

28 DECEMBER 2020, Monday



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Dozens of species saved from extinction as DENR designates over 200 protected areas

Published December 27, 2020, 11:49 AM
by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has successfully designated over 200 protected areas (PAs) and saved a dozen species from extinction in 2020.



(MANILA BULLETIN FILE PHOTO)

BMB reported that a total of 244 PAs covering more than seven million hectares have been either legislated or proclaimed in 2020, pursuant to Republic Act 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas (E-NIPAS) Act of 2018.

DENR Assistant Secretary and concurrent BMB Director Ricardo Calderon said the importance of designating PAs could not be overstated.

“Without the legislated and proclaimed PAs in the Cagayan and Marikina River Basin, the devastation of typhoon Ulysses could have been worst for the wildlife and the communities dependent on these natural ecosystems,” he pointed out.

Calderon noted that each PA is guided by a science-based management plan, incorporating biodiversity assessment tools that identify appropriate management and conservation measures for flora and fauna and their habitats.

He also reported that “12 species are no longer on the edge of extinction” after the BMB intensified its wildlife protection and enforcement efforts.

He said the respective conservation status of these species were downlisted from endangered to vulnerable and vulnerable to other threatened species (OTS).



Dozens of species saved from extinction as DENR designates over 200 protected areas

OTS, which is a classification under DENR Administrative Order 2019-09, refers to species or its varieties that is not critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable, but is under threat from adverse factors such as over collection throughout its range.

Calderon said one such species is the Asian Giant Softshell Turtle (*Pelochelys cantorii*), which was downlisted two levels from its previous status of endangered to OTS.

Another species that was downlisted to endangered to vulnerable are the Negros forest frog (*Platymantis negrosensis*), Mount Data forest frog (*Platymantis subterrestris*), Mindanao bleeding-heart (*Gallicolumba crinigera*), Luzon water redstart (*Rhyacornis bicolor*).

The Mindanao fanged frog (*Limnonectes magnus*), Basilan island caecilian (*Ichthyophis glandulosus*), Todaya caecilian (*Ichthyophis mindanaoensis*), Yellow-headed water monitor (*Varanus cumingi*), Marbled water monitor (*Varanus marmoratus*), Large-scaled water monitor (*Varanus nuchalis*), and Mount Isarog shrew-mouse (*Archboldomys luzonensis*) also downlisted from vulnerable to OTS.

Calderon, however, said that even with this achievement, the BMB should not be complacent since those species under OTS might likely revert to its vulnerable or endangered category if left as it is.

“One of the vital components as to why this is successful is our aggressive wildlife enforcement. To date, we have conducted eight successful operations despite the challenges brought about by the pandemic,” Calderon said.

Those operations led to the confiscation of 53 wild fauna and 27.36 kilograms of agarwood or derivatives of *Aquilaria* species with an estimated cost of P5.6 million.

Moreover, seven new cases against wildlife criminals have been filed this year. As of September, the DENR secured 30 convictions out of 32 criminal cases it had previously filed against violators of RA 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001.

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu attributed BMB’s success to its unwavering commitment to making sure the country’s flora and fauna are well protected even during the COVID-19 lockdown when people mobility is limited and environmental crimes are rampant.

“The effects of the community quarantine did not dampen the spirits of our people at BMB. They made sure that the agency’s mandates are still fulfilled in the fullest extent possible,” Cimatu said.



Vietnamese with P763k in rare agarwood arrested

posted December 27, 2020 at 10:40 pm

by [Ronald Reyes](#)

TACLOBAN CITY—Police arrested on Wednesday (December 23) a Vietnamese national for alleged illegal possession of agarwood during an entrapment operation in Barangay Jubasan, Allen, Northern Samar.

In a report from the Police Regional Office headquarters, the suspect was identified as 39-year-old female Hong Dinh Thi Bich.

Joint police operatives confiscated from the suspect 10.9 kilos agarwood with an estimated value of P763,000; 1/2 kilo bird nest with an estimated worth of P750; accessories of making agar beads; and marked money.

Another unidentified male person, believed to be the live-in partner of the suspect, was able to evade arrest.

The operating units were from CIDG-Northern Samar Provincial Field Unit led by Captain Deogracias Diaz III and Regional Special Operations Group (RSOG)-PRO 8, together with Northern Samar SOG, 1st Northern Samar Provincial Mobile Force Company (NSPMFC), 803rd Coy, Regional Mobile Force Battalion (RMFB 8), and Allen Municipal Police Station.

The suspect will be facing charges for violation of section 77 of President Decree 705, or the Forestry Reform Code of the Philippines and violation of Republic Act 9147, otherwise known as the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, police said in the report.

The arrested suspect was brought to CIDG-NSPFU together with the seized pieces of evidence for documentation and proper disposition.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) earlier said that trafficking of agarwood caused “indiscriminate cutting” of Lanete and Lapnisan trees, which are included in the national list of threatened plants and wildlife species in the country.

According to the DENR, high-quality agarwood, which is used in perfume and incense, could value as much as P300,000 to P350,000 per kilo.

Topics: [Vietnamese](#) , [agarwood](#)



Search for a Philippine Eagle family at Mt. Apo Geothermal Reservation



ATTEMPT. The juvenile eagle the team from PEF and EDC were tracking was observed to have attempted to hunt a macaque. However, the bird was unsuccessful. (PEF photo)



WHERE IT EATS. The Feeding tree lacked a clear nest bowl and was used only for food drops for the hungry juvenile eagle. The juvenile eagle and its parents were seen together in this spot. (PEF photo)



Search for a Philippine Eagle family at Mt. Apo Geothermal Reservation



JUVENILE. A two-year-old Philippine eagle soaring above the forests within the Mt. Apo Geothermal Reservation. (PEF photo)



SPOTTED. A two-year-old Philippine eagle gliding and perching along the boundaries of the forest. (PEF photo)

December 27, 2020

THE Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) endeavors to find all eagle nesting sites within the Mt. Apo Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) and help protect each of these nest sites.

Philippine eagle nest sites are ancient breeding areas – generations of eagle pairs have occupied the same nest site over and over again. Conserving these core areas of reproduction and keeping the nesting pair and their young safe is pivotal to the success of saving the species from being lost forever.



Search for a Philippine Eagle family at Mt. Apo Geothermal Reservation

In 2019, the PEF, Energy Development Corporation (EDC), and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) launched the “Search for the King of Birds” project at the western slopes of Mt Apo.

The search began at the Mt. Apo Geothermal Reservation in Kidapawan City where eagles were seen in the past. Apart from enhancing local awareness and capacity for eagle conservation, project implementers also wanted to find and study an eagle pair and their active nest at the reservation.

Two expeditions in 2019, one in July and another in September, found one Philippine eagle. The bird is suspected to be immature, perhaps over 3 years old, and thus is a floater (sexually immature and unpaired eagle). The presence of an immature eagle indicates that its eagle parents could be nearby.

The PEF Team -- Senior Biologist Ron Taraya and Field Intern Keanu Sitjar -- together with EDC Forest Aides Climclim Lumayon and Renjie Sinding, embarked on the month-long expedition in November to check on a possible new nesting territory of the Philippine Eagle.

The group focused their eagle search on the forests where a lone Philippine eagle was detected in 2019. The terrain at the survey site was very steep, and the forest vegetation is lush. With binoculars and field telescopes, the team alternately manned four observation posts (OP): three on the ground (OP1-3) and one on an elevated platform (OP4). OP4 offered the closest view of the gorge and its forests.

After spending 192 observation hours deep in the forest finding and documenting Philippine eagles and other raptors, the team managed to detect one eagle pair and their two-year-old young.

Confirming a Philippine eagle couple

It was on November 4 when the team saw their first Philippine Eagle pair. The first eagle was found perched inside the canopy above the waterfalls. The bird then took off and flew in circles above the falls. As it was about to head towards the other hill, another eagle appeared and started “chasing” the other eagle. The team recalled that their hearts raced at the sight of the eagles doing their elegant aerial rituals.

The eagle couple then began what appears to be a courtship routine. The two eagles mutually presented their talons in mid-air called “talon presentation”. They also did several bouts of flying together in spirals or “mutual soaring”. Then they flew to different directions; one disappearing inside the deep gorge, while the other landed on an emergent tree. There, the eagle stayed on its perch cleaning its feathers with its beak called preening. It was also seen scratching, stretching,



Search for a Philippine Eagle family at Mt. Apo Geothermal Reservation

and moving its head. After performing these general maintenance behaviors, the eagle finally flew off and glided beyond the waterfalls until it disappeared behind the tree line.

In Mindanao, September to January is the nesting season for Philippine eagles, and courtship displays precede each egg-laying. Eagle pairs at several nests sites of Mindanao start their courtship rituals above their nesting area as early as July, but the routine can last even until the pair is already rearing a chick. These observations strongly suggest that the forest the team investigated is a new Philippine eagle nesting territory at the Mt. Apo KBA.

Documenting a juvenile Philippine Eagle

On November 5, while occupying OP 2, the team was eager to see “prey delivery” and/or “sprig delivery” behaviors that would lead them to a possible nest.

To the group’s great delight, two eagles were spotted. The eagles glided steadily on a level cruise, with one trailing the other. They emerged from the same spot where one of the eagles disappeared the day before. One eagle landed on a tree that is visible to the group, while the other rested on a concealed spot.

While observing the pair, the team then heard loud, crying calls from another eagle. The calls were typical of “food-begs” from a very hungry young eagle. Food-begging calls are mostly exhibited by juveniles whenever an attending parent is nearby. The hungrier the eaglet, the louder its calls get.

The team occupied the post early the following day in anticipation of another eagle encounter. It was early in the morning when loud eagle calls were heard once again. The “food-begs” echoed across the forests and it took the team a while to find the eagle. Finally, the eagle emerged out of a tree directly above the waterfalls.

The bird was over a kilometer from the research team’s post, and at that distance, it was very difficult to see the bird’s physical features in detail. One can tell whether a bird is a juvenile or adult based on the shape of its feathers, the color of its legs, and its general appearance. The bird calls resemble infantile vocals, but the team needed to have a closer look to be sure. An adult delivering food and feeding the eagle is another proof that the bird is a juvenile.

While observing the eagle, an adult eagle appeared above the ravine and flew towards the direction of the calling bird. The adult eagle was seen to be carrying a freshly killed prey. The “food begs” intensified as the other eagle flew above the ravine. Minutes later another eagle soared above the feeding tree and disappeared behind the hills.



Search for a Philippine Eagle family at Mt. Apo Geothermal Reservation

The team returned on November 7 to check whether the tree where the adult eagle dropped the food is a nesting tree. From afar, the feeding branch looked like a huge nest bowl. The researchers also wanted to know if the juvenile slept at that tree.

Later, they discovered that the eaglet indeed slept there. The team saw the eaglet was sun-bathing, drying its feathers using under the early morning sun.

During this visit, the team also encountered the eagle-parent. It landed on a different tree and left eventually. It flew above the tree where the young eagle was perched. It then disappeared behind the tree line. The juvenile eagle trailed its parent's flight path and also disappeared behind the forests. The eagles were not seen for several days after this encounter.

To know for certain if the tree is a nesting tree, the team decided to find a closer observation post at the forest edge on November 12.

Upon closer inspection of the tree, it showed that it does not qualify as a suitable nesting tree. It did not have the typical nest bowl structure, the associated thick ferns, and other epiphytes that one will find in an old nest. It appears that the tree is more of a "feeding tree" than a nesting tree.

On November 13, the established OP₄ – an elevated platform that gave them a good view of the whole forest. The following day, they occupied our new platform and waited.

It was in the afternoon when two Philippine eagles were again spotted circling just above the ridge. But the mutual soaring did not last a minute. Only one Philippine eagle landed on a spot that is visible to the team. The other eagle, which they suspect is the juvenile, hid behind the foliage. They heard it calling but never saw it for the rest of the day.

The team had another encounter with the juvenile Philippine Eagle on November 19 after it soared just above OP₄. Now closer to the bird, about 200 to 300 meters, the relatively sword-tipped flight and tail feathers of the juvenile eagle were visible. The bird also had all the other features typical of a two-year-old juvenile such as awkward hunting moves, lower flight confidence, and limited flight duration.

The juvenile eagle was also observed to hunt when it took on a group of long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*) foraging on an escarpment just in front of the waterfalls.

Researchers saw the bird leaping from the tree and darting towards the macaques. The macaques panicked and ran frantically in different directions to avoid the eagle. While it did attempt to corner a macaque, the juvenile eagle's attempt to hunt was unsuccessful as the macaque it had its eye on was able to escape. The macaques were also observed to have rallied together to scare off the eagle.



Search for a Philippine Eagle family at Mt. Apo Geothermal Reservation

After the month-long expedition to observe and track a family of Philippine eagles, the researchers can confirm that they have discovered a new nesting territory of the eagle. The juvenile eagle is already in its post-fledging stage. Based on the general appearance of the juvenile eagle, its behavior, and the behavior of its parents towards it, researchers estimate that the age of the young eagle to be around two years old. Following the eagle's nesting cycle on Mindanao, the eagle pair could also be laying an egg soon.

Aside from detecting the critically endangered Philippine eagle, seven other raptors seen during the expedition. These raptors are the Philippine Serpent Eagle (*Spilornis holospilus*), Philippine Honey buzzard (*Pernis steerei*), Brahminy Kite (*Haliastur indus*), Philippine Falconet (*Microhierax erythrogenys*), Chinese sparrowhawk (*Accipiter soloensis*), the crested honey buzzard (*Pernis ptilorhynchus*), and the Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*). (PEF)

Ron Taraya and Jayson Ibanez. Ron and Jayson are Biologist and Director for Research and Conservation, respectively, at the Philippine Eagle Foundation.



New snake species: Scientists say dwarf E. Visayas snake should have own genus

By: [Gabriel Pabico Lalu](#) - Reporter / [@GabrielLaluINQ](#)
[INQUIRER.net](#) / 08:04 PM December 27, 2020



Waray Dwarf Burrowing Snake. Photo from Jeff Weinell Twitter post.

MANILA, Philippines — A new snake species believed to be endemic in the Philippines has been discovered to be a part of a new genus, which means that it has distinctive features that differentiate it from other existing snake species in the world.

A paper from University of Kansas graduate research assistant Jeffrey Weinell and colleagues Daniel Paluh, Cameon Siler, and Rafe Brown claimed that the Waray Dwarf Burrowing Snake — known to be native to the Samar and Leyte islands hence its name — has some characteristics that are very distinct to its previous classification.

According to the study, the Waray Dwarf Burrowing Snake — now classified part of the new genus *Levitonius*, as a *Levitonius mirus* species — shares multiple skeletal characteristics with close relatives *Myersophis* and *Oxyrhabdium*.

However, it differs in terms of size, as the maximum total length was measured at 172 millimeters, making it the smallest known species in the Elapoidea family.

Due to its size — measuring less than seven inches — it feeds mostly on earthworms.

“Molecular data support *Levitonius*, new genus, to be most closely related to *Myersophis* and *Oxyrhabdium*, and it shares multiple skeletal characteristics with these genera; *Levitonius*, new genus, differs from all of these taxa in body size, scalation, and other characters,” said the paper, published last December 23.



New snake species: Scientists say dwarf E. Visayas snake should have own genus

“Skeletal and other phenotypic data suggest that *Levitonius*, new genus, is fossorial and likely has a diet that is specialized on earthworms. *Levitonius mirus*, new genus, and species has a maximum total length of 172 mm and is at present the smallest known species in Elapoidea,” it added.

Weinell announced the availability of their [peer-reviewed paper](#) in a tweet, sharing the link of the open-access study.

In the journal, Weinell and his associates provided various models and results, from CT scans to X-rays of skeletal compositions, observations, DNA samples, and analyses which back up the need to assign a new genus for the Waray Dwarf Burrowing Snake.

What these findings bring, the researchers said, is the need to further study Samar and Leyte’s biodiversity to assess properly how the country’s fauna developed.

“Our results highlight the need for future work on Samar and Leyte Islands, which have received relatively little attention from systematists, in part because of a prevailing biogeographic paradigm that predicted (not necessarily correctly) that these islands would simply have a nested faunal subset of the Mindanao faunal region land vertebrates,” the study said.

“The discovery of a strikingly distinct and phylogenetically divergent snake lineage on these landmasses joins numerous related studies calling for a wholesale reconsideration of the Pleistocene Aggregate Island Complex model (the PAIC paradigm of diversification) biogeographic framework,” it added.



Carmen Copper Corp. commits to help landslide victims' families



File photo

December 27, 2020

THE Carmen Copper Corp. (CCC) has committed to provide free education until college and allowances to all the children of its employees who died or are still missing after a landslide took place at its Carmen Pit in Toledo City on Dec. 21, 2020.

In a press statement on Sunday, Dec. 27, the CCC said it has, as of this time, provided various forms of financial and other assistance to the immediate family of its deceased workers.

The CCC also offered employment opportunities at CCC for the victims' next of kin, spouse and children.

"CCC has given the same attention to the immediate family of the missing CCC employees and will afford them of the same commitments CCC provided to the family of the deceased," a portion of its statement read.

The CCC said it has also extended support to the family of the contractor who was among the victims.

The fatalities of the landslide were identified as Junil Lagola, Ernesto Caspe, Juan Tapang and Dionisio Labang.

As of Dec. 27, six others are still missing. They are Jose Carpentero, Jonwel Herediano, Simeon Laconas, John Paul Resuelo, Renante Sepada and Alfred Tautho.



Carmen Copper Corp. commits to help landslide victims' families

The CCC said it will help the Mines and Geosciences Bureau 7 with the latter's ongoing investigation and review and will provide a daily update on search operations and developments within the Carmen mine operating pit.

The company also said it has been providing the Toledo City Government with a daily update on its search operations. **(WBS with PR)**



- Headline**
- Editorial**
- Column**
- Opinion**
- Feature Article**



ANG SEKRETO NA AYAW IPAKITA NG MAKADILAWAN?

HALA!! MALA AQUARIUM! OCEAN PARK PANIS SA LINAW! UNDERWATER MANILA BAY

youtu.be

4:51 AM

MANILA BAYWALK

LIBO LIBONG ISDA!!! LUMABAS SA LUNGGAL! UNDERWATER MANILA BAY

5,939 views • 27 Dec 2020

234 3 SHARE SAVE ...



ESME TVKo
125K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

TINALO PA ANG OCEAN PARK SA DAMI NG ISDA AT LINAW NITO. UNDERWATER MANILA BAY
NAKAKAMANGHA NA TALAGA ANG PAGBABAGO NITO!



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION &
INITIATIVES
SERVICE

December 28, 2020

Date

Page

- Headline
- Editorial
- Column
- Opinion
- Feature Article



Manila Bay Update
Mala Dubai Sa Ganda

[December 27,2020 Manila bay Dolomite Sand update](https://youtu.be/December 27,2020 Manila bay Dolomite Sand update)
youtu.be

5:14 AM

MANILA BAYWALK

December 27,2020 Manila bay Dolomite Sand update

69 views • Streamed live 14 hours ago

3 0 SHARE SAVE ...



Aj Tv Vlog
2.69K subscribers

SUBSCRIBE



- Headline
- Editorial
- Column
- Opinion
- Feature Article



LIVE: MANILA BAY UPDATE
KASADO NA ANG CCTV
AT WATER PUMP!

[LIVE NOW: MANILA BAY | WIRINGS PARA SA CCTV AT WATER PUMP KASADO NA | MAULAN UPDATE!](#)

youtu.be

4:51 AM

MANILA BAYWALK

LIVE NOW: MANILA BAY | WIRINGS PARA SA CCTV AT WATER PUMP KASADO NA | MAULAN UPDATE!

12,429 views • Streamed live 16 hours ago

👍 364 💬 3 ➦ SHARE ⚙️ SAVE ⋮



KHOPARS VLOG
93.6K subscribers

JOIN

SUBSCRIBE

[#ManilaBayUpdate](#)

[#ManilaBay](#)

[#MayorIsko](#)

SHOW MORE



- Headline
- Editorial
- Column
- Opinion
- Feature Article



**GANITO PALA ANG DATING KALAGAYAN
NG LAGOON SA BASECO**

**DATING TAMBAK
NG BASURA... NGAYON TAMBAK
NA NG ISDA!**

[NAKARECOVER NA SA MALUBHANG KALAGAYAN ANG LAGOON NG BASECO! \(Ang Noon at Ngayon\)](#)

youtu.be

4:51 AM

#BattleForManilaBay

NAKARECOVER NA SA MALUBHANG KALAGAYAN ANG LAGOON NG BASECO! (Ang Noon at Ngayon)

11,877 views • 26 Dec 2020

👍 426 💬 5 ➦ SHARE 📌 SAVE ⋮



engr. berto
131K subscribers

SUBSCRIBE

#BattleForManilaBay



Coronavirus: What has Covid done for climate crisis?

Coronavirus: What has Covid done for climate crisis?Close

When Covid-19 sparked lockdowns around the world, emissions of one of the greenhouse gases responsible for climate change, atmospheric carbon dioxide, plummeted. But is this record drop a short-term effect of the 2020 pandemic or a 'new normal'? BBC Weather's Ben Rich explores the impact of coronavirus on the global climate.

Motion graphics by Jacqueline Galvin

Produced by Soraya Auer

COVID-19 cases sa Pilipinas 469,886 na

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Dec 27 2020 05:38 PM



Mga mamimili sa Divisoria sa Maynila noong Disyembre 13, 2020. *Mark Demayo, ABS-CBN News*

Aabot na sa halos 470,000 ang bilang ng mga kumpirmadong kaso ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas, base sa tala ng Department of Health ngayong Linggo.

Ayon sa DOH, nakapagtala sila ng 883 bagong kaso ng COVID-19 para sa kabuuang 469,886 kumpirmadong kaso.

Pero sa bilang na iyon, 22,099 lang ang active cases o iyong hindi pa gumagaling sa sakit.

Mayroon na kasing 438,678 gumaling sa sakit, kung saan 7,635 ay naitala ngayong Linggo sa ilalim ng lingguhang "Oplan Recovery" ng DOH.

May 42 bagong naiulat na namatay sa COVID-19 para sa kabuuang 9,109 na death toll.

Patuloy namang nag-iingat ang bansa laban sa bagong variant ng SARS-CoV-2, ang virus na nagdudulot ng COVID-19, na galing United Kingdom.

Sakaling lumala ang situwasyon ng COVID-19 sa bansa dahil sa bagong variant, posibleng magpatupad muli ng mga lockdown, sabi noong Sabado ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Patuloy din ang pakikipag-negosasyon ng gobyerno sa mga pharmaceutical company para makakuha ng bakuna laban sa sakit.

Sa buong mundo, umabot na sa 80.3 milyon ang bilang ng mga kumpirmadong kaso ng COVID-19, ayon sa tala ng Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center.



Lockdown posible - Duterte

By [Gemma Garcia](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon)
- December 28, 2020 - 12:00am



Inihayag ito ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa ipinatawag na emergency meeting sa Malakanyang kamakalawa ng gabi kasama ang mga miyembro ng Inter-Agency Task Force.

MANILA, Philippines — Posibleng ibalik sa lockdown ang Pilipinas sa sandaling makapasok sa bansa ang bagong strain ng COVID-19.

Inihayag ito ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa ipinatawag na emergency meeting sa Malakanyang kamakalawa ng gabi kasama ang mga miyembro ng Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF).

Nilinaw naman ng Pangulo na nakadepende pa ito kung gaano katindi ang magiging epekto ng virus sakaling makapasok ito sa bansa.

Kapag marami na umano ang kaso ng bagong variant ng virus at wala pa ang bakuna laban dito ay tiyak na magkakaroon ng malaking problema rito.

Samantala, sinabi naman ni Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año, na sa ngayon ay hindi pa kailangan mag-lockdown subalit kailangan munang isara ang border ng bansa para mapigilan ang pagpasok ng bagong strain ng COVID-19.

Para naman kay Vaccine Czar Sec. Carlito Galvez, chief implementer ng COVID-19 response, kailangan ng “pro-active measures” para maiwasan ang pagpasok ng bagong strain sa bansa.

Dapat din umanong pigilan ng Department of Foreign Affairs ang mga Filipino sa UK na umuwi ng Pilipinas at siguruhin ng Department of Transportation na mapatutupad ang mas mahigpit na border control sa mga paliparan.

Kaugnay nito, inatasan din ni Pangulong Duterte ang Department of Health (DOH) at Department of Science and Technology na bumuo ng bagong task force para sa bagong strain ng virus.



Proactive measures needed to contain new Covid-19 strain: Galvez

By Lade Jean Kabagani December 27, 2020, 5:54 pm



National Policy Against Covid-19 chief implementer and vaccine czar, Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr.
(Screenshot from RTVM)

MANILA – Proactive measures must be imposed in the country to prevent the possible entry of the new strain of coronavirus detected in the United Kingdom (UK), National Policy Against Covid-19 chief implementer and vaccine czar Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. said on Saturday night.

In an emergency meeting presided over by President Rodrigo Duterte and the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) in Malacañang, Galvez recommended to the Department of Transportation (DOTr) to establish a stringent border control to prevent individuals infected with new strain of Covid-19 from entering the country, particularly those from the United Kingdom.

"Recommend *ko po kay* (I'm recommending to) Secretary [Arthur] Tugade to give instructions to the different airlines coming from Europe *na talagang busisihin po 'yung ano, 'yung kanilang mga passport na baka mamaya doon sila nanggaling sa UK* (to strictly check their passports because they might have come from the UK)," Galvez said.

In the same meeting, Duterte approved the recommendation for an extension of the ban on flights from the UK for two more weeks after Dec. 31.

Galvez said the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) should make an advisory urging overseas Filipinos in the UK to temporarily refrain from returning to the Philippines

The local government units (LGU) should also impose active monitoring in their respective cities and municipalities, he added.

Galvez also recommended a discreet investigation among overseas Filipinos from the UK.

He said government should put up a special quarantine facility for those who will be infected with the new strain of coronavirus.



Proactive measures needed to contain new Covid-19 strain: Galvez

"We should be prepared *kung saan po natin ilalagay 'yung mga tao po na para ma-isolate po natin sila lahat* (to isolate all those infected individuals)," he added.

During the Palace meeting, infectious diseases experts said the new strain of Covid-19 is more infectious. However, there is still no evidence that it is more virulent.

At present, the variant is spreading fast across the United Kingdom and have reportedly been found in Japan, Singapore, France, Sweden, and Spain. **(PNA)**



Creation of different task force on new Covid-19 strain mulled

By Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos December 27, 2020, 12:16 pm



PANEL VS. NEW COVID-19 STRAIN. President Rodrigo R. Duterte presides over an emergency meeting with selected members of his Cabinet along with infectious disease experts at Malacañang Palace Saturday (Dec. 26, 2020). Duterte pitched for the creation of a new task force that will focus on the new strain of the coronavirus disease 2019 that was first detected in the United Kingdom. *(Presidential photo by King Rodriguez)*

MANILA – President Rodrigo Duterte on Saturday pitched for the creation of a new task force that will focus on the new strain of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) that was first detected in the United Kingdom (UK).

Duterte made the suggestion during his meeting with the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) and infectious diseases experts held at Malacañan Palace in Manila.

“Pag-aralan natin. May nakatutok talaga diyan (Let’s assess the situation. Someone needs to monitor the situation). I would suggest that we create a panel whose job would be only to observe the different progression and the identification of the new strain,” he said.

Duterte said the new task force would be different from the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID).

He directed the Department of Health and the Department of Science and Technology to form a task force that is composed of medical experts.

“It should be medical persons na nakatutok lang talaga diyan sa bagong strain (who will monitor the new strain),” he said.

Treat as ‘deadly disease’

Infectious diseases experts told Duterte during the meeting that while the new strain of Covid-19 is more infectious, there is still no evidence that it is more virulent.



Creation of different task force on new Covid-19 strain mulled

Still, Duterte said the new Covid-19 strain should be treated as a “deadly” disease.

“I think we should not be really complacent about it. We should treat them as deadly disease [that] will be entering the Philippines. *Mahirap kasi* (It’s difficult to be complacent),” he said.

Duterte also advised his Cabinet not to let their guard down to prevent the possible entry of the new variant of the SARS-COV-2, the virus that causes Covid-2019.

“Let’s do it this way: We will assume as if it will really happen. We will assume that the new strain will arrive in the Philippines,” he said.

Duterte has already approved the IATF-EID’s recommendation to ban flights from the UK from December 24 to 31 and extended it for another two weeks to avoid the possible entry of the new Covid-19 strain into the country. **(PNA)**

ALAMIN: Ano ang ‘mutation’ at epekto nito sa virus ng COVID-19?

By [Bombo Christian Yosores](#)

-December 27, 2020 | 8:00 PM



IMAGE | (L-R) Dr. Cynthia Saloma, executive director, Philippine Genome Center (PGC), and Dr. Celia Carlos, chief, Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM)/Sreengrab, DOH media forum

MANILA – Naging maugong ang terminolohiyang “mutation” kamakailan matapos mapaulat na may bagong “variant” ng SARS-CoV-2 o ang virus na nagdudulot ng COVID-19, na kumakalat United Kingdom.

Nagdulot tuloy ito ng pangamba sa ilan dahil sinasabi ng mga eksperto sa Britanya na mas nakakahawa ang nasabing bagong variant ng sakit. Pero paliwanag ng ilang local scientists, walang dapat ikabahala ang publiko dahil normal ang pagmu-mutate ng mga virus.

Ayon kay Dr. Celia Carlos, direktor ng Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM), normal ang “mutation” o pagbabago ng anyo ng mga virus.

“Viruses are living organisms, buhay sila, so they multiply. ‘Pag nagmu-multiply ang isang living organism, mayroong minsan changes na nangyayari in a normal rate, for which scientists call mutation. These mutations are generally for the good of the virus,” ani Dr. Carlos.

“The virus aims to make itself propagate or sustain its life span. Kapag nag-encounter siya ng adverse environment, nag-change siya.”

Paliwanag ng RITM director, kadalasang nangyayari ang “mutation” kapag may pagbabago sa struktura ng virus. Sa prosesong ito raw naitatala kung may natanggal, apalitan o nagbago sa bahagi ng genetic structure nito.

Ito rin ang kinumpirma ni Dr. Cynthia Saloma, executive director ng Philippine Genome Center (PGC). Ayon sa kanya, bahagi rin ng evolution o pagbabago ng anyo ng virus ang proseso ng “mutation.”



ALAMIN: Ano ang ‘mutation’ at epekto nito sa virus ng COVID-19?

“During the time of copying or replication, may error, (doon) nagmu-mutate.”

Inamin ng Pinay scientist na hindi naman palaging masama ang dulot sa host o tao at hayop kapag ang isang virus ay napaulat na nag-mutate. Katunayan, mas malaki raw ang tsansa na mamatay ang virus kung “virulent” o ang anyo nito ay nakamamatay.

Paliwanag ni Dr. Saloma, kailangang “mild” o katamtaman lang ang mutation ng isang virus para mapanatili nito ang kanyang anyo.

“Its important for everyone to know na just because may base changes sa virus na ‘yan it doesn’t mean na palaging harmful, pwedeng ang mutation ay neutral (or) wala lang.”

“Hindi naman laging bad ‘yon (mutation), pwede na ang mutation bad sa virus then mamamatay siya. Pwede rin mag-mutate ang virus na parang wala lang nangyari, neutral. Pwede rin na yung virus magiging better and adaptive sa human host, so pwede siyang tumagal nang tumagal.”

Dahil sa pandemyang idinulot ng SARS-CoV-2 virus, maraming scientists at health expert daw ang nag-aral sa sakit. Sa ngayon, aabot sa 12,000 mutations ng virus na raw ang naitala ng mga nag-aral na eksperto sa buong mundo.

Ilan sa mga natukoy na mutation ng virus ay kapareho sa nadiskubre sa UK, kung saan sinasabing mas madaling naipapasa ang sakit sa ibang tao.

“There’s also one mutation noted where there was a deletion in the spike protein, so that’s being interpreted as possible effect on the antibody response of the host.”

“Halimbawa, gumaling na siya, vaccinated, or immune na siya, pero because of this alteration the virus is able to survive even in a previously infected patient with antibodies or previously vaccinated patient.”

Ilang bansa na rin sa Europe at Asia ang nakapagtala ng bagong variant ng COVID-19 virus. Pinaka-huling nag-report ang bansang Canada.

VARIANT VS STRAIN



IMAGE | Dr. Edsel Salvana, infectious diseases expert and member of the DOH-Technical Advisory Group/Screengrab, DOH media forum



ALAMIN: Ano ang ‘mutation’ at epekto nito sa virus ng COVID-19?

Nilinaw naman ng kilalang infectious diseases expert na si Dr. Edsel Salvana na magkaiba ang “variant” at “strain.”

Ayon sa kanya, ginagamit ang terminong “strain” kapag ang mga naitalang mutation ng isang virus ay hindi na kayang labanan ng mga bakuna at antibody ng tao.

“Genetically, isa lang ang strain ng SARS-CoV-2. Kasi yung SARS-CoV, MERS-CoV, these are all strains of coronavirus. Ang strain lang natin ng SARS-CoV-2 ay iisa,” ani Dr. Salvana, na miyembro rin ng DOH Technical Advisory Group.

Ang salitang “variant” naman ay ginagamit kapag may naitatalang mutation ang isang strain ng virus.

“Any mutations to that strain is called a variant. (But) if at some point dumami talaga yung mutations na hindi na gumagana yung bakuna, or iba na yung response ng antibody, that’s the only time na sasabihing may bagong strain.”

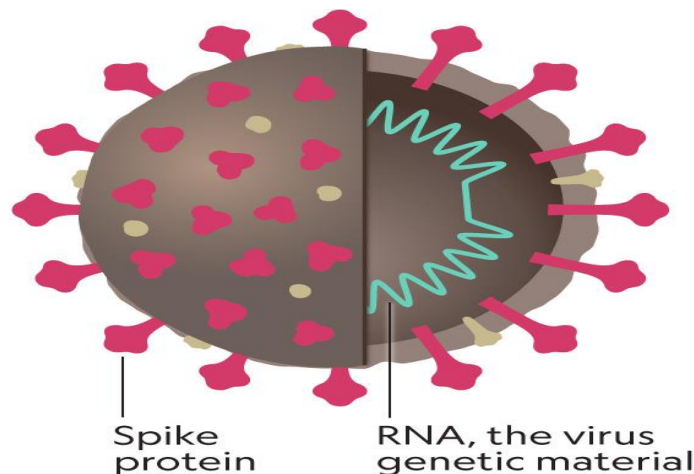


IMAGE | Coronavirus structure/National Geographic

Kung maaalala, nadiskubre ng PGC at RITM noong Hunyo na ang D614G mutation ng virus ang “dominant” o nangingibabaw na variant ng sakit na kumakalat sa Pilipinas.

“So far yung distinct genotype or sequence of mutation in UK, other than the D614G, di pa naman nakikita sa samples natin, which we did until October.”

“Yung commonality lang natin with UK variant is the region na D614G, kumakalat pa rin, essentially the dominant strain in the country and worldwide.”

Itinuturing ngayon na “dominant” mutation ng virus ang D614G sa buong mundo. Natukoy ng mga [scientists](#) ang pagbabago sa anyo ng “spike protein” o bahagi ng virus na kumakapit sa cell ng tao, na siyang dinadaan ng genetic material ng sakit papasok sa katawan ng tao.



ALAMIN: Ano ang ‘mutation’ at epekto nito sa virus ng COVID-19?

Aminado ang Department of Health na naka-apekto ang naturang variant kaya sumirit ang COVID-19 cases sa bansa noong ikatlong quarter ng taon.

Ayon sa ahensya, habang pinag-aaralan pa rin ng mga eksperto ang katangian ng SARS-CoV-2, mahalagang sundin pa rin ng bawat isa ang minimum health standards para maiwasan ang banta ng impeksyon sa COVID-19.



Philippine COVID-19 cases projected to reach 800,000 by end-2021

Published December 27, 2020 7:40pm
By JON VIKTOR D. CABUENAS, GMA News

The number of confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the Philippines is expected to climb to 800,000 by the end of 2021 even if efforts against the virus are sustained, simulations conducted by experts from the University of the Philippines (UP) found.

Based on 1,000 scenarios run by the UP COVID-19 Pandemic Response Team (UP PRT) and fitted to the actual data as of last Friday, December 25, 2020, the cumulative number of reported cases in the country will range between 700,000 to 1 million by December 2021. This corresponds to an average of around 19,000 deaths, excluding unreported cases.

The Philippines on Sunday [reported 883 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 to bring the official tally to 469,886](#) as of December 27, 2020. This includes 437,678 recoveries and 9,109 deaths.

The simulation results assume that minimum health standards remain in place, and that localized lockdowns are still possible, and takes into consideration the availability of vaccines by mid-2021.

"Based on the projected epidemic curve, there is a big chance that the number of cases will have a continuous declining trend in 2021, assuming that testing, contact tracing, isolation, and compliance to minimum health standards in the 'new normal'," Jomar Rabajante of the UP PRT said in a post on social media.

The range of simulation results, Rajante explained, depended on several factors such as the physical opening or closure of schools, the opening of the economy under the new normal, and the compliance of citizens to minimum health standards.

President Rodrigo Duterte on Saturday [took back his order allowing a dry run of face-to-face classes](#) in January 2021, following reports of a new COVID-19 variant in the United Kingdom.

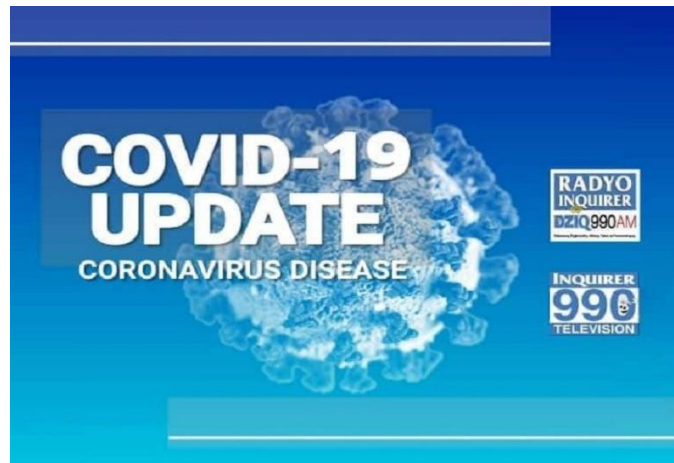
Rabajante said the simulation scenarios also considered the increased infectiousness of the virus, and the vaccination program that will likely start in mid-2021 with a maximum capacity of 1,500 complete vaccinations daily.

"These projections (agreement or deviations from these projections) can serve as guide, such as in monitoring the dynamics of COVID-19 spread in the country," he said. — **DVM, GMA News**



Bilang ng kaso ng COVID-19 sa mundo, pumalo na sa 80.72 milyon

By Angellic Jordan December 27, 2020 - 02:42 PM



Umabot na sa mahigit 80.72 milyon ang bilang ng kumpirmadong kaso ng COVID-19 sa buong mundo.

Batay sa huling tala, pumalo na sa kabuuang 80,720,289 ang tinamaan ng nakakahawang sakit sa iba't ibang bansa.

Nangunguna pa rin sa may pinakamaraming naitalang kaso ng COVID-19 ang Estados Unidos na may 19,433,847 cases.

Sumunod na rito ang India na may 10,188,392 na nagpositibo sa pandemiya.

Nasa 7,465,806 naman ang kaso sa Brazil habang 3,021,964 ang napaulat na kaso sa Russia.

Narito naman ang naitalang COVID-19 cases sa iba pang bansa at teritoryo:

- France - 2,550,864
- United Kingdom - 2,256,005
- Turkey - 2,133,373
- Italy - 2,038,759
- Spain - 1,869,610
- Germany - 1,643,169
- Colombia - 1,584,903
- Argentina - 1,578,267
- Mexico - 1,377,217
- Poland - 1,253,957
- Iran - 1,194,963
- Ukraine - 1,019,876
- Peru - 1,006,318

Samantala, lumabas din sa pinakahuling datos na umakyat na sa kabuuang 1,764,698 ang bilang ng nasawi sa iba't ibang bansa.

Nasa 56,911,409 naman ang total recoveries ng COVID-19 pandemic sa buong mundo.

Read more: <https://radyo.inquirer.net/281398/bilang-ng-kaso-ng-covid-19-sa-mundo-pumalo-na-sa-80-72-milyon#ixzz6hrMO5OM2>



2 LPAs to whip up more rain – Pagasa

By [Arlie O. Calalo](#) and [Dempsey Reyes](#)

December 28, 2020

THE two low pressure areas (LPAs) spotted in Palawan and Albay will continue to bring rain in most parts of the country although these had a low chance of developing into a tropical depression, the weather bureau said on Sunday.

The first LPA was seen 80 kilometers west of Puerto Princesa City, Palawan while the other was spotted 85 km east of Legazpi City, Albay.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), however, did not rule out the likelihood of a tropical cyclone formation.

Chris Perez, Pagasa's senior weather specialist, said moderate to heavy rains would fall in Bicol Region, Eastern Visayas, Quezon, Aurora, Bulacan, Rizal, Mindoro Provinces, Marinduque, Romblon, Dinagat Islands, Calamian Islands and Kalayaan Islands.

He added that on Monday, Cagayan — including Babuyan Islands, Isabela, the northern portion of Apayao, the northern portion of Ilocos Norte and Aurora — would have moderate to heavy rains, while light to moderate with at times heavy rains would fall in Metro Manila, Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon), Kalinga, Mountain Province, Ifugao, Kalayaan Islands, and the rest of Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon and Apayao.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) on Sunday warned the public against landslides and flash floods.

Mark Timbal, NDRRMC deputy spokesman, urged affected local government units to prepare for the possible evacuation of residents.

“The public is advised to brace for possible floods or landslides during heavy or prolonged rainfall brought by the weather disturbances,” the council said.

It called on local government officials to heighten their preparedness.

“The NDRRMC is calling on LGUs (local government units) to undertake all necessary preparations as prescribed under Oplan Listo and NDRRMC memorandum 54,” Timbal said.



Palasyo, pinatututukan ang umiiral na 2 LPA at Amihan sa bansa

By Chona Yu December 27, 2020 - 06:05 PM



Mahigpit na mini-monitor ng Palasyo ng Malakanyang ang dalawang low pressure area (LPA) at Northeast Monsoon o Amihan na nasa Pilipinas.

Ayon kay Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque, bagamat sinabi ng PAGASA na walang bagyo, patuloy na pinapaalalahanan ang publiko na maging alerto at maging handa para sa posibleng landslide at pagbaha dahil sa patuloy na pagbuhos ng ulan.

“We must not forget or ignore all the necessary precautions to ensure the safety of everyone, including the observance of minimum public health standards, such as wearing of masks/ shields, washing of hands, and maintaining social distancing. Gawin pa rin natin ang Mask, Hugas, Iwas,” pahayag ni Roque.

Patuloy anyang magtatrabaho ang ehekutibo kahit na holiday season para lamang masiguro ang kaligtasan ng bawat isa.

“We ask the public to continue following their local officials, monitor the latest PAGASA advisory, and be prepared in case there is an evacuation,” pahayag ni Roque.

Read more: <https://radio.inquirer.net/281418/palasyo-pinatututukan-ang-umiiral-na-2-lpa-at-amihan-sa-bansa#ixzz6hrNKm7tI>

Follow us: [@inquirerdotnet on Twitter](#) | [inquirerdotnet on Facebook](#)



Patuloy na nagpapakawala ng tubig ang Magat Dam ngayong Linggo, ayon sa Cagayan Provincial Information Office. As of 2 p.m., isang gate nito ang nakabukas.

📷: CAGAYAN PIO

ALERTO CAGAYANO
CPIO Special Coverage

Magat Dam Update

as of 2:00 PM, December 27, 2020

1 GATE

Open at 1 meter high

193 masl Spilling Level	190.49 masl Reservoir Water Level
Inflow = 627 cms	Outflow = 449 cms



Luzon dams release water as LPAs dump rains

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Dec 27 2020 11:12 AM | Updated as of Dec 27 2020 03:45 PM

MANILA (UPDATE) - PAGASA on Sunday warned of flooding as water level in the dams of Magat, Angat, and Ipo in Luzon continued to rise due to rains brought by two low pressure areas in the country.

The operator of Magat Dam, located in Isabela province, opened one gate at 1 meter as of 9 a.m. Sunday, according to PAGASA. The water release would likely affect the towns of Ramon, San Mateo, Aurora, Cabatuan, Luna, Reina Mercedes, Burgos, Naguilian, and Gamu, it added.

The channels of the Cagayan River are also on "above alert level," which may cause flashfloods due to accumulation of water, according to the bureau's hydrometeorology division.

"The whole stretch of the Cagayan River including major tributaries is likely to rise in the next 12 hours," PAGASA said.

Cagayan and Isabela provinces were severely flooded during the onslaught of typhoon Ulysses in November.

As of 2 p.m., the Angat and Ipo dams in Bulacan opened one gate each at 0.5 meters, according to PAGASA. The water release will affect the towns of Norzagaray, Angat, San Rafael, Bustos, Baliuag, Pulilan, and Plaridel, it said.

Angat Dam's water level was 213.378 meters, higher than its normal water level of 212 meters, PAGASA said. Ipo Dam was at 100.32 meters, nearing its normal water level of 101 meters.

The operator of Angat Dam, Metro Manila's main source of water supply, earlier issued a flood precaution as a "definitely large amount of rainfall is expected within the next 24 hours" in the dam's catchment area due to the weather disturbances.

The LPAs won't likely develop into tropical depressions but will bring rains over large swaths of the country, the weather bureau earlier said.



Public urged to brace for possible floods, landslides

By Azer Parrocha December 27, 2020, 5:26 pm



MANILA – Malacañang on Sunday urged the public to brace for possible floods and landslides brought about by two low pressure areas (LPAs) and the northeast monsoon.

Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque made this remark after the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) announced that two LPAs inside the Philippine Area of Responsibility are expected to bring moderate to heavy rains in many parts of the country within 24 hours.

“This is to inform that the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) conducted a meeting today, December 27, 2020, regarding the two low pressure areas (LPAs) and the northeast monsoon which have brought prolonged rainfall to the country,” he said in a statement.

He urged the public to monitor the news for updates regarding evacuation and other relief and response operations.

“We ask the public to continue following their local officials, monitor the latest PAGASA advisory, and be prepared in case there is an evacuation,” he said.

Despite the inclement weather, Roque explained that it is important to continue observing minimum health standards amid the prevailing pandemic.

“We must not forget or ignore all the necessary precautions to ensure the safety of everyone, including the observance of minimum public health standards, such as wearing of masks/ shields, washing of hands, and maintaining social distancing. *Gawin pa rin natin ang Mask, Hugas, Iwas* (Let’s continue to use our masks, wash our hands, and observe physical distancing),” he said.

He also assured that the executive branch continues to work during this holiday season to ensure the health and safety of everyone.

As of 3 p.m. Sunday, the first LPA was spotted 190 kilometers west northwest of Puerto Princesa City, Palawan while the other one was seen 40 kilometers northeast of Daet, Camarines Norte.



Public urged to brace for possible floods, landslides

Moderate to heavy rains will be experienced today over Eastern Visayas, Bicol Region, Quezon, Aurora, Bulacan, Rizal, Mindoro provinces, Marinduque, Romblon, Dinagat Islands, Calamian Islands, and Kalayaan Islands.

Light to moderate with at times heavy rains over mainland Cagayan Valley, Metro Manila, the rest of Visayas, Northern Mindanao, Zamboanga Peninsula, and the rest of Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, and Caraga.

The two LPAs being monitored are not likely to develop into tropical depression, PAGASA said.

However, the public and the local government units were urged to heighten preparedness for the combined effects of the two LPAs.

PAGASA issued the commencement of flood precaution period for Angat Dam in anticipation of the rainfall brought by the LPAs. Advisories on the flood-precaution period for dams are continuously disseminated to areas to be affected. **(PNA)**



2021 NAT'L BUDGET POSIBLENG LAGDAAN NA NG PANGULO NGAYONG ARAW

written by [Lyn Aurora Legarteja](#) December 28, 2020



Inaasahan nang lalagdaan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang proposed 2021 budget ngayong araw ng Lunes, Disyembre 28.

Ayon kay Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque, noong Biyernes natanggap ng Malakanyang ang kopya ng panukalang P4.506-T national budget para sa susunod na taon.

At dahil umuwi na sa Davao City ng Pangulo nakaraang Lunes para sa pagdiriwang ng pasko, ay dito na rin aniya lalagdaan ang panukalang pondo kasama ang ilan sa mga mambabatas.

Una nang tiniyak ng Malakanyang na bubusisiin nito ang panukala at gagamitin ng Pangulo ang kapangyarihan nito na i-veto ang ilang bahagi nito kung kinakailangan.



Quezon City, kinilala sa climate leadership

By [Mer Layson](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon)
-December 28, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Nakabilang ang Quezon City sa 88 global cities na kinikilala at binigyang-parangal ng global environmental non-profit na CDP dahil sa kanilang climate leadership at patuloy na pangunguna sa pagsasagawa ng environmental action at transparency nitong 2020, sa kabila nang pagsubok na pinagdaanan dahil sa pagsugpo sa COVID-19.

Sa naturang 88 lungsod, 14 ang mula sa Asia Pacific region, kabilang dito ang Quezon City, na tumanggap ng 'A score' sa kauna-unahang pagkakataon.

Ang 88 cities sa 2020 CDP Cities A List ay tumanggap ng pinakamataas na rating dahil sa pagsusumikap nila sa pagbabawas ng greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at pagtatatag ng resilience o katatagan laban sa impact ng climate change.

Bukod sa Quezon City, kabilang din sa mga naturang lungsod na nakasama sa A List ng CDP ngayong taon ay ang Newcastle (United Kingdom), Louisville KY (USA), Firenze, (Italy), Municipalidad de Peñalolén (Chile), at Pingtung (Taiwan, Greater China).

Upang makakuha ng A score, dapat na isapubliko at magkaroon ang isang lungsod ng city-wide emissions inventory, nakapagtakda ng emission reduction target, at nakapag-publish ng isang climate action plan.

Dapat ding makakumpleto ito ng climate risk at vulnerability assessment at mayroong kumpletong climate adaptation plan upang maipakita kung paano nito haharapin at tututukan ang climate hazards ngayon at sa hinaharap.

Bunsod nito, ikinatuwa naman ni Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte at ibinahagi ang natanggap na karangalan sa mga residente ng Quezon City.

Nangako rin si Mayor Belmonte na patuloy na magsisikap at magtutulungan ang mga opisyal ng QC-LGU upang higit pang maging mas maunlad na lungsod, na may pagkalinga sa kalikasan ang Quezon City.



Group calls for added measure amid fishing ban in Visayan Sea, Zamboanga Peninsula

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)
December 28, 2020

AN international conservation advocacy group has called on the Philippine government to ensure food and livelihood for municipal fishermen and commercial fish workers during closed fishing season, particularly for sardines and in the Visayan Sea and sardine and other species of fish in the Zamboanga Peninsula.

Such complementary measure, according to nongovernment organization Oceana Inc., “is imperative” as it said it expresses support behind the declaration of closed fishing season, underscoring the importance of keeping the country’s fish stock, particularly sardines, sustainable.

“The declaration of closed fishing season by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources [BFAR] this year takes a more significant turn because the National Sardines Management Plan was signed and up for implementation,” Gloria Estenzo Ramos, Oceana Vice President, emphasized. “Secondly, we have the rules on vessel monitoring measures also ready for implementation that will help in effectively enforcing the closed season.”

The participatory process that the Sardines Management Plan provides can complement the strong enforcement of the closed season, Ramos, an environmental lawyer added.

Ramos said “this is an opportunity to engage fishermen, civil society groups, local governments and other stakeholders in crafting the Fisheries Management Plan of sardines as an important element of managing the impact of the closed fishing season.”

“With the spatial and temporal closure in the portion of the Visayan Sea, it is imperative for Fisheries Management Areas through the Management Body and put in place a monitoring and evaluation mechanism that will look into the biological condition of the fisheries resources, and socioeconomic impact of this harvest control measure,” Ramos explained. “This science-based intervention of policies and plans that are developed through the participatory mechanism of the Fisheries Management Area will be most helpful.”

Sardines is an important fisheries resource especially in this time of pandemic and calamities when it is one of the items commonly given out to the affected families in relief and emergency response packs. However, our sardines municipal fisherfolk are also among the poorest of agriculture sector that are most in need of this support, Oceana said.

In the recently released third-quarter report of the Philippine Statistics Authority, fisheries registered a 1.9-percent increase in output. It contributed 15.8 percent to the total agricultural production. Bali sardinella or tamban posted a 31.5-percent growth and among the two other fisheries species that posted higher production growths. The others being big-eye tuna with 39.9 percent increment, and blue crab at 25.5 percent.

“The sustainable management of sardine fisheries is one of the goals of the National Sardine Management Plan. Part of the plan is to determine the impact of the close season and support the provision of job opportunities during the close season. As we continue to grapple with the challenges of the pandemic, climate change and fisheries management, the, our fisherfolk bear the heavier burden than any other sections of our population. Ironically, they are our food producers



Group calls for added measure amid fishing ban in Visayan Sea, Zamboanga Peninsula

that suffer the most from hunger, barely able to give their children their basic necessities of shelter and education,” Ramos said.

Based on the Fisheries Administrative Order 167-3, issued in 2013, portions of the Visayan Sea are closed for catching, selling, and buying of sardines and herrings (tamban/tabagak/tamban-tuloy/balantiong) and mackerels (hasa-hasa/gumaa/bulao/alumahan). Meanwhile, the Zamboanga Peninsula’s closed fishing season is for sardines only.

The closed fishing season started on November 15 in the Visayan Sea. It will end on February 15 next year. On the other hand, the closed fishing season for sardines in the Zamboanga Peninsula started on December 1, 2020. It will end on March 1 next year.

Ramos said that banning commercial fishing in municipal waters is considered one of the harvest control measures that the FMA should enforce.

“The use of technology like Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite can be used to detect violations during the close season. The BFAR recently issued the rules for vessel monitoring mechanisms. The installation of tracking device in the commercial fishing vessels will highly improve the enforcement efforts,” Ramos added.



Climate change: A threat underestimated?

By [Business Mirror](#)

December 28, 2020

By Reynaldo A. De Dios

While the world is currently focused on controlling the coronavirus pandemic, it is overlooking the threat of climate change or global warming. A recent report by an Australian think tank disclosed that ecological shocks caused by climate change would adversely affect the poor and under developed countries by 2030!

What are some of the risks that may be caused by this underestimated threat? They are as follows: population growth resulting in a heavy urbanization, food insecurity, water shortage, floods, typhoons, droughts, rising temperatures and sea levels.

A new risk is the annual forest fires in the USA and Indonesia, causing hazardous air pollution. In addition, it is also feared that climate change could expose new epidemics. The think tank also claimed that at least 60 percent of the countries covered would be exposed to flood threats due to rising sea levels and temperatures caused by the melting of the glaciers in both the Arctic and Antarctic Oceans, thus water and food scarcity would follow as the global population outpaces the world's resources.

A report by the United Nations emphasized the importance of reducing greenhouse-gas emission and limit global mean temperature increase to 1.5 degree Celcius above pre-industrial levels. This was the commitment agreed upon by 153 nations at the Paris Agreement in 2015. It is fortunate that a number of major nations have pledged to support forest protection and other nature-based solutions.

In Asia-Pacific, we cite the valued contribution of Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance Co. Ltd. of Japan, which has partnered with Conservation International Asia-Pacific to support conservation efforts and raising awareness about the importance of biodiversity and nature. MSIG has also launched a knowledge portal to highlight biodiversity conservation. The public can visit the knowledge portal at www.msig.asia.com/biodiversity.

Just recently, Mr. Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations, in his opening speech at the Climate Ambition Summit held online to mark five years since the Paris conference, called on governments to declare a state of climate emergency and make good on their promises to slash carbon pollution. It was also disclosed that the pandemic lockdowns and restriction of movements have brought down carbon emissions by 7 percent.

To cope with calamities and disasters, either natural or manmade, it is vital to invest substantially in resilience measures. A forward step by the Philippines is the proposed Disaster Resilience Department, which will be responsible in managing and organizing national efforts to prevent and reduce disaster risks.

The author is the Publisher-Editor of Insurance Philippines.



Southeast Asian coal demand doubles in past decade — IEA

December 27, 2020 | 6:42 pm



COAL demand in Southeast Asia doubled in the past decade led by Indonesia, with Philippine consumption fourth, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA).

“Coal consumption in Southeast Asia has more than doubled in the last decade, with the largest growth in Indonesia and Vietnam, followed by Malaysia and the Philippines. In 2019, demand in Southeast Asia was 332 MT (million tons), of which 42% was accounted for by Indonesia and 27% by Vietnam,” the IEA said in a report.

According to IEA data, the Philippines used 250 MT in the past decade. In 2019, coal consumption was 30 MT. The Philippines’ coal-fired power plant capacity was 9.6 gigawatts (GW) last year, making the power industry by far the largest user of coal.

According to the Department of Energy (DoE), the Philippines consumed around 33 MT of coal last year.

This year, however, coal demand in the Philippines will fall “for the first time in several years due to the global health emergency, the IEA said.

The IEA’s report on coal, published on Dec. 18, projected that overall coal demand in Southeast Asia will rebound 7% next year as economies recover.

In Indonesia, which consumed 1,001 MT of coal in the past decade, demand is expected to rise after Jakarta ruled that coal producers investing in downstream operations will receive a waiver on royalties, the IEA said.

The IEA said global demand for coal in 2020 will register the “largest drop since the Second World War, falling 5% from its 2019 levels.”

“Coal’s decline is only slightly sharper in power generation than in industrial applications. Except for China, industrial output has been severely subdued by the COVID-19 crisis,” the IEA said.



Southeast Asian coal demand doubles in past decade — IEA

The European Union (EU) and the US logged a 19% increase and 14% decrease, respectively, in coal-fired power generation. Consumption increased 1.2% in the Asia Pacific region this year, the IEA reported.

It added that by 2025, global coal demand is projected to “flatten out” at 7.4 billion tons, but Southeast Asia will surpass the US and EU to become the third-largest coal-consuming region.

Two months earlier, the Department of Energy (DoE) announced a moratorium on new coal-fired power plant projects, following a recent assessment which showed the need to shift to a “more flexible” power supply mix.

The Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) said in a November report that around 10GW of greenfield coal plants will be affected by the DoE’s ban.

However, a report by non-government organization Clean Air Asia estimated that power generating capacity from coal-run plants is expected to rise by 135% as soon as the plants which are currently being built became operational. — **Angelica Y. Yang**

Japan boosts renewable energy plan



By [Agence France-Presse](#)
December 27, 2020

TOKYO: Japan on Friday unveiled plans to boost renewable energy, phase out gasoline-powered cars and reduce battery costs as part of a bid to reach an ambitious 2050 carbon-neutral goal.



CLIMATE GOALS Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga wearing a face mask gives his first policy speech during an extraordinary session at the lower house of parliament in Tokyo on Monday. AFP PHOTO

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga announced the new 2050 goal in November, significantly moving up Japan's timeline for carbon-neutrality.

On Friday, his government laid out for the first time what meeting that target will involve, including setting a provisional goal of generating more than half of the country's electricity from renewable sources by 2050.

"The government's actions on the environment reflect our belief that a significant change of mindset is required and that these are not constraints for growth, rather they are drivers of growth," top government spokesman Katsunobu Kato told a regular briefing.

Japan, which is a signatory to the Paris climate deal, has been seen as reluctant to reduce its reliance on fossil fuel, despite its self-professed pride as a nation of energy-saving technologies.

The country was the sixth-biggest contributor to global greenhouse emissions in 2017, according to the International Energy Agency.

The world's third largest economy still relies heavily on coal and liquefied natural gas, with most of its nuclear reactors offline since the 2011 Fukushima disaster.



Japan boosts renewable energy plan

Japan expects demand for electricity to surge 30 to 50 percent by 2050, but the nation's conservative ruling party has so far stayed lukewarm about renewable energy, though Suga has shifted the tone in recent weeks.

Under the plans to boost renewables, officials are placing a new focus on offshore wind generation, with the goal of producing up to 45 gigawatts within the coming decades.

Japan also wants to use nuclear and thermal power plants with carbon capture technology to cover 30 to 40 percent of the nation's electricity demand.

Ammonia and hydrogen technologies are expected to fulfil about 10 percent of the nation's power needs. By the mid-2030s, the government also wants to end the sale of new passenger vehicles that are solely powered by gasoline.

Japan plans to replace them with hybrids, electric cars and cars fitted with fuel-cell engines, while bringing down the cost of batteries for those vehicles.

But while officials say the new plan is ambitious, some critics believe it falls short. Mika Ohbayashi, director of the Renewable Energy Institute, said the figures were "a poor starting point for discussions and [showed] a lack of ambition."