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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Sasmuan Bangkung Malapad Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area: A critical habitat in a wetland of intl importance

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA DECEMBER 24, 2021



The Sasmuan Bangkung Malapad Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area.

In the town of Sasmuan, a coastal municipality in Pampanga province, where fishing is a way of life, protecting its coastal resource that harbors some of the world's unique but threatened species of birds as well as mangrove is a top priority.

Recognizing its importance to saving this important ecosystem that is frequented by migratory birds, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu recently issued DENR Administrative Order (DAO) 2021-36 declaring the 405-hectare Sasmuan Bangkung Malapad Coastal Wetland in Sasmuan town as a critical habitat and ecotourism area.

Under the DAO, the coastal wetland will now be known as the Sasmuan Bangkung Malapad Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area (SBMCHEA). It will be managed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) local office and the local government of Sasmuan.

The declaration, incidentally, also aims to intensify government efforts in the rehabilitation of Manila Bay, while protecting the area against destructive human activities.

Paquito Moreno Jr., executive director of the DENR Central Luzon Regional Office, said the DAO would serve as a legal framework to protect the SBMCHEA mangrove forests and mudflats, which are a valuable ecosystem found within the more than 3,000-ha Sasmuan Pampanga Coastal Wetland.

It was declared a wetland of international importance in February being the eighth Ramsar Site in the country and the very first in Central Luzon.

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It is named after Ramsar in Iran, where the convention was signed in 1971.

Haven for migratory birds

SBMCHEA is an important habitat to many endemic and threatened water birds, Moreno explained.

He said it is essential to maintain its ecological services and other biological and cultural values, which are fundamental to conserve and enable this ecosystem as a driving force in the region's socioeconomic and ecotourism growth.



With the declaration of the Bangkung Malapad as a critical habitat and ecotourism area, stricter monitoring and enforcement of environmental laws will be done to avert and combat destructive activities within the SBMCHEA.

The DAO prohibits the dumping of waste detrimental to wildlife, squatting or occupying any portion of the critical habitat, burning, logging, quarrying, mineral exploration and illegal fishing and fishponds and dumping of hazardous wastes within the SBMCHEA.

Moreno also urged the public to report to the DENR any person found violating the law in order to stop them from destroying the environment and sustain the rich natural resources in SBMCHEA.

The DENR, along with the local government and communities, will likewise implement the ecotourism area management plan to address site management strategies and activities on habitat protection, rehabilitation, community organizing, promotion of environmental education and awareness, and other sustainability measures.

Mangrove islet

A small mangrove islet in Pasak River and part of the large and enclosed sea of Manila Bay was formed by the volcanic sediments from Mount Pinatubo's devastating eruption in 1991.

The area is known for its vast mangrove forests, where species like the Api-api tree, are abundant.

More importantly, it continues to serve as an important staging ground for migratory birds that travel halfway across the globe during winter to survive the cold weather.

Sanctuary of endangered birds

Interviewed via Zoom on December 10, Audie Salac, the Provincial Environment and Natural Resource Office chief of Pampanga, said under Section 25 of the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act the government established guidelines to protect the population of important species.

In the case of SBMCHEA, it is established to protect the Philippine duck, black-faced spoonbill, Chinese egret, and far eastern curlew. The area is also a host to the Malaysian plover.

Based on a study, SBMCHEA in Batang II barangay, is host to endangered species of migratory birds under the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Since the area is outside a Protected Area, establishing it as a critical area is important.

"I am happy to report that this is the first in Region 3 [Central Luzon] and No. 8 in the country that is declared as a critical habitat by virtue of a law or an administrative order issued by the DENR," Salac said partly in Filipino.

Stronger partnership

Don Guevarra, the chief public affairs officer of DENR Central Luzon, said the DENR is strengthening partnerships with the local government units (LGUs) and the community stakeholders, specifically the tourism office.

"To promote not only SBMCHEA but the entire Sasmuan, Pampanga Coastal Wetland, we launched a podcast, Project Kalikasan, together with the youth, particularly the Ayala Young Leadership Association-Central Luzon Cluster to give them briefing orientation. We educate them about the importance of SBMCHEA. Some of the members of the podcast project are Pampanga-based. It is important to involve the youth on this because it is new and they don't know it yet," he explained.



Hunting in the area, in particular, is strictly prohibited. Fortunately, Salac said Sasmuan Pampanga Wetland and the SBMCHEA are safe from bird hunters.

However, recently, in Candaba Swamp, some hunters who were trying out their guns in the swamp were arrested. A case was filed against them and the case is ongoing, he added.

Co-management

Salac said with the establishment of SBMCHEA, a memorandum of agreement will be signed by the DENR and the LGU of Sasmuan for the co-management of the critical habitat.

“We will then craft a critical habitat management plan jointly with the LGU and the communities and the fisherfolk to address the sustainable management of SBMCHEA,” he said, adding that he expects funding for the activity by January next year.

Crucial to the management of the SBMCHEA, he said, is the protection of the existing mangrove forest, and the conservation of mudflats and seagrasses around it.

Fish trap, artificial reef

He shared that branches of mangroves, particularly the Api-Apihan, are being harvested by fishermen to be used for a fish trap-cum-artificial reef, locally known as “bumbon.” to lure fishes that they will catch.

“We plan to strictly implement the ban on harvesting from this area to protect the mangrove,” he said.

He added that a station was put up by the DENR on the side of the SBMCHEA to enforce the ban.

“Cutting off branches and harvesting of natural resources in the area is a big challenge. But we are getting a lot of help from the LGU which is deploying people in the area, too,” Salac said.

Ecotourism

According to Salac, the fact that the area draws tens of thousands of migratory birds, makes it a potential tourist magnet.

He said the area, while set aside for conservation, will also be developed for low-impact tourism.

“We already have a boardwalk there but we plan to rehabilitate it because it was already dilapidated,” he said.

Information, education

Guevarra said the DENR through the Public Affairs Office use social media to educate the people on the protection and conservation of SBMCHEA.

“We really need it [social media] to reach the young generation. This year, when it [SBMCHEA] was declared as Ramsar site, we launched a massive education lecture in the communities in the four barangays in Sasmuan. We talked to the barangay, to provide the information and education about the importance of Bangkung Malapad,” he said.

“We want to let them know that there are 8,000 migratory birds that visit the area. But it doesn’t mean that they have 80,000 birds to hunt and divide among themselves,” he joked.

Important ecosystem function

Salac said migratory birds play a very important role in the ecosystem.

He noted that SBMCHEA is healthy because of the presence of organisms that serve as feed to waterbirds.



More importantly, the more birds that visit the area, the more bird droppings that fertilize the mangroves, the mudflats and seagrass areas in the SBMCHEA, which are essential to maintaining a balanced and healthy ecosystem.

“Right now, we are denying requests to plant propagules in the area unless they are accompanied by a DENR officer. We want to protect our mudflats, especially the seagrass, because seagrass is where dugongs and marine turtles go to feasts, too,” Salac said.

Guevarra said the DENR’s Public Affairs Office in Central Luzon is actively educating the people about the importance of critical habitats “because if they are destroyed, the benefits of a healthy ecosystem like food and ecotourism are lost forever, too,” he said.

Image courtesy of Photo courtesy of DENR-CL PAO/Don Guevarra



WWF PHL: Address challenges to achieve sustainable tourism

BYRIZAL RAOUL REYES DECEMBER 24, 2021

The country has to address three main challenges in order to achieve a genuine sustainable tourism program, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines said.

Melody Melo-Rijk, project manager for the WWF-Philippines's sustainable Diner Projects, told the BusinessMirror in a recent e-mail interview that one of the major hurdles facing the tourism industry in terms of promoting and implementing sustainable programs is to be one of the top go-to destinations in Asia and in the world.

At the same time, Rijk said the country must have vigorous conservation and protection programs of its natural resources.

"Another challenge would be to maintain and preserve our cultural heritage and historical attributes which highlights our uniqueness and contributes to our leverage in the field of tourism," she said.

Rijk said the national government and local government units must prioritize the strict implementation of laws pertaining to the environment, most especially in tourist destinations.

She added that they should create and implement a sustainable tourism development plan in the local and national level.

She said consultations with the private sector could provide support on how they can include sustainability in their operations.

By investing in efficient and sustainable technologies, Rijk said both the government and private sectors can strengthen local economies by providing job opportunities within the communities, providing capacity development among industry players, provision for research and development among others.

Meanwhile, Rijk said WWF's Sustainable Diner Project aims to promote and integrate sustainability principles in the food service sector.

Concerning rea-estate development projects, Rijk said, Presidential Decree 1586, or the Establishment of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) System, together with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' succeeding administrative orders and memorandum circulars related to the EIS System, should be complied with and implemented in the pre-development stage of any project in order to balance socioeconomic growth and environmental protection.

She pointed out that concerned national government agencies must thoroughly study, evaluate and analyze the materials and documents provided by the project proponents.

"Furthermore, public consultations with the local government units and communities must be done to ensure that the property development must be consistent with or supported by the local land use and tourism development plans," she said.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2021/12/24/wwf-phl-address-challenges-to-achieve-sustainable-tourism/>



Address climate change to keep inflation manageable – ADB

The Philippine Star December 26, 2021 | 12:00am



In its recent blog, Manila-based Asian Development Bank said a “climate change inflation” is now more evident than ever, as prices of food and other products and services are soaring and are more volatile.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines will have to work double time in addressing the impacts of climate change, as consumers are bearing the brunt of high costs of basic needs due to the environmental crisis.

In its recent blog, Manila-based Asian Development Bank said a “climate change inflation” is now more evident than ever, as prices of food and other products and services are soaring and are more volatile.

ADB Economic Research and Regional Cooperation department advisor Yesim Elhan-Kayalar said this can be said for both rich and poor countries like the Philippines amid its effects on biodiversity, energy, food, water, housing, and public health.

True enough, the Philippines dealt with stubbornly high inflation all year round, breaching government targets for the whole of 2021.

This is largely due to high food inflation, particularly meat, and increased transport inflation amid soaring oil prices. Prices of commodities also shoot up whenever the country is hit by typhoons and other natural calamities.

Elhan-Kayalar argued the cyclical effects of climate change, extreme weather events, and global warming, have an impact on agriculture, tourism, and other weather dependent industries.

“Higher temperatures and erratic precipitation levels reduce annual yield and quality of key food crops, cause crop failures, reduce access to food, and even help proliferate weeds and pests, which further erode crop yields,” Elhan-Kayalar said.

She noted that such scenarios result in higher food prices and declining food security, which would most significantly affect the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of society.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization estimated that global food prices spiked over 30 percent in just a year into the pandemic.



Consequently, Elhan-Kayalar said high prices affect global trade as those dependent on imports are left vulnerable as exporting economies often take advantage of the disruption in the market through competitive prices.

On the other hand, she noted that energy prices are expected to increase further as household and commercial demand for cooling and refrigeration systems continue to rise in response to global warming.

“Energy is a key input for manufacturing and industry, hence increased energy prices are passed up the value chain and to the end-users. Yet another transmission channel for climate change inflation,” Elhan-Kayalar said.

The UN recently reported that the cost of climate change adaptation in developing countries such as the Philippines can reach a high of \$300 billion per year in 2030 and \$500 billion in 2050.

Unfortunately, Elhan-Kayalar warned that Asia Pacific is most vulnerable to climate change inflation that may lead to higher economic losses, lower crop yields, and growing food security and health concerns.

While climate change is not the only driver of inflation, the ADB advisor emphasized that it creates its own brand of inflation and exacerbates the problem globally.

“Climate change is at the family dining table now. It is in the consumer’s wallet. Climate change inflation requires a policy response now,” she said.



Addressing climate change with disaster, holiday altruism

[Paco Pangalangan](#) - Philstar.com December 25, 2021 | 10:59am



Lory Ofamen hangs a traditional parol Christmas ornament in what used to be the bedroom of her flattened home in Calape town, Bohol province on December 22, 2021, days after Super Typhoon Rai devastated the province.

AFP/Cheryl Baldicantos

When Super Typhoon Odette came, devastation reigned. The unprecedented damage across Visayas and Mindanao left many without access to basic necessities such as food, electricity, telecommunications and reliable information. When it left, Odette took with it a reported 367 lives and rendered thousands homeless, with over 52,000 homes damaged beyond repair.

With critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, electricity and telecommunications down, responders and concerned family members and friends had little access to those caught in the path of the deadly typhoon.

According to Orlando Oxales of the advocacy group CitizenWatch Philippines, “The disruption in telecommunications was felt in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, with relatives unable to contact their loved ones to find out whether they survived the typhoon. This created a terrifying vacuum of information in the crucial hours when relief was most needed.”

Citing the importance of power and telecommunications infrastructure to post-disaster recovery, Oxales said, “We need fast action and cooperation between telcos and power cooperatives. The disruption in electricity and communication services hampers efforts to save lives and property and compromises these communities’ ability to bounce back quickly after the disaster.”

To hasten the rehabilitation of the critical infrastructure affected by Odette, Oxales suggested that electricity cooperatives be allocated with the quick- disbursing loans extended by the World Bank for a post-disaster response.

He also called on the government to work closely with the private sector to modernize our power and digital infrastructure, especially in these regions where electricity cooperatives need significant capital to upgrade capacity and build readiness to react to these events.

In addition to private sector-led initiatives to restore power and connectivity, local government clearing operations are just as critical. This is because the movement of first responders and much-needed supplies all ground to a halt if roads and bridges are not passable. For this, both the Department of Public Works and Highways and LGUs play an essential role.



The advocacy group pointed out further that the state of our critical infrastructure and the general situation on the ground reflects the gaps in the country's disaster resilience and shows how vulnerable we are to external factors like extreme weather.

Indeed, in addition to highlighting needed improvements in our post-disaster response, Typhoon Odette also showed us just how highly vulnerable we are to the long-term impacts of extreme weather events and climate change.

In fact, according to the Global Climate Risk Index (CRI) 2021, the Philippines, which came in at 17th out of 180 countries, is one of the most exposed and vulnerable in the world to extreme weather events.

According to the report, signs of escalating climate change can no longer be ignored. The impacts from extreme weather events hit the poorest countries hardest. These are particularly vulnerable to the damaging effects of a hazard, have a lower coping capacity, and may need more time to rebuild and recover.

The aftermath of typhoon Odette also serves as the unfortunate yet important context for many of the scenarios and suggestions shared by climate change advocates and experts during one of the recent discussions organized by our institute on green and sustainable recovery.

According to Mahar Lagmay of the University of the Philippines - Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards (UP-NOAH) Center, there are two ways to approach the problem of climate change – climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation.

“Climate change mitigation simply means that we have to reduce greenhouse gases that we inject into the atmosphere and that means that we must be able to control the burning of fossil fuels. While climate change adaptation refers to how we plan our communities, alter our behavior, and change the system in which we live. To be able to adapt, we must be able to change our way of life,” Lagmay said.

Red Constantino of the Institute for Climate & Sustainable Cities argued further that “We cannot afford to tackle climate change with a narrow approach. Any emissions reduction strategy must be part of a larger transition strategy focused on achieving sustainable, inclusive and resilient economic development.”

“The way that our policymakers and businesses continue to understand climate change is a fixation on disasters. This is wrong because even extreme weather events, not just disasters, they will represent a small subset of a bigger challenge with climate change. We need to pay attention to slow onset events, which take place without the drama of calamity, without body counts, without the visual effects that media actually provides,” he added.

In the words of Stratbase ADR Institute's President Prof. Dindo Manhit, climate change mitigation and adoption are a “shared responsibility that needs guidance and direction from public policies, civil society advocacy frameworks, and private sector support and investment.”

“Climate change cannot be addressed on a stand-alone basis,” he added.

The experts and advocates I've mentioned here raised good arguments and relevant points. Truly, our focus now must be on responding to the devastation left in Odette's wake. On fully restoring critical infrastructure such as roads, power and telecommunications to ensure an effective post-disaster response.



At the same time, we must also grieve as a nation with those who have lost their loved ones and commiserate with the thousands that now find themselves homeless instead of celebrating the holidays safe at home with family. However, we cannot stop there.

Instead, we must hold on to the altruistic spirit that both the disaster and this holiday season bring out in us. And we must bear in mind that we have a continued responsibility to each other to transition to more sustainable and inclusive practices and help our communities mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Paco Pangalangan is the executive director of think tank Stratbase ADR Institute.



HK researchers discover masks could pollute over 54,000 Olympic pools worth of seawater

Zoe Low, South China Morning Post

Posted at Dec 25 2021 09:06 PM | Updated as of Dec 25 2021 10:41 PM

Discarded surgical masks which fall into the sea could be releasing microplastics as they degrade, polluting an amount of water equal to 54,800 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

Dr He Yuhe at City University's State Key Laboratory of Marine Pollution made the discovery after spotting discarded masks at local beaches, which have seen an influx of local visitors looking for weekend haunts amid the coronavirus pandemic.

"The Covid-19 pandemic is still ongoing, and naturally if people are wearing surgical masks, then people are also dropping them," He said.

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"We really urge residents to be alert when they are out in the countryside and properly dispose of their used surgical masks to prevent them from being swept into the sea by wind or rain," he added.

Surgical masks have become a necessity to prevent the spread of Covid-19, with an estimated 129 billion used worldwide each month in 2020.

As the masks are made from woven plastic fibres, any discarded face coverings could take anywhere from 100 to 1,000 years to fully decompose.

The United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration defines microplastics as any type of plastic fragment less than 5mm in length.

Once in the sea, the ocean currents and ultraviolet rays from the sun break masks down into tiny fragments or fibres. He was able to replicate the movement of waves in a lab by placing them in bottles of man-made seawater and shaking them.

His lab study found that one mask, weighing between 3 and 4 grams, could fully break down into 880,000 to 1.17 million microplastic pieces after nine days, while already damaged ones could break down faster.

He said the figure could be an underestimate as they could not mimic sunlight.

A report by Hong Kong-based OceansAsia last year estimated that about 1.56 billion single-use surgical masks would have entered the sea in 2020. He estimated that this could lead to the release of 1,370 trillion pieces of microplastic.

At a concentration of 10 microplastics per ml of water, the CityU professor said the total amount would pollute a volume of seawater equal to 54,800 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

He found about one-third of the pieces were less than 10mm in size, while another 25 per cent of the fragments were bigger than 50mm.

These minuscule bits can be eaten by microscopic crustaceans called "copepods", which are found in almost every saltwater and freshwater habitat, providing food for larger animals including fish and even whales.



He tested the impact on one species, *Tigriopus japonicus*, and found their reproductive abilities had been reduced by 22 per cent, while their nutrient intake and growth rate had also slowed.

How Hong Kong's nastiest plastic pollutant hides in plain sight

The researchers said they were worried it could produce a domino effect on marine ecosystems, especially as masks were not the only source of microplastics in the ocean.

Microplastics from other waste, which can include drink bottles, cosmetics, clothing and fishing nets, are already extremely difficult to remove from the environment.

If the copepods were full from eating microplastics, they would end up eating fewer algae, leading to red tides, large blooms of aquatic plants which choke off oxygen in the water and kill other animals.

A reduction in the numbers of copepods because of slower reproduction could also spell decreased food sources for other species, He warned.

"Since the masks are a disease prevention tool, what we really need is stronger enforcement to prevent littering of the masks," said Kenneth Leung Mei-yee, a professor who was also involved in the study.

In a response to the Post, the Environmental Protection Department said residents should not leave used face masks and "any other handy items" unattended when out in the countryside.

The department added it was using unmanned aircraft systems to monitor the city's 1,200 metre seashore, which shortened the time required to survey 65 coastal sites in the Northern, Tai Po, Sai Kung, Sha Tin, Tuen Mun, Southern and Islands districts.



Soils in old-growth treetops can store more carbon than soils under our feet

BY BUSINESSMIRROR DECEMBER 24, 2021



Organic soil formed from epiphyte mats on a tree branch in a tropical humid lower montane rainforest at the Texas A&M University Soltis Center for Research and Education in Costa Rica.

NEW ORLEANS—Story carbon on treetop soils? Yes. New research reveals a previously underappreciated way old-growth forests have been recycling and storing carbon: treetop soils, an American Geophysical Union (AGU) news release said.

The research found out that forest canopy branches can hold caches of soil that may store substantially more carbon than soils on the ground beneath them, and scientists are just beginning to understand how much carbon canopy soils—which exist on every continent except Antarctica—could store.

The new research on the unique soils that was presented on December 15 at AGU Fall Meeting 2021 marked the first attempt to quantify carbon capture by canopy soils.

The work highlighted another way old-growth forests are rich, complex ecosystems that cannot be quickly replaced by replanting forests.

It said that tree branches collect fallen tree leaves and other organic material over hundreds of years, like the ground does. On top of the branches, the plant litter decomposes as it accumulates, forming a carbon-rich layer that can be several inches thick.

The researchers climbed up into the rainforest canopy in Costa Rica, instruments in hand, to find out just how much carbon canopy soils can contain.

Active carbon, a short-term storage pool of organic carbon, was three times higher in canopy soil compared to soils underfoot, the researchers found, AGU said.

“We knew these would be really organic-rich soils, but we didn’t expect the extremely large amount of carbon compared to mineral soils,” said Hannah Connuck, an undergraduate researcher at Franklin and Marshall College who will be presenting the study results.

The researchers are still calculating the total concentration of organic carbon at their research site, but other research has found canopy soils to have up to 10 times higher concentrations of organic carbon, according to soil scientist Peyton Smith, a study co-author and Connuck’s soil science mentor at Texas A&M University.



Connuck and Smith also measured how much carbon dioxide was being released by microbial organisms living in the canopy soils, which is critical for knowing whether soils are storing or releasing carbon overall.

They found that even though the microbes were releasing higher volumes of carbon dioxide than ground soils, their rate of carbon storage was rapid enough to compensate, likely making canopy soils a net carbon sink that has not been considered in carbon models yet.

“It could be a substantial carbon sink, and we need to account for it,” Smith said.

Like other soils, canopy soils take a long time to form, and therefore take a long time for a forest to recover if an area of old growth is cut down.

The soils also host unique microbiomes, including highly diverse microbial organisms and canopy-specific plants like epiphytic orchids, the AGU news release said.

“It’s a good argument for keeping primary and other old-growth forests around, rather than harvesting and replanting with secondary growth forests,” Connuck said.

Image courtesy of H. Connuck photo

Duterte to Pinoys: Help each other to heal, rebuild

Philstar.com December 25, 2021 | 10:27am



President Rodrigo Duterte tends to the survivors of Typhoon Odette as he visits the affected areas in Tisa, Cebu City on December 23, 2021.

Presidential photo / Alfred Frias

MANILA, Philippines — President Rodrigo Duterte told Filipinos to help one another to heal and rebuild as the country celebrates its second pandemic Christmas under the threat of a more infectious coronavirus variant and in the heels of the onslaught of Typhoon Odette.

“There is a time and season for everything, and Christmas is a time for peace. Let us continue to help each other to heal and rebuild our lives,” Duterte said in his Christmas message.

He added, “This will lead us to open our hearts and our homes, especially for those who are most in need so that they, too, may have joy and hope while we all work together towards better days ahead.”

The president also appealed to Filipinos to welcome Christmas with stronger faith and hope as the country tries to recover from Odette and the pandemic.

As the Omicron coronavirus variant spreads and upends Christmas celebrations globally, the Philippines got a taste of a somewhat normal holiday revelry as the number of new infections decreased, although some experts have flagged that the positivity rate in Metro Manila has picked up.

The government has attributed the decline in new COVID-19 cases to its vaccination drive that has so far inoculated over 43% of the population, and more than 90% of business hub Metro Manila’s residents.

But its overall response to COVID-19 is still wanting, especially on the fronts of testing and contact tracing.

With Odette, Duterte has apologized for the delay in the government’s response in areas struck by the typhoon, but vowed that aid is on the way.

He committed P10 billion in aid for Odette victims, but the budget department has only released P1 billion to local governments affected by the typhoon. — **Xave Gregorio**

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/12/25/2150054/duterte-pinoys-help-each-other-heal-rebuild>

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COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



NCR logs 178 new Covid cases

Two testing facilities did not operate on 23 December, while five failed to submit their reports on time

Published 3 hours ago on December 26, 2021 04:00 AM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#) @tribunephil_MJB



The Philippines reported 433 additional coronavirus infections on Christmas Day, raising the total number of active infections to 9,376 or 0.3 percent of the cumulative tally of infections, based on the health department's case bulletin.

Some 404 cases of the 433 new infections occurred within the past 14 days or from 12 to 25 December, according to the Department of Health (DoH).

Metro Manila tallied the highest number of cases with 178, followed by Calabarzon with 41 and Central Luzon with 33, it added.

Of the 9,376 active cases, 3,430 were experiencing mild symptoms, 3,337 were in moderate condition, 1,777 had severe cases, 458 were asymptomatic, and 374 were in critical state.

The country's Covid-19 tally since the pandemic started in 2020 was at 2.83 million over the weekend.

Data from seven laboratories were excluded from the tally, the health department said. Two testing facilities did not operate on 23 December, while five failed to submit their reports on time.

Meanwhile, authorities also reported 137 new Covid-19 fatalities, pushing the death toll to 51,187. The figure accounted for 1.80 percent of the number of individuals who had Covid-19 in the country.

On the other hand, the recovery count rose to 2.77 million after 369 more patients recovered from coronavirus.

Health care utilization rates remained low across the country.

In the capital region, only 19 percent of intensive care unit (ICU) beds, 17 percent of isolation beds, 16 percent of ward beds, and 13 percent of ventilators have been utilized, based on the case bulletin.



At the national level, 18 percent of ICU beds, 22 percent of isolation beds, 11 percent of ward beds, and nine percent of ventilators were in use.

The low numbers indicate the country's improving coronavirus situation, but authorities have repeatedly warned against complacency amid the threat of the Omicron variant said to be more infectious than Delta.

"Filipinos are enjoined to remain vigilant against the threat of Covid-19," the health department said.

"We should continue to ensure compliance with minimum public health standards such as wearing of masks and face shield, physical distancing, and frequent handwashing," it added.



PROBLEMA SA KALAMIDAD, PANDEMYA AT PAGBANGON



December 25, 2021 @ 5:02 PM 14 hours ago

TATLONG malaking kalaban ng ating buong lipunan ang dapat nating harapin nang agaran o bigyan ng payoridad.

Bagama't makapangyarihan ang pamahalaan sa pakikipaglaban dito, kalahati o mas higit pa ang pwersa ng milyon-milyong mamamayan na siyang tunay na pundasyon ng kapangyarihan sa lipunan, kahit sa anong bagay.

MGA KALAMIDAD MULA SA KALIKASAN

Nakalulungkot talagang isipin na taon-taon na lang tayong binabayo ng mga masamang kalikasan, partikular ang bagyo na nagdudulot ng matitinding pinsalang mula sa dala nitong malalakas na hangin, ulan at baha.

Hindi biro ang pagkamatay ng halos 400 katao at ilang missing o hindi pa natatagpuan nang manalasa ang bagyong si Odette.

Hindi rin biro ang pagkasira ng halos P4 bilyong halaga ng ari-arian.

Pero bukod sa pagkwenta ng mga bilang ng patay at nasirang ari-arian, napakalungkot isipin ang nilikha nitong gutom sa kawalan ng makain, ang kawalan ng mauuwiwang tahanan ng mga biktima, ang kawalan ng muling pagsisimulan para magkaroon ng normal na pamumuhay at iba pang grabe talagang pasanin ng milyong katao na sinalanta ng bagyo.

Dagdag-pahirap din ang pag-ulan sa pagsusumikap ng lahat na maghatid ng tulong sa mga biktima at lalong magtatagal ang kagutuman at kahirapan ng mga biktima.

Panawagan sa lahat ng mamamayan na tumulong po tayo sa mga nasalanta kay Odette hindi lang sa panalangin kundi sa pamimigay ng pagkain, tubig, gastusin, kasuotan at iba pa.

MGA TULONG HUWAG BABUYIN

Magpasalamat tayo at nagpapakita ng paglingap ang ibang mga bansa gaya ng China, United States, South Korea, Singapore, France, Japan at iba pa.

Cash, relief goods, bigas at iba pa ang ipinadadala sa mga biktima ng kalamidad.

Sana maiwasan ang mga pagnanakaw o pagsasamantala sa mga padalang tulong mula sa mga dayuhan.

At siyempre pa, sana maayos na makarating din sa mga biktia ang mga ayuda ng gobyerno at tulong nating mga mamamayan.



OMICRON VARIANT AT MALAKING BANTA NITO

Dagdag-kalamidad ang Omicron variant ng COVID-19 sa hindi natin alam na araw ng pagtatapos ng pandemya na nagpalugmok sa ating lahat sa kahirapan at kagutuman, kasama na ang pamahalaan.

Bukod sa bilis nitong magparami ng mga biktima na parang kidlat, nagsimula nang pumatay ang Omicron variant gaya ng 12 biktima sa United Kingdom, 1 sa United States at 1 sa Israel.

Ito ang tatandaan natin, mga Bro: Nagsimula lang ang COVID-19 sa isang patay noong Enero 2020 sa mahal kong Pinas na unang nilundagan ng virus mula sa China.

Pagdating ng Marso, kumalat na ito hindi lang sa Pilipinas kundi sa buong daigdid at ngayong, mahigit nang 5 milyon ang patay.

Ang Omicron, maaaring maging ganito rin.

Kaya naman, huwag tayong magrelaks sa kakaunting nahahawaan ngayon dahil maaaring matulad tayo sa ibang bansa na inaatake ngayon ng Omicron sa pagtanggap nila ng lahat ng health protocol mula sa pagsusuot ng face mask hanggang social distancing.

Dapat tayong magpabakuna at magpa-booster kung may available na bakuna upang maligtasan natin ang pandemya at manatili tayong malusog habang binabayo ng mga kalamidad mula sa kalikasan.

PAGBANGON MULA SA KALAMIDAD AT SAKIT

Itong labis nating paghihirap, kagutuman at kawalan na bunga ng kalamidad at sakit, mga Bro, ay napakalaking problema.

Kakambal na problema nito ang hirap sa pagkamit natin ng kalayaan at pagbabago hanggang sa makararamdam tayo ng kahit kaunting ginhawa.

Isang susi tungo sa kalayaan at pagbabago, mga Bro, ang pagkakaisa at pagtutulungan para rito.

Hanggang nananatiling tayong watak-watak dahil sa pulitika, pansariling interes at iba pa, hindi tayo magtatagumpay sa pag-ahon sa lugmok at nakalulungkot nating kalagayan.



#OneDENR

**Covid-19
Situation and Response**



DOH COVID-19 CASE BULLETIN # 651

DISYEMBRE 25, 2021

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

PORSYENTO NG AKTIBONG KASO

0.3%

TOTAL NG AKTIBONG KASO
9,376

PORSYENTO NG GUMALING

97.9%

TOTAL NG GUMALING
2,777,818

PORSYENTO NG NAMATAY

1.80%

TOTAL NG NAMATAY
51,187

MGA BAGONG KASO **433**

MGA BAGONG GUMALING **369**

MGA BAGONG NAMATAY **137**

KABUANG BILANG NG KASO **2,838,381**

MGA NAGPOSITIBO HULING DISYEMBRE 23

DATOS NGAYONG DISYEMBRE 25
AYON SA REPORTS NOONG DISYEMBRE 23

1.6%

PORSYENTO NG MGA
NAGPOSITIBO

25,779

BILANG NG
TINEST

HALOS
41.5%
ANG MILD AT
ASYMPTOMATIC
NA KASO!

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

KABUANG PILIPINAS

PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

ICU BEDS (3.5K TOTAL BEDS)
18% Utilized

ISOLATION BEDS (19.3K TOTAL BEDS)
22% Utilized

WARD BEDS (12.3K TOTAL BEDS)
11% Utilized

VENTILATORS (3.0K TOTAL VENTILATORS)
9% Utilized

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

PUNO NA BA ANG ATING MGA OSPITAL?

ICU BEDS (1.2K TOTAL BEDS)
19% Utilized

ISOLATION BEDS (4.5K TOTAL BEDS)
17% Utilized

WARD BEDS (3.7K TOTAL BEDS)
16% Utilized

VENTILATORS (1.0K TOTAL VENTILATORS)
11% Utilized

KALAGAYAN NG MGA AKTIBONG KASO

458 Asymptomatic

3,430 Mild

3,337 Moderate

1,777 Severe

374 Critical



UPDATE AND MESSAGE OF THE DAY

Ang kasiyahan at pagdiriwang ng Pasko ay tiyak na magpapatuloy ngayon at hanggang bago matapos ang taon. Kaya naman, mag-dobleng ingat lalo na sa mga magdaraos ng salu-salo kasama ang pamilya at mga kaibigan. Panatilihin ang pagsunod sa **Minimum Public Health Standards** para sa ligtas Christmas ang lahat. Kasabay nito ang ating pagiging alisto sa mga sintomas. Sa oras na makaramdam ay agad makipag-ugnayan sa **BHERTS** o sa **One COVID Referral Center** na maabot sa **1555, (02)886-505-00, 0915-777-7777, o sa 0919-977-3333**, para sa karampatang gabay.

Para sa iba pang pangangailangang medikal, puntahan ang <http://bit.ly/DOHTelemedicine> upang malaman kung papaano maabot ang serbisyo ng ating **Telemedicine Service Providers**, at ang <http://bit.ly/DOHHospitalHotlines> para maabot ang ating mga ospital sa lalong mabilis na panahon.



Ihahanap ka namin ng lugar para mag-isolate o magpagamot, tumawag lang sa sumusunod:

SMART: 0919 977 3333
GLOBE: 0915 777 7777
TEL NO: (02) 886 505 00



May tanong ukol sa COVID-19?

I-chat na si KIRA!

VIBER: Kira Kontra COVID by DOH

MESSANGER: Department of Health PH

KONTRACOVID PH: kontracovid.ph



Manatiling ligtas!

I-download ang StaySafe App

O Gamiting ang WEBAPP

at pumunta sa [Staysafe.ph](https://staysafe.ph)

MAYROON PANG KATANUNGAN? SUMANGGUNI LAMANG SA SUMUSUNOD:

OfficialDOHgov

@DOHgovph

doh.gov.ph

(02) 894-COVID / 1555

26 DECEMBER 2021, SUNDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

VLOGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Please click this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJeJIFgGUnk&ab_channel=MizJuly

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MANILA BAY UPDATE,HALA UMAGOS NA! Miz July

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MANILA BAYWALK DOLOMITE BEACH

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1,301 views • Dec 25, 2021

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Miz July

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MANILA

LIVE DOLOMITE BEACH ANG DAMING NAMASYAL MANILA BAY 12-25-2021

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94

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SHARE

SAVE

...



KUYARONS TV

98.8K subscribers

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LIVE MANILA BAY DOLOMITE BEACH NAGBAKASAKALI! 12-25-2021





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MANILA

DAGSA ANG DUMAYO MAKAPUNTA LANG NG DOLOMITE BEACH MANILA BAY

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Ang daming nagbakasakali na makapasyal sa loob ng dolomite beach. Mayroong nanggaling pa sa malalayong lugar makapunta lang sa manila bay.

[#manilabay](#)

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