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NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Cimatu reminds Pinoys to be mindful in disposing of face masks

Published May 11, 2021, 12:26 PM

by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu has reiterated his call for the proper disposal of face masks amid the raging coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.



Discarded face masks found at Baseco beach, Manila. (EcoWaste Coalition/ File photo/ MANILA BULLETIN)

The correct disposal of face masks would have a twofold effect as it will help prevent the further spread of the new coronavirus among individuals and at the same time spare the environment of the blight caused by discarded masks.

"Protection against COVID-19 goes beyond following the minimum health protocols and the use of face masks and face shields. Our responsibility extends to the disposal of these healthcare items which are potentially contaminated," Cimatu said in a statement over the weekend.

He noted the need to "responsibly discard" COVID-19 litter especially disposable face masks since these have now begun to affect terrestrial and aquatic animals.

"We have seen that while face masks protect us, these have become the newest threat to animal life because of entanglement, and have added up to marine litter," Cimatu said.



DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu (C) (Photo from DENR Facebook page)

Earlier this year, discarded face masks were found entangled in the coral reefs of Anilao, Batangas. The DENR chief described the discovery as "alarming".

The use of face masks among Filipinos started to become commonplace during the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic last year.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2021/05/11/cimatu-reminds-pinoys-to-be-mindful-in-disposing-face-masks/>



161 LGUs around Manila Bay provided with crucial apparatus vs. waste problem

Published May 11, 2021, 6:19 PM

by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

A total of 161 out the 178 local government units (LGUs) surrounding the Manila Bay area have been provided with shredder-composter units by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).



(Photo from DENR Facebook page)

The turnover of the units– made possible through the office of Senator Cynthia A. Villar– is expected to help address the solid waste problem in Manila Bay. Each unit costs P1 million.

“This is a huge help to LGUs to comply with the provisions of Republic Act (RA) 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000. It is anchored on the support Senator Villar has been giving to us in the DENR,” Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny D. Antiporda said in a statement Tuesday, May 11.

Antiporda, who also sits as the Manila Bay Anti-Pollution Task Force (MBAPTF) chief, said the move “raises the call for effective solid waste management as a major concern in the country’s discourse on governance, both at the national and local level”.

The Manila Bay region consists of the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga, Bataan, Nueva Ecija, and Tarlac in Central Luzon; Cavite, Rizal, and Laguna in Calabarzon; and the 16 cities and lone municipality in Metro Manila or the National Capital Region (NCR).

Of the 161 shredder-composter units distributed, Laguna received 30; Nueva Ecija, 30; Bulacan, 24; Pampanga, 22; Cavite, 23; Rizal, 14; Bataan, 12; and Tarlac, six. The units for the remaining 17 LGUs are up for bidding.

The DENR aims to complete the bidding process, installation, and turnover of the remaining units to their respective LGU-hosts within the second quarter.



Undersecretary Benny Antiporda ((Photo from DENR Facebook page)



Antiporda underscored the importance of the shredder-composter equipment as it will not only reduce the amount of waste that ends up in sanitary landfills, but also transform the diverted wastes into organic fertilizers and soil enhancers.

"We appeal to the LGUs to use these assets fully and properly," he said.

The first batch of five shredder-composter units was rolled out in December 2020 in San Fernando City and the towns of Apalit, Candaba, Guagua, and Magalang in the province of Pampanga.

The DENR said the equipment should be installed near the materials recovery facilities (MRFs) of the host LGUs and should be supplied with an independent electrical source fitted with an emergency shutdown device as a safety measure.



Masinloc-Oyon bay passes water quality parameters



SAFE. Masinloc Oyon Bay Protected Landscape and Seascape sustains its quality standards of water classification for protected waters and remains safe for recreation activities. (DENR)

[IAN OCAMPO FLORA](#)

May 11, 2021

THE water quality of the 7,558-hectare Masinloc Oyon Bay Protected Landscape and Seascape (MOBPLS) in the towns of Masinloc and Palauig in Zambales has passed the water quality parameters of containing acceptable levels of ammonia, nitrate, phosphate, total dissolved solids, and total suspended solids.

Latest reports of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Central Luzon stated that this marine protected area (MPA) sustains its quality standards of water classification for protected waters and remains safe for recreation activities.

Central Luzon DENR Director Paquito Moreno Jr. said the average fecal coliform level of the MOBPLS was 1.8 Most Probable Number (MPN)/100 ml, which was close to the minimum standard level of 1.1 MPN/100 ml.

"To improve the fecal coliform level in this MPA, the DENR regularly conducts coastal cleanup activities and strictly monitors the compliance of fish cage operators to standard stocking density," he said.

He said information, education, and communication (IEC) programs were also intensified to increase public awareness on the importance of marine resources and at the same time solicit community support for the protection of coastal ecosystems.

This Month of the Ocean, the DENR continues to urge the public to protect the major water bodies in Central Luzon, including the MOBPLS in Zambales.

MOBPLS is the first and only marine protected area in Central Luzon under the Expanded National Protected Area System (E-Nipas) law or Republic Act 11038 of 2018.

This marine ecosystem is home to rich and unique biodiversity including the hybrid mangrove *Rhizophora x lamarckii*, giant clam, mesophotic corals, large fishes, and the threatened blue-spotted rabbitfish.

It is also the source of food and livelihood to coastal communities in Zambales.

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1894299>



More dolomite coming for Manila Bay rehab phase 2

More Heramis, ABS-CBN News

Posted at May 11 2021 02:39 PM | Updated as of May 11 2021 04:05 PM



Locals sit under the shade at the Manila Baywalk with the fresh dolomite sands dumped along the promenade on Tuesday. The second phase of the Manila Bay Rehabilitation project, with 265-million peso budget, is scheduled to commence this month of May awaiting approval of plans and Memorandum of Agreement signing with the Department of Public Works and Highways, according to Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/multimedia/photo/05/11/21/denr-second-phase-manila-bay-rehabilitation>



MPD sets outpost at Baseco beach

[Marc Jayson Cayabyab](#) (The Philippine Star) - May 12, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Manila Police District (MPD) has set up a police outpost at Baseco beach to prevent people from swimming in Manila Bay, which is prohibited under the prevailing modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ).

MPD district director Brig. Gen. Leo Francisco yesterday said the police outpost was also put up to prevent a summer “super spreader event” like what happened at the Gubat sa Ciudad resort in Bagumbong, Caloocan last Sunday.

The government has deployed contact tracers to track down those who went to the resort to celebrate Mother’s Day.

At least 10 persons have been arrested for swimming at Baseco beach since the MECQ, MPD Station 13 commander Lt. Col. Robert Domingo said.

He ordered the police to come up with preventive measures to stop people from swimming at the beach, Domingo said.



UP Marine Biological Society asks immediate stoppage of Manila Bay reclamation

May 11, 2021 3 min read

City residents enjoy the 'fake' white sand of crushed dolomite rocks on a portion of Manila Bay beachfront unaware of the threat it poses to the marine eco-system in the area.

MANILA — The University of the Philippines Marine Biological Society (UP-MBS) has launched 'Save and Defend Manila Bay' aiming to raise awareness and a call for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) to stop the reclamation project in the historic bay.

The UP-MBS said the reclamation activity will only destroy it and further damage the marine ecological system in the area.

In a message to both government agencies, UP-MBS called on the authorities to enforce and comply with the mandates set by the law and the Supreme Court in respecting the right to a balanced and healthful ecology.

In particular, the group said the DENR must as directed by the Supreme Court, implement an operational plan for the Manila Bay Coastal Strategy, which includes a moratorium on dump-and-fill projects in the bay even as the agency must also allow and respect the right of the public to access the Environmental Impact Assessment Studies as well as any environmental compliance certificates (ECCs) issued for reclamation projects.

On the other hand, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, UP-MBS said, must issue letter of objections to all dump-and-fill projects in Manila as it runs counter to the order issued by Supreme Court requiring them to restore marine life in Manila Bay. The bay is a rich sardine spawning area and source of livelihood for many local fisherfolk.

Moreover, members of the society noted the historical and cultural significance of Manila Bay to the country's well-being as a whole.

"Stretching along Cavite, Parañaque, Pasay, Manila, Malabon, Navotas up to the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga, and Bataan, the stretch of the Manila Bay holds a prominent place in glorious stories of the past as it witnessed battles that changed the course of our history.

Now, it is facing an environmental war against ecologically destructive dump-and-fill projects, also known as reclamation, which is described by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization as "an irreversible form of environmental degradation," the group pointed out. (AI/MTVN)

Source: <https://maharlika.tv/2021/05/11/up-marine-biological-society-asks-immediate-stoppage-of-manila-bay-reclamation/?fbclid=IwAR0t0hawsneBZ7kjufMqJs8Jx2wTra6f3V3VmVcQgO9xuKSUZI0nDx8Bvd4>



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOEY SANCHEZ FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE

Simple joys Children continue to enjoy the summer by playing along the shoreline of the Baseco beach in Port Area, Manila amid the spread of the coronavirus disease.

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/116724526976/posts/10160032649061977/?app=fbl>



3 illegal chainsaw sellers nabbed in Nueva Vizcaya

By Benjamin Pulta May 11, 2021, 4:22 pm



ILLEGAL ITEM. The National Bureau of Investigation arrests three individuals in Solano, Nueva Vizcaya on May 6, 2021 for selling chainsaws without permits. Criminal charges have been filed against the suspects. *(Photo courtesy of NBI Facebook)*

MANILA – The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has filed criminal charges against three individuals in Solano, Nueva Vizcaya for selling chainsaws without permits.

The NBI-Bayombong District Office (NBI-BAYDO), in a news release on Tuesday, said the trio were separately arrested on May 6.

NBI Officer-in-Charge-Director Eric Distor said suspects Emero Saguid, Isagani Foronda, and Randy Ramirez have been subjected to inquest proceedings before the Office of the Provincial Prosecutor in Bayombong for violation of Republic Act 9175, otherwise known as an Act Regulating the Ownership, Possession, Sale, Importation and Use of Chainsaws.

A fourth suspect, Alex Negrillo, who owns Powersaw Trading, is at large.

The NBI received information that Powersaw Trading, Ganie Inc., and Blanco Agricultural Farm Machinery were selling chainsaws sans permits.

Five chainsaws were confiscated.

A certification issued by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources sub-office is required to sell and distribute the cutting machines.

No such permits were issued to the said firms, the NBI found out.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources can issue permits to possess and/or use a chainsaw for the felling and/or cutting of trees, timber and other forest or agro-forest products to any applicant who has a subsisting timber license agreement, production sharing agreement, or similar agreements, or a private land timber permit; is an orchard and fruit tree farmer; is an industrial tree farmer; is a licensed wood processor and the chain saw shall be used for the cutting of timber that has been legally sold to said applicant; or shall use the chain saw for a legal purpose.

The law also states that "any person who voluntarily gives information leading to the recovery or confiscation of an unregistered chainsaw and the conviction of persons charged thereof shall be entitled to a reward equivalent to 20 percent of the value of the chainsaw unit(s)."

Imprisonment ranges from one month to eight years and fines from PHP1,000 to PHP30,000. *(PNA)*

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1139867>



Illegal chainsaw dealers nabbed

The operation also resulted in the seizure of two locally-assembled chainsaws from Powersaw, two big Stihl chainsaw from Ganie and one chainsaw from Blanco

Published 4 hours ago on May 12, 2021 02:30 AM

By [Alvin Murcia](#) @tribunephil_alvi



The National Bureau of Investigation Bayombong District Office (NBI-BAYDO) reported that its operatives arrested three persons for selling chainsaws without permits from the government in simultaneous operations in Solano, Nueva Vizcaya.

NBI officer-in-charge Eric Distor identified the suspects as Emero Mendoza Saguid, Isagani Fornoda and Randy Ramirez who were arrested in different establishments in the area believed to be selling chainsaws without permits.

Distor disclosed that the establishments are Powersa Trading (Powersaw), Ganie Saw Center (Ganie) and Blanco Agricultural Farm Machinery Trading (Blanco).

The agency conducted validation led by the NBI-BAYDO operatives and discovered that the establishments are offering chainsaw and cutting implements for sale to the general public.

Distor stressed that a Certification issued by the PENR Sub-office of the DENR Office, Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya revealed that no authority nor permit to sell and distribute the said cutting machines were issued to Powersaw, Ganie and Blanco.

Three composite teams from NBI-BAYDO conducted the simultaneous entrapment operations in the morning of 6 May 2021 on Powersaw, Ganie and Blanco which led to the immediate arrest of suspects after receiving the marked money.

The operation also yielded two locally-assembled chainsaws from Powersaw, two big Stihl chainsaw from Ganie, and one chainsaw from Blanco.

The suspects were presented for inquest proceedings on the same day before the Office of the Provincial Prosecutor of Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya for violation of RA 9175, otherwise known as the Chainsaw Act of 2002.



NO FREE LUNCH

Dumping due diligence

By: [Cielito F. Habito](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:06 AM May 11, 2021

How can a national government agency possibly issue a Notice to Proceed for a project that has not gone through required evaluation and clearance processes, and that other concerned government departments had not even been made aware of? How could the Department of Budget and Management have released funds for a project even before a feasibility study was completed (not to mention all the requisite clearances that needed to be obtained)?

Sound incredible? Yet that is exactly what happened with a project reportedly costing some P4.2 billion that will build a bridge and 20 kilometers of road to connect Coron Island and Culion in Palawan. The Department of Public Works and Highways is not only set to build it; work had already started on the ground — until concerned citizens, including a former tourism secretary, nongovernment organizations, and local communities sounded the alarm. The project was bid out and awarded in the latter part of last year, and a Notice to Proceed was issued on Nov. 25. Hence, earthwork and clearing of vegetation was begun by the contractor.

What I find hard to understand is how funds for the project had already been released by the DBM, when it was all still clearly half-baked. A news item (not in the Inquirer) reported: “The DPWH confirmed it had not undertaken the required public consultations, feasibility study, or permit applications prior to the start of construction activities. DPWH Regional Director Yolanda Tangco said they fast-tracked the construction work because the initial P250 million in project funding released to the agency in 2020 would have to be returned to the Treasury if it was not spent within two years.”

A feasibility study, which Tangco admitted will only be completed in July this year, is the most basic step that must be completed even before a decision is made to pursue a project at all. It would determine if the project’s expected benefits would justify the costs to be incurred both to build the project, and as a result of the project. It doesn’t take a genius to know that constructing this bridge would have substantial repercussions on the environment in the area, which happens to have hundreds of hectares of highly biodiverse coral grounds, rich fisheries providing livelihoods to local residents, and six Japanese shipwrecks. Being part of the island of Palawan that has been voted best island in the world by international tourism groups, and given its ecological and historical significance, it attracts thousands of tourists annually in normal times, especially divers. The USAID Fish Right project has estimated that the five communities adjacent to the bridge project alone stand to benefit from a total estimated fish yield of P89 million annually, which would be severely jeopardized by construction activity in the area.

But guess what: The Department of Tourism, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources under the Department of Agriculture were not even aware of the project. Tourism Secretary Berna Romulo Puyat has publicly acknowledged that her department had not been consulted, and Secretaries Roy Cimatu (DENR) and William Dar (DA) were similarly unaware of the project when the issue was first brought to their attention.

During my time in the Cabinet under President Fidel V. Ramos, the DPWH, DBM, DOT, DENR, and DA secretaries would have been herded by FVR in a room to receive his infamous “bawling out,” for a fiasco like this. His legendary “CSW” doctrine required that any



undertaking of this sort that concerned several government departments should have been closely coordinated and agreed upon, even before a decision is made to pursue the project. He would require, back then, that a submission be made to him with all the signatures of all the Cabinet members concerned, to prove that such CSW had taken place. We in the Ramos Cabinet probably all had the experience of receiving back from him a submission emblazoned with the letters “CSW” at the top, with his trademark red Flair pen.

Alas, not so with this government, where too often, it seems, the right hand doesn't even know what the left hand is doing.

cielito.habito@gmail.com



Dumaguete City Mayor Felipe Antonio Remollo (seated, 2nd from left) and Bayawan City Mayor Pryde Henry Teves (seated, 3rd from left) signing the memo of agreement for the garbage disposal management. (Contributed photo)

2 NegOr cities ink agreement on waste disposal

By Rachelle NessiaPublished on May 11, 2021

DUMAGUETE CITY, May 11 (PIA) -- Dumaguete City's segregated residual waste will be temporarily disposed at the sanitary landfill in Brgy. Maninihon, Bayawan City.

This as Dumaguete City Mayor Felipe Antonio Remollo and Bayawan City Mayor Pryde Henry Teves signed yesterday a memorandum of agreement that would allow Dumaguete City to dispose its garbage momentarily at the sanitary landfill in Bayawan City.

Earlier, Dumaguete closed its 35-year-old open dumpsite in Brgy. Candau-ay after the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) announced that the operation of open pit dumpsite is now illegal in the country.

However, the central Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) is already operational, wherein the recyclable waste is sorted and disposed by the former scavengers who are now employed by the city government through the Environment and Natural Resources Office.

Based on the agreement, the City of Dumaguete will transport the segregated residual waste to the Bayawan City sanitary landfill at a tipping fee rate of P1,000 per ton.

Remollo thanked Teves for the gesture of support considering that Dumaguete City has the smallest land area among the local government units (LGUs) in the province but with the most number of people going in and out of the city being the center of trade, health, education, and commerce in the province.

"The signing of the MOA is a living proof of an inter-LGU cooperation encouraged by the Local Government Code of 1991," Remollo said.

The arrangement is, however, temporary since Dumaguete City is processing the approval of its own sanitary landfill by the DENR inside the eight-hectare property where the central MRF is also located.

For his part, Teves stressed the need for LGUs to cooperate to solve the present-day problems in the management of solid waste, traffic congestion, and adequate water supply of a growing city.



He said that while Bayawan City has pioneered some major initiatives, there are also best practices and strategies that they want to learn from Dumaguete City particularly in its thriving retirement tourism industry.

Both mayors agreed that LGUs should use their resources to promote mutual benefits for their constituents.

Present during the MOA signing were Dumaguete City Legal Officer Manuel Arbon, Atty. Ronel Depalubos, 3rd District Board Member Jack Raymund, Councilors Lilani Ramon, Manuel Patrimonio, Liga ng mga Barangay President Dionie Amores, Sangguniang Kabataan President Renz Macion and department heads. (jct/PIA7 Negros Oriental)



Barangay chief imposes waste segregation policy

Published 4 hours ago on May 12, 2021 02:30 AM

By [Mar T. Supnad](#)



MARIVELES, Bataan — The Barangay chief of Alasasin here is set to impose a “No segregation, No collection” policy for waste collection on 15 May in a bid to retain the cleanliness of the whole barangay.

In a statement, Alasasin barangay chair Florante Malimban stressed that the policy will be strictly implemented and its coverage include residential houses, facilities and structures for rent, buildings and other establishments producing wastes.

Malimban added that the policy aims to maintain the barangay spotless as it hosts the biggest power plant producers, sea ports, international maritime school and other commercial and industrial establishments.

The Alasasin barangay council also prioritizes the peace and order situation in the area to protect the residents, business owners and workers in the area.

Women against waste

By ... -May 12, 2021



Sustainable waste management includes upcycling or repurposing plastic packaging into other useful items such as bags and wallets (left). Gloria Bandojo (inset) in Payatas Quezon City is one of Republic Cement's partners in its sustainable waste management program.

A 30-year veteran of various landfills and wastes consolidators, Gloria Bandojo stands proud amid her unconventional workplace in Payatas, Quezon City—a dumpsite that she herself says is “dirty and smelly,” with no hint of disdain. After all, it is this dumpsite that has enabled her to send her eight children to school.

In San Jose del Monte, Bulacan, Marianita Maraas is in a similar situation. A solo parent of five children ages eight to 16 years old, Maraas could only look back on how miserable their lives were. Having learned upcycling skills from the City Environment and Natural Resources Office, she collects plastic packaging to make into wallets and bags.

Now, she can earn as much as P17,000 every month especially during the Christmas season. She also supports other wastes pickers by providing a kilo of rice in exchange for a kilo of clean, dry plastic wrappers, which she uses for her trade.

Bandojo and Maraas are just two of the hundreds of ordinary Filipinos—usually female breadwinners—who play a valuable role in the sustainable waste management program of Republic Cement's resource recovery arm ecoloop. By partnering with local government units (LGU), waste consolidators, as well as manufacturing companies who utilize plastic packaging, Republic Cement seeks to close the loop and prevent plastic waste from ending up in landfills and oceans.

ecolooop hauls and converts most of these waste through a revolutionary cement manufacturing process called co-processing. It involves recovery of residual minerals and energy from the wastes, which are then utilized in the processing of cement itself.

“Making a difference in the environment is what makes me wake up in the morning with energy to start my day,” said ecolooop director Angela Edralin. “There are challenges along the way but being a woman has allowed me to make a unique contribution to this field that will hopefully pave the way for other women to do the same or even better.”

Source: https://malaya.com.ph/index.php/news_special_feature/women-against-waste/



PCG to install buoys in Philippine Rise

By Raymond Carl Dela Cruz May 11, 2021, 4:49 pm



OCEAN BUOYS. The three "state-of-the-art" lighted ocean buoys set to be installed by the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) on Wednesday (May 12, 2021) at the Philippine Rise. The PCG said the 30-foot-long buoys are equipped with modern marine aids to navigation lanterns, specialized mooring systems, and a remote monitoring system. *(Photo courtesy of PCG)*

MANILA – The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) will install three out of the planned 10 "state-of-the-art" lighted ocean buoys at the Philippine Rise as part of efforts to mark and protect the Philippines' exclusive economic zone (EEZ) on Wednesday.

In a Facebook post, the PCG said the three buoys -- each having a length of 30 feet -- are equipped with modern marine aids to navigation lanterns, specialized mooring systems, and a remote monitoring system that uses satellite technology to transmit data to the PCG National Headquarters in Port Area, Manila.

The ocean markers arrived in Cebu from Valencia in Spain on Friday and were assembled by the PCG Maritime Safety Services Command (MSSC) and M-NAV Solutions Inc. (M-NAV).

"The Uni-Orient Pearl Ventures Inc. Shipyard where the buoys were delivered also assisted during the assembling process," the PCG said.

It said PCG Commandant Admiral Geroge Ursabia Jr., along with M-NAV Marine Aids to Navigation Specialist Engr. Adrian Van Boven, PCG Central Visayas Commander Rear Admiral William Isaga, and the Technical Inspection Team of the PCG MSSC have inspected the buoys on Monday.

"[Ursabia] also checked the equipment and other materials that will be used to install the ocean markers in the Philippine Rise situated 250 kilometers east of the northern coastline of Aurora," the PCG said.

During the inspection, Ursabia said the buoys in the Philippine Rise "will effectively communicate" that the vicinity waters are considered "special protected zone," hence mining and oil exploration are strictly prohibited to preserve its natural resources.

The PCG said the ocean markers will also be used to mark the designated food supply exclusive zone and ensure safe navigation in the Philippine Rise. *(PNA)*



Photo shows urban forest on Nayong Pilipino property.
Nayong Pilipino

Green group says Nayong Pilipino urban forest a 'critical safe space' in Metro Manila

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - May 11, 2021 - 4:49pm

MANILA, Philippines — An environmental activist group called for the protection of the Nayong Pilipino Foundation's urban forest park, which it said is an important green space in the concrete jungle that is Metro Manila.

In a statement Tuesday, Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment said the thriving urban forest on the NPF property in Parañaque City is a "critical safe space" that will benefit 1.2 million residents of the city and neighboring Pasay.

A massive vaccination center is proposed to be built on the park's property located within a gaming and entertainment complex. Vaccine czar Carlito Galvez said the temporary inoculation facility will "help accelerate" the country's slow COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

"Experts concluded last year that we need more green open spaces now more than ever to provide the public with socially distanced breathing and recreation space, pollution and disease control, and long-term climate resilience," said Leon Dulce, national coordinator of Kalikasan PNE.

The COVID-19 pandemic has unleashed a huge demand for more publicly-accessible open spaces especially in cities such as the densely populated Metro Manila.

In a statement on May 6, the NPF said the urban forest hosts a variety of wildlife as it serves as a bird flyway network. It is also the "last remaining grassland" in the reclaimed area of Parañaque.

The government-owned and controlled corporation said 500 trees are expected to be cut to give way to the mega vaccination center.

"It's not just the birds and the bees. The increasing loss of green spaces across Metro Manila is making people more vulnerable to floods and extreme climate impacts," Dulce said.

[Data from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources](#), as reported by the Philippine Daily Inquirer, showed that only 12,152.97 hectares out of the capital region's total land area of 55,922.22 ha are green spaces.

Kalikasan PNE suggested to retrofit malls, golf courses and sports complex for vaccination facilities instead.



‘Follow the law’

Lucille Karen Malilong-Isberto, who resigned as NPF executive director, said the property is located within the buffer zone of a protected area. The property is near the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area, a protected area and a wetland site of international importance.

“Environmental laws are still in place and we still have a duty to comply with those environmental laws,” she said in an interview with ABS-CBN News Channel Tuesday.

The former NPF executive said the management is not opposed to the proposed mega vaccination facility but she stressed the need for strict compliance with laws.

“We gave our approval for the use of the land as a vaccination facility on April 8. What we ask is that we follow all the legal processes for use of the land under an emergency. So what happened was the proposal came from the private sector ICTSI. The laws require the use of land should be public, which means it should be a government agency that is running it,” she said.

Galvez said ports and gaming tycoon Enrique Razon offered to build the facility at no cost to the national government.

‘Climate crisis didn't stop during pandemic’

The construction of the vaccination hub has yet to commence, prompting Galvez to call on the NPF to sign the agreement to build the COVID-19 vaccination center as soon as possible.

He said it is “inappropriate for the NPF to equate the fate of 500 Ipil-ipil trees with the lives of hundreds of thousands if not millions of Filipinos.”

But Dulce pointed out that the climate crisis did not cease to exist during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Government should not be forcing the public to choose which disaster they are willing to face. The government is mandated to ensure the public’s safety from all these risks,” he said.



Environmental group chimes in on mega vax center debate: 'Why not convert malls, golf courses instead of Nayong Pilipino?'

Published May 11, 2021, 1:13 PM

by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

Environmental group Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan PNE) has sided with the Nayong Pilipino Foundation (NPF) on the issue of whether or not a mega vaccination facility should be build on the latter's property.



A healthcare worker preparing to administer a COVID-19 vaccine. (Mark Balmores/ File photo/ MANILA BULLETIN)

In a statement Tuesday, May 11, Kalikasan PNE sought the protection of the NPF's 8.5-hectare urban forest park from being converted into what it called "a questionable mega-infrastructure project masquerading as a COVID solution." "The Nayong Pilipino urban forest park is a critical safe space that will benefit the 1.2 million residents of Pasay and Paranaque suffering from the pandemic lockdown. Experts concluded last year that we need green open spaces now more than ever to provide the public with socially distanced breathing and recreation space, pollution and disease control, and long-term climate resilience," Kalikasan PNE national coordinator Leon Dulce said.

The construction of the mega vaccination facility is being supported by Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr., vaccine czar and chief implementer of the National Task Force (NTF) Against COVID-19; and Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat of the Department of Tourism (DOT).

Actual construction hasn't begun yet since the Board of Trustees of the NPF - a subordinate body of the DOT - hasn't signed the memorandum of agreement (MOA) for it, citing environmental, health, and legal concerns. This, despite the project's approval last month.

Part of the controversy surrounding the effort to build the high-capacity vaccination center is the involvement of private entity International Container Terminal Service (ICTSI) in the supposed public undertaking. The ICTSI is owned by billionaire businessman Enrique Razon Jr.

"We find it questionable that a mega vaccination center is being forced on top of an important green space, when public health experts have been pushing for decentralizing vaccination hubs to bring them closer to the people instead," Dulce said. Dulce went on to suggest an easier route for authorities to build the facility.

"We believe it is not difficult and may even be more cost-effective to retrofit existing built environments like malls, golf courses, sports complexes, and the like for vaccination facilities," he said.



Kalikasan PNE further said that more than 450 trees would have to be cut to give way to the "mega vax center". The Wild Bird Club of the Philippines noted that at least 177 birds belonging to 25 different species were documented in just two hours of monitoring bird populations in the urban forest.

"It's not just the birds and the bees. The increasing loss of green spaces across Metro Manila is making people more vulnerable to floods and other extreme climate impacts. At least eight million Filipinos were forced to contend with agricultural and property destruction while facing the prospect of COVID-19 super-spreader events because of Typhoons Rolly through Ulysses last year," Dulce explained.

"The climate crisis did not cease to exist when the COVID-19 pandemic came about. Government should not be forcing the public to choose which disaster they are willing to face. The government is mandated to ensure the public's safety from all these risks," he said.



In this Nov. 18, 2019 photo, Manila Mayor Isko Moreno tried to wipe off the spraypaint graffiti near Manila City Hall.

Screenshot from Manila Public Information Office's video

Toxics watchdog discovers lead-containing spray paints amid ban

(Philstar.com) - May 11, 2021 - 12:29pm

MANILA, Philippines — An environmental health watchdog group monitoring compliance announced its discovery of six more spray paints with excessive levels of lead the country's ban on lead paint.

In its latest Alertoxic report, the EcoWaste Coalition in a lead content analysis performed by an undisclosed private laboratory detected up to 99,900 parts per million of lead present in six bright color Tacoma Spray Paints from a hardware store chain.

Of the six spray paint products analyzed, four contained dangerously high lead concentrations exceeding 10,000 ppm. One "glossy yellow paint" also topped the list with a massive 99,900 ppm of lead. The group said it purchased the product in mid-April, as the discovery brings the number of violative aerosol paint products in the country to 56 per the coalition's tracker.

Per Administrative Order No. 2013-24 of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the historic chemical control order phasing out lead-containing paints, bans lead, a toxic chemical, in all paints in excess of the threshold limit of 90 ppm.

"The presence of non-compliant products in the market, including imported ones, stresses the need for further measures to ensure full compliance to the ban," said Thony Dizon, chemical safety campaigner at the EcoWaste Coalition.

"The products are 'made in China' with no manufacturer's markings," he also said, adding that the products were also listed as being manufactured in 2020, which came after the government had supposedly already completed the phase-out for all lead-containing paints in the country.

Environmental health scientist Geminn Louis Apostol is quoted as saying in the group's statement: "No safe level of lead exposure without adverse health effects has been identified. Even low-dose exposure to this toxic metal is deemed hazardous, especially to infants and children and their developing brains."

Apostol, an assistant professor at the Ateneo School of Medicine and Public Health, warned that "early childhood exposure is linked to the lifelong intellectual, developmental and behavioral problems such as reduced intelligence quotient, impaired learning ability, inattentiveness, hearing and speech problems, slowed growth, aggression, violence, and other behavioral disorders."



The EcoWaste Coalition will request the hardware store chain it obtained the lead-containing paints from to voluntarily stop their sale across their 75 branches across the country and to return the remaining stocks to their source for disposal.

"Ensuring that spray paints pose no lead-based hazards is absolutely required as these paints are marketed as ideal for almost all types of surfaces and painting applications," a 2020 report by the coalition and the International Pollutants Elimination Network reads.

The coalition also said it will notify concerned environmental, health and trade regulators about their latest test buys and the need for concerted measures to boost complete compliance to the country's ban on lead paint

"Our government, with active support from the paint industry and the civil society, has phased out lead in all paints to protect our children from this major source of lead exposure for kids. They are exposed to lead when lead paint chips and crumbles, releasing lead into the dust and soil that can be ingested through normal hand-to-mouth behavior," Dizon also said.



6 hectares of land damaged in Cavite grass fire

Published May 11, 2021 11:54pm



Six hectares of land were affected after firefighters struggled to extinguish a grass fire in Barangay Toclong, Kawit, Cavite on Monday night.

In a State of the Nation report on Tuesday, the grassland fire went on for six hours as the flames easily spread due to the hot weather.

Firemen had to connect their firehose as firetrucks could not move past a barrier near the blaze.

No casualties were reported in the incident.—Consuelo Marquez/LDF, GMA News

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/787123/6-hectares-of-land-damaged-in-cavite-grass-fire/story/>



P&G Sustainability panelists: (From left) host Robi Domingo, Walter Belhomme of The Plastic Flamingo, Bas Franser of EcoMatcher, Anne Marie Bakker of FEED, Anna Legarda Locsin of P&G Phils., and PARMS' Crispian Lao

When climate change hits, no vaccine can protect us

[OOH LA LAI](#) - [Lai S. Reyes](#) (The Philippine Star) - May 11, 2021 - 12:00am

Year 2020 is regarded by the United Nations (UN) as the decade of action to end poverty, to rescue the planet and eventually build a peaceful world.

The clock is ticking and if we don't do anything about it in the next 10 years, we're going to create a problem for which there will be no vaccines available.

"Today, we are confronted with something very tragic and dramatic — COVID-19. Thank goodness, there's now a vaccine. And hopefully, everybody gets that jab one day!" says Bas Fransen, CEO of Ecomatcher. "But when the effects of climate change hit us in the next 10 years, we'll be knocked out for real."

And yes, no amount of jabs can protect us from such an environmental catastrophe.

Fransen was one of the panelists in the recent P&G Philippines' Sustainability Summit built on the theme "#ItsOurHome."

Ecomatcher is a social enterprise that helps companies and consumers tackle climate change by planting new trees on their behalf with the help of technology and a mobile app.

"One of the things that can be done is by massively planting trees," Fransen notes. "But that tree planting needs to be done in a proper way. You need to plant the right trees, at the right time, and at the right place."

The plantitos, plantitas and halamanongs are off to a good start. By planting herbs and veggies right in their backyards for personal consumption, they reduce their carbon footprints.

However, that's simply not enough. We need something bigger in scope. Scalability and planting as many trees as possible is the name of the game.

"We need to address climate change in a significant and scalable way," says Fransen.

Joining Fransen in the summit are the avengers of sustainability in the world, such as National Solid Waste Management commissioner Crispian Lao, Plastic Flamingo chief revenue officer Gauthier Belhomme, Fostering Education and Environment for Development (FEED) director for partnership Anne-Marie Bakker and P&G Philippines director Anna Legarda-Locsin.



Raffy Fajardo, P&G president

May the forest be with you

Procter & Gamble (P&G) Philippines heeded the UN's call with the launch of its "Forests For Good" program.

Forests For Good aims to actively protect nature — beginning with 12 pilot programs in 12 months across its Asia-Pacific, Middle East and Africa (AMA) region — by planting trees that help improve local ecosystems. The Philippines is one of the pilot countries supporting this natural climate solution and will help reforestation efforts in the Sierra Madre Mountain Range.

"At P&G, environmental sustainability is a key business strategy and priority. It's not nice to have. It's actually a must-have," stresses Raffy Fajardo, P&G president and general manager. "We know that we have a big role to play and that is why we are accelerating our sustainability Ambition 2030 commitments."

P&G's "Ambition 2030" aims to make responsible consumption possible for consumers globally through holistic, comprehensive interventions across four aspects, which the company controls: its brand innovations, supply chain operations, and trusted partnerships that impact society and their employees.

As a result, P&G has a long-term commitment to make significant and meaningful impacts on the environmental areas of Climate, Water and Waste.

"In the area of Waste, our commitment is to make 100 percent of our packaging recyclable or reusable by 2030," says Fajardo. "We will also cut the use of virgin plastic in packaging by 50 percent, and create smart packaging solutions that you can recycle and reuse so we will have little to no impact on the environment, including the oceans and landfills."

For the Climate, P&G's goal is to be carbon-neutral by the end of this decade. Today, 70 percent of P&G sites are on 100-percent-renewable electricity, including its Cabuyao manufacturing plant in Laguna.

"Our Cabuyao plant has reduced emissions by 80 percent already. Of the 20 percent that are non-reduceable, we are trying to offset them through the newly launched Forests for Good program," enthuses Raffy.

For this project, P&G has partnered with EcoMatcher to pilot their block-chain technology that increases forestry transparency and accountability, together with local conservation organizations in each country where they are starting this journey.

"Even before Forests For Good was launched, we'd been planting trees in Sto. Tomas, Batangas. We now have 22,000 trees planted. With Forests For Good, we're actually planting another 5,000 trees. That's two trees per employee," adds Fajardo.

In the Philippines, FEED Inc. is the local conservation partner of EcoMatcher and P&G. The program better enables employees, partners and consumers to have strong visibility and tracking of the impact they have from planting trees.

“FEED’s purpose is to preserve and protect Philippine biodiversity,” explains Anne Marie Bakker, FEED director for partnership. “I’m here in behalf of our frontliners — the farmers, fishermen and foresters. They’re considered frontliners by IATF because they’re part of Agroforestry. They are the ones who are protecting our forests, our watersheds, our oceans, our coral reefs.”

FEED has been working with Ecomatcher since 2017. “We started with 1,000 trees and we now have about 7,000,” Bakker adds. “We’ve been planting in the last 30 years, even before the term CSR was coined.”

According to Bakker, it’s easy to plant but the hardest part is definitely the maintenance and monitoring.

“It’s like having a baby. What’s the point of planting if it’s not going to survive?” Bakker says. “We can’t do it alone. We need the help of locals,” laments Bakker, who adds that FEED’s dream is to achieve what Bhutan has accomplished: carbon offsetting even their neighbors!

“As I always say, there are over a 100 million people in the Philippines. If only every one of us would plant a tree every year, 100 million trees would be added to our forest. Don’t wait for the DENR, don’t wait for the DA. Just go out there. Throw your seeds on the ground and plant, plant, plant!” enthuses Bakker.

Now is the right time to accelerate our joint commitment to sustainability and put planning into action together through this unique platform.

“Get involved with the forest today for our planet, for our communities, for our children. It’s our planet, our home,” adds Fajardo.



May pag-asa sa basura: P&G has partnered with World Vision to upcycle 3.2 million plastic sachets into public school chairs with dividers.

‘Ayoko sa plastic’: Consumer waste management

As most of us know, the Philippines is the world’s third biggest polluter with 2.7 million metric tons of plastic waste generated each year. To think that we have one of the most comprehensive and most well-written laws on solid waste management.

“Again, we have beautiful laws. It’s only a question of implementation. We lack the infrastructure to manage our waste efficiently,” explains Crispian Lao, National Solid Waste Management commission and founding president of the Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability (PARMS).

The law has clearly defined the roles of LGUs who have direct supervision and mandate over the management of waste.

“However, it didn’t tell the local governments where to get the money and how to treat the waste. So there’s a disconnect and that is where opportunities come in. That’s where private sectors and social enterprises come in,” notes Lao.

According to Lao, when it comes to consumer waste management, avoidance is key.

“Let’s avoid generating waste — at home or in the office — in the first place. And this is where each and every one of us can participate,” Lao explains. “Then let’s follow the three Rs: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.”

In principle, Lao adds, that’s where our Zero Waste to Nature Ambition 2030 streams from.

A lot of people blame single-use plastic (and plastic sachets) as the number-one polluter. But can we really do away with plastics?

“My answer is yes and no,” replied Lao. “Most of us who belong to the middle class can do away with small packets. Let’s be responsible enough to buy in bigger volumes, bigger sizes simply because we can afford it.”

But what about the poor sector of our community? Should we deny them their right to buy essential and quality branded goods that they can afford?

“A poor individual can go to a sari-sari store and get a seven-ml. sachet of shampoo so he/she can smell good the whole day,” says Lao. “Having said that, there’s still that remaining part of responsibility for those items that are generated.”

And this is where PARMS comes in.

“We have already made a road map that would lead us to zero waste to nature addressing the post-problematic packaging materials — flexible — and dealing with it,” notes Lao.

Besides, plastic is only considered waste if you throw it away.

“What if we can convert your single-use plastic into something circular? What if we can recycle it? Will you still say, ‘Ayoko sa plastic?’” adds Lao.

As for plastic sachets, one easy way to find a solution is to find another use for it.



P&G has eliminated the virgin plastic overwrap packaging for its Safeguard multipacks and are now using 100-percent recycled paper carton material.

“Instead of calling it a sachet, why don’t we call it a shelter, a bench or a boardwalk? Because that’s what we’re actually doing at the Plastic Flamingo,” enthuses Walter Belhomme of The Plastic Flamingo (The PLAF). “We are transforming these so-called wastes into something beneficial to the people and the environment. For us, these plastic sachets aren’t waste, they’re raw materials for our products.”



To help reduce post-consumer waste, P&G is committed to comprehensively work on and invest in packaging design and innovation across brands, as well as collaborating with external stakeholders on piloting waste infrastructure interventions across several of its markets.

In the Philippines, P&G has already eliminated the virgin plastic overwrap packaging for its Safeguard multipacks and is now using 100-percent-recycled paper carton material.

“The change saves 8,500 kilometers worth of plastic waste every year, and that’s equivalent to 1,000 times the length of the Boracay shoreline,” enthuses Anna Legarda-Locsin, director of P&G Phils.

P&G’s new Herbal Essences Bio:renew collection now uses post-consumer resin, which is recycled plastic material for its bottle packaging.

P&G is putting together a lot of tools that will help all of us do our share in saving our planet.

“So do it at work, do it at home. Train the elders and the kids to reduce, reuse and recycle,” Fajardo adds. “P&G, our people and our brands will continue to use our expertise, operations and scale to build a better world for all.”

* * *

To know more about P&G’s global commitments and progress, visit P&G’s ESG website or read P&G’s 2020 Citizenship Report.



E-waste recycling

Recovering precious elements from e-waste is a security imperative for Europe that should be written into law, according to a report Monday that said it was “crucial” to ensure industry competitiveness and sustain tech-dependent lifestyles in the region.

Circuit boards, magnets in disk drives and electric vehicles, batteries and fluorescent lamps are among items containing critical raw materials – including gold, silver and cobalt – that could be recycled and reused, the research found.

This would safeguard supplies for consumer electronics and even the defence industry, said the consortium behind the European Union funded CEWASTE report, which said the fate of these materials was a “societal challenge.”

Despite these essential materials being vulnerable to geo-political upheavals, it said, Europe remains too reliant on foreign supply, with recycling rates “close to zero.”

“We’ve been recycling for centuries, it’s one of the oldest professions,” said Pascal Leroy, from the WEEE Forum, one of the authors of the report.

“What makes this era different from previous eras is that we need the critical raw materials to make products that sustain our high tech lifestyle,” he said. FTM

12 MAY 2021, WEDNESDAY



NEWS ALERTS

COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Members of the Manila Police District Station 5 round up more than 100 individuals at the Ferguson basketball court in Ermita, Manila on May 6, 2021 for violating the curfew and health protocols.

The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

DOH sees 4,734 more COVID-19 infections

(Philstar.com) - May 11, 2021 - 4:01pm

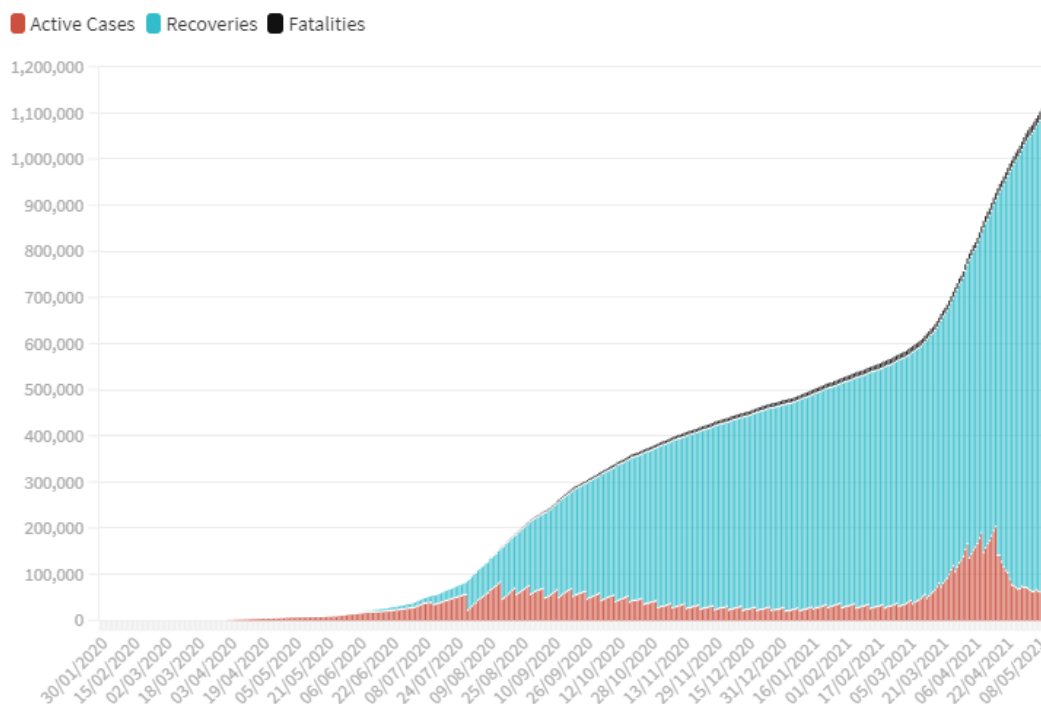
MANILA, Philippines — Health authorities on Tuesday said 4,734 more Filipinos contracted the COVID-19, raising the total count to 1,113,547.

Active cases saw a decrease of 3,145 from yesterday's 59,897, as more recoveries are seen under a daily "time-based" reporting. The last time this count was below 60,000 was in March 16.

The Department of Health said too that 12 laboratories did not submit testing results.

- Active cases: 56,752 or 5.1% of the total
- Recoveries: 7,837, bringing the number to 1,038,175
- Deaths: 59, or now 18,620 in total

The coronavirus pandemic in the Philippines

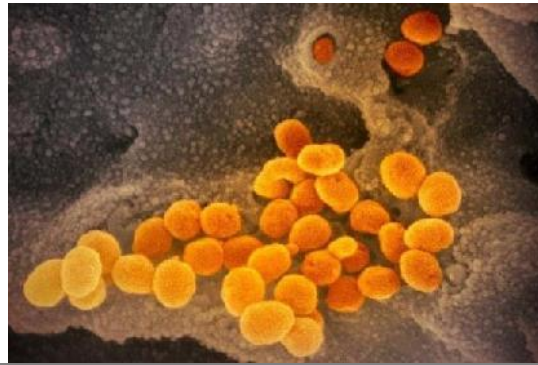


Source: [Department of Health](#) • As of May 11, 2021, 4 p.m.



What's new today?

- Officials reported the country's first two cases of the [B.1.617](#), or the COVID-19 variant detected in India. It has also been classified as a "variant of concern" by the World Health Organization.
- The economy stayed in [recession](#) in the first quarter of 2021, still as a result of the ongoing health crisis. Its gross domestic product contracted 4.2% from January to March, worse than the 0.7% last year.
- Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine was cleared in the United States for [children](#) between 12 to 15 years old. The Philippines received its first supply of the said jab yesterday, but there are no talks so far on this for Filipino children.



This scanning electron microscope image shows SARS-CoV-2 (orange)—also known as 2019-nCoV, the virus that causes COVID-19—isolated from a patient in the U.S., emerging from the surface of cells (gray) cultured in the lab. Image captured and colorized at NIAID's Rocky Mountain Laboratories (RML) in Hamilton, Montana.

NIAID

Philippines detects first cases of COVID-19 variant from India

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - May 11, 2021 - 11:39am

MANILA, Philippines (**Updated 1:14 p.m.**) — The Philippines reported Tuesday its first two cases of the COVID-19 variant first found in India, which has been classified as being “of concern” by the World Health Organization.

Two returning overseas Filipinos tested positive for the B.1.617 variant, the Department of Health said in a briefing.

“They did not come from India nor passed through India,” Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said.

One of the cases is a 37-year-old male who arrived in the Philippines from Oman on April 10, while the other is a 58-year-old male who arrived from the United Arab Emirates on April 19.

The two cases have already recovered from the disease.

The government is prohibiting the entry of travelers from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka until May 14.

Authorities approved last week the recommendation that inbound travelers be tested for COVID-19 on the seventh day of their quarantine.

“It just underscores the fact that we really need to continue intensified implementation of our border control measures: testing at the right time and then completion of quarantine. It’s not just implementation, but unified implementation across all our regions,” said Dr. Marissa Alejandria, member of the DOH technical advisory group.

Variant of concern

On Monday, the WHO classified B.1.617 as a “variant of concern at the global level.” A variant of concern is defined as one with increase in transmissibility, increase in virulence or change in clinical disease presentation, and decrease in effectiveness of public health measures or available diagnostics, vaccines and therapeutics.

The B.1.617 variant, first found in October 2020, carries several mutations, including the L452R and E484K.



The L452R mutation is associated with increased transmissibility and reduced antibody neutralization, which may help the virus get past antibodies. Meanwhile, the E484Q mutation, which is similar to E484K mutation, may also help the virus escape immune response.

“Based on current data, the COVID-19 vaccines remain effective at preventing disease and death in people infected with this variant,” the WHO said in a statement.

India is suffering from a devastating COVID-19 surge, which has overwhelmed the country’s healthcare system. Experts said the alarming growth in infections is accelerated by new variants

Three other variants of COVID-19—those first detected in the United Kingdom, Brazil and South Africa which the WHO has classified as being “of concern”—have also reached the Philippines.

The Philippines has hundreds of cases of the P.3 variant, or the one first detected in the country. The DOH said it is still not identified as a variant of concern.

The country is battling a spike in infections that has raised its COVID-19 caseload to more than 1.1 million, including nearly 18,562 fatalities. — **with report from Agence France-Press**



Global death toll bunsod ng COVID-19, higit 3.31 milyon na

By Angellic Jordan May 11, 2021 - 01:33 PM



Lagpas 3.31 milyon na ang bilang ng mga nasawing COVID-19 patient sa buong mundo.

Batay sa huling tala, umakyat na sa kabuuang 3,317,738 ang nasawi sa iba't ibang bansa bunsod ng nakakahawang sakit.

Nangunguna pa rin sa may pinakamaraming naitalang nasawi dahil sa COVID-19 ang Estados Unidos na may 596,179.

Sumunod na rito ang Brazil na may 423,436 na pumanaw bunsod ng pandemiya.

Nasa 250,025 naman ang death toll sa India habang 219,089 ang napaulat na nasawi sa Mexico.

Narito naman ang naitalang COVID-19 death toll sa iba pang bansa at teritoryo:

- United Kingdom – 127,609
- Italy – 123,031
- Russia – 113,647
- France – 106,684
- Germany – 85,481
- Spain – 78,895
- Colombia – 78,342
- Iran – 75,261
- Poland – 70,034

Samantala, lumabas din sa pinakahuling datos na umakyat na sa kabuuang 159,606,992 ang tinamaan ng nakakahawang sakit sa iba't ibang bansa.

Nasa 138,253,420 naman ang total recoveries ng COVID-19 pandemic sa buong mundo.

Source: <https://radyo.inquirer.net/291682/global-death-toll-bunsod-ng-covid-19-higit-3-31-milyon-na>



Gov't agencies ordered to enforce health protocols in workplaces

By Azer Parrocha [May 11, 2021, 7:48 pm](#)

Office of the President
of the Philippines
Malacañang

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 86

ENSURING COMPLIANCE OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND INSTRUMENTALITIES WITH HEALTH PROTOCOLS APPLICABLE TO THEIR WORKPLACES DURING THE STATE OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

WHEREAS, the government must lead by example in the observance of health protocols issued by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) and relevant agencies, which are applicable to workplaces;

WHEREAS, the IATF Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine in the Philippines, as amended (Omnibus Guidelines), provides rules applicable to workplaces under every form of community quarantine, including government offices;

WHEREAS, the Civil Service Commission (CSC), the Department of Health, and the Department of Labor and Employment issued Joint Memorandum Circular No.

MANILA – Malacañang has ordered the heads of all government agencies and instrumentalities of the executive branch, including government-owned and -controlled corporations, to strictly enforce and monitor compliance with all health protocols in their respective workplaces.

Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea on Tuesday signed Memorandum Circular 86, seeing the need "to monitor compliance with health protocols in the workplaces of all government agencies and instrumentalities, to mitigate and suppress the spread of Covid-19 while ensuring the continuous delivery of public services."

"Accountability for ensuring observance of such protocols shall rest jointly with such heads of agencies and the Committee," the circular read.

Agencies and instrumentalities of the executive branch are enjoined to encourage the active participation of employees' associations in their respective workplaces to ensure prompt communication and wider compliance.

The circular describes the temporary closure of premises as "an extreme measure", reserved for situations where the spread of Covid-19 in the workplace has become overwhelming and unmanageable.

However, the head of an agency or instrumentality considering to temporarily close its main or central office shall submit to the head of the department exercising control or supervision over it, or to which it is attached, a request for clearance to shut down the premises.

The request shall state the proposed duration of the measure and must be supported by verified data and other documentation.

No closure shall be implemented until the clearance is obtained from the head of the department.

The temporary closure of branches, and regional or field offices can be decided by the head of the concerned department, agency, or instrumentality.

In the case of agencies or instrumentalities, they shall notify the head of the department exercising control or supervision over them, or to which they are attached, of the temporary closure and the measures adopted to ensure the continuous and uninterrupted delivery of public service.

Agencies or instrumentalities not under the control or supervision of or attached to any department, as well as departments considering temporary closure of their main or central offices, shall submit their request for clearance to the Office of the President.



Temporary closures merely to conduct disinfection of premises shall not be allowed.

Instead, disinfection should be done after office hours or on weekends.

Violation or failure to implement the circular shall subject the head of the agency and the responsible members of the Safety and Health Committee to administrative sanctions.

The offices of the legislative and judicial branches of government, independent constitutional commissions, and bodies, and local government units are strongly urged to adopt the applicable provisions of this circular.

On Tuesday, the Department of Health (DOH) confirmed that the B.1.617 Covid-19 variant first detected in India has reached the Philippines.

Health authorities also recorded 4,734 new Covid-19 cases, pushing the country's total tally to 1,113,547. *(PNA)*



Pagiging 'airborne' ng COVID-19, may kinalaman ba sa mutation ng virus?

Mayo 11, 2021 10:37pm GMT+08:00
SINULAT NI: JAMIL SANTOS



Inihayag kamakailan ng World Health Organization (WHO) at Center for Disease Control and Prevention ng Amerika na posibleng airborne ang COVID-19. May kinalaman kaya ito sa mutation ng mga COVID variant?

Sa GMA News "Unang Hirit" nitong Martes, ipinaliwanag ni Dr. Rontgene Solante, miyembro ng Department of Science and Technology (DOST) vaccine expert panel, na dalawa ang klase ng transmission ng virus sa tuwing umuubo ang isang tao.

Aniya, ang pagiging airborne ng virus ay kung saan mayroong mga mas maliliit na particle ng virus na natatangay ng hangin, at ang droplet kung saan naroon ang mga mas malalaking particle.

"When you say airborne, since the virus particle is already aerosolized, and a very small particle, it will be more than three feet. In fact up to eight feet, nandoon siya sa air," sabi ni Solante.

"So the chance of you getting the infection, even if you are three feet or four feet from the person who is sneezing or coughing, mas makukuha mo 'yung virus pa rin compared to the droplet," dagdag niya.

Sinabi ni Solante na noon pang magsimula ang pandemya, kinonsidera nang airborne ang COVID-19, at wala itong kinalaman sa mutation ng mga variant.

"Hindi ito related with the variant but it's related with the size of the virus. So hindi naman dahil nag-mutate siya, kaya naging airborne. It's just that we need additional data and evidence na talagang airborne," patuloy ng doktor.

Ayon pa kay Solante, mas mataas ang tiyansa ng isang tao na makuha ang virus kapag nasa loob siya ng isang enclosed space na walang ventilation, dahil maaaring manatili ng dalawa hanggang tatlong oras ang virus sa ere.

Panoorin ang buong talakayan sa naturang usapin.--FRJ, GMA News

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/talakayan/787115/pagiging-airborne-ng-covid-19-may-kinalaman-ba-sa-mutation-ng-virus/story/>



People are seen swimming in a pool at Gubat Sa Ciudad Resort in Caloocan City on May 9, 2021 despite the implementation of MECQ in the NCR+ bubble.

The STAR/Boy Santos

‘Behavior biggest challenge in curbing COVID-19’

[Sheila Crisostomo](#) (The Philippine Star) - May 12, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Fourteen months into the pandemic, people’s fear of COVID-19 seems to have diminished, driving them to become complacent with health protocols, a member of the Department of Health’s Technical Advisory Group (DOH-TAG) said Monday night.

According to TAG member and pediatric infectious disease expert Anna Ong-Lim, people were more afraid of the “unknown” brought about by COVID-19 last year.

“Now, it seems we have become more relaxed since one year had passed and we are still here. People now have more courage and this translates to behavior,” she told ‘The Chiefs’ on One News.

Lim was commenting on how some 500 people went swimming in the Gubat sa Ciudad resort in Caloocan City during Mother’s Day last Sunday, violating health protocols and quarantine restrictions.

The expert noted it is “saddening” that this happened despite the repeated warnings of all sectors on how the virus is transmitted.

“It’s not the swimming that is the problem. It’s the close contact with people in a manner that does not provide you protection. Water does not transmit the virus but it is when you get close to each other,” she maintained.

Lim added behavioral issues are actually challenges for containment of infection.

“In the hierarchy of controls, the behavioral aspect is at the bottom of the inverted pyramid because it is the hardest to control,” she said.

Because of this, she underscored the need to strengthen other prevention strategies that are “independent of behaviors such as environment and engineering controls.”

“We should not rely only on behavior, just like now when people’s patience is running thin and they are no longer afraid to do things they want to do,” she pointed out.



Lim cautioned that what happened at the resort will “backfire on the communities” where the guests come from.

“I don’t think those people come from very far places ... just wait, in about two weeks’ time, cases will surely increase,” she added.

Meanwhile, the DOH has denied accusations that it had purchased P1 billion worth of Remdesivir, an investigational drug for the treatment of COVID-19.

In a statement, DOH clarified that they had initially planned to procure Remdesivir and other investigational drugs, but this did not push through.

The DOH said to be able to procure investigational drugs, a Certificate of Product Registration (CPR), or an emergency use authorization (EUA) is needed.

“As such, the procurement could not proceed as none of the investigational drugs have been granted these requisite regulatory approvals during the time of procurement,” it noted.

Despite this, a number of DOH hospitals, including specialty hospitals in the National Capital Region, Central Luzon and Calabarzon – now the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic – have been issued Compassionate Special Permits (CSP) to use the drug.

A CSP allows the procurement of investigational drugs even without CPR or EUAs. The CSP is a special permit that allows institutions to avail themselves of unregistered drugs and devices and use them under certain conditions.

“Thus, to ensure continued access to promising investigational drugs, especially when experiencing a surge in COVID-19 cases, funds of around P3 million to P5 million were downloaded to these authorized facilities for the procurement of COVID-19 therapeutics,” the DOH added.

According to DOH, the continued use of Remdesivir for COVID-19 patients of certain disposition is “fully supported by a consensus panel of 19 medical societies as reflected in the Philippine COVID-19 Living Recommendations.”

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