

05 JULY 2022, TUESDAY



# NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



# DENR-NVizcaya taps Army in reforestation project

By [Leander C. Domingo](#) July 5, 2022

**BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya:** The Provincial Environment and Natural Resources (PENR) office here has tapped the military for the development of at least eight municipalities that have been deforested resulting in illegal activities in recent years. To do this, the PENR has collaborated with the Philippine Army's (PA) 203rd Community Defense Center (CDC) through a memorandum of a partnership agreement (MoPA) for the development of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Ecological Park and Training Center in Aritao town. PENR officer Giovannie Magat and CDC director Bernard Ragus signed the MoPA to enrich the existing plantations and regreen denuded lands and other areas within the eight municipalities covered by the PENR sub-office. Magat has expressed support for the greening endeavors of the PA and also appealed to the public to support the uniformed personnel in forest development and protection. "The DENR is always ready to extend technical assistance in this endeavor and provide quality planting materials to ensure high survival of the plantations," he said. For his part, Col. Bernard Ragus, 203rd CDC personnel head, has assured their commitment to the environment programs through bayanihan (community spirit). Army reservist Flodemonte Gerdan, also a former Nueva Vizcaya board member, expressed his hopes that illegal activities within the forest plantations will stop through the PENR and PA partnership.





## DENR 11: No notice given to firm to resume mining



Contributed photo

RALPH LAWRENCE G. LLEMIT

July 04, 2022

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Davao Region (DENR-Davao) clarified it has not given a "notice to proceed operation" to the mining company responsible for the siltation and discoloration incident of Mapagba River and the coastal areas in Banaybanay, Davao Oriental early this year.

DENR-Davao Director Bagani Evasco said in a press conference that the cease and desist order (CDO) and notice of violation issued to Arc Nickel Resources Inc. (Anri) on January 14 is still in effect.

Evasco said based on their initial assessment, the potential source of siltation and discoloration along the Mapagba River was attributed to active mining activity of Anri.

He said rehabilitation process among the rivers is still ongoing.

"After that rehabilitation, siguro (probably) more or less two to three months, they will start operating again," the DENR official said.

Due to the recent heavy rain pours experienced in Davao Region over the past few days, the color orange water of the river remains due to natural and non-chemical processes.

"Clear na po 'yung tubig, but siyempre, 'pag umuulan... makikita mo pa rin na mag-o-orange pa rin. (The water is already clear, but of course, when it is raining, you can still the water turning into color orange). It's still a natural, it's not a chemical process," Evasco said.

The official said they are still waiting for the decision of the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) central office on the lifting of the CDO.

In a previous report, EMB-Davao Director Engr. Mario Bulacan said based on the existing Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC), Anri has three violations "Specifically ECC condition 1, condition number 4, and ECC condition number 18 administratively it has a corresponding administrative penalty of P50,000."



Bulacan said the mining company is also facing possible sanctions under Republic Act 9275, or the Clean Water Act.

He said the notice of violation is partial as it is still based on violations of the ECC and depending on the laboratory result from the water samples they can issue a notice of violation based on the Clean Water Act. **RGL**



## DENR recognizes employees' service, dedication

July 4, 2022 3 min read

By Rjhay E. Laurea

MANILA — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) recently conducted “HR@ Ur Service” to recognize employees’ service and dedication.

DENR Officer-in-charge Secretary Joselin Marcus E. Fragada led the recognition of the employees for their continuing commitment and dedication to public service amid the challenging times.

“We have issued individual certificates to recognize that no matter how low your job is as a janitor, as a clerk, we always recognize the hard work that people do for the agency. Kaya maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat!” Fragada told DENR workers during the “HR@ Ur Service” closing ceremony.

Certificates of recognition were awarded to 86 employees from the DENR Central Office.

“I would also like to recognize our employees from the Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service, Human Resource Development Service (HRDS), and the Administrative Service. I think this is the only time that we can recognize you for the efforts and services that you do for the department, for the constituents, and for other people. Maraming salamat po sa tulong at pagsisilbi ninyo [Thank you very much for your help and service],” he said.

Fragada also thanked the DENR partner-agencies for participating in the weeklong HR@ Ur Service event.

DENR Assistant Secretary for Human Resources, Strategic Communication and Sectoral Initiatives Hiro V. Masuda said that this year’s event highlighted the Duterte administration’s whole-of-society framework of “leaving no one behind,” especially during the pandemic.

“All tasks, big or small, are vital to the accomplishment of a goal. Whether white collar or blue-collar jobs, their efforts should not be left on the sidelines. We want to make sure that they are given appropriate recognition as a gratitude for the sacrifices they made,” Masuda pointed out.

During its five-day run, the HR @ Ur Service benefited 5,884 client-participants: 576 clients for PhilSys; 730 for Pag-IBIG Fund; 80 for Professional Regulation Commission; 534 for Social Security System; 670 clients for the Philippine Statistics Authority; 46 for Land Transportation Office; and 297 for National Bureau of Investigation.



During the event, the DENR-National Capital Region distributed seedlings to 737 employees, while the DENR Forestry Savings and Loan Association Inc. served 26 clients.

Merchants that took part in the event were SunLife (127 clients); Manulife (110 clients); FWD Insurance (111 clients); ActiveAsia (1,325 clients); PruLife (79 clients); Bank of the Philippine Islands (38 clients); St. Peter Memorial Plans, Inc. (12 clients); S&R Membership Shopping (16 clients); Landers (76 clients); DermFactor (125 clients); and OJO Eyewear (169 clients).  
(ai/mtvn)

Source: <https://maharlika.tv/2022/07/04/denr-recognizes-employees-service-dedication/?fbclid=IwAR2QTwIYMBgabN92xYWQpf9ePTD9yNCRsBsfnsZyw4hgSFIME6Yk7ec3xEs>





## DENR Employees Compete in Patintero

Monday, July 4, 2022 [Journal Online](#)



**Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)** employees enjoy a game of patintero during its Palarong Pinoy, a week-long activity featuring traditional Filipino games to reinforce team spirit, boost mental health, and bring back fond memories of childhood. Held from June 13-17, the employees participated in games such as bato-bato pick, bunong braso, hampas-palayok, kadang-kadang, sungka, tumbang preso, and luksong lubid. Palarong Pinoy was organized by the [DENR](#) Human Resource Development Service, Kalipunan ng mga Kawani sa Kagawaran ng Kalikasan, and [DENR Employees](#) Union.



## Mines bureau, planetGOLD plan mercury-free processing center

July 4, 2022 | 8:44 pm



[WWW.PLANETGOLD.ORG](http://WWW.PLANETGOLD.ORG)

THE Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) and planetGOLD Philippines said they are collaborating to establish a Mercury Free Processing System (MFPS) in Paracale, Camarines Norte, targeted for use by small-scale miners.

Intended users are small-scale miners (SSMs) prospecting for gold in a 26.5-hectare Minahang Bayan site in Sitio Maning in the Paracale barangay of Casalugan.

“This is in response to the various requirements for the construction and installation of the MFPS facility such as the building permit, and one of the requirements for the building permit is the conduct of community consultation,” the MGB said in a statement.

MGB and planetGOLD, which focuses on artisanal miners, said they organized a presentation to members of the community on the harmful effects of mercury used in processing ore, and on the details of the proposed facility, including safety protocols on the use of chemicals and tailings management.

“This facility is an alternative to the traditional amalgamation process employed by the artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) sector in the province. Through this facility, planetGOLD Philippines hopes to reduce the devastating effects of traditional ASGM practices which destroy the environment and introduce adverse health impacts,” it added.

“In Paracale, mercury has been used for decades as an inexpensive and easy way to collect gold despite its harmful effects, not only to the miners but also to their communities, and environment,” the MGB said. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson**

Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2022/07/04/459254/mines-bureau-planetgold-plan-mercury-free-processing-center/>





# Marcos wala pang napipiling kalihim sa DOE, DENR, DOST at DOH

By [Malou Escudero](#)(Pang-Masa) - July 5, 2022 - 12:00am



President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. leads the oath-taking of officials that would form his Cabinet on June 30, 2022. [Philstar.com screengrab](#)

MANILA, Philippines — Walang itinakdang deadline si Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr. para makumpleto ang mga miyembro ng kanyang Gabinete.

Ito ang sinabi ni Press Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angeles at kabilang sa mga wala pang napipiling kalihim ay ang Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Health (DOH) at Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

“Wala po siyang binibigay sa amin na sinasabi nilang deadline. Ang sinasabi is, masuri talaga ang pag-evaluate nila dito sa mga kandidato para sa mga posisyon,” ani Angeles.

Pero, sinabi rin ni Angeles na sa pagkakaalam niya ay nasa final evaluation stage na ang pagpili at hindi na matatagalan at ihahayag kung sino pa ang magiging miyembro ng Gabinete.

Itinanggi ni Angeles na nahihirapan si Marcos kung sino ang itatalaga sa DOH dahil kabilang sa mga ikinokonsidera ay sina Secretary Francisco Duque III at dating Health Secretary Janette Garin.

Idinagdag ni Angeles na wala siyang impormasyon kung mayroon nang inalok para pamunuan ang health department.



# 'New Water' Project ng Maynilad, inilunsad sa Parañaque

Published on: July 04, 2022

By Alehia Therese Abuan



LUNGSOD QUEZON (PIA)—Inilunsad noong Martes, Hunyo 28, 2022 ang proyektong “New Water” sa lungsod ng Parañaque City.

Ang “New Water” ay proyekto ng Maynilad kung saan nakakagawa ng potable water mula sa mga “gamit” na tubig galing sa mga households sa pamamagitan ng mahigpit na treatment process at bagong teknolohiya mula sa Israel upang maging drinkable water ito.

Ayon kay and Maynilad Water Services Inc. (MWSI) President and CEO Romancito S. Fernandez, mahaba ang pinagdaanang paglalakbay ng Maynilad nila naisagawa ang proyekto.

“Nag research, nag test, nag further test, nag validation, nag benchmarking at eventually pumili kami ng teknolohiya,” ani Fernandez.

Ang pilot testing ay gagawin sa Baranagay San Isidro at San Dionisio, sa Lungsod Parañaque.

Samantala, nabanggit naman ni Dr. Wency Blas, Head ng Environmental and Occupational Health Cluster ng Department of Health -Metro Manila Center for Health Development (DOH-MMCHD) na dumaan sa mga naka set na parameters na naayon sa Philippine National Standard for Drinking water of 2017 ang “New Water” ng Maynilad.

Ayon kay Blas, nakikiisa ang DOH-MMCHD sa isinagawang Water Taste Test ng Maynilad upang ipakita na ligtas ang tubig na ipapamahagi sa dalawang Barangay ng Parañaque City.

Naniniwala ang Maynilad na sa pamamagitan ng kanilang proyekto na “New Water”, matutugunan nito ang tumataas na pagkonsumo sa tubig ng mga tao sa komunidad.

Dinaluhan din ang paglulunsad ng iba’t ibang government agencies tulad ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na pinangungunahan ni Atty. Juan Miguel T. Cuna- Undersecretary for Field Operations-Luzon, Visayas, and Environment, Atty. Patrick Lester N. Ty- Chief Regulator, kasama si Engr. Leonor C. Cleofas ng Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), Dr. Seville D. David Jr.-Executive Director ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB), Parañaque City Mayor-elect Hon. Eric L. Olivarez at Chief Operating Officer-Randolph T. Estrellado. (DOH MMCHD/PIA-NCR)

Source: <https://pia.gov.ph/news/2022/07/04/new-water-project-ng-maynilad-inilunsad-sa-paranaque>



# Preventing Benguet forest fires, promoting watershed resilience through DOST-PCAARRD's greenbelt project

Published July 4, 2022, 8:59 AM

by [Dhel Nazario](#)

The Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST-PCAARRD) is currently a project that protects watersheds against forest fires through the establishment of greenbelt with the use of the plant Maguey.



Forest fire along Ambuklao Rd., Ambuklao, Bokod, Benguet (Photo courtesy of DENR)

According to DOST-PCAARRD, establishment, implementation, and management of effective forest firebreaks, such as greenbelts, is necessary to preserve existing forest vegetation while protecting people and the environment.

This is also due to El Niño which as a result of climate change, worsens the high risk of forest fire occurrences and its inevitable environmental consequences which has endangered the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), the watershed cradle of northern Luzon.

“The native pine forests in the region are fire-prone due to the frequent fires recorded in the past. Uncontrolled fires result in enormous flames for weeks due to the rough hilly terrain and lack of applicable equipment and skilled personnel,” the agency said.

DOST-PCAARRD's project, “S&T Action Frontline for Emergencies and Hazards (SAFE) for Forest Fire in the Watershed in Bokod and Tublay, Benguet Province using Maguey as Greenbelt,” is being implemented by the DENR – Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (DENR-ERDB) for three years.

The Benguet Pine Seed Production Areas (SPAs) are targets for forest fire protection since they serve as seed sources for the production of quality planting materials for reforestation and to support the National Greening Program (NGP) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The SPAs can be protected through the establishment of Maguey (*Agave cantala*) as greenbelts.

In its second year of implementation, the Technology Transfer and Promotion Division (TTPD) of the DOST-PCAARRD recently conducted an annual review and site visits in Tublay and Bokod, Benguet Province, as part of the monitoring and evaluation activity to assess the project accomplishments vis-à-vis objectives and deliverables, discuss issues/concerns, and recommend possible actions/solutions for the project.





During the annual review, Project Leader, For. Rhandy S. Tubal presented the Year 1 accomplishments.

“The project is on track with its workplan: It had established maguey nurseries producing 11,264 suckers/bulbils; Two Seed Production Areas had been protected from forest fires through planting of Maguey in 2.56-kilometer greenbelts in Bokod and Tublay, Benguet; Trained 14 local government officials and 58 farmers on climate change adaptation and greenbelt establishment; Information, education, and communication (IEC) materials such as manual, poster, and flyer on greenbelt establishment have been prepared for printing and copyright application,” DOST-PCAARRD said.

“The local government units of Bokod and Tublay showed their utmost support to the project. Thus, the project team hopes to provide livelihood to the barangay constituents in the succeeding years through maguey fiber craft production. Handicraft products made from maguey leaves can be used as packaging materials for their farm harvests,” it added.



# Malaking buwaya, nakita at gumagala raw sa ilog ng Guiguinto, Bulacan

Hulyo 4, 2022 8:21pm GMT+08:00



Nangangamba ngayon ang mga residente sa isang barangay sa Guiguinto, Bulacan-- lalo na ang mga nakatira sa lugar na binabaha-- dahil sa nakumpirmang buwaya sa kanilang ilog na tinatayang aabot sa anim na talampakan ang laki.

Sa nakaraang episode ng "Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho," sinabing naging usap-usapan sa Barangay Malis ang umano'y buwaya na nakikita sa ilog.

Ngunit dahil wala pang lumalabas na larawan o video ng naturang buwaya, naging tila maling impormasyon at kuwento-kuwento lang.

Kadalasan kasing nakikita ang mga buwaya sa mga dagat o ilog sa malalayong lalawigan tulad sa Palawan o Sulu. At imposibleng magkaroon nito sa mga ilog na malapit lang sa siyudad.

Ang residente na si Arman, nakita na raw ang buwaya sa ilog na mahaba umano ang nguso at malaki ang mata. Hinihinala niya na ang naturang buwaya ang kumain sa alaga niyang manok.

Iyon nga lang, wala rin naipakitang katibayan tulad ng larawan o video si Mang Arma.

Ang residente rin si aling Mildred, nakita rin daw ang ulo ng buwaya sa ilog ngunit hindi rin niya ito nakunan ng larawan.

Pero ang akalang kuwento-kuwento lang, napatunayan na totoo nang makunan ni John ng larawan ang buwaya noong nakaraang Lunes habang naglalakad siya sa gilid ng ilog.

Kuwento ni John, nakita niyang may biglang gumalaw mula sa ilog at nasundan ng paglipad ng ibon. Nang tingnan niya ang pinagmulan ng ingay, nakita niya ang ulo ng buwaya na nakalutang sa tubig at nakalubog ang katawan.

Kaagad niya rin itong kinunan ng larawan.

Nangangamba ang mga residente na baka ang mga tao na ang kainin ng buwaya kapag wala na itong hayop na makakain.



Dagdag na kaba sa kanila ang pagtaas ng tubig sa ilog at kung minsan ay pumapasok daw sa bahay ang baha.

Ang batang si Angelo, kamuntik na raw masakmal ng buwaya nang may kumagat sa hawak niyang styrofoam habang nasa tubig siya.

Ayon sa isang eksperto na nakakita sa larawan ng buwaya, isa itong saltwater crocodile at tinatayang nasa lima hanggang anim na talampakan ang haba.

Dahil sa panganib, humingi ng ng tulong ang mga residente sa mga awtoridad para mahuli ang buwaya.

Kaagad namang umaksyon ang Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management at Department of Environment Natural Resources para maglunsad ng search and recovery operation.

Mahuli kaya nila ang buwaya at saan kaya ito nanggaling? Panoorin ang video na ito ng "KMJS."-- **FRJ, GMA News**

Source: [https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/umg/837022/malaking-buwaya-nakita-at-gumagala-raw-sa-ilog-ng-guinguinto-bulacan/story/?utm\\_source=GMANews&utm\\_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1IQB9InwhJnGq\\_7Bi-LYGKJsE9nOjuCUqmcMziDaEAW5KGOwXU4xa4Bbk](https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/umg/837022/malaking-buwaya-nakita-at-gumagala-raw-sa-ilog-ng-guinguinto-bulacan/story/?utm_source=GMANews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1IQB9InwhJnGq_7Bi-LYGKJsE9nOjuCUqmcMziDaEAW5KGOwXU4xa4Bbk)





# Group asks PBBM to review merits of SMC's proposed Pasig River expressway project

BY LORENZ S. MARASIGAN JULY 5, 2022

Commuter group and transport advocacy network The Passenger Forum (TPF) is urging President Ferdinand “Bongbong” R. Marcos Jr. to review the merits of the proposed Pasig River Expressway (PAREX).

TPF Convener Primo Morillo said the project, a proposal of San Miguel Corp. (SMC), is “peppered with a lot of issues and controversies.”

“It is not commuter-friendly because it prioritizes private cars and contrary to the claims of [SMC President] Ramon Ang, the project’s technical details do not mention anything about a bus rapid transit system, bike lanes or any features for pedestrians. It is not environment-friendly as it will be detrimental to the rehabilitation of the Pasig River,” he said.

He added that the proposed 19.4-kilometer elevated expressway that will run along the Pasig River banks “endangers multiple heritage sites and historical buildings in Manila especially inside Intramuros,” noting that its “Environment Impact Assessment report has been suspected to be plagiarized.”

The supplemental toll agreement signed with the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) last September gives SMC a 30-year concession to build and operate PAREX.

In the past, Ang has already clarified that PAREX has an extensive feasibility study that took into account the environmental impact of the project. It also took into consideration the presence of historical sites along its alignment.

Morillo said that instead of the PAREX, TPF is suggesting that the government rehabilitate the Pasig River and maximize it for public transportation.

“The Pasig River traverses various densely-populated and busy areas of Metro Manila and it is an existing resource that we can maximize for public transportation especially now that we are in a transport crisis. We think that providing additional water buses and ensuring better passenger experience in the Pasig River Ferry Service will offer an alternative form of transportation for a lot of commuters,” Morillo explained.

TPF’s call for a review of the project came at the heels of Marcos’s veto of the bill that grants an eco-zone status for the location of the Bulacan Airport, another project of SMC.

“We know that what was vetoed is just the economic zone status of the airport city but we maintain that the San Miguel Aerocity is not necessary at this point. We should rehabilitate Naia [Ninoy Aquino International Airport] instead and then expand Clark airport. If we need another airport near Metro Manila, it is better to place it in a province south of NCR [National Capital Region] as Clark is already located north of Manila,” Morillo said.



# Plastic makers urge TC to revise position on imposition of safeguard duties on HDPE

BY ANDREA E. SAN JUAN JULY 4, 2022

The Philippine Plastics Industry Association Inc. (PPIA) is urging the Tariff Commission (TC) to reconsider its position on imposing safeguard duties on high-density polyethylene (HDPE) resin.

“We implore the Tariff Commission to reconsider their position and the DTI [Department of Trade and Industry] to not impose safeguard duties on HDPE resin,” said PPIA in a news statement issued on Monday.

In a report released on June 29, the TC recommended the application of the appropriate safeguard measure on importations of HDPE pellets and granules “to prevent the imminent occurrence of serious injury to the Philippine HDPE industry.”

The TC noted in the said report, “There is a direct causal relationship between increased imports of HDPE and the imminent threat of serious injury and significant overall impairment to the position of the domestic HDPE industry in the near future.”

JG Summit Olefins Corporation (JGSOC) is the country’s sole producer of HDPE pellets and granules. The leading petrochemical firm in the country claimed in its filing of the safeguard measures petition that the volume of HDPE and LLDPE—the key raw materials used in many consumer products—being imported into the country in recent years were in quantities that are substantial to cause serious injury to the local petrochemical industry.

TC’s investigation began in September 2021 upon the request of DTI, which reviewed documented applications from JGSOC, as well as imported data covering the petitioned products.

(Related Story: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/05/26/dti-seeks-probe-into-import-surge-of-petro-chemicals-hdpe-lldpe/>)

Meanwhile, PPIA, the representative of the local downstream plastic industry, decried TC’s decision, saying, “To extend protection to benefit a sole producer, at the expense of the downstream manufacturing industry dominated by micro, small and medium enterprises [MSMEs] and employing hundreds and thousands of Filipinos, increase the cost of packaging materials and plastic products and add to the increasing inflation amidst the current crisis faced by our country.”

PPIA pointed out that such a move will also result in “tariff distortion” where cheaper imported finished products will continue to proliferate the market.

The representative of the local downstream plastic industry also emphasized that the findings in the TC’s investigation report are not consistent with the facts presented during the hearings and submitted in the form of position papers.

Moreover, PPIA said, the increased imports during the period of investigation is attributed to the lack of domestic supply and operational shutdowns resulting from the expansion of JGSOC, and the increased demand for products that they do not produce.

According to a report released by the TC on Wednesday, from October 2019 to March 2020, JGSOC shut down its operations to give way to a complex-wide expansion. As a result, its production contracted by 18 percent in 2019.



“This substantially smaller domestic supply made available in the market led to an expansion of imports by 28 percent,” read the TC report.

For their part, the PPIA said that it is wrong to ascertain that the locally produced HDPE using its Unimodal technology will produce “like products” compared to bimodal production systems that make the material stronger.

PPIA added, for instance, “the construction industry experienced a significant growth during the period of investigation and while JG claims to have equivalent grades for PE100, their products have not qualified to meet the mandatory quality and performance tests, pursuant to the Philippine National Standards and Water Utility Companies who use them.”

PPI stressed that to grant safeguards for a period of three years to benefit a single entity for the “imminent occurrence of serious injury despite clear evidence of posting a healthy net income during the investigation period and embarking on expansion programs is not fair to the downstream industry who are expected to suffer from any decision favoring the request.” -30-





## Used clothing, 'bayong' best alternative to plastics — BAN Toxics

July 4, 2022 4 min read

By: Rjhay E. Laurea

MANILA — Creativity and innovation at its finest with the end point of saving the environment.

Friendly reminder: Don't throw away used, old and partly damaged clothes because it can be redesigned as reusable bags that you can use when you go shopping or buy some basic needs at a public market.

In celebration of International Plastic Bag Free Day, environmental group BAN Toxics hosted an event in which they encouraged Filipino customers and vendors to abandon single-use plastic bags in favor of reusable and eco-friendly alternatives.



The event was held in R. Calalay Frisco Market in Quezon City to raise awareness on the plastic crisis in the Philippines and promote eco-friendly bags.

Volunteer mothers and BT Patrollers attended the event and showcased different reusable and eco-friendly bags made of natural materials such as bamboo, rattan, pandan, coconut and palm leaves, cloth, textile, and katsa to encourage the public to switch to reusable alternatives.

The International Plastic Bag Free Day was designed to raise public awareness on plastic pollution and its effect on the ecosystem and biodiversity, especially to marine wildlife. It was established as a global initiative with the aim of banning single-use plastic bags globally and encouraging everyone to switch to environmentally friendly alternatives to promote environmental conservation.



The global plastic production surged from 2 million tons in the 1950s to more than 438 million tons in 2017, a trend that is expected to continue.

An alarming figure of 400 million tons of plastic wastes produced per year encouraged the creation of a new plastics treaty during the recent United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) to address the world's problem with plastic overproduction and overconsumption.



Held in Nairobi, Kenya, the resumed fifth UNEA session (UNEA 5.2) aims to address the global plastic crisis through the development of the new international legally binding treaty set in 2024.

Plastic pollution is one of the Philippines' greatest waste problems. In 2015, the country produced 2.7 million tons of plastic waste annually, ranking the country as the third largest plastic waste producer in the world. A 2018 study on waste management practices revealed that despite the Philippines' high garbage collection rates, the country still has problems with proper wastes disposal.

House Bill 9147 or the Single-Use Plastic Products Regulation Act was passed to address the Philippine plastic crisis. The bill seeks to regulate the production, importation, sale, distribution, provision, use, recovery, collection, recycling, and disposal of single-use plastic products.

BAN Toxics urged the Philippine government, particularly the newly elected president, to prioritize the plastic crisis. In his inauguration speech on June 30, 2022, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. stated that he intends to address the plastic problem in the Philippines during his term.

"While we welcome President Marcos Jr.'s acknowledgement of the plastic crisis faced by the country, BAN Toxics hopes to see a concrete action plan tackling the plastic pollution issue followed by its strict implementation and monitoring," says Mehei dela Torre, Plastics Campaigner of BAN Toxics.

In 2014, Quezon City issued City Ordinance No. 2350 which aimed to regulate the use of plastic bags and mandate all establishments to display the notice "Save the environment, bring your own recyclable/reusable bag."

The ordinance promoted the use of reusable bags by encouraging retailers to implement point system schemes and "green lanes" or express lanes for consumers with reusable bags. Establishments that violate the ordinance will be fined P1000 to P5000, or cancellation of business permit.

The said ordinance also established a plastic recovery system fee called "green fund" which shall be utilized for the sole purpose of maintaining, developing, promoting, and protecting the environment by means of programs and projects.



Quezon City also issued City Ordinance 2127 in 2012 which sought to prohibit the use of plastic bags and styro materials in all government establishments in Quezon City such as the Quezon City Hall compound, health centers, general hospitals, barangay halls, public schools, and other city-owned facilities. Merchants that violate the ordinance will be fined P500 to P2000, or cancellation of business permit for a third time re-offender.

“Let’s go back to the basics and make the switch to alternative reusable bags. It’s time for the Philippines to take stronger action to curb plastic use and consumption. We must act on the plastic crisis before it’s too late,” BAN Toxics added.

It also encouraged the public to join the “No to Single-Use Plastic Bag” campaign by posting on social media their own eco-friendly reusable bags while going to the market and encouraging fellow consumers to promote and protect the environment in their own little way. (ai/mtvn)





# EDITORIAL - Plastic pollution tumitinding problema

Pang-masa July 5, 2022 | 12:00am



MATINDI ang problema sa plastic pollution at pinansin na ito ni President Marcos Jr. nang magtalumpati siya sa kanyang inagurasyon noong Huwebes. Ayon sa kanya, ikatlo ang Pilipinas sa mga bansa sa buong mundo na plastic polluter. Nangako siya na sosolusyunan ang problema. Lilinisin umano niya ang kalat.

Mabuti at habang maaga, napagtuunan ni Marcos ang problema sa plastic pollution na nakaligtaan o napabayaang ng mga nagdaang presidente. Dahil sa kapabayaang, naging sikat ang Pilipinas sa pagiging plastic polluter.

Ayon sa pag-aaral na nalathala sa Science Advance Journal, ang Pasig River ay nakakapag-contribute ng mahigit 356,000 metriko tonelada ng plastic na basura sa karagatan bawat taon.

Problema ang plastic na basura hindi lamang sa Metro Manila kundi sa maraming lugar sa bansa. May mga ipinatupad na batas ukol sa pagbabawal sa paggamit ng plastic pero ningas kugon lamang. Sa simula lang ipinatutupad at pagtumagal, wala na.

Noong Pebrero 12, 2020, inaprubahan ng National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) ang isang resolusyon na nagbabawal sa single-use plastics sa lahat ng government offices. Inatasan ng NSWMC ang Department of Environment ang Natural Resources (DENR) na ipatupad ang kautusan. Subalit wala nang narinig ukol dito. Patuloy pa rin ang paggamit ng single-use plastics.

Ang mga single-use plastics na kinabibilangan ng sachets ng shampoo, hair conditioner, 3 in 1 coffee, catsup, toothpaste, straw at mga sando bags na karaniwang ginagamit sa palengke ang nakatambak sa mga estero at kanal at nagiging dahilan nang pagbaha.



Nagbabala ang coalition ng environmental groups na kung hindi gagawa ng paraan ang pamahalaan para mabawasan ang paggamit ng single use plastic, aapaw ang may 59.7 bilyong sachets sa Metro Manila.

Ngayong nangako si Marcos na lilinis ang mga plastic na basura, pakilusin na niya ang DENR at iba pang ahensiya para mapigilan ang paglubha ng plastic pollution. Hindi dapat ningas-kugon sa pagsolusyon sa problemang ito.



# Marcos will 'fully support' Bulacan ecozone bill after Congress remedies 'defects'

Published July 4, 2022, 1:10 PM

by [Argyll Cyrus Geducos](#)

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. will fully support the bill to create the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport once Congress fixes the “defects” in the proposed measure, Malacañang said.



Communications Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angeles (PTV/RTVM Screenshot)

Communications Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angeles made this statement after Senator Imee Marcos expressed disappointment about her brother’s [veto](#) and expressed concern about its possible chilling effect on local and foreign investors.

In her first press briefing, Angeles said they understood the disappointment of the Presidential Sister and the other legislators but reiterated the stand of the President on the issue.

“We understand the feelings of disappointment, but this is the stand of the President. Let’s fix this now, so we don’t wait for it to be challenged later on,” she said Monday, July 4.

“He does say he is fully supportive of this. In fact, it is his commitment to sharpen the law, so when this is indeed passed, then he can fully support it,” she added.

Angeles further explained that the law’s implementation would just face delays had President Marcos not vetoed the proposed bill.

“We have to make anticipations of possible constitutional challenges on this one. It will cause further delays if the law is challenged and invalidated,” she said.

“This is the best way to address the innate problems of the House Bill, and it gives an opportunity for the legislature to make these corrections,” she added.

On July 3, Angeles said Marcos’s decision to veto House Bill (HB) No. 7575 was the [“fastest way” to cure the bill’s defects](#) before it lapsed into law on July 4.

However, the Palace official said the construction of the international airport in Bulacan is not affected by the veto and will push through as the San Miguel franchise to operate the airport was approved by both the Senate and House in October 2020.

San Miguel Corporation, one of the country’s biggest conglomerates, is investing P740 billion to turn a 2,500-hectare property in Bulacan into an aerotropolis featuring a world-class gateway capable of handling 100 million passengers annually, plus an adjacent urban and industrial hub.





In his veto message, Marcos said, “fiscal prudence must be exercised particularly at times when resources are scarce, and needs are abundant.”

“I cannot support the bill considering the provisions that pose substantial fiscal risks to the country and its infringement on or conflict with other agencies’ mandates and authorities,” he wrote.

He added that since the system would be rendered incapable of generating a yield sufficient to sustain the country’s social and economic infrastructure, the Government would be forced to seek new sources of revenue through additional taxes or borrowings in the future.

“In the end, it is the taxpayers who will ultimately bear the brunt of the burden,” President Marcos said.

Angeles said the proposed measure lacks coherence with existing laws, rules, and regulations by failing to provide audit provisions for the Commission on Audit (COA), procedures for the expropriation of lands awarded to agrarian reform beneficiaries, and a master plan for the specific metes and bounds of the economic zone.

She added the bill did not provide procedures for expropriation of lands awarded to agrarian reform beneficiaries and granted “blanket powers” to the economic zone authority to handle technical airport operations, which would violate aeronautical laws.

She also pointed out that the proposed ecozone would be located near the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga province that borders Bulacan, which runs against government policy on creating special economic zones in strategic locations.



# Balisacan: Marcos Jr. veto on Bulacan ecozone meant ‘continuity’ of Duterte fiscal prudence

SOLICITED PPP PROJECTS TO BE PRIORITIZED

By: [Ben O. de Vera](#) - Reporter / [@bendeveraINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 08:08 PM July 04, 2022



FILE PHOTO Arsenio Balisacan. (Lito Tecson/Cebu Daily News)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s first-ever veto of a bill giving away tax breaks to a special economic zone next to the soon-to-rise Bulacan airport reflected “continuity” of the previous administration’s fiscal prudence, the country’s chief economist said Monday.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan also disclosed the Marcos Jr. administration’s preference for solicited public-private projects (PPP) as it hopes to tap private firms awash in cash to bankroll big-ticket infrastructure.

“We need so much resources to build our educational system, our health system, our infrastructure, our training for workers so that we can address mismatch in the labor market — where do you get that, if you’re giving away those potential revenues to entities that are saying ‘that’s not our main concern but if you give it to us that’s OK because it will improve our profitability,’” said Balisacan, who heads the state planning agency National Economic and Development Authority (Neda).

Balisacan said that during his first stint as Neda chief during the Benigno S. Aquino III administration, he found out that the grant of tax and other incentives was not among the top reasons why foreign investors preferred, or not, to set up shop in the Philippines.

The ease of doing business and paying taxes, the then-high corporate tax rates, high power costs, logistics bottlenecks, the lack of infrastructure, and corruption had been deterring the entry of more foreign investors in the country, Balisacan said.

In his speech during the turnover ceremonies with his predecessor Karl Kendrick Chua, Balisacan said: “We recognize the importance of keeping the business community informed to make optimal investment decisions. It is a fact that uncertainty raises the cost of doing business. Hence, we aim to keep stakeholders well informed of proposed changes to the rules that govern them. Such engagement would entail constant coordination and consultation with the affected parties to ensure that the proposed changes genuinely address their concerns.”



For Balisacan, Marcos Jr.'s veto did not result in uncertainty due to flip-flopping policy, which businesses and investors do not like.

“We already sent the signals that we want a more transparent incentives system when we passed the CREATE Law and the Fiscal Incentives Review Board (FIRB) that comes with that law,” Balisacan said, referring to the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (CREATE) Act. The FIRB “says that all incentives have to pass through filters; that they are sustainable, cost-efficient, [and] that they achieve their intended purpose.”

The CREATE Law signed by former President Rodrigo Duterte last year empowered the President, upon the FIRB’s recommendation, to give away hefty tax breaks to entice elephant-sized investments. CREATE also rationalized the previously wide array of fiscal perks being offered by investment promotion agencies (IPAs), which costs the government billions of pesos in foregone revenues.

“By saying that we vetoed this because it does not seem consistent with the direction that has already been set, that’s continuity; that’s not uncertainty,” Balisacan said. “I think you create more uncertainty if you have passed that law, you’re implementing it, and then you’re doing something else to undermine it; that is what the business community are so concerned about.”

Balisacan said Marcos Jr. wants to engage the private sector, especially in infrastructure development, given the government’s tighter fiscal space wrought by repayments for ballooning debts incurred amid the prolonged fight against COVID-19.

“If we can save fiscal resources from infrastructure projects that can otherwise be funded, provided by the private sector, then you can achieve your objectives of funding social requirements and infrastructure, at the same time funding those other high-priority, particularly infrastructure projects,” he said.

For Balisacan, “we need to continue the infrastructure program because we do note that we’re so lagging behind our neighbors, but we have to be open-minded about where to source funding for these projects, and we need to look at all the possible sources... [and] which of those sources are the most efficient insofar as the cost of capital is concerned.”

He noted that Marcos Jr. during his inauguration speech signaled continuing infrastructure projects that were already being implemented. “Of course, we’ll have to expand the pipeline, too, to make sure that the private sector can also see a much-bigger menu.”

The Neda chief said the current administration will review the previous administration’s pipeline of infrastructure flagship projects under the ambitious “Build, Build, Build” program to “enhance” it.

For PPPs, Balisacan said “we are looking at that approach where ideally [private-sector proponents] will find [prospective projects] in the solicited mode.”

“We want to ensure that all these projects of the government are consistent with the roadmaps,” he said, noting that “the President mentioned about coming out with a comprehensive infrastructure roadmap.”

But Balisacan said shunning unsolicited PPP projects, like the Bulacan airport to be built by tycoon Ramon S. Ang, remains to be seen. “It has not become a policy yet; the Neda Board would have to make a decision on that, but we have already discussed that, we have already mentioned to the President that moving forward, we will go for more solicited projects.”





In his speech, Balisacan said that Neda under his watch “will ensure that comments on the revised IRR [implementing rules and regulations] of the amended BOT [Build-Operate-Transfer] Law for PPPs are heard and carefully considered.”

Business groups have been jittery about the revised BOT Law IRR approved by former president Duterte’s economic managers, which not only shielded the government from arbitration, but also provided supposedly “anti-market” definitions of contingent liabilities arising from PPP projects.

Contingent liabilities included material adverse government action (Maga) clauses, force majeure, breach of government warranties, as well as failure to deliver contractual obligations, according to the amended IRR.

Chua had said the amended guidelines of the BOT Law will supposedly protect Filipinos from contingent liabilities wrought by big-ticket infrastructure projects jointly undertaken by the government and the private sector.

The Cabinet-level Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) had projected the contingent liabilities stock or the aggregate amount wrought by PPP projects to have risen to P456.2 billion in 2021 from the estimated P311.8 billion in 2020. It was on top of the P60.4-billion “flow” of contingent liabilities or the amount which “may materialize within a specific interval of time taking into consideration a project’s risk factors” among 18 national PPP contracts signed between 2008 and 2020.

Last year, the interagency Investment Coordination Committee (ICC) ordered agencies and local governments implementing massive PPP projects to ensure private proponents’ financial capacity by setting minimum equity requirements.

The previous Duterte administration had shunned PPPs, especially unsolicited projects, as it did not want disadvantageous provisions like government guarantees, subsidies, and Maga clauses. But the pipeline of big-ticket infrastructure projects included in “Build, Build, Build” that it left behind had 20 unsolicited PPP projects worth P1.5 trillion, which will be financed by tycoons’ deep pockets.

As for the Marcos Jr. administration, Balisacan said “we see much potential in the private sector’s role in upgrading the country’s infrastructure, raising productivity in agriculture and manufacturing, integrating businesses and workforce into global value chains, and preparing systems and institutions for climate change and automation disruptions.”



# Lapid files measure seeking climate-resilient PH agri, four others as priority bills

Published July 4, 2022, 11:15 AM

by [Hannah Torregoza](#)

Senator Manuel “Lito” Lapid is seeking to enhance the resiliency and adaptability of Filipino farmers to climate change and equipping them for climate-sensitive decision-making and providing access to localized weather and climate information.

The proposed law, to be known as “Climate-Resilient Agriculture Act” is among the first five measures that Lapid has filed on Monday, July 4 as part of his priority bills in the Senate for the 19th Congress. All five measures have yet to be numbered.

“Year in and year out, our agriculture sector suffers billions of pesos in damages due to typhoon, landslides, and floods...This is why the government must exert all efforts to make our agricultural industry more resilient and adaptive to climate change,” Lapid said in the explanatory note of the bill.

“Our Department of Agriculture (DA) must continuously look into innovative ideas and technologies, as well as the best practices, and determine which should be implemented to help our local farmers withstand the challenges brought about by climate change and weather disturbances,” he further said.

He said the proposed law aims to contribute to this goal of building a climate-resilient Philippine agriculture sector and one of the interventions it seeks is to institutionalize the creation and promotion of crop climate calendars for local farmers.

A crop climate calendar, he said, is defined as a “visual tool that presents the phenology and cultivation practices of a crop against the timeline of the cropping season, containing information on the weather, and climate states that occur in the locality and the risks faced by the crop per growing stage...”

Under the bill, the DA shall institutionalize the use of crop climate calendars throughout the Philippines in coordination with municipal and provincial agriculturists.

The said crop climate calendars shall be distributed free-of-charge to all farmers and farmers’ organizations as well as be made available online, including in social media, and similar sites accessible to farmers on demand.

The bill, Lapid said, also mandates the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) to provide regular and up-to-date localized weather and climate information, in clear and understandable and simple English, Filipino and other regional language or dialect.

Aside from this bill, Lapid has also filed a bill seeking to enhance patient’s rights to know his medical expenses, a bill providing for the social pension of indigent persons with disability, a bill exempting qualified indigent Filipinos from payment of professional examination fees, and the bill seeking to establish an inter-agency government task force for the protection and assistance of tourists.

The 19th Congress will formally open session on July 25, 2022.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2022/07/04/lapid-files-measure-seeking-climate-resilient-ph-agri-four-others-as-priority-bills/>



# Quarrying, health sectors top contributors to 2021 NorMin GRDP

By Nef Luczon July 4, 2022, 6:36 pm



**CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY** – The National Economic Development Authority in Region 10 (NEDA-10) has identified quarrying and human health industries as the top-performing sectors in 2021.

During Monday's socioeconomic status briefing, NEDA-10 Director Mylah Faye Aurora Cariño said the two industries contributed 4.7 percent to the 2021 Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP).

"Quarrying industry in the region saw a continuous operation despite the pandemic because of the 'Build, Build, Build' program of the Duterte administration," Cariño said.

In the human health and social work sectors, the region recorded 149 public health workers who have regular jobs.

"If we include workers under job orders (contracts), it can reach thousands," said Kathleen Emillie Navarra, NEDA-10 communications officer.

Meanwhile, Northern Mindanao's 4.7 percent GRDP in 2021 ranked seventh in the country's regional economies.

The region's GRDP per capita also increased to 5.1 percent in 2021, or PHP172,022 compared to PHP163,728 in 2020.

Cariño said there is a possibility for the regional economy to continue recovering if Northern Mindanao's coronavirus disease 2019 alert status remains at Level 1. **(PNA)**



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21h · 🌐

Pinatitigil pansamantala ni Albay Governor Noel Rosal ang operation ng quarrying sa lalawigan. Ito ay upang tiyakin na maayos na nasusunod ang mga sistema sa pag-quarry at makapagsumite ang mga operator ng mga kinakailangang dokumento upang mabigyan ng permit to quarry.

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# Youth street protesters turn sights on climate 'villains'

Frustrated by slow action on climate threats, youth activists are trying more targeted confrontations with bankers and politicians.



A photo from the Climate Strike and march in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Image: [Mark Dixon](#), [CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via [Flickr](#).

[Thomson Reuters Foundation](#) July 4, 2022

Before the Covid-19 pandemic hit, more than 6 million people flooded into the streets in 2019 as part of mass Fridays for Future protests, aiming to force governments and companies to act more swiftly to slash emissions and curb climate change.

But while the protests boosted public awareness of climate threats, the response from institutions was largely reports, letters and “creative accounting”, said German activist Luisa Neubauer, who with Sweden’s Greta Thunberg helped organise the strikes.

“They’re trying to blind us with the nice words and promises, and prevent us from looking into the details and (calling) them out,” the 26-year-old told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Now, with mass climate protests dampened by years of Covid-19 restrictions, youth activists have been exploring new ways to hold institutions to account and accelerate action to avoid the worst impacts of a hotter planet.

That includes targeting protests more selectively at leaders of major institutions - from governments to banks - who hold the power to shift both the policies and money behind climate-wrecking emissions.

As fossil fuel emissions continue to rise, despite pledges of cuts, “we need to apply everything we have,” Neubauer said. “We, as a movement, should be everywhere.”

Dana Fisher, a sociologist who studies climate activism at the University of Maryland, said the shift marks a key evolution in climate activism.

**We want to shatter all of these theatres they create and reveal their lies. Our power now lies in being unpredictable and everywhere.**

Wiktorja J droszkowiak, activist, Fridays For Future International

“Fridays for Future certainly did bring out young people in ways that we hadn’t seen before - for a very small moment in time,” she said.

“What we’ve seen is that a lot of climate activists have become really frustrated with the lack of progress,” she added, with many now thinking targeted confrontation and disruption are “the only way forward”.

Neubauer said her work has also shifted to trying to call out “greenwashing” by banks and other companies keen to portray themselves as acting on climate threats while making little real change.

This week she [met with Deutsche Bank](#) in Frankfurt, working with Ugandan youth activists to pressure the bank to abandon financing for a proposed new oil pipeline in East Africa, and other fossil fuel expansion.

“They invest in fossil fuels and try to show the public that they are doing something else,” said Ugandan activist Evelyn Acham, who insisted Deutsche Bank officially distance itself from the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP).

Acham said it is too dangerous to openly protest in the street in Uganda, but her ‘Rise Up Movement’ is finding other ways to pressure banks, such as by organising meetings with bank officials and sending them the latest U.N. climate change reports.

“I’m so scared of the future,” she said in a telephone interview. “That’s why I speak up and I just can’t go back and stay comfortable when people are dying.”

#### *Climate ‘villains’*

Many young activists are now directly targeting climate polluters and their enablers in politics, finance and the media, said Oscar Berglund, a lecturer at the University of Bristol who researches climate protest movements.

“There’s a more specific focus on the climate ‘villains,’” he said, adding that many current protesters were politicised by the Fridays for Future movement.

One of the movements making headlines in Britain is Green New Deal Rising. Since launching last August, its volunteers have sought - and filmed - confrontations with key politicians such as British finance minister Rishi Sunak.

The activists - primarily in their early 20s - recently disrupted an oil and gas industry event in Parliament with loud speeches accusing the companies of driving both the climate crisis and higher energy costs.

“We feel that, too often, decision makers go unchallenged,” said Hannah Martin, co-executive director of Green New Deal UK, which organises the movement.

Activists hope to build a multi-party coalition of political support for more radical and swift climate action.

Popularised in the United States by politicians such as U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, “green new deal” proposals aim to address climate change alongside social justice problems such as inequality and racial discrimination.

Martin says younger climate activists “understand the interconnectedness of these issues,” which is why they campaign on a variety of political causes, including attacking the British government’s policy to send asylum seekers to Rwanda.

The group has surprised UK parliamentarians at public events and inundated them with persistent questions, something Martin calls an accessible way for grassroots activists to get politicians “on the record” about their green views and actions.

“At the end of the day, they’re our representatives and they should be held accountable,” she said.

### *Ukraine war links*

Some young climate activists have also found ways to link their fight to hot-button issues.

In Poland, the war in neighbouring Ukraine persuaded climate justice activist Wiktorja J droszkowiak to drop out of university and travel across Europe to confront politicians on fossil fuel financing.

When her phone buzzed at 5 a.m. with a call from a friend saying the Russians had invaded Ukraine, her first reaction was to rush to a Polish train station to help arriving refugees.

“But after a moment we realised, ‘Wait, this is not our job,’” the 20-year-old said. “I mean, like, we’re climate justice activists. We know what this war is about.”

For J droszkowiak and fellow campaigners, merging action on the Russian invasion and climate change is a natural fit.

Staunching the flow of Russian fossil fuels could help dry up funding for the invasion while curbing climate change and potentially stoking renewables investment, they say.

In May, at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, the Eastern European activists cornered French President Emmanuel Macron, calling him out for not forcing French oil and gas company TotalEnergies to retreat from Russia.

Another recent confrontation posted online showed J droszkowiak being accosted by security at the Austria World Summit after repeatedly asking Frans Timmermans, who leads the European Commission’s Green Deal work, about the EU’s policy on green investments.

J droszkowiak said politicians seem anxious to avoid youth activists, highlighting this week’s G7 leaders summit in a closed-off castle in Germany’s Bavarian Alps.

But confronting politicians face-to-face and interrupting speeches are an important way to break through to them and to wider audiences, she said.

“We want to shatter all of these theatres they create and reveal their lies,” she said, in a social media message. “Our power now lies in being unpredictable and everywhere.”

*This story was published with permission from [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#), the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters, that covers humanitarian news, climate change, resilience, women’s rights, trafficking and property rights. Visit <http://news.trust.org/climate>.*



# ECB unveils plan on pro-climate investments

By [Agence France-Presse](#) July 5, 2022

**FRANKFURT, Germany:** The European Central Bank (ECB) on Monday unveiled plans to integrate climate change into its monetary policy in a bid to encourage eurozone businesses to pay more attention to their environmental impact.

The steps by the ECB's governing council "aim to better take into account climate-related financial risk" and "support the green transition of the economy in line with the EU's (European Union) climate-neutrality objectives," the central bank said in a statement.

Under the new plans, the ECB said it would aim to "gradually decarbonize corporate bond holdings" from October 2022, shifting them toward issuers with better climate performance.

This will be measured through indicators such as lower greenhouse gas emissions, more ambitious carbon reduction targets and better climate-related disclosures, it added.

The ECB's portfolio of asset purchases worth about 350 billion euros (\$365 billion) is currently heavily weighted toward big polluters.

The central bank said it would aim to "tilt these holdings toward issuers with better climate performance" as it reinvests about 30 billion euros a year.

The aim is to "give companies more incentives to reduce their emissions," Isabel Schnabel, a member of the ECB's executive board, told a press briefing.

However, "no company will be entirely excluded from the portfolio," she added.

By the end of 2024, there will also be limits on the share of assets issued by entities with a high carbon footprint that can be pledged as collateral by individual counterparties when borrowing from central banks.

At first, banks will apply such limits only to marketable debt instruments issued by companies outside the financial sector, the ECB said.

Assets will also have to comply with the Sustainability Reporting Directive (SRD).

However, the implementation of the SRD, which is set to apply to about 50,000 companies in the European Union, has been delayed, with eligibility criteria not kicking in until 2026.

The concept of "green" ECB loans to banks to finance sustainable projects, championed by President Christine Lagarde, remains absent from the catalogue of new measures.





# Climate activists stage protest at British Grand Prix

Agence France-Presse July 4, 2022 | 8:43am



This handout photo from Just Stop Oil shows activists on Silverstone circuit.  
Just Stop Oil

SILVERSTONE, United Kingdom — Climate activists invaded the circuit at Silverstone on Sunday shortly after the British Grand Prix was red-flagged following a multi-car crash at the start.

The same group, Just Stop Oil, were responsible for a stunt at a London art gallery last week, when two protesters glued themselves to the frame of a Vincent van Gogh painting.

And Louis McKechnie, one of those taking direct action on Sunday, tied himself to the goalpost during an Everton-Newcastle match last season.

Formula One's governing body the FIA said they had removed the group from the circuit with police announcing that "a number of arrests" had been made.

"We confirm that after the red flag, several people attempted to enter the track," an FIA statement reported. "These people were immediately removed and the matter is now being dealt with by the local authorities."

Both Northamptonshire Police and Silverstone had warned of potential disruption in the run-up to the race after intelligence received.

F1 boss Stefano Domenicali said the protest was "irresponsible and dangerous".

"Everyone has the right to speak out on issues, but no-one has the right to put lives in danger," the Italian told Sky Sports.

"The actions of a small group of people today were completely irresponsible and dangerous.

"We thank the police for their great work and we shouldn't be complacent about the risk this posed to the safety of the drivers, marshals, fans and the individuals themselves."

In a media statement Just Stop Oil claimed responsibility for Sunday's latest action at one of the jewels in Britain's sporting calendar.



They demanded that the British government "calls an immediate halt to new oil and gas projects in the UK" and warned they would "continue to disrupt sports, cultural events and oil until this demand is met".

McKechnie said: "I'm in resistance because I cannot stand by while our government licenses new oil and gas projects. Our addiction to oil has brought us to the brink of catastrophe.



# Committing to end plastic pollution, U.S. and European Commission join Clean Seas Campaign

Monday, July 4, 2022 Journal Online



**Nairobi/Lisbon, 04 July 2022** – The United States of America and the European Commission have officially joined the Clean Seas Campaign, demonstrating their commitment to ending plastic pollution. In doing so, they acknowledge the need to curb the flow of marine litter and plastic pollution entering lakes, rivers, and the ocean and, in effect, are providing greater engagement to the biggest campaign devoted to ‘turning the tide’ against plastic in the world. The [Clean Seas Campaign](#), launched by the UN Environment Programme ([UNEP](#)) in 2017, has been [a catalyst for change, transforming habits, practices, standards and policies around the globe](#). With the United States of America and the European Commission joining newcomers Cabo Verde, Portugal, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, 69 Member States have now joined the global movement devoted to ending marine litter and plastic pollution, along the life cycle and from source to sea.

Commitments made by the 69 signatory countries now cover more than 76 per cent of the world’s coastlines. More voluntary commitments are expected to be made at this year’s United Nations Ocean Conference to address ocean-related issues that affect communities and countries. To date, individual pledges of action originating from the Clean Seas Campaign have reached more than one million.

“We are pleased to welcome the United States and the European Commission as new Clean Seas members. Their leadership and commitment to the values and mission of Clean Seas will be paramount in accompanying the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee process and developing a globally binding treaty to end plastic pollution. Our success is part and parcel to the ongoing work of our Clean Seas members and partners,” Susan Gardner, Director of UNEP’s Ecosystems Division.

The Clean Seas Campaign is broadening its scope and entering a new strategic phase that will see it accompany the political process for the implementation of [UNEA Resolution 5.14](#) and its focus on ending plastic pollution. The campaign seeks to support the [Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee \(INC\)](#) process initiated to form a legally binding agreement and engage with governments and the private sector to undertake concerted action to end plastic pollution ahead of the Sixth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6).

In the lead up to joining the Clean Seas campaign, the United States of America has made significant strides in its actions to reduce plastic pollution. In 2021, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published the [National Recycling Strategy](#), reaffirming the goal to increase the U.S. recycling rate to 50 percent by 2030. Through pursuing a Sustainable



Materials Management (SMM) approach, the EPA aims to reduce the environmental impacts of materials across their lifecycle. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Marine Debris Program forms partnerships across the United States and internationally to support local and national efforts to drive more sustainable behaviors and reduce the generation of waste and marine debris. NOAA funds locally driven, community-based marine debris removal projects around the United States and supports the monitoring of debris amounts and types in shoreline environments. NOAA also funds research and advances science to help understand debris baselines, chemicals in plastics, debris detection, plastic ingestion by wildlife, economic implications, and how to minimize the impacts of derelict fishing gear.

The EPA also initiated the WasteWise Program which works with businesses, governments, and nonprofit organizations [to promote the use and reuse of materials](#) more productively over their entire life cycles, while the US Department of Energy (DOE) developed a Strategy for Plastics Innovation which coordinates various initiatives on plastic recycling, degradation, upcycling, and design for circularity.

“I’m thrilled that the United States is now a member of the Clean Seas Campaign and I affirm our commitment to the Campaign’s objective of ‘turning the tide’ on marine litter and plastic pollution, including through upstream actions,” said Nicole LeBoeuf, Assistant Administrator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

“I am pleased to celebrate the achievements of the Clean Seas Campaign and to highlight the critical role partnerships play in addressing this global challenge. We welcome the opportunity the Campaign offers to promote innovation and cooperation among all stakeholders.”

The European Commission has also become a leader in the fight to ‘turn the tide’ against plastic pollution in the past years, having recently supported a broader EU-wide ban on some single-use plastics products for which easily available and affordable alternatives exist. The Directive on single-use plastics aims to prevent and reduce the impact on the environment of certain plastic products and promote a transition to a [circular economy](#) through a variety of new measures, requiring a sustained quantitative reduction in consumption of certain single-use plastics for which there are no alternatives. Furthermore, a collection target of 90% for single-use plastic beverage bottles has been set by 2029, while incorporating 25% of recycled plastic in PET beverage bottles from 2025, and 30% in all plastic beverage bottles from 2030.

Virginijus Sinkevičius, European Commissioner for the Environment, said: “The EU and its Member States take an active role in the work for a successful outcome of the Global Agreement on Plastics. We must tackle plastic pollution with measures for the entire plastic life cycle, from design to production, use, recycling and disposal and by addressing the sources on land and in the sea. We need a strong commitment to link the work on sustainable development goals on clean water and sanitation and those on marine life. This week’s UN Ocean Conference and next year’s UN 2023 Water Conference are key occasions to deliver outcomes that will make a difference on the ground. You can count on the EU to do its share”.

The ocean makes life on earth possible, helping to regulate our climate, providing the main source of protein for more than a billion people and generating much of the oxygen we breathe. Marine litter and plastic pollution pose an existential threat to ocean health. There is a need to rebuild humanity’s relationship with the ocean and place it firmly at the center of future sustainable development solutions. It’s time to turn the tide on plastics and #FacethePlasticTruth.

Source: <https://journal.com.ph/committing-to-end-plastic-pollution-u-s-and-european-commission-join-clean-seas-campaign/>



# Plastic from greenhouse boom blights Vietnam's vegetable basket

A boom in plastic greenhouses in the Central Highlands city of Dalat may protect farmers from the impacts of erratic weather, but their environmental toll is building in the agriculture-heavy region.



A woman farmer sports a conical bamboo hat in Vietnam. Image: [Adam Cohn, CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via [Flickr](#).

By Govi Snell, [thethirdpole.net](#) July 4, 2022

Cam Ly landfill was, until it was shut down in 2020, the primary dumping ground for the city of Dalat. Five kilometres from central Dalat in the Central Highlands region, the landfill was the final destination for the majority of plastic used in agriculture in the hilltop locale.

But in August 2019, heavy rain prompted an [outpouring of trash](#), sending plastic sheeting from greenhouses and untreated agrichemical bags and bottles rushing downhill. The incident covered lowland farms in thousands of tonnes of waste.

Dalat is the capital of Lam Dong province. The municipality is known for its temperate climate, rolling hills, pine trees and agriculture. Over the past two decades, plastic greenhouses have enveloped much of the landscape within the city and surrounding areas.

These greenhouses have increased agricultural production and raised farmers' income. However, they are also contributing to [rising temperatures](#), floods, pollution of waterways and the build-up of agri-plastic waste, with no formal system for recycling.

## **Plastic shield against a volatile climate**

While greenhouses are expensive, they are a "mark of achievement" for many farmers, often lead to higher yields, and act as a "safety net against climate change", says Nguyen Châu B o, co-founder of Act Now, a Dalat-based environmental non-profit. With [increasingly unpredictable](#) weather patterns in the region, greenhouses allow farmers to control the environment and shield crops from harsh conditions.

Plastic sheeting allows non-native plants, like tomatoes, to be grown all year, protected from heavy rains, humidity, hail and frosts. Heavy downpours can cause roots to become waterlogged, split tomatoes' skin, and lead to bacterial infections in the plant. For this reason, the majority of tomatoes are grown inside greenhouses in Dalat.

It has to be a community change, a very big systemic change if you want to see a reduction in [plastic waste or agricultural waste](#). I think it is the biggest problem we need to solve.

Nguyen Châu B o, co-founder, Act Now

Hi n, a farmer in Dalat, says he relies on plastic sheeting to ensure a stable growing environment for his crop of flowers. He rents the land where he has a small greenhouse for six-month periods, so it is vital his crops come to harvest reliably within this time. From Hi n's roadside flower farm, greenhouses can be seen in every direction.

### ***Ecological toll of plastic greenhouses***

Despite the benefits for farmers, greenhouses have a heavy ecological impact on the region. Võ Xuân H o Khuyên, who was born in Dalat in 1995, used to be able to see wide swaths of pines from her home. The green space has since disappeared.

"Right now it is just the white colour because all you see is the greenhouses," she tells The Third Pole. The problems caused by rapid greenhouse development are easy to see, Khuyên adds, listing temperature increases, light pollution and floods.

Temperatures in Dalat increased by between [1 and 1.5 degrees](#) Celsius between 2008 and 2018, and the rise is expected to continue, according to statements from V Ng c Long, former director of the Ho Chi Minh City-based Southern Institute of Ecology, in a local news report. While urban development has played a role in the temperature rise, Long said that the immediate area surrounding a greenhouse is [3 to 5 degrees](#) hotter than areas in similar climates without plastic-covered structures.

While rising temperatures are a concern, floods have already had a severe impact on the region and are now a regular occurrence during the rainy season from May to October.

When raindrops hit the greenhouse, they cannot be absorbed by the soil below. Instead, says Khuyên (who has studied the sustainability problems created by greenhouses), the runoff from the tightly packed greenhouses creates streams that combine after heavy rain, flooding the city's drainage system.

"We are a mountain city. We aren't supposed to have floods, but at the end of the day we have floods, very heavy floods that even killed people," Khuyên says.

In August 2019, the damage from the severe floods that hit Dalat and surrounding areas extended beyond swamping the land with trash from the landfill. More than [12,000 homes](#) were flooded, 10,000 hectares of crops were damaged and 11 people died. In 2020, [44 people](#) were forced to evacuate a Dalat hotel when the structure became at risk of collapsing during a downpour. That same year, a runner died after being washed away by a flash flood during the Dalat Ultra Trail marathon.

Districts downstream of Dalat along the Cam Ly River which flows through the city are also impacted by the [greenhouse-amplified](#) flooding. During last year's rainy season, areas of Dalat and Duc Trong District, approximately an hour's drive from the capital city, [flooded](#) within 12 hours of heavy rain as the water level rose. Farmland was inundated, households were forced to relocate and sections of a national highway were submerged.

"Floods never used to appear in Dalat," says Ph m Tr ng Phu, who grew up in Lam Dong province and now works for SNV Netherlands Development Organisation, a non-profit with a base in Dalat. "Many disasters have followed with the development of greenhouses."

### ***An alternative way to farm?***

Les Vergers du Mekong (LVDM) Pilot Organic Farm is located down a steep, dirt road in Dalat's Ward 3. With funding from LVDM as well as the GIZ (German development agency), the team of six running the farm can try eco-friendly methods without direct impacts on their livelihoods. Fruit is grown to be juiced and bottled for sale, and the only plastic sheeting to be found is a small covering that protects seedlings.



Although many farmers in the region have taken up greenhouse farming because of its stable yields, others believe the environmental toll of the plastic coverings outweighs the benefits.

Nguy n Nhi is the farm manager at R ng Thng M Farm & Bistro, a winding 25-minute drive from central Dalat through pines with sections occupied by greenhouses. During the dry season from November to April, Nhi says, heat is trapped inside the greenhouses, causing temperatures in surrounding areas to increase. Additionally, the moist atmosphere inside greenhouses is conducive for worms which eat the vegetables, causing farmers to rely heavily on pesticides.

R ng Thng M has no plastic greenhouses. Instead, herbs and green leafy vegetables are grown using intercropping methods, and rice husks are burnt to deter pests. The farm produces little to no plastic waste, avoiding the [harmful impact](#) agri-plastics can have on [soil health](#).

“Of course I want people to use fewer greenhouses but it’s hard because it comes with efficiency. You can make more money,” Nhi says. “It is hard to ask them to go back to the natural way of farming. I expect the number of greenhouses to double.”

### ***Plastic waste is not recycled***

Over time, due to use and UV exposure, plastic degrades and needs to be replaced. The majority of the plastic sheeting used for greenhouses in Dalat is burned or buried once it is no longer usable.

Nguy n H ng Qun, who grew up in Dalat and is now director at the Institute for Circular Economy Development, a research unit within Vietnam National University in Ho Chi Minh City, tells The Third Pole that currently no “holistic or systematic solution” is available to recycle agri-plastics in Lam Dong province. The majority of agri-plastics end up in landfills.

“I think this is quite a big issue now. We see a lot of plastic waste from greenhouses,” Qun says, adding that the difficulty of managing plastic sheeting is compounded by farmers being dependent on greenhouses for their livelihoods.

Vietnam has no formal system for recycling plastic materials, despite a new environmental protection [law](#) that took effect in January. The mandate – which comes without funding – makes the country’s local governments responsible for sorting and recycling waste.

Miquel Angel sits on Vietnam’s Tourism Advisory Board and surveyed some landfills this April. He has not seen improvements in waste management and says trash is still being buried, burned or allowed to leak into the country’s waterways.

“This is a lot of talk,” he says of the new regulation. “Nobody is taking any action.”

“Greenhouses are like single-use plastic, they should be banned,” says Paul Olivier, who has lived in Dalat for 16 years and supports farmers with transforming waste into feed, fuel and fertiliser. Olivier tells The Third Pole he sees plastic sheeting, styrofoam, and bottles and bags for chemical pesticides and fertilisers in Lam Dong’s streams, lakes and rivers, where fish often float lifeless at the surface.

Informal waste collectors are the driving force behind the management of Vietnam’s plastic waste, approximately [27 per cent](#) of which is recycled. Waste pickers gather plastic bottles, cardboard and a variety of other discarded materials to sell at a local *v a ph li u* – a scrap collection centre where recyclables can be bought and sold.

### ***Action for change on plastic greenhouses***

Although not yet approved, Lam Dong province’s Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has put forward a scheme for the management of greenhouse farming with



specific goals set for 2025 and a vision for 2030. The document acknowledges that the province currently has no regulations on the management and construction of greenhouses, and that local authorities do not have effective solutions to lessen the environmental impacts of greenhouses.

The government wishes to control the proportion of greenhouse area in agricultural land to below 40 per cent in all of Dalat's 12 wards. All greenhouses illegally built on forest land, ecologically sensitive areas, and historic, scenic and culturally significant land will be cleared away by 2025. By 2030, the government also wants to upgrade substandard greenhouses, manage greenhouse construction, and build new modern greenhouses in the province.

"I really want to look at the positive side," says B o of Act Now. "It has to be a community change, a very big systemic change if you want to see a reduction in plastic waste or agricultural waste. I think it is the biggest problem we need to solve."

*This story was published with permission from [The Third Pole](#).*



05 JULY 2022, TUESDAY



# NEWS ALERTS

# NEWS CLIPPINGS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE





## NPF, DENR mark PH Environment Month

**T**O celebrate this year's Philippine Environment Month, the Nayong Pilipino Foundation (NPF) has partnered with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in a tree planting activity on June 23 at the NPF 9.5-hectare property, the Entertainment City, in Parañaque.

Employees of the NPF, DENR's Biodiversity and Forest Management Bureaus have planted more than 100 trees with different saplings from Ipil-Ipil, Tindalo, Yakal, Makaasim, Phil Ash, Lipote, Palawan Cherry, Dita, Batino to Bignay.

Advancing this year's theme - "*Aksyon Para sa Nutatanging Mundo*" highlights the collaborative efforts between the two agencies to provide a healthy and breathable environment for future generations. The said planting activity coincided with Proclamation No. 237, declaring the month of June as Philippine Environment Month, aimed at instilling environmental awareness and concern among the country's various sectors.

Speaking on behalf of NPF Executive Director Gertie Duran-Batocabe, NPF Deputy Executive Director for Marketing and Operations Dr. Jovertlee C. Pudan emphasized the Foundation's advocacy for a greener environment and nature conservation through Project Sambayanihan.

"This initiative aims to transform this 9.5 hectare property into an urban green space by planting more than 400 trees this year by promoting a participatory approach through partnerships with other government



agencies," he said.

Last March, NPF partnered with the Armed Forces of the Philippines in planting flowering trees in honor of the Philippines Women's Month. In May, NPF teamed up with the Department of Health to promote Mental Health awareness by creating greener space in the Metro Manila.

An Environmental Planner, Dr. Pudan reiterated that to make real change, we should plant more trees.

"When we conserve the environment today, the future generations will be able to live healthier lives," he said.





## Guiuan village chiefs seek responsible mining

We specifically requested for this mine tour for us to gain the experience that will help us explain to other PAMB members how mining will be done in Manicani and what we have witnessed in CMC and HMC gave us confidence to give our full support to HMC-MNP

Village leaders from 30 coastal barangays of Guiuan, Eastern Samar including Manicani recently conducted a mine tour to pose questions about responsible mining to the experts at Cagdianao Mining Corp. (CMC) and Hinatuan Mining Corp. (HMC) — the subsidiaries of Nickel Asia Corp. (NAC).

A 33-strong delegation traveled to the province of Dinagat Islands — where CMC has its operations — and to Surigao del Norte where HMC operates for back-to-back comprehensive mine tours which are part of the requirements of the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

This is in preparation for the resumption of the mining operations of HMC's Manicani Nickel Project (MNP), which is part of the jurisdiction of the Municipality of Guiuan.

To recall, HMC-MNP was recently granted the permit by the DENR to resume its mining operations in Manicani.

The village chiefs and *kagawads* of the coastal barangays expressed particular interest in the details of the environment protection and enhancement programs of the two mining companies.

Most of them have not seen an active mine before and their questions focused on the impact of mining to the environment.

One particular feature of the mines that impressed them was the technology of the series of water chambers that starts in 'canal curtains' surrounding the open mine that wind-up in wide settling ponds, plus the silt booms at the exact discharge point before the run-offs enter the body of water surrounding the island.

Both CMC and HMC proudly have this system in place, meticulously designed to ensure the protection of marine life and water resources around the mine sites.

"We specifically requested for this mine tour for us to gain the experience that will help us explain to other PAMB members how mining will be done in Manicani and what we have witnessed in CMC and HMC gave us confidence to give our full support to HMC-MNP," said Barangay 6 chief Leo Lucaba, the designated spokesperson for the group.

ENM



## Mining firm seeks gov't intervention in row with settlers in NV operation

RUNRUNO, Nueva Vizcaya – More than 500 mine workers have asked the government to help settle the row between the resisting group of illegal settlers and miners and the FCF Minerals Corporation here.

The workers, who recently staged a peaceful march from barangay Runruno to the municipal local government compound, are urging local officials to intervene to speed up the slow pace of mining operations in Stage 3 of barangay Runruno, an area covered by the Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) of FCF Minerals Corporation.

"We want a peaceful resolution and settlement of the issues and concerns between the FCF Minerals Corporation, our group and the villagers who are

residing in Stage 3," said Joel Dulnuan, President of the workers' union called Runruno Friends of Highland Group (RFHG).

He said a recent hacking attempt by a resisting villager in Stage 3 in barangay Runruno had sown fear among residents and workers here. Resistance among illegal settlers and small scale miners in Stage 3 started in previous months when mine workers started building access roads to FCF service area. The infrastructure is needed in the company's exploration activities to ascertain the amount of minable deposits in the area.

The illegal settlers and small scale miners have continuously refused the 'just' compensation being offered by the mine firm and instead demanded huge

payments way beyond the value of their illegally occupied land. This prompted both parties to seek legal remedies.

James Carmichael, FCF Minerals Country Manager said FCF's entry to Stage 3 area was legally authorized by the DENR-Mines and GeoSciences Bureau, (MGB) Mines Adjudication Board (MAB), junking the illegal settlers and miners appeal for higher compensation, among others.

He said the gold and molybdenum project has been delayed for more than two years now due to the resistance of the illegal miners who brought the issue before the local courts.

Carmichael said with the slow pace of development in Stage 3, the company is bent on implementing a retrenchment of several workers soon.



## Illegal settlers 'threaten' livelihood of NV miners

**RUNRUNO, Nueva Vizcaya** - More than 500 mine workers have asked the government to help settle the "row" between the resisting group of illegal settlers and miners and the FCF Minerals Corporation here.

The workers who recently staged a peaceful march from Bgy. Runruno to the municipal local government compound, urging local officials to intervene to speed up the slow pace of mining operations in Stage

3 of Bgy. Runruno, is an area covered by the "Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement" (FTAA) of FCF Minerals Corporation.

"We want a peaceful resolution and settlement of the issues and concerns between the FCF Minerals Corporation, our group, and the villagers who are residing in Stage 3," said Joel Dulnoan, president of the workers' union called Runruno Friends of Highland Group (RPHG).

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### ILLEGAL

FROM PAGE 1

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(MGB), Mines Adjudication Board (MAB), junking the illegal settlers and miners' appeal for higher compensation, among others.

He said the gold and molybdenum project has been delayed for more than two years due to the assistance of the illegal miners who brought the issue before the local courts.

Kathleen Guillao, who claimed to represent the clan and indigenous people in Runruno is at the forefront of the legal battle.

Carmichael said with the slow pace of development in Stage 3, the company is bent on implementing a retrench-

ment of several workers soon.

"This resistance and legal battle dragging for more than two years has resulted in huge losses of the company," he said. Wilfredo Pulido, Quezon Information Officer and representative of Mayor Dolores Binwag.

He said the issuance of the Writ of Execution is being worked out in the regional offices of the DENR-MGB-MAB: "Once we have the document, the FCF Minerals Corporation will now have the legal authority to seek government support to continue with their mining operations in the area."





## The Bulacan Ecozone veto and Ben Diokno books

**A** number of important policies and events caught my attention last week. I will discuss three of them.

### PRESIDENTIAL VETO OF BULACAN ECOZONE BILL

One big news on day 1 of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" R. Marcos, Jr., is his letter to the Senate dated July 1 expressing his veto of House Bill 7578, "An Act Establishing the Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone and Freeport" (Bulacan Ecozone).

Among the reasons given are that Bulacan Ecozone "poses substantial fiscal risks and conflict with other agencies' mandates and authorities... Ecozone Authority has rule-making powers on environmental protection not found in other Ecozones... [and] close proximity to Clark Special Ecozone."

I initially saw the logic of those reasons. I also saw the 12-page Memorandum of former Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez to former President Rodrigo R. Duterte why he should veto that bill. To see the bigger picture, I read the 12-page bill (third reading, May 30, 2022, version).

Being an advocate of free trade, more business competition and less government intervention, I actually like that bill. Here are three reasons why:

One, it will increase competition among Ecozones and Freeports. In particular, the Bulacan Ecozone will compete with nearby Clark, Subic, Batangas, and other Ecozones. In the 1990s, the Americans left Clark and Subic with their sprawling infrastructure, including runways and the Subic airport. And 31 years after, Clark and Subic have improved but they are not as developed as

### MY CUP OF LIBERTY BIENVENIDO S. OPLAS, JR.

one would expect from real freeports (like those in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Dubai).

Two, it will limit the long interventionist arms of national bureaucracies that affected Clark and Subic from becoming real freeport (these include the Bureau of Customs, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Department of National Defense). Bulacan Ecozone will operate as a separate customs territory and will have internal security and military forces for national defense.

Three, it promotes provincial economic competition and the principle of subsidiarity (which states that if a local authority can perform a function, it should not be taken by a higher or national authority). These are consistent with the federalism philosophy, which Mr. Marcos should adhere to since he ran as the candidate of the Partido Federal ng Pilipinas party.

But the previous leaderships of the Department of Finance, the National Economic and Development Authority, and other agencies did not like more ecozone competition, did not like curtailment of their bureaucratic interventions so they recommended a veto by the previous Duterte administration.

Now that the new Marcos administration has issued the bill's veto, it has to be refiled in the new Congress. But beyond this, Congress should also amend the charters of existing ecozones so that

they will have similar liberal, free trade and subsidiarity policies as the proposed Bulacan Ecozone to equalize powers and responsibilities, privileges and accountability, and empower them toward greater ecozone and freeport competition in the country.

More incentives, more private enterprises, more job generation, broader tax base as national taxation laws like RA 11534 (CREATE Law of 2021) will still apply. We need more business competition and innovation.

### THE BEN DIOKNO BOOKS

Also last week I was able to get copies of the four books (published in 2020) of new Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno.

Composed of his past columns in *BusinessWorld* and *Manila Speaks* from 2012 to 2016, the four books are: (1) *Holiday: The truth about pork*, (2) *State of The Nation: A Retrospective Look into the Macroeconomic Issues of the Philippines*, (3) *Governance: Analyzing the Economic Performance of the Estrada, Arroyo & Aquino Administrations*, and (4) *Through*

*the Looking Glass: A Look into the Public Economic Issues in the Philippines*.

In one article, "A broad-based, comprehensive tax reform is the only way forward" (*BusinessWorld*, Sept. 16, 2015), Mr. Diokno argued that "the core elements of a broad-based, comprehensive tax reform program are: lower income and corporate income tax rates, broader corporate tax base by rationalizing fiscal incentives, higher value-added tax rates, and higher real property tax."

I agree with lower personal income tax (PIT) and corporate income tax (CIT) rates and a broader tax base. But I do not agree with the higher VAT rate. We should instead have a lower VAT rate and fewer or zero VAT exemptions — except raw agriculture and fishery products — to broaden the tax base. And real property tax rate should be lower on lands that have optimal use and generate more jobs and more business transactions per square meter of land.

Mr. Diokno showed the comparative income tax rates in the

### PREZ Infrastructure spending and GDP size, P Billion

Indicators	2010	2012	2015	2020	2021	2022
Infra spending, BEF	52.1	186.1	222.5	87.5	1,073.8	1,180.5
Nominal GDP	9,734	10,566	11,546	13,952	19,411	
Infra/GDP	1.0%	1.9%	1.9%	4.6%	5.5%	

SOURCE: DEPT. BUDGET OF EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SERVICES (DBEES), VARIOUS YEARS

ASBAN from 2010 to 2018. I use his numbers below and expand it to 2022 data. The good news is that in the Philippines, PIT rates for middle income people have declined under RA 10963 (TRAIN law of 2017) and CIT under RA 11534 has declined. The bad news is that the top marginal rate of PIT has increased for the upper income people to 35% from 32% under RA 10963 (Table 1).

When people are industrious, efficient, and ambitious, and when they save and invest for the future, their income and wealth naturally increase. They should not be penalized with higher PIT for their industriousness.

Mr. Diokno wrote many articles highly critical of the overall budget and infrastructure spending under the administration of President Rodrigo S.C. Aquino III.

In one of his papers, "From a slow to fast-moving machinery" (*Manila Speaks*, April 24, 2014), he showed a table on infrastructure/GDP ratio from 2011 to 2018. I use his number and expand it to 2022 data (Table 2). It is true that infrastructure spending under the Duterte administration has indeed expanded substantially compared to previous administrations.

I do not agree with a number of points raised by Mr. Diokno in his four books but they are worth reading by researchers, writers and observers of economic policies. Having hindsight of the recent past will help formulate sound policies for the present and the future.

### LAND TRANSPORTATION NISS

Last week, I passed by the Edo-Ayala bus loading area. It was a horrible sight in the afternoon. The passenger queue was very long and hundreds, maybe thousands, of people had to endure the heat, dust, and smoke.

When buses arrive, passengers fill them up quickly and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with little to no social distancing.

### WAFI Top marginal income tax rates, %

Country	Personal income tax				Corporate income tax			
	2010	2015	2018	2021	2010	2015	2018	2022
Brunei	0	0	0	0		18.5	18.5	
Cambodia	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
Singapore	20	20	22	22	17	17	17	17
Indonesia	30	30	30	30	25	25	25	22
Malaysia	26	26	28	30	25	25	24	24
Philippines	33	32	35	35	30	30	30	25
Vietnam	35	35	35	35	25	25	20	20
Thailand	33	37	35	35	30	30	20	20

SOURCE: WFI, VARIOUS ECONOMIES



TITLE

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DATE

## DU30 lauded for declaring September as Bamboo Month

FORMER Deputy Speaker Deogracias Victor Savellano lauded former President Rodrigo Duterte for declaring September of every year as the Philippine Bamboo Month.

Savellano, one of the staunch advocates of bamboo propagation in the country and co-author of House Bill (HB) No. 7069 or the Philippine Bamboo Month Act, said Malacanang's Proclamation No. 1401 would be a big boost to the bamboo industry.

According to Savellano, the uses of bamboo in

the country "span from crib to grave."

Bamboo is being used as furniture and handicraft, effective in controlling soil erosion and inland restoration. Bamboo shoots are also being used as ingredient in recipes.

"The resiliency of bamboo against various environmental disasters represent the resilient spirit of the Filipino people against similar vicissitudes in life," Savellano said.

Earlier, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, in Executive Order (EO) No. 879 dated May 14, 2010 created the Philippine

Bamboo Industry Development Council which is mandated to provide the over-all policy and program directions for the bamboo industry.

In President Duterte's proclamation, FBIDC is being directed to lead and promote the observance of the Philippine Bamboo Month.

"Ten years ago, the 1st World Bamboo Day was celebrated in Bangkok, Thailand. This year, it is likely to be celebrated on September 18. It is gaining momentum around the world," Savellano said.

RPP





## Philippine Bamboo Month declaration hailed

By **RYAN PONCE  
PACPACO**

**FORMER** Deputy Speaker Deogracias Victor Savellano has lauded former President Rodrigo Roa Duterte for declaring September of every year as the "Philippine Bamboo Month".

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or the Philippine Bamboo Month Act, said Malacañang's Proclamation No. 1401 would be a big boost to the bamboo industry.

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"The resiliency of bamboo against various environmental disasters represents the resilient spirit of the Filipino people against similar vicissitudes in life," Savellano said.

To recall, then-President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, in Executive Order (EO) No. 379 dated May 14, 2010, created the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council (PBIDC), which is mandated to "provide the overall policy and program direc-

tions for the bamboo industry."

In President Duterte's proclamation, PBIDC is being directed to lead and promote the observance of the Philippine Bamboo Month.

"Ten years ago, the 1st World Bamboo Day was celebrated in Bangkok, Thailand. This year, it is likely to be celebrated on September 18. It is gaining momentum around the world," Savellano said.





## Marcos administration's goal to cut poverty to a single-digit level viable

By Julito G. Rada

THE government's "ambitious" target of reducing the poverty level from more than 20 percent to single digit at the end of the administration of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is doable, new Economic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan said Monday.

Balisacan took the helm of the National Economic and Development Authority from Secretary Karl Kendrick Chua in a turnover ceremony in Pasig City.

Balisacan said President Marcos and the economic team agreed on the overall goal of the administration focusing on job generation and poverty alleviation.

"We all agree to quickly revive job creation and poverty reduction by steering the economy back to the high-growth path while addressing government debt and the sharply rising prices of food and essential commodities," Balisacan said.

"In particular, we aim for economic growth at least at par with pre-pandemic levels through 2028. And we are raising the bar higher: we must make this growth more inclusive and resilient. In other words, growth must be pro-poor and can weather adverse global events such as pandemics, calamities due to climate change, and geopolitical and technological disruptions," he said.

"With quality growth and jobs, we aim to rapidly reduce poverty to a single-digit level at the end of the administration. I recognize such a target is ambitious, but I firmly believe it is achievable," he said.

Balisacan said the reforms the past administrations laid down made the economy's foundations stronger.

He said a robust economy could be attained by recovering lost ground and tapping into the country's latent human and natural capital.



### DENR, Health, Energy sec dumadaan sa butas ng karayom

Nasa final evaluation na ang aplikasyon ng mga opisyal na pagpipilian para punan ang mga natitirang bakanteng puwesto sa gobyerno.

Ito ang inihayag ni Press Secretary Trixie-Cruz Angeles matapos tanungin sa mga bakanteng puwesto sa Department of Health (DOH), Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at ilang mahahalagang government owned and controlled corporations gaya ng PACCOR at PCSO.

Ayon kay Angeles, walang deadline kung kailan mapupunan ang mga bakanteng puwesto kaya hintayin na lamang ang amunsiyo ng Palasyo sa mga susunod na araw.

Masusi aniyang sinusuri ang bawat aplikasyon para masigurong angkop sa kanila ang ibibigay na posisyon ni Panguong Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. (Aileen Taliping)





# Wawa JVCo to start delivery of additional water to Rizal

By DANESSA RIVERA

Wawa JVCo Inc., a unit of Razon-led Prime Infrastructure Capital Inc., starts delivery of additional water supply to consumers in eastern Metro Manila and parts of Rizal as it completes the first phase of the P26-billion Wawa bulk water infrastructure project last month.

In a statement yesterday, Wawa JVCo said the Tayabasan Weir – which comprises phase 1 of the Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project – filled up its reservoir early June, signaling its completion ahead of its schedule in October.

Providing ample water supply to Metro Manila and the province of Rizal, the Tayabasan Weir is a 25-meter-high roller compacted concrete structure designed to deliver 80 million liters per day (MLD) to off-taker Manila Water Co. Inc. and Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System

(MWSS).

It is comprised of three parts: the weir where water is impounded, the pumping station that brings the bulk water to the water treatment plant, and the buried water pipeline where the bulk water passes to get to the water treatment plant.

“True to our fast and lean management approach, Prime Infra, through Wawa JVCo, has delivered a critical water infrastructure that supports the country’s infrastructure development agenda with speed – as you all know, this phase of the project was finished ahead of schedule in the middle of a pandemic,” Prime Infra president and CEO Guillaume Lucci said.

“Even at this fast pace, we were able to secure the necessary permits and most importantly, obtain the seal of approval for the social aspects of the project, further demonstrating our capability

to deliver not only critical water infrastructure, but also provide economic upliftment of local communities and environmental conservation, for instance we are developing the master plan to make Wawa an eco-tourism site that will provide long-term positive impact to them,” he said.

Meanwhile, Wawa JVCo said phase 2 of the project – dubbed as Upper Wawa Dam – would be completed in 2025 and eventually deliver at least 518 MLD of water to over 500,000 households in the east zone concession area.

The project will also help mitigate recurring flood issues in the lower areas of Rizal province, Marikina City and Pasig City.

Last March, the company obtained the approval of the Dumagat/Remontado Indigenous People of Antipolo and Rodriguez for the Upper Wawa Dam.

This the fourth and final memorandum of agreement in the Free and Prior, Informed Consent (FPIC) Process for the project. The MOA event was supervised by the FPIC team and attended by representatives of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) offices.

Wawa JVCo also received the Certificate Precondition (CP) from the NCIP, certifying that the FPIC process has been complied with by the company, and the communities have given their consent to the project.

It also secured the necessary permits from various government agencies, including the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Environmental Management Bureau, the Protected Area Management Board of the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape, and the concerned local government units.





# Prime's Wawa bid nears completion

Project was delivered 'ahead of schedule in the middle of a pandemic'

BY MARIA ROMERO  
@tribuneipil\_mia

Razon-led Prime Infrastructure Capital Inc. announced Monday that its unit, WawaJVCo Inc., has completed the first phase of the P26-billion Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project – a flagship project of the government to ramp up water supply in Metro Manila.

Prime Infra president and CEO Guillaume Lucci said the project was delivered "ahead of schedule in the middle of a pandemic."

The Tayabasan Weir filled up its reservoir in early June, which signaled its completion ahead of its schedule in October.

The facility is a 25-meter high roller-compacted concrete structure designed to deliver 80 million liters (MLD) daily.

"We were able to secure the necessary permits and most importantly, obtain the seal of approval for the social aspects of

the project further demonstrating our capability to deliver not only critical water infrastructure but also provide economic upliftment of local communities and environmental conservation," Lucci said.

## Eco-tourism masterplan up

"We are developing the master plan to make Wawa an eco-tourism site that will provide a long-term positive impact to them," he added.

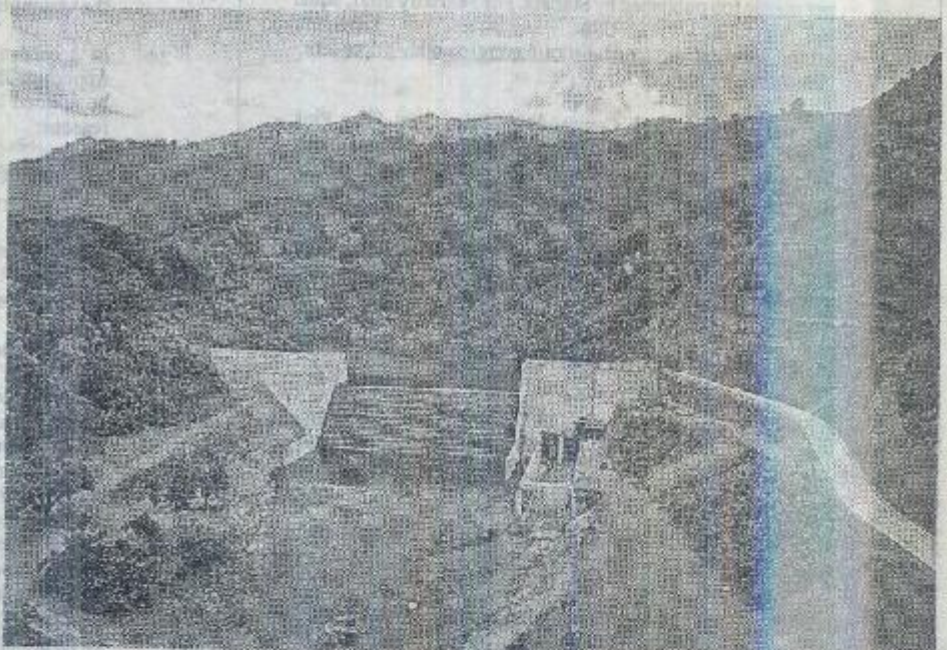
Tayabasan has three parts including the weir, where water is impounded; the pumping station that brings the bulk water to the water treatment plant; and the buried water pipeline, where the bulk water passes to get to the water treatment plant.

Meanwhile, Phase 2, dubbed as Upper Wawa Dam, is scheduled to be completed in 2025 to deliver at least 518 MLD to offtake

Manila Water Company and Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

Last March, WawaJVCo obtained the approval of the Dumagat/Remontado Indigenous People of Antipolo and Rodriguez for the Upper Wawa Dam. It was the project's fourth and final Memorandum of Agreement in the Free and Prior, Informed Consent Process.

WawaJVCo received the Certificate Precondition from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, certifying that the FPIC Process has been complied with by the company, and the communities gave their consent to the project.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF PRIME INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL

WAWA Bulk Water Supply Project was delivered ahead of schedule in the middle of a pandemic. It is a flagship project of the government to ramp up water supply in Metro Manila.





# Razon firm completes first phase of Wawa project

RAZON-LED Prime Infrastructure Capital, Inc. through its unit WawaJVCo, Inc. announced that it completed the Tayabasan weir, which is the first phase of its Wawa bulk water supply project.

"True to our fast and lean management approach, Prime Infra through WawaJVCo has delivered a critical water infrastructure that supports the country's infrastructure development agenda with speed. As you all know, this phase of the project was finished ahead of schedule in the middle of

a pandemic," Prime Infra President and Chief Executive Guillaume Lucci said in a statement on Monday.

The water infrastructure project aims to provide ample water supply to Metro Manila and the province of Rizal.

The Tayabasan weir is a 25-meter roller-compacted concrete structure designed to deliver 80 million liters per day (MLD).

It comprises three parts: the weir, where water is impounded; the pumping station, which

brings the water to the water treatment plant; and the buried water pipeline, where the bulk water passes to get to the water treatment plant.

In June, the Tayabasan weir filled up its reservoir ahead of its completion in October.

Meanwhile, second phase of the project or the upper Wawa dam is expected to be completed by 2025 and will deliver at least 518 MLD to off-taker Manila Water Co., Inc. and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

Mr. Lucci said that the firm was able to secure the necessary permits and obtain the seal of approval for the social aspects of the project, which "further demonstrates our capability to deliver not only critical water infrastructure, but also provide economic upliftment of local communities and environmental conservation."

In March, WawaJVCo obtained the approval of the Dumagat or Remontado indigenous people for the upper Wawa dam.

This marked the fourth and final memorandum of agreement in the free and prior, informed consent process for the project.

The firm added that it also secured the necessary permits from various government agencies, including the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Environmental Management Bureau, the Protected Area Management Board of the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape, and the concerned local government units.

In June, Prime Infra filed for a P28.2-billion initial public offering with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The firm plans to offer around 1.76 billion common shares at an offer price of up to P14.60, with an overallotment option of up to 175.58 million shares.

Net proceeds from the offer will be used to fund projects in the group's energy and water as well as waste and sustainable fuels businesses. — Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jucson



## Wawa 1st phase completed

PRIME Infrastructure Capital Inc., through its unit WawaJCo Inc., has completed the Tayabasan weir, the first phase of the Wawa bulk water supply project being developed in Rizal province.

The company said the Tayabasan weir, which is a 25-meter high roller compacted concrete structure designed to deliver 80 million liters per day (MLD) of water, has filled up its reservoir early last month and was completed ahead of its original schedule in October.

The Tayabasan weir is comprised of the actual weir where water is impounded, the pumping station that brings the bulk water to the water treatment plant and the buried water pipeline where the bulk water passes to get to the water treatment plant.

The second phase of the project is set to be completed in 2025 and will eventually deliver at least 518 MLD of water to Manila Water

and Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

"Even at this fast pace, we were able to secure the necessary permits and most importantly, obtain the seal of approval for the social aspects of the project further demonstrating our capability to deliver not only critical water infrastructure but also provide economic upliftment of local communities and environmental conservation. For instance, we are developing the master plan to make Wawa an eco-tourism site that will provide long-term positive impact to them," Guillaume Lucci, Prime Infra president and chief executive officer, said in a statement.

Last March, WawaJCo secured the approval of the Dumagat and Remontado indigenous people of Antipolo and Rodriguez for the upper wawa dam, the second phase of the Wawa bulk water supply project.

*-Jed Marapagal*





## Central Luzon youth leaders convene on climate change

The activity allowed participating youth leaders and IP communities to share their perspectives and best practices on climate change mitigation and adaptation

BY JONAS REYES

PORAC, Pampanga – Youth leaders of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and National Youth Commission (NYC) showed support for environmental stewardship and climate action as they convened for a three-day immersion and eco-tour activity.

The youth leaders launched "TimE-X: Training, Immersion, Ecotour for the Youth – the Stakeholders with the X Factor" and were joined by at least 20 indigenous youths here.

The event is geared towards empowering the youth by helping them understand the complexities of leadership, responsibility, integrity and transparency for environmental protection, natural resources conservation and climate change mitigation.

DENR regional executive director Paquito Moreno Jr. said that the activity allowed participating youth leaders and IP communities to share their perspectives and best practices on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

"Our youth is vital in spreading the message of environmentalism to their communities," Moreno said.

During the event, participants planted bamboo propagules along the slopes of Mount Arayat and did soil potting for use in the DENR's pilot bamboo production nursery. They also visited the Lubao Bamboo Hub and Eco-Park to learn more about the potential of bamboo for ecotourism and carbon capture.

Indigenous youth took part in a multi-sectoral exchange with the IP and barangay leaders, the NYC, the DENR Youth Desk and the Climate Change Service.

The event marked the opening of a photo exhibit on the so-called "blue lagoon" or "kelwad" as it is locally known – a potential ecotourism site in Porac town.





FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE MARCOS ADMINISTRATION

# MAP submits policy recommendations

BY ED PAOLO SALTING

**T**HE Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) has submitted a set of policy recommendations to the government that aims to help attain a dynamic economy for all Filipinos.

"As the country emerges from the Covid-19 pandemic and the deep contraction it brought to our economy, policy and program support and public investments must prioritize the country's two most important but also most challenged assets: its people and its lands. Health, nutrition and education need to be urgently addressed," MAP said.

"Likewise, the productivity of our agricultural lands and coastal and inland waters likewise ur-

gently need a substantial boost, especially in the face of a looming food crisis," it added.

The organization presented six main problems the Marcos administration needs to address as well as the recommended policies to be undertaken.

To address the country's urgent education crisis, MAP suggested the following: to immediately mobilize the Second Education Commission to develop a clear roadmap for secondary education; return to full face to face in

all schools that are in non-high-risk areas; prioritize budgetary support for connectivity in all schools in the 2023 budget and teachers' upskilling, and establish a program of cooperation among educational and practical institutions.

For quality health care, MAP said that the public health system must be upgraded and overhauled, malnutrition be curbed and institutional reforms be undertaken.

As for the agriculture sector and agribusiness, the organization recommended farm consolidation, strengthening food systems, bureaucratic reform in the agency and supplementing the "Indigenous Peoples Rights Act."

For trade and industry policies, MAP said there is a need to ratify trade agreements; formulate an aggressive new Philippine Ex-

port Development Plan; update and expand industry road maps and inclusive value chains; and expand coverage for the recognition of globally competitive Philippines-based firms.

In infrastructure adequacy, MAP encourages the government to intensify energy development; promote digital transformation; adopt integrated water resources management principles; and develop attractive public-private partnership policy environments.

And in labor market and employment policies, the organization highlighted the need for labor flexibility and pension portability.

Lastly, MAP also suggested to the administration changes in fiscal and financial policies to maximize government gain and upholding the rule of law for the contentment of all.





## The EPA decision is the biggest one of all, and the court got it right

**WASHINGTON:** The US Supreme Court announced this term's most momentous decision on the term's last day. Thursday's 6-to-3 ruling, although it lacked the cymbal-crash clarity and political wallop of the 5-to-4 decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*, matters more. It blocks the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from claiming an enormously consequential power that Congress did not clearly grant and defends the Constitution's essence: the separation of powers.

Overturning *Roe* has ignited 50 state debates about one subject: abortion. Stymying the EPA's extravagant expansion of its mission has profound implications for the making of many federal policies. Thursday's opinion, the writing of which Chief Justice John Roberts assigned to himself, might, like a boulder thrown into a pond, have large ripples.

The Clean Air Act authorizes the EPA to impose the "best system of emission reduction" for carbon-emitting activities. The EPA construes this as authorization for it to — if this seems "best" — restructure the nation's power sector by ordering "generation shifting" in electricity production from coal to natural gas and renewables (e.g., wind, solar).

Roberts, joined by Justices Alito, Barrett, Gorsuch, Kavanaugh and Thomas, invokes the "major questions" doctrine. It holds that when an executive agency claims a power to order changes of vast economic and political significance — e.g., the EPA's proposed multibillion-dollar restructuring (mandatory capital investments, higher energy prices) of a huge sector of the economy — courts should be skeptical of such claims unless legislation clearly and explicitly authorizes it. Otherwise, the agency is illegitimately lunging beyond its law enforcement function.

The court has hitherto rejected the Food and Drug Administration's claimed authority to regulate or even ban tobacco products, something Congress had not endorsed. And during the pandemic, the court rejected the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's contention that its mission to prevent the spread of disease gave it an authority, never mentioned by Congress, to impose a nationwide eviction moratorium.



WASHINGTON  
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GROUP

GEORGE  
F. WILL

Now, Roberts writes, the court is reluctant to find a sweeping power "lurking" in vague Clean Air Act language. There is little reason, Roberts writes, to think Congress, without clearly saying so, tasked the EPA, "and it alone, with balancing the many vital considerations of national policy implicated in deciding how Americans will get their energy." The majority should have invoked the related doctrine that Congress cannot properly delegate to an executive agency essentially legislative decisions.

By pruning the EPA's pretensions, the court has signaled a quickened

interest in policing the separation of powers. If, as is desirable, the decision presages similar ones, they could, cumulatively, revive Congress by compelling it to resume its proper responsibilities. This would limit the excessive autonomy currently enjoyed by the executive agencies that are the increasingly autonomous, unleashed and unaccountable administrative state.

Justice Elena Kagan, joined in her barbed dissent by Justices Breyer and Sotomayor, says "the court has never even used the term 'major questions doctrine' before." The court has, however, urged hesitancy when an agency asserts a "highly consequential power beyond what Congress could reasonably be understood to have granted." The EPA's claimed *carte blanche* to order unlimited "generation shifting" is surely a spurious power.

Progressives since Woodrow Wilson have aspired to marginalize Congress to insulate the "science" of public administration from politics. The aim is to emancipate supposedly disinterested experts to apply, without political supervision, supposedly neutral science for social betterment.

Hysteria is constant today, so hyperbole is, too — as when on June 20 *The New York Times* lead article — top of page one, columns five and six — warned readers to be frightened that the court might do what it in fact did Thursday. *The Times* said a ruling against the EPA could, severely limit "the federal government's authority" to reduce carbon dioxide from power plants. But the court's Thursday decision did not diminish the government's authority; it said the primary authority must be explicitly exercised by Congress, which (although progressivism often forgets this) is part of the government. *The Times* also warned that the EPA case could eviscerate the "federal ability" to address climate change. No, the court has only required that more responsibility be taken by Congress, which is (although progressives often regret this) a federal institution.

In 1887, Professor Woodrow Wilson of Bryn Mawr College wrote that the complexities of modern life demand government by expert administrators with "large powers and unhampered discretion." On Thursday, the court served notice to Congress and executive agencies that modern complexities are not a sufficient reason for abandoning the Constitution's separation of powers, which still governs those who govern us. (C) 2022, THE WASHINGTON POST WRITERS GROUP

George Will's email address is  
[georgewill@washpost.com](mailto:georgewill@washpost.com).





## DOJ chief: LRA, BI, BUCOR 'problematic' agencies

By Hector Lawas

**JUSTICE Secretary Jesus Crispin Remulla yesterday immediately buckled down to work and identified three problematic attached agencies of the Department of Justice -- Land Registration Authority (LRA), Bureau of Immigration (BI), and Bureau of Corrections (BUCOR).**

During his first flag-raising ceremony at the DOJ compound in Manila, Remulla observed that these agencies are consistently mired in controversies, placing the entire government in bad light.

Remulla, who was an elected congressional representative in the province of Cavite, disclosed the existence of a well-entrenched syndicate in the LRA that operates with impunity.

"Kayo ba dito na kasama ko ay papayag na tumagal pa ang sindikang ito? Marahil darating ang isang araw na lahat ng tahanan natin ay makuha na nila kapag ating pinayagan na sila ay manaig pa sa ating lipunan, yan po ang isang problema sa LRA," Remulla said.

At the Immigration Bureau, Remulla noted the pestering prevalence of extortion and human trafficking activities involving bureau executives and personnel.

The BI was rocked by controversies one after another with the 'Pastillas Scheme' hogging headlines the most. Under the Pastillas Scheme, Chinese visitors can seamlessly enter the country in exchange for bribes.

A Chinese citizen pays a P10,000 "service fee" - P2,000 of which will allegedly be shared among officials of the BI's Travel Control and Enforcement Unit (TCEU), duty immigration supervisor, and terminal heads.

The remaining P8,000 will then be given to tour operators and syndicates who will transport the Chinese from the airport to Pogo facilities. It was also disclosed during Senate

hearings that blacklisted Chinese fugitives would pay as much as P200,000 to "freely" enter the country.

"Tayo naman po ay pumunta sa Bureau of Immigration. May extortion syndicate, human trafficking syndicate, at protection syndicates, sabihin nyo na kung ano ay naroroon, and the sad thing about the Bureau of Immigration is that they exercise sovereign powers. It is the face of the country and we Filipinos have a duty to protect our own country," Remulla said.

Another attached agency of DOJ that caught Remulla's ire is BuCor, which has seven (7) prison facilities across the country under its control, including the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa City.

"Ang pangatlong ahensiya na ating tignan ay ang BuCor na hanggang ngayon walang tigil ang activities na nakakasira sa lipunan," he said.

BUCOR recently came under fire anew when at least eight high-profile inmates died under mysterious circumstances at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This came to fore following the filing of murder charges by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) against 22 policemen belonging to the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) who are implicated in the Bilibid deaths before the DOJ.

"Yan po ang isang hamon sa ating lahat, gusto nyo bang magtagal ang imahena ganito nang dahil may isang ahensyang nakalimot ng mandato?" Remulla said.

Apart from LRA, BI, and BuCor, the other DOJ attached agencies are: National Bureau of Investigation, Parole and Probation Administration, Presidential Commission on Good Government, Public Attorney's Office, Office for Alternative Dispute Resolution, Office of the Government Corporate Counsel, Office of the Solicitor General, and National Prosecution Service.





07-05-22

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Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
MINES AND GEOSCIENCE BUREAU  
Regional Office No. IV-CALABARZON  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor, DENR by the Bay Bldg., Roxas Boulevard  
Ermita, Manila, Philippines  
Tel/Fax: No. 8632, 8710-84-87 E-mail: r4office@mgb.gov.ph  
Website: r4office@mgb.gov.ph



Notice of Posting for the Application for Exploration Permit described as  
AL 1935/10000 of Eagle Star Mining Corporation

## NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR EXPLORATION PERMIT OF EAGLE STAR MINING CORPORATION

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 76 of Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Administrative Order (DAO) No. 2010-21, the Consolidated Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 7942, otherwise known as the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, that Eagle Star Mining Corporation with address at 183 EC-3A, Barangay Wack-Wack, Mandaluyong City has filed an application for Exploration Permit particularly described, as follows:

- I. Application No. : EPA-IVA-175 (formerly PMPGA-IV-178)
- II. Date of Filing : February 10, 1995
- III. Area Location : Tayabas, Quezon
- IV. Description of the Applied Area

### A. Geographical Coordinates

CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
1	14° 02' 30"	121° 43' 00"
2	14° 03' 00"	121° 43' 00"
3	14° 03' 00"	121° 42' 00"
4	14° 04' 00"	121° 42' 00"
5	14° 04' 00"	121° 43' 00"
6	14° 04' 30"	121° 43' 00"
7	14° 04' 30"	121° 44' 00"
8	14° 02' 30"	121° 44' 00"

Sketch Plan: Please refer to "Annex A"

Size: The applied area covers One Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Eight and 1935/10000 (1,328.19M hectares) hectares.

### B. Restrictions

The applied area shall be subject to Section 18 ("Areas Closed to Mining Applications"), Section 16 ("Ancestral Lands") and Section 105 ("Entry to Lands") of DAO No. 2010-21, and Section 4 of DAO No. 2012-07, as amended, which provide, among others, that:

1. The following areas are closed to mining applications: areas covered by valid and existing mining rights/applications, old growth/ virgin forests, proclaimed watershed forest reserves, protected areas and other areas expressly prohibited by law;
2. The following areas shall also be closed to mining applications except upon written consent/prior clearance by the concerned bridges, highways, waterways, railroads reservoirs, dams and other infrastructure projects, public or private works, including plantations or valuable crops;
3. In case of areas occupied by Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and/or covered by Certificates of Ancestral Domain/Land Claims/Titles (CAD/CAL/CAD/CALT), the Free and Prior Informed Consent shall be secured from the concerned IPs;
4. In case of surface owners, occupants and concessionaires that may be covered by the applied area, their permission shall be obtained prior to entry into their lands by the eventual permittee for purposes of undertaking sand and gravel extraction therein;
5. Prime agricultural lands, in addition to land covered by RA No. 867 or the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988, as amended, including plantations and areas devoted to valuable crops, and Strategic Agriculture and Fisheries Development Zones and Refuge and sanctuaries declared as such by the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture;
6. Tourism development areas, as identified in the national and local tourism development plans; and
7. Other critical areas, island ecosystems, and impact areas of mining as determined by current and existing mapping technologies, that the DENR may hereafter identify pursuant to existing laws, rules, and regulations, such as, but not limited to, the National Integrated Protected Areas System.

### V. Description of Exploration Work Program

#### 1. Research Work

Research Work duration two (2) months covering the activities such as survey of previous work in the area and data compilation.

#### 2. Reconnaissance Regional Survey or Studies

Reconnaissance activities such as regional geological survey covering a duration of 3 months to produce a geologic map with proposed quarrying sites at a scale of 1:12,500.

### 3. Semi-detailed Geological Mapping Alternative Studies

Semi-detailed geological mapping alternative studies consisting of activities such as semi-detailed studies and Surface Investigation with a period of 6 months, which aim to identify the location of the correct lithological contact results of test pits with chemical analysis to be indicated in the output map.

### 4. Topographic Survey

Topographic Survey covering area of 80 hectares

### 5. Detailed Survey or Studies

Detailed survey consists of detailed geological mapping covering an area of 400 hectares in a duration of 12 months, drilling and test piling.

Any and all persons having adverse claims, protests and/or opposition to the subject application are hereby notified that their adverse claims, protests and/or opposition should be filed within ten (10) days from the last date of posting with the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Regional Office (RO) No. IV-CALABARZON or through any Community Environment and Natural Resources Office or Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office concerned for filing in the MGB RO No. IV-CALABARZON for purposes of its resolution by the Panel of Arbitrators pursuant to the provisions of R.A. No. 7942 and DAO No. 2010-21. Adverse claims, protest or opposition should be accompanied in accordance with Sections 203 and 204 of DAO No. 2010-21 and a copy thereof shall be furnished to the applicant by the adverse claimant.

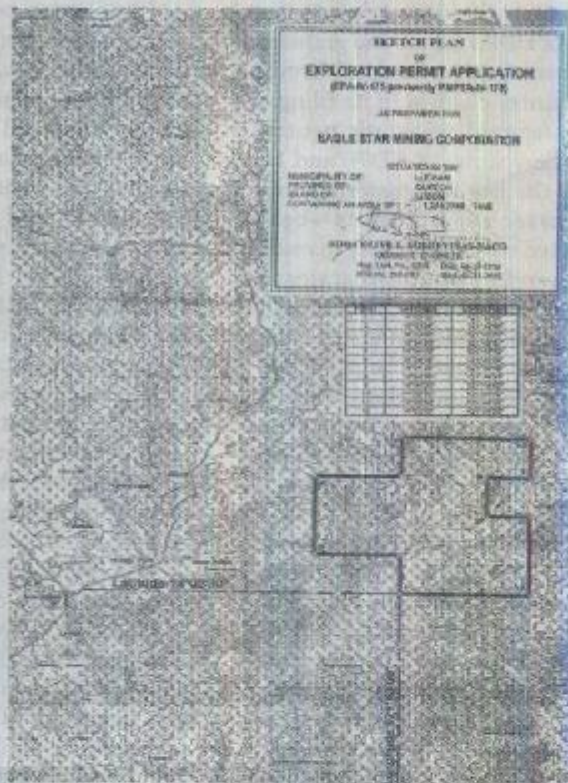
For further particulars, please course your inquiries to the Regional Director, MGB RO No. IV-A (CALABARZON) located at 9<sup>th</sup> floor, DENR by the Bay Building, 1515 Roxas Boulevard, Ermita, Manila.

DONDE DEARMENTO  
Regional Director



MINING SHALL BE PROGRESSIVE AND PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL  
IN MAINTAINING HEALTH, CREATING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## ANNEX A - SKETCH PLAN









FILE:

PAGE

DATE

Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU  
5000 Alabang Road, Alabang, Muntinlupa City  
Tel. No. 852 2211-2212  
www.environment.gov.ph

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE REPORT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN (EPRMP) OF THE PROPOSED DAWAO STEEL MILL EXPANSION WITH SCRAP RECYCLING PROJECT OF BEN CARACAR MANUFACTURING, INC. LOCATED AT BARAMUNAY MAHAYAG, BUNAWAN DISTRICT, DAVAO CITY.

Notice is hereby given to all parties who wish to give their opinion regarding the implementation of the proposed DAWAO STEEL MILL EXPANSION WITH SCRAP RECYCLING PROJECT to attend the Public Hearing scheduled at:

Date	Time	Venue
20 July 2022 (Wednesday)	9:00 AM (Registration starts at 8:30 AM)	Baramunay Mahayag, Covette Court

The Public Hearing is being conducted in connection with the review of the EPRMP of the aforementioned project by the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The following is the project information:

Project Name	Dawao Steel Mill Expansion with Scrap Recycling Project		
Project Location	Baramunay Mahayag, Bunawan District, Davao City		
Project Capacity	400,000 MTPY		
Project Type	Iron and Steel Manufacturing		
Project Rationale	Iron and steel is a basic industry prerequisite to a country's pursuit of development and industrialization. Therefore, ensuring a strong domestic and steel-based industry is vital in developing the competitive edge of a country in meeting the challenges of globalization. The Project is also envisioned because of the following objectives: (1) The project will create an estimated 5,000 jobs, 1,000+ of which will be direct jobs; (2) Enhance the economic performance in the Philippines of the local of the mill and its various products; (3) Substitution of imported steel with locally produced high quality products.		
	Component	Existing Capacity	Proposed Expansion/Additional Capacity
Project Components	Scrap Recycling Mill	400,000 MTPY	800,000 MTPY
	Scrap Recycling Mill Shop		800,000 MTPY at 50,000sq. area
Proponent	Ben Caracar Manufacturing, Inc. (BCMI)		

All interested parties who wish to attend or participate in the Public Hearing should preferably submit their comments, questions and any other concerns in a complete position paper to the ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION (EIMAD) of the Office through email at [emad@denr.gov.ph](mailto:emad@denr.gov.ph), three (3) days before the Public Hearing schedule. Those who will not be able to register or submit their position paper may be given the opportunity to state their views on the day of the hearing itself.

The project's EPRMP and Executive Summary for the Public are downloadable on our website (http://www.demr.gov.ph) after the Notice of Public Hearing/Consultation has been in our website) while copies will be available in the following offices:

- EMB Region 10 and Mahayag corner V. Quinsan St., Purok 7740, Davao City Tel. No. (802) 234-0061 | 234-3369
- City Environment and Natural Resources Office - Davao City Hall Building, City Hall Drive, San Pedro St., Davao City

For more details, please contact the EIA and Management Division at this Office at telephone number 800-2210 and 8020-4270 loc. 410 and look for the project case handler Engr. Lenson Ransbeyang and Engr. Joel Polibias.

NT - July 5 & 12, 2022



05 JULY 2022, TUESDAY



# NEWS ALERTS

# COVID-19 NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE





# DOH: New COVID-19 cases up 60% in past week

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) - Philstar.com July 4, 2022 | 5:55pm



People queue for free packed meals distributed by Catholic religious order Society of the Divine Word (SVD) in Manila on June 24, 2022. - Local pollster Social Weather Stations said in a recent survey that more than three million Filipinos went hungry and did not have anything to eat at least once in the past three months.

AFP / Ted Aljibe

MANILA, Philippines — The number of new COVID-19 cases in the Philippines rose by 60% in the last seven days, the Department of Health said Monday

From June 27 to July 3, the country recorded 7,398 additional cases, or an average of 1,057 infections a day. This was a significant rise from 4,634 cases logged from June 20 to 26.

Of the new cases, 19 had severe and critical illness.

As of Sunday, there were 497 severe and critical admissions, which represent 8.4% of total COVID-19 patients in hospitals nationwide.

Despite the renewed increase in cases, the healthcare utilization rate in country remained low. Only 15.3% of the 2,487 beds in intensive care units were utilized. Meanwhile, only 19.9% of non-ICU beds were used.

The health department also reported that 74 fatalities were verified during the past week although none of those happened from June 20 to July 3.

Authorities said the presence of more transmissible Omicron subvariants, increased mobility, and the waning COVID-19 vaccine immunity of the public are fueling the rise in cases.

## Still no DOH chief

The DOH said Monday that its senior career officials are leading the agency's pandemic response and other operations while President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. decides on who to appoint to lead the department.

Press Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angles said the president is looking "very closely and carefully" at the candidates who will replace Francisco Duque III, former President Rodrigo Duterte's health chief.

Over 70.78 million Filipinos have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. However, only 15.14 million have gotten booster shots.

Since the start of pandemic in 2020, the Philippines has confirmed 3.7 million infections, with at least 60,000 deaths.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/07/04/2192996/doh-new-covid-19-cases-60-past-week>



# Positivity rate in NCR jumps from 7.5% to 8.3%

[Pia Lee-Brago](#) - The Philippine Star July 5, 2022 | 12:00am



Tourists and residents of Baguio City are seen walking along Session Road while wearing their face masks, although others improperly do so, on Monday.

Andy Zapata

MANILA, Philippines — Positivity rate for COVID-19 in the National Capital Region has climbed to 8.3 percent, from 7.5 percent on June 29, according to the OCTA Research group.

This, however, is not particularly high as the Department of Health (DOH) cut-off rate is six, professor Guido David of OCTA said. He noted that in other local government units in Metro Manila, the average daily attack rate (ADAR) is higher than 6.

With a slow growth rate, COVID-19 cases in Metro Manila might go down within one to two weeks, according to the research group.

COVID-19 growth rate in the metropolis was at 50 percent while the virus reproductive number was 1.5 to 1.6. The ADAR was also at 3.6 per 100,000 population, David noted during a televised briefing yesterday.

“The growth rate is going down. It’s stable. The reproduction growth rate is not going up so much lately. That’s why we’re expecting one to two weeks drop in COVID cases,” David said in Filipino.

Although cases are increasing in Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, Batangas, Pampanga, Benguet and Western Visayas, these are not high, he added.

He noted that Omicron subvariants BA.4 and BA.5 and the waning immunity could be factors in the increase in COVID-19 cases in some regions.

## 60% increase

Meanwhile, the DOH yesterday reported a 60-percent increase in the number of new COVID-19 cases last week compared to the previous week.

Based on the DOH bulletin covering the period of June 27 to July 3, the daily average number of new COVID-19 infections is 1,057 or 60 percent higher than those recorded from June 20 to 26.





The department noted that 7,398 new infections were recorded in the past week. Data showed that 74 COVID-19 deaths were verified while 19 new patients were in severe and critical conditions. The DOH reported that as of July 3, there were 497 severe and critical admissions in the country. Out of the 2,487 ICU beds, 381 (15.3 percent) were occupied. At the same time, 19.9 percent (4,342) of the 21,791 non-ICU COVID-19 beds have been occupied. The DOH said that 70,780,792 or 78.64 percent of the target population are now fully vaccinated, including the additional 422,335 who got vaccinated from June 27 to July 3. As to booster or additional doses, the DOH recorded a total of 15,147,905 individuals after an additional 200,125 got booster shots last week. – **Rhodina Villanuev**



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**Covid-19  
Situation and Response**





# National COVID-19 Case Bulletin

## July 4, 2022

Official DOHgov  
@DOHgovph

### Healthcare Utilization

(as of July 3, 2022)

**19.9%**  
Non-ICU Bed Utilization  
4,342 out of 21,791 non-ICU beds used

**15.3%**  
ICU Bed Utilization  
381 out of 2,487 ICU beds used

**497**  
Severe and Critical Admissions  
8.4% of total COVID-19 admissions

### Vaccination Accomplishment

(as of July 3, 2022)

**78.64%**  
% Coverage of Target Population\*

**77.66%**  
% Coverage of Target A2 Population\*\*

Fully Vaccinated Individuals  
**70,780,972**  
+422,335 vaccinated on Jun 27 to Jul 3  
Individuals with Booster/Additional Dose  
**15,147,905**  
+200,125 vaccinated on Jun 27 to Jul 3

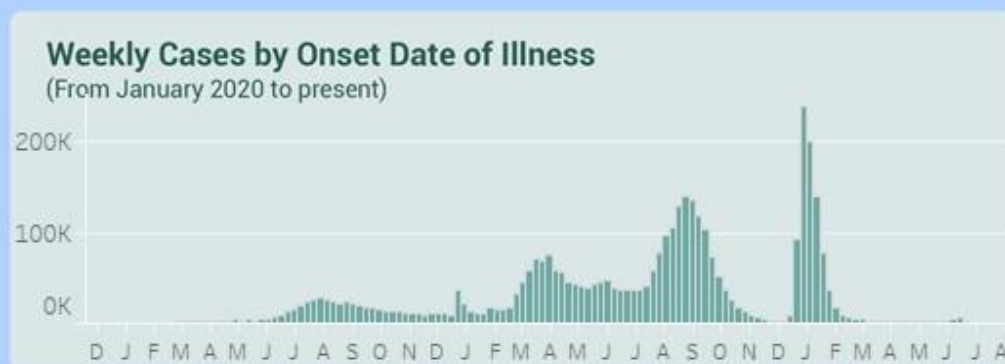
(added on Jun 27 to Jul 3)



### COVID-19 Cases

(as of July 3, 2022)

**New Cases**  
**+7,398**  
Daily Average Cases = 1,057  
(60% higher than cases on Jun 20 to Jun 26)  
Severe and Critical Cases  
**+19**  
(0.26% of new cases)  
Deaths Verified During The Past Week  
**+74**  
(0 deaths occurred on Jun 20 to Jul 3)



\*Target population refers to 80% of the total population (90,005,357 individuals)  
\*\*Target A2 population refers to 85% of the total Senior Citizen population (8,721,357 individuals)

#### DOH HOSPITAL HOTLINES

For health concerns and emergencies, you may access here the DOH hospital hotlines across the country:

[bit.ly/DOHHospitalHotlines](https://bit.ly/DOHHospitalHotlines)

#### DOH ONE HOSPITAL COMMAND CENTER (OHCC) HOTLINES

• 1555 • 0915-777-7777  
• 02-886-505-00 • 0919-977-3333

[bit.ly/OHCCHotline](https://bit.ly/OHCCHotline)

#### DOH TELEMEDICINE CONTACT DETAILS

[bit.ly/DOHTelemedicine](https://bit.ly/DOHTelemedicine)

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