

24 MARCH 2021, WEDNESDAY



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**





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BusinessWorld

14h · 🌐



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources said the timeline for rehabilitating Boracay Island, originally due to be completed in May, has been delayed by resettlement problems.

READ: <https://bit.ly/3sjo1Eo>

**BW**

“We haven’t started the resettlement activities of the informal settlers living in the forest timberland. There are lots of civilians who live there, and because of the pandemic, we weren’t able to resettle them.”

.....

**ROY A. CIMATU**  
ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY

👍 😄 8



## Solid waste initiatives on track—DENR

posted March 23, 2021 at 10:10 pm

by [Rio N. Araja](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Tuesday said its solid waste management initiatives are on the right track.

DENR Usec. for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny Antiporda said the recent inclusion of plastic soft drink straws and plastic coffee stirrers in the list of non-environmentally acceptable products (NEAP) in the country is a big boost in the government's solid waste management initiative.

He said the development has made DENR all the more determined to pursue its solid waste management initiatives through the Tayo ang Kalikasan (TAK) campaign.

"With the initial listing of these two items in the NEAP, we are all the more encouraged to uphold our mandate and advocacy on solid waste management despite the lingering pandemic in the country," he said.

Antiporda said DENR regional offices have been stepping up their TAK campaign, which primarily aims to enhance people's awareness on Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 with the end goal of substantially reducing the volume of plastic wastes and prevent these from polluting the environment.

Local governments, he said, also support the inclusion of the two plastic items in the NEAP list.

Several cities and municipalities already have their own local ordinances which include banning these two unnecessary plastic items.

"We have LGUs that have started banning plastic coffee stirrers and plastic soft drink straws, such as in El Nido, Palawan. Though there have been challenges in this pandemic, I am glad that our LGUs realize the damage of such unnecessary items to the

environment and that they are our allies in our battle against improper solid waste disposal," he said.



# Antiporda thanks LGUs for backing ban on plastic straws, stirrers

Published March 23, 2021, 12:53 PM by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Usec. Benny D. Antiporda hailed the local government units (LGUs) that have begun to prohibit the use of plastic softdrink straws and plastic coffee stirrers in their jurisdictions.



(UNSPASH FILE PHOTO)

“We have LGUs that have started banning plastic coffee stirrers and plastic softdrink straws, such as in El Nido, Palawan,” Antiporda said in a statement Tuesday, March 23.

“Though there have been challenges in this pandemic, I am glad that our LGUs already realized the damage of such unnecessary items to the environment and that they are our allies in our battle against improper solid waste disposal,” he pointed out.

Antiporda, the face of the agency’s fight against plastic pollution, is the undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and LGU Concerns and alternate chairman of the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC).

It was early February when the NSWMC made plastic straws and stirrers as the very first entries on the list of non-environmentally acceptable products (NEAP), which is a key tool in the belated implementation of Republic Act (RA) 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

“With the initial listing of these two items in the NEAP, we are all the more encouraged to uphold our mandate and advocacy on solid waste management despite the lingering pandemic in the country,” he said.

“Our ultimate goal is to ban the use of unnecessary single-use plastics in all cities and municipalities in the region. If we all work together, we can defeat the problem on plastic pollution and save communities and the next generation,” Antiporda added.

The DENR official is also concurrently the supervising undersecretary for Task Force Tayo ang Kalikasan (TAK).

Antiporda said DENR regional offices, such as the DENR-MIMAROPA have been stepping up their TAK campaign, which primarily aims to enhance people’s awareness on RA 9003 with the end goal of substantially reducing the volume of plastic wastes and prevent these from polluting the environment. The LGUs in the region, he said, also support the inclusion of the two plastic items in the NEAP list.

Some cities and municipalities already have their own local ordinances which include banning these two unnecessary plastic items.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2021/03/23/antiporda-thanks-igus-for-backing-ban-on-plastic-straws-stirrers/>





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NAKAKAALARMA ang pagdami ng hindi tamang pagtatapon ng household healthcare wastes sa panahon ng pandemya at labis na nakababaha ito ang resulta ng pagkakatuklas ng single-use face masks na nakapulupot sa coral reefs ng Anilao, Batangas.

"The recent discovery of disposable face masks, plastic face shields, and other household healthcare wastes in our reefs is alarming. These wastes will harm both marine life and divers" ayon kay Department of Environment

and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu na.

Idiniin nito na bagama't mahalaga ang pagsunod sa minimum public health protocols upang mapigilan ang pagkalat ng coronavirus, mahalaga na ang bawat isa ay magkaroon ng responsibilidad sa kapaligiran.

Bilang pagtugon, sinabi ni Environment Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units (LGUs) Concerns Benny D. Antiporda: "We have coordinated with the Philippine

## PAGTATAPON NG HEALTHCARE WASTES NAKABABAHALA

Coast Guard to ensure that all international and inter-island vessels, and even fishing vessels, have placed yellow bins for the proper disposal and storage of generated COVID-19 related healthcare waste such as, used face masks, gloves, cottons, tissue papers, and testing kits".

Sa ganitong paraan, maiwasan ang mga basura na mapupunta sa mga katubigan lalo na sa karagatan, dagdag ni Antiporda.

Ang DENR ay nakikipag-ugnayan din sa Department of the Interior and Local Government na siyang may kautusan sa mga LGUs sa tamang pagtatapon ng household healthcare wastes, paglilinis ng mga estero, at sa pagpapaalala sa

mga naninirahan sa tabi ng mga katubigan na huwag magtapon ng basura dito.

Sinabi ni Antiporda na ang DENR at ang mga partner-agencies nito ay mag-uusap para makabuo ng epektibong solusyon tungkol sa 'global problem' ng household healthcare wastes na napupunta sa karagatan at iba pang water bodies.

Inamin din nito na ang pangangasiwa ng gamit na face masks at gloves mula sa mga kabahayan ay mas mahirap kumpara sa pangongolekta mula sa hospitals at quarantine facilities.

"These (quarantine and medical) facilities are required to put up a treatment facility and get a hauling permit, so monitoring medi-

cal wastes comes easy with these sectors," aniya.

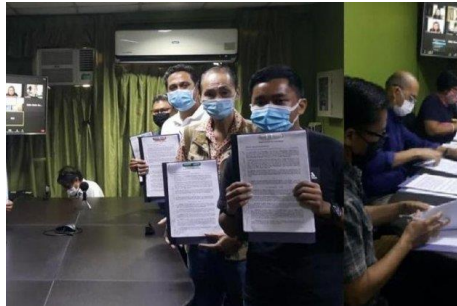
Subali't, ani Antiporda, ang pagsunod sa 'waste segregation at source' ay siya pa ring pinaka mabuting paraan ng pangangasiwa ng basura.

Muli ring binanggit ni Antiporda ang paalala ni Cimatu sa mga LGUs na bigyan ng prayoridad ang pangangasiwa sa pandemic-related wastes sa pamamagitan ng mahigpit na pagpapatupad ng segregation ng wastes mula sa mga kabahayan, pagpapatupad ng maayos na sistema sa pangongolekta at paglalagay ng yellow bins na paglalagyan ng infectious wastes o ang personal protective equipment.



## Permittees commit to establish another bamboo plantation in Aklan

Philippine Information Agency  
23 Mar 2021, 18:38 GMT+10



ILOILO CITY, March 23 (PIA) - Eighteen permit holders of Industrial Sand and Gravel (ISAG) and Mineral Processing Permit (MPP) committed to establish a communal bamboo plantation in Barangay Manika in Libacao, Aklan as part of their environmental work program.

The permit holders recently signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Region 6 through Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office-Aklan, Mines and Geosciences Bureau Regional Office (MGB) 6, and the Manika Upland Farmers Association (MUFA) for the establishment and maintenance of a 54-hectare communal bamboo plantation.

The people's organization MUFA will be in charge of the planting and maintenance of the bamboo plantation, according to MGB-6.

Further, five more MPP and ISAG permit holders opted to establish individual bamboo plantations to meet their commitment. The ISAG and MPP are permits issued by the MGB.

It will be recalled that Aklan Sand and Gravel and Quarry Operators Association, in collaboration with the province of Aklan and DENR PENRO Aklan, also entered into a MOA last year to establish a 50-hectare bamboo plantation in Brgy. Monlaque, Ibajay, Aklan.

On the part of large-scale mine tenement holders, Philex Gold Philippines Inc. and Semirara Mining and Power Corporation have committed to establish six hectares and 400 hectares, respectively, bamboo plantations within their tenement areas.

This is in line with the vision of the DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu to make Region 6 the bamboo capital of the Philippines, as establishing bamboo plantations brings about environmental benefits, livelihood to the local people, and economic contribution towards recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

MGB-6 Officer-in-Charge of the office of the Regional Director Raul A. Laput said that the project is a convergence of different sectors, namely government, private sector (mining permittees) and people's organization as they work towards achieving a common goal of environmental protection and shared responsibility and helping communities meet their economic needs while becoming self-reliant.

Meanwhile, MGB VI recently passed the recertification audit conducted by an external certifying body NQA Philippines, Inc.

It was in February 2018 when NQA certified MGB VI in three ISO standards, the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System (QMS), ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management System (EMS), and ISO 18001:2007 Occupational Health and Safety Assessment System (OHSAS).

The certification is in effect for three years and needs a recertification audit for its renewal. (MGB-6/PIA6)

Source: <https://www.malaysiasun.com/news/268178098/permittees-commit-to-establish-another-bamboo-plantation-in-aklan>





# Sarangani pushes 'protected area' status for Mt. Busa

By Richelyn Gubalani March 23, 2021, 4:26 pm



**KEY BIODIVERSITY SITE.** Photo shows the remaining untouched forests within the Mt. Busa mountain range, which straddles the municipalities of Maasim, Kiamba and Maitum in Sarangani province. The provincial government is pushing for the declaration of the site, currently a key biodiversity and important bird area, into a national protected area to strengthen the protection and conservation efforts for its threatened resources and wildlife, among them the Philippine Eagle. *(Photo courtesy of the provincial government of Sarangani)*

**GENERAL SANTOS CITY** – Efforts to declare the critical Mt. Busa mountain range in Sarangani province into a national protected area have finally gained ground before the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the House of Representatives.

Cornelio Ramirez, executive director of the Sarangani Environmental Conservation and Protection Center (ECPC), said Tuesday the DENR central office has started the assessment of the proposed measure as a strategy to further protect and conserve the mountain range and its watershed.

He said the move complements the recent filing of House Bill 9055 authored by Sarangani Rep. Rogelio Pacquiao that seeks the declaration of the 114,000-hectare mountain range straddling the municipalities of Maasim, Kiamba and Maitum into a protected landscape.

The measure was introduced on first reading on Monday (March 22), and referred to the House committee on natural resources.

Ramirez said they already submitted to the DENR-Region 12 and its central office the necessary documents and other requirements for the proposed declaration.

He said they gave a technical presentation to concerned officials of the DENR's Biodiversity Management Bureau the results of the joint Protected Area Suitability Assessment (PASA) on Mt. Busa complex and its immediate watershed areas.

The assessment was facilitated by the Mt. Busa Conservation Task Force, which is supported by the Sulong Kalikasan program of Gov. Steve Chiongbian Solon.

Ramirez, who heads the task force, said the PASA mainly cites the need to properly protect Mt. Busa and its resources from various destructive activities and developments.

He said studies showed that the mountain range has been continuously threatened by land conversion activities, *kaingin* or slash-and-burn farming, wildlife hunting, illegal logging and mining.

"Its declaration into a protected area will add more teeth to the protection efforts and the enforcement of various environmental laws," he told reporters.

The proposed law also provides for the allocation of regular funds from local and national governments that will help strengthen the implementation of conservation programs for the site, he said.

Mt. Busa is a declared key biodiversity and important bird area, and home to critically-endangered, threatened and vulnerable birds and other wildlife species.



ECPC said the area is a known habitat of some 434 rare animals and birds, among them the Philippine eagle. At least 18 flora and fauna species, including exotic orchids, are thriving in its mossy forest.

Once approved, the proposed protected area would be the second for the province after the Sarangani Bay Protected Landscape, which was declared in 1996 by then President Fidel Ramos through Proclamation No. 756.

Sarangani Bay was among the 94 protected areas in the country that were declared as national parks in 2018 under Republic Act 11038, or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 2018 signed by President Rodrigo Duterte. (**PNA**)





## Environment officials recover endangered eagle specie



ZAMBOANGA. The Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) in Liloy, Zamboanga del Norte takes into custody a South Philippine Hawk Eagle for rehab. A photo handout shows a Cenro official places the eagle into a cage during its retrieval. (SunStar Zamboanga)

March 23, 2021

THE Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) in Liloy, Zamboanga del Norte has taken into custody a South Philippine Hawk Eagle for rehab and eventual release into the wild.

Rosevirico Tan, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) regional information officer, said Tuesday, March 23, that the eagle, also known as Pinsker Hawk-eagle or Mindanao eagle, was retrieved by Cenro-Liloy headed by Dionisio Rago on March 19 in Poblacion village, Gotalac, Zamboanga del Norte.

Tan said Maria Flor Amplayo told the Cenro officials that her son went to Pitogo village in Gotalac town and saw the children feeding the bird and told them to surrender it to DENR.

The children turned it over to Amplayo's son, who eventually reported to DENR-Zamboanga Peninsula official social media page for proper disposition, knowing it was an endangered species based on a YouTube video he saw.

Tan said that further inquiries revealed that the raptor was retrieved by the children at the forested area of Kipit village, Labason, Zamboanga del Norte and brought it home.

Tan said the raptor was estimated to be five months old, weighs 500 grams, and has a wingspan of 34 inches and 14 inches in height.

He said the International Union for Conservation of Nature listed the South Philippine Hawk eagle as endangered because it is threatened by habitat loss.

He said the raptor will be released back to the wild once it is fully rehabilitated and declared fit. **(SunStar Zamboanga)**



# DILG urges barangay officials to use geohazard threat advisories to prepare for disasters

Published March 23, 2021, 9:44 AM

by [Chito Chavez](#)

The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) urged all barangay officials in the country to check and use “Geohazard Threat Advisories issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Mines and Geosciences Bureau (DENR-MGB) in support of their contingency plans to strengthen their disaster response even during the coronavirus disease-2019 (CPVID-19) pandemic.



Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) (MANILA BULLETIN)

DILG Undersecretary for Barangay Affairs Martin Diño asked barangay officials to make the move right away as preparations for calamities are done in peacetime, not near or during the time of disaster.’ There are a total of 42,046 barangays in the country.

Even if the country is in the midst of the pandemic, Diño stressed that natural disasters that may cause loss of lives and damage to properties remain dangerous threats.

“Let’s keep our guards up not only against COVID-19 but also natural disasters,” said Diño.

In an advisory, Diño asked the barangay officials to take a proactive stance in disaster risk reduction (DRR) using the geohazard threat advisories which are regularly issued to their Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (DRRMC).

“Past experiences proved that preparing conscientiously for disasters can substantially minimize loss and damages from natural hazards. Hence, in a disaster-prone country like the Philippines, the importance of contingency planning to come up with timely, effective, and appropriate response measures cannot be overemphasized,” he added.

The MGB Geohazard Threat Advisories provide critical and up-to-date information on susceptible areas to geohazards and suggest preemptive measures for local government units (LGUs) to carry out.

In the same advisory, Diño prodded the barangays to identify areas highly susceptible to floods, landslides, liquefaction (conversion of soil into a fluid-like mass during an earthquake or other seismic event) and other ground instabilities and “to perform early preparedness actions.”

All barangays are also advised to coordinate with their city or municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (DRRMC) and the local DENR-MGB for any inquiries regarding geohazards affecting their respective areas.

DILG Undersecretary and spokesperson Jonathan Malaya also cited the importance of early disaster preparedness and reminded LGUs to refer to their “Operation L!STO Manuals” for guidance in addition to utilizing the DENR-MGB Geohazard Threat Advisories.

He also urged the public to keep themselves informed by reading said advisories which are available through the DENR-MGB website ([www.mgb.gov.ph](http://www.mgb.gov.ph)) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/OfficialMinesAndGeosciencesBureau>).



Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991 states that the local government units (LGUs) are mandated to adopt measures and protect their inhabitants from the harmful effects of man made or natural disasters.

Likewise, Republic Act No. 10121, also known as the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010 makes it mandatory for the LGUs to conduct planning activities in preparation for any form of calamities.





## Globe kaisa sa Global Recycling Day

Posted by: [Maricris Valdez Nicasio](#) on March 23, 2021 in [Hataw Lifestyle](#) [Leave a comment](#)

BAHAGI na ng adbokasiya ng **Globe** na pangalagaan at proteksiyonan ang kapaligiran—sumali ang kompanya sa pandaigdigang kampanya sa pagre-recycle, tamang pagtatapon ng e-waste, pagpigil sa paggamit ng single-use plastic, at iba pang mga katulad na initiatiba kasabay ng pagdiriwang ng **Global Recycling Day** noong March 18.

Inilunsad noong 2018, ang Global Recycling Day ay naglalayong makatulong na makilala at ipagdiwang ang mahalagang papel na ginagampanan ng pagre-recycle sa hinaharap ng mundo.

Patuloy na hinihimok ng Globe ang mga empleado, partner, customer, at iba pang mga stakeholders nito na makipagtulungan sa iba't ibang programang pangkapaligiran gaya ng E-waste Zero at 'Wag Sa Single Use plastic o WasSUP. Ito ang mga programang naghihikayat sa responsableng paggamit at 'pag recycle ng mga electronic gadgets at plastik.

*“Sinimulan namin ang programang E-waste Zero noong 2014 para makaipon ng pondo na magagamit para sa pagpapatayo ng mga silid-aralan sa Aklan matapos itong masira ng bagyong Haiyan. Mula noon, napalawak namin ang programa sa pamamagitan ng pakikipagtulungan sa mga kompanya na kabilang sa Ayala Corporation Group, sa aming mga business clients, sa mga paaralan, at sa mga non-government organizations,”* ani **Yoly Crisanto**, Globe Chief Sustainability Officer at SVP para sa Corporate Communication.

Sa pamamagitan ng responsableng pag-recycle, mapapanatili at mapoprotektahan ang mga likas na yaman mula sa banta ng polusyon. Sa paraan ding ito, mabibigyan tulong at kabuhayan ang mga pamayanang nasa balag ng alanganin dahil sa kahirapan. Ang hindi wastong pagtatapon ng e-waste halimbawa, ay maaaring makasira sa kapaligiran at magdudulot ng panganib sa kalusugan dahil sila ay naglalaman ng mga nakalalason na sangkap tulad ng arsenic, cadmium, tingga, at mercury.

Kaya ang Globe, sa pamamagitan ng E-waste Zero, ay nakatuon sa responsableng pagtatapon at pag-recycle ng mga e-waste. Ang programa ay isang paraan para sa mga indibidwal at samahan na magtapon ng kanilang luma o hindi gumaganang mga electronics apparatus at accessories sa mga recycle bin na makikita sa Globe Stores, mga piling mall at tanggapan ng mga partner na grupo. Maaari ring mapakinabangan ang libreng door-to-door pickup ng e-waste sa pamamagitan ng pag-access sa <https://www.globe.com.ph/about-us/sustainability/environment.html>

Sa kasalukuyan, may 1.4 milyong kilo ng e-waste na ang naibigay, nakolekta at naihatid sa pasilidad ng Treatment, Storage, and Disposal (TSD) na partner ng Globe. Ito ang Total Environment Solutions – Asset Material Management Philippines (TES-AMM) sa Pasig City at Maritrans Recycler, Inc sa Cebu. Ang mga e-wastes ay pinaghihiwalay para mabawi ang mga materyal na plastik, elektronikong sangkap, at mahalagang mga metal. Ang pangwakas na proseso ng pag-recycle ay ginagawa sa pasilidad ng TES-AMM sa Singapore.



Naglagay na rin ang Globe ng isang plastic shredder para matiyak na ang lahat ng mga natukoy na single-use plastic mula sa loob ng nasasakupang lugar ay napoproseso sa isang responsableng pamamaraan bago maihatid sa pasilidad ng Green Antz sa Taguig.

Samantala, nagbibigay ang Quanta Paper ng mga rolyo ng tissue paper sa Globe offices na may markang Green Choice Seal of Approval. Pinatutunayan nito na ang mga produkto ay ligtas para sa kapaligiran at ginawa alinsunod sa mga alituntunin ng Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development.

SHOWBIZ KONEK

Source: [https://www.hatawtabloid.com/2021/03/23/globe-kaisa-sa-global-recycling-day/?fbclid=IwAR1WV-wpA6yFqXbj95EIgq8dOB\\_Pldp7yf1Qa9HsJBCzjr90VXIfoAB1kTY&\\_cf\\_chl\\_jschl\\_tk=\\_c\\_bf5a098fc23882522ab8318f59ec1c63981c2c3-1616539931-0-AbeUdvjus-u0jRn7WUvuSDSgz3Zr0SZmTpFI1b0z5plEfsPCIJmCuHUth2KM15LO78RoMDh\\_ENR7zetN7ubyerFCx8hEs\\_JAwDWeS2lif4i5PPOWHWcv1FX8ywO4j5O-09R6OveBgp4I8AJecZHHIZ9LEVbhgWr3TYSQU2cGvzQy6Zne84InWW3ODULc1yuDCdPl15IriScIB36Ux96kBRP-iXeSPq9THGWiggV2-eKxilx2pk7BBTshhM8-xMae5ZRh6jMge6CFKr7rVTJ8FAfpTm3RQUOPzVT07SPnT01\\_iscVp4HNR14ufkMoYdjR3JK6zvDXMg0K\\_0QZf4cXJNil0Yo5vUHXIDODaOWs1QWHO7yGmVeuGDfABzJ6KE\\_ByG3oKFXxQH04MZx84sPKIq-Bp7klt5BVPTwITSkywVKtskIJj8XPhFnCeq3mjppaWAgSVrJic7fBMLz8-W4ZzSckngOM22teGQ-E43chN](https://www.hatawtabloid.com/2021/03/23/globe-kaisa-sa-global-recycling-day/?fbclid=IwAR1WV-wpA6yFqXbj95EIgq8dOB_Pldp7yf1Qa9HsJBCzjr90VXIfoAB1kTY&_cf_chl_jschl_tk=_c_bf5a098fc23882522ab8318f59ec1c63981c2c3-1616539931-0-AbeUdvjus-u0jRn7WUvuSDSgz3Zr0SZmTpFI1b0z5plEfsPCIJmCuHUth2KM15LO78RoMDh_ENR7zetN7ubyerFCx8hEs_JAwDWeS2lif4i5PPOWHWcv1FX8ywO4j5O-09R6OveBgp4I8AJecZHHIZ9LEVbhgWr3TYSQU2cGvzQy6Zne84InWW3ODULc1yuDCdPl15IriScIB36Ux96kBRP-iXeSPq9THGWiggV2-eKxilx2pk7BBTshhM8-xMae5ZRh6jMge6CFKr7rVTJ8FAfpTm3RQUOPzVT07SPnT01_iscVp4HNR14ufkMoYdjR3JK6zvDXMg0K_0QZf4cXJNil0Yo5vUHXIDODaOWs1QWHO7yGmVeuGDfABzJ6KE_ByG3oKFXxQH04MZx84sPKIq-Bp7klt5BVPTwITSkywVKtskIJj8XPhFnCeq3mjppaWAgSVrJic7fBMLz8-W4ZzSckngOM22teGQ-E43chN)



## Sea turtle found dead in Dalaguete

By: Doris Mondragon - CDN Digital | March 23, 2021 - 12:05 PM



A sea turtle, locally known as “pawikan,” is found dead and without a head along the shores of Barangay Tapon in Dalaguete town, southern Cebu on Monday afternoon, March 22, 2021. | photo courtesy of Louie Fherds Rebugio via Doris Mondragon

Dalaguete, Cebu—A sea turtle, locally known as “pawikan,” was found dead without a head in the waters off Barangay Tapon here on Monday afternoon, March 22, 2021.

Louie Fherds Rebugio, a resident in the area, was the one who found the turtle at the back of their home along the coast.

He said he was shooting his Vlog (video blog) when he noticed the smell of rotting flesh along the shore. He followed the smell and it led him to the dead sea turtle that was already missing its head.

He told CDN Digital that the turtle was probably died in the water and was washed ashore. “Washed ashore mani klaro kaayu kay luspap na nya murag giingkitan nag mga isda. Dagko kayg balud ganiha gud. Wa nay ulo, langkat pud iyang flipper sa likod. ‘Nya luspap na gamay, ug medyo baho na siya,” he said.

(I think it was washed ashore because it’s kinda pale and there seem to be bite marks from smaller fish. The waves were big earlier. Its head is gone and so were its back flippers. It was kinda pale and it was already smelling.)

Rebugio said he immediately reported the incident to local officials of Barangay Tapon and personnel immediately responded and assisted in the burial of the sea turtle in the area where it was found.

“I tried getting in touch with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Municipal Agriculture and Natural Resources Office (Manro) through mail but they didn’t respond probably because they were busy. So I just approached the barangay hall because the sea turtle was already smelling,” he said.

/bmjo





# NCIP: No certification given yet to MWSS for Kaliwa Dam construction

By [Xianne Arcangel, CNN Philippines](#)

Published Mar 23, 2021 8:59:38 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, March 23) - The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples has not yet given the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System the green light to proceed with the construction of the Kaliwa Dam, an official told lawmakers Tuesday.

NCIP Provincial Director for Quezon Angelo Sallidao said the process of certification precondition for getting the indigenous peoples' free prior and informed consent was still ongoing.

The NCIP certification is among the requirements the MWSS needs before proceeding with the construction of the P12.2-billion dam bordering Rizal and Quezon provinces. It will be funded through a loan from China.

The Commission on Audit had questioned the issuance by the MWSS of a notice to proceed with the dam's construction despite the failure of its Chinese contractor, China Energy Engineering Corp., to comply with the requirements under the loan agreement.

At the hearing, IP leader Marcelino Tena said five out of the six "clusters" of tribal groups consulted by the MWSS in Quezon for the dam's construction did not give their consent for the project.

Tena, the president of the Samahan ng mga Katutubong Agta/Dumagat, said the construction of an access road leading to the project site was still ongoing despite the IP's opposition to it.

"Sinisira na nila ang kalikasan sa aming lupaing ninuno, nasisira din ang samahan naming mga katutubo dahil sa ginagawa nila," he said.

[Translation: They are damaging our ancestral land and the bond among tribal groups because of what they are doing.]

MWSS deputy administrator Leonor Cleofas, however, said CEEC has only been conducting surveys and geological investigation at the project site to come up with a detailed engineering design for the dam.

"Ang ating environmental compliance certificate ay ibinigay sa atin ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources noong October 2019. Nakasaad doon na walang magagawang construction hangga't hindi natin nakukuha ang lahat ng permits, clearances ng ating mga different government [agencies]," she said.

[Translation: Our environmental compliance certificate was issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources last October 2019. It's stated there that construction will not be allowed until we have secured all the permits, clearances from different government agencies.]

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/3/23/NCIP-no-certification-yet-MWSS-Kaliwa-Dam-construction-.html>



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

Screenshot from Manila Public Information Office's video

## Gov't urged: Tighten customs checks on paint imports

(Philstar.com) - March 23, 2021 - 11:06am

MANILA, Philippines — A toxics watchdog group urged customs authorities Tuesday to tighten controls to bar the entry of paint products that do not conform with the country's strict lead paint regulation.

In an earlier statement sent to reporters, the EcoWaste Coalition disclosed that it found some 13 aerosol paints from abroad that tested positive for dangerously high concentrations of lead with a lead content up to 56,100 parts per million.

According to the group, the products were found being "sold to uninformed consumers" by offline and online retailers despite the country's regulations banning lead above 90 ppm in paints.

"The authorities need to act with dispatch to ensure that these dangerous products are removed from the market and returned to their suppliers for environmentally sound disposal," Thony Dizon, chemical safety campaigner for the coalition said in a separate statement Tuesday.

"The Bureau of Customs, with guidance from concerned health and trade regulators, can stop the entry of non-compliant paint products by strengthening import controls," the group also said, warning that the continued sale of such products could only present a serious health hazard over time.

Of the 13 spray paints bought from offline and online dealers by the group, 10 were found to contain dangerously high levels of lead exceeding 10,000 ppm, while eight of the 13 lacked information about their manufacturers.

This brings the total number of imported lead-containing aerosol paints uncovered by the group to 50, after the group also tallied 37 similarly violative products last year that were subsequently banned by the authorities.

The EcoWaste Coalition in its statement said it has since notified the authorities about its latest findings and reached out to retail stores to take the products off shelves.

None of the 50 violative products was produced by companies belonging to the Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers, the coalition added.



“Lead paint chips and dust are formed when a surface covered with lead paint ages, peels and breaks...Health experts have not determined any level of lead exposure that is deemed safe and without detrimental effects,” said Dr. Geminn Louis Apostol, an environmental health scientist and assistant professor at the Ateneo School of Medicine and Public Health.

"Children are exposed to lead when they eat such paint chips or swallow or breathe in lead dust, which can affect their developing brains and cause reduced intelligence, learning ability and attention span, as well as increased risk of behavioral problems such as aggressiveness, bullying and violence."

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources issued in 2013 a policy recognizing that lead paint is a major source of childhood lead exposure eliminating lead-containing paints.

The department's Administrative Order 2013-24, or the Chemical Control Order for Lead and Lead Compounds, which, among other provisions, phased out lead-containing decorative paints in 2016 and lead-containing industrial paints in 2019.

— **Franco Luna**





# Buyers beware: Environmental watchdog names 13 lead-laced spray paint products

Published March 23, 2021, 2:20 PM by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

Spray paint cans could be harmful too, if you're not paying attention to what you're buying.



(Photo from EcoWaste Coalition)

The EcoWaste Coalition bared that some 13 spray paint can products with lead content ranging from 4,500 to 56,100 parts per million (ppm) are being sold to consumers by both offline and online retailers.

The environmental group said this is “in brazen violation of the country’s lead paint regulation limiting lead to a maximum of 90 ppm.”

“Our latest market investigation conducted amid the COVID-19 (coronavirus disease) pandemic netted 13 more spray paints with exceedingly high levels of lead that can present a serious health hazard over time,” Thony Dizon, chemical safety campaigner of EcoWaste Coalition said in a statement Monday, March 22.

“The authorities need to act with dispatch to ensure that these dangerous products are removed from the market and returned to their suppliers for environmentally sound disposal,” he said.

This brings the total number of lead-laced aerosol paints uncovered by the group to 50, noting its discovery of 37 similar products last year that were subsequently banned by authorities. None of the 50 lead-containing spray paint brands came from companies affiliated to the Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers (PAPM).

EcoWaste Coalition identified the 13 latest non-compliant spray paint can variations as the following: F1 Aerosol Spray Paint (leaf green), 56,100 ppm; Colorz Chisai Acrylic Spray Paint (lemon yellow), 55,200 ppm; F1 Aerosol Spray Paint (medium yellow), 50,800 ppm; Veslee Aerosol Paint (lemon yellow), 45,900 ppm; Super 7 Acrylic Spray Paint (yellow), 31,200 ppm; Veslee Aerosol Paint (green grass), 22,400 ppm; Colorz Chisai Acrylic Spray Paint (fresh green), 18,600 ppm; Super 7 Acrylic Spray Paint (leaf green), 13,100 ppm; F1 Aerosol Spray Paint (fluorescent orange yellow), 11,500 ppm; MR. D.I.Y. Spray Paint (orange), 10,400 ppm; MR. D.I.Y. Spray Paint (sugar cane), 8,910 ppm; MR. D.I.Y. Spray Paint (apple green), 6,820 ppm; and Sanvo Aerosol Paint (green grass), 4,500 ppm.

Of the 13 products, 10 were found to contain dangerously high levels of lead exceeding 10,000 ppm. Also, eight of the 13 paints lacked information about their manufacturers, the group said.

“Lead paint chips and dust are formed when a surface covered with lead paint ages, peels and breaks. Children are exposed to lead when they eat such paint chips or swallow or breathe in lead dust, which can affect their developing brains and cause reduced intelligence, learning ability and attention span, as well as increased risk of behavioral problems such as aggressiveness, bullying and violence,” said environmental health scientist Dr. Geminn Louis C. Apostol, Assistant Professor at the Ateneo School of Medicine and Public Health.



“Health experts have not determined any level of lead exposure that is deemed safe and without detrimental effects,” added Apostol.

Lead compounds were previously added to paint formulations to add color, quicken the drying process, inhibit rust, and increase durability, the EcoWaste Coalition said. Most paint manufacturers in the country have already switched to alternative ingredients to conform to the regulation.



# US stands by Manila in protesting mooring of Chinese vessels

March 23, 2021 | 7:44 pm



@PCOOGOV

THE United States on Tuesday said it stands with the Philippines after more than 200 Chinese vessels were spotted moored at a reef in the South China Sea that Manila claims.

In a statement, the US Embassy in Manila said it “shares the concern” of the Philippines, which filed a diplomatic protest against China this week.

In a separate statement, the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs demanded that China withdraw its fishing vessels and maritime assets at Whitsun Reef, accusing it of infringing on Philippine sovereignty.

“The continued deployment, lingering presence and activities of Chinese vessels in Philippine maritime zones blatantly infringe upon Philippine sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction,” the agency said.

It urged China to order its fishing vessels to stop environmentally destructive activities at the reef, which it said is within the Philippine exclusive economic zone.

The Philippine government earlier said it was concerned that the Chinese militia vessels had massed at the reef, which it calls Julian Felipe, with no actual fishing activities.

They had their full white lights turned on during night time, a national task force overseeing border disputes with Beijing said in a statement at the weekend, citing the Philippine Coast Guard.

The task force cited potential overfishing and destruction of the marine environment, as well as risks to navigation safety.

“The People’s Republic of China uses maritime militia to intimidate, provoke and threaten other nations, which undermines peace and security in the region,” the US Embassy said. “Chinese boats have been mooring in this area for many months in ever increasing numbers, regardless of the weather. We stand with the Philippines, our oldest treaty ally in Asia,” it added.

The Chinese Embassy in Manila on Monday said the reef, which it calls Niu’e Jiao, is part of China’s Nansha Qundao.

It said some Chinese fishing vessels had taken shelter near Niu’e Jiao due to rough sea conditions.





The Chinese Embassy said the vessels there were not Chinese militia, adding that speculations cause “unnecessary irritation.”

Senators on Monday backed the Philippine government’s diplomatic protest against China.

Senator Risa N. Hontiveros-Baraquel said the presence of the Chinese vessels within the Philippine territory is a “severe provocation” that would only escalate tensions in the disputed waterway.

She accused China of rudely advancing into Philippine seas, adding that not aggravating the tensions is the absolute least China could have done in the middle of a global pandemic.

Ms. Hontiveros said the government should study other ways to make China pay, noting that there could be more environmental damage and loss of natural resources due to their presence at the reef.

Ms. Hontiveros last month said China owes the Philippines more than P800 billion in marine damage and losses in the South China Sea.

Senator Francis N. Pangilinan also backed the diplomatic protest, citing China’s “unabated militarization and expansionism in the West Philippine Sea” during the pandemic, referring to areas of the South China Sea with the country’s exclusive economic zone.

He accused China of using donated vaccines as a “geopolitical weapon.” — **Vann Marlo M. Villegas**



# Penalize Chinese poachers in Julian Felipe P3.3 billion

[GOTCHA](#) - [Jarius Bondoc](#) (The Philippine Star) - March 24, 2021 - 12:00am

Interdict the 220 Chinese fishing vessels blockading Julian Felipe Reef in the Philippine exclusive economic zone. Philippine law requires so.

Their mere entry in the 200-mile EEZ is poaching, the Fisheries Code (RA 8550) states. Stopping there also violates innocent passage in international law.

The poachers face fines of up to \$300,000 per vessel, or \$66 million (P3.3 billion) for all 220. Section 87 demands \$100,000 punitive plus \$200,000 administrative penalties.

The three highest officers per vessel shall be imprisoned for six months. Their catch, gear and vessels must be confiscated. They can be additionally fined the value of their catch. Also if explosives, electrical or noxious stunners, poisons or fine mesh net are found onboard.

Filipinos severely are sanctioned for violation of the Code. Foreigners should be too. Punishment deters repeat offenders.

Julian Felipe (Whitsun) Reef lies 175 miles west of Palawan, well within Philippine EEZ, and outside China's 650 miles away. The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea grants coastal states sole use, jurisdiction and protection of their EEZs.

Apprehending, detaining and prosecuting are the duty of the Coast Guard, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and Department of Justice. All are under the Executive.

Past presidents enforced the law. Poachers were jailed without bail. Dozens of trawlers were impounded in Palawan, Mindoro and mainland Luzon. (With environmentalists and BFAR officials, I inspected two in Puerto Princesa Bay in 2007.) Some have been re-commissioned as Filipino patrol craft, others auctioned for domestic reuse or as scrap metal.

China has the world's largest distant water fishing fleet. Each industrial-scale, steel-hulled trawler can haul in at least 12 tons of fish per day, Chinese publications report. The 220 vessels swarming Julian Felipe Reef can poach 2,640 tons, or 2,640,000 kilos.

The value of South China Sea fish capture in 2018 was \$1,534 per ton, according to the Southeast Asia Fisheries Development Center. Going by that old figure, each Chinese trawler can poach \$18,408 (P920,400) worth of fish at Julian Felipe Reef. The 220 vessels are capable of hauling away \$4,049,760 (P202,488,000).

China menaces Filipino fishermen in their own EEZ in the West Philippine Sea. In Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal since 2012, Chinese coast guards have been driving them away with machineguns and water cannons. In Recto (Reed) Bank in 2019, a Chinese trawler rammed an anchored Filipino wooden boat then abandoned the 26 fishermen thrown overboard. In the first quarter of that year too, about 620 Chinese fisheries militia vessels took turns swarming Pagasa Island, Kalayaan, Palawan. Near Sandy Cay last January, three Chinese gunboats blocked a Filipino fishing craft from approaching from Pagasa.

Defenseless, Filipino fishers are even told by their officials to stay away from centuries-long fishing grounds. About 350,000 fishing families depend on the West Philippine Sea for livelihood.



The Philippine Coast Guard is the armed and uniformed service tasked with civilian law enforcement. It recently acquired several patrol craft and fighting equipment.

Unchallenged, the 220 Chinese fishing vessels can prelude the concreting of Julian Felipe into another Chinese island-fortress. Sighted since March 7, the trawlers form a phalanx along the boomerang-shaped sea feature.

Julian Felipe is in the center of Pagkakaisa (Union) Bank and Reefs in the Philippine EEZ. It forms a triangle with McKennan (Hughes) and Mabini (Johnson South) Reefs, both landfilled by China starting 2013. China is reinforcing control of Pagkakaisa, international maritime lawyer Jay Batongbacal, PhD, suspects. Thence, it can dislodge Vietnam from equally illegal outposts on Rurok (Sin Cowe) Island, Pagkakaisa (Lansdowne) Reef and Roxas (Collins) Reef.

Pagasa, 68 miles away, will be surrounded. Nearby Philippine reefs Zamora (Subi) and Kagitingan (Fiery Cross) earlier were paved with Chinese airstrips and seaports. Already, warships from Subi routinely threaten supply deliveries to civilians in Pagasa.

Manila has identified, denounced and diplomatically protested the 220 vessels as part of the People's Liberation Army maritime militia. Recruited, armed and equipped for spying and harassment, the Chinese fishers are part of Beijing's "gray zone tactics" of intensifying its grab of neighbor-states' EEZs. Beijing ignores The Hague arbitral court's outlawing in 2016 of its "nine-dash line" that encroaches the seas of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Vietnam. The sea boundary has no coordinates and is based on concocted history.

There has been no word from President Rody Duterte about the virtual invasion of Julian Felipe. His spokesman, when asked if the situation can lead to a military standoff with China, said, "I don't think so because we have a close friendship. Everything can be discussed by friends and neighbors." Duterte has shelved The Hague arbitral victory for \$40 billion in Chinese loans and aid, of which only 0.5 percent came. Two years ago he conceded: "When [President] Xi Jinping says, 'I will fish,' who can prevent him?" Discounting legal and diplomatic moves, he added, "If I send my Marines to drive away the Chinese fishermen, I guarantee you not one of them will come home alive."

\* \* \*

"Gotcha: An Exposé on the Philippine Government" is available as e-book and paperback. Get a free copy of "Chapter 1: Beijing's Bullying and Duplicity." Simply subscribe to my newsletter at <https://jariusbondoc.com/#subscribe> Book orders also accepted there.





## Sen. Villar cites the critical importance of water

By **BMPLUS**

MARCH 23, 2021



RECOGNIZING the value of water in our lives, Sen. Cynthia Villar has been at the forefront of sustainable water programs and initiatives, starting with the rehabilitation of Las Pinas-Zapote River and fighting for the conservation of the Las Pinas-Parañaque Wetland Park (formerly known as LPPCHEA).

“Let us make our waterways and bodies of water safe and healthy for our own safety, health and survival. Water is a life-sustaining resource,” stressed Villar as she joined the observance of World Water Day on March 22.

Sen. Villar acknowledges the critical importance of water resources, which could be readily seen from the programs, advocacies and legislative measures she has been pursuing.

Sen. Villar’s Sagip Ilog/Rehabilitation of the Zapote-Las Piñas River won for her the United Nations “Best Practices Award” in 2011 due to its outstanding contribution towards improving the living environment and its demonstrable and tangible impact on improving people’s quality of life within a metropolitan river basin.

The Sagip Ilog program involves the daily collection of floating wastes, like water lilies which were used for weaving handicrafts and coconut husks which were processed into coco nets for slope protection and coco peat used as potting mix and organic fertilizer. To this day, the Las Piñas-Zapote River continues to play an important role as a “life artery for the people of Las Piñas and nearby cities”. Sen. Villar noted that the rehabilitation of the river paved the way for social enterprises that provided livelihoods to residents.



The lady senator is at the forefront of stopping reclamations in Manila Bay that will destroy the Las Pinas-Parañaque Wetland Park, a 182-hectare critical habitat of wildlife that is also a Ramsar-listed wetland of international importance. It may be recalled that she filed a Petition for Writ of Kalikasan in 2012 against the reclamation bound to encroach upon the area of the said wetland. In 2018, the wetland was given t a protected area status upon the enactment of RA No. 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act.

Sen. Villar is likewise one of the staunchest advocate of the Manila Bay clean-up, being more actively done now under the Duterte administration, in compliance with the writ of continuing mandamus issued by the Supreme Court ordering 13 national government agencies and the local government units to clean up, rehabilitate, and preserve Manila Bay, and make its waters fit for swimming and other forms of contact recreation. For the lady senator, “The rehabilitation of Manila Bay is not just for beautification. It is very important to preserve its role as cradle of biodiversity because our people are dependent here for livelihood. About 300,000 fishermen get their fish supply from Manila Bay.”



There are other initiatives pursued by Villar for water safety and sanitation, such as the Baseco clean-up, which also included the planting of mangroves and installation of toilet facilities on homes, including the installation of communal septic tank and water waste treatment.

As environment committee chairperson, she has conducted hearings on the following water-related issues so those responsible in water pollution will be obliged to act:

- Environmental degradation of the water resources in Boracay;
- Lack of waste water treatment facilities and services in urban areas, with emphasis on NCR;
- Denuded state of forests and watersheds which substantially contributed to the heavy flooding during typhoon Ulysses.

Sen. Villar also filed SB No. 2036 National Wetlands Conservation Act, SB No. 1914 or the BIDA bill which calls for a better environmental protection mechanism to ensure the sustainable ecological conditions of Boracay amidst its development and SB No. 336 or the Rainwater Harvesting Facilities Act.

For her tireless efforts and 'pivotal role' to address water concerns, Villar received the 'Kampeon ng Katubigan' award from the DENR- NCR's World Water Day Philippines Awards 2018.

World Water Day celebrated on March 22 is about what water means to people, its true value and how we can better protect this vital resource.



## SoCot's Mt. Matutum still 'off limits' to trekkers

By Allen Estabillo [March 23, 2021, 4:18 pm](#)



Mt. Matutum in South Cotabato (*PNA GenSan file photo*)

**GENERAL SANTOS CITY** – Trekking and other related activities in Mt. Matutum in South Cotabato province have remained suspended, a year after it was first closed down due to the onset of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic.

Lawyer Felix Alicer, Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Region 12 executive director, said Tuesday they decided to sustain the prohibition pending the issuance of proper movement and monitoring regulations.

He said it applies to the entire Mt. Matutum Protected Landscape (MMPL), which covers a total of 120,457 hectares.

Such decision was based on the assessment of the MMPL-Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), he said.

Alicer said the board, which he chairs, agreed to temporarily postpone the reopening of the trekking activities until the PAMB guidelines are updated.

“Clear and specific guidelines for trekking and monitoring must be established and enforced before we open it again to the public,” he said in a statement.

The official said that since the site has a number of entry and exit points in the surrounding localities, the concern on its carrying capacity must also be discussed thoroughly.

Trekking and other activities within the MMPL were suspended in March last year in compliance with the protocols issued by the national Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases in line with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Based on MMPL-PAMB Resolution No. 11, series of 2016, or the revised recreational guidelines for mountain trekking, hiking, camping and other forms of outdoor activities in Mt. Matutum, only 50 people are allowed in its summit per day.

Alicer said he instructed the PAMB, through the ecotourism, sustainable project development and financing committee, to look into the applicability of such policy.

He said it should be updated first before they recommend the resumption of the activities previously allowed at the site.

PAMB, in coordination with local government units situated within the MMPL, have intensified the enforcement of the area's closure these past months due to reported sightings of trekkers and motorcycle trail enthusiasts.

In an advisory, it said the unauthorized use of any motorized conveyance within the protected area is prohibited and may only be allowed if it is the only practical means of transportation for the indigenous peoples to access their ancestral domain.





Efren Hibaler, MMPL area superintendent, warned that violators could face fines ranging from PHP200,000 to PHP1 million and imprisonment of not more than six years.

Mt. Matutum, South Cotabato's highest peak, is an active volcano that measures 2,286 meters above sea level.

Home to diverse flora and fauna as well as rare wildlife species, including the Philippine tarsiers, it was declared a protected landscape in 1995 through Proclamation No. 552 issued by then President Fidel Ramos.  
**(PNA)**



## Marilao River, ranks 6th of world's most polluted

March 23, 2021 12 min read

By Glen S. Ramos

MARILAO, Bulacan – A certain Barangay Kagawad who goes by the name of “Troy” has on Monday, 22 March 2021, posted in his Facebook account a picture of a river filled with all kind of garbage which was gaining popularity online due to its animosity.

The river is located in the town of Marilao, Bulacan better known as the Marilao River.

It once gained notoriety in 2020 by being one of the filthiest rivers in the world and with the foulest odor.

It ranked Number 6 in the Top 19 most polluter rivers in the world by the Conserve Energy Future (CEF), one of the world's top eco-conscious websites.

According to the website, the river is home to millions of Philippine residents use the water for drinking and also for irrigation.

The pollution of the river is mostly from wastes from tanneries, dumping, and gold refineries.

The dumping of non-recyclable materials such as plastic bottles is present on the surface of the water. In addition to this, the water has rocks bearing heavy metals, which pose a health hazard to the residents.

“The river is prone to flooding, which brings the wastes to the land, thus leading to soil degradation. The pollution of the water is detrimental to the fish industries in the Philippines since toxic metals such as lead contribute to the death of aquaculture,” CEF published.

The Marilao River flows through the Bulacan Province Philippines and empties in Manila Bay. The main sources for polluting this river are tanneries, textile factories, piggeries, gold refineries, and municipal dumps.

Source: [https://maharlika.tv/2021/03/23/marilao-river-one-of-the-most-polluted-rivers-in-the-world/?fbclid=IwAR2Vofognht59cryJeFMcMkkfymu3zESG\\_OZsJu7kuaDWLbkQxoNu6VMduY](https://maharlika.tv/2021/03/23/marilao-river-one-of-the-most-polluted-rivers-in-the-world/?fbclid=IwAR2Vofognht59cryJeFMcMkkfymu3zESG_OZsJu7kuaDWLbkQxoNu6VMduY)



# PNP seeks closure of illegal mining sites in Camarines Norte

By Christopher Lloyd Caliwan March 23, 2021, 10:19 am



**IED CLEARING OPS.** A police officer checks IED components seized during clearing operations in Barangay Dumagmang, Labo, Camarines Norte on Monday (March 22, 2021). The PNP has recommended the closure of all illegal mining operations in Camarines Norte after it discovered that some IED components used by NPA members in last week's encounter with police officers came from illegal mining sites in the area. *(Photo courtesy of PNP)*

**MANILA** – The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Monday has recommended the closure of all illegal mining operations in Camarines Norte.

The recommendation came after Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) chief Maj. Gen. Albert Ignatius Ferro, citing initial reports, said components of the improvised explosive devices (IEDs) used by the New People's Army (NPA) terrorists in last week's encounter with police officers in Barangay Dumagmang, Labo town, Camarines Norte came from illegal mining sites in the locality known for its thriving small-scale backyard gold mining activities.

The clash left five police officers dead and wounded two others.

Ferro said clearing operations resulted in the recovery of 75 IEDs consisting of one big, 16 small, and 53 medium-sized IEDs, and five Molotov petrol bombs.

Also recovered from the scene were a roll of firing wire, 43 non-electric blasting caps, two batteries, and an electric blasting cap.

The national government has condemned the attack by the communist terrorists on the remote barangay where a farm-to-market road is being built that will introduce development in peasant communities in the area.

Government troops have been deployed to the area following complaints from the project developer of extortion by the communist terrorist group.

The Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army is listed as a terrorist organization by the United States, European Union, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Philippines. ***(with Priam Nepomuceno/PNA)***





# Close illegal mine sites in Camarines Norte – PNP

[Emmanuel Tupas](#) (The Philippine Star) - March 24, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) is seeking the closure of illegal mining sites in Camarines Norte.

The PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) made the recommendation after its initial investigation showed that the explosives used by New People's Army (NPA) rebels in an encounter with police officers on Friday night were from illegal mining sites in Labo town.

Five police officers were killed and two others were wounded in the clash.

“Examination of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) recovered at the scene of the three-hour encounter led investigators to conclude that the explosives component came from illegal mining operations in Labo, which is known for its thriving small-scale backyard gold mining activities,” CIDG director Maj. Gen. Albert Ferro said.

Ferro said 75 IEDs, five Molotov bombs and 43 non-electric blasting caps were among those recovered at the scene.

He said the rebels have been extorting money from the developer of a farm-to-market-road, which were being secured by policemen involved in the clash.

PNP officer-in-charge Lt. Gen. Guillermo Eleazar had earlier ordered the Bicol police to mobilize its forces against NPA rebels.



## Baguio eyes Benguet town as waste-to-energy site

By Gaby B. Keith

March 24, 2021

**BAGUIO CITY:** The city government will pursue the purchase of a private property in nearby Sablan town as permanent site for the proposed waste-to-energy (WTE) facility and will cast aside its earlier plan to put up the same facility in Mount Santo Tomas because of financial issues.

Mayor Benjamin Magalong requested the city's local finance committee to source out funds for the possible purchase of an 8,000-square meter property in Sablan town where the WTE plant can be established for the city government to have an income-generating project in the future.

He added that the proposed alternative site for the WTE plant in the city-owned property in Mount Santo Tomas has financial implications because of the terrain and the need to build an access road network leading to the area which would cost the city government an estimated P200 million based on projections by the City Engineering Office (CEO).

Mayor Magalong claimed that social acceptability preparation for the WTE project is currently being undertaken by the proponent as the same is part of the initial processes for the issuance of the required environmental compliance certificate (ECC) of the facility.

Metro Global Renewable Energy Corporation, proponent of the Sablan WTE project, recently presented the results of its pre-feasibility study they conducted with at least 500 tons of mixed waste that can be converted into more than 10 megawatts of renewable energy that can be sold to the Benguet Electric Cooperative (Beneco).

The proponent will be using state-of-the-art technology that is environmentally-friendly with less emissions in the conversion of the mixed waste to quality renewable power while providing a permanent solution to the long overdue garbage disposal problem not only of the city government, but also the neighboring towns of La Trinidad, Itogon, Sablan, Tuba and Tublay (Listt).

The city has been locating suitable properties for this facility which is projected to be a permanent solution to the city's ongoing garbage disposal woes.

Local governments have been mandated by law to close the operation of their open dumpsites and replace them with environmentally-friendly facilities for the protection of the environment and health of the people.



## Unrecycled plastics cost PH \$890M

By [Mayvelin U. Caraballo, TMT](#) March 24, 2021

The Philippine economy is losing \$790 to \$890 million a year in terms of potential material value of recycled plastics, according to a new World Bank paper.

Released on Tuesday, the Washington-based multilateral lender's paper titled "Market Study for the Philippines: Plastics Circularity Opportunities And Barriers" said that of the 1.1 million tons per year of the four key plastic resins in the Philippines consumed in the Philippines, only 28 percent are being recycled.

These four plastic resins include polyethylene terephthalate, high-density polyethylene, low-density polyethylene/linear low-density polyethylene, and polypropylene.

The report added the total material value that could be unlocked from plastic recycling in the Philippines is \$1.1 billion annually.

This is assuming all four key plastic resins had 100-percent collected for recycling (CFR) rates and obtained the maximum value in the market, it noted.

However, the study said only 22 percent of the total material value of plastics or \$246 million a year is currently unlocked.

"This results in \$790 to \$890 million a year of potential material value that is lost to the Philippine economy," it pointed out.

Thus, the study said fully addressing this market opportunity will require public and private sector investments to improve waste collection/sorting, an enabling environment to improve recycling economics, and other systemic interventions.

It added the material value loss is the result of various structural challenges that impact the CFR rates and value yields for all four key resins.

"The Philippine plastic recycling industry faces similar challenges as other Southeast Asian countries, but it also experiences unique obstacles to its profitability and growth," the paper also underscored.

Consequently, it identified six recommended interventions to enable the Philippines to improve recycling rates from the current 28 percent. These interventions involve increasing of waste collection and sorting efficiency of post-consumer plastics; setting recycled content that targets across all major end-use applications; mandating national "design for recycling" standards for all major plastics products, especially packaging; encouraging increase in recycling capacities; creating industry-specific requirements to increase plastic waste collection and recycling rates; and restricting disposal of waste plastics and incentivize phase-out of plastics.

"These interventions could also enable the country to increase the value yield of plastics recycling from 82 percent to 95 percent, and unlock significant additional material value from recycling plastics," the report also stressed.

It added the recommended interventions for the government and the private sector each have the potential to unlock material value of \$180 to \$640 million annually.

The study also said these interventions could lay the foundation for plastics circularity, further strengthen demand for recycled plastics, and build a resilient recycling industry in the Philippines.

"However, some systemic issues, such as the comparatively high costs of operating recycling businesses in the Philippines, are not addressed by these interventions," it, nevertheless, underscored.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/03/24/business/business-top/unrecycled-plastics-cost-ph-890m/854753/>



# WB studies: PHL, 2 others lose \$6 billion in 'wasted' plastic

By [JONATHAN L. MAYUGA](#)

MARCH 24, 2021



*In file photo: Crushed plastic bottles and containers sit bound in a bale ready to be recycled at the new Poly recycling AG facility in Bilten, Switzerland.*

MALAYSIA, the Philippines and Thailand can gain so much from better managing plastic waste, a series of World Bank Group studies launched Tuesday reported.

Aside from combating marine pollution, country studies show that each of three Southeast Asian countries could actually unlock billions of dollars for a circular economy, specifically in recovering and recycling plastic waste.

The support for the Thailand and Malaysia studies was provided by PROBLUE, an umbrella multidonor trust fund, housed at the World Bank, that supports the sustainable and integrated development of marine and coastal resources in healthy oceans while the funding for the Philippines study was provided by the Korea Green Growth Trust Fund (KGGTF), a partnership between the World Bank Group and the Republic of Korea, which supports the mainstreaming of green growth through the World Bank's lending operations.

The three studies were conducted by a team from GA Circular, a research and strategy firm specializing in waste management and recycling.

The studies examine the untapped economic opportunities to promote plastic circularity and address marine debris in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand.

They evaluate the plastics recycling industry and its role in supporting a circular economy and scaling up recycling efforts via targeted public and private sector interventions using a plastic value chain approach. The studies found that less than a quarter of plastics are available for recycling in the three countries and that the rest or more than 75 percent of the material value of the plastics are lost.

This is equivalent to some \$6 billion lost annually across the three countries when single-use plastics are discarded rather than recovered and recycled, representing a significant untapped business opportunity "if key market barriers can be addressed," a World Bank Group news release stated.

"Mismanaged plastic waste across Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand is threatening key economic sectors such as tourism and fisheries, and impacting livelihoods and infrastructure, but there is strong government momentum in these countries to identify critical policies, and craft roadmaps to strengthen demand for all recycled plastic resins level the playing field for global and domestic companies and help drive a circular economy for plastics," Ndiame Diop, World Bank Country Director for Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand, said.





“These studies show that there is an untapped opportunity to reap environmental and economic benefits with clear and complementary interventions from the private and public sector,” he added.

The studies present the size and scale of each country’s plastics production and recycling industry, focusing on four key recyclable resins.

The researchers consulted with resin manufacturers, brand owners, converters, aggregators, and recyclers across the plastic value chain to compile and develop baseline data for each targeted resin. They also undertook analyses to quantify the untapped market potential for each resin and identified the pressures that contribute to material value loss in each country.

While the studies found that barriers to plastic recycling are unique to each country, there are common actions that governments and industries could take to help Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand unlock additional material value.

The recommendations include:

- Increase sorting efficiency of post-consumer collection of plastics.
- Set recycled content targets across all major end-use applications.
- Mandate “design for recycling” standards for plastics, especially for packaging.
- Encourage an increase in recycling capacities (mechanical and chemical).
- Implement industry-specific requirements to increase waste collection rates.
- Restrict disposal of waste plastics in landfills and phase-out non-essential plastic items.

“These studies serve a critical need for country-specific data on how plastics are produced, used, and managed in Southeast Asia,” said Rana Karadsheh, Asia Pacific Regional Industry Director Manufacturing, Agribusiness and Services at the International Finance Corporation. “They clearly highlight the importance of managing plastic waste as a valuable resource, and not solely as a waste management problem.”

Image credits: [Stefan Wermuth/Bloomberg](#)

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2021/03/24/wb-studies-phl-2-others-lose-6-billion-in-wasted-plastic/>



# Climate change drove ethnic tribes to Philippines: study

March 23, 2021, 8:00 am



**NEW FINDINGS.** A study conducted by historians and scientists, in coordination with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, National Museum and National Commission for Indigenous Peoples, provided new findings on the origin of ethnic tribes in the Philippines. It involved 2.3 million molecular DNA markers. *(Photo courtesy of NCIP Facebook)*

**MANILA** - A landmark study has revealed the complex shared origins, inter-relatedness, and genetic diversity of the Filipino people.

Taking advantage of the latest advances in genomics and computational biology, a team of researchers investigated into the Filipino DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid).

They looked into 2.3 million molecular DNA markers that were known to differ between various populations.

The markers from more than 1,000 individuals, representing 115 Philippine cultural communities, were comprehensively analyzed.

“This finally gives us a clearer picture of who we are as Filipinos, where we came from, and our sense of relatedness.” Carlo Ebeo, Board of Trustee member of the National Museum that was involved in the study, said.

It was revealed that, through time, the Philippines was inhabited by at least five major waves of human migration, starting with Northern and Southern Negritos as the first Filipinos, then followed by Manobo, Sama, and Cordilleran-related populations.

It was previously thought that the search for new arable lands by expanding farmer populations was the main reason for driving population migrations, such as the dispersal Austronesian-speaking groups into the Philippines.

## Role of climate change

However, Sweden-based Filipino scientist Dr. Maximilian Larena, who co-led the study, challenged this view.

“Our findings suggest that instead of farming, climate change may have played a more important role in driving the mass movement of populations in various directions,” he said.

The significant geographic changes may have prompted the migration of Manobo and Sama-related ancestral groups from Borneo into southern Philippines and Cordilleran-related ancestral groups from southern China-Taiwan area into the various islands of the Philippines.

The arrival of Manobo, Sama, and Cordilleran-related groups resulted in interbreeding with resident Negritos.

Interestingly, some Cordillerans remained to be the only Filipino ethnic group that did not show evidence of historical interbreeding with Negritos. They are the only ones in the world who remained to be the unadmixed descendants of Basal East Asians, the study showed.



“This affirms that Cordillerans were isolated for quite some time, which is evident on the retention of distinct indigenous cultural practices and presence of immense linguistic diversity in the region,” Dr. Adrian Albano, a Kalanguya Cordilleran from Ifugao State University and co-author of the study, said.

Additional minor genetic signals were also detected in some Filipino ethnic groups, including Papuan, South Asian, and European genetic ancestry.

The Papuan-related ancestry is found among the coastal ethnic groups of southeastern Philippines. This likely reflects a westward migration or gene flow of Papuan-related ancestry from Papua New Guinea or the Bismarck’s archipelago into eastern Indonesia and subsequently into southeastern Philippines.

The South Asian or Indian-related genetic signal was detected among the Sama Dilaut and other coastal Sama ethnic groups of southwestern Philippines.

The signal was dated to 500 to 1000 years ago, coinciding with the time when there was increased maritime trading activity between Island Southeast Asia and India.

The European genetic signal was only detected in one percent of all individuals investigated, indicating a limited genetic legacy of the Spanish Colonial Period.

### **Groundbreaking study**

The study was made possible through the partnership between Uppsala University of Sweden, led by Prof. Mattias Jakobsson and Larena, and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), through the office of then chairperson Felipe Mendoza de Leon.

“This is a groundbreaking study that the commission heartily endorsed, and we should be thankful for this collaboration as it sheds some light on the longstanding question of our origins. It will certainly revise our understanding and appreciate that the story of the peopling of the Philippines from three waves of migration as proposed by Otley Beyer is not supported by archeological, genetic, or historical evidence,” says Prof. Felipe Mendoza de Leon of the NCCA.

Aside from the extensive network of cultural workers provided by the NCCA, the scientific endeavor was also implemented in collaboration with indigenous cultural communities, local universities, local government units, non-governmental organizations, and regional offices of the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples.

“We are proud to be part of this historical research. It revealed how interconnected we are to each other after all, and that we share a common ancestry. Recognizing this fact will hopefully carry a message of unity and peace among various ethnic groups, regardless of beliefs,” says Waway Saway of the Talaandig ethnic group of Bukidnon that was involved in the study. **(PR)**



# Youth empowerment vs climate change urged

Published 5 hours ago on March 24, 2021 02:30 AM

By [TDI](#) [@tribunephil](#)



Antique Representative and deputy speaker Loren Legarda on Tuesday urged the youth to be more involved in environmental initiatives — especially solving problems on plastic waste — as they have the greatest stake in the sustainability of the environment.

“I have always been firm in my belief that you, our youth, are key partners in climate action — which is why I always reiterate the need to empower you by giving you the space and the capacity to be heard, to decide and take meaningful action,” said Legarda during the Consumer Youth e-Forum facilitated by the Department of Trade and Industry-Consumer Policy and Advocacy Bureau.

The lawmaker, who is also the UNISDR Global Champion for Resilience and Commissioner of the Global Commission on Adaptation, added that the fresh perspectives, the energy, the innovative actions that young people can bring might be exactly what the country needs to break the cycle of unsustainability by changing long-standing behaviors and patterns of consumption, systems of production and ways of living.

“We have to remember that plastics may be easily thrown away, but we cannot rid ourselves of the consequences just as easily.

These consequences, as you know, include its effects on the environment,” she added.

To recall, the lawmaker filed the proposed Single-use Plastics Regulation and Management Act, which calls for the strict regulation of plastic production and aims to phase out single-use plastics and encourages the use of native reusable bags made of organic or recycled materials, and reusable containers made of glass or non-toxic and non-hazardous materials.

Source: [https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2021/03/24/youth-empowerment-vs-climate-change-urged/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=youth-empowerment-vs-climate-change-urged](https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2021/03/24/youth-empowerment-vs-climate-change-urged/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=youth-empowerment-vs-climate-change-urged)





# Got issues? Citizens urged to report environmental concerns through 'MASDAN'

Published March 23, 2021, 9:01 PM

by [Merlina Hernando-Malipot](#)

Now, more than ever, there is a greater need to protect and care for the environment.



(Photo from DOST-STII)

To encourage people to be more conscious of the environmental issues around them, the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and the University of the Philippines (UP) joined forces and came up with “MASDAN.”

“MASDAN” is a DOST-funded, UP-developed mobile application to help in environment protection. It is a platform for citizen science to map and monitor the water quality of Manila Bay and other similar areas in the country.

Through “MASDAN,” citizens can now report environmental issues and concerns using their mobile phones.

In a statement issued by DOST-Science and Technology Information Institute (STII), it was noted that U -Training Center for Applied Geodesy and Photogrammetry and the DOST launched a two-year program in 2020.

Dubbed “IM4ManilaBay,” the program was in response to the need for technological interventions concerning the rehabilitation and sustainability of the Manila Bay area.

“MASDAN” mobile app is one of the outputs of the Development of an Integrated Mapping, Monitoring, and Analytical Network System for Manila Bay and Linked Environments project or MABLE which is one of the four projects of the IM4ManilaBay Program.

## Citizen Science

For IM4ManilaBay Program project leader Dr. Ariel C. Blanco, “everything is mappable.”

Blanco also underscored the need to “enable mapping and monitoring of the environment using geospatial technology such as remote sensing, surveying, graphic report systems, and other related technologies as well as citizen science.”

National Geographic defines citizen science as the “practice of public participation and collaboration in scientific research to increase scientific knowledge.”

Through citizen science, people share and contribute to data monitoring and collection programs. Usually, this participation is done by unpaid volunteers. “Through citizen science, everyone has a role to play [and] we want to enable them to contribute towards generating actionable information,” Blanco added.



## Using 'MASDAN'

To use "MASDAN," Jomer Medina, Senior Science Research Specialist of Project MapAble said that users would have to register first and fill out the user profile form on the app.

After which, users can now submit a narrative on an environmental issue or concern, its location, and accompanying photos as evidence. Users can also pin the exact location of the issue on a map.

In particular, concerned citizens can report environmental issues such as algal bloom, fish kill, water pollution, water hyacinth, ongoing reclamation and solid waste.

In the meantime, Medina said that the app can only accept photos, not videos.

Medina noted that once a report is submitted, it goes through a server where it can be directly accessible to appropriate national government agencies, state universities, and colleges, higher education institutions, local government units, civil service societies, and citizens.

Through the app, concerned agencies can take action on the reports submitted by the users.

Meanwhile, Dr. Enrico C. Paringit, executive director of the DOST-Philippine Council for Industry, Energy, and Emerging Technologies Research and Development (DOST-PCIEERD) expressed his appreciation to the project team for making this innovative mobile application.

"I encourage citizens to actively participate and become more informed on Manila Bay's conditions thus becoming more empowered and more aware," Paringit said. "Let's partake in this opportunity to contribute, share knowledge, and exchange views," he added.

DOST said that the "MASDAN" app is not only meant for Manila Bay concerns. Citizens can also report issues in the Laguna lake area and other areas in the Philippines.

"MASDAN" app can be downloaded on Google play.



# ‘Ang Huling Plastic’ documentary tackles impact of plastic crisis to communities

By [Catalina Ricci S. Madarang](#) - March 23, 2021 - 2:35 PM



Poster of "Ang Huling Plastic" (Greenpeace Philippines/Facebook)

An environmental group on Monday launched a documentary that raises awareness on the impact of single-use plastic products to communities, particularly the urban poor.

Titled “Ang Huling Plastic,” Greenpeace Philippines collaborated with RA Rivera and GMA TV comedians Maey Bautista and Betong Sumaya to produce the full-length documentary film.

The documentary was divided into five chapters where viewers are presented with an in-depth look at the consequences of plastic pollution in different populated areas in Metro Manila over the years.

“From the sanctuary-turned-dredges of Freedom Island in Manila Bay to the monstrous garbage patch in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, this film examines how gravely plastic, as a material, has changed the world,” the environmental group said.

The documentary film also included conversations on possible solutions for the environmental crisis.

“In the end, Ang Huling Plastic aims to spread awareness, spark discussion, and inspire its audience to make change...and demand change! Because for us to see the last of single-use plastics, it might take nothing short of a revolution to get it done,” it added.

Moreover, the project also discussed how the novel coronavirus pandemic contributed to the problem, citing the improper disposal of face masks, shields and even delivery packaging.

“As the global situation continues, the more likely it is that the gains of previous years will be erased as PPEs, disposable medical equipment, and take-out and delivery packaging, mostly made of plastic, become necessities in the new normal. It is, then, important to remind ourselves—Filipinos particularly (in a country with the longest lockdown)—that this problem continues to exist, and that we should continue to make space for it in our advocacies,” the organization said.



Greenpeace Campaigner Marian Ledesma said that the documentary offers the perspectives of common Filipinos who are directly affected by the impact of plastic pollution.

“The film is a unique look at the plastic crisis, offering the perspective of Filipinos, while revealing the problems at different points of plastic’s life cycle and exposing the roots of the issue. It’s not just an educational exercise, but something that will spark ideas for solutions and deeper discussions on the necessary systems change,” said Ledesma.

Rivera shared the same observation, citing the importance of educating the public about this problem.

“I think even with the COVID-19 pandemic still present, we should educate the people on how to solve the problem. Information is really the key since there are very limited avenues to discuss the issue. We need more educational materials, more discussions, and hopefully more legislation that will address it,” the director said.

To help reach more viewers, it encouraged others to host screenings to their communities through a form on its Facebook page.

“If you wish to host a screening of the documentary in your communities, please submit your request through this form: [act.gp/ahpscreening](https://act.gp/ahpscreening),” the group said.

Greenpeace premiered the documentary film on March 22, coinciding with the observance of **World Water Day**.





## Philippines' 86,200 COVID-19 active cases highest in 2021

**Published** March 23, 2021 4:06pm

By JOAHNA LEI CASILAO, GMA News

The Philippines' tally of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases rose to 677,653 on Tuesday after the Department of Health (DOH) reported 5,867 new infections as nine laboratories failed to submit data on time.

According to the DOH, this also brought the total active cases in the country to 86,200, this year's highest.

Of this, 95.4 percent are mild, 2.3 percent are asymptomatic, 0.9 percent are severe, and 0.9 percent are in critical condition.

Meanwhile, total recoveries climbed to 578,461 with 620 new ones while 20 more fatalities brought the death toll to 12,992.

Six duplicate cases were removed from the total case count.

"Moreover, 8 cases that were previously tagged as recoveries were reclassified as deaths after final validation," the DOH said.

Data from the DOH also showed that 69 percent of the country's intensive care unit beds are available while 50 percent of the mechanical ventilators are ready for use.

On Monday, the Philippines [reported](#) its highest daily increase with 8,019 infections, the first time that more than 8,000 cases were reported in the country.

Earlier, the Health Department said that at least 78 percent of isolation facilities in the National Capital Region are already [occupied](#).

The government has placed Metro Manila, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal, dubbed as the 'NCR Plus' [bubble](#), under a stricter community quarantine bubble for two weeks amid a spike in COVID-19 cases.

However, the OCTA Research group said that the stricter restrictions placed over the 'NCR Plus' bubble are [unlikely to bring down](#) the reproduction number of the coronavirus to 1 within two weeks.—**LDF, GMA News**

Source: [https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/780844/philippines-86-200-covid-19-active-cases-highest-in-2021/story/?just\\_in](https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/780844/philippines-86-200-covid-19-active-cases-highest-in-2021/story/?just_in)



## RELIGIOUS FREEDOM NI BISHOP PABILLO; 2 CARDINAL, 9 OBISPO PATAY SA COVID-19



March 24, 2021 @ 1:33 AM 5 hours ago

NAKAAAWA ngayon ang kalagayan ng milyon-milyong mamamayan dahil sa pag-atake ng coronavirus disease o COVID-19.

Walang sinasanto ang COVID-19 pandemic at maging ang mga obispong Katoliko, pastor at iba pang mga lider-panrelihiyon ay pinapatay at pinagkakasakit nito nang matindi.

Ngayong ang pandemya ay sobrang bilis at lawak ang pananalasa sa pagsulpot ng mga bagong anyo o variant na kasama ang orig na virus, dapat tumalima ang lahat sa ipinag-uutos ng pamahalaan para masugpo ito.

Ang pamahalaan ang pangunahing may responsibilidad para proteksyunan at pagsilbihan ang sambayanan na dinadaluhong ng salot na pandemya.

At dahil buo at puspusan nitong ginagampanan ang nasabing responsibilidad, kailangang sumunod ang lahat.

Tanggapin man o hindi ng mga lider-simbahan, ikaliligtas din nila mula sa pagkakasakit at kamatayan ang mga hakbang ng pamahalaan laban sa COVID-19.

Ikaliligtas din ng kanilang mga mananampalataya sa pandemya ang mga hakbangin ng pamahalaan.

### RESOLUTION NG IATF

Tinatalakay natin ang ukol sa religious gathering o pagtitipon-tipon ng mga mananampalataya na gustong pairalin ng mga lider-panrelihiyon tulad ni Manila Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Pabillo sa gitna ng matinding pandemya.

Kamakailan lang, Marso 22, sinimulang pairalin ng pamahalaan ang ilang paghihigpit laban sa mga pagtitipon, kasama na ang sa mga simbahan, at matatapos ito sa Abril 4, 2021.

Ayon sa Resolution No. 104 na may petsang Marso 20, 2021 ng Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases, partikular sa talatang Bb at Bc, ipinagbabawal naman ang anomang pagtitipong panrelihiyon, kasama ang mga pabinyag, kasal at libing, maliban lang kung 10 katao lang ang dadalo.

### KONTRA-RESOLUSYON NI BP. PABILLO NA KINONTRA NI SEC. ROQUE

Dahil sa nasabing resolusyon ng IATF, nagsisigaw ngayon si Pabillo na nilabag umano ng pamahalaan ang tadhana ng Konstitusyon ukol sa paghihiwalay ng simbahan at estado at ginawa ang resolusyon nang walang konsultasyon.

At tila hindi susunod si Pabillo sa mga pagbabawal na nakasaad sa nasabing resolusyon.



Paiiralin umano nito ang pagmimisa ngunit hanggang 10 porsyento lamang ng kapasidad ng simbahan ang isasagawa.

At nananawagan pa ang Obispo sa mga mamamayan na suwayin nila ang pamahalaan sa usaping ito.

Malinaw namang ipinaliwanag ni Malacañang Spokesman Harry Roque ang ibig sabihin ng paghihiwalay ng simbahan at estado o separation of church.

Hindi nilalabag ng pamahalaan ang kalayaan sa paniniwala sa Diyos at hindi ito nag-eendorso ng relihiyon, ayon kay Sec. Roque.

Sa halip, pinairal lang ng pamahalaan, ani pa ni Roque, ang police power o kapangyarihan ng estado na isulong ang kabutihan ng lahat.

### **IBA PANG MAHAHALAGANG PUNTO**

Kung iisipin, pansamantala lang naman ang paghihigpit na paiiralin ng pamahalaan sa lahat ng pagtitipon na hindi maituturing na essential at hindi lang naman ang mass gathering ng simbahan kundi iba pang maramihang pagtitipon.

Bukod dito, malinaw na ang sakop lang ng pagbabawal sa mass gathering ay Metro Manila at mga lalawigan ng Rizal, Bulacan, Cavite at Laguna.

‘Yun bang === pwede ang maramihang pagtitipon sa labas ng mga lugar na ito, maliban lang kung may pangangailangan dahil may kapangyarihan din ang mga local government unit na magpairal ng lockdown mismo sa kanilang mga lugar.

Isa pa, sa anomang mahalagang okasyon ng anomang simbahan gaya ng Mahal na Araw ng Simbahang Katolika, libo-libo, daang libo o milyong ang dumarayo sa isang lugar para sa mga partikular na aktibidad.

Kung ipipilit ni Pabillo ang 10 porsyentong dadalo, ano ang 10% sa libo, daang libo o milyong dadalo sa okasyon?

Nasa 100 katao ang para sa libo, 10,000 para sa 100,000 at 100,000 para sa 1 milyong.

Hindi ba malakihang pagtitipon ang mga ‘yan na malaking posibilidad na pagmulan ng hawaan sa COVID-19?

Hihintayin pa ba ng pamahalaan na may mamatay sa COVID-19 tulad ni Fr. Arnold Sta. Maria Canosa sa San Agustin Church na ikina-lockdown tuloy ng buong Intramuros sa Maynila?

Nasira tuloy ang kalayaang mabuhay nang normal ang libo-libong residente ng Intramuros, maging ang kalayaang mamasyal at magsimba sa San Agustin Church at sa Manila Cathedral.

### **IBA PANG PUNTO**

Sakaling may magsimba sa bawat Simbahang Katolika na 100 katao o 10,000 o 100,000 at may nahawa, naospital o namatay, handa ba ang kaobispuhan na sagutin ang gastos ng mga biktima, kasama ang panghabambuhay na suporta ng pamilya kung haligi ng tahanan ang natamaan, lalo na kung namatay?

Oo nga at may mga pag-aari naman ang Simbahang Katolika na mga ospital na pwedeng doon itakbo ang nagkasakit at naospital.

Subalit naniningil ang mga ospital na ‘yan sa pamahalaan ng kanilang hospital services.



At kung namatay at sinunog ang na-COVID-19, babalikatin ba ng mga Obispo ang P100,000 nang cremation fee at libre ba ang paglilibing nito sa Catholic cemeteries?

Paano rin ang contact tracing na pinagkakagastusan nang malaki ang pamahalaan?

May kontribusyon ba ang mga Obispo para rito?

## MAGANDANG PAG-ISIPAN NG MGA OBISPO

Bago lubusang maghayag ng pagtutol ang mga Obispo na katulad ni Bp. Pabillo, magandang mag-isip muna sila.

Mungkahi na isa sa itanim nila sa kanilang isipan ang katotohanang ang mass gathering tulad ng pagmimisa sa gitna ng matinding pandemya ay malaki ang posibilidad na kapahamakan sa kalusugan at buhay ang kahahantungan.

Bukod kay Fr. Canosa, may 80 pari sa Italya ang nasawi sa pagmimisa at pagdalo sa mga nagkakasakit sa COVID-19 at marami ring pastor na protestante ang nasawi rin sa Amerika sa tahasang hindi pagtalima sa kautusan ng pamahalaan na iwasan ang religious gatherings.

Kabilang sa mga namatay na lider-Katoliko ang dalawang Cardinal na sina Cardinal Eusébio Oscar Scheid at Cardinal Norberto Rivera Cabrera at siyam na obispo na kinabibilangan nina Archbishop Abel Gabuza, Archbishop Oscar Rizzato, Archbishop Philip Tartaglia, Bishop Mario Cecchini, at Bishop Moses Hamungole.

Kamamatay lang din nang sabay ang mag-asawang pastor na sina Bill at Esther Ilnisky, ng Assemblies of God.

Isa pa, malinaw na malinaw na hindi sinasagkaan ng pamahalaan ang kalayaan sa relihiyon sa pananampalataya sa pagsasabi mismo ng Resolution 104, talata Bb, na pwedeng isagawa ang mga aktibidad na mass gathering sa pamamagitan ng virtual o paggamit ng internet gaya Zoom at iba pa.

Sa kabilang banda, magandang tingnan ang partisipasyon ng ibang mga kasapi ng Catholic Conference of the Philippines sa giyera sa pandemya sa paggigiit ng paniniwalang “the best vaccine is the available vaccine” at paghahayag ng kagustuhan nilang magpabakuna para lang maakay nila ang mga mamamayan na magpabakuna.

Heto naman ang napag-alaman ng ating Uzi sa pakikipanayam sa mga taong simbahan, kasama ang masisipag na sumasali sa pagdedeliber ng Seven Last Words tuwing Semana Santa.

Paano kami dadalo sa misa at magkokomunyon kung wala kaming kasiguruhan sa paring nagsesermon at namimigay ng ostia gaya nina Fr. Canosa, Fr. Manuel Catral na nagpositibo at ikina-lockdown ng parokya ng Aparri, Cagayan, Fr. Anton Pascual na ikina-lockdown din ng Caritas Manila sa Pandacan at nagpositibo ring si Lipa City, Batangas Archbishop Gilbert Garcera?





# 'Climate change deprives 70% of Somalians of safe water'

March 23, 2021, 3:14 pm



**ANKARA** – Climate change-caused drought in Somalia has left 70 percent of families in the country without access to safe drinking water and in urgent need of humanitarian support, according to the non-profit organization Save the Children.

"Thousands of children are now reliant on emergency water trucking and unprotected wells or are forced to leave their homes in search of water," it said in its latest report.

Reduced rainfall and severe water shortages are also killing livestock, causing crop failures and diminishing household incomes, leaving children in these families with fewer daily meals and less nutritious food, the report warned.

The loss of livestock also further exposes children in Somalia to the risk of malnutrition as they have less access to milk, Save the Children said.

"As the negative impacts of climate change intensify, the frequency and severity of extreme weather events in Somalia are increasing. In the past year alone, Somalia experienced severe floods, the most powerful cyclone to ever hit the country and now a looming drought. Communities are struggling to survive as they have no time to recover before the next crisis hits," it said.

The report stressed that without immediate humanitarian aid, the crisis in Somalia is likely to peak in June, with the number of children and adults in urgent need of humanitarian support soaring to 5.9 million.

"The international community has been very generous in supporting people in Somalia. However, to reduce support now would be disastrous, as the deadly combination of continuous climate shocks, Covid-19 and conflict are pushing children and their families to the limit and they need urgent support to help them survive," it warned. **(Anadolu)**

24 MARCH 2021, WEDNESDAY



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