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DENR

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Massive Cagayan River dredging, tree planting starts on February 2 – DENR chief

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

January 28, 2021



In file photo provided by the Malacanang Presidential Photographers Division, floodwaters brought by Typhoon Vamco inundate Cagayan valley region in northern Philippines in Nov. 2020. Typhoon Vamco swelled rivers and flooded low-lying areas as it passed over the storm-battered northeast Philippines, where rescuers were deployed to help people flee the rising waters. (Ace Morandante/ Malacanang Presidential Photographers Division via AP)

Secretary Roy A. Cimatu of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Thursday announced that the massive rehabilitation of Cagayan River – the country’s largest river – will begin on February 2, coincides with World Wetlands Day, beginning with the removal of sandbars to clear the constricted section of the river and massive planting of bamboos along its banks.

Cimatu, also concurrent chairman of the Task Force Build Back Better, said in a news statement that the rehabilitation of the Cagayan River is the culmination of weeks of meticulous planning and detailed coordination to ensure that each of the dredging equipment is safely transported to the sandbar sites, and that bamboos are grown at critical portions of the riverbank needing immediate measures to address stream bank erosion and instability.

On top of the six amphibious dredgers of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), a total of 40 dredging equipment are expected to be deployed by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), which consists of dump trucks, bulldozers, tractors, and scoop loaders.

The removal of the sandbars aims to clear the constricted section of Cagayan River, known as the Magapit Narrows.

He said almost a kilometer length of the riverbank in Barangay Bangag in Lallo will be planted with 925 bamboo propagules during the launch.

The sandbar clearing and growing of bamboos will go side by side to protect nearby agricultural lands and crops from damage during typhoons.

The first phase of the dredging activities entails the removal of three priority sandbars along the Magapit Narrows covering a total of 235 hectares with a volume of seven million cubic meters.

A total of 19 sandbars have been identified by the DPWH but immediate dredging was recommended for the three sandbars, which significantly hinder the flow of flood water to the Aparri Delta draining to the Babuyan Channel.

The three sandbars have a total estimated volume of seven million cubic meters, covering 235 hectares.



These are located at Barangay Bangag in Lal-lo town covering 11.4 hectares with 334,305 cubic meters of sand; Casicallan Norte, Gattaran that covers 89 hectares with 2.7 million cubic meters of sand; and Dummun, Gattaran covering 174.70 hectares with 4.04 million cubic meters of sand.

The dredging operation will include 48 laborers and operators trained by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

Meanwhile, the planting operation will require some 100 local residents who are beneficiaries of Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/ Displaced Workers program of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to work on the project.

“This is whole-of-government at its best, with the support from almost all national agencies and the Cagayan provincial government,” Cimatu said.

TFBBB co-chairman DPWH Secretary Mark Villar, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III, and outgoing AFP Chief of Staff General Gilbert Gapay are expected to accompany Cimatu during the launch of the first phase of dredging activities on February 2.

Cagayan Gov. Manuel Mamba, Isabela Gov. Rodolfo Albano, Quirino Gov. Dakila Carlo Cua, Cagayan local chief executives Matthew Nolasco of Gattaran and Oliver Pascual of Lallo, DENR-Cagayan Valley Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan, and DPWH-Cagayan Valley Director Loreta Malaluan have also collectively worked on the programs.



Cagayan River dredging starts Feb. 2

Published January 28, 2021, 3:25 PM

by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

The dredging of the Cagayan River which is a multi-layered environmental endeavor will begin on Feb. 2, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) bared.



(DENR / MANILA BULELTIN)

The effort involves the removal of sandbars to clear the constricted section of Cagayan River known as the Magapit Narrows, as well as the massive planting of bamboo along its bank.

“This is the culmination of weeks of meticulous planning and detailed coordination to ensure that each of the dredging equipment is safely transported to the sandbar sites and that bamboos are grown at critical portions of the riverbank needing immediate measures to address stream bank erosion and instability,” DENR Secretary and Task Force Build Back Better (TFBBB) Chairman Roy Cimatu said in a statement Thursday.

Next month’s launch will see the planting of 925 bamboo propagules on a nearly a kilometer length of the riverbank in Barangay Bangag in Lal-Lo.

Cimatu stressed that the sandbar clearing and growing of bamboos “are inseperable twins,” and that the TFBBB has adopted as a strategy to protect nearby agricultural lands and crops from damage during typhoons.

On top of the six amphibious dredgers of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), a total of 40 dredging equipment are expected to be deployed by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). These include dump trucks, bulldozers, tractors, and scoop loaders.

The launch will formally open the first phase of the dredging operations, which entails the removal of three priority sandbars along the Magapit Narrows portion of Cagayan River. This covers a total of 235 hectares with a volume of seven million cubic meters.

A total of 19 sandbars have been identified by the DPWH but immediate dredging was recommended for the three sandbars, which significantly hinder the flow of flood water to the Aparri Delta draining to the Babuyan Channel.

The three sandbars have a total estimated volume of seven million cubic meters covering 235 hectares. These are located in Barangay Bangag in Lal-Lo; Casicallan Norte, Gattaran; and Dummun, Gattaran.



Some 100 local residents who are beneficiaries of the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers program of the Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) will be hired to carry out the bamboo planting operation.

The dredging operation will include 48 laborers and operators trained by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

“This is whole-of-government at its best, with the support from almost all national agencies and the Cagayan provincial government,” noted Cimatu.



Dredging, pagpapatibay sa riverbank ng Cagayan River all systems go na – Cimatú



January 28, 2021 @ 6:12 PM 13 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Upang maiwasan na ang pagbaha inanunsiyo noong Miyerkules ni Environment Secretary at Task Force Build Back Better chair Roy A. Cimatú na nakatakda nang simulan sa Pebrero 2 ang pagtanggap ng sandbars, pagpapalawak sa makitid na bahagi ng Cagayan River na tinatawag na Magapit Narrows at ang malawakang pagtatanim ng kawayan sa gilid ng ilog.

“This is the culmination of weeks of meticulous planning and detailed coordination to ensure that each of the dredging equipment is safely transported to the sandbar sites and that bamboos are grown at critical portions of the riverbank needing immediate measures to address stream bank erosion and instability,” sabi ni Cimatú.

Ayon kay Cimatú humigit kumulang na may habang isang kilometro sa riverbank ng Barangay Bangag sa Lallo ang tataniman ng 925 punla ng kawayan sa gagawing paglulunsad.

Binigyang diin ni Cimatú na ang pagtanggap ng sandbars at pagtatanim ng kawayan ay matatawag na “inseperable twins” na isang istrategiya na gagawin ng TFBBB upang maprotektahan ang agricultural lands at mga pananim tuwing may bagyo.

Sinabi pa ng DENR na bukod naman sa anim na amphibious dredgers na manggagaling sa Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) ay magpapadala rin ng 40 dredging equipment and Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na kinabibilangan ng dump trucks, bulldozers, tractors at scoop loaders.

Sisimulan ang proyekto sa unang bahagi ng dredging operations na kinakailangang tanggalin ang tatlong priority sandbars sa Magapit Narrows na may sukat na 235 hektarya at tinatayang aabot sa seven million cubic meters.

Ayon na rin sa DPWH, aabot sa 19 sandbars ang kanilang natukoy ngunit ang uunahin ay ang tatlong sandbars na nakahahadlang sa daloy ng tubig baha sa Aparri Delta papunta sa Babuyan Channel.

Ang tatlong sandbars na ito ay may estimated volume na seven million cubic meters at may sukat na 235 hectares.

Ito ay matatagpuan sa Barangay Bangag, Lal-lo na mayroong 11.4 hectares at may daming 334,305 cubic meters ng buhangin; Casicallan Norte, Gattaran, 89 hectares at may 2.7 million cubic meters ng buhangin at Dummun, Gattaran, 174.70 hectares at 4.04 million cubic meters ng buhangin.



Kukuha rin ng 100 local residents na magsisilbing laborers sa planting operation. Ito ay ang mga benipisyaryo ng Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers program ng Department of Labor and Employment.

Magiging bahagi naman ng dredging operation ang 48 laborers at operators na dumaan sa pagsasanay ng Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.

“This is whole-of-government at its best, with the support from almost all national agencies and the Cagayan provincial government,” saad pa ni Cimatú.

Inaasahang makakasama ng DENR chief sa gaganaping 1st phase ng dredging activities sa Pebrero 2 sina TFBBB co-chair DPWH Secretary Mark Villar, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello, III at AFP Chief of Staff General Gilbert Gapay.

Magiging bahagi din ng programa sina Cagayan Gov. Manuel Mamba, Isabela Gov. Rodolfo Albano, Quirino Gov. Dakila Carlo Cua, Cagayan local chief executives Matthew Nolasco ng Gattaran at Oliver Pascual ng Lallo, DENR-Cagayan Valley Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan at DPWH-Cagayan Valley Director Loreta Malaluan na nagtulong-tulong para sa programa. **Santi Celario**



“I am giving my 100 percent commitment to the DENR, Manila Water and MWSS. I am enjoining all residents to take care of our environment,” Zamora said.

[pna.gov.ph/Image grabbed from Mayor Francis Zamora FB page](https://pna.gov.ph/Image%20grabbed%20from%20Mayor%20Francis%20Zamora%20FB%20page)

San Juan River rehabilitation underway

[Neil Jayson Servallos](#) (The Philippine Star) - January 29, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The San Juan government has partnered with government agencies and the private sector to clean up San Juan River and its tributaries, according to Mayor Francis Zamora.

During the launch of the “Adopt an Estero” rehabilitation program on Wednesday, Zamora called on the local governments of Mandaluyong and Quezon City to rehabilitate the San Juan River whose portions also run in the cities.

San Juan teamed up with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and Manila Water to rehabilitate the river.

“I am giving my 100 percent commitment to the DENR, Manila Water and MWSS. I am enjoining all residents to take care of our environment,” Zamora said. “What I envision here in San Juan is once we are able to clean these creeks, we can build infrastructure for us to enjoy the waterway.”

Zamora, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu and other officials dropped 1,000 Mabuhay or bokashi balls, substances that are deemed helpful in neutralizing toxicity in waters, into the Maytunas Creek during the launching.

The local government said a livelihood program to produce bokashi balls would be conducted for out-of-school youth and displaced workers in the city.

Each bokashi ball is composed of clay soil, microorganisms and Mabuhay mix (rice bran, sugar and salt). Once thrown into dirty water, the microorganisms in the balls will eat coliform and other bacteria in the water.

“We look forward to the training of our communities in creating Mabuhay balls not just to clean rivers but also as a livelihood for the unemployed. Our constituents will be more invested in the cleanup of creeks and the San Juan River if they are part of the solution,” Zamora said.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2021/01/29/2073798/san-juan-river-rehabilitation-underway>



River clean-up

posted January 28, 2021 at 09:00 pm



East zone concessionaire Manila Water Company Inc. activates its Adopt-an-Estero program with several interventions to clean up San Juan River beginning at Maytunas and Ermitanyo Creeks in Barangay Addition Hills, San Juan City. Attending the ceremony are (from left) Manila Water president and chief executive Jose Rene Almendras, San Juan Mayor Francis Zamora, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, Undersecretary Jonas Leones, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System deputy administrator Ronald Abrigo and MWSS-RO chief regulator Patrick Lester Ty.



DENR to conduct public consultations on unsafe products

By Catherine Teves January 28, 2021, 4:34 pm



(PNA file photo)

MANILA – The environment department will further conduct public consultations on non-environmentally acceptable products and packaging (NEAPs) which RA 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000) sets to phase out.

Another round of public consultation is scheduled on Monday (Feb. 1) to give manufacturing and packaging stakeholders an opportunity to air their views and concerns about the target phase-out, said environmental management specialist Bhona Oñate of Environmental Management Bureau on Thursday, which is leading the department's efforts against solid waste.

She noted such stakeholder feedback is essential in developing the NEAP list that RA 9003 requires.

"There's still no such list until now," she said.

It remains unclear when the country will have its first NEAP list since RA 9003 cites the need for public consultations on the matter first.

According to RA 9003's implementing rules and regulations, NEAPs are "products or packaging that are unsafe in production, use, post-consumer use, or that produce or release harmful products."

RA 9003 ordered National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) to prepare, within one year from effectivity of this law, the list of NEAPs to be banned following the schedule such body will set in consultation with stakeholders concerned.

NEAPs shall not be banned unless NSWMC first finds alternatives available to the public at costs that aren't more than 10 percent higher than corresponding prices of items these will replace, however, RA 9003 clarified.

Such law also said that "notwithstanding any other provision to the contrary," its section on NEAPs "shall not apply to (a) Packaging used at hospitals, nursing homes or other medical facilities; and (b) Any packaging which is not environmentally acceptable, but for which there is no commercially available alternative as determined by the Commission."

Public consultation NSWMC held on Jan. 22 this year aimed to identify single-use plastic items for inclusion in the NEAP list, noted the environment department.

Such items end up as trash after people throw these away.

Environment chief and NSWMC chairperson Roy Cimatu acknowledged developing the NEAP list won't be easy.

He, however, assured work on the matter will continue.

"Though we are experiencing heavy resistance from the plastic industry, we will still push through in coming up with a list of NEAPs," he said earlier this week in his message for RA 9003's 20th anniversary.

Philippine waste generation is increasing -- raising urgency for dealing with NEAPs, he noted.



"We will make sure that NEAPs will not be left behind in the waste management of our country," he said.

Environment undersecretary Benny Antiporda, Cimatu's alternate as NSWMC chairperson, said despite RA 9003, the country's average daily waste generation rose from some 37,000 tons in 2012 to around 40,000 tons in 2016.

"At the close of 2020, the country has generated some 21.5 million metric tons of garbage," he also said in his RA 9003 anniversary message earlier this week.

Such data showed the country has not achieved much success in implementing RA 9003 that promotes solid waste management through the three Rs which are reducing, reusing, and recycling waste, he noted.

"Those three Rs two decades ago expanded to five Rs: reduce, reuse, recycle, refuse and rot," he said.

He noted Cimatu's prioritization of solid waste management is raising compliance with RA 9003, however.

"In the next two years, we commit to work even harder," he said.

Among solid waste management-related achievements nationwide under Cimatu are reduction in number of open dumps, increase in sanitary landfills and filing of cases against LGUs that have not been complying with RA 9003, said the environment department. (**PNA**)



NSWMC holds public consultation on single-use plastics prohibition

By DENR Published on January 28, 2021

QUEZON CITY, Jan. 28 -- The National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), recently held a nationwide public consultation with various stakeholders to identify single-use plastic items that will be included in the list of non-environmentally acceptable products and packaging materials or NEAP.

The NSWMC, chaired by DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, organized the virtual consultation, last January 22 which was participated in by 169 representatives from local government units, private sector, and key stakeholders from civil society groups, including Ecowaste Coalition and Oceana Philippines.

DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units (LGUs) Concerns and NSWMC Alternate Chair Benny D. Antiporda said conducting the consultation is "a key moment on our work on NEAP," noting that coming up with the list of NEAP is anticipated.

"Rest assured that this NEAP will not be left behind," Antiporda said, acknowledging that the establishment of the NEAP list is "long overdue."

Antiporda expressed optimism over the formulation and adoption of the list of NEAP due to the renewed vigor to engage stakeholders in implementing Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 under President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's administration.

He also assured those in the public consultation that the NSWMC will remain transparent on the recommendations in the NEAP list.

RA 9003 provides that the NSWMC "shall, after public notice and hearing, prepare a list of non-environmentally acceptable products as defined in the Act that shall be prohibited according to a schedule to be prepared by the Commission."

It also states that the NEAP "shall not be prohibited until the Commission finds there are alternatives available to consumers at a cost that is no more than 10 percent greater than the disposable product."

During the public consultation, Reynaldo Esguerra of the Department of Science and Technology-Industrial Technology Development Institute (DOST-ITDI) presented the results of a study conducted from October to December 2020.

The DOST is a member of the NSWMC.

The study titled "Findings on the Assessment Conducted on Certain Products for Inclusion in the Non-Environmentally Acceptable Products (NEAP) List" focused on the assessment of single-use plastic straws, commonly used for softdrinks, and coffee stirrers and its equivalent alternative materials.

Based on the rapid risk assessment conducted on four items, glass straws posed the highest score with 25 points, followed by metal straws, 23; plastic, 17; and paper straws, 10.



Esguerra said the higher the score, the greater the risk.

Meanwhile, a wood stirrer has a risk assessment score of 10, and 16 for plastic stirrers. (DENR)



DENR taps DILG, MMDA to help manage wastes amid COVID-19 pandemic

Published January 28, 2021 9:05pm

By JOVILAND RITA, GMA News

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said it will seek the help of different government agencies to address problems in waste management amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said Thursday they invited the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) as well as the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) to discuss solutions.

“We are inviting DILG na rin tsaka MMDA for a meeting because of the biodegradable waste, wherein hindi na naa-address ‘yung segregation ng residual tsaka biodegradable waste,” he told GMA News Online in a phone interview.

Antiporda made the statement when asked about the efforts of DENR in informing the public about proper waste management.

Recently, the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations reported that the [medical waste](#) in Metro Manila increased by 280 tons per day due to the pandemic.

Antiporda said that yellow trash bins were distributed in some barangays where household healthcare waste will be disposed. He added that the yellow bins bring awareness to the public about segregation.

He said that the DENR has limited funding to launch an information campaign. However, he said that the agency will work with other agencies instead.

“Itong medical waste na pinag-uusapan natin...the household healthcare waste, which are the face mask, face shield, tapos 'yung gloves,” he said.

“These are the things which are suspected contaminated waste na what's important only is the proper segregation,” he added.

According to Antiporda, garbage collectors will dump the household healthcare waste in a special cell in sanitary landfills.

“Ito kasi kapag kinuha ng mga garbage collector, they put it in a special cell in the sanitary landfill. They do not mix it with the ordinary residual (waste),” he said.—**LDF, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/773724/denr-taps-dilg-mmda-to-help-manage-wastes-amid-covid-19-pandemic/story/>



Nahahakot na medical waste sa Metro Manila umabot na sa 280 tons kada araw

On Jan 28, 2021



UMAKYAT na sa 280-tons kada araw ang nahahakot na medical waste sa Metro Manila dahil sa coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Batay sa inilabas na report ng Asian Development Bank at United Nations, ang kada isang tao sa health care facility ay nakakadagdag ng 3.5 kilograms ng medical waste kada araw.

Ayon kay Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, isa sa posibleng dahilan ng pagkalat ng maraming disposable face mask ay dahil walang malinaw na tapunan ang mamamayan.

Dahil dito, nagpagawa na aniya ang DENR ng mga dilaw na basurahan para sa mga household health care waste.

Target naman ng DENR na mabigyan ng dilaw na basurahan ang lahat ng local government units.

Source: https://www.policefilestonite.net/2021/01/28/nahahakot-na-medical-waste-sa-metro-manila-umabot-na-sa-280-tons-kada-araw/?fbclid=IwAR2GxDt9qGEEAvsxCY8fYnnsL10HyIzH_ZmUh9hXW9oXS1zTMEyf6iSN
[S6w](#)



Medical waste sa Metro Manila kada araw, umabot na ng 280 tons dahil sa pandemya

By [RadyoMaN Manila](#) -Jan. 28, 2021 at 6:36am



Tumaas ng hanggang 280 tonelada ang medica waste sa Metro Manila dahil sa COVID-19 pandemic.

Batay sa ulat ng Asian Development Bank (ADB) at United Nations, ang bawat tao sa healthcare facility ay lumilikha ng 3.5 kilograms ng health care waste dahil sa COVID-19 kada araw.

Ayon kay Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, madalas nakikitang basura ay disposable face masks lalo na at walang malinaw na tapunan para rito.

Ipinag-utos na ng DENR ang paggawa ng yellow trash bins para sa household healthcare waste.

Aabot na sa 100 yellow trash bins ang ipinamahagi sa Lungsod ng Maynila habang libu-libo pa ang nakatakdang ipamahagi sa ibang lungsod sa mga susunod na buwan.

Ang trash bins ay lalagyan ng label at ihihiwalay sa mga normal na basurahan.

Ang infectious waste ay ilalayo sa mga pasyente at publikong lugar.

Source: <https://rmn.ph/medical-waste-sa-metro-manila-kada-araw-umabot-na-ng-280-tons-dahil-sa-pandemya/?fbclid=IwAR2Z3Xkbi8ISKlnQVMwhCgmRzheXTAHvloMChjLld3hT1FUST8vaZhiCfcs>



New ordinance penalizes improper disposal of PPEs



SunStar File

January 29, 2021

WHEN in Cebu City, used masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) should be disposed properly in the coming days or face penalties.

This, as the Cebu City Council approved on Jan. 27, 2021 an ordinance which prohibits the improper disposal of face masks and other Covid-19 PPEs.

The ordinance authored by Councilor Alvin Dizon mandates the public to separate used masks and PPEs from regular trash by putting them in a yellow plastic bag or by marking the trash bag with a yellow line indicating the international color code for hazardous waste.

The public can also just put the sign “USED MASKS” on the plastic bag, according to the ordinance.

Used masks should also be cut in half to avoid possible reuse and their trash bags disinfected, the ordinance said.

The ordinance also prohibits the throwing of used masks, face shields, hand gloves, and other Covid-related discards in public places such as streets, sidewalks, parks, canals, esteros, and other bodies of water.

Designated areas

All offices of the Cebu City Hall, commercial establishments, hospitals, medical clinics, and educational and religious institutions are required to provide designated bins with labels indicating the hazardous nature of the waste to ensure the proper disposal of face masks and other PPEs within the premises.

The ordinance will take effect 15 days after its publication in a newspaper of local circulation.

Violators will be fined P1,000 for the first offense; P2,000 for the second offense; and P3,000 or one month imprisonment for the third and subsequent offense.

The violator may also avail of a “compromise fee” of P500 or do community service.

If the violator is an establishment or an organization, a fine of P2,000 will be imposed for the first offense; P3,000 for the second offense; and P5,000 or the revocation of the business permit for third and subsequent offense.

The ordinance covers all types of masks, face shields, hand gloves, and other Covid-19 protective gear including disinfectants, hygiene products, wipes, tissues, rubbing alcohol and hand sanitizers.



The ordinance also promotes the use of reusable and environmentally-friendly masks made of organic or recyclable materials.

An information and education campaign will be undertaken by the Cebu City Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) and the Association of Barangay Councils (ABC).

The Cenro is also mandated to maintain a database of the violators.

“The reckless disposal of Covid-19 protective gears and products, particularly potentially infectious masks, poses a threat to human health and environment and goes against the efforts of the government to clean up the city,” said Dizon. / **JJL**



As environmental warriors, they will be given pocket Wi-Fi for connectivity, face masks, and shields for them to observe health protocols, Colacion added.

The ENR Ambassadors have to sign a Memorandum of Partnership Agreement and thereafter can already start posting their various environmental activities on the official Facebook page of the DENR.

"We had an orientation last week and we will have a series of virtual briefings. We are just waiting for a schedule that is okay for everyone," he added.

Meantime, Regional Executive Director Francisco E. Milla Jr, during the virtual training-orientation program, said that "students have an important role to play in nation-building as well as in environmental awareness".

"They can help in the promotion of Program for ENR for Restoration, Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD) with the end goal of positive behavioral change through the conduct of information, education and communication campaign, advocacy, and social mobilization," he said. **(PNA)**



Injured young PH serpent eagle rescued in Iloilo

Published January 28, 2021, 11:40 AM

by [Tara Yap](#)

ILOILO CITY—The Western Visayas regional office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-6) lauded a family in this city for rescuing a young eagle that was injured.



The injured young Philippine serpent eagle was rescued by Perocho family in Iloilo City. (DENR-6/ MANILA BULLETIN)

“I am grateful for the environmentally-responsible citizens for their continuous support in the protection and conservation of our species,” said DENR-6 Regional Director Francisco Milla Jr.

The Perocho family from Arevalo district did not hesitate to call DENR after finding an Philippine serpent eagle at their backyard recently. The young eagle with the scientific name of *Spilornis holospilus* was limping with a wound on its right leg.

DENR staff in Iloilo City then transferred the injured eagle to the DENR’s Community Environment Office in Miag-ao town before it was released back to the wild.

The Philippine serpent eagle is endemic in the country and is in the list of concerned eagle species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s Red List of Threatened Species (IUCN Red List) and BirdLife International.

“The effort [of the Perocho family] is precious as it allows us to see eagles and other birds fly and soar high in the sky,” added Milla.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2021/01/28/injured-young-ph-serpent-eagle-rescued-in-iloilo/>



Oceana-backed private enterprises avoid over 1M single-use plastics

Published January 28, 2021, 10:37 PM

by [Ellson Quismorio](#)

Marine conservation advocacy group Oceana Philippines has helped quantify single-use plastic waste avoidance between November and December among a handful of environment-conscious private enterprises.



Oceana Philippines (Twitter)

“#DiNaSingle enterprises composed of Akbayanihan, Back to Basics, Eco Shift, Katha, Lush, and Balay Qubo and The Bamboo Company avoided a total of 1,055,098 single-use plastic in November to December 2020,” a statement from Oceana bared Thursday.

Oceana, in partnership with these companies, installed a monitor in their respective stores—online or otherwise—to count the number of plastic-free products created and sold to their customers.

“We are elated that our #DiNaSingle partners persevere in mainstreaming plastic-free alternatives and minimize packaging to reduce waste even without receiving incentives from the government. They are displaying ethical leadership in showing that business can still run without adding to the pervasive plastic litter that the world and our oceans face,” Oceana Vice President Gloria Estenzo Ramos said.

The hashtag #DiNaSingle is a clever reference to the local movement against single-use plastics. It also entails the formation of new partnerships.

“We are confident that more enterprises will follow suit for the care of our environment and our children’s future,” Ramos added.

Oceana recently joined the dialogue of civil society and environment groups with the National Solid Waste Management Commission. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Benny Antiporda also took part in the meeting.

Antiporda vowed to release the list of non-environmentally acceptable products and packaging soon. Oceana called this “an unperformed 20-year-old mandate of the Commission which could have drastically reduced plastic pollution at the sources.”

Having single use-plastics in the list of Non-Environmentally Acceptable Products and Packaging (NEAPP) list will effectively make their production, trade, and usage a prohibited act under Republic Act (RA) 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, Oceana said.

The pandemic has aggravated the massive use of throw-away plastics, in the form of face masks, face shields, gloves, PPE, and delivery services packaging, many of which are found in the oceans. The Philippines is branded as among the five countries responsible for most of the plastics that end up in the ocean.

It was February 2020 when DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu signed a resolution implementing a ban on the use of single-use plastic products by national government agencies, local government units, and other government-controlled offices. The banned items include plastic bags, straws, and spoons and forks.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2021/01/28/oceana-backed-private-enterprises-avoid-over-1m-single-use-plastics/>



7 firms skip single-use plastics, over 1M disposable plastic waste avoided

By: [Gabriel Pabico Lalu](#) - Reporter / [@GabriellaluINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 12:49 AM January 29, 2021

MANILA, Philippines — It took seven companies just a month to avoid wasting over one million single-use plastics, an environment advocacy group said on Friday.

In a statement, Oceana said that the outstanding figures came as some private companies adopted their advocacy of doing away with single-use plastics, or containers that would not be used again and would turn into garbage.

According to the non-government organization, local businesses Akbayanihan, Back to Basics, Eco Shift, Katha, Lush, Balay Qubo, and The Bamboo Company avoided a total of 1,055,098 single-use plastic just from November to December 2020

Oceana itself monitored the stores to count the number of transactions that occurred — or the number of plastic-free products created and sold to customers.

“We are elated that our #DiNaSingle partners persevere in mainstreaming plastic-free alternatives and minimize packaging to reduce waste even without receiving incentives from the government,” Oceana vice president Gloria Estenzo Ramos said.

“They are displaying ethical leadership in showing that business can still run without adding to the pervasive plastic litter that the world and our oceans face. We are confident that more enterprises will follow suit for the care of our environment and our children’s future,” she added.

Oceana noted that it is a good way to celebrate January, the Zero Waste Month and at the same time 20th anniversary since the passage of Republic Act No. 9003 or Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

While a lot of companies have not yet shifted or adopted this policy of not using single-use plastics, the group understands that there is still much work to do.

They also noted that a lot of responsibility sits on the Philippines’ shoulder, as it is one of the top five countries blamed for polluting seas with plastics. It is ironic, Oceana pointed out, as the Philippines benefits a lot from seas being an archipelago beside the Pacific Ocean.

“We have abused our natural life support systems and recklessly trashed plastics everywhere as if it is our birthright. It is high time for the Government to step in and stop the plastics pollution at the source,” Oceana said.

“We are a mega-diverse country but so vulnerable to disasters and climate change. Yet these do not seem to be factored in the decision-making process,” it added.

EDV

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1389565/7-firms-skip-single-use-plastics-over-1m-disposable-plastic-waste-avoided>



Velasco urges Senate to pass waste-to-energy bill

By HORPublished on January 28, 2021

PASAY CITY, Jan. 28 -- Speaker Lord Allan Velasco is urging the Senate to pass the bill allowing the use of waste-to-energy (WTE) technologies to help solve the country's perennial garbage problem.

Velasco said it was high time for the government to consider the adoption of WTE technologies in the treatment and disposal of solid waste as many of the landfills in the country will soon be filled up.

"The huge amount of waste that we produce threatens to overwhelm our landfills and create worse garbage disposal problems," Velasco pointed out. "Before this happens, we must now look for cleaner and more sustainable method to treat and dispose of solid waste, such as WTE."

Last November 24, the House of Representatives approved on third and final reading House Bill (HB) 7829 or the proposed "Waste Treatment Technology Act" with close to 200 lawmakers, including Velasco, signing on as principal authors. The Senate version, which was authored and sponsored by Senator Sherwin Gatchalian, is pending on second reading.

The bill aims to allow the use of any WTE technology, including incineration, as long as it does not produce poisonous or toxic fumes.

It seeks to amend Republic Act 8749 or the Clean Air Act of 1999 by repealing Section 20 thereof to allow the use of incineration for WTE purposes.

According to Velasco, WTE technologies convert the waste into energy and thus minimize the amount of trash sent to landfills, which also reduces negative impacts on the surrounding environment.

"WTE facilities provide a safe, technologically advanced means of waste disposal that reduces greenhouse gases and generates clean energy," said Velasco, who was previously the chair of the House Committee on Energy.

The House chief said WTE is widely recognized as a technology that can help mitigate climate change because the waste combusted at a WTE facility does not generate methane as it would at a landfill.

He said the electricity produced from a WTE facility offsets the greenhouse gases that would otherwise have been generated from coal and natural gas plants.

WTE is widely used in European countries, where there are limited space for landfills. It has also worked to keep trash off the streets and waters in Japan and Singapore.

In the Philippines, the only waste disposal method allowed under RA 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 is sanitary landfill, which is quite expensive and difficult to build, operate and maintain.



According to government data, only 30 percent of the country's population has access to sanitary landfills, many of which are close to filling up. The country, meanwhile, generates an estimated 43,700 tons of garbage daily.

Under HB 7829, WTE facilities will be regulated to make sure they are fitted with equipment that will continuously monitor, record and make publicly available the reported data on their emissions or air pollutant concentrations.

Entities using WTE technologies will be required to incorporate in their facilities or operations appropriate material recovery program and their thermal units would only treat wastes at a temperature of not less than 850 degrees Celsius.

Once the bill is enacted into law, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall be primarily responsible for its implementation and enforcement.

The DENR will be mandated to promote the use of state-of-the-art, environmentally sound and safe technologies for the handling, treatment, thermal or non-thermal destruction, utilization and disposal of residual wastes.

Pursuant to Section 15 of RA 8749, Pollution Research and Development Program shall include the continuous monitoring, evaluation and development of more appropriate air quality guideline values and standards for the treatment of municipal and hazardous wastes, or for the processing of any waste material for fuel. (HOR)



Velasco asks Senate: Pass waste-to-energy bill to address PH trash woes

By: [Neil Arwin Mercado](#), [Tonette Orejas](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 04:10 PM January 28, 2021



(FILE PHOTO) Speaker Lord Allan Velasco. Photo from the Office of Cong. Velasco

MANILA, Philippines — Speaker Lord Allan Velasco on Thursday urged the Senate to approve the bill allowing the use of waste-to-energy (WTE) technologies in order to address the country’s garbage problem.

Velasco said it is time for the government to consider the adoption of WTE technologies in the treatment and disposal of solid waste as many of the country’s landfills will soon be filled up.

“The huge amount of waste that we produce threatens to overwhelm our landfills and create worse garbage disposal problems,” Velasco, former chair of the House committee on energy, said in a statement.

“Before this happens, we must now look for cleaner and more sustainable methods to treat and dispose of solid waste, such as WTE,” he added.

The House of Representatives passed House Bill No. 7829 or the “Waste Treatment Technology Act” in November last year while a similar measure remains pending in the Senate for second-reading approval.

The House version of the measure seeks to amend Republic Act No. 8749 or the Clean Air Act of 1999 and allowing the use of any WTE technology, including incineration, as long as it does not produce poisonous or toxic fumes.

Velasco said WTE technologies convert waste into energy and, thus, minimize the amount of trash sent to landfills.

“WTE facilities provide a safe, technologically advanced means of waste disposal that reduces greenhouse gases and generates clean energy,” the Speaker also said.

Under House Bill No. 7829, WTE facilities will be regulated to make sure they are fitted with equipment that will continuously monitor, record, and make publicly available the reported data on their emissions or air pollutant concentrations.



Entities using WTE technologies will be required to incorporate in their facilities or operations an appropriate materials recovery program, and their thermal units would only treat wastes at a temperature of not less than 850 degrees Celsius.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), meanwhile, will be mandated to promote the use of state-of-the-art, environmentally sound and safe technologies for the handling, treatment, thermal or non-thermal destruction, utilization, and disposal of residual wastes.



Velasco urges WTE bill passage

The huge amount of waste that we produce threatens to overwhelm our landfills and create worse garbage disposal problems

Published 3 hours ago on January 29, 2021 02:30 AM

By [Michelle R. Guillang](#) @tribunephil_mish



House Speaker Lord Allan Velasco on Thursday urged the Senate to approve the measure allowing the use of waste-to-energy (WTE) technologies for improved solid waste management.

“The huge amount of waste that we produce threatens to overwhelm our landfills and create worse garbage disposal problems. Before this happens, we must now look for cleaner and more sustainable methods to treat and dispose of solid waste, such as WTE,” he pointed out.

Considering that landfills in the country are close to being overfilled with an estimated 43,700 tons of garbage daily, the Marinduque lawmaker said it is now the “high time” for the government to consider the adoption of WTE technologies.

The House of Representatives approved on third and final reading House Bill 7829 or the proposed “Waste Treatment Technology Act” with close to 200 lawmakers, including Velasco, signing on as principal authors, in November last year.

The bill seeks to retract Section 20 of Republic Act 8749 or the Clean Air Act of 1999 to allow the use of incineration for WTE purposes.

Velasco, who previously headed the House energy panel, is optimistic that WTE technologies can convert the waste into energy resulting in a lesser amount of garbage.

“WTE facilities provide a safe, technologically advanced means of waste disposal that reduces greenhouse gases and generates clean energy,” he stressed.

Under the bill, industries using WTE technologies must incorporate in their facilities or operations appropriate material recovery programs and their thermal units would only treat wastes at a temperature of not less than 850 degrees Celsius.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources will be mandated to implement and enforce the measure once it is enacted, while the Pollution Research and Development Program shall include the continuous monitoring, evaluation and development of more appropriate air quality guideline values and standards for the treatment of hazardous wastes, or for the processing of any waste material for fuel.

WTE is widely used in European and Asian countries like Japan and Singapore where space for landfills is limited.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2021/01/29/velasco-urges-wte-bill-passage/>



Senate asked to OK use of WTE technologies

Thursday, January 28, 2021 Ryan Ponce Pacpaco

SPEAKER Lord Allan Velasco on Thursday urged the Senate to pass the bill allowing the use of waste-to-energy (WTE) technologies to help solve the country's perennial garbage problem.

Velasco said it was high time for the government to consider the adoption of WTE technologies in the treatment and disposal of solid waste as many of the landfills in the country will soon be filled up.

"The huge amount of waste that we produce threatens to overwhelm our landfills and create worse garbage disposal problems," Velasco pointed out. "Before this happens, we must now look for cleaner and more sustainable method to treat and dispose of solid waste, such as WTE."

Last November 24, the House of Representatives approved on third and final reading House Bill (HB) No. 7829 or the proposed *"Waste Treatment Technology Act"* with close to 200 lawmakers, including Velasco, signing on as principal authors. The Senate version, which was authored and sponsored by Senator Sherwin Gatchalian, is pending on second reading.

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WTE is widely used in European countries, where there are limited space for landfills. It has also worked to keep trash off the streets and waters in Japan and Singapore.

In the Philippines, the only waste disposal method allowed under RA 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 is sanitary landfill, which is quite expensive and difficult to build, operate and maintain.

According to government data, only 30 percent of the country's population has access to sanitary landfills, many of which are close to filling up. The country, meanwhile, generates an estimated 43,700 tons of garbage daily.

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Entities using WTE technologies will be required to incorporate in their facilities or operations appropriate material recovery program and their thermal units would only treat wastes at a temperature of not less than 850 degrees Celsius.

Once the bill is enacted into law, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall be primarily responsible for its implementation and enforcement.

The DENR will be mandated to promote the use of state-of-the-art, environmentally sound and safe technologies for the handling, treatment, thermal or non-thermal destruction, utilization and disposal of residual wastes.

Pursuant to Section 15 of RA 8749, Pollution Research and Development Program shall include the continuous monitoring, evaluation and development of more appropriate air quality guideline values and standards for the treatment of municipal and hazardous wastes, or for the processing of any waste material for fuel.



Conserving tarantulas, scorpions helps prevent diseases- ACB chief

By ACB Published on January 28, 2021

LAGUNA, Jan. 28 -- Tarantulas and scorpions as pets? Think again. The head of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) expressed concern over the recent cases of illegal wildlife trafficking seemingly influenced by trends of keeping these threatened species as pets.

The Philippines' Bureau of Customs (BOC) last week reported the seizure of a package containing 20 endangered tarantula spiders and 8 scorpions at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on 6 January 2021.

Records showed the package, which came from Samut Parakarn, Thailand, was misdeclared as "teaching equipment," and imported without the necessary permits.

In 2019, the BoC intercepted 757 tarantulas at a mail exchange centre near Manila's international airport and later arrested a man who tried to claim the tarantulas declared as "collection items." In October last year, 119 tarantulas from Poland concealed in a pair of rubber shoes were also seized.

Lauding the work of the BOC, Lim emphasised the importance of strengthening wildlife law enforcement, particularly at seaports and airports, and fostering regional and transboundary coordination to combat illicit wildlife trade.

"We acknowledge the authorities' vigilance against illegal wildlife trafficking and their close coordination with environmental agencies in the pursuit to conserve and protect threatened wildlife species. The covert nature of the trade makes this a huge challenge for authorities and requires a whole-of-government approach," Lim said.

Tarantulas comprise a group of large and hairy spiders under the family Theraphosidae. Of the 39 species listed in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List global database, 11 are categorised as either critically endangered or endangered, 5 are vulnerable, and 5 are near-threatened.

Scorpions, on the other hand, can be found in six of the seven continents of the world. A species found in the ASEAN, *Isometrus deharvengi*, however, is listed as an endangered arachnid in the IUCN Red List.

Lim noted that these arachnids play important roles in ecosystems, helping control insect populations and thus helping prevent the spread of insect-borne diseases.

Also, the venoms of tarantulas and scorpions may have medicinal properties that can be valuable in the development of new drugs. Apart from their contributions to maintaining ecological balance, Lim said these arachnids may provide solutions to modern-day ailments.

"Many hobbyists and collectors, however, are willing to buy these at high prices. This demand contributes to the rampant poaching of these species from the wild, smuggling, and illegal trade. Poaching to the point of extinction may have profound impacts on the environment and eventually on human health," Lim said.



Inadvertent release or escape of exotic animals, especially poisonous ones, into the wild and ecologically sensitive places with high endemism, could result in an ecological imbalance and potentially harm other species in the ecosystems, the ACB head explained.

She warned the public to be compliant with national laws concerning the trade, transportation, and possession of these heavily trafficked animals.

In the Philippines, under the Philippines' Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Protection and Conservation Act, those engaged in illegal importation, collection, and trade of endangered wildlife are meted six years of imprisonment and a fine of P200,000.00 (USD 4,100).

Also, given the transboundary nature of most illegal wildlife trade, Lim cited the need for greater coordination and cooperation among neighbouring countries, in accordance with the commitment of the ASEAN Member States.

In 2019, ASEAN Ministers responsible for Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and Wildlife Enforcement during the Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Illegal Wildlife Trade in Chiang Mai, Thailand, agreed to scale up their efforts to strengthen cooperation in addressing illegal wildlife trade in the region by collaborating with international organisations, private sector, academia, and civil society.

"With a better understanding of the human-wildlife interface amid the COVID-19 pandemic, our collaboration is highly timely and relevant," Lim said. (ACB)



Mining firm kicks off rehab in Leyte site

By Sarwell Meniano January 28, 2021, 2:31 pm



MINE REHAB. A backfilled mine site in Maya village, MacArthur, Leyte. The MacArthur Iron Sand Project Corp. (MIPC) announced on Thursday (Jan. 28, 2021) that it has started the rehabilitation of a four-hectare land they have leased for extraction of iron sand in MacArthur town. *(Photo courtesy of MIPC)*

TACLOBAN CITY – A mining firm has started the rehabilitation of a four-hectare land they have leased for extraction of iron sand in MacArthur, Leyte, an official announced on Thursday.

Januar Ong, MacArthur Iron Sand Project Corp. (MIPC) community relations officer, said mined out areas in their pilot site are now backfilled with non-iron bearing sand as the first step to full rehabilitation.

The firm announced its rehabilitation plans after making the first shipment of 39,000 metric tons of iron sand to China from Jan. 17 to Jan. 26.

“The topsoil we have set aside during extraction will be placed back to farms to make the land (suitable) to crop production. We can help farmers improve their farming practice through the use of technology. Farm owners are our partners in rehabilitation,” Ong told reporters.

Of the seven hectares leased as a pilot site in Maya village, four hectares have been mined out since late last year. There were no actual mining operations in the remaining area since it is considered as a buffer zone, he added.

“We will not leave any hole unfilled. We are just waiting for the right time to put back the topsoil since we still have to make sure the right elevation, irrigation system, and provision of an access road,” he said.

Soil samples were collected on Thursday to examine the soil nutrients present and recommend ways to improve soil quality.

Under the two-year lease agreement, the mining firm will handle the crop production after mine extractions, demonstrating to farmers the application of farming technologies.

MIPC initially planned to plant high-value vegetables while waiting for the planting season of rice.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) reported that the MIPC is one of the priority mining projects tapped by the government to help the economy adversely affected by the health crisis.

The firm is reportedly investing PHP500 million and has already hired nearly 300 workers in MacArthur town since last year.

The MGB granted the MIPC mining claims of 2,300 hectares last September 2020, covering the towns of MacArthur, Javier, and Abuyog.

In MacArthur alone, the MIPC has mining claims of about 300 hectares for three years. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1128806>



ATN resumes quarrying works

[Iris Gonzales](#) (The Philippine Star) - January 29, 2021 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — ATN Holdings (ATN), the operator of one of the country's largest rock extraction sites, is set to fully resume operations following the government's reinstatement of its mineral processing permit.

ATN Holdings chairman and CEO Arsenio Ng said the company has received a letter from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau – Regional Office No. IV, stating that quarrying operations in Rizal province were not the “proximate cause” of the flooding incident in Marikina City on Nov. 12, 2020.

With the resumption of operations, Ng said ATN could now move forward with plans to participate in the government's Build Build Build infrastructure program.

In participating in the government's infrastructure program, ATN will supply rock aggregates to be used as construction materials.

Supply will be processed in ATN's 254-hectare property in Rodriguez, Rizal featuring a state-of-the art rock crushing plant with a capacity of 500 tons per hour. ATN has been deemed compliant after due validation, he said.

“As a responsible operator, we are cognizant of the importance of safeguarding our natural environment and ensuring the welfare of host communities. From our end, we will continuously invest in enhancing our operations through the use of modern sustainable technology, proper waste treatment facilities in accordance with best industry practices,” Ng added.



Following Biden, Duterte now eyes climate change

By [Malaya Business Insight](#) - January 29, 2021

PRESIDENTIAL spokesman Harry Roque has affirmed that the Duterte administration is determined to take measures to further mitigate the impact of climate change. He called on the Filipino to support this new government initiative.

We call this “new” because President Duterte has time and again scoffed at climate change as something that does not concern the nation, and that the responsibility to cut down on carbon emissions should be on the shoulders of the advanced economies of the West.

Roque tackled the need for collective action, noting that he was not surprised that the Philippines is among the top 10 most affected countries by extreme weather events.

‘... the Philippines has long been identified as one of the countries most vulnerable to climate hazards, such as typhoons, flooding, landslides, and droughts.’

It could be that Duterte is following the example of newly elected United States President Joseph Biden who signed an executive order at the White House just hours after being sworn in, to reverse the previous administration’s withdrawal from the 2015 Paris accord, which seeks to limit global warming and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Biden’s singular act as a known environmentalist was even praised by the chief of the United Nations, who said, “I warmly welcome President Biden’s steps to re-enter the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and join the growing coalition of governments, cities, states, businesses and people taking ambitious action to confront the climate crisis.”

The US was among 194 countries that signed the agreement in December 2015 under then President, Barack Obama.

Two years later, the Trump administration announced the country would withdraw from the treaty, a decision which became effective last November.

Roque, meanwhile, admits that the Philippines has long been identified as one of the countries most vulnerable to climate hazards, such as typhoons, flooding, landslides, and droughts. We are therefore not surprised that we are number 4 in terms of long-term climate risk index (CRI) from a study done from 1999 to 2018.

He assured the public that the government is taking all necessary steps to strengthen our capacity to mitigate and address the effects of climate change. And that to accomplish this task, the cooperation of all citizens is needed.

The issue of climate change is important to the nation and to the world, and it is time that we heed Malacañang Palace’s call for acceptance and cooperation in this regard.

Source: https://malaya.com.ph/index.php/news_opinion/following-biden-duterte-now-eyes-climate-change/



Armed with alcohol sprayers and thermometers, guards scan passengers entering the LRT Line-2 Santolan station in Pasig City as they resume operation on January 22, 2021.

The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

Philippines records 1,169 new COVID-19 cases; total rises to 519,575

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - January 28, 2021 - 4:03pm

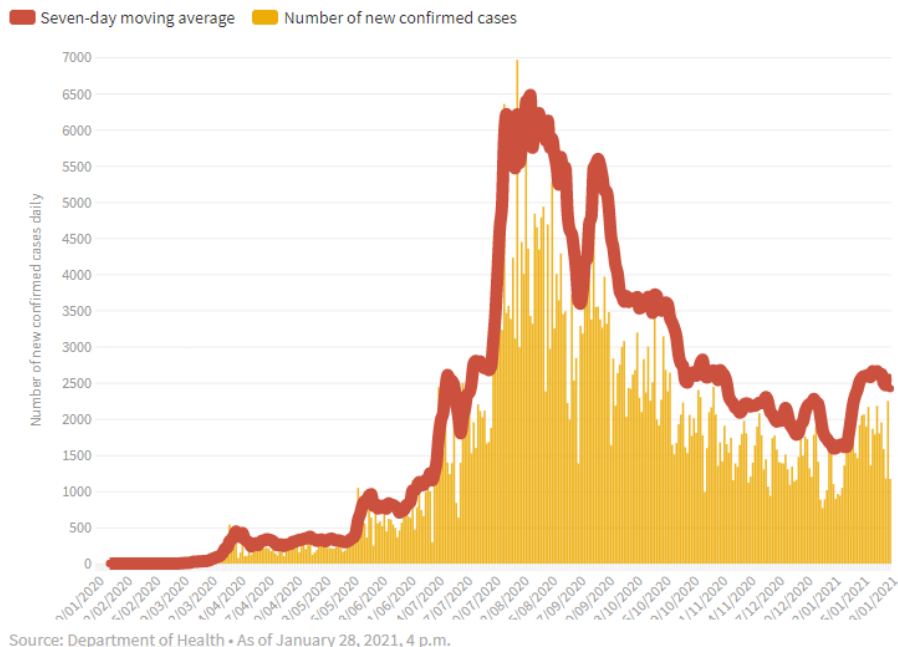
MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines now has 519,575 confirmed cases of COVID-19 after the Department of Health reported 1,169 new infections Thursday.

Of the total cases, 33,427 or 6.4% were active.

Coronavirus deaths increased by 71, raising the death toll to 10,552.

Meanwhile, recoveries reached 475,596 after 60 more people were reported to have beaten the respiratory illness.

COVID-19 cases in the Philippines



Source: Department of Health • As of January 28, 2021, 4 p.m.

• A Flourish chart

Where most cases were reported

- Quezon City (general community quarantine) – 57
- Isabela (modified GCQ) – 54
- City of Manila (GCQ) – 42
- Davao City (GCQ) – 42
- Rizal (MGCQ) – 42



What's new today?

- The country's Food and Drug Administration issued an [emergency use authorization](#) for the coronavirus vaccine developed by British-Swedish pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca. It became the second COVID-19 jab to get the approval needed for it to be rolled out in the government's immunization program after the vaccine developed by Pfizer/BioNTech.
- The Philippines ranked 79th among 98 countries evaluated by the Lowy Institute for their handling of the COVID-19 pandemic. It trailed its Southeast Asian peers, with Vietnam and Thailand among the best performers.

— with report from **Xave Gregorio**



Palace underscores vaccine education to boost public confidence on vaccines

By OPS-PCOOPublished on January 28, 2021

MANILA, Jan. 28 -- Presidential Spokesperson Secretary Harry Roque Jr emphasized in his press briefing on January 28 the importance of educating the public about the importance of vaccination in order to boost public confidence on vaccination as the Philippines gets ready to vaccinate its priority populations as early as February this year.

“Ang tawag po natin dito usaping bakuna. Bakit po tayo mayroong usaping bakuna? Eh kasi po para huwag na tayong maguluhan na andaming lima-singko na di umano’y eksperto. Tayo na po ang nag-imbita ng tunay na eksperto para mabigyan tayo ng tinatawag na vaccine education,” said Secretary Roque.

The Palace official is referring to Dr. Charles Yu, Vice-Chancellor of the De La Salle Medical and Health Sciences Institute and Past President of the Philippine College of Physicians and the Philippine College of Chest Physicians.

Dr. Yu, in the said press briefing, explained that the public should trust that all available vaccines that are available now or have been given emergency use authorization (EUA) are safe since all of it passed through strict process and criteria, including evaluation of regulatory authorities and vaccine experts.

On the decrease in vaccine confidence among Filipinos, Dr. Yu said that Filipinos should support mass vaccination in order to go back to the normal way of living. He emphasized that if 60 to 70 percent of the Philippine population will be vaccinated, then 30 to 40 percent of those who will not be vaccinated will be protected.

Dr. Yu also underscored that for those who are invoking their personal rights to refuse to be vaccinated, these people should think about how their actions or decisions will affect the greater good. He said that the more people who will be vaccinated means greater protection for the majority.

On fears of side effects of the vaccines, Dr. Yu assured that all available vaccines today are safe. He stressed that there have been millions who have been injected already with the vaccines and only a few experienced side effects, which are actually expected.

As a pulmonologist, Dr. Yu cited his experience in treating tuberculosis where even if a vaccine or medicine is given for free, they still have to convince people to get treatment. He underscored that even if the government tries hard to secure and provide free vaccines for the people, it will not work without everyone’s cooperation.

“Importante po talaga na i-promote natin ang vaccine education sa panahon po na marami po talagang hindi naman experts na nagsasamantala para sumikat lamang, kung ano-anong mga ginagawa, kung pano pong nangyari nasira ang vaccine confidence natin dahil dito sa mga di naman eksperto na kung ano-anong kabulastugan ang ikinalat, ang panlaban po natin ang mga tunay na eksperto gaya ninyo,” remarked Secretary Roque.



On another matter, Sec. Roque cited the current ranking of the Philippines in terms of the number of COVID-19 cases worldwide. Citing the World Health Organization (WHO) and Johns Hopkins ranking as of January 28, Sec Roque said that the Philippines is currently ranked 32 in terms of the total number of cases and ranked 42 in terms of active cases.

The same ranking puts the Philippines in number 133 in terms of cases per 1M population, and number 73 in terms of case fatality rate. "So I think ang mga figures po from the WHO will indicate that we have been managing rather well yung mga COVID cases," said Roque. (OPS-PCOO)



NASAAN ANG SUPLAY NG ASTRAZENICA NA 62% LANG EPEKTIB?



January 29, 2021 @ 1:00 AM 6 hours ago

HABANG nagpipiyesta ang ilan nating kababayan sa pag-apruba ng pamahalaan sa bakunang gawa ng AstraZenica-Oxford University para sa emergency use laban sa coronavirus disease o COVID-19, maaaring daraan tayo sa mas maliit pa sa butas ng karayom para magkaroon tayo ng suplay nito.

Kung magkakaroon man tayo, gaano kalaki ang bolyum at kailan ito darating para magamit na natin laban sa pandemya?

Nagtatanong tayo, mga Bro, dahil nag-aaway-away na ang ibang mga bansa at mga manufacturer o tagagawa ng bakuna sa liit o kawalan ng suplay o mabagal na delivery ng mga bakuna.

Kasama sa mga inaaway mismo ang kompanyang AstraZenica na tagagawa ng bakunang tatakan ng AZD1222.

ASTRAZENICA KINAPOS

May apat na planta ang AstraZenica: Isa sa India, 2 sa Europa at 1 sa United Kingdom.

Ayon sa mga balita, umorder ang EU sa AstraZenica ng 400 milyong dose para sa 450 milyong kabuuang populasyon ng 27 bansang kasapi nito.

Bahagi ito ng 2 bilyong dose na order ng EU mula sa lahat ng kompanyang gumagawa ng bakuna gaya ng Pfizer at Moderna para makumpleto ang pagbabakuna nito ng dalawang beses at may reserba pa.

Kailangan ang reserba dahil walang nakatitiyak kung hanggang kailan epektibo ang mga bakuna...kung hanggang 3, 6 buwan o higit pa.

Nitong huling mga araw, hanggang 31M dose lang umano ang maidedeliber nito sa halip na nasa 80M para sa unang tatlong buwan o mula Enero hanggang Marso 2021.

EXPORT NG ASTRAZENICA HAHARANGIN NG EU

Dahil kinapos nga ang delivery ng AstraZenica, nagalit na ang EU at sinabing haharangin nila ang pag-export ng AstraZenica, kasama ang Pfizer, sa ibang mga bansa kung hindi makapagdedeliber ang mga ito ayon sa napag-usapan o kontrata umano.



Dapat umanong alalahanin ng AstraZenica na nagbuhos ang EU ng napakalaking halaga para lang makagawa ito ng bakuna.

Katwiran ng AstraZenica, kulang na kulang ang raw materials o sustansya na gamit sa paggawa kaya kahit may planta sila, talagang wala silang magagawa.

Subalit sinabi ng EU na kung kinakailangan, kumuha ang nasabing kompanya ng suplay mula sa United Kingdom na nakakuha na ng 100M dose at sapat na para sa 68M populasyon nito.

Katwiran naman ng AstraZenica na nahuli o 3 buwan bago nag-order ito samantalang nauna ng 3 buwan ang UK kaya nabigyan nila ang huli ng sapat na suplay.

Ngunit hindi ito pinakinggan ng EU at ipinipilit nito ang kontrata umano na sa parte naman ng AstraZenica ay “best effort” lang ang usapan at wala talagang nakapapel na kontrata.

Sa nagaganap na ito sa EU, anak ng tokwa, tila mahirap tayong umasa ng suplay ng AstraZenica.

62% EFFICACY, ‘DI PASADO SA US

Habang ginagawa ang bakuna ng AstraZenica, nagbuhos ang United States ng \$1.2 bilyon dito at katumbas ito ng 300M dose.

Pero nagpreno ang US sa pagtanggap ng nasabing bakuna nang mapatunayang hanggang 62 porsyento lang ang epekto nito sa mahigit 5,800 katao na pinagsubukan nito sa UK, South Africa at Brazil.

Hindi bilib sa nasabing bakuna hangga’t wala itong naipakikitang papeles ukol sa pagiging ligtas at epektibo nito laban sa COVID-19, lalo’t lumitaw umano na hanggang 62% lang epektibo ito kumpara sa gawang Kano na Pfizer at Moderna na napatunayan na umanong nasa 90-95% epektibo.

Ayon pa sa mga Kano, nagkaroon ng malaking pagkakamali ang AstraZenica sa aksidenteng pagbabakuna ng kalahating dose lang sa mga nagkakaedad ng 55 pababa at sinundan ito ng buo na dose sa ikalawa.

Ang nakapagtataka umano rito, biglang naging 90% epektibo umano ang nasabing bakuna laban sa impeksyon sa COVID-19 subalit hindi bumilib ang mga Kano, lalo na si Dr. Cody Meissner, chief ng pediatric infectious disease at Tufts Medical Center.

“Big Mistake”, “Serious Error” umano ang pangyayari kaya dapat na magsagawa ang AstraZenica ng clinical trial na libo-libo ang bilang sa US bago ito aprubahan.

At nangalap nga ang AstraZenica ng 30,000 na pagsusubukan nito bago suriin mismo ng mga awtoridad na Kano ang tunay na epekto nito.

Paano ngayon gagamitin ng Pinas AstraZenica kung 62% lang pala ang epekto nito laban sa COVID-19?

PANG-INDIA LAMANG ANG BAKUNA?

Ayon sa India Serum Institute, nakagawa na sila ng 40M dose ng bakuna makaraang mag-partner ang nasabing institute at AstraZenica para sa paggawa ng bakuna.



Pero hanggang ngayon, hindi pa malinaw kung magbebenta ang ISI at AstraZenica sila sa ibang bansa o hindi.

Basta ang kalagayan sa India ay may 23 milyon na silang nababakunahan at marami pa ang mangangailangan nito dahil nasa 1.3 bilyon ang mga Bumbay na dapat mabakunahan.

Papayag ba ang India na ibenta ang nagawa na nito samantalang kailangan pa nitong magbakuna ng sarili nitong mamamayan na sobra ang dami at kulang na kulang ang bakuna nito, kasama ang nasa trial pa lang na sarili nitong gawa?

Number 2 ang India ngayon sa rami ng bilang na nako-COVID

Sa ibang salita, makaaasa ba ang mahal kong Pinas ng suplay ng AstraZenica mula sa India?

SUPLAY NG WHO KAKARAMPOT

Gustong-gusto ng World Health Organization na magkaroon ng malaking suplay ng bakuna para ipamahagi sa 92 bansang mahihirap.

Pero nasa \$2 bilyon lang ang pondo nito at kailangan pa nito ang \$5B para matupad nito ang tungkuling makapamahagi ng bakuna sa 92 mahihirap na bansa, kasama ang mahal kong Pinas.

Ang GAVI alliance na nagtatag ng COVAX facility, kasama ang WHO ay hanggang 300M dose pa lang ang nao-order o nahahawakan nito.

Paano nito ipamahagi ang bakuna sa 92 bansa at kung may makarating man sa Pinas, gaano karami at kailan darating?

Gustong-gusto natin siyempre na magkaroon na tayo ng bakuna at sa katunayan handa na ang mga sistema natin sa pagtanggap, pag-iingat, pagbibiyaha sa buong kapuluan, lugar na pagbabakunahan, kabilang na ang mga simbahan.

Pero sa nagaganap ukol sa AstraZenica, na bukod sa 62% lang pala ang pagkaepektibo, eh, kapos sa suplay at kung may suplay man, kinokorner naman ng mayayamang bansa.

Pero, siyempre, sinasamahan natin ng dasal ang pagsusumikap ng pamahalaang Duterte na sa lalong madaling panahon ay makapagsimula na tayo ng pagbabakuna.



In this file photo taken on October 22, 2019 climate activists protest on the first day of the Exxon Mobil trial outside the New York State Supreme Court building in New York City.

AFP/Angela Weiss

Two-thirds of world see 'climate emergency' — UN survey

[Marlowe Hood](#) (Agence France-Presse) - January 28, 2021 - 1:53pm

PARIS, France — Nearly two-thirds of 1.2 million people polled worldwide say humanity faces a climate emergency, according to a UN survey, the largest of its kind ever undertaken.

Young and old, rich and poor, respondents in 50 nations home to more than half the global population also chose from a score of policy options to tackle the problem, researchers at the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the University of Oxford reported Wednesday.

The findings suggest the grassroots global climate movement that surged onto the world stage in 2019—led, in part, by a then 16-year Greta Thunberg of Sweden—is still gaining momentum, even if a raging pandemic has obscured its scope.

"Concern about the climate emergency is far more widespread than we knew before," Stephen Fisher, a sociologist at Oxford who helped design the survey and process the data, told AFP in an interview.

"And the large majority of those who do recognize a climate emergency want urgent and comprehensive action."

In a clever innovation, the short survey popped up like an advertisement on cell phone game apps, giving researchers access to demographics that might not otherwise respond to a public opinion poll.

Gender gap

At the national level, some 80% of people in Britain, Italy and Japan expressed serious foreboding about the impact of climate change, which has—with a single degree of warming so far—measurably increased the intensity of heatwaves, drought and flood-inducing rainfall, as well as storms made more destructive by rising seas.

France, Germany, South Africa and Canada were close behind, with more than three-quarters of those polled describing the threat as a "global emergency."

In another dozen countries—including the United States, Russia, Vietnam and Brazil—two-thirds of respondents saw things the same way.

Nearly 75 percent of residents in small island states—some facing the prospect of losing their homelands to rising seas—perceived the climate threat as an emergency.



They were followed by high income countries (72 percent), middle-income countries (62 percent), and Least Developed Countries (58 percent).

The distribution across age groups of those seeing an "emergency" was narrow, ranging from 69 percent among those under 18, to 66 percent in the 36-59 age bracket.

Only for people 60 and older did the figure dip slightly below 60 percent.

Surprisingly, 11 and 12 percent more women than men expressed high alarm about global warming in the United States and Canada, respectively. Globally, that disparity shrank, on average, to four percent among the 50 nations polled.

"Urgent climate action has broad support amongst people around the globe—across nationalities, age, gender and education," noted UNDP chief Achim Steiner.

"But more than that, the poll reveals how people want their policymakers to tackle the crisis."

The most popular solution among those offered was protecting forests and natural habitats, selected by 54 percent of respondents.

Virtuous 'tipping point'

Following closely were the development of solar, wind and other forms of renewable power; the use of "climate-friendly" farming techniques; and investing more in green businesses and jobs.

At the bottom of the list, garnering support from only 30 percent, was the promotion of meat-free diets, and the provision of affordable insurance.

The survey results reinforce recent studies suggesting that some countries, and perhaps global society, could be approaching a virtuous "tipping point" in public opinion that would drive an accelerated transition to a carbon-neutral world.

"Achieving a rapid global decarbonisation to stabilise the climate critically depends on activating contagious and fast-spreading processes of social and technological change," researchers from the Potsdam Institute led by Iona Otto and Hans Joachim Schellnhuber noted in the scientific journal PNAS last year.

Much like the spread of a contagious disease, positive social movements—whether to ban slavery, or install democracy—"can be irreversible and difficult to stop" once they cross a certain threshold, they note.

"There is recent anecdotal evidence that protests—such as the #FridaysForFuture climate strikes, the Extinction Rebellion protests, and initiatives such as the Green New Deal in the US—might be indicators of this change in norms and values taking place right now."



Two-thirds of world see 'climate emergency,' widest UN survey shows

[Wednesday, January 27, 2021](#) [People's Journal](#)13

PARIS, Jan 27, 2021 (AFP) – Nearly two-thirds of 1.2 million people polled worldwide say humanity faces a climate emergency, according to a UN survey, the largest of its kind ever undertaken. Young and old, rich and poor, respondents in 50 nations home to more than half the global population also chose from a score of policy options to tackle the problem, researchers at the UN Development Program (UNDP) and the University of Oxford reported Wednesday.

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US kailangang pamunuan ang ‘global response’ vs climate change crisis – Biden

By **Bombo NewsCenter** -January 28, 2021 | 7:31 AM

Tiwala si US President Joe Biden na magbibigay ng maraming trabaho sa mamamayan ng Amerika at makakatulong na makabawi sa ekonomiya ang kaniyang pinirmahang panibagong executive order.

May kaugnayan ito sa pagtugon sa climate change na kinabibilangan ng pag-ban sa ilang energy drilling.

Layunin ng nasabing kautusan ay upang mai-freeze ang mga bagong “oil at gas lease” sa mga pampublikong lupain at doblehin ang paggawa ng wind-energy pagdating ng 2030.

Ayon kay Biden, kinakailangang pamunuan ng Amerika ang global response ng naranasang climate change crisis.

Aniya, kagaya ng COVID-19, kinakailangan din ang unified national response may kaugnayan sa climate crisis lalo pa’t kasalukuyan tayong nakakaranas ngayon ng climate crisis.

“I set ambitious goals of achieving a carbon pollution-free power sector by 2035 and net-zero emissions by 2050. Today, I took bold action to advance those goals,” ani Biden. “Tackling climate change will take every lever and agency of the federal government. That’s why I’ve launched a whole-of-government approach to deal with the crisis.” (wiht report from Bombo Jane Buna)



Air pollution linked to irreversible sight loss— study

[Agence France-Presse](#) / 12:13 PM January 28, 2021



Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of blindness among over-50s in richer nations. Image: FG Trade/Getty Images

Air pollution is likely to increase the risk of irreversible sight loss, according to the results of a long-term study published Tuesday.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of blindness among over-50s in richer nations, with roughly 300 million people predicted to be affected by 2040.

Known risk factors include age, smoking and genetic make-up.

Now researchers have drawn a link between AMD and air pollution, which is already known to carry a host of health risks including heart and lung disease.

Writing in the *British Journal of Ophthalmology*, researchers analyzed data from more than 115,000 participants who reported no eye problems at the start of the study period in 2006.

Official data on traffic and levels of nitrous oxide and small particulate matter was used to calculate the annual average air pollution levels at the home addresses of the participants. They were asked to report formal diagnosis of AMD by a doctor and were tested on their sight performance several years later.

In all, 1,286 participants were diagnosed with AMD at the end of the study period.

After accounting for other influencing factors including underlying health conditions and lifestyle, fine particulate matter exposure was associated with an 8% higher risk of an individual contracting AMD.

“Overall, our findings suggest that ambient air pollution, especially fine (particulate matter) or those of combustion-related particles, may affect AMD risk,” said the study authors.

“Our findings add to the growing evidence of the damaging effects of ambient air pollution, even in the setting of relative low exposure.”

The World Health Organization estimates air pollution is responsible for at least seven million deaths every year.



Last week, a separate study estimated that reducing air pollution to WHO-recommended levels could prevent more than 50,000 deaths annually across Europe.

Tuesday's study was observational and so could not establish a causal link between air pollution and AMD.

But experts said it provided further evidence for the health risks of poor air quality.

“The association of macular degeneration with smoking is well recognized, but this new finding of an environmental link related to atmospheric pollution will add further to the climate change debate,” said Robert MacLaren, professor of ophthalmology at the University of Oxford. *NVG*

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