

Drones lead to illegal lumber seizure

Published 4 hours ago
on April 30, 2020 02:20 AM
By **Elmer Recuerdo**



TACLOBAN CITY — The enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) did not deter illegal logging operations in Northern Samar as thousands of board feet of freshly cut lumbers were seized by authorities over the weekend after drone shots uncovered the contraband.

According to a report from the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) in Northern Samar, around 39,500 board feet of fresh-cut dipterocarp species with a commercial value of P1,975,037 were recovered in an anti-timber poaching operation in San Isidro, Northern Samar from 24 to 26 April 2020.

Confiscated were 8,605 board feet of assorted lumber and flitches and 78 pieces of boat keels equivalent to 30,895.75 board feet in the joint operation conducted Philippine National Police Northern Samar provincial office and PENRO Forest Protection and Law Enforcement Team.

The operation was carried out after drone shots showed stockpiles of lumber, flitches and boat keels in separate locations within Barangays Balite and Happy Valley in San Isidro Northern Samar.

Most of the violators were able to evade arrest due to the terrain, but PENRO reported that a stockpile of lumber in Barangay Balite was claimed by certain Maria Fe Omrog.

PENR officer Angelito Villanueva said an investigation will be conducted and administrative and criminal cases will be filed against the suspects in violation of Section 77 of Presidential Decree 705, or the cutting, gathering and collecting timber or other forest products without a license.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu earlier ordered the department's field offices to strictly monitor illegal activities even with the ECQ prevailing in most parts of the country. He assured the public that even during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, personnel from the regional offices will all the more continue to protect the forests from illegal activities.

"Despite some restrictions due to COVID-19, our work continues especially on law enforcement. We encourage the public to coordinate and cooperate with us against illegal activities even with this COVID-19 crisis," DENR-8 regional executive director Tirso Parian Jr. said.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/04/30/drones-lead-to-illegal-lumber-seizure/>

Hot lumber worth almost P2M seized in Northern Samar

By: [Joey Gabieta](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Visayas](#) / 12:19 PM April 29, 2020

TACLOBAN CITY — Assorted lumber worth close to P2 million were intercepted by authorities in Barangays Happy Valley and Balite, both in San Isidro town, in Northern Samar province from April 24 to 26.

In a statement, Regional Executive Director Tirso Parian Jr. of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Eastern Visayas (DENR-8) said they continued to monitor illegal logging amid the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

“Despite some restrictions due to COVID-19, our work continues, especially on law enforcement. We encourage the public to coordinate and cooperate with us in going after illegal activities in this time of crisis,” he said.

The operations resulted in the seizure of 39,500 board feet of assorted lumber, mostly of lauan species, with an estimated value of P1.97 million. No one was arrested during the operations.

Public urged to separate used face masks from household garbage

Published April 29, 2020, 1:54 PM

By *Ellalyn de Vera-Ruiz*

The Solid Waste Management Association of the Philippines (SWAPP) asked the public on Wednesday to separate used masks in a yellow garbage bag to allow waste collectors to know that a medical waste is included in the household waste.

“I hope that households do not include (used) face masks in the municipal waste picked up by our garbage collectors,” SWAPP president Grace Sapuay said in an interview on DZBB.

Medical wastes, such as face masks and gloves, are being dumped with the household garbage, while garbage collectors unknowingly pick up the medical waste that further poses the risk of infection.

Sapuay also urged waste collectors to use gloves in picking up garbage.

The Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has been appealing to the public to observe proper waste segregation at source.

“We specifically call on all households who have members identified as persons under investigation or persons under monitoring (of COVID-19) to take extra precaution in handling their special wastes by initially disinfecting it with chlorine based solution prior to collection to prevent any further spread of the COVID-19 virus in the community,” the EMB said.

Practicing proper waste segregation is in accordance with the Republic Act No. 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act 2000.

“Proper handling of household healthcare wastes, such as used face masks and gloves that are considered as special wastes will help stop the spread of COVID-19,” the EMB said.

It also asked local government units nationwide to ensure public compliance with the proper segregation, handling, and disposal of wastes in accordance with the provisions of RA 9003 and RA 6969 otherwise known as Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act.

Personal Protective Equipment para sa basurero,

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PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT PARA SA MGA BASURERO, KAILANGAN

April 29, 2020 @ 1:36 PM 18 hours ago

Views: 76

KUNG meron mang mga napababayaang mahalagang tao na tuwirang lumalaban sa Coronavirus Disease-19, kasama na rito ang mga basurero.

‘Yun bang === karaniwang walang Personal Protective Equipment na suot ang mga ito sa kabila ng direkta nilang paghawak sa sari-saring basura na itinatapon ng lahat ng tao bilang proteksyon sa COVID-19.

Tingnan ninyo.

Milyones na ang nakokolekta at itinapon nilang basurang face mask na isang uri ng PPE ng mga mamamayan mula sa Batanes hanggang Jolo.

Tiyak na milyon na ring PPE na face mask, glove, single use plastic na panlabas na kasuotan ng mga doktor, basyo ng mga disinfectant at iba pa ng mga nars, radio technician, janitor at iba pang medical professional ang nakolekta at naitapon nila.

Iba pa ang mga bulak, tissue, eringilya, suwero, karayom, sapatos, tsinelas, at iba pa mula sa mga ospital, klinika at Covid-Testing Center at ambulansya.

Patuloy na kumikilos ang mga basurero habang buhay ang pandemya at malaki ang posibilidad na mahawa ang mga ito ng sakit hanggang sa makahahawa na rin sila ng iba.

O meron na ring namatay sa mga ito dahil sa nasabing sakit?

TRABAHONG LGU

Trabahong Local Government Unit ang pagkolekta at pagtatapon ng basura.

Meron ding mga panrehiyong pamahalaan gaya ng Metro Manila Development Authority na aktibo sa pagkolekta at pagtatapon ng basura.

Araw-araw na trabaho ito.

Kaya araw-araw na nae-expose ang mga basurero.

Aktibo ang mga LGU sa pagbigay ng mga PPE sa lahat ng mga nasasakupan nilang mamamayan.

Ang tanong: kung may ipinamumudmod na mga PPE sina kapitan, meyor, gobernador at iba pa sa kanilang mga nasasakupan at mga tinatawag ngayong frontliners na medical professional, pulis at sundalo, ganito rin ba sa hanay ng mga basurero.?

Personal Protective Equipment para sa basurero,

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Sana naman ganito ang nagaganap at saludo tayo sa lahat ng mga opisyal ng bayan na nagbibigay-halaga sa kalusugan at buhay ng mga basurero.

MGA KONTRAKTOR

Ang isa sa inaasahan nating magbibigay-proteksyon sa mga basurero laban sa sakit ay ang mga kontraktor ng basura.

Kung Metro Manila ang pag-uusapan, daan-daang milyon kundi bilyong piso ang mga kontrata sa basura.

Kaya naman, hindi masama na asahan natin ang mga kontraktor na gumawa rin ng paraan na magkaroon ng PPE ang lahat ng kanilang mga tauhang mula sa tsuper hanggang sa mga magwawalis at taga-tapon ng basura sa mga dumpsite.

Sa labas ng Metro Manila, may malalaki ring kontrata ng basura sa mga lungsod at first class municipalities.

Ang ibang mga LGU, walang kontrata sa basura dahil sariling trak ng mga barangay, munisipyo, lungsod, lalawigan at rehiyon ang ginagamit.

Gayunman, sa mga may kontrata sa mga negosyante, gayundin ang ating panawagan na kumilos ang mga kontraktor para magkaroon ng PPE ang mga basurero.

PASASALAMAT

Siyempre pa, hindi lang ang mga kontraktor at pamahalaan ang tumutulong sa mga basurero para magkaroon kahit papaano ng mga bahagi ng PPE o buong PPE.

May mga organisasyong sibiko rin gaya ng Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs at iba pa.

May mga pribadong kompanya rin gaya ng ARN Central Waste Management Inc. at Jomara Konstrukt Corporation na namigay ng PPE para sa garbage collectors sa Cebu City.

Kaagapay nila sa pamimigay ng 500 PPE ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources na pinangunahan nina DENR-Management Bureau Region 7 Regional Director Lormelyn Claudio, Ecological Solid Waste Management Regional Coordinator and Chief John Roy Kyamko at EMB Director Engr. William Cuñado habang umalalay sa kanila ang staff ng EMB 7 na sina Basione Guloy, Lorelie Duragos, Stephen Gaballo, Janeth Abe, Junril Nuez, Quirico Etcuban at Dexter Madeloso at Jovelino Abe.

Salamat po sa inyong lahat at ipagpatuloy po nating lahat ang giyera laban sa COVID-19.

Green sea turtle rescued, returned to sea in Puerto Princesa village

By: [Romar Miranda](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Southern Luzon](#) / 01:27 PM April 29, 2020



The green sea turtle was (*Chelonia mydas*) rescued at Nagtabon Beach in Barangay Bacungan, Puerto Princesa City on Tuesday afternoon by local authorities. Photo courtesy of Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) Facebook page

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—A green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) was rescued by local authorities at a coastal village here on Tuesday (April 28).

The sea turtle, which weighed 130 kilograms, was found on Nagtabon Beach at the village of Bacungan, according to the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) in a statement.

The turtle's carapace measured 91 cm long and 83 cm wide.

The turtle's beaching was reported by resort owner Christian Kattinger.

The turtle was returned to the sea by volunteers and local environment officials.

Edited by TSB

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1266579/green-sea-turtle-rescued-returned-to-sea-in-puerto-princesa-village#ixzz6L2cSgHfk>

GCQ to be imposed May 1 in areas removed from ECQ list: Palace

By Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos April 29, 2020, 11:15 am



Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque

MANILA – All areas that have been omitted from the list of places under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) will now be under general community quarantine (GCQ) beginning May 1, Malacañang said on Wednesday.

This developed after the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) revised the roster of areas under GCQ.

In an interview with ANC, Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said Capiz, Aklan, Davao del Norte, Davao de Oro, Iloilo City, and Aurora have been removed from the list of areas that are still under ECQ until May 15.

“I confirm that these areas will be on GCQ effective May 1,” Roque said.

The IATF-EID on Monday approved Resolution 29, which extends the ECQ in Metro Manila; Central Luzon, except Aurora; Calabarzon (Region 4-A); Pangasinan; Benguet; Baguio City; Iloilo; Cebu; Cebu City; and Davao City until May 15.

The original recommendation of IATF-EID, which was approved by President Rodrigo Duterte on April 23, was to place Metro Manila, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Pangasinan, Benguet, Albay, Catanduanes, Davao del Norte, Davao City, Oriental Mindoro, Antique, Iloilo, Cebu, and Cebu City under ECQ until May 15.

Roque said other areas that are not on the revised list would also be under GCQ from May 1 to 15.

“Of course, all other areas not (on) the list will be on GCQ as well,” he said.

Public movement in areas under GCQ is less restricted.

People living in areas under ECQ are still required to observe strict home quarantine unless they are among the exempted individuals who can go out of their homes.

This is meant to stop the further transmission of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), which has so far infected 7,958 individuals in the country.

The imposition, lifting, or extension of the quarantine in provinces, highly urbanized cities, and independent component cities will rest on the IATF-EID starting May 16.

Provincial governors have the authority to impose ECQ in component cities, municipalities, and villages upon the concurrence of their respective regional inter-agency task groups. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1101328>

Gov't finalizing transport guidelines under GCQ

By Azer Parrocha April 29, 2020, 10:26 am



Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque. (File photo)

MANILA – The government is finalizing the guidelines on the limited resumption of public transportation during the general community quarantine (GCQ), which will be implemented in some areas starting Friday.

Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) will discuss the guidelines that will be released on Thursday.

“Meron pong bahagyang pagbukas na mangyayari kasi habang bukas ang mga industriya, hindi naman po pupuwedeng walang transportasyon ang mga tao. Isasapinal na po ‘yan sa araw na ito (There will be a partial reopening of transport because while industries are open, we can’t have people traveling without transport. It will be finalized today). By tomorrow (Thursday) po, malalaman na natin ang final guidelines (we will find out the final guidelines),” Roque said in an interview over GMA’s Unang Hirit on Wednesday.

Under the GCQ, Roque said the IATF has recommended the resumption of public transport “but in a reduced capacity”.

Jeepneys may remain banned under the GCQ since it would be difficult to maintain physical distancing while buses may be allowed for as long as passengers are seated on “every other seat”, he said.

The IATF-EID is also eyeing the resumption of limited operations of the Light Rail Transit Line 1 (LRT-1), LRT-2, Metro Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT-3), and the Philippine National Railways (PNR).

Public transport remains suspended under the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) which was extended in Metro Manila and some areas until May 15.

General guidelines

The IATF has also recommended the 50 percent to 100 percent reopening of select establishments “subject to minimum health standards” in areas under GCQ, Roque said.

Starting Friday, the provinces of Capiz, Aklan, Davao del Norte, Davao del Oro, and Aurora, as well as Iloilo City will be under GCQ.

Several sectors including malls and commercial centers will be allowed to reopen subject to strict hygiene standards.

However, Roque said mall owners will be required to keep their air-conditioning temperatures warm--at least 26°C- to prevent people from loitering.

Roque said the IATF may also tackle the possibility of requiring the elderly and children to remain indoors during the GCQ since they are most vulnerable to the coronavirus disease (Covid-19).

Under the GCQ, mass gatherings such as concerts, conferences, parades, among others are still prohibited and the public will still be required to wear face masks.

The IATF's recommendations are still subject to the approval of President Rodrigo Duterte. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1101323>

Modified quarantine eyed to restart economy

By: [Julie M. Aurelio](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:59 AM April 29, 2020



ADB ASSISTANCE The Philippine Army provides security on Tuesday to a relief operation by the Asian Development Bank for Quezon City residents under quarantine due to the coronavirus pandemic. —GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE

MANILA, Philippines — President Rodrigo Duterte may relax quarantine restrictions in low to moderate-risk parts of the Philippines in a phased reopening of the economy while the country tries to beat back the onslaught of the new coronavirus.

In a televised address to the nation late on Monday, Mr. Duterte said some sectors of the economy, such as construction, might be allowed to open “partially” but under strict public health regulations to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the new coronavirus that causes the severe respiratory disease COVID-19.

More than 860 Filipinos have been killed since the local outbreak in February.

“It’s imminent. Others will still be in lockdown while we may open partially—construction workers and things like that. You just wait for the modified quarantine,” Mr. Duterte said.

A bit of normality

He said some sectors of society might be allowed a bit of normality, though they would be required to strictly observe social distancing.

“We cannot be cramped together. It has to be modified. If you will just cram into the LRT (Light Rail Transit) again, there will be no end to our problem,” he said.

Mr. Duterte announced the plan three days after he extended the Luzon lockdown to May 15 in Metro Manila and other parts of the country with numerous coronavirus infections but relaxed quarantine restrictions in parts of the country with few cases of the disease starting May 1.

Public transportation and selected businesses in specific industries will be allowed partial resumption of operations in parts of the country where quarantine restrictions will be loosened.

Earlier, Malacañang said the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases, the temporary government body overseeing the administration’s response to the coronavirus pandemic, was completing guidelines to be implemented in parts of the country under the “general community quarantine” (GCQ) imposed on Metro Manila and other parts of the country with high infection rates.

GCQ is the government's term for limited restrictions in areas with low to moderate rates of infections; the opposite is "enhanced community quarantine" (ECQ) or lockdown.

High-risk areas

In his press briefing on Tuesday, presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said Metro Manila, Central Luzon (except for Aurora), Calabarzon, Pangasinan, Benguet, Baguio City, Iloilo, Cebu, Cebu City and Davao City made up the updated list of high-risk areas.

Capiz, Aklan, Davao del Norte and Davao de Oro were removed from the list, he said.

Oriental Mindoro, Occidental Mindoro, Albay, Catanduanes, Antique and Davao del Norte were on the list released by Roque's office on Friday, but they were no longer on the new list.

A statement released by Roque's office on Friday said Antique, Iloilo, Aklan, Capiz, Cebu, Cebu City, Davao del Norte, Davao City and Davao de Oro would be placed on the list, subject to the assessment of the task force.

A check of Roque's PowerPoint presentation on Friday showed that Capiz, Aklan and Davao de Oro were "moderate risk" areas.

As of press time on Tuesday night, the Palace had yet to respond to requests for clarification on just how many provinces were removed from the list of high-risk areas.

In his briefing, Roque said there would be a decision by May 15 if some places on the high-risk list would be moved to low to moderate-risk list, inspiring hope among Metro Manilans of gaining access to personal services, such as barbershops.

Roque read through the lists of services that would be allowed to open partially under "modified quarantine" (see list), including dental clinics but not barbershops even though barbers who only cut hair are less in danger of contracting the coronavirus than dentists who work through the open mouths of people who may be infected.

Schools will remain closed in low and moderate-risk areas, Roque said.

Employees' protection

In his speech on Monday night, Mr. Duterte thanked the public for obeying the lockdown regulations.

"I thank you for heeding the warnings of [the] government to observe the quarantine to protect [yourselves]," he said, referring to the coronavirus crisis as "war."

He also reminded shop owners and shopping mall operators to make sure their establishments were clean and their employees protected once they reopened for partial operations.

Last week, Mr. Duterte approved the task force's recommendation to allow nonleisure shops in shopping malls in low to moderate-risk areas to reopen partially.

"When you asked us to open, we agreed. But there are the protocols to be followed," he said.

The rules include temperature check, wearing protective masks, use of sanitizers and controlled entry of people.

Under enhanced community quarantine from May 1 to 15
Baguio City
Bataan
Batangas
Benguet
Bulacan
Cavite
Cebu
Cebu City
Davao City
Iloilo
Laguna
Metro Manila
Nueva Ecija
Pampanga
Pangasinan
Quezon
Rizal
Tarlac
Zambales
Under general community quarantine from May 1 to 15
Abra
Agusan del Norte
Agusan del Sur
Aklan
Albay
Antique
Apayao
Aurora
Basilan
Batanes
Biliran
Bohol
Bukidnon
Cagayan
Camarines Norte
Camarines Sur
Camiguin
Capiz
Catanduanes
Cotabato City
Davao de Oro

Davao del Norte
Davao del Sur
Davao Occidental
Davao Oriental
Dinagat Island
Eastern Samar
Guimaras
Ifugao
Ilocos Norte
Ilocos Sur
Isabela
Kalinga
La Union
Lanao del Norte
Lanao del Sur
Leyte
Maguindanao
Marinduque
Masbate
Misamis Occidental
Misamis Oriental
Mountain Province
Negros Occidental
Negros Oriental
North Cotabato
Northern Samar
Nueva Vizcaya
Occidental Mindoro
Oriental Mindoro
Quirino
Romblon
Samar
Sarangani
Siquijor
Sorsogon
South Cotabato
Southern Leyte
Sultan Kudarat
Sulu
Surigao del Norte
Surigao del Sur
Tawi-Tawi
Zamboanga del Norte
Zamboanga Del Sur
Zamboanga Sibugay

ECQ/GCQ GUIDELINES FOR INDUSTRIES, SERVICES

Allowed in ECQ and GCQ areas
Agriculture
Agriculture and fisheries, including the manufacturing of feeds, fertilizers and pesticides
Industry
Manufacturing and processing plants (raw materials, inputs, including packaging) of basic food products, essential products, medicine and medical supplies.
• All food
• Essential and hygiene products such as soap, detergents, shampoo, and conditioners, diapers, feminine hygiene products, tissue, wipes, toilet papers, disinfectants
• Medicines and vitamins
• Medical products such as PPEs, masks, gloves, etc.
• Pet food
Services
Hospitals and medical clinics
Dental and EENT clinics (with strict health standards)
Retail establishments (groceries, supermarkets, convenience stores, public markets and drugstores)
Food preparations and water refilling stations
Logistics service providers (cargo handling, warehousing, trucking, shipping line)
Delivery services, whether or not from e-commerce platform, in-house or outsourced, transporting only food, water, medicine, pet food, hardware products or other basic necessities
Delivery services, whether or not from e-commerce platform, in-house or outsourced, transporting for other products like clothing, accessories and office supplies
Banks and capital markets
Power, energy, water, IT, and telecommunication supplies and facilities, waste disposal services, technical services to above facilities
Electricity, gas, steam and airconditioning supply
Postal and courier activities
Water collection, treatment and supply
Waste collection, treatment and disposal activities; except materials recovery (junk shop)
Sewerage (except emptying of septic tanks)
Veterinary activities

Repair and installation of machinery and equipment
Repair of computers and personal household goods
Services to building landscape activities (except landscape care)
Employment activities (manpower services for essential activities)
Security and investigation activities
Programming and broadcasting activities
Rental and leasing activities (except for entertainment and mass gathering purposes)
Accommodation (used as quarantine facilities for OFWs and as temporary accommodation for essential industries such as health-care facilities, banks, BPOs, exporters and other front-line service sectors)
Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas
Gasoline stations
Laundry shops (including self-service)
Funeral services
Export
Export companies (with temporary accommodation and shuttle services, work from home)
Business Process Outsourcing companies (with temporary accommodation and shuttle services, work from home)
Mining and quarrying
Other industries
Other manufacturing activities
• Beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks)
• Cement and steel
• Electrical machinery
• Wood products, furniture
• Nonmetallic products
• Textiles/wearing apparels
• Tobacco products
• Paper and paper products
• Rubber and plastic products
• Refined petroleum products
• Other nonmetallic mineral products
• Computer, electronic and optical products
• Electrical equipment
• Machinery and equipment
• Motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers
• Other transport equipment
Allowed in GCQ but not in ECQ areas
Malls and commercial centers (including hardware stores, clothing and accessories, and nonleisure stores)

Barbershops, salons, spas and other personal care industries (with strict health standards)
Wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles
Construction and Build, Build, Build
Forestry and logging
Publishing activities
Motion picture, video and television program production, sound recording, and music publishing activities
Advertising and market research
Real estate activities (except real estate buying and selling)
Office administrative, office support and other business activities
Legal and accounting
Insurance, reinsurance and pension funding, except compulsory social security
Architecture and engineering activities; technical testing analysis
Scientific and research development
Other professional, scientific and technical activities
Social work activities without accommodation
Not allowed in both ECQ and GCQ areas
Gyms/fitness studios and sports facilities
Entertainment-related mass gatherings, including but not limited to: theaters, cinemas, large concerts, festivals, carnivals, conventions, shows, pubs and bars
Business-related mass gatherings, including but not limited to: trade shows, conferences, conventions, workshops, retreats
Politically related mass gatherings, including but not limited to: election rallies, polling centers, parades, speeches/addresses
Sports-related mass gatherings, including but not limited to: trainings, games, tournaments, championships
Libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities
Gambling and betting activities
Travel agency, tour operator, reservation service and related activities
Activities of membership organizations

Establishments that will be allowed to reopen partially are supermarkets, drugstores, banks, laundry shops, restaurants for takeout and delivery, and hardware stores.

Businesses will be required to provide their employees with gloves and protective masks. Shopping malls will be directed to maintain air-conditioning temperature at 26 degrees Celsius and disconnect free Wi-Fi to discourage people from lingering in the premises.

5th report to Congress

In his fifth weekly report to Congress on the coronavirus crisis, Mr. Duterte said government planners had submitted to the task force recommendations for response, mitigation and transition to what they called “new normal.”

He said the response phase would focus on strengthening the health-care system by increasing testing capacity, contact tracing, erecting quarantines, and adding hospital beds and medical equipment to curb transmission of the virus.

The mitigation phase includes the provision of strategies to ensure food security and reduce financial losses.

Also in the exit plan is the preparation of an economic risk assessment and possible resumption of operations for high-value sectors with low risk of spreading the coronavirus, the President said.

INQ

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1266330/modified-quarantine-eyed-to-restart-economy#ixzz6L2um9HOR>

‘Relax ECQ on low-risk NCR cities’

posted April 29, 2020 at 11:50 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

A group of Metro Manila mayors whose cities and municipality are not as severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic is asking the national government to initiate a less stringent quarantine rule in the National Capital Region.

These mayors are asking for a modified quarantine system in Metro Manila, where cities that have very low incidents of COVID-19 presence be allowed to go on General Community Quarantine status, from the stricter Enhanced Community Quarantine status the NCR is now under.

Many sectors from NCR have expressed concern that the continued extended ECQ on all cities of the metro will soon take its toll on the already restless underprivileged sector. They believe its negative impact on the country’s economic base not to mention food security is inevitable.

These mayors believe that a selective geographical approach in determining the cities to be placed on ECQ or GCQ is a better and more prudent approach to the situation. This will provide a better balance between addressing the pandemic and keeping a strong economic base with a continued source of essential goods.

Statistics show that as of April 24, northern cities like Caloocan City only has 9.07 cases for every 100,000 people (“Attack Rate” or “AR”) despite having the third highest population in Metro Manila. Valenzuela has 12.18 while Navotas has 10.11. In the middle of the northern cluster is Malabon and Navotas with the lowest AR in Metro Manila at 8.18 and 10.11, respectively. Clearly, these cities should not be included in the same group of cities with case rates that are up to almost 20 times higher.

Moving southward, cities like Las Piñas, Taguig and Muntinlupa evidently show lower case statistics with AR ranging from 20 to 24.

Marikina in the east has an AR of 20.91. Las Piñas and Muntinlupa are gateways to Southern Luzon and Marikina is gateway to the East.

In terms of Case Fatality Rates, cities located in the south record some of the lowest CFR in NCR, with Las Piñas, Taguig and Muntinlupa plotting 4 percent, 5 percent and 8 percent, respectively. These figures are only a fraction of that for northern cities with a high of 18 percent. These cities also have low-medium AR. This just means that together with the relatively lower AR, the COVID-19 survival rates here are some of the best in NCR. In fact, Las Piñas has the best showing in containing the virus having the lowest CFR vis-à-vis a comparatively lower AR than the rest of NCR. Other cities with low CFRs include Makati and Pasay.

The same data show that cities located in the central part of NCR experience the highest concentration of COVID-19 cases like San Juan, which has the highest AR in Metro Manila at 157.25, Mandaluyong with 78.74, Parañaque with 55.96 and Makati with 51.28. The following cities have rather lower ARs than the four mentioned: Quezon City with 34.48, Pasig with 33.87, Pasay with 33.63, Pateros with 30.88 and Manila with 29.93.

Despite fairly lower ARs, Quezon City and Manila, with 1,105 and 579 infections, respectively, have the highest number of confirmed cases in NCR. With the inclusion of Pateros, Pasay and Pasig, these nine cities with the highest number of COVID-19 cases comprise 70% of the total confirmed cases in NCR or 3,396 in absolute terms, according to the 24 April 2020 DOH COVID-19 Tracker.

Creation of center for disease control proposed

By [Raymond Africa](#)

-April 30, 2020



Senator Richard Gordon is also Chairman of the Philippine Red Cross (Photo from msn.com)

A BILL seeking the creation of the Philippine Center for Disease Control and Prevention has been filed by Sen. Richard Gordon who said government needs to be prepared for health threats.

Gordon, chairman of the Philippine Red Cross, said on Wednesday it is "in the nation's interest for the Philippines to join the global fight in combating infectious diseases and other potential health threats by creating an independent and competent national Center for Disease Control and Prevention."

The proposed creation is contained in Senate Bill No. 1440 which was filed amid government efforts to fight the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Sen. Grace Poe filed a similar bill on Tuesday. Poe's SB 1450, or the Pandemic Preparedness and Response Act, seeks to create a Center for Disease Control to "enhance the country's expertise in disease prevention."

In the US, its Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is the leading national public health institute, and a federal agency under the Department of Health and Human Services.

Gordon, in SB 1440, said: "With almost 8,000 confirmed cases and a death toll of more than 500 in our country alone, this ongoing pandemic is a dire reminder that communicable and infectious diseases and public health threats respect no borders... the public is increasingly demanding that the government come up with fundamental solutions to address such global and local health threats. Accordingly, the public's expectations are growing for the government's crucial role in increasing health security."

The proposed national center will be attached to the Department of Health for policy and program coordination. It will be the country's principal health protection agency tasked to prevent, protect and manage the spread of diseases and other health threats originating domestically and internationally.

It shall be the country's epidemiology and surveillance body which will develop and maintain a network of reference and specialized laboratories for pathogen detection, disease surveillance, and outbreak response and will strengthen diagnostic capacity for and laboratory surveillance of infectious diseases, among others.

'We should not be complacent': Second wave of COVID-19 still possible after ECQ, says expert

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Apr 29, 2020 8:37:10 AM



FILE PHOTO

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, April 29) — Many scenarios can still happen after the first wave of COVID-19 infections, including a second surge of the fast-spreading disease, if the Philippines becomes complacent in its fight.

Dr. Jomar Rabajante, a mathematics professor of the University of the Philippines (UP) Los Baños, said on Wednesday that the government must prepare for its next measures should it decide to lift the enhanced community quarantine or ECQ in parts of Luzon on May 15.

"We should not be complacent. After that, many scenarios can still happen," Rabajante told CNN Philippines' New Day on Wednesday.

Rabajante was among the experts who participated in the UP COVID-19 Pandemic Response Team study that found that quarantine and other safety measures undertaken by the government— were "relatively" successful in containing the spread of the infectious disease, as case doubling time also slowed down.

According to Rabajante, depending on government interventions, there could either be a continuous decline of COVID-19 cases or a second wave of infections slightly lower than the first surge.

"If we go back, lifting the ECQ and [continuing] our epidemic-friendly practices, we can expect a second wave probably a little lower than the previous wave but it will depend on our practices," he said.

"However, if we continue practicing good measures, good behavior, public etiquette, washing our hands, more testing, we might expect a continuous decline or probably a second wave with a peak that is not that higher compared to the first one," Rabajante added.

Citing recommendations of the UP COVID-19 Pandemic Response Team, Rabajante said the government must ramp up efforts to widen the gap between the outbreak threshold and the actual cases, especially in the National Capital Region which has the highest upsurge of infections.

Local government units must also prepare for any worst-case scenario in the coming weeks.

"We tell LGUs, if you need this number of intensive care units, number of hospital beds, you need to be prepared on that. We should not be complacent in a sense that we are seeing less numbers, but we need to think for the future," Rabajante added.

National Task Force COVID-19 chief implementer Carlito Galvez Jr. said on Tuesday that [the government will aggressively hold a "massive and expanded testing" of suspected COVID-19 cases and frontliners](#) on May 7, prioritizing the NCR, which he claims to be the "center of gravity" of the outbreak.

The government will also do extensive testing under other "red" or high-risk areas not later than May 15.

Galvez added that they are targeting 20,000 tests per day not later than May 15 and 30,000 tests per day by May 30, with a 24-48 hour period of release of results.

President Rodrigo Duterte announced last week that the ECQ in Metro Manila, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, and other high-risk provinces in Luzon will continue until May 15. The initial lockdown was due to end on April 30.

These other high-risk provinces are Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, Oriental Mindoro, Occidental Mindoro, Albay, and Catanduanes.

Meanwhile, all low-risk and moderate-risk areas will be under "general community quarantine" or GCQ until mid-May.

The Philippines has [7,958 COVID-19 cases to date. There are now 530 deaths and 975 recoveries](#) from the infection.

Expert says PH needs faster data gathering to come up with better COVID-19 strategy

By [Carolyn Bonquin, CNN Philippines](#)

Published Apr 30, 2020 12:14:28 AM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, April 30) - An infectious disease expert said the government must work harder on getting the number of COVID-19 infection cases right to come up with a better strategy to fight the disease.

Dr. Benjamin Co of the University of Santo Tomas Hospital said he noticed that the data on some of the coronavirus infection cases come in as late as two weeks, which explains why the daily figures reported by the Department of Health (DOH) are not real-time.

"We need quality data. Without quality data, none of these numbers will make sense," Co said in an interview with the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines on Tuesday. "There is no reason why we have an exit plan because there's nothing to base the exit plan on."

"To me latency of data is forgivable...but you find a way wherein the data is provided to you not too late," he added. "Some of them are too late. Some are late as two weeks, more than one week on recoveries and deaths."

Co also said that data on the patient's condition also takes time to be reported.

"In any audit, You need to make sure the numbers are right because that's the only way you can plan anything in the future," he said.

"We should get as much test as possible, the question is how many testing centers do we have and whether we have a good turnaround time as well," he added. "Because if you look at the data of the DOH, we have a lot of patients of posthumous diagnosis, they die and reported dead after a few days later from COVID."

Last week, there was a confusion when Cebu City announced 139 new coronavirus cases, while the DOH announced 111 new cases nationwide.

The DOH said the difference on the data that day was due to the late transmission of information from the local government. The report from Cebu City was only sent to the Health Department after its press conference.

The DOH explained that daily figures are not real-time as cases have to be validated before reporting.

Co said local and national government should coordinate and come up with better reporting system.

He also suggested having a daily cut-off or deadline in reporting cases.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/4/30/Expert-says-PH-needs-faster-data-gathering-to-come-up-with-better-COVID-19-strategy-.html???>

Shops covered in plastic to be part of ‘new normal’

Published April 29, 2020 11:08pm

Several shops have begun placing a plastic sheet barrier between the establishment and their customers as an added precaution against the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

According to JP Soriano's Wednesday report on 24 Oras, aside from the plastic barrier, a food shop in Quezon City is also implementing a no-touch payment policy. Customers were instead asked to drop their payment in a plastic bowl.

Some banks, meanwhile, have also placed plastic sheets over its counters as a precaution while several sari-sari stores, bakery stores, and LPG stores in Makati have done the same.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) said that the public should get used to the "new normal," especially amid the uncertainty of the virus.

"Yan ang magiging new normal para talagang may proteksyon ang ating kababayan, pati 'yung mga frontliners nu'ng tindahan na 'yun. 'Yung cashier, 'yung sales lady, hindi talaga sila ma-expose," DTI secretary Ramon Lopez.

The placing of plastic covers may be part of a minimum standard that the DTI, the Department of Health, and the Department of Labor and Employment are working on.

The Amalgamated Supermarket Association said that it will comply to the order once released.

"Make it mandatory, then, of course, we will comply. We will comply. There's nothing you can do. I mean, sila ang batas plus their doing it for our good," Association President Steven Cua said.

The DTI also urged all companies to train their employees and customers to conduct all precautions against COVID-19 and to accept the new normal. —**Joahna Lei Casilao/LDF, GMA News**

Batac City to install more hand washing stations in public areas

By Leilanie Adriano April 29, 2020, 9:22 pm



HAND-WASHING STATIONS. Officials of the city government of Batac demonstrate the proper way to clean hands at the newly-installed washing stations in the local public market on Tuesday (April 28, 2020). The city government plans to put up more hand washing facilities in public areas, said city Mayor Albert Chua on Wednesday (April 29, 2020). *(Photo courtesy of Batac City)*

LAOAG CITY – The city government of Batac announced on Wednesday plans to put up more hand washing stations in public areas to prevent the spread of emerging infectious diseases like coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19).

Mayor Albert Chua said this following the installation of such facilities at the Batac public market. Complete with antibacterial soap and clean water, the hand washing stations were placed at the entrance of the market. Similar stations were earlier established at the City Health Office, City Hall Office and at the Riverside Empanadaan where residents and visitors had usually gathered.

“This is part of the preventive measures to fight the spread of Covid-19,” Chua said, as he led the installation of the hand washing facilities at the Batac City public market on Tuesday.

He said the installation of additional hand washing facilities in the city was funded by the local government and this will become a continuing program even after the current health crisis.

Meanwhile, the city government continues to reach out to all residents and non-residents affected by the enhanced community quarantine by giving at least 25 kilos of rice to each of the 18,000 families in the locality.

On Wednesday, the rice delivery truck manned by city hall employees went to Caunayan village for the third wave of relief distribution. **(PNA)**

Pro-active protocols, new realities

Published April 30, 2020, 12:20 AM

METRO CORNER

By ERIK ESPINA



What was the policy basis for the recommendation of the original one-month Luzon lock-down? The separate observance of ECQs (enhanced community quarantines) in Luzon vis-à-vis Visayas and Mindanao subject to respective LGUs? Recalling first events, there was no validated sampling of a national cross-section — persons with COVID-19 serious, mild, and asymptomatic (monitored and under investigation), plus, potential hot spots configured on urban density levels.

We did not possess ample testing kits at the time, to graph scientific models for C-19 surges, trajectory, peaking, and plateauing, broken into quarters. However evident, in the initial stages, was how infectious and deadly the flu-like disease was. Were we copying the one-month medical protocols abroad, finding ourselves in uncharted waters? Or would it have made more sense to err on the side of caution, rather than risking the lives of our people. given no working data? Under said thinking, should we have declared a 6 to 8 month lockdown instead? A simultaneous national lockdown?

The one-month lock-down gave our people and sectors of society, a “vacation mentality.” It was a brief interlude in our normal lives. The seriousness of a pandemic reality did not find traction, due to conscious mis-appreciation and social denial of a national emergency/crisis defined in 30 days! Had we announced a 6-8-month lock-down, likely, the urgency of a critical environment would have sunk into the psychology of our people. The rate of compliance could have risen with the prospect, if numbers flattened, ECQ duration shortened subject to the people’s cooperation. High-value sectors, e.g. education, manufacturing, construction, utilities, banks, church, legislature judiciary, Comelec, etc., could plan ahead adopting pro-active protocols for new and lengthened realities.

Beware of false claims of COVID-19 cure

By [Ellen Tordesillas](#)

-April 29, 2020



EVERYBODY'S prayer now is for a vaccine to stop, if not totally eradicate, the novel coronavirus that has been ravaging mankind since late last year.

The world's science community is pooling resources to produce the vaccine. In the Philippines, President Duterte is offering P50 million for Filipino scientists who could develop the vaccine to combat COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus.

While scientist have yet to find a cure, malevolent minds are busy taking advantage of the situation by spreading falsehoods. VERA Files has monitored and debunked a number of them. Here are two of those falsehoods:

1. Drinking warm water with salt will kill the virus that causes COVID-19. That is false: <https://verafiles.org/articles/vera-files-fact-check-video-claiming-drinking-water-salt-kill>

This claim was being shared in Facebook (FB) Live videos showing a certain Boyet Castelo, a self-proclaimed COVID-19 patient who, however, admitted he had not yet seen a doctor at the time he went live to share the home remedy.

On April 19, contradicting his acknowledgment that there is still no cure against the virus, he said the salt water concoction will "heal" a person with the disease, adding the solution cured him of his COVID-19 symptoms.

Three days later, he went on FB Live again and repeated his claim that the salt "will kill the virus in one's body." He also repeatedly said "there is nothing to lose" in trying the method.

The World Health Organization (WHO) Philippines told VERA Files in an email that while some home remedies may "provide comfort" and alleviate COVID-19 symptoms, there is no evidence that current medicine can prevent or cure the disease. It added that clinical trials are ongoing for both traditional and western medicine.

Castelo's videos have been seen by more than 2.5 million and shared more than 135,000 times.

2. Another false claim about COVID-19 is bizarre. On March 26, Gemz Channel published on YouTube a two-minute-long video titled, "New born baby bumangon at nagsalita | ang sinabi na ba nya ang gamot sa sakit na kumakalat ngayon? (Newborn baby stood up and talked | Is what the baby said the cure to the disease that's currently spreading?)"

The video featured the front seat view of someone driving along an expressway at night. For the first 55 seconds, a woman could be heard speaking in a mix of Filipino and English. Upbeat music was overlaid on the visuals for the rest of the clip.

The woman claimed that in her hometown of Aparri in Cagayan province, a baby stood up immediately after being born and said, "Kakain kayo ng nilagang itlog (You will eat hard-boiled eggs)." The infant supposedly died right after. The woman then said "there is nothing wrong if we try to eat eggs" just as the baby instructed, and told her viewers to "spread the news."

Aside from Gemz Channel, at least four other Youtube channels (kahibol ate rhuvy, Pure Bisaya, Mari vlogs, and Rona Dew Fusion), two Facebook (FB) pages (ALL RIGHT and OFW Tambayan TV), and two netizens published posts carrying claims similar to the viral videos.

A few mentioned a different place where the incident took place, like in Malaysia or in Samar province, while others even detailed the way the egg should be prepared and eaten.

The Filipino versions of the fake claim uploaded on Youtube now have an accumulated total of almost 1.4 million views. The FB posts, on the other hand, were shared over 3,700 times and got around three thousand reactions and three thousand comments. Meanwhile, Philnews.ph's article received over 500 interactions on FB, and could have reached almost half a million social media users.

VERA Files' fact check showed the claim is untrue, and the story about the "speaking" newborn baby was recycled from an Indonesian hoax.

The World Health Organization (WHO) refuted the viral claim. "There is no evidence from the current outbreak that eating eggs has protected people from the new coronavirus," WHO Philippines said in an email to VERA Files Fact Check.

So as not to be duped by all these false claims, exercise caution in sharing claims of cure for COVID-19 in social media. Visit factcheck.ph or verafiles.org to check false claims going around in social media.

In the absence of a vaccine, the best way we can avoid catching the virus is by practicing what doctors tell us: wash hands, stay home, eat well, sleep well, maintain social distancing, wear masks.

Special people

posted April 30, 2020 at 12:25 am

by [Emil Jurado](#)

Santa Banana, it appears that China is taking advantage of the COVID-19 pandemic to further its assertiveness in the disputed West Philippine Sea. It continues to occupy shoals and islets. Its Navy vessels commit incursions into Philippine territories!

There was even this report that those onboard a Chinese coast guard vessel pointed their guns at a Philippine vessel. This prompted our Department of Foreign Affairs to file a diplomatic protest against China.

At a time when the country's attention is on the pandemic, these developments are indeed worrisome. Our problem is that all we can do is protest.

As if this were not enough, there are also reports that President Rodrigo Duterte is considering allowing Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators to reopen, supposedly because we need the money for COVID-related expenses. Will it also mean the return of Chinese criminal syndicates that made our country their playground?

I am a Filipino who loves his country above all. It appears that despite what China is doing, President Duterte continues to regard the Chinese as a special people. I have been told that many from mainland China believe that the Philippines is now a province of China that is why they regard us as second-class.

Have we really come to this point, when foreigners can lord it over our own people?

That Dasmariñas Village incident is another example of how foreigners treat us in our own country. One Javier Salvador Parra confronted a policeman who simply told a member of the household staff to wear a mask even while working in the garden.

The foreigner stormed out of the house, shirtless, and went ballistic. He cursed and hurled invectives at the cops. And when they tried to arrest him, he resisted. My gulay, he should be deported, to teach him a lesson!

* * *

There seems to be no light yet at the end of the tunnel, with the continuing upsurge of new cases of COVID-19. There is no cure yet. The World Health Organization says it may take weeks, even months, until a cure is discovered.

In the meantime, all we can do is to bear with the Enhanced Community Quarantine. This is for our own good. The ECQ has even been extended until May 15 in Metro Manila and Central Luzon.

Other areas without an alarming rate of infection will be under a General Community Quarantine. I can imagine how difficult it must be to stay indoors in a house without air conditioning. The heat and humidity could be unbearable!

Another restriction is that of the delivery of printed editions of newspapers. This makes me rely solely on the Internet and social media. The problem here is that one can sometimes fall victim to fake news.

* * *

Now we know the difference between ECQ and GCQ. In the latter, it is as if there is no more lockdown. With ECQ, restrictions are still in place.

If the curve is finally flattened, we in Metro Manila can look forward to being under a GCQ, almost normal, even though we will really never be the same again.

In Wuhan, people have gone back to normal.

If there is one good thing I can say about President Duterte, it is that he made a quick and draconian response to the pandemic.

I am no health expert, and I cannot predict when the WHO will come to a cure. I am only hoping that we will all be able to celebrate Christmas.

Source: <https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/322647>

Debunking COVID-19 myths

By [Philip S. Chua](#)

-April 30, 2020

WITH novelty comes misinterpretation, misinformation, and myths rapidly disseminated via social media around the globe. This is what is happening with the novel corona virus, SARS-CoV2 virus, the cause of the COVID-19 pandemic that has infected more than 3 million and killed more than 230,000 in 210 countries around the world; more than a million in the USA, with about 60,000 deaths; and, almost 8,000 cases and nearly 550 deaths in the Philippines. From the emails we received from our readers, here are some of them. Accurate information is a must for survival, especially during a pandemic.

Viruses are alive

Viruses are not living microbes, unlike bacteria which are alive. Viruses are protein molecules surrounded by a protective layer of lipid (fats), which enable them to merge with cells and be transmissible and infective. When the protective envelope around them is damaged, they are unable to cause infection, and subsequently destroyed. Viruses need a host, like humans, in the case of SARS-CoV2 virus (COVID-19 infection), and animals in other viruses.

Novel coronavirus in Wuhan was from bats

False. It had been officially ruled out that the nCorona virus (SARS-CoV2) did not originate from bats or snakes sold in a seafood market in Wuhan, China, but possibly from a biolab working on viruses located a few kilometers away. The circumstances surrounding the Wuhan outbreak, which is now a pandemic victimizing 210 countries around the world, is being investigated. In the meantime, lawsuits have been filed in 7 States, and also in the UK, against China seeking damages for injuries, deaths, and economic losses caused by COVID-19, courtesy of the recklessness, deceit, duplicity, and irresponsibility of the Communist Party in Wuhan. Other States and countries are expected to follow suit.

Feeling well means no COVID-19

Wrong. Unless one has tested negative for COVID-19, anyone, especially those who go out in public without caps, protective goggles, masks, gloves, without distancing, are a possible carriers of the virus, because it takes about two weeks for symptoms to appear, in a few cases up to 19 days. So, feeling well alone is not a guarantee, unless one has self-quarantined for at least 2-3 weeks and still has not fallen ill. Therefore, a person exposed, should be considered infected, an ignorant carrier, and thus potentially a geometric/exponential spreader of the virus, unknowingly.

Bacterial soap is better

False. Bacterial soap is not better than regular foamy soap and water for washings hands and as disinfectants, which has been proven to destroy SARS-CoV2 virus, the cause of the current pandemic. The soap suds dissolve the fatty protective "capsule" enveloping the protein molecule we call virus, which leads to deactivation, inability to replicate, and final destruction of the virus. Bacterial soap may be used, but not superior.

Hand sanitizers are effective

Most hand sanitizers contain less than 70 percent alcohol and do not destroy SARS-CoV2 effectively. If soap and water or peroxide or bleach solution are not available, any hand sanitizer must be used, followed by handwashing with soap and water soonest thereafter. Drying hands very well is vital. The use of moisturizers (with simethicone) helps protect the skin further against SARS-CoV2 virus and also for skin health and comfort.

SARS-CoV2 viruses are hard to destroy

Medical fact: This current killer virus is very easy to damage and rendered inactive. Simple frequent handwashing with soap and water destroys the entire virus within 20 seconds. This pandemic would not have been so massive if people were more disciplined, selfless, and responsible.

Masks only protect others

While masks (even the N95 primarily for healthcare providers) protect others if worn by someone who is infected and a carrier of the virus or who is sick by lessening transmission, it also protects the healthy wearer. Imagine ten people, half wearing masks and the others without, being sprayed with dust or flour or red powder. Those wearing a mask would obviously have much less powder on their faces compared to those not wearing one, whose faces would be full of the powder. It is a medical fact that even the N95 mask is not 100% protective or preventive, but both versions of the masks minimize the spread both ways, albeit perhaps not totally equal in extent. Together with frequent handwashing, using a cap, gloves, social distancing (staying home if possible), the use of a mask when going out (properly, tight-fitting, covering the nose and the mouth) and not touching it, even with the gloved hands, are protective, second to self-quarantine with non-infected people at home.

Staying home is 100% safe

The home is like a gated, screened, protective fort in a jungle with countless man-eating animals roaming around, hungry, looking for a prey, or a dungeon during a war, where bullets and bombs are bursting in the air. This analogy magnifies how vital the home is during this COVID-19 pandemic that kills people of any age, even children, but especially the elderly. But the home is the only place totally safe if everyone strictly follows the guidelines with wisdom, discipline, and with a bit of what I termed healthy paranoia (medical vigilance). The home is the safest place to be during an outbreak, an epidemic or a pandemic. But if anyone at home violates any of those preventive measures, then that individual could get infected and spread it to everyone at home, like a massive fire inside a cage.

*We are reposting this acronym, Fight COVID-19 with C-O-V-I-D: **C**over face to scratch, sneeze or cough; **O**mit non-essential travels; **V**oluntary quarantine; **I**ntensive handwashing; **D**istancing is now social.*

The effectiveness of this C-O-V-I-D strategy in minimizing the spread of the virus has been proven around the world, starting from China, South Korea, the Philippines, USA, even in Italy, where the curve has started to flatten.

Tea tree oil is effective against SARS-CoV2 virus

While tea tree oil is reportedly used for herpes simplex virus, it is not effective against this virus that is causing the COVID-19 pandemic. Other items advertised as useful against this virus, which is totally a scam, include herbs of various kinds, coconut oil and all other oils, pomegranates and other fruits and vegetables, Noni, SuperBeets, turmeric, curcumin, curry, garlic, peppers, steroids, anesthetic agents, etc. There is no food, drug, potion or lotion that has been proven to prevent or cure COVID-19. None so far, not even vaccines, which are being developed and still a couple of years away.

While fruits and vegetables and supplements, like vitamins D3, C, B-complex, zinc, etc. are helping boost the immune system, none of them could prevent or cure COVID-19. Various drugs, including anti-malarial, anti-lupus drug hydroxychloroquine, developed after WWII (less toxic derivate of chloroquine, discovered in 1934) are being clinically tested, in combination (a trio) with antibiotic Azithromycin and Zinc.

Vinegar is a COVID-19 disinfectant

While 5% kitchen vinegar (acetic acid) can destroy some bacteria and some viruses on surfaces, there is no evidence it destroys SARS-CoV2 virus. Vinegar is also damaging when used to clean electric iron, electronic screens, countertops, floorings, dishwashers, and other appliances.

Peroxide is useless for COVID-19

Hydrogen peroxide (H₂O₂), a popular household item that was discovered in 1818 originally used to bleach hats, deactivates rhinoviruses that cause the common cold, which are actually harder to destroy than SARS-CoV2 that causes the COVID-19. According to CDC, hydrogen peroxide is an effective disinfectant against coronaviruses, like the SARS-CoV2, which is fragile, albeit more virulent.

Peroxide had been used effectively to disinfect masks, gloves, etc. for re-use when the supply of PPE is low, and useful at home to disinfect (3% undiluted spray) various surfaces, leaving it on for one minute against bacteria and the COVID-19 virus and 6-8 minutes for rhinoviruses. Peroxide 3% or diluted with water may be used for gargling, but not to be swallowed or its vapor inhaled because it is toxic to the stomach and to the lungs.

Stay-home policy is a civil rights violation

The government, during war or an epidemic or pandemic, has the constitutional right, obligation, and power to issue, declare, mandate any policy or measure during a national (international) emergency to protect its citizens. Societal/community rights supersede and outweigh individual civil liberties when personal behavior or action of individuals jeopardizes others.

Those who do not follow the national guidelines to minimize the spread of killer SARS-CoV2, and are even now staging protests in various cities, have the right to expose themselves to the virus and get infected, or even kill themselves, but they do not have the right to infect and kill others. Their twisted thinking and selfishness, a major factor why COVID-19 has spread so much and infected and killed so many, would also prolong this deadly pandemic.

Let's safeguard the civil rights of the people who are following the medical guidelines and sacrificing to protect themselves, their loved ones, and society as a whole.

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Ocean Adventure launches donation drive to keep

April 30, 2020

TITLE: animals alive

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DATE

Ocean Adventure launches donation drive to keep animals alive

By Mahatma Datu April 29, 2020, 5:53 pm



SMART MAMMALS. Dolphins show off some "dance moves" during a live show at the Ocean Adventure in Subic Bay Freeport. The operator of the biggest tourist draw to the freeport on Tuesday (April 28, 2020) appealed for donations to keep their animals alive and well amid the enhanced community quarantine, which has forced the marine theme park to cease operation. *(Photo from the Facebook page of Ocean Adventure)*

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT – Ocean Adventure, the biggest tourism operator in this Freeport, is launching a donation drive to keep its animals alive and well amid the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) period.

Robert Ianne Gonzaga, president and chief executive officer of Subic Bay Marine Exploratorium Inc. (SBMEI), operator of Ocean Adventure, Adventure Beach Waterpark and Camayan Resort Hotel here, said in a statement Tuesday that the fund drive for the animals is an unprecedented but necessary step for them to do.

Gonzaga said that since the implementation of ECQ last March, their revenues have gone down to zero and will remain so for the short-term while the costs and expenses remain high due to the caring and feeding of animals and maintenance of the facilities.

"We rely only on our revenues to deliver the best of care for our animals and to ensure that they are in a safe and secure environment, with expert support available from our vets and caretakers," he said.

Ocean Adventure, which is responsible for attracting hundreds of thousands of guests and visitors to Subic Freeport every year, has been grappling with the negative impacts of the lockdown.

Last month, it retrenched more than 200 of its employees and placed the remaining 300 on forced leave.

"The disruption this pandemic has caused is unprecedented and likely to last for quite some time into the future, even after the quarantine is lifted. Our attendance numbers started plummeting in late January as concern for Covid-19 began to spread, and it got worse in February, which forced us to retrench workers in March -- days before the entire Luzon was put under lockdown. Now, all our businesses have shut down, aside from the hotel which is operating with a skeletal force. There is a lot of pain being felt across the entire tourism industry," Gonzaga said.

SBMA chairman and administrator Wilma Eisma had earlier required manufacturing firms which continue to operate according to the guidelines of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) to house their employees inside the Subic Freeport.

This enabled some hotels here to remain operational with a skeletal crew, catering to guests in essential industries -- the only source of income for the duration of the lockdown.

Ocean Adventure launches donation drive to keep

April 30, 2020

TITLE: animals alive

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In a statement posted on its official website, the SBMEI said the donations that the fund drive will generate will be used to purchase animal food, medicine, and vitamins, help support the animal caretakers, divers and volunteers who maintain their enclosures, veterinarians and lab technicians who provide for the health care of the animals, and pay for utilities for pumps, freezers and other equipment for the care of the animals.

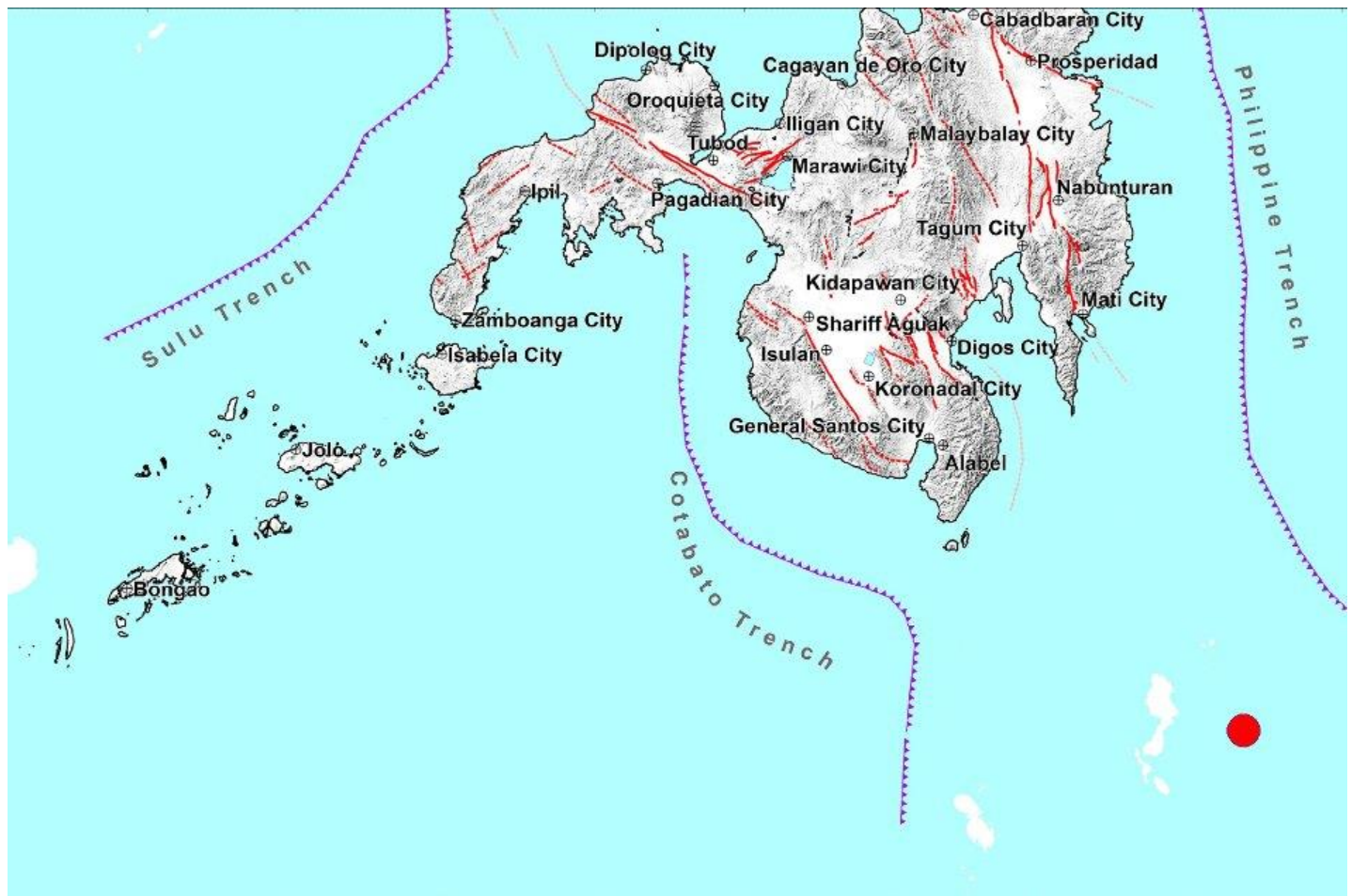
"We currently have enough food for our animals to last to the beginning of June, however, since we do not expect to generate any revenue anytime soon, we are trying to raise funds to feed and support our animals for the rest of the year 2020," Gonzaga said.

"The path to recovery is going to be long and hard, not just for our company but for everyone else in the tourism industry. That said, our animals at Ocean Adventure cannot make it through without external support in the months ahead. But we believe that with your help, nothing is impossible," he added. **(PNA)**

Magnitude 4.4 quake jolts Davao Occidental; aftershocks not expected

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Apr 30 2020 03:30 AM



MANILA—A magnitude-4.2 earthquake jolted Davao Occidental early Thursday, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said.

The tremor happened at 1:46 a.m., 251 kilometers southeast of Sarangani town.

It was tectonic in origin and had a depth of 53 kilometers, according to Phivolcs. No intensities were recorded.

The tremor is not expected to cause aftershocks. No damage has been reported so far.

Series of quakes rock Southern Leyte

By: [Joey Gabieta](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Visayas](#) / 05:34 PM April 29, 2020

TACLOBAN CITY — A series of earthquakes shook Southern Leyte province on Wednesday afternoon, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said. No damage was reported.

The afternoon earthquakes have epicenters in the municipalities of Silago, Hinundayan, and Hinunangan.

The Silago earthquake, which occurred at 12:08 p.m., registered the highest magnitude at 4.1.

Phivolcs monitoring showed that the earthquake was felt in Silago at Intensity IV, in the towns of San Juan, Anahawan, Hinunangan, and Hinundayan at Intensity III; Palo town, Leyte at Intensity II; and Surigao City at Intensity I.

Another quake was felt in Silago at 2:14 p.m. with a magnitude of 2.1.

The towns of Hinunangan and Hinundayan were also rocked by tremors at past noon.

The quakes occurred almost at the same time of 12:07 p.m., having magnitudes of 1.7 and 2.0, respectively.

Meanwhile, a series of jolts were also felt in Hinunangan.

The first tremor was monitored at 12:08 p.m. with a magnitude of 3.5, followed by another quake having a magnitude of 2.4 at 12:21 p.m.

The last earthquake in the town occurred at 12:33 p.m. having a magnitude of 2.1.

PAGASA records highest heat index in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro

Published April 29, 2020 11:20pm

San Jose town in Occidental Mindoro on Wednesday morning recorded the highest heat index with 51 degrees Celsius, PAGASA reported.

In Ambulong, Tanauan City the heat index was 47°C by in the early Wednesday afternoon while Sangley point in Cavite City it was 45°C in the morning.

A temperature of 43°C was recorded in Zamboanga in the afternoon, while in the cities of Davao, Legazpi and at the Science Garden station in Quezon City the heat index was at 42°C.

EFFECTS OF HEAT INDEX IN OUR BODY		
T in Celsius	T in Fahrenheit	Heat Index (Human Discomfort Index)
27 – 32°C	80 – 90°F	Caution Fatigue is possible with prolonged exposure and activity. Continuing activity could result heat cramps.
32 – 41°C	90 – 105°F	Extreme Caution Heat Cramps and Heat exhaustion are possible. Continuing activity could result heat stroke.
41 – 54°C	105 -130°F	Danger Heat Cramps and Heat exhaustion are likely; Heat stroke is probable with continued activity.
Over 54°C	Over 130°F	Extreme Danger Heat Stroke is imminent.

With the high temperatures recorded in Wednesday, the weather bureau issued a warning on the harm that can be caused by 41 - 54°C heat index as this can cause heat cramps and heat exhaustion that can result to heat stroke during continuous physical activity.

PAGASA, on its website, explains that heat index are human discomfort index that gives the "apparent" temperature or what human perceive or feel as the temperature affecting their body.

High air temperatures and high relative humidity will give high apparent temperatures or indices. Full exposure to sunshine can increase the heat index by 8°C.

PAGASA record highest heat index in San Jose,

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TITLE: Occidental mindoro

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These are the tips posted by PAGASA:

1. Stay indoors as much as possible, if air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor out of the sunshine
2. Wear lightweight and light colored clothing. Light colors will reflect the sun's energy.
3. Drink plenty of water regularly. The body needs water to keep cool.
4. Water is the safest liquid to drink during heat emergencies. Avoid drinking liquor because it dehydrates the body.
5. Eat small meals however eat more often. Avoid eating foods of high in protein which can increase metabolic heat.

-- BAP, GMA News

GMA News · Follow
Today at 12:32 AM · 🌐

Stand For Truth: April 29, 2020 (Chinese radar gun, kakayanin ba ng 'Pinas?)
CHINESE RADAR GUN, KAKAYANIN BA NG 'PINAS?

Napabalita ang ginawang pagtutok ng radar gun ng isang Chinese vessel sa Philippine Navy. Dahil dito, nagsampa ng diplomatic protests ang Pilipinas laban sa China. Pero ayon kay Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, maaring sinusubukan lamang ng China ang magiging reaksyon ng bansa sa ganitong insidente. May laban nga ba ang Pilipinas sa radar gun ng China? See Less

"Ang sinasagot naman ng ating barko at eroplano ay 'we are traversing within our EEZ.' So sagutan lang ng sagutan ang mga 'yan. Every time na dumaaan ang ating barko at eroplano, nagkakaroon ng ganyang exchange... It's offensive also bakit kailangan nilang itutok 'yung kanilang acquisition radars sa ating eroplano o barko,"

SECRETARY DELFIN LORENZANA
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE

STAND FOR TRUTH

▶ 2:11 / 2:57

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share 🌐 🗳️ 🗨️ 393 · 171 Comments

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=951553815261851>

Carpio: Shut down Confucius Institutes until China

April 30, 2020

TITLE: accepts South China Sea ruling

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Carpio: Shut down Confucius Institutes until China accepts South China Sea ruling

By: [Frances Mangosing](#) - Reporter / [@FMangosingINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 05:37 PM April 29, 2020

MANILA, Philippines—Confucius Institutes, educational outlets funded by the Chinese government, should be shut down in the Philippines unless China recognizes the 2016 arbitral ruling that declared its South China Sea claim invalid, according to retired Supreme Court Justice Antonio Carpio.

“I think we should start to push back,” Carpio said at an online forum hosted by the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines early this week.

He said until China recognizes the ruling, Confucius Institutes “should not be allowed to operate in the Philippines.”

China has set up Confucius Institutes all over the world to promote the Chinese language and culture in a display of its so-called soft power.

In the United States, dozens of universities have shuttered Confucius Institutes in their campuses after the US Congress passed legislation allowing Pentagon to reject funding for Chinese language programs in colleges that host the institutes.

The presence of the institutes had raised concerns over their use in espionage and their roles in curbing academic freedom. Sweden has also shut down all Confucius Institutes over security concerns.

Carpio said China has Confucius Institutes at the University of the Philippines and Ateneo de Manila University. The institutes, Carpio said, “can propagate their historical falsehood about nine-dash line.”

“They can tell students false stories about nine-dash line, but we can’t counter that because we don’t have our own institutes in China,” Carpio said.

Beijing claims to own the entire South China Sea based on its mythical nine-dash line, but this had been rejected in 2016 by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in a case filed by the Philippines.

China refuses to acknowledge the ruling.

Carpio’s comments on closing Confucius Institutes in the country came after the Chinese embassy in Manila released “Iisang Dagat,” a music video that was supposed to highlight COVID-19 cooperation between the Philippines and China, but instead drew outrage from Filipino netizens because of its subtle assertion of its South China Sea claims.

The retired justice said that China has been taking advantage of other nations’ freedoms as it denies the same at home.

“We have our freedom of expression in this country,” said Carpio. “We can’t stop the Chinese from coming out with their own music video on COVID-19. That is where we have to compete with them in the marketplace of ideas,” he said.

Carpio: Shut down Confucius Institutes until China

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“It’s unfortunate that the Chinese embassy here can release that kind of music video to give out their propaganda, while our embassy in Beijing can’t do that because they have censorship in China,” he added.

The Chinese, he said, can freely access the Philippines’ media and blogs, and advertise in newspapers. But it’s not the same for the Philippines in China.

Carpio said his e-book about the South China Sea dispute cannot be sold in China because of heavy censorship there.

“They can disseminate falsehoods here but we can’t counter it,” said Carpio.

“That’s why its people believe they really own the South China Sea since 2,000 years ago when the whole world knows that’s totally false,” he said.

Edited by TSB

US govt reveals details of sunlight study on virus

posted April 29, 2020 at 10:25 am

by [AFP](#)

Washington - The US Department of Homeland Security revealed to AFP on Tuesday new technical details regarding its highly anticipated study into how ultraviolet radiation destroys the new coronavirus, saying that its experiment had accurately mimicked natural sunlight.

A summary of the research was presented last week at the White House, with some scientists calling for caution until a more comprehensive report was made public.

US President Donald Trump raised eyebrows last week when he used his daily live national press briefing to ask whether light could become a medical treatment.

"Supposing we hit the body with a tremendous -- whether it's ultraviolet or just very powerful light," he said. "Supposing you brought the light inside the body, which you can do either through the skin or in some other way."

Trump continued on to suggest that people inject disinfectants to cure the virus, an idea that health experts quickly shot down.

DHS official William Bryan had briefed the media that the amount of virus on a non-porous surface shrunk by half in just two minutes when sunlight was present, the temperature was 70-75 degrees Fahrenheit (21-24 Celsius) and humidity was 80 percent.

The amount of virus suspended in air shrunk to half its amount in just 1.5 minutes at room temperature and 20 percent humidity, he added.

These eye-catching results surprised experts because most of the UV light contained in natural sunlight belongs to a subtype called UVA, which causes human skin to tan and age but has not generally been proven harmful to viruses, David Brenner, director of the Center for Radiological Research at Columbia University Medical Center, told AFP.

On the other hand, a part of the spectrum called UVC is particularly adept at warping the genetic material of animal and virus cells and is widely used in sterilizing lamps, but it is not present in sunlight because it is filtered out by the Earth's atmosphere.

Asked for further details on the type of UV light that was used, Lloyd Hough, a DHS scientist overseeing the test, said: "The spectrum of light that was used was designed to approximate natural sunlight that you would expect to see at noon at sea level at a mid-latitude location (e.g., mid-Atlantic, 40 degrees N) on the first day of summer.

"More specifically, it approximates the wavelengths of light predicted by the National Center for Atmospheric Research's (NCAR) Tropospheric Ultraviolet and Visible (TUV) Radiation Model for noon at 40 degrees N latitude at sea level on June 21st in range of 280 and 400 nanometer wavelengths."

The wavelengths specified pertain only to long- and medium-wave ultraviolet, also known as UVA and UVB -- the UV components of sunlight that penetrate the atmosphere -- and not UVC.

- Paper coming soon -

A DHS spokesman added that the test -- which was conducted at the National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center in Maryland -- was carried out on droplets of simulated saliva on a stainless steel surface.

Brenner, who is himself performing research into another area of the UV spectrum called far-UVC, which kills microbes without penetrating human skin, said the DHS findings did not comport with previous research.

"There is a peer-reviewed paper in the literature from the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) showing the earlier SARS-CoV virus did not respond to UVA light (though it did respond to UVC light)," he said, adding it is "reasonable to assume that all coronaviruses respond roughly the same way to light."

The results as presented were "straining credulity," he added.

But a DHS spokesman said that study would soon be submitted for peer review and published in scientific journals.

"While the results are still undergoing a rigorous scientific review, we felt it important to share information on the emerging trends that are being identified in our tests," the spokesman said.

Poaching could increase under virus lockdowns:

April 30, 2020

TITLE: watchdog

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Poaching could increase under virus lockdowns: watchdog

Published April 29, 2020, 4:06 PM

By *Agence France-Presse*

Poaching of endangered species could rebound as authorities divert their attention to enforcing coronavirus lockdown measures, an international wildlife watchdog said Wednesday, reporting stockpiling of ivory and other animal products as borders remain shut.



(AFP / Aris Oikonomou / MANILA BULLETIN FILE PHOTO)

The Wildlife Justice Commission (WJC) said that a ban on the sale of wild animals in China was causing backlogs in smuggling networks of pangolin scales and ivory across Southeast Asia.

But it warned that criminal gangs were adapting to tighter border controls amid the pandemic.

WJC operatives, often acting undercover, reported large stockpiles of ivory in Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos following a string of recent seizures.

In Vietnam alone, smugglers had access to more than 22 tonnes of pangolin scales, the WJC said.

“Brokers have made it clear that they intend on returning their operations to previous levels as soon as possible,” Sarah Stoner, WJC’s director of intelligence, told AFP.

“The stockpiling of huge quantities of wildlife products in many of the key countries concerned presents investigative opportunities for law enforcement.”

Nevertheless, Stoner said she expected high-value wildlife smuggling to rebound whenever COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

The pangolin, an endangered species, is one of the most trafficked animals on earth, fuelling a multi-billion-dollar trade for their scales, prized as medicine in many Asian countries.

After COVID-19’s emergence in China late last year and following several studies suggesting the novel coronavirus may have been passed on to humans by pangolins, authorities in Beijing moved to ban the trade and sale of all wild animal products.

While that has affected the illicit trade of the products, the WJC cautioned that authorities risked leaving endangered species more vulnerable to poachers as they enforce lockdowns.

“A major concern is that poaching incidents may increase during the lockdown period, as criminal networks exploit perceived opportunities of park closures, reduced patrols in protected areas, or the diversion of law enforcement resources to deal with COVID-19 issues,” it said.



Poaching could increase under virus lockdowns:

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Several major busts of illicit wild animal products have occurred across Asia and Africa since most of the world went into lockdown.

These include the seizure of more than six tonnes of pangolin scales in Malaysia last month, and multiple busts of smaller shipments of ivory.

But the WJC said that without sustained focus from governments to enforce stricter border controls that criminal networks would adapt and smuggling would soon rebound.

“It is important that additional resources be allocated to this problem and not merely diverting current resources to focus on the markets and leave organized crime a free hand,” said Stoner.

Poaching could increase under virus lockdowns: watchdog

Patrick Gale, Agence France-Presse

Posted at Apr 29 2020 03:39 PM



A white-bellied pangolin which was rescued from local animal traffickers is seen at the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) office in Kampala, Uganda, on April 9, 2020. *Isaac Kasamani, AFP*

PARIS - Poaching of endangered species could rebound as authorities divert their attention to enforcing coronavirus lockdown measures, an international wildlife watchdog said Wednesday, reporting stockpiling of ivory and other animal products as borders remain shut.

The Wildlife Justice Commission (WJC) said that a ban on the sale of wild animals in China was causing backlogs in smuggling networks of pangolin scales and ivory across Southeast Asia.

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Alagang aso sa North Carolina, nagpositibo sa COVID-19

Abril 29, 2020 6:03pm GMT+08:00

Isang "pug" sa North Carolina ang unang kaso ng alagang aso sa Amerika na nagpositibo sa coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Ang mga amo ng aso, pawang positibo rin sa virus.

Sa ulat ng Reuters, sinabi ng tagapagsalita ng American Humane Society nitong Martes, na posibleng nakuha ng aso ang virus sa kaniyang mga amo na mag-asawa at isang anak.

Kamakailan lang, dalawang alagang pusa rin sa magkahiwalay na lugar sa New York ang nagpositibo sa virus.

Nitong nakaraang buwan, sinabi ng Hong Kong health authorities na isang alagang aso sa kanilang lugar ang posibleng kauna-unahang kaso ng pet dog na nagpositibo sa virus.

Bagaman nagpopositibo sa virus ang hayop, inihayag ng U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), na wala namang patunay na maipapasa ng hayop ang virus sa tao.--**Reuters/FRJ, GMA News**

A Dutch flower farm spelled out a special message for tourists missing the annual tulip blooms

By Leah Asmelash, CNN

Published Apr 29, 2020 4:19:06 PM



Editor's note: Want more inspiring, positive news? Sign up for The Good Stuff, a newsletter for the good in life. It will brighten your inbox every Saturday morning.

(CNN) -- Every year, tourists descend on the Netherlands to revel in the bright and colorful tulip fields. But with coronavirus putting many travel plans on hold, tourists have been notably absent this year.

That's why Dutch Daffodils, a Dutch family flower farm, and Tulips in Holland, a travel blog dedicated to the tulips in the Netherlands, teamed up to create a special message for those sad about missing the flowers this year.



"We headed the tulips a bit earlier to write this message. From our families to yours!" Dutch Daffodils wrote in a Facebook post, along with "See You Next Year" written in the flowers, along with a heart. "We hope that this brighten your day a bit and we hope to see you next year! Much love!"

The Netherlands has more than 38,000 confirmed coronavirus cases, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

Since the virus's outbreak, the travel industry has been significantly affected, as many countries have banned visitors during this time. As a result, many hotels and other travel-adjacent industries have suffered.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/lifestyle/2020/4/29/Dutch-flower-farm-spell-out-message-.html>

How to clean your bathroom to protect against coronavirus

By Ryan Prior, CNN

Published Apr 29, 2020 7:29:25 AM



(CNN) — With nearly all kids out of school in the United States and in many other places around the world, and large numbers of workers telecommuting, many houses are more crowded than usual.

And bathrooms are perhaps the one crucial point in the house where all humans — and therefore microbes — pass through. So during the present pandemic, keeping your toilets, sinks, counters and showers as germ-free as possible is key to keeping you and your family healthy.

The novel coronavirus, or SARS-CoV-2, is known to live on hard surfaces for up to three days, [according to data](#) published in the New England Journal of Medicine. Your bathroom has plenty of those.

"We'd be mostly concerned with the inanimate surfaces," said Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious disease specialist at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

"Any household disinfectants will work against this virus," he said. "And soap and water work perfectly well."

We've got a guide to help you think about the area of your house that could become ground zero of the fight against coronavirus.

Make sure you follow the right steps

As you get ready to clean your bathroom, start by making sure to wash your hands.

If you're using disinfectants, you should pick higher-quality ones. The US Environmental Protection Agency released a five-page list of disinfectants -- including Clorox Disinfecting Wipes and certain Lysol sprays -- which are strong enough to defeat "harder to kill" viruses such as SARS-CoV-2.

It's important to focus on cleaning "high-touch" areas of your bathroom including light switches, door knobs and the sink areas in particular. That can also include less obvious areas everyone in the house likely touches, including shower heads, shower curtains and around the toilet seat.

Anything that people touch should be cleaned, whether they have symptoms or not. That includes hair dryers, electric toothbrushes, shavers or other appliances in the bathroom. (You may not have touched razors recently if you're trying to grow out a gnarly quarantine beard.)

We know you would never forget this, but just a friendly reminder not to forget to make sure devices are assuredly unplugged and turned off before you embark on a deep clean.

You should consider placing a wipeable cover on electronic devices if you can, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises, and try to use a solution that's at least 70% alcohol.

How to clean your bathroom to protect against

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It pays to be thorough, because droplets capable of carrying the virus can really get around within your bathroom.

For instance, one study published in the Journal of Applied Microbiology showed that particles and droplets can be spread up to 6 feet when you flush with the seat up.

Follow the cleaning product maker's directions

"You don't have to panic clean," said Brian Sansoni, a spokesman for the American Cleaning Institute. But he emphasized that you need to make sure you're cleaning correctly.

After you wipe down hard surfaces like sinks and counter tops, make sure to leave them wet for 3 to 5 minutes. Who knew? Turns out, the professionals do. The American Cleaning Institute recommends letting the surfaces air-dry, and then rinse them with water.

People aren't aware of the need to wait, said Sansoni, who noted that's important to give the cleaning products time to actually work and thoroughly kill germs or viruses.

Think there's no way you're doing it wrong? Sansoni cited findings from an Ipsos poll his organization commissioned, which found that 42% of Americans weren't cleaning or disinfecting the right way -- and could be leaving themselves vulnerable.

Many people aren't following directions printed on product labels, including allowing cleaning products enough time to work, he said. Please make sure you're abiding by the instructions on your products, and that you're using them as the manufacturer intended.

Use separate bathrooms if a family member is sick

If a family member or roommate living with you is showing Covid-19 symptoms, it's important to assign them their own specific bathroom and to separate that person from others.

If you don't have more than one bathroom, have the person with symptoms clean surfaces they've touched after they use the bathroom, according to the CDC.

If they're too sick to clean, your second option is to have a healthy person clean the area. Wait as long as you can before entering, wear a mask and gloves to clean and wash the mask and your clothes after cleaning. (Toss the gloves.)

That might not be an option if your patient needs help using the bathroom.

"You may have to help the person use the facilities," Schaffner said. "You can assign one person in the family to help them and to establish their routine."

If you're in close quarters with someone showing Covid-19 symptoms, you absolutely must protect yourself with a mask at minimum, he emphasized.

Protect yourself if you're helping a sick family member

In addition to a mask, Schaffner recommended wearing gloves and some sort of other garment over your regular clothes if you're caring for an ill person in the bathroom. "Watch the person, see what they touch, and wipe that off," he said.

That could include the toilet seat, which may receive a lot of action since diarrhea and vomiting are common Covid-19 symptoms.

As an additional precaution, Schaffner also recommended placing any sanitizing wipes you use in a plastic bag and throwing that in the garbage. Then change your clothes after you're done cleaning the bathroom or helping someone else use it.

If someone in your home is sick, it's especially important to wash any of their towels or dirty clothes separately.

For towels, bath mats, cloth shower curtains and other soft materials, the CDC recommends laundering them according to the manufacturer's directions with the "warmest appropriate water setting." Then dry those items completely.

Soap can work even better than disinfecting products

"By now you know that viruses, including the coronavirus, can live on surfaces for awhile -- several hours, even several days -- which means we have to be cleaning all the time," CNN Chief Medical Correspondent Dr. Sanjay Gupta said in a video.

That gets complicated when you're burning through disinfectants and sanitizing wipes, and store shelves with those products are all too often bare.

But you may already have soap at home, and it could be easier to find in a supermarket. And the good news? "Many scientists argue it's actually a better alternative," Gupta said.

There's scientific backing for this thinking: At a microscopic level, the novel coronavirus is surrounded by a "lipid envelope." Soap works on the virus by tearing through that layer of lipids that surrounds the proteins inside and breaking apart the virus.

The process is similar to how dish soap eats away at grease on a pan in ways that plain water can't.

Finish the job correctly

Finishing the cleaning job right is crucial.

Gupta explained that you don't necessarily have to wear gloves as you clean.

But if you do, make sure when you're done to remove them by sliding your finger in underneath their opening so you don't touch the exposed outer side with your bare hands.

And then wash your hands one last time after you've thrown away your gloves.