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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR sa mga mambabatas: Mas mahigpit na parusa vs mananakit sa PH eagle ikasa



January 24, 2022 @ 8:47 AM 22 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines – Hinikayat ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang mga mambabatas na amyendahan ang Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001 para mapalakas pa ang pagprotekta sa Philippine Eagle na isa nang endangered species.

Ang panawagan na ni DENR Sec. Roy Cimatu para sa mas mahigpit pang parusa sa lalabag sa batas ay kasunod ng pagpapakawala ng kagawaran sa isang Philippine eagle na pinangalanang “Godod” sa munisipalidad sa Zamboanga del Norte na may kaparehong pangalan noong Enero 10.

Si Godod, na isang Philippine eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*), ay nasagip matapos na ma-trap ng isang residente sa Barangay Bunawan, sa bayan ng Godod.

“Experts in Philippine eagle biology and ecology deem that the surge in rescues during this time means that culprits are intruding into the forests to hunt for food and as a source of livelihood, thereby causing a disturbance in the forest habitats,” ani Cimatu.

“We have to remain vigilant and let the perpetrators know that there are environmental laws they have to face if they continue with such evil deeds. Continuously confronted with such acts, we urge our lawmakers to help us protect the Philippine eagle and other wildlife species,” dagdag pa ng kalihim.

Si Godod ay pinakawalan ng Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) sa Liloy, Zamboanga del Norte matapos na alagaan at masuring malusog.

Bago naman pakawalan sa kagubatan, nilagyan ang agila ng global positioning system o GPS tracker.

Ang Philippine eagle ay idineklarangng ‘critically endangered species’ sa ilaim ng DENR Administrative Order 2019-09 o mas kilala bilang bagong National Lists of Threatened Philippine Fauna. **RNT**

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/denr-sa-mga-mambabatas-mas-mahigpit-na-parusa-vs-mananakit-sa-ph-eagle-ikasa/>



STABILIZING RIVERBANKS

500-hectare bamboo plantation, dredging to reduce Cagayan floods

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:40 AM January 24, 2022



GREEN BARRIER Environment officials inspect over the weekend the bamboos planted along the banks of Cagayan River. — DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES PHOTO

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Philippines —Riverside communities in Cagayan province have been asked to guard a 500-hectare plantation made up of bamboo and homegrown tree species that will help protect Cagayan River and avoid future floods.

The Regional Build Back Better Task Force (RBBBTF) on Sunday said it had inspected the 585-ha interconnecting plantations growing along the Cagayan riverbanks in Tuguegarao and the towns of Lasam, Gattaran, Enrile, Solana, Alcala, Amulung, Baggao, Peñablanca, Abulug, Pamplona, Sanchez Mira, Claveria and Sta. Praxedes.

Gwendolyn Bambalan, RBBBTF chair and Cagayan Valley director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), said the plantation represented the government's green infrastructure that was designed to stabilize the riverbanks.

"It complements the removal of sandbars and the construction of soil and water conservation measures or the gray infrastructure," she added in a statement.

Bambalan also urged village officials of Minanga Sur in Lasam town to ensure the survival of the 123-ha bamboo plantation along Zinundungan River, said Corazon Corpuz, DENR Cagayan Valley information officer.

The riverside plantations were put up last year by the DENR in partnership with 14 local governments.

Priority areas

Bambalan led on-site inspections of the soil and water conservation project along Paranan River in Baggao, where she proposed a memorandum of agreement with Mayor Joan Dunuan to relinquish facility maintenance to Barangay Dalin. She encouraged the barangay officials to plant more bamboo and indigenous trees to protect the riverbank against further erosion.

The area is one of the priority areas for rehabilitation due to the confluence there of Paranan River and Agaman River, which triggered severe river erosion.



Aside from Baggao, the towns of San Agustin and San Guillermo in Isabela province, and Cabarroguis in Quirino province were also recipients of small water impounding system projects for intensified watershed management under the “Build Back Better” initiatives. The projects were expected to be completed in March.

The government also inspected sandbar dredging sites at Bangag village in Lal-lo and Dummun village in Gattaran.

—VILLAMOR VISAYA JR. INQ



Guv wants mines shut down for good in Davao Oriental town

By: [Carmelito Q. Francisco](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:45 AM January 24, 2022



DIRTY WATER An aerial shot shows the heavily silted Mapagba River in Banaybanay, Davao Oriental, taken on Jan. 20, allegedly due to mine waste that inundated the river following heavy rains from Jan. 13 to Jan. 14. —MINDANAO DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

DAVAO CITY, Philippines —Davao Oriental Gov. Nelson Dayanghirang has asked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to cancel the permit of the mining companies whose activities caused the massive pollution of Mapagba and Pintatagan rivers in Banaybanay town.

In a Jan. 20 letter to Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, Dayanghirang said the mining companies Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corp. (RCMC) and its operator, Arc Nickel Resources Inc. (Anri), must not be allowed to resume operations because their activities had resulted in massive siltation and discoloration of the rivers.

The Banaybanay mines are covered by a mineral production sharing agreement covering over 6,000 hectares between the government and RCMC, although these are operated by Anri. A 2016 environmental impact assessment showed the company's plan to extract 9,600 wet metric tons of nickel ore per year from two mines sites for the next eight years.

However, an investigation by the province's technical personnel showed that the siltation ponds built by Anri were "not wide and deep enough, causing the discolored water discharges to overflow while some portions of discharges were not directed to the catchment ponds," said Dayanghirang in his letter.

'Blatant disregard'

The governor added that the mining operator did not have enough environmental mitigating measures and preparedness to address unforeseen events, which was a "blatant disregard of the company to its environmental protection and enhancement commitments ..."

Dayanghirang sent the letter to the DENR after he and Secretary Maria Belen Acosta, chair of the Mindanao Development Authority, inspected the area following the order of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau for the temporary closure of the mining operation.

Although he acknowledged the contribution of the mining industry to the economy of the country, Dayanghirang said its impact to the environment outweighed the benefits.



“For a while, it may provide benefits in terms of income for the local and the national governments. But our people and our environment will suffer the long-term effects of irresponsible mining. We can still manage without it. Environment protection and conservation should be prioritized above everything else,” he added.

Long-term effects

Acosta said there was a need for the government to review the mining policies following the incident.

“Economic development and environmental protection should go hand in hand. They should not cancel each other. Sustainable growth is the way to go,” Acosta explained.

The government has reported that the companies have started desilting Mapagba River. It has also distributed food assistance to those affected by the siltation and has since planned to start reforestation activities and other initiatives to rehabilitate the area.

The municipal government of Pantukan in Davao de Oro province has also filed a resolution asking the national government to stop the operations of the mining area in Davao Oriental as a result of the recent siltation and discoloration of its water sources.

The two provinces are both known for hosting considerable mineral deposits, but it is in Davao Oriental where nickel is concentrated, while Davao de Oro mining activities have been focused on extraction of gold. INQ



Davao Oriental chief wants permanent closure of mining firms in river siltation incident

January 23, 2022 | 10:08 pm



DAVAO ORIENTAL PROVINCIAL GOVT

DAVAO ORIENTAL'S governor has asked the Environment department to permanently cancel the permit of the mining operators that caused water pollution in Mapagba and Pintatagan Rivers.

Governor Nelson L. Dayanghirang, in a Jan. 20 letter addressed to Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, "strongly" recommended the cancellation of the mining permit of Riverbend Consolidated Mining Corporation/Arc Nickel Resources, Inc. and the permanent closure of the mining area located in Banaybanay town.

The recommendation is based on findings by the provincial government's technical staff.

"The company's mitigating measures and preparedness to address unforeseen events is not enough. This blatant disregard of the company to its environmental protection and enhancement commitments had caused immeasurable environmental damages, should be given corrective measures," the governor said in the letter.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources' regional office, along with the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, has an ongoing assessment on possible penalties, operational adjustments as well as the environmental damage of the siltation.

The rivers have turned into an orange color from nickel laterite following heavy downpour on Jan. 13.

Meanwhile, Davao-based environmental group Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability (IDIS) called on the Davao Oriental provincial board to issue a resolution supporting the governor's recommendation.

"With the letter of Gov. Dayanghirang addressed to DENR Sec. Roy Cimatu, we see a little ray of hope that the Provincial Government of Davao Oriental is taking the side of environmental justice and its people," IDIS said in a statement last week.

The joint companies have yet to issue a statement on the incident. Operations have been suspended since Jan. 17 following a cease order from authorities.

The Davao Oriental provincial government has confirmed that the operators have been conducting massive desilting operations at the Mapagba River. They also distributed food packs to affected communities downstream. — **Maya M. Padillo**

Source: https://www.bworldonline.com/davao-oriental-chief-wants-permanent-closure-of-mining-firms-in-river-siltation-incident/?fbclid=IwAR0JUnK8NvdQQnlTxhE_vRWaJFIJNXXUD8ke2TG5LGE6EmruuCF-tY3L4IA



DENR pinagsusumite ng listahan ng mga halaman, hayop na bawal ibenta, alagaan

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jan 24 2022 09:06 PM

MAYNILA — Pinagagawa ng mga senador ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ng bagong listahan ng mga halaman at hayop na nanganganib nang maubos.

Sa gitna ito ng pagtalakay nitong Lunes sa plenary session ng panukalang pag-amyenda sa Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act o Republic Act 9147.

Ayon kay Sen. Cynthia Villar, chairman ng Senate Committee on Environment at nagdedepensa ng panukala, layunin ng panukala na palakasin ang kapangyarihan ng gobyerno para masawata ang trafficking o ilegal na pagbebenta ng mga endangered species sa bansa.

Tinanong siya ng mga kapwa senador kung paano maipapaalam sa dumarami ngayong plantito at plantita kung endangered na ang binibili nilang halaman at kung magkakaroon ba ng parusa ang pag-aalaga nito.

Kwinestiyon din kung ano ang mangyayari kapag naisabatas ang panukala at nakasama sa ipagbabawal ang mga mamahaling halaman na matagal nang nabili at kinu-kolekta.

Tanong naman ng mga kapwa senador kung hindi ba lalabag sa batas ukol sa Ease of Doing Business kung pahihirapan ang publiko dahil sa probisyon ng panukala na pakuhanin sila ng permit mula sa gobyerno kung bibili at magpaparami ng mga endangered at threatened wildlife species.

Naging kwestiyon din kung may exemption para sa mga katutubo sa lugar kung saan naroon ang endangered species.

Sa pamamagitan ni Villar, sinabi ng DENR na mayroon na silang listahan ng mga hayop na bawal hulihin at mga halaman na bawal kulektahin at gawing negosyo.

Pero iginiit ng mga senador na i-update ito para magkaliwanagan. Anila, dapat ilista ang mga critically endangered, endangered, endemic, at vulnerable.

Nagpapagawa rin sila ng probisyon sa panukalang batas na magtatakda ng patakaran ukol sa pagdaragdag o pagtanggali sa listahan ng mga endangered na hayop at halaman at ng probisyon din para magkaroon ng transition para sa mga plantito at plantita na maaaring nag-aalaga ngayon ng endangered nang mga halaman para hindi sila makasuhan.

— Ulat ni Robert Mano, ABS-CBN News

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/01/24/22/denr-pinagsusumite-ng-listahan-ng-mga-halaman-hayop-na-bawal-ibenta-alagaan?fbclid=IwAR38uK5bCcbBFcEGUCmZshoepWxPUAOyM71K5d0w-Kr5LqyhztfnNtaJSN0Y>



An appeal from Zambales to Secretary Cimatu

by [Tony La Viña](#) January 25, 2022, 12:05 am

“Here’s an excerpt from the letter of the Save Zambales Kalikasan Movement.”

Last Saturday, I wrote about an environmental stand-off happening right now in Zambales. Because of the urgency of the matter, I quote excerpts from a letter sent yesterday by Ms. Heidi Mendoza, Executive Director of the Save Zambales Kalikasan Movement, to Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu. She writes:

“I am writing on behalf of the concerned citizens of San Narciso and San Felipe, Zambales in relation to a private jetty port and causeway project being implemented by AGN Trading. Among the activities being opposed by the local community, AGN Trading is compacting dredged materials from the Alusiis River and turning the said river into an access road which will lead to a private jetty port. The jetty port was intended to transport by sea and export lahar and blacksand to Singapore and China.

To dramatize the protest by using their bodies as human shields to prevent big backhoes from further destruction of our most precious Alusiis River, 30 fisherfolks have camped out beside the river Alusiis since 11 January 2022. Thankfully, a lot of media outfits have heard their cry for help and featured their story and struggles. Other non-government organizations, the Dominican nuns and priests for Justice and Peace and concerned citizens have been providing donations and moral support to the protesters. Instead of heeding their plea, the local government units of San Narciso town led by Mayor William Lim, and San Felipe town led by Mayor Leo John Farrales have set a venue for the AGN Trading to offer jobs for fisherfolks who will be displaced by the project. Fisherfolks and members of our group have walked out on both meetings set by the Mayors.

CENRO official Roger Encarnation deceived us, the Save Zambales Kalikasan Movement, when he set an arbitration between AGN Trading and our group in his office in Olongapo City on 7th January 2022. Upon reaching his Olongapo City office, we were told that the meeting was postponed because all CENRO officials were on field work. However, to our big dismay, we found out that at 8AM of that same day, CENRO Chief of Enforcement and Monitoring Edward Sarnedilla accompanied the camp of AGN Trading, Mayor Farrales, brgy. Captain Marlita Santos and the San Felipe police incursed on the site of the planned but yet unauthorized Jetty Port/Causeway project and brought with them two backhoes, barbed wires and bamboo poles to fence the site of the planned jetty port. Fisherfolks and resort owners barricaded the group of Mr. Sarnedilla and the AGN Trading and prevented them from putting up the fences and dredging the shores. Thankfully, no one was injured in that commotion.

Coupled with the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project, the opposition of the community stems from AGN’s failure to present any of the requisite permits and licenses from the pertinent government agencies before implementing the same. It must be emphasized that the project is being pushed through with undue haste despite public objection and without the necessary approvals from the government. At the outset, it is respectfully submitted that the concern for the jetty port is that it is a component or accessory to the primary operations of a mining company and that it will be used to ship out the minerals (lahar and blacksand) extracted from the province.



Unquestionably, AGN Trading needs to show that it has, among other requirements, secured: (a) an Environmental Compliance Certificate covering the development of the causeway/access road, the jetty port, the stockpile area, and other related facilities; (b) a DENR foreshore lease agreement to operate on public lands; (c) Permit to Construct a Port from the Philippine Ports Authority; (d) PPA Special Permit to Operate a Port Facility; (e) Dredging Clearance from the DPWH; (f) Approval from the Department of Tourism; (g) Authority/Endorsement from the Philippine Reclamation Authority; and (h) pertinent clearances from the local government units . . .

Under the Environmental Impact Statement System, no person, partnership, or corporation shall undertake or operate any such declared environmentally critical project or area without first securing an Environmental Compliance Certificate issued by the President or his duly authorized representative.

However, in this case, no ECCs were properly secured for each component of the project, no EIA study/report was conducted, no public consultations took place, and no permits/licenses from the concerned government agencies were secured. Yet, the project implementation pushed through and continues on . . .

This is impunity happening under your leadership. On that note, kindly sit down with us for a dialogue soonest to put an end to this travesty. We have faith in your office and in you as an alternate of the President of the Republic of the Philippines in ensuring pivotal environmental protection to save people's lives. The fisherfolks protecting River Alusiis with their bodies are very tired but very hopeful that there is a peaceful solution to this travesty . . . Please help us save Alusiis river, our fishing grounds in the West Philippine sea, our lives and our local economy."

I personally know Secretary Cimatú to be a person committed to the protection of the environment. He will respond positively to these just demands of the people of Zambales.

Website: tonylavina.com Facebook: [deantonylavs](https://www.facebook.com/deantonylavs) Twitter: [tonylavs](https://twitter.com/tonylavs)



Solon hails approval of bill on plastic wastes in PH

by [Maricel Cruz](#) January 24, 2022, 10:50 pm

Deputy Speaker and Las Piñas Rep. Camille Villar welcomed the approval of a consolidated measure designed to hold companies responsible for recycling to address the growing problem of plastic pollution in the country.

Villar cited the need for Congress to pass the packaging responsibility or product stewardship bill, also known as the “extended producer responsibility (EPR)” as consumers generate more single-use packaging and plastics from online purchases amid the pandemic.

Currently, plastic waste makes up a significant share of the overall generated waste in the Philippines. Based on reports, the Philippines is the third biggest polluter next to China and Indonesia and produces some 2.7 million metric tons of plastic waste each year.

“Worse, plastic waste is likely to aggravate pollution and worsen flooding in communities,” Villar added.

Villar filed last year House Bill 10498 that proposes to institutionalize the practice of EPR in waste management and to improve the responsibility of producers in the design, collection, reuse, recycling, and disposal of their products and packaging.

EPR refers to the environmental policy, initiatives, and practices in which companies and corporations are obliged to have the responsibility of proper and effective recovery, treatment, recycling and disposal of their products after they have been sold and used by consumers aimed at improving ecological management.

Tax perks also await firms that put in place EPR mechanisms.

Villar also appealed to her fellow legislators to support the proposed legislation.

“I have faith that this important bill is comprehensive enough to address plastic and solid waste management in the country. May I then sincerely seek the support of the members of the Committee and the stakeholders pre



3.8-M SMC trees sprout in 3 yrs

Initiative is part of SMCGP's carbon capture program dubbed Project 747, which aims to plant 7 million trees on over 4,000 hectares of land

Published 3 hours ago on January 25, 2022 03:00 AM

By **TDI** @tribunephl



SMC has planted over 3.8 million trees in its nationwide upland and mangrove forest rehabilitation program since 2019. Employees and community volunteers plant trees in the provinces of Bulacan, Albay, and Quezon. / Photograph courtesy of SMC

Asian giant San Miguel Corporation's (SMC) group-wide reforestation initiative has yielded 3.8 million trees since 2019 to date, even as it recently completed planting over 26,000 trees in Angat, Bulacan with the town's Dumagat communities.

The initiative is among SMC's major environmental sustainability projects aimed at helping address the impact of climate change through the rehabilitation of degraded forests nationwide, carbon capture and reduction of soil erosion which contributes to severe flooding in lowland areas.

SMC president and CEO Ramon Ang said the company, through its power firm SMC Global Power Holdings (SMCGP), has partnered with the indigenous communities of Dumagats in Bulacan to cover the first 16 of 55 hectares targeted for planting with dipterocarp tree species like White and Red Lauan, Palosapis, Apitong, Yakal, Guijo, and other indigenous species such as Bignai and Narra.

The initiative is part of SMCGP's carbon capture program dubbed Project 747, which aims to plant 7 million trees on over 4,000 hectares of land, in seven provinces nationwide.

Dumagats lend hand
"We thank members of the indigenous community in Bulacan, the Dumagats, for helping the company plant 26,656 trees on 16 hectares in just two weeks last December. Being residents in the area, their local knowledge and insights are very valuable to our program, from the choice of the ideal tree species, to identifying the upland areas where these trees should be planted to ensure their growth to adulthood," Ang said.

While SMCGP accounts for majority of trees and mangroves planted since 2019, other SMC businesses have either ongoing, long-term reforestation activities, or have begun their own initiatives.

With the December planting in Angat, Bulacan included, SMC and community volunteers have planted a total 54,056 trees and mangroves to date in Bulacan since 2019. The reforestation effort complements SMC's flood mitigation strategy in the province, which will include a river channel improvement program for the Marilao-Meycauayan-Obando River System as well as other active rivers and tributaries in Bulacan.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2022/01/25/3-8-m-smc-trees-sprout-in-3-yrs/>



SMC plants 3.8 million trees in 3 years

BY VG CABUAG AND JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

JANUARY 24, 2022



Photo shows employee and community volunteers during recent tree-planting activities in Quezon.

Conglomerate San Miguel Corp. (SMC) on Monday said its groupwide reforestation initiative nationwide has planted 3.8 million trees since 2019 to date, even as it recently completed planting over 26,000 trees in Angat, Bulacan together with the town's Dumagat communities.

The initiative is among the conglomerate's major environmental sustainability projects aimed at helping address the impacts of climate change through the rehabilitation of degraded forests nationwide, carbon capture and reduction of soil erosion which contributes to severe flooding in lowland areas.

San Miguel President and CEO Ramon S. Ang said the company, through its power firm SMC Global Power Holdings, has partnered with the indigenous communities of Dumagats in Bulacan to cover the first 16 of 55 hectares targeted for planting with dipterocarp tree species like White and Red Lauan, Palosapis, Apitong, Yakal, Guijo and other indigenous species, such as Bignai and Narra. The initiative is part of the power firm's carbon capture program dubbed Project 747, which aims to plant 7 million trees on over 4,000 hectares of land, in seven provinces nationwide.

"We thank the members of the indigenous community in Bulacan, the Dumagats, for helping the company plant 26,656 trees on 16 hectares in just two weeks last December. Being residents in the area, their local knowledge and insights are very valuable to our program, from the choice of the ideal tree species, to identifying the upland areas where these trees should be planted to ensure their growth to adulthood," Ang said.

The company and community volunteers have planted a total 54,056 trees and mangroves to date in Bulacan since 2019. The reforestation effort complements San Miguel's flood mitigation strategy in the province, which will include a river channel improvement program for the Marilao-Meycauayan-Obando River System as well as other active rivers and tributaries in Bulacan.

This total includes 6,400 trees, including 3,200 narra and guyabano tree varieties planted by employees of San Miguel's Bulacan Bulk Water Supply unit over 14 hectares at the Angat Dam Watershed since 2019. This project was conducted in cooperation with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

Dubbed the annual Million Tree Planting Challenge, MWSS partners with organizations to reforest or replenish the forest cover of 126 hectares of the Angat Dam Watershed within three years.



San Miguel is also looking to develop the first 20 hectares of its 80-hectare San Miguel-Paombong Mangrove Plantation and Sanctuary project at Barangay Masukol in the town of Paombong, which can host as many as 200,000 mangroves.

“We are taking a holistic approach in our environmental programs and this both entails the reforestation and establishment of mangrove and upland areas. By rehabilitating these upland areas, we can help mitigate soil erosion that contributes to heavy sedimentation or siltation of tributaries which, together with solid waste pollution, result in flooding. At the same time, nurturing mangrove areas will protect coastal areas from storm surges and flooding.”

Image credits: [Contributed photo](#)



MC plants 3.8 million trees in three years, Dumagats join reforestation efforts in Bulacan

January 24, 2022 6 min read

San Miguel Corporation (SMC) has planted over 3.8 million trees in its nationwide upland and mangrove forest rehabilitation program since 2019. Photos show employee and community volunteers during recent tree planting activities in the provinces of Bulacan, Albay, and Quezon.

MANILA — San Miguel Corporation's (SMC) group-wide reforestation initiative nationwide has yielded 3.8 million trees since 2019 to date, even as it recently completed planting over 26,000 more trees in Angat, Bulacan together with the town's Dumagat communities.



The initiative is among SMC's major environmental sustainability projects aimed at helping address the impacts of climate change through the rehabilitation of degraded forests nationwide, carbon capture, and reduction of soil erosion which contributes to severe flooding in lowland areas.

SMC president and CEO Ramon S. Ang said the company, through its power firm SMC Global Power Holdings (SMCGP), has partnered with the indigenous communities of Dumagats in Bulacan to cover the first 16 of 55 hectares targeted for planting with dipterocarp tree species like White and Red Luan, Palosapis, Apitong, Yakal, Guijo, and other indigenous species such as Bignai and Narra.

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While SMCGP accounts for the majority of trees and mangroves planted since 2019, other SMC businesses have either ongoing, long-term reforestation activities or have begun their own initiatives.

With the December planting in Angat, Bulacan included, SMC and community volunteers have planted a total 54,056 trees and mangroves to date in Bulacan since 2019. The reforestation effort complements SMC's flood mitigation strategy in the province, which will include a river channel improvement program for the Marilao-Meycauayan-Obando River System (MMORS) as well as other active rivers and tributaries in Bulacan.

This total includes 6,400 trees, including 3,200 narra and guyabano tree varieties planted by employees of SMC's Bulacan Bulk Water Supply unit over 14 hectares at the Angat Dam Watershed since 2019. This project was conducted in cooperation with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS).

Dubbed the annual Million Tree Planting Challenge, MWSS partners with organizations to reforest or replenish the forest cover of 126 hectares of the Angat Dam Watershed within three years.

Earlier last year, SMC employee volunteers planted a total of 8,000 mangrove saplings at the Bulakan Mangrove Ecopark, which the company jointly maintains with the local government of Bulakan town. A total of 13,000 mangroves are also being grown in the coastal areas of Hagonoy and Obando towns.

SMC is also looking to develop the first 20 hectares of its 80-hectare San Miguel-Paombong Mangrove Plantation and Sanctuary project at Barangay Masukol in the town of Paombong, which can host as many as 200,000 mangroves.

"We are taking a holistic approach in our environmental programs and this both entails the reforestation and establishment of mangrove and upland areas. By rehabilitating these upland areas, we can help mitigate soil erosion that contributes to heavy sedimentation or siltation of tributaries which, together with solid waste pollution, result in flooding. At the same time, nurturing mangrove areas will protect coastal areas from storm surges and flooding," Ang said. SMC's group-wide reforestation project targets to plant endemic trees and fruit tree species that are recommended by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and local communities with vast knowledge of their areas.

Out of SMC's total of 3,802,898 trees and mangroves planted to date, SMC Global Power's Project 747 accounts for 3,747,898, planted on 1,110 hectares with the help of 39 people's organizations in Zambales, Davao Occidental, Negros Occidental, Bataan, Pangasinan, Albay, Quezon province, and Bulacan.

With the help of these local community organizations, the Project 747 initiative has yielded a survival rate of 89% for upland trees and 91% for mangrove saplings.

Among upland tree, varieties planted and maintained are Narra, Molave, White Lauan, Palosapis Agoho, Batino, Igang, and Malabayabas, while mangrove varieties include Bakawan Babae, Bakawan Lalaki, Bungalon, and Api-Api.

Other SMC subsidiaries also maintained tree-planting activities despite pandemic restrictions last year.



Under its Trees Brew Life Program, San Miguel Brewery employees planted 22,600 mangroves and trees in Mandaue, Cebu, and 1,500 trees in Bacolod and Tagoloan cities in 2021. SMB's Trees Brew Life has planted an estimated one million trees in various locations nationwide over the last 10 years. At San Miguel's sustainable housing community called the San Miguel-Christian-Gayeta Homes in Sariaya, Quezon, and also in Balayan, Batangas, residents planted a total of 2,500 assorted tree varieties such as langka, guyabano, mulawin, Philippine cherry, and Philippine almond.

Employee volunteers from Ginebra San Miguel Inc. and community stakeholders are taking care of 40,000 full-grown trees across 12 hectares of land and will also undertake a two-hectare expansion at the same site in Bago City, Negros Occidental.

Petron Corporation employees and community volunteers also planted 1,000 narra seedlings last month at Sitio Marahan, Barangay Marilog, Davao City in cooperation with the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO).

Petron Corporation also eyes to plant at least 50,000 seedlings as part of its proposed 10-year biodiversity conservation efforts for the Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape. Since 2000, Petron has planted over 1 million trees and mangroves nationwide and has also adopted a total of 30 hectares of mangrove reforestation areas in Tacloban City, Leyte, Roxas City, Capiz under its "Puno ng Buhay" program.

Petron also received approval to reforest one hectare each in Bawing, General Santos City and Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental. Approximately 2,500 new mangrove propagules will be planted in Bawing, while bamboo and other seedlings will be used for Tagoloan reforestation. (ai/mtvn)

Source: <https://maharlika.tv/2022/01/24/smc-plants-3-8-million-trees-in-three-years-dumagats-join-reforestation-efforts-in-bulacan/?fbclid=IwAR0CRQdcLhCYiTdSuMoLLGWSTtA4i4sLvT499W6tOBsv7CxdgE43DFzkAas>



Legislators hopeful of House approval for water dep't measure

January 23, 2022 | 10:20 pm



By **Jaspearl Emerald G. Tan**

LEGISLATORS expressed hope that the House of Representatives will approve a bill seeking to create a water management department, after the bill hurdled committee-level evaluation.

Trade Union Congress of the Philippines Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza said House Bill (HB) 9948 or the proposed National Water Act, which is signed will create a Department of Water Resources, is now in a form that has passed scrutiny from four House committees. He said he hopes it will be approved at the next plenary session.

Mr. Mendoza, who co-authored the bill, said the measure has gone through the Government Reorganization, Public Works and Highways, Ways and Means, and Appropriations committees.

“With Committee Report No. 1115, approved by the various Committees, I believe we have achieved the best version of the many bills filed in 2019,” he told BusinessWorld in an e-mail. “I hope that the efforts will not be in vain and that approval at the plenary is inevitable.”

Magsasaka Party-list Rep. Argel Joseph T. Cabatbat, also a co-author, said in an e-mail, “We are optimistic that the House will line this up as one of the priority bills to be passed before Congress ends.”

He noted that HB 9948 was a combination of 35 separate bills and that it had “garnered massive support from one hundred forty-four House members.”

Another co-author, Parañaque Rep. Joy Myra S. Tambunting, said the measure aims to establish an Integrated Water Resource Management system to govern policymaking and planning at the national level.

Ms. Tambunting added that the bill will address water shortages by encouraging “focused research and development in water treatment, sanitation and distribution.”

The bill’s other objective is to support agriculture.

Mr. Cabatbat said one of the problems in agriculture is lack of irrigation and insufficient water allocations for rural areas.

“Once we establish a lead agency that will secure the water supply, including in agricultural areas, we expect that it can gradually address the mismanagement of water resources for irrigation that will eventually help improve the yield of our crops,” he said.



The Magsasaka representative added that the measure directs the Department of Water Resources to work with the Department of Agriculture to ensure the development of agriculture and reduce long-term pollution in both surface and groundwater.

Under the bill, the two departments are tasked with ensuring the efficient use of water, recycling or reuse, and proper wastewater treatment. It also proposes that the National Irrigation Agency be absorbed by the water department to centralize the decision-making for supplying water to agriculture.

The bill also aims to encourage the participation of the private sector by allowing the Department of Water Resources to enter into contracts and partnerships with domestic and foreign entities that invest in water projects.

“...This Department is allowed to enter into joint venture agreements, public-private partnerships or memorandums of agreement which means the creation of business design and solutions resulting in jobs,” Ms. Tambunting said.

HB 9948 is currently in the sponsorship period. A committee report on the National Water Act was filed on Aug. 9, 2021. The House of Representatives will resume its plenary sessions on Monday.

Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/legislators-hopeful-of-house-approval-for-water-dept-measure/?fbclid=IwAR3b1iojFCZKbR4b3XU-aLcvyOWQH2mA3cO590r6Rfiq5jF9H8IV1vMyaRo>



Medical waste ng laboratoryo sa Catanduanes itinapon sa tabi ng dagat

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jan 24 2022 05:46 PM



Larawan mula Brgy. Concepcion office

Natagpuan nitong Linggo sa tabi ng dagat sa isang barangay sa Virac, Catanduanes ang mga medical waste katulad ng mga syringe, blood collection tube, test kit, used glove, face mask at PPE.

Ayon sa chairman ng Brgy. Concepcion na si Anthony Arcilla, isa sa mga barangay kagawad nila ang nagpaabot sa kanya ng impormasyon.

"Around 5 p.m. kahapon, nag-report 'yung kagawad ko na may mga itinapon ngang medical wastes dun sa baybayin. May mga bata nga, nilalaro na 'yung syringe ng laboratoryo. Kaya naalarma yung mga residente," ani Arcilla ngayong Lunes.

Sa imbestigasyon na isinagawa ng barangay, galing umano sa isang medical laboratory sa kanilang bayan ang mga itinapong medical waste.

"Kinalkal namin 'yung medical waste at nakita naming may mga pangalan pa dun ng mga nagpa-test. And may isa dun na nakita naming urine container na kilala ko 'yung nakapangalan, and tinanong ko siya kung saan siya nagpa-laboratory. Kaya yun, na-confirm namin na galing ang medical wastes sa isang private medical laboratory dito sa Virac na medyo malapit lang sa amin," ani Arcilla.

Ngayong Lunes ng umaga, personal na pumunta sa barangay hall ang mismong pamunuan ng medical laboratory at humingi ng paumanhin. Nagkamali umano ng ibinigay na basura ang isa sa kanilang staff sa barangay na pinakisuyuan nilang magtapon ng basura.

"Nagkaroon daw ng switching. Bale, instead na ibasura 'yung mga papel, 'yung basura na laman daw 'yung mga medical waste ang naiabot dun sa solid waste management officer o street sweeper ng isang barangay na pinakisuyuan nilang magtapon ng basura," sabi ni Arcilla.

Sa kabila ng paghingi ng dispensa, desidido ang barangay council ng Concepcion na sampahan ng pormal na reklamo ang medical laboratory.

"Kasi dapat responsable and aware sila pagdating sa proper disposal of wastes, lalo na ang mga medical waste kasi may negatibong epekto 'yan sa health ng community," ani Arcilla.

Naipaabot na rin umano ng barangay ang nasabing reklamo sa sanitary at health officer ng Virac LGU at ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

— **Ulat ni Karren Canon**

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/01/24/22/medical-waste-itinapon-sa-tabi-ng-dagat-sa-catanduanes?fbclid=IwAR16quOGtcCV3dhLIZZBshyyMSjnHcr404oGBQHgoDYP2wbnZr1hLZTb3do>



Hot lumber seized in Aurora

By Jason De Asis January 24, 2022, 7:21 pm



INTERCEPTED. Authorities confiscate illegally cut lumber loaded in a closed van during an anti-illegal logging operation in Sitio Canili, Barangay San Juan, Maria Aurora town in Aurora province on Monday (Jan. 24, 2022). Seized were some 53 pieces of illegally cut lumbers with a total volume of 854 board feet and an estimated market value of P102,480. *(Photo courtesy of the Army's 91IB)*

BALER, Aurora – Authorities confiscated illegally cut lumber in Maria Aurora town, this province early Monday morning.

A report said elements of the Philippine Army's 91st Infantry "Sinagtala Battalion (91IB) and the 1st Aurora Police Mobile Force Company intercepted a closed Isuzu Elf van bearing plate number XTC 376 during an anti-illegal logging operation along the vicinity of Sitio Canili, Barangay San Juan of the said town at around 2 a.m.

Seized were some 53 pieces of illegally cut lumber with a total volume of 854 board feet and an estimated market value of some PHP102,480.

However, the still unidentified van driver managed to escape while his helper Ronnie M. Ramilo was arrested.

The suspects will face charges in violation of Presidential Decree 705, or the Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines as amended by Republic Act 7161, which prohibits the cutting of trees without a permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)

Meanwhile, the seized vehicle and the hot lumber were brought to the Environment and Natural Resources Office in Maria Aurora.

Lt. Col. Reandrew P. Rubio, commander of 91IB, said authorities are still conducting an investigation to determine the source of the seized illegal forest products.

"We will continue to intensify our law enforcement support operations targeting illegal contrabands and those individuals or groups that are engaged in any illegal activities. We are your partners in maintaining peace and order in the province of Aurora," Rubio said in an interview. **(PNA)**



Mga ahas, mysteryosong nagsulputan sa Tondo

Enero 24, 2022 7:47pm GMT+08:00

Isa na namang sawa ang nahuli sa isang barangay sa Tondo, Maynila. Iyon na raw ang ika-12 ahas na nakita sa naturang lugar ngayong buwan ng Enero.

Sa video ng GMA News Feed, makikita ang pagtutulungan ng ilang kalalakitahan sa paghuli sa isang sawa na malapit sa ilog sa Barangay 135, Zone 12.

Ayon sa isa sa mga nakahuli sa sawa na si Ernesto Harina, iyon na raw ang ikalimang ahas na nahuli malapit sa ilog, at ika-12 naman sa kanilang lugar ngayong Enero.

Noong nakaraang Enero 19, may nahuli namang kobra sa Barangay 59, sa Tondo rin.

May nakapansin na gumagalaw ang isang sako sa basketball court, at nang tingnan kung ano ang nasa loob nito, nakita ang kobra na nasa dalawang talampakan ang haba.

Ayon sa barangay chairman, iyon daw ikalawang ahas na nakita naman sa nakitang sa lugar.

Posible raw na sa ilog din nanggaling ang mga ahas.

Ibinigay naman sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang mga nahuling ahas.

--FRJ, GMA News

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/umg/819338/mga-ahas-mysteryosong-nagsulputan-sa-tondo/story/?utm_source=GMANews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1EJilzW-aS7kXn74nwNiKoAJrf89PEohyPKnR1B3RIDQVhCQPjQMC-its



Promoting sustainability: PPP Center eyes more health, climate projects

JAN 24, 2022, 2:05 PM

Rose De La Cruz
Columnist

The PPP Center also sees the challenges posed by climate change as urgent for the country through infrastructure that can help mitigate the devastating effects as shown by typhoon “Odette” in the country and the hurricanes, wildfires, floods and severe droughts.

To address the challenges of limited hospital beds and facilities, particularly in the regions, the Public Private Partnership (PPP) Center eyes more of these facilities for the coming months.

The PPP Center also sees the challenges posed by climate change as urgent for the country through infrastructure that can help mitigate the devastating effects as shown by typhoon “Odette” in the country and the hurricanes, wildfires, floods and severe droughts.

“With the pandemic still affecting our lives, health projects can help address the challenges that we face in terms of limited hospital beds and facilities, particularly in the regions,” the agency said in a press release.

“And with the challenge of climate change being felt, worldwide, it becomes imperative for the Philippines to adapt infrastructure that can help mitigate these devastating effects. We have already seen the damage that can be done with the recent destruction brought by Typhoon Odette.”

P7.2-B in the pipeline

PPP projects valued at P7.2 billion are in the pipeline covering 63 projects, mostly in the transportation sector.

“Most projects cover transportation (roads, airports, ports),” the center said.

“Meanwhile, health, solid waste management projects, water supply projects are of particular interest for local government units.”

The center said that “the next administration can readily pursue and implement these projects.”

PPPs in these sectors are significant because they provide alternative sources for funding amid the government’s limited fiscal space, it added.

Access to technologies, O&M expertise

“PPPs also allow implementing agencies to gain access to technologies, operational and management expertise that the private sector can provide through their resources, experiences, and expertise.”



The PPP Center maintains that PPPs are still viable options for the next government to roll out infrastructure and development projects.

“As the government continues to grapple with the devastating effects of Typhoon “Odette” and other climate resiliency issues as well as Covid-19, PPPs can help address the infrastructure gaps in our health and environment sectors.”

Amending BOT law

President Rodrigo Duterte in November — just eight months before a new administration takes office — named Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Karl Kendrick T. Chua as the chairman of a committee that would amend the implementing rules of the law authorizing the private sector to build and operate infrastructure projects, BusinessWorld reported.

The PPP Center said discussions on the rule changes are still ongoing, with a stakeholder consultation set to be done this quarter.

Investment strategy

Zy-za Nadine Suzara, executive director of the Institute for Leadership, Empowerment, and Democracy (I-LEAD), said the next administration should consider PPPs as an investment strategy for public infrastructure.

These include projects supporting transportation, information and communications technology, disaster risk reduction, and green infrastructure, she said.

“PPP’s will allow the next administration to maximize the limited fiscal space due to the impact of the global pandemic and harness private sector expertise and resources.”

John Paolo Rivera, an economist at the Asian Institute of Management, said PPPs can help make infrastructure projects more cost efficient than a more bureaucratic public sector.

“At the same time, the checks and balances of public sector practice mitigate the ‘corporateness’ of the project and ensure that it is not business-oriented but rather towards the common good of the public,” he said.

But the government should make sure that the projects prioritize delivering public services, he added, rather than commercialization driven by the private sector recovering costs.

Evidence-based cost

Because the projects still use public funds, Suzara said that the next administration should ensure evidence-based cost estimates and transparent project development, procurement, and contracting.

“The next administration should also welcome the participation of civil society organizations and the private sector in monitoring projects,” she said.

“These measures are already encapsulated in various rules and regulations of the government but they need to be strongly enforced by the next administration to avoid leakages and corruption.”



Israel to plant 450,000 trees

By [Xinhua News Agency](#) January 25, 2022

JERUSALEM: [Israel](#) has launched a national plan for shadowing and cooling the urban environment, according to a joint statement issued Sunday by Israel's [Ministry of Environmental Protection](#) and the [Ministry of Agriculture](#) and Rural Development.

The plan, at a total of 2.25 billion shekels (about [US\\$716 million](#)), includes the planting of about 450,000 trees along about 3 million meters of streets by 2040.

The plan, aiming to prepare for climate changes, was approved by the Israeli government after being submitted by Prime Minister [Naftali Bennett](#), Minister of Environmental Protection [Tamar Zandberg](#) and Minister of Agriculture Oded Forer.

The trees will be planted following artificial intelligence mapping of the existing tree shade cover in the local authorities.

"The trees will also significantly reduce heat spots, protect from heavy rains and reduce further negative consequences of climate change and pollution," according to the statement.

25 JANUARY 2022, TUESDAY



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COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DOH logs over 35K recoveries, 25K new Covid-19 infections

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor [January 24, 2022, 5:07 pm](#)



QUARANTINE FACILITY. The vacant beds inside one of the nursery stations of the Manila Covid-19 Field Hospital that will be used as a quarantine facility by returning overseas Filipinos and overseas Filipino workers. The Department of Health on Monday (Jan. 24, 2022) reported 35,461 recoveries and 24,938 new coronavirus infections. *(PNA photo by Ben Briones)*

MANILA – The Department of Health (DOH) on Monday reported 35,461 recoveries and 24,938 new coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) infections.

The latest Covid-19 bulletin indicated 262,997 active cases while total recoveries rose to 3,125,540, or 90.8 percent of 3,442,056 infections since the pandemic started in March 2020.

Out of the active cases, 250,235 are mild, 3,010 are moderate, 7,944 are asymptomatic, 1,499 are severe, and 309 are critical.

“Of the 24,938 reported cases today, 24,239 (97 percent) occurred within the recent 14 days - Jan. 11 to Jan. 24, 2022,” the DOH reported.

The regions with the most cases in the recent two weeks were the National Capital Region (NCR) with 3,610 or 15 percent of new infections; Region 4-A (Calabarzon), 3,382 or 14 percent; and Central Visayas, 2,562 or 11 percent.

The death toll has reached 53,519 with 47 new deaths, representing 1.55 percent of overall cases.

“Of the 47 deaths, 43 occurred in January 2022 (91 percent), three in October 2021 (6 percent), and one in September 2021 (2 percent) due to the late encoding of death information to COVIDKaya,” the DOH said.

COVIDKaya is a digital application used by healthcare workers to collect and share data about Covid-19 cases.

Data on January 22 show that about 40.6 percent of 59,896 who were tested turned out positive for Covid-19.

“Some 98 duplicates were removed from the total case count as 74 of these are recoveries,” the DOH said.

Meanwhile, 11 cases previously tagged as recoveries were reclassified as deaths after validation.

All laboratories were operational on January 22 but five were not able to submit their data to the Covid-19 Document Repository System.



The DOH said the five laboratories contribute, on average, 0.9 percent of samples tested, and 0.8 percent among positive individuals based on data in the past 14 days.

To date, 51 percent of 3,800 intensive care unit (ICU) beds, 52 percent of 20,500 isolation beds, 53 percent of 15,100 ward beds, and 24 percent of 3,100 ventilators are used by patients with Covid-19 nationwide.

Meanwhile, 47 percent of 1,300 ICU beds, 46 percent of 4,500 isolation beds, 50 percent of 4,500 ward beds, and 27 percent of 1,000 ventilators dedicated to patients with Covid-19 are in use in the NCR. **(PNA)**



Philippines tallies 24,938 new COVID-19 infections

(Philstar.com) - January 24, 2022 - 4:06pm



A conductor checks the temperature and Covid-19 coronavirus vaccination cards of passengers boarding a bus at a station in Quezon City, suburban Manila on January 18, 2022, as the Philippine government banned unvaccinated people from using public transport amid a record surge in coronavirus cases.

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health on Monday reported 24,938 new COVID-19 cases, bringing the country's total number of infections to 3,442,056.

Of the newly reported cases, 97% occurred from January 11 to 24. The regions with the highest number of additional infections during that period were Metro Manila (15%), Calabarzon (14%) and Central Visayas (11%).

The country's death toll rose by 47 to 53,519, while recoveries increased by 35,461 to 3,125,540.

The number of active cases was down to 262,997, of which 95% had mild illness.

According to the DOH, 40.6% of 59,896 samples on January 22 tested positive for COVID-19, way above the threshold set by the World Health Organization.

Five testing laboratories did not submit data to the agency.

Daily cases hit record highs this month following the detection of local cases of the hyper-contagious Omicron variant.

Metro Manila's cases have peaked

- COVID-19 cases in Metro Manila, the epicenter of the surge fueled by the Omicron variant, [have peaked already](#), DOH Secretary Francisco Duque III said.
- The DOH said the [new compensation system for healthcare workers](#) aims to "streamline everything and make transactions more efficient."
- Concerned Doctors and Citizens of the Philippines criticized what it said were "[discriminatory, segregationist, and unconstitutional](#)" measures proposed by the government's pandemic task force.
- Health authorities in the Philippines have yet to detect a sub-variant of Omicron, DOH Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said.

— Gaea Katreena Cabico

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/01/24/2156048/philippines-tallies-24938-new-covid-19-infections/amp/>



NCR 'ready' to de-escalate to Alert Level 2: Duque

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor January 24, 2022, 3:08 pm



Department of Health Secretary Francisco Duque III (File photo)

MANILA – Health Secretary Francisco Duque III on Monday said the National Capital Region (NCR) is “ready” to de-escalate to Alert Level 2 should the government decide for a less restrictive level by February.

In a televised public briefing, Duque described as “good” the NCR’s vaccination coverage, saying the government is confident that individuals would strictly observe the minimum public health standards.

As of January 23, there are a total of 21,473,675 vaccine doses administered in the NCR, the highest among all regions, data from the National Covid-19 Vaccination Dashboard show.

Since the start of the vaccination in March last year, the Philippines has administered 123,365,808 vaccine doses as of January 23.

Duque noted that the ongoing vaccination and implementation of health protocols are the main responses to ending the pandemic.

Even though the region is currently under Alert Level 3 until January 31, Duque said the indoor capacity for establishments is 30 percent and outdoor capacity is 50 percent, both capacities could increase to 60 percent and 80 percent respectively, provided that there is 70 percent vaccination coverage of senior citizens and individuals with comorbidities and businesses carry the Safety Seal.

“*Baka pag-usapan ‘yan kung pwede nang magbaba to Alert Level 2 pero* (We might discuss this if we can de-escalate to Alert Level 2 but) that is not yet cast in stone because we will still need to review the metrics,” he said.

NCR’s Covid-19 cases may have peaked since its rate of new infections is on a decline, he added. **(PNA)**



Omicron surge has peaked in Metro Manila, DOH chief says

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Jan 24, 2022 9:10:30 AM

Updated Jan 24, 2022 1:39:00 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, January 24) — The COVID-19 surge driven by the highly transmissible Omicron variant has peaked in Metro Manila, according to Health Secretary Francisco Duque III.

In a media briefing on Monday, Duque said the number of new infections in the capital region has started to fall.

"Lumalabas nag-peak na. Nakikita nating ilang araw nang sunod-sunod na bumababa ang kaso ng NCR at lumiliit ang porsyentong inaambag nito sa ating total caseload," he added.

[Translation: It shows that it has peaked. We see that cases in the NCR have been decreasing for the past few days. It is accounting for a smaller percentage of the total cases.]

Health spokesperson Maria Rosario Vergeire also noticed a similar trend, but she was careful to make declarations since cases could be underreported as more Filipinos opt not to get tested.

"(It) looks like we have reached the highest number of cases in Metro Manila and slowly cases are going down. But as I have said, we have to be cautious because we do not have the complete picture here because we have not seen those using the antigen and those individuals that are having symptoms or have been exposed but did not have any tests at all," she told CNN Philippines' The Source.

OCTA Research fellow Guido David said Metro Manila's COVID-19 situation started to improve in mid-January, with cases going from 18,000 to around 5,000 per day.

He added the capital region is on track to meet OCTA's projection of recording only 1,000 cases per day by Valentine's Day.

He also said provinces near Metro Manila, namely Cavite, Bulacan and Rizal, are also seeing lower daily new cases.

Is NCR ready for Alert Level 2?

The DOH said government officials need to assess the metrics, including healthcare utilization rate, to decide if Metro Manila can deescalate to Alert Level 2 by February.



Vergeire said the average daily attack rate and two-week growth rate remain high, while the hospital bed use is still at moderate risk.

"Based on these different parameters that we use, I think it is still very early for us to say that we can deescalate NCR as of this time," she added.

OCTA's David personally believes Metro Manila is not yet ready to shift to more relaxed restrictions by Feb. 1. He said it could be eased by mid-February to ensure the announcement is not premature.

Metro Manila is under Alert Level 3 until Jan. 31.



Omicron wave posibleng tapos na sa marso o abril - OCTA

By [Danilo Garcia](#)(Pang-Masa) - January 25, 2022 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Sa katapusan ng Marso o Abril ngayong taon ay umaasa ang independent monitoring group OCTA Research na matutuldukan na ang Omicron COVID-19 variant surge.

Sinabi ni OCTA Research fellow Dr. Guido David na maaari pang magtagal ang Omicron wave dahil sa nagsisimula pa lamang ito sa ibang rehiyon.

“Medyo matatagalan ‘yung Omicron wave kasi kahit na medyo bumababa na sa NCR, Cavite, Rizal, pataas pa lang sa ibang lugar at may mga lugar na hindi pa nagkaron ng pagtaas eh.” Nauna nang sinabi ni Health Secretary Francisco Duque III na naabot na ng Metro Manila ang peak ng arawang COVID case.

“We are hoping na by around March to April ay tapos na ‘yung Omicron wave sa buong bansa natin, which means baka makikita natin na less than 1,000 cases per day, pero hindi pa guaranteed ‘yon,” paliwanag pa ni David.

Posible naman aniya ang Alert Level 2 kung patuloy ang downward trend sa mid-February sa iba pang lugar.

“Sa nakikita ko ngayon, kung nasa 2,000 cases per day pa tayo by first week of February, baka masyado pang premature na ibaba agad to Alert Level 2. Siguro baka mid-February earliest ma-consider seriously na ibaba to Alert Level 2. Mas mabuting siguraduhin na nating bumaba at bumagsak ‘yung bilang ng kaso katulad nung nakita natin nung October, November to December siguro bago tayo magluwag,” dagdag pa ni David. - **Angie dela Cruz, Malou Escudero**



Moderna, Pfizer booster shots epektibo vs omicron: pag-aaral

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jan 24 2022 08:07 PM | Updated as of Jan 24 2022 09:04 PM

MAYNILA (UPDATED)— Lumabas sa 3 pag-aaral sa Estados Unidos na mataas ang proteksiyong naibibigay ng ikatlong dose o booster shot ng mRNA vaccine tulad ng Moderna o Pfizer laban sa lubhang nakahahawang omicron variant.

Ayon sa US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, aabot sa 90 percent ang efficacy ng booster dose para maiwasan ang malalang sintomas ng COVID-19 dulot ng omicron.

"Pagdating sa 2 aspeto ng pagtugon, bakuna continues to be effective versus severe, critical cases, therefore preventing hospitalizations and death," ani Health Secretary Francisco Duque III.

Giit ng isang infectious disease specialist, kahit tinamaan na ng COVID-19, mahalaga pa ring magpabakuna ng primary series at booster dose.

"Nagka-infection na sila, mayroon na raw silang antibody, so 'yun na daw ang passport nila, hindi na raw nila kailangan ng bakuna. No, that's wrong. Pag na-infect ka, naka-develop ka ng antibody, 'yung antibody response mo will not be as durable as that without the vaccine. So kailangan mo pa rin ng bakuna," ani Dr. Rontgene Solante, infectious disease specialist.

Base sa huling datos, sa 57.2 milyong indibidwal sa bansa na may kumpletong bakuna, nasa halos 6.3 million pa lang ang may booster.

Samantala, pinag-aaralan pa ng mga eksperto sa Pilipinas ang mga bagong lumalabas na datos kaugnay ng proteksiyong naibibigay ng ika-4 na vaccine dose.

Ayon as Israel Health Ministry, tatlong beses na mas mataas ang proteksyon laban sa malalang sintomas, at doble naman laban sa COVID-19 infection ng senior citizens sa Israel na tinurukan ng ika-4 na dose ng vaccine, kung ikukumpara sa mga tatlong doses lang ang natanggap.

Pinag-aaralan pa ng mga eksperto sa Pilipinas ang naturang datos, ayon sa National Vaccination Operations Center. Pero sa ngayon, hindi pa kasama sa plano para sa vaccination program ng gobyerno ngayong taon ang pagbibigay ng ika-4 na dose.

"Not yet, unless may enough data na panghahawakan," ani NVOC Chairperson Usec. Myrna Cabotaje.

"Our experts are gathering/reviewing updated data, analyzing it and will give recommendations as appropriate," aniya.

Ayon kay Solante, sapat pa sa ngayon ang proteksiyong naibibigay ng isang booster shot o dagdag na dose laban sa malalang COVID-19. Wala pa aniya silang nakikitang "significant benefit" ng ikaapat na dose.

"We reviewed the data, but we can't find any significant benefit of a 4th dose in 60 years old, because the current data, as long as booster or third dose, it was already enough to protect against severe COVID and hospitalization," paliwanag niya.

Sinabi naman ni vaccine czar Sec. Carlito Galvez Jr. na kung irerekomenda ng mga eksperto, Department of Health at Food and Drug Administration ang pagbibigay ng 4th dose, pwede itong isama sa vaccination program ng gobyerno.



Pero sa ngayon, mas mahalaga umanong maparami ang mabakunahan ng primary series, at mapataas ang bilang ng mga nagpabakuna ng booster sa kalahati man lang ng populasyon.

—Ulat ni Vivienne Gulla, ABS-CBN News



Beware of Omicron subvariant – DoH, WHO

Also known as stealth Omicron, BA.2 has additional 20 mutations, about half of them in the spike protein

Published 5 hours ago on January 25, 2022 01:00 AM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#) @tribunephil_MJB



The Philippines is keeping a close watch on the Omicron subvariant which could possibly be more transmissible than its parent lineage, Health Secretary Francisco Duque said Monday.

In a televised briefing, Duque assured the public that the government's epidemiology agency is coordinating with the World Health Organization (WHO) in monitoring the developments.

"The WHO's country office has been giving us the latest information on the characteristics of this subvariant," he said.

Dubbed BA.2, the newly-detected Covid-19 derivative has been detected in at least 40 countries, particularly in Europe.

It emerged from a mutation of Omicron, officially known as BA.1.

Other sub-lineages of Omicron like BA.3 or BB.2 have been reported across the globe, but they have attracted less attention from epidemiologists because of the dramatic increase in cases of people who have been infected with BA.2.

Also known as "stealth Omicron," BA.2 has additional 20 mutations, about half of them in the spike protein.

Experts have long said that having more mutations makes a virus spread relatively quickly.

More contagious

At press time, the WHO has yet to distinguish the Omicron and its BA.2 mutation as details on the latter remain scarce.

Duque, speaking at a news conference, noted that further studies are needed on the Omicron subvariant does not seem to have many differences from its parent lineage but appears to be more contagious.

"So far, limited data show that it's not that different from the Omicron variant. If there's any, it might be faster in transmission," he said.

Scientists around the world have admitted that it remains early to say whether BA.2 is more infectious than that of BA.1.

This comes as the DoH on Monday claimed that the surge in the number of daily Covid-19 cases in the National Capital Region (NCR) has reached its peak.

Severity

Limited data on Denmark and India suggest that BA.2-stricken individuals experience almost the same symptoms as those with the primary strain of Omicron.



“Very early observations from India and Denmark suggest there is no dramatic difference in severity compared to BA.1,” tweeted Tom Peacock, a virologist at Imperial College in London.

Meanwhile, there appears to be a consensus among the medical community that the detection of the subvariant should not call into question the effectiveness of existing Covid-19 jabs.

“Vaccines continue to be effective against severe critical cases, therefore, preventing hospitalizations and deaths,” Duque said.

Peacock of the Imperial College in London also said that there could be “minimal differences in vaccine effectiveness against BA.1 and BA.2.

“Personally, I’m not sure BA.2 is going to have a substantial impact on the current Omicron wave of the pandemic,” he added.

The Philippine Genome Center is capable of detecting the Omicron subvariant, according to the Department of Health (DoH).

At present, no BA.2 infection has been reported yet in the country. The Delta variant is believed to be the most dominant Covid-19 virus type in the Philippines, but experts have said that Omicron may easily overtake the former due to its high transmissibility.

Amid the continuous increase in coronavirus infections, Duque reminded the public that aside from vaccines, minimum public health standards like mask-wearing should be observed to contain virus spread.

“Let us mimic other countries which lifted the mask mandate and eased up restrictions because cases may jump again,” he added.

Authorities have so far detected 3.41 million coronavirus infections, of which over 270,000 cases remain active.

“It seems like it has peaked already as we’ve been seeing a continuous decline in Covid-19 cases in NCR. Its percentage in the total caseload is also getting smaller,” Duque said.

Duque added that NCR can revert to Alert Level 2 should it meet the criteria set by the government such as a moderate-risk or 0 to 200 percent growth rate within 2 weeks, an average daily attack rate of one to seven cases per 100,000 population.

Metro Manila should also achieve a 49 percent and below healthcare utilization rate before it can de-escalate to a lower alert level.

“If the NCR will be able to meet the criteria, it is automatic. we will go down to Alert Level 2,” according to the official.

Based on the case bulletin on 24 January, the capital region’s intensive care unit beds occupancy rate is at 47 percent, isolation beds at 42 percent, and ventilator machines are at 27 percent.

Also on Monday, a total of 24,938 new infections have been added to the country’s total caseload which is now at 3,442,056, according to the DoH.

Of the total case count, 262,997 are active cases, of which 250,235 are mild, 7,944 are asymptomatic, 3,010 with moderate symptoms, 1,499 have severe symptoms, while 309 are in critical condition.

with Jomelle Garner



#OneDENR

**Covid-19
Situation and Response**



DOH COVID-19 CASE BULLETIN # 681

ENERO 24, 2022

Para sa kumpletong detalye at impormasyon,
bisitahin lamang ang aming pampublikong site:
<https://ncovtracker.doh.gov.ph/>

PORSYENTO NG AKTIBONG KASO

7.6%

TOTAL NG AKTIBONG KASO
262,997

PORSYENTO NG GUMALING

90.8%

TOTAL NG GUMALING
3,125,540

PORSYENTO NG NAMATAY

1.55%

TOTAL NG NAMATAY
53,519

MGA BAGONG KASO **24,938**

MGA BAGONG GUMALING **35,461**

MGA BAGONG NAMATAY **47**

KABUANG BILANG NG KASO **3,442,056**

MGA NAGPOSITIBO HULING ENERO 22
DATOS NGAYONG ENERO 24
AYON SA REPORTS NOONG ENERO 22

40.6%

PORSYENTO NG MGA
NAGPOSITIBO

59,896

BILANG NG
TINIST

HALOS
98.2%
ANG MILD AT
ASYMPTOMATIC
NA KASO!

**SANITIZE ANG
KAMAY AT IWASAN
ANG KULOB NA LUGAR**

KABUANG PILIPINAS
PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

KALAGAYAN NG MGA
AKTIBONG KASO

ICU BEDS (3.8K TOTAL BEDS)	51% Utilized
ISOLATION BEDS (20.1K TOTAL BEDS)	52% Utilized
WARD BEDS (15.2K TOTAL BEDS)	52% Utilized
VENTILATORS (3.1K TOTAL VENTILATORS)	25% Utilized

ICU BEDS (1.3K TOTAL BEDS)	47% Utilized
ISOLATION BEDS (4.5K TOTAL BEDS)	46% Utilized
WARD BEDS (4.5K TOTAL BEDS)	50% Utilized
VENTILATORS (1.0K TOTAL VENTILATORS)	27% Utilized

7,944 Asymptomatic
250,235 Mild
3,010 Moderate
1,499 Severe
309 Critical

DOH HOSPITAL HOTLINES

For health concerns and emergencies, you may access here the DOH hospital hotlines across the country:

bit.ly/DOHHospitalHotlines

DOH ONE HOSPITAL COMMAND CENTER (OHCC) HOTLINES

• 1555 • 0915-777-7777
• 02-886-505-00 • 0919-977-3333

bit.ly/OHCCHotline

DOH TELEMEDICINE CONTACT DETAILS

bit.ly/DOHTelemedicine

SeeYouDoc
seeyoudoc.com
SeeYouDoc

KonsultaMD
konsulta.md
KonsultaMD

CloudPx
cloudpx.ph/

Telimed and Medgate
medgate.ph/shop/telimedplan/purchase

MedCheck
medcheck.com.ph/find-a-doctor/SeeYouDoc

TelAventusMD
TelAventusMD@aventusmedical.com.ph
TelAventusMD

HealthNow
healthnow.ph/
help@healthnow.ph
HealthNow



Manatiling ligtas!

I-download ang StaySafe App
o gamitin ang WEBAPP
at pumunta sa Staysafe.ph



Walang internet or load?
Report via SMS

2158-5779 (for Globe users)
225-655-779 (for other users)



May tanong ukol sa COVID-19?
I-chat na si KIRA!

VIBER: Kira Kontra COVID by DOH
MESSENGER: Department of Health PH
KONTRACOVIDPH: kontracovid.ph

MAYROON PANG KATANUNGAN? SUMANGGUNI LAMANG SA SUMUSUNOD:

[OfficialDOHgov](https://www.facebook.com/OfficialDOHgov)

[@DOHgovph](https://twitter.com/DOHgovph)

doh.gov.ph

[02\) 894-COVID / 1555](tel:02894COVID)

25 JANUARY 2022, TUESDAY



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