

DENR to work on medical waste disposal and wastewater facilities for community quarantine sites

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By *Ellalyn de Vera-Ruiz*

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is working on the establishment of medical waste disposal and wastewater facilities for community quarantine sites in Metro Manila.



(MANILA BULLETIN)

“We are coordinating with the World Trade Center (WTC Metro Manila), Philippine International Convention Center (PICC), and Rizal Memorial Coliseum for the establishment of facilities for the proper disposal of hazardous wastes, as well as wastewater, in these quarantine sites,” DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said in an interview over DZBB.

The three facilities have been converted to community quarantine sites to initially cater to COVID-19 positive patients who are asymptomatic and with mild symptoms. “These quarantine facilities have not been used for such purpose before therefore they have no proper spaces for hazardous waste disposal, unlike in actual hospitals. We will help them contain the contaminated wastes. We will also address their wastewater,” Antiporda explained.

He also appealed to all local government units (LGUs) to provide personal protective equipment (PPE) to garbage collectors because they are also exposed to the novel coronavirus and other hazardous infections that may be present in solid wastes collected from hospitals, healthcare facilities, and households.

“Our garbage collectors play a critical role especially during this outbreak. We will do our best to respond to their needs in the best way possible,” he said. “We are calling on the LGUs to not to discount proper waste collection and disposal during this period. You are putting the community at risk from possible contamination if you take this matter for granted. We should be able to look at all angles in our approach to fight the spread of the COVID-19,” he added.

Antiporda said the DENR is expected to issue a memorandum order by Thursday to direct LGUs to address the collection and segregation of “healthcare” or hazardous wastes.

Garbage collector in Cavite tests positive for COVID-19, trash pick up delayed

Published April 15, 2020 4:43pm

A garbage collector in Cavite tested positive for the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Benny Antiporda on Wednesday said.

Interviewed on DoboL B sa News TV, Antiporda said they learned about it after receiving complaint that the collection of garbage in some areas was stopped.

“Ang naging katwiran sa atin, meron daw pong nag-positive sa kanilang garbage collector kung kaya medyo na-delay ‘yung pag-pick up noong mga mga basura,” he said.

Due to this, Antiporda advised garbage collection operators in private sector and local governments to provide personal protective equipment (PPEs) to the collectors as they are exposed to the virus.

“Ang sinasabi natin, lahat po, private man o local government-operated na garbage collection, e proteksyunan natin ang ating mga garbage collector,” he said.

“Pagsuotin natin ng PPE na parang nasa operating room din sila , na parang nasa ER din sila dahil lahat po ng dumi sila ang sumasalo. Meron pong mga contaminated na nakokolekta silang basura,” he added.

The EcoWaste Coalition earlier urged the government to provide [hazard pay](#) for garbage collectors for the duration of the enhanced community quarantine.

It said garbage collectors, particularly those who are assigned to household waste and healthcare waste, face "heightened health and safety risks."

“Without their indispensable service, we may be faced with even more environmental and health hazards from uncollected waste,” EcoWaste Coalition president Eileen Sison said.

Antiporda urged revisiting the law regarding the management of hazardous waste in light of the current related issues tied to the pandemic.

But for now, DENR will issue a memorandum for local governments about the matter.

He pointed out that most of the response at this point only covered patient management, treatment, and isolation, as well as distributing aid to affected households.

“Pero ‘yung hindi natin nakikita na basura, sige lang tayo ng sige. Sayang po ‘yung ginagawa nating quarantine, sayang ‘yung isolation sa tao kung ang basura natin ay hindi natin aasikasuhin,” he said.

While acknowledging their efforts to protect and provide relief for their constituents, Antiporda urged local governments to also give attention to proper waste management.

He warned that garbage not properly handled may turn into agent of virus transmission.

“Dyan rin po iikot yan. Dyan rin po dadaan ‘yan,” he said. —**Joviland Rita/LDF, GMA News**

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/metro/734140/garbage-collector-in-cavite-tests-positive-for-covid-19-trash-pick-up-delayed/story/?fbclid=IwAR1qSCxZRVANlzS6A0i7mK0PZ0IG7mssp9Phy3dfofksqqDUjIp_TX8TS7Y

Eastern Samar folk want mining ship out

DENR says guidelines in place to prevent COVID-19 spread as it allows foreign vessel to load chromite ore on Homonhon Island

By: [Jhesset O. Enano](#), [Joey A. Gabieta](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 05:00 AM April 16, 2020



Officials of Eastern Samar province have appealed to Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu to stop a foreign vessel from loading chromite ore worth P61 million off Homonhon Island in Guiuan town amid fears of the spread of the new coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Gov. Ben Evardone said the province, under a general community quarantine, prohibited the entry of any local or foreign vessel to ensure the safety of residents.

“Our province has done all possible measures to protect our people from this disease and yet this mining operation has given Estehanons anxiety and fear over the possibility that all our efforts to prevent this disease from entering our province will go down the drain,” Evardone said in a letter to Cimatu on April 14.

The provincial board and the municipal council of Guiuan, as well as the village councils of Homonhon, have passed separate resolutions opposing the loading of chromite ore on the island.

Bishop’s opposition

Borongan Bishop Crispin Varquez also wrote the regional office of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) in Eastern Visayas expressing his opposition to any loading activities by the MV VW Peace, with a crew composed of 13 Chinese and four Myanmar nationals.

His April 13 letter was addressed to Leo Van Juguan, the MGB regional director. “In behalf of the Diocese of Borongan, I would like to manifest our collective position that we are opposing any mining operation, including the loading and exporting of mineral ore, on Homonhon Island by Techiron Resources Inc. ... This collective stand is based on the principle of general welfare, health and safety of our people in the province of Eastern Samar, particularly our people in Homonhon,” Varquez said.

Juguan said his office had allowed the loading of chromite ore by the foreign vessel for transport to China. Loading, he said, started on Tuesday afternoon. The vessel arrived in Guiuan on April 4.

Assurance

At first, Juguan said, he was instructed by Cimatu to delay loading activities due to the general community quarantine in the province. He was eventually authorized to allow these as long as the necessary guidelines and protocols would be strictly followed by Techiron Resources. The DENR on Wednesday assured Eastern Samar residents that measures were being undertaken to ensure their safety.

The regional MGB lifted the suspension order on April 11, citing the conditions imposed by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF-EID) on Emerging Infectious Diseases and by the Department of Trade and Industry that there would be unimpeded movement for all types of cargo and that export companies would be allowed to continue their operations while observing necessary measures, such as social distancing.

According to Wilfredo Moncano, acting national director of the MGB, other protocols must be implemented, including the required quarantine for the crew of MV VW Peace, who are not allowed to disembark the vessel and have physical contact with residents or stevedores. “The regional offices of the MGB and the DENR have the say if all requisites are complied with, being the ones on the ground,” Moncano said.

No special permit

Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said there was no reason to stop the operations, considering that Techiron Resources was able to comply with the requirements. “They are not given any special permit. This is a regular operation,” he said in an interview. “We cannot hamper such operation now because we need this as a source of income for the country.”

No docking

Juguan said MV VW Peace would not be allowed to dock at the port in Barangay Pagbabangan and should instead drop anchor 1.5 kilometers away. He said a barge should load the mineral from Homonhon to MV VW Peace. Also, no crew member of the foreign vessel will be allowed to disembark.

“[And] there will be no contact between the crew of the mother vessel and the [stevedores] of the barge since the loading will use clamshells or grabs,” Juguan said.

He said those who would load the mineral would wear personal protective equipment while stevedores were asked to follow physical distancing policy. The loading would last for two days.

Serious concern

But Governor Evardone hoped that Cimatu would heed their request and disallow the Panamanian-registered vessel from loading an estimated 7,000 metric tons of chromite ore.

“The people of Eastern Samar have raised serious concern on the possible danger this poses to public health while our province is under general community quarantine due to the global pandemic ... Your consideration on this matter will allay the fears of the people of Homonhon Island, in particular, and the people of Eastern Samar, in general, against the possible transmission of COVID-19 from the Chinese crew of the vessel,” Evardone said.

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1259384/eastern-samar-folk-want-mining-ship-out#ixzz6JizeUSo6>

Metro Manila assured of sufficient water supply during lockdown period

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

-April 15, 2020

ASSURING adequate supply from Angat Dam, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) said it has no plan to reduce water allocation for the National Capital Region (NCR) and several towns in Rizal and Cavite provinces.

Sevillo David, executive director of the NWRB, told the BusinessMirror that there is an adequate water supply from Angat Dam, assuring that water level at the reservoir even went up slightly over 193 meters above sea level (ASL) on Tuesday.

He attributed this to local thunderstorms experienced in the Angat watershed area the past few days.

The onset of the rainy season in June, or July, is expected to replenish the Angat-Ipo-La Mesa River System with fresh water supply.

“At this level, given Pagasa’s [Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration] weather forecast that we will experience normal, or neutral weather condition, we are confident that there will be adequate water to last until the end of the dry season,” David said.

He underscored the need for clean water as Covid-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus that originated from Wuhan, China, continues to grip the country, particularly Luzon, which is now on an extended enhanced community quarantine.

“Water is very important for health and sanitation, especially now, that’s why we are maintaining the maximum capacity of 4,000 MLD,” David said.

To recall, a day before President Duterte’s quarantine order, the NWRB increased water allocation from the previous 3,600 MLD to the maximum capacity of 4,000 MLD to assure tap water supply to every water consumers serviced by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System through its agents and contractors, Manila Water Co. Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc.

Govt vows ample water supply

By [Catherine S. Valente, TMT](#)

April 16, 2020

The government on Wednesday gave assurances that water and power supply will be sufficient during the extended implementation of the Luzon-wide enhanced community quarantine (ECQ).

Cabinet Secretary Karlo Alexei Nograles said the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) gave the full water allocation of 46 cubic meters per second to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) from the Angat Dam until April 30, 2020 to ensure the continuous supply of water in the National Capital Region (NCR or Metro Manila).

“Makakaasa po tayo na tuloy-tuloy po ang daloy ng tubig dito po sa NCR sa kalagitnaan ng enhanced community quarantine (You can expect steady water supply in the NCR during the ECQ),” he said.

The NWRB, however, might suspend water allocation for the National Irrigation Administration, especially the irrigation requirements in Bulacan and Pampanga.

NWRB Executive Director Seville David Jr. said farmers were expected to finish harvesting their crops this month thus, the demand for irrigation would be reduced.

The raw water released from Angat Dam is given to the MWSS for domestic water consumption in Metro Manila and adjacent areas. The allocation is split between Manila Water Co. Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc.

The MWSS said there would be sufficient water supply because Angat, Ipo and La Mesa dams are stable.

“The weather outlook from April to September 2020 as predicted by Pagasa (Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration) indicates near normal rainfall. Though the summer heat and the spread of the Covid-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) had seen an uptick in domestic water consumption, we assure the public that mitigation measures and technical solutions are in place to optimize our existing water supplies,” it said.

As of Wednesday, Angat’s water level went up to 193.01 meters. The water levels in Ipo Dam and La Mesa Dam also slightly rose to 100.48 meters and 77.07 meters, respectively.

Despite the assurances, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) urged the public to conserve water because Angat’s water level is below its normal operating level.

“While the country is still grappling with a pandemic, we must be prudent and wise in consuming our limited water resources,” it said.

The agency urged the public to observe responsible water utilization and conservation by checking water pipelines and reporting leaks and illegal connections; recycling water; and installing rainwater catchment, among others.

“Water scarcity is a growing threat the country must confront squarely and address immediately in the new normal. The increasing demand for water is exceeding available supply. While individual contributions are vital, the government is pursuing long-term solutions to provide access to safe and reliable drinking water sources to people,” the CCC said.

Nograles also said there would be sufficient power supply during the ECQ.

The Department of Energy said the available capacity of 11,795 megawatts (MW) in Luzon was greater than the peak demand of 7,323 MW.

“This means we currently have an excess capacity of 4,742 MW. Lubos din ang suplay natin ng kuryente dito po sa Luzon (We have enough power supply in Luzon),” Nograles said.

The Palace official added that “lifeline consumers” of electric cooperatives or those who consume less than 50 kilowatts per hour would no longer have to pay their March and April bills.

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IATF: Adequate water, power supply during quarantine

[Alexis Romero](#) (The Philippine Star) - April 16, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The government yesterday assured the public that Luzon would have enough power, water and food supply while it is under enhanced community quarantine due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Citing a report by the energy department, Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles, spokesman for the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) on Emerging Infectious Diseases, said Luzon has an excess capacity of 4,742 megawatts.

He said the island has an available capacity of 11,795 megawatts, which is greater than the actual peak demand of 7,323 megawatts.

“That means we have enough supply of power here in Luzon,” Nograles said at a press briefing.

Small power consumers would also be given relief through the Pantawid Liwanag program led by the Philippine Rural Electric Cooperatives Association Inc. The program aims to help three million poor consumers of electric cooperatives nationwide.

“To our countrymen who consume less than 50 kilowatts per hour or the lifeline consumers of electric cooperatives here in Luzon and also in Visayas and Mindanao – apart from the one-month grace period in the payment of power bills – your consumption for the March to April billing period will be for free,” Nograles said.

With regard to Luzon’s water supply, Nograles said the National Water Resources Board has given the full water allocation of 46 cubic meters per second to Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) from the Angat reservoir in Bulacan until April 30.

He said the move would ensure the continuous supply of water in Metro Manila.

“We can be sure that the supply of water here in NCR (National Capital Region) would be continuous while we are in the midst of the enhanced community quarantine,” Nograles added.

The MWSS maintained that Metro Manila’s source of water supply, namely Angat, Ipo and La Mesa dams, are all stable and that there is enough water to last the summer.

“Overall, the capacity of storage at the dams is good though it is most desirable to fill Angat Dam up to its upper rule curve and to veer away from the conservation zone as projected to likely occur if supply is not properly managed,” MWSS said.

Currently, Angat Dam is at 192.98 meters or 4.45 meters higher than the normal rule curve elevation of 188.53 meters.

The current level is also higher than the recorded level of Angat last year at 186.4 meters during the water supply crisis.

La Mesa Dam, which is used as reserve raw water storage for emergencies or water shortage, is also above its critical water level of 75 meters.

It is currently at 77.08 meters and 8.6 meters better than last year’s elevation of 68.48 meters.

“Emphasis must be made that there is no disruption to the raw water supply to portals to trigger an emergency or water shortage to warrant withdrawal from the La Mesa reservoir,” MWSS said.

The weather outlook from April to September 2020 as predicted by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration indicates near normal rainfall.

The summer heat and the spread of COVID-19 resulted in an increase in domestic water consumption, but MWSS assured the public that mitigation measures and technical solutions are in place to optimize existing water supplies.

The agency, however, continues to appeal for the responsible use of water among consumers.

Nograles said the government has also stepped up measures to ensure sufficient food supply in Luzon.

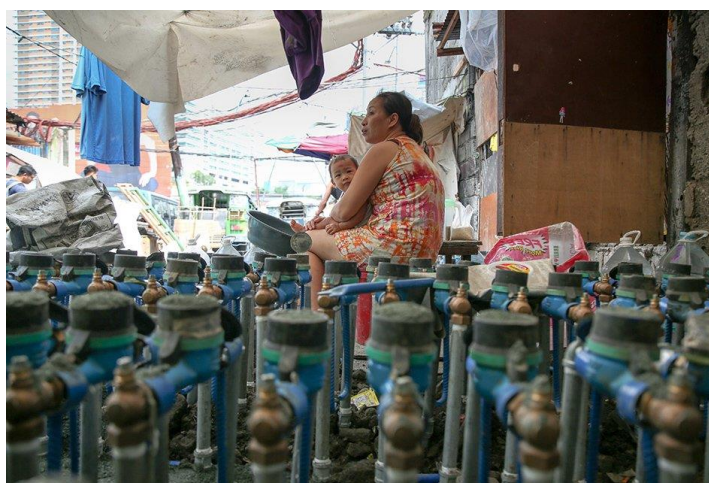
The agriculture department has distributed 80,000 sacks of rice from Ilocos, Cagayan and Central Luzon to Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela.

The department has also provided assorted vegetable seeds and seedlings to 173,957 beneficiaries through its urban agriculture program and distributed fingerlings and seaweed propagules to 1,005 fishpond and cage operators and seaweed farmers. – **With Louise Maureen Simeon**

Gov't assures enough water, power supply in Luzon during extended lockdown

Arianne Merez, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Apr 15 2020 12:10 PM



A woman and her 8-month-old daughter wait for workers to finish installing meters that will bring water to a residential area of Barangay Cembo, Makati City, Sept. 25, 2019. *Jonathan Cellona, ABS-CBN News/File*

MANILA- The government assured Filipinos Wednesday of enough water and power supply as the lockdown of Luzon stretches until April 30.

Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles said there is an excess supply of power for Luzon as reported by the Department of Energy while residents of Metro Manila can be assured that there will be no water crisis until the end of the lockdown.

The energy department said there is a 4,742 excess capacity for power demand in the Philippines' most populous island.

"As for the power demands in Luzon, the Department of Energy reports that we have an available capacity of 11,795 MW, which is greater than the actual peak demand of 7,323 MW in Luzon," Nograles said in a virtual press briefing.

As for the water supply, Nograles said the National Water Resources Board has given the full water allocation to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System from the Angat Dam.

"Makakaasa po tayo na tuloy-tuloy po ang daloy ng tubig dito po sa NCR sa kalagitnaan ng enhanced community quarantine o ECQ," Nograles said.

(You can expect continuous water supply here in NCR during the enhanced community quarantine.)

Over 50 million people were forced to stay home since March 17 as the government quarantined Luzon to arrest the spread of COVID-19.

The lockdown, which was scheduled to end on April 12, was extended to April 30 as the government said it needed more time to prepare for a "new normal."

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/04/15/20/no-water-and-power-shortage-during-luzon-lockdown?fbclid=IwAR3BvdowlGazPWynYbzp-HPE_7gCr1QTT74F3D_Zwm4VoM7gO7ioqqCwCXw

Gov't assures NCR residents of enough water supply amid ECQ

By Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos April 15, 2020, 2:56 pm



MANILA – The government on Wednesday guaranteed a steady supply of water in Metro Manila amid the implementation of the Luzon-wide enhanced community quarantine (ECQ).

Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles said the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) has given the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) the full water allocation of 46 cubic meters per second from the Angat Reservoir until April 30.

The MWSS oversees Metro Manila's water concessionaires, Maynilad Water Services, Inc. and Manila Water Company, Inc.

Nograles said the NWRB's move was meant to ensure the continuous supply of water in the National Capital Region.

"Makakaasa po tayo na tuloy-tuloy po ang daloy ng tubig dito po sa (Metro Manila) sa kalagitnaan ng enhanced community quarantine o ECQ (You can expect continuous water supply in the NCR amid the imposition of the enhanced community quarantine or ECQ)," he said in a virtual presser aired on state-owned PTV-4.

President Rodrigo Duterte imposed an ECQ in the island of Luzon to stop the further transmission of Covid-19.

The ECQ, which was supposed to expire on April 12, will end on April 30.

On March 19, Duterte signed Administrative Order 24, directing all state agencies and corporations to strictly implement water conservation measures to prevent a looming water crisis in Metro Manila.

Angat Dam supplies 97 percent of Metro Manila's water needs.

The NWRB earlier projected that the water level in Angat Dam would be below its normal high operating level of 210 meters from January to March and below its minimum operating level of 180 meters from April to May.

The projections have prompted the NWRB to reduce the water allocation for the MWSS from its normal demand of 44 cubic meters per second (mps) to 40 mps for January 2020.

The NWRB also reduced water allocation for the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) to 20 mps or 50 percent of the total allocation requirement of NIA for the dry cropping season in agricultural areas served by the Angat Dam, such as Bulacan and Pampanga provinces. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1099906?fbclid=IwAR2qFicZnv46RYJQ6F5eiibDrmgLBxvnAE8Tl6voq7lHAGA4xAdLyJ2a5AQ>



Economic recovery plan ng bansa matapos ang COVID-19 pandemic, babalangkasin ng maliit na grupong binuo ni PDU30

April 15, 2020 @ 8:10 PM 12 hours ago

Views: 282

Manila, Philippines – Bumuo si Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte ng maliit na grupo na inatasan niyang bumalangkasin ng economic recovery plan matapos ang coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic sa bansa.

Sinabi ni Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease (IATF-EID) at Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles na ang nasabing ‘small group’ ay kinabibilangan ng mga economic managers ni Pangulong Duterte.

Tumanggi naman itong isiwalat ang iba pang karagdagang detalye ukol sa panukalang hakbang na ipatutupad upang masiguro na ang ekonomiya ng bansa ay makakabangon mula sa matinding epekto ng krisis ng Covid-19 .

“There’s a small select group that will discuss these things. Kasama na diyan yung economic recovery plan ng gobyerno,” ayon kay CabSec Nograles.

Ang mabilis na pagkalat ng COVID-19 ay nagresulta ng malaking pagkagambala sa ekonomiya ng Pilipinas.

Ani CabSec Nograles, ang maliit na grupo na kinabibilangan ng mga economic managers ng bansa ay nangangailangan ng mas maraming data para makumpleto ang presentasyon ng panukalang economic recovery plan.

“So sinabi ni Pangulo na ituloy pa nila yung ginagawa nilang studies,” aniya pa rin.

Ang Covid-19 infections sa Pilipinas ay sinasabing tumalon na sa 5,453, kabilang na ang 349 na pumanaw at 353 na gumaling mula sa sakit. **Kris Jose**

Source: <https://remate.ph/economic-recovery-plan-ng-bansa-matapos-ang-covid-19-pandemic-babalangkasin-ng-maliit-na-grupong-binuo-ni-pdu30/>



SWITIK AT KORAP SA CREMATION

April 15, 2020 @ 2:12 PM 17 hours ago

Views: 103

NAGNGITNGIT sa galit ang isang pamilyang namatayan sa isang bayan sa lalawigan ng Bulacan dahil sa sobra umanong ng paniningil ng isang crematorium o sunugan ng bangkay.

Sa kagustuhan na malibing agad ang kaanak nila na naospital nang matagal at namatay sa pneumonia sa huli, aba, siningil umano ang pamilya ng P65,000 para sa cremation lang habang P5,000 ang funeral services.

Mahigit na nakipagtawaran ang pamilya dahil mahirap lang sila at naibaba naman sa P50,000 ang bayarin pero take it or leave it ang funeral services.

P12K-25K

Katamtamang nagkakahalaga ng P12,000 hanggang P25,000 ang cremation, batay sa mga advertisement ng mga may crematorium.

At kung minsan, kasama na rito ang urn o banga na sisidlan ng abo na nagkakalaga ng mula P500 hanggang sa P1,500.

Maya kanya-kanyang halaga ang sinusunog gaya ng buong katawan o parte lang gaya ng mga natsa-chop-chop na biktima ng krimen o disgrasya.

May para sa bata at may para sa matatanda.

Iba pa ang cremation din ng mga hayop.

Ngunit hanggang P25,000 lang ang pinakamahal.

MAY OVERPRICING?

Dapat na maimbestigahan ang sobrang paniningil ng cremation.

Kung totoo ngang mahal ang P50,000-P65,000.

Isang tanong: Meron bang halong komisyon ang isang punerarya o tauhan nito kaya nagmahal ang cremation?

Meron bang komisyon ang isang doktor o tauhan ng ospital na nagtuturo kung kanino ipa-cremate ang bangkay?

Meron din bang pulis na nakikikomisyon din sa cremation?

Dapat malaman natin ang buong katotohanan sa napakamahal na cremation na naranasan ng pobreng pamilya na namatayan.

KORAP AT SWITIK

Ang napakasamang nangyayari sa panahon ng krisis ay ang paglitaw ng mga korap at switik.

Korap ang sa hanay ng mga nasa pamahalaan at switik naman ang sa hanay ng mga pribadong tao.

Gaya ng presyo ng surgical mask.

Ang dating tig-P1 ay naging P15 na ngayon at benta ito ng mga negosyante.

Sa mga patay, lalo na sa mga biktima ng krimen na sakop ng tinatawag na medico-legal, anak ng tokwa, niraraket ito ng mga pulis.

Ang mga pulis ang nagsasagawa ng awtopsyang at may komisyon din sila sa mga punerarya.

May mga opisyal din ng mga munisipyo o lungsod na patong din sa operasyon ng mga punerarya.

At para makapag-operate ang punerarya sa isang bayan o lungsod, kailangan mong magbigay ng malalaking halaga sa mga opisyal ng pulis at lokal na pamahalaan.

Kung hindi, wala kang makukuhang bangkay at hindi ka rin mabibigyan ng permit to operate.

Panahon ng krisis ngayon at isa na ngang sinasamantala ang cremation.

Kailangang pigilin ang pagsasamantala at pagpapahirap sa taumbayan ng mga korap at switik.

Anak ng tokwa, hindi ba pupwedeng isama na sa cremation ang mga korap at switik?

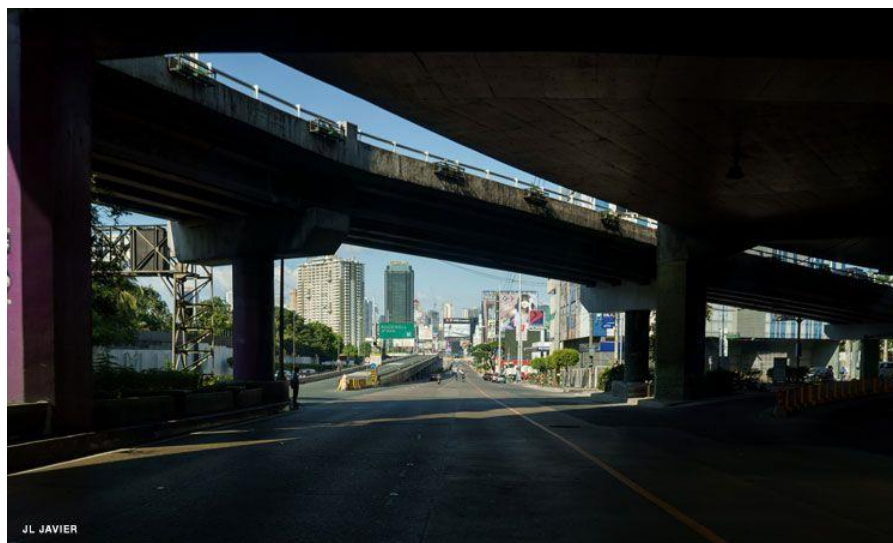
Kung 'di pwede, murahin na lang natin sila.

M@#*&%P+_!|><xnu. GRRRRRRRR!

Gov't think tank recommends gradual relaxation of quarantine restrictions after Luzon lockdown

By [Xave Gregorio, CNN Philippines](#)

Published Apr 15, 2020 8:38:59 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, April 15) — A government think tank is recommending the gradual relaxation of quarantine restrictions after the Luzon-wide enhanced community quarantine to restart economic activity, coupled with public health measures to detect and contain COVID-19.

In a study published early this month, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies recommended a “gradual and calibrated transition ... that combines relaxation of economic restriction while controlling the spread of the virus.”

This includes the resumption of economic activity “wherever it is safe and possible to allow the production of goods and services to be consumed in other areas” and the partial operation of public transportation, subject to strict social distancing guidelines.

The think tank said the government should couple with efforts to increase the capacity to detect and isolate COVID-19 patients and identify their close contacts, protect high-risk groups, continue imposing physical distancing measures, and treat as many patients as possible.

It added that the government should continue scaling up testing for COVID-19 while rapidly increasing capabilities for contact tracing.

It also said that the government should decongest health facilities by creating more isolation and quarantine sites elsewhere for patients with mild symptoms or those suspected of infection.

In its modelling, the think tank found that if the government is able to isolate around 70 percent of patients who show COVID-19 symptoms and ramps up testing, the think tank predicts that the disease would only peak in May 2021 with 904,000 cases, even if the Luzon-wide enhanced community quarantine is partially lifted.

However, it may peak as early as August of this year with 18.9 million cases if no actions are taken to contain the virus, which may deal a bigger blow to the economy.

“In a no-intervention scenario ... the Philippines may lose about P2 trillion in foregone gross value added as a result of weaker household demand as more workers are unemployed for extended periods of time,” the think tank warned.

But still, at the best case, the think tank said the COVID-19 crisis can deal a ₱276.3-billion loss to the economy.

Gov't think tank recommends gradual relaxation of
quarantine restrictions after Luzon lockdown

TITLE:

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April 16, 2020

DATE

The Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases said Tuesday it was discussing what measures it will take and implement [after April 30](#), the expected end-date of the enhanced community quarantine over Luzon.

Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles, the task force's spokesperson, said they will identify what industries could be allowed to operate or who among the labor force could get back to work.

The private sector has been calling for a "modified" quarantine where barangays or areas with limited infections can be allowed to return to work, rather than the current stringent lockdown.

That suggestion has been taken up with President Rodrigo Duterte, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry president emeritus George Barcelon said.

As of March 15, a total of 5,453 people have contracted COVID-19 in the Philippines. Of them, 353 have died and 349 have recovered.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/4/15/enhanced-community-quarantine-extension-economic-losses.html>

Gov't must work as a team — Go

Go urges LGU to work with national agencies to improve distribution system of COVID-19 assistance.

Published 6 hours ago
on April 16, 2020 02:00 AM

By [Chito Lozada](#)



Government agencies and local government units (LGU) should work together to resolve issues on conflicting lists of beneficiaries and improve the distribution system for the government's social amelioration program for Filipinos affected by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, Senator Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go said.

"I am appealing to all concerned agencies and LGU to aim for perfecting the distribution system of food and cash assistance as the government continues to address the COVID-19 situation," Go exhorted.

Go mentioned that the LGU must work hand-in-hand with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) through its local offices to resolve discrepancies.

"Since some LGU have encountered issues on the actual number of beneficiaries who are qualified to receive the emergency subsidy, LGU must work together with the DSWD and its local offices so that their lists can be reconciled accurately and immediately," Go said.

Go emphasized that according to DSWD Secretary Rolando Bautista, the agency is already providing the cash assistance to 4 million Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program beneficiaries considered as the poorest of the poor.

Distribution for identified beneficiaries belonging to the vulnerable and informal sectors is also ongoing, he added.

All will be cared for

According to DSWD, if there are families that may be left out from the initial list, those shall be submitted to DSWD for validation and, if found to be entitled, the list will be submitted to Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases for endorsement for additional funding.

In Manila alone, the government is currently conducting a pilot implementation of the "ReliefAgad" system. If successful, DSWD will use the system for the second tranche of the emergency subsidy distribution.

Starting from the poorest of the poor, around 18 million Filipino family-beneficiaries are receiving assistance from the DSWD for two months under the Social Amelioration Program.

DoLE also has an existing COVID-19 Adjustment Measures Program (CAMP) for affected workers in the formal sector consisting of a one-time P5,000 cash assistance and employment facilitation services.

More assistance coming

“After the Department of Labor and Employment, the Department of Finance (DoF) and the Social Security System would be next to offer assistance. These agencies are thoroughly leafing through the list to avoid duplication. For micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME), we will also help to pull them up... What is important is that no Filipino should go hungry,” he added.

Some 3.4 million workers will benefit from the subsidy program for MSME employees that was recently introduced by DoF.

Go also clarified that according to DSWD, barangay health workers and barangay nutrition scholars from low income families are also included in the social amelioration program.

“Let us work together to fill in the gaps as the needs of Filipino families affected by the COVID-19 crisis continue to grow,” Go said.

Food assured beyond ECQ

The government is on top of things in providing financial support to the workers, farmers and vulnerable families.

Published 8 hours ago
on April 16, 2020 12:07 AM

By [Maria Romero](#)



A four month's supply of rice would be sufficient to bridge the weeks spent during the Luzon-wide lockdown to stem the local spread of the new coronavirus pandemic, and the months when the "new normal" is laid out for the country's economic recovery.

Sufficient stock was assured by the government, through the National Food Authority(NFA), on Wednesday despite fears about a thinning supply of the country's most basic food commodity, which the agency said will not happen.

President Rodrigo Duterte, himself, declared readiness to seek support from rice producing countries Thailand and Vietnam should the possibility of a rice shortage arises.

Despite the Chief Executive expressing his possible move, the NFA said there would be no need for it at this moment.

Aside from rice, meat and meat product suppliers have also assured the government that there will be enough stock even after the expected lifting of the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) at the strike of 1 May morning.

The biggest food companies seconded these statements by saying they have enough supply for months.

In a Laging Handa press briefing on Wednesday, NFA administrator Judy Carol Dansal said the agency's market participation has been increased to 17.31 percent from the normal 10 percent so that more rice will be available to the consumers.

"We can sustain the rice needs of our country. We have more than enough stockpile in our warehouses across the country," Dansal affirmed. "This is too much, but we have sufficient stock inventory."

Despite the increased participation, the grains agency's current rice inventory is at 8.2 million bags which could last until August.

Under the Rice Tariffication Law, the NFA's role was limited to maintaining buffer stock through local procurement to ensure enough supply during crises and calamities.

The agency's market participation is only pegged at 10 percent. Majority or 90 percent of the market's needs are normally supplied by commercial rice traders.

Keep importing

The NFA chief thus urged rice traders to continue their importations, but reminded to enforce reasonable markups only.

"I hope the commercial traders will continue importing rice and selling at just a considerable markup. We need to support each other, especially at this time," she added.

It can be recalled that the Department of Agriculture (DA) recently mandated the NFA to spend nearly P15 billion to purchase local *palay* this year as the government ramps up procurement to help farmers cope amid the declining prices of unhusked rice.

In a previous interview, Agriculture Secretary William Dar said he is seeking for an additional budget for the NFA to establish more milling facilities.

"When you have a 30-day buffer stocking, the budget should not only be P7 billion. This is one of those proposals that we submitted, which is to add more budget to the NFA. We need more warehouses. We lack milling facilities," Dar said.

The NFA has limited milling facilities and once it buys unhusked rice from local farmers, it still pays commercial millers for the service. Dar said the money could be used to buy more *palay* from local farmers.

As of the end-March, the state-run agency already bought 2.3 million bags of *palay*. The agency targets to buy 15.4 million bags for the whole year

Support continues

Meanwhile, Cabinet Secretary and Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-MEID) spokesman Karlo Nograles also announced the DA's distribution of 80,000 sacks of rice from Regions 1, 2 and 3 at the CAMANAVA (Caloocan-Malabon-Navotas-Valenzuela) area.

At the same time, the DA has also provided, among others, assorted vegetable seeds and seedlings to 173,957 beneficiaries through its Urban Agriculture Program and distributed fingerlings and seaweed propagules to 1,005 fishpond and cage operators and seaweed farmers.

To help in the distribution of produce, the Palace official said the DA has also been working with some 12,000 farmers and market workers as part of its Kadiwa program.

In the Bicol Region, Kadiwa gross sales has already reached P4.6 million, which the DA hopes to replicate in other regions as well.

"The government is on top of things in providing financial support to the workers, farmers, and vulnerable families," Nograles said.

"The Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) has reached out to 219,458 workers through the COVID-19 Adjustment Measures Program. Each of them received P5,000," Nograles said.

"The DA, through its Rice Farmers Financial Assistance Program, also provided assistance to 328,282 farmers, with an additional 46,575 receiving P5,000 from the SureAid and Financial Subsidy for Rice Farmers," he added.

Nograles said that under the Emergency Subsidy Program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development or DSWD, a total of P922 million in emergency subsidies have so far been distributed to 170,989 low income, non-4P recipient families.

This is over and above the 3.72 million beneficiaries of the 4Ps.

DSWD emergency subsidies were also provided to 40,418 TNVS and public transport drivers.

The Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations program has released P61.9 million to 13,135 clients for COVID-19 concerns under.

The Department of Finance, on the other hand, is set to launch the Small Business Wage Subsidy Program, which aims to provide a 5,000 to 8,000 cash subsidy for up to two months to around 3.4 million middle-income employees of small businesses.

**with Francis T. Wakefield and
Keith Calayag**



Home, the first line of defense

[TURO-TURO](#) - [Claude Tayag](#) (The Philippine Star) - April 16, 2020 - 12:00am

With the quarantine and lockdown being extended till the end of this month, it seems we have to hold out in our foxholes a little while longer. We're told to stay home indoors, wear a mask if we have to go outdoors, observe social distancing, wash our hands as often as possible, exercise and eat nutritious food to keep our immune system stronger. After all, keeping a sane mind and a healthy body is our best defense. And home is our fortress.

Since we're faced with an invisible enemy, we "fortify" our homes, not with thicker walls or cyclone wires, but with proper hygienic practices in our daily activities.

I, for one, have been practicing "no street footwear" inside the house for the past 30 years. There are disposable slippers available for guests. Being an artist/writer/cook, most of my creative time is spent at home. The "work-from-home" policy of many businesses since the lockdown is nothing new to me. It's as normal as can be, but with the addition of a lot of physical labor doing the gardening, disposing of garbage, grocery, cooking (with the absence of househelp), while the wifey makes sure the house is in order: spring cleaning, laundry, and best of all, sanitizing the groceries before they enter the house.

I am required to remove all my street clothes outside, entering the house only in briefs and going straight to the shower (shh). She even devised a "footbath" by wetting a coconut coir rug with laundry detergent and bleach. Our son Nico is looking after the welfare of our 25 employees.

Home remedies and common sense are your best buddies in these trying times. They're often free, or low-cost, if they cost anything at all.

Go bask in the morning sun (between 6:30 to 8:30 a.m.) even just for 15 minutes for vitamin D. At the first sign of a cold, gargle with warm water, better if with salt. Or drink warm salabat (ginger tea), or even take a tablespoon of honey at bedtime.

Sabila (aloe vera) does wonders for one's hair growth, as well as an ointment to heal wounds or burns. Cuban oregano boiled into a tea (aka Spanish thyme, Indian borage or Mexican mint) has been used for ages to treat respiratory and throat infections, rheumatism, constipation and flatulence. Both plants thrive well in pots inside an apartment if placed by a window with morning sun.

What this pandemic is teaching us is how to live simply, get by with as little as possible, and help others as much as possible.

Charity begins at home

Speaking of keeping a healthy body and eating nutritious food as our best shield, the first and foremost to suffer are the frontliners in the medical, military, sanitation and service sectors. It is difficult enough for them to get a ride to their workplace and back, but they have to nourish themselves with proper nutritious food, especially the health workers doing irregular hours and overtime.

With the snail's pace of our national and local governments' response to the crisis, the best of Kapampangan generosity and compassion came to the fore. Even before the official announcement of the lockdown, private individuals had been donating cash or kind in their respective areas.

But a new set of problems arose. Some hospitals had so many food donations pouring in that on a given day some food would spoil, while on other days there wouldn't be any.

Coming to the rescue is Lugud Balen (love of town/community), an informal organization stemming from a chat group mainly from the professional Pampango chefs and restaurateurs who did the catering at the ASEAN Games late last year.

According to its Facebook account, Lugud Balen is a movement inspired by people who want to contribute to the fight against COVID-19. They believe that, no matter how little, they can and will make a difference. They are accepting donations in cash, raw materials such as meat, vegetables, seasonings, and also manpower.

It further says one can also help as "a partner restaurant or food purveyor, if one wants to produce your own meals to be donated. Just let us know so we can properly coordinate the deliveries so we can spread the blessings to all those who need it (just as my extensive Tayag family of home cooks have been assigned to provide dinners for the Ospital Ning Angeles staff since March 20). Or as a transport provider to pick up and deliver goods. Likewise, we wish to inform everyone that we continue to follow and practice the basic EHQ guidelines for everyone's safety and protection."

Lugud Balen is the "control tower" that coordinates the daily operations. As of April 9, some 17,852 meals have been provided by Lugud Balen to various recipients all over Pampanga. Cash donations have reached P1,249,640. Recipients are not limited to hospitals and the PNP, but also to Duyan ni Maria Children's Home and Tahanan ng Munting Nazareth orphanage, and some depressed areas in Porac, Mabalacat and Angeles City.

The bulk of the cooking is done in the kitchens of Systems Plus School, Taldawa Restaurant, K Café, Tollhouse, Perfect Loaf Bakery, with chefs Howard Dizon, Froi Cruz, Chloe Cauquiran, Lola Nors and Denlim heading their respective kitchens. Chef Howard is assigned to cooking food for the Jose B. Lingad Hospital, Makabali Clinic and San Fernandino Hospital, all in the City of San Fernando.

More manna from heaven came when Sara Soliven Guzman told her staff to donate all of OB Montessori Center, Angeles City's food stock of 16 sacks of rice and an assortment of frozen bulk meats. The OBMC Angeles Alumni COVID Drive has raised P328,244 and 1,640 kilos of rice so far.

Indeed, charity begins at home. Lugud Balen is kitchens by the community, for the community.

Second look at national ID

The two senators have been reiterating that the government could have easily distributed cash assistance to 18 million families affected by the enhanced community quarantine had the identification been put in place.

Published 8 hours ago
on April 16, 2020 12:40 AM
By [Hananeel Bordey](#)



A resolution calling for an investigation on the implementation of the Philippine Identification System was filed at the Senate on Wednesday.

Senate President Vicente Sotto and Senator Panfilo Lacson said Resolution 352 directs the appropriate panel to look into the progress of the law's implementation, two years after the measure was passed.

"Almost two years from its enactment into law and the approval of its IRR (Implementing Rules and Regulations), there seems to be no significant headway on its implementation," the resolution read.

Recently, the two senators have been reiterating that the government could have easily distributed cash assistance to 18 million families affected by the enhanced community quarantine had the identification been put in place.

President Rodrigo Duterte, himself, said that the National ID System would have avoided the unnecessary delay in the distribution of subsidy to each Filipino household, the senators noted.

The National ID System would not only aid in the efficient distribution of the social amelioration program, they said, but also help law enforcement agencies in fighting crimes and facilitate key government services and transactions.

In a text message to reporters, Sotto said that the inquiry is expected to be conducted as soon as they resume sessions on 4 May. Currently, both Houses of Congress are taking the congressional break which was scheduled in the 18th Congress' legislative calendar.

The National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) and the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) are among the key agencies that will be called to attend the hearing, Sotto said.

"NEDA, PSA (and) other executive offices involved and service providers from the private sector who have already proposed quick and reliable processes," Sotto said.

The government is currently distributing P100 billion as cash aid for low-income households who were forced to stay at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/04/16/second-look-at-national-id/>

Muntinlupa outlaws spitting, dumping of PPEs in public places

Published April 15, 2020, 4:46 PM

By *Jonathan Hicap*

The Muntinlupa City government has banned spitting as well as dumping of used personal protective equipment (PPE) in public places as an added measure to prevent the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Muntinlupa Mayor Jaime Fresnedi (standing left) presides over a meeting together with Muntinlupa Police chief Col. Hermogenes Cabe, barangay chairmen and COVID-19 Task Force regarding the strict implementation of physical distancing and movement of people outside their homes.



(Photo courtesy of Muntinlupa PIO)

Mayor Jaime Fresnedi has signed City Ordinance 2010-089, or the Anti-Spitting and Anti-Littering Ordinance of 2020, which was passed by the City Council.

“Since COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through contact or respiratory droplets which can last for a few days on surfaces, we are passing an ordinance penalizing hazardous societal habits that are considered as public nuisances and potentially exposes other persons to COVID-19,” said Fresnedi.

Under the ordinance, violators will be apprehended and face a fine of P5,000 and up to six months imprisonment if they are caught intentionally or carelessly spitting mucus, saliva, phlegm, or other substances from the mouth and openly sneezing out nasal mucus in public places such as city streets, alleys, sidewalks, parks, grocery stores, markets, and terminals.

In addition, anyone who disposes of PPEs and defecating and excreting bodily wastes or urinating in public places will also be penalized.

The city government has encouraged the public to document violations through photographs or video recording to be used exclusively for reporting purposes to public authorities that will become the basis of an action or complaint.

Muntinlupa has several ordinances approved and signed in order to curb the spread of COVID-19. Among these are the mandatory wearing of face masks and observing of physical distancing at all times and 24-hour curfew.

As of April 14, there are 98 positive COVID-19 cases in Muntinlupa including 15 deaths and 14 recovered cases. Muntinlupa has started its targeted COVID-19 mass testing on April 13 with persons under investigation (PUI). It has partnered with the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) for the processing of samples, which will be processed in three to four days.

Source: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/04/15/muntinlupa-outlaws-spitting-dumping-of-ppes-in-public-places/>



5.0-magnitude quake hits Samar

Published April 15, 2020, 10:36 AM

By *Marjaleen Ramos*

A 5.0-magnitude earthquake struck Samar on Wednesday, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) reported.

The earthquake, which occurred at 9:07 a.m., was tectonic in origin and was traced 47 kilometers northeast of Basay, Samar.

The quake had a depth of 99 km, with the following registered intensities: Intensity IV – Basey and Sta. Rita, Samar; Tacloban City; Intensity III – Catbalogan City, Samar; Barugo, Palo, and Pastrana, Leyte; Lawaan, Eastern Samar; Intensity II – Abuyog, Capoocan, Carigara, Dagami, Dulag, Jaro, Javier, and Tabontabon, Leyte; Borongan City, General MacArthur and Maydolong, Eastern Samar PHIVOLCS said the quake was also felt under the following instrumental Intensities: Intensity IV – Palo, Leyte; Intensity III – Borongan City

The quake was not expected to cause any damage to property. However, aftershocks are likely to happen.

Tremors felt in parts of Visayas as magnitude 5 quake hits Samar

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Apr 15, 2020 10:23:48 AM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, April 15) — A magnitude 5 earthquake hit Samar on Wednesday, with tremors felt in several parts of Visayas.

The tectonic quake was recorded in Basey, Samar past 9 a.m.

Intensity 4 or moderately strong shaking was felt in parts of Tacloban City, while weak shaking was felt in parts of eastern Samar.

State seismologists warned of possible aftershocks, but no structural damage are expected.



4.8-magnitude quake jolts Batanes

Published April 15, 2020, 10:40 AM

By **MB Online**

A 4.8-magnitude earthquake struck Batanes on Wednesday, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) reported.

The earthquake, which occurred at 10:01 a.m., was tectonic in origin and was traced 44 kilometers southeast of Sabtang, Batanes.

The quake had a depth of 3 km, with the following registered intensities: Intensity III- Basco, Batanes. No aftershocks and damages are expected from the tremor.

China's wet markets are not what some people think
they are

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April 16, 2020
DATE

China's wet markets are not what some people think they are

By Ben Westcott and Serenitie Wang, CNN

Published Apr 15, 2020 12:46:57 PM



(CNN) - If you have ever been to shopping area where butchers and grocers sell fresh produce straight from the farm, then you have been to something that would, in some parts of the world, be called a wet market.

That might be surprising -- because recently the term wet market has become almost synonymous with Covid-19 for some people in the West.

The novel coronavirus, which has infected close to 2 million people globally, is believed to have originated in a wet market in the city of Wuhan, where wild animals such as porcupines and deer were being sold and slaughtered for food and medicine.

Speaking on April 3, the US' top infectious disease specialist, Anthony Fauci, told Fox News that all wet markets should be "shut down right away," saying he couldn't understand why they were still open.

But wet markets, as opposed to dry markets, which sell non-perishable goods such as grain or household products, are simply places that offer a wide range of fresh produce. Some, but not all, also sell live animals. They are referred to as "wet" owing to the fact that floors are often hosed down after vendors wash vegetables or clean fish.

Wet markets that sell live animals can risk creating the types of dangerous conditions where viruses can spread from animals to humans, due to the close quarters and potentially unsanitary practices -- especially, if they keep rare animals or those captured from the wild, experts say.

The 2003 SARS epidemic, for example, was linked to the sale of civet cats in Guangdong province.

Most wet markets, however, are not virus petri-dishes filled with exotic animals ready to be slaughtered.

For a large proportion of people in China and across Asia, they are just places to go to buy fresh food, such as chicken, pork, fish and vegetables, at affordable prices.

Billion-dollar wildlife trade

Wet markets are a common sight not just in mainland China but across Asia.

In Hong Kong, for example, there is a widespread network of wet markets where thousands of locals shop everyday for their meat and vegetables. There is one in almost every district and none of them trade in exotic or wild animals.

Similar markets can also be found in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

China's wet markets are not what some people think
they are

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Some wet markets, however, can provide an outlet for the trade in exotic wildlife, which according to a 2017 Chinese government report was worth more than \$73 billion.

But the trade, while lucrative, is by no means mainstream. The consumption of wild meats is not common, especially in big cities, and consumers often have to travel to specific sites to purchase rare or exotic animals.

After SARS authorities in several provinces tried to tackle the wildlife trade, banning the sale of some animals such as civet cats and snakes, but many of the bans either weren't enforced or were quietly removed.

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, the Chinese government temporarily banned the trade of wild animals for food in late February and is currently drafting a permanent law to further tighten controls.

According to Chinese state-run media Xinhua, at least 94% of mainland China's wet markets had been reopened as of March 22. It remains unclear, however, how many of those have completely stopped trading wild animals.

"In the face of Covid-19, it is understandable that around the world there are calls for shutting down all wet markets," said Duan Biggs, senior research fellow in the Environmental Futures Research Institute at Australia's Griffith University.

"However, a complete ban is unlikely to be a sustainable solution to this risk -- as earlier failed attempts at bans and shutdowns show. Instead, new policies and regulations need to incorporate scientific evidence together with consideration of different cultural perceptions and values towards wildlife, wildlife trade and consumption."

Changing practices

Traditionally, consumers in China have long favored fresh produce, preferring to make several trips to a market each week to buy meat, fish and vegetables, rather than driving to a supermarket for a weekly shop. But in recent years, like everywhere else globally, wet markets have lost ground to supermarkets, especially among younger consumers.

Online grocery stores, backed by internet giants who have cash to burn and sophisticated logistics systems, are also gaining ground.

Even older generations, who have a lifelong habit of shopping in wet markets, are being lured to new services such as Alibaba's Hema (Freshhippo) with generous discounts and pledges for safety and traceability of its produce. Hema alone had 197 storefronts in China by the end of 2019.

Travel restrictions during the virus have accelerated the trend away from wet markets. Online grocery stores become a daily necessity when people across China were locked down in their homes.

Eliam Huang, analyst at Coresight, said the outbreak forces users to adapt to the trend otherwise they would be hesitant to do so. "The crisis makes people more prepared for the techy future," she said.

But for now, discouraging people from using wet markets altogether is not a viable solution. University of Sydney's environmental and humanitarian engineer Petr Matous said that wet markets play an important role in food security for many low income communities, both in China and globally, who don't have access to online options.

"Abolishing wet markets may give the illusion of solving the cause of the current situation but the real problems are deeper than that," he said in an email.

Many experts agree that ending the illegal trade of animals is the most important means of preventing the next pandemic -- and that means better regulation and stricter enforcement, especially at a local level.

In the long term, however, even better regulation might not fully stop the illegal wildlife trade if demand persists -- it will simply go underground, according to the World Wildlife Fund.

"This health crisis must serve as a wake-up call for the need to end unsustainable use of endangered animals and their parts, as exotic pets, for food consumption and for their perceived medicinal value," said the organization.

Source: https://cnnphilippines.com/world/2020/4/15/china-wet-markets-not-what-some-people-think.html?fbclid=IwAR3G2gV5MKLEsqj8E2djz2DBygMu6q9YsM-5W9FgNTw_o3M88sHR8x1so4M

Wildlife poaching rampant in Cambodia – NGO



By [KHMER TIMES](#)

April 16, 2020

PHNOM PEHN: The Wildlife Alliance revealed Roveang Station rangers, in collaboration with local authorities, confiscated AK-47 rifles, four chainsaws and metal snares hidden in Cambodia's Pursat province's Northern Cardamom mountains, while no poacher was found in the vicinity.

The weapons, said the alliance, is a reminder of the persisting threat to wildlife protection in the kingdom.

In a statement, the alliance said: "The seized arsenal of hunting gear also included a set of machetes — strong evidence the owner/s were using the weapons to hunt wild animals, which will most likely be consumed in Cambodia or trafficked to Vietnam or China."

The alliance added that since the establishment of the Cardamom Rainforest Protection Program in 2002, they had seized more than 700 firearms from poachers.

"This is not the first time assault rifles have been confiscated by patrolling rangers... However, this reminds us that some offenders carry weapons, which pose a greater threat than poorly assembled homemade guns, which are capable of firing only one round at a time," the statement said, noting the weapons were usually used by poachers to intimidate any pursuing rangers.

The hunting gears, said the alliance, would not be the last weapons to be confiscated by their rangers as they continue to protect almost 1.5 million hectares of the Cardamom Rainforest Landscape from illegal loggers, encroachers and poachers.

Despite this, the alliance said the recent crackdown on weapons demonstrated the importance of highly effective law enforcement, including rigorous ranger training to ensure rangers are equipped to deal with any challenges they might face in their line of work.

Heun Sopheap, an activist from the Prey Lang Community Network, said authorities must remain steadfast in stopping illegal logging and hunting activities to preserve and protect the kingdom's natural resources.

"We appeal to the authorities to strengthen enforcement of laws that protect forests and wildlife in the country," he added.

Khmer Times

Earth Day 2020 Brings Together An Unprecedented Collection Of Voices Including Zac Efron, Patricia Espinosa, Al Gore, Denis Hayes, Alex Honnold, Van Jones, Anil Kapoor, John Kerry, Prince Albert Of Monaco, And Kyra Sedgwick To Share Their Support For Our Planet For The 50th Anniversary

UNTV News • April 16, 2020 • 16

Special Earth Day Address from His Holiness Pope Francis to be included in Earth Day

"The Earth is our environment to protect and the garden to tend to." – His Holiness Pope Francis, Earth Day 2015

WASHINGTON, April 16, 2020 /PRNewswire/ — With the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day (April 22) fast approaching, now more than ever we need to connect as a global community united in our fight to protect the health and welfare of the planet and its people.

In support of this global movement, illustrious and preeminent religious leaders, environmental advocates, celebrities, musicians and government officials will be celebrating Earth Day with a variety of first-person video pieces demonstrating their commitment to our planet.

These messages, talks, teach-ins and performances will be part of **Earth Day Network's robust 15-hour (9am ET to 11pm ET) live digital event** on the homepage for the planet, earthday.org, as well as part of a comprehensive social media partnership with Twitter (#EarthDay2020), and as part of Earth Day Live.

The incredible lineup of personal video messages for Earth Day 2020 includes:

- **Ed Begley, Jr.**, Actor, Environmentalist, Global Advisory Committee Member
- **Zdeno Chara**, Captain of the Boston Bruins
- **Sylvia Earle**, World-renowned Marine Biologist and National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence
- **Zac Efron**, Actor and Global Advisory Committee Member
- **Patricia Espinosa**, UN Climate Change Executive Secretary
- **Christiana Figueres**, Former Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- **Jerome Foster II**, White House Climate Striker and Founder of OneMillionOfUs
- **Al Gore**, Former Vice President, Global Environmental Advocate, and Award-winning Filmmaker
- **Denis Hayes**, Organizer of the first Earth Day, Board Chair Emeritus of Earth Day Network and President, CEO, The Bullitt Foundation
- **Alex Honnold**, Free Climber and star of Oscar-Winning Documentary, *Free Solo*
- **Van Jones**, News Commentator
- **Licypriya Kangujam**, Youth Climate Activist and Founder of The Child Movement
- **Anil Kapoor**, Award-winning Actor, Producer, and Global Advisory Committee Member
- **Ricky Kej**, Grammy-Winning Musician and Global Advisory Committee Member
- **John Kerry**, 68th Secretary of State, Global Advisory Committee Member, Founder of World War Zero
- **Thomas Lovejoy**, Senior Fellow at the United Nations Foundation and Professor of Environmental Science and Policy, George Mason University.
- **Bill McKibben**, Founder of 350.org
- **His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco**, Global Advisory Committee Member
- **Paul Nicklen**, National Geographic Filmmaker, Photographer and Marine Biologist
- **Kyra Sedgwick**, Actress, Producer, Director, and Global Advisory Committee Member
- **Alexandria Villaseñor**, Founder and Executive Director of Earth Uprising
- **Rev. Lennox Yearwood Jr.**, President and CEO of the Hip Hop Caucus and Global Advisory Committee Member

“This unprecedented time has stopped us all in our tracks,” said Kathleen Rogers, President of Earth Day Network. “As each of us ensures that those around us are safe and well, it is in a momentous opportunity to examine our individual and collective relationship with the natural world and how our activities impact the planet. The way forward is hopeful, and we have an opportunity to forever change how we interact with the environment in our own backyard and our community at large.”

Earth Day 2020 is comprised of a multi-faceted program intended to activate individuals to support their planet in a safe and responsible way during the coronavirus pandemic. Titled “24 Hours of Action,” Earth Day Network will reveal an action an hour that individuals can do to support our planet. Earth Day 2020 also includes a 15-hour digital Earth Day Live program on earthday.org, featuring long-form and short-form content with interactive programming, live appearances by religious leaders, celebrities, musicians, as well as live teach-ins with preeminent scientists and advocates.

In addition, individuals can participate in [Earth Challenge 2020](#), a global citizen science initiative that will help build an open source database on air quality and plastic pollution using an app on your smartphone from the safety of your home.

About Earth Day Network

Earth Day 2020 comes 50 years after the first Earth Day which, in 1970, mobilized over 20 million citizens to demand action on the environmental challenges of the time. Today, Earth Day is observed in around 190 countries and close to 100,000 organizations. More than 1 billion people now participate in Earth Day activities each year, making it the largest civic observance in the world. To learn more, visit earthday.org.

Logo – https://mma.prnewswire.com/media/1155792/Earth_Day_Logo.jpg

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REGIONAL COOPERATION | SE Asian countries agree to strengthen health capacities

April 15, 2020 , 01:25 PM

April 15, 2020 – Southeast Asian countries have agreed to cooperate and strengthen their health capacities to cope with the deepening coronavirus pandemic which has infected close to 2 million people around the world including more than 20,000 in the region, an administration official said on Wednesday.

Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles, spokesman for the government’s inter-agency task force dealing with the coronavirus, said the ten-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) also agreed to exchange real-time information and share best practices in treating the disease as well as set up a fund to procure medical equipment, supplies and possible cure like drugs and vaccines when they become available.

“There was a consensus that all the countries involved must coordinate and share information with each other, leverage digital technology to help combat the outbreak, and prepare and build up healthcare capabilities,” Nograles said in a virtual press briefing on Wednesday, quoting from an ASEAN Declaration.

Southeast Asian leaders held a rare video conference on Tuesday morning to discuss the pandemic, which has disrupted global and regional economies. The video conference was initiated by Vietnam, this year’s summit chairman, after a face-to-face meeting was postponed on April 6 to 9.

In the afternoon, the ten leaders held similar video conference with leaders of its three closest dialogue partners – China, Japan and South Korea.

During the summit, Duterte raised four points on the need for cooperation to control the outbreak, on vaccine development and research, on adequate supply of medical equipment as well as food security, particularly on rice.

“Our most urgent priority is strengthening the capacity of our healthcare systems,” Duterte said. “We call for the increased production and the facilitation of trade of vital medical equipment and supplies in our region. But equally important, we must significantly enhance scientific cooperation, particularly in the area of vaccine and anti-viral treatment research and development.”

The popular leader told other ASEAN leaders the Philippines is ready to participate in clinical trials and medical studies related to the potential cure of COVID-19, including the Japanese manufactured anti-flu drug Avigan.

The Japanese government has been testing the drug Avigan to treat patients with coronavirus.

“The Philippines is ready to participate in clinical trials and medical studies of potential vaccines and medicines such as Avigan,” Duterte said.

In his late Monday briefing, Duterte said that an unnamed pharmaceutical company will start selling a drug that can cure coronavirus in May.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said about 50 countries have already expressed interest in the anti-flu drug.

As of April 14, more than 21,000 coronavirus cases were recorded in the Southeast Asian region, with the Philippines as the most affected country after confirming more than 5,000 cases COVID-19 patients. (Roy Narra/MM)

Source: https://news.tv5.com.ph/breaking/read/regional-cooperation-se-asian-countries-agree-to-strengthen-health-capacities?fbclid=IwARo8flynCn1BYS_sT282tNnjDovzmv1X3hSqkkv8u5FUdjAw-OxCuAOVBPA

Climate goals failure costs \$600T – study



By [Agence France-Presse](#)

April 16, 2020

GENEVA: Nations’ failure to fulfil the promises they made in the Paris climate agreement to make drastic emissions cuts could cost the global economy as much as \$600 trillion this century, new analysis showed.

Under the landmark 2015 accord, countries pledged to voluntarily reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of fossil fuels in order to limit global temperature rises to “well below” 2 degrees Celsius (C).

The deal committed states to work towards a safer temperature cap of 1.5 C, through individual emissions reductions plans, known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs).

With just 1 C of warming since preindustrial times, Earth is already undergoing devastating heatwaves, drought, wildfires and storm surges made worse by rising seas. The United Nations says global emissions must fall by more than 7 percent every year between now and 2030 to hit the 1.5-C target.

Yet countries’ current NDCs put Earth on course to heat by far more by 2100 — between 3 C and 4 C above the historic baseline. While several studies have sought to estimate the economic cost of failure to mitigate climate change, few have tried to quantify the potential net economic gain rapid action could bring.

Writing in the journal *Nature Communications*, an international team of climate experts simulated the costs of global cooperative action under a variety of scenarios.

Considering aspects such as warming thresholds, the cost of low-carbon technology, the cost of climate damage and the idea of countries paying their “fair share” towards fixing the problem, the team was able to quantify net benefit — that is how much the global economy stood to gain under various plans.

They found that the world would gain \$336 trillion to \$422 trillion by 2100 if action was taken to keep warming to 2 C and 1.5 C, respectively.

But if they fail to achieve the Paris temperature goals, countries stand to lose up to \$600 trillion (\$126 trillion to \$616 trillion) by century’s end. This amounts to an average loss of 0.57 percent of national gross domestic product (GDP) annually to 2100.

With the United States set to leave the Paris deal this year, the researchers also looked at the cost of countries failing even to live up to their current NDC pledges. That loss ranged between \$150 trillion and \$790 trillion — up to 7.5 times current global GDP.

“We think that if every country or region can greatly enhance their actions for emission mitigation, it is possible to achieve the 1.5 C,” said lead study author Biying Yu, from the Beijing Institute of Technology. “But implementing such a self-preservation strategy in a real word requires countries to recognize the gravity of global warming and to make breakthroughs in low-carbon technologies.”

He added that countries had traditionally prioritized short-term economic gain over climate action — and were therefore missing out on significant cost benefits from moving early.

“Without the upfront investment, emissions cannot be reduced, and the climate damage will occur with higher probability, which will result in huge economic loss,” he said.

The study found that global upfront climate investment would need to be \$18 trillion to \$113 trillion in order for the world to “break even” in its climate plan.

AFP

Greenland ice sheet shrinks by record amount - climate study

Kate Abnett, Reuters

Posted at Apr 15 2020 10:04 PM



A picture taken on August 20, 2019 shows an iceberg floating off the coast of Kulusuk in Greenland. *Jonathan Nackstrand, AFP*

Greenland's ice sheet shrank by more than at any time since record-taking began last year, according to a study published on Wednesday that showed the risk that climate change could cause sharp rises in global sea levels.

The huge melt was due not only to warm temperatures, but also atmospheric circulation patterns that have become more frequent due to climate change, suggesting scientists may be underestimating the threat to the ice, the authors found.

"We're destroying ice in decades that was built over thousands of years," Marco Tedesco, research professor at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, who led the study, told Reuters. "What we do here has huge implications for everywhere else in the world."

Greenland's ice sheet, the world's second largest, recorded its biggest outright drop in what scientists call "surface mass" since record-keeping began in 1948, according to the study.

Greenland lost around 600 billion tonnes of water last year, an amount that would contribute about 1.5 millimeters of sea level rise, according to the study from Columbia and Belgium's Liege university, published in *The Cryosphere*. Greenland's ice sheet covers 80 percent of the island and could raise global sea levels by up to 23 feet if it melted entirely.

Greenland contributed 20-25 percent of global sea level rise over the last few decades, Tedesco said. If carbon emissions continue to grow, this share could rise to around 40 percent by 2100, he said, although there is considerable uncertainty about how ice melt will develop in Antarctica - the largest ice sheet on Earth.

Most models used by scientists to project Greenland's future ice loss do not capture the impact of changing atmospheric circulation patterns - meaning such models may be significantly underestimating future melting, the authors said.

"It's almost like missing half of the melting," said Tedesco.

With climate change impacts from massive bushfires in Australia to thawing permafrost in the Arctic unfolding faster than many scientists had once anticipated, the study underscored the risks associated with burning fossil fuels.

A report by the United Nations-backed Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published in September projected that sea levels could rise by one metre by 2100 if greenhouse gas emissions keep climbing.

Massive freshwater melt - like that of Greenland - threatens the hundreds of millions of people who live below current high tide lines or annual flood levels. It also changes ocean salinity, which can disrupt marine ecosystems.

(Reporting by Kate Abnett, Editing by Matthew Green and Angus MacSwan)

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/04/15/20/greenland-ice-sheet-shrinks-by-record-amount-climate-study?fbclid=IwAR3nhZK7bkofogroWiFBqBsMJo1VeGhAbol5Ul5XFYXjdEGADvElv6Lpc34>

5 trapped in China mine accident



By [Xinhua](#)

April 16, 2020

TAIYUAN: Five miners have been trapped after a coal mine accident in north China's Shanxi Province, according to Datong Coal Mine Group.

The accident happened at 2:45 p.m. Tuesday when the roof suddenly caved in at a working platform in a coal mine operated by a company of the group. No reports about the safety of the trapped miners almost 24 hours since the incident, reports said.

Of the 13 miners working at the platform, eight came out of the mine safely.

Rescue work is underway. By about 3:30 a.m. Wednesday, rescuers had established contact with the trapped miners. No comments have been received from the rescuers, who are retrieving the miners located 160 meters below the ground.

A preliminary investigation showed that the accident was caused by the collapse of the supporting structure due to lamprophyre.

Xinhua