

23 DECEMBER 2020, WEDNESDAY



**DENR**

# NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



# Applications for free patent accepted until yearend

By ... -December 21, 2020

Farmers who want to avail of the government's agricultural free patent program have until the end of the month to file their application, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

The DENR said this deadline is final.

Republic Act 9176 issued in 2002 had set the filing of applications for free patent and judicial confirmation of imperfect and incomplete titles to alienable and disposable lands of public domain to Dec. 31, 2020.

Agricultural free patents are land grants awarded to natural-born Filipino citizens in actual occupation and cultivation for at least 30 years of alienable and disposable lands not more than 12 hectares and have paid the corresponding real property taxes.

"Our field offices continue to accept agricultural free patent applications to give those who have been cultivating their lots for a long time the chance to have the same titled in their names," said Emelyne Talabis, director of the Land Management Bureau.

Applicants need to submit an accomplished application form; tax declaration; deed of sale; extra judicial settlement; waiver of eights; and certification from the municipal circuit or regional trial court concerned that there is no pending land registration case involving the land being applied for.

Other requirements are: an approved survey plan with technical description; certification of status of land from the Land Registration Authority, if the municipality is under cadastral proceedings or if there is an old survey; certification that the land applied for is alienable and disposable; and documentary stamp.

Ernesto Adobo Jr., DENR undersecretary for legal, administration, human resources and legislative affairs, said all subsisting and new applications filed on or before December 31 will continue to be processed for the fiscal year 2021.

Adobo added regional offices can still process requests for subdivision of lots for titling purposes after the deadline but acceptance of agricultural free patent applications can only resume if a bill seeking to extend or remove the deadline for filing is approved. – Jed Macapagal

Source: [https://malaya.com.ph/index.php/news\\_business/applications-for-free-patent-accepted-until-yearend/?fbclid=IwAR0RZPQI-SMs7BGxPtGvS8qTc9P3czg9NmS49TeWcdkjNQ7u6nbePW2-Wcc](https://malaya.com.ph/index.php/news_business/applications-for-free-patent-accepted-until-yearend/?fbclid=IwAR0RZPQI-SMs7BGxPtGvS8qTc9P3czg9NmS49TeWcdkjNQ7u6nbePW2-Wcc)



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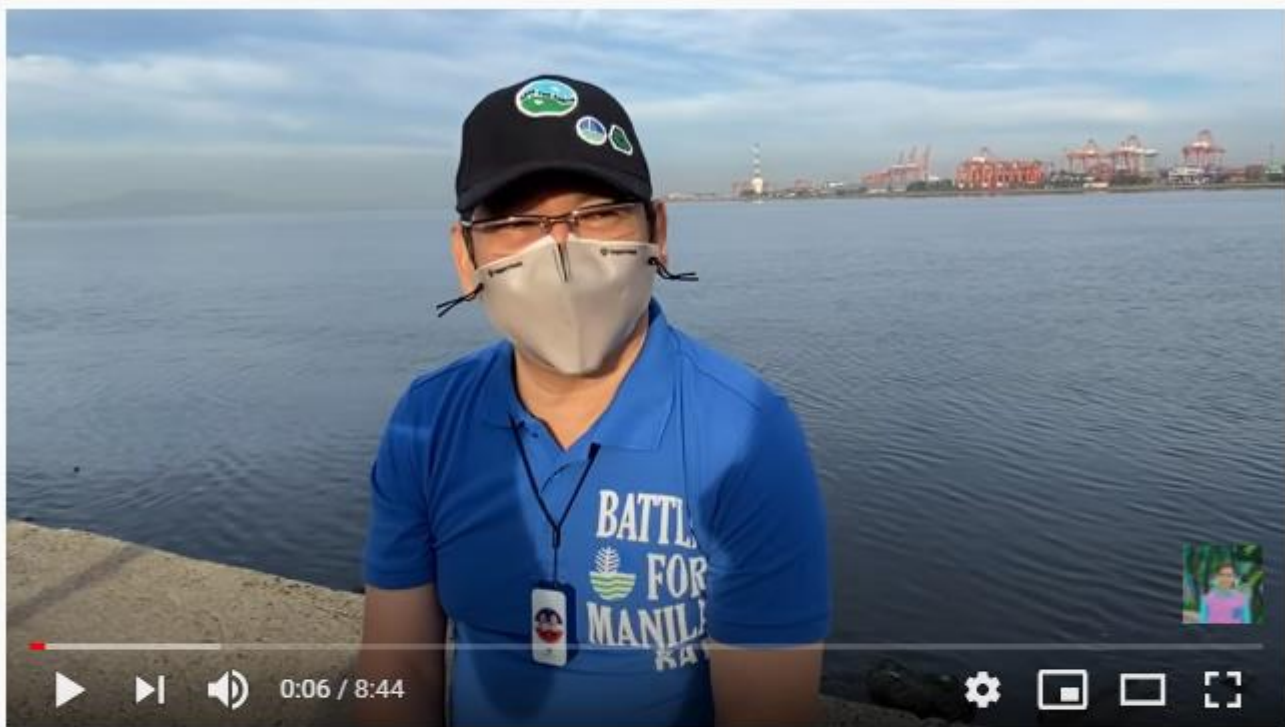
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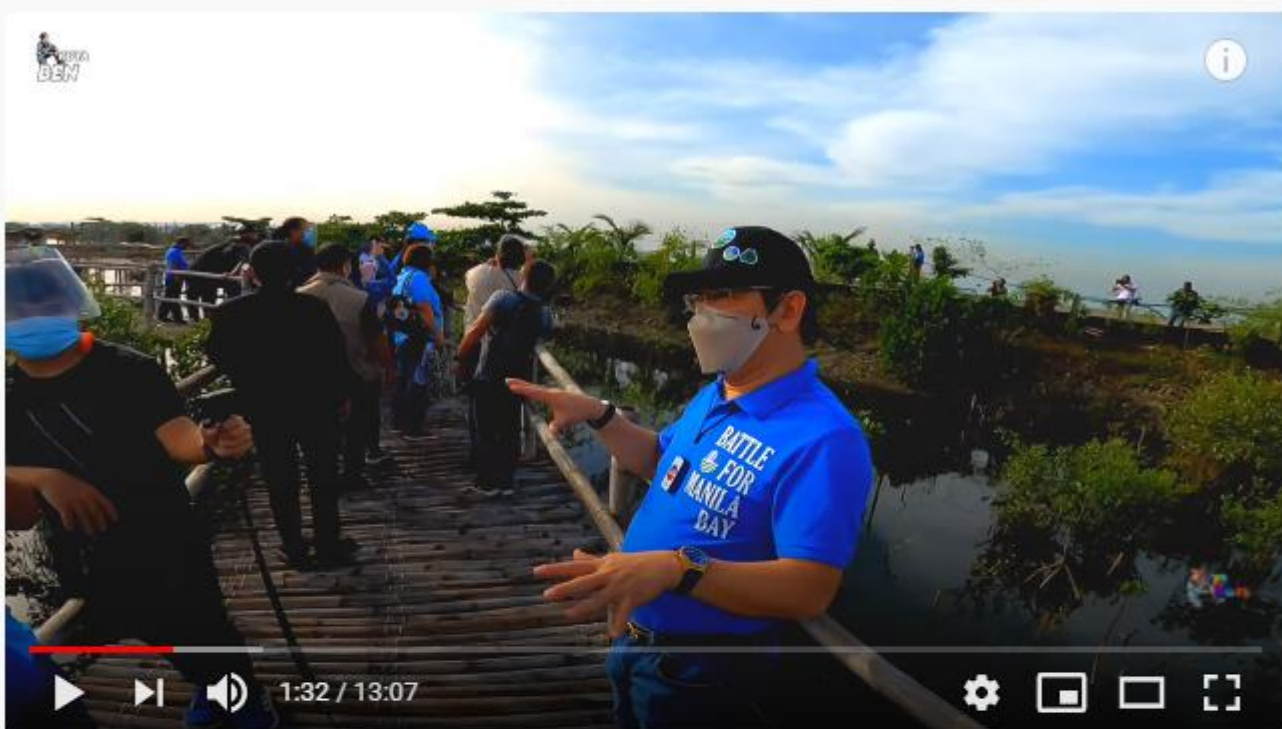
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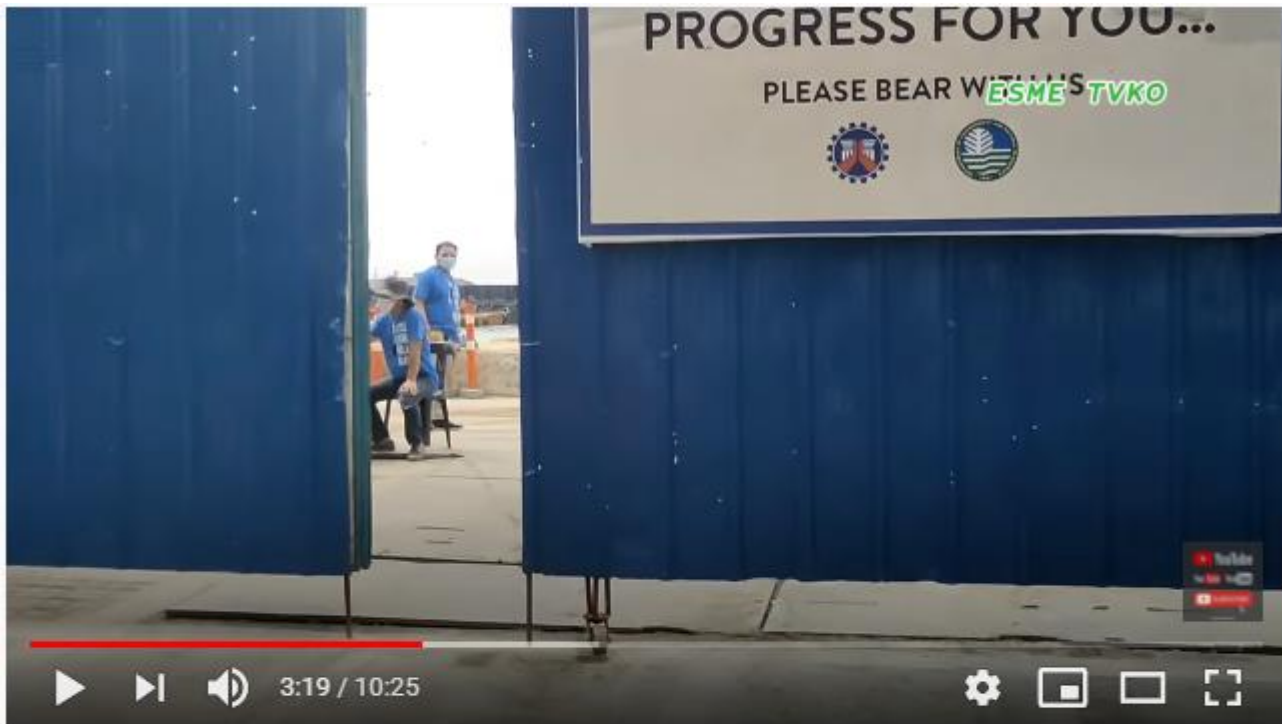
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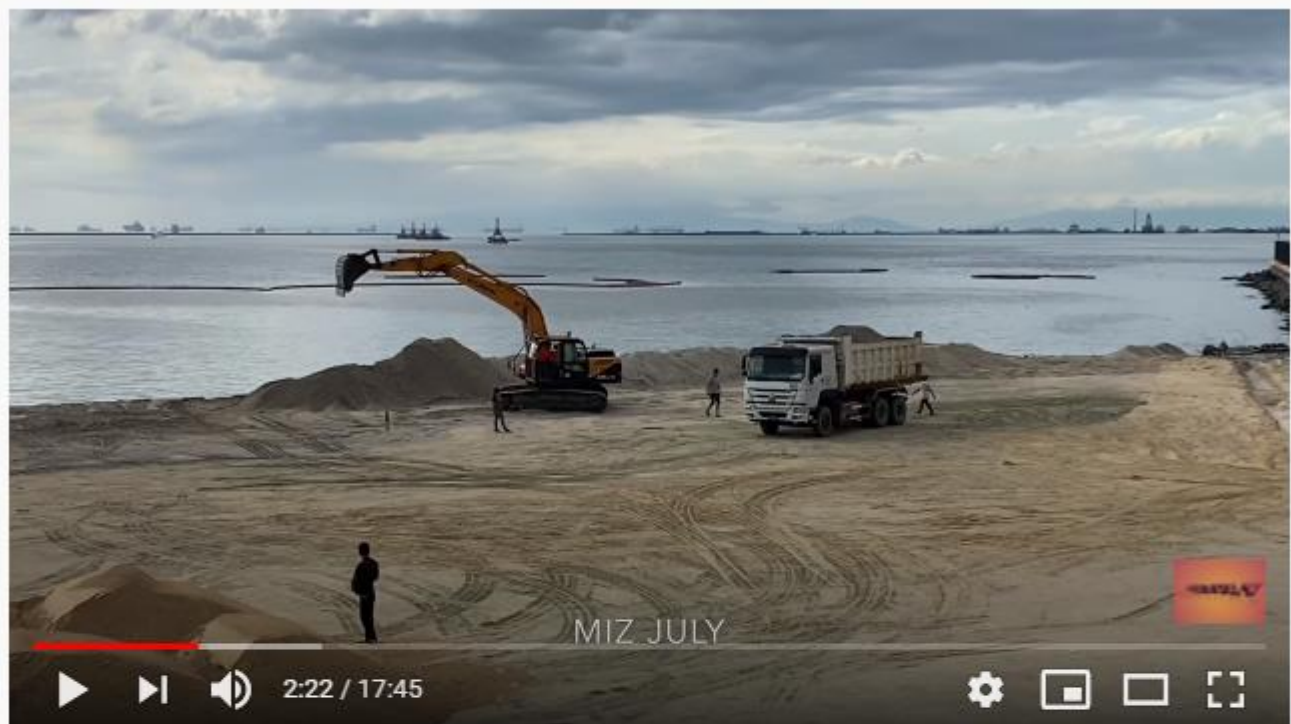
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## Pasay places 3rd in cleanup of Manila Bay

posted December 22, 2020 at 10:20 pm

by [Joel E. Zurbano](#)

The City of Pasay was ranked third among compliant local government units in Metro Manila in implementing the Manila Bay Clean-Up Rehabilitation and Preservation Program.

The recognition came from the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) on Tuesday.

The agency monitors LGUs regarding a Supreme Court ruling mandating them to strictly monitor compliance of their constituents with environmental laws aimed to prevent sewage water and industrial and human wastes from polluting rivers, esteros, and other waterways that form part of the tributary systems of the Manila Bay.

Pasay passed scrutiny in terms of liquid waste management, solid waste management, informal settler families as well as information, education, and communication materials and institutional arrangements.

Mayor Imelda Rubiano said she was thankful that all the hard work of her city to fulfil its role in the restoration of Manila Bay to its former glory have paid off.

“This award reflects the city’s unrelenting effort to improve the quality of water in the bay. We will constantly implement and even improve our efforts in keeping Manila Bay clean,” said Rubiano.

Pasay got 94.67% grade in its liquid waste management; 97% in solid waste management; 100% in informal settler families; and 90% in information, education, and communication.

The Manila Bay rehabilitation program is spearheaded by the Department of Environment, and National Resources, with Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, various government agencies, local government units, private groups, environmentalists and volunteers.

In 2013, environmentalist group Greenpeace described Manila Bay waters as the most polluted in the country, serving as a giant waste-dump for the metropolis.

Although a subject of a Writ of Continuing Mandamus issued by the Supreme Court in 2008, ordering various government agencies to help in its clean up, the bay’s condition remains largely unimproved, the group stated.

Greenpeace and scientists from the University of the Philippines had called on the Philippine government to enact immediate measures to reverse the bay’s shocking decline.

Research shows that unprocessed waste ending up in the bay has resulted in high levels of fecal coliform and the presence of heavy metals, pesticides, and excess feeds in its waters.

This, along with other factors, have resulted in the degradation of Manila Bay and its coastal areas, resulting in an estimated P4 billion in damages yearly, mostly in fisheries, exports, and mortality costs due to waterborne diseases.



# MGB-7 indefinitely suspends CCC's open pit mining operations

By: Delta Dyrecka Letigio - CDN Digital Multi-Media Reporter | December 22, 2020 - 07:55 PM



Behind this mining site of Carmen Copper Corporation in Toledo City is ground zero, an area that collapsed and buried miners on Monday afternoon, December 21, 2020. Four bodies have already been recovered while six remain missing as search and rescue operations continue. CDN Digital photo | Delta Letigio

CEBU CITY, Philippines — The Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Central Visayas (MGB-7) has ordered the suspension of the open-pit mining operations of Carmen Copper Corp. (CCC), following the death of four miners after the collapse of a mining site in Barangay Biga, Toledo City, Cebu.

Six other miners remained missing as of this posting.

MGB-7 Director Arman Malicse said in a phone interview with CDN Digital said that the suspension of the CCC operations was for the sole open pit of the mining site as the ground is still loose.

The ground in the area of the Biga Open Pit is made mostly of igneous rocks, which softened and collapsed under the weight of the rain in the past days.

This collapse led to a 15-meter tsunami-like phenomenon that hit the ten miners in the vicinity, who were supposedly already at a safe area from the actual collapse.

Malicse suspects that the miners were dragged underwater which is why they recommended to the Toledo City government to commission divers to check the waters in the area for bodies. “So ang tubig, murag tsunami, paghulpa sa yuta. Among duda is naabtan tong mga miners kay actually ang collapsed area wala namay tawo, naevacuate naman,” said Malicse.

The MGB-7 suspended the operation indefinitely until the zone is no longer dangerous to miners and other workers, and will use the time to investigate why the collapse occurred and if CCC should be held legally liable for this particular incident.

The MGB-7 will be investigating the technical reasons why the collapse occurred and whether the company followed the proper safety protocols before, during, and after the incident.

Should the company be found negligent, MGB-7 will file charges against them according to the mining law.

Still, Malicse said they will consider all aspects in the investigation especially why the miners were not evacuated ahead when an advisory for rainfall was issued in the morning of the incident as alleged by Biga Barangay Captain Pedro Sepada, Jr.



The collapse happened past 4 p.m. of Monday.

“We will look into all these allegations. That will form part of the investigation,” said Malicse. The Toledo City government spokesperson, Roseller Layan, said that even before the suspension order, the CCC voluntarily stopped operations to focus on the rescue operations.

The city government assured the public of their cooperation on the investigation to be done by MGB-7.

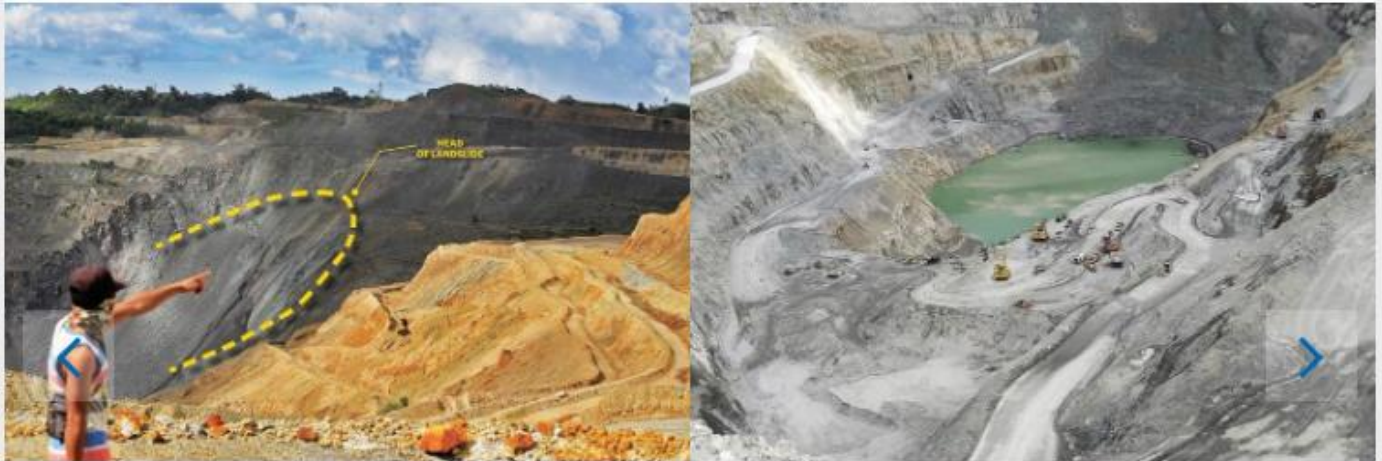
Meanwhile, Malicse denied that MGB-7 did not act on the complaint of Biga Barangay Captain Pedro Sepada, Jr., where the village chief complained that the mines breached the 300-meter distance from residential areas and that dangerous cracks have shown near the settlements.

In fact, Malicse recommended the stabilization of the cracks, but the barangay reportedly refused such a project. Still, he said the MGB-7 has responded and attended the consultations asked for the residents.

As for the legal liabilities of CCC for the death of the miners, Malicse said the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) will step in to ensure that CCC will provide the necessary assistance for them.

CCC in its recent statements said that they are in constant communication with the immediate families of the miners for assistance. /rcg

## Carmen Pit mining operations suspended



**BREAK BEFORE THE SLIDE.** A motorcycle-for-hire driver points to the area in the Carmen Pit of Carmen Copper Corp. in Barangay Biga, Toledo City, where a landslide began on Monday, Dec. 21, 2020, killing four miners. The search is ongoing for six missing miners. Photo on Page 2 shows the bottom of the pit. (Alan Tangcawan)

SEARCH and rescue operations continue at the Carmen Pit of Carmen Copper Corp. in Barangay Biga, Toledo City, Cebu Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2020, a day after a landslide caused a portion of the pit to collapse, killing four miners. Six workers remain missing. (Alan Tangcawan)

[WENILYN SABALO](#)

December 23, 2020

THE Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) 7, has issued a suspension order on Carmen Copper Corp. (CCC) directing the latter to immediately suspend its entire Carmen Pit mining operations following a landslide that killed at least four miners on Monday, Dec. 21, 2020.

Heart Rizarri, MGB 7 information officer, in a message to SunStar Cebu said the suspension order issued on Tuesday, Dec. 22, is a prelude to the conduct of an investigation on the incident.

The order came right after the death toll rose to four while six miners remained missing and unaccounted for.

Rizarri said an MGB team from the Mine Safety, Environment and Social Development Division visited CCC on Tuesday to conduct an assessment.

The team was led by MGB 7 Director Armando Malicse and DENR 7 Director Paquito Melicor Jr.

Malicse, in an interview with GMA 7's Balitang Bisdak, said the landslide involving "igneous rocks" was concentrated in Carmen Pit.

Search and rescue operations are being held in coordination with the Toledo City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office.

Toledo City Mayor Joie Perales has sought the help of the Philippine Coast Guard for divers and life boats that can help with the ongoing operations.

### CCC statement

"As of this time we are in close coordination and communication with the affected immediate families and will continue to extend the needed support and assistance. We humbly ask the general public to exercise caution and responsibility in distributing information out of respect to the affected families," the CCC said on Tuesday.

The company also thanked private groups and the Toledo City Government for extending valuable assistance in the search and rescue operations.



“We are also in close coordination and communication with concerned government agencies as we continue to conduct all necessary actions to assess and address the situation,” CCC said.

CCC has a 276-hectare active mining area out of 1,676 hectares of its total operating area.

Currently, Carmen Pit is the company’s only mine operations site. It is located in Barangay Biga, one of CCC’s four host barangays.

CCC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp., serves as the country’s principal producer of copper concentrate.

It ships copper concentrate mainly to smelters in China and Japan and to the Philippine Associated Smelting and Refining Corp. in Leyte Province.

### **Cash assistance**

Aside from aid given by the CCC to the landslide victims, the Toledo City Government will extend cash assistance to the families of the casualties.

John Layan, Toledo City information officer, said on top of the aid given by the CCC, the City Government will release cash assistance to the families of the casualties.

He, however, did not disclose the amount of the financial aid.

Layan said the CCC has been a “very compliant” company in terms of government requirements for their operations.

“Let’s focus first on the search and rescue. Let’s talk about accountability later,” Layan said in Cebuano.

For his part, Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office head Neil Sanchez said the landslide could not have been due to Tropical Depression Vicky as the typhoon had already exited PAR (Philippine Area of Responsibility) when the landslide occurred.

### **‘Badly treated’**

The families of more than 100 miners rushed to Carmen Pit immediately upon learning of the incident.

Biga Barangay Captain Pedro Sepada Jr. said barangay officials and the miners’ families were badly treated by the CCC who, he said, prevented them from entering the facility to check on the condition of their loved ones. Sepada said even the police sided with the CCC.

At 2 p.m. on Tuesday, the CCC management allowed 10 of them to enter the site; however, the company remained unclear about the status of the miners trapped inside, Sepada said.

All four miners who died were from the City of Naga and were working for Anseca, a CCC subcontractor.

Jody Grace Sepada, 25, whose husband, Reynante, remains missing, told Superbalita Cebu that Reynante had just recently returned to work when the tragedy struck. **(JOB, ANV, GPL)**

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1880961/Cebu/Local-News/Carmen-Pit-mining-operations-suspended>



# Carmen Copper halts mine operations

By Jonathan L. Mayuga  
December 23, 2020



Carmen Copper Corp. (CCC), an operating mine of Atlas Consolidated Mining Development Corp. based in Toledo City in Cebu, on Tuesday said an accident occurred in its mining site, which collapsed, killing at least four people.

“The incident was traceable to the incessant rains for the past several months and aggravated by Typhoon Vicky which hit parts of the Visayas, including Toledo City last Friday, December 18, 2020,” the company said in a statement.

The company said it has suspended all activities in the mining operations area to ensure the safety of its employees and contractors.

CCC said six more persons remain missing following the landslide that occurred at around 4:15 p.m. on Monday.

“The management of CCC is doing all the necessary action to assess and address the overall situation,” it said.

The continuous rain in the area that has prevented rescue attempts due to the risk of more landslides occurring in the site on Monday resumed Tuesday, with the hope of finding the six other miners underneath rubbles of mud and rocks.

Several miners were rushed to the Carmen Copper Hospital Tuesday afternoon following the landslide that happened at the Carmen Pit, CCC’s mine operations site.

The company said it is in close coordination and communication with the affected immediate families and will continue to extend the needed support and assistance.

“We humbly ask the general public to exercise caution and responsibility in distributing information out of respect to the affected families. We would like to extend our utmost gratitude to private groups and the Toledo City Government Emergency Response team for extending valuable assistance in our search and rescue operations,” it said.

“We are also in close coordination and communication with concerned government agencies as we continue to conduct all necessary actions to assess and address the situation.”

## Probe

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) said on Tuesday it will investigate the landslide.



MGB Director Wilfredo Moncano said the mine's operation is temporarily suspended pending the result of the investigation.

According to Moncano, the Toledo copper mine passed the Mining Industry Coordinating Council's independent audit this year.

According to its website, Carmen Copper has an operating agreement with Atlas Mining and it has exclusive operating rights over the in situ mineral resources and ore reserves of Carmen, Lutopan and biga mineral deposits or more commonly known as the Toledo copper mine which covers 1,674 hectares.

Carmen Copper resumed the Toledo mining operation in September 2007.

“Initial findings indicate that Typhoon Vicky exacerbated the already waterlogged limestone and mudstone layer from the prior typhoon that weakens its contact with the intrusive rock base. This is the material that went down to the pit bottom. A fault line called the Barot fault was also observed in the slide area and may have contributed to the landslide,” Moncano told reporters via text message.

Meanwhile, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) described the mining incident as “unfortunate.”

“Atlas is known for its strict adherence to the highest safety and health standards. Nevertheless, accidents happen in any industry. This is why the Chamber and its members are constantly looking for ways to further improve our safety and health protocols,” COMP said.

In a text message to the media, Rocky Dimaculangan said proof to this is the Chamber's adoption of the Toward Sustainable Mining initiative.

“The important thing is for the industry to learn lessons from incidents such as this to continue to improve on its protocols and practices. Undoubtedly the industry as a whole will absorb the lessons from this incident,” he said. *With VG Cabuag*



## Carmen Copper mine landslide death toll now at 4



Screenshot from the video sent to SunStar Cebu

December 22, 2020

ANOTHER worker of Carmen Copper Corporation (CCC) in Toledo City was retrieved from the mine site Tuesday, December 22, 2020, bringing the total number of fatalities from the landslide incident to four.

CCC, in a statement released to the media, said six mine workers remain missing as of 2:30 p.m. Tuesday while rescue operations are underway.

A landslide hit Carmen Pit, one of the three open pits of CCC, around 4:15 p.m. Monday, December 21, 2020.

CCC has suspended all activities in the mining area to ensure the safety of its employees and contractors.

“As of this time, we are in close coordination and communication with the affected immediate families and will continue to extend the needed support and assistance. We humbly ask the general public to exercise caution and responsibility in distributing information out of respect to the affected families,” CCC said.

“We are also in close coordination and communication with concerned government agencies as we continue to conduct all necessary actions to assess and address the situation,” CCC added.

A video shared to SunStar by one of the mine workers showed that earth movement was already monitored and mine workers were advised to stay away from drop-cut of Carmen 1 of Carmen Pit.

The radio conversation between two people showed that the drop-cut of Carmen 1 was already closed after earth movements were monitored.

However, two minutes after the conversation, the landslide happened.

MGB Regional Director Armando Malicse, DENR-Central Visayas Regional Executive Director Pacquito Melicor Jr. and a team from the Mine Safety, Environment and Social Development Division will conduct an assessment in the area Tuesday.

The bureau said it will release updates of the incident after the said assessment.

### **Assistance**

Meanwhile, Toledo City will be extending cash assistance to the families of the landslide victims.

John Layan, Toledo City Information Officer, said though the CCC will assist, the City will also give its own financial assistance to the families of the victims. He, however, did not disclose the amount of financial aid.



“As per information from our mayor, our assistance is now in place. We are just finalizing some documentary requirements,” Layan said.

He said the City Government has already provided logistical support to CCC for the search and rescue operation.

He added that Toledo City Mayor Joie Perales has requested assistance from the Philippine Coast Guard for divers and live boats that can help with the ongoing search and rescue operations.

“We just focus on the search and rescue. Later we will look into the accountabilities of what happened,” Layan added. **((MVG/With WBS/JOB))**



## Four dead, six missing in copper mine landslide in Cebu

**Published** December 22, 2020 2:19pm

By TED CORDERO, GMA News

Four people were killed while six others remain missing following a landslide at the Carmen Pit of Carmen Copper Corporation (CCC) in Toledo City, Cebu.

In a statement on Tuesday, CCC said that around 4:15 p.m. Monday, December 21, 2020, a landslide happened at the company's mine operation site.

CCC is an operating arm of listed Atlas Consolidated Mining Development Corporation (ACMDC) based in Toledo City.

The landslide claimed four lives, the miner said. Eleven people were injured in the incident.

“Following the statement regarding a slide incident at the Company's mine operations site, as of 1 p.m. December 22, 2020, the Company solemnly regrets to inform that this incident has claimed four lives,” it said.

“The Company continues its efforts to locate six more persons missing,” it added.

CCC said the incident was traceable to the incessant rains for the past several months and aggravated by Storm Vicky which hit parts of the Visayas, including Toledo City last Friday, December 18, 2020.

“As of this time we are in close coordination and communication with the affected immediate families and will continue to extend the needed support and assistance,” the company said.

“We humbly ask the general public to exercise caution and responsibility in distributing information out of respect to the affected families,” it added.



## Ongoing investigation

Sought for comment, Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Director Wilfredo Moncano said an official investigation is ongoing.

“The mine pit operation is temporarily suspended to determine the cause of the landslide,” Moncano said in a text message.

The MGB chief noted that the mine passed the Mineral Industry Coordinating Council (MICC) independent audit conducted this year and in 2017.

“Initial finding indicated that typhoon Vicky exacerbated the already waterlogged limestone and mudstone layer from the prior typhoons that weakens its contact with the intrusive rock base. This is the material that went down to the pit bottom,” Moncano said.

“A fault line called the Barot Fault was also observed in the slide area and may have contributed to the landslide,” he added.

CCC, meanwhile, said it is in close coordination and communication with concerned government agencies as it continues to conduct all necessary actions to assess and address the situation.

“Meanwhile, we have suspended all activities in the mining operations area to ensure the safety of our employees and contractors,” the company said. — **RSJ, GMA News**

Source: [https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/768983/four-dead-six-missing-in-copper-mine-landslide-in-cebu/story/?utm\\_source=GMANews&utm\\_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1FjOfI5W8X7pWrzihcX-fHc5v4PDNr7RFTbyxH\\_S71Tkh2gW\\_HNkkfeFI](https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/768983/four-dead-six-missing-in-copper-mine-landslide-in-cebu/story/?utm_source=GMANews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1FjOfI5W8X7pWrzihcX-fHc5v4PDNr7RFTbyxH_S71Tkh2gW_HNkkfeFI)



## 4 dead, 6 missing in Cebu mine landslide

[Evelyn Macairan](#) (The Philippine Star) - December 23, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Four persons died and six others were reported missing in a landslide at a mining pit in Toledo City, Cebu on Monday.

Pedro Sepada Jr., chairman of Barangay Biga, where the mine pit of Carmen Copper Corp. (CCC) is located, said the bodies of three of the victims were recovered at around 6 p.m. on Monday. The remains of another victim were pulled out at about 10:30 p.m. yesterday.

CCC said search and rescue operations for the missing are ongoing. Mining operations were suspended to ensure the safety of their employers and contractors.

The company said the landslide was “traceable” to successive days of rain in November and “aggravated” by Tropical Depression Vicky, which hit parts of the Visayas.

However, Neil Sanchez, head of the Cebu provincial disaster risk reduction and management office, said the landslide could not be connected to Vicky as the weather system had exited the Philippine area of responsibility when the incident occurred.

Philippine Coast Guard spokesman Commodore Armand Balilo said they sent additional search and rescue dogs to help locate the missing miners.

Balilo said they initially sent two K9 teams, consisting of two dogs and four handlers.

“We would assess the situation if there is a need to bring more trained dogs from Manila to Cebu. We could easily transport them using our Islander plane,” he said. — Le Antojado, Mae Fhel Gomos, Michelle Palaubsanon/The Freeman





## Mine landslide claims 4 lives at Toledo site

*posted* December 23, 2020 at 12:30 am

by [Othel V. Campos](#)

A mining project in Toledo City in Cebu said Tuesday the slide incident that happened Monday had claimed four lives.

Carmen Copper Corporation announced in an update that the company was doing its best to locate six more missing people.

“As of this time we are in close coordination and communication with the affected immediate families and will continue to extend the needed support and assistance. We humbly ask the general public to exercise caution and responsibility in distributing information out of respect to the affected families,” the company said in a statement.

The company also cited the efforts by private groups and the Toledo City Government Emergency Response team for extending assistance in the search-and-rescue operations.

Company officials blamed the non-stop downpour that further softened the earth on the mining grounds, resulting in dangerously slippery grounds.

The company said it was in close coordination and communication with government agencies to address the situation.

It has suspended all activities in the mining site area to ensure the safety of employees and contractors.

Carmen Copper is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Atlas Consolidated Mining Corporation. It has active mining operations in the Toledo Mines covering 1,645 hectares.

## 3 dead, 7 missing in Toledo City mining pit collapse

By: Delta Dyrecka Letigio - Multimedia Reporter - CDN Digital|December 22,2020 - 11:10 AM

TOLEDO CITY, Cebu — Three individuals were confirmed dead while seven others have remained missing following a landslide at the mining pit of the Carmen Copper Corporation in Toledo City in midwestern Cebu on Monday afternoon.



Contributed Photo

Personnel of the City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO) have been conducting search and rescue operations since 6 a.m. on Tuesday hoping to rescue the still missing miners.

As of 10:30 a.m. today, it remains clear exactly how many workers were inside the pit when the landslide happened.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Central Visayas (MGB-7) has also sent a team to Toledo Cito to inspect the pit and assess the current situation there.

MGB7 Regional Director Armando L. Malicse and DENR-Central Visayas Regional Executive Director Paquito D. Melicor, Jr. are also scheduled to visit the area.

In her message, Perales urged city hall employees to help the families of the deceased miners as a way of giving back to the mine, which is the biggest taxpayer in their city. / dcb

Source: <https://cebudailynews.inquirer.net/356148/3-dead-7-missing-in-toledo-city-mining-pit-collapse>



# 3 patay, 7 missing sa landslide sa minahan sa Cebu

On Dec 22, 2020



NASAWI ang tatlo katao, habang pito pa ang nawawala sa landslide na naganap sa mine site sa Toledo City, Cebu.

Ayon sa Cebu Provincial DRRMO, nangyari ang insidente Lunes ng hapon (Dec. 21).

Sa pahayag ng Carmen Copper Corporation, kinumpirma nitong tatlo na ang nasawi sa insidente. Nangyari ito sa Carmen Pit mine operations site.

Ang pagguho ng lupa ay dahil sa mga naranasang pag-ulan sa nagdaang mga buwan na pinalala pa ng pag-ulan dulot ng bagyong Vicky.

Source: <https://www.policefilestonite.net/2020/12/22/3-patay-7-missing-sa-landslide-sa-minahan-sa-cebu/?fbclid=IwAR3dVafa2eHESPsQP1FEEPJPnX-I0yotxbjLOjCRGIx3UFC2ux0hc4ZhJ8I>



## PCG-K9 team ipinadala sa gumuhong minahan



December 22, 2020 @ 5:25 PM 14 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Inatasan ni Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Commandant, Admiral George V. Ursabia Jr. ang pag-deploy ng K9 teams na tutulong sa isinasagawang search and rescue (SAR) operations sa nangyaring landslide sa isang minahan sa Toledo City Cebu.

Inisyal namang nagpadala ng isang K9 team na may kasanayan sa SAR operations si Commodore Nelson B Torre, Commander ng the Coast Guard K9 Force sa lugar na binubuo ng apat na personnel at dalawang working dogs para tumulong sa City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO).

Ayon sa PCG, walang humpay ang ginagawang operasyon mula alas-6 ng umaga ngayong araw, December 22.

“We have several SAR K9 teams on standby in Manila for further deployment, if necessary. We are already coordinating the issuance of their health clearances so they may safely and swiftly travel to Cebu right after augmentation request from the CDRRMO,” ayon kay Commodore Torre.

Sa pakikipag-ugnayan ng Coast Guard Station Cebu, karagdagang K9 teams mula sa Coast Guard District Eastern Visayas ang inaasahan ding dumating ngayong gabi sa Toledo City. **Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden**



# Philex Mining unit gets new 25-year term from DENR

December 22, 2020 | 12:05 am



PHILEXMINING.COM.PH

PHILEX Mining Corp. has announced that its subsidiary in Surigao del Norte has secured the renewal of its mineral production sharing agreement (MPSA) from the government.

In disclosure to the stock exchange on Monday, Philex Mining said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) had approved a new 25-year term of MPSA-149 under Silangan Mindanao Mining Co., Inc.

The company said the new term will start on Dec. 29, 2024.

“MPSA-149-99 XIII covers the Boyongan deposit in the Province of Surigao del Norte and is part of Silangan Mindanao Mining Co., Inc.’s Silangan Copper-Gold Project,” the company said.

Philex’s Silangan project is touted as one of the big ticket mining projects that can greatly increase the contribution of the local mining industry to the Philippine economy.

However, it has been affected by the ongoing ban on open pit mining imposed by the late former Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez in April 2017.

Open pit mining is a surface mining method that has been used by the mining industry for the extraction of minerals such as copper and gold.

During the third quarter, Philex Mining posted an attributable net income of P495.04 million, sparked by better revenues. The company’s revenues during the period rose 21.9% to P2.17 billion.

For the January-September period, Philex Mining said its net income more than doubled to P919.59 million, against the P439 million it posted last year.

On Monday, shares in Philex Mining at the stock exchange rose 5.27% or 27 centavos to end at P5.39 per piece.

Philex Mining is one of three Philippine units of Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd., the others being Metro Pacific Investments Corp. and PLDT, Inc. Hastings Holdings, Inc., a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc., has interest in *BusinessWorld* through the Philippine Star Group, which it controls. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/philex-mining-unit-gets-new-25-year-term-from-denr/?fbclid=IwAR2jpWFZ9Elrsdh83r4qU8opE9NcqsTHPjBqSY2d-Y2aO9FRYFfGctPkNHc>



## Bentahan ng pampasabog sa minihan, bantayan para 'di magamit ng NPA – Digong



December 22, 2020 @ 11:00 AM 20 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines – Ipinag-utos ni Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte sa Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) na mahigpit na bantayan ang bentahan ng pampasabog sa mga minahan para kontrahin ang mga pag-atake ng teroristang New People's Army (NPA).

Sa public address ni Pangulong Duterte, Lunes ng gabi ay sinabi nito na ang NPA, armed wing ng Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), ay kumukuha ng mga materyales na ginagamot sa pambobomba sa mga minahan.

"Karamihan diyan galing sa mina so that may double check tayo ngayon. It must be cleared by the police and supervised strictly," ayon sa Pangulo.

"Go to the commanding officer of the military there and let him know that you have bought these explosives para para 'pag ginamit na ninyo 'yan, mabantayan," dagdag na pahayag nito.

Inakusahan naman ni Pangulong Duterte ang mga komunista ng paglabag sa Geneva Convention dahil sa paggamit nito ng improvised explosive devices laban sa pwersa ng gobyerno.

"When the communists use it, they justify it. Gusto namin maglagay ng landmine din. Ang problema, bawal. Government cannot violate the law. Kayo wala naman kayong pakialam sa laws," aniya pa rin.

Magugunitang, inanunsyo ni Pangulong Duterte na ayaw na nito magdeklara ng ceasefire kasama ang NPA. *Kris Jose*

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/bentahan-ng-pampasabog-sa-minihan-bantayan-para-di-magamit-ng-npa-digong/?fbclid=IwAR000jYKcW6tVmaVIIXvYfzZGZkGF3AGJaNdfu0Yi02qL5zGmaeBeA7GOn0>

# Pangulong Duterte, ipinag-utos ang mahigpit na kontrol sa pagbebenta at paggamit ng pampasabog sa mga minahan

By [RadyoMaN Manila](#) - Dec. 22, 2020 at 8:06am



Ipinag-utos ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang mahigpit na pagkontrol sa pagbebenta at paggamit ng pampasabog sa mining operations para maiwasang mapasakamay ito ng mga rebeldeng komunista.

Sa kanyang "Talk to the Nation Address," ang pagbebenta at paggamit ng mining explosives ay dapat mayroong clearance mula sa mga pulis maging sa mga militar na nakatalaga sa lugar.

Naniniwala kasi ang Pangulo na ginagamit ng mga rebeldeng komunista ang mga pampasabog para atakehin ang mga tropa ng pamahalaan.

Nais ding malaman ni Pangulong Duterte kung gaano karaming pampasabog ang ibinebenta ng mga mining companies lalo na at maraming sundalo at pulis ang namatay dahil dito.

Kinuwestyon din ng Pangulo ang tila pag-justify ng mga rebeldeng komunista sa paggamit ng mga pampasabog.

Noong 2018, inatasan ni Pangulong Duterte ang environment authorities na bawiin ang lisensya ng mga mining firms na nagsu-supply ng pampasabog sa communist rebel group.

Source: <https://rmn.ph/pangulong-duterte-ipinag-utos-ang-mahigpit-na-kontrol-sa-pagbebenta-at-paggamit-ng-pampasabog-sa-mga-minahan/?fbclid=IwAR07FTMPD9FboT9ZARpqXxUvHvDr58cmFOMq2YCOzgyplRlhGfbx71KcE6A>



## IED ng NPA galing sa minahan – Duterte

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Dec 22, 2020

NEWS



Photo courtesy of pcoo.gov.ph



Hihigpitan ng gobyerno ang pagbebenta ng mga pampasabog na ginagamit sa mga minahan gaya ng dinamita at explosives dahil ginagawa umano itong improvised explosive device (IED) ng New People's Army.

Sa kanyang regular na mensahe sa bayan, sinabi ng Pangulo na karamihan sa mga landmine na itinatanim ng mga komunista laban sa tropa ng militar ay galing sa minahan.

Dahil dito, sinabi ng Pangulo na panahon na para higpitan ang pagbebenta ng mga dinamita at explosives sa mga kumpanya ng minahan para matigil na ang pamiminsala ng mga komunista.

“Iyang mga IED ninyo komunista, saan nyo kinukuha yan? Where do you get your explosive powder? Karamihan diyan galing sa mina,” anang Pangulo.

Inatasan ni Pangulong Duterte si Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Eduardo Año na kontrolin at higpitan ang pagbebenta ng mga gamit pampasabog sa mga minahan para hindi na makaporma pa ang mga komunista sa bansa. (Aileen Taliping)





This Dec. 22, 2020 photo shows the members of Tumandok Tribe being evicted in their homes in Puka Beach, Yapak, Boracay Island.

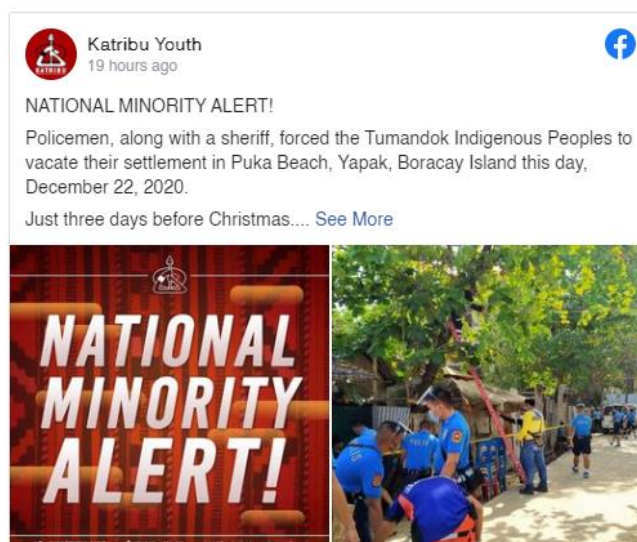
Photo from Katribu Youth and Gabriela Youth Laguna

## Tumandok IPs forced to vacate settlement in Boracay island – groups

[Rosette Adel](#) (Philstar.com) - December 22, 2020 - 7:59pm

MANILA, Philippines (**Updated 8:36 p.m.**) — A number of progressive groups on Tuesday reported that some members of the Tumandok community, one of the original inhabitants of Boracay island, were forced to vacate their settlement in Puka Beach, Yapak on the same island.

Jolina Tupaz, Tumandok chieftain, led the tribe in defending their right to ancestral domain. However, the court reportedly did not heed their demands.



The Republic Act No. 8371 or the "The Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997" states that ancestral domains "refer to all areas generally belonging to Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous People (ICCs/IPs) comprising lands, inland waters, coastal areas, and natural resources therein, held under a claim of ownership, occupied or possessed by ICCs/IPs."

The law also says that the state shall protect the rights of ICCs/IPs to their ancestral domains "to ensure their economic, social and cultural well being and shall recognize the applicability of customary laws governing property rights or relations in determining the ownership and extent of ancestral domain."

Groups said policemen conducted operations on Tuesday and forced them to vacate just three days before Christmas Day.



## Groups condemn eviction

“Tuluyan nang kinamkam ang lupang ninuno ng mga Tumandok ng Boracay sa Puka Beach, Yapak, Boracay island upang maisakatuparan ang development project ng administrasyong Duterte sa nasabing lugar,” Gabriela Youth Laguna said.

(The ancestral land of Boracay’s Tumandok in Puka Beach, Yapak, Boracay island were possessed to pave way for the development project of the Duterte administration in the area)

A resident who refused to be named confirmed the incident to **Philstar.com** and claimed that the force eviction was conducted without any land survey.

Under government guidelines, demolitions of homes need prior planning by the local government unit, which will include a census and physical survey of the area where people will be relocated from.

The community must also be given advance notice of the planned relocation and an explanation why it is necessary.

Progressive groups, meanwhile, condemned the eviction and called on the government to defend ancestral lands.

“Tahasang kinokondena ng Anakbayan LPQ ang pagpapalayas ng mga pulis sa mga ninunong residente ng Boracay Island. Ipinapakita lamang nito ang pagsasawalang bahala ng gobyerno sa mga katutubo,” [Anakbayan Las Piñas-Parañaque said](#).  
(Anakbayan LPQ vehemently condemns the forced eviction of ancestral residents of Boracay island by the police. This shows the disregard of the government to our indigenous people)

“Tahasang kinukondena ng Anakbayan Batangas ang walang konsiderasyong pagpapalayas sa mga Tumandok at pagsasawalang bahala sa kanilang mga kahilingan! Wakasan ang pagmamalupit at pagsasamantala sa mga katutubo sa kanayunan at sa kanilang lupang ninuno!” the group’s Batangas chapter also said.

(Anakbayan vehemently condemns the inconsiderate eviction of Tumandok and the disregard to their demands! End the violence and abuse to indigenous groups and their ancestral lands)

This eviction comes almost a month after at least nine people — Filipinos and expatriates — were arrested in Barangay Balabag and were briefly detained for allegedly occupying or building structures in protected forest lands.

## Recovery of Wetland No. 6

The Department of Agrarian Reform earlier said that the original inhabitants of the island, the Ati and Tumandok people, were moved to a 2.3-hectare walled community when the island was developed into a prime tourist destination in the early 2000s.

Last July, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Boracay Inter Agency Rehabilitation Management Group (BIARMG) evicted 31 families belonging to the Tumandok Tribe as it cleared the 8.5-hectare Wetland No. 6 located at Barangay Manoc-Manoc of illegal structures.

They were transferred to lands awarded to them by the government in March.

In March, DAR Secretary [John Castriciones said](#) that indigenous people belonging to both the Ati and Tumandok communities in Boracay were declared as agrarian reform beneficiaries and were given Certificates of Land Ownership Award.



DENR Director Natividad Bernardino, who serves as general manager of the BIARMG, meanwhile, [said the recovery of the Wetland No. 6](#) or the “Dead Forest” is in compliance with Executive Order (EO) 53 that created the DENR-led Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) to reverse the degradation of the world-famous resort island in 2018.

Through that EO, Duterte ordered the DENR “to relocate and demolish all establishments and structures encroaching on forestlands, wetlands and other water bodies in Boracay.”



The Community Environment and Natural Resources Office, DENR this month said clearing operations in the island will continue.

No demolition, eviction during pandemic

Barangay Yapak chairman Hector Casidsid on December 1 wrote to Malay Mayor Frolibar Bautista seeking an action plan on the demolition.

In his appeal, Casidsid cited the letter of the Presidential Commission for Urban Poor dated Sept. 29, 2020 furnished to them, which prohibited demolitions and evictions during the pandemic.

Republic of the Philippines  
Province of Aklan  
Municipality of Malay  
**BARANGAY YAPAK**  
Office of the Punong Barangay

Email: [barangayhallyapak@gmail.com](mailto:barangayhallyapak@gmail.com) Telephone No. 036-288-3905 Hotline: 195

1 December 2020

HON. FROLIBAR S. BAUTISTA  
Acting Municipal Mayor  
Malay, Aklan

Office of the Mayor  
MALAY MUNICIPAL ACTION CENTER  
Boracay Island, Malay, Aklan

RECEIVED

Date: 02 DECEMBER 2020  
Time: 9:10 am  
By: MARIANNE M. ANTONIA - AS

OFFICE OF THE CENRO  
BORACAY, MALAY AKLAN

RECEIVED

DATE DEC 02 2020

Re: An inquiry on the stand/response of LGU-MALAY on the Letter sent by PCUP

**Dear Hon. Bautista,**

Greetings in Peace and in spirit of Benevolence!

Article 3 of the Bill of Rights of the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines clearly stipulated two vested rights a Filipino citizen must enjoy, the Right to Due Process and the Equal Protection of the Law. These rights shall guard and protect people for whatever forms of abuses he/she may suffer from any individuals most specially when committed by the government itself or by a public officer.

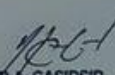
On that note, I would like to inform you the sentiments of the underprivileged and victims of injustice who are extremely disappointed of what had been doing to them, to their families and loved ones during this troubled time. This inhumane treatment truly deprived them from invoking those vested rights.

May I remind your good office of the letter sent by the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor(PCUP) dated 29 September 2020 which have been furnished to us fortunately, where it clearly mandated the prohibition on Demolition and Eviction during this time of pandemic. However, some unfortunate islanders and native-Boracaynon (Tumandok), occupying their land since time immemorial have been receiving Notice of Demolition and Eviction from the DENR and the National Bureau of Investigation commanding them to vacate immediately leaving them with no options. But what is truly heart breaking is seeing them helpless as no little amount of sympathy expressed by the local government officials to these people. The incident happened in Mt. Luho several days back is an evident manifestation of the unjust and illegal implementation of the law. People were claiming that no local government officials were there during the said painful event. Our mere presence is just enough to somehow make them feel that they have the local government to rely on. On this regard, I must say that we, from the local government failed and had been negligent of our duties.

Henceforth, in behalf of the underprivileged and soon to be homeless Boracaynons, I seek to inquire on your stand and response to the Executive Order 152 Series of 2002 directing No Demolition and Eviction during this time of great chaos. Please further enlighten these people of your plans and possible remedies to somehow address and lessen their griefs and agonies. I demand for a TANGIBLE and CONCRETE RESOLUTION from you being the local chief executive on the matters raised above.

Please remember that these least members of the society are the reasons why we come into power. They deserved explanation, They deserve just and humanitarian treatment, They deserved justice!

Thank you.



HON. HECTOR A. CASIDSID  
Punong Barangay

Cc: DLG-MALAY  
DENR CENRO Boracay  
BIATF

DENR  
NATIONAL TASK FORCE - BORACAY

RECEIVED

02 DEC 2020

10:09 am DDC



“In behalf of the underprivileged and soon to be homeless Boracaynons, I seek to inquire on your stand and response to the Executive Order 152 Series of 2020 directing No Demolition and Eviction during this time of great chaos,” the barangay captain wrote in a letter obtained by **Philstar.com**.

“Please further enlighten these people of your plans and possible remedies to address and lessen their griefs and agonies. I demand for a tangible and concrete resolution from you being the local chief executive on the matters raised,” he added.



# WFP initiates study that shows climate change as one of main drivers of global hunger

Published December 22, 2020, 1:17 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The World Food Programme (WFP) has initiated a study on the impacts of climate change to the Philippines' food security, nutrition, and livelihood, as well as to identify appropriate solutions.



(MANILA BULLETIN FILE PHOTO)

The launch of the research initiative titled “Climate Change and Food Security Analysis” was supported by the Climate Change Commission (CCC), various government agencies, experts from different industries, advocates for climate resilience, and members of the academe to launch in a virtual event held recently.

The report revealed that aside from conflict, climate change is one of the main drivers of global hunger.

Climate change impacts are also undermining agricultural production, where smallholder farmers are particularly vulnerable.

It also noted that more than 80 percent of the world's most food-insecure people are being hit by extreme weather events, such as drought and flooding, including other stresses, such as pest infestation and land degradation.

Changes in climate are affecting the production of staple crops—wheat, rice and maize—in both tropical and temperate regions. This situation is set to worsen as temperature increases and becomes more extreme, and rainfall becomes more unpredictable, it further pointed out.

In a statement, WFP OIC and Deputy Country Director Mats Persson cited that climate variability and extreme weather events are among the key drivers behind the recent increase in global hunger and one of the leading causes of severe food crisis.

“To fill in the undeniable gap between climate change and food insecurity, WFP forged a partnership with the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and initiated a research study of the Philippines Climate and Food Security Analysis,” he added.

Alliance of Biodiversity International and CIAT managing director Stephan Weise pointed out how the changing climate is impacting food security in ways and in intensity, which we have not experienced before.

“Just this year, for example, the Philippines had to bear the brunt of multiple typhoons that took lives, and caused damage and losses worth billions of pesos in the agriculture sector,” Weise said.

“If anything, this is a signal for organizations like ours to work closely together along with national authorities and institutions to build greater resilience in the food systems of the Philippines,” he added.



On January 10, 2020, President Rodrigo Duterte signed Executive Order No. 101, creating the Inter-Agency Task Force on Zero Hunger to put an end to the hunger problem in the country by 2030.

The WFP has extended its support for the task force and its initiatives to help the country achieve its goals.

CCC chief of Policy Research and Development Division Jerome Ilagan commended the Climate and Food Security Analysis as it is consistent with the country's Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement.

On the promise of food security, he said he expects that the results of the analysis will lead to a complementary and anticipatory adaptation mechanism that is founded on scientific drivers presented in partnership with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and local experts.

"The National Panel of Technical Experts from the Climate Change Commission can also share their views on how to do multi-scenario, multi-hazard impact projections; inasmuch as the productivity of the sector lies not only on the natural hazards but the complementary implications of other growth drivers such as land use, land industry optimization and incentives, green jobs creation, and the building of people's movements so that they could start investing consistently with the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act," he added.

The virtual event was organized by WFP in partnership with the CIAT, with the participation of the Zero Hunger Task Force.



# The ongoing climate change problem

[INTROSPECTIVE](#) - [Tony Katigbak](#) (The Philippine Star) - December 23, 2020 - 12:00am

This year has understandably been focused on combating the coronavirus and finding ways to keep people safe. It's been so completely encompassing that anything else that happened seemed like a small side story compared to the overarching plotline of the year. With a new strain emerging in the UK and panic starting to rise again, it eerily feels like we could be back to square one. I certainly hope not. Now that we're coming to the end of the 365-page book that is 2020, we're all still keenly focused on how the vaccine rollout will impact 2021, the new strain, and life as we know it. I guess in that aspect all we can do is wait.

However, despite COVID-19 being the big bane of everyone's lives this 2020, it's not the only problem we have to solve. In the Philippines where we experienced several major storms and terrible natural disasters, we should be extremely aware of the fact that climate change remains a huge issue that needs to be solved soon lest we sit back and watch more massive floods wreak havoc on our country.

We aren't the only ones falling victim to Mother Nature either. We've abused her long enough and she's rightfully angry. Earthquakes, landslides, massive forest fires, hurricanes, and more have been sweeping the earth and a large portion of these terrible weather phenomena can be linked to climate change and the rapid degradation of our environment.

Like the coronavirus, scientists have been sounding the alarm for years. And much like the coronavirus, people have not listened and still are not listening. Are we going to have to wait until it's spiraled completely out of control? I guess historically I already know the answer to that. Even with the severity of COVID-19, most people had to wait until it was do-or-die before even following the simplest protocols.

Honestly, there are many parallelisms to addressing climate change as there are to the coronavirus response. A lot of the countries that contribute the most to rising temperatures around the globe are first world countries. Many of these same countries refused to follow even the simplest safety protocols for COVID until the numbers had inflated so much they could no longer be ignored.

This leaves us all to wonder when we are going to get past the point of no return for climate change. It's coming soon. The Earth's core temperature has already increased significantly and it'll only be a matter of time before things go from bad to worse. Five years ago, the nations of the world – including the Philippines – met in Paris to discuss the world's climate problem. Back then they agreed to try to keep the rise in temperature to less than 1.5 degrees Celsius and made a commitment to take the necessary steps to make that happen.

Fast forward to today and carbon dioxide levels are at an all-time high. On record, the temperature has already risen 1.2 degrees and could even reach a three-degree increase in this century if we don't take drastic measures to change course. The UN Secretary-General had to raise the alarm again last weekend to remind everyone to do their parts as promised despite being in the throes of COVID-19.

China and other developing countries have said they are slowly doing their part and are calling on more developed countries to do their share as they contribute more. Thankfully incoming US President-elect Biden has vowed to return the US to the table and reduce their emissions after President Trump rejected the Paris Agreement. Hopefully, with the US recommitted and China doubling down, other countries will follow suit.



Here in the Philippines, even though our overall contribution is lower compared to that of other countries, we are also committing to lowering our emissions. The Department of Energy is looking into more opportunities for sustainable and renewable energy sources to figure in the country's future. That is reassuring and hopefully leads to more positive changes in the Philippines.

Of course, all of us can do our part as well. We need to lower our consumption and contributions to the problem. Reduce, reuse, and recycle is more important now more than ever with the growing problem of disposable masks and plastic face shields. If possible, use a washable mask, don't get flimsy face shields that you'll have to keep replacing. Additionally, bring eco-bags, save water, and walk or bike whenever possible. Let's not wait for it to become catastrophic before we commit to change.

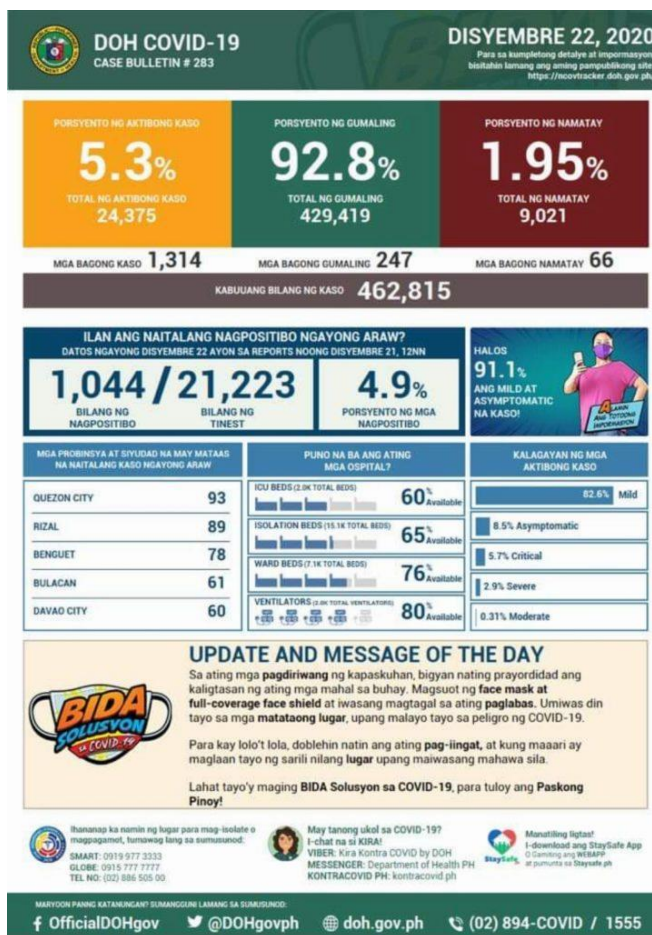
\* \* \*

This year has been rough, no doubt, but there are definitely still some blessings we should be thankful for and enjoy. Let us remember those this holiday season. Have a safe Christmas at home and here's to better and brighter days ahead! Merry Christmas!



# BREAKING: Mga nagpositibo sa COVID-19 sa Pilipinas, nasa 462,815 na

By Angellic Jordan December 22, 2020 - 04:14 PM



Mahigit 1,000 muli ang panibagong kaso ng Coronavirus Disease o COVID-19 sa Pilipinas.

Sa huling datos ng Department of Health (DOH) bandang araw ng Martes (December 22), umabot na sa 462,815 ang confirmed cases ng nakakahawang sakit sa bansa.

Sa nasabing bilang, 24,375 o 5.3 porsyento ang aktibong kaso.

Sinabi ng kagawaran na 1,314 ang bagong napaulat na kaso ng COVID-19 sa bansa.

82.6 porsyento sa active COVID-19 cases ang mild; 8.5 porsyento ang asymptomatic; 0.31 porsyento ang moderate; 2.9 porsyento ang severe habang 5.7 porsyento ang nasa kritikal na kondisyon.

Nasa 66 naman ang napaulat na nasawi.

Dahil dito, umakyat na sa 9,021 o 1.95 porsyento ang COVID-19 related deaths sa bansa. Ayon pa sa DOH, 247 naman ang gumaling pa sa COVID-19.

Dahil dito, umakyat na sa 429,419 o 92.8 porsyento ang total recoveries ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas.



# Gov't eyes to sign deal for 20M vaccines by end-Dec

By Lade Jean Kabagani December 22, 2020, 3:29 pm



National Policy Against Covid-19 chief implementer and vaccine czar, Sec. Carlito Galvez Jr. (Screengrab from PCOO)

**MANILA** – The government is eyeing to sign a deal for the procurement of another 20 million doses of AstraZeneca's coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) vaccine by the end of December, National Policy Against Covid-19 chief implementer and vaccine czar, Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. said on Monday night.

"Baka (maybe) this coming next week, either December 28 or 29, inaantay lang po namin 'yung — 'yung (we are just waiting for) Ministry of Health Regulatory Authorization ng U.K. at puwede na po naming pirmahan 'yung ano po, 'yung kontrata (of United Kingdom and we could sign the contract)," Galvez said during the public briefing of President Rodrigo Duterte.

Galvez said out of the 20 million doses of vaccine, around 10 million will be allocated for local government units (LGUs) and the private sector.

Galvez also reported a positive outcome of the government's negotiation with pharmaceutical companies to secure Covid-19 vaccines.

"Ang naging positive result po nito 'yung mga may-ari po ng kumpanya at saka po 'yung mga (The results are positive with those company owners and) country [representatives], they agree on strong support on non-profit–no loss concept," he said.

They also agreed to negotiate the Covid-19 vaccine at a lower price, he added.

"Katulad po nung ginawa ng AstraZeneca (As what the AstraZeneca did,) that they pegged their price to only five dollars a shot or more or less, siguro po mga aabot lang po ng 500 pesos po na sa dalawang shot na po iyon (I think it will only cost PHP500 per two shots of vaccine)," Galvez said.

With his talks with the country representative of the Serum Institute of India, a manufacturer of immunobiological drugs, Galvez said the company committed to comply with the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 also known as Government Procurement Reform Act.

Galvez said the government expects to get 30 million doses of the Novavax Covid-19 vaccine.

The government targets to vaccinate about 60 million Filipinos by the second and third quarter of 2021, Galvez said. **(PNA)**



## Rody to ink '21 budget Dec. 28

posted December 23, 2020 at 12:35 am

by [Vito Barcelo and Macon Ramos-Araneta](#)

President Duterte is expected to sign the proposed 2021 national budget into law in Davao City next week, his spokesman Harry Roque said Tuesday.

Roque said five lawmakers each from the Senate and the House of Representatives would fly to Davao for the signing set on Dec. 28.

The President is in his home province of Davao to spend Christmas with his family.

The Palace had earlier appealed to Congress for the timely approval of the P4.5 trillion budget proposal to avert the prospect of having the government operating on a reenacted 2020 budget next year.

The budget bill ratified by Congress includes a P72 billion allocation for the procurement of COVID-19 vaccines.

Roque said the President was expected to scrutinize the budget proposal and would readily veto any unlawful allocation he finds.

Senate President Vicente Sotto III said the 2021 budget would ensure an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The 2021 budget assures funding for the pandemic and assistance. Its priority is not just our health workers but about 70 percent of our people. They should be prioritized," Sotto said, referring to free immunization for the poor.

The passage of the budget is the biggest accomplishment of the Senate especially now that the country is in a pandemic, he said.

"We are just awaiting the President's signature," he said.



## 16.7 families affected by ‘Vicky’ – NDRRMC

posted December 22, 2020 at 10:40 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

The number of families affected by Tropical Depression Vicky has now reached 16,762, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) reported on Tuesday.

In its update, the agency said this is equivalent to 68,088 persons residing in 239 barangays in Central Visayas, Eastern Visayas, Davao Region, and Caraga.

Of this figure, 1,053 families or 4,791 persons are now being served in 48 evacuation centers while 1,180 families or 4,627 individuals are now being aided outside.

Also, 235 houses were reported damaged in Central Visayas, Davao Region, and Caraga.

Of these, 120 were classified as totally damaged while 115 were recorded as partially damaged. Meanwhile, the number of dead remained at eight with two injured and one missing.

Around P117,240,000 worth of infrastructure damage was also recorded in Bicol, Davao Region and Caraga while damage to agriculture was estimated at P5,272,835 in Davao De Oro.



# Some areas in Tuguegarao still flooded on Tuesday

**Published** December 22, 2020 11:29pm

Several areas in Tuguegarao were still flooded on Tuesday after heavy rains poured the past few days and caused rivers to overflow.

According to Joanne Ponsoy's report on "24 Oras," Barangay Linao East has been submerged for three days.

Residents worry that they might celebrate Christmas with the flood.

Meanwhile, residents of some barangays have already cleaning their surroundings in time for the holidays.

"Humuhupa na po 'yong tubig since tumigil na rin po 'yong ulan since yesterday so siguro malaking bagay din po 'yon," Tuguegarao DRRMO research and planning unit staff Zenart Villamar said.

Earlier, almost 6,000 individuals were evacuated due to flooding in Isabela and Cagayan as heavy rains poured, rivers overflowed their banks and Magat Dam released water.

The Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council said 5,912 individuals or 1,467 families were evacuated in the two provinces so far.

A total of 113 barangays were flooded in the two provinces.

The rains were due to the tail-end of a frontal system as well as the Northeast Monsoon (Amihan) enhanced by Tropical Depression Vicky. **-Ma. Angelica Garcia/NB, GMA News**



# 4 dams in Luzon open gates —PAGASA

Published December 22, 2020 3:59pm

By MA. ANGELICA GARCIA, GMA News

Four dams in Luzon opened their gates to release water, according to state weather bureau PAGASA on Tuesday.

As of 6 a.m., Angat Dam had three gates open at 3.0 meters.

Angat’s water level was at 215.71 meters, 3.0 meters higher than its normal high water level of 212 meters.

**PAGASA-HMD**  
@PAGASAFFWS

Dam updates as of 6:00 AM, 22 December 2020

Dam	Observation Time & Date	Reservoir Water Level (RWL) (m)	24 Hr. WL Deviation	Normal High Water Level (NHWL) (m)	Deviation from NHWL (m)	Gate Corral Elevation (m)	Deviation from Gate Corral (m)	Estimated % Release to NHWL (m) (24 Hr)	Gate Opening (meters)
ANGAT	5:00 AM 22 Dec	215.71	0.16	212.00	3.71	206.64	8.87		3 Gates / 3.0 m
	6:00 AM 22 Dec	215.55			3.55	206.78	8.77		
	6:30 AM 22 Dec	100.80			-6.40	-	-		
IPO	5:00 AM 22 Dec	99.80	0.70	101.00	-1.10	-	-		
	6:00 AM 22 Dec	79.62		80.16	-0.53	-	-		
	6:30 AM 22 Dec	79.71			-0.44	-	-		
LA MESA	5:00 AM 22 Dec	751.52	-0.06	752.00	-0.48	752.00	-0.48		2 Gates / 0.80 m
	6:00 AM 22 Dec	751.58			-0.42	752.00	-0.42		
	6:30 AM 22 Dec	574.52	0.24	575.00	-0.48	574.29	0.23		1 Gate / 0.50 m
BINGA	5:00 AM 22 Dec	574.29	0.24	575.00	-0.72	574.32	-0.04		1 Gate / 0.50 m
	6:00 AM 22 Dec	279.92		280.00	-0.08	275.34	4.58		
	6:30 AM 22 Dec	279.90			-0.10	275.42	4.48		
SAN ROGUE	5:00 AM 22 Dec	206.82	0.22	221.00	-14.18	218.51	-11.69		
	6:00 AM 22 Dec	206.80			-14.40	218.58	-11.90		
	6:30 AM 22 Dec	190.83		193.00	-2.17	192.72	-1.89		2 Gates / 4.0 meters
MAGAT	5:00 AM 22 Dec	190.83		193.00	-2.07	192.68	-1.76		4 Gates / 0.0 meters
	6:00 AM 22 Dec	287.58			-	-	-		
	6:30 AM 22 Dec	287.50			-	-	-		
CALIRAYA	5:00 AM 22 Dec	287.50			-	-	-		
	6:00 AM 22 Dec	287.50			-	-	-		
	6:30 AM 22 Dec	287.50			-	-	-		

6:47 AM · Dec 22, 2020

See PAGASA-HMD's other Tweets

Ambuklao Dam had two gates open at 0.80 meter.

Ambuklao’s water level was recorded at 751.52 meters, slightly higher than its normal high water level of 752 meters.

Binga Dam, meanwhile, had one gate open at 0.50 meter. Its water level was at 574.52 meters. Moreover, Magat Dam had two gates open at 4.0 meters.

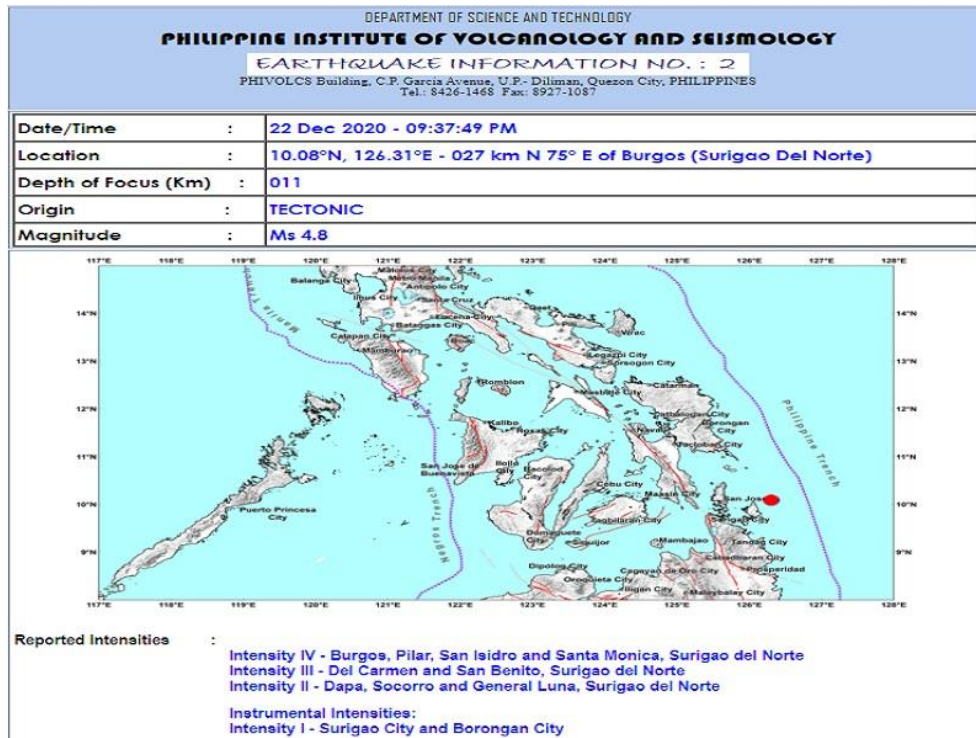
Magat’s water level was at 190.83 meters.—AOL, GMA News

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/768999/4-dams-in-luzon-open-gates-pagasa/story/>



# Burgos, Surigao del Norte niyanig ng magnitude 4.8 na lindol

By Mary Rose Cabrales December 23, 2020 - 12:20 AM



Niyanig ng magnitude 4.8 na lindol ang lalawigan ng Surigao del Norte.

Ayon sa Phivolcs Earthquake information no. 2, naitala ang pagyanig sa 27 kilometers northeast ng bayan ng Burgos, alas-9:37 gabi ng Martes (December 22).

Naitala ang sumusunod na intensities:

Intensity IV – Burgos, Pilar, San Isidro and Santa Monica, Surigao del Norte

Intensity III – Del Carmen and San Benito, Surigao del Norte

Intensity II – Dapa, Socorro and General Luna, Surigao del Norte

Naitala rin ang instrumental intensity 1 sa Surigao City at Borongan City.

May lalim na 11 kilometers at tectonic ang origin ng pagyanig.

Wala namang naitalang pagkasira ng mga ari-arian at aftershocks bunsod ng pagyanig.



## PH nuclear plan up for President's approval

By Jordeene B. Lagare

December 23, 2020

THE proposal to include nuclear energy as one of the country's energy sources is now awaiting the approval of President Rodrigo Duterte, according to a government official.

Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi said the Department of Energy (DoE) has already submitted the nuclear power plan to the President last Friday.

The submission is a requirement stated in Executive Order (EO) 116, signed by Duterte in July, which mandates a government study to determine and develop the national position for a nuclear power program in the country.

For this purpose, the Nuclear Energy Program Inter-Agency Committee (NEP-IAC) was created.

The NEP-IAC shall also formulate a national strategy to include a timeline in the preparation of a NEP, as well as measures to address infrastructure issues and make appropriate recommendations.

It will also review the existing legal framework, study the viability of nuclear energy, and recommend the necessary steps in the utilization of nuclear energy, as well as existing facilities such as the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant.

“The government shall conduct a study for the adoption of a National Position on the Nuclear Energy Program in accordance with the pertinent IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) guidelines and relevant laws, rules, and regulations,” said Duterte said in his directive.

Duterte stated in the EO that the state adhered to international standards on the safety, security and safeguards on peaceful development of nuclear energy.

Furthermore, the country has to satisfy the infrastructure requirements prescribed by the International Atomic Energy Agency for the development of a national infrastructure for nuclear power.

Cusi is hoping the government will decide “favorably” in the nuclear energy program crafted by the agency.

“We hope that it will be included in our energy mix. We submitted it, we did the work and, of course, [we have a] positive expectation,” he said.

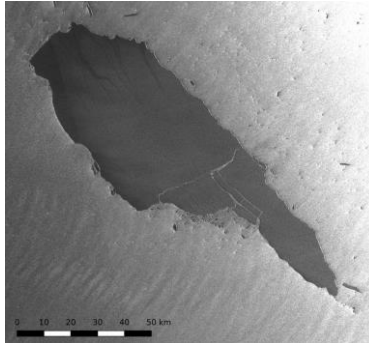




- Headline
- Editorial
- Column
- Opinion
- Feature Article

# Giant iceberg A68a shatters into large fragments

By Jonathan Amos BBC Science Correspondent Published 7 hours ago



COPERNICUS DATA 2020 / A.LUCKMAN

image caption A68a: The section that looks like a "finger" has snapped

**The giant iceberg that's been drifting through the South Atlantic looks to have experienced a major break-up.**

Tuesday's latest satellite imagery reveals major fissures in the tabular berg known as A68a, with huge blocks of ice starting to separate and move away from each other.

A68a, which calved from Antarctica in 2017, has been floating off the coast of South Georgia island.

Experts have been watching to see if it might ground in shallow water.

Were that to happen - and parts of the berg still could - it might cause problems for the British Overseas Territory's penguins and seals as they go about foraging for fish and krill.

The image at the top of this page comes from the EU's Sentinel-1 radar spacecraft. It was acquired at 07:17 GMT on Tuesday.

Although cracks were very pronounced on Monday, they hadn't by that stage cut right through A68a.

"Nearly three-and-a-half years since it calved away from Larsen C Ice Shelf, Iceberg A68a - the fourth largest on record - is finally beginning to disintegrate," observed Adrian Luckman from Swansea University, UK.

**U.S. National Ice Center**  
@usnatice

Icebergs A-68E and A68-F Calve from Iceberg A-68A in the South Atlantic Ocean!

10:31 PM · Dec 22, 2020

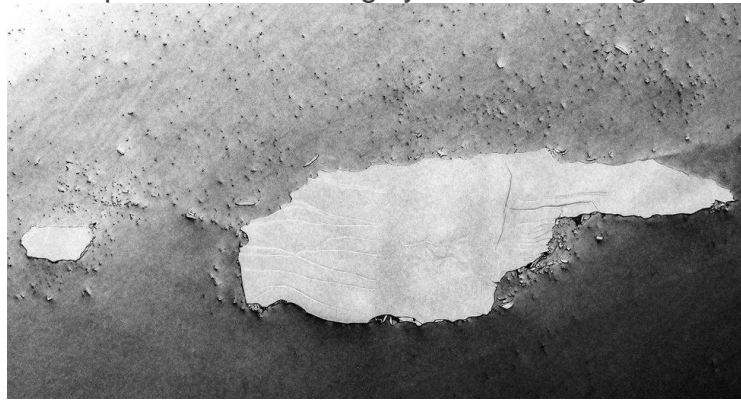
62 32 people are Tweeting about this



"As well as being one of the largest icebergs ever recorded, A68 must also be one of the most watched.

"With such a massive recent growth in the volume of satellite data and a huge improvement in the speed at which it can be made available, this capability has been put to good use in monitoring this huge iceberg on its journey from birth to destruction," he told BBC News.

The US National Ice Center operates the naming system for icebergs.



COPERNICUS DATA 2020 - P.MARKUSE

image captionHow the berg looked on Monday. Deep cracks but not yet fully fragmented

The bergs get given a prefix letter depending on which quadrant of the Antarctic they calve from, plus a number to designate their position in the sequence of big breakaways. Fragmentations then earn a suffix letter.

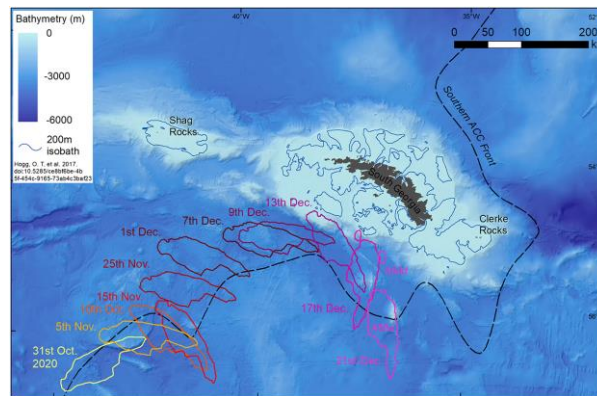
Just last week, a big piece broke from A68a and this was called A68d. You can see "d" trailing behind the main berg in another Sentinel-1 image from Monday processed by Pierre Markuse. Two of the largest fragments identified by Sentinel-1 on Tuesday have already been named A68e and A68f.



IS and mapping specialist at the British Antarctic Survey Laura Gerrish calculates the areas of the various fragments to be roughly:

- A68a - 2,600 sq km
- A68d - 144 sq km
- A68e - 655 sq km
- A68f - 225 sq km

*(Fragments A68b and A68c broke away a long time ago and are not in the immediate vicinity)*



BAS/LAURA GERRISH

image caption Laura Gerrish is tracking the berg around South Georgia

Although now much reduced in size, A68a is still imposing and could yet present a sizeable obstacle to South Georgia's foraging marine predators.

At the moment, all the berg fragments are entrained in a fast-moving stream of water known as the Southern Antarctic Circumpolar Current Front. This is likely to sweep the chunks around the island and then throw them north.

Satellites will monitor their progress as they skirt the shallow continental shelf. There are a number of places where the fragments could get caught and anchor in place.

When A68 first calved from Antarctica, it measured almost 6,000 sq km - about a quarter of the size of the Wales.

To put Tuesday's remnant A68a in some context - 2,600 sq km still bigger than Greater London, which covers about 1,500 sq km of land.

Why A68a has little to do with climate change

The iceberg came from a part of the Antarctic where it is still very cold - the Larsen C Ice Shelf. This is a mass of floating ice formed by glaciers that have flowed down off the eastern side of the Antarctic Peninsula into the ocean. On entering the water, the glaciers' buoyant fronts lift up and join together to make a single protrusion. The calving of bergs at the forward edge of this shelf is a very natural behaviour. The shelf will maintain an equilibrium and the ejection of bergs is one way it balances the accumulation of mass from snowfall and the input of more ice from the feeding glaciers on land. Larsen C calves big icebergs like A68 on decadal timescales.



# Climate change ruins Kashmir's 'red gold' saffron crop

posted December 22, 2020 at 08:05 pm

by [AFP](#)

By PARVAIZ BUKHARI

PAMPORE, India—On sweeping fields once blanketed in lush purple, a thin and bedraggled crop of flowers is all farmers in Indian-administered Kashmir's saffron-growing region Pampore have to show for this year's harvest.

Dry conditions blamed on climate change have seen yields of the world's most expensive spice halved in the past two decades, threatening the future of a cash crop that has brought wealth to the region for 2,500 years.



*In this picture taken on November 1, 2020, farmers work in a saffron field in Pampore, south of Srinagar. Dry conditions blamed on climate change have seen yields of the world's most expensive spice by weight down by half in the last two decades, threatening the future of a cash crop that has brought wealth to the region for 2,500 years. AFP*

"These fields used to be like goldmines," said Abdul Ahad Mir in Pampore, just south of Indian-administered Kashmir's main city Srinagar.

Saffron has long thrived there, and Mir's family was reared in the delicate work of plucking the lucrative but tiny crimson threads from purple crocus flowers.

"In my childhood we needed 80 men over a week to pick the flowers," Mir told AFP.

"Today our family of six finish it in a day."

Warming temperatures caused by climate change have made rainfall erratic, depleting the thirsty saffron fields of water. Shrinking glaciers across the Himalayan region have also cut water flows to the foothills downstream.

It takes around 160,000 flowers to yield one kilogram of the precious spice, which will sell for around \$1,350 in local markets.

But official figures show that harvests of the so-called "red gold" were just 1.4 kilograms per hectare in 2018—half the figure recorded in 1998.

Mohammad Ramzan Rather says his acreage in Pampore only produced around 30 grams of the crop this year, down from two kilograms 12 years ago.

The harvest season—which lasts for just two weeks at the end of autumn—has also been devastated by the coronavirus pandemic, as well as recent security lockdowns in response to a long-running insurgency in the disputed territory, claimed by both India and arch-rival Pakistan.

Ancient pride

Historians say saffron has been cultivated in Kashmir since at least 500 BC.

Locally the spice is added to traditional dishes and used as an ingredient in Kehwa, a sweet drink served during special occasions such as marriages.



Elsewhere in the world, it is prized for its use in cooking and cosmetics and can fetch prices of more than \$10,000 per kilogram on the international market.

Nearly 90 percent of the world's saffron is grown in Iran, but experts consider Kashmir's crop to be superior for its deep red color and distinct aroma.

In 2010, Indian authorities sought to halt the impact of climate change by launching a \$54-million fund to introduce modern agricultural technology to farmers.

Authorities have touted it as a success, claiming it has rejuvenated Kashmir's 3,700 acres of saffron fields.

But farmers disagree. They have ripped up plastic irrigation pipes that are now strewn across fields, saying they bring little water and make it harder to till the land.

Others say high-yield seed varieties introduced under the scheme have ruined their crops.

Jalal-ud-Din Wani said some farmers were turning their land into orchards because apples need less water. Though he said the government's intervention had failed, Wani believes that the luck of some farmers may improve.

If they stick to traditional methods of farming the crop, he said, "there is still a sliver of chance to revive it."



# Warning from the world's worst natural disasters in 2020

By [Atty. Josephus Jimenez](#)(The Freeman) - December 23, 2020 - 12:00am

I do not wish to spoil your Christmas with these very disturbing things. But I need to forewarn you, guys, about the many fearful things to come. The global warming has started to make itself felt and feared worldwide. Nature is getting back at man's insatiable greed and recklessness. The whole world should discern the indubitable signs that many disasters are coming to hit us.

Earthquakes, hurricanes, typhoons, floods, and bushfires, locusts and pests, pestilence and pandemics are the series of revenge from an overly abused, devastated and ravaged natural environment. Humanity is being forewarned.

Let us review the ten worst natural disasters in 2020 and reflect on our own mindless ravaging of Mother Earth. First, the global COVID-19 pandemic; second, Australia bushfires; third, the flash floods in Indonesia; fourth, the Philippines' volcano eruption; fifth, the earthquakes in China, Iran, Russia, Turkey, the Caribbean and the Philippines; sixth, the swarms of locusts in Asia, East Africa, India and the Middle East; seventh, the cyclone Amphan in Bangladesh and India; eighth, the forest fires in west California and in Uttarakhand, India; ninth, the Assam floods in India; and tenth, the Green Snow in Antarctica.

The Covid crisis is deemed a natural disaster because it is driven by a living virus brought about by something wrong in our natural habitat. As of this writing, 72.2 million people worldwide have been infected, with 1.7 million deaths and 47.1 million having recovered. The USA leads with 16.4 million infected and more than 300 thousand deaths. India follows with 9.9 million infections and 144 thousand deaths. Brazil has 7 million infected and 182 thousand dead. France has 2.4 million infections and 47 thousand deceased. The UK and Italy both have 1.9 infected and 65 thousand dead, followed by Turkey with 1.9 million infected also but with just 17 thousand deaths. The Philippines is number 28, and has only 450 thousand infections and less than 9,000 deaths.

The Australian bushfires, called the black Summer was deemed one of the biggest conflagrations in all history with more than 47 million acres of forestlands destroyed, with millions of flora and fauna dead, over 9,000 buildings and homes destroyed, and more than 400 dead caused directly and indirectly by it. It started in October 2019 and was still burning towards the end of January 2020. In the Indonesia floods on the first of January, 4 million people were displaced and about 100 died and many more missing and unaccounted. Rivers and canals overflowed destroying entire towns and communities and inundating urban and rural centers alike. The Taal Volcano eruption in January caused more than 2,000 volcano induced tectonic earthquakes, out of which 176 were felt. It dislocated more than 8,000 people and destroyed homes, crops and killed farm animals.

While the global pandemic continued to bring sufferings to the people worldwide, no less than 45 major earthquakes hit at varying times respectively in China, India, Iran, Turkey, the Caribbean and the Philippines. Hundreds of buildings were destroyed, thousands of people died, billions worth of crops and properties were destroyed. People suffered a lot and epidemic follows after natural disasters with the destruction of water supply and electrical connections. Then, many swarms of locusts descended in the farms and forests and plantations in East Asia, Africa, India and the Middle East eating in matter of few minutes foods enough to feed 35,000 people. Cyclone Amphan hit India and Bangladesh, killing more than 30 people and destroying homes, causing landslides and dams to burst, inundating rice fields and devastating communities and settlements. It was a category 5 hurricane that terrified millions in the poverty-stricken localities. There was also a forest fire in Uttarakhand, India which caused hundreds of kilometers of forests and caused multiple deaths and destructions.



Finally, snow algae grew in Antarctica changing the color of the entire mountains causing freezing temperature. This rare phenomenon is still being studied, whether good or bad. But since it started, the temperature has attained unprecedented of below zero freezing points that caused destruction of faunas, including penguins, seals and other marine animals. It also killed some floras and seaweeds, and disturbed the balance of the marine life. I hope that as this year ends, a new ray of hope shall usher into humanity and that we shall have a much better 2021. I'll drink to that and keep praying with fingers crossed.



# Making biodegradable packaging from wound dressing scraps

AFP Relaxnews / 12:19 PM December 22, 2020



Chemists at Brazil's São Paulo State University are using waste from the manufacture of wound dressings to make a biodegradable film suitable for food packaging. Image: IStock/editorial\_head via AFP Relaxnews

Plastic, the star material of the 1950s, is now public enemy number one for the planet in terms of polluting materials. Still widely used in our day-to-day lives, plastic continues to poison the environment. However, teams throughout the science world are exploring more eco-friendly alternatives. Chemists in Brazil, for example, are using industrial waste to make a biodegradable film suitable for food packaging.

Based at Sao Paulo State University (UNESP), the scientists collected waste scraps from the manufacture of wound dressing biofilms, which they transformed into a durable biodegradable film suitable for food packaging. This next-level upcycling uses hydroxypropyl methylcellulose (HPMC) and bacterial cellulose scraps — both of which are sustainable raw materials — left over from industrial processing.

“We set out to fill the HPMC matrix with bacterial cellulose nanocrystals in order to enhance its properties. We also wanted to create greener protocols for the development of novel composites, from the material itself to its origin, so we included the reuse of industrial waste in the project,” explained Márcia Regina de Moura Aouada, a co-author of the article [published](#) in the Applied Material & Interfaces journal on Sept. 16.

The bacterial cellulose scraps from a factory making wound dressing biofilms are first milled into a powder. Then they undergo sulfuric acid hydrolysis to obtain a bacterial cellulose nanocrystal suspension. This is then mixed with HPMC diluted in water to produce a film-forming dispersion.

Films made of HPMC and other biopolymers can have low mechanical strength compared to traditional films derived from petroleum. However, adding bacterial cellulose improves these properties.

“Bacterial cellulose can be produced in the laboratory all year round, regardless of weather and environmental conditions. It’s a purer molecule and the production process generates less pollution,” said Aouada. Another advantage of this material is its high tensile strength, meaning it can withstand certain loads or stresses without breaking.





The next step for the scientists will involve testing other polymer dispersion techniques, comparing them to the use of HPMC and assessing their biodegradability.

“Our main focus is on finding substitutes for materials not considered ecologically correct, such as petroleum products. Such substitutes include biodegradable composites derived from renewable resources,” concluded Aouada. *CC*