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NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Cimatu blames public as trash litters Manila Bay dolomite project

Published July 22, 2021 9:33pm



Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu blamed the public for the piles of trash swept toward Manila Bay that nearly covered the controversial "white sand" or "dolomite" beach project of the department.

In Emil Sumangil's report on "24 Oras," Cimatu said there was nothing wrong with the design of the dolomite beach.

"Ang nakikita kong pumapasok diyan sa Manila Bay Walk ngayon ay basura nanggagaling sa other places," he said.

He said he has coordinated with several local government units to impose fines those who will be caught littering in the area.

Cimatu said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will soon launch a proper waste disposal project.

But while it is still in the process of planning, he said the DENR will continue to conduct cleanup drives.

Earlier, trash and water hyacinths were [washed ashore](#) in Manila Bay's dolomite beach due to incessant rains brought by enhanced southwest monsoon.— Ma. Angelica Garcia/LDF, GMA News

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/metro/796421/cimatu-blames-public-as-trash-litters-manila-bay-dolomite-project/story/>



Accumulated trash on 'dolomite beach'

Mores Herais, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jul 23 2021 02:15 PM | Updated as of Jul 23 2021 04:31 PM



Personnel from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Manila Department of Public Safety (DPS) collect trash that have accumulated on the shores of the 'dolomite beach' in Manila on Friday. Heavy rains and lashing waves overnight brought on by the habagat deposited tons of trash along the beach, which is part of an ongoing rehabilitation project of the Manila Bay.



Task Force Build Back Better to start Phase 2 of the Marikina River Restoration Project

Published on: July 22, 2021
By PIA-NCR



The Task Force Build Back Better (TF-BBB) will begin its dredging activities for Phase 2 of the Marikina River Restoration Project in Barangay Santolan, Pasig City on Wednesday, 21 July 2021.

A short ceremony to be officiated by DENR Secretary and TF-BBB Chairperson Roy A. Cimatu and Pasig City Mayor Victor "Vico" Sotto will mark the start of Phase 2 of the project.

The Marikina River Restoration project was launched by TF-BBB following the devastation and flooding caused by typhoons Rolly (international name: Goni) and Ulysses (international name: Vamco) in Metro Manila last year.

Experts have pointed out that one reason behind the flooding—which partially or fully submerged more than 40,000 homes in Marikina City alone—is the reduced capacity of the Marikina River to receive and drain excess rainwater. This prompted Sec. Cimatu to order Regional Executive Director Jacqueline A. Caanacan of DENR National Capital Region to conduct aerial and ground survey of the waterway and to determine encroachments by comparing the survey results with official land records.

Last February, the TF-BBB launched the Marikina River Restoration project at Barangay Industrial Valley Complex in Marikina City together with Marikina Mayor Marcelino "Marcy" Teodoro. Phase 1 of the project involved the removal of identified encroachments, dredging, and widening of Marikina River along Barangays Barangka, Calumpang, and Industrial Valley Complex.

Sec. Cimatu promised Mayor Marcy to complete Phase 1 of the project within seven months or less. The project, however, was completed two months ahead of the deadline.



Task Force Build Back Better to start Phase 2 of the Marikina River Restoration Project

Phase 1 covered a total area of 6,936 square meters and dredged material amounting to 41,625 cubic meters.

Sec. Cimatu is set to hand over the completed project to Mayor Marcy in a short ceremony preceding the launch of Phase 2 at Olandes area, Barangay IVC in Marikina City.

Phase 2 of the project, on the other hand, will consist of the removal of identified encroachments on the stretch of Marikina River covering parts of Barangay Santolan and Barangay Ugong in Pasig City.

Aside from the dredging operations to be conducted by the Department of Public Work and Highways (DPWH), DENR, through its regional office in the National Capital Region, will help in the restoration of the riparian ecosystem through bamboo tree planting and other activities.

RED Caancan pointed out that ecosystems restoration is just as important as the dredging operation and will complement efforts to increase the flood carrying capacity of the Marikina River.

“When we can successfully replant easements with appropriate plant species, we will not only help stabilize the riverbanks but regulate water flow in Marikina River”, she explained.

In line with this, RED Caancan ordered the Conservation and Development Division (CDD) and Field Offices to strengthen its coordination with the local government in the identification and development of planting areas. Just the same, she ordered the team in charge of the identification and demarcation of legal easements to assist and ensure that identified planting areas will not be affected by future infrastructure projects or developments.

“We need verified information in demarcating legal easements so we are mobilizing our survey team”, RED Caancan explained. “The work of TF BBB in Metro Manila is far more complex in Metro Manila as parts of Marikina River are either occupied by illegal structures or have claimants”, she added.

The TF-BBB was created through Executive Order No. 120, S. 2020 issued by President Rodrigo Duterte in November of last year. The task force aims to strengthen the rehabilitation and recovery efforts in typhoon-hit areas and is chaired by the DENR Secretary and co-chaired by the DPWH Secretary. ###

(REGIONAL PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE - DENR National Capital Region)

Header Photo Courtesy of PTV (via Clay Cleizl Pardilla)



Congress pressed on legislation to enhance enforcement of environmental laws

Published July 23, 2021, 12:56 PM

by [Czarina Nicole Ong Ki](#)



Commission on Human Rights (CHR)

Congress has been asked to pass immediately the proposed legislation on the creation of the Environmental Protection and Enforcement Bureau (EPEB) to strengthen the enforcement of the country's environmental laws.

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) said the importance of the legislation was tackled during the 4th National Environmental Law Enforcement Summit held last July 14 to 16.

It said the National Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee – Subcommittee on Environment and Natural Resources (NALECC-SCENR) and other participating agencies signed Joint Resolution No. 02 Series of 2021.

It pointed out that the resolution tackled the inability of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to properly perform environmental protection and enforcement.

The resolution also stressed that the DENR does not even have its own dedicated bureau to enforce environmental and natural resources laws it is mandated to implement.

Last March 3, a joint hearing of the House Committee on Government Reorganization and Committee on Natural Resources was held for the deliberations of six proposed measures to strengthen environmental laws. Four of the six House Bills (HBs) push for the creation of the EPEB within DENR.

CHR Spokesperson and lawyer Jacqueline Ann de Guia said that one of the country's most pressing environmental concerns is the increasing number of fallen environmental rights defenders and law enforcers whose lives, liberties, and security were curtailed in the line of duty.



Congress pressed on legislation to enhance enforcement of environmental laws

De Guia said that the Philippines has been declared by the independent watchdog group Global Witness as the deadliest country for land and environmental defenders.

She said: "As such, CHR stresses that strengthening institutions to empower environmental rule of law is central to achieving sustainable development. There is a need to integrate environmental needs with the essential elements of the rule of law, and provide the basis for improving environmental governance."

She stressed that the CHR hopes for the Senate and the House of Representatives' expedient certification of the proposed bill as urgent since this will give meat to existing environmental laws.

"This is to also ensure that guarantees and protection will be accorded to environmental frontliners against any attacks, harassments, and retaliation from violators and criminals; and that the legislation will genuinely contribute in mitigating the environmental degradation and biodiversity loss in the Philippines," she added.

DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu had also expressed hopes for the immediate passage of EPEB bill into a law.

"What we are seeing is a sense of urgency and concerted effort at the House of Representatives and the Senate to reform the implementation of environmental laws of the land and establish a strong institution whose singular task is to be the government's backbone in running after violators of our environmental laws like illegal loggers and wildlife poachers," Cimatu said.



Illegal sand quarrying in Leyte town bared

By [Nestor L. Abrematea](#)

July 24, 2021

TACLOBAN CITY, Leyte: The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Eastern Visayas has confirmed rampant illegal sand and gravel quarrying in Barugo, Leyte.

Margarito Jerry Barreto, chief, Mine Management Division of MGB-DENR 8, said a field inspection and investigation conducted by their technical personnel found out the unlawful activity at Barangay Poblacion in Barugo.

Barreto added a group of residents from Barangay Hilaba has been manually extracting sand and gravel along Himanglos River in the town.


The MGB has written Barugo Mayor Ma. Rosario Avestruz and advised her to stop immediately further quarrying without a valid permit, he said.

According to Barreto, the illegal sand and gravel extraction is a violation of Section 1003 of Republic Act 7942.

The MGB has asked Avestruz to report illegal quarrying activities in Barangay Poblacion, he said.

The illegally sourced sand and gravel are allegedly being patronized by local private contractors in Barugo town.



 **News5** ✓
12h · 🌐

Nasabat ng mga otoridad ang nasa 477 piraso ng hardwood na lauan mula sa isang ten-wheeler truck sa Surigao Baseport, Surigao City. Ilegal itong pinutol at ilinago sa mga coco lumber na nasa truck, at kulang umiango ang mga dokumento at permit ng driver, ayon sa mga operatiba ng PNP, Philippine Ports Authority at DENR.

Tinatayang nasa P794,000 ang halaga ng mga ito at dadalhin sana sa Cebu gamit ang RoRo. Nahaharap ngayon ang driver sa paglabag sa R.A. 7161 o ang Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines.

📍 Philippine Coast Guard - Surigao del Norte

See Translation





Endangered giant clam gets much-needed lift

Published July 23, 2021, 5:27 PM

by [Manila Bulletin](#)



First hatchery-bred giant clams in Palawan released into the wild at a special protection marine zone in Malampaya Sound in Taytay, Palawan on July 1, 2021. (Contributed photo/MANILA BULLETIN)

The Philippines's true native giant clam species, scientifically called the *Tridacna gigas*, is about to get a needed lift to get it out of local extinction.

Led by the Malampaya Foundation, Inc. (MFI), several groups have banded together to ramp up catalytic restocking of the said species in effectively managed marine-protected areas (MPA's) in Northern Palawan and Verde Island Passage.

Tagged as the String of Pearls project, the initiative aims to help revive the natural stocks of giant clams, abalone, and top shell in select Philippine reefs through marine restocking in partnership with the Western Philippine University (WPU), the Palawan State University, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development.

In 2012, MFI partnered with the WPU to help improve the hatchery production of abalone and topshell juveniles to catalyze trial culture as potential livelihood for fisherfolks and stock enhancement in MPAs.

The work evolved as the String of Pearls Project when giant clams were added as focal species thru the guidance of the late MFI Trustee and National Scientist Dr. Edgardo Gomez. In 2017, after a lead from WPU, five breeders of *Tridacna gigas* were confirmed by Dr. Gomez as Philippine-native. Declared to be locally-extinct since the 1980s, the five healthy clam breeders have been thriving well under the care of a private resort in Honda Bay, Puerto Princesa, Palawan.



Endangered giant clam gets much-needed lift

Due to its low population and survival rate of less than 1% in the wild, the Philippine-native *Tridacna gigas* species is hard to propagate thus the need for hatchery facilities.

Upon reaching the size of a thumbnail (~20mm), the baby clams are transferred to nursery sites in the wild and kept for 8 months to a year before the larger individuals (>20cm) are carefully selected and released into the wild.

MFI and its partner institutions and representatives from the private resort spearheaded the first in-situ spawning of the clam species to help increase their number. The hatchery facility of the WPU in Binduyan, Puerto Princesa City houses majority of the activities for the String of Pearls Project. As of February 2021, a total of 2,300 clams have been restocked in various MPAs in Northern Palawan.

"We at MFI, together with our advocacy partners, envision a wider distribution of the Philippines' true native giant clam *Tridacna gigas* throughout the country's protected reefs by 2025. With the continued protection of restocked reefs in effectively-managed MPAs, the Philippines' true native giant clam *Tridacna gigas* may come out of extinction status in 15-20 years," said MFI Executive Director

Karen

Agabin.

The Philippines' marine biodiversity provides a plethora of benefits for Filipinos including food, medicine, livelihood, and oxygen. However, over the last few decades, there have been many problems facing the country's marine ecosystems including pollution, decline in fish catch rates, coral reef bleaching, and habitat alteration.

MFI has been helping establish, expand, and manage over 335,000 hectares of marine-protected areas (MPAs) and marine management zones with communities, local governments, and national agencies in Palawan, Batangas, and Oriental Mindoro since 2013.

"This has been one of our major investments," Agabin said. "There is a stark contrast between poorly-managed reefs and properly-managed MPAs. If effectively managed, MPAs can help accelerate the restoration and sustainable use of coastal and marine resources. They can also help regenerate and rebound fisheries of the country," she further emphasized.



[VOLUNTEERS CLEAN UP 'DAGAT NG BASURA'](#)

JUL 23, 2021, 3:51 PM



Mike Taboy
Photographer

Volunteers and employees from the Manila City Hall remove garbage and other debris that washed up along the Roxas Boulevard in Ermita, Manila Friday (July 23).

Gigantic waves sent trash mounds along the boulevard and on the "dolomite" beach near the United States Embassy at the height of thunderstorms the previous day. (MT)

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/168722493140749/posts/4458297297516559/?app=fbl>



MMDA wants estero cleanup as community service for litterers

Published July 23, 2021 9:49pm



People caught not properly disposing of their garbage may soon find themselves wading through muck and sewage water.

This after the Metro Manila Development Authority on Friday said it is considering punishing violators by letting them clean up clogged esterros and waterways as part of their community service.

"Gusto ko maramdaman mo kung gaano kaimportante. Paglinisin kaya kita nang limang oras ng kanal? Kunin mo lahat iyan. Tanggalin mo sa kanal para mahal in mo mismo yung nililinis mo," MMDA chair Benhur Abalos said of the plan to use drainage clean-up as an alternative sanction to the usual fine and prison term.

(I want you to feel how important this is. What if I tell you to clean up canals for five hours straight? Collect all that. Take them out of the canal so you would learn to appreciate the cleanliness of your surroundings.)

In a report on GMA News' 24 Oras, Abalos also said he is also considering deploying marshals specifically tasked to apprehend litterers.

The MMDA has so far collected 15 truckloads of garbage all over Metro Manila after conducting declogging and desilting operations during the past few days of rain.

The MMDA said in the next one to four years, floods in Metro Manila could be a thing of the past as the World Bank planning to fund 20 pumping stations. -MDM, GMA News



ABS-CBN News

16h · 🌐

LOOK: Truckloads of garbage were removed from the San Andres pumping station after Thursday's heavy downpour.

Abalos explains plastic waste, wood and other garbage blocking pumping stations have aggravated Metro Manila's flooding problem. | via Bianca Dava, ABS-CBN News





MMDA sa publiko: Basura itapon nang tama



July 23, 2021 @ 6:32 PM 13 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – PLANO ng Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) na magtalaga sila ng kanilang mga “marshals” na ang layunin ay manghuli ng mga pasaway na magtatapon ng kanilang basura sa kalsada na nagiging sanhi ng pagbaha sa Kalakhang Maynila.

Ito ang ipinahayag ni MMDA Chairman Benhur Abalos kasabay ng isinagawa nitong inspeksyon sa San Andres Pumping Station sa Maynila kung saan naabutan nito ang madaming nakuhang basura dito.

Giit ni Abalos, kasabay ng kanilang isinasagawang mga clean-up operations ay dapat gawin ng publiko ang kanilang responsibilidad hinggil sa tamang pagtatapon ng kani-kaniang mga basura upang hindi na umano ito maging dahilan ng pagbabara sa daluyan ng tubig lalo na sa kanilang mga pumping station na nagdudulot ng pagbabaha.

“It will be a never-ending cycle. People throw garbage, then we conduct cleanup operations. It’s time we break the cycle. Let us exercise discipline in managing our trash properly,” ani Abalos.

“I am appealing to everyone, let us stop throwing garbage on the streets. We shall deploy marshals to apprehend violators and let them clean waterways by way of community service in order to teach them a lesson in caring for the environment,” dagdag pa ni Abalos.

Nabatid na regular na nagsasagawa ng declogging at dredging operation ang mga tauhan ng Flood Control and Sewerage Management Office ng MMDA sa mga kanal at daanan ng tubig sa mga pangunahing daanan sa Metro Manila. Ang programa ay isa sa mga nakakatulong na hakbang ng ahensya bago pa man magsimula ang tag-ulan.



MMDA sa publiko: Basura itapon nang tama

“The agency has 67 pumping stations located in strategic areas in Metro Manila all operational this rainy season,” saad ng MMDA.

Samantala, sinabi ni Abalos na pinaplano na ng MMDA at ng DPWH ang pagsasailalim sa modernisasyon at rehabilitasyon ng mga pumping station sa ilalim ng Metro Manila Flood Management Project.

Sa lalim ng MMFMP, nasa 20 bagong mga pumping station ang nakatakdang itayo sa loob ng apat na taon. Kabilang na dito ang Cutcut sa Pasay; Romualdez sa Manila; Maytunas sa Mandaluyong-San Juan; Buhangin sa Mandaluyong; Casili sa Caloocan-Manila; Ilugin River sa Pasig; Isla sa Valenzuela, Damayang Lagi, Del Monte, Dona Imelda, Kalusugan, Mariblo, Masambong, Matalahib-Talayan, Progreso, Roxas, Sobrepena, Sta. Cruz, Talaya, asa Tatalon sa Quezon City. JAY Reyes



EDITORIAL- Paralyzed by floods... again

(Philstar.com)

- July 23, 2021 - 12:00am



Even with face-to-face classes suspended and other pandemic restrictions, traffic slowed to a standstill in many parts of Metro Manila and neighboring provinces on Wednesday as Typhoon Fabian combined with a tropical depression and the monsoon, dumping heavy rains and spawning flashfloods.

Traffic was snarled in the affected areas for much of the day even as government workers were sent home in the afternoon. The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority reported that except for one pumping station that was being repaired, its 66 other stations were working fine. The problem, the MMDA said, was the large number of garbage in the floodwaters. This slowed down the pumping operations, prolonging the time that it took to make the floods recede.

Mobility restrictions have been eased, so there is no excuse for inefficiency in the collection of garbage. In densely populated communities, barangay personnel and local government officials must work together to promote proper garbage disposal and prevent the pollution of waterways. All local governments have ordinances against littering. These ordinances must be fully enforced, and promoted through the provision of garbage receptacles.

The problem with pollution is not necessarily the type of material that's tossed into the environment, but filthy habits of people who ignore or are unaware of the adverse impact of littering. Whether it's single-use or biodegradable plant-based plastic, or double-layer paper bag, tin can or Styrofoam food container, improper waste disposal and filthy habits will ensure continued pollution.

In turn, pollution will continue to derail every effort to mitigate flooding. The poetic justice here is when the destructive floods caused by drainage systems clogged by garbage hit the homes of the polluters. What goes around comes around.



EDITORIAL - Basura at baha

(Pang-Masa)

- July 24, 2021 - 12:00am



BASURA ang numero unong dahilan kaya may pagbaha sa Metro Manila. Inamin ito ng Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) kamakalawa. Dahil sa dami ng basura, nahihirapan ang pumping stations kaya bumabagal ang pagliit ng baha. Ayon sa MMDA may 66 na pumping stations sa Metro Manila at lahat naman daw ay operational.

Taun-taon sa ganitong panahon, karaniwang tanawin na ang pagbaha sa Metro Manila. Hindi na nabago ang senaryo na umaapaw ang mga ilog at estero at sa kalsada humahantong ang tubig-baha. Kapag umapaw ang mga kalsada, mga bahay na ang babahain. Papasukin na ang loob ng bahay at ang mga malapit sa ilog o sapa, pati ikalawang palapag ay inaabot na rin. Kaya maraming humahantong sa bubong ng kanilang mga bahay.

Gumastos ang pamahalaan ng bilyong piso para sa flood control program pero nabalewala rin ang mga ito sapagkat hindi kayang lulunin ang baha na may kasamang basura. Ang mga ginawang malalim na drainage ay hindi rin umubra sapagkat nababarahan din ng basura. Hindi lang pangkaraniwang basura ang nakabara kundi mga plastic na hindi nabubulok. Karaniwang plastic sando bags, sache ng shampoo, 3-in-1 coffee, cup ng instant noodles, plastic shopping bags at iba pa ang nakabara.

Maraming estero ang hindi na gumagalaw ang tubig dahil sa dami ng basura. Kadalasang ang mga informal settlers na nasa pampang ng estero ang nagtatapon ng mga basurang plastic. Naging maluwang na basurahan ang mga estero. Tapon lang sila nang tapon dito.

Sabi ng MMDA, dapat maghigpit sa mamamayan sa pagtatapon ng kanilang basura. Kailangan daw magkaroon ng disiplina ang lahat. Pero sa nangyayari ngayon, "kamay na bakal" na ang nararapat



EDITORIAL - Basura at baha

ipatupad para matuto ang mamamayan. Maglabas ng ordinansa ang bawat barangay na nagbabawal sa pagtatapon ng basura kung saan-saan. Ang mga mahuhuli ay pagmultahin.

Panagutin ang barangay kapitan na hindi mai-patutupad ang kautusan. Sila ang nararapat manguna sa wastong pagtatapon ng basura.



Environmental group pushes for strict observance of waste law to help mitigate metro flooding

By [Jeline Malasig](#)

- July 23, 2021 - 10:39 PM



A man wearing a face shield for protection against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) rides a bicycle on a flooded street in Manila, Philippines, July 21, 2021. (Reuters/Eloisa Lopez/File Photo)

An environmental health organization urged local government units (LGUs) to strictly implement waste management laws to help minimize the flooding in urban areas amid heavy monsoon rains.

EcoWaste Coalition renewed its call for waste prevention and reduction as floodwaters submerged metropolitan streets and affected residents, commuters and those lining up for [COVID-19 vaccines](#).

The National Capital Region experienced a continuous downpour of rains this week brought about by the southwest monsoon or "habagat" which was enhanced by a slow-moving tropical cyclone, Typhoon "Fabian."

Another tropical cyclone outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility, Typhoon "Cempaka," further enhanced the downpour.

These resulted in flash floods that inundated major roads in the metro such as Taft Avenue, Roxas Boulevard, areas around EDSA, parts of C5 and some streets in Makati, among others.

According to EcoWaste, strictly observing Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act can help mitigate the occurrence of floods.

"We all know that Metro Manila is vulnerable to flooding due to its inherent geographical characteristics that are aggravated by other factors such as the recklessly thrown garbage clogging up the inadequate urban drainage system," Jove Benosa, the coalition's Zero Waste Campaigner, said in a [release](#).



Environmental group pushes for strict observance of waste law to help mitigate metro flooding

“While we cannot do much to alter the region’s geography, we can surely help in mitigating the floods by preventing plastics and other discards, including COVID-related waste such as used face masks, from spilling into the storm drains and waterways,” he added.

The coalition said that 17 LGUs of the capital region “generate close to 10,000 tons of trash every day.”

Citing the Metro Manila Development Authority, it added that over 30 truckloads of garbage are collected from the 57 pumping stations operating all over the metro.

The group said that the strict implementation of Republic Act 9003 in every household “will avoid garbage from being produced, littered and dumped in streets, vacant lots, esteros and rivers.”

The waste law promotes waste avoidance and volume reduction, segregation at source, reusing, recycling, composting and other best practices in ecological solid waste management, excluding incineration.

It also bans the dumping of waste materials in streets, canals, esteros and other public places and penalizes such offenses with a fine of P300 to P1,000, or one to 15-day community service, or both.

“The honest-to-goodness implementation of waste separation at source, recycling, reusing and composting will not only mitigate flooding woes, but also curb leptospirosis, dengue and other water-borne diseases during the rainy season,” Benosa said.

“LGUs should determinedly enforce the salient provisions of R.A. 9003, including penalizing those who recklessly throw their trash anywhere without any sense of guilt or shame,” he added.



Green advocates flunk Duterte's environmental policies

Mike Navallo, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jul 23 2021 08:55 PM | Updated as of Jul 24 2021 12:20 AM



Manila Police District personnel disperse members of the Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan PNE) during a protest in Mendiola, Manila on July 22, 2021. George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News

MANILA — Green advocates on Friday gave President Rodrigo Duterte a failing grade for his environmental policies, accusing of him not fulfilling campaign promises and betraying the legacy left behind by the late environment secretary Gina Lopez.

"Claiming to be a green President during the campaign in 2016, his promises on regulating mining, land use and protecting the rivers and forests have not been achieved — promises that would have lessened the impacts of COVID-19 to the rural poor and indigenous peoples, if they were delivered," the group Green Thumb Coalition (GTC) said in a statement read during an online press conference organized by the Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ) ahead of the President's State of the Nation Address (SONA) on Monday.

Jaybee Garganera of the GTC and Alyansa Tigil Mina faulted the Duterte administration for its failure to implement environmental laws, regulate the industry to reduce environmental impact, pass green laws, and prepare the Philippines to face the effect of climate change and disasters.

- [DENR: 80 show-cause orders issued vs resorts, establishments encroaching Marikina Watershed](#)

In his first SONA in July 2016, Duterte ordered the DENR to review all permits granted to mining, logging and other environmentally-sensitive activities and even directed the military to support the fight against illegal logging and illegal mining.



Green advocates flunk Duterte's environmental policies

He particularly mentioned known environmental advocate Gina Lopez whom he asked to be his DENR secretary on her visit to Davao City shortly after his election into office.

Lopez would go on to close and suspend 28 mines as part of her audit for 41 large-scale mines in the country until the Commission on Appointments [rejected](#) her appointment less than a year later.

- [LOOK: Gina Lopez's 2017 post urging watershed reforestation goes viral after metro floods](#)

Five years after taking office, the group noted that Duterte has walked back on all that he stood for with respect to mining.

"Duterte has totally reversed the gains and victories against irresponsible and destructive mining, with the issuance of EO 130, or the responsible mining policy of this administration. This after he reversed the mining suspension and closure orders by former DENR Sec. Gina Lopez," GTC said.

Executive Order 130, signed by Duterte in April this year, lifted the moratorium on mineral agreements under Executive Order 79 signed by former President Benigno Aquino III in 2012 which requires that there first be a new law rationalizing existing revenue sharing schemes and mechanisms from mining operations.

EO 130 said the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Act (RA 10963) already doubled the excise tax on minerals, mineral products and quarry resources to justify the lifting of the moratorium.

It argued it hopes to reap significant economic benefits and the mining industry can support government projects such as the much-touted Build, Build, Build program and the Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa Program.

But for green advocates, Duterte betrayed Lopez's legacy.

"Si Gina Lopez pinaki ta na sa atin na ang ating kalikasan na bulnerable na nang husto. Anong ginawa ng Duterte administration? Tinanggal si Gina Lopez upang ang mga mayayaman sa Pilipinas ay magtamasa ng sobra-sobrang yaman sa pagkalkal ng mga bundok ng ating bansa," Fr. Pete Montellano of the Save Sierra Madre Network and Stop Kaliwa Dam network said.

"Yan po ang napakasamang ginawa ng Duterte administration kaya mahalaga pong singilin natin ang kanyang mga ginawa kasi ang kinabukasan ng ating bansa ay nakasalalay dito sa hindi pagpansin niya sa dapat pinaglilingkuran niya — ang sambayanang Pilipino. Hindi ang sambayanang iilang mayayaman at ang sambayanang Tsina, ang CCP (Central Communist Party) sa Tsina ang kanyang pinaglilingkuran," he added.

Montellano warned against the lack of studies behind the Kaliwa Dam project and called for stricter scrutiny of the Build, Build, Build projects which, he said, lacked transparency but all of us will have to pay for.

The Kaliwa Dam is a 60-meter high dam in Infanta, Quezon expected to augment water supply in Metro Manila but which critics claim will displace hundreds of indigenous peoples in Rizal and Quezon, and endanger plants species and hundreds of hectares of watershed.

Green advocates flunk Duterte's environmental policies

- [China calls Kaliwa Dam project a 'great achievement' in PH](#)

Recently, a lawmaker claimed it will cause potential flooding in Metro Manila should the dam collapse, citing recent incidents in China.

The project is expected to be completed in 2025.

Environmental advocates also slammed Duterte over his failure to comply with commitments with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

The group said that instead of cancelling all coal and fossil fuels from the country's energy pipelines and shifting to renewable energy, the country continues to rely on coal, with Quezon becoming the coal energy capital of the Philippines, according to Fr. Warren Puno of the Ministry of Ecology of the Diocese of Lucena and convenor of the Quezon for Environment group.

The group noted Duterte initially ordered the Department of Energy to expedite the shift to renewable energy but he eventually signed an executive order creating an Energy Investment Coordinating Council that would expedite the construction of coal-fired power plants in the country.

Executive Order 30, signed by Duterte in June 2017, cited the "urgent need to construct additional power plants to provide sufficient available electricity capacity" to promote rapid economic growth in an "open and competitive power market environment."

Puno said members of the religious like him feel the need to intervene and advocate against coal-fired power plants because it is the poor who will bear the brunt of the effects of climate change.

"Kaya ang Simbahan ay malaki ang malasakit at lumalaban dito sa injustices sa climate change na ito dahil sa bandang huli, ang mga mahihirap na yaman ng Simbahan ang tunay na naapektuhan ng extreme weather conditions," he said.

For its part, the Nuclear and Coal-Free Bataan Movement (NCFBM), which also advocates for a shift to renewable energy, lamented the killing of one of its own members on the first day of the Duterte presidency in July 2016.

Community leader and anti-coal activist Gloria Capitan had led the campaign against coal stockpile and coal plants operating in Mariveles, Bataan.

"Green groups are also sickened by the continuing harassment and killings of environmental defenders, particularly women and indigenous peoples. In 2020, the Philippines remain to be one of the most dangerous countries for environmental activists who face harassments, threats, and even murder for standing up for their rights to land, livelihoods and their culture," GTC noted in its statement.

NCFBM's Derek Cabe said supposed development projects have not benefited their communities. She asked: "Para kanino at sino ang higit na nakikinabang?"

To his credit, Duterte oversaw the closure and rehabilitation of Boracay Island and led efforts to clean Manila Bay and Laguna de Bay.



Green advocates flunk Duterte's environmental policies

Still, dissatisfied environmental advocates on Friday presented a man with Duterte's face as mask in "handcuffs" as they called for accountability over his supposed inaction on the climate crisis.

"To the dismal failure of the Duterte regime in protecting and promoting environmental protection, green groups say goodbye and good riddance to the Duterte regime," GTC said.

Sonaserye 2021: Pangakong 'independent foreign policy' ni Duterte natupad ba?

"We have learned the bitter lessons from the pandemic and the wrong choices we made in selecting incompetent and corrupt leaders. We will make sure that we won't make the same mistakes. We will inform and mobilize our communities and reach out to the general public especially the youth, to use their votes wisely in the 2022 elections," it added.

"We will work to prevent the continuation of a disastrous regime to lead the country."



2 dams in Benguet still below critical level despite rains

By Liza Agoot July 23, 2021, 7:26 pm



(PNA file photo of Ambuklao Dam)

BAGUIO CITY – The Cordillera Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (CDRRMC) on Friday afternoon said the two major dams in Benguet province are still below critical level despite the continued heavy downpour being experienced in the region the past several days.

Albert Mogol, chair of the CDRRMC and regional director of the Office of Civil Defense-Cordillera, reported the current water level of Ambuklao Dam in Bokod, Benguet is 743.26 meters which is still below the critical level of 753 meters.

For Binga Dam, the current water level is 571.55 meters which is also below the critical level of 575 meters.

“All gates (of the two dams) are closed and there are no spilling operations,” Mogol said in the report.

Discharge of both dams drains to the San Roque Dam in Pangasinan.

Mogol, however, advised local disaster councils to maximize information dissemination, monitoring, and warning of weather updates and dam conditions especially in communities at risk in case there is a need to release water.

“(The) Cordillera Administrative Region has been experiencing a prolonged light to moderate to at times heavy rains due to typhoon Fabian-enhanced southeast monsoon,” he said.

The current situation may trigger possible flash floods or landslides, he said.

Meanwhile, Mogol, in a text message, clarified that information circulating on social media on the supposed death of a passenger of a vehicle hit by a falling tree in Baguio is incorrect.



2 dams in Benguet still below critical level despite rains

"The victim was injured and is in the hospital being treated," he said.

In another report from the Department of Public Works and Highways-Cordillera on Friday afternoon, it said that Kennon Road in Baguio City is open only for residents.

It added that the Busa bridge in Sabangan, Mountain Province along the Baguio-Bontoc road is temporarily closed due to a collapsed portion of the bridge.

The road portion in Gacab, Malibcong in Abra along the Abra-Kalinga road is also closed due to soil collapse.

"Clearing operation is hampered due to adverse weather condition and unstable slope condition," the report said.

Also, the clearing operation at the Shilan-Beckel road in La Trinidad, Benguet was temporarily stopped due to the inclement weather. (PNA)



Solon warns massive Metro Manila flooding from Kaliwa Dam project

Published July 22, 2021, 3:22 PM

by [Ben Rosario](#)

Rizal 2nd District Rep. Fidel Nograles on Thursday, July 22 warned government that the construction of the New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam project may cause massive flooding in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.



Dam breaking

Nograles, a member of the House Committee on Metro Manila Development, urged government to heed the warning of environmental groups against the implementation of the project that will displace hundreds of indigenous families in Rizal and Quezon.

“Environmental groups have long warned us that the Kaliwa Dam project will spell disaster not just upstream, where it will endanger 291 hectares of watershed and 172 plant species, but also for the populous areas downstream that will bear the brunt of deadly and destructive flooding,” Nograles said.

He also noted that the multi-billion peso project aimed at tapping a new source of potable water for Metro Manila has been “peppered with controversy” as a result of the illegal construction of access roads reportedly by the Chinese construction firm that was awarded the contract for the project.

Serious questions have also been raised against the issuance of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process with indigenous Dumagat and Remontado peoples in the area.

“We have to be very careful especially after the collapse of two dams in Inner Mongolia, China just a few days ago, and the Chinese military’s warning that another dam is on the verge of collapse in Henan province. All of these things are happening just because of heavy rains in China, and heavy rains are a regular occurrence in our country,” Nograles added.



Solon warns massive Metro Manila flooding from Kaliwa Dam project

Nograles said lessons may be learned from Sunday's collapse of two reservoir dams in Hulunbuir City in the Chinese autonomous region of Inner Mongolia and the current situation in central China where 25 people have already died and 100,000 were evacuated due to intense rains and flooding. The incident in Inner Mongolia was caught on video and is currently making the rounds in social media.

"With the welfare of our people in mind, I call on the national government to rethink this project. We don't have to rush it as it could endanger not just our environment but the lives and livelihood of the people we wish to serve," Nograles stated.



24 PULGADANG PATAK NG ULAN SA CHINA, PAGHANDAAN SA PINAS



July 23, 2021 @ 4:44 PM 15 hours ago

KAHAPON tinalakay natin ang grabeng pagbaha sa Europa na ikinamaty ng 209 katao at ikinawala ng nasa 240 iba pa.

Bilyones naman na halaga ang nasira, lalo na sa Germany, pangalawa ang Belgium, na sentro ng kalamidad.

Ngayon naman ang baha sa China na nakaapekto sa milyon-milyong mamamayan, kasama ang mga namatay, at ikinasira ng bilyones din na halaga ng ari-arian.

WALANG BINATBAT ANG PINAS, EUROPE

Grabe ang naganap na pagbaha sa China na dinala ni bagyong Fabian na pinangalanan sa China na In-fa.

Naging signal no. 3 si Fabian na dumating sa China At heto ang pinakamasamang balita sa sangkatauhan ngunit maswerteng 'di tumama sa atin.

Katumbas ng walong buwang ulan ang nabuhos sa loob lang ng 2-3 araw lalo na sa Zhengzhou City na kapital ng Henan province.

Walang binatbat ang mga malalakas na ulan sa Pinas at sa Europa sa ulan na pinakawalan ni Fabian.

Heto ang mga sukat ng ulan: Kay Fabian – 617 milimetro o 24 pulgada; Ondoy – 341 milimetro o 13.4 pulgada; Ulysses – 150 milimetro o 6 pulgada; at ulan sa Europa – 150 milimetro o 6 pulgada (hindi 5 piye na nabanggit natin kahapon).

Heto pa, may second round si In-fa at tatama sa mas malawak na lugar sa labas ng Henan province at masasama ang Shanghai at iba pang lugar.



24 PULGADANG PATAK NG ULAN SA CHINA, PAGHANDAAN SA PINAS

Magbubuhos naman umano ng ulan na 300 milimetro o 11.8 pulgada ang patak.

Hindi man tumama sa atin, nakikisimpatiya tayo sa milyones na mamamayan ng China na dinale ni Fabian.

GATAO, GADIBDIB NA BAHA, 33 patay

May 33 nang natatagpuang patay, kasama na ang mga pasahero ng commuter train na na-trap sa isang tunnel.

Nasa 200,000 mamamayan ang inilikas o lumikas nang tamaan sila ng rumaragasang baha na umabot sa gatao o gadibdib ang lalim.

Pero sa kabuuan, mahigit 2.5 milyon umano ang natamaan sa kabuuang Hennan province, lalo na sa kahabaan ng Yellow River.

Bukod sa mga biktima na patay at buhay, tumigil sa 40 oras ang biyahe ng 10,000 pasahero ng mg tren.

Kasama sa mga lumubog ang pinakamalaking pagawaan ng I-Phone sa buong mundo, pabrika ng mga sasakyan at iba pang mga pabrika at negosyo.

Mabuti na lang umano at nagkaroon na ng ani, partikular ang trigo, bagama't marami pa ring pananim ang nasira.

Inaasahan ngayon na tataas ang presyo ng trigo sa buong mundo dahil dito at tiyak na makaaapekto maging sa Pilipinas dahil magmamahal din ang mga produktong trigo gaya ng mga tinapay.

PAANO NANGYARI?

Pinag-aaralan ngayon ng mga siyentipiko ang dahilan ng sobrang lakas ng ulan sa China na pinakamalakas umano sa nakalipas na 1,000 taon o 60 taon naman para sa iba.

Lumalabas na nasa pagitan ng dalawang malalaking bundok ang Henan province na laging lumilikha ng mga ulap at ulan.

Nang dumating si Fabian doon, humalo ang mga ulap at ulan nito sa nadatnan nitong mga ulap at ulan at nang bumuhos ang ulan, ganoon na lang ang nilikhang mga pagbaha.

Pero may sinasabi rin ang mga siyentista na iba pang mahahalagang dahilan ng pagbaha.

Walang iba kundi ang paglikha ng mga lungsod sa lugar at pagbabagong-gamit o land conversion ng mga lupang agrikultural sa subdibisyon, komersyal at industriyal.

Gaya sa Europa, maramihan ang pagkawala ng mga puno at ang mga lupa'y pinagsesemento na nagbunga ng pagkawala ng mga lupa na tagasipsip ng mga ulan at baha.

Upang maibsan ang pagbaha, mga Bro, pinaggigiba ng People's Liberation Army ang ilang dam upang magkaroon ng iba't ibang daluyan ng tubig at mailigtas ang mga lugar na nanganib na daluhungin ng malalaking baha.



24 PULGADANG PATAK NG ULAN SA CHINA, PAGHANDAAN SA PINAS

MAGHANDA TAYO

Tag-ulan at tagbagyo sa mga panahong ito at paghandaan na rin natin ang mga nagaganap sa China, gayundin sa Europa.

Tiyak ang mga pagbaha na nakamamatay at nakasisira sa mga ari-arian na pundar natin at mismo ng pamahalaan.

Pag-aralan natin ang mga dahilan ng mga pagbaha at mga binabahang lugar upang maihanda ang ating mga sarili tungo sa kaligtasan at mabawasan ang pagkasira ng mga ari-arian.

May mga pagbaha na sarili nating mga gawa ang dahilan at kaya nating igawan ng paraan.

Ang mga basura natin ay laging natatagpuan sa mga daluyan ng tubig at sa kaso ng Metro Manila, ang mga ito ang bumabara maging sa mga tubig-baha na dapat itapon sa mga ilog at dagat ng mga flood control machines natin.

Magtapon tayo ng mga basura nang maayos at huwag ihagis kung saan-saan.

Itigil naman ang mga iligal na pagmimina at hindi maayos na open dumpsite.

Huwag maging matigas ang ulo kundi makipagtulungan nang buo sa pamahalaan sa pagsasaayos o paglilinis ng mga daanan ng tubig at mismong sa mga pagbabakwit.

Pinakamalaking pwersa laban sa anomang uri ng pag-ulan at pagbaha ang mahigpit na kooperasyon ng mga mamamayan at pamahalaan laban sa kalamidad.

Sa pagkakaisa at pagtutulungan, kaya nating labanan o bumangon mula sa krisis na dulot ng malalakas na ulan at baha.

CLIMATE CHANGE | From China to Germany, giant floods expose climate vulnerability

July 23, 2021 , 09:02 AM

By Aradhana Aravindan and James Mackenzie

(Reuters) -Deadly floods that have upended life in both China and Germany have sent a stark reminder that climate change is making weather more extreme across the globe.

At least 25 people in the central Chinese province of Henan died on Tuesday, including a dozen trapped in a city subway as waters tore through the regional capital of Zhengzhou after days of torrential rain.

Coming after floods killed at least 160 people in Germany and another 31 in Belgium last week, the disaster has reinforced the message that significant changes will have to be made to prepare for similar events in future.

"Governments should first realize that the infrastructure they have built in the past or even recent ones are vulnerable to these extreme weather events," said Eduardo Araral, associate professor and co-director, Institute of Water Policy, at Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy.

In Europe, climate change is likely to increase the number of large, slow-moving storms that can linger longer in one area and deliver deluges of the kind seen in Germany and Belgium, according to a [study](#) published June 30 in the journal Geophysical Research Letters.

As the atmosphere warms with climate change, it also holds more moisture, which means that when rainclouds break, more rain is released. By the end of the century, such storms could be 14 times more frequent, the researchers found in the study using computer simulations.

While the inundation that devastated wide swathes of western and southern Germany occurred thousands of kilometres from the events in Henan, both cases highlighted the vulnerability of heavily populated areas to catastrophic flooding and other natural disasters.

"You need technical measures, bolstering dikes and flood barriers. But we also need to remodel cities," said Fred Hattermann at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research. He said there was increasing focus on so-called "green-adaptation" measures, like polders and plains that can be flooded, to stop water running off too fast.

"But when there's really heavy rain, all that may not help, so we have to learn to live with it," he said.

Reinforcing dikes and climate-proofing housing, roads and urban infrastructure will cost billions. But the dramatic mobile phone footage of people struggling through subways submerged in chest-deep water in Zhengzhou or crying in fear as mud and debris swept through medieval German towns made clear the cost of doing nothing.

"It is shocking and I have to say it is scary," said John Butschkowski, a Red Cross driver who was involved in rescue work in western Germany this week. "It is ghostly, no people anywhere, just rubbish. And it is inconceivable that this is happening in Germany."

CLIMATE CHANGE | From China to Germany, giant floods expose climate vulnerability

ONE YEAR'S RAINFALL IN THREE DAYS

Koh Tieh-Yong, a weather and climate scientist at Singapore University of Social Sciences, said an overall assessment of rivers and water systems would be needed in areas vulnerable to climate change, including cities and farmlands.

"Floods usually occur due to two factors combined: one, heavier-than-normal rainfall and two, insufficient capacity of rivers to discharge the additional rainwater collected," he said.

In both China and northwestern Europe, the disasters followed a period of unusually heavy rain, equivalent in the Chinese case to a year's rainfall being dumped in just three days, that completely overwhelmed flood defences.

After several severe floods over recent decades, buffers had been strengthened along major German rivers like the Rhine or the Elbe but last week's extreme rainfall also turned minor tributaries like the Ahr or the Swist into fearsome torrents.

In China, built-up urban areas with inadequate water evacuation and large dams that modified the natural discharge of the Yellow River basin may also have contributed to the disaster, scientists said.

But measures such as improving the resilience of buildings and raising riverbanks and improving drainage are unlikely to be enough on their own to avert the effects of severe flooding. As a last resort, warning systems, which were heavily criticized in Germany for leaving people insufficient time to react, will have to be improved.

"It really needs to be embedded in practical knowledge that people have so they know what to do," said Christian Kuhlicke, head of a working group on environmental risks and extreme events at the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research.

"If you can't keep the water back, if you can't save your buildings then at least make sure that all vulnerable people are moved out of these places."

(Reporting by Aradhana Aravindan in Singapore and James Mackenzie in Milan; Additional reporting by Ann-Kathrin Weis in Ahrweiler, Maria Sheahan in Berlin; Writing by James Mackenzie; Editing by Lisa Shumaker)



Climate 'mysteries' still puzzle scientists

posted July 23, 2021 at 08:40 pm

by [AFP](#)

What worries one of the world's leading climate scientists the most?

Heatwaves—and particularly the tendency of current models to underestimate the intensity of these bursts of deadly, searing temperature.

This is one of the “major mysteries” science still has to unravel, climatologist Robert Vautard told AFP, even as researchers are able to pinpoint with increasing accuracy exactly how human fossil fuel pollution is warming the planet and altering the climate.

“Today we have better climate projection models, and longer observations with a much clearer signal of climate change,” said Vautard, one of the authors of an upcoming assessment by the United Nations’ panel of climate experts.

“It was already clear, but it is even clearer and more indisputable today.”

The assessment, the first part of a trio of reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), will be released on August 9 at the end of meetings starting Monday.

It focuses on the science underpinning our understanding of things like temperature increases, rising ocean levels and extreme weather events.

This has progressed considerably since the last assessment in 2014, but so has climate change itself, with effects being felt ever more forcefully across the planet.

Scientists now have a greater understanding of the mechanisms behind “extreme phenomena, which now occur almost every week around the world,” said Vautard, adding that this helps better quantify how these events will play out in the future.

In almost real time, researchers can pinpoint the role of climate change in a given disaster, something they were unable to do at all until very recently.

Now, so-called “attribution” science means we can say how probable an extreme weather event would have been had the climate not been changing at all.

For example, within days of the extraordinary “heat dome” that scorched the western United States and Canada at the end of June, scientists from the World Weather Attribution calculated that the heatwave would have been “almost impossible” without warming.

Despite these advances, Vautard said “major mysteries remain.”

Scientists are still unsure what part clouds play “in the energy balance of the planet” and their influence on the climate’s sensitivity to greenhouse gases, he said.

But it is “phenomenal temperatures,” like those recorded in June in Canada or in Europe in 2019, that preoccupy the climatologist.

“What worries me the most are the heat waves” and the “thousands of deaths” they cause, said Vautard, who is director of France’s Pierre-Simon Laplace Institute, a climate research and teaching centre.



Climate 'mysteries' still puzzle scientists

With rainfall, scientists have a physical law that says water vapour increases by seven percent for every degree of warming, he said, with intense precipitation increasing by about the same amount.

But extreme heat is harder to predict.

"We know that heatwaves are more frequent, but we also know that our models underestimate the increasing intensity of these heatwaves, particularly in Europe, by a factor of two," he said.

Climate models have come a long way, even since 2014, but there is still room for improvement to reduce these uncertainties.

"Before we had models that represented the major phenomena in the atmosphere, in the oceans," said Vautard.

Today the models divide the planet's surface into grids, with each square around 10 kilometers.

But even now he said the "resolution of the models is not sufficient" for very localized phenomena.

The next generation of models should be able to add even more detail, going down to an area of about a kilometer.

That would give researchers a much better understanding of "small scale" events, like tornadoes, hail or storm systems that bring intense rain like those seen in parts of the Mediterranean in 2020.

Even on a global scale, some fundamental questions remain.

Perhaps one of the most ominous climate concepts to have become better understood in recent years is that of "tipping points."

These could be triggered for example by the melting of the ice caps or the decline of the Amazon rainforest, potentially swinging the climate system into dramatic and irreversible changes.

There are still "a lot of uncertainties and mysteries" about tipping points, Vautard said, including what level of temperature rise might set them off.

Currently, they are seen as low probability events, but he said that it is still crucial to know more about them given the "irreversible consequences on the scale of millennia" that they could cause.

Another crucial uncertainty is the state of the world's forests and oceans, which absorb about half of the CO₂ emitted by humans.

"Will this carbon sink function continue to be effective or not?" Vautard said.

If they stop absorbing carbon – as has been found in areas of the Amazon, for example – then more CO₂ will accumulate in the atmosphere, raising temperatures even further.

"It is a concern," said Vautard.

24 JULY 2021, Saturday



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Philippines sees 6,845 new coronavirus infections

(PhilStar.com)

- July 23, 2021 - 4:11pm



People brave the heavy rain in Kamuning EDSA, Quezon City on July 22, 2021. Typhoon Fabian (international name Cempaka) enhanced southwest monsoon that brought heavy rain for almost a week since Monday.

MANILA, Philippines — Local health authorities on Friday reported 6,845 more COVID-19 infections, bringing the national caseload to 1,537,097.

- Active cases: 55,069 or 3.6% of the total
- Recoveries: 2,330, pushing total to 1,455,137
- Deaths: 0, bringing total to 26,891

The Department of Health said the lack of fatalities reported are due to technical issues with COVID Kaya, a digital platform for COVID-19 information management in the Philippines.

"This is currently being investigated with the Department of Information and Communications Technology and a resolution is expected in the next few days," DOH said.

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Restrictions heightened, travel ban expanded amid local transmission of Delta variant

- The Department of Health last night [confirmed](#) the local transmission of the highly infectious Delta variant of COVID-19.
- In response, Malacañang announced this morning that Metro Manila would be [reverted](#) to general community quarantine with heightened restrictions until the end of the month.



Philippines sees 6,845 new coronavirus infections

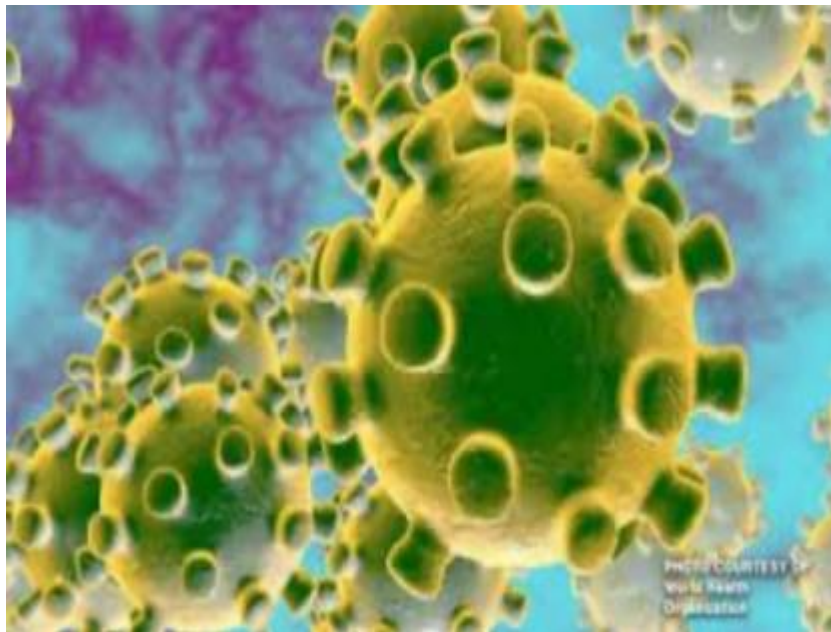
- Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Davao de Oro and Davao del Norte will also be under GCO with heightened restrictions from July 23 to July 31, Palace spokesman Harry Roque said in a statement.
- This means kids below the age of 17 in these areas will [no longer be allowed outdoors](#).
- Malacañang also announced that it [expanded](#) the travel ban currently hoisted over eight countries to include Malaysia and Thailand. Roque reiterated that the ban is meant to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 variants in the country.
- A million more doses of the COVID-19 vaccine developed by China's Sinovac Biotech were [delivered](#) to the Philippines earlier this morning.

— Bella Perez-Rubio



2.2K new survivors bring PH tally to 1,455,137

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor July 23, 2021, 5:35 pm



MANILA – With 2,230 new recovered cases reported on Friday, the overall tally of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) recoveries nationwide rose to 1,455,137.

According to the Department of Health (DOH), the figure is equivalent to a 94.7-percent recovery rate among those who contracted the disease since last year.

The DOH also reported that the death toll stays at 26,891 as no new fatality was recorded.

Another 6,845 new cases were reported, bringing the total number of active cases in the country to 55,069.

Of the active cases, 93.4 percent are mild, 1.3 percent are asymptomatic, 2.3 percent are severe, 1.60 percent are moderate, and 1.4 percent are in critical condition.

“The zero deaths reported today is due to the current issues with COVIDKaya. This is currently being investigated with the Department of Information and Communications Technology and a resolution is expected in the next few days,” the DOH said.

It added 11 duplicates were removed from the total case count as six of these are recoveries.

Moreover, three cases were found to have tested negative and have been removed from the total case count.

According to DOH data on July 21, about 12.3 percent of 43,668 who were tested turned out positive for Covid-19.

All laboratories were operational on July 21 while two laboratories were not able to submit their data to the COVID-19 Document Repository System (CDRS).

Based on data in the last 14 days, the two non-reporting laboratories contribute, on average, 0.4 percent of samples tested and 1.2 percent of positive individuals.



2.2K new survivors bring PH tally to 1,455,137

To date, 52 percent of 3,500 intensive care unit beds, 48 percent of 19,400 isolation beds, 44 percent of 12,100 ward beds, and 36 percent of 2,800 ventilators dedicated to patients with Covid-19 are in use nationwide.

In Metro Manila, 42 percent of 1,100 intensive care unit beds, 41 percent of 4,700 isolation beds, 35 percent of 3,500 ward beds, and 32 percent of 1,000 ventilators dedicated to patients with Covid-19 are being used. (PNA)



Pandemic task force told to 'level up' its 'reactive' approach to Delta variant threat

(PhilStar.com)

- July 23, 2021 - 5:18pm



President Rodrigo Duterte holds a meeting with members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) at the Malago Clubhouse in Malacañang on June 22, 2020.

MANILA, Philippines — Two senators on Friday called on the government's pandemic task force to recalibrate its "reactive" approach to the highly infectious Delta variant of COVID-19.

Local transmission of the Delta variant [confirmed](#) by the Department of Health last night caused the task force to abruptly tighten restrictions, amending quarantine classifications meant to stay until the end of the month [for the second time](#) in just seven days.

President Rodrigo Duterte also [scheduled](#) what he called an "emergency" meeting for Saturday night, two days after local transmission of the variant driving a surge in cases in neighboring countries was confirmed.

"[I]t is pathetic that our national health authorities are...being reactive instead of proactive," Sen. Panfilo Lacson said in a statement. "Knowing the Delta variant has already gripped India and Indonesia, it seems they have not prepared adequately."

He further scored the government's handling of [two vessels that arrived in the country from Indonesia](#) with 12 crew members positive for the virus, including one who snuck out from the boat and returned home. Indonesia has the worst coronavirus outbreak in Southeast Asia and is currently suffering from a new surge driven by the Delta variant despite its high vaccination rate.

"It seems nothing has changed from early 2020, when our health officials failed miserably in the conduct of contact tracing on the fellow passengers of a Wuhan couple who traveled from Cebu to Dumaguete and Manila," Lacson said.



Pandemic task force told to 'level up' its 'reactive' approach to Delta variant threat

"Worse, [the] government refused to close our borders to travelers from Mainland China when we already knew that the first known COVID-19 patient came from Wuhan, China in December 2019."

'Practical, science-based solutions needed'

Sen. Nancy Binay in a separate statement called on the task force to "level up" its pandemic response by coming up with "practicable alternatives and science-based solutions."

Binay reiterated that the country's genome sequencing capacity and vaccine rollout should be ramped up immediately to contain the spread of the Delta variant.

"The things that should have been started and done last year, let's take them seriously," she also in Filipino. "What is the status of our contact tracing system? Clarify guidelines on border controls. If necessary, enhance and step up health protocols."

"More than a year after, we are still here, still filling in the gaps at the fundamental level."

— Bella Perez-Rubio



Raising the alarm on COVID-19 Delta variant

posted July 24, 2021 at 12:20 am

by [Elizabeth Angsioco](#)



POWER POINT
by Elizabeth
Angsioco

"Let us keep each other well, safe, and alive."

The Department of Health (DOH) has recently confirmed local transmission of the COVID-19 Delta variant. As of this writing 47 cases have been detected in the country.

6,546 new cases were reported by the DOH on July 21, and the daily average for the week was 5,570. As of July 23, the total number of cases is more than 1,530,266 (1.53 million) with 1,452,813 (1.45 million) recoveries. The total number of deaths was pegged at 26,891 (source: worldometer).

The status of vaccination leaves much to be desired. Data from HerdImmunityPH reveal that as of July 15, only 5.78% Filipinos of the target seventy (70) million herd immunity target are fully vaccinated. At the rate the vaccination rollout is going, it will take about one-and-a-half (1.5) years or January 2023 to achieve herd immunity. Currently, the vaccine supply we have is enough to fully inoculate 14.11% of the population.

Simply put, the COVID-19 pandemic is far from over and it continues to wreak havoc in our lives. Meanwhile, the government is super slow in its vaccination drive.

And now, local transmission of the Delta variant has been confirmed. Why should COVID-19 Delta variant be a cause of serious concern to all? According to The New York Times, it is the most transmissible variant of the virus yet. Delta may also be able to partially evade the antibodies made by the immune system after a coronavirus infection or vaccination. This means that those who have recovered from the virus, and even those who have been fully vaccinated, may still get this variant.

Experts are unanimous in saying that the highest risk of getting the Delta variant is among the unvaccinated population. Given the slow and erratic vaccination program here, we can say that many of us are at risk.

Delta may cause more severe illness, although more research is needed. According to experts, there is a greater risk of hospitalization for those who catch this variant that has now been detected in 85 countries including the Philippines. Presently in the United States, Delta is the more dominant variant now accounting for 51.7 percent of positive COVID-19 samples (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). There has been a 10-percent increase in positive cases there.

However, vaccines that are in use in the US are effective against all detected COVID-19 variants, including Delta. On the other hand, recent reports indicate that Sinovac is the least effective against this variant and in the Philippines, many, if not most, have been administered with this Chinese vaccine.



Raising the alarm on COVID-19 Delta variant

Perhaps the most disturbing report about the Delta variant came from Australia. Officials there are emphasizing that COVID-19 can be, and is transmitted through the air. According to The Guardian, "Scarily fleeting encounters" resulting in Delta spread in Sydney was captured after CCTV revealed two people walking past each other transmitted the virus. Imagine that!

Infectious diseases experts say that a greater focus on airborne transmission is needed to manage the spread of the COVID virus. Australia is seeing very fleeting contacts leading to transmission. The Delta virus was described as, "a gold medalist when it comes to jumping from one person to another." Even the World Health Organization (WHO) finally acknowledged the airborne spread of COVID-19 last April after months of growing scientific evidence. Meanwhile, there is not much emphasis on airborne transmission.

In the Philippines, few people understand that COVID-19 may be transmitted through air especially in congested and poorly ventilated areas. Although the case in Australia is just one, they were able to establish transmission through air. And this was between two persons who just passed each other by, meaning it only took a few seconds for the virus to be transferred.

How dangerous is it here where a lot of people are careless in following protocols? More and more people are congregating, even having parties, sometimes even in air conditioned areas. One ordinarily sees people on the streets wearing face masks the wrong way.

Thailand has predicted that soon, the Delta variant will be the dominant variant there also because many Thais were vaccinated using Sinovac. Are we far behind?

The Duterte administration has said that this is an emergency. Yet, the President will meet with the IATF in the evening of the following day. Again, it seems that there really is no sense of urgency. An emergency is an emergency. Government does not have the luxury of time and has to act fast.

General Community Quarantine (GCQ) with heightened restrictions has just been imposed on Metro Manila and four other areas. Outside of this, it is most important to significantly speed up the vaccination roll-out since the highest risks are among those who remain unvaccinated.

For those who can afford it, stay home and work from home as much as possible. Open your windows for ventilation. If you can, do not use the air conditioner especially in areas where people gather. Wear your mask properly. Practice physical distancing.

Remember that the Delta variant can be transmitted through air. Be vigilant. Let us keep each other well, safe, and alive.



EDITORIAL - Battling Delta

(Philstar.com)

- July 24, 2021 - 12:00am



As the more virulent Delta variant spread from India to other parts of the planet including neighboring Indonesia and Thailand, a Philippine health official said it was “inevitable” that the highly infectious mutation of the COVID virus would reach the country.

With authorities unable to prevent even COVID-positive crewmembers of a tugboat from Indonesia from leaving the vessel and roaming Butuan, it was also inevitable that the country is now facing the local transmission of the variant.

Government officials are scrambling to prevent a crisis similar to what Indonesia is now facing. Delta has eluded vaccines even in the United States and parts of Europe, prompting countries with high vaccination rates to consider booster shots.

In the Philippines, the situation in Butuan illustrates the problem in containing Delta, which is believed to be causing a case spike in Metro Manila. The tugboat with barge from Indonesia docked in Butuan on July 14. City officials said three of the crewmembers disembarked to buy food at the public market. The ships left the city on July 16 and headed for Albay. Butuan officials were only belatedly informed that 12 of the 20 all-Filipino crew had tested positive for COVID-19.



EDITORIAL - Battling Delta

Five samples were taken from the infected crew and sent to the Philippine Genome Center for sequencing. Butuan officials were told that it could take from 20 to 30 days before the sequencing can determine if Delta fueled the infections. In the meantime, all that the people in the city's public market can do is wait for the emergence of symptoms, get tested, and hope that they will be spared from the worst.

With the country's contact tracing a disaster and the long wait for COVID test results and genome sequencing, people who must leave their homes to earn a living or carry out other essential activities can only hope to avoid exposure to an infected person. Delta is reported to be multiple times more transmissible than the other COVID variants, including the Alpha and Beta that are believed to have fueled the killer surge last summer.

Infection can be kept at bay through continued strict observance of health protocols, notably wearing of face masks and shields, physical distancing and regular handwashing. Vaccination is also essential; the government must further ramp up efforts to acquire more doses and persuade people to get the jabs. We have seen what Delta can do in other countries. Everyone has a role to play in preventing its spread.



#OneDENR

**Covid-19
Situation and Response**

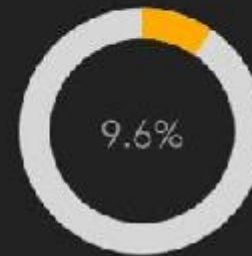
DENR-CO COVID-19 Monitoring



Data on COVID-19 include reported cases of DENR employees (Permanent, Contract of Service/Job Order, Support Staff (Triumph/Security)) as collected by the Contact Tracing Team of DENR Central Office.



% COVID-19 Confirmed Cases in DENR-CO



Daily Confirmed Cases



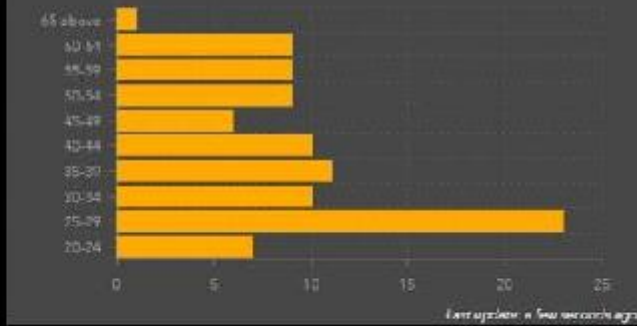
Residence of affected personnel



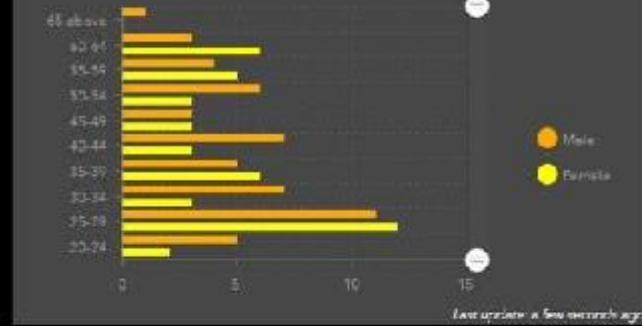
Please note that representative dots were randomly assigned within the barangay residence of the affected personnel and do not necessarily provide exact location/ addresses of the cases.

[Map](#) [Map Legend](#)

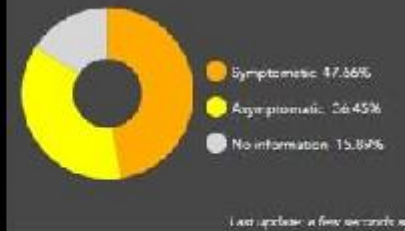
Age Group



Age Group by Sex



Health Status



Comorbidity



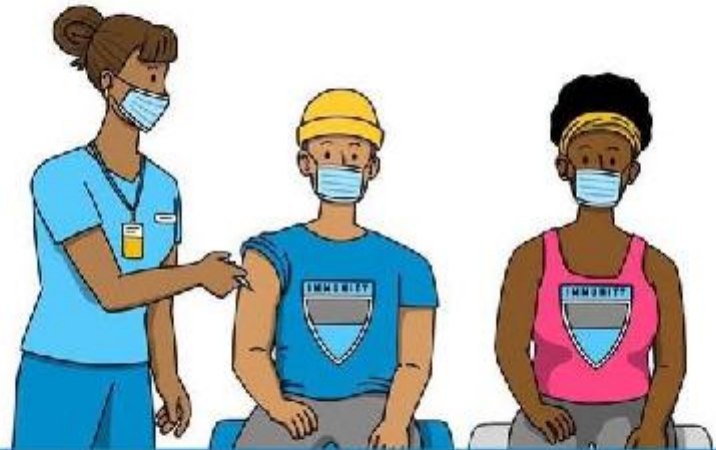
Sex



Developed by the DENR Statistics and Data Resource Management Division (SDRMD) - Knowledge Information Systems Service. To report data discrepancies and for any inquiries email us at sdrmd@denr.gov.ph

GET VACCINATED EVEN IF YOU HAVE HAD COVID-19

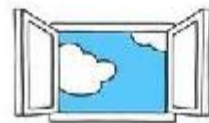
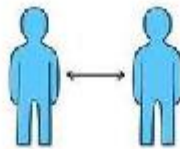
This is because we don't know how long the immunity from getting the disease lasts.



Think of the vaccine as a booster to protect you longer.



DOING IT ALL, PROTECTS US ALL



Always remember to follow these 5 precautions, even after getting vaccinated.



**World Health
Organization**

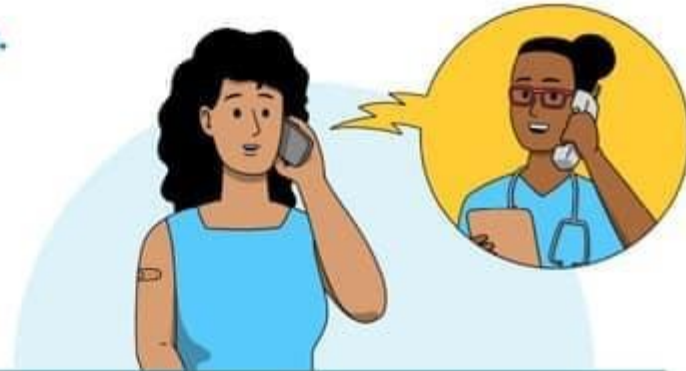
TYPICAL SIDE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 VACCINE ARE:

- 1 Tiredness and headache
- 2 Fever
- 3 Chills
- 4 Pain or swelling at the injection site



In most cases, these are normal and last a short time.

Contact your care provider if the tenderness or pain where you got the shot increases after 24 hours, or the side effects do not go away after a few days.

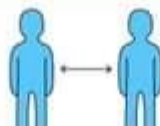


Over-the-counter medicines may relieve some of these symptoms, but talk to your care provider first.

Patients with certain conditions like peptic ulcer or chronic renal disease may need to follow some precautions when taking these medications.

- Ibuprofen
- Aspirin
- Antihistamines

DOING IT ALL, PROTECTS US ALL



Always remember to follow these 5 precautions, even after getting vaccinated.



World Health Organization

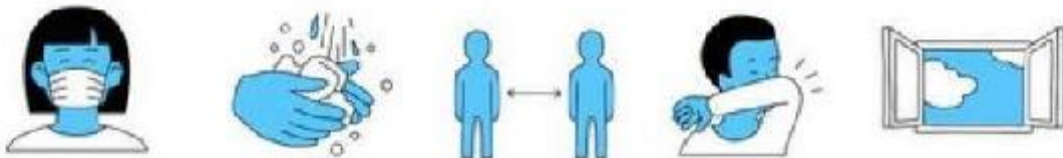
WHEN IT'S YOUR TURN, TAKE YOUR VACCINE

All approved COVID-19 vaccines have been thoroughly tested, and all provide a high degree of protection against getting seriously ill and dying from the disease.



It is important to be vaccinated as soon as possible and not wait. This way, we build immunity in our communities faster and can get back to our normal lives.

DOING IT ALL, PROTECTS US ALL



Always remember to follow these 5 precautions, even after getting vaccinated.

24 JULY 2021, Saturday



DENR

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MAY INIWAN SI FABIAN

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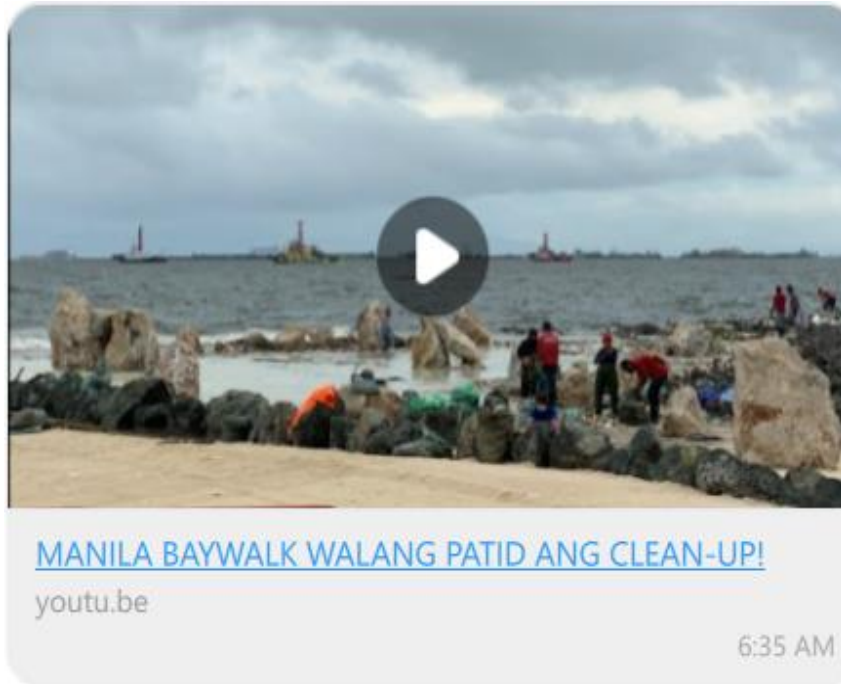
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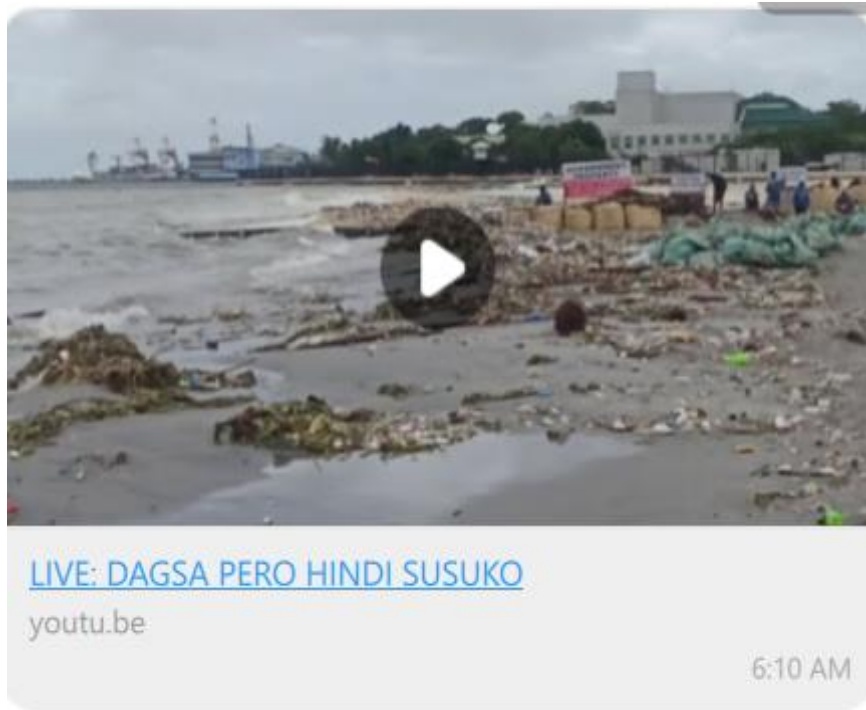


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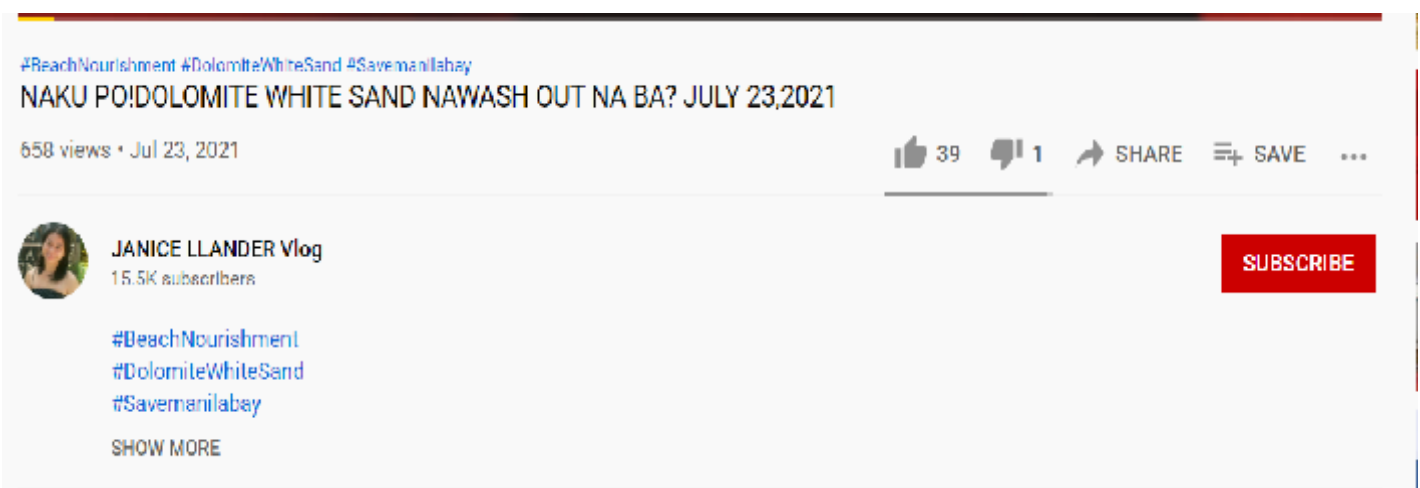
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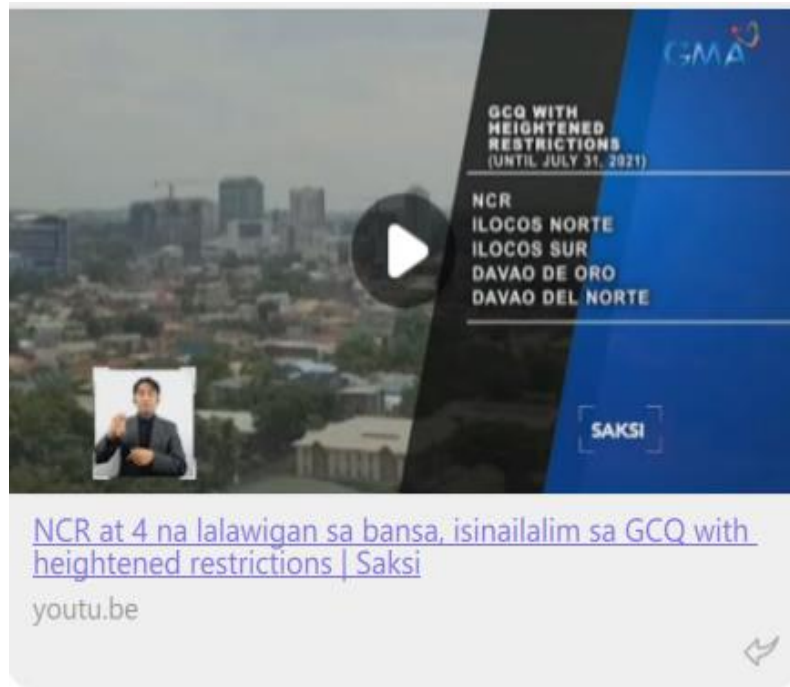
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