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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Boracay rehabilitation on track – DENR

By Eireene Jairee Gomez

December 31, 2020

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) expressed confidence that the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) is on track to meet all its targets by the time its term ends in May 2021.



Secretary Cimatu readily took the challenge of the President to clean up Boracay and with military zeal, he recommended the six-month closure of the island despite much resistance from the business sector, highranking government officials and even from some of its residents.

“The BIATF is capping 2020 on a high note, setting us off in 2021 with solid confidence that we will hit our targets within the remaining five months ahead of us,” Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said in a statement on Wednesday.

Cimatu chairs the BIATF, which President Rodrigo Duterte created more than two years ago to supervise and manage Boracay’s rehabilitation.

In its year-end report, the BIATF’s implementing arm, the Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Management Group (BIARMG), said illegal structures on the island are now down by 21 percent — from the initial 1,569 to 342.

Majority or 943 of these structures are commercial establishments, with 212 violating the 25+5-meter easement rule and 731 within the 12-meter easement. This was followed by residential houses at 456, of which 117 and 339 are in the 25+5-meter and 12-meter easements, respectively.

In terms of compliance with the easement rule, 79 percent or 978 structures are now compliant with the 12-meter road easement rule, according to the report.

For the 25+5-meter beach easement limit, 73 percent or 249 structures are now compliant. Only 27 percent or 90 establishments are noncompliant.

BIARMG General Manager Natividad Bernardino said the Boracay rehabilitation was “successful” in terms of compliance by hotels and other commercial establishments.

“The improved water quality of Boracay has been primarily the result of the enforcement of the 25+5-meter shoreline easement rule,” Bernardino said.

She also noted that the average coliform level at the island’s main tourism beach, the “White Beach,” is now down to 10 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100ml).



Based on DENR Administrative Order 34, Series of 1990, the safe quality standard for Class SB water, which is suitable for seawater recreational activities like swimming and skin diving, is 100 MPN/100 ml.

The 2020 BIARMG report also cited the completion of Phases 1 and 2 circumferential road improvements covering up to 8.75 kilometers of paved and widened road.

Bernardino added that the relocation of some 113 illegal structures in Wetland No. 6 paved the way for its full rehabilitation. The 31 Tumandok families who previously occupied the “no build zones” were relocated to other areas.

“The Indigenous Peoples and natives of Boracay were awarded land through the government’s Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program as a strategy to relocate them from ‘No Build Zones’ in wetlands and forestlands,” she explained.

This year, the DENR has filed 51 cases for illegal occupation of Boracay forestlands from the 406 violation notices issued.



Boracay task force on track to meet all targets

posted December 30, 2020 at 11:00 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said Wednesday the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force is on track to meet all its targets by the time its term ends in May 2021.

“The BIATF is capping 2020 on a high note, setting us off in 2021 with solid confidence that we will hit our targets within the remaining five months ahead of us,” Cimatu said.

He is the chairman of the BIATF, which President Rodrigo Duterte created more than two years ago to supervise and manage Boracay Island’s rehabilitation in Aklan.

In its year-end report, the BIATF’s implementing arm, the Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Management Group, revealed that the number of structures violating the easement rules in Boracay was now down to only 342, representing 21 percent of all 1,569 illegal structures on the island.

Of the 1,569 structures, 1,230 were inside the 12-meter road easement while 339 establishments were inside the 25+5-meter beach easement limit.

Majority or 943 of these structures are commercial establishments with 212 violating the 25+5-meter easement rule and 731 within the 12-meter easement. This was followed by residential houses at 456 (117 and 339 in 25+5-meter and 12-meter easements, respectively).

BIARMG general manager Natividad Bernardino said Boracay’s rehabilitation was successful in terms of compliance by hotels and other commercial establishments. Rio N. Araja

“The improved water quality of Boracay has been primarily the result of the enforcement of the 25+5-meter shoreline easement rule,” she said.

“The indigenous peoples and natives of Boracay were awarded land through the government’s Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program as a strategy to relocate them from the ‘No Build Zones’ in the wetlands and forestlands.”

This year, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has filed 51 cases for illegal occupation of Boracay forestlands out of the 406 notices of violations issued for such offense.



DENR nagsagawa ng mangrove planting sa Baseco



December 29, 2020 @ 6:47 PM 1 day ago

Manila, Philippines – Bilang bahagi ng rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay pinangunahan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) noong Martes (Disyembre 22) ang mangrove planting sa Baseco lagoon sa Tondo, Manila.

“Our responsibility under the rehabilitation is not only confined in the physical rehabilitation, cleaning and dredging. Habitat restoration is also so much a part of the rehabilitation efforts,” sabi ni DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu.

Ayon kay Cimatu ang planting activity ay umpisa pa lamang ng habitat restoration sa lugar na ito ng Manila Bay.

Sinabi pa ng kalihim na magsasagawa din ng malawakang mangrove planting activities sa baybayin ng Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area at sa Parola sa bahagi ng Pasig River.

Dumalo rin sa aktibidad si Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chairman Danilo Lim. Ang MMDA ay isa sa malakas na katuwang ng DENR sa paglilinis ng Baseco lagoon at paligid nito maging sa pagtanim ng mga puno.

Ang endangered mangrove species na gapas-gapas mula sa Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau ang isa sa mga itinanim. Kabilang pa sa mga species na itinanim ay ang nipa, busain at nilad.

“Because this area is most suitable for mangroves to thrive, we are not only assured of relatively high survival rate, we also encourage the return of several marine species to their natural spawning ground and thus restore the natural ecosystems of the bay,” ayon pa kay Cimatu.

Tiniyak din ng environment chief na ang habitat restoration ay gagawin sa mabilis, epektibo at mahusay na paraan.

Ang estero rangers at ang bakawan warriors ng DENR-National Capital Region ang magmo-monitor sa paglago ng mangroves.



Ang mangroves ay tumutulong na mapangalagaan ang kalidad ng tubig at nakapagbibigay ng proteksiyon sa baybayin mula sa dumi o siltation at storm surge. Nagsisilbi rin itong tahanan at itlugan ng mga isda na nagreresulta ng pagdami ng mga nahuhuling isda.

Ang Baseco beach area ay nasa bunganga ng Pasig River na isang waterway na dumadaloy patungo sa Manila Bay. (Santi Celario)



Halamang Nilad Repopulation Project, inilunsad sa Maynila



December 29, 2020 @ 4:33 PM 2 days ago

Manila, Philippines – Inilunsad ang proyektong “Nilad for Maynila” na ang layon ay muling ibalik at paramihin ang halamang Nilad sa paligid ng Manila Bay kahapon ng umaga.

Pinangunahan ni Manila Vice Mayor Maria Sheilah “Honey” Lacuna-Pangan ang paglulunsad sa naturang proyekto sa tulong ng Department of Public Services (DPS) at ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (DENR-ERDB) na isinagawa sa Baseco Esplanade.



“This project will re-green a part of Manila Bay by bringing back the Nilad population, a plant that features flowers of bright white and yellow,” saad ng Manila Public Information Office (MPIO).

Sisinagawang pag-aaral ng DPS at DENR-ERDB, apat na lugar sa Maynila ang maaaring taniman nila ng halamang Nilad at ito ay ang lugar sa Baseco Beach, bakanteng lote malapit sa H2O Hotel, bandang likuran ng itinayong STP building na kahilera ng Manila Yacht Club at mga plant boxes at islands sa kahabaan ng Manila Baywalk.



Ipinaliwanag naman ni Vice Mayor Honey ang kahalagahan ng muling pagtanim at pagpaparami sa halamang Nilad sa lungsod lalo na sa coastal areas.

“Siguro naman po alam ninyo na ang ating pong lungsod, ang Maynila, sabi po nila nagmula ang pangalan nito sa ‘Nilad’ plant. Lahat po ng proyektong ilulunsad natin dito ay para sa pagpapaganda at pagpapaulad ng inyong komunidad,” ani Pangan.



Dinaluhan naman ang nasabing paglulunsad sa proyekto nina DPS Director Kenneth Amurao, DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, DENR-ERDB Director Henry A. Adornado at Assistant Director Mayumi Quintos-Natividad. **Jay Reyes**

Source: <https://www.remate.ph/halamang-nilad-repopulation-project-inilunsad-sa-maynila/?fbclid=IwAR2BCczpFV7-uTbWdY7pNWO8uBbilr8NLI5qbjbBb1KgcTySlhC13jNghOU>



Manila Bay rehabilitation efforts ongoing despite lockdown, DENR says

December 28, 2020 | 7:08 pm



PHILSTAR

THE Manila Bay cleanup was not delayed by the public health emergency, with various activities carried out this year, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said Monday.

In a statement recapping its program for the year, the DENR said the inter-agency task force overseeing the cleanup launched a solar-powered sewage treatment plant in July; conducted regular clean ups of creeks, esteros and river systems feeding into the bay; and dredged and desilted portions of the bay.

“Our work continues despite the limitations in mobilizing people, especially for our clean-up, monitoring and enforcement activities,” DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, who chairs the Manila Bay Task Force, said.

Mr. Cimatu noted that there was a “significant decrease” in fecal coliform levels recorded in the Baywalk area, Estero de San Antonio Abad and Baseco Beach this year.

The Baywalk recorded a fecal coliform count of 2.2 million most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100 mL), compared to a reading of 5.66 million MPN/100 mL taken last year. The coliform level in Estero de San Antonio decreased to 19.07 million MPN/100 mL from 43.89 million MPN/100 mL. Meanwhile, the coliform count in Baseco Beach fell to 341,225 MPN/100 mL from 1.7 million MPN/100 mL.

The Manila Bay task force also introduced debris booms which collected floating trash, and silt curtains which kept suspended silt and sediment from entering the waterway.

Earlier this month, a project to provide portable toilets to informal settlers living along Manila Bay was also launched.

“We are optimistic that these measures will really help clean the waters of Manila Bay,” Mr. Cimatu said.

The cleanup and rehabilitation efforts of the bay are outlined in the Manila Bay Coastal Strategy (2017-2022) document and administrative order no. 16 issued by President Rodrigo R. Duterte last year.



The plan and administrative order comply with a Supreme Court order to restore Manila Bay waters to levels suited for recreational use, including swimming and diving.

In September, the DENR embarked on a P389-million beach nourishment or “white sand” project using dolomite sand.

MORE THAN 200 PROTECTED AREAS DESIGNATED

In an earlier statement Sunday, the DENR said that its Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) was able to designate 244 protected areas (PAs) and “save a dozen species from extinction” all over the country this year.

“Without the legislated and proclaimed PAs in the Cagayan and Marikina River Basin, the devastation of Typhoon Ulysses could have been worse for the wildlife and the communities dependent on these natural ecosystems,” Assistant Secretary and concurrent BMB Director Ricardo L. Calderon was quoted as saying in a statement.

Mr. Calderon also said that 12 species were no longer on the “edge of extinction,” following the BMB’s wildlife protection and enforcement efforts.

This year, the BMB conducted eight wildlife enforcement operations that led to the confiscation of 53 wild fauna and 27.36 kilograms of agarwood worth around P5.6 million.

— **Angelica Y. Yang**

Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/manila-bay-rehabilitation-efforts-ongoing-despite-lockdown-denr-says/?fbclid=IwAR1Riwg9wsmgzwBUUpDrbpWRtwWeeAG3eLhIBwqnKdmav7pHz50Hmx-nMwqU>



2020: Manila Bay dolomite sand project stirs controversy

By Marita Moaje December 30, 2020, 3:53 pm

MANILA – Controversy hounded the move to use crushed dolomite boulders along a portion of the Manila Bay beach, a vital part of the bigger Manila Bay rehabilitation project spearheaded by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

In September, the overlaying of the dolomite in Manila Bay beach or the beach nourishment project caught public attention, stirring curiosity and setting off waves of people flocking to the area to get a glimpse of the "white sands".

Many criticized the project, throwing allegations at the DENR, calling the project a health hazard and a waste of public funds.



MANILA BAY REHAB. The Manila Bay white sand project continues to pique the public's curiosity as bikers and other passersby on Sept. 6, 2020 stop and try to take a look at the large heap of white sand at the bayfront. Manila Bay has always been famous for its breathtaking sunset. (PNA photo by Avito C. Dalan)

But the DENR emphasized that the beach nourishment with the use of dolomite is a significant component of the rehabilitation aimed to protect the coastal resources in the area and prevent coastal flooding, erosion, and pollution.

Being a mineral, a naturally occurring chemical compound that is calcium magnesium carbonate, DENR said the dolomite is not detrimental to the ecosystems of Manila Bay, and is a known neutralizer that lessens the acidity of seawater making it popular for use in fish aquariums.

As to the claim that the dolomites allegedly pose health hazards to the public, the Department of Health also assured that "no untoward incidents will occur as a result of the endeavor".

The DOH said the dolomite material used for the project is 100 times bigger than dust, hence it does not get suspended in the air that would make it hazardous.

The health said the "dolomite, in its bulk state, is not a known health hazard" and is not included in the list of carcinogens.

The estimated cost of the entire Manila Bay rehabilitation project is PHP389 million, of which, around PHP28 million is allotted for the dolomite overlay.

On claims that the project is a waste of public funds, Cimatu assured the public that the funds used for the project will not be put to waste as people expressed fears that the dolomite sands would simply be washed away especially during typhoons.

He said engineering interventions were made to prevent the artificial white sand from being washed away.

The project, he said, likewise passed the required environmental impact assessment.



Despite the criticisms, many also expressed appreciation especially when people started flocking to have their pictures taken at the beach area.

For many, this is a man-made white sand beach in the middle of the city, a first in history seen by many, including the local government of Manila where it is situated, to boost local and international tourism and generate jobs for residents.

The DENR said the beach nourishment project is more than just aesthetics.

It said it is a strategy to promote pro-environment behavior among Filipinos with the hope that the white sand would inspire people to be more mindful of their obligation to help keep the Manila Bay clean.

Manila Bay rehab to continue

The Manila Bay rehabilitation efforts also include continuous bay and estero clean-ups and the setting up of sewage treatment plants.

The whole program, which started in January 2019, was also called “Battle for Manila Bay” aimed at “restoring the water quality of Manila Bay in accordance with the Writ of Continuing Mandamus of the Supreme Court”.

Among the challenges faced by the DENR this year are the limitations in mobilizing people due to the community quarantines imposed because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

“Our work continues despite the limitations in mobilizing people, especially for our clean-up, monitoring, and enforcement activities,” said Cimatu.

He said among the significant accomplishments for the rehabilitation is the inauguration of the solar-powered sewage treatment plant (STP) in July.

He said STP is capable of treating 500,000 liters of wastewater per day from three drainage outfalls—Padre Faura, Remedios, and Estero de San Antonio Abad.

A significant decrease in fecal coliform has been recorded in three priority sites, namely, the Baywalk area, Estero de San Antonio Abad, and Baseco Beach.

In the Baywalk area alone, fecal coliform went down to 2,211,833 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100ml), compared to 5,666,213 MPN/100ml in 2019.

Regular clean-up activities were also regularly conducted in creeks, esteros, and river systems.

An average of 60 metric tons of garbage was collected daily for a total of 24,471.30 metric tons from 2019.

With the help of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), dredging and desilting operations were also ramped up.

DENR said a total of 210,549 cubic meters (m³) of silts and submerged garbage were dredged in the Baywalk area while about 551,768.72 m³ of dredged materials were collected from the different esteros, creeks, and rivers.

These include esteros in eight priority river systems: San Juan River, Pasig River, Tullahan-Tinajeros River, Navotas-Malabon River, Parañaque River, Las Piñas-Zapote River, Taguig-Pateros River, and Marikina River.

Moreover, geo-engineering interventions have been introduced in the bay areas that include the installation of trash booms and silt curtains.

Portable toilets were also installed at Parola compound in Tondo in partnership with the Manila city government and other stakeholders.

The project aims to minimize open defecation in Manila Bay by informal settler families (ISFs) in Manila.



In Baseco, a circumferential sewerage interceptor was constructed and communal septic tanks were installed to minimize the direct discharge of untreated wastewater to the bay.

The DENR is optimistic that said measures will help clean the waters of Manila Bay.

However, Cimatu said the whole Manila Bay rehabilitation project will not be successful without the help and cooperation of the public.

He said this is not only an effort of the government but of every Filipino working hand in hand.

The cleanup and rehabilitation of the Manila Bay are guided by the Operational Plan for the Manila Bay Coastal Strategy which covers the period 2017-2022, and by Administrative Order No. 16 issued by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte in 2019.

The President's directive also includes the monitoring of establishments for pollution and compliance to required standards, as well as the monitoring of water quality in key river mouths, outfalls, and bathing beaches along the Manila Bay region. **(PNA)**

Source:

https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1125931?fbclid=IwAR2VHfBPT53vBIRaCKLzuoF9RT_1scDSKgA65_yGTPUQfXRZ1nsZ0LUkQD8



DENR, Rotary Club, Brgy. Quirino 2-A naglagay ng basurahan para malinis ang esteros



December 29, 2020 @ 6:34 PM 1 day ago

Manila, Philippines – Ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa pamamagitan ng kanyang Task Force Tayo ang Kalikasan katuwang ang Rotary Club ay naglagay ng mga basurahan sa Quezon City para malinis ang mga estero.

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns and Supervising Undersecretary for Task Force Tayo Ang Kalikasan Benny D. Antiporda, ang mga naturang basurahan ay magsisilbing “defense trap” sa mga basura na nagmumula sa mga barangay.

“We cannot solve the problem in Manila Bay if we cannot solve the problem in your barangay,” ayon kay Antiporda sa isinagawang programa na isinagawa nitong December 23, 2020 sa Multi-Purpose Court ng Barangay Quirino 2-A.

Ayon sa DENR ang 19-foot trash trap na gawa sa fish net at recycled plastic bottles ay inilagay sa Buaya Creek sa Barangay Quirino 2-A.

Sinabi ni Antiporda, na ang Rotary Club district ay may mahalagang kontribusyon sa environment protection sa pamamagitan ng pamamahagi ng trash trap sa mga creek sa iba’t ibang lugar na kabilang sa DENR’s Enhanced Adopt-An-Estero Waterbody Project.

Nabatid pa sa DENR na mahigit 80 trash traps ang inilagay sa mga tinukoy na creeks sa Quezon City at isa sa nilagyan ay ang Barangay Novaliches Proper nitong September 21, 2019.

Kabilang sa mga opisyal na lumahok sa aktibidad ay ang Task Force Tayo ang Kalikasan Executive Director and Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service Assistant Director Maria Matilda A. Gaddi; Rene Madarang of Rotary District International 3780, former EMB Regional Director Engineer Roberto Sheen at Rotary Club of Diliman Silangan, at Chi Armenta of Rotary Club ng Cubao.

Dumalo rin ang Barangay Novaliches Proper Kagawad Enrique Añonuevo, Kagawad Elena Quinto, barangay officials mula sa Barangay Quirino 2-A, at estero rangers ay lumahok sa naturang okasyon.



“Ikaw, Ako, Tayo ang Kalikasan,” ayon kay Antiporda “that’s why we need to take care of our environment.” (Santi Celario)



300 landfills target ng DENR sa 2 taon



December 30, 2020 @ 5:41 PM 14 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Target ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na makapaggawa ng 300 pang sanitary landfills (SLFs) sa bansa sa 2022.

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, sa pamamagitan ng public-private partnership, layunin na masaayos pa lalo ang solid waste materials.

“Ambitious as it may seem to be as a target, but we shall aim to establish 300 SLFs by the end of 2022,” ani Antiporda.

Ito ang naging pahayag ng DENR official sa isinagawang hybrid consultation meeting sa SLF operators kasama ang face-to-face at teleconferencing recently.

Kasalukuyan aniya na 189 SLFs ang nasa operation servicing mula sa 399 LGUs sa bansa. **RNT/FGDC**



DENR eyes 300 landfills in 2 years

Published December 30, 2020, 4:36 PM

by [Chito Chavez](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) revealed Wednesday that it aims to build 300 more sanitary landfills (SLFs) in the country by 2022.

DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda noted that through a public-private partnership, the move is designed to further improve the country's management of solid waste materials.

"Ambitious as it may seem to be as a target, but we shall aim to establish 300 SLFs by the end of 2022," said Antiporda.

Antiporda noted that SLF remains the primary long-term method of solid waste disposal allowed under Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

The DENR official made the statement during the hybrid consultation meeting with SLF operators, which combined face-to-face and teleconferencing recently.

Some 21 SLF operators were present during the meeting, either personal or via Zoom.

Antiporda said the meeting was aimed at closer collaboration among SLF operators, LGUs, and the DENR, through the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC), where he sits as alternate of Environment Secretary and NSWMC Chair Roy A. Cimatu.

There are currently 189 SLFs in operation servicing 399 LGUs across the country.

However, Antiporda lamented that "the number of SLFs remains small 20 years after RA 9003 took effect."

During the consultation meeting, Antiporda called on the SLF operators to look into the viability of offering their facilities to LGUs with illegal dumpsites in anticipation of an aggressive campaign by the DENR to close these down starting January.



DENR issues more than 86,000 free patents

Published December 29, 2020, 3:33 PM

by [Ellalyn de Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) was able to issue over 86,000 agricultural and residential free patents across the country.

From 2019 to October 2020, the DENR reported that its regional offices had issued a total of 30,456 agricultural free patents covering around 20,144.98 hectares across 14 regions in the country, topping its original target by 4.25 percent.

According to DENR-Land Management Bureau (LMB) Director Emelyne Talabis, the increase can be attributed to the December 31, 2020 deadline on the filing of applications pursuant to Republic Act 9176, as well as the increased use of the Land Administration Management System Philippines (LAMS), which fast tracked the approval of land surveys.

At the same time, the DENR regional offices also issued 56,265 residential free patents covering around 1,408.46 hectares across 16 regions in the country.

Such issuances of free patents, which include beneficiaries of the Handog Titulo Program, was in support of President Rodrigo Duterte's socioeconomic agenda of ensuring security of land tenure to encourage investments and to address bottlenecks in land management and titling agencies.

Likewise, modernization initiatives of LAMS, such as the migration of land records in the LAMS database, pilot testing of the submission of e-survey returns and online access to survey records, digital cadastral database cleansing, and projection of Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title or Certificate of Ancestral Land Title have been implemented in several cities and regions across the country.

In partnership with the Land Registration Authority (LRA), a joint memorandum circular has also been crafted to implement information sharing between LMB's LAMS and LRA's Philippine Land Registration and Information System (PHILARIS).

This aims to link the land information database managed by both agencies and significantly reduce turnaround time in the processing of land transactions.

This year, the regional offices have also formulated the Foreshore Management and Development Plans for the provinces of La Union, Camarines Sur, Leyte, Eastern Samar, Camiguin and Davao Oriental, and the city of Iloilo.

Each plan contains a broad analysis of the conditions and issues covering foreshore lands, as well as recommendations on the appropriate foreshore management scheme to be adopted for each of the said provinces and city.

Upon the recommendation of LMB and DENR-Region 13, DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, through Undersecretary for Field Operations, Enforcement and Muslim Affairs Jim Sampulna lifted the titling suspension in Siargao on Nov. 18, 2019.

This year, the suspension was lifted in South Cotabato and Sarangani on January 29, Panglao, Bohol on February 28, and Palawan on March 2.

Rapid Land Tenure Assessment (RLTA) was also conducted by the regional offices in support of a planned nationwide acceleration of titling.

RLTA is a barangay profiling activity designed to determine how much titling work is still needed to be done in a local government unit.



The LMB also intensified public awareness on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Mechanism through the conduct of “ADR on Wheels” in selected cities, as well as its online talk show “Talakayang Panlupa” to encourage parties to settle their dispute amicably.

“The resilience that we have developed because of the pandemic all the more drives us to continue to work on our commitment to provide policy direction and technical support on land management and administration for 2021,” Talabis said.

“We are indeed happy with the achievements of LMB. These show that we have provided many Filipinos with security of land tenure, which is essential to build shelter and create livelihood,” Cimatú said.



Mining approach amid storms cited

posted December 30, 2020 at 11:20 pm

by [Rio N. Araja](#)

The Environment department on Wednesday cited its proactive approach to responsible mining amid the COVID-19 pandemic and the powerful typhoons that hit the Philippines in the last quarter

“We have faced a lot of challenges this year, especially during the last quarter. A series of typhoons hit parts of our country triggering massive flooding and lahar flow that led to the loss of life and damage to property and natural resources,” Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said.

“However, we in the department, together with Mines and Geosciences Bureau and all the concerned agencies, were proactive in finding solutions to these problems.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau investigated mining and quarry activities within the hazard-prone areas and closed down illegal mining operations in the country during recent months.

We assure you that we will continue to exert the needed effort to prevent and mitigate natural disasters.”It also coordinated with national government agencies and local government units to address the destruction in flood- and landslide-prone areas to prevent disasters from happening again.

Separate investigations were conducted in Marikina City and the provinces of Albay and Rizal to evaluate whether mining and quarrying activities contributed to the massive flooding during the typhoons.

The DENR has already been monitoring the contracts/permits of mining companies and operators to ensure compliance with mining laws, rules, and regulations, Cimatu says.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the bureau conducted virtual audit and monitoring of the mining activities based on submitted reports and real-time photos/videos from its regional offices.

A total of 680 mining contracts/permits either under exploration, development, utilization/production, and including those under rehabilitation period were monitored/audited for compliance to terms and conditions.

Before the onset of the typhoons, the MGB had already updated its geo-hazard maps with a scale of 1: 10,000 and conducted vulnerability and risk assessments for 214 cities and municipalities across the country.

It has directed its regional offices to allow mining companies to realign the unused funds from the social development and management program to assist host and neighboring communities affected by COVID-19.

As of Aug. 7, P380 million was used to procure personal protective equipment, medical supplies, goods, and grocery supplies for the beneficiaries.

In order to aid in the recovery of the country's economy post-COVID-19, the mining contractors/permit holders were instructed to establish an additional bamboo plantation equivalent to 10 percent of their declared final mining area, bringing the total target of bamboo plantations to at least 20 percent.

Cimatu directed the mining companies to establish and maintain bamboo plantations equivalent to 10 percent of their mined-out areas.



MGB-Central Visayas says investigation still ongoing



LANDSLIDE SITE. A habal-habal driver points to the crown of the landslide at Carmen Pit in the Toledo copper mines. (Alan Tangcawan)

December 31, 2020

ALMOST two weeks after a landslide in the only active open-pit mine of Carmen Copper Corp. (CCC) in Toledo City killed four workers and left six others missing, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Central Visayas (MGB 7) has yet to disclose the cause of the incident.

Heart Rizarri, MGB 7 information officer, said in a message to SunStar Cebu on Wednesday, Dec. 30, 2020, that the investigation on the Dec. 21 landslide incident was still ongoing.

She said further study will also be conducted before the MGB 7 can give its recommendation to the Toledo City Government on the fate of 400 families living near the site.

The families have been evacuated. Whether they will be allowed to return to their homes largely depends on the recommendations of MGB 7.

"There will be further georesistivity study/survey that will be done by experts from MGB central office," she said, without specifying the

schedule.

A georesistivity survey involves the use of a resistivity-meter to determine the nature of the earth materials beneath the surface.

Rizarri said monitoring of the cracks observed at 360 meters away from the nearest community in Hill 3, Brgy. Biga, Toledo City is ongoing.

She said MGB 7 Director Armando Malicse has declined to comment on the statements made by Biga Barangay Captain Pedro Sepada Jr.

Sepada had said that before the landslide at the Carmen Pit, barangay officials held an emergency consultative meeting on Nov. 26 with representatives of the CCC and MGB 7 as well as Biga residents to discuss possible measures to be undertaken after the cracks were sighted.

However, he alleged that neither MGB 7 nor CCC was able to present a concrete response to ensure the residents' safety. Their representatives merely said the area remained safe.

MGB 7 has already ordered the suspension of the Carmen Pit operations.



In a post on its official Facebook page on Wednesday, the Toledo City Government said Malicse visited the office of Toledo City Mayor Marjorie "Joie" Perales to give updates on their actions regarding the landslide incident.

Perales has reportedly assured that the City Government is ready to assist and cooperate with MGB 7.

Toledo City public information officer John Roseller Layan could not be reached for further details about the meeting.

Search and retrieval operations to locate the six missing workers are still ongoing. **(WBS)**



Philippine Coast Guard, patuloy ang paghahanap sa anim na minerong na-trap sa gumuhong minahan sa Toledo City, Cebu

By [RadyoMaN Manila](#) - Dec. 29, 2020 at 10:37am



Patuloy ang Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) sa paghahanap sa anim pang minero na na-trap kasunod ng pagguho sa isang minahan sa Toledo City, Cebu noon pang December 21, 2020.

Base sa pinakahuling tala ng lokal na pamahalaan ng Toledo City, apat na minero na ang binawian ng buhay kasunod ng pagguho sa nasabing minahan.

Nakilala ang mga nasawing minero na sina Junil Lagola, Ernesto Caspe, Juan Tapang at Dionisio Labang.

Noong Linggo, December 27, 2020, tumulong na rin ang PCG sa mabilis at ligtas na paglikas ng 400 na pamilya na nakatira malapit sa minahan.

Ito'y para masigurong hindi na madagdagan pa ang mga biktima ng nangyaring insidente.

Nabatid na ang sunod-sunod na pag-ulan ang sinasabing dahilan kung bakit gumuho ang minahan.

Samantala, mula alas-12:00 ng hatinggabi hanggang alas-6:00 ng umaga kanina, higit 2,000 pasahero ang naitala ng PCG na bumiyahе sa mga pantalan sa buong bansa.

Sa datos ng PCG, 1,483 ang outbound at 917 ang inbound passengers habang 116 ang vessel at 19 na motorbanca ang kanilang nainspeksyon kung saan 1,429 na personnel ang idineploy ng Coast Guard.

Source: <https://rmn.ph/philippine-coast-guard-patuloy-ang-paghahanap-sa-anim-na-minerong-na-trap-sa-gumuhong-minahan-sa-toledo-city-cebu/?fbclid=IwAR2Xy4iq2pN16VyWJ-Z5fY8T1LMOq9ydeYXZeFugx4p2PnSFVBIO5eScrQw>



Clark records good air quality

[CHARLENE A. CAYABYAB](#)

December 30, 2020

THE Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) in Central Luzon has recorded good ambient air quality inside Clark Freeport.

Based on the data secured by the Clark Development Corporation (CDC)-Environmental Permits Division (EPD) headed by Engineer Rogelio Magat from EMB-Central Luzon, the Air Quality Index (AQI) in Clark Freeport that was measured in terms of the SO₂ parameter has been consistently below 50 and averages at 10. This proves that the air in the freeport is less polluted and is safe for maintaining the health of the general public, as well as the environment.

CDC-EPD shared that the AQI works like a thermometer that runs from zero to 500 degrees and shows changes in the amount of pollution in the air. An AQI under 50 means that the air quality is good.

With this freeport's low AQI level, a person can spend time outdoors and air pollution will pose very little risk to their health.

Meanwhile, CDC-EPD Assistant Manager Mayflor Candelaria mentioned that the ambient air quality here is monitored through the Clark Station, located at Challenger's Field inside the Air Force City and established by the EMB RIII since 2003. This station screens CO, NO₂, SO₂, PM₁₀ and Hg coming from the operations of Clark International Airport (CIA), various industrial and commercial establishments, motor vehicles, and from construction activities here.

CDC-EPD has also been monitoring the PM₁₀ levels, a measure of the presence of particulate or dust particles in the air, along C.M. Recto Highway and M.A. Roxas Highway since 2019. The average AQI value is 30, attesting to the good quality of air even along major roads in Clark.

During the general community quarantine imposed in June due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the AQI in this freeport was recorded at 25. In contrast, the Manila AQI based on PM₁₀ value is at 55 in December 2020 and with a high of 74 for the year 2020.

Meanwhile, Candelaria likewise said the good results of the air monitoring in this freeport is a testament to the good environmental management and strict compliance of Clark locators to the Clean Air Act.

In December 2020, CDC-EPD initiated the regular updating and posting of the AQI data in the Freeport. To ramp up this initiative, the said data are also being shown on LED billboards of Filinvest Mimosa Inc. and Berthaphil Inc. along M. A. Roxas Highway. They are also being frequently uploaded on the iClark app and streamed online on the CDC web page for easy access of all interested parties and stakeholders.

In the absence of an online system, the data from the Clark Station is regularly provided by Engineer Nesty Mendiola of the Air Section of EMB-Central Luzon.

Regional Director Wilson Trajeco and Engineer Dennis Celestial, chief of the EMED, welcomed this initiative of CDC-EPD to increase awareness on sustainable development and doing business in harmony with nature.

Source: <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1881476/Pampanga/Local-News/Clark-records-good-air-quality>



More than 100 turtle eggs found in Dahican Beach in Mati City

Published December 30, 2020, 2:10 PM

by [Zea Capistrano](#)

DAVAO CITY – With only a few days before the start of a new year, members of an environmental conservation group in Davao Oriental province were elated to find over a hundred turtle eggs at the Dahican Beach in Mati City.



With only a few days before the start of a new year, members of an environmental conservation group in Davao Oriental province were elated to find over a hundred turtle eggs at the Dahican Beach in Mati City. (Photos courtesy of Amihan sa Dahican – Save our Seas Project Facebook page)

In a Facebook post on Tuesday, Amihan sa Dahican-Save our Seas Project said its morning patrol team “found the mother turtle laying her eggs at exactly 4:30 am.”

The group recovered 120 eggs. The eggs were placed in a “pawikan (sea turtle)” hatchery “for safety and protection from predators”.

“The Amihan team will now monitor the eggs and will wait for approximately 60 days for these mighty creatures to hatch,” it added.

According to its website, the Amihan sa Dahican team was established on April 4, 2004. The organization aims “to conserve marine wildlife species in the bay, while taking care of young children, and sharing surfing and skimboarding skills with visitors.”

The patrol teams of Amihan sa Dahican monitor and trace oliver ridley turtles which lay eggs between the months of October-May, and green and hawksbill turtles on May-September.

Once the patrol team finds a nest, they transfer the eggs to the hatchery to protect the eggs “from human activities as well as from predators such as birds, cats, and crabs.”

“Even though only limited resources are available, we are determined to monitor and record the number of marine turtle eggs transferred and hatchlings released. We also tag the mother turtle for monitoring purposes and to inform conservation management,” it added.

It said their group members have received training for these procedures from the Department of Energy and Natural Resources (DENR)-Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB).

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/12/30/more-than-100-turtle-eggs-found-in-dahican-beach-in-mati-city/>



The Manila Journal

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Mitigating effects of climate change to PH fisheries

December 30, 2020, 2:57 pm

MANILA – The impact of climate change to fisheries is a key contributor to the country's economy particularly in the Philippines being an archipelago.

According to a study, climate change impacts on fisheries capture in the Philippines is projected to cause a decrease by about 9 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) with the mitigation scenario and about 18 percent of GDP with the extreme scenario up to 2060, as compared to the baseline scenario.

This impact results in income reduction by as much as 0.36 percent for urban households and 0.38 percent for rural households in the country's economy.



(PNA file photo)

Limuel Aragon, director of the University of the Philippines (UP) Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology, in an earlier Tugon Kabuhayan virtual presser, said there is a need to take into account scientific considerations to mitigate the effects of climate change in the country's fisheries and aquatic resources.

Intensified management of the seas surrounding the Philippines, including the West Philippine Sea, Visayas Sea, Celebes Sea, and Sulu Sea, will require a lot of resources and focus, he noted.

"We are an archipelago, surrounded by seas. This is our great asset," he added.

Aragones said there is a need to give more attention to the biodiversity in our ocean, especially on the management of marine mammals, identification of native species, and difference of habitats.

"We have a lot of resources in the ocean that we can't take care of because we are too focused on agriculture. It's a different context because, in agriculture, we grow food. In fisheries, there's still a concept of captive fisheries, which is inherent as opposed to the context of culture," he said.

To prepare for climate change, the Philippines needs to conduct an assessment of vulnerability to climate change for fisheries at the national level in order to respond to changing economic conditions expected to worsen over time and that the assessment is continuously and periodically carried out.

It also needs to carry out a gap analysis on the capability to cope with the impact of climate change on fisheries for the national economy which would enable organizations to take selective and premeditated actions providing the information about whether a sector or area can potentially be associated with the issue or which community is more vulnerable to climate change.

There is also a need to incorporate climate change impacts into national economic development plans and fisheries development plans, and also incorporate climate adaptation into the fisheries management plan.

Climate change will affect the fisheries over a long period of time so the country must be ready for the impact and endeavor to mitigate its effect. (**PNA**)

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1125991>



Climate change to hurt PH fisheries

posted December 30, 2020 at 11:05 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

The impact of climate change on the fisheries sector is a key contributor to the Philippines' economy, it being an archipelago.

According to a study, the impact of climate change on fish harvests is projected to cause a decrease by about 9 percent of its gross domestic product with the mitigation scenario, and about 18 percent of GDP with the extreme scenario up to 2060, as compared to the baseline scenario.

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He says there is a need to give more attention to the biodiversity in our ocean, especially on the management of marine mammals, on the identification of native species and difference of habitats.

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Climate change will affect the fisheries sector over a long period of time, so the country must be ready for the impact and endeavor to mitigate its effect.



Conservationists call for protection of forests, animal habitats to prevent another pandemic

By [Janine Peralta, CNN Philippines](#)

Published Dec 30, 2020 8:28:34 PM



The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to our attention that the actions of human beings and nature are inextricably linked and protecting biodiversity is key to preventing exposure to organisms that cause diseases, conservationists stressed. (FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, December 30) — The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to our attention that the actions of human beings and nature are inextricably linked and protecting biodiversity is key to preventing exposure to organisms that cause diseases, conservationists stressed.

World Wide Fund for Nature Philippines, an organization advocating ecosystem conservation, points out that through human actions such as urbanization, contact with more animals increased, allowing infectious diseases such as COVID-19 to [emerge and wreak havoc](#).

"Our cities are urbanizing so there is a point in time wherein people and animals and organisms that come from them will interact very closely to create these zoonotic diseases that will jump and affect humans," WWF Philippines Climate and Energy Programme Head Angela Ibay told CNN Philippines' Front and Center.

"In the Philippines, our forests have been marginalized and we need to be able to clamour and say we need to protect our forests and other natural habitats," she said.

For global conservationist Sean Lee-Davies, capitalism and excessive consumerist habits such as the wildlife trade are the main culprits. Lee-Davies often travels to countries as the founder of Project C: Change, a social enterprise and media platform that raises awareness in Asia about illegal wildlife trade and climate change.

"Humanity is waging war on nature and nature always strikes back and we see how nature strikes back in the form of the pandemic," he said. "We were warned by scientists for many many years of a pandemic if we carried on destroying habitats and irresponsible farming."

Coronaviruses are what scientists called zoonotic, meaning they are viruses that came from animals and transferred to human beings due to similarity in biological makeup. A study found that this transmission or "[virus spillover](#)" occurs often through destruction of animal habitats, as a result of hunting them for food and other uses.

"If we cut forests in a faraway country, that will impact our lives wherever we are," said Lee-Davies. "We're born consumers. It's in our nature to consume. Unfortunately, capitalism has turned those consumption habits into an extreme superpower. We are super consumers."

The solution, he said, is to urge corporations and governments to turn to a greener leaf, by adopting sustainable business models that would preserve nature and mitigate its negative effects.



The sustainable model

Bonar Laureto, executive director for Philippine Business for the Environment, said a sustainable business means three things: ensuring equitability in access to resources, ensuring that it meets the needs of society and the environment, and ensuring that it manages its detrimental impact on nature.

"The role of business in its core resources is to effect positive change in society," he said.

The challenge, however, is making this marketable to companies who think protecting nature is an added cost or burden. Laureto said the best way to address this dilemma is highlighting sustainability as a rewarding investment.

"For a real estate company for example, investing in eco-system restoration, because it becomes part of the value proposition of their properties," he explained. "Then it makes sense that it's not cost, it's an interesting investment proposition."

The business can also contribute to conservation by implementing a model that would depend on natural resources, Laureto added.

"Energy companies in hydro need water and water can only be available and sustained if you have water sheds," he said as an example. "Then investing in watersheds...It's not an external cost but internalized into the business model of companies."

More than the business side, conservationists and sustainability advocates also want to emphasize the weight of individual efforts. Apart from calling for action, there is also the significance of living a life that is more conscious of its carbon footprint, that way, corporations can follow suit.

"A lot of people are saying they don't want single use plastics but at the end of the day, they continue to buy unnecessary plastics, then that wouldn't change corporate behavior," said Laureto. "If people really want to influence the decision-making of companies, it has got to be lived by."

WWF's Ibay said the changes could mean as simple as home-gardening, conserving energy and minimizing use of plastic.



Is the government serious in having 'green' power in our energy mix?

By [Val A. Villanueva](#)

December 30, 2020



In file photo is the 150-MW Burgos Wind Project in Burgos, Ilocos Norte of EDC Burgos Wind Power Corporation (EBWPC)

By 2040, the Philippines would have lessened its greenhouse gas emissions by 30% if the draft text of the country's nationally determined contribution (NDC) — one of the central modules of the Paris climate deal — is implemented to the letter.

Based on the draft text, only 2% or 185.56 million metric tons (MT) of expected carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions will be gashed "unconditionally," but the larger share of this assurance, or some 2.48 billion MT of emissions, would greatly depend on financial aid and resources from the international community.

This development jibes with the country's push for enticing more 'green' energy investments, as Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III disclosed during the 7th Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Forum held from October 19 to November 12 this year. Dominguez said in that forum that the country "aims to bounce back from the pandemic-induced recession, while fighting climate risks and enhancing disaster resilience."

"Like most countries," according to Dominguez, "we are also in the midst of a great battle against Covid-19. The pandemic has forced us to rethink our ways of economic life, which makes this an opportune moment to intensify our action on the climate crisis." He added that the Philippines was "turning the contagion into an opportunity to begin building sustainable and safer cities ... "[and] aim to shift our investments to clean energy resources and green technologies."

The latest records from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reveal that the destruction done by natural disasters and extreme events cost the country some P463 billion from 2010 to 2019. Hardest hit were the agriculture, infrastructure and communications sectors.

The finance chief noted that "unlike Covid-19, for which a vaccine will likely be [rolled out] soon, there is no quick solution for the climate crisis."

I couldn't agree more. But as they say, talk is cheap. While Dominguez hammers on the need for the country to be hospitable to clean energy investors, government agencies tasked to make this work seem to be taking a few steps back.

This column has chronicled the roadblocks Australia-based Energy World Corp. (EWC) has been hurdling to get its Pagbilao Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project in Quezon Province into full production. The project is 90% complete. It is lock and loaded to contribute to the country's energy needs. But why is it that the project seems to be in limbo?



Here's the main problem: EWC couldn't piggyback on the existing transmission facilities, and its request to the Department of Energy (DOE) to assist it in convincing transmission firms to allow it seems to be falling on deaf ears.

Despite the difficulties the company has faced through the years, it has remained committed to its investment in the country. It is in the mid-stages of building its own transmission facilities and, were it not for the pandemic, EWC could have been in full production by next year.

LNG is clean energy. While Dominguez talks about the country's desire to go 'green,' energy and climate think tank Center for Energy, Ecology and Development, however, has questioned the persistent inclusion of coal in the country's energy mix. As Gerry Arances, the center's executive director, points out, "Without phaseout plans for coal, we are bound to repeat carbon-intensive mistakes of the past."

Meanwhile, despite constraints on site works exacerbated by the pandemic, EWC is putting up \$32 million or about P1.5 billion more into its ongoing LNG gas terminal and power plant complex. According to the Australian firm's preliminary annual report, it spent \$27.1 million related to the construction of and financing for its Pagbilao gas-fed power plant, as well as \$4.9 million for the adjacent LNG Hub.

I can just imagine the frustration EWC has been experiencing with Philippine regulators. Its LNG hub and anchor power complex, which were originally set to go online in 2017, have now been marked to switch on by 2024. The National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) Pagbilao substation is key to facilitate EWC's power generators to deliver electricity to the grid.

EWC's LNG terminal is set to become a hub of LNG distribution around the country once it becomes fully operational. The company reported to the Australian Stock Exchange that its facility is capable of handling 3 million metric tons per annum of LNG. Its first tank could support 3,000 megawatts of gas-fired power plants, supporting its adjacent 650MW combined cycle gas fired power plant, and provide expansion options for both EWC and its third-party gas clients. The company said that the deep water jetty of the terminal would be able to handle all sizes of LNG vessels.

The project costs over \$750 million of direct investment in the Philippines, and has created over 800 direct jobs during its construction period. The project signifies that the country will now be able to gain access to clean and affordable fuel for power generation and further develop its gas infrastructure.

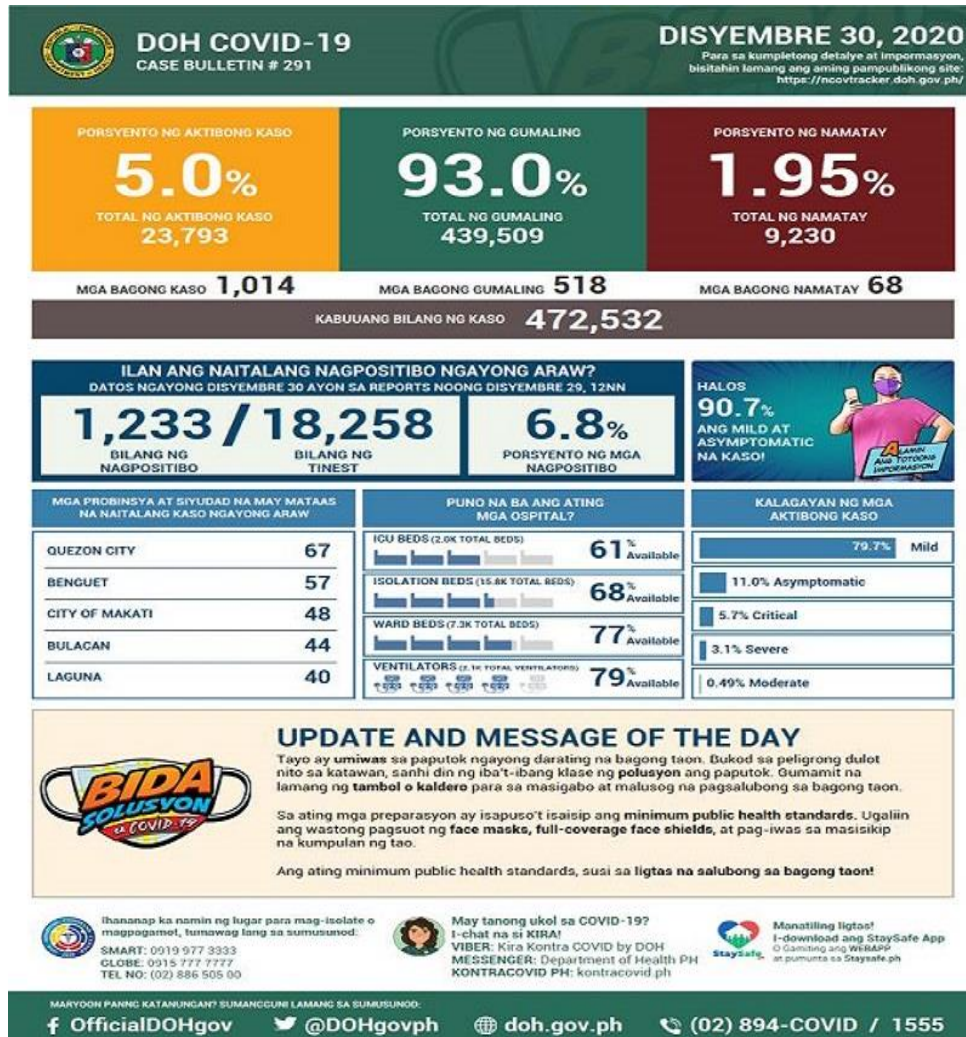
If the government were truly dead set — as it claims it is — in enticing more 'green' energy investments as part of its obligation to uphold the Paris climate deal, why is EWC being thrown red-tape impediments? Why doesn't the government extend a helping hand to an investor like EWC who has remained steadfast in its commitment to invest in our country's program for clean, renewable energy?

For comments, suggestion, e-mail me at mvala.v@gmail.com.



BREAKING: Bilang ng mga tinamaan ng COVID-19 sa bansa umabot na sa 472,532 – DOH

By Mary Rose Cabrales December 30, 2020 - 04:45 PM



Tumaas pa ang bilang ng mga tinamaan ng coronavirus disease o COVID-19 sa bansa.

Ayon sa huling datos ng Department of Health (DOH), 1,014 ang bagong naitalang kaso ngayong araw ng Miyerkules (December 30) kaya umabot na sa 472,532 ang kabuuang bilang ng tinamaan ng virus sa bansa.

518 naman ang bagong naitalang gumaling o naka-recover na sa COVID-19 sa bansa kaya umabot na ito sa 439,509.

Ang bilang naman ng nasawi ay nadagdagan ng 68 kaya umabot na ito sa 9,230.

Narito naman ang ilang mga probinsya at siyudad na may mataas na naitalang kaso ngayong araw:

- Quezon City – 67
- Benguet – 57
- Makati City – 48
- Bulacan – 44
- Laguna – 40

Paalala naman ng DOH ngayong bagong taon ay dapat ay dapat umiwas sa paputok dahil sa dulot na peligro nito sa ating katawan at polusyon sa kalikasan at laging tandaan ang pagsusuot ng face mask at face shield sa mga pampublikong lugar at iwasan din ang pakikihalubilo sa maraming tao.

Source: <https://radyo.inquirer.net/281954/breaking-bilang-ng-mga-tinamaan-ng-covid-19-sa-bansa-umabot-na-sa-472532-doh>

Quezon City bans use of firecrackers during festivities

Robie de Guzman • December 30, 2020



The local government of Quezon City has announced that it will be implementing a ban on the use of all firecrackers and pyrotechnic devices during festivities.

In an advisory, the city government said Mayor Joy Belmonte has ordered the strict enforcement of Ordinance No. SP 2618, S-2017 which prohibits the use of firecrackers and pyrotechnic devices in all public places in Quezon City during a festivity or any occasion, unless there is a clearance from the Department of Public Order and Safety (DPOS).

Public places include street, road, alley, thoroughfare, open space, plaza, parks, basketball courts and other similar places.

“The strict implementation of the Firecracker Ordinance, will, aside from reducing firecracker injuries, discourage gatherings for fireworks display and aid in compliance with COVID-19 health protocols,” Belmonte said in a statement.

“The reduction in firecracker injuries will also ease the burden on medical resources, which are already overstrained by the ongoing pandemic,” she added.

Belmonte issued the order in support of the Metro Manila Council MMDA Resolution No. 20-17, which stressed that the individual and household use of firecrackers and other pyrotechnic devices attract mass gatherings without proper observance of COVID-19 safety protocols such as social distancing and allowed number of persons.

Barangay captains have been tasked to strictly enforce the ban within their respective jurisdictions with the assistance from the Quezon City Police District and DPOS.

Violators may face a fine of P5,000 or one-year imprisonment or both at the discretion of the court.

The city government said there are only three community fireworks displays allowed by the DPOS, to be held at the Quezon Memorial Circle, Eastwood City, and Araneta City.

The fireworks display will be virtual, and no crowd will be allowed in the venues to prevent the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

“Hopefully, we can still ring in the New Year with a fireworks display because this has already been our longstanding tradition,” said DPOS head, General Elmo San Diego.

The Quezon City Council also passed Ordinance No. SP-2587, S-2017, which prohibits the selling, giving, and sharing of any type of firecracker to minor children within its territorial jurisdiction.

The ordinance covers firecrackers such as Baby Rocket, Bawang, Small Triangulo, Pulling of Strings, Paper Caps, El Diablo, Judah’s Belt, Rocket, and other equivalent firecrackers.

Violators will be fined with P5,000 or one-year imprisonment, or both at the discretion of the court.

Source: <https://www.untvweb.com/news/quezon-city-bans-use-of-firecrackers-during-festivities/>



PH population at 111.1 million in '21

posted December 31, 2020 at 12:50 am

by [Willie Casas](#)

Filipinos will continue to grow in number in 2021—although at a slower pace—as their number is projected to reach 110,881,756 next year, according to the Commission on Population and Development.

Despite the rise in absolute numbers, the population grew gradually to 1.31 percent by the start of 2021—an increase from the previous 109,480,590 at the onset of 2020. From a 1.68 percent population growth rate in 2016, it was at 1.45 percent between 2019 and 2020.

With the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic such as service delivery disruptions on family planning factored-in, the figure is estimated to swell at 111.1 million, affecting mainly the under-one age group due to increased unplanned pregnancies.

Among population groups, the most notable increase was observed within the working-age or Filipinos between 15 and 64 years old, which will increase by just over one million from 2020 and will reach 71,278,520 by next year, making up 64.15 percent of the entire Philippine population.

Broken down by sex, there will be more males in this group at 36,139,866 than females at 35,138,630. This implies the need for the country to create at least a half a million new jobs next year, posing a huge challenge for the labor sector in the midst of the pandemic.

The changing age structure of the Philippines' population due to the increase in the working-age population indicates a demographic precondition for greater productivity, given its potential to support the dependent population.

However, Undersecretary Juan Antonio Perez III explained: "The increasing working age population presents a prospect for economic gain because of potentially greater income and productivity it can generate. This is what we call an opportunity for demographic dividend."

Perez cautioned: "There is a need to ensure that members of the labor force are healthy, educated, skilled and gainfully employed. This is what we need to work on to attain the demographic dividend and reap its economic benefits in the next five years; otherwise, they can also potentially become dependents on the income of the family and on government services."

Meanwhile, individuals belonging to the "dependent" population, consisting of those within 0-14 years old, as well as those 60 years of age and older (29.83 percent and 9.07 percent of the population, respectively), will increase by 475,543, and total 43,136,259. It is significant to note that senior citizens in the country will exceed 10 million for the first time, with implications for increased cost for their health care and vulnerability to COVID-19.

Perez, who is the undersecretary for population and development, noted, "We also need to focus on the needs of this vulnerable part of the population, as it is also an often-neglected sector."

Interestingly, women of reproductive age 15 to 49 years old are estimated to have the greatest potential growth in numbers—an increase of about 337,193. This, said Perez, will drive population momentum, as more women are expected to give birth.

"With the increasing proportion of Filipino women of childbearing age, there is a need to intensify actions to ensure their access to family planning information and services to prevent unplanned pregnancies, especially within the context of the pandemic," Perez said.

Given this scenario, the University of the Philippines Population Institute and the United Nations Population Fund* revealed that the number of expected unintended pregnancies for this age group is at 2,560,000—a surge of 751,000 due to community quarantine-induced family planning service reductions.

"This aspect also needs attention, as Filipino women need to have healthy and safe pregnancies given the risks from COVID-19," Perez added.

"We also need to ensure that Filipinos' aspirations on having two children on average** are attained, amid service reductions in family planning due to the pandemic."

The number of adolescents belonging to the 10 to 19 age group will only see an increase of 38,224 in 2021.

Despite these low figures, unintended pregnancies from this age group will reflect a 21.04 percent rise and are expected to reach 102,000, also as an after-effect by community quarantine-induced service reductions on family planning*.



Perez, however, tempered expectations that may lead to complacency among POPDEV stakeholders and policy makers: “Our country still has one of the highest population growth rates in ASEAN. There are still lingering issues we all have to address as we usher in a new decade: management of limited resources in the face of climate change, unrestrained internal migration leading to congestion in urban areas, as well as the disturbing rise of adolescent and teenage pregnancy nationwide, among many others.”

“We still have a lot of work ahead of us with regard to population management and family planning,” the undersecretary said.

“It would still take a comprehensive approach that links government efforts to nongovernment organizations and the private sector—one that allows population programs like family planning to reach every community in all 42,000 barangays nationwide. We also enjoin our countrymen to do their part, as their decisions on family planning will affect our communities.”

POPCOM’s estimates for 2021 are based on geometric-method projections using the last population census in 2015 by the Philippine Statistics Authority.



NAGNGANGAWA SA BAKUNA, NAKASIPER SA DENG VAXIA



December 30, 2020 @ 9:02 AM 21 hours ago

NGAWA nang ngawa ngayon ang mga kritiko ng administrasyong Duterte ukol sa pagpapabakuna laban sa coronavirus disease o COVID-19 ng mga miyembro ng Presidential Security Group na nagbabantay kay Pangulong Rodrigo 'Digong' Duterte.

Ang isang masasabi natin, hindi binakunahan ang mga miyembro ng PSG para sila mapahamak kundi para maging malusog sa paggampan ng kanilang sinumpaang tungkulin.

Ang puno't dulo nito ay para matiyak ang seguridad sa kalusugan ng Pangulo bilang pinakalider ng mahal kong Pinas at para na rin sa pambansang seguridad at interes na maaaring maapektuhan kung madisgrasya ang Pangulo sa nakamamatay na COVID-19.

Kung malulusog, higit na malaki ang tsansa na hindi mahahawaan ng COVID-19 si Pangulong Digong mula mismo sa mga nakapaligid sa kanya.

Kung malusog din ang Pangulo, tiyak na magagampanan nito ang kanyang tungkulin laban sa iba pang mga problema na kinahaharap ng bansa.

Kabilang sa mga litaw na litaw na problema ang terorismo, korapsyon, krimen, malawakang pang-ekonomiyang krisis at pakikialam ng mga dayuhan sa mga panloob na usapin ng Pilipinas.

Hindi dapat hayaang magkasakit ang Pangulo at ang mga bantay nito at mawala ang pokus ng pamahalaan sa pagresolba sa nasabing mga problema ng bayan.

SAAN GALING?

Pinagdirinang ng mga kritiko ang usaping saan galing ang bakuna.

Wala pa raw kasi umanong aprubadong bakuna ang Food and Drug Administration.

Dahil wala pang aprubado ang FDA, hindi pa matiyak ang ibinakuna sa mga miyembro ng PSG kung ligtas at epektibo laban sa COVID-19.

Sa kabilang banda, ang dami nang bansa ang nagbabakuna at kabilang sa mga bakunang ginagamit ang mga gawang China, Amerikano at Europeo.

Lantaran na nga at milyones na ang binabakunahan sa United States, Canada at Britanya samantalang milyones din ang binabakunahan sa China at Russia.



Sa United Arab Emirates at Bahrain, hindi lang ang mga gawang Amerikano at Europeo ang aprubado kundi maging ang gawang China.

Sabi ng pamahalaang UAE, maraming Pinoy ang nagpabakuna sa mga gawang China, Amerika at Europa, 99 porsyento sa mga nabakunahan ang nagkaroon ng epekto sa kanilang katawan laban sa mild at severe COVID-19.

Ngayon, mga Bro, masasabi nating ligtas at epektibo ang mga bakunang gawa ng mga Amerikano, Europeo, Chino at Ruso.

May problema ba kung saan galing ang bakuna, kung ligtas at epektibo, na itinurok sa mga PSG ni Pang. Digong?

DIGONG, NAGSABI NG TOTOO

Mismong sa bibig ni Pang. Digong nanggaling ang balita na may mga nabakunahan nang ilang miyembro ng militar at sa huli, ang mga PSG na binubuo ng mga galing sa iba't ibang sangay ng Armed Forces of the Philippines at Philippine National Police ang natukoy.

Ang pinakamahalaga rito, naging tapat lang sa publiko si Pang. Digong at hindi niya isinikreto ito.

Tiyak din namang hindi pinilit kundi nagboluntaryo ang mga PSG para mabakunahan at kung may ilan mang nagduda, sa huli nagpabakuna sila alang-alang sa pagggaman ng kanilang sinumpaang tungkulin na protektahan ang Pangulo, ang pamahalaan at mamamayan.

At bilib ang ULTIMATUM sa kanilang pagsasakripisyo.

Halimbawang may madisgrasya dahil hindi gawang Amerikano at Europeo ang ginamit kundi gawang China at Russia, ang tanong, eh, hindi ba may namatay o nagka-allergy rin sa bakunang gawa ng Pfizer/BioNTech na iniulat mismo ng media sa US?

Isa pa, normal namang may mga nagkakaproblema o nadidisgrasya sa lahat ng bagay, kahit pa sa mga training ng mga pulis at sundalo kung ginagamit na ang mga live bullet sa pagsasanay.

DENGVAXIA SA BATA, COVID-19 VACCINE SA MAY EDAD

Isang mahalagang dapat pang isipin ang pagkakaiba ng pagbabakuna laban sa COVID-19 at laban sa dengue.

Ang mga may edad at mismong sa paligid ni Pangulong Digong ginawa ang pagbabakuna laban sa nakamamatay na virus na nagpakalat ng pandemya na ikinamatay na ng halos 1.8 milyon sa buong mundo at ikinasakit na ng nasa 82 milyon habang tinitipa natin ito.

Pero sa panahon ni ex-President Benigno Aquino III, anak ng tokwa, ang mga inosenteng bata ang inunang bakunahan ng Dengvaxia laban sa nakamamatay ring dengue.

Kitang-kita ang pagpapakita ng sakripisyo ng mga taga-Malakanyang ngayong panahon ni Pang. Digong sa COVID-19 vaccine.



Pero noong panahon ni PNoy, walang balita na nagpabakuna mismo ang mga taga-Malakanyang laban sa Dengvaxia at inuna nilang isalang sa panganib ang mga inosenteng bata, ang daan-daang libong umabot sa 800,000 na pupil at karamihang nasa public elementary school.

Marami ang namatay sa mga ito at ngayo'y nakasampa na ang mga kasong homicide at iba pang kasong criminal laban sa mga opisyal ni PNoy mula sa mga magulang ng mahigit 100 namatay sa Dengvaxia.

TAHIMIK SA DENGVAXIA, NGAWA NANG NGAWA SA COVID-19 VACCINE

Hindi mapigilan ng mga kritiko ang kanilang bunganga at daig pa ang pagbuga ng bala ng armalite ang kanilang mga paninira sa pamahalaan sa pagpapabakuna ng PSG at siyempre pa, mismo kay Pang. Digong.

Kasama lang ang isyu ng pagbabakuna laban sa COVID-19 sa napakaraming isyu na malaki at maliit na ginagamit nila sa paninira para lang pabagsakin ang pamahalaang Duterte.

Pero, anak ng pitong putakte, kung hindi nakasiper ang bunganga nila sa ibinunga na mga kamatayan sa mga inosenteng bata sa pinalaganap at pinagtuturok nilang Dengvaxia, todo-sigaw sila sa pagtatanggol sa sarili at pagiging inosente rito.

Ang masama pa, ipinipilit nilang ligtas sa mga Pinoy ang Dengvaxia samantalang sa pagsusuri ng Public Attorney's Office, marami na ang namatay rito.

Hindi natin tuloy malaman kung sila talaga ay tagapagtanggol ng bayan, katotohanan at kapakanan ng taumbayan.

SIRAAN NG MGA GUMAGAWA NG BAKUNA

Mismong ang World Health Organization ang nagsasabing nagsisiraan ang mga gumagawa ng bakuna laban sa COVID-19.

Bakit?

Sapagkat gusto nilang sila ang mamayani sa napakalaking negosyo sa bakuna sa pandemya.

Sa simpleng salita, mga Bro, agawan ng merkado sa bentang bakuna ang pangunahing interes ng mga ito.

Kung sino ang makakopo ng isang bansa bilang kanilang merkado, kikita sila ng limpak-limpak na salapi.

Sabi ng WHO, inuuna pa ng mga kompanyang gamot ang pagsusulong ng karapatan nilang maging sikreto ang kanilang paggawa ng bakuna para masolo nila ang merkado kaysa ibahagi ito sa mga mamamayan.

Ang pamahalaang China naman, kapag tinanggap ng mga bansa ang kanilang mga bakuna, ibibigay nila ang teknolohiya sa paggawa rito at bahala na ang mga bansa na gumawa para sa kanilang sariling kapakanan.

Ang Russia naman, gustong magtayo ng pabrika ng bakuna mismo sa Pinas at siyempre pa, matututunan din natin ang paggawa.



Ang mga kompanyang Amerikano at Europeo?

Aba, inuunang papirmahan sa mga opisyal ng mga bansa sa kasunduang huwag ipamahagi ang teknolohiya ng kanilang mga bakuna.

'Yun bang === confidential disclosure agreement o CDA.

At kabilang sa mga sandata ng mga kompanyang Amerikano at Europeo ang paggamit ng mga opisyal ng pamahalaan para isulong ang kanilang mga paninira sa kanilang mga kalaban at pagpupuri sa kanilang mga sarili.

Ilang kongresman at senador ang itinuturo ngayong tagapagtanggol ng Dengvaxia at lumalabas ding sila ang maiingay laban sa pagbabakuna sa mga PSG.

Ang iba pang mga kritiko, ginagamit ang isyu ng pagbabakuna para sa pansarili nilang interes.



EDITORIAL- Hope for a better year

(The Philippine Star) - December 31, 2020 - 12:00am

The figure is down by five points. Considering the public health and economic crisis suffered in the year that's about to pass, however, it's a wonder that the drop in public optimism has not been greater in the survey conducted by pollster Social Weather Stations Inc.

The SWS survey, taken from Nov. 21 to 25 using face-to-face interviews, showed 91 percent of Filipinos welcoming the New Year with hope rather than fear. Pollster Pulse Asia came up with the same figure in its own survey, the results of which were released ahead of the SWS poll.

Filipinos have consistently expressed high optimism in all pre-New Year surveys. The 91 percent is typical, but SWS noted that it was five points lower than the 96 percent recorded last year. Meanwhile, seven percent of the 1,500 respondents said they were entering 2021 with fear – up from the four percent in a similar yearend survey taken by SWS in 2019.

Mental health professionals and assistance groups have reported a spike in cases of depression since the start of the pandemic, but a new year normally brings a promise of change for the better. This time, there is hope that 2021 will mark the end of this coronavirus pestilence, even as a variant and more infectious strain is now rapidly spreading.

The year is starting with three COVID vaccines already passing the stringent and reliable scrutiny of regulators in the United States and United Kingdom. Epidemiologists have expressed confidence that the vaccines will work just as well against the variant strain, which they also note is not deadlier than the original.

Several countries including Singapore have started mass vaccinations with the shots developed by US pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech. Soon to be rolled out is the vaccine made by US biotech firm Moderna, which has also received emergency use authorization from the US Food and Drug Administration. Yesterday, UK regulators approved the emergency use of the vaccine developed by British pharma AstraZeneca and the University of Oxford.

Those developments boost hopes that 2021 will be a better year. People, however, are also hoping that the year will herald reforms in many areas – to improve public health care and pandemic response, and to help people recover from the economic tsunami unleashed by COVID-19. The government must not dash those hopes.



A 2021 budget to fund nat'l recovery

Published December 30, 2020, 11:00 PM

by [Manila Bulletin](#)



We end this year on a note of uncertainty with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic which remains uncontained worldwide one year since it emerged as a new and unidentified illness in Wuhan, China.

It remains a major threat to many nations around the world, notably the United States and now the United Kingdom where a new variant of the virus has emerged. But while it remains a threat in our country, it has not claimed as many victims, for which we must be grateful for the early action of the national government to order a lockdown in Metro Manila and Luzon and its continuing restrictions on mass gatherings.

In the coming year, the pandemic it will remain a major problem for the country. To keep it under control and ultimately end its threat, the Philippines has now set aside ₱72 billion in the National Budget for 2021 for the purchase, storage, transportation, and distribution of COVID vaccines.

The budget for the Department of Health for 2021 is ₱210.2 billion, 19.6 percent higher than the 2020 allocation. A great deal of this will go to the maintenance of hospitals and other healthcare services many of which are now filled with COVID-19 patients.

In line with the Constitution, the Department of Education continues to have the largest funding among the government departments in the 2021 national budget, with ₱751.7 billion, followed by the Department of Public Works and Highways, ₱695.7 billion; the Department of Interior and Local Government, ₱249.3 billion; Department of Health, ₱210.3 billion; Department of National Defense, ₱205.8 billion; Department of Social Welfare and Development, ₱176.9 billion; Department of Transportation, ₱87.9 billion; Department of Agriculture, ₱71 billion; the Judiciary, ₱45.3 billion; and Department of Labor and Employment, ₱37.1 billion.

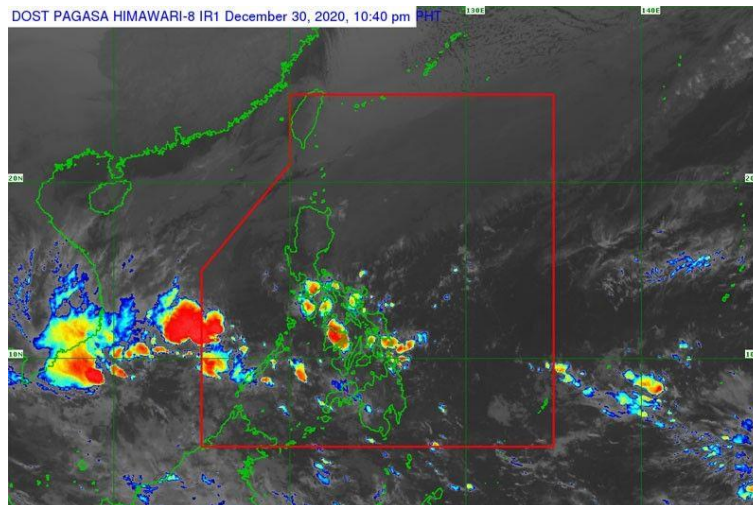
But while the country continues to battle the pandemic, it looks forward to recovery from a year of setbacks in so many areas of the national life. In 2021, the national government will thus step up its infrastructure program of Build, Build, Build, which will also create new livelihood opportunities.

The 2021 national budget carries the theme “Reset, Rebound, and Recover,” Secretary Wendel Avisado of the Department of Budget and Management said. Government operations will gradually resume in this coming year but with a definite stress on the infrastructure program which will not just build roads and bridges and government buildings, but will also provide jobs for the many who have lost their livelihood in the pandemic.

The national effort to end the pandemic will continue in our hospitals, our airports and seaports, in markets and other public places, and in remote communities. both rural and urban, where people tend to ignore government restrictions on their everyday activities.

But along with this continuing health program, we will begin an economic program of recovery with programs funded by the 2021 General Appropriations Act which President Duterte into law signed last Monday.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/12/30/a-2021-budget-to-fund-natl-recovery/>



The Bicol region, Cagayan, Isabela, Aurora and Quezon province, including Polillo Island, will experience cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms due to the tail-end of a frontal system.

PAG-ASA

Rainy New Year – PAGASA

[Helen Flores](#) (The Philippine Star) - December 31, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Two weather systems are expected to bring rains in many parts of Luzon, including Metro Manila, on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said yesterday.

The Bicol region, Cagayan, Isabela, Aurora and Quezon province, including Polillo Island, will experience cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms due to the tail-end of a frontal system.

The northeast monsoon, meanwhile, will bring cloudy skies with rains over the Cordillera Administrative Region and the rest of Cagayan Valley region.

Metro Manila will also have cloudy skies with rains today and tomorrow, PAGASA weather specialist Raymond Ordinario said.

Baguio City will likewise experience rainy weather today and tomorrow, with temperatures ranging from 15 to 23 degrees Celsius.

Luzon residents can expect an improvement in weather conditions by Saturday.

Ordinario said the Visayas and Mindanao, except for Northern Mindanao, will have fair weather apart from isolated rains due to thunderstorms.

No tropical cyclone is expected to affect the country in the next three days, he said.

One tropical cyclone is predicted to enter or develop inside the country in January, Ordinario said.

Thai women gold panners are rare winners in COVID-hit economy

Matthew Tostevin, Reuters

Posted at Dec 30 2020 09:14 PM



Thai gold miners Boonsom Aeamprasert (L) and Sunisa Srisuwanno pan for gold on the Sai Buri river, Sukhirin, Thailand Dec. 29, 2020. Picture taken December 29, 2020. *Matthew Tostevin, Reuters*

SUHKHIRIN — As the yellowish mud swirls away in the waters of Thailand's Sai Buri river, Sunisa Srisuwanno lifts her wooden pan with a cluster of gleaming specks caught in the center.

"That's 100 baht," she said, pointing to grains worth about \$3.30 after little more than 15 minutes work with her gold panning partner, Boonsom Aeamprasert.

With global gold prices near an all-time high, the women are a rare bright spot for an economy hard hit by the collapse of tourism amid coronavirus travel restrictions.

"The gold panning business is doing well, especially during COVID-19," said Sunisa, a 37-year-old mother of two. "Panning gold is our main staple. We sell gold today, we are able to buy food to feed the family."

The area's name - Gold Mountain - indicates that mining has gone on longer than anyone can remember in Sukhirin District, on Thailand's southern border with Malaysia.

But it has been made more lucrative by rising gold prices, up nearly a quarter over the past year.

The rest of Thailand's economy is suffering, with the central bank forecasting a 6.6% contraction this year.

Thailand's deep south, scene of a decades-old Muslim separatist insurgency, lacks the beach resorts, nightlife or temples that draw so many tourists to the country.

But visitors who come to Sukhirin for hiking, kayaking and wildlife are still an important income source - at least until the pandemic struck.

"As the community was forced to shut down the attractions, we had to switch from welcoming tourists to digging and sifting for gold," said Wari Bantakit, 40, who works for a community tourism group.

Some gold sifters use just a shovel, a pan and a plastic squeeze bottle to suck up the grains - and the occasional nugget. Others try to find the best prospects by scrabbling underwater with a snorkel mask.

There are men among the gold panners, but miners said the draw of gold is particularly appealing for women. Men traditionally gather wood and forage in the forests.

"Housewives who used to sell stuff, vegetables, food to tourists were forced to stop," said Wari. "They had to turn to gold panning. It's become the main job."

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/life/12/30/20/thai-women-gold-panners-are-rare-winners-in-covid-hit-economy?fbclid=IwAR0kWDjIkFMHN92zwr8bByTCnae3bWqrKGO6YGbx6kciKsjb2E8YeCAyMqc>



WHO urges fair COVID-19 vaccine distribution to all

Stephanie Nebehay, Reuters

Posted at Dec 30 2020 10:31 PM

GENEVA - The head of the World Health Organization, marking a year since the first cases of the novel coronavirus were reported by China, urged countries on Wednesday to ensure that vaccines are made available to people at risk everywhere, not just in rich nations.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO director-general, appealed for \$4 billion to buy COVID-19 vaccines for distribution in lower and middle-income countries through the COVAX vaccine facility.

"This is the challenge we must rise to in the New Year," Tedros said in a video message issued a day before the first anniversary of China reporting the first cases of pneumonia of unknown origin to the U.N. health agency.

"Vaccines offer great hope to turn the tide of the pandemic. But to protect the world, we must ensure that all people at risk everywhere - not just in countries who can afford vaccines - are immunized," he said.

He also urged countries to combat conspiracy theories and attacks on science, saying "The choice is easy," and the world can "walk the last miles of this crisis together, helping each other along the way, from sharing vaccines fairly, to offering accurate advice, compassion and care" to all who need them.

The COVAX alliance, which aims to secure fair access to COVID-19 vaccines for poor countries, said on Dec. 18 it had agreements in place for nearly 2 billion doses, roughly doubling its supply, with the first deliveries due in early 2021.

A WHO-led international mission of experts is due to visit China in the first week of January to investigate the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that emerged in the central city of Wuhan in December 2019.

More than 81.84 million people have been reported to be infected by the novel coronavirus globally and 1,788,443 have died, according to a Reuters tally.




"The likely scenario is the virus will become another endemic virus, a virus that will remain somewhat of a threat but a very low-level threat in the context of an effective global vaccination programme," Mike Ryan, WHO's top emergency expert, told a press conference on Monday.

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/12/30/20/who-urges-fair-covid-19-vaccine-distribution-to-all?fbclid=IwAR0SYIONGT4Y8QgYSDiVXeHrGbNshXTeT0NLPO_tWIrY3IMSI6I87pKCnzY



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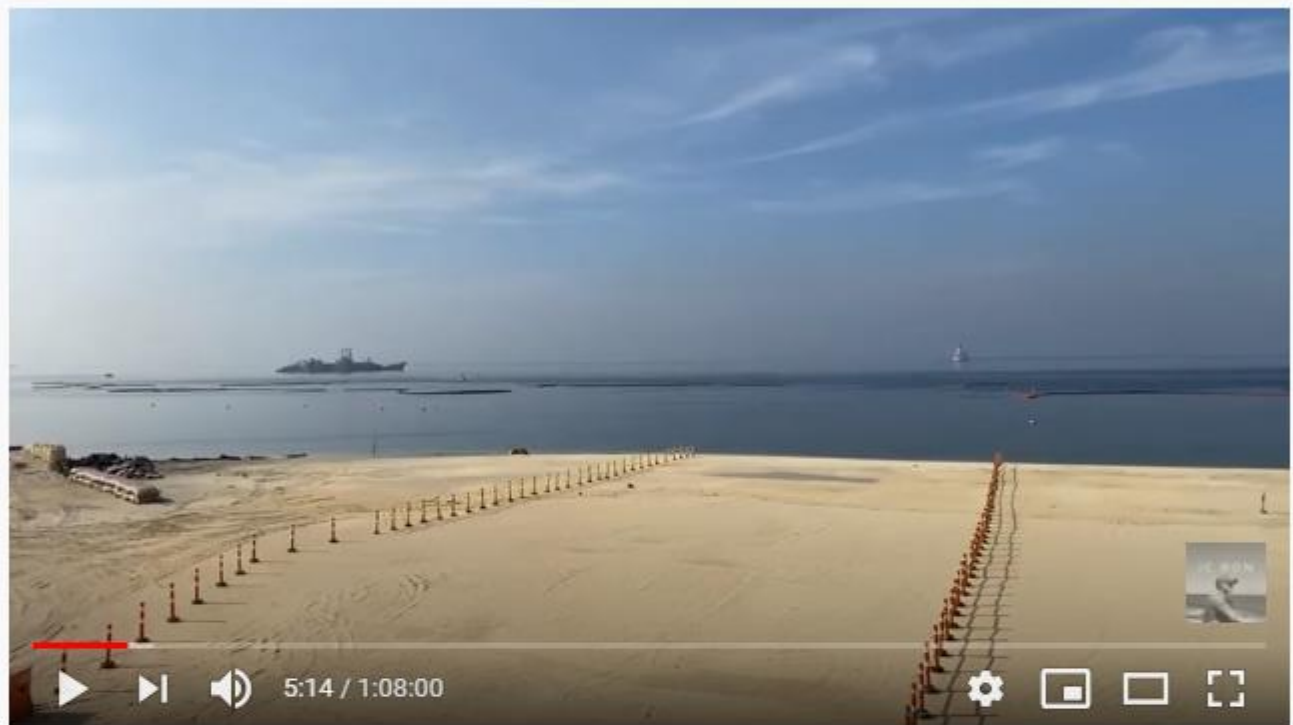
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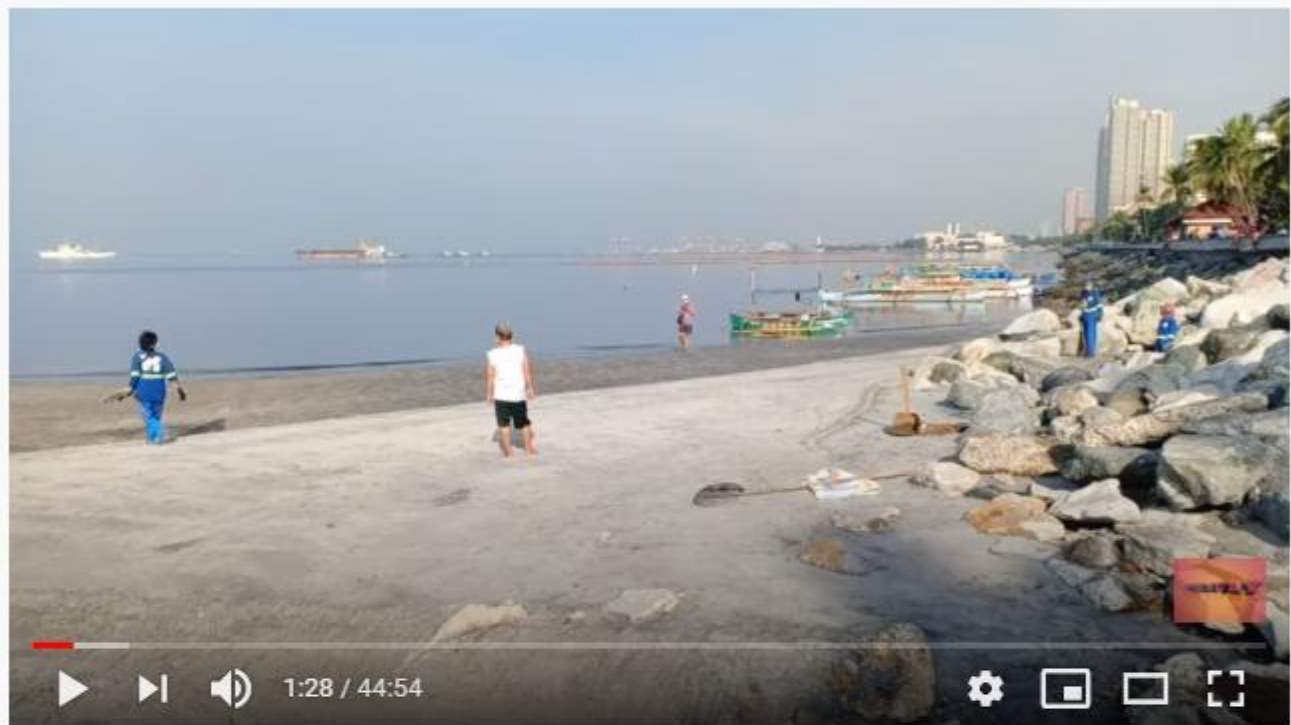
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