03 JUNE 2022, FRIDAY



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



DENR to inventory trees damaged due to nailing of campaign materials

Philstar.com June 2, 2022 | 5:03pm



A man removes a campaign poster from a tree on April 19, 2022. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Handout

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources said Thursday it will conduct an inventory of trees damaged during the election campaign to prevent infection.

The agency ordered its regional offices to carry out an inventory of trees injured due to nailing and tacking of campaign materials such as tarpaulin banners, and to provide possible treatments appropriate to the conditions.

"The move is especially important as injured trees, if left unattended, are susceptible to infection and may not be able to grow properly with structural defects that make them prone to fail and fall over during typhoons," acting environment chief Jim Sampulna said.

According to the department, juvenile trees are less able to recover from injuries and are most vulnerable to long-term damages from injuries compared to mature trees over 10 years old.

Sampulna added that trees in urban areas need to be prioritized in the inventory.

"Trees in our urban areas have been decreasing through the years despite the countless benefits they give to improve the quality of life in cities, especially now that climate change is upon us," Sampulna said.

Over 114,000 pieces of campaign materials had been taken down as of April. DENR earlier said that the confiscated campaign paraphernalia will be donated to environment groups and other organizations that make bags and school supplies out of those materials. — Gaea Katreena Cabico

Source: https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-environment/2022/06/02/2185556/denrinventory-trees-damaged-due-nailing-campaignmaterials?fbclid=IwAR3AqC_Lhk8XLI15c8SMEkB5Lm73MrH6Mf8aPrsfwZ-HpJV1B_-Yi7wnKiY



DENR to rescue trees damaged by campaign materials

Rhodina Villanueva - The Philippine Star June 3, 2022 | 12:00am



Acting Environment Secretary Jim Sampulna said "the move is especially important as injured trees, if left unattended, are susceptible to infection and may not be able to grow properly with structural defects that make them prone to fail and fall over during typhoons."

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said it will carry out "search and rescue" operations of trees needing immediate treatment for injuries incurred as a result of being nailed with election campaign materials.

Acting Environment Secretary Jim Sampulna said "the move is especially important as injured trees, if left unattended, are susceptible to infection and may not be able to grow properly with structural defects that make them prone to fail and fall over during typhoons."

Sampulna's directive was issued through a memorandum signed by DENR Undersecretary for field operations - Luzon Visayas and Environment Juan Miguel Cuna last May 17, 2022 whose office oversees DENR's implementation of its "Oplan Baklas" (OB) in all its 16 regional offices.

In order to complete their OB accomplishment reports, Cuna likewise directed DENR regional offices through their respective regional executive directors to "conduct an inventory of trees damaged due to the election campaign and conduct possible treatments appropriate to the conditions" of the injured trees.

As of April, some 114,664 pieces of campaign materials and other paraphernalia had been taken down in DENR's OB which has been implemented nationwide under a DENR-Comelec-DILG Joint Memorandum which calls for tearing down or confiscation of campaign materials posted outside of common poster areas designated by the Commission on Elections.

Sampulna said trees in urban areas need to be prioritized, noting that "trees in our urban areas have been decreasing through the years despite the countless benefits they give to improve the quality of life in cities, especially now that climate change is upon us."

Of particular concern to the environment chief is the manner by which many of the trees had been cleared of the nailed posters and the likelihood that there are nails still left in the bark or trunk, which can cause long-term damage especially to young trees.

Sampulna explained, "Hammering a nail into a tree inevitably leaves a wound that exposes its insides to bacteria and fungi and causes decay of the wood, leading to a structurally weakened tree and can even shorten its life."



Juvenile trees are less able to recover from these injuries and most vulnerable to these long-term damage from injuries compared to mature trees over ten years old, he added.

For his part, Raul Briz, chief of forest protection of the Forest Management Bureau, said, "Our field officers may have to revisit the trees that have been cleared of these materials to remove unpulled nails and apply a wound dressing that contains fungicide and insecticide, especially in nail holes that show signs of surface rust."

Source: https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/06/03/2185690/denr-rescue-trees-damagedcampaignmaterials?fbclid=IwAR1GRFEVM6SThrC4V8ML66ABdX8Dl2PoCQdlhK8fmUmfQpF78KG ObDsH4xo





Headline Editorial Column Opinion Feature Article

DENR sets 'rescue' operations for trees after

May 9 elections

by<mark>Rio N. Araja</mark> June 2, 2022, 10:30 pm

After the May 9 polls, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is set to carry out "search-and-rescue" operations and inventory on injured trees cleared of campaign materials in a bid to prevent infection and even their death.

"The move is especially important as injured trees, if left unattended, are susceptible to infection and may not be able to grow properly with structural defects that make them prone to fail and fall over during typhoons," agency chief Jim Sampulna said.

Undersecretary for Field Operations-Luzon, Visayas, and Environment Juan Miguel Cuna issued a memorandum to all regional executive directors to "conduct an inventory of trees damaged due to the election campaign and conduct possible treatments appropriate to the conditions."

As of April, some 114,664 pieces of campaign materials and other paraphernalia were taken down in DENR's Oplan Baklas among DENR, the Commission on Elections, and the Department of Interior and Local Government outside of common poster areas designated by the Comelec.

Trees in urban areas must be prioritized, Sampulna said, noting that "trees in our urban areas have been decreasing through the years despite the countless benefits they give to improve the quality of life in cities, especially now that climate change is upon us."

He raised concern about how the trees had been cleared of the nailed campaign posters, saying nails still left in trees could cause long-term damage to trees, especially the young ones.

"Hammering a nail into a tree inevitably leaves a wound that exposes its insides to bacteria and fungi and causes decay of the wood, leading to a structurally weakened tree and can even shorten its life," he said.



DENR leadership transition team kasado na



June 2, 2022 @ 9:00 AM 22 hours ago

MANILA, Philippines – Upang maisakatuparan na maililipat ang programa para protektahan ang kalikasan tiniyak ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna na magkakaroon ng maayos na turnover ng mga programa at proyekto ng ahensiya para sa susunod na administrasyon bago pa man makapagtalaga ng bagong DENR chief.

Kaugnay nito upang maisakatuparan ang kanyang pangako ay bumuo na ng transition team si Sampulna na pinamumunuan ng DENR undersecretary upang matiyak na magkakaroon ng preparasyon para sa pagpapasa ng mga responsibilidad.

"We are ready. The documents have been prepared and will be presented to the next DENR Secretary," aniya.

Ayon kay Sampulna, ang hakbang na ito ay base na rin sa bilin ni Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte sa kanyang cabinet officials na gawin ito ng tama.

"By doing it right, he means you won't make excuses and you will not do any nonsensical actions. Because I have a good President, I will leave DENR in good governance," saad pa nito.

Kabilang sa mga malalaking programa ng DENR na ipapasa sa susunod na DENR chief ay ang Boracay Rehabilitation at Manila Bay Rehabilitation.

Samantala noong 2018 nang ipag-utos ni Pangulong Duterte ang rehabilitasyon ng Boracay Island dala ng mga alalahanin na ang tanyag nitong beaches at kulay asul na tubig ay nagmistulang dagat ng basura dahil na rin sa naging environmental damage.

Ang matagumpay na rehabilitasyon sa Boracay ang naging modelo para naman sa rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay.

Ang Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program na binansagan ding "Battle for Manila Bay" ay sinimulan noong Enero 27, 2019 bilang pagsunod sa Writ of Continuing Mandamus ng Supreme Court na nag-aatas sa 13 ahensiya ng gobyerno na i-clean up, rehabilitate at preserve ang Manila Bay, at ibalik at panatilihin ang tubig nito sa SB level na angkop para sa swimming, skin diving at iba pang contact recreation.

Bilang bahagi ng rehabilitation program ng makasaysayang baybayin ay naglagay ng solarpowered sewage treatment plant (STP) sa kahabaan ng Roxas Boulevard sa Manila noong Hulyo 30, 2020. **Santi Celario**

Source: <u>https://www.remate.ph/denr-leadership-transition-team-kasado-</u> na/?fbclid=IwAR1fZ7DsAOO0wfux7shsF5qUH5RiN7bDP46I699n5Lpf58h0gHycP-2eAk0



DENR to hand over Boracay, Manila Bay rehabs to next leadership

Philstar.com June 1, 2022 | 3:19pm



This photo taken on June 17, 2020 shows a general shot of empty famous white beach of Boracay Island in central Philippines. AFP/Ernesto Cruz

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources said Wednesday it will turn over to the incoming administration the programs to rehabilitate Boracay and Manila Bay.

In a release, DENR said its acting chief Jim Sampulna has formed a transition team to oversee the transfer of responsibilities to his successor. President-elect Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. has yet to pick an environment secretary.

"We are ready. The documents have been prepared and will be presented to the next DENR secretary," Sampulna said.

The efforts to rehabilitate Boracay island and Manila Bay are among the programs that will be handed over to the next DENR leadership.

Calling it a "cesspool," President Rodrigo Duterte shut down the over-developed Boracay island for a six-month makeover in 2018. DENR said the "successful" rehabilitation of the tourist destination served as a model for the cleanup of Manila Bay.

DENR began the rehabilitation of the degraded waterway in 2019, in compliance with the Supreme Court's order. The environment department reported a decrease in coliform levels in several sampling stations.

In 2020, DENR transformed a stretch of Manila Bay's shoreline into an artificial white sand beach made from crushed dolomite rocks. Officials said the move would help rehabilitate and protect coastal resources in the area, but scientists and environmentalists criticized the project as an expensive and temporary initiative that will not address the bay's problems.

Disaster recovery, rehab

DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and International Affairs Jonas Leones said they will also propose the continuation of the Task Force Build Back Better. DENR chairs the TFBBB, which was directed by Duterte to ensure post-disaster rehabilitation efforts in typhoonhit areas.



Leones added they will discuss with the incoming administration the strict implementation of environmental laws such as the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act. — Gaea Katreena Cabico

Source: <u>https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-</u> environment/2022/06/01/2185291/denr-hand-over-boracay-manila-bay-rehabs-nextleadership?fbclid=IwAR0yKfI96w5PwU1RdbaIZVgWUJ9D9GCmHLjXhCodXKXfKq226G2 VRV48XPU



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DENR to urge Marcos admin to continue Boracay, Manila Bay rehabilitation

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jun 02 2022 11:33 AM

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources said on Thursday it would urge the incoming administration of President-elect Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. to continue the rehabilitation of Boracay and Manila Bay.

The agency believes this is one of the programs which are "critical in terms of addressing the needs of our countrymen," said Environment Undersecretary Jonas Leones.

"For the Boracay [rehabilitation], it's just finishing touches. Patapos na kami diyan (we are almost done with that)," he told ANC's "Rundown."

"As regards to Manila Bay, we are planning to open the baywalk portion this coming June 12. We will be showcasing to the public what we have done in the dolomite area and some infrastructure we have put in place," he added.

The DENR will also ask the incoming administration to keep the task force on disaster recovery and rehabilitation, Leones said. He said the Task Force Build Back Better provides immediate response and addresses post-disaster recovery, rehabilitation and restoration of typhoon-hit areas.

Leones also urged the next DENR chief to strictly implement the country's environmental laws such as Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, and the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act.

Marcos has yet to pick an environment secretary. He will take his oath as the 17th President of the Philippines on June 30.

The DENR has formed a transition team for a smooth turnover of its programs and projects to the Marcos administration.

Source: <u>https://news.abs-cbn.com/video/news/06/02/22/denr-hopes-marcos-govt-to-continue-boracay-manila-bay-</u> <u>rehab?fbclid=IwAR3pM0MzojHDvMAi8W29vNXpQGtv9ePtM2hFCLdu5FrIXo4l02yVShBR</u> 508





Manila Bay Dolomite Beach to reopen on June 12

June 2, 2022



Photo courtesy of DENR official Facebook page

By Katrina Gracia Consebido

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna announced that the rehabilitated Manila Bay Dolomite Beach will reopen its doors to visitors on June 12.

The initial scheduled reopening in May was postponed due to the unfinished works on some of the infrastructures in the area.

"We are excited to open the dolomite beach to the public again on June 12. This is the good legacy of the Duterte administration, that's why we really aim to open it before President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's term ends," Sampulna said.

DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, and International Affairs Jonas Leones expressed his gratitude to the Department of Public Works and Highways and other government agencies in maintaining the 500-meter beach.

"This proves that the dolomite beach, thanks to the assistance of the Department of Public Works and Highways and the other agencies, is stable and will prevail," he said.

Moreover, Manila Bay Coordinating Office Executive Director Jacob Meimban said the reopening of the beach is only for visitation, walking, and sunset viewing.

He said the dolomite beach is "not yet for swimming as water quality is still not within the 100 most probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100 mL) standard fecal coliform level."

Once the beach reopens, the DENR will allow 1,500 to 3,500 persons to ensure compliance with minimum public health protocol. Pre-registration is not required, but full vaccination is encouraged among visitors. – ag



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Capas National Shrine gets a special patent

he Manila Times

By Jerry M. Hernandez

June 2, 2022



The Capas National Shrine is a memorial built by the Philippine government at Camp O'Donnell in Barangay Aranguren in Capas, Tarlac, in honor of all the Filipino and American soldiers who endured the historical Death March during World War 2. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CAPAS, Tarlac: The Capas <u>National Shrine</u> (<u>CNS</u>), one of the province's premier tourist destinations, received a special patent for its land from the <u>Department of Environment and</u> <u>Natural Resources</u> (DENR) Handog Titulo program.

DENR Undersecretary for Legal, Administration, Human Resources and Legislative Affairs <u>Ernesto Adobo Jr.</u> said the move was in line with the marching order of Acting Environment secretary <u>Jim Sampulna</u> to prioritize the issuance of land titles to all military, naval, and air force military camps and reservations.

"Through this [special patent], we are helping our fellow public servants from the <u>Department</u> <u>of National Defense</u> and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to achieve their mission of winning lasting peace for sustainable development by protecting their military camps from illegal occupation and adverse claims of ownership," he said.

The awarding of the special patent is a fundamental component of the DENR's thrust to improve land administration and management.

"It would be fundamental in strengthening and sustaining the government's greening programs, particularly in conserving 31,000 trees planted within the Capas National Shrine that symbolize 25,000 Filipinos and 6,000 Americans who died in the concentration camp," DENR Regional Executive Director Paquito Moreno Jr. said.

Source: <u>https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/06/02/news/regions/capas-national-shrine-gets-a-special-patent/1845849?fbclid=IwAR2F5ODL2aObZyLs0NUdra_BKYU6NXmrE622II91Z6IRZjj_GOP2</u>NbSiwWk





June 03, 2022 Date Headline Editorial Column Opinion Feature Article

DENR reviews Sarangani Bay Protective

Seascape accords

by<mark>Rio N. Araja June 2, 2022, 10:50 pm</mark>

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is reviewing five agreements on the 215,950-hectare Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape to ensure that the contracts abide by existing policies.

The review is being undertaken in compliance with a directive by former DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu to convert all compliant instruments into special use agreements in protected areas (SAPAs) pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act 7586 or the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992, as amended by RA 11038, otherwise known as the Expanded NIPAS (ENIPAS) Act of 2018.

The law allows the grant of tenure instrument to certain development projects called "special uses," except in strict nature reserves and in designated strict protection zones, for a term of 25 years, renewable for the same length of period.

The resource-use projects in the seascape with SAPA applications, covers 104,049 square meters (sqm) or 10.4 hectares under a memoranda of agreement with Cargil Oil Mills Philippines Inc. for a jetty-pier project (44,358 sqm), YBS Green Oil Corp.'s oil depot and terminal project (34,444 sqm), Petron Corp.'s fuel terminal project (11,373 sqm), Seatrade Canning Corp.'s tuna processing and production plant (9,925 sqm) and Alliance Select Food International Inc.'s wastewater treatment and wharf facilities (3,949 sqm).

The Kamanga Agro-Industrial Ecozone Development Corp., which also holds a memorandum of agreement (MoA), has been issued SAPA for a jetty-pier project covering an area of 211,970 sqm.

"This measure is aimed at making development projects covered by MoA consistent not only with the NIPAS Act, as amended, but with the Indigenous Peoples Right Act of 19977," Secretary Jim Sampulna said.

He said there are ancestral lands within protected areas that are covered by the agreements.

He cited the DENR's arrangement with the Masungi Georeserve Foundation Inc. covering some 2,700 hectares within the Rizal watershed, as another case that needed to be rectified through the issuance of SAPA.

The agreement was issued in 2017, or one year before the ENIPAS was enacted into law.

The free and prior informed consent of concerned indigenous peoples would be required, "something that was not considered when the MoA was inked with MGFI in 2017."

The agreement does not provide for the payment of user-fee or government share from profits and does not cite specific validity period, giving MGFI "perpetual land trust" despite some of its area is inside the 26,125-hectare Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape, a legislated protected area by virtue of the ENIPAS Act of 2018, the DENR said.



3-month off season in Mt. Apo begins to ensure protection, conservation

ABS@CBN

NEWS

Posted at Jun 02 2022 02:33 PM | Updated as of Jun 02 2022 02:34 PM



A climber wears a face mask while hiking across Mt. Apo's boulders as protection against the novel coronavirus as well as fumes from the sulfur vents. Hernel Tocmo, ABS-CBN News/File

Trekking and camping activities are temporarily prohibited in the Philippines' highest summit Mount Apo as it officially begins its off-season Wednesday.

The Mount Apo Natural Park - Protected Area Management Board started implementing annual off-season since last year or every 1st of June up to the 31st of August every year. The closure is pursuant to MANP-PAMB En Banc Resolution No. 08, series of 2021.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resource in Davao region said in a statement that the entire season gives time for the "sacred mountain" to recuperate.

"It is to likewise allow the wild life species to enjoy their habitat without disturbance," DENR Davao said.

For Sta. Cruz Tourism Office, it will also give way for trails and campsites to rest and rehabilitate and for wildlife to breed and reproduce.

"Further, it is to ensure the protection and conservation of Mt. Apo considering its aesthetic, economic, cultural and ecological importance and its unique biodiversity," DENR Davao added.

Trekking activities will resume on Sept. 1.

The Mount Apo Natural Park, with a total land area of about 64,000 hectares, is located in south-central Mindanao spanning the provinces of North Cotabato in Region 12, and Davao del Sur and Davao City in Region 11.

With an altitude of 2,954 meters above sea level, it is the highest mountain and one of the most popular nature-based tourism sites in the country.

MANP was declared a protected area and a component of the National Protected Areas System under Republic Act 9237 in 2003.

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/02/22/3-month-off-season-in-mt-apo-begins-to-ensure-protection-

conservation?fbclid=IwAR21VZrq_kMoGu_dGnIMusAjJInHS_KW9ca0qL7CYfDIGfRDWEd_-WQ6MMs



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June 03, 2022	Headline
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River summit begins in Cebu City

By: Delta Dyrecka Letigio - Multimedia Reporter - CDN Digital|June 02,2022 - 07:59 PM



River Summit in Cebu City.

CEBU CITY, Philippines — The Cebu City government will hold its first ever River Summit from June 2 to 3, 2022.

Holding the summit is fulfilling Cebu City Michael Rama's 21 gun salute programs, which are programs in memory of the late Mayor Edgardo Labella.

Outgoing Vice Mayor and incoming First Councilor Donaldo Hontiveros, who is handling the summit, said that the two-day convention aimed to identify the problems of the river systems in the city.

There are seven major rivers in the city including Guadalupe, Kinalumsan, Mahiga, Lahug, Estero de Parian, Bulacao, and Butuanon.

Hontiveros said that there was a need to address the perennial problem of the rivers in the city that had become sewage systems instead of waterways because of the tons and tons of garbage there.

"Gigather nato ang 80 barangays so that even if dili sila duol sa river, naa gihapon silay macontribute. Ang private sector, atong national agencies, ang EMB (Environment Management Bureau), and ang atong counterpart ang CCENRO (Cebu City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CCENRO), to consolidate information and solutions," said the vice mayor.

(We gathered the (representatives of) 80 barangays so that even if they are not near a river, they can still contribute. The private sector, our national agencies, the EMB (Environmental Management Bureau), and our counterpart the CCENRO (Cebu City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CCENRO) to consolidate information and solutions.)

The barangays' representatives have been placed in focus groups to discuss the plans to rehabilitate the seven rivers of the city and eventually turn them back to their ecological health.

For the vice mayor, there is a sense of urgency to fix the problem of the rivers, but the reality remains that the solution cannot be done immediately.

It will take process, time, and collaboration so that the rivers that have been left behind in the city's progress finally become the healthy waterways as they should be.

On the first day of the summit, the EMB in Central Visayas, CCENRO, and Oceana, discussed the current state of the riverways in the city and the challenges faced by the communities living





nearby.

On the second day, the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) is expected to discuss the laws that guide the local government units (LGUs) in the preservation of the environment.

Hontiveros, who would be returning as councilor in the next Sangguniang Panglungsod (SP), said the summit would be the foundation of the future ordinances that he would be filing in order to preserve the waters of Cebu City.

The two-day event is attended by stakeholders in most industries including business, residential, non-government, cause-oriented, and other organizations.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION &
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Rivers in Cebu City dirty, unsafe but hope remains — CCENRO, EMB

By: Delta Dyrecka Letigio - CDN Digital Multi-Media Reporter|June 02,2022 - 08:39 PM



Volunteers spend their Saturday morning, Feb. 22, 2019, helping in the cleanup of Bulacao River in Cebu City spearheaded by the Cebu City Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro). | CDND Photo/Delta Dyrecka Letigio

CEBU CITY, Philippines — Cebu City's major river systems are dirty and unsafe for the public, especially the downstream.

This was the report of the representative of the City Environment and Natural Resources (CENRO) and the Environment and Management Bureau in Central Visayas (EMB-7) during the first day of the River Summit in Cebu City.

Kay Espinosa of the EMB-7 said that based on their testing, most of the rivers especially the downstream have tested positive for fecal matter.

This means that the water in the city's rivers is not safe for bathing or drinking by the public.

"In general, our water quality shows that many of our rivers suffer a high level of fecal coliforms. Tungod kay high level of fecal coliform, it shows nga naa tay wastes from warm blooded animals particularly sa mga toilet nato, mga animals, mga baboy," said Espinosa.

Espinosa notes that water quality can change through time and the seven river systems differ from each on the quality of water, but generally, the public is not advised to use the water of any of the downstream rivers in the city.

Still, the EMB-7 believes there is hope in reversing the current condition of the river systems through a concrete and intensive plan to rehabilitate them.

Espinosa said the rivers are not yet biologically dead, and there remains hope to save them.

The EMB-7 is grateful to the Cebu City government for holding the River Summit that brings together all stakeholders to discuss the current state of the rivers and the long-term plan to save them.

"As long as we have programs and projects, and we work closely with our stakeholders, there is hope for our rivers. We are looking forward that the summit will encourage the city government, also our stakeholders, to work together in the implementation of different laws and programs to improve the water quality of our rivers," said Espinosa.

Engineer Myka Marie Llanos of the CCENRO, said that seven river systems in the city span various areas and even border the city.

Some rivers are long and stretch from the mountain barangays to the sea, while others are mainly situated in urban areas.



"We have the problems in the upstream areas where grabe ang septage problems. Magbuhi ang mga tawo without proper septic facilities. And then midstream, we have drought because of the current situation in the mountains with extreme tree cutting and we also have mining, quarrying, especially sa river beds nato. Wala man ta nagdili ana, pero it's an alarming issue. There should be measures ba."

"Midstream walay nay water kay dili na healthy atong watersheds. Sa atong downstream, it's supposed to be the most critical because mao ni nga area nga marelease sa dagat. Ang magic naa dinha, daghan tag tubig sa downstream because we have untreated wastewater released to our rivers," she said.

Llanos said that the conditions affecting the riverways can be improved only if there is a collaboration between the barangays, the local government unit (LGU), and the private stakeholders.

CCENRO has been conducting information dissemination in the communities, but without the will of the people to help, it will be difficult to implement the ordinances of the city.

However, the agency cannot monitor all the time the riverside communities that are seen to be the major contributants to the garbage and septic problems of the rivers.

The agency has talked with barangays in deputizing barangay personnel to cite violators of the anti-littering ordinances especially households that throw their garbage directly into the river.

CCENRO hopes that by empowering the barangay, it will be one of the long-term solutions to the perennial problem.

Llanos added that the River Summit is a chance for CCENRO to engage with stakeholders and present the realities of the river systems in hopes to get their commitment.

CCENRO hopes that after the two-day convention, they will be able to influence the stakeholders to care for the rivers' rehabilitation. /rcg



MGB says nickel mining in Davao Oriental outside protected area, not an open-pit mine

June 1, 2022 | 7:08 pm



THE MINES and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) has clarified that the nickel mining project in Davao Oriental is not an open-pit mine and confirmed a local government's earlier statement that its location is outside the Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary, a declared protected area and UNESCO World Heritage Site.

"Please be informed that the Austral-Asia Link Mining Corporation and Hallmark Mining Corporation (ALMC/HMC)... are nickel mines with valid and existing Mineral Production Sharing Agreements... and employ strip or contour mining method only," the bureau's Davao regional office said in a statement.

It also said that the companies have "already waived a portion of their mining claims to be part of the protected wildlife sanctuary."

HMC says on its website that it "relinquished 7,200 hectares to adequately expand the Hamiguitan World Heritage Site."

The delineation of the buffer zone boundaries was undertaken in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), according to the mines bureau.

"This office acknowledges the concerns raised by various environmental groups and advocates," it said. "Rest assured that you are heard and that the DENR is likewise putting its best foot forward to keep our environment and natural resources sustainably managed."

The local government of Mati City, Davao Oriental's capital and host of the project, earlier allayed public concern over the project following photos posted on social media about the mining site's location.

Advocacy group Interfacing Development Interventions for Sustainability (IDIS), Inc. said the mining project's close proximity to Mt. Hamiguitan as well as the Pujada Bay Seascape, also a protected area, poses a serious environmental threat.

"Regardless of the claim that it is outside the protected area delineation, we strongly uphold and fight for the ecological rights and integrities of these watersheds from ridge to reef," IDIS said. — Maya M. Padillo

Source: <u>https://www.bworldonline.com/the-nation/2022/06/01/452328/mgb-says-nickel-mining-in-davao-oriental-outside-protected-area-not-an-open-pit-mine/</u>







DENR-MGB and mining companies in Caraga conduct bamboo planting activity in mining areas

73 views • 2 Jun 2022

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DENR-MGB and mining companies in Caraga conduct bamboo planting activity in mining areas

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Source: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kp74ho-Wmc</u>





ABS-CBN News 22h . @

TINGNAN: Nasagip ng mga awtoridad ang isang grass owl at isang serpent eagle sa Davao del Norte at Davao Oriental kamakailan.

Na-rescue ang sugatan na grass owl sa Davao del Norte noong Mayo 24. Ayon sa municipal environment and natural resources office, tumama sa isang barbed wire ang kuwago kaya nagtamo ito ng sugat na agad namang ginamot.

Isang batang serpent eagle naman ang na-rescue noong Miyerkoles, Hunyo 1, mula sa isang poacher o iligal na mangangaso sa Davao Oriental.

Ayon sa isang retiradong pulis na nagmamay-ari ng beach resort doon, agad niyang nakumpiska ang agila mula sa poacher. | Ulat ni Hernel Tocmo

(ma: MENRO New Corella, Mark Oliver Alvite)



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ISANG BABY SERPENT EAGLE, NASAGIP SA MATI CITY, DAVAO ORIENTAL

Isang baby serpent eagle ang matagumpay na nasagip sa Macambol, Mati City, Davao Oriental noong Miyerkules (June 1).

Ayon kay Ferdinand Mabandos, isang retiradong pulis, agad niya itong kinumpiska sa isang residente na dumaan sa kaniyang pagmamay-aring beach resort.

Ayon naman kay City Environment chief Zaldy Lumaan, bagaman hindi napapabilang sa endangered species ang serpent eagles, ilegal pa rin ang pagdakip dito.

Agad namang nai-turn over ni Mabandos ang nasabing agila sa DENR office sa Mati City at inaasahang ililipat ito sa isang rehabilitation facility sa Tagum City.

Ang coastal village ng Macambol ay idineklara ng national government bilang santuaryo ng Philippine eagles. Bahagi ito ng Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary, ang nag-iisang World Heritage Site sa Mindanao.//





Youth solon lauds adoption of House climate justice resolution

Published June 2, 2022, 11:15 AM by Seth Cabanban

On the last day of the 18th Congress' third regular session Wednesday, June 1, the House of Representatives adopted House Resolution (HR) No. 2605 expressing the House's sensibilities towards climate justice,

The adoption by the lower chamber was praised by Kabataan Party-list Rep. Sarah Jane Elago praised.



Rep. Sarah Jane Elago, Kabataan Party-list

"This youth rep would just like to put on the record our utmost gratitude to various groups of climate action and climate justice advocates and eco-warriors who have tirelessly worked with and alongside us for the adoption of House Resolution 2605 and for the advancement of multiple legislative measures which aim to urgently address the planetary emergency," Elago said in a statement on Thursday, June 2.

HR No.2605 is formally titled "Resolution Expressing the Sense of the House of Representatives for Climate Justice, Strengthened Implementation of the Philippines Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Laws, and for the Developed Countries to Deliver on Their Commitments."

It was sponsored by Elago, Bohol Rep. Edgar Chatto, and Antique Rep. and Senator-elect Loren Legarda.

"Through our persistent collective efforts, there have been major developments but we also know that more needs to be done, not just here but moreso for governments of big economies and corporations around the globe to limit global temperature to 1.5 C and to deliver accurate and just solutions to the climate crisis," the youth lawmaker concluded.

Source: https://mb.com.ph/2022/06/02/youth-solon-lauds-adoption-of-house-climate-justiceresolution/?fbclid=IwAR1pe-3XXeHsVOYLHwFmsnQCm9bSA3-M_NWc9VvjfqTLTku7vByUkVwtG8k



Abellanosa: Climate change and politics

unSta



RHODERICK ABELLANOSA FRINGES AND FRONTIERS June 02, 2022

IN ONE of the presidential debates, the nine presidentiables, because BBM was absent, were made to answer questions on climate change: different aspects of climate change policy, including renewable energy, water security, and nutrition.

I am not going to delve into the intricacies of their answers. It should be enough to remark, however, that the incoming president of the Philippines should not disregard "climate change." It is not enough to just say something about it. It is urgent and imperative to implement existing laws on environmental conservation. More importantly, the country's new leadership should upgrade the effort to protect the climate by expanding networks and lobbying on an international scale.

It's unfortunate that for all the noise that was made during the campaign period, we did not spend enough time for more intelligent discussions on a problem that can wipe all of us out from this country. It is true that the candidates said something about "this or that" on climate change and that their points were printed on papers. But unless we think that all of those were enough – we must admit that climate change and the challenge to further advance "climate justice" have not been taken seriously during the campaign period.

"The impacts of climate change will not be borne equally or fairly, between rich and poor, women and men, and older and younger generations." This is a serious reminder to our politicians who have made promises to their supporters especially those in the most vulnerable areas of society.

Between the rich and the poor, the poor will carry more burdens. Between women and men, women will have to suffer more on the global scale. Between the old and the younger generations, the future (younger) generations will have to suffer more because of the effects of the choices and the activities of the current (older) generation. This can be said in simpler terms: even in suffering people are not equal, but unfortunately, those who are more responsible suffer less than those who are less responsible.

How the next administration will carry out its promises to the people will have to be tested not just in terms of infrastructures, cash incentives, and subsidies. It will have to be judged based on how the different areas of concern in politics are integrated in the much larger fight for climate justice. Interrogatively put: will the plans, projects, and policies of this new administration benefit the poor in terms of protecting them from the harms brought about by climate change? It remains to be seen how politicians will deal with mining and other giant or multinational companies.



Part of the needed response from the government are the provisions for a universal healthcare or massive or country-wide implementation of risk-reduction measures in the face of rising water levels. Again, it remains to be seen whether in the face of more typhoons coming and floods resulting from it – something would be done to better our disaster and risk management program at the LGU level.

As always, our country is not totally "zero" in terms of laws – the problem is the implementation. We have an existing Climate Change Act that created a climate change commission under the Office of the President. We also have a National Framework Strategy on Climate Change and the Philippine Green Jobs Act of 2016.

We can only hope to see a more courageous President who will take the lead in using our justice system to impose accountability on companies who have cause serious damage to nature and peoples affected by climate change.*



House probe on delayed Manila Bay project sought

Delon Porcalla - The Philippine Star June 3, 2022 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — An administration lawmaker has filed a resolution in the House of Representatives, urging the committee on good government and public accountability to conduct an investigation over a developer's delay to finish its contract with the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA).

Rep. Enrico Pineda of 1Pacman party-list, who chairs the House committee on labor, said there is a need to look into the allegedly illegal claims and onerous changes the DM Wenceslao Corp. committed in its contract with the PRA.

House Resolution 2611 aims to conduct a hearing, in aid of legislation, on DM Wenceslao's September 1989 project along Manila Bay wherein the contractor, along with three other firms collectively known as R-1 Consortium, agreed to reclaim the area.

The contractor entered into an agreement with the PRA for the reclamation project.

Pineda said the project suffered delays and extensions.

"The PRA has been hounded and harassed by DM Wenceslao to issue a transfer certificate of title to the reclaimed lands," he said.

Pineda said government agencies must remain free from harassment by private corporations seeking to "earn profit at whatever cause, especially if this is at the expense of the government."

He said various government offices have determined that the implementation of certain provisions of the agreement between the PRA and DM Wenceslao was allegedly disadvantageous to the agency.

Source: <u>https://www.philstar.com/nation/2022/06/03/2185624/house-probe-delayed-manila-bay-project-</u> sought?fbclid=IwAR2DE4i4aLONnggI3sEMBldD6A3MC4FsRCn68Xy13A8FUqsdj71eIkHg4c

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION & INITIATIVES	ABS CBN	June 03, 2022 Date	Headline Editorial Column
SERVICE	NEWS	1 of 2 Page	Opinion Feature Article

DBM says calamity fund enough as typhoon season approaches

ABS-CBN News Posted at Jun 02 2022 03:34 PM | Updated as of Jun 02 2022 03:41 PM



An aerial view of destroyed houses on a collapsed mountain side along the coastline in the village of Pilar, Abuyog town, Leyte province on April 14, 2022 day after a landslide struck the area due to heavy rains at the height of tropical Storm Megi. Bobbie Alota, AFP

MANILA — The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) assured the public on Thursday that the government has enough funds to respond to calamities this year as more typhoons are expected to hit the Philippines in the coming months.

"To date, mayroon pa tayong sapat na pondo. 'Di pa naman masyadong nabawasan 'yung calamity fund. Kalagitnaan [pa] lang ng taon," DBM Sec. Tina Canda said at the Laging Handa briefing.

(To date, we have enough funds. The calamity fund for the year has only been slightly used up. And we're only halfway through the year.)

She did not provide the exact amount left for the calamity fund, but said that the contingent fund that will augment the calamity fund is still at P6.8 billion.

The contingent fund is released after the approval of the President, she said.

State weather bureau PAGASA says that on average, around 20 tropical cyclones enter the Philippine area of responsibility per year, with about 8 or 9 of them crossing the country.

The peak of the typhoon season is July to October, when nearly 70 percent of all typhoons develop, according to PAGASA.

Last month, PAGASA declared the start of the rainy season and advised that intermittent rains associated with the southwest monsoon or "Habagat" would start to affect Metro Manila and western sections of the country.

Agaton, the first major storm to have hit the country this year, has left 175 dead and millions worth of damage to infrastructure and agriculture.



Climate change is behind weird rainfall patterns in Europe

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BY**BLOOMBERG OPINION** JUNE 2, 2022

Emissions of planet-warming greenhouse gases caused by human activities are directly responsible for long-term dry conditions in the Mediterranean basin and the increasing rainfall over the rest of Europe during winter, according to a study by the UK's Met Office.

The research, published in Journal of Climate, is the first to show the direct link between seasonal rainfall trends in Europe and climate change, the Met Office said in a statement. Scientists compared climate scenarios with and without human influence.

"With this clear identification of the role of greenhouse gasses, this study provides further evidence that changes to our rainfall patterns in Europe will continue as our atmosphere warms," said Nikos Christidis, lead author and Met Office climate scientist. "Even though countries are used to these kind of extremes, the increase in frequency, severity and intensity is going to demand greater adaptation to a new kind of climate regime."

Scientists are highly confident that man-made climate change has an influence on precipitation patterns on land, according to the conclusions of the latest report from the UN-backed Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. But the regional effects of this global trend have been more difficult to detect, making it harder to come up with mitigation strategies to help vulnerable populations and the environment.

The study looked at seasonal precipitation in Europe since the beginning of the 20th century. It found that the Mediterranean basin is getting drier, while the rest of the continent is becoming wetter. This trend is stronger in winter and weaker in summer, when drying is more widespread across the whole of Europe.

As the planet warms, water evaporates and water vapor increases by 6 percent to 7 percent, according to research cited in the study. The higher moisture in the air leads to changes in rainfall patterns. The Met Office's findings fit with attribution studies of single events like the floods that devastated Germany last year. Human emissions of greenhouse gases are making such events more intense and more frequent.

Using a new generation of climate models, scientists were able to create a scenario where human influence on the climate was removed, another where the climate was influenced only by aerosols and a third where it was influenced by aerosols and greenhouse gases. They concluded that greenhouse gas emissions were the main contributor to the trend, but that it was also weakened by aerosols, which have a cooling effect on the planet.

Ironically, as the world—and particularly Europe—seek to improve air quality in cities and restrict emissions from industrial activity, changes in rainfall will accelerate, the study concluded, because of a decrease in the amount of polluting aerosols. That, coupled with the continuing warming of the planet, means there's an increasing risk of extremely dry seasons in the Mediterranean and extremely wet seasons elsewhere in Europe.

Even in countries with a relatively high capacity to adapt to the changing climate, communities may still be greatly vulnerable, Christidis said. "The climate will shift to something that we're not experiencing now and these changes will all come with a raft of impacts."

Bloomberg Opinion

Source: https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/06/02/climate-change-is-behind-weird-rainfallpatterns-in-europe/?fbclid=IwAR3LLdHJEKrjCfq_oYlS6nih9iCN8e5d_BiUGhnshpEL-CHsnXuFcno8q68



Big tobacco's environmental impact is 'devastating' — WHO

Nina Larson - Philstar.com June 2, 2022 | 8:27am



Medical students and staff from a hospital display placards during an awareness rally against the use of tobacco.

GENEVA, Switzerland — The tobacco industry is a far greater threat than many realize as it is one of the world's biggest polluters, from leaving mountains of waste to driving global warming, the WHO said Tuesday.

The World Health Organization accused the industry of causing widespread deforestation, diverting badly needed land and water in poor countries away from food production, spewing out plastic and chemical waste as well as emitting millions of tons of carbon dioxide.

In its report released on World No Tobacco Day, the UN agency called for the tobacco industry to be held to account and foot the bill for the cleanup.

The report, "Tobacco: poisoning our planet", looks at the impacts of the whole cycle, from the growth of plants to the manufacturing of tobacco products, to consumption and waste.

While tobacco's health impacts have been well documented for decades—with smoking still causing more than eight million deaths worldwide every year—the report focuses on its broader environmental consequences.

The findings are "quite devastating," Ruediger Krech, WHO director of health promotion, told AFP, charging that the industry is "one of the biggest polluters that we know of."

Poison

He slammed tobacco companies' frequent efforts to rehabilitate their image through beach cleanups and funding environmental and disaster relief organizations as "greenwashing".

"The tobacco industry dumps toxic waste into communities and depletes natural resources," he told a press conference.

"Tobacco is not only poisoning people, it's poisoning our planet."

The industry is responsible for the loss of some 600 million trees each year—or five percent of global deforestation—while tobacco growing and production uses 200,000 hectares of land and 22 billion tons of water annually, the report found.

It also emits around 84 million tons of carbon dioxide, it said.



In addition, "tobacco products are the most littered item on the planet, containing over 7,000 toxic chemicals, which leech into our environment when discarded," Krech said.

4.5 trillion cigarette butts

He pointed out that each one of the estimated 4.5 trillion cigarette butts that end up in the oceans, rivers, sidewalks and beaches every year can pollute 100 liters of water.

And up to a quarter of all tobacco farmers contract so-called green tobacco sickness, or poisoning from the nicotine they absorb through the skin.

Farmers who handle tobacco leaves all day consume the equivalent of 50 cigarettes worth of nicotine a day, Krech said.

This is especially worrying for the many children involved in tobacco farming.

"Just imagine a 12-year-old being exposed to 50 cigarettes a day," he said.

Most tobacco is grown in poorer countries, where water and farmland are often in short supply, and where such crops are often grown at the expense of vital food production, the report said.

UN agencies have launched a project to try to help farmers transition to other crops.

Plastic pollution

At the same time the processing and transportation of tobacco account for a significant share of global greenhouse gas emissions—with the equivalent of one-fifth of the global airline industry's carbon footprint.

In addition, products like cigarettes, smokeless tobacco and e-cigarettes also contribute significantly to the global build-up of plastic pollution, WHO warned.

Cigarette filters contain microplastics—the tiny fragments that have been detected in every ocean and even at the bottom of the world's deepest trench—and make up the second-highest form of plastic pollution worldwide, the report said.

Stressing that there is no evidence filters provide any proven health benefits over smoking nonfiltered cigarettes, the UN agency urged policy makers worldwide to consider banning them.

The WHO also called for governments to immediately halt the some \$500 billion in subsidies the tobacco industry receives each year, and also urged them to stop allowing taxpayers to foot the bill for cleaning up the industry's mess.

Each year, China for instance dishes out around \$2.6 billion and India around \$766 million, while Brazil and Germany pay some \$200 million each to clean up littered tobacco products, the report found.

It is important, Krech said, that "the industry pay actually for the mess that they are creating."

Source: https://www.philstar.com/headlines/climate-and-

environment/2022/06/02/2185506/big-tobaccos-environmental-impact-devastatingwho?fbclid=IwAR1XNIKEs95NCNJY8viVIYw4ueqo_UFt6aMc3ZfwEJIvw08xn1CEtVuGYZ

03 JUNE 2022, FRIDAY



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

TITLE

DENR to launch SAR ops for trees 'victimized' by erring politicians

By Jonathan L. Mayuga

HE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said it would conduct "search and rescue" (SAR) operations for trees injured by erring politicians during the recently concluded national and local elections.

DENR Acting Secretary Jim O. Sampulna said "the move is especially important as injured trees if left unattended, are susceptible to infection and may not be able to grow properly with structural defects that make them prone to fail and fall over during typhoons."

DENR Undersecretary for Field Operations-Luzon, Visayas and Environment Juan Miguel Cuna last May 17, 2022, whose office oversees DENR's implementation of its "Oplan Baklas" (OB) in all its 16 regional offices, had already started carrying out Sampulna's directive.

In order to complete their OB accomplishment reports, Cuna likewise told DENR regional offices through their respective Regional Executive Directors to "conduct an inventory of trees damaged due to the election campaign and conduct possible treatments appropriate to the conditions" of the injured trees.

As of April, some 114,664 pieces of campaign materials and other paraphernalia had been taken down in DENR's OB which has been implemented nationwide under a DENR, Commission of Elections (Comelec), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Joint Memorandum to tear down or confiscate poll campaign materials posted outside of common poster areas designated by the Comelec.

BusinessMirror

Sampulna cited trees in urban areas need to be prioritized, noting that "trees in our urban areas have been decreasing through the years despite the countless benefits they give to improve the quality of life in cities, especially now that climate change is upon us."

Of particular concern to the environment, the chief said, is how many of the trees had been cleared of the nailed campaign posters and the likelihood that there are nails still left in trees that can cause longterm damage to trees, especially the young ones.

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"Hammering a nail into a tree inevitably leaves a wound that exposes its insides to bacteria and fungi and causes decay of the wood, leading to a structurally weakened tree and can even shorten its life," Sampulna explained.

Juvenile trees are less able to recover from these injuries and are most vulnerable to these long-term damages from injuries compared to mature trees over 10 years old.

"Our field officers may have to revisit the trees that have been cleared of these materials to remove unpulled nails and apply a wound dressing that contains fungicide and insecticide, especially in nail holes that show signs of surface rust," according to Raul Briz, chief of Forest Protection office of the Forest Management Bureau.



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EDITORIAL

By Joel dela Torre

ENVIRONMENT Acting Secretary Jim Sampulna formed a transition team for a smooth turnover of the agency's programs and projects to the incoming administration, even before the appointment of a new DENR chief. According to Sampulna, the team will be chaired by an undersecretary to oversee the preparations for the handing over of responsibilities to the next leadership. He did not claborate further.

did not elaborate further. "We are ready. The documents have been prepared and will be presented to the

"We are ready. The documents have been prepared and will be presented to the next DENR Secretary," he said. The Acting environment chief said this move is aligned with President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's instruction to his cabinet officials to "do it right." "By doing it right, he means you won't make excuses and you will not do any nonsensical actions. Because I have a good President, I will leave DENR in good governance," he said. Among the top DENR programs to be handed over to the incoming DENR chief are the Boracay Rehabilitation and Manila Bay Rehabilitation. In 2018, President Duterte ordered the rehabilitation of Boracay Island over concerns that its famous beaches and clear blue waters have been transformed into a "cesspool" because of sustained environmental damage. Boracay's successful rehabilitation has served as a model for the rehabilitation of Manila Bay.

Boracay's successful rehabilitation has served as a froder for the rehabilitation Program, of Manila Bay. Other responsibilities tobe turned over is the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program, dubbed as "Battle for Manila Bay" which started on January 27, 2019, in compliance with the Supreme Court's Writ of Continuing Mandamus directing 13 government ngencies to clean up, rehabilitate, and preserve Manila Bay, and restore and maintain its waters to SB level to make it fit for swimming, skin-diving, and other forms of contact recreation.

contact recreation. The Manila Bay's Dolomite Beach is a part of the beach nourishment process under the Manila Bay Rehabilitation program. Meanwhile, Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and International Affairs Jonas Leones said that they will also be proposing to the next administration the continuation of task force on disaster recovery and rehabilitation created under the Duterte administration and the strict implementation of major environmental laws.



COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Beach festival revived as marine biodiversity effort

OLUNTEER scuba divers from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and local government units of Sarangani Province lead the underwater collection of the crown of thorns (COT) which prey on the coral reefs of Sarangani Bay, one of the country's most biodiversity-rich protected seascapes. One of Mindanao's richest bodies of water and diving haven, the bay has been experiencing occasional outbreaks of COTs over the past few years due to the loss of its natural predators such as the Triton trumpet, Napoleon wrasse, whitespotted pufferfish, and titan triggerfish which keep its population in check, as well as the rise in sea surface temperature due to climate change. The four-day environmental initiative is part of the soft revival of the annual Sarangani Bay (SarBay) Festival, regarded as the biggest beach party in the archipelago held at the famed white beach of Gumasa, Glan which was suspended for the past two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Aside from the COT collection, the Wake Up Sarbay Festival also includes a bike-for-environment ride which will be participated in by cycling enthusiasts who will plant mangroves in the coastal villages of Malapatan town.



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Urgent plea for environment

ailed as "very welcome (but) long overdue," the recent court ruling against Marcopper Mining Corp. was handed down almost 30 years after "one of the worst mining and environmental disasters in Philippine history."

On May 16, the Marinduque Regional Trial Court Branch 38 ordered Marcopper to pay P200,000 in temperate damages to each of the 30 plaintiffs affected by the 1993 Marcopper mine spill in Mogpog town, and another in moral damages. The mining each of the second

P100,000 in moral damages. The mining company was also ordered to pay P1 million in exemplary damages.

The court blamed the mining firm's negligence in maintaining its Maguila-guila siltation dam, which burst and flooded the Mogpog River and nearby communities with toxic residues of heavy metals.

While describing the court decision as "a major victory for the people of Marinduque," the province's representative and Speaker Lord Allan Velasco said the government must continue to exact accountability from the mining firm "for the consequences of its irresponsible mining practices" that led to two major mine spills in 1993 and 1996. Poisoned with mine tailings, both the Mogpog and Boac rivers are now considered biologically dead. Meanwhile, Velasco said, his province mates "continue to suffer the effects of the mining tragedy as evidenced by health problems, making it all the more imperative to come up with stringent and long-term environmental solutions."

While the damages awarded are widely considered to be "too little, too late," they brought into sharp focus the huge social and economic costs, as well as environmental risks, involved in mining, and the need for stricter government regulations to protect the community. Quite a timely reminder, too, given the country's recent lifting of its four-year-old ban on open-pit mining for copper, gold, silver, and complex ores to boost venue.

In Palawan, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) early this month canceled the environmental clearance certificate issued in 2007 and 2009 to the Coron Bay Development Project, which the DENR itself admitted was a "minor lapse" on its part.

"The progress of the project should have been closely monitored [by local environmental officials]," DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones said of the reclamation project that had already covered 40 of its original 48-hectare proposed expanse, when the damage it had inflicted on Coron's coastal area and ecosystem was discovered.

With government agencies busy addressing the pandemic, the proponents and the provincial government "took advantage [of the situation] to reclaim and reclaim," the DENR official said.

While the project was halted due to "lack of funds" between 2012 and 2018, it was reinstated by Palawan Gov. Jose Alvarez, who entered into a joint venture with developers for the construction of hotels, docking stations, and other tourism-related facilities in Coron town proper. The DENR should crack the whip and file charges for violating environmental laws against those responsible for the destructive project that was noted to have already changed the landscape of Coron. According to a study conducted by a marine biologist, 27 percent of corals in the area are now dead, while the rest are threatened by sedimentation.

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Similar cases of environmental peril are in the news as well, among them the reopening on June 12 of the P389-million dolomite beach on Manila Bay, despite warnings from health experts of the harm that crystalline silica, found in dolomite, can cause to the lungs, eyes, and skin.

Just as worrying is the possible operation of the mothballed Bataan Nuclear Power Plant that, following the 1979 Three Mile Island accident in the United States, underwent a safety inquiry that revealed 4,000 defects, including its being built near a major geological fault line.

Such issues underscore the need for the incoming administration to include environmental concerns among its priorities because of their immediate and catastrophic impact. Climate change, for one, has unleashed increasingly violent storms, devastating floods, and massive landslides on vulnerable countries like ours. With the typhoon season upon us, it would be timely for authorities to review government policies that touch on these perennial disasters, and reconsider rationalized land use, the protection of natural watersheds, antilogging laws, land conversion, reforestation as part of urbanization, and so on.

Just as urgent is finding and developing cheaper and renewable sources of fuel in the face of skyrocketing gas prices because of the ongoing Ukraine-Russia crisis. Coal as an alternative would mean balding forests, while nuclear energy could have cataclysmic consequences.

Addressing all these environmental ills won't be easy, and the temptation is to look for short-term solutions to get them out of the way. The real challenge, though, is to take a long view on how to conserve and prudently use the country's limited resources, given that future generations depend on them as well.



Collective action to save our Earth

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he year 2022 is a historic milestone for environmental sustainability, as it marks 50 years since the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment led to the launch of a host of new global agreements to collectively protect our planet.

However, during this half a century of rapid industrialization, we are now using the equivalent of 1.6 Earths to maintain our current way of life. Ecosystems simply cannot keep up with our demands.

As a result, our Earth is currently facing a triple planetary crisis: climate disruption, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste. Notably, the Philippines' experiences with typhoons, including the impact of Tropical Depression "Agaton," saw tens of thousands of families displaced in the Visayas and Mindanao regions, damaging over \$1.6-billion worth of properties.

This fact makes this World Environment Day especially poignant, calling us to reflect on how there is "Only One Earth." We need to recognize that production and consumption are not only key aspects of human life: they also have major environmental impact, calling for collective attention and action.

Investing more toward using less. To reduce our carbon emissions, we need to address our staggering consumption of natural resources. Global consumption will continue to increase unless we rethink our approach and learn to live with less. By reconfiguring our key systems-water, energy, and food-we can drastically prevent the Earth's environmental decline.

One way for us to achieve this is by implementing sustainable solutions. Notably, water has been called the most crucial link in climate action, and also the most ignored. I recently spoke at a panel in this



year's World Economic Forum, where I highlighted how water plays an important, interconnected role across key economic, social, and environmental agendas.

strategies, we risk derailing our efforts on climate and the decarbonization of industry sectors. Additionally, the sheer volume of water being moved and treated every day leads to greater energy consumption, consequently contributing to climate change.

There are ways to address this. For example, new technology featuring data analytics and sensors enables water systems to be intuitively adjusted based on current demand, reducing unnecessary energy use and reducing the risks of water being wasted. Utilities intelligence into their systems, such as cloudbased platforms for existing water technology.

While such solutions can call for significant investment, national and local governments can look at supporting businesses to adopt sustainable solutions through grants and subsidies, such as the Green Jobs Act in the Philippines.

And this doesn't have to stop at the municipal level-our renewed relationship with water can start right at home. Homeowners can adapt their consumption rate for the better through digitalization and data, keeping an eye on our water usage and responding with "water-wise" behavior.

Striving for circularity. Beyond addressing our carbon footprint by being a water steward, tackling our vast use of resourc-

es is equally important. As manufacturers, we have all the responsibility to strive for circularity and promote reuse, repair, reand recycling, notably manufacturing, through recycling and reuse initiatives and implementing take-back programs. It is also crucial that industries ensure wastewater is effectively treated to a quality that makes it possible to feed back into our water cycles.

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However, to establish best practices and If we overlook and omit water in our compliance toward a sustainable supply chain, industry collaboration is key. Notably, the global Rare Earth Industry Association or REIA is working with organizations, including Grundfos, to tap into blockchain to help companies improve the transparency and sustainability of their supply chains when it comes to critical and rare earth materials.

> By combining expertise and knowledge across industries and academia, we can accomplish much more in advancing our supply chains toward our sustainable ambitions.

Planning for the next 50 years. Fifty years globally are also exploring ways to integrate ago, the world's first environmental movement was sparked through the Stockholm Conference. Since then, we have seen the power of what we can achieve through collective action. By working toward a common goal, we can achieve monumental change. So far, we have seen sustainability as a movement gaining tremendous traction. However, we need to do more and at a faster rate.

> This World Environment Day (June 5), let us continue to march together, and with each conscious step toward our sustainability goals, let us remember we only have one chance and only one earth.

> Poul Due Jensen is CEO of Grundfos, which is considered the world's leading manufacturer of products that provide energy-efficient and intelligent water solutions.

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BY JONAS REYES

PORAC, Pampanga – After 13 years of waiting, the indigenous people (IP) of this town received their Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) for their ancestral land that has a total measurement of 18,660.0522 hectares.

Pampanga Representative Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice Governor Lilia Pineda awarded the certificates to the Aeta elders represented by Roman King during the awarding ceremony at the Villa Maria Covered Court on Tuesday.

Pineda said that the CADT is a big help to the IP of Porac which includes some part of Porac, San Marcelino in Zambales, Angeles City and Bamban in Tarlac.

King said that a total of

7,000 Aetas live in the town of Porac and with the awarding of the CADT, no outsider can put pressure on their community when it comes to claiming of the land as he also expressed his gratitude to the local government for providing the pertinent paper in the claiming of their ancestral land.

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The Aeta elder also lauded other officials who helped them acquire the CADT, including officials from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and the local government of Porac headed by Mayor Jaime Capil.

The CADT is a title that formally acknowledges the rights of the indigenous cultural communities and IP to their ancestral lands in line with Republic Act 8371 or the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

These are the batteries we need to ease the power crunch

Business

By Anjani Trivedi

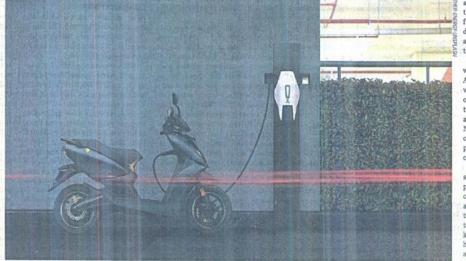
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THE WORLD is struggling with simultaneous energy and climate crises. To solve the first could require undoing all the progress made toward greener power and cleaner air. But it doesn't have to be that way. Euphoria for electric cars –

Eupnorm for electric cars and the powerpacks that run them — has obscured a more immediate and distinct need: batteries to run homes and businesses, as countries across the world deal with the repercussions of an ongoing power crisis. Despite the worsening state of energy and rising electricity prices, existing technologies anen't being put thinking about the steepening cost of generation, paralyzed by the thought descalating bills and more frequent blackouts.

There's a simple solution: Store the energy and use it when the need arises. As the market for EV batteries expands and evolves, large industrial-scale powerpacks – energy storage systems, or ESS – are being overlooked as a potential solution to this power crunch. The market for the former, for instance, is expected to grow to \$S00 billion over the next two decades, while that of ESS won't even make it past \$100 billion, according to Morgan Stallestimates. The latter is what we need far more urgently.

EV excitement has, no doubt, pushed development of battery technology overall and therefore, helped ESS along as well. However, it han't been driven by active concerns about our energy needs.



ESS are typically large, stationary powerpacks that can store excess energy from grids and other sources for later use, or when demand is peaking. As renewable energy contribution to power supply increases across the globe, the ability to store it and use it when people or businesses need it will become more important. What's underappreciated

about these systems is that they benefit from all the EV battery developments like better energy density and safety, but don't have the same problems or constraints. One big issue is size, for instance. Electric car, batteries need to be small, high-energy, and safe. It's been difficult to get all three factors operational at the same time. But for ESS, size isn't an issue since they don't need to be housed in a moving vehicle. That reduces one variable. In addition, factors that worry

In addition, factors that worry EV buyers about smaller batterless are different: Energy density doesn't matter as much, nor does how far they need to take a vehicle, or the range. Tha's key: this issue has driven manufacturers to push for other formulations that are expensive and tough to deploy commercially. What matters is charging cycles, battery life, and frequency. Viable options like lithium iron

phosphate, or LFP, powerpacks, are underestimated. Life cycles and other metrics for stationary battery use are improving. Most materials used in this type are abundant, although prices have risen in recent months. They can operate for several thousand cycles of charging and discharging.

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All this means that existing technologies have come far enough to make ESS a reality even for a few hours a day. Several manufacturers are already onto the imminent need for such systems, investing billions in building out these energy storage systems.

The world's largest battery company, China's Contemporary Amperex Technology Co., has been actively expanding its work in this area. It's sold these products at six projects in Texas to an independent power producer. The looming issue is upfront costs. Analysts often talk about how unviable these systems are, but in reality, there are too many unknowns to make accurate estimates on how steep industrialscale energy storage projects will be. The running expenses will depend on improvements including the quality of products and the life cycle of powerpacks - and these have both come a

long way. Bottom line is, the status quo isn't sustainable — it's already cracking, and it's time to look for solutions.

But are governments and companies willing to put ESS to use and boost adoption? The smart move would be to provide incentives, tax cuts, or consumer awareness programs to push things along. Ultimately, the upfront costs need to be brought down and that requires talking about something less exciting than electric cars.

China, for instance, has been widely deploying LFP chemistry. As part of its goals to have 30 gigawarts of energy storage systems over the next three years, it plans to slash costs to help businesses adopt and deploy these systems. Notably, it will ensure energy security to maintain its global supply chain heft. That's not been a considerating for many others

A recent MIT study on energy storage noted that the current policy focusing on short-term decarbonization goals has encouraged both public and private attention toward "relatively mature technologies." That means markets and money haven't pushed hard enough on new uses of storage and more effective energy utilization, since they continue to fly under the radar, set apart from mainstream policy. Until they focus on the future,

Until they focus on the future, we should start worrying more about more blackouts and power shortages as climate change and extreme weather combine to put energy supplies at risk. # BLOOMBERS OFINION

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES

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Climate change and food security

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

hile working for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (UN-FAO), I have seen the extensive damage caused by super typhoon Yolanda in nine of the Philippines' poorest provinces. I can never forget the first time I saw Tacloban thousands of cadavers lay in debris, the streets smelled of death and decay, and in several barangays, not a single house survived. Students who were just studying for their exams woke up the next day with nothing but their shirts.

According to a report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), ocean heat content and sea level rise due to climate change worsened the impacts of super typhoon Yolanda, the deadliest and most devastating natural disaster in the Philippines so far.

But we do not need to experience more typhoons and other climate-related disasters to remind us that climate change is amidst us. It has already been unraveling itself in the past decades, intensifying year after year.Without the necessary interventions both on mitigation and adaptation, climate change will continue to threaten our communities and adversely affect our most basic needs, particularly food security.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), between 2010-2019, extreme weather events in the Philippines caused \$463 billion in damages, 62.7 percent of which or about \$290 billion were damages on the agriculture sector.

In December last year, typhoon Odette registered ₱11 billion worth of damages to agriculture. Fisheries was the most affected sector registering ₱3 billion in losses; followed by rice at ₱2.6 billion worth of losses.

In November 2021, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) released its Climate Change and Food Security Analysis (CCFSA) study in the Philippines. The study indicated that combined climate hazards, such as typhoon, flood, and drought will cause serious threats to food security. A major risk is price volatility of food

We need a whole-ofsociety approach to mitigate the impacts of climate change, we must all work together to combat the threats to our rural livelihoods and food security.

items caused by disruption of food production in areas affected by climate-related hazards.

The CCFSA study outlined the top three climate-related risks for food security in the Philippines in the coming decades. (1) The increased rainfall variability, frequency and severity in many parts of the country will affect rice and annual crops livelihood zones. (2) The rise in mean temperatures will contribute to the spread of crop diseases and increased incidences of drought. (3) Extreme w eather

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ANNA MAE YU LAMENTILLO

events such as super typhoons could impact agricultural and fisheries production due to the destruction of crops and fish catching/storage facilities from strong winds and flooding.

While these data show the impacts on agriculture, the effect will be most felt by the poor. The WFP study stresses that climate impacts on agricultural, livestock and fishery supply chains will affect food production, distribution, and consumption, which in turn affects the availability, affordability, and accessibility to nutritious food, particularly for the poor and marginalized populations. They who did not cause climate change will once again bear the brunt of its impacts.

We already have laws geared towards achieving climate resiliency, we have climate-resilient agriculture-related policies, and the Department of Agriculture (DA) has the Adaptation and Mitigation Initiative in Agriculture (AMIA) program since 2014, implementing technologies and practices like alternate wetting and drying (AWD), organic farming, and crop rotation, among many others.

Our farmers and fisherfolks need urgent support in making their livelihoods resilient to natural hazards and climate impacts. Led by the government, we need a whole-of-society approach to mitigate the impacts of climate change, we must all work together to combat the threats to our rural livelihoods and food security. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

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NEP to contain Marcos' key programs

INCOMING budget secretary Amenah Pangandaman yesterday said she has been instructed by

President-elect Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to ensure the 2023 National Expenditure Program (NEP) contains his priority programs and projects.

These are agricultural and food security, climate change adaptation, economic recovery, improved healthcare and education, enhanced infrastructure projects including digital infrastructure, utilization of renewable energy sources, strengthened tourism and jobs creation, and sustainable development, among others.

Pangandaman said she will draft and implement a budget that will "promote a broad-based and inclusive economic recovery and growth," and aligned with Marcos' priority programs.

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The proposed budget contained in the NEP is accompanied by the President's Budget Message, which encapsulates the budget's policy thrust and priorities.

This will be submitted to Congress within 30 days from the opening of the regular session.



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PHL behind Asean peers i ting SDGs, says repo mee

sinessMirro

By CAI U. ORDINARIO 9 @caiordinario

HE Philippines has fallen behindits Asean peers in terms of achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), according to the latest report from the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN).

Based on the SDG Index for this year, the Philippines ranked 95th out of 160 economies globally. With an overall score of 66.6 out of 100, the country was even bumped off from Asean-5 economies.

In the Asean-5, the leader is Thailand, ranked 44th with a score of 74.1; followed by Vietnam at 55th with a score of 72.8 out of 100; Singapore, 60th, 71.7 out of 100; Malaysia, 72nd, 70.4 out of 100; and Indonesia, 82, 69.2 out of 100.

"Fifty years after the first UN Conference on the human environment in Stockholm in 1972, the bedrock SDG principles of social inclusion, clean energy, responsible consumption, and universal access to public services are needed more than ever to respond to the major challenges of our time," Prof. Jeffrey D. Sachs, President of the SDSN and first authorofthereport, saidin a statement.

Poor and vulnerable countries are being hit particularly hard by multiple health, geopolitical and climate crises and their spillovers. To restore and accelerate SDG progress, we need global cooperation to end the pandemic, negotiate an end to the war in Ukraine, and secure the financing needed to achieve the SDGs," he added.

Based on the data, the Philippines is encountering more challenges in achieving seven goals, namely, SDG 2 on ending hunger; SDG 3 on universal health; and SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth.

The list includes SDG 9 on industry and infrastructure; SDG 10 on reducing inequalities; SDG 14 on life below water; SDG 15 on life on land; and SDG 16 on peace, justice, and institutions.



The country is still facing significant challenges in six goals, namely SDG1 on eradicating poverty; SDG 5 on gender equality; SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation; SDG 7 on affordable clean energy; SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities; and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals.

The report also noted that challenges remain for the country's attainment of SDG 4 on quality education and SDG 13 on climate action. The SDSN said the country has achieved SDG 12 on responsible consumption.

In terms of progress, the country is stagnating in achieving four goals, namely SDG 5 on gender equality; SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities; SDG 13 on climate action; and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals.

There is, however, a moderate increase in progress in terms of achieving 10 goals, namely SDG 1 on eradicatingpoverty; SDG2 on ending hunger; SDG 3 on universal health; SDG4 on quality education; and SDG 7 on affordable clean energy.

The list includes SDG 8 on decent

work and economic growth; SDG 9 on industry and infrastructure; SDG 10 on reducing inequalities; SDG 14 on life below water; SDG 16 on peace, justice, and institutions.

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The country only remains on track to achieve SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation; SDG 12 on responsible consumption; and SDG 13 on climate action.

Global SDG effort

THE Philippines is not alone in its challenges of achieving the SDGs. The SDSN said that for the second year in a row, the world has been deemed not on track to meet the global agenda.

The SDSN said multiple and simultaneous health, climate, biodiversity, geopolitical and military crises are major setbacks for sustainable development globally.

As a result, the network said the SDG Index world average has slightly decreased in 2021 for the second year in a row, largely due to the impact of the pandemic on SDG 1 and SDG 8 as well as poor performance on \$DGs 11 to 15.

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BusinessMirror

PHL behind Asean peers in meeting SDGs, says report CONTINUED FROM A14

"Besides their massive humanitarian costs, military conflicts—including the war in Ukraine—have major international spillovers on food security and energy prices, which are amplified by the climate and biodiversity crises," SDSN said. "They also crowd out space for long-term thinking and investments. Peace, diplomacy, and international cooperation are fundamental conditions for the world to progress on the SDGs towards 2030 and beyond," it added.

The 2022 SDG Index is topped by Finland, followed by three Nordic countries—Denmark, Sweden and Norway—and all top 10 countries are European countries. Yet even these countries face major challenges in achieving several SDGs.

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Overall, East and South Asia is the region that progressed most on the SDGs since their adoption in 2015. Bangladesh and Cambodia are the two countries that progressed most on the SDGs since 2015.

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In contrast, Venezuela declined the most on the SDG Index since their adoption in 2015.

. STRATEGIC UPPER CARTOON EDITORIAL F PAGE 1 STORY BANNER COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES 06-03-22 SERVICE DATE TITLE : PAGE Republic of the Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resource COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES CALACA NOTICE Notice is hereby given that the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office at Calaca, Butangas will accept oral or written bids not later than <u>11:00 AM on July 25, 2022</u> for the lease for Industrial Port purposes of the tract of land herein below described: Brgy. San Rafael, Calaca, Batangas Location Description Miscellaneous Lease Application No. 041007-5 11,200 sqm. Southbay Bulk Terminal, Inc. Area Applied for by represented by Connie C. Mandaraog represented by Connie C. Mandaraog The right to lease the land will be awarded to the person offering the highest annual restal, which shall not be less than three per centum (3%) of the value of land plus one per centum (1%) of the value of the proposed and / or existing improvements. In order that a person may be entitled to participate in a bidding, he must be a qualified public land applicant, and must, before the commencement of the same, make a deposit of equivalent to three (3) months rental. Only deposit in cash, money order treasury warrant, certified checks, cashier's check or manager's check can be accepted. A person bidding, the bidder has to make an additional deposit every time his bid is raised, to complete the three (3) months rental, otherwise, such bid as raised shall not be accepted. The right is reserved to reject any or all bids. ISAOAN C. AMATORIO Date FINR Officer

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COVID cases in provinces, cities up but PH keeps low-risk status

by Willie Casas and Joel E. Zurbano June 3, 2022, 12:55 am

About 70 percent of provinces, highly urbanized cities, and independent component cities showed an increase in cases, but the Philippines remains at a low-risk classification for COVID-19, the Department of Health (DOH) said Thursday.

The DOH said severe and critical cases remain at less than 1.5 percent of hospital admissions nationwide.

However, the DOH stressed the importance of minimum public health standards.

"Masking, ventilation, and sanitation are important interventions to complement vaccination in mitigating the risks of transmission among our population," it said.

In May, the Philippines detected the more transmissible Omicron subvariant BA.4 and confirmed the local transmission of the Omicron subvariant BA.2.12.1, of which there are now 22 cases.

At present, the Philippines has recorded a total of 3,690,707 cases, of which 2,320 remain active. The death toll from COVID-19 has reached 60,455.

A researcher who has focused on the pandemic, meanwhile, said the Philippines should wait a little longer before lifting mask mandates.

OCTA Research Fellow Dr. Guido David cited as an example New York City in the US, where an increase in COVID-19 cases followed the scrapping of the mask mandate.

David also said it was premature to consider the country out of the woods.

Globally, COVID-19 cases and deaths continue to decline. But the World Health Organization (WHO) urged the public to treat these figures with caution due to a significantly reduced amount of testing in many countries.

"The pandemic is not over. We continue to call on all countries to maintain testing and sequencing services, to give us a clearer picture of where the virus is spreading, and how it's changing," said WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus.

On Wednesday night, Pfizer completed the delivery of 15 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines for children aged 5 to 11 years old following the arrival of 2,400 doses in Manila Wednesday night.

The shipment arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 via Air Hong Kong flight LD-456 around 8:37 p.m.

The latest vaccine delivery completes the national government's purchase of 15 million vaccine doses from the US-based manufacturer Pfizer-BioNTech.

To date, the country has received over 245 million vaccine doses since February 2021.

A year and two months since the national COVID-19 vaccination program was launched, a total of 73,993,483 Filipinos have already received their first vaccine dose, while 69,366,505 individuals have been fully vaccinated as of May 31.

About 2.8 million children aged 5 to 11 years old have been fully vaccinated since the pediatric vaccination started on Feb. 7 this year.



The government is encouraging parents to have their children vaccinated to ensure they are protected upon the resumption of face-to-face classes.

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