



## Pagbibigay ng PPE sa mga garbage collector, inirekomenda ng DENR

April 17, 2020 @ 6:54 PM 12 hours ago  
Views: 140

Manila, Philippines – Inirekomenda ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang pagbibigay ng Personal protective equipment (PPE) sa mga garbage collector bilang proteksyon ng mga ito laban sa Covid-19.

Ayon kay DENR Usec. Benny Antiporda, mahalagang maprotektahan ang mga garbage collector at naghahakot ng basura dahil itinuturing itong mga frontliner din na humaharap sa banta ng Covid-19.

Sinabi pa ni Antiporda na bukod sa pagbibigay ng proteksyon sa mga naghahakot ng basura inirekomenda din nito ang proper disposal ng mga basura at gamit ng healthcare workers na exposed sa mga pasyenteng nagtataglay ng Covid-19 at basura galing ng mga ospital.

Ayon pa kay Antiporda dapat mahiwalay ang mga basura galing sa ospital dahil sa panganib ng Covid-19.


Nabatid pa kay Antiporda na kinakailangan din mabigyan ng gamit at protective equipment ang mga garbage collector bilang proteksyon ng mga ito laban sa Covid-19.

Nauna rito magugunitang may napaulat umanong may garbage collectors ang nahawaan ng corona virus (Covid-19) dahil sa kawalan nito ng protective equipment sa kanyang katawan. Santi Celario

Source: <https://remate.ph/pagbibigay-ng-ppe-sa-mga-garbage-collector-inirekomenda-ng-denr/>

News5 8 hrs ·

Hinikayat ng DENR ang DILG na maglabas ng kautusan sa LGUs at private garbage collection companies na bigyan din ng personal protective equipment ang garbage collectors, ayon kay Usec. Benny Antiporda sa isang panayam sa OnePH.



**“**Mayroon na pong nag-positive na garbage collectors na ika nga'y hindi sila kino-consider as frontliner. Nakikiusap po ako sa taumbayan, frontliner po 'yang ating mga basurero. **Hindi po porket marumi ang kanilang trabaho ay hindi na po sila frontliner.** Tulungan po natin sila kung maaari, mabigyan sila ng PPE, at kung maaari maproteksyunan sila. **”**

**USEC. BENNY ANTIPORDA**  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT  
AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
APRIL 17, 2020

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# EMB faces COVID waste disposal crisis

posted April 17, 2020 at 11:10 pm

by [Butch Gunio](#)

In response to Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu's directive to anticipate the increased volume of infectious wastes during the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Environmental Management Bureau has issued guidelines on the issuance of special permits to transport medical wastes during the Enhanced Community Quarantine period.

EMB Memorandum Circular Nos. 2020-14, 15 and 16, signed by EMB OIC-Director Engr. William P. Cuñado, direct the simplification of processing SPTTs by registered transporters and existing transport, storage and disposal facilities, "pursuant to the need for continuity of operations in the field of public health and safety."

Transporters with SPTT are exempted from the travel ban to ensure that the collection and transportation of pathological and infectious wastes for treatment is unhampered.

Per the guidelines, the EMB seeks "to continuously monitor the transportation, storage, and disposal of hazardous wastes in order to avoid environmental contamination; and to provide temporary protocols for waste generators, transporters, and treaters, local government units, law enforcement authorities, and other stakeholders in the smooth implementation of proper hazardous waste management."

Collection of fees for the issuance of SPTTs during the ECQ period is also suspended, provided that all requirements are complete and the fees will be paid once regular business operations in the EMB resume.

Transporters and TSD facilities with existing M501 permits or registration certificates expiring during the ECQ period enjoy an automatic extension of their licenses for a period of up to 60 days and that application for renewal shall be "immediately done within five days as soon as the ECQ is lifted."

EMB-3 Regional Director Wilson L. Trajeco informed the Manila Standard that his office has approved SPTTs for a little over 9,000 metric tons of medical wastes, as of April 11.

He said that once the requirements are complete, approval and issuance of the SPTT takes more or less only one hour.

Applications are done through the EMB's Online Permitting System and approval is also coursed through electronic mail to the applicant.

In anticipation of the possible peak of the pandemic after the ECQ period, Trajeco recommends the application of these interim guidelines for as long as there are cases of COVID-19 patients.

Most of the country's infectious wastes are being treated in Region 3 or Central Luzon, according to a report furnished by the EMB-3 to Manila Standard.

Aside from those in the Region, health care facilities in Metro Manila, Regions 1, 4A, 6, and 11 all transport their infectious wastes to Central Luzon for treatment and disposal.

At present, there are four existing TSD facilities in the Region: Safewaste, Inc., Udenna Environmental Services Inc., Total Organic Environmental Solutions, Inc., and Cleanway Environmental Management Solutions, Inc.

All of them are mandated to treat infectious wastes in compliance with the Clean Air Act of 1999, which prohibits incineration, and the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 for final disposal of treated medical waste in a sanitary landfill facility.

According to Christopher Tang, Business Development Director of Safewaste Inc., they use the no-burn thermal disinfection, or autoclaving, method whereby wastes are treated at temperatures of up to 140 degrees Centigrade using steam and heat to kill germs, viruses and other pathogens.

However, Tang noted that the volume of medical wastes coming into their facility decreased as small waste generators, such as diagnostic clinics, which are prolific in the Region, have ceased operations. Meanwhile, dialysis centers, rural health units, in addition to hospitals, are still operating. While some health care facilities do not label their wastes, Tang said that they consider all medical wastes during the ECQ period as related to COVID-19 and that they take necessary precautions in order to protect their own personnel and the public in collecting and treating such wastes.

Health care waste management involves segregation, collection, transportation, treatment and waste disposal.

Louie Dimalanta, infectious control nurse at the AUF Medical Center in Angeles City, Pampanga, said that protective equipment and other medical wastes used in treating COVID-19 patients are stored in containers and placed a separate area in the hospital.

Dimalanata said that they disinfect these wastes thoroughly before collection by the transporter, and disinfect the entire room again once emptied.

According to the 2017 World Health Organization study paper, around 85 percent of waste produced by health care providers is similar to household wastes and are typically classified as “non-hazardous” or “general health care wastes.”

The bulk of wastes mostly comes from administrative, kitchen and housekeeping functions of these health care providers.

The remaining 15 percent is considered as “hazardous” and can pose a number of health and environmental risks.

According to WHO, “Poor management of health-care waste exposes health-care workers, waste handlers and the community to infections, toxic effects and injuries,” adding that there is also potential for drug-resistant microorganisms of being released into the environment due to poor handling of health-care wastes.”

The most hazardous type of medical waste are sharps, specifically needles, because of the possible pathogens that they carry from an infected person such as, HIV, Hepatitis C and B and now, the novel coronavirus.

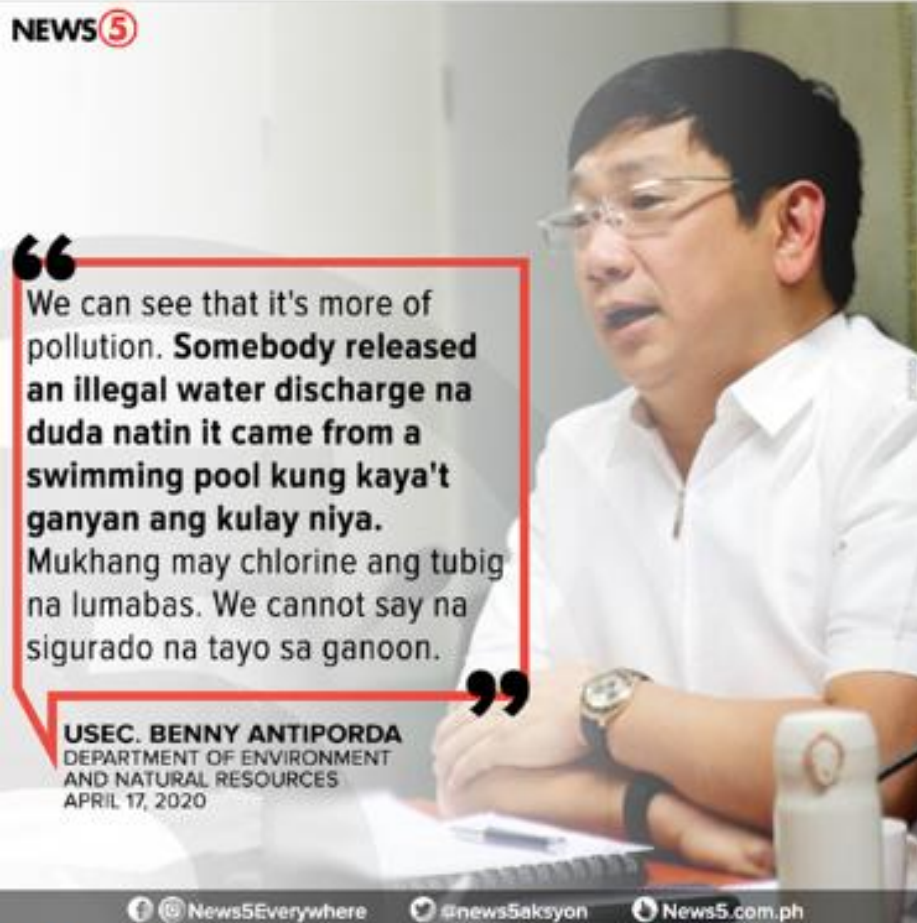
According to DOH data, there are around 48 hospitals in Central Luzon, in addition to other health care facilities, such as rural health units.



News5

7 hrs ·

Mayroon nang suspected areas ang DENR na posibleng pinagmulan ng "polusyon" sa Manila Bay, na nagmukhang "turquoise" ang kulay sa gitna ng enhanced community quarantine, ayon kay Usec. Benny Antiporda sa isang panayam sa OnePH.



“ We can see that it's more of pollution. **Somebody released an illegal water discharge na duda natin it came from a swimming pool kung kaya't ganyan ang kulay niya.** Mukhang may chlorine ang tubig na lumabas. We cannot say na sigurado na tayo sa ganoon.

**USEC. BENNY ANTIPORDA**  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT  
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# Sarangani Bay marks 24th year as protected area

By [The Manila Times](#)

April 18, 2020

Sarangani Bay, one of the country's richest bodies of water and home to the Philippine tuna industry, recently celebrated its 24th year as a protected seascape.



Sarangani Bay is rich in biodiversity, with coral resources covering 2,293 hectares, 60 important live hard coral species, 411 reef species and 11 species of seagrass. DENR REGION 12 PHOTO

To mark the occasion, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 12 (Soccsksargen) in collaboration with the Protected Area Management Board, launched the first-ever Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape (SBPS) Week to highlight the efforts to protect and conserve its coastal and marine resources.

The bay was declared a protected seascape by former president Fidel Ramos through Proclamation 756 series of 1996, covering 215,950 hectares.

Held in Gen. Santos City and various parts of Sarangani province, the week-long observance consisted of mall exhibits of marine species and simultaneous bay-wide cleanups participated in by the 68 barangays, business and tourism establishments along the bay's coast.

A dive safari and underwater photography contest held at Maitum, Kiamba and Maasim towns showcased Sarangani's emerging scuba diving sites. Topping the three-day photo tilt were Bretch Garcinez of General Santos City and East Pardillo of Davao City who won the wide and macro categories, respectively.

Fringe activities included a three-day environmental forum and enforcement summit, trash to art, mass dance and logo making competitions, and the search for the Ambassadors of SBPS.

Declared by the Department of Tourism as a scuba diving haven in southern Mindanao in 2017, the bay was also listed by the DENR as a Key Marine Biodiversity Areas with coral resources covering 2,293 hectares, 60 important live hard coral species, 411 reef species and 11 species of seagrass.

The DENR has also monitored various dolphin species, killer whales, dwarf and pygmy sperm whales in the bay, attesting to its rich biodiversity.

Because of the event's success, the SBPS Protected Area Management Board passed a resolution declaring March 5 as the annual SBPS Day, and directing local government units, major stakeholders, and partner organizations to take part in the observance.

PAMB Vice Chair and Sarangani Gov. Steve Solon lauded the maiden celebration, saying it symbolizes a broader commitment in preserving the bay as a shelter, and source of living and life to the areas around it.

He said the provincial government is a major stakeholder in the preservation of the bay's ecosystem through its Sulong Kalikasan program and the Environmental Conservation and Protection Center.

Hugging a coastal road of some 224 kilometers, the bay is host to the Gen. Santos City Fish Port Complex, fisherfolk villages, beach resorts, a coal energy power plant, shipyards, marine parks and sanctuaries, and aquaculture farms.

THE TIMES



ABS-CBN News

7 hrs · 🌐

TINGNAN: Isang Philippine eagle ang nasagip ng isang residente sa Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte, Huwebes.

Ayon sa DENR Regional Office 9, nakita ng residente sa damuhan ng Barangay Bulacan ang ibon na tila hindi makalipad. Agad niya itong dinala sa kanilang barangay chairperson, na siyang nakipag-ugnayan sa DENR.

Nasa 3.5 kilograms ang bigat nito at tinatayang 3 hanggang 5 taong gulang na. Walang nakitang sugat sa agila ngunit inoobserbahan pa rin ito bago pakawalan sa kabundukan.

Itinuturing na critically endangered ang Philippine eagle. Ayon sa International Union of Conservation of Nature, tinatayang nasa 400 pares na lang nito ang nasa bansa ngayon. (📺: DENR 9) | ulat ni RJ Rosalado, ABS-CBN News



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THE LEARNING CURVE

# Jun Factoran, freedom fighter and friend

By: [Neni Sta. Romana Cruz](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:04 AM April 18, 2020

Human rights lawyer and former Department of Environment and Natural Resources secretary during the Cory Aquino administration Fulgencio S. Factoran Jr., 76, left us quietly on Palm Sunday. Not a victim of the pandemic, but after a long struggle with his health challenges.

Jun was a special friend of the Women Writers in Media Now (WOMEN), a group of writers I belong to. We first met him, along with the other Mabini (Movement of Attorneys for Brotherhood, Integrity and Nationalism Inc.) lawyers like Joker Arroyo, Bobbit Sanchez, Rene Saguisag in the era of the Marcos dictatorship. The women journalists sought the help of human rights lawyers when they were summoned to military courts. Jun was one of 11 lawyers who defended Arlene Babst, Ceres P. Doyo, Jo-Ann Q. Maglipon in one case; we seemed to always be needing their help in those perilous times. Perhaps it was the trials and tribulations we endured together that gave the women writers and the human rights lawyers an extraordinarily strong bond of friendship. Jun especially seemed an integral part of our writing lives over the years, and our interactions went way beyond legal advice. He was himself an excellent writer, and to his dying day, we were urging him to write his memoir. He shrugged it off, thinking he had nothing significant to say.

Harvard-educated and a proud Rafael Salas boy to whom he credits his love for books and good restaurants, Jun hosted regular lunches with us, often with SF-based award-winning photographer Sigma Rhoan Rick Rocamora, because he said he enjoyed intelligent conversations—although I wonder how cerebral they really were when all I recall were his hilarious stories and much laughter as he counseled us on what we were engaged in, such as Rochit Tañedo as subdivision president and why Karina Bolasco and I must be on the go all the time. He was in awe of Sheila Coronel, Sylvia Mayuga, Marites Vitug, Cris Yabes. We tried to keep him company in the hospital as he faithfully kept watch over his wife Kay, whom he lost in 2012. We knew he was lonely and in search of meaning in his life again, and we offered him an array: a grief counselor, a therapist, Pilates, reading, writing?

He has left us in deep grief but enriched with many memories. Of the surprise 70th birthday his children hosted (yes, thoughtful, he said, but the bill went directly to him) when the WOMEN honored him with heartfelt messages and a crown of laurel—something that my florist could not understand until I showed her a photo of Balagtas! Of the day at lunch when he, Joker, and Rene brought out the rosaries in their pockets as testimonies of their source of strength. Of books we read and shared—of late, he wondered why his current favorites were about old men. Of Philippine titles he would always buy to read and to give away; the latest he wanted me to track down was Rolando Peña's biography, "Crossings." Of his heartwarming relationship with his eldest grandson, painter Jeffee, whose smile made every homecoming from the hospital special. Of his female law classmate who told me she would have been valedictorian were it not for Jun. Of my bantering with him about poor dating etiquette because while he would invite for plays and concerts, if you lived north of Manila, you had to Grab yourself home.

But he was there, like a beaming patriarch, when the Ateneo Library of Women's Writings honored WOMEN in 2013 in an exhibit of our writings. And, even while hospitalized, he sent a generous check to a writer in need—a gesture difficult to match.

Paulynn Sicam calls him her lifesaver. Sol Juvida remembers delightful boogies with light-footed Jun. Gemma Nemenzo recalls how thoughtful he was about arrangements for her flight to Cebu when her father died that those meeting her wondered about their relationship.

Jun had accomplished much in his lifetime—his is a life and a legacy to be proud of. My only regret is that he did not live long enough to see the fruits of his crusading, the country as he dreamt it to be—progressive, truly democratic, adhering to the rule of law, affording equal opportunities to all. The latter was especially important to one who never forgot his humble origins.

Neni Sta. Romana Cruz (nenisrcruz@gmail.com) is a member of the Eggie Apostol Foundation.

## LOOK

# Pililla windmills in Rizal seen clearly from Pasay City

Published April 17, 2020 3:37pm

A netizen captured a clear view of the windmills in Pililla, Rizal all the way from Pasay City.

The uploader Donald Pancho took the photos from a rooftop on March 30, two weeks after President Rodrigo Duterte placed Luzon under [enhanced community quarantine](#).

Pancho said this wasn't the first time he saw the windmill, but he said that the view was much clearer now with less smog and air pollution.

Pililla is around 50 kilometers away from Pasay City.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Benny Antiporda confirmed that the [air quality in Metro Manila improved](#) with fewer vehicles on the road.

Sights from nearby provinces became clearly visible for the first time in many years, such as the [Mt. Samat shrine](#) in Bataan and the [Sierra Madre](#) mountain range. --Margaret Claire Layug/MGP, GMA News

Source: [https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/hashtag/content/734468/pililla-windmills-in-rizal-seen-clearly-from-pasay-city/story/?just\\_in](https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/hashtag/content/734468/pililla-windmills-in-rizal-seen-clearly-from-pasay-city/story/?just_in)

## Boracay in isolation

posted April 17, 2020 at 07:20 pm

by [Manila Standard Lifestyle](#)



Malay, Aklan-based photographer Jack Jarilla (@boracayphotographer) captures the magnificent beauty of Boracay three weeks into the local government-imposed community quarantine in the municipality.



The series of postcard-worthy photos, posted on his Facebook account on April 7, has been liked over 2,900 times and shared 5,900 times as of this writing. The powdery white sand and the turquoise water glistening under the sun stand out without the crowd.



In an interview with PEP.ph, Jarilla said the photos were taken during lockdown while he was doing a property shoot for a client.

Source: <https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/321769>

# Water level at dams still below normal despite rains

Published April 17, 2020 9:57pm

Despite the recent rains, the water level at Angat Dam and La Mesa Dam remains below normal, according to a 24 Oras report.

Both dams are major water sources of Metro Manila.

The current level at the Angat Dam of 192.68 meters did not meet its normal water level of 212.00 meters.

Water level at the La Mesa Dam, meanwhile, was recorded at 77.01 meters. It was below its normal water level at 80.15 meters

Localized thunderstorms are expected to bring partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers over Metro Manila and the rest of the country on Saturday, PAGASA said Friday.

In its 24-hour forecast, the weather bureau said this has no significant impact on the country.

Meanwhile, the temperature in Quezon City reportedly dropped to 24.6°C at 6:30 a.m. and peaked at 33.2°C at 1:50 p.m. —**Joahna Lei Casilao/LDF, GMA News**

## Manila Water raises capital base to P4.4B

posted April 17, 2020 at 09:10 pm

by [Jenniffer B. Austria](#)

Shareholders of Manila Water Co. Inc. on Friday approved an increase in the company's capital stock to P4.4 billion from P3.5 billion, paving the way for the entry of businessman Enrique Razon Jr. into the company as a strategic investor.

Shareholders also voted to raise the carved-out shares from the increase in the company's capital stock from 300 million to 900 million unissued common shares and allow the issuance of the carved-out shares.

Manila Water chairman Fernando Zobel de Ayala said during the annual stockholders' meeting held via livestream the higher capital stock and the increase in the carved out shares were just one of the other conditions being worked out by both parties.

Razon's group through unit Trident Water is poised to acquire a controlling stake in Manila Water while Ayala group's ownership in the utility firm will drop to 31.6 percent based on the share purchase agreement signed by both parties in February.

Under the agreement, Razon will acquire 820 million Manila Water shares at P13 apiece, or equivalent to a 25-percent stake.

Razon also received proxy rights by Philwater Holdings Co. of Ayala Corp., giving him a 51-percent voting interest in the water concessionaire after the transaction.

Razon plans to make a tender offer to acquire more shares held by other investors in Manila Water. Zobel said the completion of the revised water concession agreement with the government would bring more stability into the company.

"Bringing in a strategic investor will be helpful to the company but the completion of the negotiations with the government on our concession agreement will provide a great deal of stability and make our banks more comfortable. That (negotiations) is proceeding well and we hope to get the results very soon," Zobel said.

The country's Metro Manila water concessionaires are in the midst of renegotiating an agreement with the government after President Rodrigo Duterte cited alleged "onerous provisions" in the previous deals.

Share price of Manila Water on Friday rose 0.2 percent to P11.08.

Duterte talked about 'horse antibodies' vs COVID-19.

April 18, 2020

TITLE: What't that about?

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# Duterte talked about 'horse antibodies' vs COVID-19. What's that about?

**Published** April 17, 2020 4:52pm  
By KAELE MALIG, GMA News

In his press conference on Thursday, President Rodrigo Duterte suddenly mentioned horses.

"Doon sa patay, kunan mo ng dugo niya, i-inject mo doon sa kabayo," he said. "Wag naman bigla kasi magka-COVID talaga, biktima 'yan. Dahan-dahan lang hanggang ma-immune. 'Pag marami nang antibodies 'yung kabayo, doon na kunin 'yung maraming [antibodies]."

Duterte may have been talking about a possible treatment for the [coronavirus disease 2019](#) (COVID-19).

While there is no medicine available at present, doctors around the world have been trying several methods to cure COVID-19 patients.

One of them is convalescent plasma transfusion or plasma therapy, which uses the antibodies from the blood of a recovered patient to help another fight the disease.

However, human blood only gives a limited supply of antibodies, according to a [report from Time Magazine](#).

"Each recovered donor has different levels of antibodies that target SARS-CoV-2, so collecting enough can be a problem, especially if the need continues to surge during an ongoing pandemic," the report said.

SARS-CoV-2 is the official name of the virus that causes COVID-19.

According to the Time report, one unit of plasma from a human donor can treat one patient.

This is where the horses can come in.

Emergent BioSolutions, a pharmaceutical company based in Maryland, United States, has turned to horses as a source of plasma.

Laura Saward, the head of the company's therapeutic business unit, told Time that the horses' size makes them ideal donors.

When scientists used plasma from horses to produce treatments for a bacterial infection called botulism, they found that the volume of plasma horses produce could treat more than one patient.

Plasma from horses may also have a higher concentration of antibodies.

Duterte talked about 'horse antibodies' vs COVID-19.

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"The thought is that a smaller dose of equine plasma would be effective in people because there would be higher levels of antibody in smaller doses," Seward said.

In a statement, Emergent said that the plasma of immunized horses with antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 can be developed as a potential treatment for critically ill patients.

The company expects its equine plasma ready for testing in people by the end of summer in the US around September.

As of Thursday, April 16, nearly two million cases of COVID-19 have been recorded globally. Over 130,000 have died from the disease. --MGP, GMA News



# IATF not tackling proposed 'total lockdown': Nograles

By Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos April 17, 2020, 4:01 pm



Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles

**MANILA** – The proposed “total lockdown” to stop the further transmission of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) in the country was not raised during the meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID), Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles said on Friday.

“What would a total lockdown look like and will it be limited to Luzon only if ever? We are not talking about that,” Nograles, spokesperson of IATF-EID, said in a virtual press briefing aired on state-run PTV-4.

Nograles issued the statement a day after Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said the proposed implementation of a total lockdown is an “option,” in case the government fails to “flatten the curve” of Covid-19 cases in the country.

The Philippines has so far 5,660 confirmed Covid-19 cases, with 362 fatalities and 435 recoveries.

The proposed total lockdown is different from the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) that is currently being imposed on the whole island of Luzon and some areas in Visayas and Mindanao.

The suggested total lockdown prevents people from going out of their homes and mandates the closure of all public establishments.

The ECQ, on the other hand, limits public movements to accessing basic necessities.

Nograles said Roque was perhaps thinking of “stricter” measures to fight Covid-19.

“*Kaya patuloy ang aming panawagan sa taumbayan na* (That’s why we are asking the public to) make it easier for us to make a decision. Because the decisions are based on our assumptions of how the Filipino people will behave and cooperate,” he said.

## Duterte has final say

The small group tasked by Duterte to assess the government’s response to Covid-19 is expected to come up with recommendations with regard to ECQ’s fate by Monday.

Nograles said the IATF-EID’s possible decision, which will be subject to President Rodrigo Duterte’s approval, would be based on the small group’s recommendations that will be presented on Monday.

"We will discuss what that possible scenario will be, what are the pros and cons, what we are ready to allow, what will be the new do's and don'ts, what will be the new guidelines after April 30," he said.

The final decision, however, would still come from Duterte, Nograles said.

"Ultimately, *si Presidente ang magde-decide doon sa recommendations natin* (Ultimately, the President will make a decision on our recommendations)," he said.

Nograles also reiterated his appeal for public cooperation, considering that Luzon-wide ECQ expires on April 30.

Nograles emphasized that the ECQ's fate lies in the hands of all Filipinos.

He said it would be more difficult for IATF-EID to come up with a decision if there are people who continue to violate the quarantine protocols.

"It makes it easier for us to make the decision because everybody is cooperating," Nograles said. "If they don't follow the rules, if they don't cooperate, it destroys all the assumptions. Then the model is also destroyed." **(PNA)**

IP rights advocates wary of using 'idle' ancestral

TITLE: domain as food production areas

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In this July 2, 2018 photo, students tend a farm at Alternative Learning Center for Agricultural and Livelihood Development, Inc. in Lianga, Surigao del Sur

Alcadev Facebook page

## IP rights advocates wary of using 'idle' ancestral domain as food production areas

[Jonathan de Santos](#) (Philstar.com) - April 17, 2020 - 1:33pm

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture should look to developing existing farmland instead of turning supposedly idle portions of ancestral domain into food production areas, indigenous peoples' rights advocates said Friday, adding food is already being grown in IP land anyway.

The DA, in a release on Thursday, said it is calling on IP groups "to transform part if not most of their idle ancestral lands into vegetable and high-value crop farms" under the government's "Plant, Plant, Plant" program for urban and community farming.

The department said that it will "allot a substantial budget to bankroll the enhanced food production program in ancestral lands." That support will include providing seeds for high-value crops, vegetables, and fruit trees.

Agriculture Secretary William Dar told reporters Thursday that according to consultations by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, IP communities need the program "so they will be food secure and reduce their dependence on the commercial market." He also indicated that the DA has been regularly giving support to IP groups that avail of the assistance.

He said in a DA press release on Thursday that "aside from profitable types of vegetables — like onion, string beans, potato, carrots, pineapple, garlic, cauliflower, and watermelon — our brother IPs can grow cacao, coffee, abaca or black pepper, or they may go into raising native pigs and free-range chicken."

IP rights advocates wary of using 'idle' ancestral

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## 'IP land not idle'

Rep. Eufemia Cullamat (Bayan Muna party-list), a Manobo leader, said Friday however that indigenous land is not idle. "From the start, this has been used productively, cared for and preserved by the IPs because this is our land and our livelihood," she said in Filipino in an email to **Philstar.com**.

She said a large portion of land recognized as ancestral domain is forest land, which should be conserved.

"We have been planting for centuries. Innovations like rice terraces and upland farming show that unlike big haciendas and corporate plantations, we know how to feed our communities while sustaining the health of our people as well as the environment. You need not tell us to 'plant, plant, plant,' Sandugo, a Moro and IP rights group, said in a separate statement on Friday.

Cullamat and Sandugo are wary that the call to make use of the supposedly idle IP land is similar to a pronouncement by President Rodrigo Duterte in 2018 that he would handle looking for developers for ancestral domain.

The DA, while Emmanuel Piñol was secretary, also proposed in 2018 "[to transform the vast tribal lands into food production areas](#)," saying "several lands are left idle and unproductive because of the failure of government to initiate projects in the area." Under the law, IPs have the right to decide for themselves how their ancestral domain will be used and developed. Activities like mining, which some Lumad communities oppose, require free and informed prior consent from the IP community.

However, disputes on who should represent the community and give that consent has also led to [conflict within IP groups](#). Dar indicated Thursday

"We defend ancestral land from mining and plantations because we know they are important in achieving food security," Cullamat said. "But the government insists on these (kinds of ) projects. Now they are insisting on this project even while we are in the middle of a pandemic."

Cullamat said the government should instead work on removing factors—like encroachment into IP land—that keep indigenous peoples from "sustainable development of our ancestral domain."

## 'Develop existing farmland'

Sandugo said that the Philippines already had 7 million hectares of farmland in 2012, "[including] indigenous lands converted throughout history, by force or deception, into large-scale plantations and private farms" that can be used for food production.

"These millions of hectares of plantations produce not food for our citizens, but raw export materials like palm oil, rubber, orchids, and fruits," it claimed.

Sandugo acknowledged, though, that the government should help farmers and work towards food security.

"They cannot feed the nation if they themselves are starving," Sandugo said.

IP rights advocates wary of using 'idle' ancestral

April 18, 2020

TITLE: domain as food production areas

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The group said the government should also make the most use of existing farmland "to be more efficient in producing fast-yielding crops that can be used for relief efforts" and make sure that local governments buy and transport the crops to needy constituents.

That, it said, would "help LGUs provide urgent and nutritious food aid to the most vulnerable, especially the urban poor."

The government should also come up with a food sufficiency program that will include "rural industrialization and genuine land reform."

Cullamat added: "There are vast idle lands on the route to Tagaytay and so much agricultural land is being converted into subdivisions but it's on ancestral domain that they're saying we should 'plant, plant, plant'."

# Muntinlupa bans spitting in public, improper disposal of PPE amid Covid-19 emergency

By [The Manila Times](#)

April 18, 2020

IN a bid to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) in Muntinlupa, the local government bans spitting, expelling substances from the mouth and nose and littering of used or contaminated personal protective equipment (PPE) in public places amid the Covid-19 emergency.

Mayor Jaime Fresnedi approved Ordinance 2020-089 or the “Anti-Spitting and Anti-Littering Ordinance of 2020” as a mitigation measure against the spread of Covid-19 in the city.

“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,” Fresnedi said.

The local government will start apprehending individuals who carelessly or intentionally spit mucus, saliva, phlegm, or other substances from the mouth and openly sneezes out nasal mucus in public places such as city streets, alleys, sidewalks, parks, grocery stores, markets, and terminals, among others.

Under Ordinance 2020-089, any person whether natural or juridical who willingly or unintentionally disposes PPEs in public places will also be penalized. Other prohibitions provided in the local ordinance include defecating and excreting bodily wastes or urinating in public places.

Individuals violating the ordinance will face up to six months imprisonment with P5,000 fine.

Recently, the local government has also required everyone to wear face masks at all times and observe physical distancing as the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the city continues to rise. City residents are mandated to wear face masks at all times, especially when going outside of their residence, at the workplace, when entering government buildings and offices, and while in public places.

Muntinlupa City started its targeted Covid-19 mass testing beginning with persons under investigation (PUI). PUIs are being transported to a field testing area located at the local health office for the collection of swab samples. Swab booths are being used by CHO personnel during the targeted mass testing to lessen the exposure of health workers to possible Covid-19 patients.

The local government partnered with the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) for the processing of samples. Results will be released three to four days after testing.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/04/18/public-square/muntinlupa-bans-spitting-in-public-improper-disposal-of-ppe-amid-covid-19-emergency/715227/>

# Waste collectors, crematorium cleaners carry on despite COVID-19 risk

**Published** April 18, 2020 12:02am

While most of the population stay at home to limit the spread of COVID-19, collectors of hospital wastes and cleaners of crematorium and quarantine facilities remain on the job handling potentially dangerous wastes every day.

In Saleema Refran's exclusive report on 24 Oras, Jhon Espaldon of the Task Force Special Waste Collection in Quezon City detailed the danger they face in their work.

"Hindi man kami direktang humahawak sa mga pasyente pero 'yung pinaggamitan nila, 'yung pinagkainan, pinaggamitan ng tissue, lahat, even beddings kailangan namin i-disinfect," Espaldon said.

"Parang-awa niyo na po na tulungan niyo kami na mawala na 'yung virus natin. 'Yung ganoong parte po na hindi niyo pag-labas, pag-stay niyo sa bahay, 'yung mga gamit na pinaggamitan natin nakalagay lang sa tamang basurahan, napakalaking bagay na po," he added.

The disinfection team will first enter crematoriums or testing centers to sanitize areas that may have been used by possible COVID-19 patients.

The waste collection team will follow to collect the garbage, which will also be disinfected.

"Pag babalewalain lang ho namin 'yung mga proteksyon, hindi ho kami mag-iingat. Hindi ho natin alam baka sa mga basurahan po may makuha po'ng virus," Oliver Dajao said.

The frontliners also take extra precaution when cleaning the interior and exterior of crematoriums.

With their work done, they will then disinfect each other.

According to the report, they also exercised caution when picking up garbage from hot zones in the city or the houses of confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Though the frontliners knew that they carried a big responsibility, they were also very aware of the accompanying danger.

"Nakakatakot din po kasi hindi rin po biro 'yung ganitong trabaho. Virus 'yun eh, virus talaga, kasi kailangan parang lakasan na lang po ng loob," Gerald Mones said.

"Lahat po kami natatakot po na pinasok po namin ganito may kumakalat po na sakit. Para lang po sa bayan po, para lang makatulong," Jan Padro, disinfection team, added.

They also took pride in their jobs, despite not being as acknowledged as other frontliners.

"Garbage collector lang na simple lang po. Kahit po ganito lang 'yung tingin niyo sa amin, at least po makatulong kami sa inyo na linisin 'yung lugar natin para hindi na po kumalat 'yung coronavirus," Roldan Marijuan, a special waste collector, said. —**Joahna Lei Casilao/LDF, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/metro/734542/waste-collectors-crematorium-cleaners-carry-on-despite-covid-19-risk/story/>

# DILG: Prioritize PWD benefits

Published 6 hours ago  
on April 18, 2020 01:10 AM  
By **Paula Antolin**



In acknowledgement of the disadvantages faced by persons with disability (PWD) even before the COVID-19 crisis, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) has directed local government units (LGU) to prioritize the distribution of relief goods for this sector.

DILG Secretary Eduardo Año said, “The ECQ is more challenging to vulnerable groups like PWD. The DILG urges LGU to prioritize PWD in the distribution of food packs, medicine and vitamins.”

The DILG likewise warned against the photocopying or unauthorized reproduction of the social amelioration cards (SAC) for the Bayanihan Fund cash subsidy.

It stressed the forms are barcoded and prenumbered by the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Those who will be caught photocopying the SAC forms will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Memorandum Circular (MC) 2020-066 enjoins provincial governors ensure that their city and municipal mayors shall include PWD in their list of beneficiaries and indicate the recipients’ disability.

The enlistment is to be done by barangay workers. Barangay captains will then submit their lists to their mayors who shall then submit to governors. The latter will submit the data to the DILG for consolidation of reports.

The MC was issued following reports received by the Commission on Human Rights from the PWD sector about their growing concerns amid the COVID-19 crisis.

“PWD may find it harder to protect themselves against COVID-19. Thus, I am prodding all local chief executives to provide for the welfare of PWD for them to cope up with the impact of the ECQ to their lives considering that they have special needs,” Año said.

The DILG also reminded LGU to give more consideration to children with disability, pregnant women with disability, and senior citizens with disability.



Meanwhile, the City of Makati is awarding hazard pay and special risk allowance to all qualified city hall frontliners who have reported for duty during the enhanced community quarantine.

The Sangguniang Panlungsod passed City Ordinance 2020-092 authorizing the allocation of P124,453,000 to fund the said compensation based on the provisions of City Ordinance 2018-013, which grants occupational duty risk pay for eligible city government personnel rendering hazardous or perilous work relating to disaster risk reduction and management.



## SUMALI SA CLINICAL TRIAL VS COVID-19

April 17, 2020 @ 3:20 PM 16 hours ago

Views: 112

HIGIT na nakararami sa 197 bansa at 13 teritoryo ang nagsabing sasali na sa clinical trial o pagsubok sa pangagamot sa Corona Virus Disease-19.

Kabilang na rito mismo ang mahal kong Pinas at mismong si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang sumang-ayon at nagpahayag sa World Health Organization ang ating pagsali.

May ilang gamot nang ginagamit sa ilang bansa na natagpuang panlaban sa Covid-19 kahit pa wala pa talagang saktong gamot o bakuna laban dito at ang mga ito ang gagamitin sa clinical trial.

Ang mahalaga sa ngayon, napatunayang epektibo sa ilang pasyente na posible nang namatay kung hindi nagamitan ang mga ito ng nasabing mga gamot na panlaban sa lagnat, malaria at human immuno virus.

Kontra-virus at bakteria ang mga ito.

Nasubukan na ang mga gamot na ito sa Thailand, South Korea, Japan, China at iba pa.

### MAGTIWALA LANG

Kung ano ang mga gamot na ito, ang mga doktor na ang magsasabi dahil pipiliin nila ang ilalapat sa iyo makaraan kang masuri.

Nasa Department of Health ang pangkalahatang pangangasiwa sa programang ito, katuwang ang Drug and Food Administration, kaya ang mga patakaran sa pagpili ng mga gamot, paglalapat ng mga ito at pagsusuri ay nakaangkla sa DOH at FDA.

Ang dalawang ahensyang ito ang laging dapat na pagsanggunian ng lahat ng mga doktor, ospital at iba pa, gaya ng Philippine Red Cross, sa kanilang gagawing clinical trial upang makontrol ang lahat at hindi sesemplang sa kamatayan kundi kagalingan ng mga maysakit ang iluluwal ng programa.

Magtiwala lang tayo na kaya sumali ang ating bansa sa clinical trial ay upang mapabilis ang tagumpay natin sa giyera sa Covid-19.

Alalahaning kung puro lockdown, stay at home at quarantine ang paiiralin, darating ang araw na magkandalugi-lugi ang lahat na negosyo at anomang pinagkakakitaan hanggang sa matagpuan na lang natin ang ating mga sarili na nakikipaggiyera na rin sa gutom, kahirapan at krimen.

Huwag nating hayaang darating tayo sa ganitong kalagayan at ang pakikisali natin sa clinical trial ang malaking hakbang para tayo mabuhay at hindi mamatay sa Covid-19.

Kung mapatunayang epektib ang mga gamot at higit na nakararami ang gagaling kaysa mamatay hanggang sa kakaunti na lang ang mababawian ng buhay (na hindi maiiwasan sa ngayon), diyan na rin unti-unting mabaklas ang mga lockdown, stay at home at community quarantine.

Diyan na babalik sa normal ang ating pamumuhay.

Muling gagana ang mga pabrika, transportasyon, opisina, agrikultura, pag-aabroad at iba pa na magpapabalik sa trabaho ng nasa 60 milyong obrero sa lahat ng larangan ng ekonmiya natin.

Makakayanan na nating lahat nang nagkakaisa ang pagbangon mula sa kagutuman, kahirapan, pagkakasakit at muling sisigla ang buhay ng lahat at makaaasa ng magandang kinabukasan bilang isang bansa.

## **HINDI ISTAYL DENG VAXIA**

Hindi istayl-Dengvaxia ang magaganap sa clinical trial.

Sa Dengvaxia, basta pinagtuturuan ang mahigit 800,000 Pinoy, karamihan ang mga bata sa public elementary schools, para lang makakalap ng malaking boto ang mga kandidatong kalaban noon ni Pang. Digong.

Walang pahintulot mismo sa mga biktima at magulang ang paglalapat ng Dengvaxia at huli na nang aminin ng Sanofi Pasteur, may gawa ng bakuna laban daw sa dengue, na delikado at nakamamatay pala ang Dengvaxia sa mga hindi pa nagkakasakit sa dengue.

Lumalabas na ginustong kumita ang Sanofi-Pasteur at tagalako nitong Zuellig Pharma Philippines mula sa P3.5 bilyong halaga ng Dengvaxia.

Hindi natin alam kung may kumita rin sa mga opisyal ng gobyerno ni ex-President Noynoy Aquino at mga kandidato nitong nakinabang ng boto sa mga naturukan ng Dengvaxia.

Dito sa clinical trial, kukunin ang iyong pagsang-ayon, ipaliliwanag sa iyo na testing lang ang lahat dahil naging epektibo naman sa iba.

Aaminin sa iyo na wala pa talagang saktong gamot o bakuna laban sa Covid-19 at kung pumayag ka, sasalang ka na sa tamang pagsusuri.

Aalamin kung wala o meron kang ibang sakit maliban sa Covid-19 upang malapatan ka ng mga kaukulang gamot.

Maya't maya, aalamin ang iyong kalagayan kung bumubuti o hindi at mga doktor ang magsasagawa ng mga agarang aksyon upang higit kang maligtas sa kapamakan.

Magpasalamat tayo sa Diyos ng labis kung tayo'y gagaling at makatutulong tayo sa buong bayan na kumalas na sa mga lockdown, stay at home at community quarantine at makabalik ang lahat sa normal na kalagayan at buhay.

## PLASMA THERAPY

Makaraan tayong gumaling, mga Bro, kakausapin naman tayo ng mga doktor kung sasali tao sa convalescent plasma therapy.

Ang dahilan nito, may malakas pala tayong panlaban sa Covid-19 at kailangan ng mga maysakit pa rin ang ating mga dalang pangontra sa sakit.

Kukunan tayo ng dugo at isasalin ang plasma sa ibang maysakit upang gumaling na rin.

Matagal nang napatunayan ito na uri ng panggagamot sa mga tao na may sakit.

Kumbaga, kung nakagat ka ng ahas, galing din sa kamandag ng ahas ang gagamitin bilang panlaban sa nakamatay na kamandag na binugso ng ahas sa iyo.

Uulitin natin, nagpakuha na mismo si Sen. Sonny Angara ng dugo para magamit sa iba at ang Philippine General Hospital ang naatasang unang gagawa muna nito upang mapag-aralan nang husto ang epekto ng convalescent plasma therapy.

Nangangailangan ng nasa 150 donor ng dugo ang PGH upang maging sapat kahit papaano ang pag-aaral kung talagang maging epektibo ang paraang ito.

Mahigit nang 435 ang gumaling sa severe o matinding Covid-19 sa ating bansa at pumasa ang mga ito sa pangangalaga sa ng mga ospital at 14 araw na quarantine.

Kung may magpo-positibo man muli, kaunti lang ang bilang ng mga ito.

Kaya hindi dapat katakutan ang panggagamot na ito at iniimbitahan natin ang mga gumaling na may magandang kalusugan na sumali sa convalesent plasma therapy.

Tumulong po sana tayo lahat giyera sa Covid-19.

## SALAMAT SA LAHAT

Ang pagsunod natin, bagama't may mga pasaway, sa lahat ng patakaran sa lockdown, stay at home, social distancing at community quarantine ay lubhang mahalaga.

Kaya salamat sa lahat ng mamayang sumusunod dito.

Pasasalamat na labis din ang ipinaaabot natin sa mga nagbuwis ng kanilang buhay sa giyera sa Covid-19 na ikinaliligtas ng marami.

Saludo tayo sa mga doktor, nars, pulis, sundalo, opisyal at empleyado ng pamahalaan, obrero ng lahat ng mga mahahalang pangangailangan ng bayan sa kanilang pag-aalay ng buhay para sa atin.

Ang mga nagpupuyat sa mga checkpoint, kasama ang mga sibilyang volunteer at opisyal ng mga lokal na pamahalaan mula barangay hanggang sa mga baya, lungsod, lalawigan at rehiyon, marami rin salamat sa inyo.

Ang mga simbahan, negosyante, mamamayan at iba pa nagbibigay ng lahat ng tulong na kanilang makakaya mula sa pamimigay ng kwarto, gusali at matutulugan, mapagpapahingahan, transportasyon at iba pa hanggang sa mga gamot, face mask, face shield, personal protective equipment at iba pang mga pangangailangan ng mga frontliner, biktima at kinu-quarantine, maraming salamat po sa inyo.

Hindi magkakasya ang espasyong ito kung ililista natin ang lahat ng tumutulong sa mga mamamayan sa oras ng kagipitan at kaligtasan ng mga lumalahok nang direkta sa giyera.

Basta nakalista sila lahat sa ating puso at ipinanalangin natin silang sana'y hindi mapagod sa pagtulong laban sa sakit at para pagbangon ng ating bayan sa malalang krisis na dulot ng nakamamatay na sakit

Siyempre pa, pinasasalamatan din natin ang pamahalaang pambansa na gumagawa ng lahat ng paraan para matapos na ang krisis nating lahat sa Covid-19, kasama na ang Kongreso at Hudikatura..

Hindi rin natin dapat kalimutan ang lahat ng mga lokal na opisyal mula sa mga barangay hanggang sa mga mayor, gobernador.

# Coronavirus: What must we change to address the climate emergency?

By [Ludwig O. Federigan](#)

April 18, 2020

A lot has been written about the relationship between the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) and climate change. Both are global emergencies and both are expected to change the world for the present and future generations.

While we are witnessing how our governments are finding ways to defeat Covid-19, the same is not present on how we are addressing the other equally important existential challenge — the climate emergency.

2020 is expected to be one of the hottest years on record. While climate change is topical in the last decade, climate emergency — the 2019 “word of the year” — will be the headline news in this decade.

I had the opportunity to interview three young leaders from Mindanao — a Sangguniang Kabataan president, a plant-based lifestyle advocate and a social entrepreneur — on their thoughts on what must we change to address the climate emergency amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Marian Jule C. Cedeno  
Sangguniang Kabataan  
Federation president Municipality of Kapatagan, Province of Lanao del Norte

In less four months, the novel coronavirus disease has affected over 200 countries and territories around the globe. governments are doing extreme measures to contain the virus. People are forced to stay indoors, and schools, offices, retail establishments, and manufacturing facilities are closed.

In the Philippines, since President Rodrigo Duterte declared the state of national calamity, there has been a decrease of vehicles running on the streets. The decrease in the number of vehicles on the streets also decreases the amount of carbon emitted to the environment, allowing the environment to take a breather.

Second, even though the government has implemented a price freeze on essential commodities, the prices of these commodities remain higher than usual. Because of this, people are utilizing their food resources efficiently, resulting in a decrease in food waste.

Food wastes contribute to carbon emissions and the decrease in its volume will decrease carbon emissions.

Third, amid the global pandemic, the government saw the potential for sustainable agriculture as a tool for addressing hunger and malnutrition. While processed food products such as canned goods and instant noodles are becoming expensive to the ordinary Juans and Juanas and, at the same time, unhealthy, local government units are switching to vegetable, fruits, and other agricultural products as relief goods. Nowadays, majority of us are changing our lifestyle to strengthen our immune system. Consuming more vegetables, fruits and other agricultural products are being encouraged to stay healthy. By the time this pandemic is over — if ever it would be really over — conscious citizens will consume less of the processed food products — less volume of production from factories means less greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Elpidio “Chef Elpi” M. Jugalbot  
Registered nurse, vegan chef, entrepreneur  
Owner, ELPI Vegan Resto, General Santos City

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It's been years that we have been warned about the detrimental effects of animal agriculture on our climate. Animal agriculture or the meat industry, being one of the leading causes of global warming — more damaging than the automotive industry — must go away. The destruction of our forest due to our high consumption for meat, the natural habitats of wildlife has brought this havoc into our lives. Filthy meat markets such as in Wuhan, Hubei province, China threaten the health of everyone by providing a breeding ground for deadly diseases like severe acute respiratory syndrome, bird flu, coronavirus and others. The United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention said that approximately 75 percent of recently emerging infectious diseases affecting people began as diseases in animals.

Mother Earth is trying to tell us “we humans should stop exploiting other beings.” One significant step to prevent outbreaks of animal-borne infectious diseases is — “we have to stop eating animals.”

As a nurse and plant-based lifestyle advocate, I am upset that we have to learn our lessons the hard way. I am upset that we have to go through these devastating ordeals. I am upset that more innocent lives will be lost before we start doing something about it.

However, I still cling unto hope. I am hopeful knowing that people are now realizing the impact of animal agriculture and their food choices into this global crisis. People started to shy away from eating meat and focus more on fruits and veggies not only to strengthen their immunity against the virus, but also to create a greener and sustainable environment.

Imagine how much greenhouse gases we could prevent from reaching the atmosphere if we eat more plant-based meals.

We should start with our plates. We have three meals a day to vote for the kind of world that we want. Our food choices matter now more than ever.

Complicated problems do not need complicated solutions. In fact, the perfect solutions are the simplest ones. All we have to do is go back to the basics.

And to beat Covid-19, we eat greens, we plant greens and we go green. The power is yours.

## **Rey Anthony B. Anacleto**

Co-founder, Peace Crops, Inc.

Peace Crops is one of the Ten Accomplished Youth Organization 2019 awardees.

Since the onset of this pandemic, one of the main problems is how to provide subsistence to people whose jobs are greatly affected due to government-imposed lockdowns. One cannot discount the people living below the poverty line, which translates to 17.6 million of our current population.

The government is facing a great challenge more than ever — food security. Is there any innovative solution for this food security problem? In Peace Crops, yes, and it is through agriculture.

While it's true that urban communities have no vast lands to till and plant, they can have a solution to aid food security using the resources they have at home.

Urban gardening is a farming style of growing plants of all varieties in an urban setting. By using materials like plastic bottles, unused tires, paint cans and the like, one can eventually start planting. It is an efficient way to utilize recyclable materials. It can also make your home environment-friendly by contributing in cleaning the air. It can also be a learning opportunity on how to grow your own food. By growing healthy foods, families can have an alternate meal with the canned goods and noodles that some nongovernment organizations and government agencies had given as a relief.

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Given the multiple outlooks of health experts on the possible longevity of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is strategic to cleave back to one of the world's oldest professions to survive.

It is a more sustainable option that we have right now. Thus, think of it as not just mere gardening rather treat it as a chance to connect with nature — one way to ease the anxiety that you feel. In the end, it is nature that will save us from this pandemic.

## Our takeaway

Undeniably, in the interim, people will adapt to these lifestyle changes, but we need political leaders with tremendous political to ensure that these changes will be sustained in the long-term. We need to enact laws and institute policies that envision a more sustainable, greener and habitable environment – where humans can live in harmony with nature. We need to continue educating our people on the easy-to-do, eco-friendly solutions that will deliver profound effects for our health and the health of our common home.

*The author is the executive director of the Young Environmental Forum. He completed his climate change and development course at the University of East Anglia (United Kingdom) and executive program on sustainability leadership at Yale University (USA). He can be emailed at [ludwig.federigan@gmail.com](mailto:ludwig.federigan@gmail.com).*



# Baguio store owner initiates urban farming using recycled bottles amid ECQ

Aileen Cerrudo • April 17, 2020 • 56



A minimart store owner in Barangay Asin Road, Baguio City has been helping his neighbors cope with the lockdown through urban farming.

Due to the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) residents are finding it difficult to live normal lives. Schools are suspended, several establishments are closed and everyone is worried about the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Bradley Robuza's store is among the establishments in Baguio hard hit by the COVID-19 crisis. He said only few customers are buying from their mini store since the ECQ.

The public market is also too far from their area so they have no choice but to settle with buying pricey raw foods in the nearest market.

But despite the struggles, Bradely and his sister Rizelle Hernandez found a way to share kindness with the whole neighborhood amid the crisis.

They began urban farming in front of their store using used plastic bottles. For two weeks they planted tomatoes, cauliflower, pineapple and more. They were able to collect over 200 seedlings which they give away for free to customers and other residents.



Courtesy Bradley Robuza

Baguio store owner initiates urban farming using recycled bottles amid ECO

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“Since wala naman na pong gaanong bumibili po ngayon sa amin kaya may mga oras po kami mag-farm. Lugi negosyo pero okay lang po mai-share po namin ang biyaya ng Dios, *(Since we only have a few customers we have time to farm. Our business is not doing good but it is okay because we can still share God’s blessing)*

Rizelle said they are giving away the seedlings so they can also start planting raw foods in their homes. Urban farming can also be helpful in case the ECQ will be further extended.

“Libre naman po namin pinatubo kaya libre din po namin ipamimigay, *(We farmed it for free so we will give it away for free)*,” she said.



Rizelle also said using plastic bottles also help in keeping the environment clean.

“Kaysa naman itapon namin iyong mga plastic bottles naisipan namin na diyan na lang namin itanim para makabawas ng basura, *(Instead of throwing out the plastic bottles, we thought we could use them for farming to lessen the litter)*,” she said.

More than 10 individuals have already benefited from their urban farm. Nelia Matuyog, a resident, is grateful for the free seedlings and said this is the right time to plant.

“May binigay din ang barangay kaya lang hindi kami nakaabot kaya thank you at meron [dito], *(The barangay is also giving away [seedlings] but we were not able to get some so thank you for this)*,” she said. AAC

Source: <https://www.untvweb.com/news/baguio-store-owner-initiates-urban-farming-using-recycled-bottles-amid-ecq/>

# Singapore disinfecting robot trialed in virus fight

Agence France-Presse / 05:55 PM April 17, 2020



A worker wearing a face mask fumigates at a construction site, to prevent the spread of dengue fever during the ongoing COVID-19 novel coronavirus pandemic, in Singapore on April 17, 2020. (Photo by Roslan RAHMAN / AFP)

**SINGAPORE** — Singapore researchers have invented a disinfecting robot with an arm that mimics human movement, to help take the load off overworked cleaners during the coronavirus pandemic.

The “XDBOT” is a box-shaped creation on wheels mounted with a dexterous robotic limb, which can reach awkward locations such as under tables and beds.

The robot, built by researchers at the city-state’s Nanyang Technological University (NTU), has a high-powered nozzle for spraying disinfectant and can tackle large surfaces rapidly.

It can be controlled remotely with a laptop or tablet, reducing the risk to cleaners of becoming infected with the virus, which has killed over 140,000 people worldwide.

“Using our new robot from a distance, a human operator can precisely control the disinfection process... with zero contact with surfaces,” said Chen I-Ming, an NTU scientist who led the project.

The cleaning robot differs from others on the market, which are mainly intended to clean floor surfaces and cannot disinfect odd-shaped objects.

The robot could help meet growing calls in Singapore for more deep-cleaning and disinfection services, with reports suggesting cleaners are having to work long hours as demand explodes during the pandemic.

The XDBOT has been trialed on NTU campus, and its creators hope to test it in more public areas and hospitals.

Singapore is battling a fast-moving second wave of infections, with case numbers jumping by 728 Thursday to bring the total to 4,427, including 10 deaths. The outbreak's epicenter is crowded foreign worker dormitories.

From Thailand to Israel, robots are increasingly being used in the fight against the coronavirus, as they are seen as fast, efficient, and contagion-proof.

# Scientists try 'cloud brightening' to protect Great Barrier Reef

Published April 17, 2020, 5:37 PM

By Agence France-Presse

An ambitious "cloud brightening" experiment has been carried out over Australia's Great Barrier Reef in an early-stage trial that scientists hope could become a futuristic way to protect coral from global warming.



Warmer seas caused by climate change have damaged the health of the Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest coral system

(AFP/File / SARAH LAI, SARAH LAI / MANILA BULLETIN)

In an attempt to cool waters around the reef by making clouds reflect more sunlight, researchers said they used a boat-mounted fan similar to a snow cannon to shoot salt crystals into the air.

Results from the trial were "really, really encouraging", the project's lead scientist Daniel Harrison from Southern Cross University said on Friday.

"All the research is theoretical... so this an absolute world first to go out and actually try and take seawater and turn it into these cloud condensation nuclei," he told AFP.

Harrison stressed that despite the success of the experiment, at least four years of further research would be needed to prove the theory.

Warmer seas caused by climate change have damaged the health of the Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest coral system.

The experiment was carried out by the university and the Sydney Institute of Marine Science late last month, just before a comprehensive scientific survey found that the reef had suffered its most widespread coral bleaching on record.

Bleaching occurs when healthy corals become stressed by changes in ocean temperatures — causing them to expel algae, which drains them of their vibrant colours.

It was the third mass bleaching event in the past five years, raising fears that much of the reef's coral could be permanently damaged.

To have a significant impact on the reef, a full-scale experiment would need to be 10 times larger, involving the use of several big barge-mounted turbines, Harrison said.

But, he added, "If it works as well as we hope then maybe we could reduce the bleaching stress by about 70 per cent... potentially nearly all of the mortality."

He also said the effectiveness of the cloud-brightening technique would drop significantly as the ocean warms further.

That means the process would be similar to putting the reef on life-support while the underlying challenge of climate change was addressed.

"If we keep going on business-as-usual-type emission scenarios, then at most this technology can just buy a couple of extra decades before we see the complete loss of the reef," he warned.

Source: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/04/17/scientists-try-cloud-brightening-to-protect-great-barrier-reef/>

# Scientists try 'cloud brightening' to protect Great Barrier Reef

Agence France-Presse / 06:29 PM April 17, 2020

SYDNEY — An ambitious “cloud brightening” experiment has been carried out over Australia’s Great Barrier Reef in an early-stage trial that scientists hope could become a futuristic way to protect coral from global warming.

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This photo taken on November 20, 2014, shows an aerial view of the Great Barrier Reef off the coast of the Whitsunday Islands, along the central coast of Queensland. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park encompasses about 99 percent of the World Heritage-listed natural wonder, with the additional one percent outside the marine park but within the heritage-listed area — about 3,600 square kilometers (1,390 square miles) — being managed by the Queensland state government and includes most islands and ports, as well as lakes and other waterways. AFP PHOTO / SARAH LAI (Photo by Sarah Lai / AFP)

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Scientists try 'cloud brightening' to protect Great barrier

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# Virus-hit Asian nations brace for double disasters as extreme weather looms

By **Reuters**

- April 17, 2020 - 5:17 PM



Strong winds and heavy rain batter a flooded landscape as the typhoon Kammuri hits Gloria, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines, December 3, 2019 in this still image obtained from a social media video. (Courtesy of Patrick Josh Valisno/Social Media via Reuters)

**ROME (Thomson Reuters Foundation)**— Countries from India to the Philippines, already struggling with the coronavirus pandemic, are likely to also battle weather-related crises, from heat waves to cyclones, in coming months, disaster experts warned Thursday.

In India – currently under lockdown with more than 12,000 confirmed cases of the virus – the cyclone season starts in two weeks, said Kamal Kishore, a member of the country’s National Disaster Management Authority.

To try to maintain social distancing requirements, India would need to double the space available to shelter people from extreme weather, he said in a webinar organised by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.

That means schools and colleges currently closed by the virus outbreak, as well as other buildings, may need to be turned into shelter sites, he said.

May and June are also the hottest months for India and Pakistan. People without adequate access to cooling or sufficient water could face health risks, particularly during the lockdown, scientists warned.

An intense heat wave last May and June caused widespread deaths across India.

With hospitals already filling with COVID-19 patients this year, “we really have to work doubly hard this year to make sure that we minimise the heat-wave-related burden on hospitals,” said Kishore.

## Pacific storms

Meanwhile in Vanuatu, around 160,000 people are in need of assistance after Cyclone Harold tore through South Pacific islands last week, said Sanaka Samarasinha, U.N. resident coordinator in Fiji.



Virus-hit Asian nations brace for double disasters as  
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“Crops have been all but destroyed,” he said. If a new season of crops isn’t quickly planted, “we will be looking at food insecurity for quite some time”, he warned.

The disaster forced the government to announce a second state of emergency on April 11, after an earlier one banned mass gatherings as a result of coronavirus fears.

Vanuatu has said it has no confirmed cases of the virus as of April 15.

Islands in the North Pacific, meanwhile, may have to contend with drought-like conditions as well as the virus, said Lemau Afamasaga from the Palau Red Cross Society.

“In the past couple of months, part of the work is encouraging the local communities to wash their hands but... we were asked, ‘How do we wash our hands when there is a lack of water?’”, she said.

The Philippines, meanwhile, is juggling more than 5,600 COVID-19 cases – the highest number in Southeast Asia – as well as thousands of people displaced by a volcano eruption in January and by last year’s cyclones. Elizabeth Zavalla, secretary-general of the Philippines Red Cross, said the association is manning a 24-hour call centre on the coronavirus as well as distributing aid to disaster victims.

The Philippines’ monsoon season starts in May but most of the more than 20 storms the country sees each year come between June and August, she said.

As Asian and Pacific countries brace to handle extreme weather and virus outbreaks at the same time, it is crucial disaster response teams are provided with personal protective equipment and psychological support, experts said.

“COVID-19 is a crisis which is not going to dissipate in two or three weeks,” warned India’s Kishore.

“It will take months and those months will also coincide with floods and cyclones and heat waves – so the demand on response forces will be huge.” —**Reporting By Thin Lei Win @thinink, Editing by Laurie Goering**

# Thai man trampled by elephant from park closed by pandemic

Published April 17, 2020, 5:16 PM

By *Agence France-Presse*

A Thai farmer was trampled to death by an elephant foraging for food, a police officer said Friday, as the kingdom's controversial animal parks struggle to feed the giant mammals during the pandemic.



(AFP/ MANILA BULLETIN)

Chiang Mai — Thailand's northern tourist hub popular for its food, culture, and myriad animal parks promising the experience of a lifetime — has seen a massive drop in visitors since the coronavirus outbreak began.

Dozens of elephant camps, criticized by activists alleging cruelty and exploitation of the captive animals, were ordered to close by the government to stop the spread of the disease.

And with global travel paralyzed, campaigners are now worried the elephants will starve, as owners no longer have money to feed them or be sold to illegal loggers near the Thailand-Myanmar border.

On Wednesday, an elephant belonging to a camp was foraging for food in a shallow river when it encountered a villager, said police captain Suchart Thippayawong.

"Because there are no tourists due to COVID-19, the elephant was kept near the river and it waded through it for food," Suchart told AFP.

"The elephant killed a 69-year-old villager while he was watering his vegetables," he said.

No charges have been filed against the camp owner but police are still compiling evidence, he added.

There are an estimated 2,000 elephants used in Thailand's lucrative tourism sector. Activists say the animals are kept in abusive and stressful conditions, as they must be "broken" to be trained to perform tricks.

# Thai man trampled by elephant from park closed by pandemic

Published April 17, 2020 5:11pm

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There are an estimated 2,000 elephants used in Thailand's lucrative tourism sector. Activists say the animals are kept in abusive and stressful conditions, as they must be "broken" to be trained to perform tricks. — **Agence France-Presse**

# Images of Venice from space show how coronavirus has changed the city's iconic canals

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Apr 17, 2020 9:06:51 AM



*This image of Venice, captured on April 13, shows a distinct lack of boat traffic compared to last April.*

**(CNN)** - The European Space Agency has released two images of Venice, taken one year apart, which highlight the impact the coronavirus pandemic has had on its famous waterways.

The images, one taken on April 13 and the other on April 19, 2019, show how dramatically the number of boats within the Italian city's main thoroughfare has reduced since the Covid-19 crisis began.

Venice, situated in northeastern Italy in an enclosed bay in the Adriatic Sea, is famed for its network of waterways.

But since Italy announced a lockdown on March 8, the city -- usually packed with tourists -- has been almost empty.

The images show that this has had a knock on effect on traffic in the city.

In April last year, there appears to be dozens of boats in Venice's Grand Canal and the Giudecca Canal, but there were visibly far fewer this week.

The images were taken by the European Space Agency's Sentinel-2 satellite, which is part of the European Commission's Copernicus program to observe earth and any changes to the environment.

Various lockdown measures implemented globally have had a number of effects on the environment.

Within days of the lockdown, Venetians began sharing photos that showed fish visible in the lagoon, which usually has boats churning up sediment from the water bed.

Meanwhile, thousands of miles away in India, residents have been able to see the Himalayas for the first time in decades due to the reduction in air pollution.

Similarly, satellite images taken over the US have also shown pollution is on the decline as millions of people stay at home.

Italy is among the countries worst hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

The number of people in the country who had died with Covid-19 was 21,645 as of Thursday, according to figures from Johns Hopkins University, with 165,155 having tested positive for the virus.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/world/2020/4/17/venus-from-space.html>

Melting glaciers reveal lost mountain pass and artifacts

TITLE: used by Vikings

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# Melting glaciers reveal lost mountain pass and artifacts used by Vikings

By Ashley Strickland, CNN

Published Apr 17, 2020 6:08:30 AM



**(CNN)** — The retreat of melting glaciers has revealed a lost mountain pass in Norway — complete with hundreds of Viking artifacts strewn along it, according to a new study.

Researchers first discovered the pass in 2011 and have been examining it, and the artifacts that have been revealed as more ice melts, ever since. Dating the objects helped them reconstruct the timeline of when this pass was used and its purpose.

The new study published this week in the journal [Antiquity](#).

In recent years, climate change has caused mountain glaciers to melt away, revealing well-preserved markers from different periods in history beneath. This is what happened in Lendbreen, Norway.

"A lost mountain pass melting out of the ice is a dream discovery for us glacial archaeologists," said Lars Pilø in a statement. He is the study author and co-director of the Glacier Archaeology Program. "In such passes, past travelers left behind lots of artefacts, frozen in time by the ice. These incredibly well-preserved artefacts of organic materials have great historical value."

The researchers believe the pass was used from the Roman Iron Age in 300 AD to the Viking Age in 1000 AD.

Horseshoes; a horse snowshoe; the bones of packhorses; sled fragments; and a walking stick inscribed with runes all reveal the transportation used on the pass. Other objects discarded along the way include a knife and its wooden handle; a birchbark container; a wooden needle; tinderbox; a wooden whisk; and a distaff, a tool that was used to hold wool as it was spun by hand.

Some of the most remarkable items include blue textile rags, a Viking mitten, shoes and a complete Roman Iron Age tunic.

And some items can't be identified yet because the researchers have nothing to compare them to.

Frozen for all this time, some of the items appear almost new.

"The preservation of the objects emerging from the ice is just stunning," said Espen Finstad, study co-author and co-director of the Glacier Archaeology Program, in a statement. "It is like they were lost a short time ago, not centuries or millennia ago."

Sixty of the items have been dated so far. Based on the ages the items provided, the researchers believe that local traffic used the pass to access summer dairy and livestock farms located in higher elevations. They found small wooden bits, likely used for goats, and leaf fodder stripped from trees that could be used as a dietary supplement for livestock during winter.

Melting glaciers reveal lost mountain pass and artifacts

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It was also a travel and trade route, transporting goods like antlers and pelts outside of Norway.

Passage was likely easiest between late winter and early summer when snow covered the rough terrain.

Cairns, or piles of stones built by humans, were used to mark the route. They also found evidence of a permanent shelter on the pass. The pass was used for 700 years.

"The start around AD 300 was a time when local settlement activity was picking up," said James H. Barrett, study co-author and program partner, in a statement. "When the use of the pass intensified around AD 1000, during the Viking Age, it was a time of increased mobility, political centralisation and growing trade and urbanisation in Northern Europe."

Barrett noted that mountain passes acted as links to larger trading networks, connecting remote regions.

Eventually, use of the pass decreased.

"The decline of the Lendbreen pass was probably caused by a combination of economic changes, climate change and late medieval pandemics, including the Black Death," Pilø said. "When the local area recovered, things had changed, and the Lendbreen pass was lost to memory."

Fieldwork has been conducted at the site since 2011, but this study only includes the discoveries made up through 2015. The researchers said more ice has melted since then, with a large amount lost in 2019.

More research about the final remains recovered from Lendbreen will be released in the future. The 2019 melt also revealed the first artifacts from another pass on the same ridge, about six miles to the west.

"When we arrived at the site last fall, the surface of the ice in the pass was littered with artefacts and horse dung," Finstad said. "The remaining ice from the time of the pass probably melted out. The final melt revealed many remarkable finds, such as a dog with collar and leash, a horse snowshoe and a wooden box with the lid still on."