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Cimatu wants augmentation teams in fight vs. illegal logging

Published December 17, 2020, 1:02 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu has ordered the creation of augmentation teams to ensure that no illegal logging activities are being conducted in Cagayan Valley, Bicol region, and the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape.



Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu
(NTF AGAINST COVID-19 / MANILA BULLETIN)

Cimatu directed DENR Undersecretary for Special Concerns Edilberto Leonardo to create four special composite teams that would augment the anti-illegal logging operations in those areas.

He said the creation of augmentation teams is a strategic move on the part of the DENR to shift its orientation in forest protection operation more towards prevention by “going hard and swift” against the financiers and operators.

The order is pursuant to Executive Order 23, Series of 2011, which calls for the creation of anti-illegal logging task force from the national to the regional and provincial levels.

Each team is composed of representatives from the DENR, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of National Defense, Armed Forces of the Philippines, and Philippine National Police.

Cimatu said the key to curbing illegal logging is to identify and penalize the financiers and operators, noting that only transporters and buyers in possession of undocumented forest products are oftentimes collared in illegal logging operations.

The DENR chief has recognized the agency’s need to shift from reactive to proactive efforts to absolutely curtail illegal logging activities in the country.

It is high time for the DENR to move away from the traditional model of forest protection operation, which has been “largely measured in terms of apprehended undocumented forest products, and not in terms of standing trees,” he said.

“Ang trophy ay ‘yung nakatayong mga puno, hindi ‘yung mga putol na. (The trophy is the standing trees, not the felled ones),” Cimatu said during a recent meeting of the Build Back Better Task Force that is in charge of the rehabilitation of areas ravaged by recent strong typhoons.

Cimatu, who co-chairs the task force, said the massive flooding that submerged parts of Cagayan Valley, Rizal province and Marikina City during the onslaught of typhoon Ulysses should serve as a “wake-up call” for DENR field offices to recognize their accomplishments in the confiscation of undocumented forest products “not as trophies” but as “manifestations of their failure” as DENR enforcement officers.



“The illegally-gathered forest products should actually be regarded as their (DENR field offices) failure to prevent these trees from being illegally cut,” Cimatu said.

He noted that illegal logging has been referred to as one of the reasons behind the devastating floods due to typhoon Ulysses.

The DENR’s Environment Protection and Enforcement Task Force has reported that some 62,666 board feet of undocumented forest products have been apprehended between the months of June and October.

Most of the apprehended forest products were narra, red and white lauan, bagtikan and bita.

Five conveyances—consisting of two six-wheeler trucks, two closed vans and a motorcycle—were also seized during the period.

Cimatu had earlier said the DENR would not scale-down efforts to enforce forestry laws during the pandemic and its field officers would continue to patrol forests.



Cimatu tasks 4 special teams to go after illegal loggers

Thursday, December 17, 2020 Cory Martinez

DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu has ordered the creation of four special composite teams tasked to augment the anti-illegal logging operations in Cagayan Valley, the Bicol Region and the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape. Cimatu issued the order to DENR Undersecretary for Special Concerns Bernardo Leonardo in pursuant of Executive Order 23, Series of 2011, which calls for the creation of an anti-illegal logging task force from the national to the regional and provincial levels.

The creation of the augmentation teams in those areas, Cimatu said, is a strategic move on the part of the DENR to shift its orientation in forest protection operation more towards prevention by *"going hard and swift"* against the financiers and operators.

Each team is composed of representatives from the DENR, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of National Defense, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and the Philippine National Police.

Cimatu stressed that there is a need to shift from reactive to preventive in their efforts to curb illegal logging by stopping criminals before they cut trees.

He said that it is high time for the agency to move away from the traditional model of forest protection operation, which has been *"largely measured in terms of apprehended undocumented forest products, and not in terms of standing trees."*

"Ang trophy ay 'yung nakatayong mga puno, hindi 'yung mga putol na," Cimatu said during the recent meeting of the Build Back Better Task Force in charge of the rehabilitation of areas ravaged by recent strong typhoons.

Cimatu, who co-chairs the task force, said the massive flooding that submerged parts of Cagayan Valley region, Rizal province and Marikina City during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses should serve as a *"wake-up call for DENR field offices to recognize their accomplishments in the confiscation of undocumented forestproducts "not as trophies" but as "manifestations of their failure" as DENR enforcement officers.*

"The illegally-gathered forest products should actually be regarded as their (DENR field offices) failure to prevent these trees from being illegally cut," Cimatu said, as he noted that illegal logging has been tagged as one of the reasons behind the devastating Ulysses floods.

Cimatu added that the key to curbing illegal logging is to identify and penalize the financiers and operators, noting that only transporters and buyers in possession of undocumented forest products are oftentimes collared in illegal logging operations.

The DENR's Environment Protection and Enforcement Task Force has reported that some 62,666 board feet of undocumented forest products have been apprehended between the months of June and October.

Most of the apprehended forest products were narra, red and white lauan, bagtikan and bita.

Five conveyances—consisting of two six-wheeler trucks, two closed vans and a motorcycle—were also seized during the period.

Cimatu had earlier said the DENR would not scale-down efforts to enforce forestry laws during the pandemic and its field officers would continue to patrol forests.

Source: <https://journal.com.ph/news/provincial/cimatu-tasks-special-teams-after-illegal-loggers/>



CIMATU: DAPAT MAHULI ANG ILLEGAL LOGGERS BAGO MAKAPAGPUTOL MULI NG PUNO



December 18, 2020 @ 12:20 AM 5 hours ago

NAIS ni Secretary Roy A. Cimatu na higit pang maging aktibo ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na mahuli ang mga illegal logger bago pa man makapagputol ng puno sa halip na makakumpiska lang ng mga pinutol nitong kahoy.

Ayon kay Cimatu, napapanahon na upang baguhin ng ahensya ang tinatawag na “traditional model of forest protection” kung saan nakakukumpiska ng mga pinutol na punong kahoy sa halip na mahuli ang mga gumagawa nito bago pa man maputol ang puno.

“Ang trophy ay ‘yung nakatayong mga puno, hindi ‘yung mga putol na,” sabi ni Cimatu sa katatapos na pulong ng Build Back Better Task Force na naatasan sa rehabilitasyon ng mga lugar na sinalanta ng bagyo.

Sinabi ni Cimatu, na nagsisilbing co-chair ng task force, na ang naganap na matinding pagbaha sa mga lugar ng Cagayan Valley region, Rizal province at Marikina City dahil sa pananalasa ng bagyong Ulysses ay magsilbi sanang “wake-up call” for DENR field offices to recognize their accomplishments in the confiscation of undocumented forest products “not as trophies” but as “manifestations of their failure” as DENR enforcement officers.

“The illegally gathered forest products should actually be regarded as their (DENR field offices) failure to prevent these trees from being illegally cut,” saad ni Cimatu at idinagdag pa nito na ang illegal logging ang itinuturong dahilan ng matinding pagbaha dulot ni Ulysses.

Samantala, inatasan naman ni Cimatu si DENR Undersecretary for Special Concerns Bernardo Leonardo na bumuo ng apat na special composite team na magdaragdag sa anti-illegal logging operations sa Cagayan Valley, Bicol Region at sa Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape.

Ayon pa sa environment chief, ang pagbuo ng augmentation teams sa mga nabanggit na lugar ay isang madiskarteng paraan sa bahagi ng DENR upang baguhin ang nakasanayan sa pagprotekta ng kagubatan bagkus ay mas mainam na masawata at maparusahan ang financiers at operators.



Ang kautusan na ito ay base na rin sa Executive Order 23, Series of 2011 na nananawagan sa pagbuo ng anti-illegal logging task force mula sa national hanggang sa regional at provincial levels.

Ang bawat grupo ay bubuuin ng mga kinatawan mula sa DENR, Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of National Defense (DND), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) at Philippine National Police (PNP).

Sinabi pa ni Cimatú, ang susi upang mapigilan ang illegal logging ay ang pagtukoy at pagbibigay ng parusa sa mga financier at operator at idinagdag pa nito na tanging transporters at buyers na may dalang “undocumented forest products” lamang ang kadalasang nahuhuli sa illegal logging operations.

Sa ulat ng DENR’s Environment Protection and Enforcement Task Force, umabot na sa 62,666 board feet na undocumented forest products ang nakumpiska sa pagitan ng buwan ng Hunyo hanggang Oktubre.

Karamihan sa mga nakumpiskang forest products ay narra, pula at puting lauan, bagtikan at bitaog.

Limang sasakyan, kabilang na ang dalawang six-wheeler truck, dalawang closed vans at isang motorsiklo ang nakumpiska sa nabanggit na mga buwan.

Kamakailan ay sinabi ni Cimatú na hindi titigil ang DENR sa pagpapatupad ng forestry laws kahit nasa gitna ng pandemya at patuloy rin ang field officers sa pagpapatrulya sa mga kabundukan.



Loggers must be stopped before they cut trees

posted December 17, 2020 at 11:20 pm

by [Rio N. Araja](#)

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said Thursday illegal loggers must be stopped before they cut trees. He said he wanted the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to shift from reactive to preventive in its efforts to curb illegal logging by stopping criminals before they cut trees.

He said it was high time the agency moved away from the traditional model of forest protection operation, which had been “largely measured in terms of apprehended undocumented forest products, and not in terms of standing trees.”

“Ang trophy ay ‘yung nakatayong mga puno, hindi ‘yung mga putol na,” he said.

Cimatu said the massive flooding that submerged parts of Cagayan Valley, Rizal and Marikina during the onslaught of typhoon “Ulysses” should serve as a “wake-up call” for the DENR’s field offices to recognize their accomplishments in the confiscation of undocumented forest products “not as trophies” but as “manifestations of their failure” as enforcement officers.

“The illegally gathered forest products should actually be regarded as their [DENR field officers’] failure to prevent these trees from being illegally cut,” Cimatu said.

Illegal logging was tagged as one of the reasons behind the devastating “Ulysses” floods, he said.

Cimatu tasked Undersecretary for Special Concerns Bernardo Leonardo to create four special composite teams that would augment anti-illegal logging operations in Cagayan Valley, Bicol and the upper Marikina River basin as protected landscapes.

He says the creation of the augmentation teams in those areas is a strategic move on the part of the DENR to shift its orientation in forest protection operation more towards prevention by “going hard and swift” against the financiers and operators.

The order is pursuant to Executive Order 23 of 2011 calling for the creation of an anti-illegal logging task force from the national to the regional and provincial levels.

Cimatu said the key to curbing illegal logging was to identify and penalize the financiers and operators, noting that only transporters and buyers in possession of undocumented forest products were oftentimes collared in illegal logging operations.



DENR unlikely to issue ECC for Marikina River reclamation — Cimatu

Published December 17, 2020, 5:34 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu has confirmed that the DENR has not issued an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) for the reclamation of a portion of Marikina River.



Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu
(RTVM / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

In a press briefing in Malacañang on Thursday, Cimatu said there should be no reclamation. Even if the company seeks an ECC now, the DENR will unlikely to issue the document due to encroachment violation, he said.

Cimatu also said that the DENR has evaluated the changes in the width of Marikina River to determine if they were due to natural causes or reclamation activities.

Based on the data from the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority, he noted that the width of Marikina River has been reduced by about 30 meters in a span of three decades.

From a width of 90 meters in 1982, Marikina River's width is 60 meters in the actual survey conducted in 2020.

Cimatu said they have already identified the lot numbers in the reclaimed area.

However, he noted that an investigation is ongoing to determine if the lot numbers are tied to BF Corporation, which is allegedly owned by Marikina Rep. Bayani Fernando.

Cimatu said they have already given notices to the lot owners to vacate the reclaimed area. This will allow them to restore the original width of the Marikina River that will prevent a repeat of the massive flooding in Marikina City.

The DENR earlier said they will look into the complaint of the Marikina City government over the alleged reclamation project along Marikina River, which has not secured an ECC from the department.



DENR, hindi mag-iisyu ng ECC para sa Marikina River reclamation

By [RadyoMaN Manila](#) -Dec. 18, 2020 at 5:27am



Kinumpirma ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na hindi sila nag-iisyu ng Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) para sa reclamation ng isang bahagi ng Marikina River.

Ayon kay Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, wala dapat ginagawang reclamation.

Aniya, kahit mag-request pa ang kumpanya ng ECC ay malabo itong ibigay ng ahensya dahil sa encroachment violation.

Nagsagawa ang DENR ng evaluation sa pagbabago sa lapad ng Marikina River para malaman kung ito ay bunga ng natural causes o reclamation activities.

Sa datos ng National Mapping and Resource Information Authority, napansin na ang lapad ng ilog ay nabawasan ng 30 metro sa loob lamang ng tatlong dekada.

Mula sa 90 meters noong 1982, ang lapad na lamang ng Marikina River ay nasa 60 meters mula sa actual survey na isinagawa ngayong taon.

Nagpapatuloy ang imbestigasyon kung ang mga lote ay may koneksyon sa BF Corporation, na pagmamay-ari ni Marikina Representative Bayani Fernando.

Sinabi ni Cimatu na nagbigay na sila ng abiso sa mga may-ari ng lote para bakantehin ang reclaimed area.

Sa pamamagitan nito, maibabalik sa orihinal na lapad ang ilog para maiwasan ang malawakang pagbaha sa lungsod.

Source: https://rmn.ph/denr-hindi-mag-iisyu-ng-ecc-para-sa-marikina-river-reclamation/?fbclid=IwAR2VSCJTBULf4L-TILjgBH416MjHUWXgYYjosn8FedO4VBBAm_OWQ_55OGc



Foreign contractors not allowed to dredge Cagayan River: Cimatu

By Marita Moaje December 17, 2020, 9:06 pm



Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu (Screenshot)

MANILA – No foreign contractors will be allowed to dredge the Cagayan River even for free, Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu said on Thursday.

“We have a ruling that there will be no foreign contractors here, they should be all Filipinos who have a construction company and this is really a part of our river restoration projects all over the country. This is not only in Cagayan River, all rivers that need to be restored, we are allowing contractors to dredge the river for free but they can get their—whatever stunts they will be able to get there – so they can also recover their cost of dredging,” Cimatu said in Palace media briefing.

Cimatu said even the dredging will be done for free, a memorandum of agreement is needed to ensure the work will be done properly by the contractor.

He said governors in Cagayan Valley will sign the agreement with the contractors since the dredging project involves several provinces along the Cagayan River.

Cimatu also said contractors still need to secure clearances and pay the 4 percent excise tax to the government.

“There is a process naman sa pagkuha ng contractor by the governor, ay may proseso po iyan. Mayroong, they have mga clearances, everything. At saka mayroon din naman silang iyong authority to transport nila, they have to get the clearance from the Bureau of Mines (There is a process in getting the contractor by the governor. They have clearances, everything. They also have the authority to transport, and they also have to get the clearance from the Bureau of Mines),” Cimatu said.

Cimatu said dredging is necessary for the heavily silted Cagayan River, the longest and the largest by discharge volume of water in the country, to prevent a repeat of the massive flooding in the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela during successive typhoons last month.

Aside from dredging, Cimatu said there will strict enforcement of the 20-meter easement rule along the river.

“This means that at the bank of the river, there will be no other structures 20 meters on both sides,” he said.

The DENR, he said, will also look closely on the illegal logging especially in Sierra Madre, Cordillera, and Caraballo mountain.

“We will be planting bamboo. So for the rest of the river, we will be planting around the bank of the river, 20 meters wide from the bank of the river. So these are our interventions. Another major is Magapit Narrow to make the water free-flowing,” Cimatu said. (PNA)

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1125090>



Dayuhang contractor tablado sa dredging project

By Abante News Online — Last updated Dec 17, 2020

NEWS



Hindi papayagan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang mga dayuhang contractor sa mga gagawing dredging operation sa Cagayan river at sa lahat ng mga ilog sa bansa.

Ito ang nilinaw ni DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu sa Malacañang matapos aprubahan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang rehabilitasyon ng Cagayan Valley River at ilog sa Marikina City sa ilalim ng Task Force Build Back Better.

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Sinabi ni Cimatu na pawang Filipino contractors lamang ang papayagan maghukay alinsunod sa batas pangkalikasan.

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“We have a ruling that walang foreign contractors po rit, all Filipinos po ito na may construction compamy and this is really a part of our river restoration projects all over the country,” ani Cimatu.

Libre aniya ang maghukay sa mga ilog at ano mang makukuha o mapapakinabangan ng mga contractor ay hindi na pakikialaman ng gobyerno.

Matatandaang ang Cagayan at Marikina City ang nakaranas ng matinding pagbaha noong nakalipas na buwan matapos umapaw ang kanilang ilog dahil masyado ng mababaw ang mga ito kaya

kinakailangan muling hukayin para malutas ang malubhang pagbaha sa tuwing may bagyo o malakas na pag-ulan.(Aileen Taliping

DENR to Marikina Rep. Fernando: Explain 'encroachment' in Marikina River

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Dec 17, 2020 4:03:39 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, December 17) — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is planning to crack down on the reclamation project of Marikina Rep. Bayani Fernando that encroached a portion of the Marikina River which recently contributed to massive flooding in the city.

During a press briefing in Malacañang on Thursday, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu confirmed that Fernando's BF Corporation has not secured an environmental compliance certificate for his project along Marikina River, a similar issue that previously prompted the city mayor, Marcelino Teodoro, to file a complaint against the congressman's firm.

"Well, talagang hindi mabibigyan ng ECC kasi encroaching sa river eh. Definitely walang ECC na ibibigay namin iyan. Violation na talaga iyon eh. So, wala talagang ECC iyan," Cimatu said.

[Translation: That project will have unlikely secured an ECC because it is encroaching the river. Definitely, we wouldn't have given them an ECC. It was really a violation. So there is no ECC there.]

He added that Fernando has yet to provide them an explanation on the matter.

"We will ask him (Rep. Fernando) to explain and after that, kung talagang violation iyong ginawa niya magself demolish na lang sila diyan (if it really was a violation, then they should self-demolish there). Otherwise, we will be the one to demolish at their cost."

Cimatu then quickly clarified that investigation is still ongoing and they are still confirming whether the following lot details and coverage in Marikina River are solely tied to BF Corp:

- Lot 4, PCS-13-000341 (2,856 square meters)
- Lot 55 A-B PCS-13-001212 (5,364 square meters)
- Lot 7, PCS-13-000341 (4,189 square meters)
- Lot 2-B, PSD-00-033588 (1,787 square meters)
- Some 3,762 square meters as portion of the river

"We will check and in due time, malalaman natin (we will eventually know)," he said.

Teodoro previously said that upon consultation with the DENR, the BF Corp's certificate was not approved due to "lacking requirements." Teodoro also slammed the "conflict of interest" between a public official's functions and his project to build a private road that will only benefit his firm.



In a television interview last month, Fernando denied ties to the encroachment and claimed that the dumping was part of the Department of Public Works and Highway's road dike project. The DPWH, on the other hand, said that it does not have any reclamation project in the area.

Hundreds of residents were forced to flee their homes when Marikina River reached 22 meters [at the height of Typhoon Ulysses](#) (international name: Vamco) on November 12, just one meter below the 23 meters reached when Tropical storm Ondoy (international name: Ketsana) battered the country 11 years ago.

Both cyclones left Marikina City submerged in floodwaters for days, and even prompted the local government to deploy boats to rescue the ones who were stranded.



DENR taps students in C. Luzon as environment ambassadors

By Zorayda Tecson December 17, 2020, 8:35 pm



CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga – Selected students in Central Luzon will play vital roles in the protection and conservation of the environment and natural resources in the region.

Donaver Guevarra, chief of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Regional Public Affairs, said on Thursday a total of 14 senior high school and college students or two students per province from various schools and state universities in the region were selected by the DENR to become environment and natural resources (ENR) ambassadors.

“The DENR recognizes the vital role of our youth and student in protecting our environment, and the ENR ambassador project is the tool to transform the potential of our student in promoting the value of our ecosystems including plants and animals”, he said in a statement.

He added that the end goal of the project is to change the behavior of the public or communities toward the protection and conservation of the environment and natural resources and an opportunity to show the youth/student environmental advocacies.

“Our ENR ambassadors shall serve as force multiplier in changing the behavior of the people towards environmental stewardship. They will serve as role models in biodiversity protection and conservation and may implement environmental activities in partnership with the DENR,” Guevarra said.

He said a memorandum of agreement (MOA) was also forged by and between the DENR through the Provincial and Community Environment and Natural Resources Offices and the schools of the selected ENR ambassadors to strengthen the implementation of the project.

He said that each ENR ambassador was provided with communication gadgets such as tablets and pocket Wi-fi to be used in the information, education, and communication activities.

He added that virtual training on ecological solid waste management and global warming and climate change was also conducted by the DENR as a fresh start for the ambassadors to increase their knowledge on important environmental issues. (PNA)



DENR taps students, youth as environment ambassadors

[IAN OCAMPO FLORA](#)

December 17, 2020

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is placing its hopes on the participation of students and youth in the protection and conservation of environment and natural resources in Central Luzon.

The DENR launched Thursday, December 17, the environment and natural resources ambassador's project to actively involve the younger sector in environmental protection.

According to Donaver Guevarra, chief of the DENR Regional Public Affairs Office, a total of 14 senior high school and college students or two students per province from various schools and state universities in the region were selected by the DENR as ENR Ambassadors.

"The DENR recognizes the vital role of our youth and student in protecting our environment, and the ENR ambassador project is the tool to transform the potential of our student in promoting the value of our ecosystems including plants and animals," he said.

He said the end-goal of the project is to change the behavior of the public or communities toward the protection and conservation of the environment and natural resources and an opportunity to show their [youth/student] environmental advocacies.

"Our ENR ambassadors shall serve as force multiplier in changing the behavior of the people towards environmental stewardship. They will serve as role model in biodiversity protection and conservation and may implement environmental activities in partnership with the DENR," Guevarra added.

A memorandum of agreement (MOA) was also forged by and between the DENR through the Provincial and Community Environment and Natural Resources Offices (Penro and Cenro) and the schools of the selected ENR ambassadors to strengthen the implementation of the project.

The DENR has also provided each ENR ambassador with communication gadgets (tablets and pocket Wi-Fi) that will be used in the information, education, and communication (IEC) activities.

Virtual training on ecological solid waste management and global warming and climate change was also conducted by the DENR as a fresh start for the ambassadors to increase their knowledge on important environmental issues.



Pampanga cops nab bird hunters

posted December 17, 2020 at 06:10 pm

by [Jess Malabanan](#)

Candaba, Pampanga—Six bird hunting enthusiasts were hauled to jail after they were caught in the act shooting to death two great egrets at the Candaba Swamp in Barangay Paligui here Thursday.

Police Lt. Colonel Efren David Jr., chief of Candaba police, identified the suspects as Jaime Buenaventura, Pablo Cunanan, Jose Carlo Dizon, Michael Gamos, Vicente Pangan and Rodrigo Canlas, all from Barangay San Joaquin in Sta. Ana, Pampanga.

David said the suspects are known bird hunters frequenting the Candaba Swamp, a 32,000-hectare haven of migratory birds coming from Asia and other parts of the globe.

Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office chief Laudemir Salac said residents in the community tipped-off the police on the presence of bird hunters leading to the arrest of the suspects and confiscation of hunting rifles and wounded birds.

The local government unit here and PENRO declared Candaba Swamp as protected area. Bird hunters have been prohibited there. Only bird watchers and photographers could get inside the protected zone.

“It is very clear that killing and destroying of wildlife species is illegal and punishable against our wildlife law. We will not tolerate this incident even during this pandemic to protect our migratory birds and other wildlife species since they are vital components of our environment,” said Salac.

He said that protection and conservation of wildlife including birds is particularly important to maintain a well-balanced ecosystem.

David said that four units of oxygen-powered air rifles, three pieces of carbon dioxide (CO2) tank, 37 pieces of air gun pellets and two species of dead Great egrets were seized from the suspects.

The suspects are now under the custody of the Candaba PNP while criminal charges are being prepared for violation of Section 27 of Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources and Conservation and Protection Act of 2001, and Provincial Ordinance No. 756 in relation to Republic Act 11332 or the Mandatory Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Health Events of Public Health Concern Act of 2018, for not wearing a face mask.

If found guilty, the suspects may be imprisoned for a maximum of six months and be fine with P100,000. Salac appealed to the public to report to the nearest DENR Office in their area any illegal hunting and wildlife trade or contact the DENR hotline at 09453685303.

Great egret also known as *Ardea alba* are among migratory bird species in the Candaba swamp which is also found in Africa, America, and southern Europe.

Candaba swamp has been identified as one of the three “most important wetlands” in the Philippines and has consistently been listed in the Asian Bird Map is an important wintering area for migratory birds.

DENR records show that there are 54 species of resident birds and 68 migratory birds recorded in Candaba wetlands since 1940. Last year, more than 2,000 birds were recorded during the Asian Waterbirds Census.

Migratory birds from as far as China, Korea, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand prefer the Candaba Swamp as a wintering refuge, feeding, and breeding in the area from October to March to escape the cold winter.

Ilang migratory birds sa Pampanga pinagbabaril; 6 tiklo

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Dec 18 2020 04:22 AM



Nakuha mula sa isang grupong sangkot sa illegal hunting ang isang great egret na nabaril nila umano sa bayan ng Candaba, Pampanga. *Kuha ng DENR-PENRO Pampanga*

Inaresto ng pulisya at ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang isang grupo sa pamamiril umano ng migratory birds sa bayan ng Candaba, Pampanga nitong Huwebes.

Ayon sa pulisya, 2 great egret ang napatay ng grupo na kinabibilangan ng 6 na suspek, sa kanilang illegal hunting umano sa Barangay Paligui.

Nakilala ang mga inaresto na sina Jaime Buenaventura, Pablo Cunanan, Jose Carlo Dizon, Michael Gamos, at Vicente Pangan Rodrigo Canlas.

Mula sa katabing bayan ng Santa Ana umano ang mga nahuli.

Nakuha sa mga nahuli ang 4 na unit ng air ripple, 3 carbon dioxide (CO2) tank, 37 air gun pellets at ang 2 patay na great egret.

Kinasuhan na ng violation of Section 27 of Republic Act 9147 (Wildlife Resources and Conservation and Protection Act of 2001), at Provincial Ordinance No. 756 in relation to Republic Act 11332 (Mandatory Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Health Events of Public Health Concern Act of 2018) dahil wala silang suot na face masks.

Kung mapatunayang nagkasala ang mga suspek, maaari silang makulong hanggang 6 na buwan at multahan ng P100,000.

Apela ng DENR-PENRO Pampanga, ireport agad sa kanilang hotline na +63945-368-5303 ang anumang panghuhuli, pagbili o pagbebenta ng wildlife.

Ayon sa DENR, ang great egret na may scientific name na ardea alba, o mas kilala sa tawag na common egret, ay mga migratory birds na madalas makita sa Candaba swamp.

Makikita rin ang mga ito sa Africa, America, at southern Europe.

Isa ang Candaba swamp sa 3 “most important wetlands” sa bansa at laging nasa listahan ng Asian Bird Map bilang important wintering area ng mga migratory birds.

Sa tala ng DENR, nasa 54 species ng resident birds at 68 migratory birds ang makikita sa Candaba wetlands mula taong 1940. Noong 2019, higit 2,000 birds ang naitala ng Asian Waterbirds Census.--Ulat ni Gracie Rutao

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/12/18/20/ilang-migratory-birds-sa-pampanga-pinagbabaril-6-tiklo>



Senate OKs measure on granting land titles to farmers

By Bernadette E. Tamayo

December 17, 2020

THE Senate has passed a bill that simplifies the procedure and requirements in granting land titles to help farmers secure land certificates.

The senators approved on third and final reading Senate Bill (SB) 1931 which aims to disregard the Dec. 31, 2020 deadline for the filing of application of agricultural free patents.

SB 1931 also synchronizes and shortens the period of possession required for perfection of imperfect titles from 74 years to 30 years.

President Rodrigo Duterte on December 15 certified its passage as urgent “to allow the continuous titling of public alienable and disposable agricultural lands beyond Dec. 31, 2020 and ultimately preserve the security of tenure of land claimants and farmers.

“The certification authorized the Senate to approve SB 1931 on second and third reading on the same day, allowing for faster passage of the measure.

The bill addresses the difficulties encountered in proving ownership by removing the need for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary’s certification among others.

Sen. Richard Gordon, author of SB 1931, said “If no law is passed to extend or remove the period of application, no new agricultural free patent will be issued by DENR and poor rural farmers may not be able to title their lands.

He added, “If we allow our farmers to have property rights by securing land titles, we are giving them an opportunity to improve their lives as they can use land as collateral in order to borrow more capital and further improve their lot.”

“We want to manifest that we have reviewed the proposed measure. We find it necessary and urgent, and we have no questions and interpellations,” said Senate Minority Floor Leader Franklin Drilon.



Gordon lauds colleagues for passing bill on land titling

December 17, 2020, 6:48 pm



Senator Richard Gordon (File photo)

MANILA – Senator Richard Gordon thanked his fellow senators for passing his proposed bill simplifying the procedure and requirements in granting land titles to help rural farmers easily secure land certificates.

On December 15, President Rodrigo Duterte certified Senate Bill No. 1931 as urgent “to allow the continuous titling of public alienable and disposable agricultural lands beyond December 31, 2020 and ultimately preserve the security of tenure of land claimants and farmers.”

The certification authorized the Senate to approve the bill on second and third reading on the same day, allowing for faster passage of the measure last Tuesday.

“We want to manifest that we have reviewed the proposed measure. We find it necessary and urgent, and we have no questions and interpellations,” said Senate Minority Floor Leader Franklin Drilon, who was among those who expressed intention of co-authoring the bill.

Gordon also thanked the support of the Foundation for Economic Freedom (FEF) that advocates for tenure security, agricultural productivity and well-defined property rights.

On the other hand, FEF president Calixto Chikiamco conveyed his appreciation to Gordon via text message.

“Thank you so much. The country salutes you for another landmark law,” he said.

Senate Bill No. 1931 aims to address the difficulties encountered in proving ownership since 1945 by removing the need for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary’s certification and the barriers of proving ownership.

It also synchronizes and shortens the period of possession required for the perfection of imperfect titles from 74 years to 30 years.

Another objective of the bill is to disregard the deadline set on Dec. 31, 2020 for the filing of application of agricultural free patents.

“If no law is passed to extend or remove the period of application, no new agricultural free patent will be issued by DENR and poor rural farmers may not be able to title their lands. If we allow our farmers to have property rights by securing land titles, we are giving them an opportunity to improve their lives as they can use th



Time to replenish Manila Bay dolomite beach

December 17, 2020 1 min read

Workers and heavy equipment are spotted on Thursday morning while replenishing the white sand at Manila Bay dolomite beach while a barge full of sand is docked nearby.

The controversial dolomite beach was depleted following the series of typhoons that hit Metro Manila in the last two months, causing the white sands to wash out to the sea. (FC/MTVN)

MORES HERAMIS / BANJAMIN CUARESMA

Source: https://maharlika.tv/2020/12/17/time-to-replenish-manila-bay-dolomite-beach/?fbclid=IwAR0lvPmzD6-5Co_9MdHxy7iAqjFZf76e5CBdA4RtRU0ddBO1Fn0ESP4XJZ8



Bay view

posted December 17, 2020 at 11:58 pm

by [Norman Cruz](#)



The controversial Manila Bay's Dolomite Beach gets reworked on Thursday December 17, 2020. DENR's Manila Bay beautification project aims to restore the bay's former glory as a top tourist draw.



#BattleForManilaBay #BeachNourishment

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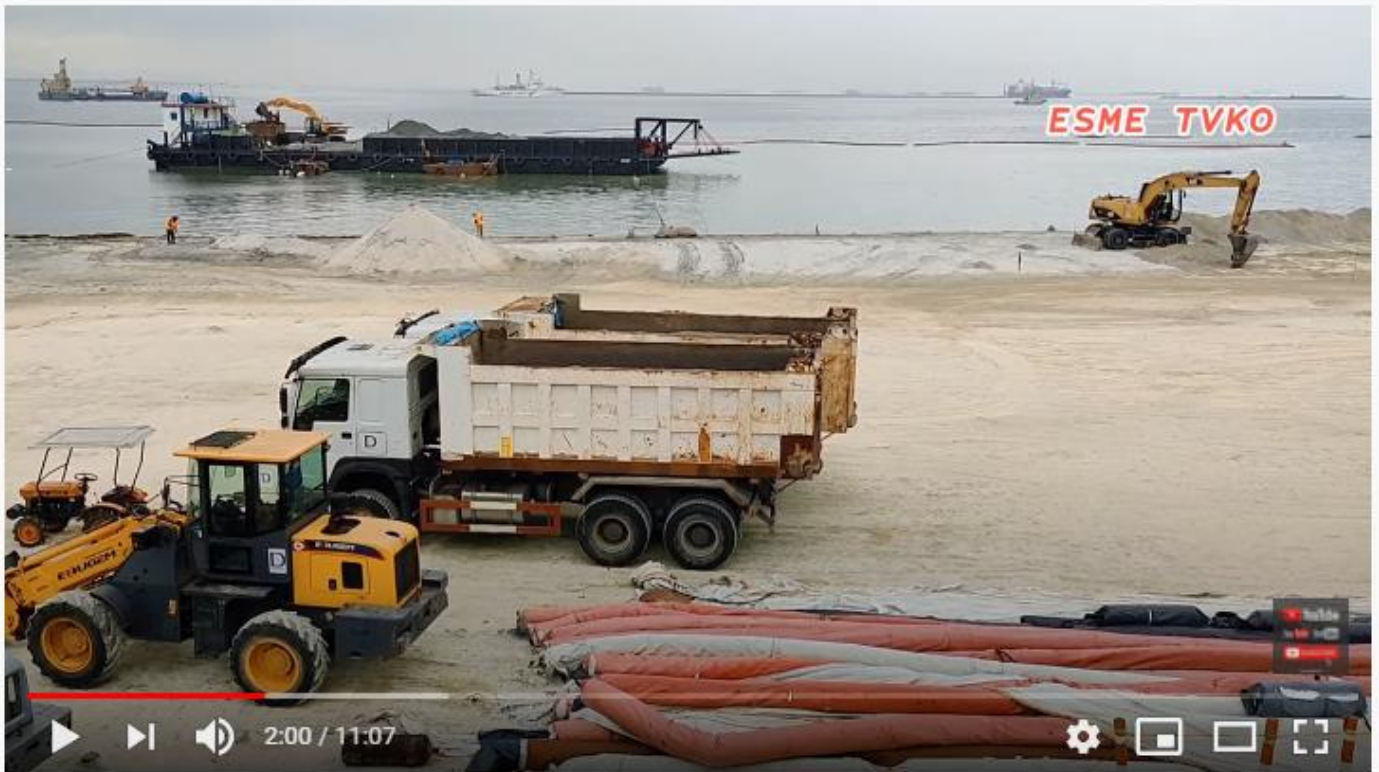
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manila bay phase 2 is now ongoing,dredging continue,sea water now are clean, birds are flucking to manila bay,thanks to government for thier effort

Source:

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MANILA BAY

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Bulacan airport project sued over environment issues; SMC vows to address concerns

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Dec 15, 2020 9:46:31 PM



San Miguel Corporation said it has begun a project to plant thousands of mangroves in a coastal area in Hagonoy, Bulacan. (FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, December 15) — A marine conservation group filed a writ of kalikasan case on Tuesday, saying San Miguel Corporation's ₱734-billion airport project in Bulacan will affect Manila Bay's marine life and migratory bird population.

Oceana Philippines went to the Supreme Court to file the petition that was signed by its vice president Gloria Estenzo Ramos, Bulakan town fishermen Rodel Alvarez and Teodoro Bacon, as well as labor group Aniban ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (AMA) and San Jose del Monte Archbishop Roger Martinez.

A writ of kalikasan is a legal remedy available to any person who feels that their constitutional right to a balanced and healthful ecology has been violated or could be violated.

The petition enumerated the multiple dangers of building the 2,500-hectare airport city. It was waged against San Miguel Aerocity, Inc., its contractor Silvertides Holdings Corp. and the Departments of Transportation, and Environment and Natural Resources.

One of the main concerns cited was the project's adverse effects on Manila Bay's biological diversity. The bay serves as a habitat for marine life, especially for sardines, said Jun Viterbo, Oceana's defense counsel. It is also home to crustaceans and shrimp which makes it a lucrative fishing point for residents. AMA Chairperson Renato dela Cruz said the airport will trample 18 species of marine animals if it pushes through.

"It's not a dead area for fish," said Viterbo in a press briefing. "It's actually a very very profitable area."

Thousands of birds also often flock to the bay as part of its migration route, according to Mike Lu, president of the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines.

Lu, who mentioned that his group has worked with environment officials for bird sightings, pointed out that everyday, around 25,000 birds visit Barangay Bambang, by the airport site. The presence of planes in the area could also increase the number of bird strikes, or accidents where birds collide with airplane engines.

SMC's airport project, which was proposed to decongest the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, is expected to feature four parallel runways and a world-class terminal, among other things, and can accommodate up to 100 million passengers annually.

SMC's response

SMC President and COO Ramon Ang said the company will address the issues in the petition once they get a copy of it. He maintained, however, that they have already taken steps to ensure the project will be built sustainably.



These initiatives include mangrove tree-planting after environment advocates in the past raised that the project will severely impact mangroves in coastal communities that are needed to cushion the effects of storm surges and other disasters.

The company earlier vowed to plant 200,000 mangroves in the province and around Central Luzon, which already began in [July](#).

"We have also commissioned a foreign firm to conduct a comprehensive and independent study of all possible environment impacts, to ensure these will be taken into consideration and addressed in the development stage," said Ang in a statement.

SMC also questioned the involvement of petitioners Alvarez and Bacon, claiming that the two informed the company that they were not aware they were cited in the case. It also revealed that Bacon in particular, received financial help from the conglomerate for a new home, with access to water and electricity.

However, in the press conference, Oceana showed a recent video of the two fishermen attesting that they were against SMC's airport project.

"Kaya kami nasama sa kaso na 'to, gusto naming ipaglaban din 'yung aming hanapbuhay na naapektuhan ng proyekto na 'yan," said Bacon in the video. "Sabi nila noong una, pwede pa kami maghanapbuhay dun. Ngayon pinagbabawalan na kami."

[Translation: We joined this case because we want to fight for the source of our livelihood that was affected by that project. They said at first we could still work there, but now we are being prevented from doing so.]

CNN Philippines Digital Producer Janine Peralta contributed to this report.



Pangasinan LGU turns 64K kilos of plastics into goods

December 17, 2020 2 min read

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan – The provincial government of Pangasinan has collected some 64,464 kilograms of plastic wastes as of Wednesday, which was replaced with goods through its “Kalinisan Karaban” project.

In an interview on Thursday, General Services Office chief Evan Gladish Domalanta said amid the pandemic, they continued the program and collected plastic wastes from residents of the different towns and cities of the province and in turn, gave out over PHP1.2 million worth of groceries.

She said the top three municipalities that contributed plastic wastes are Bautista with 16,235 kilograms (kg), Balungao with 10,497 kg, and Bugallon with 4,510 kg.

Domalanta said there were 3,637 bricks produced from the plastic wastes collected since the program started in 2019.

Pangasinenses exchanged their plastic wastes for different goods, including cellphone load, school supplies, and groceries through the program but this year, they focused on giving out groceries.

The Kalinisan Karaban was initiated by Governor Amado Espino III aimed at clearing the streets of Pangasinan of plastic wastes and encouraging the love for the environment through segregation, especially among the children.

Domalanta said the Kalinisan Karaban store truck, which started going around the province last year, operates in a designated place where residents can bring their segregated wastes, such as plastic containers, shampoo sachets, sando bags, and candy wrappers, which will be weighed and exchanged with goods.

“Every kilo of plastic wastes is equivalent to PHP15, which they could use to buy goods from our store truck,” she said.

The plastic wastes, she added, should be separated from wrappers and sando bags.

Domalanta said the project was institutionalized through Provincial Ordinance 32-2019 by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) on March 4 last year.



“It is the aim of the province to institutionalize public participation in the implementation of the Kalinisan Karaban program through the promotion of individual responsibility towards reusing, reducing, and recycling of household plastic wastes,” Provincial Ordinance 32-2019 stated.

Upon its institutionalization, funding worth PHP1.5 million was provided for the project. **(PNA)**



Mayor issues “quarry ban” vs capitol trucks

Thursday, December 17, 2020 Steve A. Gosuico

PEÑARANDA, Nueva Ecija – *“No to illegal quarrying.”*

Mayor Joselito “Lito” Ramos yesterday issued this order as he imposed a “quarry ban” in this town, stressing that need for its immediate implementation amid urgent calls from his constituents in two barangays here who were adversely affected by the alleged desilting and dredging operations earlier being done at the Penaranda river bed.

In an interview with reporters at his residence, Ramos said the quarry ban also covers dump trucks and other heavy equipment serviced or owned by the provincial government found entering the town to haul mineral aggregates from the river in Bgys. San Josef and Callos.

“Ang posisyon ng Penaranda ay wala nang quarry dito, bawal silang humakot kahit mayroon pa silang permit na kung anu-ano na dala,” said the mayor, referring to the trucks of the provincial capitol. In bowing to his constituents’ pleas, Ramos cited the need to immediately put to a halt quarrying operations to protect the interest of his people and the local government unit.

Ramos cited an August 2019 municipal ordinance banning the extraction of quarry resources from the riverbanks without the required permission from the authorized agencies and providing the penalties thereof.

Also affected by continued quarrying activities are the town’s two old bridges — the San Josef and Callos bridges, said municipal administrator Benjamin Abes Jr.

Abes cited a recent inspection report of the 2nd Engineering District of the Nueva Ecija-Department of Public Works and Highways headed by district engineer Ricardo M. Puno which stated that the two bridges already need to be replaced as they are starting to show signs of deterioration.

Ramos also said that because the municipal government’s application for the issuance of a gratuitous permit remains pending with the provincial government until now, they were constrained to haul quarry materials needed for the construction of a seven-kilometer-long farm-to-market road project in Bgys. Sinasajan to Las Pinas from nearby towns such as San Leonardo and Gapan City.

“Kami nga, ang pamilya namin ay hardware ang negosyo, iyung kapatid ko sa labas pa kami ng Penaranda bumibili ng pang-graba at pang-quarry, kaya mas mahal ang quarry dito sa amin eh,” said Ramos.

The former vice mayor-turned-local chief executive’s statements came less than a week after a two-day standoff occurred between the LGU and the provincial capitol when the latter’s trucks loaded with concrete aggregates were stalled and prevented from leaving the town due to the non-presentation of the required permits.



WWF, GCash complete reforestation of Ipo watershed damaged portions

Published December 16, 2020, 5:03 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

International environmental organization World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines has reported the completion of the reforestation of 75 hectares of the “damaged” portions of Ipo Watershed in Bulacan last month.

WWF-Philippines, in partnership with GCash, opted to push through with the reforestation work, citing the importance of continuing with the conservation of the watershed amid the coronavirus pandemic.

They also noted the recent water shortages caused by siltation in Ipo Dam that further stressed the need to protect and rehabilitate the crucial, but damaged, watershed.

“The pandemic has shown how taking care of nature is actually about taking care of ourselves, and others on this planet. The rest of the world may have stopped, but those who take care of our environment did not,” WWF-Philippines project manager Paolo Pagaduan said.

The Forests for Water program, which Pagaduan oversees, has sought the rehabilitation of Ipo Watershed since 2016.

With their partners, WWF-Philippines works to secure the natural integrity of the watershed. As WWF-Philippines and GCash recognized the severity of the pandemic, they made sure that the health of volunteers and the communities of Ipo Watershed were protected during the conservation work.

The staff in charge of the reforestation work have since stayed within the watershed since the start of the pandemic to reduce chances of the disease reaching the local communities.

The seedlings used for reforestation were also sourced from a nursery within the Ipo Watershed. The nursery, which was established at the end of 2019, supplies seedlings from native trees already located within the watershed.

“We’re aware of the risks brought about by the pandemic, but our conservation work in Ipo Watershed is of utmost importance. With the locals of Ipo Watershed, we found newer, safer ways to keep on rehabilitating the watershed throughout the year,” Pagaduan said.

GCash has supported the reforestation and rehabilitation of Ipo Watershed since 2018. Through GCash Forest, GCash aims to plant 365,000 seedlings across the country, 120,000 of which have been committed to Ipo Watershed.

“Responding to the threats of climate change calls for innovative solutions and more collaborations between the public and private sectors. GCash Forest is a true testament to this collaboration and is promising in its utilization of technology to help restore our forests, increase awareness on our tree species, and secure our country’s natural resources for future generations,” GCash head of Public Affairs and Corporate Social Responsibility Mabel Niala said.

WWF-Philippines and GCash expressed their commitment to protect the country’s ecosystems to allow Filipinos to prepare for the current climate crisis.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/12/16/wwf-gcash-complete-reforestation-of-ipo-watershed-damaged-portions/>



PH Covid-19 recoveries reach almost 420K

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor December 17, 2020, 5:14 pm



MANILA – With 633 new recovered cases reported on Thursday, the overall tally of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) recoveries nationwide climbed to 419,902.

According to the Department of Health (DOH), the figure is equivalent to a 92.4-percent recovery rate among those who contracted the disease nationwide.

There are 1,470 new confirmed cases, bringing the total number of active cases to 25,695.

Of the active cases, about 84.8 percent are mild, 6.9 percent are asymptomatic, 5.4 percent are severe, 0.30 are moderate, and 5.4 percent are in critical condition.

Most of the newly announced cases were from Quezon City with 74, Rizal with 64, the City of Makati with 58, Davao City with 55, and Quezon with 46 infections.

DOH data released on Dec. 16 showed that about 1,582 or 6.3 percent out of the 25,106 tested turned positive for Covid-19.

The DOH also logged 17 deaths on Tuesday, pushing the death toll to 8,850.

"About 11 duplicates were removed from the total case count, and of these, ten recovered cases and a death have been removed. Moreover, three cases previously tagged as recovered were reclassified as deaths," it said.

The department also reported that it has a total bed capacity of 21,300 dedicated to Covid-19 patients.

Available are about 59 percent of 1,900 intensive care unit beds; 64 percent of 13,500 isolation beds; and 74 percent of 5,900 ward beds.

About 80 percent of 2,000 ventilators are available for patients' use.

The DOH reminded the public to avoid superspreader events this holiday season and to limit the celebration of the holidays with immediate family members.

It also advised the public to choose staycation over going out on trips, to have limited time outdoors, and to always observe minimum public health standards. (PNA)

PRRD reminds Filipinos to follow health protocols during the holidays

December 17, 2020



Photo courtesy of Arman Baylon/PCOO

A week before Christmas, President Rodrigo R. Duterte reminded the public to comply with the minimum health protocols.

“Kayong mga kababayan ko, sumunod ho kayo sa mga patakaran ng gobyerno (My fellow citizens, obey the rules set by the government). We have suffered enough and to suffer more is not acceptable anymore.”

While the president Duterte acknowledged that celebrations are part of the Filipino culture during the holiday season, he urged everyone must remain calm, pray, and delay their shopping this year to prevent the further spread of the Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19).

Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea also appealed to the critics of the government on the vaccine procurement to wait. He added that the Philippines’ system against the pandemic is one of the best.

In a press briefing, Thursday, Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque reiterated the advice to follow health protocols especially the wearing of face masks and face shields. He warned that failure to comply may result to a surge in the number of COVID-19 cases and an imposition of stricter quarantine measures.

Source: <https://ptvnews.ph/prrd-reminds-filipinos-to-follow-health-protocols-during-the-holidays/>



Face shield over face mask now required

By ... -December 18, 2020

THE government is so afraid of a resurgence in cases of COVID-19 that it has now mandated that anybody going out of the house should wear a face shield over the ubiquitous face mask.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said the face shield requirement is no longer a big deal because masks and face shields are available in large quantities and at a low price.

He explained that while the use of face shield had been required only in specific places like malls or while riding public transportation, the expected increase in movement and gathering of people this holiday season increase the probability of the nation having another surge in COVID-19 infections. Roque even cited studies that showed the chances of avoiding viral infections improve due to the wearing of face masks and face shields in tandem.

“Residents will most likely invoke lame alibis whenever policemen or barangay tanods require them to follow the rules: “Patawarin mo na, Pasko naman, eh.””

The directive to the public from the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) is terse and clear: All persons are mandated to wear full-coverage face shields together with face masks, earloop masks, indigenous reusable or do-it-yourself masks, or other protective equipment.

The protocol on wearing masks and shields may be effective but whatever advantages this brings will instantly be negated if the IATF and its enforcement arm, the police and local government officials, are lax in implementing the ban on Christmas parties and other gatherings this season.

For sure, this ban on family gatherings will be honored more in the breach than in the observance, as even barangay officials will find it difficult to instill discipline among their constituents. Blame it on culture, religion and good, old hardheadedness. Residents will most likely invoke lame alibis whenever policemen or barangay tanods require them to follow the rules: “Patawarin mo na, Pasko naman, eh.” (Let them be, anyway it’s Christmas.)

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said he will not get tired of reminding the people about the risks of COVID-19, and the need to follow the most basic health protocols to keep everyone safe.

We agree with him that this is needed, even as the government grapples with all the problems of ordering and buying the vaccine from manufacturers abroad, amid the heckling from some senators and do-gooders.

Source: https://malaya.com.ph/index.php/news_opinion/face-shield-over-face-mask-now-required/

Pilipinas hindi nakakuha ng katiyakan para sa 10 million doses ng Pfizer vaccine – Duque

By COVID-19 vaccine December 17, 2020 - 12:45 PM



Hindi nakakuha ng katiyakan ang Pilipinas mula sa US pharmaceutical firm na Pfizer para pagsu-suplay ng 10 doses ng COVID-19 vaccine.

Sinabi ito ni Health Secretary Francisco Duque III matapos mapirmahan ang Confidential Disclosure Agreement.

Ginawa ni Duque ang pahayag matapos sabihin ni Senator Panfilo Lacson na nabigo si Duque na isumite ang documentary requirements para sa pagde-deliver ng 10 million doses ng COVID-19 vaccine mula sa Pfizer.

Ayon kay Duque walang napag-usapan tiyak na dami ng suplay.

Una nang itinanggi ni Duque na may nagpabaya kaya ang suplay ng bakuna na dapat para sa Pilipinas ay napunta na sa Singapore.

Dona Dominguez-Cargullo



4K ARAW-ARAW SA MM SA COVID-19; 'WAG MAGMADALI SA BAKUNA



December 18, 2020 @ 12:30 AM 5 hours ago

MAY mga nag-aaway-away na opisyal ng ating pamahalaan ukol sa naunsiyami umanong dapat maaga sanang pagbili natin ng bakuna laban sa COVID-19 mula sa kompanyang Pfizer/bioNTech.

Anoman ang katotohanan ukol sa posibleng kapabayaang ng mga namamahala sa pagbili o kaya'y tangkang pagkikbak dito kaya naunsiyami, nanatiling tsismisan lang ito lahat hangga't walang makapaglalabas ng mga solidong ebidensya sa mga paratang.

Pero alam ba ninyong maaaring blessing pa rin ang kawalan pa natin ng bakuna mula sa Pfizer/bioNTech?

ANG MGA PROBLEMA

Alam ba ninyo ang nagaganap ukol sa bakuna ng Pfizer/bioNTech?

Una, biglang pumreno ang Pfizer/bioNTech sa paggawa ng bakuna dahil sa kakapusan at depektibong hilaw na materyales.

Hanggang 50 milyong dosage na lang ang magagawa nito hanggang katapusan ng taon sa halip na 100 milyon na taliwas sa pangako nito.

Kaya naman, hanggang 25 milyon lang ang mababakunahan nito dahil dalawang dosage ang kailangan para gumana ang katawan ng tao na lumaban sa COVID-19.

Kaya naman, sa Britanya, United States at Canada lang na roon sinimulan ang pagbabakuna, ubos na ang 50 milyon dahil linggo-linggo, milyones na dosage ng bakuna ang idinedeliber sa mga ito.

Ikalawa, lumalabas sa mga ulat na dumarami ang mga nagkaka-allergy, maging ang mga walang allergy sa anomang gamot gaya ng nagaganap sa Alaska.

Paliwanag ng mga doktor na ating nakauusap sa harap ng may allergy sa gamot, kung nagkaroon ng allergy sa loob ng katawan ng tao at maapektuhan ang mga utak, puso at iba pang laman ng katawan ng tao, malalagay sa kritikal na kalagayan o kamatayan ang nabakunahan.

Ikatlo, pilitin man natin ang bumili, hindi tayo makabibili dahil kinokorner na ng mayayamang bansa ang mga suplay ng bakuna.



Parang mga negosyante ng sibuyas ang mayayamang bansa na dahil sila ang nagbigay ng puhunan sa pananaliksik at paggawa ng bakuna, sila rin ang uunahing bigyan ng suplay at hindi ang katulad natin na walang kakayahang magbigay, gaya halimbawa ng \$10 bilyon gaya ng ginawa ng United States.

Kita ninyo, mga Bro?

MAKIRAMDAM MUNA TALAGA

Ito ang isang tandaan natin: ang Dengvaxia na ikinapahamak ng marami nating bata na nainiksiyunan ay minadali.

Nasa korte at naisyuhan na ng warrant of arrest at nabasahan na ng demanda ang mga sangkot sa pinaniniwalaang pagkamatay ng maraming bata sa mahal kong Pinas.

Minadali noong panahon nina ex-President Benigno Aquino III ang bakuna sa dengue at late na nang magdeklara ang Sanofi Pasteur, may gawa ng bakuna, na delikado pala at posibleng ikamatay ng tao na hindi pa dinadapuan ng dengue.

Ngayon nga ay may lumalabas na allergy sa bakuna ng Pfizer at namamatay ito kung hindi maagapan.

Nagbababala naman ang Pfizer sa allergy subalit may nakalusot dito at may mga tinamaan.

At ito ang hindi maganda.

Sabihin na nating totoo ang katwiran ng Pfizer na hindi apektado ang epekto ng bakuna nila bilang mabsang gamot sa COVID-19.

Pero pinakamaganda pa ring maghintay tayo ng panahon na mapatunayang hindi delikado ang bakuna sa maraming tao lalo ngayong libo-libo na ang natuturukan dito sa ibang mga bansa.

Huwag magpadalos-dalos at padadala sa mga idinadadal ng mga politiko na kaya sila'y maingay ay dahil gusto nilang magpasikat lalo't malapit na ang halalang 2022.

GAWIN PA RIN ANG NARARAPAT

Nagkakaisa ang Department of Health at ang OCTA Research na nakabase sa University of the Philippines na maaaring lumundag sa 4,000 araw-araw ang magka-COVID-19 dala ng pagsama-sama nang maramihan ng mga Pinoy sa Kapaskuhan.

Pinagbatayan ng DOH at OCTA Research ang naganap na paglundag ng dami ng kaso sa US dahil sa pagtitipon-tipon ng mga ito nang maramihan sa nakaraang Thanksgiving Day nila at ngayo'y sa nalalapit nang Kapaskuhan.

Sa ngayon, mahigit 1,000 lang ang naiuulat na nagkakasakit araw-araw sa buong kapuluan at kung darami nga sa 4,000 kahit sa Metro Manila lamang, aba, doble-triple 'yan.

Lalo na kung isasama natin ang iba pang lugar ng mahal kong Pinas.



Kaya naman, sana, huwag nating kalilimutan kahit man lang ang mga minimum na obligasyon natin bilang mga hakbang laban sa COVID-19.

Magsuot tayo ng face mask at face shield kung lalabas tayo ng bahay at papasok sa iba, mag-social distancing, maghugas lagi ng kamay at iba pang parte ng katawan natin.

LUMAHOK DIN SA 3T

Kung magagawa natin, lalahok tayo sa aktibong laban na nakapaloob sa 3T kung tawagin: ang Tracing, Testing at Treatment.

Kapag sa tingin natin ay may natamaan, tumulong tayo sa pagsunod o pagkilala sa mga kontak na tao nito upang sila'y makilala at maihiwalay sa pamayanaan.

Marami tayong paraan para makatulong sa gawaing ito gaya ng pag-text message, pagtawag sa telepono, pag-email ng impormasyon sa mga awtoridad na tiyak namang aaksyon agad.

Kung sinabi naman ng mga otoridad na magpa-test tayo gaya nang kung papasok tayo sa trabaho o pupunta sa ibang malalayong lugar, gawin natin.

Huwag na huwag gawin ang pamemeke ng iba ng upang hindi tayo makahawa o mahawa sa iba at hindi rin tayo makakasuhan at mabilanggo.

Kung tinamaan ang isang tao, sana makatutulong din tayo sa pagpagamot sa kanila.

At kasama sa pagpapagamot siyempre ang pagkakaroon ng gastos ng pamilya.

Ngayon, karaniwang nila-lockdown ang buong pamilya ng pasyente kaya gutom ang inaabot ng mga ito, lalo na ang mga mahihirap.

Makatutulong tayo rito kahit man lang sa paghahatid ng isang kilong bigas para sa kanila na tiyak na paralisado para sana maghanapbuhay.

Huwag nating iasa lahat sa pamahalaan at tatandaan natin na kalahati ng pwersa ng buong bansa laban sa COVID-19 ang dapat manggaling mismo sa ating mga bisig bilang mamamayan.



Government sets 20 million registration goal for National ID system in 2021

By BusinessMirror

December 17, 2020

AN additional 20 million of the population is expected to be registered under the government's National ID system by next year.

In a news statement issued on Wednesday, Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said President Duterte and other members of the Cabinet approved during a meeting on Monday the allocation of P3.52 billion for the said initiative through the Philippine Identification System (PhilSys).

He said this is on top of the 50 million target registrants for PhilSys for next year.

Republic Act 11055, or the PhilSys Act, mandates the government to provide a valid proof of identity for all Filipinos and resident aliens through a National ID System.

Last month, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported delays in the implementation of the second phase of the enrollment process for PhilSys due to the delays in the availability of registration kits.

The first part of the registration involves collection of demographics data, while the second part is for the collection of biometrics data of registrants.

As of last November 24, PSA was able to register 6.289 million people for the National ID system.

It is targeting to enroll 9 million people under PhilSys this year.

During the latest Cabinet meeting, Roque said, the President also approved the flood mitigation and management plan of the Task Force Build Back Better (TFBBB) led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Cagayan province and Marikina City.

Both areas suffered heavy flooding, when Typhoon Ulysses (international code name Vamco) hit the country last month.

This prompted Duterte to issue Executive Order 120 creating the TFBBB.



In this photo taken on September 8, 2020, passengers wearing face shields sit next to plastic dividers, as part of health protocols imposed by authorities on passenger jeepneys against the COVID-19 coronavirus in Manila.

AFP/Ted Aljibe

World Bank OKs fresh \$900 million for disaster response, rural areas

[Ian Nicolas Cigaral](#) (Philstar.com) - December 17, 2020 - 3:39pm

MANILA, Philippines — The World Bank on Thursday announced financing two projects in the Philippines that would help the country get back on its feet after the coronavirus pandemic and strong typhoons delivered a double whammy to the economy.

The first financing is in the form of \$600-million policy loan "promoting competitiveness and enhancing resilience to natural disasters," the Washington-based lender said in a statement. Information on loan interest and payment terms were unavailable.

Loans will be used to implement reforms that would speed up the adoption of digital technologies to reduce costs of doing business, World Bank explained. This, in turn, is expected to assist small enterprises and consumers cope with changing business conditions brought by the pandemic, including heightened need to follow social distancing measures and other health protocols.

"Reforms to improve digital infrastructure and speed up adoption of digital technologies will not only help the country's efforts to recover from the impacts of the pandemic but will also boost its export competitiveness that is vital for creating more and better jobs in the future," Ndiame Diop, country director, said.

The second financing from World Bank is a \$300-million grant for KALAHI-CIDSS National Community Driven Development Project (KC-NCDDP) that seeks to address poverty in rural areas. Grants are funds given as free assistance.

Without going into specifics, the lender said funds will "restore or improve" basic facilities in countryside areas such as access roads and bridges, water systems, school buildings and daycare centers, the bank said. KC-NCDDP is implemented by the social welfare and interior and local government departments.

"Community-driven development approaches have shown to be effective in accelerating community reconstruction following disaster events and efficiently putting money for priority needs of communities around the world," Diop said.

"I have no doubt that the same approach – communities working together to address common challenges – will help them bounce back from this pandemic and build resilience to future shocks at the same time," he added.

Finance department data as of December 15 showed the Duterte administration has secured \$13.36 billion in foreign financing for pandemic response programs. The amount includes loans, grants and proceeds from bonds sale. Of that figure, World Bank contributed \$2.27 billion.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/business/2020/12/17/2064475/world-bank-oks-fresh-900-million-disaster-response-rural-areas>



LPA to bring rains, thunderstorms over 3 areas

Published December 17, 2020 5:18pm

A low pressure area (LPA) is expected to bring cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms over Mindanao, Eastern Visayas, and Central Visayas, according to PAGASA on Thursday.

In its 24-hour forecast, the weather agency said flash floods or landslides are possible during moderate to heavy rains.

The LPA was estimated at 395 kilometers east-southeast of Davao City, Davao del Sur at 3 p.m.

Meanwhile, cloudy skies with rains may prevail over the Cagayan Valley, the Cordillera Administrative Region, the Bicol Region, Aurora, and Quezon due to the northeast monsoon.

PAGASA warned affected residents of possible flash floods or landslides.

The monsoon may also bring partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated light rains over Metro Manila and the rest of the country. It has no significant impact on said areas.

Western Visayas may, meanwhile, experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers due to localized thunderstorms.

The weather agency said flash floods or landslides are possible during severe thunderstorms.

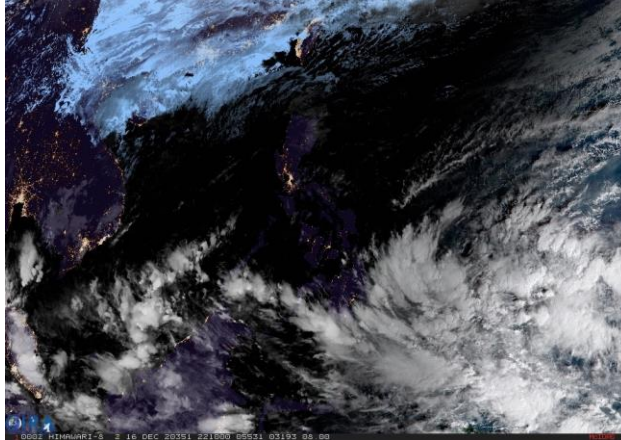
PAGASA's synoptic station at the Science Garden, Quezon City recorded a minimum temperature of 23.1°C at 5 a.m. and a maximum temperature of 29°C at 1 p.m.—**Joahna Lei Casilao/LDF, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/weather/768418/lpa-to-bring-rains-thunderstorms-over-3-areas/story/>

New brewing storm spotted off Mindanao

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Dec 17 2020 06:53 AM | Updated as of Dec 17 2020 08:05 AM



Courtesy of Japanese Meteorological Agency

MANILA - State weather bureau PAGASA said Thursday it was monitoring a new brewing storm off Mindanao.

Weather specialist Shelly Ignacio, in a 4 a.m. press briefing, said the low-pressure area (LPA) was located 820 kilometers east of Davao City.

The LPA's trough or extension may bring cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms over Eastern Visayas, Northern Mindanao, Caraga, Soccsksargen and Davao Region.

The brewing storm is unlikely to strengthen into a tropical cyclone, Ignacio said. But if it becomes a storm, it may pass over the central part of the country, she added.

Meanwhile, the northeast monsoon or amihan, which is cold winds from the northeast that bring rains over the eastern side of the country, continues to affect parts of Luzon.

The amihan may cause cloudy skies with rains over Cagayan Valley and Cordillera Administrative Region. Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon may also experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated light rains due to amihan.

The rest of the country may generally have a fair weather with chances of rain because of localized thunderstorms.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/12/17/20/new-brewing-storm-spotted-off-mindanao?fbclid=IwAR06bEusGWookvVo3F-uYWV7z6sS3j5JwHqxYVml779hiTu8Rp7DJUDfM>



China needs reusable systems, not biodegradable plastics, to solve waste woes

CGTN



China's effort to curb the use of plastics by replacing them with environment-friendly materials, particularly biodegradable plastics, may not ease the mounting pressure on landfills.

Massive promotion and demand have boosted production of biodegradable plastics by leaps and bounds. The country's e-commerce sector alone is estimated to generate more than five million tonnes of biodegradable plastic waste per year by 2025, said a report released by Greenpeace on Thursday.

Non-biodegradable plastics take decades to decompose and, in this process, releases microplastics, which contaminates soil, water and the food chain. Biodegradable plastics, however, decay in a few months provided certain conditions are met.

"Under typical conditions such as landfill, biodegradable plastics can remain intact for much longer than six months," researchers said.

Handling such a vast amount of the material from entering landfills would require robust recycling and dedicated facilities to decompose the new material. "Switching from one type of plastic to another cannot solve the plastics pollution crisis that we're facing," Dr. Molly Zhongnan Jia, Greenpeace East Asia plastics researcher said.

Within this year, 36 companies have entered into manufacturing biodegradable plastic in China, with an added production capacity of more than 4.4 million tonnes, an increase of sevenfold in less than 12 months, said the report.



Once the world's largest importer and recycler of waste, China closed its ports to shiploads of scraps from foreign countries in 2018 to deal with its rising domestic waste problems.

Chinese manufacturers used to import a whopping 7.3 million metric tons worth \$18 billion of waste metal, plastics and paper, mostly from developed countries.

To reduce waste generation within the country, the government has imposed fines and also revamped solid waste collection with steps by waste segregation at the household level. Companies have been asked to ensure 50 percent of their online packages and 20 percent of food delivery packaging use biodegradable materials.

But researchers are advocating for reusable materials as an effective way to reduce waste generation. "We need to take a cautious look at the effect and potential risks of mainstreaming these materials, and make sure we invest in solutions that actually reduce plastic waste," said Jia.

"Reusable packaging systems and a reduction in overall plastic use are much more promising strategies to keep plastic out of landfills and the environment," she said.

(Cover: Workers clear garbage at the bank of Yangtze River in Taicang, Jiangsu Province, China, December 23, 2016. /Reuters)



Indon women fight for environment

The forest has always been associated with men

Published 1 day ago on December 17, 2020 02:30 AM

By [Agence France-Presse](#)



INDONESIA (AFP) — Sumini gets up at dawn to do her household chores — then leads a team of women into the jungles of Indonesia’s Sumatra island, on a mission to battle rampant deforestation and wildlife poaching.

The 45-year-old mother of five heads a unique team of female rangers taking on illegal loggers and hunters threatening Sumatran tigers, pangolins and other at-risk wildlife.

The culprits are mostly men, including neighbors or even the husbands of team members, who live together in Damaran Baru village in the north of Sumatra.

Along the way, the 30-member team grapples with sexist stereotypes in ultra-conservative Aceh province, and authorities who are indifferent to the environmental destruction wrought by illegal logging and land clearance for the region’s many coffee plantations.

Deforestation and habitat loss have long been a problem across the vast Southeast Asian archipelago, which is among the most biodiverse nations on Earth.

“The forest has always been associated with men,” said Sumini, who like many Indonesians goes by one name.

“But we want to change that and say it’s also about women. Women who are angry about environmental destruction and who are taking action to fix the problem.”

The group, which now includes one of Sumini’s sons and his wife, got its start in 2015 after a flash flood destroyed a dozen houses in the community of about 1,000 residents.

Sumini’s husband relented after repeated demands that he show her why so much wood and debris was mixed in with the floodwaters barreling down from a nearby volcano.

“When we got there, I saw the mountain had been deforested,” she said. “I said to my husband ‘Well, so this is the reason.

The forest has been destroyed by men.’ I was so angry that, from that moment on, I told myself I’d take on the role of protecting the forest.”

The fledgling squad got no help from authorities when they complained about hillsides scarred by tree loss.



“They thought we made it up. That is why we established the team,” Sumini said.

Twice a month, the hijab-clad women strap on floppy hats and rubber boots before setting off for about five days at a time, navigating the steep, mountainous terrain.

They search for signs of poaching and logging, remove animal traps, document endemic wildlife and plant species and post signs warning against illegal activity, which they report to government authorities.



Climate change turns up the heat on ad industry

Reuters / 06:00 AM December 18, 2020



A combination picture shows screenshots from a TV advertisement created in 2010 as part of the 'We Agree' campaign by ad agency McGarryBowen for the oil company Chevron Corp. via

REUTERS

The avuncular man in the TV ad has an urgent-sounding message from his employer, the oil giant Chevron Corp.

"I think renewable energy is vital to our planet," says the man, identified only as an environmental expert called Steve. "At Chevron, we're investing millions in solar and biofuels technology to make it work." He adds that the energy can be made widely available and the work needs to begin "right now."

What Steve doesn't mention, according to three U.S. lawsuits alleging deceptive advertising, is that Chevron is overwhelmingly focused on fossil fuel extraction and its investment in renewables remains minuscule compared to the billions it spends each year on drilling for oil and gas.

Critics have long attacked the oil industry for ad campaigns that they call "greenwashing" – telling people that policies or products are more environmentally friendly than they really are. But the ad agencies behind the campaigns have largely escaped scrutiny.

That's changing, as the issue of climate change shoots up the global agenda. Climate activists and some ad industry figures are calling on agencies to declare or dump their Big Oil clients.

Recent lawsuits by four U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and a city allege "greenwashing" by oil companies, accusing them of making "misleading and deceptive" claims. The suits don't name the ad agencies as defendants, but do single out at least 15 campaigns. As a result, the companies could face embarrassment or become embroiled in litigation.

Sean Corey, a Chevron spokesman, said such lawsuits are "meritless" and "serve only to divert attention and resources away from the collaborative, international efforts that are critical to developing a meaningful solution to climate change."

Pressure has been building against oil and gas companies in recent years to address dangerously rising global temperatures. The companies, which rank among the world's worst polluters, have been targeted by protests outside their offices and seen sponsorship deals with museums, art galleries, and others canceled in the United States and Europe.



A prominent climate protest group, Extinction Rebellion, last year unfurled a banner reading “TELL THE TRUTH” outside the advertising industry’s top awards ceremony in Cannes, France. Activists in the Netherlands and other European countries are campaigning for a tobacco-style ban on fossil fuel advertising.

All these pressures will likely intensify after the January inauguration of U.S. President-elect Joe Biden, who has vowed to get tough on climate change.

Most major advertising companies with fossil fuel clients, and the U.S. ad industry’s leading trade group, declined to comment for this story or did not respond to requests for comment. However, in a statement, WPP Plc, the world’s largest advertising and public relations holding company, defended its practices.

“WPP recognizes the importance of its role in addressing climate change by applying rigorous standards to the content we produce and helping clients to accelerate the world’s transition to a lower-carbon economy,” the agency said. A spokeswoman also said the company “will not undertake work which is intended or designed to mislead.”

WPP did not handle the ad featuring Steve, formally known as “We Agree.” That ad is part of a global campaign created in 2010 by New York-based agency Dentsu McGarryBowen LLC. Jennifer Ferguson, a spokeswoman for McGarryBowen’s holding company, Dentsu Group Inc, declined to comment.

‘A sea change’

Delaware, along with Connecticut, Massachusetts, Minnesota, the District of Columbia, and the city of Hoboken, New Jersey, are suing key players in the oil industry for violating consumer protection laws with the help of “greenwashing” ad campaigns.

The new scrutiny of advertising campaigns raises the prospect that ad agencies could see their names dragged into litigation along with their oil company clients, said Karen Sokol, an environmental law professor at Loyola University New Orleans.

Sokol said that similar lawsuits against the tobacco industry brought to light information on the role of advertisers and PR companies in deceiving the public about the dangers of smoking.

In 1997, R.J. Reynolds tobacco company agreed to pay \$10 million to settle a lawsuit over a campaign for its Camel brand, which was accused of targeting children. The “Joe Camel” campaign was executed by large advertising firms that also were sued.

Ultimately, Sokol said, details about advertising and marketing practices that emerged during litigation against the tobacco industry contributed to the companies’ decision in the late 1990s to pay billions of dollars annually in a massive settlement with the vast majority of U.S. states and territories.

“There was a sea change in how we viewed tobacco products after we learned about that industry’s disinformation,” she said. “We’re on the cusp of that with climate.”

Others predict that Big Oil’s message makers will likely avoid costly courtroom verdicts. Douglas Kysar, a professor at Yale Law School who specializes in climate change, among other things, said it was unlikely that ad firms would be held liable for misleading communications by fossil fuel companies. That’s because the primary duty of those firms is to their clients, the companies, and not to the public, he said.



However, he added, given the “existential stakes” of climate change, advertisers likely won’t escape being sued in the first place. “I fully expect that advertising/PR firms, bankers, insurers, accountants, lawyers, and other professionals that support fossil fuel companies, will increasingly find themselves targeted by lawsuits and pressure campaigns.”

‘Creativity has consequences’

The picture is different in Europe, where regulators have taken action against a number of ad campaigns by oil companies.

In 2019, for instance, the UK advertising watchdog upheld a complaint against an ad by Norwegian energy giant Equinor ASA that suggested gas was a “low carbon” energy source. In January, Italy’s competition authority slapped state-backed energy giant Eni SpA with a €5 million (\$6.10 million) fine for ads claiming that its diesel was “green” and helped the environment.

In the United States, ad agencies face more immediate worry.

Several current and former ad executives and industry experts say advertisers for fossil fuel companies face a big challenge in appealing to young people, who polls show are far more concerned about global warming than their elders. In addition, some say, agencies with oil industry clients face a struggle to recruit talented young people with climate concerns.

Ad agency staff “are forced to treat all clients as equal,” said Solitaire Townsend, co-founder of Futerra, a mid-sized advertising firm based in London. “But for the best young talent that simply isn’t good enough anymore. They know that creativity has consequences, so our industry cannot be neutral.”

Futerra has set up an initiative in which agencies voluntarily declare what proportion of their revenue comes from so-called “high-carbon” clients, including not just Big Oil but also the aviation, automobile, concrete, and plastics industries.

Futerra disclosed in 2019 that 1% of its revenue was generated by clients involved in plastics or aviation, but otherwise had no high-carbon clients.

Her firm and 244 small to mid-size agencies have signed on to the initiative, she said.

The American Petroleum Institute, the oil industry trade group, criticized the spate of recent efforts to get advertising firms to ditch the oil and gas industry, saying that they were “divisive” and “unfounded.”

“We are focused on being part of the solution, and we welcome debate on the best ways to innovate for a cleaner, reliable and affordable energy future,” said API spokeswoman Bethany Aronhalt.

Together with their subsidiaries, the Big Four advertising companies – WPP, Omnicom Group, Publicis Groupe and Interpublic Group of Companies (IPG) – handle the accounts of many major oil companies. The accounts provide much-needed income for an ad industry financially devastated by the coronavirus pandemic.

WPP and IPG told Reuters they would not disclose their client lists. Omnicom and Publicis didn’t respond to a request for comment.



'The clarion call'

Despite financial strains exacerbated by the pandemic, the oil industry's spending on advertising and PR will continue, or perhaps rise, as it fights tougher climate-related regulations and shrinking social acceptance in many countries, ad industry experts told Reuters.

"Over the past thirty years, the major oil companies have ramped up their PR activities whenever it appears that the government is considering regulation of their activities," said Bob Brulle, Visiting Professor of Environment and Society at Brown University in Rhode Island. "It is quite predictable that this will occur as the Biden administration starts acting to control carbon emissions."

The suits by Delaware and Hoboken cite four WPP campaigns for fossil fuel companies as "misleading" or "greenwashing."

WPP, which is not named as a defendant, declined to comment on the lawsuits.

WPP's website publishes an emphatic statement in favor of addressing climate change by its subsidiary, Ogilvy Consulting. "As industry leaders, we must be the clarion call," said the article. "We must act now."

Those actions included helping its clients from the energy sector "accelerate the world's transition to a lower-carbon economy," WPP told Reuters.

Christine Arena, CEO of Generous, an ad agency in San Francisco, said big agencies were positioning themselves as saviors of the climate while representing companies accused of wrecking it. In 2015, Arena was one of four executives who left a large U.S. public relations firm to protest its representation of oil companies.

"We're at the point where you can no longer play both sides credibly or with impunity," she said.

(\$1 = 0.8193 euros)



Climate change remains a major world problem

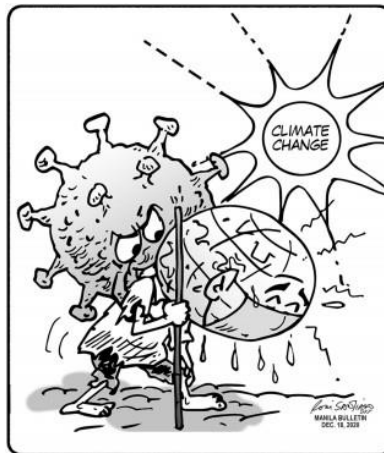
December 18, 2020 | Filed under: Editorial, Opinion | Posted by: Tempo Desk

Five years ago, the nations of the world, including the Philippines, met in Paris, France, on the world's climate problem – rising world temperatures due to carbon emissions from the world's industries, causing the polar ice to melt, ocean levels to rise, and spawning more destructive typhoons and hurricanes.

A Climate Ambition Summit was convened this weekend by the United Nations and the governments of Britain and France to assess what progress has been made on the world's climate since that Paris conference five years ago. The nations had agreed then to try to keep the rise in world temperature to less than 1.5 degrees Celsius and each country submitted its commitment to take steps to help reach that goal.

Last Saturday, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres told the Climate Ambition Summit: "Carbon dioxide levels are at a record high. Today we are 1.2 degrees hotter than before the Industrial Revolution. If we don't change course, we may be headed for a catastrophic temperature rise of more than 3 degrees this century. That is why today I call on all leaders worldwide to declare a state of climate emergency in their countries until carbon neutrality is reached." Guterres said 38 countries have already done so. "All other countries should follow," he added.

The Climate Ambition Summit acknowledged the public commitments announced only recently by some nations led by China whose President Xi Jinping told the conference China would reduce its emissions by 65 percent over 2005 levels by 2030.



China became the first nation to announce its commitment to the Paris goal when President Xi Jinping pledged before the United Nations last September that China would achieve zero carbon emissions by 2060. It was soon followed by Japan, whose Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga committed to achieve the same goal by 2050.

Xi said China was making its commitment although it is still developing economically. Richer countries should step up more, he said, evidently referring to the United States, under President Donald Trump, the only nation that rejected the Paris Agreement. Incoming President Joseph Biden, however, has already announced he will bring the US back to the assembly of nations that have vowed to reduce their carbon emissions.

The Philippines is a minor contributor to the world's carbon emissions but it has vowed to do its part. Last month, our Department of Energy declared a moratorium on its endorsements for coal power plants. This should lead to "more opportunities for renewable energy to figure prominently in our country's energy future," Secretary of Energy Alfonso Cusi said.

The world is still in the grip of the COVID-19 pandemic but it has not forgotten the other problems it faces today, such as the climate problem that continues to worsen and threaten the lives of all people on our planet on a scale more massive than regional conflicts, hunger in so many nations, and even epidemics like the one we are now beginning to overcome.



'World's ugliest orchid' among new species named in 2020

Reuters / 09:17 PM December 17, 2020



FILE PHOTO: An orchid (*Gastrodia agnicellus*) is seen in this handout photo taken in Madagascar on September 20, 2019. Rick Burian/Handout via REUTERS

LONDON —Orchids are not often called ugly, but that is how the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, London, described a new species of the normally vibrant and delicate flower discovered in the forests of Madagascar.

Gastrodia agnicellus, one of 156 plants and fungal species named by Kew scientists and their partners around the world in 2020, has been crowned “the ugliest orchid in the world.”

“The 11 mm flowers of this orchid are small, brown and rather ugly,” Kew said in its list of the top 10 discoveries of the year. The orchid depends on fungi for nutrition and has no leaves or any other photosynthetic tissue.

Although assessed as a threatened species, the plants have some protection because they are located in a national park.

Among the other discoveries officially named this year were six new species of webcap toadstool mushrooms in the United Kingdom and a strange shrub encountered in southern Namibia in 2010.

Botanist Wessel Swanepoel could not place the shrub in any known genus and neither could anyone else, and so Swanepoel called Kew’s molecular expert Felix Forest and his team for analysis.

The result was that it was not just a new species, but a new genus and a new family, called *Tiganophyton karasense*.

While around 2,000 plants are named new to science annually, new families are only published around once a year.

The shrub has bizarre scaly leaves and grows in extremely hot natural salt pans, hence its name *Tiganophyton*, derived from the Latin ‘Tigani’, or ‘frying pan’, and ‘Phyton’, or ‘plant’.



Martin Cheek, senior research leader at Kew, welcomed the latest natural discoveries.

“Some could provide vital income to communities while others may have the potential to be developed into a future food or medicine,” he said.

But he warned: “The bleak reality facing us cannot be underplayed. With two in five plants threatened with extinction, it is a race against time to find, identify, name, and conserve plants before they disappear.”



An orchid (*Gastrodia agnicellus*) is seen in this handout photo taken in Madagascar on September 20, 2019. Rick Burian/Handout via REUTERS

'World's ugliest orchid' among new species named in 2020

Published December 17, 2020 9:11pm

LONDON - Orchids are not often called ugly, but that is how the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, London, described a new species of the normally vibrant and delicate flower discovered in the forests of Madagascar.

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Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/world/768456/world-s-ugliest-orchid-among-new-species-named-in-2020/story/>