

10 JULY 2022, SUNDAY



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**



# DENR turns over sanitary landfill to Marawi City government

Published July 9, 2022, 1:07 PM

by [Aaron Recuenco](#)

A newly-built sanitary landfill facility was turned over to the City Government of Marawi, its construction was part of the rehabilitation of the area which was heavily-devastated by six-month armed conflict in 2017.

In a statement, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said the turnover includes the the operations, maintenance, and management of 31.7-hectare facility in Barangay Malimono, Marawi City and in Barangay Kasanayan, Kapai town, in Lanao del Sur.

“This is a landmark accomplishment that will finally put an end to Marawi City’s long-time garbage problem,” said former DENR Officer-In-Charge Joselin Marcus Fragada following the turnover ceremony and unveiling of markers.

He said the facility is also the DENR’s contribution to the Comprehensive Marawi Recovery, Reconstruction, and Rehabilitation Program.

The construction of the facility started after the signing of a deed of donation and turned over a manual guidebook for the proper operation of the sanitary landfill. Under the deed of donation, the DENR will prepare and implement a five-year solid waste management project for Marawi City.

It will also procure several units of heavy equipment, machineries, and tools for information and communications technology development.

The DENR will likewise be responsible for the cost of the fuel, service and maintenance of the vehicles, trucks, and heavy equipment, and their regular maintenance until the end of the project on December 31, 2022.

After the period, the vehicles and equipment will then become the property of the Marawi City local government, and the expenses relative to the operation of the SLF will be at their cost.

The properties, however, will only be used for the purpose of the donation.



## DENR turns over new landfill to Marawi City

by [Maricel Cruz](#) [July 10, 2022, 12:00 am](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has turned over the operations, maintenance, and management of a newly built sanitary landfill facility (SLF) to the government of Marawi City in Lanao del Sur province.

Former DENR officer-in-charge Secretary Joselin Marcus Fragada said the completion of the SLF served as a “landmark accomplishment that will finally put an end to Marawi City’s long-time garbage problem.”

“The turnover of the 31.7-hectare SLF in Marawi City starts the ball rolling for the proper implementation of solid waste management in the historic Islamic City. We hope that the residents of Lanao del Sur province will make good use of it for the benefit of their health and environment,” Fragada said in a statement.

The turnover ceremony and unveiling of the marker in Brgy. Malimono, Marawi City and Brgy. Kasanayan, Kapai town, in Lanao del Sur province was held June 28.

Fragada said the facility is also the DENR’s contribution to the Comprehensive Marawi Recovery, Reconstruction, and Rehabilitation Program.

During the event, DENR officials led by Assistant Secretary for Legal Affairs Michelle Angelica Go, who serves as the head of the DENR Sub-Committee on Land Resource Management of Task Force Bangon Marawi, signed a deed of donation and turned over a manual guidebook for the proper operation of the SLF.

Under the deed of donation, the DENR will prepare and implement a five-year solid waste management project for Marawi City.

It will also procure several units of heavy equipment, machineries, and tools for information and communications technology development.

The DENR will likewise be responsible for the cost of the fuel, service and maintenance of the vehicles, trucks, and heavy equipment, and their regular maintenance until the end of the project on December 31, 2022.

After the said period, the vehicles and equipment will then become the property of the Marawi City local government, and the expenses relative to the operation of the SLF will be at their cost.

The properties, however, will only be used for the purpose of the donation.

Go pointed out that the construction of SLF in Marawi City is a “result of collaboration and shared action among the officials of the DENR, Marawi local government, Lanao del Sur provincial government, and the Task Force Bangon Marawi.”

“When you do not have a sanitary landfill, where do you put the garbage? If you dump it elsewhere, it affects the environment. This emphasizes the imperative need for shared action among government, non-government organizations, stakeholders, and communities,” Go said.



## DENR adopts online payment facility



Department of Environment and Natural Resources (File Photo)

IAN OCAMPO FLORA

July 09, 2022

THE public may now use an online channel to pay for services offered by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) here through the Link.Biz Portal of the Landbank of the Philippines (LBP).

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the DENR here and the LBP supports the provisions of Executive Order No. 170, which calls for the adoption of digital payments for government disbursement and collections.

Aside from providing an efficient, convenient and digital payment channel, the utilization of the Link.Biz portal aims to enable a fast and transparent mode of delivering government services and reduce the risks of graft and corruption.

The Link.Biz Portal covers services under the Licenses, Patents and Deeds Division, Conservation and Development Division, Surveys and Mapping Division, and Legal Division, which includes fees on the application of Certificate of Wildlife Registration, Gratuitous Permit, Area Status and Verification, NIPAS Certification, Certificate of Lot Status, Technical Description Fee, among others.

The public may pay for these services online using their Landbank ATM and Debit Account, participating BancNet member-bank, cash payment options via partner collection outlets, and other banks via PCHC Paygate.

For more information, visit [www.landbank.com](http://www.landbank.com) or call LANDBANK Customer Care at (02) 8-405-7000 or 1-800-10-405-7000 (PLDT Domestic Toll Free).

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1934340/pampanga/local-news/denr-adopts-online-payment-facility>



## fugao cops given Gawad Kalikasan Award

Published July 2, 2022, 8:19 PM

by [Comanda Rizaldy C.](#)

BAGUIO CITY — The Ifugao Police Provincial Office headed its provincial director in Col. James Mangili received the Gawad Kalikasan Award from the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources–Cordillera Administrative Region during its 35th Anniversary on June 30 at the DENR–CAR Regional Training Center, DENR Compound, Pacdal, Baguio City.



Photo via Zaldy Comanda

The award is given by the DENR CAR to its partners who work with the agency for the environmental protection, ecological stability and economic upliftment to attain sustainable development.

It also expresses the appreciation of the invaluable activities towards establishing tree plantations, sustaining environmental awareness in information and education campaigns, leadership and quick response in the implementation of laws contributing to environmental awareness and protection.

The award serves as an honor for the recipient and a motivation to continuously protect and preserve our environment and our communities for the future generation.

Truly, without environmental protection and preservation, the safe place to live and work will not be attained. As the maxim says, protect mother earth and it will protect you too.

This gigantic task of protecting mother earth also reinforces the advocacy of the Philippine National Police Core Values under 'Makakalikasan' that supports the government action in preserving nature.



# Marcos urged to halt, review controversial infra projects

Anjo Bagaosan, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jul 09 2022 08:18 PM



Aerial shot of the Kaliwa River in Barangay Daraitan, Tanay, Rizal. *Kathleen Lei Limayo/file*

A Philippine environmental advocate on Saturday urged President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to issue a moratorium on several controversial infrastructure projects that are said to have affected or will affect local environments and residents.

Leon Dulce, national coordinator of the Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment, said during a media forum that a review of the contracts and agreements behind them must be done to see if they would protect and benefit Filipinos.

"Ang panawagan namin ay kailangan magkaroon ng omnibus na moratorium sa mga identified talaga na proyektong mapanira at madaya. Magkaroon ng moratorium until such time mareview ang contracts, agreements," Dulce said.

"Hangga't hindi magawang ang tama ang independent review talagang malulugi lang tayo if mag-proceed ang mga proyektong ito."

Among the projects Dulce cited were the Kaliwa Dam Project in Quezon province, the San Miguel Aerocity in Bulacan, the Pasig River Expressway Project, and the Manila Bay rehabilitation project.

Community and environmental groups have in the past criticized these projects for their alleged negative impact on biodiversity and the livelihood of indigenous people.

In the case of the Kaliwa Dam, which is being built as a water source for the capital region, Dulce said there are other proposals of sustainable water projects that would not destroy nature, such as desiltation and creating a rainwater impoundment network to catch water.

"Itigil muna ang mga ito to prevent further harm on people and planet. At 'di naman tayo malulugi kasi nandiyan lang 'yong likas yaman, nandiyan lang ang landscape, seascape na makikinabang para sa mamamayan, pero kailangan tiyakin natin we are renegotiating for the future of people and planet, 'di lang renegotiating kung ano ang ilalaki ng kita natin sa immediate," he added.

Dulce said big infrastructure would be "aggressively" pursued under Marcos, seeing Marcos's appointment of officials from businesses behind some of the projects and the president's own vow to carry on the Duterte administration's "Build, Build, Build" program.



However, he said these economic activities must be reframed and rethought to ensure it would benefit future generations as well.

For instance, Marcos vetoing of an economic zone around the Bulacan Aerocity must be monitored in the coming months, Dulce said.

“Any new proposals patungkol doon sa Aerocity, hindi ina-address ang matagal nang naging injustices diyan. Hindi ina-address ang daan-daang pamilyang pinalayas, thousands of mangroves na pinutol diyan, hindi makapagpropose ng sufficient offset mechanism sa mawawalang mangroves. So maraming baggage ang Aerocity na tingin ko the veto will not easily address,” he said.

“Mas marami pa tayong ikasisira kapag trinato ang mining as economic recovery kaysa i-regulate ito para mapalakas ang recovery sa agrikultura at iba pang aspects ng ekonomiya,” he said.

He also hit the continuing vacancy in Marcos’s environment secretary portfolio amid the climate crisis.

“Crucial ang appointment ng DENR secretary. It comes at a time when governments of the world are being challenged by the global scientific community na kailangan na talaga ng deep and drastic climate action within this year, especially strategically over the next 3 years,” he said.

“Yan na lang ‘yong window of change, opportunity to change doon sa ilang global environment and climate commitments ng bansa, kasama ang Pilipinas, na kapag’ di ‘yan na-aaddress decisively, point of no return na ang planetary crisis na hinaharap natin.”

Kalikasan also criticized Marcos’ plan to revisit the revival and rehabilitation of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant.

Dulce called the move as more on “image building” because of the plant being built by the president’s father, Ferdinand Sr.

Instead of pursuing nuclear energy, the group said the Philippines must invest more in renewable energy sources, which has a less cost in health and environmental impact.

They also called on Marcos to scrap the maintenance of the controversial Manila Bay Dolomite Beach due to its need for further quarrying.

The better alternative, Dulce said, is restoring the ecosystem in Manila Bay or reinforcing coastal stability through means other than crushed dolomite.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/07/09/22/marcos-urged-to-halt-review-controversial-infra-projects?fbclid=IwAR0xi9EJFjBMK2V0pfv5EGN6jsu0p2KFGFKNyD3owTXWyUSj821uPJc-RPo>



## EDITORIAL - Tutukan din ang air pollution

Pang-masa July 10, 2022 | 12:00am



HINDI lamang ang problema sa plastic pollution ang dapat tuunan ng pansin ng Marcos administration kundi pati na rin ang lumalalang air pollution. Kapag walang ginawang aksiyon sa air pollution, marami ang magkakasakit at ang pamahalaan din ang mahihirapan sapagkat dadagsa sa ospital ang mga biktima.

Malala ang air pollution sa Metro Manila na nabawasan na noong 2020 habang nananalasa ang pandemya. Bahagyang bumaba ang lebel ng air pollution dahil napilay ang transportasyon sa pananalasa ng pan-demya. Walang biyahe ang mga jeepney, bus at maski taxi na nagbubuga ng may lasong usok. Tigil din ang mga pabrika.

Subalit ngayon nagbalikan na sa kalye ang lahat ng sasakyan at balik operasyon ang mga pabrika, balik din ang air pollution. Araw-araw nang nakalalanghap ng may lasong usok ang milyong residente sa Metro Manila.

Sa pag-aaral ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), ang mga sasakyan ang numero unong nagdudulot ng air pollution sa Metro Manila. Umano'y 70-80 percent ng emissions ay galing sa mga tambutso ng sasakyan. Ang maruming usok na ito ang nalalanghap ng commuters.

Ayon sa Department of Health (DOH), ang mga sakit na nakukuha dahil sa pagkalahap ng hangin na may lason ay allergies, acute respiratory infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, cancer at cardiovascular diseases. Ayon sa report, 120,000 Pilipino bawat taon ang namamatay dahil sa pagkalahap ng hangin na may lason. Ayon pa sa report, pang-tatlo ang Pilipinas sa mga bansa sa Asia na maraming namamatay sa air pollution. Nangunguna ang China sunod ang Mongolia.

Wala pang itinatalaga si Marcos na DENR secretary. Malaking hamon para sa bagong secretary ang problema sa air pollution na nakaligtaan ng nakaraang pamunuan.

Isa sa mga paraan para masolusyunan ang air pollution ay ang pagbabawal sa mga luma at karag-karag na sasakyan sa kalye. Ang mga lumang sasakyan ay malakas kumunsumo ng gasolina at nagpo-produce nang nakasusulasok na usok. Ipagpatuloy din ang smoke belching campaign para masiguro na ang mga sasakyang yumayaot ay hindi nagbubuga ng may lasong usok. Ipatupad ang Clean Air Act of 1999.

Iligtas ang Metro Manila sa air pollution. Kaawaan ang mga susunod pang henerasyon. Iligtas sila sa nakamamatay na usok.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pang-masa/punto-mo/2022/07/10/2194372/editorial-tutukan-din-ang-air-pollution>





## Saving the world from plastics

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA JULY 10, 2022



[BAN Toxics photo](#)

BAN Toxics campaigners show their alternative reusable bags during an event highlighting the International Plastic Bag Free Day at the Frisco Market in Quezon City on July 3.

In celebration of the International Plastic Bag Free Day on July 3, the group BAN Toxics (BT) organized an event at Frisco Market in Quezon City to raise public awareness on the plastic crisis in the Philippines.

The event, which aims to promote the use of environment-friendly bags instead of single-use plastic bags or sando bags, saw volunteer mothers and “BT Patrollers” showcasing different reusable and eco-friendly bags made of natural materials, such as bamboo, rattan, pandan, coconut and palm leaves, and recycled ones like textiles and katsa, to encourage the public to switch to reusable alternatives.



[BAN Toxics photo](#)

A woman uses an alternative reusable bag at the Frisco Market in Quezon City on July 3.

### Global concern

Global plastic production surged from 2 million tons in the 1950s to more than 438 million tons in 2017, a trend that is expected to continue, according to BAN Toxics,



Around 400 million tons of plastic waste produced per year has encouraged the creation of a new plastics treaty during the recent United Nations Environment Assembly to address the world's problem with plastic overproduction and overconsumption, the group noted.

In the Philippines, plastic pollution is one of the biggest waste problems.

According to BAN Toxics in 2015, the country produced 2.7 million tons of plastic waste annually, ranking the country as the third-largest plastic waste producer in the world.

### Tip of the iceberg

The use of single-use plastic bags, or sando bags, is just the tip of the iceberg. Thony Dizon, Toxics Campaigner at BAN Toxics said the focus of the campaign is on single-use plastic bags that are commonly used in public markets.

"Environment-friendly reusable bags are available. Our campaign aims to convince the public to shift to bayong, basket, or recycled old clothing when they buy in the market to address plastic pollution," Dizon told the BusinessMirror in a telephone interview on July 3.

However, he admitted that the practice of buying and selling in retail, or "tingi," has proven to be equally problematic, especially in urban and rural communities, a reflection of the country's "tingi" economy, which even manufacturers have sadly taken advantage of.

### The solution in past practices

When asked on the issue, Greenpeace Philippines Zero Waste Campaigner Marian Ledesma said besides giving rise to plastic pollution, the use of plastic bags, bottles and sachets have edged out sustainable practices that were used before.

"Now, we don't often see things like bayong in use, consumers refilling reused jars and people drinking from glass soda bottles. With the worsening plastic crisis, we can find solutions in past practices anchored on reuse, less waste and minimal use of resources," Ledesma told the BusinessMirror via e-mail on July 5.

According to Ledesma, Filipinos can live a life free from plastic if reuse models like refill and reusable materials were adopted by companies, and if public policies that regulate plastics are available and encourage sustainable alternatives.

### Damaging to marine ecosystems

The worst thing about plastics, Ledesma said, is that it damages marine ecosystems and disrupts natural processes needed for the growth and development of plants and animals.

"Plastic pollution has harmed over 800 marine and coastal species due to entanglement, ingestion and habitat change," she said.

"But even before waste reaches the ocean, plastics have already impacted marine environments. Every phase of plastics lifecycle has carbon emissions that contributes to climate change, threatens our oceans and creates toxic pollution which damages ecosystems and contaminates waterways," she lamented.

### Extremely urgent matter

Oceana Philippines Vice President Gloria Estenzo-Ramos, for her part, said plastic has become part of the system since its inception in the 1950s. The action to address its detrimental effects on the ocean, wildlife, people's health and natural world has become extremely urgent.

"Artisanal fisherfolk are saying that they are catching more plastics than fish in their nets and take time to remove them," Estenzo-Ramos, an environmental lawyer said via e-mail on July 6.



“Likewise, not many are aware of the largely hidden cost of the plastic crisis: plastic’s contribution to global greenhouse-gas emissions and climate change,” she added.

Being among the countries recognized as “most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change,” this is an issue that demands high prioritization, she pointed out.

### **World drowning in plastics**

“The plastic crisis is real with the global plastic production now at 400 million tons per year with its impacts highly underestimated. The world is drowning in plastics and not many people realize it,” she said.

On a positive note, she said President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., in his inaugural address, put the spotlight on agriculture, which includes fisheries, livelihood and climate change, and committed to addressing the worsening plastic issue, all of which are interconnected.

“We do not need to craft more laws to address these compelling issues. We just need the much-needed political will to fully implement them,” she said.

### **Political will is needed**

According to Estenzo-Ramos, the Philippines has a very progressive law in Republic Act 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, which was crafted more than two decades ago to deal with the plastic pollution problem.

Ironically, she said the National Solid Waste Management Commission sat on its unequivocal mandate to release annually the list of nonenvironmentally acceptable products and packaging, including single-use plastics, that could have stopped plastics pollution at source—from the manufacture, production and distribution.

“It is our fervent hope that the Philippines under the Marcos administration will do what his predecessors utterly failed to do—to step up in the determined and genuine implementation of RA 9003 with the utmost sense of urgency. We already have a law and all we need to do is implement it properly, without fear or favor. Political will is needed now,” she said.

### **Go back to natural materials**

Asean Centre for Biodiversity Executive Director Theresa Mundita S. Lim said that as a country known to be rich in biological diversity, the Philippines is rich in raw materials that can serve as essential components for natural and compostable shopping bags.

Lim told the BusinessMirror on July 6 via Messenger that the Philippines has around 40 confirmed species of calamus, or myrtle grass, with 10 species known as being used in crafts, and around 100 species of pandan with five species, which can be used as materials for bags.

“The native bags and bayong can be environment-friendly alternatives to single-use plastics, which have already been proven damaging to our coastal and marine ecosystems and, subsequently, to our health,” Lim explained.

“Moreover, in my experience supporting community-based and biodiversity-based livelihoods, the production of these alternatives to single-use plastics have also provided income to communities that can protect the wild resources and harness the raw materials effectively,” she added.

Lim cited the materials pataga and sarakat in Baggao, Cagayan, the bakong in Sta. Teresita and the banig in Basey, Samar.



## Far-reaching impact

Lim noted that President Marcos's vowing to clean up plastic pollution is laudable and "rightly so," noting that the impact of single-use plastics is more far-reaching than we have imagined.

"For us who study wildlife and biodiversity, its visible impacts had already manifested years ago, on iconic marine species, such as whales, sea turtles and sea birds, which died with plastics and other undigestible garbage in their stomachs," she lamented.

Lim said plastics have cumulative effects, such that some so-called biodegradable plastics break down to microplastics that can be ingested by smaller fishes and accumulate in bigger fish that feeds on them, eventually ending up in the seafood on our table, affecting the public's nutrition and health.

"Plastics contribute to marine pollution that not only affects health and food safety, but other important industries that rely on the aesthetics of our island ecosystems, such as beach tourism, swimming and diving," she said.

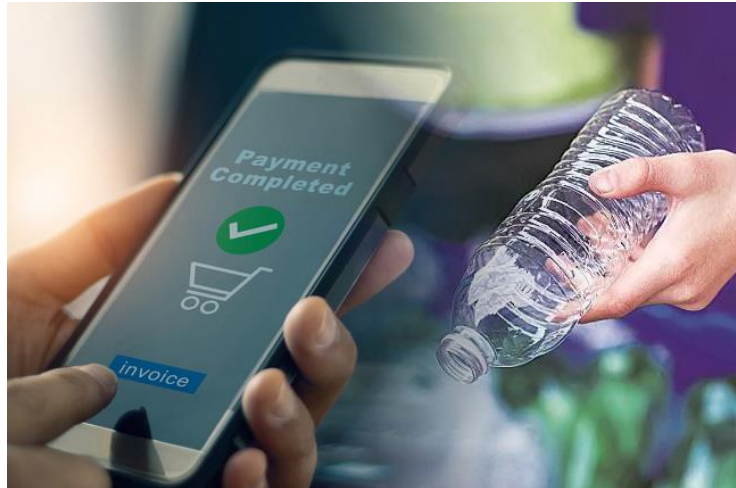
"Plastics also clog our waterways which cause massive flooding during heavy rains. So all things considered, at the end of the day, when it comes to marketing, it might be worth it to consider the traditional practices of our lola [of using native bags and reusable materials]," Lim said.

Image credits: [BAN Toxics photo](#)



## ONLINE TRANSACTIONS AT SINGLE-USE PLASTICS, PINAG-AARALAN NANG SINGILAN NG BUWIS—DOF

by **Rashid Locsin** July 9, 2022



Planong singilan ng buwis ang mga online transactions at ang single-use plastics.

Ito ang inihayag ni Department of Finance (DOF) secretary Benjamin Diokno kung saan kabilang ang Pilipinas sa 200 bansa na nakiisa sa kasunduan sa Paris na bawasan ang greenhouse gas emissions.

Sinabi pa ni Diokno na malaking tulong ito sa kalikasan at mababawasan din ang pag-init ng temperatura sa mundo.

Gayunman, nakasaad sa United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) 2018 report na kabilang ang Pilipinas sa top plastic polluters sa mundo.



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Plano ng pamahalaan na patawan ng buwis ang single-use plastics pati na ang online shopping. Ayon sa Department of Finance, isa ito sa mga tinitingnang paraan upang makalikom ng pondo para sa government projects.

See Translation



YOUTUBE.COM

Online shopping at single-use plastics, planong patawan ng buwis – DOF

Plano ng pamahalaan na patawan ng buwis ang single-use plastics pati na ang online shoppin...

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# PHL, Indonesia marine parks receive marine biodiversity award

BY BUSINESSMIRROR JULY 10, 2022



The Raja Ampat Islands Marine Conservation Area in West Papua, Indonesia, is among the richest coral reefs on the planet.

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna—Two marine parks from the Asean—the Philippines' Apo Reef Natural Park and Indonesia's Raja Ampat Islands Marine Conservation Area—received the Blue Park platinum and gold-level awards, respectively, from the Marine Conservation Institute at the 2022 United Nations Ocean Conference in Lisbon, Portugal.

Asean Centre for Biodiversity Executive Director Theresa Mundita Lim congratulated the parks for meeting the highest science-based standards for marine conservation, ACB said in a news release.

"We commend the Apo Reef Natural Park and the Raja Ampat Islands Marine Conservation Area for their designation as thriving emblems of the Asean region's spectacular marine biodiversity," Lim said in a statement.

The expanse of reefs and waters in both areas are interconnected by the changes of the tides and flows of currents, guiding highways for many migratory species, such as whales and whalesharks and pathways of the shared stocks like the small pelagics like sardines and round scads.



The Apo Reef Natural Park off the coast of Occidental Mindoro province in the Philippines is the second largest contiguous coral reef in the world, containing high coral diversity and providing habitat to around 500 types of marine species.

The Apo Reef Natural Park consists of several islands located 33 kilometers off the coast of Occidental Mindoro province in the Philippines.



The biggest island in the park, Apo Reef, is the second largest contiguous coral reef in the world, containing high coral diversity and providing habitat to around 500 types of marine species, including shoals of fishes like jacks and trevallies.

Shark varieties—reef, white tip, black tip, hammerhead and grey— are also known to be abundant in its waters.

“This Blue Park Award is a testament to more than two decades of hard work of different sectors for the conservation and protection of Apo Reef Natural Park,” said Philippine Ambassador to Portugal Celia Anna M. Feria in a statement delivered during the awarding ceremony, where she was joined by Apo Reef Natural Park Superintendent Krystal Villanada.

Meanwhile, Raja Ampat Islands Marine Conservation Area in West Papua, Indonesia, is known to be one of the richest coral reefs on the planet, encompassing more than 40,000 square kilometres of seas and about 1,500 islands.

The area is a primary source of nutrients for a diversity of life forms, being a “gateway” between the Indian and the Pacific Oceans.

In recent studies, Raja Ampat has been confirmed to be a key sanctuary for species like manta rays (*Mobula alfredi*).

Syafri, S.Pi, head of the Raja Ampat Marine Protected Area Management Authority, shared their pride in being part of the global network, adding that in Raja Ampat, they “want to continue to strengthen management to promote ocean health and ensure food and natural resource sustainability for our children and generations to come.”

“The conferment of these marine protected areas is an inspiring proof of the vital importance of these precious habitats to the region. It is only fitting that the favor is returned with concrete and concerted actions among countries and partners to ensure a bluer future not just for oceans, but for us all,” Lim said.

While only nine Asean member-states have coastal areas, all 10 have vital river systems and waterways that drain into the sea with around 650 million people dependent on healthy coastal and marine ecosystems for food, livelihood, and culture.

However, despite this commonality, these ecosystems continue to face challenges and threats.

Lim added that the common contexts of challenges in conservation and the shared responsibility of ensuring sustainability propel regional platforms, such as the ACB.

The rest of the Asean can learn from the experience of the awardees, and the ACB stands ready to upscale these learnings across the region.

The Blue Park Award recognizes outstanding efforts in marine biodiversity conservation. Since its launch in 2017, the annual award has been given by the Marine Conservation Institute, an international council of marine conservation experts, to recognize governments, civil society organizations, protected areas, and local communities for their efforts in effectively protecting marine ecosystems now and for the future.

The 2022 awardees, Apo Reef Natural Park and the Raja Ampat Islands Marine Conservation Area, together with Old Providence McBean Lagoon National in Colombia, join a growing network of 24 recognized waters in 20 countries.

Image credits: [I Made Adi Dharmawan/Wikimedia Commons](#), [Alexis Duran /ACB](#)

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/07/10/phl-indonesia-marine-parks-receive-marine-biodiversity-award/>





# Green recovery to bring in investments into Southeast Asia

[Louella Desiderio](#) - The Philippine Star July 10, 2022 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Pursuing a green recovery from the pandemic in Southeast Asian countries can generate \$172 billion worth of investment opportunities annually and create over 30 million jobs in the region by 2030, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said.

In a new report titled “Implementing a Green Recovery in Southeast Asia,” which has the Philippines, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar and Thailand as its focus countries, the multilateral institution said a green recovery approach from the pandemic is crucial for the region to achieve an economically and environmentally resilient future.

“While several countries in the region have begun to support a green recovery, more needs to be done,” ADB director general for Southeast Asia Ramesh Subramaniam said during a webinar organized by ADB and ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute for the report yesterday.

“We must encourage additional green stimulus, design carbon pricing schemes, reduce dependence on fossil-fuel intensive power, and attract private sector investors to large-scale renewable energy, sustainable transport, and clean urban projects,” he said.

To help governments in Southeast Asia pursue a green recovery, ADB’s report identified five areas offering opportunities such as productive and regenerative agriculture; sustainable urban development and transport models; clean energy transition including the development of renewable energy projects and enhancing the efficiency of energy use across various sectors; circular economy models; and healthy and productive oceans.

“If leveraged fully, the five green growth opportunities would require approximately \$172 billion in capital investment and can create 30 million jobs in Southeast Asia by 2030,” ADB said.

“These growth opportunities also align with almost 60 percent of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal targets,” the multilateral institution said.

In the area of productive and regenerative agriculture which will involve transforming agricultural landscapes and farming practices to improve yields while enhancing surrounding natural ecosystems, ADB said specific opportunities include the use of emerging technologies such as big data analytics and the internet of things to support precision agriculture applications; farming practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions such as rotational grazing; rotating crops and reducing tillage to replenish soil nutrition; as well as micro-irrigation to reduce water usage and run-off.

ADB said there are major risks in not taking advantage of the opportunities in this space given the agriculture sector’s contribution to the five focus countries’ economy and employment.

In particular, the sector accounts for 10 percent of the gross domestic product of the Philippines, eight percent of Thailand’s, 13 percent of Indonesia’s, 21 percent of Cambodia’s, and 23 percent of Myanmar’s.

In terms of employment, the sector’s share is at 23 percent for the Philippines, 28 percent for Indonesia, 31 percent for Thailand and Cambodia, and 49 percent for Myanmar.

“Not harnessing greater productivity efficiencies in this sector could thereby result in significant economic opportunity costs,” ADB said.

In terms of sustainable urban development and transport models, ADB cited opportunities including better-planned urban developments; developing sustainable public transport



systems and last-mile connectivity like multimodal public transport systems, corridors for active mobility like walking and cycling paths; electric vehicle adoption; and promoting ride sharing.

As for clean energy transitions, ADB said Southeast Asian countries can look at facilitating the phase-out and early retirement of coal-fired power plants, scaling up renewables and storage, developing interconnected grids, and saving energy through demand-side energy efficiency measures.

In terms of a circular economy or a model of production and consumption where raw materials and components are used for as long as possible, opportunities include investments and policies that support the processing of waste into usable and valuable end products across various sectors.

ADB said the Philippines currently has industry specific initiatives in this space, particularly in food processing and construction, but the country lacks an integrated circular economy plan.

To have healthy and productive oceans, ADB said Southeast Asian countries will need to have sustainable management of wild fisheries by ensuring biologically viable fishing levels and improving and scaling sustainable mariculture and aquaculture to replenish overexploited stocks.

ADB also identified other policy options in the report which include stepping up research on green technologies, encouraging women entrepreneurs to participate in green business opportunities, and managing biodiversity better through open and integrated data systems.

To implement a green recovery, ADB said Southeast Asian governments will need to identify sustainable sources of financing for climate-friendly infrastructure investments and to take advantage of green growth opportunities.

It said financing approaches should include mobilizing domestic resources through environmental and carbon taxes, reducing subsidies for fossil fuels, mobilizing private investors by addressing risks related to green investments, and leveraging public and private finance through green funds such as the Association of Southeast Asian Catalytic Green Finance Facility.

It also cited the need to have stronger collaboration among neighboring economies and to establish partnerships with various stakeholders for the benefits to be felt throughout the region.



## Protecting nature: key to breaking the zoonoses chain

Published on: July 09, 2022

By ACB

LAGUNA -- The COVID-19 pandemic upended not only public health systems and economies across the world—it has also profoundly impacted people and communities at a much more personal level.

While COVID-19 may currently be the most menacing zoonotic (transmitted from animals to humans) disease known to us, it may definitely not be the last. In the face of a notable uptick in global cases of other zoonotic diseases such as monkeypox, experts cautioned that there are 1.7 million currently ‘undiscovered’ viruses that exist in mammals and birds, and up to 827,000 of these could still infect people. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), three out of four or 75 per cent of new human diseases in the last decade are zoonotic in origin.

This year’s commemoration of World Zoonoses Day is a nod to the important work of Louis Pasteur, who, on July 6th 1885, administered the first vaccine against the zoonotic disease, rabies.

However, it is also an important occasion to bring to light the implications of this daunting possibility of more outbreaks and how it typifies the greater need to integrate biodiversity into the broader discussion of public health.

Over the past few years, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) has expanded discussions and developed interventions that recognise the interaction between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment. In the recently concluded joint virtual workshop Biodiversity as a One Health Shield in Asia and the Pacific organised by World Organization for Animal Health and the World Wide Fund for Nature held 28 June 2022, the ACB shared opportunities for the ASEAN as a contribution to the global discussion on the biodiversity and health interface.

Historically, the region is no stranger to zoonotic outbreaks. In the 1990s, viral diseases such as the Ebola-Reston, Nipah virus, and the H5N1 influenza severely impacted domestic animals and humans. The SARS outbreak in 2003 caused a number of deaths in the ASEAN region.

In all these instances, wildlife species have been implicated to be the primary viral sources. But viruses usually do not simply jump from wildlife species to humans. As highlighted by evidence, disease emergence is caused by the increasing human-wildlife interactions, resulting in cases of direct transmission.

But while the richness of biodiversity – including the natural virus reservoirs – makes the region vulnerable to further zoonotic outbreaks, it also holds the solutions to preventing future



pandemics. Healthy biodiversity is a vital part of the solution: in developing vaccines and pharmaceuticals, which have turned the tide against fatal pandemics such as COVID-19; in ensuring wildlife populations safe in their natural habitats, thus minimising direct contact across species and spillover of potential diseases.

With the ASEAN's critical history and experience with pandemics, biodiversity and health have become among the key focus areas at the national and regional levels. Significant policy statements provide guidance for incorporating biodiversity in public health responses and regional development processes.

As early as 2003 during the SARS outbreak, the significance of a multi-disciplinary approach has been recognised. Two simple principles were observed that eventually contained the disease: detecting all cases and protecting those at risk of infection from these cases.

Governments promoted the interface of animal-human health, joint surveillance, monitoring of wetlands and waterbirds, maintaining a safe distance between poultry farms and migratory bird watering areas, and facilitating stronger coordination across the countries to address wild bird and poultry smuggling.

As a potential pathway forward, the ACB is exploring how One Health, an integrated approach to addressing public health concerns which is hoped to open greater collaboration across sectors and stakeholders on human and environmental or ecosystem health.

The collaboration exemplified by experts, scientists, and governments in pushing back on the impacts of COVID-19 is evidence of the greater potential to break the chain. The adaptive measures put in place, as seen in the intensive efforts toward vaccine development and roll-out, have proven to contribute concretely to its management. However, nature-based solutions are proven to be valuable components of a broader longitudinal mitigation strategy to prevent future pandemics and outbreaks.

Biodiversity is an integral part of the solution. Internalising this and translating it into positive personal and institutional actions can only be done once a deeper understanding of the linkages between biodiversity and health has been achieved.

As a regional centre facilitating actions in biodiversity, we at the ACB continue to work with the ASEAN Member States and partners in broadening the space for collaborations that not only address biodiversity loss but engage key sectors such as health as well.

We hope that with a renewed understanding of the importance of protecting biodiversity in breaking the zoonoses chain, we can better prepare ourselves to build a healthier tomorrow, both for people and nature. (ACB)



# Working together to mentor youth as they transition to the working environment

Published July 8, 2022, 4:35 PM

by [Edgard Hilario](#)



DHL Philippines partners with SOS Children's Villages International

DHL Express, DHL Global Forwarding, and DHL Supply Chain have signed a local partnership with SOS Children's Villages International to empower young people aged 15 to 25 in the Philippines and help prepare them for employment or entrepreneurship.

The global partnership with SOS Children's Villages began in 2011 under Deutsche Post DHL Group's "GoTeach" initiative globally. It has since grown to more than 50 countries. The Philippine partnership will kick off on 6 July 2022, upon signing of the memorandum of agreement. This is the second GoTeach partnership for DHL in the Philippines. Since 2013, DHL has been supporting students and teachers from Teach for the Philippines with internships, career planning sessions and mentoring.

Partnering SOS Children's Villages and Teach For All, GoTeach is a global program by Deutsche Post DHL Group to help young people transition into independence in their respective countries. The program aims to improve the employability of young people, especially those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds due to poverty, loss of family, and fleeing.

"We would like to thank DHL for partnering with us for YouthCan! and for giving children more opportunities to choose their path in life. Together, let's ensure that our youth will pave their way to a bright future," said Romil Rayos del Sol, OIC & Deputy National Director of SOS Children's Villages Philippines.

Under the partnership with SOS Children's Villages, employees of DHL Express, DHL Global Forwarding, and DHL Supply Chain will work to mentor youths as they transition to the working world. The activities include job orientation to help young people understand the job market, soft and basic skills training to improve employability, and entrepreneurship to empower them to become independent and make their dreams come true.

"This partnership is important to us because education is fundamental to greater stability and prosperity for individuals and society. Through these collaborative efforts, I believe we will have more opportunities to help train our youth and prepare them for employment and independence. This is part of our commitment to invest in the next generation of leaders and assist them in developing skills and capabilities for a better future," said Nigel Lockett, Country Manager of DHL Express Philippines.



“When it comes to our GoTeach activities, our employees share their time and individual skills and experiences in mentoring and developing young leaders. This is a rewarding experience for both and a great opportunity for the youth to expand and explore different career paths,” said Bevan Noel Williams, Country Managing Director of DHL Supply Chain Philippines.

“This partnership with SOS Children’s Villages is a testament to our commitment to helping improve the employability of young people as part of our GoTeach activities. We are honored to provide mentorship and other resources to our youth and help them find success in their chosen careers,” said Yvonne Lee, Managing Director of DHL Global Forwarding Philippines.



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### Solar-powered recycling catamaran, to operate in Manila Bay

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The 'circular explorer,' a pioneering solar-powered recycling catamaran, is set to operate in the Philippines to assist in the Manila Bay rehabilitation.

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ABS-CBN News

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Matapos ang pagbaha sa Cebu, nakakolekta ng sangkaterbang basura sa mga estero at ilog sa Cebu City, Talisay, at Consolacion Sabado. (📷: Cebu City PIO; Talisay PIO; LGU Consolacion) | via Annie Perez

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OpinYon Quezonin

20h · 🌐

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TINGNAN: Mga syringe, nagkalat sa ilang parte ng Mauban

Ipinarating ng isang residente mula sa Mauban, Quezon ang kaniyang hinaing tungkol sa mga nagkalat na mga heringgilya (syringe) sa kanilang barangay.

Sa post sa Facebook ni Gretel Amarillo Monteverde, sinabi niyang natusok ng syringe ang kanyang ama habang ito ay naglilinis ng kanilang bakuran.

Kinailangang magtungo sa Health Center ang kaniyang ama upang maturukan ng anti-tetanus.

Naglitawan umano mula sa isang kanal na konektado sa isang sapang matatagpuan sa likuran ng kanilang Barangay Health Center ang nasabing mga syringe matapos ang naganap na pagbaha dulot ng walang tigil na pag-ulan kamakailan.

Nanawagan naman si Monteverde sa mga awtoridad na bigyang pansin at aksyunan ang mga nagkalat na heringgilya sa kanilang lugar.

"Sana po ay mabigyan pansin hanggang ngayon ay nagkalat pa rin sa kalsada. Delikado sa mga dumadaan ganun na rin sa mga bata. Ang mga syringe po ay gamit na," ani Monteverde.

(Larawan mula kay Gretel Amarillo Monteverde)

See Translation



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**DENR**

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07-10-22

TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

## Bagong sanitary landfill ipinagkaloob sa Marawi City

Para malutas ang problema ng basura ipinagkatiwala na ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang operasyon, maintenance at management ng bagong gawang sanitary landfill facility (SLF) sa lokal na pamahalaan ng Marawi City sa probinsiya ng Lanao del Sur.

Ayon kay dating DENR-OIC Secretary Joselin Marcus Fragada, ang pagkakumpleto sa engineered SLF ay magsisilbing landmark accomplishment para malutas ang problema sa basura sa Marawi City.

"The turnover of the 31.7-hectare SLF in Marawi City starts the ball rolling for the proper implementation of solid waste management in the historic Islamic City. We hope that the residents of Lanao del Sur province will make good use of it for the benefit of their health and environment," sinabi ni Fragada.

Ang pasilidad ay kontribusyon ng DENR para sa Comprehensive

Marawi Recovery, Reconstruction, and Rehabilitation Program.

Sa ginanap na okasyon, ang mga opisyal ng DENR sa pangunguna ni Assistant Sec. for Legal Affairs Michelle Angelica Go, na nagsisilbi ring head ng DENR Subcommittee on Land Resource Management

of Task Force Bangon Marawi, ay lumagda sa "deed of donation" at nag-turn over ng manual guidebook para sa tamang operasyon ng SLF.

Nakasaad sa deed of donation na ang DENR ang mangangasiwa sa 5-year solid waste management project para sa Marawi City. (Angie dela Cruz)



# TAX ON PLASTICS, ONLINE TRANSACTIONS PUSHED

STORY BY BEN O. DE VERA

The Marcos government inherits a 'much better' tax system but also a huge debt estimated to top P13 trillion by year-end. To boost its revenue, Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno says the new administration plans to tax all online transactions, which can raise P13.2 billion annually, and earn another P1 billion from single-use plastics.

## FROM A1

By Ben O. de Vera  
@bendeveraINQ

The government is determined to boost its revenues from the boom in digital or online transactions with an estimated yearly value-added tax (VAT) collection of as much as P13.2 billion from them and P1 billion more from single-use plastic products, which are a major pollutant, according to Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno.

Aside from the fresh push for the two measures, the new administration is not planning any new or higher taxes in the short term, Diokno said during a press conference on Friday with other members of President Marcos' economic team.

"If you buy a product from a regular store, you pay tax; I think we should also pay tax on online sales," he said, adding that it was only "fair" to levy the 12-percent VAT on such purchases.

This tax would be imposed "sooner than later" upon the passage of a bill to tax online providers of products and services, including video and audio streamers, shopping sites and advertisers on social media.

The bill authored by Albay Rep. Joey Salceda was passed by the House of Representatives during the 18th Congress, and it can be reintroduced then tackled by the Senate in the 19th Congress. Once enacted, users of Net-



Benjamin Diokno  
—MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

flix (for video) and Spotify (for audio), for instance, would be charged higher subscription fees.

Salceda, who was the House ways and means committee chair in the 18th Congress, pushed for the online tax bill to partially offset the billions of pesos in forgone revenues after the government slashed the tax rate for corporations to 25 percent and to 20 percent the tax rate for micro, small and medium enterprises under the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (Create) Law.

### BIR move

These tax cuts were retroactively applied to corporate taxes which had been due since July 2020 supposedly to ease the pain inflicted by COVID-19 on businesses.

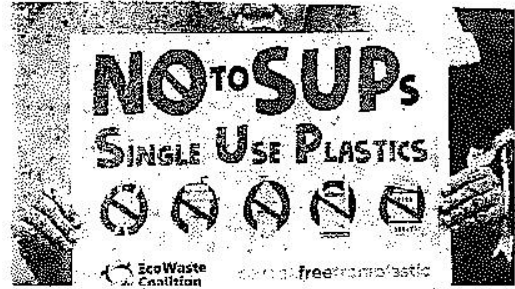
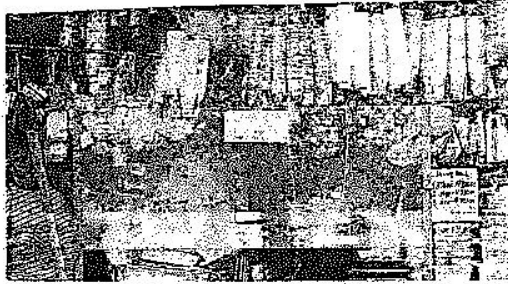
While awaiting passage of Salceda's proposed law, the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) worked on a system to collect VAT from for-



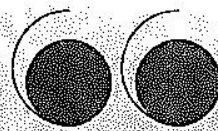
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PAGE 2/3

DATE



**BOON AND BANE.** One of the new taxes being keenly considered by the new administration's economic managers is on single-use plastics, a great convenience for the local retail industry and the so-called sachet market but a bane to the environment and a constant target of green advocates (right photo). A World Bank study says Philippine households use about 1.2 million tons of plastic packaging each year. —PHOTOS BY NIÑO JESUS GRBETA/LYN RILLON



## If you buy a product from a regular store, you pay tax; I think we should also pay tax on online sales

**Benjamin Diokno**  
Finance Secretary

eight digital service providers, including global giants like Amazon, Google, Netflix and Spotify.

Under the bill, all digital service providers with customers in the Philippines, whether operating here or abroad, were subject to VAT.

The digital service providers abroad are to register online for VAT purposes, similar to what they do in other countries. At the same

time, they would be responsible for assessing, collecting, as well as remitting the VAT on transactions on their online platforms.

At the height of the pandemic, the BIR reminded online sellers, many of whom experienced a business boom as the pandemic shuttered thousands of brick-and-mortar stores and restricted travel, to register as taxpayers. It

invoked a 2013 regulation to register issued by then BIR Commissioner Kim Henares.

The BIR is also running after delinquent social media "influencers," investigating hundreds of them who may already be earning millions of pesos through their vlogs on YouTube and Facebook but are not paying any income tax.

### Part of climate action

Diokno said that the plan to impose a tax on single-use plastics would not only increase revenue but also help in the fight against climate change.

A bill passed by the House in December last year will impose an excise of P20 per kilo of single-use plastic bags used in retail stores, shops, supermarkets and malls, among other sales outlets.

The excise would raise an additional revenue of P1 billion yearly, according to the Depart-

ment of Finance (DOF).

The World Bank said that plastics production contributed \$2.3 billion to the Philippine economy in 2018, as many poor and middle-income households used cheap consumer goods in plastic containers.

"A high dependence on single-use plastics like multilayer sachets and pouches has led the Philippines to become a 'sachet economy' that continues to worsen the alarming levels of marine plastic pollution in the region," the World Bank had said. About 163 million sachets are consumed in the country per day, it added.

In a June 21 report titled "Marine Plastic Management: The Gender Dimensions," the World Bank said that an estimated 55 percent to 60 percent of global plastic waste leakage comes from China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.



07-10-20

TITLE :

PAGE

p 3/3

DATE

## TAX ON PLASTICS, ONLINE TRANSACTIONS GETS NEW PUSH

FROM A2

The Philippines has an estimated annual household plastic packaging consumption of 1,281,000 tons, or a per capita rate of 12.4 kilograms, according to the World Bank.

It said plastics were the fifth-largest import of the Philippines and in March 2019, it was worth \$235.04 million, or 14.2 percent more than in the previous year. The country's total plastic production in 2019 was estimated at 2,592,000 tons, the World Bank said.

Diokno said the Marcos administration was not looking at new or higher taxes on consumption, plus the three-year deferral of the scheduled personal income tax cuts, while slashing public spending on nonpriority budget items.

These plans left behind by President Rodrigo Duterte's economic team were aimed at repaying the pandemic-induced debts and reverting the yawning budget deficit to prepandemic levels.

Instead, Diokno said, they will focus on improving tax administration.

He acknowledged that they inherited a "much-better" tax system from the Duterte administration.

### P12.5T inherited debt

But the new administration also was handed a huge outstanding debt amounting to P12.5 trillion as of May. This is estimated to reach P13.4 trillion by year-end.

The loans were obtained to beef up the country's COVID-19 war chest. Although these were concessional loans, the repayment will take two generations, or up to 2060.

Diokno said the government wanted more inclusive growth in the next six years so it could collect more taxes. The Marcos administration targets a gross domestic product growth of 6.5 percent to 7.5 percent this year, and 6.5 percent to 8 percent yearly from 2023 to 2028.

He noted that the ongoing digitalization at the biggest tax-collection agencies—the Bureau of Customs and BIR—will hike their tax take and also result in "less opportunity for corruption."

The finance chief said their plan is to raise the share of tax collected to the economy by 0.3 percent to 0.4 percent yearly through good tax administration and economic growth.

"That's why we're focusing on making sure that growth will be faster and more broad-based, [as] that's where the bigger part of the tax revenues will come from," Diokno said. —WITH A REPORT FROM

INQUIRER RESEARCH INQ



07-10-22

TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

### Villar malamig sa plastik buwisan

Nabahala si Senator Cynthia Villar sa posibleng epekto sa business sector sa planong pagpapataw ng buwis sa single-use plastic.

Giit ni Villar kailangang balansehin ang pagpapataw ng buwis at sa mga negosyo at investor dahil maaring madismaya at umatras ang mga ito na maginvest o magnegosyo sa bansa.

"Babalansehan natin 'yan. Baka ma-discourage 'yong mga investor/business sector," ayon kay Villar.

Aminado ang senadora na bagama't dagdag kita sa gobyerno ang pagbubuwis sa single use plastic ngunit dapat aniyang isaalangalang ang epekto nito sa panig ng business sector.

Nasa Kongreso umano ang pagpasya ukol dito.

Una nang sinabi ni Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno, kinokonsidera nila ang pagpapataw ng single-use plastic tax dahil makatutulong umano ito sa pagtugon sa lumalalang problema sa climate crisis. (Eralyn Prado)



07-10-22

TITLE

PAGE

DATE

# High tourist arrivals in Boracay 'good sign'

By **RYAN PONCE PACPACO**

**AKLAN 2nd District Representative Teodorico Haresco Jr. has welcomed the increase of foreign arrivals in Boracay as a "good sign" of economic recovery for the province and the country.**

According to a report from the municipal tourism office of Malay in Aklan province, where Boracay is located, there has been a constant influx of foreign tourists on the island, indicated by a 69% increase.

The tourism office recorded 6,873 tourists in June; up from 4,268 in May; 4,737 in April; and 2,533 in March.

"The revival of the tourism industry, especially of famed destinations like

Boracay Island, will be key to providing more local jobs and boosting our economic recovery," Haresco said.

In 2019, the tourism industry contributed about 12.8% to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

However, Haresco said that international travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic greatly reduced the sector's contribution to 5.4% in 2020.

Employment in tourism industries was estimated at 4.68 million in 2020, or 11.9% of total employment.

This was the lowest contribution of the tourism sector to GDP after tourism employment dropped from 5.72 million in 2019, he added.

"After enduring two years of travel restrictions amid the coronavirus pan-

dem, Boracay Island has allowed local tourists to enter in September 2021 and foreign tourists in February 2022, contributing to the early recovery of the economy," Haresco said.

The bulk of foreign arrivals came from the United States, United Kingdom, France, Canada, Singapore, and Korea. Domestic tourism also contributed to the tourism boom with the number of visitors in March soaring to 111,022 compared to 80,095 in February.

"The challenge for us now is to continue strictly enforcing health and safety protocols to protect both locals and tourists from COVID-19 while keeping holistic and comprehensive efforts to expand tourism recovery and build back the economy better," Haresco added.





## Another haul of 'hot lumber' worth P440K seized in Ecija

**GENERAL TINIO**, Nueva Ecija - A total of 153 pieces of illegally-sawn lumber flitches worth P440,676.20 found abandoned in a river here were recovered during an anti-illegal logging operation conducted in Barangay Rio Chico on Friday.

The latest successful operation came two days after authorities seized on Wednesday some 127 pieces of "hot lumber flitches" having a total volume of 6,833.36 board feet, worth P410,019 at the Sumacbao River in Bgy.

Pias, said Acting Nueva Ecija Provincial Police head Col. Jess B. Mendez.

During Wednesday's operation, at least eight suspects, including the alleged illegal logging operator, managed to flee after the arresting lawmen were "mobbed" by local residents, numbering more than 100 people, including women and children, allowing all eight suspects to escape.

Mendez said the anti-illegal logging operation was conducted in Bgy. Rio

Chico was spearheaded by the local police led by Maj. Lawrence Lira, together with the 1st Provincial Mobile Force Company headed by Lt. Col. Robert D. Agustin, the San Leonardo and Peñaranda police, the PENRO and CENRO, and the Army's 84th Infantry Battalion.

"Tumaas kasi ang tubig sa ilog dahil sa mga pag-ulan kaya bumaba ang lahat ng kahoy na ipinaanod gal-ing sa itaas," said Mendez. Recovered during the

twin operations were 126 pieces of assorted illegally-sawn lumber with a volume of 6,446 board feet and 27 pieces of various wood sizes, measured at 673 board feet, with an estimated market value of P386,800 and P53,876.20, respectively.

Agustin said the recovered illegal wood shipment has been taken for temporary safekeeping at the 1st PMFC headquarters in Cabanatuan City and the local police. Steve A. Gosuico



# New UN financing initiative powers climate action

A new United Nations (UN)-led financing tool to strengthen weather and climate forecasting to improve life-saving early warning systems, safeguard jobs and underpin climate adaptation for long-term resilience has opened for business.

The Systematic Observations

Financing Facility (SOFF) is a key building block for a new initiative spearheaded by UN Secretary-General António Guterres to ensure that early warning services cover everyone on Earth within the next five years.

SOFF seeks to address the longstanding problem of inadequate weather forecasting

and climate services, especially in least developed countries (LDC) and small island developing states.

In support of the Paris Agreement on climate change, it will strengthen the international response to keeping global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius "by filling the data gaps that limit our understanding

of the climate," according to a press release issued by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

These gaps affect the ability of national agencies to predict and adapt to extreme weather events, such as floods, droughts and heatwaves, all of which are on the rise, in line with the warming climate.

**As the climate crisis worsens, it is crucial that we boost the power of prediction for everyone, so countries can reduce disaster risk.**

Heads of the three founding agencies, WMO, the UN Development Programme and UN Environment Programme, joined ministers from donor countries, LDC Group members, Alliance of Small Island States representatives and development partners at the first SOFF Steering Committee meeting to get the facility up and running.

**Boost 'the power of prediction'**

"As the climate crisis worsens, it is crucial that we boost the

power of prediction for everyone, so countries can reduce disaster risk," said the UN chief.

"That is why we have launched an initiative to ensure that every person on Earth is protected by early warning systems within the next five years. SOFF is an essential tool to achieve this. I thank all the countries that are providing initial funding to the SOFF UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund and urge others to do the same."

"Early warning systems are built on the foundation of weather observation data, but this foundation is patchy to non-existent in many in LDC and African countries," Selwin Hart, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Climate Action and Just Transition, stated.

**Join the club**

"I want to congratulate all the countries that have come forward and announced or soon will announce their financial contributions to the SOFF UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund. I urge others to follow suit and help create a strong global data foundation upon which timely, accurate, people-centered early warning systems can be built for everyone. Our collective efforts are needed more than ever," Hart added.



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07-10-22

TITLE:

PAGE *p/2*

DATE

# Eco-warrior Dingdong Dantes walks the talk

By Allan Policarpio  
@alpolicarpio

**A**s a father, Dingdong Dantes believes that it's also his responsibility to instill in his kids early on the importance of protecting our environment.

"Telling them what they should or shouldn't do is good... But they also need actual exposure," the actor said of his children, Zia, 6 and Sixto, 3. "For instance, when we travel and go to the beach, I always remind Zia to observe the environment. If she sees plastic, I tell her to pick it up because it doesn't belong there."

"I tell her the effects plastic can have if it reaches the waters ... the animals in the sea can end up eating it," Dingdong said in a recent video conference for the month-long fourth anniversary celebration of the infotainment show "Amazing Earth."

"Zia understands the concept when you talk to her about it. But she developed a deeper appreciation when I showed it to her outside."

And as much as possible, Dingdong tries to lead by example. "*Iba'yung praktikal, nararamdaman, nahahawakan at*

*nararanasan...* You have to lead by example. And this is true, whether at home or at institutions. What the children see in you, they will replicate. So it's important to set this culture starting at home," he said.



**You have to lead by example. And this is true, whether at home or at institutions. What the children see in you, they will replicate**

**Dingdong Dantes**  
Actor-TV host

## Everyone's responsibility

Environmental conservation, he said, is everyone's responsibility, with policymakers and citizens working together.

"It should be a given for us people to take care of all the beautiful things the Lord has given us ... all the God-given gifts," Dingdong said. "We have to take care of that. We should all do our part by being responsible citizens."

"Amazing Earth" features stories and documentaries on uncharted destinations, fascinating wildlife as well as interviews with local environmental heroes. And for its fourth anniversary, the program—which airs Sunday evenings—prepared four special episodes featuring different Kapuso artists and environmental advocates:

The July 10 episode will have Glaiza de Castro giving a tour of her house in Baler province.

On July 17, Max Collins will reminisce about the four years she spent living in Boracay.



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C6  
PAGE

UPPER  
 LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

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07-10-22

TITLE: ECO-WARRIORS DINGDONG...

PAGE 2/2

DATE

On July 24, Dingdong will join Ruru Madrid and the so-called Team Harabas of Occidental Mindoro.

On July 31, Dingdong will get to know the young eco-warriors of Bagac, Bataan, led by Fr. Noel Nuguid, as well as reigning Miss Universe Charity Pauline Amelinckx who creates children's coloring books as part of her advocacy.

"People tell me that they like watching the show with their kids because they learn a lot of things. And I do, too. Since I deliver the stories, I get to hear about the stories first. And there's always something new. It has become a way of life for me. Hearing stories about people and how they take care of the environment is inspiring," he said.

Aside from "Amazing Earth," Dingdong also hosts the game show "Family Feud" and

topbills with wife Marian Rivera the sitcom "Jose & Maria's Bonggang Villa."

"I always work hard and I always give my best regardless of whether I have a few or lots of projects on my plate. You must give them the same dedication and energy. I was lucky to have been entrusted with these shows," he said.

"Amazing Earth' is in its fourth year. 'Family Feud' has been extended for another season. And I get another chance to work with my wife in 'Bonggang Villa.' And I'm thankful," he added.

#### Packed schedule

Dingdong's schedule is packed, with tapings from Mondays to Sundays. So while a teleserye for him is currently in development, it probably won't air or go into production until next year.

"I have things to do all week. I'm not thinking about what's next for me because there are still a lot of things that need to be done. My existing shows aren't done yet and will probably run longer. I don't know until when this kind of schedule lasts, but you just make the most out of the cards you're dealt with," Dingdong

said. INQ



# Droughts increase nearly a third in a generation

Humanity is “at a crossroads” when it comes to managing drought, and accelerating ways of slowing it down must happen “urgently, using every tool we can,” the head of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) said, as he called for a global commitment to support drought preparedness and resilience.

Through its newly published “Drought in Numbers” report, released in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire during the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15), UNCCD’s compendium of drought-related information and data is helping inform negotiations for the final outcomes of the conference.

Ibrahim Thiaw, UNCCD Executive Secretary, said that the “facts and figures of this publication all point in the same direction: An upward trajectory in the duration of droughts and the severity of impacts, not only affecting human societies, but also the ecological systems upon which the survival of all life depends, including that of our own species.”

**From 1998 to 2017, droughts triggered global economic losses of roughly \$124 billion – a number and duration of which have risen 29 percent since 2000.**

## Compelling call to action

The report reveals that from 1970 to 2019, weather, climate and water hazards accounted for 50 percent of disasters and 45 percent of disaster-related deaths, mostly in developing countries.

Moreover, while droughts represented 15 percent of natural disasters, they accounted for approximately 650,000 deaths throughout that period.

From 1998 to 2017, droughts triggered global economic losses of roughly \$124 billion – a number and duration of which have risen 29 percent since 2000.

Meanwhile in 2022, more than 2.3 billion people are facing water stress and almost 160 million children are exposed to severe and prolonged droughts.

## Burden on women

Droughts have deep, widespread and underestimated impacts on societies, ecosystems and economies, having impacted some 1.4 billion people between 2000 and 2019.

Second only to flooding, droughts inflict the greatest suffering on women and girls in developing countries in terms of education, nutrition, health, sanitation and safety.

The publication explains that 72 percent of women and nine percent of girls are burdened with collecting water, in some cases spending as much as 40 percent of their calorific intake carrying it.

## Ecosystems in focus

“Drought in Numbers” paints a grim picture surrounding ecosystems as well, noting that the percentage of plants affected by drought has more than doubled in the last 40 years – with about 12 million hectares of land lost each year to drought and desertification.

Meanwhile, they are becoming increasingly common in the vast Amazon region, which has suffered three widespread droughts that triggered massive forest fires throughout the first two decades of this century.



07-10-22

TITLE:

continuation

PAGE

DATE

## Drought increase nearly . . . . 2

If Amazonian deforestation continues unabated, 16 percent of the region's remaining forests will likely burn by 2050, warned the report.

And in Europe, photosynthesis was reduced by 30 percent during a 2003 summer drought there.

In the past century, more than 10 million people died due to major drought events, which also generated several hundred billion dollars in economic losses worldwide. And the numbers are rising.

### No continent is safe

While severe drought affects Africa more than any other continent — accounting for 44 percent of the global total — over the past century, 45 major drought events have also affected millions of people in Europe — affecting an average of 15 percent of that continent's land and 17 percent of its population.

In the United States, drought-induced crop failures and other economic losses have totaled \$249 billion since 1980 alone, and over the past century, Asia was the continent with the highest total number of humans affected by drought.

### Offering solutions

“One of the best, most comprehensive solutions is land restoration, which addresses many of the underlying factors of degraded water cycles and the loss of soil fertility,” Thiaw said.

“We must build and rebuild our landscapes better, mimicking nature wherever possible and creating functional ecological systems.”

Beyond restoration, there needs to be a paradigm shift from “reactive” and “crisis-based” approaches to “proactive” and “risk-based” drought management approaches involving coordination, communication and cooperation, driven by sufficient finance and political will, he added.

### Looking ahead

Unless action is stepped up:

By 2030, an estimated 700 million people will be at risk of being displaced by drought.

By 2040, an estimated one in four children will live in areas with extreme water shortages.

By 2050, droughts may affect over three-quarters of the world's population, and an estimated 4.8 to 5.7 billion people will live in areas that are water-scarce for at least one month each year, up from 3.6 billion today. And up to 216 million people could be forced to migrate by 2050, largely due to drought in combination with other factors, including water scarcity, declining crop productivity, sea-level rise and overpopulation.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF UN  
WIND turbine farms, such as this one in Maui, USA, offer a renewable source of energy.





07-10-22

TITLE:

PAGE:

DATE:

continuation  
Drought increase nearly . . . 3



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF UN  
ROWS of solar panels cover Nevada, California's crescent dunes to provide power.

## U.S. Supreme Court ruling 'setback' to climate change fight

The recent ruling by the United States Supreme Court against the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is "a setback in our fight against climate change," United Nations (UN) spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric said.

He was responding to a question at the regular briefing at the UN Headquarters in New York about the ruling, which in effect strips away the power of the EPA to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

The case was brought against the US government agency by the state of West Virginia on behalf of other mainly Republican-led states and several major coal producing companies.

The issue at hand, decided on by a majority of 6-3, was whether the EPA had the right to regulate CO2 emissions on a state-wide versus an individual company level.

**The Secretary-General has said repeatedly that the G20, the group of developed industrialized economies, must lead the way in dramatically stepping up climate action.**

The conservative-leaning majority on the Court sided with the states and fossil fuel interests, which argued it threatened excessive regulation, agreeing that Congress — when the EPA was established — did not intend to delegate such significant decisions to an agency.

US President Joe Biden described it as a "devastating decision." Although the court ruling does not prevent the EPA from regulating emissions in the future, according to news reports, it makes clear that Congress would have to give clear consent for the agency to act.

### Already 'far off-track'

"While it is not the UN's role to provide legal commentary on judicial decisions of individual member states, just more generally, I can say that this is a setback in our fight against climate change when we are already far off-track in meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement," Dujarric told correspondents.

"The Secretary-General has said repeatedly that the G20, the group of developed industrialized economies, must lead the way in dramatically stepping up climate action," he continued.





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COMMUNICATION  
AND  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE



07-10-22

III

PAGE

DATE

### Amazon deforestation hits record for 2022

MANAUS, BRAZIL—Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon rainforest reached a record high for the first six months of the year, as an area five times the size of New York City was destroyed, preliminary government data showed on Friday. From January to June, 3,988 square kilometers were cleared in the region, according to national space research agency Inpe. That's an increase of 10.6 percent from the same months last year and the highest level for that period since the agency began compiling its current Deter-B data series in mid-2015. —REUTERS





07-10-22

TITLE:

PAGE

DATE

# SteelAsia opens first industrial-scale melt shop

BY RAFFY AYENG  
*@tribunephil\_raf*

SteelAsia Manufacturing Corporation is set to operate the country's first industrial-scale melt shop in 2024 using the latest green technology from Tenova.

The 600,000-ton plant, located in Lemery in Batangas, will use local scrap metal to produce high-grade billets, which will be the raw material for building, port construction, and shipbuilding, among other projects.

This can be instrumental for President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.'s dream to transform the country into a central logistics and shipping hub next to Singapore.

According to SteelAsia president Benjamin Yao, the melt shop will formalize and organize the collection, consolidation, and recycling of scrap metal throughout the country, creating a business sub-sector with opportunities for individuals and small businesses like junk shops.

**This can be instrumental for President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr.'s dream to transform the country into a central logistics and shipping hub next to Singapore.**

Aside from generating business opportunities and thousands of jobs, it will also save the country precious dollars currently used to import billets.

"This is part of the vision of SteelAsia to put in place an integrated steel industry, the backbone of a country's industrial base. SteelAsia, the largest steel producer in the country, already has six operating plants and has lined up several more in a multi-billion-dollar plan to keep the country abreast of its neighbors," he said.

To minimize the project's carbon footprint, SteelAsia will use the latest green technology of Tenova, a global leader in steel and mining technology.

Its Consteel Evolution technology saves energy, decarbonized steel production, and reduces environmental impacts through efficient energy recovery and pollution control innovations.



TITLE:

PAGE:

DATE: 07-10-22

## P660-M mini hydropower plant rising in Ecija

According to DBP president and chief executive officer Emmanuel Herbosa, the funding for the Dupinga Project is part of the bank's thrust in helping achieve the government's goal of 30 percent renewable energy share in the country's total energy mix by 2030

BY JONAS REYES

**CABANATUAN CITY** – A P660-million mini hydropower plant will soon rise in Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija, providing 4.6-megawatt of renewable energy to the province.

The project is funded by the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and is in line with the state-owned institution's thrust to support new and renewable energy sources.

According to DBP president and chief executive officer Emmanuel Herbosa, the funding for the Dupinga Project is part of the bank's thrust in helping achieve the government's goal of 30 percent renewable energy share in the country's total energy mix by 2030.

The funding by DBP is under the Financing Utilities for Sustainable Energy Development and will be paid by the Dupinga Mini Hydro Corporation (DMHC). The project aims to contribute to the increased access to electricity services through financing of utility-scale energy generation projects.

The proposed mini hydropower plant is situated within the ancestral domain of the Dumagats of Central Luzon and Sierra Madre mountain range.

Herbosa assured that the welfare of the indigenous people living there and their community as well as the Sierra Madre are protected and remains sustainable.

DBP is expected to release to DMHC the first tranche from the approved loan within the first week of July 2022 to fully mobilize construction activities and target completion by early 2024.

DMHC is a partnership between Alternergy Holdings Corporation and Markham Resources Corporation.

The small-scale run-of-river hydropower project will harness water from the Dupinga River system and convert it as clean, renewable electricity supply to Nueva Ecija II – Area 2 Electric Cooperative, Inc.

It is expected to spur economic activities and improve the welfare of the community through additional income from royalties, taxes and government share for every kilowatt of generated output.

Corporate Social Responsibility program is focused on assisting the Dumagats.



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
AND  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE



B5  
PAGE

UPPER  
 LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

07-10-22

TIME

PAGE

DATE

## PetroGreen's 2 solar projects get gov't OK

By RICHMOND MERCURIO

PetroGreen Energy Corp., the renewable holding unit of Yuchengco-led PetroEnergy Resources Corp. (PERC), has been given the green light by the government for two new utility-scale solar power projects.

PERC assistant vice president Maria Victoria Olivar said PetroGreen Energy has secured the solar energy operating contracts from the Department of Energy (DOE) and the corresponding environmental compliance certificate from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for the 25-megawatt direct current (MWdc) Bugallon project in Pangasinan and the 27 MWdc Dagohoy project in Bohol.

"Resolutions of support for the projects have also been granted by the local governments of Pangasinan and Bohol, for which we are grateful," Olivar said.

She said the company's final investment decision now awaits the closing of ongoing discussions with selected contractors and project lender.

PERC president Milagros Reyes said the two new solar projects continue the company's calibrated expansion of its renewable energy assets.

This comes even as the firm carefully wind down its upstream petroleum operations to go completely renewables in the near future.

"These new projects not only contribute to the government's goal of increasing renewable en-

ergy's share in our generation mix but will also provide fresh investments and critical power supply in two high-growth areas of the country - Bohol and Pangasinan," Reyes said.

PetroGreen Energy is an investor and developer of renewable energy projects in the country.

The company has significant stakes in the 32-MW Maibarara geothermal facility in Batangas operated by Maibarara Geothermal Inc., the 36 MW Nabas1 wind power project in Aklan by PetroWind Energy Inc., and the 70-MWDC Tarlac solar power facility by PetroSolar Corp.

It also recently acquired three new offshore wind blocks from the DOE covering offshore northern Luzon, northern Mindoro, and eastern Panay.



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AND  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE

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8  
PAGE

UPPER  
 LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

07-10-22

PHF

PAGE

DATE



**BONDING TIME** — With July 9 declared a holiday in observance of the Islamic Feast of Sacrifice or Eid'l Adha, families take this as an opportune time for bonding at the Dolomite Beach on Roxas Boulevard in Manila. (Manny Llanes)



# Converge joins environmental transparency group

Internet provider Converge ICT Solutions Inc. will soon report the climate risks and opportunities it faces after joining an international movement to strengthen the capital market through environmental transparency.

According to Converge

CEO and co-founder Dennis Anthony Uy, the firm has joined more than 3,100 companies worldwide that will disclose the climate risks they face as recommended by the Financial Stability Board's Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD).

Uy said adhering to the TCFD proposals on disclosures allows Converge to manage its risks as an enterprise operating in one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change.

"The sea level rise, stronger and more frequent typhoons and rising temperatures will all have

an impact on our business and on the Filipino people. Supporting the TCFD means that we will be able to better plan for the future and adapt our business to manage these risks," he said.

Converge chief strategy officer Benjamin Azada said investors are also becoming

concerned for the future of their investments in the face of climate hazards.

"By progressively adopting TCFD's recommendations over time, we will get better at disclosing the specific climate-related risks and opportunities facing Converge," Azada said.

In particular, Azada said Converge would come up with its gap analysis and readiness assessment using TCFD's framework, after which the internet provider will build on its reporting capabilities toward disclosing its climate risks.

- Elijah Felice Rosales

10 JULY 2022, SUNDAY



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

# **COVID-19 NEWS**

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## NCR's positivity rate breaches 10% – OCTA

[Janvic Mateo](#) - The Philippine Star July 10, 2022 | 12:00am



New voter applicants flocked to the satellite registration site at mall in Quezon City on July 8, 2022.

STAR / Jesse Bustos

MANILA, Philippines — The number of people who test positive for COVID-19 in the National Capital Region (NCR) continued to increase over the past week, findings of OCTA Research Group showed.

Data as of last Thursday revealed that 10.4 percent or one in every 10 COVID-19 tests conducted in the capital region yielded positive results, up from 8.3 percent five days prior on July 2.

Eight other provinces also recorded “high” positivity rates or those above 10 percent.

These include Antique (18.9 percent), Capiz (17.8 percent), Cavite (16.2 percent), Laguna (16.2 percent), Rizal (15.7 percent), Iloilo (10.9 percent) and Batangas (10.5 percent).

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends a positivity rate of five percent or below to effectively manage the pandemic.

Meanwhile, five provinces recorded “moderate” positivity rates as of Thursday: Pangasinan (9.6 percent), Bataan (9.5 percent), Isabela (8.8 percent), Benguet (8.2 percent) and Bulacan (6.3 percent).

Given that the indicator is based on the total tests conducted, a high positivity rate does not necessarily mean high number of cases. Antique, for instance, recorded only five new cases on Friday.

OCTA monitoring showed that the NCR recorded 748 new cases out of the 1,712 reported by the Department of Health (DOH) on Friday.

It was followed by Cavite with 123, Iloilo with 98, Laguna with 91 and Rizal with 86.

Nationwide, there were 12,528 active COVID-19 cases, according to the DOH.

The DOH stressed that infections have been increasing and reminded the public to continue wearing best-fitted masks, isolate when sick, get vaccinated and avail of booster shots and ensure good ventilation in places they visit a lot.



In the last 14 days, Metro Manila has recorded the biggest number of COVID-19 cases with 6,869.

It was followed by Region 4-A (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon or Calabarzon) with 2,915; Region 6 (Western Visayas) with 1,253; Region 3 (Central Luzon) with 1,134 and Region 7 (Central Visayas) with 662. – Rhodina Villanueva





# PBBM asks LGUs to support booster vaccine drive

July 9, 2022, 2:49 pm



President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. (Photo courtesy of BBM Facebook)

MANILA – President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on Friday asked local government units (LGUs) to support the booster campaign rollout in order to safely resume face-to-face classes and fully reopen the economy.

“I hope that you will be part of the effort that we have to bring us back to normal. This is really part of the effort to bring us back to normal,” Marcos said in a virtual speech before newly elected governors and city mayors.

Marcos is currently in isolation after testing positive for Covid-19.

In his message, Marcos stressed the importance of in-person learning for students as well as opening up the economy with people not worrying about reimposition of lockdowns.

“Gawin natin itong booster rollout at makakatiyak tayo [na] wala ng lockdown at ayaw na ayaw na naming magkaroon ng lockdown. Kaya’t ito naman ang magiging pang-counter natin diyan sa pagkalat na naman nitong Omicron and its variants,” he told local officials.

He asked them to help agencies in replicating the massive Covid-19 vaccine rollout conducted last year and praised them for the “very, very good job.”

Marcos wants LGUs to conduct large-scale immunization drive for booster shot targeting school children so they can safely go back to school either August or September.

Marcos said Vice President and Education Secretary Sara Duterte plans a phased return to the face-to-face classes, starting initially from two-day, or three-day weekly class schedule.

If the massive vaccination drive becomes successful, the government could allow children to return to full face-to-face classes and open the rest of the economy, which Marcos said could send a signal to the rest of the world that the Philippines is opening up for business.

At the same time, the government may consider relaxing the alert level and make masking optional.

“Pero hindi po natin gagawin ‘yan hanggang maliwanag na maliwanag na safe na talaga. Dahil although so far maganda naman ang takbo, hindi naman napupuno ang mga ospital. Ngunit kung hindi tayo maingat, mapupunta na naman tayo doon,” the President pointed out.



Among the highlights of Friday's event are the briefing presentation by the Department of the Interior and Local Government on LGU's efforts on booster administration, the Department of Education's presentation on the resumption of face-to-face classes, and the Department of Health's plan on vaccination mobilization. **(PND)**

10 JULY 2022, SUNDAY



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