peoples community in the provinces of Quirino, Aurora, Nueva Vizcaya and Nueva Ecija claiming ancestral domain ownership over OceanaGold's mining areas condemned the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) Region 2 office in Tuguegarao City for the "premature and baseless" issuance of a certificate of non-overlap (CNO) to the mining company.

The former headhunting tribe's provincial chieftains and elders from the four provinces signed a petition questioning the jurisdiction of NCIP Region 2 office in its conduct of a field-based investigation without the Ancestral Domain Office (ADO) final decision.

This was over the tribe's pending Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) application over the areas where OceanaGold operates.

Rosario Camma, over-all chieftain of the Bugkalot tribe, said the issuance of CNO was "rigged" in favor of the mining company to expedite the renewal and approval of its expired FTAA by President Duterte.

On June 10, 2019, the FTAA of OGPI), a subsidiary of Melbourne-based OceanaGold Corporation, has expired resulting in temporary suspension of OGPI's operations pending renewal of its license with the Office of the President.

Duterte also took notice of the pending application for CADT by the Bugkalot/Ilongot tribe over 12 villages including OceanaGold's host village of Didipio.

This was apparently the reason for the non-renewal of OGPI-FTAA to support the IP community particularly the Bugkalot/Ilongot, who have been roaming these areas "since time immemorial" and whose names of towns, villages, rivers, creeks, forests, trees, among other were named by their ancestors.



## Masungi foundation, tribal leaders trade barbs



By [EIREENE JAIREE GOMEZ](#)

January 9, 2021

THE Masungi Georeserve Foundation is standing firm on its conviction that it is dedicated to the conservation of the rich biodiversity in the area, following charges filed by the Dumagat tribe of Rizal province alleging the foundation intruded a portion of their ancestral land.

“Our organization is dedicated to the conservation of the Masungi limestone formations and hundreds of unique biodiversity against persistent threats such as quarrying, land speculation and illegal logging in Baras, Rizal,” Masungi said in a letter to The Manila Times, following a December 26 story published in the paper about the graft charges filed by the Dumagats of Antipolo against the operators of the Masungi Georeserve and several officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The letter was signed by Ann Adeline Dumaliang, managing trustee and project manager of Masungi Georeserve Foundation.

In its defense, the Masungi Georeserve Foundation said it “never accused the indigenous people of Antipolo of environment violations. Rather, it strongly opposed and called for proper action on the large-scale land claims and deployment of armed guards of former General (Luizo) Ticman in the Upper Marikina Watershed.”

The foundation also noted that Reynaldo Doroteo, Kaksaan chairman, did not issue the statement released by Rublou Inc., which is owned by Ticman. “The tribe Rublou is fronting does not have an approved ancestral domain title (CAD-T) in the area, contrary to what is announced in the press release given to The Manila Times,” the letter signed by Dumaliang said.

Nonetheless, the Dumagats sued in Dec. 14, 2020 the operators of the Masungi Georeserve for allegedly violating Sections 3 (e) and (g), and 4 (b) of Republic Act (RA) 3019 or the “Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act” before the Rizal Prosecutors Office.

In a 10-page complaint, Rolando Vertudez and Leonardo DR Doroteo from the Dumagat tribe named the following respondents: Masungi Georeserve operators Ben Dumaliang, Lilian Dumaliang, Anne Adeline Dumaliang, Billie Crystal Dumaliang, Sonia Oliveros and several unidentified individuals (Jane and John Does) from the DENR.

Protected by Republic Act

The complainants narrated that they have been occupying their ancestral land since the time of their great forefathers, which is the reason why RA 8371 or the “Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act of 1997” (IPRA Law) recognized them. They said that the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the main implementing agency of the IPRA Law, recognized and certified them, including the issuance of land measurements and plans, on Jan. 7, 2017.



## Masungi foundation, tribal leaders trade barbs

“But last October 2020, officials from the Masungi Georeserve, together with several armed and uniformed men, intruded into a portion of our ancestral domain and insisted that they are the ones who have the right to our land because of their memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the DENR,” they stated in their complaint.

They stressed that the MOA was “defective, onerous and grossly disadvantageous” to the government, which is the main subject of their suit.

The complainants said the MOA was “perpetual”, which is contrary to law that sets the limit to only 25 years. By law, Masungi Georeserve is also supposed to pay the government for the use of the protected area, while records show the former is not paying the latter for the use of the protected area within its MOA.

On Dec. 19, 2020, Environment Assistant Secretary for Climate Change and concurrent Biodiversity Management Bureau Director Ricardo Calderon said a mere MOA cannot supersede the Expanded National Protected Areas law. Assailing the MOA that legalizes the operations and occupancy of the Masungi Georeserve, he said that it was flawed and disadvantageous to the government.

“It is public land and, as such, the government is entitled to certain taxes and fees for its use. Imagine, having the right to use the land for ecotourism for free, without paying taxes forever,” Calderon emphasized.





## Mindanao bamboo summit slated Jan. 19

By Prexx Marnie Kate Trozo January 8, 2021, 3:11 pm



**DAVAO CITY** – The Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) will convene bamboo stakeholders from all over the region in a face-to-face and virtual Summit on January 19 to organize the Mindanao Bamboo Industry Council.

Secretary Emmanuel Piñol said in a public announcement Friday that the Mindanao Bamboo Summit will be held at the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) Conference Hall in Cagayan de Oro City where the major stakeholders, including representatives of the different agencies, will meet face-to-face.

He said that representatives of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) are expected to provide inputs on how they can support the Mindanao Bamboo Industry.

Piñol added that DBP President Emmanuel Herbosa will also join the face-to-face conference and is expected to present financing windows for the Bamboo Industry which will be made accessible to both farmers and processors.

“Other stakeholders who could not join the face-to-face organization meeting could participate through a Zoom Virtual Conference starting at 5 p.m.,” he added.

He said Bukidnon Giant Bamboo (BGB) Resources Corp. President Rod Bioco will make a presentation on the current state and prospect of the Mindanao Bamboo Industry.

“The BGB Corporation has established a bamboo processing facility in Malaybalay, Bukidnon, and is currently buying giant bamboo poles from farmers in the area,” the MinDA chief said.

The Mindanao Bamboo Industry Council is being organized by MinDA as part of its programs to promote the greening of Mindanao's critical watersheds and headwaters while at the same time providing income opportunities for the people. *(PNA)*



## Nasagip na pelican sa Aurora, ibinigay sa pangangalaga ng DENR

Gracie Rutao, ABS-CBN News  
Posted at Jan 08 2021 06:55 PM



Nanghihina na umano ang Great White Pelican nang iturnover ito sa pangangalaga ng awtoridad. Nasagip ng 3 residente ang migratory bird sa Dilasag River sa Sitio Mahogany, Barangay Masagana sa lalawigan ng Aurora. *Larawan mula sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources Region 3*

Ibinigay na ng tatlong residente sa pangangalaga ng awtoridad ang nasagip nilang migratory bird sa Dilasag river sa Masagana Village sa lalawigan ng Aurora nitong Miyerkoles.

Pagod at nanghihina na ang ibong isinauli nina Francisco Calinog, Andy Ortiz, at Francia Dasillo ng Sitio Mahogany, Barangay Masagana.

Itinurn-over nila ang ibon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) – Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) sa bayan ng Casiguran, Aurora.

Ang DENR-CENRO ang siyang nagsabing isang migratory bird na great white pelican ang ibon na may scientific name na *Pelecanus onocrotalus*.

Nasa 87 cm ang taas nito.

Ayon sa mga eksperto, walang sugat ang ibon pero nanghihina, marahil dahil naiwan ito ng mga kasama niya habang nagma-migrate.

Inilipat na ang pelican sa Global Zoo, isang DENR-accredited wildlife rescue center sa Clark Freeport Zone sa Pampanga.

Oras na gumaling ito, muli na itong pakakawalan.

Ayon kay Paquito Moreno Jr., executive director of DENR sa Central Luzon, ang mga great white pelican ay migratory bird na kalimitan naninirahan sa mga swamp at shallow lake ng southeastern Europe, Africa at Asia.



## Nasagip na pelican sa Aurora, ibinigay sa pangangalaga ng DENR

Posibleng napadpad ang pelican sa Aurora dahil may tropical freshwater at sapat na dami ng isda, damo at reed beds na siyang hanap ng breeding pelicans sa pamumugad.

Hinihikayat ng DENR ang publiko na kaagad isauli ang anumang ibon o hayop na matagpuan sa gubat, bundok, ilog o dagat.

Ang pagpatay, pagbebenta o pagdakup ng wildlife ay paglabag sa Section 27 ng Republic Act 9147, o ang Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001.

Maaaring makulong o magmula ang mga mahuhuli ng mula P100,000 hanggang P1 million.

Kilala ang mga Great White Pelican sa matagalang paglipad at paglangoy at nabubuhay ng hanggang 50 taon.

Maari itong lumaki ng hanggang 180 cm at hanggang 15 kilograms ang bigat.





## DENR retrieves 2 owls, 2 palms civets



ZAMBOANGA. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has placed under rehabilitation two Giant Scops Owls and two Asian Palm Civets in preparation for their release back into the wild. A photo handout shows DENR personnel retrieve the wildlife species on Wednesday, January 6, in Poblacion village, Sominot, Zamboanga del Norte. (SunStar Zamboanga)

January 08, 2021

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has placed under rehabilitation four wildlife species in preparation for their eventual release back into the wild.

Placed under rehabilitation at the Regional Wildlife Rescue Center in Baclay, Tukuran, Zamboanga del Sur are two Giant Scops Owls and two Asian Palm Civets.

Rosevirico Tan, DENR regional information officer, said the Giant Scops Owls and Asian Palm Civets were voluntarily turned over by Maximo Octao, 66, of Poblacion village, Sominot, Zamboanga del Norte on Wednesday, January 6.

Tan said the wildlife species were retrieved by personnel of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) of Ramon Magsaysay, Zamboanga del Sur.

Tan said a physical examination on the wildlife species showed that they are in good condition with no external wounds.

Scops owls feed on insects and are not recommended as pets because they are not easy to feed. They have an excellent sense of hearing, which helps them locate their prey and their well-developed raptorial claws and a curved bill facilitate tearing their prey into pieces that are small enough to swallow.

On the other hand, the Asian Palm Civet is an omnivore feeding foremost on fruits such as berries and pulpy fruits. Thus, it helps to maintain tropical forest ecosystems via seed dispersal.



## DENR retrieves 2 owls, 2 palms civets

Since 2008, Asian Palm Civet is red-listed under the International Union for the Conservation of Nature as least concern as it accommodates a broad range of habitats while the Giant Scops Owl is listed as vulnerable.

Meanwhile, Tan said the Cenro-Ramon Magsaysay discussed Republic Act 9147 also known as the "Wildlife Resource Conservation and Protection Act" to the rescuer and nearby residents in Poblacion, Sominot, emphasizing that keeping wildlife without a proper facility and care is illegal. (**SunStar Zamboanga**)



## Pag-asa, first Philippine eagle bred in captivity, dies – conservationists

Published January 8, 2021 4:48pm

By JOAHNA LEI CASILAO, GMA News

Pag-asa, a 28-year-old Philippine eagle and the first bred and hatched in captivity, has died, the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) announced Friday.

According to PEF, Pag-asa succumbed to infections associated with Trichomoniasis and Aspergillosis, both of which are fatal to raptors, at 8:03 p.m. on Wednesday, January 6.

Though treatment on the eagle began over a week ago, Pag-asa's condition continued to deteriorate. He would have turned 29-years-old on January 15.

PEF said Pag-asa was the first Philippine eagle bred and hatched in captivity using the cooperative artificial insemination (CAI) techniques.

“Pag-asa’s birth- the culmination of 14 years worth of research, heralded hope for the critically endangered species and the entire conservation mission,” it said in a statement.

The Philippine eagle was [listed by the International Union of Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources \(IUCN\) as one of the country’s threatened birds](#) due to loss of habitat.

Later, Pag-asa’s first offspring hatched on February 9, 2013.

“[T]he PEF reached yet another milestone with Pag-asa in the form of his first and only offspring. She was named Mabuhay and was also bred and hatched through CAI,” it said.

“Even after he retired from breeding, Pag-asa lived his life as an icon of hope for Filipinos, young and old, and was a constant inspiration to the people working tirelessly to save our National Bird from extinction... Pag-asa was gone too soon indeed, but his legacy lives on,” it added. — **DVM, GMA News**

Tags: [technology](#), [Science](#), [Environment](#), [philippine eagle foundation](#), [W](#)



## Tributes pour in for 1st captive-bred Philippine Eagle Pag-Asa

By [Jeline Malasig](#)

- January 8, 2021 - 7:20 PM



Pag-asa as an adult in this photo shared by the Philippine Eagle Foundation on Jan. 10, 2019. (Photo from Philippine Eagle Foundation Official via Facebook)

Filipinos were hit with nostalgia as they shared their own memories involving **Pag-asa**, the first-ever captive-bred Philippine Eagle who succumbed to infections fatal for raptors last Wednesday.

The **Philippine Eagle Foundation** (PEF) said that the 28-year-old eagle passed away on January 6 due to infections associated with Trichomoniasis and Aspergillosis that are said to be fatal to raptors such as eagles.

“Although treatment was done over a week ago, he continued to deteriorate and died at 8:03 p.m. on January 6,” PEF said in a [statement](#).

Pag-asa was born on Jan. 15, 1992, and his birth has “heralded hope for the critically endangered species and the entire conservation mission.”

He was the first-ever Philippine Eagle to have been bred and hatched in captivity using cooperative artificial insemination technologies following 14 years of research.

Following this announcement, Filipinos honored Pag-asa by sharing their own memories of the eagle, directly or indirectly.

“May nakakakilala po ba sa kanya? Pag-asa died. I still remember super sikat siya during my elementary days and we even have his stamps before na binenta sa school namin for the protection of his species. Fly to the rainbow bridge Pag-asa!” another [online user](#) said.

“When I was 18, I wrote an essay about seeing Pag-asa during a family trip to Davao. That essay changed my life. Goodbye, Pag-asa. And thank you for the hope you gave us,” [shared](#) another Filipino.

“I still remember doing a school report about him and the Philippine Eagles in grade school. Fly free, Pag-asa,” a different [Twitter user](#) wrote.





## Tributes pour in for 1st captive-bred Philippine Eagle Pag-Asa

Another Filipino recalled how people would show their interest in the eagle whenever he would give tours “at the center.”

“I remember how much people would be asking about Pag-asa whenever I’d be giving them a tour at the center and they’d be excited to share their tidbits about Pag-asa that they know to their friends and fam (family),” he [said](#).

There are more than 30 Philippine Eagles under PEF’s care in Barangay **Malagos, Davao City**.

The Philippine Eagle can be spotted in **Luzon, Samar, Leyte** and **Mindanao**. It is considered critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.



SunStar Davao ✓

14h · 🌐



[#SunStarBreaking](#)

It is with great sadness that the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) announces the death of the 28-year old Philippine eagle Pag-asa.

Pag-asa, who would have turned 29 on January 15, was the first-ever Philippine Eagle bred and hatched in captivity using cooperative artificial insemination (CAI) techniques.

"Pag-asa succumbed to infections associated with Trichomoniasis and Aspergillosis. Both diseases are fatal for raptors. Although treatment was done over a week ago, he continued to deteriorate and died at 8:03pm on January 6," read PEF's statement.

[Philippine Eagle Foundation \(Official\)](#)

[#AllYouNeedToKnow](#)



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/716461365074866/posts/3735580056496300/?app=fbl>



## 'Don't harm the crocodiles,' Isabela-based foundation asks public

Published January 8, 2021, 3:50 PM  
by [Liezle Basa Iñigo](#)

**SAN MARIANO , Isabela** – Twenty-two crocodiles from a reptile sanctuary here have gone missing after floods hit the Cagayan region last month.



The Mabuwaya Foundation is asking people not to harm the reptiles should they chance upon them. (Photo courtesy of Merlijn Van Weerd / MANILA BULLETIN)

But instead of warning the public about the danger that could be posed by the crocodiles, the Mabuwaya Foundation is asking people not to harm the reptiles should they chance upon them.

"The people do pose a threat to the crocodiles. It is our fear that crocodiles are being killed," Mabuwaya Foundation Chief Operating Officer Marites Gatan-Balbas told the Manila Bulletin.

Balbas said that, in September last year, the sanctuary had 32 crocodiles, but when the floods hit last December, their last count yielded only 10.

According to her, crocodiles often stay in upland rivers and creeks on the edge of the northern Sierra Madre where there was enough food and less disturbance by the people.

But during floods, crocodiles are washed downstream by the strong current in rivers, and to places where there are likely more people.

"They will move back upstream by themselves, but there is a risk that people will kill them," she said.

Balbas said the municipal government of San Mariano, as well as communities located near crocodile breeding grounds, protect the reptiles in locally conserved areas.

But she also pointed out that these sanctuaries did not have fences, which was why crocodiles could easily leave.



## **‘Don’t harm the crocodiles,’ Isabela-based foundation asks public**

She also underscored that the townsfolk of San Mariano was used to the presence of crocodiles, and respected them. This was very much unlike those living in downstream areas who think Philippine crocodiles are dangerous.

“They are not. Philippine crocodiles are small, and will not attack people unless provoked,” Balbas noted.

She added that it was the “people who pose a threat to the crocodiles”.

“It’s our fear that crocodiles are being killed,” Balbas said.

She reminded the public that killing crocodiles was illegal because the reptile is protected under the Wildlife Act.

Balbas stressed that the Philippine crocodile was among the rarest crocodile species in the world.

The Philippine crocodile can grow up to a maximum length of three meters, but most adults measuring only between 1.5- and 2.5-meter long.

As such, only the smaller crocodiles are swept away by strong currents.

And it was more likely that the crocodiles that the public would encounter are the smaller ones, measuring less than one-meter long, Balbas said.





## Patay na Balyena, napadpad sa Padre Burgos, Quezon

Enero 8, 2021 4:14pm GMT+08:00  
SINULAT NI: PEEWEE BACUÑO

Isang uri ng balyena ang napadpad na patay na sa baybayin ng Barangay Campo, Padre Burgos, Quezon pasado alas-sais ng umaga nitong Biyernes.

Nakita ng mga residente ang patay na balyena malapit sa fish port ng bayan.

Agad na nagtungo sa lugar ang mga kinatawan ng LGU at Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) upang masuri ang balyena.



Dead whale. MDRRMO Padre Burgos

May haba itong 4.3 metro at bigat na aabot sa 600 kilos.

Ayon sa mga eksperto, ito ang kauna-unahang stranded marine mammal ngayong 2021. Dagdag pa nila, ito raw ay isang Blainville's beaked whale.



## Patay na Balyena, napadpad sa Padre Burgos, Quezon

Inakala umano ng mga residente sa lugar na ito ay isang dolphin.

Dahil sa laki at bigat nito ay gumamit pa ng heavy equipment upang maiahon sa dagat ang isda at mailagay sa isang truck.

Kumuha ng sample tissue mula sa balyena ang mga eksperto upang pag-aralan ito.

Pasado alas-dose na ng tanghali natapos ang paglibing sa balyena.



—LBG, GMA News



## Illegal logger arrested, another eludes arrest in Eastern Visayas

**RONALD O. REYES**

January 08, 2021

AN ALLEGED illegal logger was arrested while another eluded arrest in separate anti-illegal logging operations in Eastern Visayas towns Friday, January 8, 2021.

In Catbalogan City, police identified the suspect as a 28-year-old resident from Barangay Caranas, Motiong, Samar.

Confiscated from the suspect's possession were seven sacks of illegal charcoal with an estimated market value of P2,800

In Eastern Samar, authorities are in hot pursuit operation against a suspected illegal logger from Barangay Guinmaayohan, Balangiga town.

Police confiscated 13 pieces of 2x3x12 illegally sawn lawaan lumbers worth P2,200.

The suspect, however, managed to escape by running towards the dense forest area of the said barangay upon sensing the presence of the operating unit.

The confiscated lumbers were brought to Balangiga Municipal Police Station for documentation and proper disposition. **(SunStar Philippines)**



## Negros Occidental flood prevention bid draws help from DPWH, DENR, DA

[Inquirer Visayas](#) / 05:08 PM January 08, 2021

BACOLOD CITY—Three national government agencies are joining forces with officials of the third district of Negros Occidental province in a bid to prevent, or reduce, flooding.

Rep. Francisco Benitez, of the third district, said dredging of silted waterways would start on Saturday (Jan. 9) by an amphibious excavator of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). Also on Saturday, dredging will start in Talisay City with the use of a dredging machine of the provincial government.

The DPWH has allocated P400 million to build new canals and drainage systems in Victorias City, the area worst hit by flooding on New Year's Day, Jan. 1, according to the congressman.

Dredging of silted waterways in other parts of the third district will follow.

Benitez said the DPWH, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Department of Agriculture (DA) are joining local governments units in drawing up an integrated master plan on flood and water management in the third district.

Negros Occidental Gov. Eugenio Jose Lacson urged cities hit by the floods to procure their own dredging machines and keep their waterways clear to prevent flooding.

Read more: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1381172/negros-occidental-flood-prevention-bid-draws-help-from-dpwh-denr-da#ixzz6izogCFNm>

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## Three departments tasked to identify key projects eligible for regulatory relief, waivers

January 7, 2021 | 7:51 pm



THE Departments of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Trade and Industry (DTI) and Finance (DoF) will form a committee to identify critical private-sector projects deemed crucial to the post-pandemic landscape which will be eligible for regulatory relief.

The committee's powers were defined in the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of Section 4 (nnn) of Republic Act No. 11494, or the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act (Bayanihan II), which were issued Thursday.

Bayanihan II, signed into law last year and recently extended until the end of 2021, lays down relief measures to help the economy recover faster from the pandemic. It permits the government to extend regulatory relief and waive certain permits, licenses, certificates, clearances and other requirements. The relief applies to private sector-led projects deemed of national importance, or those judged yield significant economic returns and jobs.



## Three departments tasked to identify key projects eligible for regulatory relief, waivers

The measure does not seek to provide exemptions from taxes, duties, border controls and environmental rules. The waivers are valid while the state of national emergency is in force, or until the end of June 2022.

“The Committee will work towards achieving the goal of the Bayanihan II to spur investment by speeding up the approval and implementation of private investment, stimulate economic activity and create jobs, so that our economy can recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic,” Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III said in a statement Thursday.

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“It will not be granting blanket relief as the committee will still carefully consider the overall contribution of the projects and their impact on the general health and welfare of the public,” he added.

“While permits, licenses, and other similar authorizations will be waived for private projects that meet the directives of the Act, we will ensure that their proponents comply with all the other laws pertinent to the implementation of these projects,” Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu was quoted as saying in the same statement.



# Three departments tasked to identify key projects eligible for regulatory relief, waivers

Private project proponents seeking relief should apply to the committee chaired by the DoF, according to the IRR.

Projects eligible for relief will be assessed based on a per-requirement basis, as well as their economic and social impact.

The IRR said projects likely be covered by the relief package are housing and resettlement works under the Balik Probinsya Program, and projects related to water supply and sanitation, watershed rehabilitation and protection, power generation, transmission and electrification to support the digital economy, and other critical services that will help strengthen security and promote peace.

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“As such, the total cost of the covered project is not necessarily the sole basis in determining national significance,” it said.

The rules also bar any court, except the Supreme Court, from issuing temporary restraining orders, preliminary injunctions or preliminary mandatory injunctions against the committee and projects covered by the relief measures.

The government can also cancel at any time the relief granted to proponents if they are found to have violated the rules. — **Beatrice M. Laforga**





## DOF chief leads selection panel on projects qualified for Bayanihan 2 'regulatory relief'

By [Bernadette D. Nicolas](#)  
January 8, 2021



Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III is set to lead the committee tasked to identify private sector projects that may qualify for the grant of “regulatory relief” under Bayanihan to Recover as One Act (Bayanihan 2).

Together with the Secretaries of Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as its members, the panel was created in compliance with the provision under the newly issued Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 11494, or the Bayanihan 2 law.

Dominguez, Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez, and Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu signed the IRR, which took effect after publication in a newspaper general circulation on January 7, 2021.

In a news statement issued on Thursday, the DOF said the committee was also tasked to identify the specific permits, licenses, certificates, clearances, consents, authorizations, or resolutions that shall be waived in accordance with the IRR of the Bayanihan 2 provision.

While the panel has the mandate to grant regulatory relief and promote investments, Dominguez said, “It will not be granting blanket relief as the committee will still carefully consider the overall contribution of the projects and their impact on the general health and welfare of the public.”

“The committee will work towards achieving the goal of the Bayanihan 2 to spur investments by speeding up the approval and implementation of private investments, stimulate economic activity and create jobs, so that our economy can recover from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic,” he said.





## DOF chief leads selection panel on projects qualified for Bayanihan 2 'regulatory relief'

### Build back better

For his part, Lopez said regulatory relief measures provided under the Bayanihan 2 will “fast-track high impact investments and help our country to build back better and lead to our post-pandemic recovery.”

The trade chief added it will also allow private projects to provide more employment opportunities for our fellow Filipinos that is critical at this time of the pandemic.

Cimatu, for his part, also assured the public that they will make sure that the proponents of private projects comply with all the other laws related to the project implementation despite permits, licenses and other similar authorizations being waived to meet the directives of the Bayanihan 2 law.

Under Bayanihan 2, private projects determined to be “nationally significant” and “with high economic returns” or “with high employment potential” may have certain permits, licenses or other requirements waived, to avoid delays in their implementation and immediately stimulate economic activity and create jobs during the state of national emergency declared by the President as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### Exclusions

These regulatory relief measures exclude those relating to taxes, duties, border control and environmental laws and regulations, as stated in Bayanihan 2 and in Section 6 of the IRR.

Under Section 4 (nnn) of Bayanihan 2, the committee “shall be valid during the state of national emergency as declared by the President and the economic rehabilitation period or until the last day of June 2022, whichever is later.

Under its IRR, the DOF shall serve as the committee secretariat, where the private sector proponent of the project is required to submit the application for regulatory relief.

In identifying which covered projects shall be granted regulatory relief and the specific requirement or requirements that shall be waived, the committee is mandated under the IRR to evaluate them on a per-requirement basis and determine the economic and social impact of the project (economic returns, job generation potential, effect on the delivery of critical services) on both the national and local economies.

The committee shall also consider the impact of the lack of the requirement to be waived on the operations and quality of the output of the covered project, and the health and safety of the personnel working on the project, among other factors as stated under Section 5d of the IRR.

### Projects of national significance

Taking into account the new normal, the IRR stated that covered projects under the following sectors may also be considered by the committee as projects of national significance: housing and resettlement in support of the Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa Program (BP2P); water supply and



## DOF chief leads selection panel on projects qualified for Bayanihan 2 'regulatory relief'

sanitation to accelerate achievement of full coverage; watershed rehabilitation and protection; power generation, transmission and electrification to support the digital economy; and provision of other critical services that contribute to providing security and promoting peace.

Moreover, in determining the national significance of a project, the committee shall also consider "the significant sectors that would accelerate the recovery and bolster the resilience of the Philippine economy" and may also take into account "the project's direct and indirect contribution to economic growth and development, implementation readiness, and such other facets that would stimulate the local economy."

"As such, the total project cost of the covered project is not necessarily the sole basis in determining national significance," the IRR stated.

On top of this, Section 10 of the IRR also prohibit any court, except the Supreme Court, from issuing any temporary restraining order (TRO), preliminary injunction or preliminary mandatory injunction against the committee and the operation of the covered project granted regulatory relief.

A technical working group (TWG) composed of representatives from the DOF, DTI, DENR and other government agencies identified by the committee may be created to serve as its technical arm in evaluating applications.

The TWG is responsible for conducting the necessary interagency coordination and consultation in evaluating the applications for regulatory relief; and in submitting a comprehensive report to the committee with its recommendations supported by factual, technical and legal reasons.

The procedures and requirements in applying for regulatory relief and the limitations and coverage of such relief measures are outlined in the IRR.

It also stated that "[t]he committee shall not be held liable if there will be a subsequent finding by the appropriate agency that the application should be disapproved."

Further, any approval of regulatory relief by the Committee may be revoked at any time in case the project "is determined to have violated any condition given in the grant of such relief."



## The nest

By [Antonio M. Claparols\(Philstar.com\)](#)

- January 9, 2021 - 12:00am

We visited El Nido in Palawan last December. It was my first time there.

We landed on a well-built airport in Lio and drove to the town of El Nido. Then we took a boat from the port to what seemed like another world: filled with old limestone formations and many white-sand, forested islands – lovely and rich in natural resources. The limestone formations were testament to the fact that this was all underwater once upon a time.

From the looks of things, the town of El Nido is booming. Pre-COVID, you would find a bustling resort town for foreigners; now, the locals are enjoying their rich natural heritage.

The “protected area” status accords the area of El Nido a place among the 10 priority sites in the Philippines that need conservation. The area covers a total of 90,321 hectares: 40-percent terrestrial and 60-percent marine. This is a recorded fact.

It was only our first day and it already felt like an awe-inspiring journey to a past life. The sound of the waves was the only semblance of noise we could hear, along with the music of birds. It was an utterly amazing and surreal place. The Caesars would love to vacation here if they could!

The Bourne Legacy was filmed on this site and I heard Bill Gates, Brad Pitt and many others have visited these islands.

The following day, we went island-hopping to savor its wonders. We took a boat to the lagoon and kayaked in what seemed like a world lost in time; a truly spectacular marvel.

El Nido covers about 400 square kilometers of area at the northern tip of Palawan. This first-class municipality consists of 45 islands and islets, all of which are part of the Bacuit Archipelago. El Nido, which translates to “the nest,” owes its name to the fact that it remains an important breeding ground for turtles.

Our country is indeed blessed with rich natural beauty. It is a pity that climate change is taking its toll on our islands, bleaching our coral reefs and, yes, urban development has found its way to this part of the country, resulting in even more environmental losses. I pray it remains as pristine as it is.

I was writing this article when three monkeys passed by to say hello. It reminded me of Kandalama in Sri Lanka when I visited years ago. It’s protected and wild. Turtle sanctuaries remain no-go zones in their islands.

We must protect our wild open areas and keep them secluded. We need to rid them of the evil that is destroying our land. We have tried to save the planet. We were brave, but we failed. It is time our nation wakes up and fights for the environment and all its abundance. We are at tipping point of an ecological disaster. Let us abate the destruction together.

\* \* \*

Antonio Claparols is the president of the Ecological Society of the Philippines.



## For the first time, Quezon City, Philippines among 88 cities recognised for climate leadership by CDP



Published by  
CDP Friday 8 January 2021



Global environmental non-profit CDP announces the **88 global cities\***<sup>[1]</sup> that continue to lead on environmental action and transparency during 2020, despite the pressures of tackling Covid-19. **14 cities on the list are in the Asia Pacific region**, with Quezon City receiving an A score for the first time.

Despite the coronavirus pandemic, **34 per cent of cities are new to this year's A List**.

- This year's A List shows **major progress since the signing of the Paris Agreement in 2015**, demonstrating that impactful and urgent environmental action is possible:
- Only 61 per cent of cities on this year's A List (54/88) disclosed their environmental data through CDP in 2015.
- In 2015, half of the cities on the 2020 A list (44/88) did not report greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets. Today, they all report targets and 38 per cent (33/88) aim to reach net-zero emissions by 2050 or earlier.
- All A List cities have also made progress on building resilience to climate change, reporting plans to adapt to climate impacts. In 2015, only 30 per cent (26/88) of 2020 A List cities were reporting such plans.



## For the first time, Quezon City, Philippines among 88 cities recognised for climate leadership by CDP

The 88 cities on the [2020 CDP Cities A List](#) have received the highest rating for both their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and build resilience to the impacts of climate change. Together, they are setting an example of environmental action that we urgently need other cities and national governments to follow if emissions are to rapidly decline, to safeguard the planet, economy and citizens, and put us on the right track ahead of COP26.

Despite the coronavirus pandemic, **34 per cent of cities are new to this year's A List**. New leaders across the globe include Newcastle (United Kingdom), Louisville KY (USA), Firenze, (Italy), Municipalidad de Peñalolén (Chile), Pingtung (Taiwan, Greater China), and Quezon City (the Philippines). These cities and others on the 2020 A List are working to become resilient, healthy, and prosperous places to live and work while cutting emissions and rapidly building resilience against the climate crisis. National governments too, from the United Kingdom to South Korea have been ramping up their environmental ambition, submitting new and renewed commitments to rapidly cut emissions ahead of COP26.

The 2020 A List are also making headway on renewable energy targets, with 26 cities working to be powered by 100 per cent renewables by 2050 or earlier. 8 cities, including Copenhagen, Stockholm and San Francisco have achieved 50 per cent or more of their targets.

Designed to drive and support cities to ramp up their climate action and ambition, CDP's A List is based on environmental data disclosed by hundreds of cities through the [CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System](#) in 2020.

**To score an A**, a city must disclose publicly and have a city-wide emissions inventory, have set an emissions reduction target, published a climate action plan. It must also complete a climate risk and vulnerability assessment and have completed a climate adaptation plan to demonstrate how it will tackle climate hazards now and, in the future, among other actions.

### Continued need for urgent city environmental action

Five years since the Paris Agreement was signed, the latest climate science tells us that global emissions must be [halved by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050 to avoid catastrophic climate change](#). The cities on this year's A List demonstrate that impactful and urgent action is possible. **Although almost 40 per cent of cities on this year's A List did not disclose to CDP in 2015, they are now demonstrating leadership in transparency, building resilience against climate risks, and delivering against emissions reduction targets.**

Analysis has shown that the number of 2020 A List cities reporting emissions reduction targets has more than doubled since 2015, with 38 per cent of these cities setting net zero targets by 2050 or earlier. Cities have also made progress on building resilience to climate change. In 2015, only 30 per cent of the 2020 A List cities reported having an adaptation plan. Actions taken by A List cities include community engagement and education, tree planting and creation of green space, and flood mapping.

## For the first time, Quezon City, Philippines among 88 cities recognised for climate leadership by CDP

**Kyra Appleby, Global Director of Cities, States and Regions at CDP** said:

*“We commend the 88 cities on the CDP Cities A List for their transparency and action to build resilience against climate change and cut emissions. They are building resilient, healthy, and prosperous places to live and work while reinforcing their commitment to the Paris Agreement.”*

*“However, the science is clear – we categorically must halve global emissions by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2050 to limit the impacts of the climate crisis. The world is still in the midst of a public health crisis, but environmental action cannot slow down. The cities on the 2020 A list demonstrate resilience and ambition, and we congratulate them for their leadership in tackling climate change.”*

**Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte** said:

*“We are proud to have earned a spot on the CDP’s A List cities. This milestone affirms Quezon City’s commitment towards a science-based approach to climate action planning and risk governance. Local climate actions that are driven by robust data and a social equity lens could bring about multiple economic, environmental, and health benefits to our citizens, especially the most vulnerable groups.”*

### The next step for cities

While there has been major progress, more needs to be done and by a greater number of cities. **A significant next step is setting science-based targets to rapidly cut emissions in line with limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 °C.** Cities can learn more about this and how to join the UNFCCC’s Race To Zero campaign with the support of a guide on Science-based climate targets for cities, launched on 18th November.

### About CDP

CDP is a global non-profit that drives companies, cities and governments to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, safeguard water resources and protect forests. Voted number one climate research provider by investors and working with institutional investors with assets of US\$106 trillion, we leverage investor and buyer power to motivate companies to disclose and manage their environmental impacts. Over 9,600 companies with over 50 per cent of global market capitalisation disclosed environmental data through CDP in 2020. This is in addition to the hundreds of cities, states and regions who disclosed, making CDP’s platform one of the richest sources of information globally on how companies and governments are driving environmental change. CDP, formerly Carbon Disclosure Project, is a founding member of the We Mean Business Coalition. <https://cdp.net/en/cities> or follow us [@CDP](#) to find out more.

The data reported by cities was collected in partnership by CDP and ICLEI- Local Governments for Sustainability. In response to local and regional governments calling for a simpler reporting process, the CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System was launched in April 2019. In that same year, over 830 cities disclosed compared to 43 in 2011 when Cities disclosure began. This steep increase



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## For the first time, Quezon City, Philippines among 88 cities recognised for climate leadership by CDP

reflects the growing number of cities taking action to lead the transition to a resilient, net-zero future.

### About science-based targets for cities

Science-based climate targets for cities, is led by the Science-Based Targets Network's core 'cities' partners, CDP, C40, GCoM, ICLEI, the World Resources Institute (WRI), and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF). The partners have come together to provide a guide to help cities select a methodology to set a science-based climate target, launching on 18th November.

[1] This data was collected in partnership by CDP and ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability



## 1,776 new COVID-19 cases push Philippines' total over 483,000

Published January 8, 2021 4:01pm  
By JOAHNA LEI CASILAO, GMA News

The number of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases in the Philippines rose to 483,852 on Friday after the Department of Health (DOH) announced 1,776 new infections as five laboratories failed to submit data on time.

Bulacan reported the highest number of new cases on Friday with 99, followed by Davao City with 96, Quezon City with 83, Rizal with 80, and Laguna with 64.

Meanwhile, 285 more patients have recovered from the illness, bringing the total to 449,330, while eight new fatalities brought the death toll to 9,364.

The DOH said seven duplicate cases were also removed from the total case count while one case previously tagged as recovered was reclassified as fatality.

Of the remaining 25,158 cases undergoing treatment or quarantine, 82.6% are mild, 8.6% are asymptomatic, 2.9% are severe, and 5.4% are in critical condition.

Based on data from the DOH, 60% of the country's intensive care unit beds are available while 79% of the mechanical ventilators are ready for use.

Earlier, the DOH said the public [should not be complacent](#) in the battle against COVID-19 amid presidential spokesperson Harry Roque's claim that the "worst is over."

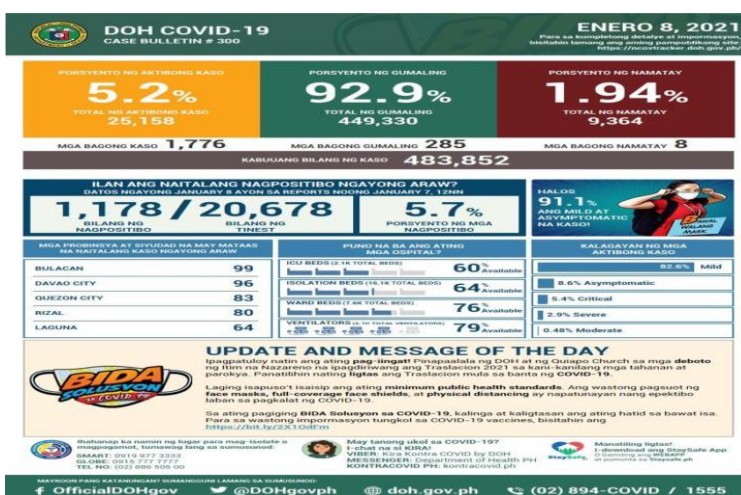
Meanwhile, [15,000 participants](#) are being scouted in the country for the World Health Organization's Solidarity Trial of COVID-19 vaccines which will start by the end of January or in February.—AOL, GMA News

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/770971/1-776-new-covid-19-cases-push-philippines-total-over-483-000/story/>



# Pinakamataas na nadagdag na kaso ng covid-19 simula noong Pasko naitala ngayong araw

January 08, 2021 - 05:01 PM



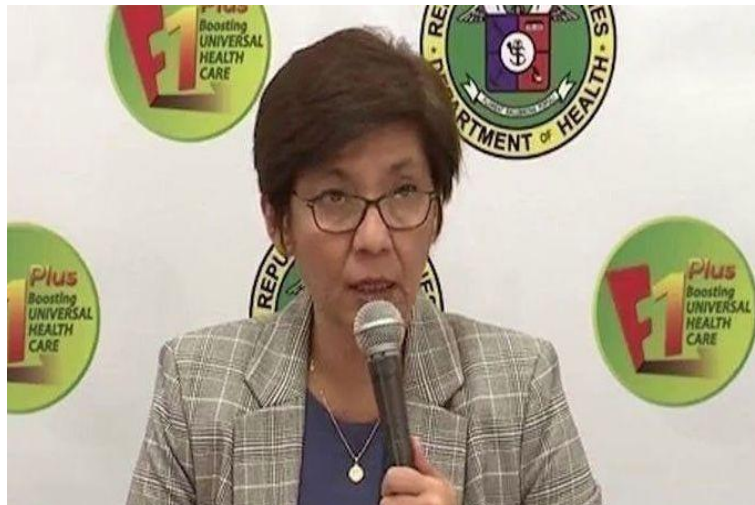
Muling lumobo ang bilang ng kumpirmadong kaso ng covid-19 sa bansa. Sa datos ng Department of Health, nakapagtala sila ng 1,776 na karagdagang kaso na pinakamataas simula noong araw ng Pasko. Dahil dito, umakyat na sa 483,852 ang bilang ng mga nagkasakit ng covid-19 sa bansa. Ang kabuuang active cases ay umabot na sa 25,158 o 5.2% pangkalahatang datos ng DOH sa buong bansa. Iniulat din ng DOH na 285 ang mga gumaling sa covid-19 ngayong araw dahil na upang pumalo na sa 449,330 ang mga naka-recover. Walo naman ang panibagong bilang ng namatay kaya umakyat na sa 9,364 ang nasawi sa kabuuan. Ang lalawigan ng Bulacan ang nakapagtala ng pinakamaraming bagong kaso sa 99, sinundan ng 96 sa Davao City, 83 naman ang bagong kaso sa Quezon City, 80 sa lalawigan ng Rizal at 64 naman sa Laguna. Ang isa naman na naiulat na gumaling ayon sa DOH ay iniulat ngayon na nasawi pala. Mayroon namang limang laboratory ang bigong makapagsumite ng kanilang datos.

Read more: <https://radio.inquirer.net/282576/pinakamataas-na-nadagdag-na-kaso-ng-covid-19-simula-noong-pasko-naitala-ngayong-araw#ixzz6jo9mlRKH>  
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## 3 bagong COVID-19 variants binabantayan ng DOH

By [Ludy Bermudo](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon)  
- January 9, 2021 - 12:00am



“Sa ngayon, meron na tayong tatlong variant na binabantayan. Ito po ‘yung sa UK na type ng variant, ito po ‘yung sa South African na variant, and then there was this identified variant din dito naman sa Malaysia,” pagkumpirma ni Health Undersecretary Rosario Vergeire sa virtual press briefing.

### PCOO

MANILA, Philippines — Hindi lang isa kundi tatlo na ang bagong strain ng COVID-19 na binabantayan ng Department of Health (DOH) kung nakapasok na sa Pilipinas.

“Sa ngayon, meron na tayong tatlong variant na binabantayan. Ito po ‘yung sa UK na type ng variant, ito po ‘yung sa South African na variant, and then there was this identified variant din dito naman sa Malaysia,” pagkumpirma ni Health Undersecretary Rosario Vergeire sa virtual press briefing.

Nasa 300 samples ang kasalukuyang pinag-aaralan ngayon sa Philippine Genome Center, na sinasabing unang batch pa lamang.

Ani Vergeire, ang mga nakuhang samples ay nagmula sa iba’t ibang rehiyon sa Visayas at Mindanao, upang makita kung may variants na sa mga lugar na ito.

Una nang napaulat na isang Pinay domestic helper ang na-detect sa Hong Kong na positibo sa bagong strain na UK COVID-19 variant kaya nagsagawa ng contact tracing ang DOH sa mga nakasalamuha nito sa Cagayan Valley Region at sa pinuntahan sa Maynila.

“They are currently quarantined and being monitored, ito pong mga close contacts sa Solana, Cagayan,” sabi pa ng DOH official.

Natunton at na-swab na rin daw ang mga close contacts ng Pilipina sa Maynila, na naka-quarantine na rin at inoobserbahan ang kalagayan.

Tiniyak naman ni Vergeire na may pondo nang ilalaan sa PH Genome Center para ma-sustain ang kanilang pag-aaral na mahalaga sa surveillance system nila.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2021/01/09/2069250/3-bagong-covid-19-variants-binabantayan-ng-doh/amp/>



## LASENGGO AT LASINGGERA AT GIYERA SA PANDEMYA



January 8, 2021 @ 2:17 PM 15 hours ago

Parehas na mabagsik ang alak at ang coronavirus disease o COVID-19 at mga anak o variant o mutant nito.

Parehas na nakamamatay ang mga ito o nakasisira ng buhay.

Kaya huwag na huwag maging lasenggo o lasengga at magtodo-ingat naman tayo habang nakikipaglaban sa pandemya.

### NALASING NAGBAHAY-BAHAYAN

May magkapatid na may mga sariling asawa na nagkapalitan ng asawa sa isang gabi makaraan silang malasing sa isang lungsod na kapit-lungsod ng Navotas City.

May nag-birthday na miyembro ng pamilya at lumaklak ng alak ang dalawang mag-asawa.

Pag-uwi nila, iba ang napasukan na pintuan ng magkapatid na lalaki at kasunod nito ang labing-labing sa nadatnan nilang mga asawa.

Kinabukasan, nang magising ang mga misis, nagulantang sila na sina bayaw ang naging katalik nila sa gabi kaya isa ang nagsumbong sa barangay para magreklamo ng rape.

Nang magkaliwanagan na pare-pareho silang lasing, anak ng tokwa, nagpakapatawaran na lang sila.

Sa harap ng kapitan ng barangay nagpirmahan ng pagpapatawad sa sarili nilang gawa makaraang malasing.

### 5 INOSENTE NAKULONG NG 5 TAON

Meron namang kaso sa Tondo, Manila na pinagbintangan ang limang lalaki na bumigti sa nakainuman nilang kalugar.



## LASENGGO AT LASINGGERA AT GIYERA SA PANDEMYA

Mabilis na hinuli ang limang lalaki dahil hindi sila umalis sa lugar at kabilang pa nga sila sa mga rumesponde makaraan nilang mabalitaang patay na ang kainuman nila na kaibigan at kalugar.

Limang taon silang nakulong sa Manila City Jail habang dinidinig ang kaso at sa kalagitnaan ng pagdinig, hinihingan sila ng danyos perwisyo na ilang daang libong piso ngunit hindi sila nagbigay.

Pero pinawalang-sala sila ng korte sa kawalan ng ebidensya na sila ang pumatay dahil naganap ang krimen makaraan silang mag-uwian dakong alas-2:00 ng madaling araw samantalang sa awtopsiya, mga alas-4:00 naganap ang pagkamatay ng biktima dahil sa bigti.

Sa huli, nanaig ang katwiran ng mga akusado na nagkukuwento ang biktima ng labis na sama ng loob sa pag-iwan sa kanya ng kanyang girlfriend at hindi pagpasa sa bar examination.

At niyaya silang samahan siya at mag-inuman.

**DACERA: NI-RAPE AT PINATAY BA SIYA O HINDI?**

Sa kasalukuyan, magulo ang naganap na pangyayari ukol kay Philippine Airlines flight attendant Christine Dacera.

Kabilang sa mga lumutang na problema ang kung ni-rape siya at pinatay kaya kinasuhan ang kanyang mga kasamahan ng rape with homicide.

Ang siste, mga Bro, walang sapat na ebidensya para rito, ayon sa Makati Prosecutor's Office kaya naman hinayaan nitong lumaya ang lahat ng mga suspek na kinulong ng mga pulis.

Hindi pa rin ito nagsasampa ng kaso sa korte at hinihintay nito ang mga posibleng karagdagang ebidensya para rito.

Ukol sa rape, unang sinabi ng Makati Police na may mga nakitang katas ng lalaki sa katawan ni Dacera pero sa ibang mga awtoridad, wala ito sa report nila.

May tatlong palatandaan ng sugat sa kanyang ari pero matagal nang naghilom deeply healed umano ang mga ito.

Kaya lang may pangalawang awtopsiya na hinihintay ang resulta at hindi pa nating alam kung ano ang resulta.

May nagsabi namang baka wala nang silbi ito dahil hinaluan at sinira na ng kemikal na kagaya ng formalin ang swab test o drug test na isinagawa sa katawan ng biktima.

At maaaring madamay pati ang kwestiyon kung gumamit o hindi si Dacera at mga katropa niya ng droga.

Pero ang alak, ang pagkalasing ang isa ring malaking usapin sa kamatayan ni Dacera.

Lumaklak nang lumaklak umano sila ng tequila at vodka na may malalakas ang espiritu at masasabi bang isa ito sa nagpabagsak kay Dacera sa banyo at naging dahilan ng kanyang walang tigil na pagsusuka hanggang sa matagpuan siyang walang nang buhay sa nasabing parte ng hotel?





## LASENGGO AT LASINGGERA AT GIYERA SA PANDEMYA

Sa maraming pagkakataon, mga Bro, nakamamatay ang alak at maaaring kunin ka ni Lord kahit hindi ka patayin ng iyong kapwa.

Sa kabuuan, isang kasong kriminal ang kaso rito at hintayin na lang natin ang kahihinatnan nito mula sa piskalya hanggang sa korte.

Ang piskalya at korte ay mga haligi ng katarungan at sila sa huli ang ating sandalan sa katotohan.

### MAG-INGAT SA BAGONG COVID-19

May Pinay na natagpuan sa Hong Kong na dinapuan ng COVID-19 variant o bagong anyo o mutant o mestisong COVID-19.

Unang galing siya sa Hong Kong noong Disyembre at bumalik siya roon nitong Enero kaya katanungan ngayon kung saan siya nahawa muna.

Nagkakaroon ng variant ang isang sakit habang nagtatagal at problema ngayon kung ang nagawa nang mga bakuna laban sa COVID-19 ay epektibo laban dito.

Pero ang isang tiyak, higit na mabilis na nakahahawa ang COVID-19 variant kumpara sa orig na virus.

Ito ngayon ang isa sa mga dahilan kung bakit napakarami ang nagaganap, gaya ng mga pambansang lockdown sa United Kingdom at South Africa dahil sa pagdami ng nagkakasakit.

Ngayon naman, meron na ring iba pang variant sa Nigeria at mahigit 30 bansa na ang pinasok ng mga variant na ito.

Nagsasarahan na ng mga pintuan ang mga bansa at ang United Kingdom at South Africa ang pangunahing biktima ng sarahan.

Nahihiwalay na ang dalawang bansa sa mundo dahil bawal na ang pagbiyahe sa mga ito at nadamay na rin ang ibang mga bansa.

Ang Pinas lamang, marami na ang ipinagbawal na bansang puntahan natin at marami ring pumaparito na bawal nang pumasok sa ating mga paliparan at daungan.

### NAKAMAMATAY RIN

Wala pang tiyak ebidensya na kasama na ang mga variant o mutant sa pagpatay ng orig na virus ng nasa 14,000-15,000 katao araw-araw.

Pero tiyak na kasama na ito sa dahilan kung bakit may nagkakasakit sa COVID na 500,000-700,000 araw-araw sa buong mundo.

Sapantaha ng iba, kung hindi makontrol ang mga variant at kung hindi epektibo ang mga bakunang nagagawa na at iniiniksyon na, mamamatay ang mga biktima ng mga ito sa ibang mga paraan.



## LASENGGO AT LASINGGERA AT GIYERA SA PANDEMYA

Maaari umanong mamamatay ang mga biktima ng mga variant sa kawalan na ng kakayahan ng mga gobyerno na gamutin ang mga sanlaksang itinatakbo sa mga ospital.

‘Yun bang === kung punuan at umaapaw na ang mga ospital, magkukulang na ang mga doktor, nars at bakuna at ang mga nagkakasakit ay maaaring mamatay sa orig na virus o sa mga variant.

### LAHAT LUMABAN SA VARIANT

Kaya naman, dapat sumali ang lahat, gobyerno at mamamayan sa lubos na pag-iingat at pakikipaglaban sa COVID-19 at mga variant nito.

Sa ngayon, nagsasama na ang pambansang pamahalaan at mga lokal na pamahalaan sa mga negosasyon sa pagbili ng bakuna laban sa orig na virus.

Kasali na rin sila sa pag-aaral ukol sa mga COVID variant at iniistriktuhan na nila ang pagpapairal ng mga health protocol at pagbabantay sa paglabas-masok ng mga Pinoy at dayuhan sa mahal kong Pinas.

Mga Bro, gawin nating obligasyon ang pakikiisa at pakikipagtulungan sa lahat ng pagkilos ng ating buong pamahalaan laban sa pandemya.

Ang totoo, hindi mabigat na gawin ang mga obligasyon na palagiang pagsusuot ng face mask at face shield, pagsunod sa social distancing at palagiang malinis sa kamay at iba pang parte ng katawan.

Hindi rin malaking gastos ang isang mensahe sa text sa contact tracing para ipaabot natin sa mga kinauukulan ang mga posibleng tinamaan ng virus upang kaagad na kumilos ang mga awtoridad at alagaan at ihiwalay at gamutin ang mga may tama sa pandemya.

O tara na, kilos na lahat at huwag maging pasaway, pabaya at walang pakialam!



## South Africa coronavirus variant: What is the risk?

By Michelle Roberts  
Health editor, BBC News online  
Published  
14 hours ago

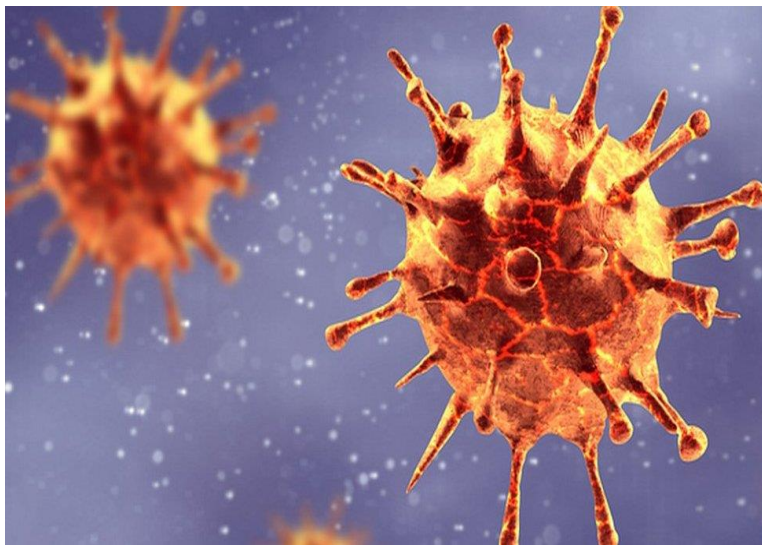


IMAGE COPYRIGHTGETTY IMAGES

**A new variant of coronavirus circulating in South Africa is now being seen in other countries, including the UK.**

Experts are urgently studying it to understand what risk it poses.

What is the new variant?

All viruses, including the one that causes Covid-19, mutate.

These tiny genetic changes happen as the virus makes new copies of itself to spread and thrive.

Most are inconsequential, and a few can even be harmful to the virus's survival, but some can make it more infectious or threatening to the host - humans.

There are now many thousands of different versions, or variants, of the pandemic virus circulating. But experts' concerns focus on a small number of these.

One is the South African variant called 501.V2.

What do experts say?

The South African variant carries a mutation called E484K, among others.

It's different to another recently discovered [variant that scientists have been studying](#) in the UK.

Both the new South African and UK 'Kent' variants appear to be more contagious, which is a problem because tougher restrictions on society may be needed to control the spread.

While changes in the new UK variant are unlikely to harm the effectiveness of current vaccines, there is a chance those in the South African variant may do so to some extent, say scientists.



## South Africa coronavirus variant: What is the risk?

It is too soon to say for sure, or by how much, until more tests are completed, although it is extremely unlikely the mutations would render vaccines useless.

Scientists have tested the Pfizer Covid vaccine against one of the mutations found in the South African variant, called N501Y, using blood samples from 20 people.

In that [preliminary study](#), vaccination appeared to work against the mutated virus.

More studies are needed though, because N501Y is not the only change the South African variant has undergone.

Dr Simon Clarke, who is an expert in cell microbiology at the University of Reading, said: "The South African variant has a number of additional mutations including changes to some of the virus' spike protein which are concerning."

The spike protein is what coronavirus uses to gain entry into human cells. It is also the bit that vaccines are designed around, which is why experts are worried about these particular mutations.

"They cause more extensive alteration of the spike protein than the changes in the Kent variant and may make the virus less susceptible to the immune response triggered by the vaccines," said Dr Clarke.

Prof Francois Balloux, from University College London, said: "The E484K mutation has been shown to reduce antibody recognition. As such, it helps the virus SARS-CoV-2 to bypass immune protection provided by prior infection or vaccination."

But even in the worst case scenario, vaccines can be redesigned and tweaked to be a better match in a matter of weeks or months, if necessary, say experts.

- [Scientists seek to understand new variant](#)

Is it more dangerous?

There is currently no evidence to suggest that any of the mutated viruses cause more serious illness.

And measures like washing your hands, keeping your distance from other people and wearing a face covering will still help stop the spread.

How far has it spread?

It is already the dominant virus variant in the Eastern and Western Cape provinces of South Africa.

Other countries including Austria, Norway and Japan, have also found cases.

The UK has detected two people with the South African variant - one in London and the other in the north west of England. Both were contacts of people who travelled to South Africa.





## South Africa coronavirus variant: What is the risk?

What is the UK doing about it?

The UK has imposed a ban on direct flights from South Africa and restrictions on flights to the country. Anyone who has travelled there recently, and anyone they have been in contact with, are being told to quarantine immediately.

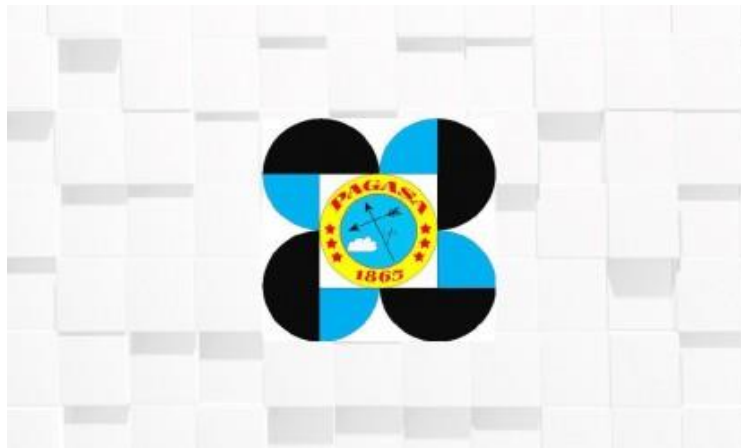
Public health authorities and scientists are studying the variant and will share their findings soon.

Dr Susan Hopkins, chief medical adviser on Covid-19 to Public Health England, said: "We are carrying out work as a priority to understand the potential risk this variant may cause. It is important to say that there is currently no evidence that this variant causes more severe illness, or that the regulated vaccine would not protect against it."



## Bicol, Visayas face flooding, landslide this weekend

By Catherine Teves January 8, 2021, 4:15 pm



**MANILA** – Rainy weather is likely to be experienced and elevate the risk for flooding and landslides in Region V (Bicol) and the Visayas this weekend.

"Communities in those areas must be alert to such dangers," said Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) hydrologist Aileen Abelardo.

Heavy or prolonged rainfall can set off flash floods and landslides particularly in areas that are either susceptible to these hazards or already saturated due to previous rain there, she noted.

Surface runoff and swelling of river channels can cause flooding in areas that haven't experienced such rainfall, PAGASA also said.

According to PAGASA weather forecaster Ana Clauren, the intertropical convergence zone (ITCZ) that brought rain to Bicol and the Visayas this week already moved away from these areas.

However, rain is still possible in those areas this weekend due to the tail-end of a frontal system (TEFS), she noted.

"Light to moderate with at times heavy rainfall may occur there then," she said.

In its 11 a.m. weather advisory on Friday, PAGASA located the TEFS at 60 km east-northeast of Southern Leyte province's Maasin City.

The low-pressure area (LPA) within the ITCZ is already embedded in the TEFS, noted Clauren.

She, however, clarified that "such LPA is less likely to become a tropical cyclone".

Abelardo said the expected rainfall may affect waterways in Region V and the Visayas.

She said increased water in the waterways, due to such rain, can spill into and flood nearby areas.

PAGASA said Region V waterways particularly likely to be affected are Camarines Sur province's Lower Kilbay Catabangan, Ragay, Tinalmud, Tambang and Lagonoy; Camarines Norte province's Labo and Daet Basud; Masbate province's Lanang, Mapayawan, Mandaon, Asid, Malbug, Guiom, Nainday, Daraga, Nauco (Aguada) and Baleno; Albay province's Guinale and Upper Donsol as well as Sorsogon province's Lower Donsol, Ogod, Putiao, Cadacan, Banuang-Daan, Fabrica (Tugbugan) and Matnog. Also likely to be affected are Catanduanes province's Cabuyan, Bato and Pajo.



## Bicol, Visayas face flooding, landslide this weekend

In Region VI (Western Visayas), PAGASA said waterways of particular concern are Capiz province's Panay, Mambusao, Panay Malinao, Alingon and Balantian; Antique province's Sibalom, Ipayo, Cagaranan, Palawan, Cairauan, Dalanas and Tibiao; Iloilo province's Pinantan, Barotac, Akalaygan, Jalaud, Jalano, Jagdong, Jalaur, Lamunan, Jaro-Aganan, Sibalom and Guimbal; Aklan province's Ibajay, Aklan and Jalo as well as Negros Occidental province's Malogo, Sicaba, Grande, Himogaan, Danao, Upper Tabanan, Sipalay and Lower Ilog.

All waterways in Guimaras province may also be affected, continued PAGASA.

Region VIII (Eastern Visayas) waterways particularly at risk of being affected are Southern Leyte province's Bisay, Himbangan and Pandan; Northern Samar province's Catarman, Bugko, Pambujan, Catubig, Palapag, Mawo and Gamay; Leyte province's Sangputan, Palo, Solano (Quilot), Daguitan Marabang, Cadac-an, Bongquirogon, Salug, Pagbanganan, Pagsangahan and Binahaan; Eastern Samar province's Oras, Dolores, Ulot, Taft, Borongan, Suribao, Llorente, Balangiga and Sulat; Samar province's Basey, Silanga, Calbiga and Jibatan as well as all channels in Biliran province, PAGASA continued.

PAGASA is not discounting the possibility of light to moderate with at times heavy rainfall over Palawan province including Cuyo and Cagayancillo islands in Region IV-B (Mimaropa).

Abelardo said the weather bureau is monitoring weather and waterways in Region IV-B.

"While our monitoring shows those waterways are still okay, people must be aware that these may eventually overflow also," she added. (PNA)

## TINGNAN: Pagguho ng lupa sanhi ng pag-ulan, naitala sa Southern Leyte

Ranulfo Docdocan, ABS-CBN News  
Posted at Jan 08 2021 05:13 PM



Pansamantalang hindi makadaan ang anumang uri ng sasakyan sa highway sa bahagi ng Barangay Kahupian sa Sogod, Southern Leyte dahil sa pagguho ng lupa na bunsod umano ng mga pag-ulan.

*Larawan mula kay Melissa Cañete Guiñarez*

Gumuho ang lupa sa bundok sa tabi ng highway sa Barangay Kahupian sa Sogod, Southern Leyte, Biyernes ng madaling araw.

Ang landslide ay bunsod umano ng mga pag-ulang naranasan sa Southern Leyte at iba pang bahagi ng Eastern Visayas.

Dahil dito, pansamantalang isinara sa anumang klase ng sasakyan ang nasabing kalsada.

Agad aming nagsagawa ng clearing operations ang mga tauhan ng Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Southern Leyte Engineering District.

Sa ngayon ay madaraan na muli ng mga sasakyan ang lugar.





## 6 dead, nearly 50,000 evacuated in ‘worst’ Malaysia floods

posted January 08, 2021 at 09:30 pm

by [AFP](#)

Mentakab, Malaysia—At least six people have died and nearly 50,000 evacuated in Malaysia after monsoon rains pounded the country’s east coast, authorities said Friday, causing what residents described as the worst flooding in half a century.

Authorities have stepped up rescue operations after locals complained they had to fend for themselves earlier this week.

Heavy rains continued to batter the region on Friday, swelling the number of people abandoning their homes to more than 47,000, officials said.

“I have lost everything. The water has covered my roof,” 59-year-old factory worker Tan Kong Leng told AFP, tears filling his eyes.

Floods hit the region during the rainy season every year and regularly result in mass evacuations; but those in the affected areas say this year’s are the worst in decades.

Many roads, including the main expressway that links the east coast states, have been closed.

The worst-hit state is Pahang, where around 27,000 people have been evacuated in recent days, according to the social welfare department.

In one village in the state cut off by floods, residents were evacuated in an excavator on Wednesday, while others were forced to swim through deep waters.

Tan, the factory worker, and his wife took shelter at his plywood factory. They had just minutes to put their clothes in their car and flee to higher ground before the fast-rising waters engulfed their home.

“I am sad. All my fittings and fixtures are destroyed. My biggest fear is that more rain will pour in the coming days. Look! There are dark clouds moving in fast,” he said.

In one of the worst-hit districts in Pahang, residents complained that narrow and rubbish-filled drains contributed to the deluge.

Mentakab resident Muhammad Fadzil Wahab said he and other locals have formed their own patrol units to prevent house break-ins.

“We scout the entire flooded village at night with our small boats and torch lights,” he told AFP.

“My family members are safe at the evacuation centres.”

Adding to the complexity of rescue efforts, Malaysia is seeing a surge in coronavirus cases, reporting its biggest daily rise on Thursday.

But Fadzil said government help has started to intensify, including boats and military trucks.

**Topics:** [Malaysia](#) , [monsoon rains](#) , [coronavirus disease](#) , [Tan Kong Leng](#)



## 2020 was tied for the hottest year ever recorded – but the disasters fueled by climate change set it apart

By Drew Kann and Brandon Miller, CNN  
Published Jan 8, 2021 7:55:24 PM



(CNN) — Global average temperatures last year were tied for the hottest on record, capping what was also the planet's hottest decade ever recorded, according to new data analysis released Friday. The last six years are now the hottest six on record, with 2020 on par with 2016 as the hottest year ever recorded.

The new analysis comes from the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service, one of several datasets which track global temperatures and climate change impacts.

Last year's temperatures were 0.6 degrees Celsius (1.08 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than the 1981 to 2010 average, and 1.25 degrees Celsius (2.25 degrees Fahrenheit) above the pre-industrial average.

Global warming has brought the planet ever closer to the 1.5 degree Celsius warming threshold, which scientists have warned will increase the risk for more extreme wildfires, droughts, floods and food shortages potentially impacting hundreds of millions of people.

However, it was abundantly clear in 2020 that the world is already seeing worsening disasters from climate change.

It began in January, when heat and drought stoked unprecedented wildfires across Australia. When the flames were finally extinguished, the fires had charred an area larger than the state of Florida. An analysis last year found that climate change made the fires at least 30% more likely.

Then came the Atlantic hurricane season, which saw a record-breaking 30 named storms, 12 of which made landfall in the US. Many of those storms carried the fingerprints of climate change, which scientists say is making hurricanes more destructive.

Extremely hot and dry conditions also fueled the worst wildfire season ever recorded in the Western US, which engulfed an estimated 10.3 million acres in flames.



## 2020 was tied for the hottest year ever recorded – but the disasters fueled by climate change set it apart

And in the Arctic, some of the most extreme temperatures anywhere on Earth were observed in 2020, as the region continues to warm more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet.

Huge parts of the Arctic saw temperatures more than 3 degrees Celsius (5.4 degrees Fahrenheit) above average, and some locations saw average temperatures more than 6 degrees Celsius (10.8 degrees Fahrenheit) above normal for the year.

To illustrate how enormous a 6 degree Celsius difference can be – during the last ice age, which occurred around 20,000 years ago and featured much of North America covered in ice, the planet’s average temperature was about 6 degrees Celsius cooler than it is today.

“2020 stands out for its exceptional warmth in the Arctic and a record number of tropical storms in the North Atlantic,” said Carlo Buontempo, the director of the Copernicus Climate Change Service, in a news release. “It is no surprise that the last decade was the warmest on record, and is yet another reminder of the urgency of ambitious emissions reductions to prevent adverse climate impacts in the future.”

### La Niña fails to cool the planet down

Making the heat in 2020 all the more startling is the fact that the year featured La Niña, a naturally occurring climate cycle characterized by cooler than normal temperatures in the Pacific Ocean. The large expanse of cooler ocean water and the resulting impacts on the global climate act like a natural air conditioner for the planet, and La Niña years tend to make the planet cooler than years without a La Niña or the opposite phase of the cycle, called El Niño.

El Niño, which features warmer than average ocean temperatures in the Pacific, adds large amounts of excess heat released into the atmosphere and tends to make those years warmer.

It is no surprise that 2016, which had previously been the hottest year on record, featured a strong El Niño for the first half of the year. It is remarkable, however, that even with the cooling effects of La Niña present, that 2020 would feature the same amount of global heat.

This provides yet another yardstick to measure the impact that human-caused global warming is having on the planet’s climate.

### Greenhouse gas levels rise despite Covid lockdowns

2020 set another record according to Copernicus Climate Change Service, with carbon dioxide concentrations reaching a maximum of 413 parts per million (ppm) during May.

It may seem counterintuitive that a year dominated by Covid-related shutdowns and a halt to global production and transportation would have the highest CO<sub>2</sub> levels of any on record. But the fact is that until fossil fuel production reaches net-zero, or carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere on a major, globally-coordinated scale, each year will likely see higher carbon dioxide levels than the last.



## 2020 was tied for the hottest year ever recorded – but the disasters fueled by climate change set it apart

The increase in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration in 2020 was slightly less than what was seen in each of the past two years (2.3 ppm vs 2.5 and 2.4 in 2019 and 2018, respectively).

This could partly be the result of Covid-related shutdowns, which some estimates show reduced human CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2020 by around 7%, according to the Global Carbon Project. However, more research is needed to determine exactly how big of a role the pandemic played in cutting emissions last year.

This story was first published on CNN.com, "[2020 was tied for the hottest year ever recorded – but the disasters fueled by climate change set it apart.](#)"





## 2020 hit temperature record, EU climate service says

Kate Abnett and Matthew Green, Reuters

Posted at Jan 08 2021 11:54 PM



A worker adjusts a Vlies fabric to cover the snow of a glacier at Stubai glacier ski resort near Neustift im Stubaital, Austria, May 7, 2020. *Lisi Niesner, Reuters/File Photo*

BRUSSELS/LONDON – Last year tied with 2016 as the world’s warmest on record, rounding off the hottest decade globally as the impacts of climate change intensified, the European Union’s Earth observation service said on Friday.

After an exceptionally warm autumn and winter in Europe, the continent experienced its hottest year on record in 2020, while the Arctic suffered extreme heat and atmospheric concentrations of planet-warming carbon dioxide continued to rise.

Scientists say the rising temperatures contributed to more intense natural disasters, from wildfires in Australia and the United States to cyclones in South Asia, heatwaves in Europe and locust swarms in east Africa.

With governments due to meet for a climate summit in Glasgow in November, the latest data prompted renewed calls for faster action to slash greenhouse gas emissions in line with the 2015 Paris Agreement to avoid catastrophic climate change.

“The key here is to – for every year and as quickly as possible – reduce the amount we emit, thus reducing the amount we actually add into the atmosphere,” said Freja Vamborg, senior scientist at the Copernicus Climate Change Service.

In 2020, temperatures globally were an average of 1.25 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) higher than in pre-industrial times, Copernicus said.

The Paris accord aims to cap the rise in temperatures to “well below” 2C and as close as possible to 1.5C to avoid the most devastating impacts of climate change.



## 2020 hit temperature record, EU climate service says

The Arctic and northern Siberia continued to warm more quickly than the planet as a whole in 2020, with temperatures in parts of these regions averaging more than 6C above a 30-year average used as a baseline, Copernicus said.

The region also had an “unusually active” wildfire season, with fires poleward of the Arctic Circle releasing a record 244 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2020, over a third more than in 2019.

Arctic sea ice continued to deplete, with July and October setting records for the lowest sea ice extent in that month.

In August, instruments documented the highest temperature ever reliably recorded, when a California heatwave pushed the temperature at Death Valley in the Mojave Desert up to 54.4C (129.92°F).

### “GRIM MILESTONE”

Although COVID-19 lockdowns meant global emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> dipped in 2020 compared with recent years, the concentration of the gas accumulated in the atmosphere continued to rise, Copernicus said.

Britain’s Met Office forecast on Friday that CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations would hit levels 50% higher than before the industrial revolution in spring 2021.

“This is another grim milestone in the unrelenting rise of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration,” said Heather Graven, a climate scientist at Imperial College in London.

Scientists said the latest data were consistent with growing evidence that climate change is likely to result in more intense hurricanes, fires, floods and other disasters.

Damages from natural disasters globally rose to \$210 billion in 2020 from \$166 billion the previous year, with the United States hit hard by hurricanes and wildfires, German reinsurer Munich Re said in a report published on Thursday.

The impacts were particularly punishing in developing countries, where the majority of losses from weather-related disasters are not covered by insurance, said Ernst Rauch, chief climate scientist at Munich Re.

“The consequence is that economic development, with all these economic shocks, is set back, is pushed back for years,” Rauch said.

In the United States, Adam Smith, a climate scientist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said an annual tally of the costs of US disasters causing at least a billion dollars worth of damage would be announced at 1600 GMT (1100 a.m. EST) on Friday.



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## 2020 hit temperature record, EU climate service says

Published data shows the United States suffered 16 billion-dollar disasters in the first nine months of 2020, matching records set in 2011 and 2017. A preliminary analysis found 13 of last year's disasters led to at least 188 deaths and costs of \$46.6 billion, Smith said.

"I think it's fair to say that 2020 – even in the first nine months – was another historic year," Smith said. "We need another dictionary to help us describe how these extremes continue to play out and unfold year after year."



# Bank lending to plastics industry faces scrutiny as pollution concerns mount

January 7, 2021 | 2:59 pm



*Public concerns over plastic have risen in recent years. With European and US banks increasingly spurning the most polluting fossil fuel projects to help slow climate change, campaigners want lenders to take a similar approach to plastics by making loans conditional on measures to boost recycling.*

LONDON — Banks have provided \$1.7 trillion of finance to 40 companies in the plastics supply chain without imposing any requirements to tackle plastic pollution pouring into the world's rivers and oceans, according to a report published on Thursday.

With European and US banks increasingly spurning the most polluting fossil fuel projects to help slow climate change, campaigners want lenders to take a similar approach to plastics by making loans conditional on measures to boost recycling.

“What the financial sector needs now is someone to step forward and say ‘okay, we’re going to take a look at plastics,’ and then others will follow,” said Robin Smale, director of Vivid Economics, a consultancy, which audited the report.





# Bank lending to plastics industry faces scrutiny as pollution concerns mount

Compiled by Portfolio.earth, a research network, the report ranked Bank of America Corp., Citigroup Inc., and JPMorgan Chase & Co. as the three biggest financiers of plastics between January 2015 and September 2019.

Each bank provided from \$144 billion to \$172 billion in loans and underwriting to companies from chemicals, packaging, and drinks manufacturers to retailers, the report found.

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Barclays and HSBC were ranked as the largest plastics financiers among European peers, extending \$118 billion and \$96 billion respectively.

Citigroup referred Reuters to existing sustainability commitments. JPMorgan, Barclays, and HSBC declined to comment. Bank of America did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Public concerns over plastic have risen in recent years, as scientists have discovered contamination in once pristine environments from ocean depths to the Arctic.

The report said none of 20 global banks that provided the bulk of financing for the plastic packaging industry had introduced any due diligence or exclusion criteria.

But banks could tackle plastic pollution by making loans contingent on ambitious re-use and recycling schemes, and by lobbying governments to support such measures, the report said. —  
**Matthew Green/Reuters**



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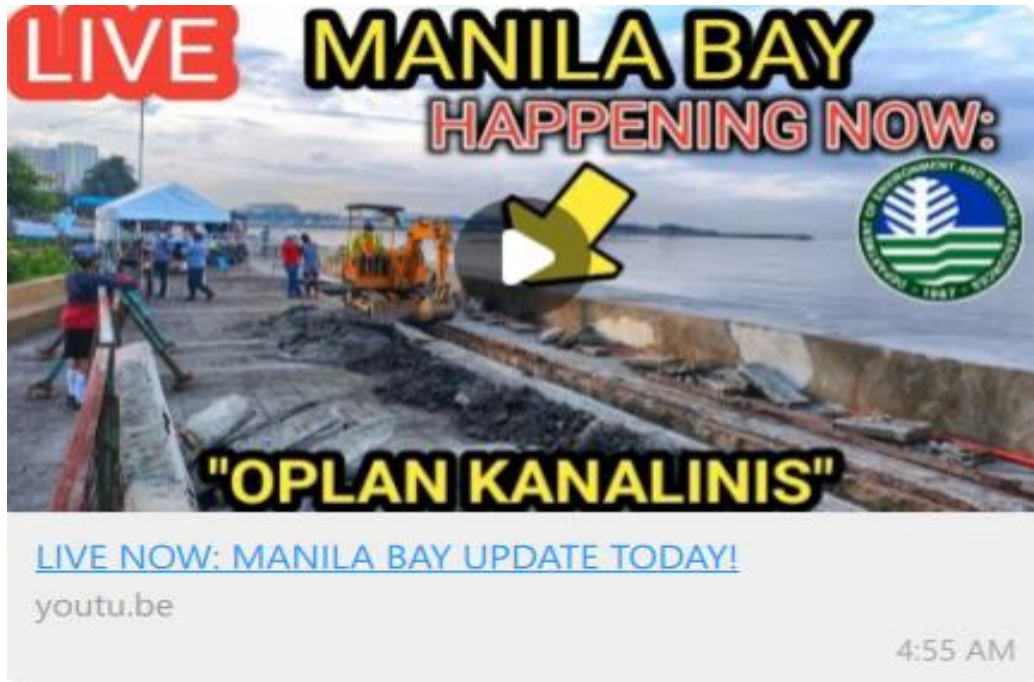
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