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DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR suspends 2 Cebu dolomite firms

By Eireene Jairee Gomez

September 28, 2020

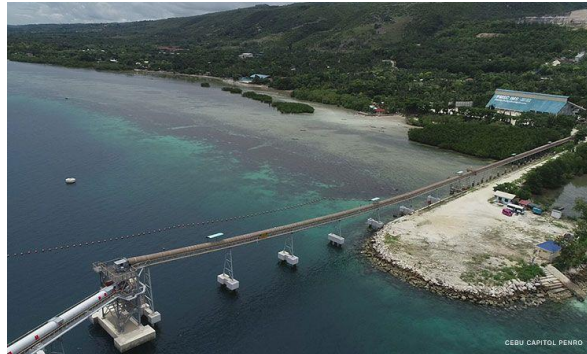
THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has suspended two dolomite firms in Alcoy, Cebu, pending results of an investigation of alleged coral reef damage, water quality monitoring and ambient air quality, the DENR chief said recently. This came after an inspection, led by DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, who immediately called for the suspension of Dolomite Mining Corp. (DMC) for its quarry operations and Philippine Mining Service Corp. (PMSC), a processing plant for dolomite. He directed the DENR-Environmental Management Bureau in Region 7 to conduct a water-quality sampling in waters below the conveyor at the shiploading facility and conduct ambient air quality. He also ordered the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources-Cebu to conduct a coral assessment to determine the health condition of the corals that was the subject of the complaint by the provincial government. DMC, the only large-scale producer of dolomite materials, is a holder of a 25-year mineral production sharing agreement covering 524.6103 hectares of dolomite property, located within the municipalities of Alcoy and Dalaguete, Cebu, which will expire in 2030. PMSC is a holder of a mineral processing permit, which will expire in 2023.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/09/28/news/regions/denr-suspends-2-cebu-dolomite-firms/773052/>



DENR: Issues against Cebu mining firms separate from Manila Bay 'white sand' project

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#) Published Sep 27, 2020 8:32:34 PM



(FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 27) — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources said allegations plaguing Cebu-based dolomite mining companies were not related to the government's efforts to beautify Manila Bay.

"Separate issue po 'yan pagdating sa project natin sa Manila Bay kung saan hindi po ipagsasapalaran ng ating Kalihim ang ating kalikasan para lang gumanda ang Manila Bay," DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda told CNN Philippines on Sunday.

[Translation: That is a separate issue from the Manila Bay project, and the Secretary will not risk endangering the environment just to beautify Manila Bay.]

What's important, Antiporda said, was that the operations of the mining and mineral processing firms were suspended pending an investigation.

He said the initial complaint against the companies concerned their taxes, which the DENR had no jurisdiction over. The agency only stepped in when allegations concerning environmental issues surfaced.

Antiporda said the DENR has never received a formal complaint against the firms regarding the issues before.

He said while the investigation could affect the overlaying efforts along the Manila Bay shoreline, they could look for other alternatives to dolomite, including what he called "lighter black sand."

On Friday, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu [ordered the suspension](#) of the Dolomite Mining Corporation for its quarry operations and Philippine Mining Service Corporation, a processing plant for dolomite.

Cimatu ordered the suspension to make way for a thorough investigation on the alleged damage caused by dolomite mining on the coral reef, water, and ambient air quality in the extraction area.

Both companies are located in Alcoy, Cebu, where the dolomite boulders are mined, crushed and processed. Truckloads of the same dolomite materials were transported to the Manila Bay and used in the so-called 'white sand' project.

The Cebu provincial government has earlier issued a cease-and-desist order for the unauthorized extraction of the dolomite rocks.

Governor Gwendolyn Garcia issued Executive Order No. 25 preventing the two firms from "extracting, processing, selling and transporting dolomite, associated mineral deposits, and other quarry resources."

Antiporda said the investigation would be done quickly but could not tell when its results would be released.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/9/27/denr-cebu-mining-dolomite-manila-bay.html>



Garcia welcomes DENR order suspending operations of mining firms

Published September 27, 2020, 12:11 PM

by [Calvin Cordova](#)

CEBU CITY—Cebu Governor Gwendolyn Garcia welcomed the decision of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to suspend the operations of the dolomite mining and mineral processing firms in Alcoy town, southern Cebu.



Cebu Governor Gwendolyn Garcia (Cong. Gwen Garcia Facebook page / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

Garcia thanked DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu for stopping the mining firms' operations pending the results of an investigation on violations of their mining permits, water discharge permit, and the Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC).

“I would like to thank Secretary Cimatu for acting quickly,” said Garcia.

The governor said she believed that Cimatu was already apprised of the investigation showing some signs of damage in the town's marine ecosystem that was caused by mining activities.

“There are obvious violations to the ECC and to the water discharge permit. These are violations that are causing degradation of our seabed,” Garcia said.

Cimatu ordered Dolomite Mining Corporation and Philippine Mining Service Corporation to suspend the processing of blocks of dolomite exported as raw material to Korea and Japan for the manufacture of glass and steel. The two firms also processed the crushed dolomite rocks used for the beautification project in Manila Bay.

The governor added that there were already plans to issue cease and desist orders before the suspension order was issued.

“We had contemplated on issuing cease and desist orders, but I thank Secretary Cimatu for beating me to it. So, thank you very much,” Garcia said.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/09/27/garcia-welcomes-denr-order-suspending-operations-of-mining-firms/>



PEOPLES
JOURNALS
Tonight

Volume XL, No. 290 • Sunday, September 27, 2020 • P10.00

**GO SA MGA P/5
TITSER: 'WAG
MAGBAGSAK
NG ESTUDYANTE**



ANTIPORDA TO EX-SOLON: DO THE MATH

DENR exec hits 'overpriced' Manila Bay rehab claim

DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources Undersecretary Benny Antiporda took a swipe at former Kabataan Party-list congressman and Infracatch PH convenor Terry Ridon over the latter's claims that the Manila Bay beach nourishment project was "overpriced."

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DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda (in file photo with President Rodrigo Duterte) said that he gave Infracatch PH convenor Terry Ridon a lecture on mathematics on Sept. 24, 2020 due to allegations of overpricing on the Manila Bay beach nourishment project. Ridon called on Antiporda not to resort to name-calling in dealing with critics of the Manila Bay white sand project. Photo source: DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda's Facebook Page



Pacquiao, McGregor brace for 'epic fight'

SENATOR Manny Pacquiao's camp on Saturday hinted on his possible retirement from boxing following the confirmation of his fight next year against Conor McGregor.

By MARLON PURIFICACION

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**From sad
life to
happy wife**



SINETCH itey comedienne na sobrang happy lang sa life nya ngayon dahil it seems everything is falling into place?

/Page 12

**SANGGOL LUMUSOT
SA SIWANG NG
BARONG-BARONG,
NALUNOD!** P/3

DoH bares 494 new COVID recoveries

THE Department of Health (DoH) on Friday reported 494 new recoveries from the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and 2,630 new cases, bringing the country's total active cases to 61,766.

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File photo from the City Government of Batac Facebook page

Family recovers from COVID-19

SAN CARLOS CITY, Pangasinan - Four members of a family in Barangay Quezon Boulevard here have fully recovered from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and have been sent home.

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After unruly fuss, 'Manila Bay Sands' lies empty in guarded desolation

Published September 27, 2020 12:43pm

Updated September 27, 2020 3:28pm

After the fuss and the unruly excitement over the "Manila Bay Sands" public opening last week, the artificial white beach along the busy Roxas Boulevard on Sunday falls empty as Philippine Coast Guard patrol boats keep people away.



Photo by Danny Pata

Sunday's sight of the artificial beach was the complete opposite of the area's view on September 20, when the project was opened to the public.



The sheer excitement of seeing a white sand beach in Manila Bay's coastline prompted curious visitors to defy COVID-19 health protocols, which resulted in the suspension of a police official.

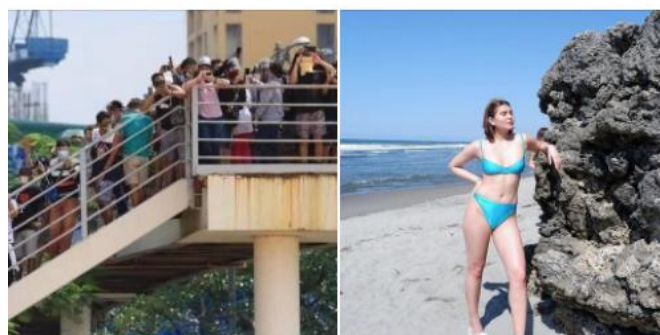
At the opening, the hullabaloo in the beach seemed to draw the attention of migratory egrets that came in a flock, and walked on the artificial sand.



Photo by Danny Pata

A day after Sept. 20, Twitter screamed with hilarious memes showing popular showbiz people and ordinary citizens frolicking in beaches, juxtaposed with the now “iconic” crowded footbridge overlooking the "Manila Bay Sands" project.

My timeline be like... Okay, my entry 🤔
#ManilaBayChallenge



—with a report from Danny Pata/LBG, GMA News

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/09/03/denr-hit-for-planning-to-fill-manila-baywalk-with-white-sand/>



PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFONSO PADILLA FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE @tribunephil_al

THE government's effort to rehabilitate Manila Bay will ensure that fisherfolk will be able to catch something to feed their families and sell some for a little cash.



Solusyon sa mental health? Matalo ang COVID-19, hindi ang white sand beach: Robredo

By **Bombo Christian Yosores**

-September 27, 2020 | 3:34 PM

Hindi ang white sand beach sa Manila Bay, kundi ang pagsisikap na matuldukan ang COVID-19 pandemic ang makakapagpabuti ng mental health ng mga Pilipino, ayon kay Vice President Leni Robredo.

Pahayag ito ng pangalawang pangulo sa gitna pa rin ng mga issue kaugnay ng itinambak na dolomite sand sa bahagi ng Manila Bay kamakailan.

“Siguro pinakamalaking tulong sa mental health, iyong ma-suppress kaagad natin iyong virus,” ani Robredo sa isang panayam nitong Biyernes.

“Kasi ito iyong nakakadagdag sa nakakabagabag sa ating lahat—iyong pag-aalala kung ano iyong ating kinabukasan, lalo na sa mga taong nawalan ng trabaho, lalo na sa mga taong hindi alam kung saan kukunin iyong ipapakain sa pamilya sa mga susunod na araw.”

Nanindigan si VP Leni, na bagamat walang mali sa proyekto, ay hindi napapanahon ang implementasyon nito sa gitna ng hinaharap na pandemic crisis ng Pilipinas.

Hindi rin daw angkop na sa kabila ng mga pahayag ng administrasyon na wala ng pera ang pamahalaan, ay nagawa pa ring ituloy ng pamahalaan ang proyekto.

“Maraming nagugutom ngayon, maraming nangangailangan ng tulong, iyong transmission hindi natin ma-control, tapos makikita iyong ganito. Parang number one, insensitive. Insensitive sa kahirapan. Number two, pinapakita na wala talagang—parang walang sense of urgency sa pagasikaso ng [pandemic].”

“Ang sinasabi natin, gaya iyon, iyong Bayanihan 2 may standby fund kasi sabi natin wala tayong pera. Tapos makikita ganito. Parang very contradictory.”

Bukod sa aniya’y hindi praktikal na pagpapatupad ng Manila Bay beautification ngayong pandemic, ikinababahala rin ni Robredo ang posibleng health hazard ng dolomite sand.

Magugunita kasing sinabi ng Department of Health (DOH) na delikado sa kalusugan kapag humalo sa hangin ang pinong porma ng dolomite.

“Ano ba iyong katotohanan as far as the health hazard is concerned? Kasi pati yata iyong DOH, hindi rin naging malinaw. Parang una, concerned sa health hazard. Sunod, parang wala nang nire-raise na concerns.”

Hamon ng bise presidente, kung talagang nais ng administrasyon na mapabuti ang mental health ng mga Pilipino, talunin muna ang pandemya.

“So sa akin lang, sana kung mental health iyong talagang target natin, ginamit sana natin sa bagay na may direct connection sa pag-aappease ng mga worries na nararamdaman natin ngayon.” Matapos buksan ng dalawang araw, muling isinara sa publiko ang viewing ng white sand beach para ipagpatuloy ang kabuuan ng proyekto.

Source: <https://www.bomboradyo.com/solusyon-sa-mental-health-matalo-ang-covid-19-hindi-ang-white-sand-beach-robredo/>



People were seen crowding on a footbridge to see and visit the stretch of Manila Bay's shore covered with crushed dolomite rocks on September 20, 2020.

The STAR/Edd Gumban

Robredo: Pandemic didn't cancel Manila 'white sand' opening, shouldn't push back polls

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - September 27, 2020 - 1:35pm

MANILA, Philippines — There is no reason to postpone the 2022 national elections because of the coronavirus pandemic when the government can open Manila Bay's artificial "white sand" beach to the public, Vice President Leni Robredo said Sunday.

Rep. Mikey Arroyo (Pampanga) earlier in the floated the idea of postponing the next national elections, saying his constituents are afraid to vote due to possible exposure to the new coronavirus.

But Robredo shot down the proposal, citing that South Korea successfully held elections in the middle of a raging pandemic. The United States and New Zealand are also preparing to hold their respective polls, she added.

"Kung kayang buksan 'yung Manila Bay, bubuksan na rin 'yung Boracay, bubuksan 'yung ibang tourism sites, walang dahilan para i-postpone," Robredo said in her weekly radio show.

(If we can open Manila Bay, we are also opening Boracay and other tourism sites, we have no reason to postpone it.)

Last week, people flocked to the "white sand" beach along Manila Bay after it was briefly opened to the public. Photos and videos showed people crowding and not practicing physical distance despite efforts to limit visitors inside the beach area.

Boracay, the country's top tourist destination, is also set to open its shores to tourists from general community quarantine and modified GCQ area starting October 1.

Scenario with COVID-19

The Commission on Elections said it is already preparing to conduct polls during COVID-19 pandemic.

"As far as the Comelec is concerned, it is already given that by 2022, there is still a pandemic. That is the basis of our preparations," Comelec spokesperson James Jimenez said in an interview on radio dzBB Friday.



“At this point, we don’t see a need for it. We do not see the need for a postponement,” he added.

Jimenez said they are studying ways to expand alternative voting methods and moving polling places to gymnasiums or covered courts instead of small classrooms to avoid crowding. The commission is also looking into whether elections may be held in two to three days instead of just one day.

Article VII, Section 4 of the 1987 Constitution provides that “unless otherwise provided by law, the regular election for president and vice president shall be on the second Monday of May.”

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/09/27/2045477/robredo-pandemic-didnt-cancel-manila-white-sand-opening-shouldnt-push-back-polls?fbclid=IwAR0YDAhL99I96WNvymX7N2x9QC3zmDO6N0BjUm8kgQeBAerFeMukD1gSFfY>



The Manila Bay sand trap

By Thomas M. Orbos

September 28, 2020



Thomas M. Orbos

STREET TALK

IN the game of golf, landing your golf ball on a sand trap is a most unfortunate event. It would test not only your skill but also your fortitude while all eyes are on you. Such is the case of the Manila Bay white sand project. Now, everyone is watching what is going to happen—whether it will get caught deeper into the sand trap or it will get out and prove its validity and viability to the total rehabilitation of the bay.

The Manila Bay rehabilitation project started in 2019 with the President ordering the cleanup, right after the successful environmental turn-around of Boracay. With multi-agency and private sector participation, the next few months saw a garbage-less Manila Bay shoreline, never seen before, giving Metro Manilans a ray of hope that in due time, the bay will regain its past glory. There were no expectations that miracles would happen overnight. It was enough that we were moving in the right direction. Then came the white sand makeover, catching everyone off guard amid the pandemic.

The project is now in a sand **trap**, with an almost equal division of public opinion at play. Those in favor highlight the resulting aesthetic value of the project, as well as its benefits to local commerce and tourism. This is accompanied by a narrative of the failure of the past six administrations in such a cleanup, and bolstered by the selfies posted on social media of the thousands who flocked to the site. Indeed, the hope of another Boracay miracle is occurring right before our eyes.

On the other side of the spectrum are those who are against it for a variety of reasons. First on their table is the nature of the sand material itself, made up of crushed dolomite, eliciting questions about its extraction, not to mention how this would impact Manila Bay itself, with some environmental advocates planning to seek judicial remedy on the matter. The project's funding has also been raised though the initial report of P389 million project cost was refuted recently by the project proponents, countering that only P28 million was spent. Nevertheless, as these are public funds, questions on proper dispensation as well as proper accountability are being raised, especially as these were spent during the pandemic.

So, how can the government get out of this sand trap? My suggestion: Just like in golf, what matters is the long game. The government needs to present the whole rehabilitation plan, which I am sure they have, to the public. Presenting the complete picture puts rationale and appreciation to the small portion that we only see now. Ignore the politics. A good, sound project survives political fighting no matter what. The second step would be to make the cleanup participative. Open areas where the public can share responsibility. Bring in private sector funding, expertise, and most especially the academe and the environmental advocates. Have regular multi-sectoral cleanup events. Let the public be part of the fight and the eventual victory. When people participate in public projects, half of the success is already gained. Third would be to expand the scope of the project beyond Manila Bay. The project's success depends on ensuring that all the adjacent bodies of water, including the Pasig River, Laguna de Bay, and the waters off Cavite, Laguna, Bulacan and Bataan are also prioritized. And as the garbage flows from the Metro Manila tributaries, then a more stringent enforcement needs to be undertaken metro-wide. Lastly, to ensure the longevity of the environmental mindset, the importance of environmental conservation needs to be hammered into the consciousness of the public, most especially to our youth to whom we will pass the torch of responsibility of preserving what we have for the future.



Fixing the environmental problem can never be a one-off and a stand-alone effort. As we have seen worldwide with issues on global warming, environmental cleanups need to be holistic, long-term and participated by everyone. Just like the game of golf, winning is about the whole 18 rounds. The government just needs to get out of its present sand trap and play the long game on.

Thomas "Tim" Orbos was formerly with the DOTr and the MMDA. He has completed his graduate studies at the McCourt School of Public Policy of Georgetown University and is an alumnus of the MIT Sloan School of Management. He can be reached via e-mail at thomas_orbos@sloan.mit.edu



Studies on PH environment, natural resources available online — DENR

Published September 27, 2020, 4:47 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The public can now have online access to various significant studies on the environment and natural resources conducted by the Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB).



(MANILA BULLETIN FILE PHOTO)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has launched an online platform to host various ERDB research findings and scientific publications that prove crucial in formulating DENR programs, policies, and decisions for the protection and conservation of the environment. ERDB is an agency under the DENR.

The research materials can now be downloaded from the ERDB's official website, <https://erdb.denr.gov.ph/>.

The research publications are not only used by the DENR offices, but are also widely used by state universities and colleges, public libraries, and other institutions.

Secretary Roy Cimatu said he is pleased that through the collective efforts of the scientists, experts, researchers, and employees of the ERDB, "the Department gets to understand more about our environment and every little (thing) that goes with it."

"They spend months, even years, doing rigorous research to provide the Department with the scientific knowledge that we need," he added.

Among those that can be downloaded from the website are "Sylvatrop," "Canopy International," and "Research Information Series on Ecosystems" or RISE.

Sylvatrop is the DENR's official technical journal for new and original scientific information and research breakthroughs on ecosystems and natural resources, while Canopy International is a semi-technical publication on science-based stories about ecosystems issues and solutions.

Meanwhile, RISE is a compilation of pertinent knowledge on the propagation and planting techniques of important indigenous reforestation species to help students and researchers save these species from extinction.

Cimatu said the online platform is one of the innovative ways of the DENR to reach the public, especially amid the coronavirus pandemic.



“Even in the midst of a pandemic, this is our response to the growing demand for information that may empower us Filipinos into achieving sustainable growth and development,” he stressed.

The DENR chief also noted how research is vital to the agency’s strategic programs and policies that help address major environmental problems in the country.

“This pool of knowledge serves as a vehicle to allow us to move further. Science helps us arrive at more informed decisions. It tells us what to do next, which steps to take, and how far we will go. This is how we use knowledge in the DENR as a fuel towards growth and productivity,” he pointed out.

ERDB Director Henry Adornado vowed that the bureau will continuously update and populate its website with new research information.

“We assure the public, more so, the DENR bureaus, offices, and attached agencies that ERDB will live up to its mandate of providing more technologies and information for the protection and betterment of the environment,” he said.

DENR ibabahagi sa online ang mga resulta ng ecosystem research



September 27, 2020 @ 4:25 PM 13 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Upang makapagbigay ng access sa publiko sa iba't ibang makabuluhang pag-aaral tungkol sa kapaligiran at likas na yaman na ginawa ng Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB) isang online platform ang inilunsad ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Ayon kay Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, ang online platform ay magbibigay daan upang ma-access ang iba't ibang mga ERDB research finding at scientific publication na tunay na napakahalaga at kailangan sa pagbuo ng mga programa, polisiya at desisyon ng DENR para sa proteksyon at konserbasyon ng kalikasan.

“As Secretary of the DENR, I am very pleased that through the collective efforts of the scientists, experts, researchers, and employees of the ERDB, the Department gets to understand more about our environment and every little [thing] that goes with it,” sabi ni Cimatu.

Ang mensahe ni Cimatu ay ipinahayag ni Undersecretary for Legal, Administration, Human Resources and Legislative Affairs Ernesto D. Adobo, Jr. sa ginanap na virtual launch ng online platform sa pamamagitan ng Facebook live noong Setyembre 15.

“They spend months, even years, doing rigorous research to provide the Department with the scientific knowledge that we need,” dagdag pa nito.

Ayon sa DENR ang mga research material ay maaaring mai-download mula sa ERDB's official website na <http://erdb.denr.gov.ph/>.

Kabilang sa mga maaaring mai-download mula sa website ay ang Sylvatrop, Canopy International and Research Information Series on Ecosystems o RISE.

Ang Sylvatrop ay ang opisyal na technical journal ng DENR para sa bago at orihinal na scientific information at research breakthroughs sa ecosystems at natural resources, habang ang Canopy International ay isang semi-technical publication sa science-based stories tungkol sa mga ecosystem issue at solution.

Ang RISE naman ay isang compilation ng mga pertinenteng kaalaman sa propagation at planting techniques ng mga importanteng indigenous reforestation species upang makatulong sa mga mag-aaral at mga mananaliksik na maisalba ang species na ito sa extinction.



Sinabi ni Cimat, ang online platform ay isa sa mga innovative na paraan ng DENR upang abutin ang publiko, lalo na ngayong nasa gitna tayo ng coronavirus pandemic.

“Even in the midst of a pandemic, this is our response to the growing demand for information that may empower us Filipinos into achieving sustainable growth and development,” pagdiin pa nito.

Binanggit pa ng DENR chief kung gaano kahalaga ang research sa mga strategic program at mga polisiya ng ahensya na nakatutulong upang malapatan ng solusyon ang mga pangunahing problema sa kalikasan ng bansa. **Santi Celario**



Villar says reclamation project of Paranaque government will worsen flooding, threaten protected area

By **BMP** Plus September 27, 2020



Sen. Cynthia Villar

Sen. Cynthia Villar today asserted that the reclamation project being pushed by the Paranaque local government will cause flooding in Cavite, Paranaque, and Las Pinas and will be detrimental to the viability of the Las Pinas-Paranaque Wetland Park.

Villar, chairperson of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, made this statement as a response to the public hearings being called on October 1 and 2 for the creation of a 287-hectare artificial island along the coast of Manila Bay in the territorial jurisdiction of Paranaque.

“The Paranaque Reclamation Project will be building on the buffer zone of the Las Pinas- Paranaque Wetland Park. This should not be allowed to proceed because it will hamper the free flow of water which is critical to the survival of the wetland ecosystem,” Villar said. In addition it will destroy 35 hectares mangrove forest which is the spawning ground of fishes in Manila Bay supporting the livelihood of 300,000 fisherfolks in Manila Bay.

Villar also disputed project proponent and Paranaque Mayor Edwin Olivarez’s claim that the flooding will be prevented by the Imus catchment basin, saying that the infrastructure was constructed for the existing problem in Cavite brought about by the Cavite expressway. She said the Paranaque reclamation project was not considered when this was planned.

“According to former DPWH Secretary Singson, the Cavite Expressway is supposed to be a viaduct according to plan but instead, they reclaimed Manila Bay and constructed the expressway on top of the reclaimed road which causes so much flooding in Imus, Bacoor and other places in Cavite. To address this, DPWH built the Imus catchment basin. This project is not intended to solve flooding in Paranaque and Las Pinas,” Villar said.

The lady senator also appealed to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to consider the buffer zone of the wetland park before approving any reclamation in the area.

Villar has also voiced out her opposition to the 320-hectare Bacoor reclamation project which also proposes to build on the wetland’s buffer zone

Under Republic Act 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act, the 175-hectare wetland situated South of Manila Bay is a protected area. It is also listed as one of the seven areas in the country declared as a wetland of international importance by the Ramsar Convention because of its critical role in the survival of threatened, restricted-range and congregatory bird species.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/09/27/villar-says-reclamation-project-of-paranaque-government-will-worsen-flooding-threaten-protected-area/>



Villar: Reclamation Project ng P'que Government, makasisira sa Wetland Park

On Sep 27, 2020



IGINIIT ni Senador Cynthia Villar na magdudulot ng matinding pagbaha sa Cavite, Paranaque at Las Pinas at makasisira sa Las Piñas-Paranaque Wetland Park ang reclamation project na isinusulong ng Paranaque local government.

Ginawa ni Villar, chairperson ng Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, ang pahayag bilang tugon sa nakatakdang public hearings sa Oktubre 1 at 2 para sa pagtatayo ng 287 ektaryang artipisyal na isla sa baybayin ng Manila Bay na sakop ng Paranaque.

“The Paranaque Reclamation Project will be building on the buffer zone of the Las Pinas-Paranaque Wetland Park. This should not be allowed because it will hamper the free flow of water which is critical to the survival of the wetland ecosystem,” sabi ni Villar.

Makasisira rin ang naturang proyekto sa 35 ektaryang mangrove forest na tirahan ng mga isda sa Manila Bay at pinagkukunan ng kabuhayan ng 300,000 mangingisda dito.

Kinontra ni Villar ang pahayag ni Paranaque Mayor Edwin Olivarez, ang project proponent, na mapipigil ang pagbaha ng Imus catchment basin.

Binigyan-diin ni Villar na ang imprastraktura ay itinayo para sa kasalukuyang problema sa Cavite na dala ng Cavite expressway.

“According to former DPWH Secretary Singson, the Cavite Expressway is supposed to be a viaduct based on the plan. However, they reclaimed Manila bay and constructed the expressway on top of the reclaimed road which causes so much flooding in Imus, Bacoor and other places in Cavite,” sabi ni Villar.

“To address this, DPWH built the Imus catchment basin. This project is not intended to solve flooding in Paranaque and Las Pinas,” dagdag pa nito.

Umapela rin ang senadora sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na ikonsidera ang buffer zone ng wetland park bago aprubahan ang anumang reclamation sa nasabing lugar.

Sa ilalim ng Republic Act 1038 o Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act, isang ‘protected area’ ang 175 ektaryang wetland sa katimugang bahagi ng Manila Bay ay isang protected area.

Kabilang ang Las Pinas- Paranaque Wetland sa talaan ng pitong lugar sa bansa na idineklarang ‘wetland of international importance’ ng Ramsar Convention dahil sa kritikal nitong papel sa kaligtasan sa buhay ng iba’t ibang uri ng mga ibon sa nasabing lugar. **(Mylene Alfonso)**

Source: https://www.policefilestonite.net/2020/09/27/villar-reclamation-project-ng-pque-government-makasisira-sa-wetland-park/?fbclid=IwAR0YNZeN1nqA1ul74LXVEkNjNcyDrk3ytt_P9JJE69e0213XdCFaGXlzD3I



Villar extols value of Las Piñas-Zapote River

posted September 27, 2020 at 11:20 pm

by [Macon Ramos-Araneta](#)

In observance of the World Rivers Day every 4th Sunday of September, Senator Cynthia Villar recognized the importance of Las Piñas-Zapote River as a “life artery” for the people of Las Piñas and nearby cities.

Villar said that “while we no longer have a river as pristine as those in the 70’s, back in the time when the river is teeming with fish, the Las Piñas-Zapote River continues to provide for the city through livelihood projects.” Villar, chairperson of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, said the rehabilitation of the Las Piñas-Zapote River paved the way to social enterprises that provided livelihood to residents.

In 2002 when Villar was still a congresswoman, the Sagip Ilog project was launched. It involved the daily collection of floating garbage which continues up to this day. Workers were employed to clean one kilometer each of the river stretch aboard a boat made of PET bottles.

The water lilies collected from the river were also used as material for weaving handicrafts. The Las Piñas Weaving Center employed women and helped housewives earn an income. The coconut husks thrown into the river were also processed into coco nets for slope protection and coco peat, which is used as a potting mix and organic fertilizer.

The Sagip Ilog project won for Villar and her husband, former Senate President Manny Villar. the United Nations “Best Practices Award” in 2011. The award recognized the project for protecting water resources and for providing livelihood to Filipinos.

Every February, the Las Piñas River Festival was celebrated to mark the anniversary of the second largest battle during the Philippine-American War-- the 1897 Battle of Zapote Bridge.

Among the activities during this event are the drum and lyre competition participated by public elementary schools in the city and a fun run dubbed as Takbo para sa Kalikasan.

The senator also initiated the construction of the Las Pinas River Drive, a five-phase, 20-kilometer road project to ease traffic congestion and reduce flooding incidents in Las Pinas during the rainy season.

“Through this new road, we are certain of a shorter and a more convenient travel time for the people of Las Pinas and for all those who travel to and from our city. This road infrastructure development makes Las Pinas more attractive to investors,” the senator said.

The road which follows the curve of the river bank, involved the resettlement of informal settlers and clean-up of the Las Pinas River.

“We hope that through our projects that transformed our once murky and dirty river to a useful water system, we are raising awareness on the need to better care for our water resources for it to continue to provide us with necessities of life,” she said.

World Rivers Day is celebrated every fourth Sunday of September to highlight the many values of rivers and also to encourage the improved stewardship of rivers around the world.



Las Piñas-Zapote River, kinilala ni Villar bilang 'life artery' ng lungsod



September 27, 2020 @ 2:13 PM 17 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Upang ipagdiwang ang World Rivers Day, nagbigay pugay si Sen. Cynthia Villar sa Las Piñas-Zapote River na patuloy na nagsisilbing 'life artery' para sa mga taga-Las Piñas at karatig siyudad.

Sa pahayag, sinabi ni Villar, chairperson ng Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, na ang rehabilitasyon ng Las Piñas-Zapote River ang naging daan sa pagusbong ng social enterprises na nagbibigay ng pangkabuhayan sa mga residente.

“While we no longer have a river as pristine as in the 70’s, back in the time when the river is teeming with fish, the river continues to provide for the city through livelihood projects that sprung out of our project to rehabilitate the Las Piñas-Zapote River,” ayon kay Villar.

Noong 2002, nang congresswoman pa si Villar, inilunsad niya ang Sagip Ilog project kung saan araw-araw na kinokolekta ang mga inaanod na basura sa ilog na ginagawa hanggang sa ngayon.

Sakay ng bangkang yari sa PET bottles, nililinis ng mga manggagawa ang bawat isang kilometro ng ilog. Kinokolekta mula sa ilog ang water lilies na ginagamit sa paglalala ng handicrafts.

Binibigyan ng Las Piñas Weaving Center ang mga kababaihan at maybahay na magkaroon ng kita.

Ang mga bunot ng niyog na itinatapon sa ilog ay ginagawang coco nets para sa slope protection at coco peat na ginagamit na panghalo sa organic fertilizer.

Dahil sa Sagip Ilog project, napanalunan nina Villar at ang kanyang asawang si dating Senate President Manny Villar ang United Nations “Best Practices Award” noong 2011. Kinilala sa award ang proyekto dahil sa pangangalaga nito sa water resources at pagbibigay ng pangkabuhayan sa mga Filipino.

Ipinagdiriwang ang Las Piñas River Festival tuwing Pebrero upang gunitain ang anibersaryo ng pangalawa sa pinakamalaking digmaan noong Philippine-American War– ang 1897 Battle ng Zapote Bridge.



Kabilang sa mga aktibidades sa pagdiriwang ang drum and lyre competition na nilalahukan ng public elementary schools sa siyudad at fun run na tinaguriang “Takbo para sa Kalikasan.”

Sinimulan din ng senador ang konstruksyon ng Las Piñas River Drive, five-phased, 20-kilometer road project na layuning mabawasan ang trapiko at pagbaha sa Las Piñas tuwing tag-ulan.

“Through this new road, we are certain of a shorter and a more convenient travel time for the people of Las Piñas and for all those who travel to and from our city. This road infrastructure development makes Las Pinas more attractive to investors,” ayon sa senador.

Kabilang din ang resettlement ng informal settlers at paglilinis sa Las Piñas River sa paggawa ng kalsada na sinundan ang kurbada ng river bank.

“We hope that through our projects that transformed our once murky and dirty river to a useful water system, we are raising awareness on the need to better care for our water resources for it to continue to provide us with necessities of life,” sabi pa ni Villar.

Ipinagdiriwang ang World Rivers Day tuwing ikaapat na Linggo ng September upang itampok ang mga kalahagahan ng ilog at itampok na pagbutihin ang pangangalaga sa mga ilog sa buong mundo. **Ernie Reyes**



Environment, health vital in the fight against infectious diseases

By Marites B. PanedaPublished on September 27, 2020



File photo of an environmental activity. Grab from file

QUEZON CITY, Sept. 27 (PIA) -- Various public health emergencies such as dengue, polio, and COVID -19 are linked to environmental factors that needs to be addressed in the fight against emerging and infectious diseases, said Health Secretary Francisco Duque III during the virtual celebration of World Environmental Health Day (WEHD) 2020 on September 25.

By virtue of Proclamation No. 595 of 2018, WEHD is celebrated annually every September 26th to raise global awareness about the most pressing environmental health concerns.

With the theme, "Sa panahon ng pandemya, malusog na kapaligiran ang BIDA", Duque said that water supply, sanitation, air quality, solid waste management, chemical safety, food safety, occupational safety, and climate change are all connected to human health. These are essential components of the National Environmental and Health Plan (NEHAP), which serves as blue print in implementing minimum health standards under the new normal.

Duque emphasized that addressing health and environment is not only the responsibility of the Inter-Agency Committee on Environmental and Health (IACEH) but by everyone. IACEH is an inter-agency body created under Executive Order (EO) 489 series 1991.

He enjoined everyone to be a solution especially in fighting COVID-19 by following the BIDA cradle.

"The list of threats to our environment is already long but we overcome each one through a Bayanihan spirit with your commitment to make a difference in the health of our people and communities that we live in, we will not only heal and recover, we will certainly recover as one," Duque concluded. (MBP/PIA-IDPD)



PH eagle 'Mal'lambugok' released to the wild

Published September 27, 2020, 12:14 PM

by [Antonio Colina IV](#)

DAVAO CITY—The Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) released Philippine eagle “Mal'lambugok” back to the wild on Saturday after being nursed back to health for nearly two months at its center in Barangay Malagos, Baguio District in Davao City.



Philippine Eagle Mal'lambugok (Photo courtesy of Province of Davao Oriental / MANILA BULLETIN)

In an information released by the Provincial Information Office of Davao Oriental, the almost two-year-old female raptor was released in Sitio Palo Siete in Barangay Sobrecarey, Caraga town in the province two months after it was found trapped in Sitio Tagbanahao of the same barangay, after preying on the livestock at a farm there.

“Mal'lambugok” is a Mandaya word for “eagle.”

The release was led by Davao Oriental Governor Nelson Dayanghirang, and representatives from the Philippine Eagle Foundation, Municipal Government of Caraga, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in time for the observance of the “World Environment Health Day.”

The PEF installed a global positioning system (GPS) transmitter on its back to monitor the eagle's movement. The foundation raised P364,736.69 through online crowdfunding for its tracking and monitoring.



Cops vs illegal loggers: 2 dead

Published 4 hours ago on September 28, 2020 02:10 AM

By [Elmer Recuerdo](#)



Two policemen who responded to a report of illegal logging in San Isidro, Northern Samar, were killed in a shootout with the suspects on Saturday night.

Patrolmen Jessie Golondrina, 30, from Lavezares town, and Fernando Velarde, 25, from Matuguinao, were members of the 2nd Maneuver Platoon of the 803rd Mobile Company based in Barangay Salvacion in San Isidro town.

Initial investigation showed the two policemen were sent to verify information from an anonymous caller regarding an ongoing transport of illegal lumber using a motorboat manned by armed men in Barangay Buenavista.

Upon arrival at the site, the armed men fired at the cops.

The shootout lasted several minutes. The victims were taken to St. Camillus Hospital, Calbayog City, but were pronounced dead on arrival.

Captain Leslie Lalic, acting company commander of 803rd Mobile Company, ordered a hot pursuit operation on the suspects.

A few minutes later, a seaborne patrol operation led by Major Antonio Montaña from the San Isidro Municipal Police Station chanced upon the motorboat. As they approached the suspects, a second motorboat loaded with armed men fired on the policemen. Another firefight ensued, hitting boat captain Edwin Erenia on the leg.

Erenia, 40, was brought to Allen District Hospital. His companions, identified as Alex Nunez, 45, and Mark Estoy, 37, both residents of Masbate City, were arrested.



2 Samar cop tinodas ng sinitang illegal logger

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Sep 27, 2020

VISMIN



Patay ang dalawang pulis matapos nilang makaengkwestro ang isang grupo ng illegal loggers Sabado ng gabi sa bayan ng San Isidro, Northern Samar.

Ad Asia Banner – below 1st paragraph

Kinilala ang dalawang pulis na sina Patrolman's Jessie Golondrina y Casulla, 30, at Fernando Velarde, 25, kapwa nakatalaga sa San Isidro Municipal Police Station (MPS). Ang mga ito ay nagtamo ng mga bala sa katawan at idineklarang dead on arrival sa St. Camillus Hospital sa Calbayog City.

Sa inisyal na ulat, alas-10:00 ng gabi nang rumesponde ang dalawang pulis matapos makatanggap ng tawag hinggil sa isang grupo ng mga illegal loggers na nagbibiyahe ng mga torso sa baybayin ng Barangay Buenavista sa nabatid na bayan.

Inabutan ng mga pulis ang mga suspek sakay ng bangkang de motor tangay ang mga troso kaya sinubukan nila itong pigilin subalit agad silang pinaputukan ng grupo.

Nagkaroon ng palitan ng putok hanggang sa tamaan ang mga pulis at makatakas ang mga suspek.

Nadala pa sa nabanggit sa pagamutan ang mga biktima subalit hindi na rin naisalba ang kanilang mga buhay. (Edwin Balasa)



2 pulis patay sa engkwentro laban sa illegal loggers sa Northern Samar

Setyembre 27, 2020 10:11am GMT+08:00

SINULAT NI: RONNIE ROA

SAN ISIDRO, Northern Samar —Patay ang dalawang pulis na rumesponde sa impormasyong may nagbibiyahe ng illegal lumber sa isang bayan sa Northern Samar.

Batay sa inisyal na ulat ng mga pulis, ideneklarang dead on arrival ang mga biktima matapos makaengkwentro ang mga armadong salarin sa baybayin ng Barangay Buenavista sa bayan ng San Isidro.

Rumesponde ang dalawang pulis sa imposmasyong may ibinebiyaheng illegal na troso sa naturang barangay dakong alas-dies ng gabi nitong Sabado.

Sakay ng isang motorized banca, pinaputukan umano ng mga armadong maydala ng kahoy ang mga pulis.

Nagkaenkuwentro ang dalawang panig at pagkatapos ng ilang minutong palitan ng putok, natamaan ang dalawang pulis na kinilalang sina Patrolman Jessie Golondrina y Casulla, 30; at Patrolman Fernando Velarde, 25.

Naisugod pa umano ang dalawa sa St. Camillus Hospital sa Calbayog City, ngunit ideneklarang dead on arrival dakong 11:55 ng gabi ni Dr. Gilbert Cabigon.

Agad namang isinagawa ang pursuit operation ng mga pulis. —**LBG, GMA News**



Trash including used face masks, gloves, PPEs seen scattered on EDSA

Published September 28, 2020 5:25am

Updated September 28, 2020 6:14am

Bags of trash containing used face masks, gloves, personal protective equipment (PPE), among others, were seen strewn on EDSA near White Plains Avenue before dawn on Monday.

Around six garbage bags were opened and found along the highway before 5 a.m., according to a report by Mark Makalalad on Super Radyo dzBB.

There were also used diapers, bottles of mineral water, plastic cups, paper and used tissue.

The trash were found on two northbound lanes, including the bike lane, and were still there as of 6 a.m., according to a report by James Agustin on Unang Balita.



Motorists avoided the trash by staying on the two leftmost lanes. —KG, GMA News

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/metro/757442/trash-including-used-face-masks-gloves-ppes-seen-scattered-on-edsa/story/?fbclid=IwAR1DX4_wNdRGzz0INiBZAUAXx8_2gXZQ272yhhQax1jTjbAWNpqj0pJ_El0



DoST-PTRI promotes bamboo textile processing technology

Published September 27, 2020, 3:38 PM

by [Dhel Nazario](#)

Bamboo textile processing technology is being promoted by the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Textile Research Institute for the production of natural blended yarns and woven fabrics to maximize local bamboo as a vast natural resource.

DoST-PTRI said that through research and development efforts, bamboo is now the newest addition to the local natural textile fibers, joining pineapple, abaca, and banana, which are being converted into textile or fabric through the DoST's textile processing technology.

Noting that bamboo has the highest textile fiber yield among other textile fibers like pineapple, banana, or abaca, more significant opportunities will be provided for income generation from upstream to downstream for the natural textile industry sector.

The DoST-PTRI technology has been optimized following mechano-chemical processes, and has noted significant increase in value of the bamboo pole at P5 per kilogram, to its transformation into bamboo textile fibers (BTF) in spinnable form to spun yarns at P910 per kilogram.

DoST-PTRI said that in a one hectare bamboo plantation, there will be over 4,589 kilograms of spinnable bamboo textile fibers that can be obtained and when it is transformed into yarns, an estimate of 12,500 kilograms of yarns composed of 75/25 blended ratio of cotton and bamboo textile fiber can be produced.

DoST-PTRI has identified eight provinces in the Philippines which have been proposed as potential Bamboo Textile Fiber Innovation Hubs (BTFIH) – Abra, Pangasinan, Isabela, Rizal, Quezon, Antique, Agusan provinces, and Bukidnon.

The agency said that these hubs will serve as the gateway towards sustainable bamboo textile production and manufacturing given the ample bamboo plantation in their area. It seeks to boost the local economy through the utilization and value-addition of bamboo for the farmers, cooperatives, and or local processors who may adapt the developed technology.



WALANG IBANG PLANETA



September 27, 2020 @ 7:17 AM 23 hours ago

Kakaiba talaga itong mga millennial at mga GenZ.

Lalo na 'yung mga nasa kolehiyo ngayon at talaga naman aktibo at excited sila sa mga gawain para sa kalikasan at sa nagbabagong klima o "climate change."

Nasa gitna tayo ng ilang araw ng tinatawag nila na Global Days of Action for Climate Change.

Ilang araw na puno ng makukulay at nakatutuwang magagarang aksyon na talaga naman mapapaisip ka.

Naglabas sila ng higanteng bandera sa isang footbridge sa Katipunan, na nakasulat ang "There is no planet B."

Ibig sabihin, ito lang ang planeta natin at 'pag nasira ito, patay tayong lahat na nakatira sa planetang "Earth."

Wala na tayong ibang planetang pwedeng puntahan.

Isa namang grupo ng mga kabataan ang humiga sa isang dambuhalang mapa ng mundo, naglagay ng mga placard sa dibdib nila, napapaikutan ng "thought bubbles" o parang mga salita sa komiks at saka sila nagpa-picture gamit ang isag drone!

Ang galing!

Ang pinakagusto ay 'yung "light painting" na ginawa ng lampas 100 na kabataan nu'ng Biyernes ng gabi.

Sa gitna ng dilim, malinaw ang kanilang mga mensahe at tumayo ang balahibo ko habang pinanood ang mga galaw ng ilaw, flashlight, LEDs, bike lights at iba.

Medyo gets ko rin sila.

Hindi na sila mga batang musmos, pero halos nagsisimula pa lang sila.

Sa pagiging college students o baka mga bagong karera nila sa buhay.



At ang hinaharap nila ay ang banta ng pandemya, lumalalang pag-init ng mundo at posible pa nga, eh, matitinding disaster dala ng mas malalakas na bagyo o tagtuyot dahil sa La Niña at El Niño.

Sabi ng isang maka-kalikasag grupo, dahil kinalbo na natin ang gubat dahil sa pagmimina at pagtotroso, bumibilis ang pagbabago ng klima at nauubos ang tirahan at pagkain ng mga insekto at hayop sa gubat.

At dahil nagbabago ang katawan at kilos ng mga hayop, isa ito sa dahilan ng paglabas ng mga bagong sakit at mga pandemya tulad ng COVID-19.

Malinaw ang aral dito.

Alagaan ang kalikasan para bumagal ang pagbabago ng klima at mapigilan ang mga bagong pandemya.

Kung noon sabi nila, makinig tayo sa matatanda, hindi na ngayon.

Makinig tayo sa mga kabataan.

Tama sila.

Wala nang ibang planeta para sa atin.



GCQ or MGCQ? Gov't to decide on NCR's fate

Published 14 hours ago on September 27, 2020 03:45 PM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#) @tribunephl_MJB



The Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) would decide this week if Metro Manila and other areas under general community quarantine (GCQ) would be placed under a more lenient lockdown status.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque confirmed on Sunday that the IATF, which serves as the government's policy-making body on pandemic response, would convene this week to discuss the matter.

Business groups, as well as Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez, have been pushing to place the capital region under modified GCQ to allow the reopening of more businesses and public transportation.

Under modified GCQ, public gatherings such as movie screenings, concerts, sporting events and other entertainment activities are allowed, but participants may fill no more than half of the capacity of the venue.

The same rule applies to religious gatherings, community assemblies, and non-essential work gatherings.

However, researchers and analysts from the University of the Philippines (UP) have warned that a premature easing of GCQ in Metro Manila would lead to an "exponential" rise come Christmas time.

The UP group said in a report that while the situation in the capital region has "improved," it has yet to achieve the 28-day case doubling time set by the IATF as a prerequisite to shift into modified GCQ status.

The GCQ status in Metro Manila would lapse by the end of the month and President Rodrigo Duterte is expected to announce his decision on the quarantine level on or before Wednesday.

Metro Manila is the region that has stayed the longest under GCQ for nearly four months, a quarantine classification which allows public transportation and most industries but prohibits tourism activities, entertainment events, and large mass gatherings.

Of the 61,766 active COVID-19 cases in the Philippines as of Saturday, Metro Manila accounts for 45 percent of the number with 28,010 infections.

Apart from the capital region, other areas under GCQ until the end-September are Bulacan, Batangas, and Tacloban City.



Roque previously said that the government is eyeing to place parts of the country without COVID-19 cases in the past month under the “new normal” classification, which lifts restrictions on business activities including travel, provided that minimum health standards are observed.

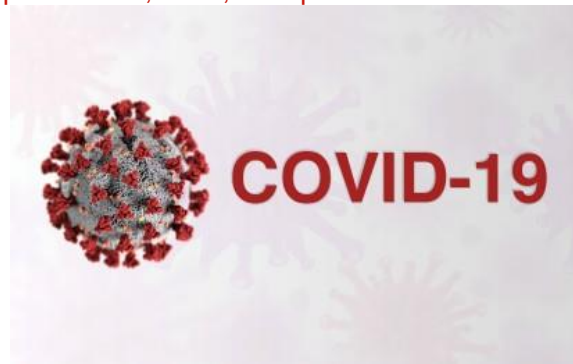
The “new normal” classification used to be the fifth and lowest quarantine classification until the task force temporarily removed it in June.

Under the current four-tier classification, the MGCQ is most lenient lockdown status.



PH Covid-19 tally climbs to 304,226; recoveries now 252,510

By Ma. Teresa Montemayor **September 27, 2020, 5:48 pm**



MANILA – The overall tally of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) infections nationwide hit 304,226 on Sunday.

This, after the Department of Health reported 2,995 newly-confirmed cases.

In its latest case bulletin, the DOH said only 46,372 are active cases and of this figure, about 86 percent are mild, 8.8 percent are asymptomatic, 1.6 percent are severe, and 3.7 percent are in critical condition.

Majority of the newly announced cases are from the National Capital Region (NCR) with 1,065, the provinces of Cavite with 297, Bulacan with 180, Batangas with 157, and Laguna with 143 infections.

The DOH also reported 19,630 new recoveries and 60 deaths, bringing the total number of recoveries to 252,510 and the number of deaths to 5,344.

Of the 60 deaths, 37 occurred in September which is 62 percent, nine in August which is 15 percent, 11 in July which is 18 percent, two in June which is 3 percent and one in April which is 2 percent.

NCR recorded 29 deaths or 48 percent, Calabarzon with six or 10 percent, Caraga with five or 8 percent, Northern Mindanao with four or 7 percent, Central Luzon with three or 5 percent, Central Visayas with three or 5 percent, Davao Region with three or 5 percent, Bicol Region with two or 3 percent, Soccsksargen with two or 3 percent, Western Visayas with one or 2 percent, Zamboanga Peninsula with one or 2 percent, and Mimaropa with one or 2 percent.

"There were 25 duplicates removed from the total case count, and of these, 16 were recovered cases. Moreover, 10 cases previously tagged as recovered were reclassified to deaths after final validation," the DOH said.

As of Saturday, the 103 licensed reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) laboratories and 32 licensed GeneXpert laboratories have conducted a total of 3,405,136 tests nationwide.

DOH said it has 22,800 total bed capacity dedicated to Covid-19 patients.

Occupied are about 46 percent of 1,900 intensive care unit beds; 40 percent of 14,900 isolation beds; and 44 percent of 6,000 ward beds.

About 23 percent of 2,200 ventilators are in use. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1116759>



Nearly 20,000 new COVID-19 survivors bring PH recovery tally past 252,000

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Sep 27, 2020 4:32:40 PM



The Department of Health reports almost 20,000 new COVID-19 survivors, which pulled the country's number of active cases or currently ill patients down to 46,372.

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 27) -- The Department of Health recorded on Sunday 19,630 more patients who have gotten well from COVID-19, as the national recovery count surged to 252,510.

The department said 18,892 of the new recoveries are time-based, where patients were cleared of the infection based on its Oplan Recovery program's criteria. These include spending a certain amount of time in quarantine and the loss of symptoms. The remaining 738 are from routine reports, the DOH said.

Sunday's bulletin also showed that 2,995 more people have contracted the virus, raising the total case tally to 304,226.

The top five areas in the country which registered the highest rise in cases include Metro Manila with 1,065 more infected residents, followed by Cavite with 297, Bulacan with 180, Batangas with 157, and Laguna with 143.

Meanwhile, the death toll further rose to 5,344, after 60 more died of the illness. Thirty-seven of the newly confirmed fatalities occurred in September, while the other 23 transpired in April to August.

The latest figures, especially the jump in the recovery tally, pulled the number of active cases in the country down to 46,372. This means 15 percent of the nationwide case tally are currently ill.

In its report, the DOH also noted that it removed 25 duplicates from the total count as part of its constant cleaning process. It added that 10 cases previously reported as recoveries were retagged as deaths after final validation.

Abroad, five more Filipinos contracted the virus while another succumbed to the disease, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs. To date, the DFA has confirmed 10,438 cases among overseas Filipinos in 78 countries, including 6,654 who have already recovered and 791 who have died from the illness.

Across the globe, 994,000 people out of the 32.8 million infected have lost their lives, data from the US-based Johns Hopkins University showed.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/9/27/PH-19k-new-coronavirus-recoveries.html>



EDITORIAL

DoH should review order requiring wearing of both face mask and face shield in workplace

By [The Manila Times](#)

September 28, 2020

IT is a good sight to see the Department of Health (DoH) being more proactive in the drafting and imposing of regulations governing the national policy in fighting the coronavirus pandemic. It is preferable to see Health professionals issue the commands during a health emergency than to see soldiers, policemen and bureaucrats ordering us around during the pandemic.

What will be even better and more persuasive is a situation where the DoH takes care to present its policy and regulatory preferences in coherent, authoritative and understandable language.

We refer here to the announcement last Saturday by Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire that the Department of Health will insist on the wearing of face masks and face shields in the workplace — its response to the petition of various organizations for the exemption of workers inside offices and factories from the shield rule.

The new assertiveness of the DoH on a pandemic matter is noteworthy. The department is the nation's primary public health agency, which has charge and supervision over the entire public health system and its many facilities and institutions.

Throughout the last seven months, the DoH has not been forthcoming in leading the fight against Covid-19. Health Secretary Francisco Duque 3rd has been diffident in assuming his role of chairman of the Inter-agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) to which he has been explicitly designated by executive order. The secretary has not been the leading voice in the making and articulation of policy on the health emergency. Instead, it is military men such as the twice-infected Interior Secretary Eduardo Año, Peace Process Adviser Carlito Galvez Jr and Baguio City Mayor Benjamin Magalong, who have been doing most of the talking and issuing the orders.

Regarding the regulation on face masks and face shields inside the workplace, the decision would be comprehensible if the Health department is fully convinced that the mandatory wearing of face masks and face shields can reduce the risk of contracting Covid-19. But it should cite the scientific and research studies that validate the policy.

We noticed also that in announcing the policy, Undersecretary Vergeire chose to communicate verbally in Filipino — which is not easy to understand unless fully translated — instead of issuing a full statement on the policy. Resorting frequently to the use of the polite terms *po* and *ho* does not make Filipino easier to comprehend, not to mention inappropriate and unnecessary.

After researching the subject of face shields or visors online, we were surprised to discover there is a wide divergence of opinion regarding the efficacy of face shields in combating the virus. And there is considerable opposition and resistance to the idea of the government mandating the wearing of both a face mask and a face shield in offices and factories.

There is a point when coercion becomes counterproductive and ineffective in trying to subdue a viral outbreak.

Consequently, we believe the DoH was a trifle hasty in turning down outright the petition of the business organizations. It should study the substance of the proposal of the business sector. It will be far better if our Health officials spend more time and care in formulating this new health protocol. To command is easy; to achieve meaningful results is harder.

If Health officials were to test these contraptions themselves, they will discover that wearing a face mask and a face shield together is more punitive than protective.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/09/28/opinion/editorial/doh-should-review-order-requiring-wearing-of-both-face-mask-and-face-shield-in-workplace/773047/>



“The next few weeks will be very challenging, and I appeal to our colleagues for their cooperation, unity and professionalism,” ACT-CIS party-list Rep. Eric Yap, who chairs the powerful House appropriations committee, said.

The STAR/Felicer Santos

House starts plenary debates on 2021 budget

[Delon Porcalla](#) (The Philippine Star) - September 28, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives will start today plenary debates on the P4.5-trillion national budget for 2021 that the executive department has proposed.

It may take two weeks before the measure is sent to the Senate.

“The next few weeks will be very challenging, and I appeal to our colleagues for their cooperation, unity and professionalism,” ACT-CIS party-list Rep. Eric Yap, who chairs the powerful House appropriations committee, said.

“This is the people’s budget, and it is our obligation to make sure that the national budget will not only be passed on time, but ultimately, it will respond to the growing needs of our countrymen,” Yap added.

More work needs to be done, according to Yap, as he expressed hope that the entire budget process will not be delayed by whatever issue that Congress may face in the coming days, bearing in mind Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano’s vow to finish the budget at the soonest time possible.

The chamber passed last Friday House Bill 7727 or General Appropriations Bill at the committee level after 15 days of budget briefings. It has been described by officials as the biggest economic stimulus during the pandemic.

Yap is expected to deliver his sponsorship speech for the approved bill at the plenary today.

Deputy Speaker Raneo Abu said the House is prepared to start and finish in record time the passage of the 2021 national budget, just like what they did last year in approving the P4.1-trillion 2020 General Appropriations Act.

“The timely passage of the national budget is very crucial to our economic recovery from the effects of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. We are united with the common goal to get the country back on its feet,” the Batangas representative said.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, who chairs the House ways and means committee, lauded Yap for doing a good job.

“Eric Yap is working hard and works well with House Majority Leader Martin Romualdez. Upon the instructions of Speaker Cayetano, the schedules are well-grouped and assignments are well-organized,” Salceda said.



At the same time, he has filed House Bill 7760 or the Financial Technology Industry Development Bill that will help develop a thriving financial technology (fintech) sector in the country.

“Make no mistake: we are in the game for fintech investments. We have 74 million smartphone users who spend 10 hours a day on the internet,” Salceda said, noting that more and more fintech firms are fleeing Hong Kong’s regulatory jitters and saturated Asian markets.

“That is one of the biggest consumer markets for digital products in the world. For market-seeking firms, we are probably one of the most attractive,” the senior administration lawmaker said.

Meanwhile, Quezon City Rep. Precious Hipolito-Castelo supported the plan of the Department of Health (DOH) to prescribe a single, common price for the reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) or swab test for suspected coronavirus carriers.

“The price should be affordable to the poor to encourage them to subject themselves to RT-PCR screening if they show any symptom of infection,” Castelo said.

Based on information she received, RT-PCR tests’ cost varies from P3,500, which is the price the Philippine National Red Cross charges, to a high of P12,500, the rate that some private hospitals impose on persons who avail themselves of their drive-through services and who want results to be available in 24 hours.

Government hospitals are charging higher rates than the Red Cross, according to Castelo.

“Based on prevailing prices, I am suggesting that an affordable rate would be P2,000. The results should be available in 24 hours,” she said.

‘Not responsive to pandemic’

The proposed P4.5-trillion national budget for 2021 is not responsive to the COVID-19 pandemic as it does not have funding for the grant of emergency cash assistance to distressed sectors as the country awaits the roll-out of vaccines, Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon said yesterday.

“The way I see it, however, the proposed budget for 2021 will not be able to respond to the crisis sufficiently given the cut in the budget for the social service sector and the absence of a (SAP),” Drilon told radio station dzBB.

He said the financial assistance or the social amelioration program (SAP) should be continued and funded in next year’s budget as officials of the Duterte administration projected that the vaccines may be available in the country in the second half of 2021.

This means the economically debilitating COVID-19 restrictions would remain in place, millions of Filipinos would remain unemployed and thousands of businesses would remain closed, he added.

The senator appealed to Congress to increase the budget of the DOH and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in order to bolster the government’s ability to respond to the pandemic and address the plight of the poor.

He also hit the DSWD for not distributing P10 billion to the poor. The P10-billion unused budget is part of the funding for the SAP under the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act (Bayanihan 1) that the agency said it did not release due to the “double compensation” and the failure of local government units (LGUs) to provide the list of beneficiaries.



For Drilon, however, the DSWD should have been more lenient during these “extraordinary” times in the country’s history.

He maintained that the unused funds should be distributed to the poor, opposing the DSWD’s insistence to use it for livelihood assistance instead.

“What the people need today is ayuda. The livelihood assistance, let other agencies do it. What the DSWD is mandated to do is to provide assistance to the poor,” Drilon said.

He also cited the decrease in the budget of the DOH, saying it could affect the government’s ability to curb the pandemic.

The DOH’s total budget for 2020, including additional appropriation from Bayanihan 1 and its successor, Bayanihan to Recover as One Act, amounts to P180 billion, according to Drilon, but it was reduced to only P131 billion in the National Expenditures Program (NEP).

Palace hopes no delay

Malacañang expressed hope that the passage of next year’s budget would not be delayed following the approval of the spending bill at the House committee level.

“On the part of the executive branch and as stated by the President, we want the budget approved immediately... We do not want a repeat of the delays in the (passage of the) budget especially during a pandemic. The government relies on that budget... for its programs and activities in 2021,” Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles said in a live online session last Saturday.

“When the budget is delayed, there will be delays in the implementation (of programs). That should not happen, especially during the time of COVID... The faster the budget will be approved, the better,” Nograles added.

He noted that the proposed 2021 outlay would fund the government’s pandemic response and vital programs in health care, education, transportation and infrastructure.

House leaders have given assurances that the issue over the chamber’s leadership would not delay the passage of the budget.

Under a term-sharing deal brokered by President Duterte, Cayetano would be the speaker until October 2020 while Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Velasco would succeed him and assume the post until June 2022.

Deputy Speaker Luis Raymund Villafuerte, however, claimed in a recent television interview that the majority of lawmakers wants Cayetano to remain as the leader of the chamber.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque has said Duterte would not interfere in the House leadership squabble but insisted that the approval of the 2021 budget is “non-negotiable.” – **Paolo Romero, Alexis Romero**



Robredo lauds Duterte's UN speech, South China Sea win commitment

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Sep 27 2020 11:34 PM



Vice President Leni Robredo (left) praised President Rodrigo Duterte's (right) first speech at the UN General Assembly last week for affirming the Philippines' victory in a 2016 ruling on the South China Sea.

MANILA - Vice President Leni Robredo on Sunday lauded President Rodrigo Duterte for rejecting attempts to undermine the Philippines' victory in a 2016 ruling on the South China Sea during his first appearance at the UN General Assembly last week.

"Ang ganda noong speech," Robredo said in her weekly radio show.

(The speech was beautiful.)

The Vice President said she liked that Duterte finally asserted the Philippines' claims to the disputed waters, which the country had been waiting for since 2016.

"Noong nakuha natin ang arbitral ruling, hinihintay natin na mag-make ng statement iyong Pangulo na iyong ruling is a part of international law already. Hindi siya puwedeng maging subject of compromise. Hindi siya puwedeng maging subject of negotiation," Robredo said.

(When we won the arbitral ruling, we waited for the President to make a statement that the ruling is already part of international law. It can't be subjected to compromise. It cannot be the subject of negotiation.)

Robredo said she expects the administration to keep its commitment, citing other countries' relations with China that have deteriorated due to conflicting claims but haven't resulted to war.

"Ang nagpapakita nito, Indonesia saka Vietnam, na kahit tuloy-tuloy iyong economic relations nila with China, pagdating sa incursion sa kanilang territorial waters ay hindi sila pumapayag," Robredo emphasized.

(This is being shown by Indonesia and Vietnam, that even though their economic relations with China continue, they won't allow incursions into their territorial waters.)

In a pre-recorded video message, Duterte told UN member states his administration was keeping its commitment to international agreements with the territorial row in the disputed waters, which the country also calls the West Philippine Sea.

"The Philippines affirms that commitment in the South China Sea in accordance with UNCLOS (UN Convention on the Law of the Seas) and the 2016 Arbitral Award," he said.

Before Duterte became president, a 2016 decision on the arbitration case by the Permanent Court of Arbitration invalidated China's "nine-dash line" claim over the entire South China Sea.

The case was brought to the international court by the Philippines, but China refused to participate and has always refused to acknowledge the victory.



Duterte has pursued warmer ties with China during his administration and has refrained from asserting rights to the territory amid China's building of structures in artificial islands there.

In his last State of the Nation Address, Duterte said he was "inutile" over China's claim of the territory, stressing that diplomatic relations should be pursued with the global power unless the country was ready to go to war.



Duterte terribly wrong — or just diabolically clever — in his arbitration statements at UN

By [Rigoberto D. Tiglao](#)

September 28, 2020

PERHAPS it was a classic instance of following an aphorism in Sun Tzu's Art of War: "The whole secret lies in confusing the enemy, so that he cannot fathom our real intent."

But on the face of it, President Rodrigo Duterte's statements before the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on September 22 regarding the South China Sea arbitration award was so terribly wrong.

"The award is now part of international law, beyond compromise and beyond the reach of passing governments to dilute, diminish or abandon," Duterte pontificated.

But this is very wrong. An arbitration is an arbitration or two parties' agreement to let a third party settle its dispute. An ad hoc panel of five judges — all European except a Ghanaian, who is, however, a permanent resident of Europe — handled the arbitration that wasn't an arbitration, as China refused to join it.

The panel itself called its rulings an "award" and not a decision. How can an "award," which the panel itself emphasized can be binding only on the two parties, become "part of international law"?



Do we want President Rodrigo Duterte to enforce arbitration award, which ruled that our islands are mere rocks with no 200-mile exclusive economic zone, just a small 12-mile territorial zone?

Even arbitration awards within one legal jurisdiction, i.e., one nation, cannot be part of that nation's law — which is determined by laws passed by Congress, and their interpretation by appellate courts and most especially the Supreme Court. And Duterte says this arbitration award is part of international law, which therefore other sovereign nations have to follow?

China refused to participate in the arbitration, pointing out that its accession to UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos) specifically was on the condition that no such compulsory proceeding can be undertaken with regard to disputes involving questions on its sovereignty and its overlapping exclusive economic zones (EEZs).

Initial hurrahs

After the initial hurrahs over the award, perfectly understandable because the US and its Western dummies dominate global media, more and more international-law barristers and academic experts have criticized many of the award's provisions in the past three years.



Oxford professor Stefan Talmon, considered one of the best experts on Unclos, pointed out in a May 2017 article on the South China Sea arbitration in the *Journal of International Dispute Settlement*:

“An arbitral award, as any decision by an international court or tribunal, does not cast international law in stone. Unlike most domestic legal systems, international law does not know of a hierarchically organized judiciary with a single highest court at the apex. On the contrary, even the decisions of the International Court of Justice have no binding force except between the parties and in respect of the particular case at hand.”

Talmon listed so many instances when legal rulings in decisions or awards by international tribunals were routinely reversed or ignored by others similar bodies.

What’s very important in Talmon’s article is his explanation that there are four ways by which an arbitral award — or even decisions by international courts — such as that on the South China Sea arbitration can be reversed.

Reversed

The most important, I think, among Talmon’s four ways: “Judicial and arbitral pronouncements can be reversed through contrary state practice.”

In the case of the South China Sea arbitration award, China’s total rejection of it, and Duterte’s actual policy and practice of setting it aside — despite his recent declaration that it is part of international law — have in effect legally reversed the arbitration award.

Indeed, more than four years since the arbitral panel handed down its award, Duterte’s refusal to act on any provision of the award has made it what is called in legal systems a “dead letter,” a law or parts of a law that is ignored or is not enforced for various reasons.

Duterte may just be diabolically clever, and pulling the leg of China-bashers and the Yellows. His UNGA statement undermines one of the noisiest issues against him — that he is a China-lover — but he is still not enforcing the award’s provisions. After all, beyond the propaganda rhetoric, the award’s provisions do not really advance our sovereign claims, with some even directly going against our national interest.

Among these are the following.

Scarborough Shoal

First, President Benigno Aquino 3rd and his Foreign secretary had claimed that the suit was in order for the country to recover for us Scarborough Shoal, which they were fooled into losing by the US.

The award didn’t: it was even the first declaration by an international panel that China and the Philippines each were claiming sovereignty over it, which the panel nor any international body is not authorized to rule on.

Second, yes, the award declared Mischief Reef as well as the purportedly hydrocarbon-rich Reed Bank as within our EEZ. But China claims these areas as part of the sovereign territory it calls its Nansha archipelago, which by definition is a more powerful claim than sovereign rights in an EEZ. The tribunal was silent on which claim is superior — of course, since neither it nor any other body can rule on such sovereignty issues.

Third, yes, the award declared that the nine-dash line encompassing most of the South China Sea shown in Chinese maps as without basis in international law. But China’s claim over the Spratlys (nor on the Paracels) is not based on this nine-dash line, but on several other developments in the modern era as well as its declarations of sovereignty through several of its laws.



Proof of this is that China defined the boundaries of its Paracel islands by drawing its baselines in 1996, without any reference to the nine-dash line. Woe to us if China decides to draw its baselines around the Spratlys.

Military

Worse, the award could have given China an idea that would be very bad for us.

The Yellow lawyers had stupidly asked the tribunal to rule as illegal Chinese ships' attempts in May 2013 to block Philippine vessels from providing supplies to our 12-man Marine detachment at the Second Thomas (Ayungin) Shoal living in the BRP Sierra Madre wreck. The tribunal ruled that the incident was a "quintessentially military situation," and therefore it had no jurisdiction to consider the complaint.

This kind of view was confirmed when the tribunal maintained that it has jurisdiction in determining if the construction on Mischief Reef violated Unclos since China had described these as civilian in nature.

Roncevert Ganan Almond, a partner of a Washington-based think-tank studying the arbitration award, pointed out how this conclusion of the panel favors China: "If only to avoid future compulsory arbitration, China may simply drop the thin veneer of civil use and more explicitly militarize its positions within the South China Sea."

The Yellows and ignorant writers yelling for Duterte to implement the award don't really know what they are talking about.

Pag-asa

Do they want Duterte to declare that our Pag-asa and seven other islands in the Kalayaan Island Group are no longer islands entitled to a 200-nautical-mile EEZ, but are merely "rocks" with a small 12-nautical-mile territorial sea and "low-tide elevations"?

Believe it or not, this was the tribunal's decision, that not only the Chinese-occupied reefs but all the heretofore so-called islands in the Spratlys are not entitled to EEZs. The idiots forgot that our islands are also in the Spratlys: How can the tribunal rule one thing on the Chinese-occupied features, and another on those we occupy?

Do they want Duterte to declare, complying with the award's provisions, that the Kalayaan Island Group — because of Marcos' Presidential Decree 1596 in 1978, the only addition to our territory since the 1898 Treaty of Paris defined it — is dissolved, and all we have in that area are only a smattering of separated islets?

After all, how would Duterte "enforce" the tribunal's decisions, almost all of which simply declare that China had breached this and that Unclos provision, but do not specifically say what China and the Philippines should do about this?

An example of this rather Catch-22 situation is the tribunal's conclusion that China built an artificial island in Mischief Reef "without the authorization of the Philippines."

But what can Duterte do to enforce this decision? Issue a note verbale asking China to request its permission? But China will simply explain that even if Mischief Reef is within our EEZ, it is part of its sovereign territory Nansha Island, and therefore it doesn't need any permission from the Philippines. Why, the tribunal didn't even order China to dismantle its artificial islands.



Dead letter

If one just carefully reads the award, it did not order China to do anything even if it ruled that China was in breach of this or that Unclos provision. A weak analogy, but the tribunal is in effect declaring that somebody is illegally occupying a piece of land, but stops short of ordering it out of the land. A Dead Letter — exactly.

The arbitration suit was the past Yellow regime's colossal folly, prodded on by the US as part of the Obama-era "Pivot to Asia" move. Indeed US Secretary of State Michael Pompeo recently demonstrated in his recent anti-China tirade that it is solely the arbitration award the US could harp on — that is, China's refusal to recognize it — as "proof" of the Asian superpower's rejection of international law. The award also gives the US Navy the legal clout to patrol the South China in any way it wants.

The suit was a decision of a small cabal of the Yellow regime to file, at that time also intended as a smokescreen for its colossal boo-boo of losing Scarborough Shoal. Only a handful of legislators were invited to a meeting explaining it, which even gave them little background nor time to study it.

The Duterte administration should organize an expert group, without Yellow affiliations, to really investigate what the suit was all about. Perhaps even ask the Senate to do such a probe. After all it does concern our foreign relations with China, the emerging superpower not only in our neighborhood but in the entire planet.

There is urgency to do so as the Yellows and the US, because of their lies about the arbitration suit, have whipped up such anti-China sentiment that makes it virtually impossible for government to undertake a very urgent task.

The Malampaya wells which supply one-third of our energy requirements will run dry in 2024. Other than importation, the only way to replace Malampaya is to extract the natural gas from the Reed Bank which we can only do through a collaborative venture with China and Vietnam. The anti-China frenzy whipped up by the Yellows will make it difficult to do so.

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Book orders: www.rigobertotiglao.com/debunked

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LPA, Habagat magdadala ng pag-ulan



September 27, 2020 @ 8:25 AM 23 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Magdadala ng pag-ulan ang low pressure area (LPA) at habagat sa Ilocos Region, Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) at Cagayan Valley on Sunday ayon sa Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

Namataan ang LPA sa 360 kilometro silangan ng Basco, Batanes.

Makararanas ng bahagya hanggang maulap na papawirin na may hiwa-hiwalay na pag-ulan dala ng habagat at localized thunderstorms kaya't posible ang pagbaha at pagguho ng lupa sa Metro Manila at nalalabing parte ng bansa.

Maaapektuhan din ang Luzon at Visayas ng habagat.

Magiging katamtaman naman ang lakas ng alon sa kanlurang bahagi ng Luzon at Visayas habang mahinang hanggang sa maalon sa nalalabing parte ng bansa. **RNT/ELM**



Leaders to UN: If virus doesn't kill us, climate change will

Associated Press / 04:10 PM September 27, 2020



FILE — In this Saturday, July 22, 2017, file photo, a polar bear stands on the ice in the Franklin Strait in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago. In a year of cataclysm, some world leaders at September 2020's annual United Nations meeting are taking the long view, warning: If COVID-19 doesn't kill us, climate change will. With Siberia seeing its warmest temperature on record this year and enormous chunks of ice caps in Greenland and Canada sliding into the sea, countries are acutely aware there's no vaccine for global warming. (AP Photo/David Goldman, File)

JOHANNESBURG — In a year of cataclysm, some world leaders at this week's annual United Nations meeting are taking the long view, warning: If COVID-19 doesn't kill us, climate change will.

With Siberia seeing its warmest temperature on record this year and enormous chunks of ice caps in Greenland and Canada sliding into the sea, countries are acutely aware there's no vaccine for global warming.

"We are already seeing a version of environmental Armageddon," Fiji's Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama said, citing wildfires in the western U.S. and noting that the Greenland ice chunk was larger than a number of island nations.

This was meant to be the year "we took back our planet," he said. Instead, the coronavirus has diverted resources and attention from what could have been the marquee issue at this U.N. gathering. Meanwhile, the U.N. global climate summit has been postponed to late 2021.

That hasn't stopped countries, from slowly sinking island nations to parched African ones, from speaking out.

"In another 75 years, many ... members may no longer hold seats at the United Nations if the world continues on its present course," the Alliance of Small Island States and the Least Developed Countries Group said.

The main goal of the 2015 Paris climate accord is to limit the rise in global temperatures to 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times, but scientists say the world is on track to soar past that. A new study found that if the world warms another 0.9 degrees Celsius (1.6 degrees Fahrenheit), the West Antarctic ice sheet will reach a point of irreversible melting. It has enough water to raise global sea levels by 5 meters (16 feet).

The Pacific island nation of Palau hasn't had a single COVID-19 infection, but President Tommy E. Remengesau Jr. warns it's the rising seas that will bring the country down.

"The momentary drop in (carbon) emissions this year cannot be allowed to generate any complacency about global progress," he said, referring to the sparkling skies that followed lockdowns to slow the spread of the virus around the world. Pollution has crept back up as restrictions ease.



World powers cannot shirk their financial commitments to fighting climate change during the pandemic, Remengesau said, even as economies are battered.

But few pledges have emerged at the U.N. gathering, aside from China's announcement that it aims to have carbon dioxide emissions peak before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.

The pandemic has muted the U.N. meeting, with world leaders speaking not from the podium in New York but via video from home. That has sapped the urgency of diplomacy and left nations wondering just how many people are listening.

Amid concerns that the world is distracted, it was perhaps no surprise that the student-led movement Fridays for Future returned to the streets this week for the first major demonstrations for climate action in months.

Still, island nations have seized on the unusual circumstances to show off what's at stake. The prime minister of Tuvalu, Kausea Natano, delivered his U.N. speech with a vista of turquoise waters and swaying fronds behind him that instantly fired the imaginations of house-bound viewers.

But the prime minister quickly shattered any dreams. While Tuvalu is free of the coronavirus, the pandemic struck as the island nation was recovering from a pair of tropical cyclones — storms that scientists say are likely to become wetter as the planet warms.

Tuvalu's highest point is just a few meters (yards) above sea level. The pandemic's effect on the movement of goods exposed food insecurity as local agriculture becomes more difficult with rising sea levels, Natano said.

"While COVID-19 is our immediate crisis, climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security, and well-being of the Pacific and its peoples in the long run," the prime minister said.

From the Marshall Islands, also free of COVID-19, President David Kabua used the virus's example to plead for more help now.

"Change relies on protecting the most vulnerable, because those on the frontline — whether healthcare workers battling the pandemic or small island nations sounding the alarm on climate change — are critical to the survival of us all," he said.

"Small island and atoll nations like mine do not have time for paper promises," Kabua added. Urgent pleas also came from Africa, which contributes least to global warming but stands to suffer from it the most.

"In favoring solutions based on the respect for nature, we're also preserving the health of our peoples," said President Issoufou Mahamadou of Niger, part of the Sahel region south of the Sahara desert where temperature increases are expected to be 1.5 times higher than the world average.

"Our global home that was teeming with millions of species of God-given creatures, both great and small, is slowly dying," said Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, who last year noted that his country was the only one in Africa to reach the goal of making renewable energy 75% of its energy mix. He added: "Our world is yearning for us to stop its ruin."

/MUF

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1340793/leaders-to-un-if-virus-doesnt-kill-us-climate-change-will>



Leaders to UN: If virus doesn't kill us, climate change will

By [The Associated Press](#)

September 27, 2020



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In this photo provided by the United Nations, the pre-recorded message of Tommy Esang Remengesau Jr., President of Palau, is played during the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Wednesday Sept. 23, 2020, at U.N. headquarters, in New York. (Eskinder Debebe/UN Photo via AP)

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In this image made from UNTV video, Kausea Natano, Prime Minister of Tuvalu speaks in a pre-recorded message which was played during the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Friday, Sept. 25, 2020, at UN headquarters. (UNTV via AP)



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Young people take part in global climate protest in Warsaw, Poland, Friday, Sept. 25, 2020. (AP/Czarek Sokolowski)

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Image credits: [AP/David Goldman](#)

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/09/27/leaders-to-un-if-virus-doesnt-kill-us-climate-change-will/>



The 2015 Paris Agreement calls for blocking global warming at well below 2 degree celsius and 1.5 degree celsius if possible.

Steve Buissinne via Pixabay

'Two-headed beast': China's coal addiction erodes climate goals

(Philstar.com) - September 27, 2020 - 3:18pm

BEIJING — China's surprise pledge to slash its carbon footprint to zero by 2060 was met with cautious applause, but fresh spending on coal to rev up a virus-hit economy threatens to nullify its audacious bid to lead the world into a low carbon future.

The fossil fuel has powered China's economic surge over the last thirty years, and the nation burns about half the coal used globally each year.

Between 2000 and 2018, its annual carbon emissions nearly tripled, and it now accounts for nearly a third of the world's total greenhouse gases linked to global warming.

Despite pledges to wean the economy off coal with the world's most ambitious investment in renewables, China's coal consumption climbed back in June this year to near the peak levels seen in 2013.

That was in part due to a pivot back to coal after geopolitical uncertainty in the Saudi peninsula, China's main oil supplier.

But the coronavirus, which saw the Chinese economy contract for the first time in 30 years, also opened the taps from government lenders to build new coal plants to revive flatlining provincial economies.

There is a "tension at the heart of China's energy planning" Li Shuo, senior climate and energy officer at Greenpeace China, told AFP.

It "pits Beijing's strategic interests against the immediate goals of cash-strapped provincial governments, makes it difficult to walk the talk" on cleaner future.

This week Xi Jinping unveiled China's bold pitch for leadership on global warming at the United Nations, vowing his nation will reach peak emissions before 2030 and go carbon neutral thirty years later.

It is the first time China has announced any plans to become carbon neutral, but so far there have been no details on how the country would rebalance away from fossil fuels.

In the first half of 2020 China approved 23 gigawatts-worth of new coal power projects, more than the previous two years combined, according to Global Energy Monitor (GEM), a San Francisco-based environmental NGO.



"A new fleet of coal plants is in direct contradiction with China's pledge to peak emissions before 2030," said Lauri Myllyvirta, China analyst at Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air.

Facing both ways

The world's second largest economy is also positioning itself as the global leader in renewables.

It is already the top global producer and consumer of wind turbines, solar panels and electric vehicles, and Chinese factories make two-thirds of all solar cells installed worldwide.

"China's energy policy is like a two-headed beast, with each head trying to run in the opposite direction," said Greenpeace's Li.

But the new coal surge is running renewables out of the market because China's energy distribution system uses Soviet-style quotas, where power suppliers are allocated a monthly supply limit.

The grid quotas pushed local governments to increase the allocation for coal-based power over recent years, and it leave less room on the grid for renewable energy use, even if investment in them is stepped up.

"Local governments prefer to buy more coal-generated power to protect mining jobs," Li said.

Wind and solar farms have been forced to idle and dozens of new renewable projects have been cancelled since late last year as small private operators struggle to make money.

'White elephants'

Experts say China's coal addiction will not be easy to end.

The country already has 400 gigawatts more coal-fired capacity than what is needed to meet peak demand, according to GEM.

"China's coal fleet is running at about 50 percent capacity," Myllyvirta said.

"Many facilities are white elephants. Adding new ones would only make them less efficient."

Policymakers say new plants with lower emissions standards will be replace the old dirty chimneys.

But the savings are modest: new plants emit just 11 percent less carbon dioxide per kilowatt-hour of power generated compared to the old ones.

The direction of travel for now still points to a energy future dominated by coal.

Renewables are slapped with higher land taxes, interest rates on loans and have lower grid quotas.

Subsidies for onshore wind farms are currently set to end in 2021 — offshore wind farm subsidies ended in March as subsidies for solar were also slashed in half — while investments in clean energy dipped eight percent in 2019, according to data from Bloomberg New Energy Finance.



Meanwhile, overseas Belt and Road investments will festoon developing nations from Pakistan to Zimbabwe with new coal power stations.

"Our energy policy needs a serious overhaul — a surgery — because the growth in renewables has hit a glass ceiling," Li said.

"But reforms have stalled for nearly a decade, because the coal lobby is too powerful."



'Taiwan is Taiwan': China name dispute moves from birds to climate change

Ben Blanchard, Reuters

Posted at Sep 27 2020 10:32 PM



Climate activists attend a parade to call for climate change awareness, organised by the Taiwan Youth Climate Coalition (TWYCC), in Taipei, Taiwan September 27, 2020. *Annabelle Chih, Reuters*

TAIPEI - The dispute over international organizations referring to Taiwan as Chinese has moved from wild bird conservation to climate change, after a global alliance of mayors began listing Taiwanese cities as belonging to China on its website.

China has ramped up pressure on international groups and companies to refer to democratic, self-ruled Taiwan as being part of China, to the anger of Taiwan's government and many of its people.

Beijing views the island as merely a wayward Chinese province.

This month a Taiwan bird conservation body said it had been expelled from a partnership with a British-based wildlife charity after it demanded the Taiwan group change its name and sign documents stating it did not support Taiwan's independence.

Late on Saturday, the southern Taiwanese city of Kaohsiung's government said the website of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy had begun listing Taiwan member cities like itself as part of China.

On Sunday, Taiwan's government reacted with anger.

"Taiwan is Taiwan. China is China. Taiwan is not a city of China's. If there is incorrect usage we think this is extremely improper," Premier Su Tseng-chang told reporters.

The Kaohsiung city government circulated to reporters a draft of a joint letter from six Taiwanese mayors to the Global Covenant asking it to fix the name issue, or they would withdraw from the group.

In an emailed statement, the Global Covenant's secretariat said it was an apolitical organization promoting climate action.

"Since our inception, we have designated cities in accordance with international practices and this has not changed since. We have received and are evaluating the request from the six mayors," it said, without elaborating.

The Global Covenant says its mission is to "galvanize climate and energy action across cities worldwide", representing a population of over 800 million. The only Chinese city it lists as a member is Hong Kong.

China's Foreign Ministry did not respond to a request for comment. *(Reporting by Ben Blanchard; Additional reporting by Ryan Woo in Beijing; Editing by Stephen Coates and Nick Macfie)*

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/09/27/20/taiwan-is-taiwan-china-name-dispute-moves-from-birds-to-climate-change>



More violent storms from rising pollution

September 27, 2020 | Filed under: Editorial, Opinion | Posted by: Tempo Desk

SCIENTISTS have long established that rising temperatures around the world are spawning more violent storms while melting more ice in the polar regions. And the world is getting hotter because of the carbon emissions billowing daily into the atmosphere from factories of the industrial nations.

Last Monday, Oxfam said new research shows that the richest one percent of the world's population is responsible for more than twice as much carbon pollution as the poorest half. This poorest half consists of some 3.1 billion people mostly living in remote areas of the globe.

Oxfam disclosed the fresh findings of the Stockholm Environment Institute that there is an ever widening "carbon inequality" in the world today. The most pollution is coming from the two most industrialized countries on the globe – the United States and China. Unfortunately for us, their carbon emissions do not stay over their lands; they spread to other countries. And the rising heat they cause also spreads around the world.

The heat is melting icebergs at the poles, causing ocean levels to rise which, in turn, threatens low-lying islands around the world, such as some of our own in the Philippines. The heat has also spawned more and more violent storms.



The US itself has been recently hit repeatedly by hurricanes, two of them causing considerable destruction and death in Louisiana. Another one is now threatening Texas. Meanwhile, forest fires are raging in California, partly caused by the hotter climate. Way down south, fires have caused so much damage to the Amazon forest in Brazil.

There is extreme economic inequality in the world today and it is causing an ever-widening "carbon inequality" which, in turn, is causing extreme weather impacting all the nations of the world, both rich and poor.

At the 2015 Paris climate conference, every nation submitted individual plans to reduce its carbon emissions, some through greater use of renewable energy to replace highly polluting coal and gas. We can only hope that all these nations, including our own, will strive harder to carry out their plans and pledges.



Final whale saved from grim Australia mass stranding

Published 14 hours ago on September 27, 2020 04:33 PM

By **TDT** @tribunephil



NEARLY 500 pilot whales were stranded in a remote Harbor in Tasmania, with only 110 surviving. W. Commons

A lone whale was rescued from among hundreds of carcasses Sunday, taking to 110 the number of creatures that survived a mass stranding in southern Australia.

The country's largest-ever mass stranding saw around 470 pilot whales become stuck in a remote harbour on Tasmania's rugged western seaboard last week, sparking a major effort to save the animals.

It was "absolutely remarkable" another whale was found alive six days after the pod was first discovered, a Tasmania environment department spokeswoman told *AFP*, adding that it had been taken back out to sea.

More than 100 rescuers toiled for days in chilly waters, but many volunteers and conservationists have now packed up as efforts turned to disposing of the remaining carcasses.

"There has been a tremendous team effort and this combined commitment has allowed us to get as many whales as we can back out to sea," Parks and Wildlife Service manager Rob Buck said of the "complex rescue".

With more than 300 carcasses spread across a 10-kilometre area (about 6 miles), authorities shifted their focus Sunday to a mass sea burial.

Boats have begun towing the dead whales into the open ocean, where they will be released over several days.

Authorities have warned that more whales could be found in the area, with some animals likely to become beached for a second time.

The causes of mass strandings remain unknown, but some experts have suggested the pod may have gone off track after feeding close to the shoreline or by following one or two whales that strayed.

p/jd

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/09/27/final-whale-saved-from-grim-australia-mass-stranding/>



Selfie incriminating

Published 6 hours ago on September 28, 2020 12:04 AM

By [WJG](#)



Somewhere along the complicated and lengthy process of vaccine development is a monkey.

Not humans, of course, but primates, specifically of the rhesus macaque species.

While people regard such monkeys as nuisance, particularly in the Thai city of Lopburi, where thousands of the animals roam the streets in search for food after the coronavirus pandemic turned away tourists who used to feed them, these macaques are crucial in the making of COVID-19 vaccines that humans desperately need to regain their social lives, jobs and mobility.

Macaques serve as the initial guinea pigs to test a prototype vaccine before this is tried on humans. The number of monkeys used to experiment on one potential vaccine is by the hundreds to simulate its application on the actual population. Some countries breed the animal for this purpose. Even then, reports say pharmacists are encountering a shortage of the animal, with about 100 potential COVID-19 vaccines currently under development worldwide, which requires thousands of test monkeys.

Animal rights groups have limited powers to control the medical experiments since these are in the name of science and for the sake of human survival. Fortunately, macaques are not on the list of endangered species.

Meanwhile, wild macaques like the ones in Lopburi are luckier than their brothers in lab cages. They are free to move around and be mischievous as they want. But that doesn't mean they cannot be held accountable for acts like stealing a smartphone.

One macaque did just that to 20-year-old student Zackrydz Rodzi of Batu Pahat in Johor, Malaysia last 12 September. When Rodzi woke up and could not find his phone, he called it to check if it was in the house. He heard the ring outside in the jungle behind their backyard. Eventually, Rodzi found his gadget under a palm tree.

There is no escaping for the thief. It was identified through its selfies saved on the device. And with the monkey's own photos going viral on Twitter where Rodzi shared it, the instantly famous macaque won't stand a chance in court from the couple of hundred thousand "witnesses" to its selfies. Well, that is if they can single it out from the other similarly looking macaques in the jungle.



16 dead from carbon monoxide poisoning in Chinese coal mine

Published 10 hours ago on September 27, 2020 07:44 PM

By **TDI** @tribunephil



THE cause of the accident is still under investigation. W. Commons

BEIJING (AFP) — Sixteen workers died and one is in a critical condition after being trapped underground in a coal mine in southwest China on Sunday, reported state broadcaster CCTV.

A conveyor belt caught fire in the early hours of the morning, state news agency Xinhua cited the government as saying, which produced dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.

Medics are fighting to save the life of the remaining survivor, CCTV reported.

The cause of the accident is still under investigation, said the Qijiang district government on social media platform Weibo.

The facility, Songzao Coal Mine, is owned by state energy firm Chongqing Energy and located just outside the city of Chongqing.

Mining accidents are common in China, where the industry has a poor safety record and regulations are often weakly enforced.

At least 14 miners were killed in a coal and gas blast last December at a mine in southwestern Guizhou province.

In December 2018, seven miners were killed in Chongqing after the connecting segment of a skip broke and fell down a shaft.

In October the same year, 21 miners died in eastern Shandong province after pressure inside a mine caused rocks to fracture and break, blocking the tunnel and trapping the workers. Only one miner was rescued alive.

p/jd

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/09/27/16-dead-from-carbon-monoxide-poisoning-in-chinese-coal-mine/>



16 dead in coal mine poisoning

posted September 27, 2020 at 06:50 pm

by [AFP](#)

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Sri Lanka returns 'hazardous waste' to UK

7 hours ago



Sri Lanka says it is sending 21 containers of waste back to the UK after they were found to contain hazardous material.

Customs officials said hospital waste was discovered in many of the 263 containers imported by a private firm.

The shipment was meant to be made up of used mattresses, carpets and rugs for potential recycling.

Most of the containers have been stored in warehouses, with only a small amount of material having been re-exported.

- **Sri Lankans demand UK take back rotting waste**

The authorities said there was also plastic and polythene waste in the containers.

Legal action was taken after the Sri Lanka authorities impounded the material in 2018.

Officials said the 21 containers left Sri Lanka on Saturday.

Customs spokesman Sunil Jayaratne said the original importation breached international and EU rules and regulations on hazardous waste and its disposal.

England's Environment Agency said it was committed to tackling illegal waste exports.

An EA spokesperson said: "We are in contact with the Sri Lankan authorities and have requested more information which would allow us to launch a formal investigation."

Several other countries in the region have recently begun to return waste imported from foreign countries.

In January, **Malaysia returned 42 shipping containers** of illegally imported plastic waste to the UK.



Mga basurang galing UK, ibinalik na ng Sri Lanka

By **Bombo Jovino Galang**

-September 28, 2020 | 12:00 AM

Ibinalik ng Sri Lanka ang mga basurang galing sa United Kingdom.

Nadiskubre ang 263 na containers ng basura noong 2017 na ito ay mula sa isang pribadong kumpanya.

Nakasaad sa nasabing containers na naglalaman ito ng mga carpets, mattresses at mga basahan.

Ayon kay Sri Lankan Customs spokesman Sunil Jayaratne, na lumabag ang UK sa international at European Union rules and regulations on hazardous waste and disposal.

Magugunitang noong Enero ay ibinalik din ng Malaysia ang 42 containers ng mga basura na galing sa UK.