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NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



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DENR urges LGUs to educate public on proper waste mgm't

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

LOCAL officials must educate and inspire the public to achieve effective and sustainable implementation of the proper waste management practices in their respective jurisdictions.

This was the call of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna to all local

government units (LGUs) as he stressed the importance of the cooperation and contribution of the people in the conservation and protection of the environment.

Sampulna made the call during his recent visit to El Nido, Palawan, wherein he commended the efforts of the municipal and provincial governments on the construction and operation of the sewage and solid waste treatment plant (SSTP), which was inaugurated in September 2021.

He said that while the SSTP helped reduce the fecal coliform level in El Nido, that alone could not fully protect the environment from further degradation if people will not contribute to its conservation.

"Ayusin natin ang pag-iisip ng ating mga tao dito, na hindi sila basta-basta magtapon ng basura at huwag magtapon ng kahit ano sa ating dagat kasi it will only destroy our environment," Sampulna said.

The 490-million state-of-the-art SSTP, which is in Barangay Villa Libertad, is designed to address water pollution from untreated sewage discharge and garbage waste disposal.

It has been benefitting the residential and commercial establishments from at least 18 barangays in the municipality of El Nido.

The facility can generate about 2,400 cubic meters of wastewater per day, making it more efficient than any other sewage treatment plant in Palawan.

DENR CALABARZON Sets 8-Year Strategic Communication Action Plans for its Protected Areas



The DENR CALABARZON sets its 8-Year Strategic Communication Action Plans for its Quezon Protected Areas during the Communications Planning Workshop for the Protected Areas of Quezon Province held last March 28-30, 2022 at St. Jude Coop Hotel and Events Center, Tayabas, City, Quezon.

DENR CALABARZON is one of the first regions to develop Communications Plans specific for Protected Areas. “Ang gusto natin ay magkaroon tayo ng nakalatag na plano... We will try to arrive at communications activities designed specifically for your own PAs. Tayo ang isa sa mauuna na gumawa ng Comm Plan at very challenging sa atin. This may set the bar for other Regions in making Comm Plan specific to PAs”, said For. Raymond Rivera, Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer of Quezon Province.

The CALABARZON Region eyes to develop 18 Communications Plans for its 12 Protected Areas in Quezon, 1 PA in Batangas, 1 PA in Cavite, and 4 PAs in Rizal for the year 2022. This is to set the 2022-2030 communication objectives of DENR CALABARZON for the 18 Protected Areas of the Region and capacitate representatives from each PA to produce and build a clear and comprehensive communication plan for its targeted stakeholders.

PENRO Rivera reminded the participants of the importance of progress and technical monitoring. He raised that the communications plan could be subject for change. “Ang plano hindi naman ‘yan nakataga sa bato. As we implement evolving ‘yan kasi after we conduct an activity we assess saan tayo nagkulang o nagkamali at ano pa ang pwede nating iimprove para sa susunod ay mas effective ang ating communications activities.”

Meanwhile, Ms. Rowena Ganibi, Assistant Division Chief of the DENR Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service Development Communication Division (SCIS-DCD), emphasized that the communications interventions of DENR should move forward from raising awareness to eliciting behavioral change among its intended audience and stakeholders. This was supported by PENRO Rivera saying “On top of our target, ang basic premise ay kailangan nating mabago ang pag-iisip at behavior ng mga taong kasama natin sa PA at makita nila ang importansya ng PA. Dapat ay may sense of ownership ang mga tao sa ating PAs.”

After the Communications Planning Workshop, the PA staff will move on with further data gathering on their respective areas through the conduct of KAP (Knowledge, Attitude, Practices) Survey, Focus Group Discussions, and Key Informant Interviews.



Meanwhile, the Communications Planning Workshop was attended by the Protected Area Superintendents (PASUs), Assistant PASUs, PA Technical Staff, and Provincial and Community Information Officers of Quezon Province. It was facilitated by PENRO Quezon in coordination with the DENR CALABARZON Conservation and Development Division (CDD) and the Regional Strategic Communication and Initiatives Group (RSCIG). Assistance from partner academes such as the Batangas State University, Enverga, Southern Luzon State University, and St. Anne College were also sought for technical guidance in the writing of the communications plans.

Topics discussed during the three-day workshop include: BMB Technical Bulletins Pertinent in the development of PA Communications Plans tackled by For. Salud Pangan of the DENR4A CDD and the Results-based 8-Year Strategic Communication Action Plan presented by Ms. Rowena Ganibi of SCIS-DCD. Further, Dr. Vaberlie Manadane-Garcia and Dr. Benedict O. Medina of the Batangas State University facilitated the workshops on PESTLE Analysis and SWOT Analysis, Discussion on handling FGD and KII and analyzing Qualitative and Quantitative Data, Discussion and Workshop on Stakeholder Mapping, Discussion on identifying the communication problem and writing short-term, medium-term and long-term communications objective. On the last day of the workshop, the participants were tasked to develop their respective KAP Surveys as preparation for gathering their baseline data.

On the other hand, the workshop will also be implemented for the PAs of Rizal, Batangas and Cavite. The Quezon cluster PAs aim to finish their Communications Plans by May while the rest of the provinces are set to finalize their Communications Plans by June. ###



PHILIPPINE EAGLE CENTER, PANSAMANTALANG ISINARA BILANG PAGHAHANDA SA BIRD FLU

by *Abby Malanday* April 11, 2022



PHOTO FROM PHILIPPINE EAGLE FOUNDATION

Pansamantalang isinara ngayong araw ang Philippine Eagle Center (PEC), para sa gagawing simulation activity sa kanilang mga personnel.

Bilang paghahanda ito sa posibleng lockdown sakaling ma-detect ang kaso ng bird flu sa Davao City.

Ayon kay Andi Baldonado, Development Project Manager ng Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF), kalahok sa gawain ang mga bird keepers, food stock technicians at maintenance personnel.

Itatalaga ang mga ito sa iba't ibang parte ng pasilidad bilang pangangasiwa sa mga ibon.

Muling magbubukas ang PEC sa Abril 12.

Asian firms risk getting ambushed by intensifying climate disasters

As intense floods and storms get more frequent in the region, there are growing fears that companies aren't even aware of the risks they face, let alone being prepared for them.



When Henan province in central China was deluged by heavy floods last summer, it was labelled a once-in-a-millennium event.

Widespread [flooding in Malaysia](#) at the end of the year was attributed to once-in-a-century downpours.

Such timestamps seem increasingly archaic, as increasingly intense extreme weather pummels a rapidly warming Earth. The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) warns of more frequent and intense flooding in the coming decades. There's talk that heavy flooding in Malaysia may happen [every decade](#) at the end of the century.

"Flooding is not a matter of if, it is a matter of when," said Yong Seek Ying, vice-president and an engineering manager for the Asia Pacific region at American commercial property insurer FM Global. Asia is the world's [most flood-prone region](#) and loses US\$30 billion from inundations annually.

"In the United States, that is very much established. In Asia Pacific, we are still trying to build awareness and knowledge in terms of, are people in a flood-prone area? If they are, what can they do to prevent it? This is still an ongoing process," Yong added. Her team of engineers helps clients assess risks ranging from floods, earthquakes and typhoons, among other natural hazards.

The fear now is that climate change is advancing so rapidly that businesses get knocked out by extreme weather events before they see a need to protect themselves. Such ignorance could mean huge financial losses, disruptions and erosion of investor confidence.

The Henan floods occurred in the heart of China's transport and industrial hub. Total financial damage from the disaster reached [US\\$16.5 billion](#) as water seeped into car and electronics factories, stalling production. Over 300 people lost their lives.

Malaysia's year-end deluge also hit Selangor, a major economic and political hub, which had not experienced an episode this bad since 1995.



“Most businesses are used to the weather fluctuating and being somewhat volatile, but without dramatic changes in the underlying trend. But the changing climate is producing that and is going to continue to produce that,” said Louis Gritzko, vice-president of research, international codes and standards at FM Global.

“Company leaders are focused on quarterly returns and profitability. They’re focused on this month, next month, next year. There’s this kind of short-term thinking that is pervasive in businesses today, because of the competition and the economic pressures that they are under,” he added.

Beyond floods, Asia Pacific is also set to be hit by increasingly severe winds. In the Philippines, experts say six [super-typhoons](#) — that is, a storm exceeding 185 kilometres an hour — a year is now the norm.

One such storm, Typhoon Rai, killed 400 last year, while cutting electricity and water to millions of households and businesses.

Think before building

“The most logical solution is, don’t build facilities in a place that is flood prone,” said Yong.

But for the many existing factories in low-lying areas, Yong said it means helping clients figure out solutions ranging from small flood barriers to entire levees along rivers.

These measures are especially important in countries such as Thailand, where urbanisation has historically been concentrated along major rivers that brought trade to the kingdom, and cities like Jakarta in Indonesia, which is already sinking from over-extraction of groundwater. Meanwhile, scientists are also warning against “mal-adaptation” to climate risks that could aggravate climate impacts. The latest [IPCC paper on climate adaptation](#) highlighted the risks of building coastal walls against sea-level rise, which imperils wildlife and could be toppled by extreme storm surges.

Gritzko added that companies need to ensure that their own installations are built with resilience in mind. Better insulation to reduce energy consumption from heating and cooling could mean greater fire risks if not properly installed. New climate-friendly installations such as solar power need to be protected against climate risks too.

“The message to companies is: think carefully as you pursue your sustainability objectives, make sure you’re not introducing new risks and unintended consequences,” he said.

Governments play a key role too, Gritzko said, as haphazard construction can often become a zero-sum game between neighbouring factories and regions as excess floodwater gets channelled from one area to another, causing flooding elsewhere. They can provide data to help with better planning, and finances to bolster climate adaptation.

“One of the things that we have seen recently is that bottom-up efforts are the most effective,” Gritzko said.

“Governments can’t simply mandate. They have to partner with companies because the companies are the ones that are going to have to execute plans, keep jobs in place and get the economy going,” he added.

The Asia Pacific region is one of the least insured regions of the world, with only [17 per cent](#) of US\$50 billion lost to extreme weather last year covered by insurance, according to global insurer Munich Re.

With more extreme weather events expected in the coming years, insurers are expected to [raise prices](#) to manage damage costs.



Consultancy Deloitte warned that rising premiums may [turn people away](#) from buying insurance, and suggested providing discounts for people who protect themselves against disasters. FM Global said industrial and commercial properties that do more to protect themselves from climate risks are in a better position to get favorable terms from their insurer.

Earthworms like to eat some plastics, but side effects of their digestion are unclear

by [American Chemical Society](#)



Earthworms are a welcome sight for gardeners and farmers because the wriggling invertebrates recycle nutrients from soil, making them more accessible to plants. As worms burrow, they consume almost everything in their path, including microscopic plastic pollution. Now, researchers reporting in ACS' *Environmental Science & Technology* have observed that earthworms actually prefer soil with some types of microplastics but digest the polymers differently, which the team suggests could impact the animals' health and the ecosystem.

Soil is becoming increasingly contaminated by fragments of plastic—especially microplastics less than 5 mm wide—that have broken off of larger plastic waste or have been directly released from products as [small particles](#). Previously, researchers have shown that earthworms will ingest these synthetic particles, even breaking them apart into [smaller pieces](#). But during the digestion process, animals could potentially be harmed by the microplastics themselves or by the toxic substances they carry. Currently, companies are producing alternatives to petroleum-based plastics that are derived from plants, are biodegradable or both. Just like traditional plastics, these "bioplastics" can also fragment into microscopic particles, but there is [limited information](#) on whether earthworms will also ingest and decompose these materials. So, Lei Wang and colleagues wanted to compare the willingness of earthworms to consume soil laced with microscopic pieces of bioplastic and petroleum-derived plastic, studying the *in vitro* digestion and excretion of the particles.

By placing earthworms in chambers with different types of plastics in certain locations in the soil, the researchers found that worms preferred soils with bio-based [polylactic acid](#) (PLA) particles or petroleum-derived polyethylene terephthalate (PET) particles but actively avoided some semi-synthetic plastics. When [lactic acid](#) and terephthalic acid, sour-smelling monomers that make up PLA and PET, respectively, were spiked into soil, the worms were also attracted, suggesting that the animals were drawn in by the odors as potential cues for food. In another experiment, the researchers put earthworms in soil mixed with either microscopic PLA or PET particles. Analysis of the creatures' excretions showed that their digestive systems broke down PLA into much smaller fragments than was observed with PET plastics. The animals also excreted PLA much more slowly. The researchers say the results show that earthworms can promote the breakdown of bioplastics, such as PLA, in [soil](#). They add that more studies are needed to determine how the slow excretion of PLA fragments affects the health of these animals and whether the worms are an option to remove degradable plastics from the environment.



2 ilog sa Southern Leyte, tumaas ang tubig dahil sa walang-tigil na ulan | UB

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MAASIN CITY, SOUTHERN LEYTE

UNANG BALITA 2 ILOG, TUMAAS ANG TUBIG DAHIL SA WALANG-TIGIL NA ULAN

6:10 AM GOOD NEWS, MGA KAPUSO! GAMIT ANG GMA AFFORDABOX.

0:16 / 1:27

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Taal evacuees, pinayagan nang makauwi – NDRRMC



BATANGAS – Pinayagan nang makabalik sa kanilang mga tahanan ang mga residente sa Batangas na lumikas noong Marso dahil sa muling pagsabog ng Bulkang Taal.

Sa Laging Handa public briefing, sinabi ni National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) spokesperson Mark Timbal na ito ay kasunod ng payo ng Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council ng Calabarzon sa mga lokal na pamahalaan.

“Ang regional district council for Calabarzon ay nag-issue po ng payo sa ating mga LGUs na puwede nang pabalikin pauwi ‘yung ating mga kababayan sa kanilang mga tahanan,” anang Timbal.

Noong Sabado, matatandaang ibinaba na sa Alert Level 2 (decreased unrest) ang Bulkang Taal.

Ayon kay Timbal, marami sa mga lumikas ang bumalik na sa kanilang mga tahanan habang isinara na rin ang ibang evacuation centers.

Nabatid na hanggang noong Marso 31 ay aabot sa 7,237 indibidwal o 2,047 pamilya ang naapektuhan ng aktibidad na bulkan.

Kabuuang 4,165 indibidwal o 1,209 pamilya ang pansamantalang nanirahan sa 20 evacuation centers habang ang iba ay nakituloy sa kanilang mga kamag-anak. **RNT/ JCM**



136,300 katao apektado ng bagyong 'Agaton'; Patay sa Davao bineberipika



Ilang kuha ng mga binahang lugar sa Baybay City, Leyte

MANILA, Philippines — Sumipa na sa daanglibong katao ang naapektuhan ng pananalasa ng Tropical Depression Agaton sa Visayas at Mindanao, na dahilan na rin ng pagtungo ng libu-libong pamilya sa loob ng mga evacuation centers.

Vina-validate pa ngayon ang tig-isang patay at nawawala sa Davao Region habang kumpirmado naman daw ang dalawang sugatan sa Northern Mindanao, ayon sa National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), Lunes.

- Apektadong populasyon: 136,390
- Lumikas na nasa evacuation centers: 13,049
- Lumikas na wala sa evacuation centers: 25,485

Ilan sa mga nakatikim ng hagupit ng bagyong "Agaton" ang:

- Western Visayas
- Central Visayas
- Eastern Visayas
- Northern Mindanao
- Davao Region
- SOCCSKSARGEN
- CARAGA
- Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

Aabot naman sa 49 kabahayan ang bahagyang nasira ng nasabing sama ng panahon sa ngayon habang tatlo naman ang wasak na wasak.

Tinatayang nasa 874,000 halaga ng pananim naman ang napinsala sa ngayon sa SOCCSKSARGEN at BARMM.

Binaha nang husto ang ilang lugar sa Baybay City sa Leyte, dahilan para malubog ang mga kabahayan at establisyamento.

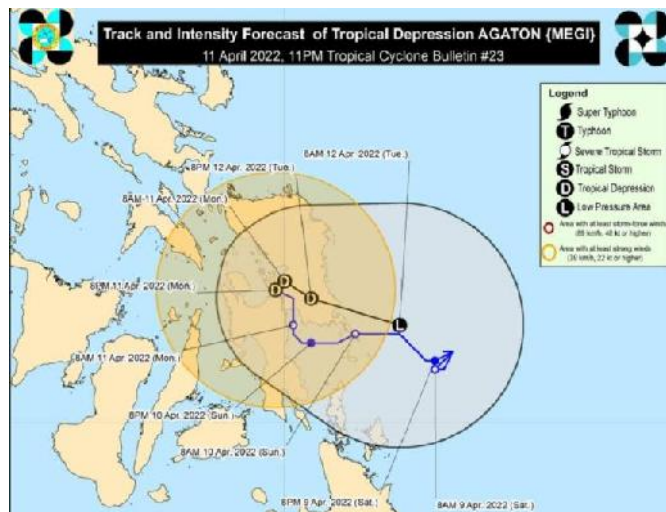


Sa kabila ng lahat ng ito, nakapagbigay na ng nasa 2.15 milyong halaga ng pagkain sa mga naapektuhan ng bagyong "Agaton" sa CARAGA.

Kasalukuyang nasa ilalim ng Signal no. 1 ang 11 lugar buhat ng naturang bagyo, habang naghahanda naman ang bansa sa pagpasok ng Severe Tropical Storm Malakas (int'l name) mamayang gabi, na [nakikitang magiging typhoon din mamaya](#). — **James Relativo**

9 areas under Signal No. 1 as Agaton moves over Santa Rita, Samar

Published April 11, 2022 11:40pm



The center of Tropical Depression Agaton was estimated in the vicinity of Santa Rita, Samar with maximum sustained winds of 45 kilometers per hour near the center, gustiness of up to 60 km/h, and central pressure of 1000 hPa and moving in the north northwest direction slowly.

The center of Tropical Depression Agaton was estimated in the vicinity of Santa Rita, Samar with maximum sustained winds of 45 kilometers per hour near the center, gustiness of up to 60 km/h, and central pressure of 1000 hPa and moving in the north northwest direction slowly.

Tropical Cyclone Wind Signal (TCWS) No. 1 is hoisted over the following areas:

Luzon

- the southern portion of Masbate (Dimasalang, Cawayan, Palanas, Placer, Cataingan, Esperanza, Pio V. Corpuz)

Visayas

- Eastern Samar
- Samar
- Northern Samar
- Biliran
- Leyte
- Southern Leyte
- the northeastern portion of Cebu (Daanbantayan, Medellin, City of Bogo, Tabogon, Borbon, Sogod) including Camotes Island



Mindanao

- Dinagat Islands

With the potential impacts of winds at minimal to minor threat to life and property, wind Signals in other areas are hereby lifted.

Hazards affecting land areas

On Monday evening to Tuesday evening, moderate to heavy with at times intense rains over Eastern Visayas, Sorsogon, Masbate, the northern and central portions of Cebu including Bantayan and Camotes Islands, Aklan, Capiz, Iloilo, Antique, Guimaras, and the northern and central portions of Negros Provinces.

Light to moderate with at times heavy rains over MIMAROPA, Dinagat Islands, Zamboanga del Norte, Quezon, and the rest of Visayas and Bicol Region.

Strong winds will be experienced within any of the areas where TCWS No. 1 is currently in effect.

Hazards affecting coastal waters

Rough seas will prevail over the seaboard of areas where Wind Signal No. 1 is hoisted in the next 24 hours. These conditions may be risky for most seacrafts.

In the next 24 hours, moderate to rough seas will also prevail over the remaining seaboard of the country that are not under any wind signal or gale warning.

Track and Intensity outlook

Tropical Depression Agaton is forecast to continue moving in the vicinity of Samar-Leyte-Biliran before turning more east southeastward towards the Philippine Sea by late evening on Tuesday or Wednesday morning.

Due to the combined effects of land interaction, increasing vertical wind shear, and the effects of the upper-level outflow of Severe Tropical Storm Malakas, Agaton is forecast to deteriorate within 36 hours then continue moving eastward over the Philippine Sea as it becomes assimilated within the circulation of Malakas. -- **BAP, GMA News**

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/weather/828225/9-areas-under-tcws-no-1-as-agaton-moves-over-santa-rita-samar/story/?utm_source=GMAnews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR2JrcitGRvXAWP5oxoXJhPBRZinKUPjDv3TMCXupriWkU7qgst_60VPmnM

Nasa 20 katao, nasawi umano sa mga landslide sa Baybay, Leyte



Nasa 20 katao ang sinasabing nasawi at may mga nawawala pa sa mga landslide na naganap sa Baybay City, Leyte dahil sa matinding pag-ulan na dulot ng bagyong "Agaton."

Sa panayam ng Super Radyo dzBB nitong Lunes, sinabi ni Baybay City police chief Police Colonel Jomen Collado, na nakuha ang mga bangkay sa apat na barangay ng Mailhi, Maypatag, Bunga at Kantagnos.

"Alam na ng mga kaanak ng mga nasawi ang nangyari," sabi ni Collado.

Patuloy pa umano ang search and retrieval operations sa anim pang nawawala.

Mayroon pa umanong iniulat na nawawala pero kinumpirma pa raw ang mga ito, ayon kay Collado.

Sa ulat ng GMA Regional TV "Balitang Bisdak," makikita ang mga pagbaha na idinulot ng bagyong Agaton sa lalawigan ng Leyte.

Nag-landfall si Agaton sa Calicoan Island sa Guiuan nitong Linggo ng gabi.

Nitong Lunes ng hapon, isinailalim ng PAGASA Signal No. 1 ang 11 lugar matapos mag-landfall naman ang bagyo sa Basey, Samar. — **FRJ, GMA News**

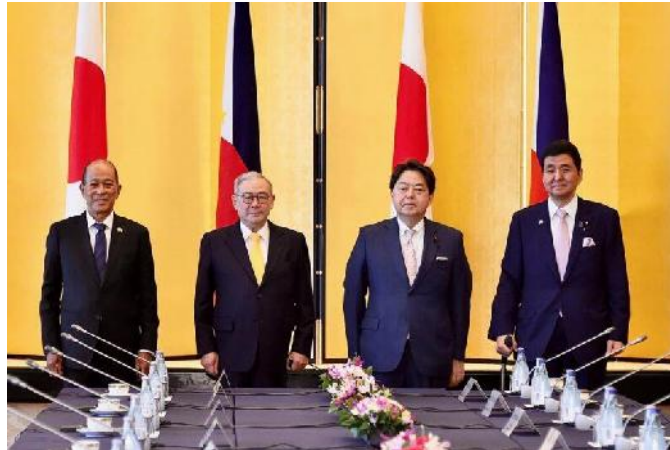
Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/promdi/828213/nasa-22-katao-nasawi-umano-sa-mga-landslide-sa-baybay-leyte/story/?utm_source=GMAnews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR2SavWCwe-GpF73go51Urrc55vxpUDCArnoLsgRvct_c1koBMs3GWlgVlo



PHL, Japan eye military exercises a la Balikatan, citing sea tensions

BY MALOU TALOSIG-BARTOLOME ANDRENE ACOSTA

APRIL 11, 2022



From left, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro L. Locsin Jr. pose with their Japanese counterparts, Japan's Foreign Minister Hayashi Yoshimasa and Defense Minister Kishi Nobuo, after the historic 2+2 Meeting in Tokyo at the weekend.

MANILA and Tokyo are eyeing the holding of large-scale joint military exercises between the Philippine and Japanese armed forces similar to PH-US Balikatan in a bid to improve bilateral defense cooperation as they both expressed “serious concern” on the increasing tension in the South China and East China seas.

The prospect of a joint military training involving the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Japan Self-Defense Forces were among the issues discussed and agreed upon during the inaugural Japan-Philippines Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting (“2+2”) held in Tokyo on Saturday. Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro L. Locsin Jr. had flown in to Tokyo to meet with their Japanese counterparts, Hayashi Yoshimasa and Kishi Nobuo, respectively, on Saturday.

The dialogue came a day after President Duterte and Chinese President Xi Jinping spoke during a teleconference.

During the 2+2 dialogue in Tokyo, the Philippine and Japanese foreign and defense ministers “expressed serious concern” about the East and South China Sea.

Without directly referring to China, the four ministers said they “strongly opposed actions that may increase tensions.”

Both Japan and China have a common security threat with the growing Chinese maritime presence. The Philippines has a long-running territorial dispute with China in the South China Sea, while Japan and China have overlapping claims in Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in the East China Sea.

“The Ministers concurred to start considering ways to further enhance and facilitate cooperation such as exercises between Japan Self-Defense Forces and the Armed Forces of the Philippines, including frameworks to facilitate their reciprocal visits as well as reciprocal provision of supplies and services in the field of logistical support,” the two sides said in a statement.



Aside from military exercises, both sides have agreed to reciprocal port calls and ship visits, transfer of more defense equipment and technology, and continuous cooperation on previously-transferred defense equipment.

Port calls and visits into the Philippines by Japanese navy vessels have increased during the past years as Tokyo also actively supports Manila's effort to strengthen its maritime domain awareness capability, including its past donation of six maritime patrol planes to the Philippine military.

Japan has also attended previous iterations of the yearly Philippines-US Balikatan military exercise as an observer, along with Australia and Asean militaries.

During the 2 + 2 meeting, both countries also supported efforts to increase and improve their own defense capabilities and further strengthen overall defense relations through "defense capacity and capability building."

The statements said: "The Ministers underscored the importance of peace and stability in the region and the security of its seas. The Ministers reaffirmed their common commitment to freedom of navigation and overflight in the East and South China Seas, and a rules-based approach in resolving competing claims in maritime areas within the framework of international law, in particular UNCLOS."

Japan concurred with the Philippines' long standing objections to unlawful maritime claims, militarization, coercive activities and threat or use of force in the South China Sea.

The Japanese officials also expressed their support for the UN arbitral award on the South China Sea as their Filipino counterparts emphasized that the arbitral award on the South China Sea is "final and legally binding."

The statement said both Japan and the Philippines called for the early conclusion of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea "consistent with UNCLOS and not prejudicial to the legitimate rights of all stakeholders in the South China Sea."

Likewise, both sides underscored the importance of each country's respective treaty alliance with the United States and that of enhancing cooperation with regional partner countries.

Last year, the Philippines signed a contract to buy fixed, long-range air surveillance radars and a mobile air radar from Japan. Lorenzana and Minister Kishi noted that the transfer process for this radar system is "steadily proceeding."

The Philippines also procured its largest multi-response vessels from Japan, which are now being used by the Philippine Coast Guard in patrolling the West Philippine Sea.

12 APRIL 2022, TUESDAY



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Save rainwater, too

When LPA meets Malakas, destructive floods occur in places in the Visayas and Mindanao while Metro Manilans pray for rain. Rain is as utilitarian as it is romantic, but what a waste, when all that precious precipitation just goes down the drain.

And yet, and yet, at least 20 SM malls are doing something about it – something that neither the Department of Agriculture nor the National Water Resources Board wants to consider as a practical solution to the perennial wa-

ter shortage problem. The answer is a series of rain-fall catchments to catch the rain and store it for uses other than drinking.

Okay, so rainwater is not fit for drinking, but under a system like MWSS where potable water comes out of the same taps for washing, flushing toilets, putting out fires, irrigating, and manu-



MEDIUM RARE
JULLIE Y. DAZA

facturing, whatever volume is saved for drinking is a blessing and a bonus!

Quoting from an SM Supermalls report, the water caught in those catchments spread out among 20 malls is enough to fill 32 Olympic-size pools. Imagine our farms and plantations thirsty for rain today and drowning in seasonal or untimely floods next week, when DA could easily have designed and distributed yesterday a prototype of SM's rain-storing facilities. If the malls can do it, why not a government department funded to help farmers and urban dwellers as well? We're not asking for a dam which takes years and billions to build, we're waiting for a much simpler, cheaper way to harvest rain and even prevent floods.

SM Masinag, with a catch capacity of 17,681

cubic meters, serves two communities whose drainage systems are connected to the mall through its 30 hp submersible pumps that flush out accumulated rainwater, thereby preventing floods.

SM gives credit to a law authored by no less than presidential candidate Sen. Manny Pacquiao, whose Rainwater Harvesting Act mandates the "establishment, maintenance, and management of rainwater harvesting systems." Under the hot sun or in the rain, the candidate tells his fans and supporters how he prays for signs and receives messages in his dreams.

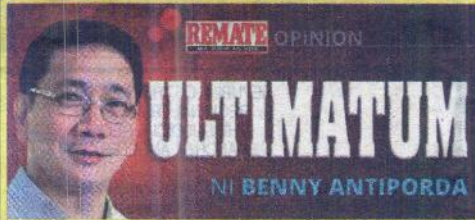
The good senator should next pose this question to DA and other relevant government agencies: How many more typhoons before you start saving rain, a gift from heaven?



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REIMATE OPINION

ULTIMATUM

NI BENNY ANTIPORDA

TULUNGAN VS BAGYO, BAHA, KAMATAYAN, PAGHIHIRAP

HINDI pa gaanong nakatatayo ang libo-libong biktima ng super bagyong si Odette na tumira sa Kabisayaan at ilang bahagi ng Mindanao ilang araw bago mag-Pasko, heto na naman sina Agaton at Malakas na tumitira ulit sa Kabisayaan at Mindanao.

Si Odette pumatay ng 17 katao at sumugat sa mahigit 300 iba pa habang sinira nito ang malalawak na taniman, maraming tahanan at marami ring imprastruktura.

Itong si Agaton naman, bagama't mas mahina kaysa si Odette ay may napatay na sa Davao dahil sa dala nitong baha at landslide at hindi makaalis nang mabilis dahil pinipigilan ito ni Malakas.

Nagdeklara na ng state of calamity ang Cateel, Davao del Sur at Cebu City para magamit ang kanilang mga calamity fund para sa naghihirap nilang mga mamamayan.

MGA AYUDA

Halos parehong mga lugar ang dinaanan nina Odette at Agaton kaya doble at hindi masukat na perwisyo ang tinamo ng mga tinamaang biktima.

Upang mapalamnan man lang ang kumakalam na sikmura ng marami, nararapat lang ang paghahatid ng ayuda sa mga ito.

Pagkain, malinis na tubig, damit, gamot at iba pa.

Subalit nariryan ang pangangailangang pangmatagalan gaya ng bahay, puhunan sa hanapbuhay, trabaho at iba pa.

Ang pamahalaan ang pangunahing inaasahan ng mga biktima at sana ipagpatuloy rin ng mga pribadong organisasyon at mamamayan ang kanilang pamimigay ng ayuda.

Sana, kumilos lahat para sa pag-ahon ng mga biktima at pagsisimula ng buhay ng mga labis na nasalanta.

SIRANG KALIKASAN

Nandiyan na ang sinasabing pagkasira ng kalikasan na nagdudulot ng matitinding bagyo at ulan na lumilikha ng mga matitindi ring baha at landslide na ikinapipinsala ng tao.

Isa sa mga klarong dahilan ng pagbabago ng klima at pag-iinit ng panahon ang pagkakalbo ng kapaligiran na dating magubat ngunit wala nang maraming puno para sumipsip ng carbon na ibinubuga ng tao, hayop, sasakyan at pabrika.

Ayon sa mga siyentista, darating ang araw na maaaring kapusin din mismo ang tao at hayop ng hininga dahil sa pagkawala ng mga puno na nagbubuga ng oxygen.

Napakalaking perwisyo 'yan, mga Bro.

Kaya naman, dapat nang pag-ingatan ang kapaligiran sa pagdebelop dito at pagkuha ng kabuhayan mula rito.

Ang mga land developer, hangga't maaari, gumawa na ng ilang palapag sa halip na tayuan ng tig-isang baha ang malalawak na lupa at magtanim siya ng puno, kasama ang mga mamamayan sa mga babakantehing lupa.

Sa pamamagitan ng puno, makatitiyak pa tayo ng suplay ng tubig mula sa mga ito sa panahon ng tagtuyot para sa inumin at irigasyon para sa pagsasaka.

Dapat na ring ihanapan ng hindi babahaing lugar ang mga nasa danger zone gaya ng mga nasa gilid ng ilog at tinatamaan ng landslides.

Gawan na rin ng paraan ang mga daluyan ng tubig gaya ng pagkalkal at pag-alis ng bara sa mga ilog na kung bumaha ay tumatama sa mga taniman at kabahayan.

Ang milyon-ilyong mamamayan, kasama ang gobyerno, kung magtulungan ay maraming magandang bagay ang magagawa para i-repair ang kalikasan at labanan ang bunga ng pagkasira nito.

Anomang reklamo o puna, iparating lang sa www.remate.ph o i-text sa 0921-4303333.



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DAVAO

Eagle Center prepares for bird flu outbreak

By ANTONIO COLINA IV

The Philippine Eagle Center (PEC) was closed temporarily on Monday, April 11, for a simulation activity to prepare its personnel for a possible lockdown in case an avian influenza (AI) H5N1 or bird flu is detected in Davao City.

Andi Baldonado, development project manager of the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF), said that the one-day drill was aimed at testing the protocols of the center in the event of an outbreak that could make the temporary closure necessary.

She said the bird keepers, food stock technicians, and maintenance personnel participated in the drill to effectively handle a situation during a lockdown "for the safety of our national bird, endemic raptors, and other animals housed at the PEC."

The PEF announced, in its social media account on Saturday that a lockdown would severely affect the operation of the center but added it could not risk the safety of the endemic wildlife, many of which had been rescued, either taking shelter or being rehabilitated at the center.

The drill, as the announcement pointed out, allowed the center personnel to respond "at a moment's notice as soon as there is a detected case of avian flu in Davao City."

"In the event that the avian flu is detected in Davao City, the Philippine Eagle Center will again have to resort to lockdown and quarantine," the foundation said, adding that a lockdown was a necessary biosecurity measure to protect all Philippine eagles and other raptors in the facility from being wiped out by the disease.

The center reopens today, April 12.

"The PEC is home to five percent of the global population of this already critically endangered bird," it said.

Dr. Cerelyn Pinili, head of the City Veterinary Office, said during an interview over Davao City Disaster Radio (DCDR 87.5) Friday that the local

government was doing all it could to protect the city and keep its bird-flu free status after the recent detection of avian influenza in neighboring Davao del Sur, North Cotabato, and Sultan Kudarat.

She said the local government has set up 13 veterinary checkpoints, assisted by Task Force Davao and Davao City Police Office, to enhance its border control and monitor entry of live poultry and poultry products.

"They are 24/7 to check the entry of live poultry or poultry products if they have the documents," she said.

She said the city was classified under "stage 1," which means it remains free from avian flu.

Under this stage, she said the local government undertakes preventive measures, including consistent surveillance of the commercial and backyard poultry farms.



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Buwaya nahuli sa Jones, Isabela

NAGDULOT ng takot sa mga residente ng isang barangay sa Jones, Isabela ang nakita nilang dalawang buwaya sa isang ilog na tinatayang nasa anim na talampakan ang laki.

Sinasabing Philippine Crocodile o "Bukarot," ang uri ng buwaya na nakita ng mga residente sa ilog ng Barangay Dicomay Uno.

Sa pangambang magdulot ng panganib sa mga tao ang mga buwaya, hinuli nila ito pero nakatakas ang isa.

Ipinaubaya ng barangay

ang nahuling buwaya na isang babae sa Mabuwaya Foundation at dinala naman sa Philippine Crocodile Conservation Center ng San Mariano, Isabela.

Bukod sa bayan ng Jones, nakikita na rin daw ang mga buwaya sa mga ilog ng bayan ng San Mariano, Maconacon at Divilacan.

Pero sinabi ng Mabuwaya Foundation na mali ang paraan ng paghuli sa buwaya dahil kinoryente ito.

"Hindi sana dapat kinoryente 'yon. At ang paggamit

ng koryente kahit hindi man ito gamitin sa buwaya ay labag po sa ating Fisheries Code," paliwanag ni Marites Balbas ng Mabuwaya Foundation.

Nauunawaan naman daw ng mga awtoridad ang naging reaksyon ng mga residente. Pero ipinaalam sa kanila na hindi kasama sa listahan ng pagkain ng mga buwaya ang mga tao.

Idinagdag pa na panahon ngayon ng pagpaparami o mating season ng mga buwaya.



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION
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BusinessMirror

A broader look at today's business



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URC: Units lead march towards net-zero goal

UNIVERSAL Robina Corp. (URC), the food unit of the Gokongwei Group, said its agro-industrial and sugar groups have been leading the way for the company's overall push for a net-zero emission goal by 2050.

Since 2015, the company's agro-industrial group has been generating over 600 megawatts a year at its poultry farm in Naic, Cavite, and pig farm in San Miguel, Bulacan, using biogas. Its sugar group,

meanwhile, kept the biogas program in place when it took over the assets of Roxas Holdings Inc. in La Carlota City, Negros Occidental, in 2020.

"These efforts are part of URC's overall push towards reaching its 'net zero' goal by 2050, by sourcing its energy needs from power producers that use renewable sources," Irwin Lee, URC president and CEO said.

Net zero emission is a strategy to zero-out the amount of greenhouse gases the

company emits, by offsetting these with its efforts such as recycling or planting trees or in this case using renewable energy in its operations.

This commitment will support the Philippines's pledge to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which aims to reach carbon neutrality by 2050 and to reduce the country's GHG emission by 75 percent by 2030 as part of its National Determined Contribution. *VG Cabung*



BIKERS, APRUB SA ECO-FRIENDLY CAMPAIGN

NAKIPADYAK ang iba't ibang grupo ng mga siklista sa iba't ibang lugar ng bansa pata sa eco-friendly at lead-by-example campaign.

Naglunsad ng kani-kanilang caravan sa Quezon City, Maynila, Pasay City, Mandaluyong, Santiago sa Isabela, Bulacan, Olongapo sa Zambales, Imus sa Cavite, Calamba sa Laguna, Albuquerque at Tagbilaran sa Bohol, Pagadian sa Zamboanga, Iligan sa Lanao del Norte, at Tagum sa Davao del Norte.

Pinamunuan at inorganisa ng ilan sa pinakamalalaking cycling groups ang nationwide caravan na umaabot sa daan-daan ang mga lokal na miyembro, tulad ng Universal Cycling Network (UCN) sa Cavite, multisports group na TriZurKamesa sa Pagadian, at Kasabike Iligan sa Iligan.

Samantala, ayon kay dating House Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, ito na ang pangatlong nationwide caravan na inilunsad ng mga bikers bilang pakikiisa sa eco-friendly campaign nito. Pinuri naman ng iba't ibang environment group tulad ng EcoWaste Coalition ang panawagan na gawing mas malinis, ligtas at maayos ang kampanya hanggang sa araw na halalan.

(Mylene Alfonso)



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PNP: 22 todas sa landslide kay 'Agaton'

Nasa 22 katao ang nasawi sa landslide sa iba't ibang barangay sa Baybay City, Leyte dahil sa walang tigil na pagulan bunsod ng bagyong 'Agaton', ayon sa ulat ng Philippine National Police (PNP) kagabi.

Sa panayam kay Baybay City Police chief Col. Jomen Collado, base na rin sa ulat ng City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office ang mga nasawi ay mula sa apat na barangay sa nasabing lungsod.

"Opo based po 'yan doon sa report na nakuha natin sa PDRRMO at saka sa monitoring na rin namin dito sa Baybay PNP" pahayag ni Collado sa isang panayam sa radyo kagabi.

Ayon pa kay Collado, 16 sa mga nasawi sa landslide ay mula sa Brgy. Mailhi, dalawa naman sa Brgy. Maypatag, tatlo sa Brgy. Kantagnos at isa sa Brgy. Bunga.

Samantala, mayroon pa umanong naiulat na anim na nawawala sa landslide at patuloy na pinaghahanap.

"Iba-iba po ito. Bale total na po 'yan 22 simula po kahapon at saka ngayong araw. Nakuha po natin 'yan sa 4 na barangay 'yong sa isang barangay landslide po,

'yong ibang barangay nag-landslide tapos naanod po 'yong ibang biktima natin at sa kasmaang palad at nadala sila ng agos ng tubig," sabi pa ni Collado.

'Agaton' nag-landfall sa Basey

Matapos ang ilang oras na hindi gumagalaw, nag-landfall sa Basey, Samar ang bagyong 'Agaton', ayon sa pinakahuling weather bulletin ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

Sa advisory ng Pagasa dakong alas-otso kagabi, matapos mag-landfall ng bagyong 'Agaton' dakong alas-kuwatro ng hapon sa Basey ay bahagya na itong gumalaw at kumilos sa bisinidad ng Samar, taglay ang lakas ng hangin na 45 kilometer per hour at bugso na 60kph.

Ayon sa Pagasa, 11 lugar pa rin ang nasa storm warning Signal No. 1 kabilang ang katimugang bahagi ng Masbate, Eastern Samar, Northern Samar, Biliran, Leyte, Southern Leyte, hilagang-silangang bahagi ng Cebu, hilagang parte ng Bohol, Surigao del Norte at Dinagat Islands. (Edwin Balasa/Tina Mendoza)



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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

March 25, 2022

DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR
No. 2022 - 0180

TO: ALL UNDERSECRETARIES; ASSISTANT SECRETARIES; DIRECTORS OF BUREAUS, SERVICES, AND CENTERS FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT; EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF SPECIALTY HOSPITALS, NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL, CHIEFS OF DOH-HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CENTERS AND INSTITUTES; DIRECTOR OF TREATMENT REHABILITATION CENTERS; PRESIDENT OF PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION; DIRECTOR OF PHILIPPINE NATIONAL AIDS COUNCIL; AND ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT: Public Consultation on the Draft DOH-DILG-DOT-DENR-DHSUD-PCW Joint Administrative Order entitled "Guidelines on the Creation and Use of Parks and Public Open Spaces for the Promotion of Physical and Mental Health and Well-being During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic"

The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the need for accessible parks and open spaces to promote both physical and mental health. As such, the Department of Health, together with the Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Tourism, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development, and the Philippine Commission on Women, developed a Joint Administrative Order entitled "Guidelines on the Creation and Use of Parks and Public Open Spaces for the Promotion of Physical and Mental Health and Well-being During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic". The draft policy aims to provide guidance on the safe reopening of public open spaces, and to outline the minimum standards that will constitute a healthy public open space.

Relevant stakeholders are enjoined to submit their respective inputs/comments on the draft policy by 29 April 2022 through policy.hpb@gmail.com. A copy of the draft Order is hereby attached for your perusal. In submitting comments, kindly indicate the page and line number of the provision being referred to for easy reference.

Dissemination of the information to all concerned is requested.

By Authority of the Secretary of Health:

MARIA ROSARIO SINGH-VERGEIRE, MD, MPH, CESO II
Undersecretary of Health
Public Health Services Team

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
PHILIPPINE COMMISSION ON WOMEN

JOINT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

No. 2022-

SUBJECT: Guidelines on the Creation and Use of Parks and Public Open Spaces for the Promotion of Physical and Mental Health and Well-being During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic

I. BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the need for accessible parks and open spaces for the promotion of both physical and mental health. Literature has long established the link between health and benefits in investing in safe and sustainable green developments to heighten health promotion in cities and communities. A 2013 World Health Organization report on urban planning, environment, and health stated that green spaces can positively affect physical activity, social and psychological wellbeing, improve air quality, reduce exposure to noise, and potentially reduce public health inequalities. Additionally, green spaces also serve as buffers which help absorb the effects of climate change such as flooding and forecasted increase in temperature. Outdoor spaces are likewise preferable to indoor spaces for preventing the spread of COVID-19.

In view of the foregoing, it is the role of the governing bodies to enable the promotion of physical wellness and the protection of mental health and well-being by ensuring the availability and accessibility of healthy and safe public open spaces. These guidelines on the safe and risk-based reopening of public green, blue, and open spaces were developed to assist relevant stakeholders and administrators in the promotion, use, and management of public outdoor venues and facilities during and beyond the pandemic as outlined in this Order.

These guidelines likewise provide the minimum standards for constituting healthy and safe parks and public open spaces to guide administrators and developers in maximizing its physical, social, psychological, and environmental benefits. In line with the settings-based approach of the Health Promotion Framework Strategy 2030, the creation of such healthy and safe public open spaces also strengthen social cohesion in local communities and help transform neighborhoods into environments that are healthy to live, work, play, and age in. This policy, together with other intersectoral initiatives with partners, will provide communities with health-supportive conditions that support better health outcomes for all Filipinos.

II. OBJECTIVE

This Order aims to provide guidance on the creation, promotion, use, and

management of public open spaces to support the physical and mental health and well-being of Filipinos during and after the pandemic. Specifically, it aims to:

1. Provide guidance on the risk-based reopening of public open spaces; and
2. Provide standards for the creation and management of healthy public open spaces.

III. SCOPE AND COVERAGE

This Order shall cover all users, administrators, and other relevant entities involved in the development, administration, and use of public open spaces, including natural green and blue spaces, and green spaces in urban settings under the national or local governments.

IV. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

A. Public open spaces - is an umbrella term which shall refer to land spaces provided by the national or local government units, designated as parks and intended for physical activity, leisure, and recreational use by the public. Public open spaces may also include privately-owned land spaces that are made publicly accessible. These may be categorized based on the following:

According to surface or setting:

- Blue spaces** - shall refer to public open spaces with water elements ranging from natural and man-made ponds, aquariums, to coastal zones and public beaches.
- Green spaces** - shall refer to public open spaces with natural surfaces or natural settings; green open spaces include, but are not limited to, trails, forest parks, natural wildlife areas, community gardens, nature parks and reserves, zoos, aquariums and botanical gardens.
- Urban spaces** - shall refer to open-space areas reserved for parks and other green spaces, including plant life, water features, and other kinds of natural and man-made environments generally considered open to the public and can be privately owned e.g., theme parks, water parks, and other amusement parks, education campuses, neighborhood community parks/gardens, and institutional or corporate grounds (UN City, 2017).

According to activity:

- Active open spaces** - shall refer to public open spaces intended primarily for formal outdoor sports or organized physical activities; active open spaces include sports complexes, basketball courts, tennis courts, playgrounds, and the like.
- Passive open spaces** - shall refer to public open space used primarily for leisure, unstructured physical activities, passive recreation or informal play; passive open spaces include neighborhood parks, gardens, linear corridors, conservation areas or heritage sites, nature reserves, and the like.

V. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- For the continued mitigation of COVID-19 transmission, proper implementation of the Minimum Public Health Standards per DOH Administrative Order No. 2021-0043 or "Omnibus Guidelines on the Minimum Public Health Standards for Safe Reopening of Institutions" and succeeding amendments shall at all times be ensured.
- Public open spaces shall remain operational and accessible to the public, and in limited capacity, when and as applicable.
- Public open spaces shall ensure equitable access of all people, regardless of gender, age, religion, political affiliation or belief, ethnicity, disability, and/or socio-economic status.
- In order to maximize the physical, psychological, social, and environmental benefits of public open spaces, development of relevant spaces and infrastructure shall be guided by the minimum standards set out in Section VI-C of this Order.
- Partnerships shall be fostered between relevant National Government Agencies, Local Government Units (LGUs), non-government organizations, academic institutions, and the private sector for a whole-of-government and whole-of-system approach in the creation, promotion, use, and management of public parks and open spaces.
- All public open spaces that are required to attain development or building permits shall undergo the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Review Process of the DOH and/or the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) System of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, pursuant to Republic Act No. 11223 or the Universal Health Care Act and Presidential Decree No. 1586, respectively.

VI. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

A. Health and safety protocols in public open spaces during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Movement of persons with regards to use of public open spaces may be subject to applicable restrictions for purposes of public health and safety (e.g. based on age, comorbidities, vaccination status, etc.), as may be determined by the relevant governing bodies or the LGUs.
- All users of public open spaces shall be required to wear face masks at all times. Individuals engaging in physical activities are recommended to wear face masks, but maintain the conduct of physical activity to a low or moderate intensity. Individuals may remove their face masks when eating and/or drinking, provided that eating or drinking within the area is allowed based on applicable alert level classification and that physical distancing is maintained from individuals or groups from different households.
- Physical markers that serve as visual cues for physical distancing shall be placed where applicable, to guide individuals to maintain a distance of at least one (1) meter from individuals or groups from different households.
- Sanitation facilities inside the premises of public open spaces shall be kept open, easily located, properly maintained, and with privacy and security for its users to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. In the absence of basic sanitation facilities, relevant actors shall endeavor to provide amenities that enable proper hand hygiene such as presence of hand sanitizers, dispensers with alcohol-based solution, and handwashing facilities.
- Routine disinfection of infrastructure and high-touch surfaces in public open spaces shall be ensured.
- Renting, borrowing, or sharing of non-personal equipment (e.g. bikes, scooters, etc.) shall be permitted, provided that these are routinely disinfected before and after every use. Further, renting, borrowing, or sharing of personal equipment such as those used orally (e.g. mouth



guards, water gear, etc.) and those that have prolonged contact with the face (e.g. helmet, headgear, etc.) shall not be allowed.

7. A Safety Seal shall be granted to public open spaces with management that have established the applicable administrative and engineering controls for mitigating the transmission of COVID-19, in accordance with current applicable rules and regulations.

8. Promote the use of contactless transactions including, but not limited to, online appointments or reservations, and provision of digital menus, maps, or tickets, as applicable.

9. Tour guides, if any, shall use lapel microphones to minimize hand contact and avoid clustering of visitors while on tour.

B. Risk-based classification of activities in public open spaces

The management, operation, and use of public open spaces, and the implementation of allowed activities shall be in accordance with current applicable guidelines and alert level classification systems. The Annex A of this Order provides a summary of allowed activities vis-a-vis the risk or alert levels of the location.

C. Minimum standards for the creation, promotion, operation, and use of healthy public open spaces

1. *Open and accessible*

a. Recognizing that public open spaces are essential to the core functioning of a community, all such spaces shall be designed cohesively within the network of other essential destinations and establishments.

b. All public open spaces shall be easily accessible by foot, bicycle and other forms of active or light modes of transportation, and public transit.

c. In communities where public open spaces are limited, existing lands or recreational areas in schools or other similar properties may be opened up for such purposes through shared use agreements between the relevant entity and the local government.

2. *Child, elderly, PWD, and pet-friendly*

a. All public open spaces shall be sensitive and responsive to the needs of all its users, especially the children, elderly, and persons with limited physical mobility or other disabilities.

b. Sidewalks, walking paths, pedestrian and crossing infrastructures, and other accessibility facilities shall be provided at grade. Materials that are tactile, not slippery when wet, well lit, and that can provide high contrast shall be used in the development or enhancement of such spaces.

c. All signages, controls, or nudges for way-finding shall be made visible with appropriate visual design, and placed in conspicuous areas at suitable height for children and people in wheelchairs.

d. Properly maintained public furniture, rest areas, benches, shades, ramps, and other similar features and amenities that are easily located shall be provided for the elderly, persons with disabilities, and families with children.

e. Public open spaces shall, as applicable, provide appropriate, sanitary, and properly maintained breastfeeding and changing stations for mothers with infants or children.

f. A mix of open and enclosed spaces shall be provided, if possible, to allow users to select the kind of environment to experience, especially for persons with autism and other neurodiversity including those who are deaf or have hard of hearing who may prefer more enclosed or secure facilities with less sensory information. Activities that are sensitive and responsive to the needs of hypersensitive and hyposensitive persons may also be made available.

g. Senior citizens and persons with disability shall be provided with an express lane, or otherwise given priority.

h. Pets may be allowed in open spaces, such as natural parks, subject to strict compliance with prescribed health protocols and the parks' existing rules and regulations for visitors bringing their pets.

3. *Safe space for all genders*

a. All public open spaces shall adopt a zero-tolerance policy against acts of gender-based violence and public spaces sexual harassment such as unwanted and uninvited sexual actions or remarks, wolf-whistling, catcalling, sexist, misogynistic, transphobic, and homophobic slurs, physical or verbal advances that threaten one's personal space, or such other acts as provided for in RA No. 11313 or the "Safe Spaces Act".

b. All public open spaces shall ensure safe routes going to and from its premises by maintaining park visibility during daylight hours and proper lighting at night; Provided, that such lighting shall not compromise the diurnal cycle of plants and animals present in the public open space.

c. Interior security mechanisms to prevent and/or address such incidents shall be instituted in all public open spaces, which include installing of CCTV and clearly visible warning signs against gender-based sexual harassment, and designating an anti-sexual harassment officer to assist and provide support to the victim, as applicable.

4. *Smoke and vape, drug, alcohol free*

a. All public open spaces, especially those frequented by the youth, families with children, and persons with co-morbidity, shall strictly enforce a no smoking and no vaping policy. No designated smoking or vape areas shall be harbored within the premises of the public park and open space.

b. Selling and advertising of tobacco or vape products within 100 meters from any point of the perimeter of the public open spaces shall not be allowed.

c. Drinking and selling, especially to minors, of alcoholic beverages or other drinks with alcohol regardless of level of alcohol content shall not be allowed in public open spaces, including in outdoor food parks and farmers markets, in accordance with Food and Drug Administration Circular No. 2019-006 on Guidelines in the Commercial Display, Selling, Promotion, and Advertising of Alcohol.

d. All public open spaces shall remain drug-free in compliance with Republic Act No. 9165 ("Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002"), and other existing policies.

5. *Handwashing and sanitation*

a. Accessible, sufficient, and easily located sanitation facilities for personal hygiene, handwashing, and toilet use that provide privacy and security for its users shall be provided and properly maintained inside the premises of public open spaces.

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b. In public open spaces with amenities or concessionaires for food and drinks, facilities for toilet and personal hygiene must not be connected directly or situated close to the kitchens.

c. Pocket parks or parklets and other urban green spaces of relatively smaller scale, and thus with no necessity for dedicated sanitation facilities, shall ensure that as an alternative, a publicly available handwashing station, toilet, and restroom is accessible within 100 meters from its location.

6. *Eco-friendly, sustainable, and non-polluting*

a. Development or enhancement of public open spaces shall, under no circumstance, destroy, displace, and/or contaminate existing natural habitat of local wildlife, forests, or agricultural domains.

b. Public open spaces with water facilities like ponds, aquariums, fountains, or other related attractions, shall be designed to consume water efficiently and sparingly whenever possible.

c. Proper waste management measures such as installation of visible signages and trash bins in conspicuous locations, and implementation of scheduled garbage collection and disposal, shall be observed by the administrators.

7. *Climate and disaster resilient*

a. Public open spaces shall be developed with the aim of mitigating or reducing hazards and risks around its area.

b. All identified public open spaces shall be suitable for use in accordance with the results of the LGU's Climate and Disaster Risk Assessment (CDRA).

c. Should the public open space be affected by any climate or disaster risk as identified in the LGU's CDRA, an alternate area shall be considered; but if no other areas are available, necessary adjustment and retrofitting in order to accommodate, manage, and mitigate the risks shall be employed.

8. *Functional park management, enforcement, and maintenance*

a. Public open spaces shall adopt appropriate environmental design principles that enable natural surveillance and natural access control, which allow for safe, orderly, and enjoyable experience for all its users.

b. Public open spaces, especially those within the jurisdiction of national and local governments, shall have dedicated park administrators, recreation staff, rangers, and/or security officers to enforce relevant park policies and provide safety and assistance to its users and visitors. Relative to this, sufficiently manned helpdesks or similar mechanisms shall likewise be ensured.

c. Regular and supervised programming of engaging and appropriate physical activity, sports, or recreational activities shall be facilitated to increase the use of public open spaces and the public's sense of community and organization.

9. *Promotive of local culture, heritage, and biodiversity*

a. Programming of amenities, attractions, and activities in public open spaces, especially those within the purview of the local governments, shall consider and accommodate the needs and the cultural identities of the social groups in the community.

b. Public open spaces shall, where applicable, protect and feature native species of animals, insects, trees, and flora or vegetation.

D. Sustainability and financing of public open spaces

1. Resources at the national level shall be mobilized for the promotion, creation, and use of healthy public open spaces, as aligned with the respective functional mandates of the relevant national government agencies.

2. Likewise, resources at the local level shall be mobilized to support and maintain public open spaces. LGUs are enjoined to include as part of its local development plans the creation of healthy public open spaces or improvement of existing local public open spaces that are aligned with the provisions of this Order.

3. New financing mechanisms may be explored, including but not limited to public-private partnerships, benefit allocations, community fund-raising, or donations, to support the establishment of new or enhancement of existing public open spaces.

4. Privately-owned and managed open spaces may implement reasonable fees for the maintenance of their respective facilities.

VII. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The Department of Health (DOH) shall:

1. Review, develop, and continue to update the set minimum public health standards based on most recent evidence available, and issue succeeding updates through appropriate policy issuances;

2. Provide technical assistance in developing inclusive health standards, protocols, and guidelines on the creation, promotion, and use of healthy public open spaces; and

3. Monitor and evaluate relevant data or indicators on health and its risk factors in relation to the promotion and use of public open spaces.

B. The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall:

1. Promote among LGUs the adoption of national policies, programs, and standards on the creation, promotion, and use of healthy public open spaces;

2. Grant Safety Seal certification to open public spaces with management that have complied with current applicable health and safety standards (e.g. DOLE-DOH- DILG-DOT-DTI Joint Memorandum Circular 2021-01);

3. Ensure that law enforcement agencies implement applicable safety policies, rules and regulations in public open spaces, including the full implementation and localization of RA No. 11313 or the Safe Spaces Act in connection with the provision on safe spaces for all genders.

C. The Department of Tourism (DOT) shall:

1. Develop and promulgate supplemental guidelines in coordination with relevant attached agencies (e.g. Intramuros Administration, National Parks Development Committee, etc.) for the operations of tourist attractions or such other public open spaces within its area of jurisdiction that are covered in the Order;

2. Assist in the promotion of recreational activities being conducted in public open spaces within its area of jurisdiction;

3. Grant Safety Seal certification to open public spaces with management that have complied with current applicable health and safety standards (e.g. DOLE-DOH- DILG-DOT-DTI Joint Memorandum Circular 2021-01); and

4. Provide technical assistance in the programming of supervised appropriate and culturally-relevant activities in public open spaces.



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- D. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall:**
1. Provide relevant environmental standards and technical assistance for the development and enhancement of public open spaces, especially green and blue spaces and lines;
 2. Facilitate and process the application for environmental impact assessment of infrastructure or development projects related to public open spaces or such other spaces within the scope of this Order, as applicable; and
 3. Monitor and evaluate environment-related data or indicators relevant to healthy public open spaces.
- E. The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) shall:**
1. Provide necessary technical assistance on environmental, land use, and urban planning and development in support of the creation of public open spaces;
 2. Ensure that urban design and development for public open spaces comply with the standards set in Section C of the Specific Guidelines of this Order; and
 3. Monitor the development of public open spaces relative to the implementation of comprehensive land use plans and zoning policies of the local government units.
- F. The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) shall:**
1. Provide necessary technical assistance for instituting safety mechanisms in public open spaces to address and/or respond to gender-based harassment on streets and public places, pursuant to Republic Act No. 11313 or the Safe Spaces Act.
- G. Local Government Units (LGUs) shall:**
1. Review existing urban, land use, environmental, and/or tourism plans to inform the creation, promotion, operations and use of public open spaces;
 2. Provide necessary resources and infrastructure for city, municipal, or community public open spaces;
 3. Incentivize the development of pocket parks and parklets in the community;
 4. Ensure the proper implementation of the minimum public health standards in public open spaces;
 5. Grant Safety Seal certification to open public spaces with management that have complied with current applicable health and safety standards (e.g. DOLE-DOH- DILG-DOT-DTI Joint Memorandum Circular 2021-01);
 6. Properly maintain city, municipal, or community public open spaces

- 433 located in their jurisdiction;
- 434 7. Coordinate with the relevant National Government Agencies in
- 435 carrying out the provisions of this Order; and
- 436 8. Ensure immediate and widest dissemination of these guidelines to all
- 437 units and sectors within their jurisdiction.
- 438

VIII. FUNDING

439 All expenses relative to the implementation of this Order shall be charged

440 against the concerned offices and agencies, subject to existing accounting

441 and auditing rules and regulations.

IX. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

442 Should any provision of this Order or any part thereof be declared invalid,

443 the other provisions, insofar as they are separable from the invalid ones,

444 shall remain in full force and effect.

X. EFFECTIVITY

445 The Order should take effect fifteen days after publication in a newspaper

446 of general circulation and upon acknowledgement of a copy thereof by the

447 UP Office of the National Administrative Registrar (ONAR).

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and
Urban Development

ATTY. KRISTINE ROSARY E. YUZON-CHAVES
Executive Director
Philippine Commission on Women

Annex A. Summary matrix of recommended conduct of activities in public open spaces (Subject to change following succeeding issuances or amendments to current applicable guidelines by relevant authorities)

	Alert Level 5	Alert Level 4	Alert Level 3	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 1
Outdoor Venue Capacity	Not allowed	30% venue capacity	50% venue capacity	70% venue capacity	100% venue capacity
Exercise - Contact Sports	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Allowed at a maximum of 70% on-site or venue/seating capacity, taking into account physical distancing and approved by the LGU where such games shall be held	Allowed at a maximum of 100% on-site or venue/seating capacity, taking into account physical distancing
Exercise - Non-Contact Sports and Other Forms of Physical Activity	Not allowed	Individual outdoor exercises beyond the general area of their respective residences shall be allowed for all, except for unvaccinated individuals in the vulnerable population. No group activities shall be conducted. If possible, limit the individuals allowed at a maximum of 30% of the venue capacity	Individual outdoor exercises shall be allowed for all ages regardless of comorbidities or vaccination status. No group activities shall be conducted If possible, limit the individuals allowed at a maximum of 50% of the venue capacity	Individual outdoor exercises shall be allowed for all ages regardless of comorbidities or vaccination status. No group activities shall be conducted If possible, limit the individuals allowed at a maximum of 70% of the venue capacity	Individual outdoor exercises shall be allowed for all ages regardless of comorbidities or vaccination status.
Eating/Drinking (e.g. outdoor dining, picnics)	Not allowed	Eating and drinking shall be allowed at a maximum of thirty percent (30%) of the venue capacity taking into account physical distancing, and regardless of vaccination status.	Eating and drinking shall be allowed at a maximum of fifty percent (50%) of the venue capacity taking into account physical distancing, and regardless of vaccination status.	Eating and drinking shall be allowed at a maximum of seventy percent (70%) of the venue capacity taking into account physical distancing, and regardless of vaccination status.	Eating and drinking shall be allowed at a maximum of a hundred percent (100%) of the venue capacity taking into account physical distancing, and regardless of vaccination status.
Operation/Availability of Shared Facilities (Playgrounds, Outdoor Gyms, etc.)	Not allowed	Allowed, ensure regular cleaning and maintenance and 30% venue capacity	Allowed, ensure regular cleaning and maintenance and 50% venue capacity	Allowed, ensure regular cleaning and maintenance and 70% venue capacity	Allowed, ensure regular cleaning and maintenance
Operation of Visitor or Tourist Attractions	Not allowed	Not allowed	Max of 30% indoor venue capacity** and 50% outdoor capacity	Max of 50% indoor venue capacity (except for unvaccinated individuals over 65 years old) and 70% outdoor venue capacity	Full on-site capacity
Operation of Funfairs/Peryas	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Max of 50% indoor venue capacity (except for unvaccinated individuals over 65 years old) and 70% outdoor venue capacity	Full on-site capacity
Outdoor concerts in open spaces	Not allowed	30% venue capacity	50% venue capacity	70% venue capacity	100% venue capacity

12 APRIL 2022, TUESDAY



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DOH logs 1,906 new COVID-19 cases; 428 deaths from April 4 to 10

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Apr 11, 2022 4:14:29 PM



The Department of Health (DOH) recorded 1,906 new COVID-19 infections and 428 fatalities in the week of April 4 to 10. (FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, April 11) — The Department of Health (DOH) recorded 1,906 new COVID-19 infections and 428 fatalities in the week of April 4 to 10.

The agency's weekly bulletin posted Monday showed the daily average for that week was 272 new cases, about 29% lower than the previous week.

Of the 428 deaths, 31 (7.2%) occurred this month, 65 (15.2%) last month, 45 (10.5%) in February and 51 (11.9%) in January 2022.

There were 164 deaths traced to 2021: six in December, two in November, 17 in October, 34 in September, 33 in August, seven in July, six in June, 11 in May, 19 in April, 16 in March, eight in February, and five in January.

There were also 72 new deaths from 2020: five in December, eight in November, nine in October, 11 in September, 13 in August, 14 in July, ten in June, and two in May.

There were no new critical cases logged but the DOH said 707 severe and critical COVID-19 patients are currently staying in hospitals — about 12.6% of total COVID-19 admissions.

The department said 16.4% of non-intensive care unit beds are occupied or 4,045 out of 24,689 beds. For ICU beds, the utilization rate was at 18.4% or 542 beds out of 2,951.

The DOH also gave updates on vaccination rates with 74.05% of the target population and 76.12% of the target elderly population (A2 group) inoculated.

Over 66.65 million people have been fully vaccinated, including 526,654 who received their shots in recent week. Meanwhile, more than 12.48 million people got their boosters, including 322,913 boosted in the recent week.

Source: <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2022/4/11/DOH-cases-April-4-to-10.html>



Average daily cases below 300

By **Gerard Naval** -April 12, 2022

THERE were 1,906 new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) cases from April 4 to 10 for a daily average of 272, according to the Department of Health.

In its latest bulletin, the DOH said the daily average was “lower by 29 percent than cases reported from March 28 to April 3.”

While the daily average has dropped down below 300, there were 428 more deaths during the past week.

The DOH also reported that there are currently 707 severe and critical cases in the country as of April 10.

Of the total severe and critical cases, the report showed that 542 of them are occupying ICU beds.

The number of occupied ICU beds account for the 18.4 percent of the 2,951 total nationwide.

There are 4,045 COVID-19 patients occupying COVID-19 beds. This is 16.4 percent of the 24,689 total COVID-19 beds allocated nationwide.



Gov't eyes to sustain recovery as pandemic response continues

By Lade Jean Kabagani [April 11, 2022, 6:35 pm](#)



(Photo courtesy of NTF)

MANILA – The government aims to accelerate and sustain socio-economic recovery while management of Covid-19 risks continues.

On Monday, the National Task Force (NTF) Against Covid-19 Task Group on Strategic Communications held a virtual town hall meeting, dubbed “Road to Recovery”, to discuss the country’s fifth phase of the National Action Plan (NAP 5).

“It’s really about making sure that they have access to risk-informed health protocols, they have access to accurate and affordable testing, the treatment and the vaccine, as well as timely and accurate information,” said National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Undersecretary Rosemarie Edillon.

Edillon said there’s a need to build the capacities of institutions to monitor and provide health information, especially the local health units.

Under NAP 5, the government will ensure the continuity of businesses and services by adopting risk-informed guidelines, harmonizing and streamlining travel protocols, and institutionalizing safe work and public spaces.

To address the scarring due to Covid-19, the government would conduct a needs assessment, identify a catch-up plan, and mobilize resources.

Edillon said digital transformation is one of the keys to make the Philippines more resilient against the pandemic, which includes increasing digital infrastructure, improving digital literacy, and digitalization of the government processes.

“Let’s build resilience against future health threats,” she said.

Moreover, the government is eyeing to craft a “pandemic response playbook.”

It is also pushing for a pandemic flexibility bill and health security strategy as midterm to long-term solutions against the global health crisis.

“It will be by way of legislation so that when it happens next time -- hopefully not, knock on wood -- that we can respond in a timely manner,” Edillon said.



NTF chief Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. earlier said the government has started crafting the National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for Covid-19 Vaccines (NDVP) to improve vaccination policies and strategies.

The NDVP 2 covers key components of the vaccination program such as the planning, deployment, administration, and monitoring.

“I believe that the NDVP 2 is a labor of love, as it is a product of all our experiences in implementing the national vaccination program,” Galvez said.

Galvez said the government targets to provide guidelines on the pandemic response for the next administration to ensure the gains will be sustained up until the new government is seated.

“By doing so, we can ensure that the gains we have achieved over the past year in protecting our fellow Filipinos from the deadly virus through our vaccination program can be sustained and will continue to be implemented by the next administration,” he added.

The NDVP 2 will contain regulatory preparedness; planning and coordination; costing and funding, identification of targets population; vaccine delivery strategies; supply chain management and waste management; human resource management and training; acceptance and uptake; vaccine safety and quality monitoring; management of adverse event following immunization and injecting safety; vaccination monitoring system; and vaccine effectiveness. **(PNA)**



Duterte not keen on ditching face mask until his term ends

By Lade Jean Kabagani April 12, 2022, 1:07 am



(PNA file photo)

MANILA – While he urged Filipinos to continue adhering to minimum public health protocols, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte said he is not keen on ditching the requirement of wearing face masks until his term ends.

“I just state my cases, there’s no way that mask will not be required. It will be part of the protocol for a long time until my last day in the office. *Iyan ang order ko at iyan ang sundin niyo* (That’s my order, you should follow it),” Duterte said in his prerecorded Talk to the People aired Monday night.

Duterte cited the need to continue wearing face masks accompanied by regular hand washing and strict physical distancing.

“We are not out of the woods actually, we are still in a bind,” he said.

Despite a decline in the number of new coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) cases and hospitalizations in the country, Duterte reiterated the need for the unvaccinated to avail of jabs “to protect the body.”

Duterte cited the need to wear face masks as it reduces the chance of spreading the disease amid the election-related and religious activities that entail the crowding of people.

“We have so many crowds lately – religious and political (And you can see people are very close to each other),” Duterte said, adding that health authorities have cautioned about the possible worse impact of these physical mass gatherings.

In her report to Duterte, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said other countries experienced Covid-19 surge after lifting mandated wearing of face masks. **(PNA)**

12 APRIL 2022, TUESDAY



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