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NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Teodoro vows continued support for Marikina River restoration

Published March 9, 2022, 6:29 PM
by [Khriscielle Yalao](#)

Marikina City Mayor Marcelino “Marcy” Teodoro vowed to continue supporting and maintaining the rehabilitation and restoration of the Marikina River, calling it a “generational effort”.

The mayor made his commitment during a turnover ceremony held on Wednesday, March 9, in Barangay Sta. Elena, Marikina City.

The event was led by Teodoro and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna.

During the ceremony, the Marikina local government and the Task Force Build Back Better (TF BBB) turned over the responsibilities of the dredging activities of the Marikina River Restoration Project (MRRP) — particularly the portion from Andres Bonifacio bridge to the Manggahan floodway — to the Flood Control Management Cluster of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Unified Project Management Office (UPMO).

“Magtutuloy-tuloy ang ating mga ginagawa para sa ating kalikasan...Nakita natin kung paano bumalik ‘yung ecology natin dito (We will continue our projects that will benefit the environment...We have seen the rebirth of our ecology [in and along the river],” Teodoro said.

He said they have assigned point persons to guard and oversee the river in order to protect it. They have also implemented local ordinances to facilitate the right and correct maintenance of the river.

“Ang Marikina River Restoration Project ay isang mahalagang accomplishment at critical intervention. [Ito ay] patunay na ang role of government, [using] a society-approach, is an effective solution (The Marikina restoration project is a significant accomplishment and a critical intervention. It is proof that using a society-approach in the role of government is an effective solution),” Teodoro added.

The 11-km long river stretches to 11 out of the 16 barangays in the city. There are communities with a population of around 13,000 residing by the riverside.

However, Teodoro assured that structures are no longer occupying the easement areas of the river.

He thanked the DENR, the DPWH, and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) for aiding the local government in the dredging activities such as providing technical services, specifications, and adequate equipment.

Teodoro suggested the clustering and collaboration of resources between the local governments of Marikina, Pasig, and Quezon City, as well as engaging with various government agencies and development workers.

The mayor noted the impact and importance of these activities in order to prevent flash flooding in the areas of Marikina City, Pasig City, and Quezon City especially during typhoon season.



Teodoro vows continued support for Marikina River restoration

“In the aftermath of Ulysses, we personally witnessed, experienced how destructive a natural calamity such as a typhoon can do to a community...We will “build back better”, meaning [creating a] more resilient, and more sustainable community,” Teodoro said.

Dredging operations of the Marikina River by TF BBB were announced on Feb. 17, 2021. They included widening the scope of the river, and planting bamboo trees to mitigate erosion of the riverbanks.

The TF BBB turned over the project to the Marikina local government on July 21, 2021, according to the DPWH.



Source:

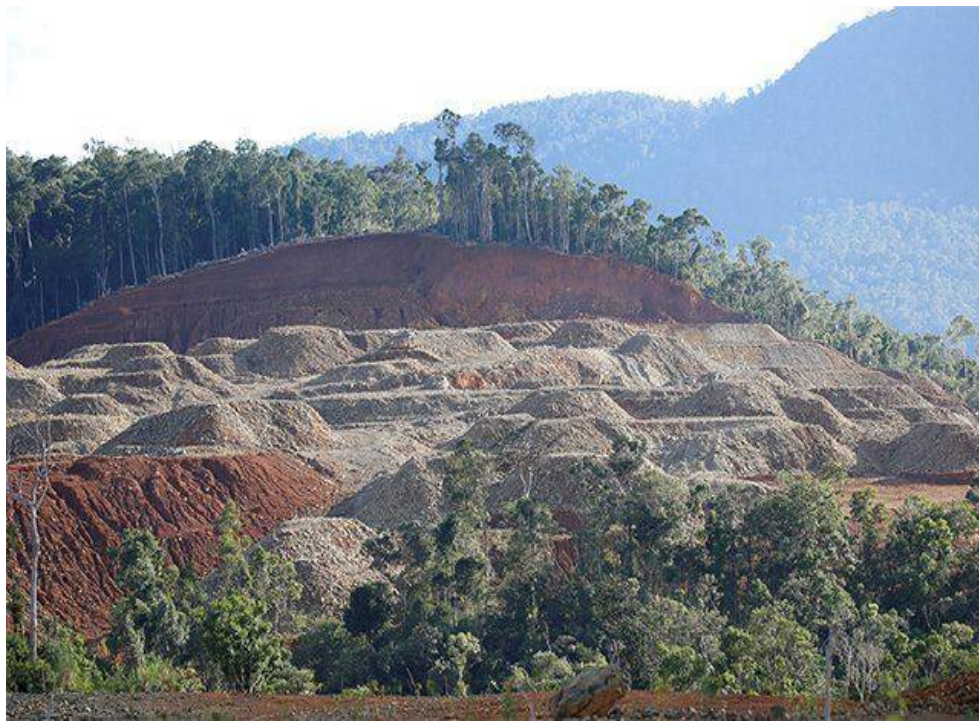
<https://www.facebook.com/499151633499640/posts/5156913647723392/?app=fbl>



Philippines expecting a dozen new mines this year, mostly nickel

By [Enrico Dela Cruz via Reuters](#)

- March 11, 2022 - 2:50 PM



A view of nickel ore stockpiles at DMCI Mining Corporation's mine in Sta Cruz Zambales in northern Philippines February 7, 2017. Picture taken February 7, 2017. (Reuters/Erik De Castro/File Photo)

- Philippines 2021 nickel ore output highest in 6 yrs
- Philippines is China's biggest nickel ore supplier
- Rising costs challenge for industry – mining exec

MANILA — About 12 new metallic mines in the Philippines should begin commercial operations this year, mostly nickel projects, adding to a “bright” outlook for a sector enjoying cash windfall from high prices, the local industry regulator said on Friday.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau also said in a report the Philippines' nickel output last year totaled 386,359 tonnes, 17% higher than the previous year's production and the highest in six years.

The Philippines has been China's biggest supplier of nickel ore after Indonesia banned exports of the material from 2020, to try to develop a full supply chain that includes processing of the metal used in stainless steel and batteries for electric vehicles.

The medium-term outlook for the mining industry is rosy “unless the war in Ukraine will spill over to Asia and cause disruption to trade,” MGB Director Wilfredo Moncano said.

He is hopeful the next administration will support policies of President Rodrigo Duterte, whose term ends in June, including ending a four-year-old ban on open-pit mining for copper, gold, silver and complex ores.



Philippines expecting a dozen new mines this year, mostly nickel

While existing local nickel miners “have always been operating at an optimum capacity”, the entry of new producers will increase domestic ore output, said Dante Bravo, president of Global Ferronickel Holdings Inc FNI.PS, the country’s second-largest nickel ore miner.

Despite high metals prices, however, Bravo told Reuters challenges remain for a local industry now burdened by rising fuel prices, higher inflation, a manpower shortage, supply chain disruption and potentially, rising freight charges.

—Reporting by Enrico Dela Cruz; Editing by Martin Petty



A dozen new mines to begin operations this year, mostly nickel

March 11, 2022 | 3:41 pm



DAVID HELLMANN-UNSPLASH

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Despite high metals prices, however, Mr. Bravo told Reuters challenges remain for a local industry now burdened by rising fuel prices, higher inflation, a manpower shortage, supply chain disruption and potentially, rising freight charges. — **Reuters**

Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/a-dozen-new-mines-to-begin-operations-this-year-mostly-nickel/>

Central Luzon native tree increase seen

The arboretum project will also provide help in the efforts to sustain the population of native trees that prevent them from potential extinction.



Published 1 day ago
on March 11, 2022 03:30 AM
By [Jonas Reyes](#)



CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) recently partnered with the provincial government here and the Beverly Place Golf and Country Club, Inc. (BPGCCI) to construct a proposed arboretum in the town of Mexico.

The project aims to boost the propagation of native trees in Central Luzon and according to DENR regional executive director Paquito Moreno Jr., the arboretum project in Mexico will expedite the growth of native trees, and would promote urban forest management.

He added that urban forest management is considered as one of the fundamentals in mitigating the threats of climate change.

“Urban greening is beneficial for both the environment and the city dwellers. By increasing the green spaces within the city, local residents will see the value of our native trees as effective air



Central Luzon native tree increase seen

filters that remove pollutants, thus, encouraging them to become stakeholders in sustaining our ecological wealth,” he said.

Moreno added that the project is the first in the country and could be replicated in other areas to extensively promote “green” cities.

He also noted that the establishment of the arboretum inside the BPGCCI is supplemental to the government’s preexisting reforestation program.

“The arboretum project will also provide help in the efforts to sustain the population of native trees that prevent them from potential extinction,” Moreno said.

“Planting native trees is a strategic approach in increasing our forest cover in the region, especially that these endemic tree species pose high survival rate given their site compatibility and resistance to pests and diseases,” he added.

More than 1,300 planting materials that include Narra, Bamboo, Bitao, Ilang-ilang, Molave, Balitbitan, Banaba, and Fire Tree species are expected to be established along the seven-kilometer length of the Beverly Place.



DENR joins partners in native tree propagation



NATIVE TREE PROPAGATION. DENR Regional Executive Director Paquito Moreno Jr. plants a native tree as part of efforts to boost the propagation of native trees in Central Luzon through an arboretum project in Mexico town in Pampanga. (DENR)

[IAN OCAMPO FLORA](#)

March 11, 2022

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in the City of San Fernando partnered with the Provincial Government of Pampanga and the Beverly Place Golf and Country Club Inc. (BPGCCI) to boost the propagation of native trees in Central Luzon through an arboretum project in Mexico town.

DENR Regional Executive Director Paquito Moreno Jr. said the initiative would not only fast-track the growth of native trees, but would also eventually promote urban forest management, which has been considered among the fundamentals in mitigating the threats of climate change.

“Urban greening is beneficial for both the environment and the city dwellers. By increasing the green spaces within the city, local residents will see the value of our native trees as effective air filters that remove pollutants, thus, encouraging them to become stakeholders in sustaining our ecological wealth,” Moreno said, noting that this project was the first in the country and could be replicated in other areas to extensively promote “green” cities.



DENR joins partners in native tree propagation

He said the establishment of the arboretum within the golf course area of the Beverly Place would be supplemental to the government's existing reforestation program, as well as in the efforts to sustain the population of native trees that prevent them from potential extinction.

"Planting native trees is a strategic approach in increasing our forest cover in the region, especially that these endemic tree species pose high survival rate given their site compatibility and resistance to pests and diseases," Moreno said.

More than 1,300 planting materials that include Narra, Bamboo, Bitao, Ilang-ilang, Molave, Balitbitan, Banaba, and Fire Tree species would be established along the seven-kilometer length of the Beverly Place.

To mark the partnership, DENR Undersecretary for Field Operations in Luzon Juan Miguel Cuna, Regional Executive Director Moreno and Provincial Chief Laudemir Salac led the signing of the memorandum of agreement (MOA) with Committee on Natural Resources and Environment Chairman Ananias Canlas Jr. and BPGCCI General Manager Elson Alvaran.

The group initially planted a total of 35 Narra and 20 Thai Bamboo in the area.

Alvaran expressed his gratitude to the DENR for the gesture of support they have received from the government, noting that the partnership would bear sustainable development and increase the value of the property as an ecotourism and plant propagation area.

Under the MOA, the BPGCCI will conduct the site preparation and on-site layout of the endemic tree species. It will also take charge of protecting and maintaining the trees, as well as in preparing periodic reports and installing weather-resistant signage in the planting area.

The Provincial Government of Pampanga will assist the BPGCCI in monitoring and providing necessary environmental inputs needed in the area, while the DENR will provide native tree species and forest tree planting materials.

The planting materials will come from the replacement seedlings from the issued tree cutting permits of the DENR office in Pampanga and other possible sources from field offices.

Trees to be planted in this area will join the over 128,000 hectares of forest plantations established by the DENR and its partners through the Enhanced National Greening Program since 2011.

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1923319/pampanga/local-news/denr-joins-partners-in-native-tree-propagation>



Grass owl retrieved in Zamboanga del Sur town



ZAMBOANGA. A grass owl is now under the care of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Regional Wildlife and Rescue Center for its eventual release back to the wild. A photo handout shows the owl that was retrieved last week in Sandal village, Mahayag, Zamboanga del Sur. (SunStar Zamboanga)

March 10, 2022

A GRASS owl has been placed under the care of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) Regional Wildlife and Rescue Center for treatment before its release back to the wild.

DENR Information Officer Rosevirico Tan said Thursday, March 10, that the owl was retrieved last week by the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro)-Ramon Magsaysay in Sandal village, Mahayag, Zamboanga del Sur.

Tan said Cenro-Ramon Magsaysay headed by Geoffrey Zayas sent a quick response team to retrieve the raptor after receiving the Mahayag Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office reported that an adult grass owl is in the possession of the municipal government.

The raptor was voluntarily handed over to Mahayag Mayor Manuel Saladaga by Emeliano Emfil who found the grass owl.



Grass owl retrieved in Zamboanga del Sur town

Saladaga praised Emfil for his efforts in saving the wildlife.

The mayor also assured that his office will continue to support positive collaboration with DENR in the conservation of the environment and natural resources.

Tan said the grass owl will be sent back to its natural habitat once it is already healthy and fitted for release.

Tan urged the public to immediately report any wildlife concerns to the agency for the proper handling, rescue, and retrieval operations.

They may call or send a text message to DENR's hotline at 0948-147-1250. **(SunStar Zamboanga)**

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1923228/zamboanga/local-news/grass-owl-retrieved-in-zamboanga-del-sur-town>



PROTEST AGAINST OPEN PIT MINING

MAR 10, 2022, 7:52 PM



Danny Querubin
Photographer

Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM) marched their way to the central office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Quezon City from the Department of Agriculture as they demand accountability for pro- mining policies of the Duterte Administration in commemoration of the enactment of the Mining Act of 1995 (RA 7942) 27 years ago.

Among the pro-mining policies of Duterte are the issuance of EO 130 which allowed open pit mining, that reversed the ban imposed by the late DENR Secretary Regina Lopez.



Bidding up for Bacolod’s third sanitary landfill facility



BACOLOD. The bidding for the construction of Bacolod City’s third sanitary landfill in Barangay Felisa will be on March 14, 2022. (File photo)

MERLINDA A. PEDROSA
March 10, 2022

BACOLOD Mayor Evelio Leonardia said Wednesday, March 9, 2022, that the bidding for the construction of the third cell of the city’s third sanitary landfill at Barangay Felisa will be on March 14, 2022.

This was the answer of Leonardia to the question on how his administration will address the issue on the city’s sanitary landfill in Barangay Felisa during the town hall debate dubbed “Debate Serye 2022” organized by DYHB RMN Bacolod with his challenger former congressman Alfredo “Albee” Benitez at the Osbron Hall of Ikthus Bacolod in Barangay Mandalagan.

The Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has earlier said the landfill can no longer accommodate the city’s garbage within eight to 10 months.

“It is going to help us a lot in anticipating the possible problems in the city (but) rest assured that we are on time,” he said.

Cell Nos. 1 and 2 were constructed by the city’s garbage hauler IPM-Construction and Development Corporation.



Bidding up for Bacolod's third sanitary landfill facility

The mayor also admitted that the waste segregation is the hardest thing to do.

He said the city already tried to implement the "no segregation, no collection" policy, but because of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic, the people also failed to observe the proper ways of disposing the garbage which, not only in Bacolod, is also happening in some cities in the country.

For his part, if he will be given a chance to lead the city, Benitez said the city needs to put up a materials recovery facility to ensure that all the garbage at the landfill is residual waste.

"We should do segregation. We only need proper waste management," he said.

He added the best solution to the garbage problem is to find technology that would introduce waste to energy programs.

Benitez said the sanitary landfill should be managed by the city and not by the private company.

"The government should level up and do the basic services. It's the role of the government to do that," he said.



Governor: Proposed LNG power plant still up for SP discussion



NEGROS. The Sangguniang Panlalawigan has yet to discuss the proposed P18.5 billion worth of liquified natural gas power plant project in San Carlos City. (File photo)

TERESA D. ELLERA
March 10, 2022

NEGROS Occidental Governor Eugenio Jose Lacson assured Thursday, March 10, 2022, that the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) will soon discuss the proposed liquified natural gas (LNG) power plant project in San Carlos City.

All stakeholders will be given the opportunity to be informed about the proposed project of San Miguel Corporation (SMC), Lacson said.

He made the clarification amid reports that the project will be met with opposition by some environmentalist groups.

"In the first place it is not yet being discussed (since) it is still with the SP and they will be inviting the proponents," Lacson said, adding that they will study if the complaints have basis.

"San Miguel said they won't go for coal (powered plant) because it has become expensive (and) there are other forms of energy like this one (LNG)," the governor said.



Governor: Proposed LNG power plant still up for SP discussion

Lacson also said SMC will always decide on the business and economic side and that it is always conscious of the environment being an “A-listed company.”

“You don't expect San Miguel to be violating rules especially on the environment, they're way above it already,” he said..

Representatives from SMC will be invited to present the project with the Provincial Board.

Provincial Consultant Alfredo "Albee" Benitez earlier said SMC is eyeing a 300-megawatt LNG plant in San Carlos City worth P18.5 billion.

SMC Global Power Holdings Corp., the power unit of diversified conglomerate San Miguel Corp., reportedly plans to invest in LNG combined cycle power plants in the province.

Based on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources record, SMC Global's wholly owned unit Reliance Energy Development Inc. (Redi) is proposing a 4x75-MW LNG combined cycle power plant within the San Carlos City Ecozone in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental.

The proposed project will be constructed inside the 49-hectare leased property from Grand Planters International Inc.

Redi is targeting to start constructing the power project in the third quarter of this year with completion eyed in the third quarter of 2024.

It is in the process of pre-feasibility study and environmental compliance certificate application.

The company considered different technologies for the project, such as natural gas, coal, wind and solar, but chose natural gas since it is more flexible, secured, environmentally friendly and cost-effective.



Ecogroups to Rama: Don't sign pricey, harmful incinerator deal

[KEVIN A. LAGUNDA](#)

March 11, 2022

THE pollution watchdog EcoWaste Coalition has urged Cebu City Mayor Michael Rama not to sign a joint venture agreement with the incinerator company that would build a waste-to-energy facility in the city, calling the long-term garbage contract a problematic solid waste management system.

The group issued the warning after the Cebu City Council approved during its council session Wednesday, March 9, 2022 the unsolicited proposal of New Sky Energy (Philippines) or NSEPI, and authorized Rama to sign the joint venture agreement (JVA).

In a statement Friday, March 11, 2022, EcoWaste Coalition said the proposal was “approved by the council despite the lack of proper multi-stakeholders’ consultations and public bidding processes.”

It identified NSEPI as a subsidiary of Chinese incinerator firm New Sky Environment Tech. Co. Ltd.

“The hasty approval by the Cebu City Council of the incinerator proposal is very unfortunate. There is clear scientific evidence that WTE facilities produce and release harmful toxins that cause serious respiratory diseases. Moreover, the city will be locked into a highly onerous contract for many years. These are serious concerns and the City Government should reconsider its approval of this dangerous agreement,” said lawyer Lievj Alimangohan of EcoWaste Coalition.

Under the proposal submitted to the Cebu City Council, NSEPI would establish a waste-to-energy (WTE) garbage incinerator facility that would process and transform solid waste daily into usable materials and energy. The facility would be capable of producing 18 megawatts of electricity.

The City would provide “a 40-year secured franchise to the company and minimum guaranteed volume of 800 tons of garbage per day at an expensive rate of P1,300 per ton,” EcoWaste said.

“We urge Mayor Rama to reconsider this incinerator proposal. The City should not jump at this quick-fix solution that in the end will be a burden to the city and will threaten the people’s health, welfare, and sources of livelihood,” Alimangohan said.

“There are already more ecological and people-centered solutions on solid waste management and we hope these should be considered first and foremost by our local leaders,” said Alimangohan.

In his Friday morning press conference, Mayor Rama said he had yet to read the JVA.



Ecogroups to Rama: Don't sign pricey, harmful incinerator deal

Environmentalist Lito Vasquez accused the Cebu City Council of railroading the process in allowing Mayor Rama to sign the JVA with NSEPI.

"I think it is a midnight deal," he said in a phone interview with SunStar Cebu on Friday, March 10.

"Nganong gihimo nila nga duol na ang election (Why did they do that close to the May elections)?" Vasquez asked.

Vasquez said the City Council should have allowed the next administration to review the JVA and decide on it.

The aim of establishing a WTE facility is garbage reduction, but if Cebu City succeeds in this aspect, Vasquez said the City would still have to pay the tipping fee per ton even if it cannot deliver 800 tons of waste per day.

"Bayad gihapon ang City kay it's contractual obligation," Vasquez said, adding that the City would be put at a disadvantage.

Vasquez had worked as an executive assistant of then city councilor Nida Cabrera from 2011 to 2016, and as a member of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office from 2016 to 2019.

At present, he is not connected with the Cebu City Hall in any capacity. The environmentalist had also worked for the EcoWaste Coalition.

Vasquez said environmentalists will seek relief from other venues to question the JVA.

He said there should have been a public hearing and the site of the WTE facility should have been identified first.

During a regular session on Aug. 26, 2020, Vasquez said, NSEPI presented its proposal online.

After the presentation, Vasquez said, City Councilor Alvin Dizon passed resolutions calling for a public hearing with affected communities and public disclosure of documents.

Dizon's resolutions were unanimously approved, Vasquez said.

SunStar reached out to City Councilor Raymond Garcia, author of the resolution authorizing Rama to sign the JVA, Friday, but he had not given a response as of press time.



Ecogroups to Rama: Don't sign pricey, harmful incinerator deal

After EcoWaste issued its statement on Monday afternoon, SunStar also tried to reach Rama, but City Hall's public information officer Cerwin Eviota said the mayor had a full schedule.

On Thursday, Council minority leader Nestor Archival questioned why the project was approved by the City Council in the absence of a feasibility study from the project's proponent, including the identification of the location for the facility.

Garcia responded by saying the presentation of such documents is done at the level of the Joint Venture Selection Committee while the role of the council is to approve or disapprove the venture. (GDC)

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1923371/cebu/local-news/ecogroups-to-rama-dont-sign-pricey-harmful-incinerator-deal>



Planting bamboo can combat climate change



Published 7 hours ago
on March 12, 2022 12:20 AM
By [TDT @tribunephil](#)



photograph courtesy of base bahay foundation BASE Bahay aims to standardize the use of bamboo across all kinds of structure.

At the supply facility in Nasugbu, Batangas, bamboo is treated and prepared for use in the construction of housing.

As a non-profit that advocates for and implements the use of Cement-Bamboo Frame Technology in affordable housing, Base Bahay Foundation is leading the charge on research and innovation surrounding the use of bamboo for the affordable housing sector and, eventually, the construction industry at large.

In a world fighting the accelerating effects of climate change, an abundant, resilient and sustainable construction material has proven itself to be one of the best tools in mitigating this environmental phenomenon: Bamboo.

This was the main message of Pablo Jorillo, general manager of Base Bahay Foundation, at the International Conference on Project Management 2021, which focused on the theme “Project Management Towards Resiliency and Recovery.” Jorillo specifically discussed the Management of Carbon Sequestration and Emission Reduction Along the Bamboo Value Chain, as Base Bahay’s research and work advocates for the use of bamboo to build more affordable housing communities across the Philippines.

With the amount of carbon dioxide increasing in our atmosphere because of human activities — mainly the burning of fossil fuels — and therefore amplifying the warming effect of trapped

Planting bamboo can combat climate change

greenhouse gases, carbon sequestration has become one of the most effective ways to reduce the levels of carbon in our atmosphere.

Carbon sequestration is recognized by the 1997 Kyoto Protocol as one of the most practical ways to combat climate change and bamboo, explained Jorillo, is a natural and renewable resource that is able to rapidly sequester carbon in biomass and soil.

“Bamboo is able to take carbon out of the atmosphere faster than almost any other plant,” Jorillo said. “The housing sector and construction industry at large can therefore play a great role in reducing our carbon emissions if they are able to use bamboo as a mainstream building material,” Jorillo said.

Bamboo naturally sequesters carbon in the atmosphere through photosynthesis, and naturally stores it in its culms. When it is harvested, treated, and eventually used as building material, Jorillo says the sequestered carbon still stays in the bamboo biomass. This presents bamboo as a truly sustainable construction material, as opposed to steel, cement and glass, the manufacturing of which represents 11 percent of carbon dioxide emissions in 2018, according to the Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction 2019.



BAMBOO is truly a sustainable construction material.

The same report states that the buildings and construction sector accounted for 36 percent of final energy use, and 39 percent of energy- and process-related carbon dioxide emissions in 2018.

Using bamboo, on the other hand, has a completely opposite effect. A carbon pool is created when you use harvested wood like bamboo. Bamboo products such as houses, furniture, boards, or engineered bamboo are durable and can store carbon for a long time, hence becoming a carbon



Planting bamboo can combat climate change

pool or carbon reservoir. Carbon storage in harvested biomass is more significant in bamboo than in trees because of the former's fast growth and renewability. The more you use bamboo, the more you store carbon. As a non-profit that advocates for and implements the use of Cement-Bamboo Frame Technology in affordable housing, Base Bahay Foundation is leading the charge on research and innovation surrounding the use of bamboo for the affordable housing sector, and, eventually, the construction industry at large.

Initiated by the Hilti Foundation in 2014 to provide alternative and affordable housing solutions to people in the Asia Pacific that are exposed to natural disasters such as typhoons and earthquakes, Base Bahay's Cement-Bamboo Frame Technology is certified by the Accreditation of Innovative Technologies for Housing (AITECH) by the National Housing Authority.

Ultimately, what Base Bahay aims to achieve is to incorporate the mainstream use of bamboo in the National Building Code, so as to standardize its use across all kinds of structures. "Our vision is to be the global reference for bamboo and sustainable construction, in order to help countries find alternative construction methods," Jorillo said. For more information on Base Bahay Foundation and ongoing projects, visit <http://www.base-builds.com>.



Kawayan: 'Salandigan sang Tanan'



Governor Edwin To and RC of Metro Bacolod President Jeinz Salgado planted bamboo. (Contributed photo)

March 10, 2022

AS PART of their outdoor activity to preserve the environment, the Rotary Club of Metro Bacolod conducted a tree planting activity at the Bacolod City Water District (BACIWA) - maintained watershed area in Sitio Campuestohan, Barangay Cabatangan, Talisay City.

The activity was held timely as Rotary International District 3850 Governor Edwin To and spouse Lady Mary Ann was in Bacolod City for the Governor's Visit to various Rotary Clubs in Bacolod City and Negros Occidental.

The rotary governor and his wife joined the Rotary Club of Metro Bacolod joined Club President Jeinz Salgado, Past President Jake Dumapi, Rotarian Chinky Dulaca, Past District Governor Joe Jay Doctora, Past Presidents Emil Masigon, Lorenzo dela Cruz; Renato Monfort; Allan Magallanes; Haig Conmigo; Armand Jardeliza; Rotarian Jade Diaz and Club Secretary Richard Chua and several others participated in the said bamboo planting activity that could help protect the environment, provide a local economy, and promote our identity of service in the community.

Other collaborators also joined them, namely the Bureau of Jail Management Head Supt. Marie Rose Laguyo, MPSA Provincial Jail Administrator, Vines Organization Head Felix Alegayda,



Kawayan: 'Salandigan sang Tanan'

President; Amity Volunteer Fire Brigade Fire Chief Mike Gorne; Citizen Crime Watch, Talisay Chapter Chairwoman Adelfa Fernandez; Integrated Institute of Electrical Engineers, Negros Chapter Head Roque Ben Ayubo; Felix Yusay Foundation headed by Sharon Jornadal, Executive Director; Interact NOHS- Metro Bacolod headed by Hazel Uberas; RCC Kabugwason- Metro Bacolod headed by Marlyn Espino and BACIWA Engr. Michael Soliva.

The participants walked downhill and uphill terrain for an hour to get to the site.

Salgado said it was a risky topography as typhoon Odette damaged some parts of the area.

“(Despite that), still, it was also gratifying to the Rotarians who helped realize our goals,” she said.

The Rotary Club of Metro was allowed to plant 500 endemic seedlings and bamboos at the 500 square meters within the watershed property.

“Our goal is to plant bamboo for environmental preservation and support a local business that uses bamboo as its products for construction, furniture, handicraft manufacturers, food, and cooking purposes,” Salgado said.

Governor To and Lady Mary Ann were happy to experience going to such a place and shared their time to achieve such an endeavor with their fellow Rotarians and non-Rotarian collaborators.

The area is vital to be preserved considering that the water supply of Bacolod City is mainly sourced from the said watershed, he said.

Salgado cited a study about the usefulness of bamboo, such as it is a crucial element in balancing oxygen and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

A bamboo grove releases 35 percent more oxygen than an equivalent stand of trees; because of this, planting bamboo is a great way to reduce your carbon footprint and help fight global warming.

It is a viable replacement for wood and is the fastest growing plant on this planet. It has been recorded growing at an impressive 47.6 inches in 24 hours.

Bamboo can be harvested in 3 to 5 years while 10 to 20 for most softwoods and it can out yield pine 6 to 1 in biomass production.

It is also one of the most robust building materials, with a tensile strength of 28,000 psi. It is an excellent soil conservation tool.



Kawayan: 'Salandigan sang Tanan'

It dramatically reduces erosion with a stem flow rate and canopy intercept of 25 percent. This dramatically reduces rain run-off, preventing massive soil erosion and making it earth-friendly.

Bamboo's new shoots can likewise be eaten. It is made into fiber for clothing, used in concrete reinforcement, provided excellent livestock feed with the foliage being up to 22 percent protein, and machined into numerous forms of lumber, etc. It might be easier to compile what bamboo cannot be used for than what it is used for.*



- Headline
- Editorial
- Column
- Opinion
- Feature Article



Maharlika TV



Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/100064206931542/posts/333375258812703/?app=fbl>



The journey toward climate justice



By [Ludwig Federigan](#)

March 12, 2022

FOR over 30 years now, science has been crystal clear.

The scale of the climate and challenges we face today and in the future is by now evident. The adverse effects of climate change have the potential to undermine the development gains of the last many decades and they threaten the prospects for achieving sustainable development goals.

The phenomenon of climate change is so complex and overreaching in its impacts. It is no longer a specter on the horizon. The disasters are not looming or impending. They are happening right in front of our eyes and they will only get worse if we continue with business as usual.

The climate crisis affects food production, water security, settlements, jobs and livelihood, human welfare, safety and security, poverty reduction, economic growth and, consequently, the overall pursuit of sustainable development.

We have seen many times the impact of natural hazard extremes and the prevalence of disaster risk, exacerbated by climate change. They kill thousands of individuals, wipe out cities and communities, and undo years of development gains.

Scientists agree that the main cause of climate change is attributed to human activities and our production of excessive greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) that alter the composition of the global atmosphere. Unless drastic cuts in GHG emissions are introduced, global temperatures are projected to increase by the end of this century.

Climate science has warned that our window of opportunity for achieving the 1.5 degree Celsius long-term temperature goal of the Paris Agreement is closing.

Global warming beyond 1.5 C will disrupt basic social and economic activities. It will transform human life as we know it. The 1.5 C goal is the global warming threshold that will enable vulnerable developing countries like ours to survive and thrive.

Typhoon "Odette" is a stark reminder that climate change, which has been linked to the increased probability of extreme weather events, is a clear and present threat to the lives of all Filipinos, particularly those who are situated at the most vulnerable sectors of our society — local communities, Indigenous Peoples, farmers, fisherfolks, persons with disabilities, women, children and the elderly.

Do not have luxury of time

This is an important subject that we have to address now more than ever for we do not have the luxury of time to remain still if we aim to halt the trend of the devastating impacts of climate change.

The world cannot afford further delays, more so the vulnerable people who end up as climate refugees in their own communities, they who suffer again and again from tragedies brought about by a climate crisis, not of their own doing.



The journey toward climate justice

For the sake of the vulnerable, we seek climate justice now to restore the dignity of those suffering and to strengthen the resilience of the poor. For the sake of future generations, we seek a commitment to act now and to implement a holistic solution.

There has been a strong call for climate justice: that those who are most vulnerable, who suffer the most from the adverse effects of climate change and who have contributed the least to climate change are empowered and enabled, in terms of capacity and finance, to fight back.

One national leader once said: "We must hold countries most responsible for climate change to account, to answer. We must adapt and build our resilience by advancing initiatives that care for the people and the environment."

We must sustain our call for climate justice — to demand from the developed countries their fair share in addressing this climate crisis by significantly and rapidly reducing their carbon emissions in the atmosphere to limit global warming and climate change.

We need to continue voicing out the need to accelerate and scale up their support for developing countries like ours in the areas of finance, green technology and capacity development in order for us to build resilience against these typhoons and other climate impacts.

Climate justice is to demand what is right and just for the Filipinos who everyday fall victim to climate change. It is to improve our capacity to adapt and mitigate. It is to commit to upholding the right of every Filipino to a better life.

These are major considerations that we have been fighting for in the name of climate justice in the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

It is also important for the Philippines to promote climate justice in our own country by advancing climate change adaptation and mitigation at the national and local levels.

The Philippine Nationally Determined Contribution, essentially our country's commitment to limit global warming way below 2 degrees and further to 1.5 C, as agreed in the Paris Agreement, is important for us in order to usher to a low-carbon economy. Even if the Philippines is not a major emitter of GHG, with only a 0.3-percent share in global emissions, we vow to remain committed to a 75 percent avoidance and reduction of GHG.

We are standing at a climate crossroads. The world has already warmed 1.1 C above pre-industrial levels. Beyond 1.5 C, we risk experiencing bigger, more destructive climate-related disasters that will disproportionately affect the poor, the vulnerable and the marginalized. This has been made more challenging by the Covid-19 pandemic, more lives are at stake.

We must continue to recognize the climate emergency at hand and all together act now — to reform the ways we've lived and the ways we've regarded our environment — so that we may all survive and thrive amid the changing climate.

We must strengthen our focus on giving light to the urgency of responding to climate injustices and build striking environmental awareness that will spark movement from every sector of the society and align their commitment to climate action.



The journey toward climate justice

The author is the executive director of the Young Environmental Forum and a nonresident fellow of Stratbase ADR Institute. He completed his climate change and development course at the University of East Anglia (United Kingdom) and an executive program on sustainability leadership at Yale University (USA). You can email him at ludwig.federigan@gmail.com. Follow him on Twitter @WiggyFederigan.



Irregular deal?

[SENTINEL](#) - [Ramon T. Tulfo](#) - The Philippine Star March 12, 2022 | 12:00am

The deal between the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and news website Rappler is off – for now.

The memorandum of agreement provides for Rappler to act as the poll body’s fact-checking network concerning false and misleading claims on social media related to the May 9 elections.

The MOA was suspended pending a petition filed with the Supreme Court by Solicitor General Jose Calida.

Calida contends that Rappler is a foreign-owned firm which violates a constitutional provision that media entities should be owned wholly by Filipinos.

But why did Calida keep quiet when the Comelec signed a contract with presidential crony Dennis Uy’s F-2 Logistics for distribution of election equipment and paraphernalia?

Didn’t Calida also find the Comelec-Dennis Uy deal highly irregular?

* * *

It was well for the Comelec to be rebuffed by the Supreme Court which ordered a temporary restraining order (TRO) to desist from further removing campaign materials posted by private citizens in their properties.

The TRO holds while the high tribunal is hearing the petition of the supporters of a presidential candidate to stop the poll body.

The claim that the poll body is suppressing freedom of expression is valid.

For why should the Comelec prevent a private citizen from endorsing his favorite candidate in his own gate and fence to his house?

Doesn’t the law say that a man’s domicile is his kingdom?

* * *

Prominent philanthropist James Dy, president and CEO of the Chinese General Hospital and Medical Center, is donating P2 million to the government to bring home Filipino domestic workers afflicted with COVID-19.

Dy made the P2 million offer to the Department of Labor and Employment through the Filipino Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the Philippine Chinese Charitable Association Inc.

“I was moved with pity upon learning the sad plight of our kababayans(compatriots) who are forced to sleep in airport terminals and public parks for the past two nights after employers advised them to go home upon testing positive for COVID-19,” said the 91-year-old philanthropist.

Dy’s concern for the sick Pinoy domestic helpers in Hong Kong is noteworthy as he is also having problems with his health.

“The strongest people make time to help others, even if they are struggling with their own problems,” goes a saying adopted by the US Army’s Special Forces or Green Berets.

* * *

I’m going to make a wager: COVID-19-hit Filipino domestic helpers returning from Hong Kong will be accepted gratis by the Chinese General Hospital and Medical Center (CGHMC) as patients.



In the past, I had asked Dy to accept very sick persons who were poor to get treated at the CGHMC, one of the best hospitals in the country.

Dy paid for their hospitalization and medicines from his own pocket.

* * *

Aside from this columnist, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana is also asking President Digong Duterte to pardon retired Army Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, who is serving a life term at the New Bilibid Prison.

Palparan, once a nemesis of the New People's Army (NPA) and called berdugo (butcher) by leftist groups, was convicted of kidnapping by a Bulacan regional trial court.

The judge who heard the case was apparently pressured by leftist groups despite the lack of evidence against the former general.

The good judge took the testimony of a farmer who was detained for being a suspected member of the NPA. The witness didn't even see Palparan at the scene of the kidnapping.

I'm surprised why the military establishment is only now standing up for Palparan who has served his country well.

If I may venture a guess: The controversial former general is not a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA). It's professional jealousy among the officers' corps at its worst.

* * *

Very few of the delivery service riders will be too busy to read this column, so I'm addressing this advice to their friends or relatives:

When you're assigned to deliver a package by your online delivery service employer, ask what is in the package.

If I were you, I would even insist that the package be opened in your presence so you will know what it contains.

Some riders have been arrested for delivering packages which – they didn't know – contained contraband. The riders were not backed up by their employers.

Such was the case of John Michael Hipona, who was arrested by the police for carrying a package which contained two types of Philippine turtles considered as endangered species, the possession of which is illegal.

Hipona's employer, Lalamove, threw him under the bus.

It was highly suspicious that the Manila policemen and agents from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) didn't go after Lalamove which assigned Hipona to act as a courier.

Hipona spent four days in jail; Lalamove didn't do anything to get him out.

Hipona's cellular phone and motorcycle were confiscated.

Up to this time, the phone and motorcycle have not been returned despite the fact that the Manila City Prosecutor's Office ordered him "released for further investigation." This means that the prosecutor who handled the preliminary investigation didn't find Hipona liable for any crime.

Hipona was passed around like a ball by the police to the DENR when he asked for the return of his phone and motorcycle. The police said Hipona's items were with the DENR.



When we at Isumbong mo kay Tulfo, who are helping Hipona, called the DENR we were told that the female bureaucrat who was supposed to sign the release of the confiscated items was on leave and would not be around for days. Nobody could sign for her.

Hipona is jobless because the tools of his trade are not with him yet.

Putting a floor under Asia's sinking cities

Rising sea levels will affect many Asian countries, particularly those in Southeast Asia. There needs to be fresh approaches and policies to manage what is termed a 'super wicked problem'.



Aftermath of the Bangkok floods in 2011. Image: [ebvImages](#) / Flickr



By [Dimas Fauzi](#)
4 minute read March 11, 2022

The increasing threat from climate change has made coastal cities more vulnerable to floods, which impacts could be further exacerbated by extreme weather events. In the next three decades, rising sea levels will severely affect [low-lying Asian countries](#), such as Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. As a result, an estimated [300 million people](#) living in these sinking cities will be affected by floods in 2050. While developed countries generally have better mitigation and adaptation strategies to deal with the problem, developing countries, such as those in Southeast Asia, are often [left out](#) due to the lack of financing, policy frameworks and technological know-how.

There is a relationship between economic growth and the growth of urban areas. In many countries, export-oriented growth [corresponds](#) to the expansion of urban areas near coastal ports. These coastal cities are prone to the adverse impact of climate and environmental change. The

Putting a floor under Asia's sinking cities

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ([IPCC](#)) reported that over the last 100 years, the mean global sea level has risen by an average of 1 to 2 centimetres per year. The IPCC also acknowledged that sea level rise could be influenced by human activities, such as subsidence and coastal development.

The policy responses to the 'sinking cities' problem in Southeast Asia are mostly [infrastructural](#), dating back to the colonial era. Governments often approach the problem by building dikes, seawalls and by reclaiming land. Such infrastructural solutions are more [appealing to the public](#), as they provide a sense of security and protection from floods. In addition, some infrastructural solutions to address floods are financially more attractive than some nature-based solutions that could provide flood protection while addressing climate change. These include the National Capital Integrated Coastal Development in Indonesia and the Manila Bay Integrated Flood Control, Coastal Defence, and Express Way project in the Philippines. However, these infrastructural solutions do not yield a long-term result as they only address the symptoms but not the root causes.

When these infrastructural protections fail, coastal communities often have to abandon their homes or adapt to the changing landscape. For instance, communities in [Manila Bay](#) in the Philippines and [Northern Jakarta](#) in Indonesia have been adapting to drastic landscape changes due to sea level rise and land subsidence. Although some of these infrastructural solutions have failed to protect these communities from inundation, policymakers do not appear to be changing their approach. Why is that the case?

A Super Wicked Problem

The 'sinking cities' problem is a '[super wicked problem](#)'. Scholars use this term to characterise problems that meet four criteria: the lack of time, when those seeking to solve the problem are also its source, the lack of a central authority (or a weak one), and policies that reduce the impact of the future irrationally.

As a super wicked problem, sinking cities are a ticking time bomb, as land continues to subside, while climate extremes become more frequent. Once the land sinks, there is little which can be done to reverse the situation. Besides, the infrastructural solutions often result in a boomerang effect. For instance, while the large-scale seawalls provide immediate protection from inundation, their hefty construction materials [add pressure](#) to the already sinking land.

From a governance perspective, the multiple causes of sinking cities make it difficult to pinpoint a specific central actor that can address its root causes. Solving climate-induced sea level rise and land subsidence involves various stakeholders, from those responsible for coordinating climate mitigation to those managing groundwater use and urban water services. But policymakers tend to work in silos, causing unsynchronised policy measures focused on short-term returns, such as those offered by the infrastructural solutions. Besides, prioritising environmental protection over economic development has always been a difficult choice for policymakers.

Leveraging Path Dependency

Solving a 'super wicked problem' requires prioritisation to target the root causes more holistically. For the sinking cities problem, [prioritisation](#) acknowledges the limited time to correct the situation and the irreversibility once the damage is done.

Putting a floor under Asia's sinking cities

As mentioned, the policy responses to address sinking cities in Southeast Asia tend to follow infrastructural path dependence: building protective infrastructure that have been conveniently pursued since the problem started to appear. Rather than antagonising path dependency, policymakers should learn from it to prescribe policy solutions that could trigger what is called '[progressive incrementalism](#)', a process that relies on smaller, evolutionary steps.

As a super wicked problem, sinking cities are a ticking time bomb, as land continues to subside, while climate extremes become more frequent. Once the land sinks, there is little which can be done to reverse the situation.

Two points need to be ensured to create a path-dependent effect. First, at the governance level, appointing a central stakeholder to oversee and consolidate efforts to address the sinking cities issue could be a good initial step. This will help identify the gaps and conflicting measures done by different actors and synchronise the efforts to make them more holistic. Political will, thus, is the key to ensuring that there is a centralised governing stakeholder responsible for resolving the silo mentality that hinders the holistic problem solving approaches.

Second, at the policy level, the prescribed solutions should be able to address the root causes of the problem, such as improving the registration and monitoring of groundwater extraction and expanding green spaces in urban areas. The mega-infrastructural solutions chosen by the policymakers in Indonesia and the Philippines, for instance, are focused on treating the symptoms than addressing the root causes of their sinking cities: climate crisis, excessive groundwater extraction, and poor urban planning.

In designing and implementing these policies, policymakers should mainstream human rights perspectives through affirmative actions. This will ensure that vulnerable and marginalised groups — such as urban slum residents, people experiencing homelessness, and the low-income communities — can get access to fundamental rights, such as clean water and housing.

There is, however, no universal policy prescription to address the 'sinking cities' problem, as the solutions will depend on the specific governance and technical contexts. Ensuring the proper application of the aforementioned points will help create incremental changes to solve the sinking cities problem while leaving no one behind.

Dimas Fauzi is Research Associate, Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) Asia.

Pangolins rescued from illegal wildlife trade in Vietnam found to carry Covid-like viruses

Pandemic prevention needs to focus on pathogen spillover from wildlife, a study from Wildlife Conservation Society recommends.



An oral swab is collected from a pangolin by WCS wildlife health professionals at a wildlife rescue center in Vietnam. Credit: WCS/Viet Nam

By [Robin Hicks](#)

3 minute read March 11, 2022

Pangolins confiscated from the illegal wildlife trade in Vietnam have been found to host Covid-like viruses, providing further evidence of the pandemic risk associated with the international trade in wild animals.

Analysis documented in the journal *Frontiers in Public Health* found that coronaviruses related to the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS CoV 2) identified in the pangolins in Vietnam — which is a major global hub for the illegal wildlife trade — were closely related to those previously only detected in pangolins retrieved from the illegal wildlife trade in China.

The ongoing SARS-CoV-2, or Covid-19 pandemic, is believed to have originated in a wet market in Wuhan, China where exotic wild mammals were being traded — a theory that has recently gained credibility over rival origination theories, such as a leak from a Wuhan laboratory that engineered the virus. A [study published in February](#) found that the outbreak “very likely” resulted from at least two incidences of the disease passing from animals to humans at the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan.

Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/pangolins-rescued-from-illegal-wildlife-trade-in-vietnam-found-to-carry-covid-like-viruses/>



Mga ahas, horned lizards, itinago sa singit para ipuslit sa US

Marso 11, 2022 7:22pm GMT+08:00



Photo: U.S. Customs and Border Protection/FB

Bistado ang isang lalaki na nagtangkang magpuslit sa Amerika ng mga ahas at horned lizards. Ang ilan sa mga reptile, itinago niya sa kaniyang singit.

Sa ulat ng Agence France-Presse, sinabing nabisto ng mga tauhan ng Customs and Border Patrol ang tangkang pagpuslit sa San Ysidro border crossing sa California noong nakaraang buwan.

Umabot umano sa 52 bags ng reptiles ang nakitang nakatago sa iba't ibang bahagi ng katawan at kasuotan ng lalaki.

Siyam sa mga ito ay ahas at 43 naman ang horned lizards.

"Smugglers will try every possible way to try and get their product, or in this case live reptiles, across the border," ayon kay Sidney Aki ng Customs and Border Patrol sa San Diego.

"The smuggler attempted to deceive CBP officers in order to bring these animals into the US, without taking care for the health and safety of the animals," patuloy niya.

Hindi tinukoy ang pangalan ng lalaking inaresto.

Isinailalim naman sa quarantine ang mga nakumpiskang hayop.-- **AFP/FRJ, GMA News**

Forests are a vital public health solution, says WWF report

Forests not only act as reservoirs for potentially contagious diseases, but also filter water and air pollution that can otherwise lead to illnesses like cancer and diabetes, found a new WWF study.



The Amazon rainforest of El Oriente, in Ecuador. Image: [Katarina Yee, Flickr](#)

By Maxwell Radwin, [Mongabay.com](#)
4 minute read March 11, 2022

During the pandemic, as researchers looked to wet markets and the animal trade in search of the source of Covid-19, there was a renewed concern for how the natural world might be impacting public health. An increasing number of experts and government officials [pointed to](#) agriculture, urbanisation and other forms of [land use change](#) as raising the likelihood that new diseases might jump from animals to humans.

But the impact that nature has on public health goes much deeper than just infectious disease. A new [report](#) from WWF attempts to broaden the narrative, laying out the different ways that forest ecosystems can play a role, both positively and negatively, on things like mental health, malnutrition and cancer.

“Forests are a public health solution,” Annika Terrana, WWF forests director and report co-author, told Mongabay, “and they should be part of our public health approach and understanding.”

Forests are a vital public health solution, says WWF report

While deforestation has been shown to break up forest habitats, leading to greater concentrations of contagious diseases like Covid-19, the report says, deforestation is also connected to non-infectious illness like diabetes, typhoid and respiratory disease.

Forests help filter millions of tons of pollutants from the air every year, helping reduce hundreds of thousands of incidences of acute respiratory problems like asthma. Over the long term, pollution reduction also cuts down on cardiovascular diseases, pulmonary diseases and lung cancer, among other things.

On the other hand, when forests burn, they send massive amounts of pollution into the air that can have adverse effects on human health.

Forests also help cut down on soil erosion and sediments that contribute to the pollution of drinking water, which could otherwise result in paratyphoid fever and lower respiratory tract infections, especially in rural areas, the report says.

From a public health perspective, that's no small impact by any means. Non-communicable illnesses ranging from gastrointestinal disease to stroke to cardiovascular disease account for around 70 per cent of deaths worldwide, according to the Lancet Commission on pollution and health. In 2015 alone, pollution was linked to 9 million deaths.

"If you look at the way that forests can mitigate air pollution or mitigate water pollution, you have pretty direct correlations that forests have on clean air and water, and then the resulting impact that has on preventing non-communicable disease," said Craig Beatty, report co-author and WWF forest strategy and research manager.

Globally, around 10 million hectares (2.5 million acres) of forest were lost every year between 2015 and 2020, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The Amazon, a critical tool for absorbing carbon, has lost 17 per cent of its area in the last 50 years.

That has a direct impact on the health and well-being of the 1.6 billion people who depend directly on forests for their livelihoods, the report says. Forest ecosystems can provide fuel and medicine to local communities as well as healthier foods than what is usually available in unforested urban areas, such as nuts, seeds, fruits and leafy greens, fish and insects.

"Children who experience malnutrition in the first 1,000 days of life go on to have compounding health problems for the rest of their lives," Beatty said. "Forests provide a source of vitamins and nutrients that might not otherwise be available, especially in places where markets are not strong."

People who can safely rely on forests tend to have lower pulses and blood pressure, the report says. They tend to live a more active life, which may also contribute to better mental health.

In addition to providing food, medicine and raw materials, forests' ability to filter and store water helps lower the chance of deadly droughts, heat waves and fires, while preventing erosion that can lead to mudslides, the report points out.

A new mindset

Recognizing that forests have a direct impact on human health, WWF's report calls for greater collaboration between conservationists and the public health sector.

Forests are a vital public health solution, says WWF report

“If through interacting with public health organizations we’re even able to make a 1 per cent dent in the instance of non-communicable disease through forests,” Beatty said, “that’s a massive number of people who live healthier lives with their loved ones.”

The report recommends that more be done to conserve the world’s existing forests while preventing future land use change, especially in areas where people rely on the ecosystems for their livelihoods. It calls for bolstering programs that support sustainable agriculture and says government regulations can help mitigate everything from forest fires to hazardous wildlife markets.

“Studying the thresholds and tipping points at which forests are unable to recover from various threats should be a priority,” it says. “These indicate irreversible ecological processes that land managers ought to avoid and the associated social and economic impacts with strong implications for human health.”

The report also calls for the creation of urban forests, the idea being that it would bring the benefits of the forest to people normally unable to access them. The trees would help cool cities and slow floods while filtering high-density air pollution that causes disease.

Finally, it urges people to protect forests for the sake of their own individual health, whether that means supporting conservation legislation or being responsible consumers of products that haven’t contributed to deforestation.

“Everyone is an advocate for their own health,” Beatty said. “And what we hope is that, through this report, people can advocate through their own healthcare for the role that forests can play in their and their communities’ health.”

This story was published with permission from [Mongabay.com](https://www.mongabay.com).



Green energy

[FULL DISCLOSURE](#) - [Fidel O. Abalos](#) - The Freeman

March 12, 2022 | 12:00am

Sanctions on Russia, though might make Russians' lives miserable, have made ours difficult too. As the world's second largest producer and third biggest exporter (Russia) of crude oil, global consumers are feeling the pinch of the ongoing disruption in deliveries.

Certainly, a solution is available. To recall, almost two years ago (when Covid-19 seemed uncontrollable), oil prices plummeted. Consequently, OPEC member countries (plus Russia) substantially cut their production output to raise prices. Therefore, the solution is crystal-clear, increase production output.

The USA did increase its output but the OPEC member countries have a different agenda. Yes, it is true that collectively they agreed (together with Russia) not long ago to increase production output as the world slowly opened up its economy after locking it down for over a year. Such agreement holds until April. The premise then, however, was solely based on the effect of the pandemic and the hoped economic recovery.

Today, as there is a drastic fall in the supply side, these OPEC member countries are so adamant and will never yield to the requests of the USA and some European countries for the immediate output augmentation. Given the fact that five of the top ten oil exporting countries in the world are OPEC members, it should have been a surefire solution. These are United Arab Emirates (1), Saudi Arabia (2), Kuwait (4), Iraq (5) and Nigeria (8). Clearly, together with the other nine members, OPEC can substantially address the current production shortages.

Obviously, money is the motivation. As oil price surges, the windfall is just so irresistible. Well, just plain deviousness. To think that the rest of the world are suffering from the ill effects of extreme weather that is caused largely by carbon dioxide emissions out of the production of fossil fuel and the use of it, this act (increasing output) could have been considered as a compensation.

To put it clearly, the U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates that in 2019, "global emissions of energy-related carbon dioxide totaled 33.1 billion metric tons." That's how huge and dangerous global CO₂ emission is.

Knowing fully well that, despite being guilty of destroying our environment, these fossil fuel producers aren't helping us get over these current oil shortages, a greener alternative must be considered. And there are credible studies that will help us understand this. One of them is the report from Carbon Tracker, a London-based non-profit organization.

It revealed that "solar and wind have the potential to produce thousands of petawatt hours (PWh) of electricity a year, while the world's current electricity demand stands at just 27 PWh." It further reported that "if humans chose to get all their energy from solar power alone, the land required would take up just 450,000 km²—just 0.3% of the world's total land area, and less than the space currently taken up by fossil fuel industry operations."

Yet right now, people are using only a fraction of the renewable energy available to them. The report notes that only "0.01% of the world's solar potential is being utilized, and just 0.16% of wind potential is being exploited." As Stanford University professor Mark Jacobson shows in his book (100% Clean,



Green energy

Renewable Energy and Storage for Everything), “global energy demand could be met by using 0.2% of available land area for solar, and 0.5% for spacing between onshore wind turbines.”

So that, Carbon Tracker stressed that “solar and wind energy have the potential to meet global electricity demand 100 times over, and the costs of these renewables are collapsing so rapidly that fossil fuels could be pushed out of electricity generation altogether by 2035.”

With such findings, Carbon Tracker claimed that “the fossil fuel era is over.” At current growth rates, it says, “solar and wind power could price fossil fuels out of the world’s electricity markets by the mid-2030s, and by 2050 could replace fossil fuels entirely.”

We are a tropical country, hence, in us, the use of solar energy is a no-brainer. Lest we forget, our easterlies and westerlies are also strong enough to turn onshore wind turbines. Therefore, both are feasible.



Phivolcs observes spike in sulfur dioxide emission from Taal Volcano

Published March 11, 2022, 1:08 PM
by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)



Taal Volcano (FILE PHOTO / PNA / MANILA BULLETIN)

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) has monitored a “more active” degassing activity from the Taal Volcano’s main crater, according to its latest monitoring on Friday, March 11.

“Degassing from the Taal Main Crater has noticeably become more active since midnight, 11 March 2022. Volcanic SO₂ [sulfur dioxide] gas emission is on an increasing trend since March 6 and recently peaked at 15,900 t/d [tons per day] on 9 March 2022,” Phivolcs said in a tweet.

In its bulletin issued on Friday, Phivolcs said Taal recorded eight volcanic earthquakes, including four volcanic tremor events having durations of two to eight minutes, and three low-frequency volcanic earthquakes in the past 24 hours.

Meanwhile, the activity at the main crater was dominated by the upwelling of hot volcanic fluids in its lake which generated plumes 1,200 meters high.

Phivolcs said the Taal Volcano remains under Alert Level 2, which means that the active volcano continues to manifest “increased unrest.”

“At Alert Level 2, sudden steam- or gas-driven explosions, volcanic earthquakes, minor ashfall, and lethal accumulations or expulsions of volcanic gas can occur and threaten areas within and around TVI,” it pointed out.

The volcano has been under Alert Level 2 since July 23, 2021.



Phivolcs observes spike in sulfur dioxide emission from Taal Volcano

Phivolcs reiterated that entry into the Taal Volcano Island, which is a permanent danger zone, especially the vicinities of the main crater and the Daang Kastila fissure, is strictly prohibited.

It said that “extended stays on the lake” are also strictly prohibited.

Phivolcs advised the concerned local government units to continuously assess and strengthen the preparedness of previously evacuated barangays around Taal Lake in case of renewed unrest.

“Civil aviation authorities must advise pilots to avoid flying close to the volcano as airborne ash and ballistic fragments from sudden explosions and wind-remobilized ash may pose hazards to aircraft,” it added.

12 MARCH 2022, Saturday



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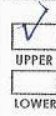
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SATURDAY | MARCH 12, 2022



Acting Environment Secretary Jim Sampulna leads an inspection of the Manila Baywalk Dolomite Beach yesterday. He said the beach will be open to visitors after Holy Week.

RUSSELL PALMA



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MAJOR CLEAN UP A backhoe piles up the mix of debris and mud on the side of the Marikina River during the launch of the Marikina River Restoration Project on Wednesday, March 9, 2022. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Task Force-Build Back Better turned over the project in dredging activities to the Department of Public Works and Highways. PNA PHOTO





The journey toward climate justice

FOR over 30 years now, science has been crystal clear.

The scale of the climate and challenges we face today and in the future is by now evident. The adverse effects of climate change have the potential to undermine the development gains of the last many decades and they threaten the prospects for achieving sustainable development goals.

The phenomenon of climate change is so complex and overreaching in its impacts. It is no longer a specter on the horizon. The disasters are not looming or impending. They are happening right in front of our eyes and they will only get worse if we continue with business as usual.

The climate crisis affects food production, water security, settlements, jobs and livelihood, human welfare, safety and security, poverty reduction, economic growth and, consequently, the overall pursuit of sustainable development.

We have seen many times the impact of natural hazard extremes and the prevalence of disaster risk, exacerbated by climate change. They kill thousands of individuals, wipe out cities and communities, and undo years of development gains.

Scientists agree that the main cause of climate change is attributed to human activities and our production of excessive greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) that alter the composition of the global atmosphere. Unless drastic cuts in GHG emissions are introduced, global temperatures are projected to increase by the end of this century.

Climate science has warned that our window of opportunity for achieving the 1.5 degree Celsius long-term temperature goal of the Paris Agreement is closing.



ALL ABOUT
CHOICES

LUDWIG O.
FEDERIGAN

Global warming beyond 1.5 C will disrupt basic social and economic activities. It will transform human life as we know it. The 1.5 C goal is the global warming threshold that will enable vulnerable developing countries like ours to survive and thrive.

Typhoon "Odette" is a stark reminder that climate change, which has been linked to the increased probability of extreme weather events, is a clear and present threat to the lives of all Filipinos, particularly those who are situated at the most vulnerable sectors of our society — local communities, Indigenous Peoples, farmers, fisherfolks, persons with disabilities, women, children and the elderly.

Do not have luxury of time

This is an important subject that we have to address now more than ever for we do not have the luxury of time to remain still if we aim to halt the trend of the devastating impacts of climate change.

The world cannot afford further delays, more so the vulnerable people who end up as climate refugees in their own communities, they who suffer again and again from tragedies brought about by a climate crisis, not of their own doing.

For the sake of the vulnerable, we seek climate justice now to restore the dignity of those suffering and to strengthen the resilience of the poor. For the sake of future generations, we seek a commitment to act now and to implement a holistic solution.

There has been a strong call for climate justice: that those who are most vulnerable, who suffer the most from the adverse effects of climate change and who have contributed the least to climate change are empowered and enabled, in terms of capacity and finance, to fight back.

One national leader once said: "We must hold countries most responsible for climate change to account, to answer. We must adapt and build our resilience by advancing initiatives that care for the people and the environment."

We must sustain our call for climate justice — to demand from the developed countries their fair share in addressing this climate crisis by significantly and rapidly reducing their carbon emissions in the atmosphere to limit global warming and climate change.

We need to continue voicing out the need to accelerate and scale up their support for developing countries like ours in the areas of finance, green technology and capacity development in order for us to build resilience against these typhoons and other climate impacts.

Climate justice is to demand what is right and just for the Filipinos who everyday fall victim to climate change. It is to improve our capacity to adapt and mitigate. It is to commit to upholding the right of every Filipino to a better life.

These are major considerations that we have been fighting for in the name of climate justice in the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

It is also important for the Philippines to promote climate justice in our own country by advancing climate change adaptation and mitigation at the national and local levels.

The Philippine Nationally Determined Contribution, essentially our country's commitment to limit global warming way below 2 degrees and further to 1.5 C, as agreed in the Paris Agreement, is important for us in order to usher to a low-carbon economy. Even if the Philippines is not a major emitter of GHG, with only a 0.3-percent share in global emissions, we vow to remain committed to a 75 percent avoidance and reduction of GHG.

We are standing at a climate crossroads. The world has already warmed 1.1 C above pre-industrial levels. Beyond 1.5 C, we risk experiencing bigger, more destructive climate-related disasters that will disproportionately affect the poor, the vulnerable and the marginalized. This has been made more challenging by the Covid-19 pandemic, more lives are at stake.

We must continue to recognize the climate emergency at hand and all together act now — to reform the ways we've lived and the ways we've regarded our environment — so that we may all survive and thrive amid the changing climate.

We must strengthen our focus on giving light to the urgency of responding to climate injustices and build striking environmental awareness that will spark movement from every sector of the society and align their commitment to climate action.

The author is the executive director of the Young Environmental Forum and a nonresident fellow of Stratbase ADR Institute. He completed his climate change and development course at the University of East Anglia (United Kingdom) and an executive program on sustainability leadership at Yale University (USA). You can email him at ludwig.federigan@gmail.com. Follow him on Twitter @WiggyFederigan.



Towards a global Plastic Pollution Treaty by 2024

The world's highest level decision-making body on environmental concerns has just agreed to start negotiations for a new global legally binding instrument that will address plastic pollution, a huge problem threatening our planet's health and humanity's future. The ambition is to have the instrument ready for adoption and signing by 2024.

At the just concluded biennial United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) held on February 28 to March 2 in Nairobi, Kenya, governments adopted a resolution whose title undoubtedly reflects the global consensus to act: "End plastic pollution: Towards an international legally binding instrument."

As noted in the preamble section, "the high and rapidly increasing levels of plastic pollution represent a serious environmental problem at a global scale, negatively impacting the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development." Plastic pollution, as agreed by delegates, includes micro plastics, or the minuscule plastic pieces less than five millimeters in size that pose a serious threat to marine life.

The resolution made emphasis on "the urgent need to strengthen the science-policy interface at all levels, improve understanding of the global impact of plastic pollution on the environment, and promote effective and progressive actions at the local, regional and global level, recognizing the important role of plastics for society."

It likewise underscored "the importance of promoting sustainable design of products and materials so that they can be reused, remanufactured or recycled and therefore retained in the economy for as long as possible along with the resources they are made of, as well as minimizing the generation of waste, which can significantly contribute to sustainable production and consumption of plastics."

Governments agreed about the importance of tackling the impacts of plastic pollution through a full lifecycle approach and requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to convene an intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) that will start its work during the second half of 2022 through the ad hoc open-ended working group (OEWG) to discuss and agree on the timetable and organization of the INC, with the goal of completing INC's work by the end of 2024.

The resolution also gave due recognition to "the significant contribution made by workers under informal and cooperative settings to collecting, sorting and recycling plastics in many countries." It further directed the INC to consider in its deliberations

the lessons learned and best practices, including those from the informal and cooperative waste workers.

The INC has been given the mandate "to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full lifecycle of plastic, taking into account among other things, the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, as well as national circumstances and capabilities, including provisions."

Among the INC's long list of assigned tasks include:

To specify the objectives of the instrument;

To promote sustainable production and consumption of plastics, including, among others, product design, and environmentally sound waste management, including through resource efficiency and circular economy approaches;

To promote national and international cooperative measures to reduce plastic pollution in the marine environment, including existing plastic pollution;

To develop, implement and update national action plans reflecting country-driven approaches to contribute to the objectives of the instrument;

To promote national action plans to work towards the prevention, reduction and elimination of plastic pollution, and to support regional and international cooperation;

To specify national reporting, as appropriate;

To periodically assess the progress of implementation of the instrument;

To periodically assess the effectiveness of the instrument in achieving its objectives;

To provide scientific and socio-economic assessments related to plastic pollution; and

To increase knowledge through awareness-raising, education and exchange.

The resolution also pointed to the importance of ensuring the widest possible and effective participation in the ad-hoc OEWG meeting and the INC meeting, stressing that such meetings should be open to governments, UN specialized agencies, regional economic integration organizations, as well as relevant stakeholders, consistent with applicable UN rules.

The Eco Waste Coalition, a partner group of the Laban Konsyumer Inc. has welcomed UNEA's decision as it can serve as a solid basis for negotiators to craft an agreement addressing the impacts of plastic throughout its lifecycle. "UNEA has given negotiators the green light to craft a global legally binding instrument that is absolutely needed to end plastic pollution and its adverse and toxic impacts on the environment. It's a big win for Mother Earth, but this colossal fight is far from over" the group said.

The roadmap towards a strong plastic treaty has been set. It is now up to the world's governments and stakeholders to engage and ensure that the final treaty will be strong or even stronger to truly beat the plastic pollution.

Email at labankonsyumer@gmail.com



**CONSUMER
HOTLINE**

ATTY. VIC DIMAGIBA



When climate change crisis became more important than issues of war and peace

Third of a series

First word

THE
Climate change



OBSERVER
**YEN
MAKABENTA**

movement — and its sidekick green energy — could end up as one of the big losers in the Ukraine war, when that conflict finally ends and the costs are tallied. As the new energy crisis continues to persist and bite economies, the climate change delusion has increasingly been identified as a driver of the crisis.

While energy realism has descended upon Germany after the shock Russian invasion of Ukraine, the United States under President Joe Biden — which joined Europe in the climate crusade and made “fighting climate change” the country’s top national security concern — continues to pursue an incoherent energy policy. ►MakabentaA5

Confused US energy policy

Having canceled the Keystone XL pipeline to transport over 800,000 barrels per day of oil from Canada to US Gulf Coast refiners on his first day in office, President Biden revoked US sanctions on Russia’s Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline.

In what one analyst described as “energy masochism” driven by its climate change obsession, the Biden administration continues to favor the interests of the likes of Russia and Iran at the cost of those of its presumed allies. On February 18, in an act of bizarre timing, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) revised its policy for approving natural gas pipelines and export terminals which will adversely impact the already fraught construction process of new US LNG export facilities.

US energy policy incoherence is exemplified most by John Kerry, President Biden’s climate envoy. Writing in the Real Clear Energy website, on March 3, 2022, author and energy commentator Rupert Darwall dismissed Kerry as “Putin’s useful climate idiot.” Darwall wrote:

“Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine marks the end of the West’s Era of Illusions. It was an era in which Western elites obsessed about solving climate change

because the climate crisis was far more dangerous than issues of war and peace and the stability of the international system. They even convinced themselves that climate change causes war, so climate change policy could double as national security policy; and, for many years, the annual round of kumbaya UN climate talks was the apogee of international relations.

“In a BBC World Service interview, presidential climate envoy John Kerry expressed concern about the amount of greenhouse gas being emitted from the war in Ukraine. Kerry was just getting warmed up with a string of platitudes that show him as a deluded climate relic, unable to come to terms with the reality that Putin has imposed on the world. ‘Equally importantly,’ Kerry complained, ‘you’re going to lose people’s focus,’ as if the first invasion of a sovereign European country since the Second World War is an annoying distraction. Hopefully, Kerry continued, Putin would realize that Russia’s land is thawing, and the people of Russia are at risk.

“Kerry concluded with an expression of pure self-deception, saying he hopes Putin ‘will help us to stay on track with respect to what we need to do for the climate.’ Stay on track? Russia has never

hidden its intention to avoid cutting its emissions. Russia’s second Nationally Determined Contribution, submitted in November 2020 under the Paris climate agreement, is to limit its 2030 emissions to ‘no more than 70 percent of 1990 levels.’ The document is careful to avoid pledging to cut or reduce emissions. The 1990 baseline year was the last one before the collapse of the highly inefficient and heavily polluting centrally planned Soviet economy. Thus, the 70 percent limit actually enables Russia to increase its emissions by 34 percent — and that’s before taking account of any changes in forestry and land use that would allow Russia to claim credit for negative emissions.”

Indifferent to climate change

“Despite Kerry’s claim about the thawing of their frozen north, Russians’ indifference to climate change predates Putin’s rise to power. During preparation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s (IPCC) first assessment report in 1990, Soviet scientists argued that warming might be beneficial at northern latitudes. Yuri Izrael, the Soviet academician and chair of the IPCC’s working group examining potential im-



TITLE: When climate change crisis became more important than issues of war and peace PAGE 2/2

pacts of global warming, emphasized the doubt and uncertainty of climate change and disputed claims that it would be harmful.

"At a 2005 conference on avoiding dangerous climate change organized by Britain during its G8 presidency, Putin's former economic adviser, Andrei Illarionov, challenged the premise of the conference. 'Anyone who is frightened about the prospect of global warming is welcome to come and live in Siberia,' Illarionov told a journalist.

"Indeed, a strong case can be made that Russian climate scientists have a better understanding of climate science and the likely impact of rising levels of carbon dioxide on global temperatures than their colleagues in the West. In testimony to Congress in 2016, John Christy, the Alabama state climatologist and director of the Earth System Science Center at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, compared 102 climate-model simulations against observed global temperature of the mid-troposphere from satellites and balloons (the troposphere is the lowest layer of the atmosphere, up to a height of around 33,000 feet). On average, the models warmed the atmosphere at a rate two-and-a-half times faster than what happened

in the real world. The only model that produced simulations close to observations was the Russian INM-CM4 climate model. Small wonder Russians are disinclined to believe there's a climate crisis."

Putin's 'useful climate idiot'

"When it comes to the science of climate change, says Darwall, there can be few people quite as gullible and simpleminded as John Kerry.

'I can remember from when I was in high school and college, some aspects of science or physics can be tough — chemistry. But this is not tough,' Kerry told an audience of school children in Indonesia in 2014, when he was secretary of state. 'This is simple. Kids at the earliest age can understand this.' The science was 'absolutely certain,' Kerry claimed. 'Let me give you an example. When an apple separates from a tree, it falls to the ground.' Contrast Kerry's simplistic analogy with this statement in the IPCC's third assessment report. 'The climate system is a coupled non-linear chaotic system, and therefore the long-term prediction of future climate states is not possible,' the IPCC said in 2001, before it became deeply politicized as it is now.

"There is, however, one area where Kerry and Putin are likely

to find themselves in full agreement. Two years ago, at a business conference in Moscow, the Russian president denounced fracking as 'barbaric,' claiming that fracking technologies 'destroy the environment.' A January 2017 Intelligence Community Assessment on Russian activities in US elections noted that RT, the Russian state-owned news channel, ran anti-fracking programming that highlighted the alleged environmental and public health harms of the practice. 'This is likely reflective of the Russian government's concern about the impact of fracking and US natural gas production on the global energy market and the potential challenges to Gazprom's [the Russian state-owned energy company] profitability,' the assessment concluded.

"Putin understands the importance of energy as an essential component of US strategic power. John Kerry does not. That is why, to borrow from Lenin, Kerry acts as Putin's useful climate idiot. Putin's invasion of Ukraine plunges the world into its gravest emergency since the Cuban missile crisis 60 years ago. It puts into perspective the folly of those, like Kerry, who confuse imaginary crises with real ones."

yenobserver@gmail.com



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USAID launches P750M project to support climate resilience in PH

THE United States government, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), launched a P750 million (\$15 million) new project to build climate resilience in the Philippines, one of the world's most disaster-prone countries.

Initially announced during the Indo-Pacific Business Forum in October 2021, the five-year Climate Resilient Cities project will help Philippine cities adapt to, mitigate, and endure the impacts of climate change by increasing their access to climate financing and tools to build resilience. Through this project, the U.S. govern-

ment will support local government units and other stakeholders to better understand, use, and disseminate climate information to local communities.

"Climate change is impacting people, communities, and nations all around the world," said U.S. Embassy in the Philippines Chargé d'Affaires ad interim Heather Variava. "We believe that responding to the climate crisis is a shared mission between the U.S. and Philippine governments. We look forward to our collaboration with key stakeholders to ensure that resilience is built into the fabric of cities in the Philippines."

The project will also help cit-

ies and nongovernment organizations access climate financing to increase community resilience and contribute to communities' economic and social development, as well as support natural climate solutions that increase cities' resilience to climate change impacts.

"Climate change is a serious threat and a daily reality for the Philippines. For us, reversing the effects of climate change is a matter of survival. We are determined to move ahead with the implementation of actual projects on the ground to be able to meet our commitments," said Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez, President Rodrigo

Duterte's official representative in the Climate Change Commission.

The Philippines has committed to a projected greenhouse gas emission reduction and avoidance of 75 percent from 2020 to 2030 for the agriculture, wastes, industry, transport, and energy sectors.

"We thank the U.S. government for this timely initiative that will help arm our local communities with the necessary knowledge to enable them to formulate doable and practical climate adaptation and mitigation projects on the ground," said Dominguez. *Cristina Lee-Pisco*



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US, Phl agree to strengthen nuclear energy cooperation

By JANVIC MATEO

The United States and the Philippines have agreed to strengthen partnership and cooperation on nuclear energy, science and technology.

Energy Undersecretary Gerardo Erguiza Jr. and US State Undersecretary of State for arms control and international security Bonnie Jenkins have signed a Nuclear Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding (NCMOU), which seeks to improve cooperation on energy security and strengthen diplomatic and economic relationship.

"The United States and the Philippines have an enduring alliance and maintain long-standing cooperation in the fields of security, energy, commerce, and nonproliferation," the US State Department said in a statement.

"Deepening our cooperation in nuclear energy, science and technology has the potential to make a significant contribution to our shared clean energy goals, agricultural development, availability of clean water, medical treatments and more," it said.

"Our nuclear cooperation rests on a strong nonproliferation regime and the Philippines' steadfast commitment to nonproliferation," it added.

According to the US State Department, NCMOUs will enable the US to help "its partners build their own infrastructure for the responsible use of nuclear energy and technology, and adopt high standards of nuclear safety, security and nonproliferation, including independent regulatory oversight."

NCMOUs also help partner countries prepare to take advantage of the advanced nuclear technologies and innovations in reactor design and other areas that are being pioneered in the US.

The memorandum was signed days after President Duterte signed an executive order allowing the use of nuclear energy in the country.

Meanwhile, the US Agency for International Development on Thursday formally launched a new project to build climate resilience in the Philippines, one of the world's most disaster-prone countries.

Initially announced during the

Indo-Pacific Business Forum in October 2021, the five-year, P750-million (\$15 million) Climate Resilient Cities project aims to help Philippine cities adapt to, mitigate and endure the impacts of climate change by increasing their access to climate financing and tools to build resilience.

Through this project, the US government will support local government units and other stakeholders to better understand, use and disseminate climate information to local communities.

"Climate change is impacting people, communities, and nations all around the world," said US embassy Chargé d'Affaires ad interim Heather Variava.

"We believe that responding to the climate crisis is a shared mission between the US and Philippine governments. We look forward to our collaboration with key stakeholders to ensure that resilience is built into the fabric of cities in the Philippines," she added.

The project also aims to help cities and nongovernment organizations access climate financing to increase community resilience and contribute to their economic and social development, as well as support natural climate solutions that increase cities' resilience to climate change impacts.

"Climate change is a serious threat and a daily reality for the Philippines. For us, reversing the effects of climate change is a matter of survival," said Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez, who also chairs the Climate Change Commission in behalf of the President.

"We are determined to move ahead with the implementation of actual projects on the ground to be able to meet our commitments," he added, referring to the country's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 75 percent in 2030 for the agriculture, wastes, industry, transport and energy sectors.

Working with USAID to implement the Climate Resilient Cities project is the Catholic Relief Services and its consortium partners, including the University of the Philippines Resilience Institute, Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation, Conservation International and Rocky Mountain Institute.



Environment group slams waste-to-energy facility in Cebu City

THE pollution watchdog, EcoWaste Coalition, urged Cebu City Mayor Michael Rama to not sign a joint venture agreement with the incinerator company that will tie the city to a long-term garbage contract involving a highly problematic solid waste management system.

The group issued the warning after the Cebu City Council ap-

proved the unsolicited proposal of New Sky Energy (Philippines) during its council session last March 9. The proposal was approved by the council despite lack of proper multistakeholder's consultations and public bidding processes. The incinerator company is a subsidiary of a Chinese incinerator company New Sky Environment

Tech Co. Ltd.

"The hasty approval by the Cebu City Council of the incinerator proposal is very unfortunate. There is clear scientific evidence that WTE (waste-to-energy) facilities produce and release harmful toxins that cause serious respiratory diseases. Moreover, the city will be locked into a highly onerous

contract for many years. These are serious concerns and the city government should reconsider its approval of this dangerous agreement," said Lievj Alimangohan of EcoWaste Coalition.

In the proposal submitted by New Sky Energy to the Cebu City Council, the incinerator company will put up a WTE garbage

incinerator facility in the city. Meanwhile, the city will provide a 40-year secured franchise to the company and minimum guaranteed volume of 800 tons of garbage per day at an expensive rate of P1,300 per ton.

"We urge Mayor Rama to reconsider this incinerator proposal. The city should not jump at this

quick-fix solution that in the end will be a burden to the city and will threaten the people's health, welfare and sources of livelihood. There are already more ecological and people-centered solutions on solid waste management and we hope these should be considered first and foremost by our local leaders," said Alimangohan.

THE TIMES



Planting bamboo can combat climate change

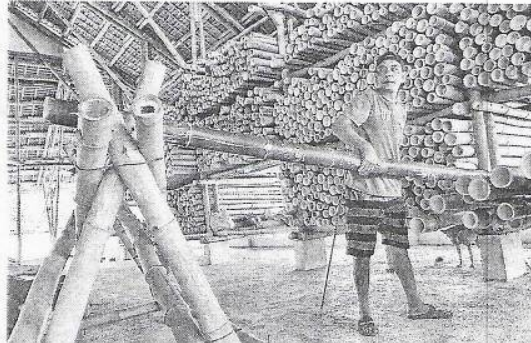
At the supply facility in Nasugbu, Batangas, bamboo is treated and prepared for use in the construction of housing.

As a non-profit that advocates for and implements the use of Cement-Bamboo Frame Technology in affordable housing, Base Bahay Foundation is leading the charge on research and innovation surrounding the use of bamboo for the affordable housing sector and, eventually, the construction industry at large.

In a world fighting the accelerating effects of climate change, an abundant, resilient and sustainable construction material has proven itself to be one of the best tools in mitigating this environmental phenomenon: Bamboo.

This was the main message of Pablo Jorillo, general manager of Base Bahay Foundation, at the International Conference on Project Management 2021, which focused on the theme "Project Management Towards Resiliency and Recovery." Jorillo specifically discussed the Management of Carbon Sequestration and Emission Reduction Along the Bamboo Value Chain, as Base Bahay's research and work advocates for the use of bamboo to build more affordable housing communities across the Philippines.

With the amount of carbon dioxide increasing in our atmosphere because of human activities—mainly the burning of fossil fuels—and therefore amplifying the warming effect of trapped greenhouse gases, carbon sequestration has become



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF BASE BAHAY FOUNDATION

BASE Bahay aims to standardize the use of bamboo across all kinds of structure.

one of the most effective ways to reduce the levels of carbon in our atmosphere.

Carbon sequestration is recognized by the 1997 Kyoto Protocol as one of the most practical ways to combat climate change and bamboo, explained Jorillo, is a natural and renewable resource that is able to rapidly sequester carbon in biomass and soil.

"Bamboo is able to take carbon out of the atmosphere faster than almost any other plant," Jorillo said. "The housing sector and construction industry at large can therefore play a great role in reducing our carbon emissions if they are able to use bamboo as a mainstream building material," Jorillo said.

Bamboo naturally sequesters carbon in the atmosphere through photosynthesis, and naturally stores it in its culms. When it is harvested, treated, and eventually used as building material, Jorillo says the sequestered carbon still stays in the bamboo biomass. This presents bamboo as a truly sustainable construction material, as opposed to steel, cement and glass, the manufacturing of which represents 11 percent of carbon dioxide emissions in 2018, according

to the Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction 2019.

The same report states that the buildings and construction sector accounted for 36 percent of final energy use, and 39 percent of energy- and process-related carbon dioxide emissions in 2018.

Using bamboo, on the other hand, has a completely opposite effect. A carbon pool is created when you use harvested wood like bamboo. Bamboo products such as houses, furniture, boards, or engineered bamboo are durable and can store carbon for a long time, hence becoming a carbon pool or carbon reservoir. Carbon storage in harvested biomass is more significant in bamboo than in trees because of the former's fast growth and renewability.

The more you use bamboo, the more you store carbon.

As a non-profit that advocates for and implements the use of Cement-Bamboo Frame Technology in affordable housing, Base Bahay Foundation is leading the charge on research and innovation surrounding the use of bamboo for the affordable housing sector, and, eventually, the construction industry at large.

Initiated by the Hilti Foundation in 2014 to provide alternative and affordable housing solutions to people in the Asia Pacific that are exposed to natural disasters such as typhoons and earthquakes, Base Bahay's Cement-Bamboo Frame Technology is certified by the

Accreditation of Innovative Technologies for Housing (AITECH) by the National Housing Authority.

Ultimately, what Base Bahay aims to achieve is to incorporate the mainstream use of bamboo in the National Building Code, so as to standardize its use across all kinds of structures.

"Our vision is to be the global reference for bamboo and sustainable construction, in order to help countries find alternative construction methods," Jorillo said.

For more information on Base Bahay Foundation and ongoing projects, visit <http://www.base-builds.com>.

The more
you use
bamboo,
the more
you store
carbon.



BAMBOO is truly a sustainable construction material.



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SENTINEL

RAMON T. TULFO

Irregular deal?

The deal between the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and news website Rappler is off – for now.

The memorandum of agreement provides for Rappler to act as the poll body's fact-checking network concerning false and misleading claims on social media related to the May 9 elections.

The MOA was suspended pending a petition filed with the Supreme Court by Solicitor General Jose Calida.

Calida contends that Rappler is a foreign-owned firm which violates a constitutional provision that media entities should be owned wholly by Filipinos.

But why did Calida keep quiet when the Comelec signed a contract with presidential crony Dennis Uy's F-2 Logistics for distribution of election equipment and paraphernalia?

Didn't Calida also find the Comelec-Dennis Uy deal highly irregular?



It was well for the Comelec to be rebuffed by the Supreme Court which ordered a temporary restraining order (TRO) to desist from further removing campaign materials posted by private citizens in their properties.

The TRO holds while the high tribunal is hearing the petition of the supporters of a presidential candidate to stop the poll body.

The claim that the poll body is suppressing freedom of expression is valid.

For why should the Comelec prevent a private citizen from endorsing his favorite candidate in his own gate and fence to his house?

Doesn't the law say that a man's domicile is his kingdom?

Prominent philanthropist James Dy, president and CEO of the Chinese General Hospital and Medical Center, is donating P2 million to the government to bring home Filipino domestic workers afflicted with COVID-19.

Dy made the P2 million offer to the Department of Labor and Employment through the Filipino Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the Philippine Chinese Charitable Association Inc.

"I was moved with pity upon learning the sad plight of our *kababayans* (compatriots) who are forced to sleep in airport terminals and public parks for the past two nights after employers advised them to go home upon testing positive for COVID-19," said the 91-year-old philanthropist.

Dy's concern for the sick Pinoy domestic helpers in Hong Kong is noteworthy as he is also having problems with his health.

"The strongest people make time to help others, even if they are struggling with their own problems," goes a saying adopted by the US Army's Special Forces or Green Berets.

I'm going to make a wager: COVID-19-hit Filipino domestic helpers returning from Hong Kong will be accepted gratis by the Chinese General Hospital and Medical Center (CGHMC) as patients.

In the past, I had asked Dy to accept very sick persons who were poor to get treated at the CGHMC, one of the best hospitals in the country.

Dy paid for their hospitalization and medicines from his own pocket.

Aside from this columnist, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana is also asking President Digong Duterte to pardon retired Army Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, who is serving a life term at the New Bilibid Prison.

Palparan, once a nemesis of the New People's Army (NPA) and called *berdugo* (butcher) by leftist groups, was convicted of kidnapping by a Bulacan regional trial court.

The judge who heard the case was apparently pressured by leftist groups despite the lack of evidence against the former general.

The good judge took the testimony of a farmer who was detained for being a suspected member of the NPA. The witness didn't even see Palparan at the scene of the kidnapping.

I'm surprised why the military establishment is only now standing up for Palparan who has served his country well.

If I may venture a guess: The controversial former general is not a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA). It's professional jealousy among the officers' corps at its worst.

Very few of the delivery service riders will be too busy to read this column, so I'm addressing this advice to their friends or relatives:

When you're assigned to deliver a package by your online delivery service employer, ask what is in the package.

If I were you, I would even insist that the package be opened in your presence so you will know what it contains.

Some riders have been arrested for delivering packages which – they didn't know – contained contraband. The riders were not backed up by their employers.

Such was the case of John Michael Hipona, who was arrested by the police for carrying a package which contained two types of Philippine turtles considered as endangered species, the possession of which is illegal.

Hipona's employer, Lalamove, threw him under the bus.

It was highly suspicious that the Marila policemen and agents from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) didn't go after Lalamove which assigned Hipona to act as a courier.

Hipona spent four days in jail; Lalamove didn't do anything to get him out.

Hipona's cellular phone and motorcycle were confiscated.

Up to this time, the phone and motorcycle have not been returned despite the fact that the Manila City Prosecutor's Office ordered him "released for further investigation." This means that the prosecutor who handled the preliminary investigation didn't find Hipona liable for any crime.

Hipona was passed around like a ball by the police to the DENR when he asked for the return of his phone and motorcycle. The police said Hipona's items were with the DENR.

When we at *Isumbong mo kay Tulfo*, who are helping Hipona, called the DENR we were told that the female bureaucrat who was supposed to sign the release of the confiscated items was on leave and would not be around for days. Nobody could sign for her.

Hipona is jobless because the tools of his trade are not with him yet.

12 MARCH 2022, Saturday



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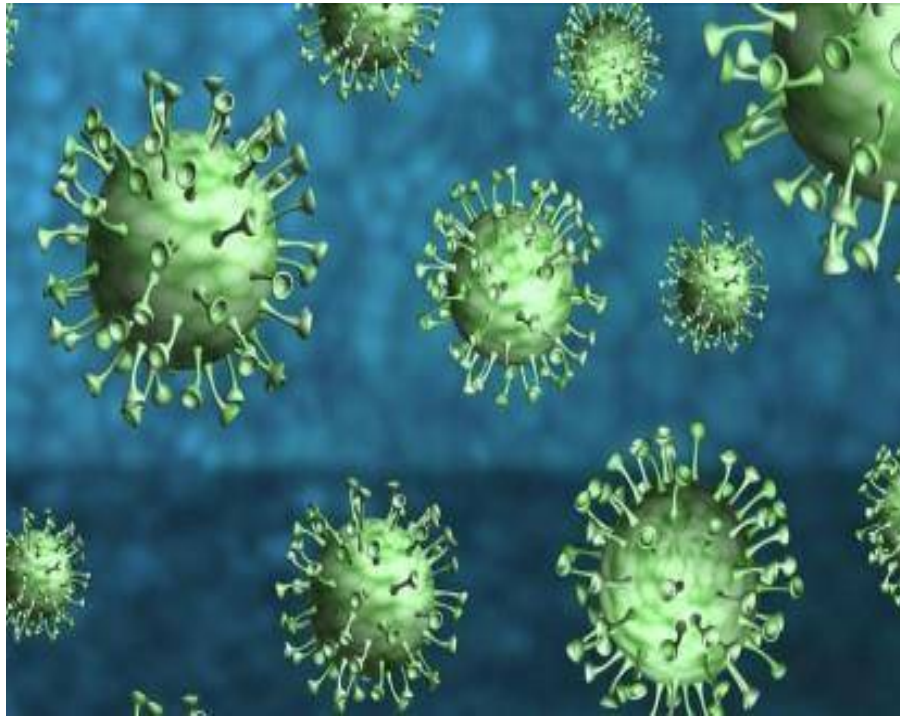
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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



PH ready to fight 'Deltacron' variant

By Lade Jean Kabagani March 11, 2022, 6:35 pm



MANILA – The Philippines will always be ready for the emergence of any variant of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19).

The World Health Organization (WHO) on Wednesday warned that the recombinant virus of the Delta-Omicron variants may spread after it was identified in several regions in France.

Viral genomes with a similar profile were also reportedly identified in Denmark and the Netherlands.

On Friday, Presidential Adviser on Covid-19 Response, Secretary Vince Dizon, said the so-called Deltacron is not yet a dominant variant of concern but the country is ready just the same.

"We'll be ready for anything. But I think what the experts have also said is the so-called Deltacron is not new. It's actually been there. I think the first cases were detected around December last year," he said in a media interview in Baguio City.

WHO infectious disease epidemiologist Maria Van Kerkhove said in a recent press conference that no changes are being observed in its severity and transmissibility but several studies are underway.

After previous experiences with variants, including the highly transmissible Delta and Omicron, Dizon is confident the country will manage the impact of the Deltacron.

"*Nakita naman natin, ilan na bang variant ang pumasok sa atin? Nasa lima na? So kahit papaano naman nakaraos tayo* (We've seen that, with how many variants we had in the country, five? So we survived it somehow) We will be ready for it if it comes," he said.

Dizon reiterated the efficacy of vaccines against any coronavirus variant, accompanied with continuous adherence to minimum public health standards. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1169580>



ATF to base new alert levels on 'latest' Covid-19 data, metrics

By Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos March 11, 2022, 5:53 pm



Deputy Presidential Spokesperson and Communications Undersecretary Michel Kristian Ablan (Photo courtesy of the Office of the Presidential Spokesperson)

MANILA – The Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) will base its decision on the new alert level classifications in the country after March 15 on the “latest” coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) and alert level matrix.

In a virtual presser, Deputy Presidential Spokesperson and Communications Undersecretary Michel Kristian Ablan said the IATF is being careful in further easing the restrictions in the country, despite the continued drop in Covid-19 infections.

Ablan issued the statement a day after Health Secretary Francisco Duque III raised the possibility that the alert level status in some parts of the country might be downgraded to “Alert Level 0”.

The IATF, Ablan said, is still monitoring the overall Covid-19 situation in the country.

“Masusi at dahan-dahan nating binubuksan ang ekonomiya kaalinsabay sa pagpapabilis ng pagbabakuna sa ating mga kababayan (We are carefully and gradually reopening the economy, alongside the speedy vaccination of our fellow countrymen). Nandiyan pa rin po ang ating IATF (Members of the IATF is still there), and they are constantly monitoring the situation,” he said.

Ablan said the IATF’s decision would be announced before March 15.

“Maghihintay po tayo bago mag-March 15 para i-release ng IATF ‘yung kanilang desisyon sa alert level (Let’s wait for the IATF to release their decision on the new alert level classifications before March 15), knowing and being conscious that they are trying to use the latest data and metrics to make the right decision,” he said.

Duque on Thursday said the task force will study the metrics and the elements for the possible de-escalation of Covid-19 alert level classification in several parts of the country to Alert Level 0.



ATF to base new alert levels on 'latest' Covid-19 data, metrics

Metro Manila and 39 other areas in the country have been placed under Alert Level 1 for the first half of March.

Under Alert Level 1, movement of persons regardless of age and comorbidities is allowed, but with restrictions on crowded and closed spaces and close contact settings. Private establishments and government agencies are also allowed to operate as at full on-site capacity subject to minimum public health standards.

Ablan said the IATF-EID, in its Resolution 164 approved Thursday, also rescinded Section E(3) of its Resolution 101 issued on Feb. 26 to pave the way for the full seating capacity for public transportation in Metro Manila.

Section E(3) of IATF-EID Resolution 101 prohibits bus companies to use their private terminals and requires all buses bound for provinces to use the Integrated Terminal Exchange as the central hub for transportation.

Following the revocation of Section E(3) of IATF-EID Resolution 101, all buses in Metro Manila bound for provinces will no longer be required to use the Integrated Terminal Exchange as the central hub for transportation starting March 22, Ablan said.

Face-to-face classes

Ablan said the IATF-EID also approved the recommendation of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to conduct limited face-to-face (F2F) classes for higher educational institutions (HEIs) operating in areas under Alert Level 1.

HEIs, Ablan said, must take self-assessment checklists and operate under self-reopening before they conduct in-person classes.

Ablan said only fully-vaccinated teaching and non-teaching personnel, and students will be allowed to participate in the limited in-person classes.

Under IATF-EID Resolution 164, unvaccinated or partially-vaccinated students shall continue under flexible learning modalities.

"On classroom capacity, the allowable seating capacity in classrooms of HEIs in areas under Alert Level 1 is at a maximum of 100 percent capacity," the resolution read. "On the operations of student dormitories, there will be no restriction as to the operation, however, the HEI should coordinate with the LGU (local government unit) concerned before opening." (PNA)



Mask mandate should stay under 'Alert Level o' — expert

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

- March 11, 2022 - 4:34pm



A passenger (C) sits inside a tricycle covered with a reminder to wear a mask, part of the Covid-19 health protocols, in Manila on February 16, 2022.

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines must retain the mask mandate should the government decide to lower the country to “Alert Level o,” an infectious diseases specialist said Friday.

Health chief Francisco Duque III earlier said authorities and experts were studying a possible Alert Level o as COVID-19 cases continue to drop.

“At this point, [based] on the metrics na nakikita natin ngayon, especially sa pagbaba ng mga kaso at healthcare utilization, if ever we will downgrade to Alert Level o, mukhang ready na tayo,” Rontgene Solante, head of adult infectious diseases unit in San Lazaro Hospital, told state broadcaster People’s Television.

(At this point, based on the current metrics, especially the decline in cases and healthcare utilization, if ever we will downgrade to Alert Level o, it looks like we’re ready.)

“We still have to maintain the wearing of face masks even in Alert Level 1. I think that’s the more important part of protection even if limitations will be lifted,” he added.

Solante also stressed that proper hand hygiene should still be observed and at least 90% of the country’s population should be immunized against COVID-19 to avoid surges in infections.

Metro Manila and 39 other areas are under Alert Level 1 until March 15. Duque said these areas are doing “so far, so good” even as most pandemic restrictions are scrapped.

The Philippines has been progressively easing entry rules and pandemic restrictions after a sharp drop in COVID-19 cases.

Health authorities have confirmed more than 3.6 million COVID-19 cases since the start of the pandemic, with over 57,000 deaths.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/03/11/2166599/mask-mandate-should-stay-under-alert-level-o-expert/amp/>

12 MARCH 2022, Saturday



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