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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



LLDA Board endorses P609-billion BOO scheme for rehab of Laguna de Bay

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)
November 27, 2020



Fisherman traverse one of the narrow tributaries of the heavily silted Laguna de Bay.

The Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) has endorsed an unsolicited proposal from a private consortium to rehabilitate and develop Laguna de Bay, the country's largest lake and biggest aquaculture hub.

In a news statement, LLDA General Manager Jaime "Joey" Medina disclosed that the agency's Board of Directors has approved the proposed P609-billion Laguna Lake Development and Rehabilitation Project "after months of review and evaluation."

The unsolicited proposal will be undertaken through a Build-Own-Operate (BOO) scheme, which means that the proponent will finance, construct, operate, maintain and own facility and can collect fees and charges to recover their investment.

The government, on the other hand, will provide the authorization and assistance in securing the BOO contract and has the option to buy the output, or service provided by the operator.

The consortium is led by Taguig Lake City Development Corp. (TLCDC), with two big foreign companies as partners that have the experience, expertise and track record in undertaking such a project.

Medina said the endorsement comes on the heels of successive strong tropical cyclones, the latest of which is Typhoon Ulysses that triggered massive flooding in Metro Manila, Rizal province and other areas.

"This is a welcome opportunity as this will truly aid in addressing the Laguna Lake's continual problems in siltation, industrial pollution, sedimentation, and lakeshore flooding," Medina said.

Medina said the project proponent has been issued "original proponent status," or OPS, and the project is now under review by the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda), through its Public-Private Partnership Center.

The LLDA endorsement will be eventually evaluated by Neda's Investment Coordination Committee to determine the reasonable rate of return and other parameters for negotiation.

The Neda Board would either approve, or deny, the proposal as the case may be.



The consortium, after being granted the OPS, now has the authority to match better offers submitted by other rivals when a Swiss challenge is undertaken for the project, the LLDA chief said.

The rehabilitation project will run in a span of five years to 10 years. It includes the dredging of approximately 800 million cubic meters of silt and mud.

It also involves an assistance program to affected fisherfolk and other stakeholders, as well as silt transfer and development of pre-identified catchment area to be done in phases as the dredging process progresses.

The said project also includes soil treatment, ground improvement and development, construction of a water treatment facility and the introduction of a soil improvement technology called the high vacuum densification method (HVDM).

Sometime in December 2019, the LLDA sent a briefer, through a memorandum to the Office of the President, on the urgent need to rehabilitate the waters of Laguna Lake to sustain and enhance aquatic life therein; the need to increase and improve the holding capacity and water quality of the Laguna Lake in order to viably and effectively access the lake as a domestic water source; and the potential of Laguna Lake and its outlying areas to significantly enhance water quality and boost socio-economic growth in the region and in the country.

The memorandum also stated the request of LLDA to seek President Duterte's favorable endorsement and approval of the project and its project objectives for purposes of urgent and speedy implementation.

The Laguna de Bay is the largest lake in the Philippines, with around 100 rivers and streams draining into it, making it prone to siltation and flooding. The Napindan Channel, through the Pasig River, drains the lake waters to Manila Bay.

During the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses, the Laguna Lake overflowed causing severe flooding and affecting thousands of residents in several municipalities and cities in Laguna, such as Famy, Sta Cruz, Calamba, and San Pedro.

Due to strong winds and currents, fish pens in Laguna de Bay were wiped out and unleashed some 2.2 million kilograms of *bangus*, or milkfish, estimated to cost P115 million in losses to fish operators of Laguna during Typhoon Rolly.

Image credits: [Nonie Reyes](#)

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/11/27/llda-board-endorses-p609-billion-boo-scheme-for-rehab-of-laguna-de-bay-2/>



P609B Laguna Lake rehab backed

By [Jed Macapagal](#) - November 27, 2020



Urgent. The LLDA has noted the need to immediately address the siltation, industrial pollution, sedimentation and lake-shore flooding of Laguna Lake.

The Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) is supporting an unsolicited proposal of a private consortium to rehabilitate and develop Laguna de Bay to address problems in siltation, industrial pollution, sedimentation and lakeshore flooding.

Jaime Medina, LLDA general manager, said the agency's board of directors has endorsed to the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) this week the proposed P609-billion project "after months of review and evaluation."

Last year, LLDA sent a memorandum to the Office of the President stressing the urgency of rehabilitating the waters of Laguna Lake to sustain and enhance aquatic life and turning it to an effective domestic water source.

Medina said the project is being reviewed by the NEDA to determine the reasonable rate of return and other parameters for negotiation.

He said the board has determined the proponent, led by Taguig Lake City Development Corp. with two foreign companies as partners, has the experience, expertise and track record in undertaking the project.

Medina said the proponent has obtained original proponent status which gives it authority to match better offers submitted by rivals when a Swiss challenge is undertaken.

The project will be undertaken through a build-own-operate scheme.

The project will be developed in five to 10 years and will involve the dredging of approximately 800 million cubic meters of silt and mud.

The proponent also offered to give assistance to affected fisherfolk and other stakeholders.

Other activities include the transfer and development of pre-identified catchment area, soil treatment, ground improvement and development and construction of a water treatment facility.

Medina added that the proponent will finance, construct, operate, maintain and own facility and can collect fees and charges to recover investment while the government will provide the authorization and assistance in securing the contract.

The government has the option to buy the output or service provided by the operator.

The Laguna de Bay is the largest lake in the Philippines, with around 100 rivers and streams draining into it.

Source: https://malaya.com.ph/index.php/news_business/p609b-laguna-lake-rehab-backed/



LLDA SUSUPORTA SA REHABILITASYON AT PAGPAPAUNLAD SA LAGUNA DE BAY



November 27, 2020 @ 12:20 AM 7 hours ago

SUPORTADO ng Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), ang ahensyang nasasakupan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), ang plano mula sa private consortium na magkaroon ng rehabilitasyon at pagpapaunlad sa Laguna de Bay.

Ayon kay LLDA General Manager Jaime "Joey" Medina, ang Board of Directors ng ahensya ay nag-endorso para sa P609-billion Laguna Lake Development and Rehabilitation Project, matapos ang ilang buwang pag-aaral at pagsusuri.

Ang endorsement na ito ay matapos ang magkakasunod na malakas na bagyo at ang pinakahuli ay ang bagyong Ulysses na naging dahilan ng matinding pagbaha sa Metro Manila, Rizal province at ipa pang lugar.

"This is a welcome opportunity as this will truly aid in addressing the Laguna Lake's continual problems in siltation, industrial pollution, sedimentation, and lakeshore flooding," saad ni Medina.

Sinabi pa ni Medina na ang project proponent ay nakapaglabas na ng "original proponent status" o OPS at ang proyekto ay kasalukuyan nang pinag-aaralan ng National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) sa pamamagitan ng kanilang Public-Private Partnership Center.

Ang endorsement ng LLDA ay pag-aaralan ng Investment Coordination Committee ng NEDA upang matukoy kung makatwiran ang mga nilalaman ng negosasyon.

Ayon pa kay Medina, ang NEDA board ay maaaring aprubahan o balewain ang mungkahi.

Ayon kay Medina, "after being granted the OPS, the consortium now has the authority to match better offers submitted by other rivals when a Swiss challenge is undertaken for the project."

Ang proyektong rehabilitasyon ay gagawin sa loob ng lima hanggang sampung taon, kabilang na dito ang dredging sa tinatayang 800 million cubic meter ng dumi at burak.

Bukod dito, tutulungan din ang mga apektadong mangingisda at iba pang stakeholders maging ang paglipat sa mga makukuhang dumi at pagsasaayos ng matutukoy na "catchment area" na gagawin sa magkakahiwalay na bahagi habang isinasagawa ang paghuhukay.



Kabilang sa proyektong ito ang: "soil treatment, ground improvement and development, construction of a water treatment facility and the introduction of a soil improvement technology" na tinatawag na High Vacuum Densification Method (HVDM).

Ang "unsolicited proposal" na ito ay nakapaloob sa Build-Own-Operate scheme, na nangangahulugan na ang "proponent" ang bahala sa pag "finance, construct, operate, maintain and own facility" at maaari din silang mangolekta at maningil upang mabawi nila ang kanilang pinuhunan.

Sa kabilang dako, ang gobyerno naman ang bahala magbigay ng authorization at assistance sa pagkuha ng BOO contract at may opsiyon din ito na bilhin ang output o serbisyo ng ipagkakaloob ng operator.

Ang consortium ay pangungunahan ng Taguig Lake City Development Corporation (TLCDC), na mayroong dalawang malaking kasosyong foreign companies na may karanasan, kadalubhasaan at may maayos na track record sa paggawa ng katulad na proyekto.

Sa iba pang kaganapan, noong Disyembre 2019, ang LLDA ay nagpadala ng "briefer" sa pamamagitan ng Memorandum sa Office of the President tungkol sa: (1) the urgent need to rehabilitate the waters of Laguna Lake in order to sustain and enhance aquatic life therein; (2) the critical need to increase and improve the holding capacity and water quality of the Laguna Lake in order to viably and effectively access the lake as a domestic water source, and (3) the real potential of Laguna Lake and its outlying areas to significantly enhance water quality and boost socio-economic growth in the region and in the country.

Nakasaad din sa memorandum ang hiling ng LLDA kay Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte na bigyan ng favorable endorsement and approval ang Project at ang Project objectives para sa mabilis na implementasyon nito.

Ang Laguna de Bay ay ang pinakamalaking lawa sa Pilipinas, kung saan halos 100 ilog at batis ang dumadaloy patungo dito kaya't ito ay prone to flooding. Ang Napindan Channel na dumadaan naman sa Pasig River ay dumadaloy naman sa Manila Bay.

Sa pananalasa ng bagyong Ulysses ay umapaw ang Laguna Lake na naging dahilan ng matinding pagbaha at nakaapekto sa libong residente sa iba't ibang munisipalidad at lungsod sa Laguna at ilan sa mga ito ang Famy, Sta. Cruz, Calamba at San Pedro.

Dahil din sa malakas na hangin ay nasira ang mga fish pen sa Laguna de Bay at nakawala ang tinatayang 2.2 million kilogram ng bangus na aabot sa halagang P115 million pagkalugi sa mga fish operators sa Laguna sa kasagsagan ng bagyong Rolly.



MVP Group takes lead

Published 3 hours ago on November 27, 2020 04:00 AM

By **TDT** @tribunephl



While the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has forced most businesses to deprioritize non-essential sectors, the MVP Group of Companies has maintained its thrust for social responsibility, particularly with efforts related to environmental protection and sustainability.

MVP Group chair Manuel V. Pangilinan says that despite the urgency of addressing concerns related to COVID-19, environmental protection must never take a back seat as climate change and other environmental concerns pose even greater dangers to human life.

“Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has already been facing daunting challenges on how to protect our environment and promote more equitable social development.

If we don’t act now or even pause what we have already started, we might reach a point where we are no longer able to protect ourselves from the irreversible effects of environmental destruction,” said Pangilinan.

“As a conglomerate that champions innovation and social responsibility in all our fields of business, we recognize the significance of our role in making a positive impact and contribute to the sustainable development of our country, people, and planet,” he added.

On 6 November 2020, PLDT and Smart Communications Inc.

have formally announced their partnership with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources through the DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau and DENR Caraga 13 Regional Office for the conservation of carbon-rich peatlands in the Caraga Region to help combat climate change.

This project focuses on the protection, conservation, and restoration of the Caimpugan Peatland, located within the Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary in Agusan del Sur.

The Caimpugan Peatland is the only recorded remaining intact peat swamp forest — the largest of its kind — in the Philippines.

At 5,000 hectares, this peatland stores an estimated 22.9 million tons of carbon, which, when released, is certainly a dangerous amount that can harm vegetation, wildlife, and human life surrounding the area due to destruction of the ecosystem.



PLDT-Smart and DENR will work hand-in-hand to protect and conserve the Caimpugan peatlands, while raising public awareness on the importance of peatlands through marketing campaigns, as well as creating sustainable-peatland enterprises to provide jobs and livelihood to people living in the surrounding communities.

Also taking part in the MVP Group's massive efforts for environmental protection is water utilities and services provider Maynilad Water Services Inc.

Its annual Plant For Life program, which aims to reforest the Ipo Watershed and other watersheds within the West Zone, has pledged to plant 34,000 trees and mangroves this year.

The project, which started in 2007, has planted nearly 800,000 trees covering about 341 hectares of the Ipo Watershed alone.

Plant For Life hopes to mitigate the dangerous effects of climate change to human life by preventing disasters such as land erosion and flooding through tree-planting, all while maintaining the healthy quality of water collected in the dams that supply most of Metro Manila.

Meanwhile, other companies within the MVP Group are also working on different projects to protect the environment.

Metro Pacific Investments Foundation's (MPIF) Bayan Tanim! Project aims to help disadvantaged communities recover from the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic by growing household crops from their backyard.

The program provides communities and displaced workers with basic cultivation essentials crates from the "Move Food Initiative" of Agrea Agriculture System International Inc., which contains seeds, seedlings, fertilizer, soilless potting mix, as well as fresh vegetables directly sourced from local farmers from the "Plant, Plant, Plant" campaign of the Department of Agriculture.

In partnership with First Pacific Company Ltd., MPIF has turned over the first 100 Bayan Tanim! plant crates to the local government of Barangay 128 Smokey Mountain in Tondo, Manila, last September.

The planting crates will help expand the range of crops grown in their local community garden, a collective effort of their residents to build a sustainable source of food.



APPEAL TO MALACAÑANG

Rizal gov't seeks 'general moratorium' on mining

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:06 AM November 27, 2020

The Rizal provincial government appealed to Malacañang to order a “general moratorium” on land development and locational clearances, including mining and quarrying, across the province that was hit hard by Typhoon “Ulysses” (international name: Vamco) early this month.

In a letter to President Rodrigo Duterte on Nov. 18, Gov. Rebecca Ynares said it was “so unfortunate that to date, we have not been informed of [any] action taken” by the national government on the province’s long-standing call.

Ynares’ letter came with the attachment of the provincial government’s earlier letter to former President Benigno Aquino III also calling for a “general moratorium or suspension” of mining and quarry permits, whether issued by the local government or the Mines and Geosciences Bureau within the Laguna de Bay region.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in August 2018, suspended quarry permits following the flood left by the “habagat” (southwest monsoon) but lifted the ban only about two months later.

Quarrying, mainly for basalt that is supplied to Metro Manila, occupies a total area of 278 hectares in the province. Isidro Mercado, provincial environmental officer, said all 29 quarry companies in the province were operating “outside the protected area.”

Mercado said the recent flooding in Rodriguez and San Mateo towns was a result of the overly saturated soil and excessive rainfall (365 millimeters to 368 mm recorded in Tanay, Rizal) dumped by Ulysses.

He said the 698-square-kilometer Upper Marikina River Basin, which covers parts of Rizal, Bulacan and Metro Manila, remained intact and free from human activity, although several titled properties surrounding the watershed had long been developed into subdivisions.



ALL CLEAR The massive flooding that hit Rizal province this month submerged communities and displaced thousands. In Rodriguez town, workers using heavy equipment from a private company help clear a road at Kasiglahan Village in Barangay San Jose on Nov. 21. —NIÑO JESUS ORBETA



Bamboo forest

The DENR said its priority after the floods was to “enhance” vegetative control measures by planting bamboo, like the “kawayan tinik” (*Bambusa blumeana*), on riverbanks to prevent soil erosion.

Mercado said the department would also construct check or small dams toward the upstream portion of the Upper Marikina River Basin to control water flow.

Edgardo Manda, president of Philippine Bamboo Foundation Inc., said his group would start the rehabilitation of the abandoned Wawa Dam in Rodriguez town by planting bamboo clumps. “It will be our model site,” he said.

Manda, also a former general manager of the Laguna Lake Development Authority, said a shift from dipterocarp to the dominant bamboo species as a planting material for reforestation programs could also help solve problems of “kaingin” (slash and burn) and charcoal-making, by providing communities with a sustainable income source.

Bamboo is good for stabilizing riverbanks, as well as a good source of building materials, said vice chancellor Roberto Cereno of the University of the Philippines Los Baños, who is also a forester.

“But it will take some time. We’re talking of 10 to 20 years before bamboo grows into clumps and perfect its soil erosion capability,” he said.



Priest appeals to stop black sand mining in MacArthur town



LEYTE. Black sand mining activities in MacArthur, Leyte. (Photo courtesy of Father Amadeo Alvero)



LEYTE. Black sand mining activities in MacArthur, Leyte. (Photo courtesy of Father Amadeo Alvero)

[RONALD O. REYES](#)

November 27, 2020

CATHOLIC priest Amadeo Alvero has appealed to government officials for an end to black sand mining operations in the small town of MacArthur in Leyte.

“I am pleading with my bended knees. This appeal I made on behalf of those who love and want to protect our environment,” said Father Alvero.

In his open letter, Alvero, parish priest of the St. Isidore the Worker, called on the attention of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), and local officials to the “destruction of the environment.”

The priest cited the recent devastations in Cagayan and other areas in northern Luzon brought by a series of typhoons were aggravated by “environmental-related destructions.”

“If we protect the environment from destructions, the environment will protect us from destructions. If we protect the Mother Earth, our Mother Earth will protect us in return,” the priest said in his post on Facebook.

The letter, which went viral, gained support from the locals who thanked Alvero for tackling the issue.

“A brave one to express concern for everyone's welfare! No one will dare to expose this kind of activity for fear,” read one comment from Alvero’s social media post.

“I know and understand we cannot win our battle against the black sand mining without the help of our dear government leaders. And so I am humbly appealing to the deepest of their hearts to help us stop this black sand mining (in MacArthur) for the sake of those who will suffer and die in the future if we do not protect our environment,” Alvero added.

The town of MacArthur, named after American general Douglas MacArthur who helped liberate the Philippines from the Japanese during World War II, is a fifth-class municipality in Leyte.

The town, with a population of over 21,000 in the 2015 census, gained national attention when a fish kill struck its lake in 2012, decimating the livelihood of villagers.

In November 2013, the town was also devastated by Super Typhoon Yolanda, which killed over 6,000 persons mostly in Leyte and Samar provinces.



No to irresponsible mining

Alvero maintained that he is not against mining.

“I am for anti-irresponsible mining, of which all the previous mining operations were irresponsible,” he told Sunstar Philippines.

“That is why I oppose any mining, particularly black sand mining without first rehabilitation of all the previous mined areas. If the said areas will be rehabilitated, maybe it will soften the hearts of the locals,” Alvero said.

The priest, however, did not identify the mining companies in his post.

He also asked whether the mining activities in MacArthur have the necessary government permits.

In an earlier press release, MGB-Eastern Visayas announced that MacArthur Iron Projects Corporation (MIPC) has inaugurated its dredger and magnetic separator plant and started its debugging on September 28, 2020, in Barangay Maya in MacArthur.

It added that it is “one of the priority mining projects tapped by the government to help the economy which is adversely affected by Covid-19.”

The bureau said, “the mining industry cares for the environment and that it always delivers especially in its commitment to help.”

According to MGB, MIPC’s processing plant has 4,000 tons of iron sand for debugging purposes and is expected to process 8 to 10 percent of its feed with a cut-off grade of 50.

Its process is the physical separation of magnetite concentrate from raw sand via magnetic separators and sieve screens, it added.

Mining permits

In a statement, MIPC debunked the allegations of Alvero.

“The management of MIPC totally denies claims of Fr. Alvero’s baseless posts on Facebook generally implying that an existing mining operation in the municipality of Mac Arthur does not have valid permits and licenses from concerned government agencies,” the MIPC management said on November 20.

The management maintained that it has “secured all necessary permits, licenses and approvals necessary to bring the business operation to its current stage.”

It added that “there is no commercial production yet” in the mining area.

“Equipment necessary for production has recently been assembled and are undergoing commissioning and debugging which makes shipment impossible as wrongly implied in social media,” said the company.

MIPC is reportedly investing P500 million for the operation.

“We have performed our business operations within the bounds of law including all its pertinent policies and regulations, and we all continue doing so during the course of our business operations,” it said.

“This includes the responsibilities of MIPC towards stakeholders by our operations and the environment around us. We will, especially, make good of our commitment to restore or bring the utilized lands to its stable and productive state before turning them over to landowners,” the management added.

According to MIPC, it already hired nearly 300 workers in MacArthur.



Leyte mining potential

MGB reported that from 2014 to 2016, mining in Leyte “has significantly contributed to the province’s economic landscape in the form of fees and taxes such as occupation and extraction fees and excise taxes paid by the mining companies.”

From 2014 to 2016, the mining sector contributed a total of P31,777,457.55.

Leyte, which is composed of 40 towns, is the largest province in Eastern Visayas.

A first-class province, Leyte has a total land area of 578,382 hectares.

The total area covered by the approved mining rights is only 4.2 percent or 24,502.11 hectares of the total land area of Leyte and only 32.38 percent or 7,935.12 hectares are covered by operating mines out of 24,502.11, according to MGB.

Leyte, known as the site of the largest geothermal plant in Asia, is one of the “resource-rich” provinces of the country.

The bureau said the mining industry “has started to pick up in the province with the exploration in MacArthur.”

Mining as Covid-19 revenue generators

In July, DENR said mining could be used to generate additional revenue for the government’s fight against coronavirus pandemic.

“The Philippine mining industry is doing its share to help during the pandemic with a P402-million relief fund that has so far benefited more than 1.4 million households and frontliners across the country,” the department said in a statement.

In a report from Catholic news site Licas.news, green groups denounced the move of DENR’s plan to use more mining and river dredging as a stimulus for Covid-19 recovery.

Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM), a coalition of organizations and groups who challenged the aggressive promotion of large-scale mining in the country, said that the “minuscule economic contribution of mining to the Philippine economy poses a bigger threat to rural and indigenous communities and the environment.”

The alliance urged the national government “to find better, greener and more sustainable solutions to contribute to stimulating the economy under a new normal.”

In a position paper “Mining and Covid-19,” environmental organizations said there are links between mining, climate change and pandemics.

“Equally disturbing is the priority of our national leaders that seem to be more concerned in ‘opening up the economy’ at the expense of public health considerations,” ATM said.

The green groups also reminded the government that “there is no business in a dead planet, and if we proceed in the dangerous track of opening up more mines and destroy more forests and watersheds, we risk repeating the bitter lessons brought by Covid-19.”

Ban on black sand mining

In 2019, jailed opposition Senator Leila de Lima proposed a measure to prohibit black sand mining operations in the Philippines, which according to her, “continue to wreak environmental havoc while placing people’s health and livelihood at great peril.”



Citing studies from environmental groups, the senator said that “where black sand mining activities are common, operations have shown to have contributed greatly to the depletion of fishery resources, erosion of land and severe flooding.”

She cited the situation in Cagayan province “where the adverse effects of illegal mining of black sand are obvious, such as the crumbling houses because the sand underneath it is getting eroded, the lessening harvests as the fields were inundated by saltwater, and the suffering fisherfolk due to reduced catch.”

"One of the areas affected by black sand mining operations showed a growing number of cases of skin and lung diseases attributed to the black sand mining and noted other related diseases such as severe eye irritation and hernia," the senator said in a statement.

In 2016, an American study also predicted that areas in Northern Luzon mined for magnetite, or black sand, could sink and be underwater within 30 to 70 years.

Black sand is a highly valuable mineral used in making concrete, steel, cosmetics, jewelry and other industrial products. **(SunStar Philippines)**



Illegal quarrying lands 12 in jail

posted November 26, 2020 at 09:55 pm

by [Jess Malabanan](#)

Mabalacat City—Government agents arrested 12 persons following a raid on an illegal quarrying operation at Barangay Sapang Balen here Wednesday.

The suspects were identified as John Patrick Reyes, Jhun Murillo, Egilberto San Pascual, Ronald Linsangan, Edcel Ruiz, Vincent Canlas, Eldren Anson, Jomar Nazar, Christopher Moreno, Joel Ong, Francis Pangilinan and John Michael Matias, all residents of the village.

National Bureau of Investigation - Environmental Crime Division (NBI-EnCD) in Manila raided the quarrying site after it received complaints from concerned citizens in this city regarding the presence of illegal quarry operations by a group of individuals who allowed the extractions of sands and lahar without the necessary permit from the local government unit.

The group leader identified as Virgilio Gamez was not around during the raid.

NBI-EnCD conducted surveillance operations week before the raid. Operatives also checked with the LGU if the quarry operations of Gamez has the permit.

“Surveillance operations revealed the unrelenting extraction of sands and lahar materials in the areas,” said NBI-EnCD in a statement.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Mines and Geosciences Bureau 3, Environmental Management Bureau 3, and the Pampanga Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office has no records of Gamez quarrying operations.

“Gamez is not a holder of any permit from the LGU and concerned government agency to extract and haul sands and lahar materials,” NBI-EnCD added.

The suspects were brought to NBI-Manila headquarters for further investigation as appropriate charges are being readied against them.



LGUs na sangkot sa illegal logging at mining, tuluyan!

ni [Ryan Sison](#) - @Boses | November 26, 2020

Matapos ang malawakang pagbaha na resulta ng sunud-sunod na paghagupit ng bagyo sa bansa, naangkat ang mga isyu ng ilegal na pagpuputol ng punong-kahoy at pagmimina.

At kamakailan, umamin si Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Eduardo Año na may ilang mayors ang posibleng nakikinabang sa mga illegal logging at mining operations sa kanilang mga nasasakupan.

Ayon kay Año, hindi pinatitigil ng ilang mayors ang ilegal na gawaing ito dahil posibleng natutulungan at nasusuportahan sila ng mga ito sa kanilang kampanya.

Kaugnay nito, nagbabala ang Palasyo sa mga alkalde na dawit sa ilegal na pagpuputol ng punong-kahoy at pagmimina, na sinisisi sa malawakang pagbaha matapos ang sunud-sunod na hagupit ng bagyo sa bansa.

Sa totoo lang, nakadidismaya dahil ang mga tinaguriang lider pa pala ang sangkot sa ganitong gawain. Hindi natin nilalahat, pero hindi maaalis ang katotohanan na ang dapat ehemplo ay may ginagawa palang ilegal.

Kaya ngayon, kitang-kita natin ang epekto ng mga gawaing ito sa kalikasan kung saan napakaraming bahay ang nasira at sandamakmak na kabuhayan ang nawala.

Napalaking danyos ang iniwanan ng magkakasunod na bagyo, kaya plis lang, 'wag kayong magbulag-bulagan.

Kung magsilbi sa publiko ang talagang pakay n'yo, patunayan n'yo. Gamitin n'yo ang inyong kapangyarihan para maibigay sa taumbayan ang totoong serbisyo at hindi para gamitin sa mga personal na pakinabang.

Samantala, panawagan naman sa mga kinauukulan, 'wag puro babala, galaw-galaw din. Patunayan n'yong kayang panagutin ang mga dapat managot para tubuan naman ng hiya ang mga opisyal na 'yan.

Panahon na para seryosohin ang mga babalang ito dahil hindi biro ang epekto ng ginagawa nilang ilegal.



NBI sues 10 Boracay property owners for occupying forestland

By: [Nestor Burgos Jr.](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:00 AM November 26, 2020



DEMOLISHED Debris from demolished boarding house rooms are left at a wetland on Boracay Island during clearing operations in May 2018. Removal of illegal structures and road and drainage repairs have yet to be completed more than two years after the government started the island's environmental rehabilitation. —NESTOR P. BURGOS JR.

ILOILO CITY, Iloilo, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation on Wednesday filed criminal complaints against 10 residents and property owners in Boracay who were arrested on Tuesday for alleged violation of environmental laws when they occupied forestland areas on the island.

Rizaldy Rivera, special investigator of the NBI's Environment Crime Division, said the respondents included a Belgian, a Filipino-Australian and two Britons.

The complaints were filed in the Aklan provincial prosecutor's office against all respondents for violating Presidential Decree No. 705 (Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines) while two were also charged with violation of Presidential Decree No. 1067 (Water Code) and a municipal ordinance mandating a 30-meter beach easement.

The recommended bail was P36,000 each for those accused of violating PD No. 705 and a total of P75,000 each for the two respondents facing three complaints.

They were arrested on Mt. Luho and Sitio Diniwid in Barangay Balabag and detained overnight at the Boracay police station before they were taken to the capital town of Kalibo where the complaints were filed.

'Lawful'

Rivera said the warrantless arrest of the respondents were "lawful" because "there is actual occupation of forestlands."

More arrests are expected as part of enforcement of environmental laws on the island which is undergoing rehabilitation, he said.

"They have ignored notices to self-demolish and to vacate forestlands and we continuously appeal to them to comply," Rivera told the Inquirer.

Lawyer Czar Eric Nuqui, chief of the NBI's Environmental Crime Division, said the respondents "have been repeatedly warned and sent notices of violations for several years but they chose to ignore. This is their day of reckoning."



Manner, timing of arrest

But lawyer Emmanuel Sodusta, who is providing legal assistance to some of the respondents, questioned the manner and timing of the arrests.

“They were ‘invited’ for a discussion but were later brought to the police station. Why do this at the height of a pandemic?” he said.

A source in Boracay, who asked not to be named, told the Inquirer that the residents, including the foreigners, were cuffed and were taken to the police station onboard at least two vans.

Rivera denied that those arrested were handcuffed but admitted that the operatives were carrying rifles and handguns as part of their normal operations.

The arrests surprised several residents and property owners in Boracay.

“Some of those arrested were longtime residents who have settled here. They were issued building permits and paid taxes only to be told later that their properties were on forestlands,” a resident told the Inquirer.

Property of the state

Several property owners and longtime residents, including expatriates, have been questioning the classification of areas on the island, especially those considered as forestland.

On Oct. 8, 2008, the Supreme Court upheld Proclamation No. 1064 issued by former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, declaring the entire island a property of the state, except those with titles.

Only about a third of the 1,032-hectare island is titled and most land claimants hold tax declarations and pay realty taxes, many for more than 30 years, as proof of possession or right over properties.

The island was closed to tourists for six months from April 25, 2018 to Oct. 25, 2018 to undergo rehabilitation.

The rehabilitation activities were supposed to be concluded in two years but President Duterte issued Executive Order No. 115 on May 11, extending the term of the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) to a third year until May 8, 2021.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, the BIATF chair, said in March that around 1,100 illegal structures built on forestlands and on beach and road easements had yet to be removed.

He said the implementation of rehabilitation activities had been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1364944/nbi-sues-10-boracay-property-owners-for-occupying-forestland>



Popular tourist spot Masungi Georeserve reopens

Published November 26, 2020, 9:33 AM

by [Hanah Tabios](#)

Adventure seekers may now again experience some adrenaline-rush activities as Masungi Georeserve, a popular tourist spot in Baras, Rizal, formally reopens to tourists Wednesday after seven months of lockdown.

The reopening is a move to revive its massive tourism losses amid the ongoing global health crisis.



Masungi Georeserve (ALVIN KASIBAN / MANILA BULLETIN)

Ben Dumaliang, a trustee of Masungi Georeserve Foundation, said they have already zero income with no tourists coming in over the past months. They were forced to release about P2 million from their personal resources each month to maintain the conservation efforts in the area and prevent its hundred workers from losing their jobs.

In support of the reopening, Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat was among the first visitors to experience both the newly reopened Legacy and Discovery trails. Her presence also aims to encourage tourists to go out under the new normal.

She was joined by other officials from the Department of Tourism (DOT). Her brother, Pasig Rep. Roman Romulo, also attended the reopening, along with his wife former Valenzuela City Councilor Shalani Soledad.

“We’re always looking for ways na (makapagdevelop) mga bagong tourism products. Although (Masungi) is already (existing) pre-COVID, naidentify based on the survey na talaga ang hinahanap ng tao, open-air, mountain climbing, and one with nature,” Puyat said referring to the recent tourism survey released by the Asian Institute of Management (AIM).

(We’re always looking for ways to develop new tourism products. Although Masungi is already existing pre-COVID, it was identified based on the survey that people are looking for open-air, mountain climbing, and one with nature.)

With Masungi’s proximity to Metro Manila, the tourism chief also pointed out that Metro Manila residents will finally be able to break the monotony of staying long at home and visit the area.

“Kasi yung mga iba kasi talaga gustong gusto na lumabas ng bahay (kaya) pwede sila pumunta dito,” she added.

(Because others really want to go out so they can finally visit here.)



According to Ann Dumaliang, Masungi's project manager and management trustee, all tourists from areas under general community quarantine (GCQ) and modified (GCQ) may now start reserving their slots at Masungi's website www.masungigeoreserve.com.

But unlike during the pre-COVID period when the average carrying capacity of the area is 250 tourists per day, only 50 visitors per day for each trail will be accommodated in accordance with the guidelines of the national government's Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF).

For those coming in groups, a slot should be composed of five to eight persons per reservation but as much as possible, groups should be ideally composed of households of close contacts in the meantime for safety.

Pre-screening forms like conservation agreement, health declaration form, and COVID-19 agreement need to be submitted online three days before the visit. These can be filled out upon securing a reservation.

Walk-ins are strictly prohibited and visitors are advised to arrive 30 minutes ahead of time. "Park rangers may deny entry for non-compliant guests who pose risks to themselves or others," she said.

Though outdoor visits are generally safer than indoor spaces outside visitors' private households, Dumaliang said Masungi is not eliminating the risks entirely brought about by the deadly novel coronavirus disease. Hence, during hiking, a 1-meter distance will be implemented and the wearing of face masks is required.

"Visitors must avoid prolonged exposure of more than 15 minutes. If this is not possible, they have to move to a different location," she added.

Dumaliang also stressed that trails in Masungi are a circuit, thus, guests are moving in a single direction which limits the chances of encountering other groups and having deliberate density control.

Reopening during a challenging time

The reopening of Masungi also comes at a time when the management recently recovered a quarried 500-hectare land, where Puyat led the reforestation activity on the same day of its reopening.

The said illegal activity happened in February prior to the Luzon-wide lockdown. Dumaliang said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through its head Sec. Roy Cimatu, helped them stop the quarrying activities.

But in October, another encroacher illegally fenced a portion of Masungi's land in the Upper Marikina Shed, also the parts of the protected area they are reforesting.

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. The law mandates that the area is "protected against destructive human exploitation."

It was later identified that Rublou Inc., a family-owned and controlled corporation by husband and wife (Ret.) Gen. Luizo C. Ticman and Ruby A. Ticman, was the one responsible for claiming ownership of the land.

Just last week, Nov. 15, the Masungi Georeserve Foundation issued a statement that it is deeply disturbed about the continuous deployment of armed guards of Rublou Inc. in hundreds of hectares of the Upper Marikina Watershed despite a DENR Show Cause Order.



Dumaliang then sought help from Puyat during her visit to ask again for the DENR's help to finally stop the encroachment.

"If we killed the conservation work alongside sa pagkawala ng turismo (the loss of tourism), the damages would definitely be irreversible," she said.



'Masaker' sa critically endangered pangolins

Nobyembre 27, 2020 12:21am GMT+08:00

Nang magtungo ang "Born To Be Wild" sa Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD), ipinakita kay Doc Ferds Recio ang nakumpiskang mga sako-sako ng kaliskis ng critically endangered pangolins. Bukod sa kaliskis, may mga patay na pangolin din na nakalagay sa mga container.

Ayon kay Doc Ferds, maaaring nasa isang libong kilo ang sako- sakong kaliskis ng pangolin na ipinakita sa kanila ng PCSD na nakatabi sa bodega na pinaglalagyan ng mga nakukumpiskang ebidensiya.

Para makaipon umano ang isang kilo ng kaliskis ng pangolin, nasa 10 pangolin ang kailangang patayin.

Kaya ang katumbas umano nang lahat ng sako ng kaliskis na nakita nila sa PCSD, tinataya ni Doc Ferds na nasa 11,000 pangolin na pinatay.

Bakit nga ba pinapatay ang mga pangolin para kunin ang kanilang kaliskis at karne? Alamin ang kasagutan sa video na ito ng "Born To Be Wild."




Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/talakayan/765832/masaker-sa-critically-endangered-pangolins/story/>



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This handout aerial photo taken and received on November 14, 2020 from the Philippine Coast Guard shows submerged houses in Cagayan province, north of Manila, on November 14, 2020, days after Typhoon Vamco hit parts of the country bringing heavy rain and flooding.

Handout/Philippine Coast Guard/AFP

House declares climate emergency

[Xave Gregorio](#) (Philstar.com) - November 26, 2020 - 10:51am

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives on Wednesday declared a climate emergency, calling climate change a “clear and present threat to the country’s national security and its efforts to reduce poverty.”

“In declaring a climate emergency, a government admits that global warming exists and that measures taken up to this point are not enough to limit the changes brought by it,” read the resolution that the House adopted.

Resolutions express the sense or position of a chamber of Congress but are not binding.

The declaration urges local governments and government bodies to adopt policies to mitigate climate change, but does not legally compel them to act.

Among the actions being urged by the declaration is for local governments to also pass climate change declarations and for them to adopt a policy against coal-powered energy.

Local governments and local industries are also being urged to pursue renewable and sustainable energy sources.

The declaration is also calling on major carbon emitters here and abroad to “take responsibility” for climate change and reinvest in renewable and sustainable energy.

The House is also committing to look into the compliance of national government agencies and local governments to existing environmental, climate, disaster risk reduction and management and appropriation laws, and international agreements.

The lower chamber’s declaration of a climate emergency follows that of 41 economies which have also declared a climate emergency in their respective jurisdictions.

Malacañang has said President Rodrigo Duterte would look into the suggestion to declare a climate emergency, saying that tackling climate change is at the top of the president's agenda.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/11/26/2059579/house-declares-climate-emergency>



Legarda: Build a resilient recovery for the Philippines

By Climate Change Commission (CCC) Published on November 26, 2020



Flood in Marikina after Typhoon Ulysses (CCC Photo)

MANILA, Nov. 26 -- House Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda recommended stronger policy measures to help avert future loss and damage and ensure sustainable and resilient recovery, in light of the escalating climate-related disaster risks, compounded by factors caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a privilege speech before the House plenary, Legarda said that the recent back-to-back typhoons that hit provinces in the Luzon and Visayas regions affected more than 6.7 million Filipinos and damaged over 35 billion pesos worth of infrastructure and agriculture.

She also noted that the amount of rainfall brought by the typhoons and the volume of water released by dams and the environmental degradation of the Sierra Madre range as a natural buffer against tropical cyclones have worsened the level of flooding in the affected areas.

Legarda recently filed House Resolution No. 1363 directing the House Sub-Committee on the New Normal to conduct an inquiry on the massive flooding caused by Typhoon Ulysses, in relation to the enforcement of environmental, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction and management laws by government agencies and local government units (LGUs).

The resolution also seeks to identify gaps in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in development, investment, and land use planning.

Legarda noted that the track of Typhoon Ulysses was almost the same as Ondoy. In terms of rainfall amount, 347 millimeters of Ondoy rains fell within six hours as compared to the 356 millimeters of rains from Ulysses for the whole day on November 12.

She added that other factors led to Ondoy-level flooding during Ulysses, such as land use, construction of settlements and cultivation in flood-prone areas; excessive rainfall due to climate change; and siltation of waterways due to excessive soil erosion because of illegal logging and deforestation.

She also mentioned that poor or non-implementation of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Law also contributed as seen in the huge amounts of plastic debris floating on water. The law, which she principally authored and sponsored in the Senate, mandates the proper segregation of waste at source and the establishment of materials recovery facility within LGUs.



Among the recommendations she noted in the resolution were to:

- Regularly declog canals, roadside ditches, and drains, as well as supplement traditional flood mitigation projects, such as river dredging, dike construction, and tree planting upstream, with natural flood intervention programs, such as river and floodplain restoration;
- Pursue landscape and ecosystem-based comprehensive development and land use planning informed by geohazard maps and risk assessments;
- Ensure that geohazard maps are updated to take into account current and projected climate hazards and are well-understood by LGUs, and provide a basis to consider measures based on their assessment of these risks; and
- Determine areas for improvement in the capability and agility of PAGASA's systems for climate observation and projection, weather forecasting, and real-time climate information dissemination to dam operators, national government agencies, LGUs, academe, and research institutions; as well as for translating scientific climate information into more relatable messages of potential impacts for more effective risk communication down to the last mile.

"While PAGASA provided timely and accurate scientific information about typhoon Ulysses, this did not translate to how people imagined the typhoon would be. Scientific information must be understandable, actionable, and relatable," Legarda stated.

As a Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) Ambassador for Parliaments and UNISDR Global Champion for Resilience, Legarda voiced out the need to accelerate and scale up support for vulnerable developing countries like the Philippines in the areas of finance, green technology, and capacity development to build resilience against extreme weather events that are attributed to continued rising emissions of greenhouse gases mostly from industrialized nations.

"To make adaptation truly work for us requires efforts not just among us but from the international community, and both the public and the private sectors, to bring about the needed investments to enable genuine resilience," Legarda stressed.

In closing, Legarda said that resilience should be all about empowering the people not merely with inspiration but with the right tools and the means to be able to decide and take action, for them not to be defenseless.

"We have described Filipinos as resilient or tenacious in the face of these many disasters that come our way, as if resilience is purely based on spirit and determination. As if wading through neck-deep floodwater, waiting for hours on top of your house to be rescued, or just generally enduring one typhoon after another, is resilience in itself," Legarda said.

"As leaders of our nation, we are accountable to the people we serve. More lives are at stake, especially in this era of the climate crisis made more challenging by COVID-19. Our decisions and actions will have an impact on our communities and our nation," Legarda concluded. (CCC)



Magat Dam file photo

Legarda stresses need to revisit dam protocols following Cagayan floods

Published November 26, 2020 10:22am

By ERWIN COLCOL, GMA News

Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda on Thursday stressed the need for dam operators to update their protocols after the massive flooding in Cagayan and Isabela, which was partly blamed on the release of water from Maga Dam.

"I believe all dams including Magat Dam should update their protocols. I am not saying that they did not update. That's why an inquiry is in order," Legarda said in an ANC interview.

According to Legarda, revisiting dam protocols would allow authorities to check if the water being released would not cause further damage to surrounding communities.

"Bago [magpakawala] ng tubig ang dam operator, ito ba ay nakitugma sa Pag-asa? Sinukat ba ang pagbagsak ng ulan at inabisuhan ba sa simpleng pamamaraan na maiintindihan ng mga local na pamahalaan?" she said.

"Sapat ba ang panahon para ilikas ang mga tao sa Cagayan Valley?" she added.

Legarda recalled that when she was still a senator, an investigation also took place as to the contribution of dams and other water reservoirs in the massive flooding during the onslaught of Tropical Storm Ondoy in 2009.

"Ondoy [poured a bigger volume of water] but the destruction in 2020 with Ulysses was much, much more. So we can see that there should be a revisit of the dam protocols," she said.

The House Committee on Agriculture and Food and on North Luzon Growth Quadrangle on Tuesday began its inquiry on the massive flooding in Cagayan and Isabela.

In the said inquiry, National Irrigation Administration chief Ricardo Visaya maintained that the opening of the water gates of Magat Dam was not the major cause of the flooding in Cagayan Valley.



He also said concerned offices and individuals who may be affected by the release of water are warned at least six hours before the release of the water from Magat Dam.

He added that the release of water from Magat Dam was done gradually and not all at once. —**LBG, GMA News**



Lolo nagtanim ng 10K mangroves para protektahan ang bahay sa bagyo

On Nov 26, 2020



KUNG pagiging plantito lang naman ang pag-uusapan, isa na sa mga “OG” o originals ang 65-anyos na lolo sa Leyte.

Sa loob ng 8 taon, umabot sa 10,000 mangroves ang kanyang naitanim sa isang bahagi ng dagat sa Leyte.

Pinagsikapang itinanim ni “Tatay” Gary Dabasol ang mangroves ng walong taon upang protektahan ang kanyang bahay sakaling may dumating na bagyo.

Dahil sa kanyang pangambang matatamaan ng malalakas na alon ang bahay ay naisipan niyang magtanim ng miyapi, pagatpat at bakawan.

“I’m glad that I was able to inspire people, I hope that they will also follow what I am doing. I also want to contribute to higher marine production by cultivating a spooning area for fish, crabs, and shrimps and other species,” saad ni Dabasol.

Si netizen Dan Niez ang nagbahagi ng kwento ni Dabasol sa social media. Aniya, maraming netizen ang humanga kay Dabasol batay sa kanyang post dahil nakaka-inspire ang kanyang ginawa.

Kaya naman hinikayat ni Niez ang mga kabataan na tularan ang ginawa ni Dabasol na nakakatulong na maprotektahan ang kalikasan at mga marine life.

Source: https://www.policefilestonite.net/2020/11/26/lolo-nagtanim-ng-10k-mangroves-para-protektahan-ang-bahay-sa-bagyo/?fbclid=IwAR2MYjkgUwDYf5CZLKfYJrGHvGDLiAgmG-f9_vXKx5BBgu9Oq69KjU72xPI



Typhoon-hit Quezon province needs massive replanting program, governor says

Published November 26, 2020 5:17pm

By ANNA FELICIA BAJO, GMA News

Quezon governor Danilo Suarez on Thursday said the province needs a massive replanting program as its agriculture sector was severely damaged by the previous typhoons, especially super typhoon Rolly and typhoon Ulysses.

At a Laging Handa press briefing, Suarez said the damage in agriculture and infrastructure brought by the typhoons already reached P3,549,675,000.

He specifically mentioned that the province's banana industry was adversely destroyed by the storms.

"Kung maaari sana 'yung intervention na masabi sa gobyerno ay 'yun munang kailangang-kailangan ngayon. Sa pagtama ng bagyo, Quezon being agricultural, naubos ang aming banana industry. It will take a year and eight months bago ito ulit tumubo at kung nakaligtas man kami kay Ofel at Pepito, dito kay Rolly at Ulysses, tumumba na pati mga niyog namin," Suarez said.

"We need a massive replanting program and at the same time, take advantage 'yung aming program na intercropping na medyo nagkaroon din ng kaunting damage but manageable," he added.

Quezon was among the provinces pounded by the typhoons that crossed Luzon in the previous weeks, bringing massive floods in certain areas.

President Rodrigo Duterte already placed the entire Luzon under state of calamity following the onslaught of the typhoons.—**AOL, GMA News**



QUEZON PROVINCE KAILANGAN NA NG MASSIVE TREE PLANTING — GOVERNOR SUAREZ

written by Ashley Jose November 27, 2020



Kailangang-kailangan na ng massive tree planting sa lalawigan ng Quezon.

Ayon kay Quezon Governor Danilo Suarez, ito ay dahil labis na naapektuhan ng mga nagdaang bagyo ang kanilang lugar, partikular na ang sektor ng agrikultura.

Sinabi ni Suarez, labis kasing apektado ang kanilang lalawigan tuwing may bagyo at aabutin pa ng ilang buwan bago maibalik ang mga nasirang pananim.

Matatandaang isinailalim ang buong Luzon sa state of calamity dahil sa pinsalang idinulot ng mga nagdaang bagyo.



House probe malamya, duwag — KMP (Sa sanhi ng malawakang pagbaha)

Posted by: [hataw tabloid](#) on November 26, 2020 in [News](#) [Leave a comment](#)

MALAMYA, walang tapang, at tiyak na walang mapananagot kung pagbabasehan ang takbo ng ginagawang imbestigasyon ng House of Representatives kaugnay sa naging pinsala ng bagyong Ulysses sa Cagayan at Isabela dahil nakatuon lamang sa ginawang pagpapakawala ng tubig ng mga dam at walang imbestigasyon sa ilegal na pagmimina at ilegal na pagtotroso, ayon sa Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP).

Ang pahayag ay ginawa ng grupo bilang reaksiyon sa sinabi ni House Speaker Lord Allan Velasco na climate change at ang pagpapakawala ng tubig sa Magat Dam ang sanhi ng massive flood sa Cagayan at Isabela kaya naman ang rerebyuhin ng Kamara ay dam protocols upang hindi na maulit ang mapansilang baha gaya ng idinulot ng bagyong Ulysses.

Ayon kay KMP President Danilo Ramos, ang mahalagang dapat imbestigahan ng Kamara ay ilegal na pagtotroso sa mga bundok ng Cagayan at Isabela at ang mapanirang pagmimina na nagiging sanhi ng pagbaha.

Aniya, welcome development sa kanila ang House inquiry na ginagawa ng mga kongresista ngunit nakalulungkot na hindi naman nito kayang banggain ang malalaking contractor at malalaking tao na nasa likod ng ilegal na minahan at pagtotroso.

“Tingin po namin mahalagang matukoy kung sino ang responsable upang ‘di matulad sa iba na after ng insidente ay basta nawala na lang sa limot. Kailangan magkaron ng hustisya sa mamamayang naapektohan. Ito ang pinakamagandang pagkakataon para tingnan ng mga mambabatas ang pagkakalbo ng mga bundok at pagkasira ng kalikasan dulot ng pagmimina,” pahayag ni Ramos.

“Mahalaga ang imbestigasyon ng Kamara pero sa takbo ng ginagawang hearing ay mapupunta na ito at magagaya lang sa nakaraan na wala rin nangyari, ang aming apela ay huwag lang mag-focus sa dam,” dagdag ng KMP chairman.

Sa joint investigation ng House Committee on Agriculture and Food at Special Committee on North Luzon Growth Quadrangle, sinabi ni Velasco, ang pagpapakawala ng tubig ang nagpalala ng sitwasyon sa Cagayan at Isabela sa kasagsagan ng pananalasa ng bagyong Ulysses.

Sinang-ayonan ito ni House Deputy Majority Leader Bernadette Herrera na nagsabing 2006 pa ang dam protocol na sinusunod na hindi na akma sa panahon.

Ngunit pinabulaanan ito ni National Irrigation Administration (NIA) head Ricardo Visaya, aniya, hindi ang pagbubukas ng gates ng Magat dam ang ugat ng matinding pagbaha sa Cagayan at Isabela kundi ang malawakang ilegal na pagtotroso, pagmimina at pagtitibag sa lugar.

Batay sa isang matrix na ipinakita ni Visaya, mula 9-14 Nobyembre noong kasagsagan ng bagyo, ang peak water inflow ng Magat Dam ay 7,128 cubic meters per second pero naglalabas lamang ang dam ng 6,706 cubic meters per second, pagpapatunay na hindi ang pagbubukas ng water gate ng dam ang ugat ng matinding pagbaha.

Sinabi ng KMP, maituturing na moro-moro lamang ang imbestigasyon ng Kamara kung hindi nito sasakupin sa kanilang House inquiry ang tunay na problema sa pagmimina kabilang ang black sand mining na talamak sa Cagayan at ang talamak na legal at ilegal na pagtotroso na may permiso pa mismo ng lokal na pamahalaan.

Minaliit din ng KMP ang naging pahayag ni Isabela Governor Rodito Albano at Vice Governor Faustino Dy III na wala nang operasyon ng pagmimina at ilegal na pagtotroso sa lalawigan.



Anila, mismong mga residente ang makapagpapatunay na talamak pa rin ang ganitong ilegal na aktibidad at hindi pa rin ito nagbago.

Kahapon ay ipinag utos ni Interior Secretary Eduard Año ang crackdown sa ilegal na pagtotroso at ilegal na pagtitibag kasunod ng naranasang malawakang pagbaha sa bagyong Ulysses.

Partikular na pinakikilos ni Año ang LGUs at Philippine National Police (PNP) na bantayan ang mga ilegal na aktibidad kasabay ng pagbabanta sa mga tiwaling local government officials na sangkot sa ilegal na pagtotroso at ilegal na pagtitibag sa kanilang lugar na tutukuyin at sasampahan ng kaso.

Garbage to some, gold to others: Ulysses victims forced to scavenge for their needs

Photos and text by **George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News**

Posted at Nov 27 2020 01:23 AM

Nora Paladan, 64, sits among the garbage with her 12-year-old granddaughter, Sophia Monsanto, along the Marikina riverbanks on Thursday.

Under the Marcos bridge, where a temporary dumping area was set up, scavengers dig through the debris for anything they can use. Nora and her family used to live along the riverbank before being forced to relocate to Cogo in Antipolo due to the developments in the area.

With the floodwater subsiding in Marikina, Paladan and her family kept going back to the area daily to scavenge for reusable materials swept away by Typhoon Ulysses.

“May nakukuha kaming kawali, kaldero, kasirola. Yun magagamit namin yun. Tapos yung ibang pwede ibenta, ibebenta namin,” Paladan says.

Aside from these, she also looks for clothes that can still be used.

“Hahati-hatiin ko sa mga anak ko. Yung iba, dadalhin ko sa Bicol. Sa mga kapatid ko, sa nanay ko. Wala daw kasing dumadating na tulong dun,” says Paladan, who hails from Goa town, Camarines Sur, one of the towns severely affected by Super Typhoon Rolly.

“Sacrifice ko yung P100, pamasaha nung mga damit. Nakaka-isang sako na ako.”

Paladan says a bag of clothes costs P100 if she would send it through provincial buses, but such trips are few.

Executive Director Ricardo Jalad earlier said in a briefing that infrastructure damage from Ulysses cost about P10.79 billion while P540 billion in agricultural damage was recorded. Jalad also said that the cost of assistance for those affected almost reached P200 million.

A few minutes into digging through garbage, a motorcycle rider passed by and called the attention of Paladan. The rider then handed her a big plastic bag filled with clothes, and rode away after she expressed her gratitude.

She then sits with her granddaughter, sifting through the bag of clothes and checking if anything fits the child.



Paladan and her granddaughter Monsanto sit among the garbage as they look for reusable materials under the Marcos bridge in Marikina.

 **George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News**

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/life/multimedia/slideshow/11/27/20/garbage-to-some-gold-to-others-ulysses-victims-forced-to-scavenge-for-their-needs>



Flood adaptation

[SKETCHES](#) - [Ana Marie Pamintuan](#) (The Philippine Star) - November 27, 2020 - 12:00am

Looking at paintings and illustrations from the Spanish colonial period, you can see that flooding has been plaguing residents in what we now know as Metro Manila and other parts of Luzon even back in the 19th century, and surely long before that.

Maybe the monsoons and typhoons simply bring too much rain in this part of the planet, swelling mountain streams, rivers and lakes, dislodging soil and volcanic mud from the slopes, and sending them rampaging down and smashing into dwellings along their path.

But even after seeing how nature works, and regularly suffering from nature's wrath, our ancestors continued to build their communities close to large rivers and lakes, on mountain slopes near streams, at the feet of active volcanoes, in fertile valleys surrounded by mudslide-prone mountains.

We adapt to our natural environment, risking natural calamities. We don't leave because we are threatened by regular typhoons, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions. If people did, where would Japan be?

With the information now available, it's of course possible to ban new residential, commercial and industrial development in high-risk areas and strictly enforce easement rules in coastal communities as well as around rivers and lakes.

For properties that have sat on danger zones for decades, however, it's clearly a challenge to get the occupants to move to safer areas. The typical reaction of those who saw their homes damaged or destroyed in the recent floods and typhoons was: it's home, they survived and they would rebuild.

* * *

Adaptation is the key, and increasing disaster mitigation capabilities. Earthquakes? The Japanese of yore built houses made of light materials that could be easily rebuilt (but after devastating fires during earthquakes, they began using sturdier materials). In the Netherlands, where about one-fourth of the land is below sea level, people have been reclaiming land and keeping out the North Sea through a sophisticated network of dikes, dams, storm surge barriers, sluices, locks and levees.

Powerful water pumping stations are used for subways and tunnels that pass through seas. Such pumping systems are quite costly to procure and maintain.

Structural adaptation measures are expensive, and governments need to discuss whether their economies can afford it.

Landscape architect and urban development planner Paulo Alcazaren, who was our guest on OneNews' "The Chiefs" this week, said countries such as Singapore have started using porous (also called pervious or permeable) concrete for certain roads and curbs, and building perforated parking lots where rainwater can drain to the ground or be directed, using pipes, to landscaped areas or water detention basins.

Paulo describes such materials as "a bit more expensive" than the regular ones (up to three times more, according to some websites).

* * *

Civil engineers have built bioretention basins for flood control. A detention basin temporarily stores stormwater runoff and then gradually discharges it. A retention basin has a permanent water pool, installed usually at the outfall of a residential or business district, from where pollutants can be filtered out.



Paulo points out that flooding in Marikina, Cagayan Valley and several other areas comes from above, not below – from the sky to the mountains and the waterways on the slopes, and on down to the rivers and lakes on the ground.

So it makes sense to minimize the water that comes down from the mountains. Adaptation includes avoiding or minimizing activities that heighten the risk of disaster occurrence. Illegal logging and destructive agricultural activities such as slash-and-burn farming on the slopes must be prevented. Many people depend on the forest for their livelihood, so sustainable agroforestry must be designed into reforestation programs.

As for mining and quarrying, which look awful and obviously destroy watersheds while the activities are ongoing, the country will have to decide if it wants such activities, and if we can afford to rely completely on imports for our raw material requirements. Some mining companies are touting post-operation restoration of areas stripped of minerals, with former sites covered with rich loam and turned into farms or ecoparks. They will need models to present to skeptics.

Where nature has given way to property development, and people refuse to relocate despite awareness of the risks and actual experience of the disasters, there are engineering interventions for adaptation and flooding mitigation.

* * *

Paulo and several other urban planners point out that with the massive amounts of rainfall dumped all over the country every year, water harvesting should be boosted. Water detention basins can be built, from where the water can be redirected for gardening or farm irrigation, for example.

Houses or buildings can have roof catchment cisterns. The water can then be recycled for use in gardens, and for cleaning driveways and flushing toilets.

Out of necessity, water harvesting was more extensive in our country before piped water was introduced. Older houses have cisterns and deep wells.

For perennially flood-prone communities that residents refuse to abandon, Paulo is suggesting, seriously, the construction of houses and buildings on elevated platforms or reinforced stilts.

The German city of Hamburg in fact has an area regularly inundated by flooding from the Elbe. The mighty river gave rise to Hamburg but has also been the city's bane. After an apocalyptic flood in February 1962 that submerged the Wilhelmsburg borough and killed 315 people in Hamburg alone, German engineers built a flood control system whose underlying principle is managing the surge of stormwater and redirecting it so it doesn't paralyze the area.

Some years ago when I visited Hamburg I was amazed by the elevated pedestrian walkways and "floatable" buildings built on pontoons or piles, with windows on the lower floors that can be quickly shut and rendered watertight. Even the park where concerts can be held is amphibious.

We're still a long way from amphibious multistory buildings and parks, but at least we're working on bioretention basins.

"It's a hard road to travel, but we're taking the steps," Paulo Alcazaren told us.



Paulit-ulit, palala nang palala ang pagwasak sa kalikasan

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Nov 26, 2020

OPINION



SA tuwing may dumaraang kalamidad nauwi sa sisihan, turuan kung sino ang may kasalanan kaya nagkaroon ng malawakang pagbaha sa iba't-ibang bahagi ng ating bansa.

Tulad na lamang nitong karanasan natin sa sunod-sunod na bagyong nanalasa atin mula Quinta, Rolly hanggang ang pinakagrabe ay ang super typhoon Ulysses na kumitil ng maraming buhay.

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Marami ang nagsasabi na hinigitan umano ng bagyong Ondoy ang bagyong Ulysses na talagang sinalantana ang Isabela at Cagayan na nilamon ng baha ang maraming lugar na hindi naman dating binabaha.

Maraming nasirang ari-arian sa ilang lugar sa Metro Manila partikular ang Marikina at ilang bayan sa Rizal na hanggang sa kasalukuyan ay hindi pa rin alam kung paano nila sisimulan ang kani-kanilang buhay.

Tulad ng dapat asahan, ang nakikitang dahilan ng mga pagbahang ito ay kawalan na ng mga punong dapat ay pumipigil sa buhos ng ulan upang hindi diri-diretsong rumaragasa sa mga mabababang lugar.

Isa sa sinisisi ang walang humpay na operasyon ng illegal logging na kahit anong gawing pagtutol ng marami nating kababayan ay patuloy pa rin sa pagkalbo sa kabundukan.

Kahit hanggang sa mga oras na ito at katatapos lamang ng trahedyang nagdaan ay kabi-kabila pa rin ang operasyon ng mga illegal logger na alam naman nating hindi naman mangyayari kung walang basbas ng mga dapat magbantay.

Tinitingnan din ngayon ng Palasyo ang wala ring pakundangang pagmimina na isa rin sa sumisira ng maraming kabundukan dahil sa patuloy na paghuhukay makakuha lamang ng ginto.

Talamak din ang operasyon ng small scale mining sa maraming lugar at isa rito ang talagang malala na ang sitwasyon ng kabundukan ay ang lugar ng Paracale sa Bicol area.



Butas-butas na ang naturang lugar dahil sa kabi-kabilang paghuhukay at maging ang pamunuan ng pulisya ay hindi kumikilos dahil sa umiiral na regular na lagayan para huwag lamang hulihin ang mga naghuhukay na minero.

Sa kasalukuyan ay nasa delikadong estado na ang bulubunduking bahagi ng Paracale na kapag may matinding delubiyong magdaan ay posible na itong gumuho at marami ang mapahamak.

Ikinagagalit din ng Palasyo ang napakaraming operasyon ng quarry sa iba't-ibang lugar at halos lahat ng lalawigan sa bansa ay may mga nagpapatag na ng mga kabundukan at gumagamit pa ng dinamita.

Napakabigat ng epekto ng quarry dahil matapos na kalbuhin ang mga kabundukan ay papatagin naman ng mga quarry operator at kapag patag na ay gagawin namang subdibisyon kaya ang resulta ay malawakang pagbaha.

Ang mga pangyayaring ito ay matagal na nagaganap at lantarang nakikita ng ating mga kababayan ngunit kataka-takang hindi nakikita ng nakatalagang pulisya sa bawat lugar.

Ang huhusay nilang magpaliwanag kapag kinakapanayam sila ng media at palaging pinagtatakpan ang mga operasyon ng mga walang pusong winawasak ang ating kalikasan.

At tuwing may mga pagbaha palaging nasisisi ang mga sumisira ng kabundukan at paulit-ulit ito kada may kalamidad ngunit kataka-takang hindi mapahinto ng maykapangyarihan.

Ngayon posibleng tahimik ang operasyon ng mga taga-wasak ng kabundukan dahil mainit pa ang sitwasyon ngunit inaasahang muli silang magbabalik sa operasyon kapag humupa na ang imbestigasyon at sa susunod na panahon ay mauulit na naman ang ganitong senaryo.

Sana magkaroon ng pangil ang batas na tuluyang ipatigil ang pagkawasak ng kabundukan na alam ko namang imposible dahil marami sa mga bantay ang mismong sumasalakay.



1,392 pang bagong kaso ng COVID naitala; 27 nasawi, 328 gumaling



November 26, 2020 @ 4:14 PM 15 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Patuloy ang pagtaas ng bilang ng kaso ng COVID-19 sa bansa gayundin sa mga gumagaling at namamatay.

Katunayan, muling nadagdagan ng 1,392 ang kaso ngayong araw dahilan para umabot na sa 424,297 ang kumpirmadong tinamaan ng virus sa bansa.

Ang mga gumaling naman sa sakit ayon sa pinakahuling datos ng Department of Health (DOH) ay pumalo na sa 387,266 dahil naman sa karagdagang 328.

Habang ang mga pasyente na hindi nakaligtas sa sakit at binawian ng buhay ay nadagdagan pa ng 27 sanhi upang umakyat na sa 8,242 ang namamatay.

Samantala, nasa 28,789 naman ang aktibong mga kaso na ang mild at asymptomatic case ay nasa 92.3%

Sa nasabing bagong bilang ng karagdagang mga kaso, ang Caloocan City ang nangunguna sa may naitalang mataas na kaso na nasa 77; na sinundan ng Cavite City na may 73 kapareho sa Laguna.

Hindi naman nawawala ang Davao City sa daily case update ng DOH na may naitatalang kaso na may 62 habang at 60 kaso naman sa Quezon.

Gayundin ay mayroon pa ring 10 duplicates na kailangang alisin sa total case counts kung saan ang walo rito ay recovered case.

Bukod dito, siyam ang na-tag na recovered ang na-reclassified bilang deaths.

Mayroon ding siyam na laboratoryo na bigong makapagsumite ng kanilang datos sa COVID-19 Data Repository System (CDRS) nitong November 25 na maaaring dahilan din ng mababang case reporting o datos ng mga kaso. **Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden**

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/1392-pang-bagong-kaso-ng-covid-naitala-27-nasawi-328-gumaling/>



PH manages Covid-19 'very well' with low mortality rate: Palace

By Azer Parrocha [November 26, 2020, 4:45 pm](#)



File photo

MANILA – The Philippines is doing “very well” in terms of controlling the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) with a low mortality rate, Malacañang said Thursday.

Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque made this remark after a Bloomberg study showed that the Philippines ranked 46th out of 53 countries when it came to handling the Covid-19 health crisis.

“Pinaninindigan po natin (We maintain) that we have managed Covid-19 very well in this country,” he said in a Palace press briefing.

Roque said he has yet to see the study himself but disagreed that the Philippines was among the countries with the worst ranking.

“*Hindi ko pa po nakikita yung pag-aaral na ‘yan. Hayaan niyo po titingnan ko yung pag-aaral na ‘yan pero tingin ko parang hindi po accurate ‘yan sa actual na nangyari (I haven’t seen the study yet. Allow me to check it, but I think it’s not accurate to the actual situation on the ground),*” he said.

Even if the Philippines entered the list of 20 countries with the most number of Covid-19 cases, Roque said it fared well than other countries that made the top of the list.

He also noted that the country remains to have a low mortality rate at 1.75 percent,

“*Nakikita niyo naman po bagamat number 22 na tayo sa buong mundo, hindi naman po tayo nasa absolute top in terms of numbers. Maliit po ang ating mortality rate at maliit din po yung nagkakasakit ng malala at kritikal (You see, even if we are number 22 in the world, we’re not on the absolute top in terms of numbers. We have a low mortality rate and only a few severe and critical cases),*” he added.

Bloomberg’s Covid Resilience Ranking scores economies of more than USD200 billion on 10 key metrics: from growth in virus cases to the overall mortality rate, testing capabilities, and the vaccine supply agreements places have forged. The capacity of the local health-care system, the impact of virus-related restrictions like lockdowns on the economy, and citizens’ freedom of movement are also taken into account.

All the indicators are scored on a 0-100 scale, with 100 indicating the best performance and zero the worst. The rest fall in between, scaled by their distance from one another. The final Ranking score is the average of a place’s performance across the 10 indicators, equally weighted.

As of Nov. 23, the Philippines, with a resilience score of 48.9, fared better than seven countries namely Iran, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Belgium, Peru, Argentina, and Mexico.



The Philippines has recorded 422,915 confirmed Covid-19 cases as of Nov. 25. Of this figure, 8,215 are fatalities while 386,955 are recoveries.

New Zealand, with a resilience score of 85.4, topped the list for its "decisive, swift action" against the pandemic.

Mexico, with a score of 37.6, fared the worst with a high positive test rate at 62 percent, suggesting undetected infection is widespread. (PNA)



The National Capital Region is home to more than 12 million people and the site of nearly half of over 423,000 coronavirus infections in the Philippines. It has been under GCQ since July.

Edd Gumban

Metro Manila mayors want GCQ throughout holidays

[Jose Rodel Clapano](#) (The Philippine Star) - November 27, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Metro Manila mayors want their cities retained under general community quarantine (GCQ) until after the Christmas holidays, National Task Force Against COVID-19 chief implementer Carlito Galvez Jr. said yesterday.

The National Capital Region is home to more than 12 million people and the site of nearly half of over 423,000 coronavirus infections in the Philippines. It has been under GCQ since July.

But Galvez noted in yesterday's Laging Handa virtual press briefing that the Manila mayors are concerned over the possibility of a spike in coronavirus cases should the national government place Metro Manila under a modified GCQ status.

"We talked with the mayors and they said they want to retain the GCQ in Metro Manila until after the holidays. Maybe next year after the holidays, we can place Metro Manila under MGCQ," Galvez said.

The MGCQ is the most lenient quarantine classification, wherein more businesses can operate at higher capacities and protocols on mass gatherings are more relaxed.

Most of the provinces and cities in the Philippines are now under MGCQ.

Galvez called on local government units (LGUs) to strictly implement health protocols during the Christmas season as well as the restrictions on unnecessary gatherings and movements to make sure that the spread of the virus will be contained.

"The fight against COVID-19 is not yet over. In 1991, there was a devolution of health services and give the responsibility for primary and secondary health care to LGUs. The metro mayors recommend (that we) keep the GCQ until the holidays are over. Any easing of restrictions can be considered next year after the holidays," he added.

Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco expressed the same worry that cases would spike after the holidays.

"My stand is that even if we maintain GCQ, there is a big risk that cases will spike after the holidays, so I don't want to increase the risk by loosening up to MGCQ," Tiangco told The STAR.

Malabon Mayor Antolin Oreta III said the best way is to continue wearing face masks and observing physical distancing as well as avoiding large Christmas get-togethers.



“We are worried with the data after Christmas as I’m sure people will congregate and meet. On our part, the best is to remind everyone to wear a mask and physical distancing, especially in the presence of elders,” Oreta noted.

The Metro Manila mayors also agreed to ban caroling this Christmas due to studies that singing increases the risk of virus transmission.

Also, the number coding scheme and truck ban would remain suspended during the holidays to help business establishments recover from the pandemic and not hamper the delivery of basic goods.

“Only the enforcement of traffic and clearing of alternate routes like Mabuhay Lanes would continue,” said Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) general manager Jojo Garcia.

Garcia noted that vehicular traffic, even with the restrictions on, is back in the streets.

“The situation now is that (there is) traffic and more people are outside. Imagine if we downgrade it to MGCQ?” Garcia told The STAR.

In an interview with “The Chiefs” over the One News channel Wednesday, MMDA Edsa traffic chief Edison Nebrija said there are no specific policies to manage the Christmas rush, only to manage traffic “as it is” with no traffic restrictions in place to help jumpstart the economy.

“Before, we have number coding and truck ban but we are trying to help the economy, for business to spark the movement of the economy. Now there’s really no specific policy that will address the Christmas holidays. We are not talking about it right now. We will be managing the traffic as it is,” Nebrija said.

President Duterte is expected to announce the updated quarantine classifications on Nov. 30, according to his spokesman Harry Roque.

“The IATF (Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases) will discuss the data this week... I was told that the President would have a talk to the people. The President will announce the change in classifications if there are any,” Roque said. – **Alexis Romero, MarcJayson Cayabyab**



Text 8888, stamp out corruption

Published 6 hours ago on November 27, 2020 12:20 AM

By [Francis Wakefield](#)



The public will have a direct line to Malacañang in reporting instances of abuse of power through text messages to the 8888 Citizen's Complaint Center (CCC) hotline where such communications will be "given the highest priority."

In a televised briefing, presidential spokesperson Harry Roque noted that the office of Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea will handle the complaints.

The rollout of the text hotline comes weeks after Duterte promised a renewed crackdown on corruption.

Those who are corrupt, lazy, incompetent in the government, be forewarned.

You are now one text away.

"The Office of the Executive Secretary is in charge of the 8888," Roque said. "And since the Executive Secretary is primus inter pares in the Cabinet, we are expecting that all complaints on all agencies and departments will be given the highest priority."

Recently, telco giants Globe and Smart announced that texts sent to 8888 will not be charged.

Prior to this, the center could be reached by landline, e-mail, or even snail mail.

"Those who are corrupt, lazy, incompetent in the government, be forewarned.

You are now one text away," Roque said.

The national hotline was introduced by President Rodrigo Duterte in October 2016 and it was institutionalized via Executive Order 6.

Baring report not Rody's call

President Duterte also does not need to give in to calls for him to disclose the names of the 12 members of the House of Representatives who the Presidential Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC) tagged as having mulcted project contractors, Senator Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go said yesterday.

President Rodrigo Duterte's stand not to reveal the names of lawmakers who are allegedly involved in irregularities is in line with the principle of separation of powers that means the President has no jurisdiction over them as they belong to a different and co-equal branch of government.



In an ambush interview after his visit to typhoon “Ulysses” victims in Bagumbayan, Quezon City, Go said President Duterte, as a lawyer, knows the limits of his powers as president. “Separation of power.

That should be respected and the President, as a lawyer, knows that,” Go said.

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo also slammed critics for questioning the President’s decision to defer to the Ombudsman the naming of the alleged abusive legislators. In his radio show “Counterpoint,” Panelo said detractors did nothing but condemn the President’s actions.

“These critics ask ‘Why didn’t you name the congressmen?’ You know, critics.

Remember when the President named those involved in illegal drugs before? Critics would ask, ‘Why did you name them, you haven’t filed charges yet?’” Panelo said.

During his “Talk to the People” address on Monday evening, Duterte refused to name lawmakers who are allegedly involved in corruption, citing the ‘separation of powers’ principle as an impediment for his office to investigate corrupt members of the legislative branch.

“I have no business investigating congressmen.

They belong to a separate organ of government which is co-equal to the President,” Duterte said.

President Duterte made the statement after PACC chief Greco Belgica provided him with a list of lawmakers who allegedly demand commissions from contractors of government projects. The President, however, said he will send the names to the Ombudsman for further probing.

I have no business investigating congressmen.

They belong to a separate organ of government which is co-equal to the President.

Go emphasized that the President respects interdepartmental courtesy among the branches of the government, as well as the constitutional mandate of the Ombudsman to investigate irregularities in the government.

Help identify crooks

Go further emphasized that the anti-corruption task force created by President Duterte is tasked to probe into alleged anomalies within the executive branch in accordance with his disciplinary powers over such branch.

He added that other agencies which have investigative functions can help identify government officials who are involved in illicit dealings and activities and that cases of irregularities found through these investigations shall be referred to the Office of the Ombudsman for appropriate action.

“However, when the cases are under investigation by the Ombudsman, the office can tap the task force created by the President, headed by (Department of Justice) Secretary Menardo Guevarra,” explained Go.

“Other agencies such as the Commission on Audit, the Civil Service (Commission) can reveal those who are involved... For now, the President does not want to name them even without a formal investigation,” he added.



Despite Mr. Duterte's decision, there will be no sacred cow in the government's fight against corruption, according to Go. He and the President respects the mandate and duty of the Ombudsman to prosecute government officials to bring them to justice.

Earlier, Go warned erring public officials who refuse to comply with Duterte's policies against corruption, saying that they will face consequences for their deeds.

He, then, appealed to the conscience of government officials to shape up and do what is right.

Panelo, meantime, expressed contempt for Duterte's critics, saying there seemed to be nothing that can please them.

"He was criticized for naming them.

Now that he doesn't want to name them you're still mad.

That's the problem, when the President does something, you don't like it. When he doesn't do it, you don't like it either.

He's damned if he does and he's damned if he doesn't," he added.

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LPA to bring scattered rains over Metro Manila, central Luzon, CALABARZON, La Union, Pangasinan

Published November 27, 2020 4:20am

As of 3 a.m. on Friday, the Low Pressure Area (LPA) was estimated in the vicinity of Bubulong Munti, Bulacan while the northeast monsoon will be affecting Luzon, PAGASA reported in its early morning forecast.

Metro Manila, central Luzon, CALABARZON, La Union, and Pangasinan will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms due to the LPA with possible flash floods or landslides during moderate to at times heavy rains.

Cordillera Administrative Region, Cagayan Valley and the rest of Ilocos Region will have cloudy skies with light rains brought about by the Northeast Monsoon with no significant impact.

The Bicol Region, MIMAROPA, Visayas, and Mindanao will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms due to the easterlies with possible flash floods or landslides during severe thunderstorms.

Wind speed forecast for northern and central Luzon is moderate to strong and moving northeastward while coastal waters will be moderate to rough.

Southern Luzon will have moderate to strong wind speed moving in the east to northeast direction while coastal waters will remain moderate.

Visayas and Mindanao will have light to moderate wind speed moving in the east to northeast direction while coastal waters will be slight to moderate.

The sun will rise by 6:03 a.m. and set by 5:24 p.m. -- **BAP, GMA News**

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/weather/765839/lpa-to-bring-scattered-rains-over-metro-manila-central-luzon-calabarzon-la-union-pangasinan/story/?just_in



Nearly 100 whales die after mass stranding in New Zealand

Reuters

Posted at Nov 25 2020 02:57 PM



Courtesy of New Zealand's Department of Conservation - Te Papa Atawhai

WELLINGTON - About 100 pilot whales and bottlenose dolphins have died in a mass stranding on the remote Chatham Islands, about 800 km (497 miles) off New Zealand's east coast, officials said on Wednesday.

Most of them were stranded during the weekend but rescue efforts have been hampered by the remote location of the island.

New Zealand's Department of Conservation (DOC) said in total 97 pilot whales and 3 dolphins died in the stranding, adding that they were notified of the incident on Sunday.

"Only 26 of the whales were still alive at this point, the majority of them appearing very weak, and were euthanized due to the rough sea conditions and almost certainty of there being great white sharks in the water, which are brought in by a stranding like this," said DOC Biodiversity Ranger Jemma Welch.

Mass strandings are reasonably common on the Chatham Islands with up to 1,000 animals dying in a single stranding in 1918.

Mass whale strandings have occurred throughout recorded modern history, and why it happens is a question that has puzzled marine biologists for years.

In late September, several hundred whales died in shallow waters off the Australian coast in one of the world's biggest mass whale strandings.

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/11/25/20/nearly-100-whales-die-after-mass-stranding-in-new-zealand?fbclid=IwAR0fZbrwQX3yoXNXKfuqgqhTHpU7NmnYVGls_0nZbpUhQj3Vneiizt2Z1Dw



Ready for the Dry Years: Building Resilience to Drought in Southeast Asia

By The Manila Times
November 27, 2020

Joint Op-Ed between ESCAP Executive Secretary and the ASEAN Secretary-General

South-East Asia has long endured severe droughts, which occur on average every five years. The prolonged 2015 and 2018 droughts were the worst on record for two decades. They simultaneously affected more than 70 per cent of the land area, with over 325 million people exposed. No ASEAN member States was spared from the devastating impacts including the disruption to livelihoods and food security, as well as forest fires and haze.

The drivers of drought risk in South-East Asia are inherently complex, resulting in considerable year-to-year variations. Drought is heavily influenced by various climatic drivers, mainly the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD). Yet, despite this complexity, clear trends point to an intensifying drought risk across the region.

New analysis of observed data and climate projections in the second edition of Ready for the Dry Years: Building Resilience to Drought in Southeast Asia, a joint report by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) reveals a statistically significant increase in temperature from 1981-2020, that is expected to continue. This means that drought severity will increase as the climate gets warmer.

This urgency has been enhanced by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has converged with the climate crisis. Both disasters have simultaneously disrupted people's health, livelihoods and supply chains across the region. These compounding impacts have led to severe economic stress and undermined the ability of the region to deal with current and future disaster risks. It is crucial that we understand how recurrent droughts and the current pandemic are interacting, to identify appropriate policies that can address these crises simultaneously.

ASEAN and ESCAP are working together to prevent the destructive impacts of droughts by promoting a paradigm shift towards more adaptive drought risk management and governance. This cooperation is anchored in a forward-looking, science-based approach to drought risks. The adaptive policy interventions must support the most vulnerable and those furthest behind in the region.

The latest evidence shows that 15 to 25 per cent of the region's population lives in drought hotspots, with low levels of socio-economic development and high exposure to recurring droughts. Targeted policy interventions in these areas will be essential to prevent the cumulative impacts of recurring droughts, which over time, pose a serious threat to hard-won development gains, particularly the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. These interventions must follow three clear policy tracks to reduce and prevent droughts from occurring; prepare and respond to droughts when they happen; and restore and recover after a drought has passed. Accordingly, they should cover a wide range of policy areas, from the management of food, water and energy systems, to the implementation of early warning systems and drought risk financing.

Governments should capitalize on several opportunities to meet this challenge. Firstly, the cyclical and slow-onset nature of drought provides time for us to take risk-informed actions now, to prevent a drought hazard from becoming a crisis. Secondly, governments can benefit from ASEAN's extensive experience and expertise through greater regional cooperation, driven by ASEAN's agenda on drought and the newly adopted ASEAN Declaration on the Strengthening of the Adaptation to Drought. Thirdly, the COVID-19 pandemic offers an opportunity to act now to reduce the impacts of future droughts, by incorporating measures to build resilience into COVID-19 recovery stimulus packages.



The latest developments in science and technology will underpin the successful scale up of drought management interventions. ASEAN member States must take concrete steps now to strengthen national and regional drought monitoring and improve our understanding of the causes of drought. It is now more vital than ever for the region to build resilience to drought. By working together, we can mitigate the impact of future droughts and ensure that the entire ASEAN Community will be ready for the dry years ahead.

On this note, strong partnerships between the United Nations, ASEAN and national governments and other stakeholders are essential to deal with the increasingly complex and uncertain extreme weather and climate situations along with the impacts of transnational slow-onset disaster risks. ASEAN and the United Nations has enjoyed fruitful cooperation through implementation of the Comprehensive Partnership and the Plan of Action. This joint ASEAN-ESCAP work has reflected our cooperation and partnership for the benefit of our peoples.

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Dato Lim Jock Hoi

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