

26 OCTOBER 2020, MONDAY



DENR

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LOOK: Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, together with Cebu City officials, inspected some of the city's major waterways late Thursday afternoon, October 22, 2020. Some of the areas checked were those hit by the massive flooding that occurred last October 13, 2020, wherein three people died. | Photos courtesy of DENR - Central Visayas via Morexette Marie Erram #CDNDigital



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DENR demolishes illegal site at the Upper Marikina River basin

Published October 25, 2020, 4:31 PM

by [Ellayn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has started to dismantle a fenced off area in the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape in Rizal on Sunday, Oct. 25, following reports that armed men attempted to illegally occupy a part of the restoration and conservation site.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources
(MANILA BULLETIN)

According to DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, and International Affairs Jonas Leones, a team from the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office in Rizal was already at Sitio San Roque, Brgy. Pinugay in Baras town on Sunday to conduct the demolition of illegal structures.

“Together with personnel from Masungi Georeserve, they are now dismantling the fences,” Leones said.

Masungi Georeserve Foundation, which is managing the conservation of the site in Baras town, found out about the illegal activity on Oct. 23 as they were on their way “to reinforce the station of our rangers, who have been bravely protecting this area from rampant illegal logging.”

“The site is part of the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape under Presidential Proclamation 296, which can never be any person or any company’s private property, as it is a protected area and wildlife sanctuary. It has been protected by various laws since 1904 as a critical watershed,” Masungi Georeserve’s trustee Billie Dumaliang earlier pointed out.

“As the authorized manager of the site, we asked for their title or permit, but they could not present any. We likewise gave our contacts so they can submit these, to no avail,” she said.

Leones said the DENR personnel was expected “to issue a show-cause order to the supposed claimant, and if needed, appropriate cases will be filed against the violators.”

The conservation group on Friday appealed to President Rodrigo Duterte to put a stop to the rampant land speculation and trafficking in Masungi, and all other forests and watersheds in the country.

This has been the second time illegal structures and barbed wire fences were built by armed men in the area this year.



Protected areas like the Upper Marikina Watershed and Masungi Wildlife Sanctuary are environmentally critical areas considered as main sources of biodiversity. Disturbances to such conservation areas threaten flora and fauna and water resources, which could affect the food and water supply in the country.

“They have suffered way too long and our collective future from floods, landslides, water loss, and climate change is kept hostage,” Dumaliang stressed.



DENR sends team to check fencing off of Masungi Georeserve in Rizal by armed men

Kristine Sabillo, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Oct 25 2020 11:29 AM | Updated as of Oct 25 2020 11:06 PM



The fences were at least 15 meters long, guarded by men "carrying long, high-powered weapons." The affected site covers an estimated 1,000 hectares of the restoration project in Rizal, Masungi Georeserve's Billie Dumaliang said. *Masungi Georeserve*

MANILA — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Sunday said it has already sent people to check if it is true that armed men had fenced off parts of the Masungi Georeserve in Rizal province.

Usec. Jonas Leones told ABS-CBN News in a text message that the DENR already sent a team of foresters to the site "to validate the report and effect immediate stoppage of any activity thereat."

Leones said they will also issue a show cause order to the identified owner.

Armed men fence off portion of reforestation site in Rizal
Kristine Sabillo • Follow

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MASUNGI GEORESERVE
Rizal, Philippines | Oct. 23, 2020

Masungi Georeserve shows video of armed guards who fenced off a portion of their reforestation site. The foundation says land grabbing, illegal activities intensified during the pandemic.

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"If found in violation of existing laws after investigation, a demolition of the fences will be undertaken tomorrow," he added.

He told ABS-CBN that the DENR will provide further details once they get them.



On Sunday morning, Masungi Georeserve posted an update on its Facebook page, saying that the company behind the fencing off of the area continues to send armed security personnel.

The closed-off area is a reforestation site and fencing it off has blocked Masungi personnel from accessing 1,000 hectares of land.

“Community members likewise report that this is not the first time the group has done something like this, and that some 1,000 hectares of forest around us are being claimed by them,” Masungi Georeserve said in its post.

In recent years, Masungi Georeserve has become a popular eco-tourism site because of its unique limestone landscapes, and adventurous but also Instagram-worthy rope courses.

But it is also a protected area that has undergone massive reforestation to address the damage left by illegal logging and quarrying in the area.

Billie Dumaliang, a trustee and advocacy officer at Masungi Georeserve, told ABS-CBN News that the area is part of the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape and is under the Masungi Wildlife Sanctuary and Strict Nature Reserve.

Under Proclamation 296 issued in 2001, the Marikina Watershed Reservation was declared a protected area and was renamed Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape.

It was granted protection under Republic Act no. 7586 or the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992. This means the area is “protected against destructive human exploitation.”

Meanwhile, DENR Department Administrative Order 1993-22 declared the area as a “Strict Nature Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary.”

ABS-CBN News is still waiting for details on the company that fenced off the area and declared it as “private property.”

Dumaliang earlier said that the guards at the fence were not able to show a land title or a permit authorizing them to install fences. She said the men claimed to be employees of a renewable energy company.

A video shared by Dumaliang shows the guards saying that they were armed to protect the property of the land owners, but did not specify what the company’s plans were.

Leones said they will check such report.

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/10/25/20/denr-sends-team-to-check-fencing-off-of-masungi-georeserve-in-rizal-by-armed-men?fbclid=IwAR0Af5DPOTKrIE0-EkgkRVRK_FFO030louiamnJ18gSZPnDeCXQOls5ex4w



DENR sumugod sa binakurang Masungi Georeserve

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Oct 25, 2020

METRO



Naalarma ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa napaulat na may mga armadong kalalakhian na nambakod sa bahagi ng Masungi Georeserve kaya agad na nagpadala kahapon ng kanilang mga tauhan sa lalawigan ng Rizal.

Ad Asia Banner – below 1st paragraph

Ayon kay Usec. Jonas Leones, nagpadala na sila ng grupo ng mga manggugubat o 'foresters' sa lugar upang i-validate ang nasabing report at agad na mapigilan ang ginagawang aktibidad.

"If found in violation of existing laws after investigation, a demolition of the fences will be undertaken tomorrow," giit ni Leones.

Nag-post ang Masungi Georeserve sa kanilang Facebook page kahapon ng umaga, na nagpakalat ng armed security personnel ang kumpanyang nasa likod ng pagbabakod sa nasabing lugar.

"Community members likewise report that this is not the first time the group has done something like this, and that some 1,000 hectares of forest around us are being claimed by them," base sa post ng Masungi Georeserve.

Kinilala at naging eco-tourism site ang lugar dahil sa unique nitong limestone landscapes, at adventurous maging sa Instagram-worthy rope courses. (Dolly Cabreza)



DENR set to probe 'black water' discharge in El Nido's Bacuit Bay

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

October 26, 2020



BusinessMirror File Photo

THE Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in the Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan) Region will look into the reported black water discharge into the Bacuit Bay in El Nido, Palawan, on October 22.

Drake Matias, Mimaropa EMB Regional Director, said in statement that further investigation is needed to determine if sewage water from nearby establishments is causing the black water discharge. However, the region's Environmental Management Bureau and El Nido Protected Area Management Office, Brgy. Masagana Chairman Edilberto Templado said that the discharged water was due to his directive to clear the outfall so that rainwater would drain into the sea and prevent flooding in the village.

The outfall drains the water coming from the nearby mountains and those that pass through the national highway, Tabanca Road and some portions of Baranggay Maligaya. During high tide, however, sands build up and block the outfall, causing water to settle and eventually, flood the village especially during typhoons, Matias explained.

To prevent the town from being inundated by the other night's rainfall, he said he decided to order to remove the debris in the outfall. Hence, the channel opened and eventually flushed out the stagnant, black water seen in Bacuit Bay on October 22.

He maintained that what flowed from the outfall was not sewage water as most establishments in the area are still not operational.

The DENR-EMB, however, wants to make sure that the said waterway does not release dirty water into the bay.

The Bacuit Bay is under strict monitoring by the DENR following upon the instruction of DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu. In August last year, the DENR has shut down a total of ten establishments for allegedly causing water pollution in beaches in Coron and El Nido.

"We have taken water samples for testing and we will also conduct tracing to determine if there are commercial establishments that drain their wastewater into that outfall," Matias said.



The water samples are tested for fecal coliform, total suspended solids, dissolved oxygen, nitrate, phosphate, pH, color and temperature. As of press time, the DENR and EMB are still waiting for the results of the tests.

Besides these initiatives, Matias said the subject outfall shall, likewise, be included in stations regularly monitored, such as Cabugao, El Nido Estero, Masagana and Corong-corong.

These outfalls from four priority barangays, namely Buena Suerte, Maligaya, Masagana and Corong-corong are under strict monitoring as part of the government's efforts to rehabilitate El Nido's Bacuit Bay, portions of which were found polluted due to the discharge of untreated wastewater by several commercial establishments.

"We cannot afford to have another outfall that would degrade the water quality of Bacuit Bay, especially now that El Nido is slowly re-opening for tourism," DENR Mimaropa Regional Executive Director Maria Lourdes G. Ferrer said for her part.

"Just like before, we bank on our partnership with the LGU [local government unit], the business sector and the community, to prevent any form of destruction in our environment and completely restore the beautiful island of El Nido," the director concluded.



Mga paguho ng lupa, posibleng maranasan sa mga susunod na araw- MGB Bicol

By **Bombo Radyo Legazpi**

-October 25, 2020 | 11:02 PM

LEGAZPI CITY- Ibinabala ng Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) ang posibleng pagkakarong mga paguho ng lupa hanggang sa mga susunod na araw, dahil sa epekto ng bagyong Quinta.

Paliwanag ni MGB Bicol Director Guillermo Molina Jr. sa panayam ng Bombo Radyo Legazpi, nakita sa projections ng geologists na posibleng magsimulang makapagtala ng paguho ng lupa sa ilang bahagi ng rehiyon bukas ng madaling araw hanggang sa Oktubre 28 dahil sa epekto ng malakas na mga pag-ulan.

Dahil dito, nagbigay ng direktiba ang opisyal sa mga local government units na nasa landslide at flood prone areas na i-monitor ang sitwasyon sa mga nasasakupan na lugar hanggang sa susunod na mga araw.

Pinaghahandaan kasi ang paglambot ng lupa dahil sa epekto ng naturang sama ng panahon na nagdulot ng mataas na accumulated rainfall.

Dagdag pa ni Molina na batid na rin ng mga residente ang sitwasyon sa kanilang mga lugar kaya ang mga ito na mismo ang dapat na magpatupad ng ibayong pag-iingat.



Govt keen on privatizing, operating mining assets

By Cai Ordinario

October 26, 2020

The government is keen on privatizing and operating its mining assets to boost revenues, according to the Department of Finance (DOF).

The DOF also said efforts are now underway to “untangle” the legal issues surrounding these assets.

The DOF said the Privatization and Management Office (PMO) noted lawsuits filed by the private sector proponents in the operations of these mining assets have hampered efforts by the government to privatize them.

“We are forming an interagency team to study ways on how we can clear the path for these assets to be privatized and revive their operations,” Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III said.

The interagency team will be composed of representatives from the DOF, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), the DOF-attached Privatization and Management Office (PMO), and the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG).

The DOF said a PMO memorandum identified five state-owned mining assets that are under litigation could be privatized and operated.

These assets include the following: the copper-gold project of the Maricalum Mining Corp. (Maricalum Mining) in Negros Occidental; the nickel mines of the Nonoc Mining and Industrial Corp. (Nonoc Mining) in Surigao del Norte; and the gold- and copper-rich North Davao Mining Property (North Davao Mining) in Davao del Norte.

The PMO also said the copper mines of the Basay Mining Corp. (Basay Mining) in Negros Oriental and the nickel mine once operated by the Marinduque Mining and Industrial Corp. (MMIC Bagacay Mine) in Western Samar have also been unoperational because of legal concerns on how these assets should be disposed.

Dominguez recently told business leaders during the 46th Philippine Business Conference and Expo that the government is keen on reviving the mining industry to create alternative employment in the countryside.

“Definitely, we are pushing for the revival of the mining industry,” Dominguez said during the virtual conference.

According to the PMO, DENR Administrative Order (AO) 2012-07, states that the MGB shall formulate the guidelines for the privatization of mines through public bidding.

However, DOF said this needs to be harmonized with the PMO’s mandate to dispose of state assets for a successful tender.

The DOF explained that Maricalum Mining, led by its president, Teodoro G. Bernardino, has been tied up in litigation since 1995. However, the winning bidder, G Holding Inc. (GHI), refused to pay the balance of the price of its purchased shares under its Purchase and Sale Agreement with the government.

The agency said in the last General Information Sheet (GIS) filed by GHI with the Securities and Exchange Commission in 2005, it indicated Michael G. Bernardino as chairman of its board with Eleanore B. Gutierrez as its major stockholder.



Meanwhile, Nonoc Mining was acquired by the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and the Philippine National Bank (PNB) in 1984 and turned over in 1987 to the then-Asset Privatization Trust (APT).

In 1996, APT sold 22.5 million shares of stock of Nonoc Mining to Philnico Mining and Industrial Corp. (PMIC), now Philnico Industrial Corp. (PIC). The sale represented 90-percent ownership of Nonoc Mining.

Based on its 2018 GIS, the PIC board chairman is Ramon S. Ang, and its president is Horacio C. Ramos.

“Under the Arda [Amended and Restated Definitive Agreement] between the two parties, PMIC agreed to pay APT the peso equivalent of \$263.762 million as purchase price, payable in two sets of installments and in accordance with the schedule set in the ARDA,” DOF said.

It explained that the government moved for the reversion of the shares sold to PMIC when the latter defaulted. This led to numerous cases filed by both the private sector and the government against each other that eventually reached the Supreme Court.

The DOF said the issue is now awaiting resolution by the high court. To date, there has been no collection on the P14.9 billion purchase price.

Meanwhile, the North Davao Mining case involved the bidding for a Joint Operating Agreement (JOA) to develop its mining assets in partnership with the Philippine Mining Development Corp. (PMDC).

The PMDC is a wholly-owned and controlled-government corporation designated as the new implementing arm of the DENR in undertaking the mining and mineral processing operations in Compostela Valley Province, among others.

“The Asia-Alliance Mining Resources Corp. [AAMRC], led by its President Simon L. Paz, was qualified and considered as the highest calculated and responsive bid, failed to comply with the conditions of the Notice of Award in 2009, including failure to pay the commitment fee, secure a performance bond, and execute the JOA. A series of litigation ensued, and is still pending with the Court of Appeals [CA],” DOF said.

The agency said that in terms of Basay Mining, formerly the CDCP Mining Corp. which was established in 1970, its operations were suspended in 1983 because of lack of working and operating funds.

The Basay Mining had entered into a Deed of Assignment of Mining Claims and Leasehold Rights with the Philippine National Bank (PNB) to secure credit and loan accommodations from PNB.

DOF said technical studies by the PMO indicated that the Basay mine is estimated to contain at least 105 million tons of copper ore and could generate at least P1 billion.

Similarly, MMIC Bagacay mine which has been mired in environmental complaints and was foreclosed by the DBP and PNB in 1984 with an outstanding claim of P19.5 billion. Its assets were transferred to APT for privatization.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/10/26/govt-keen-on-privatizing-operating-mining-assets/>



Gov't pushing to privatize mining assets to revive industry

Published October 25, 2020 5:59pm

By JON VIKTOR D. CABUENAS, GMA News

The administration is now pursuing steps to privatize mining interests held by the government and revive their operations, in a move seen to restart the economy in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In an emailed statement on Sunday, the Department of Finance (DOF) said the government is working to privatize at least five mining assets of the government in the Visayas and Mindanao regions.

"We are forming an interagency team to study ways on how we can clear the path for these assets to be privatized and revive their operations," said Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III.

The team will be composed of the DOF, its attached agency the Privatization and Management Office (PMO), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), and the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG).

According to the DOF, the PMO has identified several mining assets: the copper-gold project of the Maricalum Mining Corp. (Maricalum Mining) in Negros Occidental, the nickel mines of the Nonoc Mining and Industrial Corp. (Nonoc Mining) in Surigao del Norte, and the gold- and copper-rich North Davao Mining Property (North Davao Mining) in Davao del Norte.

It also said identified the copper mines of the Basay Mining Corporation (Basay Mining) in Negros Oriental and the nickel mine once operated by the Marinduque Mining and Industrial Corp. (MMIC Bagacay Mine) in Western Samar as inoperational assets that should be disposed.

The PMO said lawsuits filed by the private sector proponents in the operations of such assets have hampered efforts by the government to privatize them.

"Maricalum Mining, Nonoc Mining, and North Davao Mining were once successful mining companies that have failed to settle their debts with government financial institutions, leading to their foreclosure and transfer of their assets and shares of stocks to the national government," the DOF said.

"The government then auctioned off the shares of these mining firms, but the firms with the highest bid failed to fulfill their obligations, which resulted in decades of litigation that have left these mining assets idle," it added.

Moving forward, Dominguez said, the administration will push for the revival of the mining industry to spur economic growth.

"Definitely, we are pushing for the revival of the mining industry," Dominguez was quoted as saying. — **BM, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/economy/761352/gov-t-pushing-to-privatize-mining-assets-to-revive-industry/story/>



DoF tackles issues on govt-held mining assets

By Anna Leah E. Gonzales

October 26, 2020

The Department of Finance (DoF) said it will form an interagency team that will look at ways on how to untangle the legal issues that are tying down idle mining interests held by the government in a bid to speed up the privatization of these assets and revive their operations.

In a statement over the weekend, the Finance department said that according to its Privatization and Management Office (PMO), lawsuits filed by private sector proponents in the operations of these mining assets have hampered efforts by the government to privatize them.

“We are forming an interagency team to study ways on how we can clear the path for these assets to be privatized and revive their operations,” said Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez 3rd.

He said the team will be composed of representatives from the DoF, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), the DoF-attached PMO, and Office of the Solicitor General. The MGB is an agency under DENR.

A memorandum by the PMO to Dominguez identified the copper-gold project of the Maricalum Mining Corp. in Negros Occidental, nickel mines of the Nonoc Mining and Industrial Corp. in Surigao del Norte, and the gold- and copper-rich North Davao Mining Property (North Davao Mining) in Davao del Norte as among the idle mining assets held by the government that have long been under litigation.

The PMO also said the copper mines of the Basay Mining Corp. in Negros Oriental and the nickel mine once operated by the Marinduque Mining and Industrial Corp. in Western Samar have also remained non-operational because of legal concerns on how their assets should be disposed.

Maricalum Mining, Nonoc Mining and North Davao Mining were once successful mining companies that failed to settle their debts with government financial institutions, leading to their foreclosure and transfer of their assets and shares of stocks to the national government.

The government then auctioned off the shares of these mining firms, but the DoF said the firms with the highest bid failed to fulfill their obligations, which resulted in decades of litigation that have left these mining assets idle.

Maricalum Mining, led by its President, Teodoro Bernardino, has been tied up in litigation since 1995. The DoF said the winning bidder, G Holding Inc., refused to pay the balance of the price of its purchased shares under its purchase and sale agreement with the government.

Nonoc Mining, meanwhile, was acquired by the Development Bank of the Philippines and Philippine National Bank in 1984 and turned over in 1987 to the then-Asset Privatization Trust (APT).

In 1996, APT sold 22.5 million shares of stock of Nonoc Mining to Philnico Mining and Industrial Corp., now Philnico Industrial Corp. (PIC). Based on its 2018 general information sheet, the PIC chairman of the board is Ramon Ang and its president is Horacio Ramos

The sale represented 90 percent ownership of Nonoc Mining.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/10/26/business/business-top/dof-tackles-issues-on-govt-held-mining-assets/786162/>



Gov't to untie knots on mining assets

Published 45 mins ago on October 26, 2020 03:20 AM

By [Joshua Lao](#) @tribunephl_lao



The government is keen on reviving the mining industry in the country following the identification of several idle government-held mining assets that have been tied with legal issues. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF STEELGURU

The government is expected to undertake necessary steps to finally settle and monetize its idle mining assets, Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III said over the weekend.

“We are forming an interagency team to study ways on how we can clear the path for these assets to be privatized and revive their operations,” Dominguez said.

The Finance chief earlier announced their intentions to revive the mining industry, as the government could make use of such income to beef up its war chest against the pandemic.

Industry revival

Still, Dominguez cited that the industry’s revival will provide jobs in the regions where there are no alternative jobs, especially in rural areas, due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Privatization and Management Office (PMO) already identified several idle government-held mining assets which have been tied with legal issues, including the Maricalum Mining Corp. in Negros Occidental, Nonoc Mining in Surigao del Norte and the North Davao Mining Property in Davao del Norte.

According to the PMO, lawsuits filed by private sector proponents in the operations of these mining assets impeded the government’s privatization efforts.

Likewise, frequent protests from various rights and activist groups along with the government’s demand for a clean process in mining the minerals, drastically affected the industry’s development.

The PMO said the copper mines of the Basay Mining Corporation in Negros Oriental and the nickel mine once operated by the Marinduque Mining and Industrial Corp. in Western Samar have remained inoperational due to legal concerns on how these assets should be disposed.

The PMO disclosed that Basay mine could generate at least P1 billion from its estimated 105 million tons of copper ore but its operations were suspended in 1983 owing to lack of working and operating funds.

Performance rebound

Previously, the local mining industry expressed optimism that the government will recognize their importance amid the pandemic while expecting a rebound in performance in the succeeding years. “Definitely, we are pushing for the revival of the mining industry,” Dominguez said.

Citing that Maricalum Mining, Nonoc Mining and North Davao Mining were once successful mining companies that have failed to settle their debts with government financial institutions, leading to their foreclosure and transfer of their assets and shares of stocks to the national government.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/10/26/govt-to-untie-knots-on-mining-assets/>



'SC to expedite ruling on water firms' compliance with CWA'

By Joel R. San Juan

October 26, 2020

CHIEF Justice Diosdado Peralta has assured that the Supreme Court (SC) would expedite its final resolution of its decision compelling water concessionaires to comply with its obligation under the Philippine Clean Water Act to provide wastewater treatment facilities.

It has been more than a year since it issued a decision on August 4, 2019, directed both Manila Water Co. and Maynilad Water Services as well as water regulator Metropolitan Water Works and Sewerage System (MWSS) to pay a fine amounting to almost P2 billion for violation of the provisions of Republic Act (RA) 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act (CWA).

Peralta acknowledged that the construction of wastewater treatment facilities and sewerage systems are vital to the ongoing efforts to rehabilitate the waters of Manila Bay.

"I will confer with the member-in-charge to fast track the resolution of the motion for reconsideration [MR]," Peralta said when asked by the BusinessMirror on the status of the case.

"You are correct; Maynilad and Manila Water should actually construct the sewerage system. That would really clean the water that comes from the households because unfortunately within the five-year period that they were supposed to construct the sewerage system....they did not do anything. That is why the Court imposed fine, that is P200,000 a day until they comply," Peralta said.

The SC has yet to act on the motions for reconsideration filed by Manila Water and Maynilad of the Court's 2019 ruling affirming the Court of Appeals decision which found the water concessionaires liable for violation of Section 8 of the Philippine Clean Water Act.

The said provision requires MWSS and the 2 concessionaires to provide wastewater treatment facilities and to connect sewage lines in all establishments, including households, to an available sewerage system within five years upon the effectivity of RA 9275 on March 6, 2004.

The Court's ruling specifically states that "Maynilad shall be jointly and severally liable with the MWSS for a total amount of P921,464.184 and "Manila Water Co. Inc. shall be jointly and severally liable with MWSS for the same amount."

The Court said the amount covers the period from May 2009 to date of promulgation.

The petitioners are given 15 days upon receipt of the decision to pay the fine.

A fine of P322,102 a day subject to further 10 percent increase every two years as provided under Section 28 of RA 9275 would be imposed against the petitioners until they have fully complied with the decision.

The Court also imposes a legal interest of 6 percent per year until the decision is fully satisfied.

Manila Bay decision

In their MRs, both Manila Water and Manyilad argued that based on the Court's ruling on December 18, 2018, or the Manila Bay decision, they have until 2037 to comply with their obligations under Section 8 of the CWA.

Maynilad added that it would be "legally and physically impossible" to comply with the SC's directive within a five-year period.



It pointed out that the Court should not pin the responsibility to provide a centralized sewerage system to water concessionaires only as the law operates under a framework of “collective responsibility.”

The petitioner said other government agencies, such as the Department of Health, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Public Works and Highways and local government units also have obligations under Section 8 of the CWA.

It pointed out that aside from government agencies, private third parties’ actions and inactions have also contributed to the legal impossibility of strict compliance with Section 8 of the CWA as mandated by the SC ruling.

These include the refusal of establishments and households to have their existing sewerage lines connected to available sewerage systems, and the refusal of commercial and industrial establishments to install pre-treatment facilities needed before interconnection.

Based on its financial projections, Maynilad said it would have to spend more than P149 billion using 2019 prices to put up sufficient wastewater facilities to meet 100 percent sewerage coverage by 2022.

Meanwhile, Manila Water also warned that the accelerated establishment of a complete centralized sewerage system is expected to increase water prices by P26.70 per cubic meter or 780.18 percent.

The 2 water firms have asked the conduct of an oral argument on the issue, but the SC has yet to act on it.

Peralta said he was informed by Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu that Manila Water and Maynilad are already constructing wastewater treatments both in the south and north side of the metropolis.

“I have not seen the places, but one of these days when we will conduct inspection in accordance with the continuing mandamus that we issued, I think we will try to visit those two places if indeed they already constructed or how much they have done in the construction of the waste waters in Manila Bay, definitely,” Peralta said.



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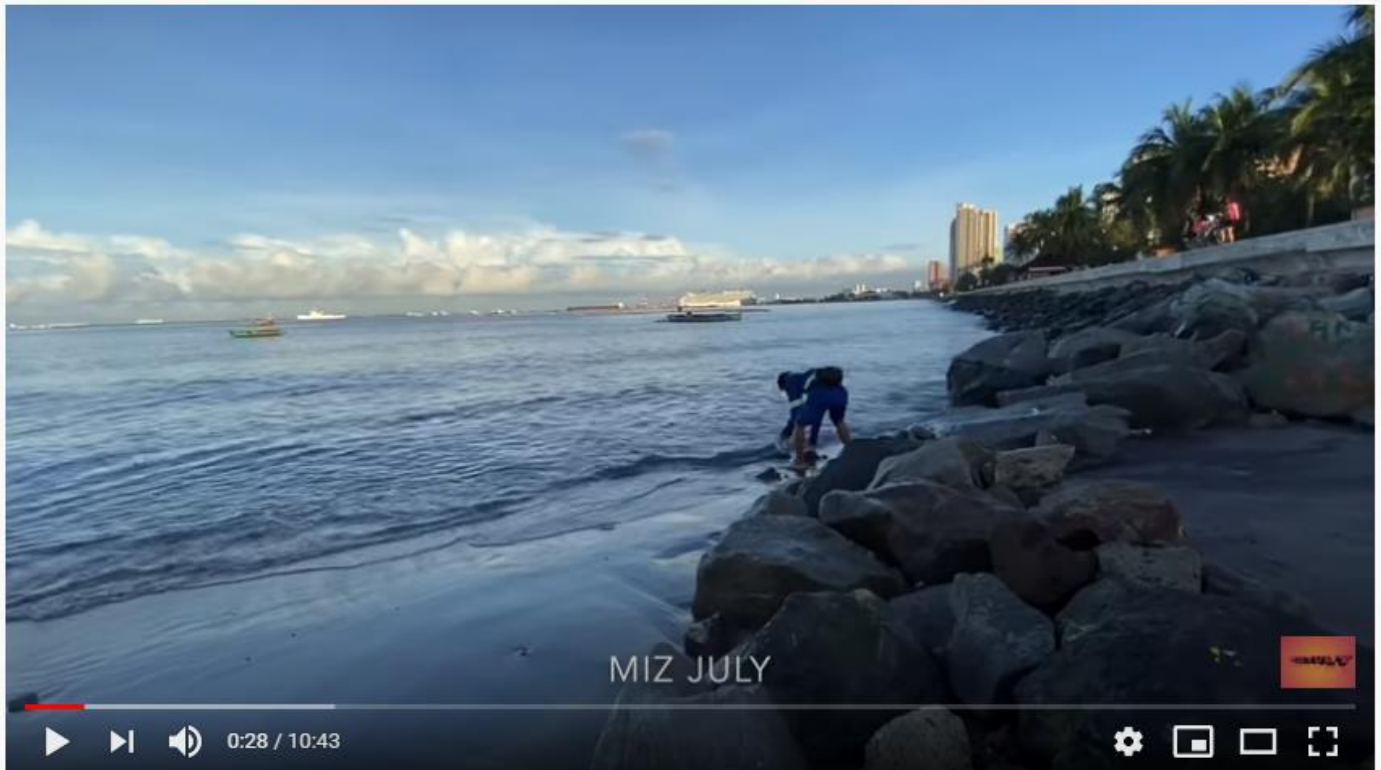
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BASECO BEACH

MANILA BAY BASECO,TROPANG DILAWAN LUSOB! Nauna pa kay Quinta! Mga water hyacinth! Miz July

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Source:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdkrkSzvG5s&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=MizJuly



'Kalibasib' gone but still a model in saving tamaraw population

By: [Madonna Virola](#), [Maricar Cinco](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:16 AM October 26, 2020



CONSERVATIONSYMBOL "Kalibasib" was the lone tamaraw born and raised in a gene pool center in Occidental Mindoro until his death on Oct. 10. He died at 21, within the 21-to-25- year life span of the highly endangered species. —PHOTO COURTESY OF GREGG YAN/UNDP BIOFIN

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines — Rangers on Saturday gathered at the Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP) office in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro province, to pay their final respects to a very special ward.

It felt like losing a child of his own, said Eduardo Angagan, 65, who began looking after "Kalibasib" when the tamaraw, also known as Mindoro's dwarf buffalo, was only 3 years old. "He was elusive at first but we eventually found a way to tame him. He also grew fond of eating ripe bananas all the time," Angagan recalled.

Next generations

Kalibasib, from the phrase "kalikasan bagong sibol," or nature newly sprung, was the only tamaraw successfully bred in captivity. His death on Oct. 10 from cardiac failure marked an end to a chapter in the government's attempt in 1980 to repopulate the critically endangered animal species.

"My children were all saddened. If not for Kali, I wouldn't have sent all nine of them to school," said Angagan, who joined the TCP as a ranger in Mt. Iglit-Baco National Park in 1996.

Kalibasib was buried in a 5-foot deep grave—or at least some parts of him.

Also on Saturday, the tamaraw's skull (cervical vertebrae), limbs (femur and fibula and the radius and ulna), and tail (caudal vertebrae) were transported to Quezon City for the tedious process of animal stuffing and preservation.

TCP Coordinator Neil Anthony del Mundo said the provincial government commissioned a private taxidermist for the procedure, which could take eight to 10 months and cost P300,000.

"It's not for us but for the next generations that, who knows, might not be able to see a tamaraw anymore," Gov. Eduardo Gadiano said.

Tamaraw (*Bubalus mindorensis*) population in the wild is now down to 600, from an estimated 10,000 in 1900, according to the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (Biofin) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



Baseline data

Most of them are found on Mt. Iglit-Baco and face threats from illegal poachers.

Recently, Biofin led a crowdfunding initiative and raised over P1.1 million from partner institutions and individuals to support tamaraw rangers and forest wardens, who lost their jobs during the coronavirus pandemic. The fund would be turned over on Oct. 29 to cap off Tamaraw Month.

Government veterinarian and TCP partner Mikko Angelo Reyes said Kalibasib's internal organs were preserved for histopathology and scientific research.

Even in death, Kalibasib was more than an icon of wildlife conservation as he would also be providing researchers the baseline data on the tamaraw's internal organs.

"We never had any data on the internal organs. I usually referred only to its closest relative like the carabao," Reyes said.

He said they also wanted to find out how Kalibasib acquired liver cirrhosis, as shown in the necropsy results.

It was not clear why no earlier studies had been made when tamaraws, among them Kalibasib's mother, "Mimi," were brought to the gene pool farm for captive-breeding. Mimi died in August 2011 and its skeleton was mounted at the TCP office.

Del Mundo said he was looking forward to see Kalibasib in its new form once a local tamaraw museum in Mindoro was put in place.

Kalibasib's bones would also be exhumed at the TCP compound's burial site after a year and would be mounted alongside his mother's, he said.



LandBank to list bonds for environmental projects

By Tyrone Jasper C. Piad

October 26, 2020

The Land Bank of the Philippines is set to list its P3-billion bond offering with the Philippine Dealing and Exchange Corp. next month.

In a recent statement, the state-run bank announced the launch of its sustainability bonds aimed at raising funds for environment and social projects.

The peso-denominated fixed-rate bonds due in 2024 have tenor of two years. The offering will be issued in minimum denominations of P50,000 and in multiples of P10,000 thereafter.

The offer period runs from October 26 to November 6.

LandBank tapped Standard Chartered Bank to be the sole lead arranger and bookrunner of the transaction. Both banks are the selling agents.

“With the pandemic posing both as a pressing challenge and opportunity, it strengthens LandBank’s commitment all the more, with a sharpened focus in supporting sectors and activities for sustainable recovery,” LandBank President and CEO Cecilia C. Borrromeo said.

The proceeds from the transaction will finance loan programs supporting green and social projects identified in the bank’s Sustainable Finance Framework.

Among the green projects are climate change mitigation and adaptation, natural resource and biodiversity conservation and pollution prevention and control.

Meanwhile, LandBank cited programs for basic infrastructure, food security, essential services, affordable housing, employment generation, and food security as some of the social projects.

Recently, the state-owned bank stated that it will be providing a 60-day grace period on loan and credit- card payments following the passage of Republic Act 11494, a law aiming “to accelerate the recovery and bolster the resiliency of the Philippine economy.”

The one-time moratorium covers all existing, current and outstanding loans falling due from September 15 to December 31.

“LandBank understands how providing loan relief can significantly support our clients during these difficult times,” Borrromeo said. “We look to ease their financial concerns as we continue navigating the challenges of this pandemic.”

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/10/26/landbank-to-list-bonds-for-environmental-projects/>



Study: PHL banks score low in climate change policies

By [Tyrone Jasper C. Pead](#)

October 26, 2020

IN Asia, Philippine banks scored lower than the average in terms of climate change policies despite the country being the most climate-vulnerable in the world, a study cited.

According to the Fair Finance Asia (FFA) Philippines 2020 Policy Assessment, local banks received a score of 2 percent out of 100 percent in climate policies. It is lower than the average of 4 percent based on evaluation of 45 banks from six Asian countries.

FFA surveyed BDO Unibank Inc., Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), Land Bank of the Philippines (LandBank), Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. (Metrobank) and Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (RCBC) in the Philippines.

While BDO and LandBank are “positioning themselves as champions for green energy,” both were scored very low in terms of climate and nature, FFA noted.

“The only policy commitments outlined in bank policies were focused on ensuring the companies the banks invested in disclose (LandBank) or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions [BPI, RCBC], or switch from using fossil fuels to using renewable energy sources [BDO],” the report explained.

Juliette Laplane, senior researcher at Fair Finance Guide International and Amsterdam-based research group Profundo, said the surveyed banks in the Philippines have no policies excluding the use of coal and other fuel fossils.

“Even if some of the banks disclosed some measures to finance renewable energy, there is really no strong incentive to support clients and encourage their clients to switch from fossil fuel to renewable energy,” Laplane said.

With this, the report said that the major banks should step up their climate policies because they will be dealing with the economic impact of climate change in the future.

FFA is advising the banks to incorporate environmental, social and governance criteria in their policies and operations. This, in addition to making sure the companies they are investing in are complying with international sustainability standards.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Supervisory Policy Subsector Managing Director Lyn I. Javier agreed that the Philippine banks need to improve their sustainability initiatives. In April, the BSP inked its Sustainable Finance Framework amid the coronavirus pandemic.



“As banks rethink, review and revisit their strategies and business models, this is the best time to consider sustainability principles in the vision and strategic setting of the banking industry,” Javier said.

The BSP official also emphasized that banks should also keep in mind the financial risk of not factoring in climate change in their strategies. Citing a study, Javier said that increased rainfall in the country is seen prompting a surge in nonperforming loans and assets.

Javier said that the banks should be able to identify their exposure relating to the matter at hand and how this can affect the bottom-line figures.

“We want banks to address, understand and recognize that climate change brings forth financial risk,” she said. “It leads to potential losses in their balance sheets and income statements.”

While the Philippine scored lower in climate policies, it ranked highest in terms of financial inclusion at 44 percent. Local banks scored 12.8 percent and 6.2 percent in transparency and gender, respectively.



Rio Tuba community ‘upcycles’ for soil conditioners

posted October 26, 2020 at 12:05 am

Rio Tuba Nickel Mining (RTN) is the first in the mining industry to use the bioreactor technology of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) that converts biodegradable wastes into organic fertilizers and soil conditioners.



The bigger challenge, and probably the most important component, is to get the residents of the mining community of Rio Tuba in Palawan to participate in this upcycling program.

RTN, a subsidiary of Nickel Asia Corp. (NAC), adopts this innovative soil conditioning technology through DOST’s technology transfer program, which was developed to promote efficient solid waste management practices in the communities.

According to Wilbern Blitz Paeste, Mining Technology and Geosciences Specialist at RTN, the key in using the bioreactor is to arrive at the right mix of household wastes to increase the nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and carbon content necessary to reach the “soil fertilizer” status of the compost.

Paeste says that materials fed in the bioreactor are biodegradable wastes from the communities, classified as – dry waste, wet waste, and animal manure.

The bigger challenge, however, and probably the most important component, is to get the residents of the mining communities to participate in the upcycling program so enough household wastes are collected to be turned into fertilizers or soil conditioners.

“Segregation is a challenge. We need to educate the people on how critical segregation is to the success of this program” says Bong dela Rosa, RTN Community Relations Manager.

This breakthrough in the production of soil conditioner using household wastes is a game-changer in the mining industry where tons of fertilizers are needed to help improve the soil condition in the mined-out areas.

Lateritic soil in mining areas are relatively low in soil nutrients and uncondusive for agriculture.

The challenge of nutrient deficiency of lateritic topsoils can be addressed only with proper intervention in order for the mined-out areas to be ready for rehabilitation programs.

In a series of Waste Analysis and Characterization Study, it is shown that each household can produce at least 1.5 kg of wastes per day. What are needed to produce soil conditioners are wet wastes or table leftovers, fruits and vegetable peelings, and backyard wastes such as leaves and the likes. No plastics included of course.

In Rio Tuba, 80 kilos of household wastes are collected per day with about 64 houses and select establishments initially participating in the program.



The right mix of household wastes to increase the nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and carbon content necessary to reach the “soil fertilizer” status of the compost.

“It is encouraging to see the communities participate, showing commitment to segregation and becoming conscious of the individual’s role in the production of soil conditioners,” exclaims Engr. Cynthia E. Rosero, RTN’s Resident Mine Manager.

“Aside from using our own organic fertilizers in the mine’s rehabilitation programs, the goal is to be able to provide soil conditioners that the communities and our employees can use in their backyard gardening in exchange for household wastes, as result this will limit our dependence on expensive commercial fertilizers,” ends Paeste.



- Headline
- Editorial
- Column
- Opinion
- Feature Article

Daily Tribune (Philippines)

Magic of GRASS

Bamboo has the highest textile fiber yield among other textile fibers, which can provide significant opportunities for income generation from upstream to downstream for the natural textile industry sector

Ecology - Business
26 Oct 2020

Testament to the resiliency and innovation of the nation is an ambitious project to use the common bamboo into raw material to produce commodities of daily use such as textiles.

The perennial plant in the subfamily of the Bambusoideae of the grass family Poaceae becomes the latest addition to the list of local natural textile fibers, joining pineapple, abaca and banana, which are being converted into textile or fabric through the Department of Science and Technology's (DoST) textile processing technology.

Different countries, including the Philippines, have been pushing for the increase in people's awareness

of the importance of bamboo.

To maximize local bamboo as a vast natural resource, the Philippine Textile Research Institute (PTRI), the textile arm of the DoST, pro-

motes its bamboo textile processing technology for the production of natural blended yarns and woven fabrics, as better options to petroleum- and chemical- based synthetics.

The PTRI has since included bamboo in its efforts at nurturing natural textile materials to support the Philippine contribution toward the attainment of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly SDG12, on sus-



THIS innovation will spur growth in the countryside.



INNOVATION Center for Yarns and Textiles of the DoST-PTRI can now produce the bamboo textile. DoST Secretary Fortunato de la Peña spearheads the bamboo project.



OPENED bamboo textile fibers.



IT will maximize local bamboo as a vast natural resource.



BAMBOO fabric.

sustainable consumption and production.

It is notable that the developed process is community-centric and

sustainable in the conversion of poles to textile, the processing being one other than the regeneration route popularly known as the viscose process, an open system that is known to adversely affect the environment.

DoST- PTRI identified eight provinces in the Philippines, which are proposed as potential Bamboo Textile Fiber Innovation Hubs (BTFIH), which will serve as the gateways toward sustainable bamboo textile production and manufacturing given the ample bamboo plantation in their areas.

The DoST- PTRI aims to create the BTFIH in the targeted regions to make bamboo fabric available and push for funding of such textile innovations that will spur growth in the countryside.

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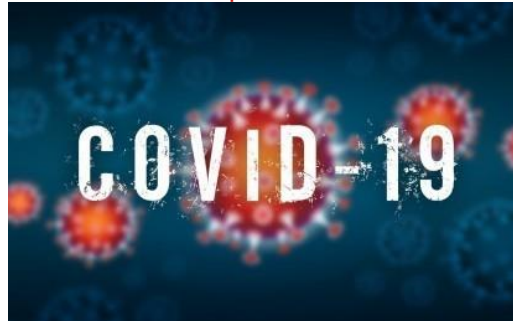
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14,944 more beat Covid-19; boost PH tally to 328,036 recoveries

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor **October 25, 2020, 5:42 pm**



MANILA — The Department of Health (DOH) on Sunday reported 14,944 new recovered cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), pushing the nationwide total to 328,036.

The DOH also reported 2,223 newly-confirmed Covid-19 cases which bring the total tally of active cases to 35,015.

Quezon City tops the list of areas with the most number of new cases with 112 infections, followed by Laguna with 111, Rizal with 109, Cavite with 79 and Batangas with 74.

Of the active cases, the DOH noted that 82 percent of the active cases are patients with mild symptoms, 11.3 percent are asymptomatic, 4.2 percent are critical and 2.4 percent are severe.

The DOH logged 43 deaths, pushing the total number of fatalities nationwide to 6,977.

"Of the 43 deaths, 29 or 67 percent occurred in October, three or 7 percent in September, five or 12 percent in August, three or 7 percent in July, one or 2 percent in June, and one or 5 percent in May," it said.

Adjusting its Covid-19 data, the DOH removed 14 duplicates from the total case count -- of these, nine were recovered cases.

"Moreover, 11 cases previously tagged as recovered were reclassified as deaths. These numbers undergo constant cleaning and validation," it said.

As of Saturday, the DOH reported, 43 percent of the 1,900 intensive care unit beds and 43 percent of the 13,600 isolation beds are occupied.

It added only 36 percent of 6,000 ward beds are occupied and 24 percent of 2,000 ventilators dedicated for Covid-19 patients are in use. (PNA)



Duterte to announce new quarantine classifications on Monday

By: [Darryl John Esguerra](#) - Reporter / [@DJEsguerraINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 09:58 PM October 25, 2020



(File Photo) FIRST FRIDAY- People gather outside the Quiapo church in Manila for the first friday mass of September, as the government allows religious activities to resume under the GCQ but only up to 10 percent of the church's capacity.

INQUIRER/ MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

MANILA, Philippines — President Duterte Rodrigo is expected to announce on Monday his decision on the quarantine classifications of Metro Manila and other areas in the country for the month of November.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque confirmed this in a text message to [INQUIRER.net](#) Sunday. He added that Duterte's speech will be recorded from his hometown Davao City.

Metro Manila, the province of Batangas, and the cities of Tacloban, Iligan, and Iloilo remain under the general community quarantine (GCQ) until Oct. 31.

The rest of the country is under the most lenient modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) except for Lanao Del Sur and Marawi City which are both under modified lockdown.

Mayors of the 17 cities and municipalities in Metro Manila are pushing for the imposition of GCQ until the end of the year to further contain the spread of COVID-19 in the metropolis.

As of Sunday, the Department of Health (DOH) has recorded a total of 370,028 confirmed coronavirus disease (COVID-19) nationwide, including [328,036 recoveries](#) and 6,977 deaths.

/MUF

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1352367/duterte-to-announce-new-quarantine-classifications-on-monday>



Naiibang diskarte kailangan sa bagong ekonomiya

By [Joy Cantos](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon) - October 25, 2020 - 12:00am



Sa isang 'aide memoire' na isinumite sa bagong liderato ni Speaker Lord Allan Velasco, ipinaliwanag ni Salceda ang isang bagong istratohiyang binansagan nitong "New Deal for the New Economy" at dito'y nakapaloob ang agresibong mga tugon ng batas na titiyak sa patas na pagbangon para sa lahat pagkalipas ng pandemya. [Philstar.com/ Irish Lising](https://www.philstar.com/irish-lising)

MANILA, Philippines — Isinusulong ni Albay 2nd District Rep. Joey Salceda ang mga 'bold economic policies' o naiibang mga diskarte sa pagharap sa bagong ekonomiya pagkatapos ng COVID-19 pandemic.

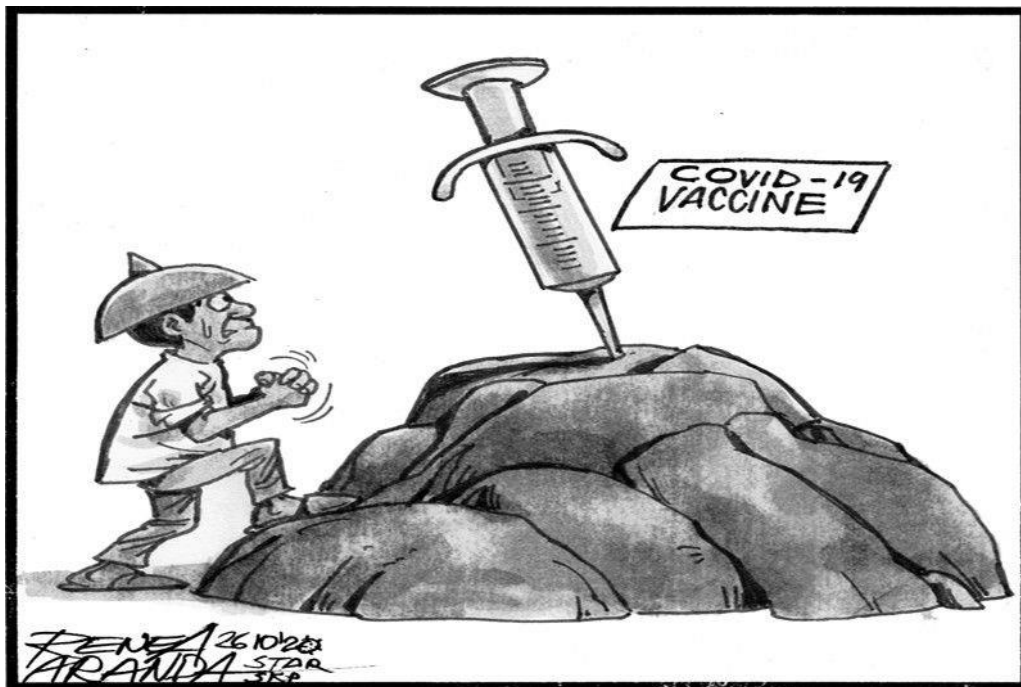
Sa isang 'aide memoire' na isinumite sa bagong liderato ni Speaker Lord Allan Velasco, ipinaliwanag ni Salceda ang isang bagong istratohiyang binansagan nitong "New Deal for the New Economy" at dito'y nakapaloob ang agresibong mga tugon ng batas na titiyak sa patas na pagbangon para sa lahat pagkalipas ng pandemya.

"Nasa sitwasyon tayong bumagsak o sumulong. Kailangang mabilis tayong kumilos para magamay ang bagong ekonomiya. Naging matinding pagsubok sa bansa ang Covid-19 at kailangang maging matibay ang lahat sa matinding mga hamon na ating kinakaharap," paliwanag ng solon.

"Nakita na natin ang mga naturang hamon. Marami ang napilitang sa bahay magtrabaho. Maraming karaniwang mga manggagawa ang nawalan ng trabaho at kabuhayan, sabi ni Salceda.

Sa ilalim ng 'New Deal for the New Economy,' kailangan ang mga komprehensibong reporma sa enerhiya, imprastruktura, pamumuhunan sa mga lalawigan, matatag na pananalapi tungo sa 'A' credit rating, giit pa ni niya.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2020/10/25/2052103/naiibang-diskarte-kailangan-sa-bagong-ekonomiya/amp/>



EDITORIAL - Vaccine-ready

(The Philippine Star) - October 26, 2020 - 12:00am

A Chinese company has reportedly begun administering to volunteers a vaccine against coronavirus disease 2019. Russia is also said to be gearing up for the rollout its own COVID-19 vaccine. The Americans are also preparing to distribute a vaccine as early as next month, with health frontliners to get the first shots.

With scientists in over 170 countries racing to produce a safe and effective vaccine against coronavirus disease 2019, it looks like it's just a matter of time before global immunization gets underway to end the worst pandemic in a century.

The Philippines, which is not producing its own vaccine, is hoping to get priority in the rollouts by participating in third and final-phase clinical trials for certain products in development. President Duterte has tempered his projections, saying a vaccine could become available for widespread use in the country by the first quarter of 2021 instead of within this year.

Even with the resetting of timelines, it looks like a vaccine is on the way, and the country must be prepared for it. Sen. Ralph Recto has called for the appointment of a "vaccine czar" to negotiate with foreign companies or governments so the Philippines will get priority in securing a "supply-to-syringe cold chain" for a vaccine. Health experts have pointed out the need for proper handling and storage of the vaccine at freezing temperature to ensure its utmost efficacy.

Logistics is always complicated in an archipelago of over 7,100 islands. This is expected to become more challenging with flights and shipping services limited by the pandemic, and with personnel worried about coronavirus infection. Every effort must be made to ensure that the vaccine supply will not be compromised by problems in logistics. With public coffers depleted by the responses to the COVID pandemic, every centavo of people's money must be used judiciously.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2020/10/26/2052277/editorial-vaccine-ready>

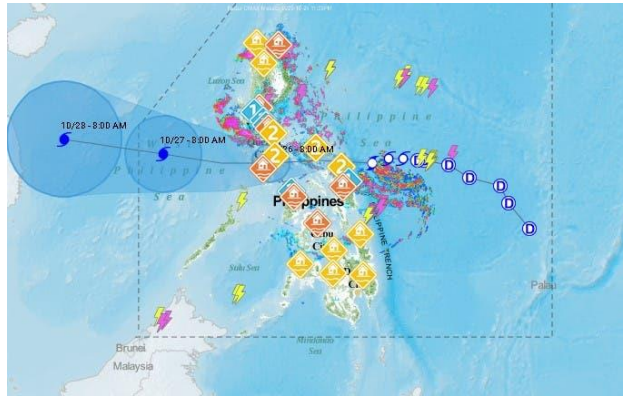


Storm Signal No. 2 up in Luzon

By Arlie O. Calalo

October 25, 2020

Tropical storm Quinta is expected to make landfall in the Catanduanes-Albay-Sorsogon area on Sunday afternoon or evening, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said.



Moving westward at 25 kilometers per hour, the tropical storm has maximum sustained winds of 95 km/h near the center and gustiness of up to 115 km/h.

Signal No. 2 was hoisted over Catanduanes, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Albay, Sorsogon, Masbate (including Burias and Ticao Islands), the central and southern portions of Quezon (Mauban, Sampaloc, Lucban, Dolores, Candelaria, Tiaong, San Antonio, Sariaya, Tayabas City, Lucena City, Pagbilao, Atimonan, Perez, Alabat, Calauag, Quezon, Tagkawayan, Guinayangan, Lopez, Pitogo, Plaridel, Gumaca, Unisan, Agdangan, Padre Burgos, Macalelon, Catanauan, General Luna, Buenavista, San Narciso, Mulanay, San Andres and San Francisco), Batangas, Marinduque, Romblon, Oriental Mindoro and Occidental Mindoro including Lubang Island.

The same storm signal was raised over Northern Samar.

Meanwhile, Signal No. 1 was raised over Metro Manila, Laguna, Rizal, Cavite, Bulacan, Pampanga, Bataan, the southern portion of Zambales (San Marcelino, San Felipe, San Narciso, Castillejos, Subic, San Antonio, Olongapo City, Botolan and Cabangan), Calamian Islands and the rest of Quezon.

The northern portion of Samar (Calbayog City, Matuguinao, Tagapul-An, Santo Nino, Almagro, Santa Margarita, Gandara, San Jose de Buan, Pagsanghan, Tarangnan, San Jorge, Catbalogan City, Jiabong, Motiong and Paranas), the northern portion of Eastern Samar (Maslog, Jipapad, Arteche, San Policarpo, Oras, Dolores, Can-Avid and Taft), the northern portion of Capiz (Sapi-An, Ivisan, Roxas City, Panay, Pilar, Pontevedra and President Roxas), Aklan, the northern portion of Antique (Caluya, Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste and Culasi), and the northeastern portion of Iloilo (Batad, Balasan, Estancia and Carles) were also placed under Signal Number 1.

The weather bureau said Quinta will bring moderate to at times intense rains over Bicol Region, CALABARZON (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon), Aurora, Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Romblon, Marinduque, Calamian Islands, Northern Samar, Eastern Samar, Samar, Biliran, Aklan and Antique.

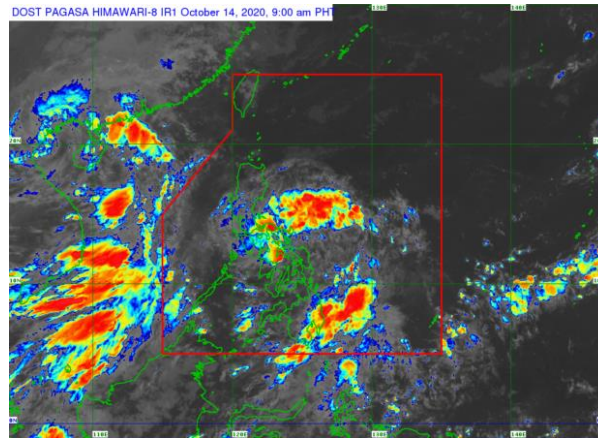
Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/10/25/news/latest-stories/storm-signal-no-2-up-in-luzon/785578/>



Landslides, floods reported in Laguna as 'Quinta' dumps rains over Southern Luzon

By: [Maricar Cinco](#) - Reporter / [@maricarcincoINQ](#)

[Inquirer Southern Luzon](#) / 04:23 PM October 25, 2020



Source: Pagasa website | October 25 3:40 pm

SAN PEDRO CITY — Families living in high-risk areas fled their homes in Calamba City, Laguna, as floods and landslides occurred in other parts of the province.

Aldwin Cejo, the provincial disaster response chief, said 11 families (46 individuals) sought shelter in an evacuation site in Barangay (village) Bucal, Calamba City, as of 2 p.m. Sunday, as Severe Tropical Storm “Quinta” (international name: Molave) continued to dump heavy rains. In Luisiana, a landslide occurred in Barangay San Antonio where a large tree was uprooted off a cliff. Cejo said the road had since been cleared.

Flooding was also reported in Barangay Concepcion in Lumban town and in Barangay Bakia in Majayjay town.

At the Batangas port, boat trips were cancelled Saturday evening. Search and rescue personnel across Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan region were readied for deployment, according to the regional police headquarters.

JE

Source: https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1352258/landslides-floods-reported-in-laguna-as-quinta-dumps-rains-over-southern-luzon?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR2jykEMfVCY5MhZSVERY9p5UihSd-BaGN2xKidBxI-XUTOOfXf5hMJJaIssI#Echobox=1603614634

First 'murder hornet' nest found in US successfully removed

By Rory Sullivan, CNN

Updated 1250 GMT (2050 HKT) October 25, 2020



Invasive 'murder hornet' spotted in US for first time 00:57

(CNN)The first nest of giant "[murder hornets](#)" ever discovered in the United States has been eliminated, two days after it was located in Washington state.

The [Asian giant hornet](#) nest was found on Thursday at 4 p.m. local time by entomologists from the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) in the cavity of a tree on a property near the town of Blaine.

WSDA staff tracked down the nest through radio trackers which they had attached to several captured hornets. They saw dozens of the insects flying in and out of the tree.

An attempt to eradicate the nest took place on Saturday and "appears to have been successful," [the WSDA said in a short statement](#). "The WSDA Pest Program vacuumed numerous specimens out of the nest," it added



An Asian giant hornet is pictured in a tree at a property near Blaine, Washington, where a nest of the insects was discovered.

The owner of the property had given the department permission to remove the nest and also the tree if necessary, WSDA said on Friday.

The department will give more information about the removal operation, which was postponed from Friday to Saturday due to "inclement weather," at a press conference on October 26.

Asian giant hornets, which are not native to the US, were first discovered in Washington state in December last year, leading the WSDA to set up a network of traps around the state with the help of citizen scientists. The first hornet was caught in the state in July.

A small group of these hornets, which are the world's biggest, can kill a hive of honey bees "in a matter of hours," according to the WSDA. They usually nest in the ground but can also be found in dead trees.

Source: <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/10/25/us/murder-hornet-nest-removal-washington-trnd-scli/index.html>



'Raping the Galapagos': Chinese fishing boats, COVID threaten Ecuador's Unesco site

South China Morning Post by Associated Press

Posted at Oct 25 2020 10:04 AM

Just south of the Galapagos' Marchena Island, there's a dive spot known by locals as the "fish arena."

There, within the choppy, cool waters of the Pacific, thousands of colourful fish swim in schools, lobsters poke their long antennae out of rocky outcrops, dolphins bear their young, and]]>

Charles Darwin documented the rich biota of these islands in the early 1800s. In more recent times, an unofficial network of local tour boats and fishing vessels has worked to protect it, by keeping an eye out for those who might harm the marine bounty. But the coronavirus pandemic has grounded this surveillance fleet, creating an opening for outsiders.

Earlier this summer, more than 300 Chinese fishing vessels - many designed to hold 1,000 tonnes of catch - waited at the marine preserve's border, ready to snatch up sea life as it migrated south toward the waters off Peru and Chile.

By some estimates, China has a "distant water" fishing fleet of 17,000 vessels that has been involved in fishing conflicts off the coasts of West Africa, Argentina and Japan in recent years. Now this fleet is triggering similar anger off Ecuador and Peru, two nations highly dependent on their robust near-shore fisheries.

As a result of Covid-19, tourism has plummeted - tour boats have been moored in Santa Cruz Island's Academy Bay for months, while shops and restaurants are closed along Puerto Ayora's main drag, Avenida Charles Darwin.

It has laid bare the vulnerability of an economic model that is 90 per cent dependent upon tourism dollars, while also highlighting the extraordinary beauty and remoteness of the islands - and the magic that is lost when thousands of tourists descend daily into this fragile ecosystem.

During a recent visit to the Galapagos, a Los Angeles Times reporting team - the only visitors touring the park by boat - witnessed penguins swimming alongside tropical fish and sea turtles, krill blooms clouding the shallow waters with pink flotsam, and migrating tuna and hammerhead sharks meandering through the darker, deeper waters.

Normally, pods of dolphins and whales stay out of the busy harbour in Academy Bay. But with the tourist boats out of commission, they are swimming around the area for the first time in decades. Brown pelicans are nesting in the nearby cliffs and mangroves - a sight Fiddi Angermeyer, 68, a local tour operator and business owner, says he hasn't seen since he was a kid.

The situation has prompted politicians, environmentalists and business owners to wonder how the region can regrow and provide a vibrant economy and jobs for its residents while maintaining the wild essence of the park and tamping down on its carbon-intensive requirements - the jet planes and cruising boats of international tourism.

"It's like it was 30 or 40 years ago," said Mary Crowley, the director of Ocean Voyages Institute, a Sausalito, California, environmental organisation working to rid the oceans of plastic. She's been to the Galapagos 23 times since 1972. "That splendour has returned."

It's also exposed the critical role tourism plays in the upkeep and safety of the park: Without visitors travelling to the outer islands and local fishing crews patrolling the park's waters, no one is watching for poaching or picking up the litter and plastic floating in from the mega-fleets and mainland.

The calculus is clear, said Angermeyer: "If there are no tourists, there is no park. And if there's no park, there are no tourists."

Mosquera Island is not much more than a skinny spit of sand and rock off Baltra Island, where the Galapagos Islands' main airport is located.



On a recent afternoon, baby sea lions, Galapagos pigeons and Sally Lightfoot crabs scrambled across the rocks or lolled in the sun-baked sand on Mosquera's southern shore. The airport and the channel separating the islands were largely silent - just the sound of waves lapping and sea lion moms and pups barking back and forth.

But a walk around the rocky edge of the island showed something deeply distressing to Fernando Ortiz, a park guide and former director of the region's chapter of Conservation International: scores of plastic bottles, shoes and equipment packaging - labelled with Chinese characters - poked out of the jagged rocks.

"These are from those boats," said Ortiz, pointing south, toward the horizon, where the fleet of Chinese fishing vessels had congregated roughly 200 nautical miles away. He noted the "newness" of the items, with labels not faded by sun or sea.

In July, the Ecuadorean navy had become alarmed as the fleet approached the edge of the 321-kilometre zone around the park where commercial fishing is illegal.

For years, fishing crews have trawled this zone, hoping to capitalise on the fruits of conservation - increasingly healthy and robust fish stocks - said Boris Worm, a researcher at Dalhousie University in Canada who has studied the fishery.

But last summer, the number of vessels exploded. In late August, a US Coast Guard cutter was called in to help Ecuador's navy patrol the area.

Captain Brian Anderson, commanding officer of the coastguard cutter Bertholf, said the Chinese brought in a tanker ship, which provided fuel to the other ships, and processing ships, where the fishing vessels could dump their harvest and go out and collect more.

"It was like a city," he said, noting the fleet had all the pieces it needed to stay out for months without returning to home ports.

Several of the Chinese vessels weren't reporting their location electronically, he said, and one was reporting its location as Alaska. But without jurisdiction in the area, and nothing blatantly illegal to report to the Ecuadorean navy, the coastguard was relegated to watching, he said.

For its part, China has contended it has "zero tolerance" toward illegal fishing. In a July 23 statement, the Chinese Embassy in Quito said Beijing respects Ecuador's measures to protect the environment and preserve marine resources.

But John Serafini, chief executive of a Virginia-based military defence and commercial data analytics start-up called HawkEye 360, said his company's research - which relies on radio frequency and satellite imagery to process movement - showed many suspicious signals coming from within the zone this summer.

In 2017, a Chinese fishing vessel intercepted off the Galapagos was found to be hauling 300 tonnes of fish, which included tens of thousands of illegally caught sharks.

Mayor Vinueza said the continuing presence of the fleet is an assault on the preserve and his residents' livelihood, especially in the face of the economic devastation the park is suffering.

In August, hundreds of Santa Cruz canton residents took to the streets to protest the fishing fleet - worried it was depleting the park's natural resources, potentially giving one more reason for tourists not to return.

On September 24, a commercial flight from Guayaquil to Baltra Island had only nine passengers aboard. Though Avianca Airlines once had daily flights to the island, those have dropped to a sporadic two or three a week.

The lack of tourists has clearly hit the businesses that rely on them, as well as the fishermen and farmers who supply the industry.

Denato Rendon, a local fisherman, has been giving his fish away while his cooperative tries to find new buyers on the mainland and overseas. William and Noralma Cabrera, farmers in the hills outside Puerto Ayora, are also giving food away, and sometimes bartering - trading their tomatoes and cucumbers for goods such as fish, chicken or milk.



"We're a close-knit community," the father of two said as he stood in front of greenhouses where beans, lettuce and tomatoes were ripening.

The dearth of tourists has also hit the park, which relies on US\$100 entry fees from visitors. The fees provide money for preservation, conservation, upkeep and enforcement. More than 97 per cent of the Galapagos is protected parkland; the rest is residential.

On September 24, the park pulled in US\$1,240 from tourist fees at the islands' two airports - just 4 per cent of last year's collection for the same day, said Norman Wray, president of the Government Council of Galapagos.

"We can't keep things going like this," Wray said of the high unemployment and tourism exodus from the islands. To try to counteract that, Wray and others are underscoring the safety of the islands and the seriousness with which the industry takes the pandemic.

"Look around you," Vinueza said, "it is safe here. We have strict protocols. We won't let the virus in."

Proof of a negative PCR coronavirus test, taken within 96 hours of arrival in the Galapagos, is required for entry. That's more stringent than the requirement to get into Ecuador, which requires a PCR coronavirus test to be taken within 10 days of arrival.

Seemingly everyone in the now-quiet Puerto Ayora wears a mask, and all businesses require patrons to douse their hands and shoe soles in alcohol before entry. Boat crews are even spraying the hands of scuba divers just emerging from the ocean before they let them back on their boats.

"We just can't be too careful," said Ortiz, who works on Angermeyer's ship, the Passion, as a guide. "And it's important that people know how seriously we take this disease."

Still, there's the sense here that the pandemic may have changed the tourist economy in the islands forever - and in some respects, Wray said, that may be for the better.

He noted that broadband cables are being laid along the ocean floor, which soon will connect the islands with high-speed internet - making it possible for a hi-tech academic centre or industry, such as Google or Amazon, to relocate or establish satellite offices in the islands.

"What a laboratory to work in," he said, describing the wildness, beauty and history of the islands. And such a prospect, he said, could help park managers imagine a future that didn't require international tourists to board jumbo jets or gas-guzzling pleasure cruisers to meander around the islands.

For the park to survive and its wildlife to thrive, the future of tourism on the island and in the region must change, Wray said.

Though the pandemic and Chinese fishing fleet pose threats, he said, they also have offered a moment for the park's leaders to consider more sustainable models for the Galapagos and the flora and fauna that tourists come to see.

"We can't survive without them," he said. "But we need to find a balance."

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EU adopts tough biodiversity strategy

By Agence France-Presse

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BRUSSELS: European Union environment ministers on Friday (Saturday in Manila) adopted a biodiversity strategy aimed at protecting ecosystems, a move deemed essential to tackling climate change and reducing the risk of future pandemics.

Meeting in Luxembourg, the 27 national ministers backed the EU Commission's strategy of placing at least 30 percent of the EU's land maritime areas under special protection.

The objective will be reached "with all member states participating in this joint effort," the joint statement said.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has once again shown us the fundamental importance of ecosystems and biodiversity for our health and economic and social stability," said German environment minister Svenja Schulze.

"Biodiversity is our life insurance: it supplies clean air and water, food, building material and clothing. It creates jobs and livelihoods. With the destruction of nature there is also the risk of disease outbreaks and pandemics," she added.

The European governments now expect the EU Commission — the bloc's executive arm — to integrate the biodiversity policy objectives in relevant future legislative proposals.

The joint statement stressed the need "to fully integrate these objectives into other sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and forestry." It also said member states wanted some EU climate action funding to be directed to biodiversity programs.

A Monday report by the European Environment Agency (EEA) warned that more than 80 percent of the EU's natural habitats were in poor or bad condition.

"We clearly need a large-scale restoration in Europe," EEA expert Carlos Romao, one of the authors of the report, said at the time. Friday's EU initiative received a cautious welcome from environmental groups.

"Today's endorsement is a much-needed beacon of hope," the World Wide Fund for Nature said in a statement. But the group said the EU ministers had "failed to make real progress on the EU climate law, ignoring the European Parliament's recent support for a 60-percent emissions reduction target for 2030."

Strong differences remain between member states on that issue, with Poland leading a group of countries who believe that such a cut, or the 55 percent from 1990 standards put forward by the Commission for 2030, are not feasible for economies reliant on carbon fuel.

The current agreed drop is 40 percent. The European Parliament also easily passed a massive farm subsidy bill on Friday, to the fury of environmental activists who say it fell well short of EU commitments to fight climate change.

"It's five minutes to midnight on the climate emergency clock, but our governments are stalling," said Greenpeace EU climate policy adviser Sebastian Mang.

"Meanwhile, the gas industry, the industrial farming lobby, airlines and carmakers are shooting holes in the EU Green Deal, and our chance of a safe climate for people and nature is fading."

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/10/25/news/world/eu-adopts-tough-biodiversity-strategy/785272/>