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Paglilinis sa karagatan tututukan din ng DENR



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MANILA, Philippines – Matapos ang matagumpay na pagpapasara sa may 355 open dumpsites sa buong bansa na ipinatupad ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) tutukan na rin ng DENR ang paglilinis sa mga karagatan.

Ito ang sinabi ni DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units(LGU) Concerns Benny D. Antiporda pagtutuunan naman ng pansin ng ahensya ang paglilinis sa mga karagatan bilang selebrasyon ng DENR sa Month of the Ocean.

Sa post ni Usec. Antiporda sa selebrasyon ng Month of the Ocean ipinaliwanag nito ang layunin ng DENR sa paglilinis ng mga karagatan ay una upang wala ng makitang lumulutang na basura at mga labi sa karagatan, pangalawa makalanhap ng malinis na hangin sa karagatan, pangatlo ay maabot ang water quality ng standard level ng tubig sa karagatan.

Ayon pa kay Antiporda hindi magiging matagumpay ito kung hindi makikipagtulugan ang publiko sa paglilinis sa ating mga karagatan.

“We’re still a long way para maabot natin yun, but then again, at least we tried and we can see drastic change in what we’ve done to Manila Bay,” ani pa ni Antiporda, na siya rin chairs ng Manila Bay Anti-Pollution Task Force.

Magugunitang sinabi ng DENR upang tuluyang maisakatuparan ang rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay makikipagtulungan ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa Manila City government, water concessionaire Maynilad at Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) upang mawakasan na ang ginagawang “pagdumi” ng mga tao na ginagawang palikuran ang Baybayin at pagtatapon ng basura. **Santi Celario**

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/paglilinis-sa-karagatan-tututukan-din-ng-denr/?fbclid=IwAR2zYaqxQh4PRE4weJUzuMw94XhnO4SK03Lx9ny2uAZXpLpNCp6UAAeBZOk>



Paglilinis ng DENR sa mga ilog suportado ng mga barangay

Last Updated May 26, 2021



SUPPORTADO ng mga barangay official ng Quezon City ang isinasagawang rehabilitasyon sa mga ilog na bahagi ng programa ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) para sa paglilinis ng mga ilog upang muling buhayin ang mga daluyan ng ilog sa pamamagitan ng pagsasagawa ng dredging at river restoration projects.

Magugunitang naunang ipag-utos ng DENR sa mga local government units (LGUs) ang paglilinis sa mga ilog sa Kamaynilaan at sa buong bansa upang malinis ang mga ilog at estero. Ayon sa direktiba na inilabas ni Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu na nag-aatas sa mga LGUs na magsagawa ng dredging sa mga maruruming ilog at iba pang daluyan ng tubig sa buong bansa upang maibalik ang maayos na daloy nito at maiwasan ang pagbaha.

Target na malinis ng DENR ang Buwaya Creek na pinalilibutan ng Barangay East Kamias, West Kamias, Silangan at Brgy. E. Rodriguez na ang ilog ay konektado sa Marikina River at San Mateo river.

Ayon kay Barangay Captain Marciano Buena-Agua Jr., ng Brgy E. Rodriguez Sr District 3 QC bilang bahagi ng paglilinis sa Buwaya creek ay ang planong paglilipat sa may 600 families na informal settler na nakatirik ang mga bahay sa paligid ng Buwaya creek na sakop ng naturang barangay.

Sa isang interbyu sinabi ni Buena-Aguna matagal ng plano idemolis ang mga naturang informal settler nakapaligid sa naturang ilog subalit wala pa umanong paglilipatan sa mga naturang pamilya ang local na pamahalaan ng Quezon City.

“Plano namin mailipat ang may 600 pamilya na nakapaligid sa Buwaya creek upang maisakatuparan ang paglilinis sa naturang ilog” ayon kay Buena-agua.

Idinagdag pa ng nasabing barangay official na bukod sa paglilipat sa mga informal settler patuloy ang dredging operation sa naturang creek kasama ang mga environmental personnel ng barangay ang city government.

“Bukod sa dredging operation plano naming maglagay ng basurahan sa paligid ng creek at fish net bilang pansalo sa mga basura upang hindi na dumurecho sa ilog” dagdag pa nito.



Kaugnay nito tiniyak naman ni Usec. Benny Antiporda Chair ng National Solid Waste Management Commission ng DENR na patuloy ang pagtatrabaho ng ahensya upang masiguro na mahusay at maiasasaayos ang mga basura sa ating bansa.

Ayon kay Antiporda hindi magtatagumpay ang isinusulong ng DENR para sa rehabilitation ng mga ilog at estero kung hindi makikipagtulungan ang mga LGUs. **(Boy Celario)**

Source: <https://www.policefilestonite.net/2021/05/26/paglilinis-ng-denr-sa-mga-ilog-suportado-ng-mga-barangay/?fbclid=IwAR3NK1N8hnhRnVxqCDGUywADi8bMS9seZaCFr08LAGMFSkag0rujR7MGkQ>



DENR shuts down 100% of all illegally operating dumpsites nationwide

By DENR Published on May 26, 2021

QUEZON CITY, May 26 -- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has completed the closure of the 335 open dumpsites all over the country after Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ordered the strict enforcement of Republic Act (RA) 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

Open dumpsites are those where solid waste is deposited without planning and consideration for environmental and health standards and are illegal to establish or operate, based on RA 9003.

"This is a victory for the environment and the DENR," said Cimatu on the long overdue closure of open dumpsites.

"Despite the limitations brought about by the pandemic, our people never wavered in their sworn duty as public servants to get the job done," Cimatu said.

Since 2017, the closure of dumpsites has been part of Cimatu's commitment under the country's solid waste management program.

It is also a testament of the political will of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte and his administration since it is only now, 20 years after the enactment of RA 9003 in 2001, that the closure has been fully accomplished.

Section 37 of the Act prohibits the use of open dumpsites for solid waste. It states that "No open dumps shall be established and operated, nor any practice or disposal of solid waste by any person, including LGUs, which constitutes the use of open dumps for solid waste, be allowed after the effectivity of this Act."

DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units (LGUs) Concerns Benny D. Antiporda said the closure of the 335 open dumpsites "completes the closure of all open dumpsites in the country."

"This shows that the DENR walks the talk and strictly adheres to what Secretary Cimatu taught us to do," said Antiporda who is also the alternate chair of the National Solid Waste Management Commission.

"We have shown the public that they cannot escape the long arm of the law. It will eventually catch up with them for violating any and all laws," Antiporda pointed out.

With the closure of all open dumpsites, LGUs have the option to bring their solid waste to existing sanitary landfills (SLF) or to a residual containment area.

A residual containment area is a temporary storage of their residual wastes while negotiating a Memorandum of Agreement with another LGU operating an SLF, finalizing a contract with a privately operated SLF, or awaiting operationalization of their own SLF.

"It is important that all LGUs follow the law on solid waste management such as waste avoidance, waste segregation, recycling and composting of biodegradable wastes," Antiporda said.

There are 237 operational SLFs in the country and 11 are under construction.



On the other hand, Antiporda, on Friday (May 21), announced the filing of cases against the mayor of Urdaneta, Pangasinan for violations in the Environmental Clearance Certificate of the town's SLF, and the mayor of Sta Ana, Pampanga for the operation of an open dumpsite in his area of jurisdiction.

Further, Antiporda has proposed to the DENR Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) that SLFs be privately operated or through public-private partnership (PPP) to ensure compliance with all the requirements of its operation.

'When operated as a business, return of investment is one of the critical factors that account for better management and eventual success,' Antiporda said.

According to Antiporda, all the dumpsites that have been closed down will have to undergo the Safe Closure and Rehabilitation Plan of Dumpsites, courtesy of EMB.

"Local government units may ask the technical assistance of EMB on how to conduct the Safe Closure and Rehabilitation Plan for the respective dumpsites in their



DENR supports calls for bicycle law

By DENR Published on May 26, 2021

QUEZON CITY, May 26 -- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) supports the call to promote bicycle riding in the country to keep cyclists safe while on the road.

DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said that the use of a bicycle “is not only good for the health of the cyclist but also for other people and the environment.”

“This pandemic has taught each and every one of us a lot of lessons in life, especially in the way we conduct our daily business. Taking care of our environment is also taking care of our health,” Cimatu said.

“This proposal for the use of bicycles should be supported as it has become an alternative mode of transportation that is efficient and emission-free not only here in our country but also elsewhere around the world,” he added.

Data from the DENR Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) showed a significant decrease of 39% monthly average concentration of Total Suspended Particulates (TSP) from the Air Quality Monitoring Stations of EMB National Capital Region for the period March 2020 to April 2021. TSP refers to particles ranging in size from 0.1 micrometer to about 30 micrometers in diameter.

However, from March 2020 to April 2021, the monthly average concentration of PM (particulate matter) 10 increased by 43%. On the other hand, the monthly average concentration of PM 2.5 also increased by 5%. EMB attributes this to the motor vehicle emissions in Metro Manila, since there are still private and public transport vehicles on the roads.

PM 10 is 10 micrometers and smaller in diameter such as dust, pollen and mold. PM 2.5 is 2.5 micrometers or smaller in diameter from soot, smoke, metals, chemicals, dust and other elements that can easily be breathed and are usually associated with respiratory illnesses.

DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units (LGUs) Concerns Benny D. Antiporda pointed out that while Congress has yet to pass a law on the safety of cycling in the country, he hopes that LGUs would pass ordinances designating bicycle lanes in the localities to ensure cyclists safety.

“It’s high time that we enact a bicycle law to protect our commuters. With the COVID-19 pandemic, many of our people have now been travelling using their bicycles on their way to work, and it is only right to assure them of their safety while travelling,” he said.

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte signed Proclamation No. 1052 in November 2020 designating a “National Bicycle Day” to be observed every 4th Sunday of November to promote the environmental benefits of bicycles.

Under the proclamation, the DENR is tasked to enjoin other national and local government agencies, including LGUs and the private sector, to participate and support the implementation of the national bicycle proclamation.

Antiporda is also the Supervising Undersecretary for Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service wherein this office played a crucial role in lobbying for champion to institutionalize this activity to become a national movement.

Since battling COVID-19 for over a month, Antiporda said cycling has been one of his activities to boost his immune system. He also suggested to other people to try cycling as the air outdoors



is less risky than being inside any enclosed space.

“Using this mode of transportation not only helps in improving the health and well-being of the public, but also ensures a sustainable, clean and healthy environment,” he noted.

Senate and House leaders have called for the use of bicycles and the safety of cyclists, the most recent of which was House Bill 8156 authored by Las Pinas Rep. Camille Villar which seeks to provide bicycle lanes in all main roads and highways. (DENR)

DENR-Zamboanga Peninsula turns over TIWS admin to Barmm



ZAMBOANGA. The administration and management of Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary in the province of Tawi-Tawi are now under the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Energy in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (Menre-Barmm). A Photo handout shows Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Zamboanga Peninsula Executive Director Crisanta Marlene Rodriguez (left) and Menre-Barmm Forest Management Services Director Abdul-Jalil Umngan during the symbolic turnover Sunday, May 23, in Baguan Island, Turtle Island town. (SunStar Zamboanga)

May 26, 2021

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Zamboanga Peninsula has turned over to the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Energy in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (Menre-Barmm) the administration and management of Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary (TIWS) in the province of Tawi-Tawi.

The symbolic turn-over was held on Sunday, May 23, in Baguan Island, Turtle Island town, where DENR-Zamboanga Peninsula Executive Director Crisanta Marlene Rodriguez, as Protected Area Management Board chairperson, handed over to Menre-Barmm Forest Management Services Director Abdul-Jalil Umngan.

Turtle Islands is globally recognized as the most important nesting ground for the endangered Green Sea Turtle and the critically endangered Hawksbill Turtle.

Rodriguez recalled how TIWS came under DENR-Zamboanga Peninsula's management in 1996 when it became one of the 10 priority protected areas under the Conservations of Priority Protected Areas Project (CPPAP) and was institutionalized and declared a protected area named TIWS under Presidential Proclamation No. 171 on August 26, 1999 pursuant to Republic Act (RA) 7586 known as the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 and later on became one of the 94 newly legislated Protected Areas Under RA 11038 or the Enipas Act of 2018.

"We have cherished our role in TIWS proving time and time again that although distance has always been a challenge, it was never regarded as a hindrance to our efforts to protect and conserve not just wildlife but more so the habitat that these species depend on for their survival," Rodriguez said.

She also relayed her gratitude to different stakeholders such as the Municipality of Turtle Islands and the Province of Tawi-Tawi; law enforcement partners such as the Philippine Navy, Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine National Police (PNP), PNP-Maritime, and Philippine Marines; non-government organizations; Protected Area Management Board members; and, the to the DENR family and wardens for their collaborative effort, hard work and dedication for the management and protection of TIWS.



Menre Minister Abdulraof Macacua, in a message delivered by Umngan, said it is in the mandate of Menre to formulate policies and guidelines and will implement programs, activities and projects for the protection and preservation of biological diversity and the endangered flora and fauna in Barmm.

“Rest assured that our mission now includes the protection and conservation of Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary, its biodiversity, flora and fauna, and the habitat that’s inseparable from the survival of the species relying on the beauty of the islands,” he said.

Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary is composed of six islands namely Boan, Taganak, Baguan, Great Bakkungan, Lihiman and Langaan under the municipality of Turtle Islands in Tawi-Tawi.

Rodriguez and Umngan were among the visitors during the celebration of the Green Sea Turtles Day Sunday, May 23, in the municipality of Turtle Islands, Tawi-Tawi.

Umngan was the designated head of delegation of Barmm for the activity in Turtle Islands and official representative of Barmm senior minister and Macacua. **(SunStar Zamboanga)**



MGB ranks firm's mining forest project 2nd in country

By Benjamin Moses M. EbreoPublished on May 26, 2021

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya, May 26(PIA) - The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Mines and GeoSciences Bureau (DENR-MGB) has placed the Mining Forest Program (MFP) of the FCF Minerals Corporation here as second best in the country.

FCF bagged the second runner-up award under the Metallic Category of the 2020 Best MFP by the MGB.

The award was received by Lorne Harvey, FCF Minerals Corporation's acting general manager for Operations in March 18 at the DENR Central Office in Quezon City.

MGB Regional Director Mario Ancheta said the mining firm's FMP showed an exemplary feat in support of their "Adopt A Tree, Adopt A Mining Forest Movement" under DENR Administrative Order No. 22 Series of 1989.

The program aims to encourage mining companies to participate in the tree planting of qualified trees and seedlings in the designated areas, make proper identification and undertake maintenance during the duration of their adoption.

"Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the onsite validation was changed into offsite one considering the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic," Ancheta said.

He said the virtual validation of the company's MFP included their documentation and data of their development plans, nursery operation, extent of planted areas, maintenance and protection, bio-diversity consideration and other environmental factors such as research studies, IEC, community involvement, community service and other conservation measures.

Ancheta said the award also signifies the mining company's obligations and sustained efforts in the implementation of the MFP objectives and purpose.

"More importantly, this feat also showed the company's compliance with environmental laws, protection and conservation of biodiversity and community involvement and engagement towards sustainable development," he said.

The mine firm operates and manages the gold-molybdenum project in barangay Runruno in Quezon town.**(MDCT/BME/PIA 2-Nueva Vizcaya)**



MGB updates Soccsksargen geohazard maps

By Allen Estabillo May 26, 2021, 4:17 pm



GENERAL SANTOS CITY – The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) in Region 12 (Soccsksargen) has launched another round of assessment on the susceptibility of various communities to flooding and landslides.

Ariel Acosta, MGB-12 supervising geologist, said Wednesday they are gradually updating the geohazard maps of localities to determine possible changes in their vulnerability to rain-induced hazards.

He said the assessment is being conducted in coordination with concerned local government units (LGUs) down to the *sitio* and *purok* levels.

“Ideally, the geohazard maps should be updated every three to five years so this is currently ongoing,” he said in an online radio program hosted by the Philippine Information Agency.

The updating includes the assessment on the implementation of mitigating measures they recommended to LGUs, which could change an area’s susceptibility rating if properly adopted, he said.

Acosta said they already completed the initial geohazard mapping of all 50 cities and municipalities in the region, which was conducted in two batches.

The first batch was finished in 2014 to 2015 and the second batch in 2020, with all LGUs already provided with copies of their geohazard maps.

He said the mapping covers the determination of a locality’s combined moderate and high susceptibility rating to floods and landslides.

In terms of landslides, included in the top 10 areas are Lake Sebu, Tampakan and Tboli towns in South Cotabato; Libungan, Arakan, Magpet and Carmen in North Cotabato; Malungon and Glan in Sarangani; and, Columbio in Sultan Kudarat.

The highly prone areas to flooding are Norala and Tampakan in South Cotabato; Cotabato City; Palimbang, Lutayan, Lambayong, Tacurong City and Kalamansig in Sultan Kudarat; and, Pikit and Mlang in North Cotabato.

Felizardo Gacad Jr., MGB-12 director, said they are regularly providing updates and other relevant information to LGUs and the public to help mitigate or lessen the impact of possible disasters.



“We are not alarmists. We want to make people aware about relevant facts and correct information so they can also act in the right manner,” he said.

He added the information that they provide, especially on an area’s vulnerability to geohazards, is properly validated through onsite visits and assessment by their geologists.

Gacad said they issue recommendations to the LGUs so they can decide and implement the appropriate mitigating measures. **(PNA)**



MGB-Bicol naka-alerto sa pagbantay sa dumaong na Chinese vessels sa CamNorte

By **Bombo Radyo Naga**

-May 26, 2021 | 8:26 PM

NAGA CITY- Mahigpit nang binabantayan ng Mines and Geoscience Bureau- Regional Office 5 ang dumaong na Chinese Vessels sa bayan ng Paracale, Camarines Norte.

Mababatid na unang namataan ang barko ng J. Peace kasama ang barge at tugboat nito noong Mayo 21, 2021.

Sa panayam ng Bombo Radyo Naga kay Engineer Guillermo Molina, Regional Director ng MGB – Regional Office 5, kinumpirma nito na may intensiyon na mag-export mula sa Paracale ng mga iron sand o mas kilala bilang black sand ang nasabing barko.

Ayon kay Molina, posibleng ang Unidragon o Feng Hua company ang nakikitang sources ng nasabing chinese ventures.

Kaugnay nito, sa isinagawa namang imbestigasyon ng MGB-Bicol, nabatid na tanging ang lokal na pamahalaan ng Paracale ang nagbigay ng permit to transport ng nasabing barko.

Kung kaya, tinawag na ng MGB ang atensiyon ng LGU, sa utos na rin mula sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), para hindi makakarga ng mga blacksand ang nasabing barko.

Humingi na rin ng asistensiya ang MGB sa iba't-ibang ahensiya kasama na dito ang Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), gayundin ang Philippine National Police (PNP) para sa monitoring sa nasabing Chinese Vessels.

Sa ngayon, hindi pa naman nagsasagawa ng extraction ng mga blacksand ang barko sa nasabing bayan.



NWRB, Korean agency partner for water project

By [Jordeene B. Lagare](#) May 27, 2021

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) are strengthening bilateral ties by working on a new water project.

In a statement on Tuesday, the NWRB said the partnership involves the establishment of the Integrated Water Resources Management Information System (IWRMIS) for the Pampanga River Basin.

The said system aims to improve water resources planning, management, and regulation in the river basin.

Under the foreign grant covering 2021 to 2025, the Korean government will provide the Philippine government with necessary softwares, equipment and materials, dispatch some experts from Korea to assist in the implementation of the project and host capacity building activities for NWRB's officials and personnel.

"With the improvement and expansion of the project covering the entire Pampanga River Basin, it is expected that we will be able to reap more benefits from this project, specifically, in terms of water allocation and distribution, irrigation and flood analysis," said NWRB Executive Director Sevillo David Jr.

"Consequently, this also means more work from both our ends, but this is a very much welcome challenge in which the NWRB is up to," he added.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Rodolfo Garcia, meanwhile, underlined the importance of communicating the project initiatives to the surrounding communities.

Garcia said the public must be educated in order to "elicit their support and move them to action."

Pampanga River Basin has a catchment area of 10,434 square kilometers covering the provinces of Nueva Vizcaya, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Pampanga, Bulacan, Zambales and Bataan.

Based on the DENR's website, the river basin is envisioned to "become the most economically advanced river basin in the country that shall attain the lowest incidence of poverty, [with] fully restored watershed and ecosystems, properly utilized and managed water resources, adequately provided modern infrastructure facilities, and an empowered citizens in partnership with transparent, accountable, and development oriented leaders."

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/05/27/business/top-business/nwrk-korean-agency-partner-for-water-project/1800822>



Endangered PH cockatoo spotted in Eastern Samar

Published May 26, 2021, 7:03 PM

by [Marie Tonette Marticio](#)

TACLOBAN CITY – A rare Philippine cockatoo was recently sighted in Homonhon Island, Guiuan, Eastern Samar.

Forester Virginio Cugtas said the cockatoo's presence on the island is only the third confirmed location in the country aside from Palawan and Mindoro.



RARE SIGHTING. The most recent photo of a rare Red-vented cockatoo which was seen sitting on a tree branch in Homonhon Island. (DENR-8)

“The sighting of the critically endangered Philippine cockatoo in the Island of Homonhon underscores the need to protect its natural habitat from further destruction,” said Cugtas.

Cugtas was the designated team leader of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) that monitored and verified the presence of the Philippine cockatoo on the island.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has classified the Philippine cockatoo or the Red-vented cockatoo (*Cacatua haematuropygia*) as critically endangered as its population declined between 60 to 80 percent from 1980 to the present.

A recent estimate by the Katala Foundation suggests that only 1,000 of them are left in the wild with 70 to 75 percent found in Rasa Island, Palawan.

Its decline can be attributed to poaching because of its high demand among collectors and the destruction of their habitats which are the mangrove and forest trees as well as the conversion of lowland forests to agriculture, mining, and human settlement.

The Katala Foundation has been running a conservation program in Palawan Faunal Region since 1982. Around 180 of the birds are found in wilderness conservation in the municipality of Narra and Puerto Princesa, Palawan, particularly in Rasa Island.

A captive population is bred by in Birds International located in Fairview, Quezon City.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2021/05/26/endangered-ph-cockatoo-spotted-in-eastern-samar/>



Isabela police rescues 2 Philippine Serpent Eagles

By Merlito G. Edale, Jr. Published on May 26, 2021

CITY OF ILAGAN, Isabela, May 26 (PIA) - The Isabela Police Provincial office (IPPO) has rescued two Philippine Serpent Eagles and turned them over to the management of Sta. Victoria Sanctuary in this city.

Colonel James Cipriano, IPPO chief said the two serpent eagles were found in the forest area of Benito Soliven town by concerned citizens and brought them to the police station in the town with the presence of a representative from Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) - Naguilian.

They were turned over to City Environment and Natural Resources Officer and OIC of Fuyot Spring Natural Park administrator Arvin Perez who assured that the eagles will be protected and taken care of.

“We adhere to the Philippine National Police (PNP’s) “Makakalikasan” as we show concern and protection of wildlife in our area of operations,” Cipriano said.

He said police personnel are not only confide in protecting the citizens but also the God-given creations especially that the serpent eagles are of extinct species now. (BME/MGE/PIA 2-Isabela)



Common-sense suggestions

posted May 27, 2021 at 12:15 am

"Sadly, the government seems to be a hostile environment for common sense these days."

Given the many challenges facing the government's vaccination drive against COVID-19, here are some common-sense suggestions that may help speed things along.

The first comes from a group of scientists, engineers and researchers, who want the government to take the P389 million earmarked for an environmentally dubious program to dump dolomite onto Manila Bay to "beautify" it, and reallocate the money to the country's COVID-19 response.

In a statement, the group Agham (Advocates of Science and Technology for the People) said the beach nourishment project should be stopped while the government studies its environmental implications of dumping crushed dolomite rocks on the bay and its ecosystem. It criticized the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for ignoring the calls of the scientific community to halt and review the project, calling its actions as "completely lacking in scientific integrity."

This call gained added urgency after a Philippine representative of Oceana, the largest international ocean conservation and advocacy group, observed that the dolomite dumped in the area from September to December 2020 had already been reclaimed by the sea, and that from December 2020 to February 2021, the dolomite beach had eroded by at least 300 square meters.

But this had already been predicted—and ignored. In September 2020, the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute said the dolomite sand would only erode, given the hydrodynamic conditions of the bay.

Now the DENR is throwing good money after bad, by dumping more truckloads of pulverized rocks to replace the sands washed away and fill the 500-meter stretch of the bay walk.

The math is as simple as it is compelling—P389 million could have gone to buying almost 300,000 complete doses or two jabs of China's Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine.

Yet the Palace spokesman said there was no way to reallocate the funds that are now being used for an ongoing project. This, from the same official, who once defended the Manila Bay project by saying that Filipinos who were suffering the psychological effects of the COVID-19 lockdown, could calm their nerves by walking along an artificial white sand beach.

Another common-sense suggestion comes from Senator Sherwin Gatchalian, who urged the government to allow the general public to get inoculated as vaccine hesitancy remains high among members of priority groups.

If the idea is to inoculate as many people as quickly as possible, the senator's proposal makes eminent sense. Following the senator's suggestion would also nip in the bud an illegal market for vaccines and vaccination slots that the government is now investigating.

Sadly, the government seems to be a hostile environment for common sense these days, and these two proposals have as much chance of taking hold as the fake white sand on the Manila Bay beach.

Source: <https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/355535>



QC 'trash for cash' to help residents earn, save environment

By Marita Moaje May 26, 2021, 6:28 pm



'TRASH TO CASHBACK'. Officials of Barangay Socorro in Quezon City establish a drop-off point for the city's Trash to Cashback Program in this undated photo. Under the program, the QC Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department and Basic Environmental Systems & Technologies, Inc. personnel will collect recyclables and single-use plastics from residents, which they can exchange for 'environmental points'. (Photo courtesy of QC government)

MANILA – Quezon City residents on Wednesday welcomed the city's point system program on waste management, saying this will aid efforts to save the environment while helping them cushion the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

"Magandang proyekto ito dahil nakatulong ka na sa mga mamamayan at makakaiwas pa sa mga pakalat kalat na basura sa kalsada, tama ang kasabihan na me pera sa basura (This program will help the people and in cleaning the streets. This is true to the saying that there is money in garbage)," netizen Dema Ruby said of the city's "Trash to Cashback" program on the social media page of the city government.

Under the program, residents can trade their recyclable materials to "environmental points" (EPs) which can be exchanged for basic goods such as rice, eggs, vegetables, and other essential grocery items.

"Kapag lahat ng barangay ganito ang gagawin for sure next year di na problema ang plastik na basura (If all barangays will implement this, for sure next year, plastic wastes will no longer be a problem)," netizen Armida Suzuki said.

The program was first launched in Quezon City Hall in March and is part of the city's campaign to reduce plastic wastes that normally ends up clogging waterways.

"Maraming tao ang magugustuhan ang ganitong programa dahil ang kanilang basura tulad ng plastic ay maaaring maging pera (Many people will like this kind of program because their wastes like plastics can be turned into cash)," netizen Renz Antonio said.

Mayor Joy Belmonte said the program is set to be rolled out in different communities in QC next month.

"Together with our partner, Basic Environmental Systems and Technologies (BEST), we are bringing this project down to our barangays to make it more accessible and convenient to our residents who are willing to trade their recyclables into groceries. Hopefully, we can launch it by June in celebration of Environment Month," she said in a statement.

The first step of the program is on the barangay level where officials will identify a drop-off point in their own community.



Residents may bring their recyclables like metal, papers, PET bottles, single-use plastics (SUP) such as shampoo sachets, coffee packs, and even online shopping plastic packages.

At the drop-off points, residents may choose whether to keep the EPs for themselves or if not, they have the option to donate them to beneficiaries from various sectors who are identified by the village officials.

The barangay's chosen beneficiaries will then receive groceries or "incentive bags" from BEST in exchange for the accumulated EPs donated by the residents, said Andrea Villaroman, head of the city's Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department (EPWMD).

"The incentive bag will include rice, vegetables from our urban farms, and other necessities. We will ensure that these food packages and groceries will be given and distributed to those in need, especially the most vulnerable sectors of the city," Villaroman said.

Eventually, the city government plans to introduce the program to different establishments such as malls, hotels, and restaurants where BEST will directly pick up the collected recyclables from their drop-off points.

The accumulated EPs will be converted into a bXTRA cashback that may be used to redeem grocery items from the mobile redemption store or bXTRA outlet and bXTRA food deliveries.

QC residents can register to the bXTRA Website through bXTRA.com.ph to start earning EPs.

Aside from the existing ban on the use of plastic bags, the use of disposable materials for dine-in transactions will be prohibited in the city starting July 1. **(PNA)**



PH to spend P318B for 'green' projects

By [Ben Kritz](#) May 27, 2021



Chairman Carlos Dominguez 3rd

THE government will spend an estimated P318.6 billion this year and in 2022 on projects that will count toward its commitment under the 2015 Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 75 percent by 2030, according to data provided to The Manila Times by the Department of Finance (DoF).

The Aquino 3rd administration pledged a 70-percent reduction in GHG emissions as the Philippines' National Determined Contribution (NDC) to global efforts to limit the increase in atmospheric temperatures to 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial levels by the end of the century.

Last month, Finance Secretary and Climate Change Commission (CCC) Chairman Carlos Dominguez 3rd announced that the Philippines had revised its NDC upward to 75 percent in a letter to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat. Under the Paris Agreement, NDCs are updated every five years. The baseline for GHG reduction is the estimated total GHG emissions for a "business as usual" scenario - that is, if no action were taken - for the 2020 to 2030 period. For the Philippines, that figure is 3.3403 billion metric tons of CO₂ equivalent (3,340.3 MtCO₂e). So, if the NDC is to be met, the country will have to reduce GHG emissions to less than 830.1 MtCO₂e by 2030.

There is, however, a significant caveat to the Philippines' NDC: since the country contributes very little to overall global GHG emissions - only about 0.3 percent - and is considered among the countries most at risk from climatic changes, most of the NDC is "conditional," or only achievable with financial and other material support from developed economies. Under the current version of the Philippines' NDC, that amounts to 72.29 percent of the 75 percent emissions reduction target; the remaining 2.71 percent is "unconditional," or the amount the country must achieve on its own.

That small percentage still equates to a considerable sum in terms of government spending. Based on DoF data, there are five major initiatives that are considered "fully unconditional" policies and measures with respect to the Paris Agreement obligations. These include:

– The expansion of wastewater treatment facilities in response to the Supreme Court's writ of mandamus to rehabilitate Manila Bay. P1.5 billion was earmarked under the 2021 General Appropriations Act (GAA) for this purpose; the amount that will be provided under the 2022 national budget is still undetermined.

– The Public Utility Vehicle Modernization program, which has a budget of P591.8 million for 2021 and an estimated budget of P824.4 million for 2022.

– Bus Rapid Transit projects in Cebu and along Quezon Avenue in Manila. The Cebu project figured into the 2021 budget for a total of P511 million; the Quezon Avenue project, which will begin in earnest next year, will raise the budget encompassing both initiatives to an estimated P7.4 billion.



– Various rail projects under the Build, Build, Build umbrella, which accounted for P40.7 billion this year, and an estimated P266.98 billion next year.

– Ongoing work by the Department of Energy to assess and develop baseline indicators for energy efficiency, which is vital to being able to properly measure the environmental impact of other development projects. This has a budget of P45 million this year.

Funding 'gap'

With the Philippines putting forth a substantial effort to meet its "unconditional" NDC commitment, how well are the world's wealthier nations meeting funding needs for the "conditional" commitment to reduce GHG emissions?

Perhaps not surprisingly, that aspect of the broader effort is proving to be a bit problematic, although not for lack of commitment or unwillingness to make funds available on the part of developed nations. Numerous financing vehicles that developing and emerging economies can tap for climate mitigation and adaptation needs have been created. Two of the more familiar ones are the Green Climate Fund (GCF), which is part of the UNFCCC framework and is the main financial mechanism of the 2015 Paris Agreement; and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), an administratively independent fund created in 1991 prior to the 1992 Rio climate summit.

However, getting the funds to beneficiary countries is a slow process. In a sense, the issue is one of two sides speaking different languages, DoF Assistant Secretary Paola Alvarez explained in an interview with The Manila Times, and it is reflected in two issues that as of now make it more difficult to accurately assess the cost (in financial terms) and value (in terms of GHG emissions reduction) of climate mitigation and adaptation projects.

"The Paris Agreement, which provides for the commitment to greenhouse gas emissions, doesn't really talk about losses and damages, [or] quantifying losses and damages in relation to climate change," Alvarez said. "So that's the first issue. Second, the concept of finance within the framework of the Paris Agreement is not the same as the usual finance tools."

Finance from the government's perspective is fairly straightforward; the cost or close estimate of the cost of particular projects and initiatives is calculated and included in the country's GAA. From the perspective of the global funds, however, costs are necessarily more generalized since local conditions in individual countries lead to significant variations.

"If you go to a banker or a financier, they'll tell you the exact cost of an infrastructure project," Alvarez said. "But this is not how the UNFCCC computes. So that's where the gap lies. You have the funding facilities like the GCF, the GEF - you can apply for a project, for them to fund you, but it takes a lot of time" to work out the differences in financing definitions and approaches, she added.

To help resolve some of these difficulties, Alvarez explained, the Green Task Force of the CCC, with support from the UK Prosperity Fund, is developing what they call a Sustainable Finance Roadmap, which, among other things, will present a uniform taxonomy of climate-related initiatives and impacts. Work on this project is ongoing, with the final version intended to be presented at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties or COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland in early November.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/05/27/news/national/ph-to-spend-p318b-for-green-projects/1800763>



SMC power unit to plant 1.1 million trees in 8 provinces

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

MAY 27, 2021



Ramon S. Ang

SMC Global Power Holdings Corp., the power unit of San Miguel Corp. (SMC), is set to plant 1.1 million seedlings this year as part of its 7-year upland and mangrove forest rehabilitation initiative.

Dubbed “Project 747” the program spearheaded by SMC’s power unit was launched in 2019.

It so far planted a total 1,994,988 seedlings and propagules over 620 hectares of land as of December 2020.

The program brings together employee volunteers and partner farmer and fisherfolk associations, who work together to plant and take care of the forests.

“With close to two million trees planted in two years, this shows the dedication and commitment of our SMC Global Power’s employee volunteers, our partner organizations, and our government agencies, in rehabilitating forests and growing new ones in both upland and coastal areas,” SMC President Ramon S. Ang said in a statement.

Ang said last year, due to the pandemic restrictions, only 900,000 trees and mangroves were planted.

“This year, we intend to make up for it by planting 1.1 million trees, when the rainy season starts,” said Ang.

The environmental program serves as a carbon sequestration mechanism to help mitigate climate change. Essentially, forests capture carbon dioxide (CO₂) from large point sources such as power facilities, which trees and plants then convert into oxygen through the natural process of photosynthesis.

It involves the rehabilitation of 2,800 hectares of upland forests and 1,204 hectares of mangrove forests in Pangasinan, Zambales, Bataan, Bulacan, Quezon, Albay, Negros Occidental, and Davao Occidental.

Ang underscored the role played by local farmer groups and fisherfolk organizations that help identify the indigenous tree varieties to be planted in their respective areas. They are also crucial in the implementation of planting and livelihood initiatives, and ensuring the high survival rates of young trees.

“Our partner farmer and fishermen know their areas very well since they’ve been living and working there all their lives. So with the help of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources [DENR], we tap into their local knowledge on what plant species are endemic in their areas, and enlist their help in nurturing these trees to adulthood,” Ang said.



Survival rates of planted seedlings and mangrove propagules are at an average of 89 and 91 percent, respectively, he noted.

Tree varieties in the upland plantation are Narra, Molave, White Lauan, Palosapis, Agoho, Batino, Igang, and Malabayabas while mangrove varieties planted include Bakawan Babae, Bakawan Lalaki, Bungalon, and Api-Api.

The tree planting component is only one part of the program. It also aims to address the social and economic needs of SMC's community partners and leverage on their capacity for livelihood development and environmental stewardship, Ang said.



PCOO chief, Manila administrator join PHL-Australia Day with tree planting

BY BUSINESSMIRROR MAY 27, 2021



PCOO Secretary Martin M. Andanar (from left), Australia Alumni Association's President Ret. Col. Ariel Querubin (Ret.), Alelee Andanar, Ambassador Steven J. Robinson AO, and Manila City Administrator Felix Espiritu

AMBASSADOR Steven J. Robinson AO of Australia joined Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Martin M. Andanar and Manila City Administrator Felix D. Espiritu for a tree-planting activity at the Arroceros Forest Park to mark Philippines-Australia Friendship Day on May 22.

The Friendship Tree caravan is an initiative of the Australia Global Alumni network to plant 750 trees across the country, in celebration of 75 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

"I am very pleased to be back here at Arroceros Forest Park with [Secretary Andanar—who is our] outstanding Australia Global Alumni—and with...Administrator Espiritu," said Robinson. "I visited this park with...Mayor [Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso] in 2019 to hear about the city's plans for its maintenance and the development of the adjacent area."

He added, "Australia offers our support to the mayor and his plans for the sustainable use and conservation of the forest park."

The envoy commented that, much like the Arroceros Forest Park that has seen changes since the 16th Century, the Philippine-Australian relationship has also evolved and grown over time: "Our friendship with the Philippines stands tall and firm—deeply rooted in history and on our shared values. Just like the trees here in what is now a permanent forest park, I am certain...the Philippine-Australian relationship will further flourish and mature."

"It is fitting we hold our friendship day activity...in Manila. The embassy's ties to the city are rooted in history: the first Australian Consulate-General was opened at the Manila Hotel on May 22, 1946—75 years ago..." Robinson relayed. "[Its] chancery was...in Binondo for 20 years: First at the Plaza Cervantes, then later at the iconic El Hogar Filipino Building, and Ayala Building on Juan Luna Street."

The 2.2-hectare Arroceros Forest Park was declared a permanent forest park in March 2020 by the City of Manila. It is home to about 3,000 species of trees, plants and birds.

Embassy officials, alongside prominent Australia-educated Filipinos, including Col. Ariel Querubin (Ret.) and Education Department Superintendent Dr. Magdalena Lim, planted 100 endemic seedlings at the park.

Get updates on the anniversary by visiting mateshipandbayanihan.com and following @AusAmbPH on Twitter, as well as the Australian Embassy in the Philippines on Facebook and Instagram.

Image courtesy of BILLTIYU

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2021/05/27/smc-power-unit-to-plant-1-1-million-trees-in-8-provinces/>



General Motors exec: Warming climate calls for shift to electric vehicles

By: [Jhesset O. Enano](#) - Reporter / [@JhessetEnanoINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 06:21 PM May 26, 2021



The Online Electric Vehicle (OLEV), towing three carriages, runs along a blue line under which power strips are buried for recharging, at an amusement park in Seoul. General Motors says EVs are crucial in light of the climate crisis. AFP PHOTO

MANILA, Philippines – The road to electric vehicles (EVs) will not happen overnight, but it is a necessary direction for the environment in light of the climate crisis, according to the executive of one of the world's largest automakers.

General Motors' Tom Cooney, vice president of global public policy, said the company is working with governments worldwide, including the Philippines and Southeast Asia, to shift toward electric-powered vehicles, seen as a cheaper, cleaner alternative to gas-guzzling cars.

"Change can be hard, transformation can be hard, but people do change," he told foreign journalists in a briefing organized by the Foreign Press Centers of the US Department of State last week.

"This change is coming and it's for the environment. This is necessary for climate change," he added.

Early this year, General Motors shocked the auto industry by announcing it would only sell EVs by 2035, making a dramatic end to the gasoline and diesel-powered cars, trucks and SUVs, roaring vehicles that made GM famous around the world.

The announcement came a day after US President Joe Biden signed a series of executive orders on climate action, including a goal of installing 500,000 new electric vehicle charging stations by 2030.

Nissan study

In a September 2020 Nissan study, respondents in six Southeast Asian markets were highly enthusiastic about owning an electric vehicle, with Indonesians, Filipinos and Thais showing the highest interest levels. In the next three years, 45 percent of Filipino respondents intend to buy an electric vehicle.

Although, overall, 48 percent of respondents said that they feared running out of power before they could reach a charging station, while 77 percent of respondents said they considered tax benefits and 75 percent said they looked at charging infrastructure in residential buildings as incentives for switching to electric vehicles.

By 2025, Cooney said GM plans to launch 30 fully electric models worldwide, investing \$27 billion.



“We have an aspiration to be carbon-neutral by 2040. That means our fleet and also our operations and our facilities [will be carbon-neutral],” he said.

No panacea

Electric vehicles have been touted as one way to combat the climate crisis, especially since they reduce emissions from gas and diesel vehicles.

However, it won’t completely solve the transportation sector’s huge emissions. Electric cars would not emit any emissions directly but would still run on electricity produced by coal and fossil fuels in many parts of the world.

“In countries with coal-intensive electricity generation, the benefits of EVs are smaller,” according to an analysis by UK-based Carbon Brief in 2019. “However, as countries decarbonize electricity generation to meet their climate targets, driving emissions will fall for existing EVs and manufacturing emissions will fall for new EVs.”

According to government data, vehicles are responsible for most of the country’s emissions and poor air quality, especially in urban areas.

Challenges come with the shift. The public has concerns about the high costs of electric cars and range anxiety—fear that the car will run out of power before reaching its destination—or so many countries around the world do not yet have adequate infrastructure that enables these vehicles to find mainstream acceptance, such as charging stations.

“We’re working with governments around the world... in association with other automakers to help build that environment out there and increase consumer confidence to adopt an EV,” said Cooney.

It’s all about government incentives, consumer incentives and infrastructure investments, he said.

“General Motors itself is making huge investments in EV charging infrastructure with various private sector partners, but that public-sector support is essential as well,” he added.
abc



6 Antique LGUs open residual containment areas

By Annabel Consuelo Petinglay **May 26, 2021, 7:19 pm**



DUMPSITE CLOSED. The San Jose de Buenavista open dumpsite in Barangay Pantao was shut down in adherence to the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000. Six other towns of Antique closed their dumpsites and established residual containment areas, the Antique Provincial Environment Management Unit said on Wednesday (May 26, 2021). *(Photo courtesy of San Jose de Buenavista LGU)*

SAN JOSE DE BUENAVISTA, Antique -Six municipalities of Antique have established residual containment areas (RCAs) following the closure of their open dumpsites in March this year.

Josephine Maguad, chief of the Antique Provincial Environment Management Unit (PEMU), in an interview on Wednesday, said the municipalities of Anini-y, Tobias Fornier, Barbaza, San Jose de Buenavista, Culasi, Tibiao, and Pandan voluntarily closed their open dumpsites before the March 31 deadline.

She said that except for this municipality, which received assistance from the Office of Antique Rep. Loren Legarda for the establishment of its sanitary landfill, the other municipalities have temporarily resorted to having RCAs.

“It would be good if the Antique provincial government could assist them in establishing their sanitary landfill,” she said.

Maguad added the Antique provincial board will conduct a consultative meeting anytime soon so they could come up with a plan for a clustered sanitary landfill.

In a separate interview, Pandan Mayor Plaridel Sanchez VI said their open dumpsite in Barangay Buhang was closed last February 15 and they established the RCA in the same barangay while working out to establish a sanitary landfill in Barangay Mag-aba.

“The RCA is just a temporary containment area where we put our residual wastes until such time we could establish a sanitary landfill,” he said.

The Antique Provincial Environment Management Unit (PEMU) is yet to inspect the proposed area if it is suitable for the sanitary landfill.

The dumpsites were shut down in adherence to Republic Act (RA) 9003, otherwise known as the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 which provides for an ecological solid waste management program, creating necessary institutional mechanisms and incentives, among others. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1141599>



Plastics no-no

posted May 26, 2021 at 11:50 pm

by [Danny Pata](#)



Members of the Earth Island Institute Philippines hand out recyclable eco-bags to community pantry beneficiaries in exchange for their usual plastic bags during the launching of the #WalangPlastikan campaign which aims to lessen the use of single-use plastics in community pantries during this time of the pandemic on Wednesday, May 26, 2021, in Matimyas Street, Sampaloc Manila.



Programa sa paglaban sa climate change inilunsad ng Santo Papa

By **Bombo Jovino Galang** - May 26, 2021 | 5:16 AM

Inilunsad ni Pope Francis ang isang plataporma para maalagaan ang kapaligiran.

Tinawag ito na Laudato Si Action Platform kung saan mula ang pangalan sa 2015 encyclical para sa sa pagprotekta sa kapaligiran, paglaban sa global warming at ilayo ang mga mahihirap sa epekto ng climate change.

Sinabi ni Cardinal Peter Turkson ang namumuno sa development office ng Vatican, na isa itong ipapakilala ng Santo Papa sa pagdalo nito sa United Nation's Climate Change Conference (COP26) sa buwan ng Nobyembre na gaganapin sa Glasgow, Scotland.

Ayon naman sa Santo Papa na layon nito na sa loob ng pitong taon ay makikita na ng komunidad ang kahalagahan ng pagkakaroon ng tinatawag aniya na "Spirit of integral ecology".

Pinuna din nito ang pagkakaroon ng maling kaugalian ng isang tao na siyang lubos na sumisira sa kaisipan at maging sa kalikasan.

Nakatuon aniya ito sa mga grupo kabilang ang pamilya, mga parishes at diocese, schools and universities, hospitals at ilang mga health care facilities, negosyo, lay Catholic organizations at mga orders of priest and nuns.

Tutulungan aniya ng Vatican Development office ang mga grupo.



Epson joins National Geographic climate change fight

Epson has joined forces with National Geographic to promote the protection of the world's permafrost – the frozen ground beneath the polar regions of the earth – in its newly launched “Turn Down the Heat” campaign.

The campaign comes as scientists predict the world's permafrost will thaw entirely by 2100, drastically changing ecologies, raising global sea levels, and releasing over 950 billion tonnes of methane into the atmosphere. Together, Epson and National Geographic aim to raise awareness of how people can reduce their own impact of global warming, from homes to offices and other businesses.

“Turn Down the Heat” is fronted by National Geographic Explorer, Dr. Katey Walter Anthony, who oversees arctic observatories in Alaska and Russia to monitor the long-lasting impact of climate change. Her pioneering research into the protection of permafrost is featured in a series of videos, infographics and online content in collaboration with Epson and National Geographic and can be found at <http://epson.com.ph/heat-free>.

27 MAY 2021, THURSDAY



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COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



OCTA suggests extended GCQ in NCR till June

posted May 27, 2021 at 01:20 am by [Willie Casas and Macon Ramos-Araneta](#)

The independent OCTA Research Group on Wednesday has recommended retaining in June the general community quarantine (GCQ) status of the National Capital Region (NCR) and four neighboring provinces included in the NCR Plus bubble.

OCTA Research fellows Prof. Guido David and Fr. Nicanor Austriaco said that while cases in NCR Plus -- Metro Manila, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal -- had decreased, "the numbers are still high."

"While we believe that we can relax restrictions, we think that we should try to retain the GCQ at this time because the (COVID-19) cases are still significant," David said in an online forum. NCR Plus is currently under "GCQ with heightened restrictions" until the end of May. Some of the "heightened restrictions" could be relaxed to allow more businesses to operate at a higher capacity, said David.

OCTA said it was too early to loosen restrictions in NCR Plus to modified GCQ, the least stringent lockdown classification.

"In fact, back in February, we were at 400 cases [in Metro Manila] per day but we were still in GCQ, so it doesn't seem to be the time to relax to MGCQ at this time. It also gives us the wrong messaging to the people," David said.

"We want to avoid situations where people become very complacent because they feel that the situation has improved significantly, that there are no more cases, when in fact there are still cases," David said.

Metro Manila averaged 1,099 new COVID-19 cases daily over the past week, 80 percent lower than during the peak of the surge in infections in April, said OCTA.

"That is about 80 percent lower than the average during the peak of the surge. The single-day peak was 8,000 but the daily average peak was 5,550, so this is a significant improvement," David said.

David also said NCR's reproduction number, referring to the number of people that each COVID-19 case can infect, decreased to 0.53.

Its positivity rate has gone down to 10 percent from a high of 25 percent in April, he said.

New cases

The Philippines logged on Wednesday 5,310 new cases of coronavirus disease 2019, bringing the total to 1,193,976, as four laboratories were not able to submit their data on time, the Department of Health said.

Based on data in the last 14 days, the four non-reporting labs contribute, on average, 1.1 percent of samples tested and 1.7 percent of positive individuals, the DOH said.

The DOH also reported 150 new fatalities, bringing the death toll to 20,169. It also listed 7,408 newly-recovered patients, bringing the total recoveries to 1,127,770.

The department also said 46,037 cases were active, of which 92.5 percent were mild, 2.1 percent were asymptomatic, 1.7 percent were critical, 2.2 percent were severe, and 1.51 percent were moderate.



NCR's cases

David also said the National Capital Region's reproduction number, that refers to the number of persons that each COVID-19 case can infect, decreased to 0.53 while its positivity rate has gone down to 10 percent from a high of 25 percent in April.

"Obviously, we want to sustain this. Then again, we should remind everyone that even though we have made significant improvements, the NCR will always be at risk of another surge... that's why the focus right now is on vaccinations," David said.

The surge in COVID cases prompted the national government to put NCR, as well as the adjacent provinces of Laguna, Cavite, Rizal and Bulacan, under the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) in late March.

The classification was later on downgraded to modified ECQ, then to the current general community quarantine (GCQ) "with heightened restrictions."

Surge due to variants

While the National Capital Region is seeing a downtrend of COVID-19 cases at 80 percent than the peak of the surge, the OCTA Research Group warned it remained at risk of another surge due to variants of the virus.

The different variants of the COVID-19 could trigger another increase in coronavirus cases if we let our guard down, Guido said.

"The variants are coming... complacency may lead to another surge at this point in time.

While not vaccinated fully, that will happen. So, our focus now is on the vaccine," related Guido during a Zoom media briefing.

However, David said they did not know when the spike in coronavirus cases would happen. David also reported Quezon City, Zamboanga, Manila, Pasig, and Davao City logged the highest number of new COVID-19 cases over the past week.

Despite this, he said most cities posted a negative case growth rate, except for Davao City whose infections grew by 49 percent.

Quezon City and Zamboanga also posted high hospital occupancy rates of 62 percent and 70 percent, respectively.



A man sits amid burning pyres of victims who lost their lives due to the COVID-19 coronavirus at a cremation ground in New Delhi on April 26, 2021.

AFP/Money Sharma

Indian COVID-19 variant found in at least 53 territories — WHO

[Robin Millard](#) (Agence France-Presse) - May 26, 2021 - 11:22am

GENEVA, Switzerland — The coronavirus variant first detected in India has now been officially recorded in 53 territories, a World Health Organization report showed Wednesday.

Additionally, the WHO has received information from unofficial sources that the B.1.617 variant has been found in seven other territories, figures in the UN health agency's weekly epidemiological update showed, taking the total to 60.

The report said B.1.617 had shown increased transmissibility, while disease severity and risk of infection were under investigation.

Globally over the past week, the number of new cases and deaths continued to decrease, with around 4.1 million new cases and 84,000 new deaths reported -- a 14 percent and two percent decrease respectively compared to the previous week.

The WHO's European region reported the largest decline in new cases and deaths in the past seven days, followed by the southeast Asia region.

The numbers of cases reported by the Americas, Eastern Mediterranean, Africa, and the Western Pacific region were similar to those reported in the previous week.

"Despite a declining global trend over the past four weeks, incidence of Covid-19 cases and deaths remain high, and substantial increases have been observed in many countries throughout the world," the document said.

The highest numbers of new cases in the past seven days were reported from India (1,846,055 -- down 23 percent); Brazil (451,424 -- up three percent); Argentina (213,046 -- up 41 percent), the United States (188,410 -- down 20 percent), and Colombia (107,590 -- down seven percent).

Variant detection

The update gave information on the four mutations classed as variants of concern: those first reported in Britain (B.1.1.7), South Africa (B.1.351), Brazil (P.1) and India (B.1.617).

When counting up the total number of territories reporting each variant, the WHO added together those from which it had official and unofficial information.



B.1.1.7 has now been reported in 149 territories; B.1.351 in 102 territories and P.1 in 59 territories.

The WHO split up figures for the B.1.617 variant into three lineages (B.1.617.1, B.1.617.2 and B.1.617.3).

The first has been reported in a total of 41 territories, the second in 54 and the third in six: Britain, Canada, Germany, India, Russia and the United States.

Together, lineages of the B.1.617 variant were officially recorded in 53 territories and unofficially in another seven.

The update also listed six variants of interest that are being monitored.

One was first discovered in multiple countries, two of them were first found in the United States, while the three others were first discovered in Brazil, the Philippines and France.

"Virus evolution is expected, and the more SARS-CoV-2 circulates, the more opportunities it has to evolve," the report said.

"Reducing transmission through established and proven disease-control methods... are crucial aspects of the global strategy to reduce the occurrence of mutations that have negative public health implications."



7,000 PATAY, LIBO-LIBO TANGGAL-MATA SA BLACK FUNGUS SA INDIA SA COVID-19



May 26, 2021 @ 1:24 PM 17 hours ago

HINDI natin titigilang pag-ukulan ng pansin ang pandemyang dulot ng coronavirus disease 2019 o COVID-19.

Ito na kasi ang nagdidikta ng ating buhay bilang indibidwal at bilang bansa.

Hangga't hindi tayo nagtatagumpay na labanan ito, mananatili tayo sa hindi magandang kalagayan gaya ng pagkakasakit at pagkamatay, kahirapan sa mga mamamayan at pamahalaan at iba pa.

Isa sa mga dapat na bigyan ng pansin ang mga pinagmumulan ng pandemya o dagdag ng mga ito upang lahat ay makapag-ingat at makagawa rin tayo ng mga karampatang aksyon. Kahit papaano may good news sa giyera natin sa pandemya pangunahin ang pagbaba ng mga kaso sa Metro Manila at mga lalawigang nakapaligid dito gaya ng Rizal, Laguna, Cavite at Bulacan.

Pero hindi tayo dapat magpakampante, mga Bro, kundi laging mapagbantay at mag-ingat.

INDIA VARIANT PUMAPATAY NA

May patay nang Pinoy kaugnay ng pagpasok ng Indian variant sa mahal kong Pinas. Namatay ang taga-Parañaque na crew o seaman ng MV Athena Bridge na nakadaong sa Manila Bay sa isang ospital sa Metro Manila.

May naiulat na ring dalawang namatay sa India, kabilang na ang isang Philippine Embassy staff natin doon.

Magkagayunman, hindi malinaw kung COVID-19 India variant ang dahilan ng pagkasawi ng mga namatay sa India bagama't may posibilidad ito.

Itong mga India variant, gaya ng mga tinatawag na double mutant (ang ikinamatay ng seaman), triple mutant at AP variant ay mababagsik at higit na nakamamatay kaysa sa orig na virus ng COVID-19 at napatunayan na mismo sa pagkamatay ng nasabing seaman.

Natatagpuan ding mas mahina ang epekto ng mga bakunang laban sa pandemya sa mga variant na ito.

Kaya naman, mahalagang magbantay at lumaban nang mahigpit laban sa kabuuang COVID-19 at mga variant nito upang maligtas tayo mula sa mga ito.



Ukol sa India variants na may halong mga United Kingdom variant, Brazil variant at South Africa variant, mga Bro, ginagawa na ng gobyerno ang lahat para malabanan at mapigilan ang pagpasok ng mga ito sa Pinas.

Mahigpit na pinagbawalan ang biyaheng India-Pilipinas, sa eroplano man o sa barko. Ano-ano naman ang ginagawa nating mga mamamayan?

NAKAMAMATAY NA BLACK FUNGUS

May mahigit nang 9,000 ang inaatake ng black fungus na kumakambal sa COVID-19 sa India. Kaugnay nito, 7,000 na sa mahigit 9,000 biktima ang nasawi, ayon kay AIIMS Director Dr. Guleria.

Ang masaklap, tinatangalan sila ng isa o dalawang mata para maligtas sa kamatayan dahil ang mata ang isa sa mga inaatake ng black fungus.

Pero marami pa rin ang namamatay kahit natanggalan na sila ng mata.

Galing ang black fungus sa mga inaamag na pagkaing gulay, prutas, tinapay, dumi ng mga hayop at iba pa.

Pumapasok sa katawan ng tao ang fungus sa ilong, bunganga at maging sa mga sugat natin sa balat hanggang sa hahantong ang mga ito sa utak, baga at sinus o ilalim ng ilong.

Sinasabing kalahati ng bilang o 50 porsyento ng mga biktima ang namamatay rito at kung hindi makontrol ang sakit na ito, aabot sa 94% ang mamatay.

Kaya naman nagdeklara na ang pamahalaang India ng epidemya ng black fungus dahil natatagpuan na ito sa malawak ng bahagi nito.

Ang black fungus na ito ay kumakapit pa sa kasalukuyang may COVID-19 o kaya nasa dalawang linggo makaraang gumaling ang biktima ng COVID-19.

PABALIK-BALIK NA FACE MASK, STEROID AT DIABETES

Ayon sa mga nag-aaral sa mga buhay na biktima at nag-aawtopsy sa mga namamatay sa COVID-19, konektado umano ang pagdami ng black fungus sa paggamit ng face mask at steroid.

Paliwanag nila, nakukuha ang black fungus sa pabalik-balik na paggamit ng face mask nang hindi muna nililinis.

O babala ito sa mga nagtitipid at maling paggamit ng face mask.

Lumalabas ding matindi ang pag-atake ng black fungus sa mga biktima ng COVID-19 dahil sa hindi tamang paggamit sa mga ito ng steroid.

Ginagamit ang steroid bilang panlaban sa sakit ng katawan, asthma o problema sa balat na pawang karamdaman ng mga may COVID-19.

Pero lalong mabagsik ang black fungus kung may halong diabetes ang may COVID-19. Habang mas mataas ang diabetes ng may COVID-19, lalong nagpaparami at nagpipiyesta ang black fungus.

MAGBANTAY, MAG-INGAT SA BLACK FUNGUS

Walang nakaaalam kung kailan makapapasok ang black fungus sa Pinas.



Ang totoo umano, kahit saan, kahit sa Pilipinas, may black fungus ngunit ang India ang laging may pinakamalaking problema rito.

At ang masaklap, humahalo ang black fungus sa virus sa COVID-19 para mangmasaker ng libo-libong tao, araw-araw.

At maiimadyin ba natin kung tayo'y bulag sa pagkakatanggal ng ating mga mata dahil sa black fungus na ito?

Magsama-sama po lahat na lumaban at magbantay laban sa black fungus con COVID-19.

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