



4 exotic pets kinumpiska ng DENR

By Leifbilly BegasMay 07,2020

APAT na exotic pets ang kinumpiska ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources sa isang subdivision sa Antipolo City noong Martes.

Nakatanggap ng tip ang DENR kaugnay ng pag-aalaga umano ni Don Michael Perez, ng Filinvest East Homes ng mga exotic animals kaya isinagawa ang raid.

Wala umanong naipakitang permit si Perez para sa pag-aalaga ng dalawang Serval cats (*Leptailurus serval*), isang Ducorp's cockatoo (*Cacatua ducorpsii*), at isang Blue-and-gold macaw (*Ara ararauna*).

Ayon kay Perez ang mga Serval cats ay ibinenta sa kanya ng holder ng certificate of wildlife registration, samantalang ang Ducorp's cockatoo ay nabili niya sa Cartimar, Pasay City samantalang ang Blue-and-gold macaw ay galing umano sa Birds International Inc.

Dahil sa ipinatutupad na quarantine, binigyan si Perez ng panahon upang maipresinta ang mga kinakailangang permits sa DENR para hindi masampahan ng kaso.

Dinala ang mga hayop sa Wildlife Rescue Center sa Quezon City.

Ayon sa Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act (RA 9147) kailangan ng permiso mula sa DENR para makapag-alaga ng wildlife pets.

Ang Serval cats ay nasa Appendix II ng Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

DENR probes circumstances surrounding importation of rare cats in Antipolo City

By [BusinessMirror](#)

May 8, 2020

You might as well keep domestic cats as pets, be it an alley cat, or the more pricey imported breeds. But never keep a wild cat as pet at home, an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) warned on Thursday.

In an interview, Assistant Secretary Ricardo Calderon said they are now digging into old records to check whether the DENR, or any of its Regional Offices, has approved the importation of North American serval cats.

“Right now, the burden of proof is on the alleged owner. If he fail to show proper documentation for these wild animals, he is into trouble,” said Calderon, referring to businessman Don Michael Perez at Filinvest East Homes in Antipolo City.

This came after the surprise discovery of two of these rare breed kept as pets at a gated subdivision in Antipolo City last week. The serval cats, according to sources at the DENR, were being used as attraction at Perez’s coffee shop in Quezon City.

“Allegedly, the coffee shop was closed down and the cats were brought to Antipolo,” Calderon said. The official said he himself was surprised of the discovery of not just one, but two serval cats, in Philippine soil.

“If these have no import permit coming from the DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau, or Regional Offices, then it must have been smuggled into the country,” Calderon said.

“We are conducting further investigation into this because serval cats are threatened species and they are not supposed to be kept as pets,” Calderon, the concurrent director of the DENR-BMB, said.

On Wednesday, a joint operation conducted by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resource Office (Penro) of Rizal and the DENR-BMB, seized four exotic pets, including the two serval cats.

Acting on a tip-off, a team led by the DENR-BMB’s Task Force Philippine Operations Group on Ivory and Illegal Wildlife Trade, or Task Force POGI, Rizal Penro Isidro Mercado and the local governments of Antipolo and Cainta, inspected Perez’s house and found the exotic pets—two serval cats (*Leptailurus serval*), one Ducorp’s cockatoo (*Cacatua ducorpsii*), and one Blue-and-gold macaw (*Ara ararauna*).

Perez failed to show the necessary permits to justify his possession of the wild animals.

DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns and spokesman Benny D. Antiporda, who personally received the seized animals during a simple turnover rites, commended the members of Task Force Pogi and Rizal Penro led by Mercado for carrying out the operation despite the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) in Metro Manila and nearby provinces to contain the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19).

“This just goes to show how serious and determined the DENR is in fighting illegal wildlife trafficking and trade that even during the ECQ, where there’s mobility restrictions, we continue and are always ready to respond to wildlife crimes and any other crimes against the environment,” Antiporda said in a news release.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/05/08/denr-probes-circumstances-surrounding-importation-of-rare-cats-in-antipolo-city/>



DENR sees upsurge in transportation permit for all forest products, wildlife after ban lifting

Published May 7, 2020, 11:39 AM

By Marie Tonette Marticio

TACLOBAN City – Following the order of Department of Environmental and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu’s to lift the suspension on the issuance of transportation permit for all forest products and wildlife, and to accept, process, and issue transport-related permits or documents for all forest products and wildlife, the DENR in Eastern Visayas is gearing up for the possible upsurge in the number of applicants for transport permit and documents.

The instruction comes in consideration of the results of the assessment of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) on coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Recovery Plan which already allows social and economic activities to proceed.

“While we will try to accommodate and expedite the process, we shall not also be complacent and lower our guards against the deadly virus as we will ensure the strict observance of health and safety protocols laid down by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (ATF-EID) and the Department of Health (DoH),” Regional Executive Director Tirso P. Parian, Jr. said.

He added that while easing down the suspension, the applicants still need to obtain the needed documents such as Certificate of Timber Origin/Certificate of Lumber Origin (CTO/CLO) to ensure the legitimacy of their source.

Prior to the transport of the forest products, the applicant also needs to comply with other documentary requirements such as valid harvesting permit, approved Wood Processing Plant (WPP) Permit/Certificate of Registration as Lumber Dealer, approved Log Supply Contracts or its equivalent, among others.

“The same information should be forwarded by the concerned CENRO/Implementing PENRO to the DENR field office that has jurisdiction of the destination or to the regional office itself,” he said.

The issuance of transport permits was suspended in March as an added protection against the spread of COVID-19 pursuant to Republic Act No. 11469, the “Bayanihan to Heal as One Act.” This resulted in the stoppage of businesses and industries that were dependent on the buying and transportation of forest products and wildlife.

He said the suspension has led to loss of government revenue from the collection of fees on forestry-related services in Region 8 amounting to at least P1 million from an average of P1.2 million revenue for the month of April in the previous years down to P590,555.23 in April, 2020.

This includes forest tenurial instruments/permits and other forest charges of even licensed lumber dealers in the region, their employees, and other related businesses.

“It is our desire that the lifting of the suspension can help boost the economic recovery in the region after the economic lockdown and start getting back on our feet,” Parian added. (Marie Tonette Marticio)

Supply ng tubig sa Metro Manila, sapat hanggang Hunyo-NWRB

[Angie dela Cruz](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon) - May 8, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Sapat ang suplay ng tubig sa Metro Manila hanggang sa buwan ng Hunyo kahit na patuloy ang pagbaba ng water level sa Angat Dam dulot ng nararanasang mainit na panahon at walang pag-ulan sa may watershed ng naturang dam.

Ayon ito kay National Water Resources Board (NWRB) executive director Seville David Jr.

Ang Angat Dam ang nagsusuplay ng 90 percent ng tubig sa MM.

“Ang mga dam natin partikular po ang Angat Dam ay bumababa pa rin po ang lebel dahil nga po sa mainit ang panahon. Inaasahan natin na patuloy pa itong bababa,” sabi ni David.

Anya ang latest water level sa Angat dam ay umaabot sa 189.3 meters kaya’t matutugunan pa nito ang pangangailangan sa tubig ng Metro Manila kahit walang nararanasang pag-ulan sa mga watershed ng dam.

Sinabi ni David na dahil sa kawalan ng ulan, posibleng bumaba ng isang metro ang water level ng dam tuwing ika-lima hanggang anim na araw.

Ayon kay David, nananatiling may regular allocation ng water supply sa Metro Manila ng 46 cubic meters per second para sa publiko na sapat na magamit ngayong panahon na may krisis dulot ng COVID-19 pandemic.

Angat Dam level still dipping; water supply enough until June —NWRB

Published May 7, 2020 8:35am

The water in level in Angat Dam is expected to drop further due to the soaring heat index recorded across the country, the National Water Resources Board said on Thursday.

Interviewed on Dabol B sa News TV, NWRB executive director Sevillo David Jr. said that the water supply in Metro Manila is still sufficient for May and June.

“Ang mga dam natin partikular po ang Angat Dam ay bumaba pa rin po ang lebel dahil nga po mainit ang panahon. Inaasahan natin na bababa pa rin siya,” he said.

“Sa kasalukuyang lebel niya na 189.3 meters, medyo masasabi natin na nasa normal pa ang lebel ng Angat Dam. Matutugunan pa rin ang mga pangangailangan natin sa tubig,” he added.

Angat Dam supplies over 90 percent of Metro Manila's water needs.

On Wednesday, state weather bureau [PAGASA reported a record-high heat index](#) of 53 degrees Celsius (°C) heat index in Butuan City. The high human perceived temperature was recorded at 2 p.m.

The second hottest temperature was reported in Ambulong, Tanauan City recording at 51 degrees °C, followed by Sangley Point in Cavite City with 51°C, Clark in Pampanga with 46 °C, and Maasin City with 46 °C.

According to David, the water level in Angat Dam could drop a meter every five to six days. PAGASA earlier said the rainy season is expected to come around May or June.

NWRB maintained the regular allocation of water supply in Metro Manila at 46 cubic meters per second for the public to utilize enough water amid the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) crisis.

Even with enough storage, David still advises the public to conserve water. —**Joviland Rita/LBG, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/metro/737192/ang-at-dam-level-still-dipping-water-supply-enough-until-june-nwrbs/story/>

Tubig sa Angat Dam patuloy ang pagbaba, pero sapat pa–NWRB

By Leifbilly Begas May 07, 2020



PATULOY ang pagbaba ng tubig sa Angat dam pero sapat pa umano ito para suplayan ang Metro Manila hanggang sa dumating ang tag-ulan sa buwan ng Hunyo.

Ayon kay National Water Resources Board Executive director Seville David Jr., inaasahan na ang pagbaba ng tubig sa Angat dahil sa init ng panahon.

“Sa kasalukuyang lebel niya na 189.3 meters, medyo masasabi natin na nasa normal pa ang lebel ng Angat Dam. Matutugunan pa rin ang mga pangangailangan natin sa tubig,” ani David sa panayam sa radyo.

Posible umano na bumaba ng isang metro sa loob ng lima hanggang anim na araw ang tubig sa dam.

Patuloy pa rin umano ang pagpapalabas ng 46 cubic meter per second na tubig sa Angat upang suplayan ang tinatayang 90 porsyento ng pangangailangan ng Metro Manila.

Angat Dam level drops

Published 5 hours ago
on May 8, 2020 01:50 AM

By **Elmer N. Manuel** @tribunephi_Imer



The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) revealed on Thursday that the Angat Dam's water level is expected to drop further due to the soaring heat index recorded across the country.

In a radio interview, NWRB executive director Seville David Jr. said while the dam's water level is expected to drop in the coming days, water supply in Metro Manila is still sufficient for May and June.

"As of now, the water level in Angat Dam is as 189.3 meters and we can say that it still on the normal level," David said. "We still have sufficient water supply."

Angat Dam supplies over 90 percent of Metro Manila's water needs and the scorching heat may pose a problem to these areas if it continues.

On Wednesday, State weather bureau Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) on Wednesday reported a record-high heat index of 53 degrees Celsius (°C) in Butuan City at 2 p.m.

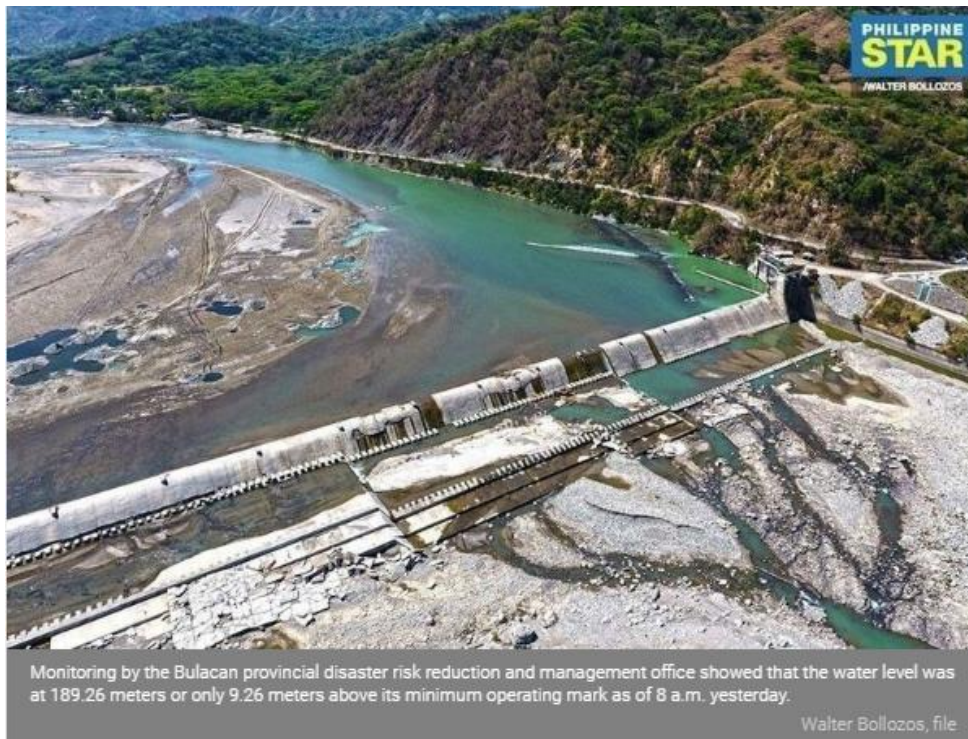
Hot temperatures were also reported in Ambulong, Tanauan City at 51°C; Sangley Point in Cavite City with 51°C; Clark in Pampanga with 46 °C; and Maasin City with 46 °C.

Easterlies, the ridge of a high-pressure area and localized thunderstorms may bring partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers over Metro Manila and the rest of the country, according to PAGASA. However, this was said to have "no significant impact" on the country.

David disclosed that the water level in Angat Dam could drop a meter every five to six days. PAGASA earlier said the rainy season is expected to come around May or June.

The NWRB maintained the regular allocation of water supply in Metro Manila at 46 cubic meters per second for the public to utilize enough water amid the coronavirus health crisis.

Even with enough storage, David still advises the public to conserve water.



Monitoring by the Bulacan provincial disaster risk reduction and management office showed that the water level was at 189.26 meters or only 9.26 meters above its minimum operating mark as of 8 a.m. yesterday.

Walter Bollozos, file

Water in Angat Dam continues to recede

[Ramon Efren Lazaro](#) (The Philippine Star) - May 8, 2020 - 12:00am

MALOLOS, Philippines — The water level in Angat Dam continues to recede.

Monitoring by the Bulacan provincial disaster risk reduction and management office showed that the water level was at 189.26 meters or only 9.26 meters above its minimum operating mark as of 8 a.m. yesterday.

The water level, which was monitored at 190.17 meters on Friday last week, dropped despite moderate to heavy rains this week.

Sevillo David, National Water Resources Board (NWRB) executive director, said water in Angat Dam is still within its normal operating level, but is seen to further recede as the heat index soars.

If the water level reaches the 180 meter mark, irrigation allocation for farmlands in Bulacan and parts of Pampanga will be suspended.

The NWRB said it is coordinating with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and National Irrigation Administration to ensure a steady supply considering the importance of water to prevent the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19.

Angat Dam supplies over 90 percent of Metro Manila's water needs.

The NWRB has maintained an allocation of 46 cubic meters per second for the MWSS.

David said the water level in the dam is not expected to hit its critical mark, citing the projection of the state weather bureau on the onset of the rainy season this month.

However, he urged the public to conserve water. - **Rhodina Villanueva**

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2020/05/08/2012539/water-angat-dam-continues-recede>

Anti-smoke belching to be intensified

Published May 7, 2020, 1:34 PM

By *Alexandria Denise San Juan*

While many areas are still under enhanced and general community quarantines, the Land Transportation Office (LTO) was directed to intensify and strictly implement anti-smoke belching initiatives as part of the Department of Transportation's (DOTr) thrust to ensure public health in its sector.



DOTr Secretary Arthur Tugade (Department of Transportation's Official Facebook Page / MANILA BULLETIN)

"We must ensure that all vehicles on the road comply with our country's emission standard," Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade said in an online meeting with the Department's Road Sector over the week.

Tugade issued the directive to the LTO while the country continues to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, noting that emissions from vehicle sources greatly contribute to air pollution, especially in urbanized areas of the country, which is among the major causes of respiratory problems and other ailments according to health experts.

"Persons with existing health problems, and therefore, with weak immune system, have a higher risk of contracting and difficulty in overcoming COVID-19," the Department explained in a statement.

The DOTr cited a recent study released by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Institute of Environmental Science & Meteorology at the University of the Philippines-Diliman, and Airtoday.ph which showed that air quality in Metro Manila has improved significantly with the continued implementation of the enhanced community quarantine.

The Department added that majority of the air pollution in areas observed in the study came from vehicle emissions.

"Sayang naman ang pagbuti ng air quality, lalo na dito sa Metro Manila ngayong may ECQ (enhanced community quarantine), kung babalik lang din sa dati. Our skyline is now smog-free and very beautiful. Napakagandang pagmasdan. Kaya nararapat lamang na maging bahagi ang magandang kalidad ng hangin ng ating 'new normal' (It is unfortunate if air pollution will return when air quality now has improved, especially here in Metro Manila during the ECQ. Our skyline is now smog-free and very beautiful. What a sight to behold. We should have good air quality as part of our 'new normal')," Tugade pointed out.

For his part, LTO assistant secretary Edgar Galvante assured that it will comply with Tugade's directive to strictly enforce Republic Act No.8749 or the Clean Air Act of 1999 and other relevant laws, and will intensify its anti-smoke belching enforcement.

"Magbubuo kami ng mga hakbang upang mapalawig at mapaingting ang implementasyon laban sa smoke-belching, alinsunod sa direktiba ni Secretary Tugade (We will develop measures to extend and intensify implementation against smoke-belching, under the directive of Secretary Tugade)," Galvante said.

"We will revisit the law and cite relevant provisions to intensify the implementation," he added.

Source: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/05/07/anti-smoke-belching-to-be-intensified/>

Solon files House bill to boost Balik Probinsya program

By: [Cathrine Gonzales](#) - Reporter / [@cgonzalesINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 11:12 AM May 07, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — A lawmaker filed on Thursday a House bill complementing Executive Order 114 signed by President Rodrigo Duterte institutionalizing the Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pagasa Program, which aims to decongest Metro Manila and promote regional development by sending the urban poor in the metropolis back to their home provinces.

In a statement, Bohol 3rd District Rep. Alexie Besas Tutor said she had filed House Bill 6674 to “directly respond to the urgent need for a Balik Probinsya program for the urban poor, especially those in Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, and Metro Davao.”

“HB 6674 goes into the details of methodically identifying beneficiaries by the Philippine Statistics Authority, registering the urban poor for basic government services, and laying out the broad strokes of creating the public housing communities for the beneficiaries,” she said.

“This bill draws lessons from the first National Migration Survey done in 2018 and the results of which were released last January. This bill is also follow-up legislation to the charter of the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development,” she added.

She said the executive order will also boost the chances of the bill to becoming a law as soon as possible.

According to Tutor, the bill addresses the main reasons for the rural-to-urban migration that has “spawned thousands of informal settler neighborhoods and more so in the country’s three main metropolises.”

“The bill lays down the mandate to have ready employment for the beneficiaries, public housing, and the essential components of a functioning, thriving community. Jobs, education, electricity, water, and health services are mandated,” she also said.

For the economic sustainability of the public housing communities, the bill also includes mandates for ecozones and tourism enterprise zones as components of the commercial areas of the communities, according to the lawmaker.

The Balik Probinsya program is a “medium-term solution” to the urban congestion and population density of Manila, Cebu, and Davao, she noted.

She said she is hoping that by 2022, the first Balik Probinsya public housing communities would have its first batches of residents settled in.

Speedy dole out under Balik Probinsya

Published 7 hours ago
on May 8, 2020 12:05 AM
By **Manny Angeles**



Delivery of government assistance is expected to be more efficient in times of crises like the ongoing coronavirus pandemic when the proposed Balik Probinsya Program is implemented, according to its proponent Senator Christopher Lawrence “Bong” Go.

Noting the lack of job opportunities in the countryside that eventually led to the congestion of urban centers, like Metro Manila, Go said the program would reunite families separated by job opportunities available mostly in the metropolis.

Delivery of government assistance, he said, would be easier and faster if we would give them a chance to be reunited under one roof under the Balik Probinsya program.

“We all know how hard it is to be away from your loved ones especially in times of crisis such as this. You don’t have any relative to run to unlike when you are all in one place,” he said.

Bill filed

In a related development, Bohol 3rd District Rep. Kristine Alexie Tutor has filed a bill establishing a “Balik Probinsya” housing and relocation program to address congestion in the country’s three main metropolises.

House Bill 6674 mandates implementing agencies to create specific programs under Balik Probinsya to be implemented in Metro Manila, Metro Cebu and Metro Davao.

The bill mandates the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) to conduct surveys and inventory of every urban poor household residing in informal settler communities in the mentioned cities.

Go pointed out that the present setup contributes to unforeseen instances of duplication of the provision of social amelioration to Filipino families who are scattered throughout the country as breadwinners are stranded in Metro Manila due to travel restrictions.

He commended those who returned duplicated social amelioration aid, saying that Filipino honesty and kindheartedness live through amid the pandemic.

A tricycle driver in Pasay City was recently reported returning the emergency cash aid from the government upon learning that his wife earlier received the same in Nueva Ecija. Meanwhile, an Ati from San Enrique town, Iloilo was also reported to have returned an assistance grant because she is already an active member of Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program which entitles her for a similar kind of aid as top up to the regular 4Ps grant.

“I salute those who are honest enough to return duplicate dole outs. I certainly encourage other recipients whose grants were unintentionally doubled due to the challenges in the distribution to do the same in this trying times,” he said.

Go urged all LGU to be transparent and report how they distributed the Social Amelioration Funds downloaded to them by the Department of Social Welfare and Development to their constituents.

“Let us address the challenges in the distribution and make sure those who are deserving are provided the assistance that they are entitled to receive in this time of need,” he said.

To further address the challenges in the distribution of assistance and to ensure that more Filipinos benefit from various government programs, Go said that a “Balik Probinsya” program aims to give Filipinos economic opportunities in the countryside, therefore eliminating the need for them to migrate to Metro Manila and be separated from their families.

Top destinations

Citing PSA data, Tutor, in the explanatory note of his bill said NCR and CALABARZON are the top migrant destinations in the country followed by Central Luzon, Davao Region and Central Visayas.

The bill also mandates the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) to lead the implementation of the Balik Probinsya program.

“The DHSUD shall identify and designate Balik Probinsya public housing relocation sites on a regional basis and in accordance with Republic Act 11201 (Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development Act).”

“The sites shall be located in the outskirts of the city or municipality identified to host the Balik Probinsya public housing communities,” the bill states.

The bill further mandates the DHSUD to design an employment package for those who will be relocated in coordination with the Department of Labor and Employment.

Decongest Metro Manila

President Rodrigo Duterte on Wednesday ordered the implementation of the Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa Program to decongest Metro Manila and promote development in the provinces in the country.

Go mentioned that during his fire visits, he has met several residents who have expressed willingness to return to their provinces. However, their reluctance comes from the lack of job opportunities in the countryside.

To encourage city dwellers to return to their provinces, Go said that the government is currently crafting a long-term plan to create economic opportunities in the countryside and boost regional development for returning individuals and families to start their life anew in their home provinces.

“We have to give them decent housing, jobs, and other economic opportunities. Let us give them ‘hope of a better tomorrow’ as what the President said,” he said.



EDITORIAL - Return to the provinces

(The Philippine Star) - May 8, 2020 - 12:00am

Several administrations have been trying to reverse urban migration and decongest Metro Manila. The effort, however, has always been stymied by two things.

One is the lack of better livelihood alternatives that can entice people to return to their rural hometowns. Second is the power of the vote enjoyed by every citizen upon reaching 18 years old, including those living in informal settlements.

Local government executives have actively encouraged squatting because informal settlements are vote-rich enclaves where political patronage can ensure the perpetuation of dynasties. For their part, barangay officials, who are mandated by law together with the police to prevent squatting, are often the landlords in informal settlements.

Now the informal settlements in urban areas have become major headaches for local government and barangay officials in containing COVID-19. Physical distancing and basic hygiene practices against the coronavirus disease 2019, such as regular hand washing with soap and water, are serious challenges in densely populated slums.

Benigno Aquino III, during his presidency, had the National Convergence Initiatives for Sustainable Rural Development, to encourage urban migrants to return to the provinces. Now President Duterte has launched a similar program, through Executive Order 114, which he signed on May 6.

According to EO 114, the “Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa” program aims to decongest Metro Manila while at the same time promoting countryside development and the “equitable distribution of wealth, resources and opportunities” for balanced and inclusive growth across the regions.

Reversing urban migration entails not just persuading the migrants to return to the rural areas but also to keep them there. This is possible only if they are assured of jobs and livelihood opportunities, decent shelter as well as basic services such as education, health care and public utilities that are widely available in the urban centers.

This means making rural areas attractive for job-generating investments and industrial activities, through the provision of adequate infrastructure and proper business environment. Agricultural production can also be boosted to entice more people to return to farming or engage in agribusiness ventures. Such programs will need microlending support. When the pandemic is over, tourism is also a major source of livelihood opportunities.

Even before the “Balik Probinsiya” program gets underway, certain local executives are already expressing resistance to the possibility of seeing an influx of informal settlers from Metro Manila. Even without the pandemic, such resistance is bound to be there. The return to the provinces is a long-term program that can succeed only if the necessary support services are present – both for the returnees, and the communities that will take them in.

Gov't to give high-risk areas time to shift to GCQ

By Azer Parrocha May 7, 2020, 6:51 pm



ECQ TRAFFIC. Vehicles pass through Edsa on Wednesday (May 6, 2020) amid the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) in Metro Manila. ECQ in Metro Manila and other “high-risk” areas will expire on May 15. (PNA photo by Robert Oswald P. Alfiler)

MANILA – The government will give Metro Manila and other “high-risk” areas, which are currently placed under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ), enough time to transition to general community quarantine (GCQ), Malacañang said on Thursday.

In a virtual presser, Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) will be announcing more GCQ areas days before the ECQ ends on May 15.

“The ECQ will end on May 15, so I suppose it will be a few days before May 15 *dahil kinakailangang mag-transition din tayo to GCQ para doon sa mga areas na pupuwede nang mag-GCQ* (because there will be a need to transition to GCQ for areas that can be declared GCQ),” Roque said.

Roque, however, clarified that it remains to be seen if there is a chance that the entire Metro Manila could be placed under GCQ.

“*Hindi lang po ako sigurado kung ito ay magiging para sa buong Metro Manila dahil sa iba’t-ibang mga siyudad po ay patuloy pa rin po iyong pagdoble ng sakit every two to three days* (I cannot be sure if a GCQ can be implemented in the entire Metro Manila because the infection rate in different cities continues to double every two to three days),” he said.

GCQ is being implemented in all low-risk and moderate-risk areas nationwide.

He pointed out that the decision to place other areas under GCQ will depend on the rate of infection, health and testing capacity, and economic factors.

Roque earlier said the Philippines is close to hitting 20,000 tests for coronavirus disease (Covid-19) tests per day with the opening of new laboratories including the Philippine Red Cross’ own testing center.

Once the government reaches its goal of running 30,000 Covid-19 tests per day by May 30, Roque said the IATF-EID will have a better “gauge” of the real number of confirmed cases in the country.

“I think it’s a good basis because, number one, *lalo nga pong nag-i-increase iyong ating testing capacity* (our testing capacity has increased). So, as we come closer to May 15, we would have a better picture,” Roque said.

On Tuesday, the first mega-swabbing facility in the country at the Palacio de Maynila on Roxas Boulevard was inaugurated. It is the first among the four mega-swabbing facilities that the administration seeks to operationalize to ramp up the country’s Test, Trace, and Treat program.

The three other swabbing centers are located at the Philippine Arena, Mall of Asia Arena, and Enderun tent.

These swab facilities can conduct 5,000 tests per day.

Health authorities on Thursday announced 343 new infections, increasing the country’s confirmed cases of Covid-19 to 10,343 with 685 deaths and 1,618 recoveries. (PNA)

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1102218>

Some NCR cities may be placed under GCQ next

TITLE: week - DILG

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May 8, 2020
DATE

Some NCR cities may be placed under GCQ next week – DILG

By: [Consuelo Marquez](#) - Reporter / [@CMarquezINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 08:14 AM May 07, 2020



Few motorists traverse EDSA at the Ortigas Center on Sunday, March 15, 2020, the first day of the Metro Manila community quarantine imposed by President Rodrigo Duterte to curb the spread of COVID-19. (Photo by GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE / Philippines Daily Inquirer)

MANILA, Philippines — Interior Secretary Eduardo Año on Thursday said some cities in Metro Manila may be placed under general community quarantine (GCQ) after the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) ends on May 15.

“There are areas already in Metro Manila that are actually improving like San Juan and Valenzuela but Quezon City is still really what we call a very high-risk area with the 1,000 positive,” Año said on ANC.

“Some cities in Metro Manila may be downgraded into GCQ but we still have eight days to go so we wait for data analytics,” he added.

As of Wednesday night, Valenzuela City has 122 confirmed cases of COVID-19 including 23 recoveries and eight deaths.

valenzuelacity @valenzuelacity

#COVID19 UPDATE: Valenzuela City Monitoring Report as of 9:00 pm, May 6, 2020.

The total number of confirmed cases is now at 122, with 23 recoveries and 8 deaths.

COVID-19 UPDATE

VALENZUELA CITY MONITORING REPORT
As of 9:00 PM, May 6, 2020

CONFIRMED CASES 122

ACTIVE CASES **91**

RECOVERED **23**

NUMBER OF DEATHS **8**

To respect the patients' privacy and confidentiality, their barangays won't be disclosed.

COVID-19 / EMERGENCY HOTLINES
8352-5000
137-160

Bigang klasipikasyon ng COVID-19 cases mula sa DOH

SUSPECT - PA (suspect) cases, subject to WHO and health report

PROBABLE - PA (suspect) cases, subject to WHO and health report

CONFIRMED - COVID-19 cases

BARANGAYS	SUSPECT	PROBABLE
Alibon Bato	2	0
Alibon	5	0
Biliran	7	1
Malib	1	0
Canaway East	3	0
Canaway West	7	0
Coloang	2	1
Dalandayan	7	1
Ita	2	0
Lasing Bato	6	0
Lingnan	4	0
Malib	3	0
Malunday	9	0
Malib	10	0
Palisan	1	0
Parawilla Villa	1	0
Pasig	1	0
Pobocan	0	0
Pala	1	0
Pantarin	6	0
Risco	1	0
Tapiag	5	0
Valiza Bato	1	0
Wawang Pata	0	0
Yapacan	2	0
San C. De Leon	31	2
Kalayaan	25	0
Magandang Lupa	7	0
Hanlan	33	0
Mayan	4	1
Patara	3	2
Pala De Bata	12	0
Uyay	16	2
TOTAL	227	10

30 9:31 PM - May 6, 2020

See valenzuelacity's other Tweets

Some NCR cities may be placed under GCQ next

May 8, 2020

TITLE: week - DII.G

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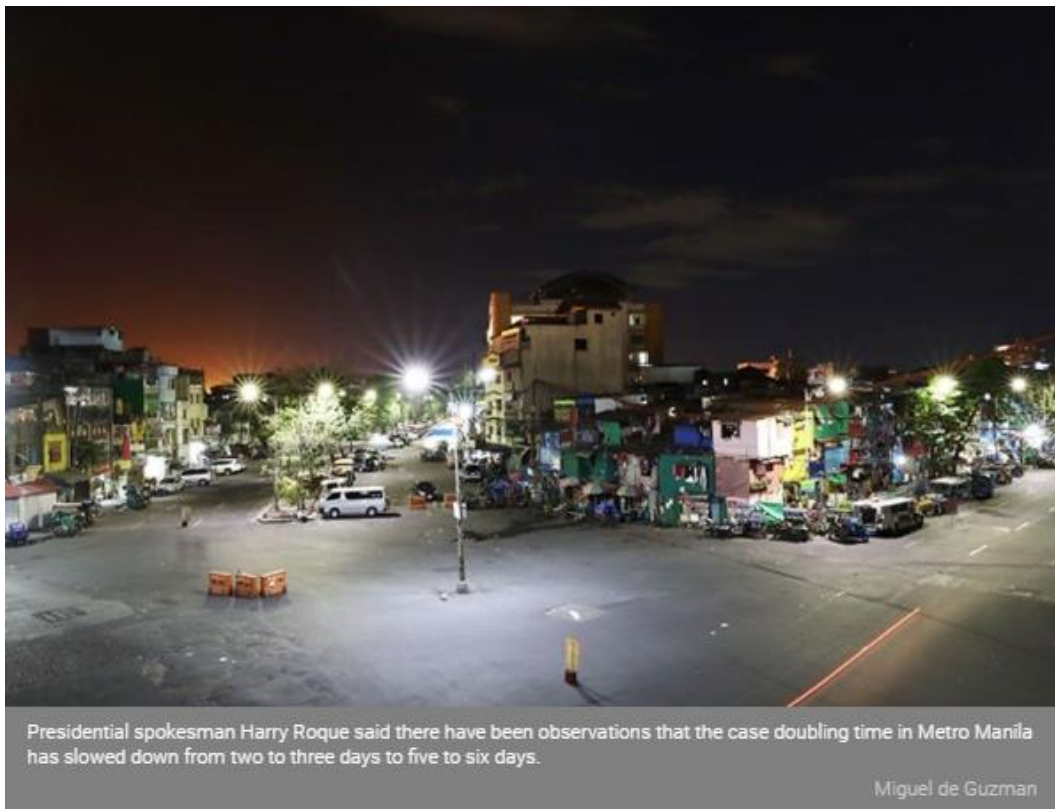
DATE

Meanwhile, San Juan City recorded 252 confirmed COVID-19 cases, including 58 patients who have recovered and 37 others who perished.

Quezon City has the most number of COVID-19 cases in Metro Manila with 1,464 including 292 deaths and 132 recoveries.

The City of Manila has 749 cases, while Caloocan City has 236, Las Piñas City 201, Makati City 472, Malabon City 58, Mandaluyong City 404, Marikina City 135, Muntinlupa City 176, Parañaque City 499, Pasig City 307, Taguig City 283, Pasay City 227, Pateros 24 and Navotas City 3.

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1271184/fwd-ano-some-ncr-cities-may-be-placed-under-gcq-after-may-15#ixzz6LnHe0fYY>



Some Metro Manila cities may be eased to GCQ

[Edu Punay](#), [Alexis Romero](#) (The Philippine Star) - May 8, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The government may ease quarantine restrictions in parts of Metro Manila where the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is slowing down, Malacañang said yesterday.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said there have been observations that the case doubling time in Metro Manila has slowed down from two to three days to five to six days.

“If the data that show that the spread of the disease is slowing down does not change and we still have the capacity to provide critical care, perhaps that is the direction we are taking,” Roque said at a press briefing when asked whether some Metro Manila cities may be placed under general community quarantine (GCQ).

“That is why our appeal for the remaining days...is stay at home so the IATF (Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases) won’t have difficulties lifting the ECQ (enhanced community quarantine) especially in Metro Manila,” he added.

Metro Manila, home to more than 12 million people, has been under ECQ since March 17. The lockdown, which has been extended twice, is supposed to last until May 15.

Under ECQ, mass transportation is suspended and only essential businesses and services can operate. Restrictions under GCQ are relaxed as public transportation can now operate but at reduced capacity. Selected establishments, including malls, may also resume operations but are required to comply with social distancing and health standards.

“I am not sure if it (the lifting of ECQ) will cover the entire Metro Manila because in other cities, the cases still double in every two to three days,” Roque said.

Interior Secretary Eduardo Año previously said San Juan and Valenzuela are among the Metro Manila cities that have shown a slowdown in the growth of COVID-19 cases. He, however, clarified that the government would have to look at the data on the confirmed cases before deciding on the quarantine restrictions.

Last Wednesday, the health department reported that the country is starting to flatten the COVID-19 curve. The agency, however, warned that a resurgence of cases may happen if people become complacent about social distancing.

Ready to reopen

House ways and means committee chairman Joey Salceda said the Philippines is ready to reopen and ease quarantine measures after May 15 while tackling the COVID-19 crisis.

Salceda said he has conducted several studies and found that lifting the two-month ECQ may now be a viable option.

“At this time, I am prepared to say that we are more ready for the consequences of a reopening even as we await a vaccine possibly in 2021 than for the impacts of another hard lockdown as we know it. Human behavior in our institutions and in the public has begun to be more prepared for the ups and downs of an epidemic,” he stressed in a statement.

The Albay representative, who initiated the earlier extensions of the ECQ from the original one-month period to two months, cited “evolving numbers, emerging scenarios and the national strategies and their implementation” as well as consultations with data scientists, chaos theorists and economists in coming up with his latest recommendation.

But before reopening the economy after May 15, Salceda said the national government needs to come up with a strategic plan to prevent a spike in COVID-19 cases.

He suggested that management of protocols and response be assigned to local government units – but not at the barangay level.

Salceda said the Department of Health (DOH) should likewise continue to increase testing, tracing and treatment. It should also make sure it achieves its target of 8,000 tests per day by May 15 and 30,000 per day by May 30.

“Lastly, we must all do our part – the low-cost non-pharmaceutical interventions: wash your hands, wear face masks, avoid crowds and maintain physical distancing even at home,” he said. “No part of the day’s activities should disproportionately expose anyone to the possibility of infection.”

In preparation for the lifting of the ECQ by May 16, government offices have been directed to craft their own occupational safety and health program to protect their workers “from the dangers of injury, sickness or death and to prevent loss or damage of properties.”

The order is contained in Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1 Series of 2020 issued to government offices by the Civil Service Commission (CSC), DOH and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

Safety first

Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian said the safety and well being of workers require greater attention, especially now that the government is gearing up for the resumption of its Build, Build, Build flagship program.

“Our skilled workers are our country’s best assets. They are the backbone of the country’s strong and resilient economy. Aside from providing them jobs at this time, let’s not forget about their well-being and by issuing clear guidelines on a safe working environment, we will be able to ensure their safety,” he said.

The DOLE should issue such guidelines.

He also expressed alarm at seeing many idle workers who failed to get out of the metropolis to return to their respective provinces before the March 17 lockdown.

“I am calling the construction companies and contractors to take care of these workers,” he said.

Sen. Joel Villanueva, meanwhile, urged the government to continue its social support programs until after the transition to the so-called new normal.

“We also have to understand that economic resilience varies from person to person. Those living below the poverty line will always need a helping hand in these times. But the longer we impose the quarantine, more individuals will need financial and social assistance,” Villanueva said.

He said the government must also review the target beneficiaries and assist companies to prevent massive layoffs of workers.

“We must realize this and must be ready to provide assistance and review their target beneficiaries. We also see companies beginning to lay off workers. We must act immediately to provide support to these companies so that they can continue to employ their workers,” he noted.

Villanueva noted that the number of vulnerable in the population is expanding.

“We must be able to respond to their needs immediately. We reiterate that only the essential, valuable sectors in the economy with strong disease surveillance mechanisms should be allowed to reopen. This can provide employment to some and produce basic necessities while most of us are under quarantine,” he pointed out.

While the reopening of the economy is done in phases, Villanueva said the government must simultaneously ramp up the capacity of the healthcare system in anticipation of a rise in COVID-19 cases during the transition to the new normal.

“This potential rise is one of the risks that go with the reopening of the economy, and the only way we can mitigate this is to expand the capacity of our healthcare system. As we have seen in the past months, failing to prepare means preparing to fail,” he said. –
Cecille Suerte-Felipe, Elizabeth Marcelo

Rate of infection, healthcare capacity to determine whether some Metro Manila areas will shift to GCQ — Palace

Published May 7, 2020 4:35pm
By VIRGIL LOPEZ, GMA News

The COVID-19 transmission rate and the capacity of the healthcare system will aid the government in deciding whether to ease restrictions in some areas in Metro Manila after May 15, Malacañang said Thursday.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque issued the statement after Interior Secretary Eduardo Año said some areas in Metro Manila may shift from enhanced community quarantine to general community quarantine owing to continued decline in new cases.

Majority of the COVID-19 cases were recorded in the capital region.

“Kung hindi po magbabago ang datos na nagpapakita ngayon na bumabagal na iyong pagkalat at mayroon pa tayong kapasidad na magbigay ng critical care ay siguro po iyan ang direksiyon,” Roque said in a televised briefing.

“Makikita natin na bagama’t marami pa ring mga bagong COVID cases, ang pagtaas naman po ay hindi masyadong matarik. At makikita na rin natin na iyong mga nagre-recover ay pataas na po ang numero, ang mga namamatay ay parang pareho lang po on a daily basis.”

Roque also reiterated his call for people to stay at home.

The Philippines has so far reported [10,343 COVID-19 cases](#), with 685 deaths and 1,618 recoveries. — **RSJ, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/737269/rate-of-infection-healthcare-capacity-to-determine-whether-some-metro-manila-areas-will-shift-to-gcq-palace/story/>

PH 'more ready' for consequences of reopening economy: solon

By Filane Mikee Cervantes [May 7, 2020, 5:16 pm](#)



Albay Rep. Joey Salceda

MANILA – The chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee on Thursday said the country is “more ready” for the consequences of a reopening of the economy than for the impacts of another hard lockdown.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda made the statement after conducting several studies on the “evolving numbers, emerging scenarios, and national strategies” to combat the coronavirus disease (Covid-19), as well as discussions with scientists, chaos theorists, and economists if the enhanced community quarantine is lifted in mid-May.

“Human behavior in our institutions and in the public has begun to be more prepared for the ups and downs of an epidemic,” he said.

He said as the country moves gradually from quarantine to a “cautious path toward recovery”, necessary precautions must be taken to avoid large waves of infection that may necessitate more lockdowns.

“But first, I hope government strategists would steel our nerves during episodic spikes in cases and not fall for the easy default of an unplanned lockdown which we can only do at the expense of resources for our recovery. Localized maybe but LGU (local government unit)-managed not barangay-directed,” he added.

He said that the national task force against coronavirus disease (Covid-19) should continue to increase testing, tracing, and treatment to achieve the 8,000 per day target by May 15 and the 30,000 daily targets by May 30.

He noted that low-cost non-pharmaceutical interventions should be enforced such as the mandatory wearing of face masks, physical distancing, and frequent handwashing, among others.

Salceda said all hospitals must remain prepared for surges, acquire ventilators for areas where infection waves remain likely and must stockpile enough personal protective equipment to protect health care workers.

To combat the economic shocks of the pandemic, he said the approval of the proposed economic stimulus package would bring back the Philippines on its “previous growth path”.

Salceda said the first-quarter gross domestic product figures, which contracted by 0.2 percent, mark the first decline in more than two decades, noting that “this crisis is unprecedented, and will require similarly unprecedented action.”

“Let us pass an economic recovery plan that will put us back on our previous growth path. Let us also take this opportunity to see where our economic weaknesses lie and strengthen them with necessary structural reforms,” he said.

PH 'more ready' for coonsequences of reopening

May 8, 2020

TITLE: economy: solon

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"Congress will work hand in hand with the executive to get an economic recovery plan passed, hopefully in a matter of weeks. Consumer and business confidence will be key, so government action must inspire confidence in the people," he added.

The PHP485-billion economic stimulus package will include PHP20 billion for test kits to build up consumer and business confidence; PHP130 billion worth of loans under Landbank of the Philippines, Development Bank of the Philippines, Small Business Corp., and Philippine Guarantee Corp.; PHP25 billion capitalization for National Development Corp.; PHP150 billion for individual subsidies under Department of Labor and Employment and PHP160 billion for sectoral assistance.

The Philippine Statistics Authority reported on Thursday that the main contributors to the first-quarter economic growth decline were manufacturing, transportation and storage, and accommodation and food service activities.

Among the major economic sectors, agriculture, forestry and fishing; and industry contracted by 0.4 percent and 3 percent, respectively. **(PNA)**

Gov't issues occupational safety and health standards for public sector

By Civil Service Commission Published on May 7, 2020

QUEZON CITY, May 7 -- Government workers can be assured of their health and safety in their workplaces after the Civil Service Commission (CSC), Department of Health (DOH), and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) jointly issued guidelines on occupational safety and health standards.

CSC-DOH-DOLE Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1, s. 2020 aims to institutionalize occupational safety and health (OSH) in government workplaces to protect government workers from the dangers of injury, sickness, or death and to prevent loss or damage of properties through the adoption of safe and healthy working conditions.

The Guidelines on OSH Standards requires government agencies to establish their own OSH Program, create a Safety and Health Committee and/or a Special Investigation Committee, and appoint or designate a Safety Health Officer, to ensure their compliance with OSH Standards and the promotion and effective implementation of OSH in their workplaces.

The guidelines provide a long list of reasonable working conditions. Workplace standards that agencies must comply with include installation of adequate fire, emergency, or danger signs, facilities for persons with disabilities, and health clinic or treatment room; regular practice of good housekeeping such as eradication of stagnant water and proper waste disposal; OSH Standard-compliant building construction and maintenance, space requirement, walkway surface, floor and wall openings, among others; provision of OSH Standard-compliant personal protective equipment (PPE) and devices; proper handling, use, and storage of hazardous materials; and implementation of an indoor air quality management program.

Government agencies must also establish a Risk Reduction Management System and a Crisis Management Plan and Contingency Program, as well as ensure adequate emergency supplies such as fire extinguishers, medical first aid kits, among others. They must also partner with the nearest government health facility that can respond to accidents and injuries in case of emergencies.

Support facilities such as recreation areas, training rooms, and daycare facility, as well as lactation stations for lactating mothers, must be provided. Moreover, the special needs of pregnant women, older employees, the differently-abled, and those with limited working abilities must be considered in determining reasonable work assignments and a good working atmosphere.

The guidelines further mandate agency heads to ensure adequate working breaks to minimize or prevent employees' exposure to illness due to prolonged sitting, as well as to allow and adopt flexible work arrangements. The agency's internal rules on working hours, break, and leave privileges must still observe appropriate civil service rules and regulations.

Workplace policies and programs on smoking, prohibited drugs, tuberculosis, HIV and AIDS, Hepatitis B, and medical assistance and benefits must also be implemented.

CSC-DOH-DOLE Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1, s. 2020 was published 7 May 2020 in a newspaper of general circulation and will take effect on 22 May 2020. The complete text of the policy can be accessed on the CSC website at www.csc.gov.ph. (CSC)

Source: <https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1041274>

“New normal” sa mga tanggapan inaprubahan ng IATF

By Bella Carioso May 07, 2020



INAPRUBAHAN ng Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) ang interim guidelines na isinumite ng Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) at Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) kaugnay ng pagbabalik ng mga empleyado sa kani-kanilang trabaho sakaling alisin na ang enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) at ipatupad ang general community quarantine (GCC).

“Ito po iyong new normal, kung anong mangyayari doon sa mga lugar na pinagtatrabahuhan natin. Kinakailangan po magkaroon ng alternative work arrangements – iyong working hour shifts, iyong work-from-home kung pupuwede po at saka iyong pagtatrabaho on a rotation basis,” sabi ni Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque.

Nakatakdang magtapos ang ECQ sa Metro Manila, Region 3, Calabarzon area at iba pang lugar sa Mayo 15.

“Kinakailangan po nagsusuot po ng face masks, ang mga meeting po ay kinakailangan mayroong minimum number of participants para masiguro po ang social distancing, at kung pupuwede, ang mga pagpupulong ay gawin na lang via video conferencing,” ayon pa kay Roque

“Iyong mga tables po natin sa ating mga pinagtatrabahuhan eh ayusin po natin sa pamamaraan na magkakaroon ng physical distancing at kung pupuwede magkaroon po ng barriers in between tables,” paliwanag pa ni Roque.

Idinagdag ni Roque na kabilang sa mga dapat upatupad ng mga kompanya sa ilalim ng ‘new normal’ ang mga sumusunod:

- Iyong mga work stations’ lay out ay dapat idisenyo para magkaroon ng isang direksiyon lamang papuntang aisles, corridors or walkways.
- Dapat limitahan ang mga tao na nasa enclosed spaces kagaya ng kuwarto, tindahan at hall para sa physical distancing.
- Kailangang i-limit ang sakay ng mga elevators para magkaroon ng one-meter physical distancing.
- Ini-encourage ang paggamit ng hagdanan. Kung mayroon dalawang stairways na accessible, iyong isang stairway ay gamitin pataas at iyong isa naman ay gamitin pababa para magkaroon ng social distancing.
- Hinihikayat din ang online system para sa mga kliyenteng nangangailangan ng mga assistance mula sa mga opisina, kasama na ang video conferences.

Workplace safety and health standards during Covid-19

By [Gerardo Maximo Francisco](#)

May 7, 2020

At some point, the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) still in effect in many areas in the Philippines will be downgraded by the government to the level of a general community quarantine (GCQ). Hopefully, this vital decision to shift to a GCQ will be made circumspectly and with the full backing of medical science and experts.

A declared GCQ will allow various industries to operate, including “financial services, BPOs (business process outsourcing), legal and accounting, and auditing services, professional, scientific, technical, and other non-leisure services, barber shops, salon, and other personal care services as defined by the DTI (Department of Trade and Industry), and other non-leisure wholesale and retail establishments, at a maximum of 50 percent work-on-site arrangement, and without prejudice to work-from-home and other alternative work arrangements,” said Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases’ Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine in the Philippines dated April 29, 2020.

Last May 1 (Labor Day), the Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) issued a news release announcing the promulgation of DTI and DoLE’s Interim Guidelines on Workplace Prevention and Control of Covid-19 on April 30, 2020, in which “workers and employers in the private sector will be mandated to observe strict health protocols as the enhanced community quarantine and general community quarantine remain in effect” and “workers and employers will be required to follow total precautionary measures as the country grapples with the containment of the deadly Covid-19.”

The guidelines require the implementation in all workplaces of safety and health standards, including:

1. Increase physical and mental resilience by emphasizing to all workers the everyday actions to stay healthy; enjoining companies to provide free medicines and vitamins; and providing referral for workers needing counselling or with mental health concerns.

2. Reducing transmission of Covid-19 as follows:

a. Prior to entrance in buildings or workplaces: all employers and workers shall wear face masks (to be provided by the employers), accomplish daily a health symptoms questionnaire and submit to the guard or designated safety officer prior to entry, and have their temperature checked and recorded in the health symptoms questionnaire (any person with temperature higher than 37.5 degrees Celsius or whose response in the questionnaire needs further evaluation shall be isolated in a designated area and not allowed to enter the premises; clinic staff assigned to assess workers in isolation area shall be provided the appropriate medical grade personal protective equipment (PPE) and spray alcohol/sanitizers to both hands; provide disinfectant foot baths at the entrance if possible; equipment or vehicle entering the hub operational area must go through a disinfection process; and if there will be a long queue outside the office or store premises, roving officers should instill physical distancing of one meter.

b. Inside the workplace: all work areas and frequently handled objects such as door knobs and handles shall be cleaned and disinfected regularly, at least once every two hours; all washrooms and toilets shall have sufficient clean water and soap, workers are encouraged to wash their hands frequently and avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth; sanitizers shall be made available in areas where workers pass; workers shall always observe physical distancing between workers (at least one-meter radius space); eating in communal work spaces is discouraged (it is discouraged that workers engage in conversation with masks off during meal times); and canteens and kitchens should be cleaned and disinfected regularly.

3. Minimize contact rate: through alternative work arrangements, such as working-hour shifts, work from home and rotation; prolonged face-to-face interaction between workers and with clients are discouraged and masks shall be worn at all times and not removed; office tables should be arranged in order to maintain proper physical distancing; workstation layout should be designed to allow for unidirectional movement in aisles, corridors or walkways; number of people in an enclosed space shall be limited; use of stairs should be encouraged; online system (including the use of videoconferencing) shall be highly encouraged; and roving officers shall always ensure physical distancing and observance of minimum health protocols.

4. On reducing the risk of infection from Covid-19: in the event a worker is suspected as having Covid-19, the worker shall immediately proceed to the isolation area and never remove his/her mask; clinic personnel attending to the worker should wear appropriate PPE and, if needed, transport affected worker to the nearest hospital; decontamination of workplace; if the worker is sick or has fever but is not suspected to have Covid-19, the employer must advise the worker to take prudent measures to limit the spread of communicable diseases.

Employers who fail or refuse to observe the safety and health standards established in the guidelines may be held liable under Republic Act 11058 (approved August 17, 2018) or “An Act Strengthening Compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Standards and Providing Penalties for Violations thereof.” This law imposes, among others, a fine not exceeding P100,000.00 per day until the violation is corrected in case of willful failure or refusal of an employer to comply with occupational safety and health standards, or with a compliance order that may be issued by the Labor Secretary.

Gerardo Maximo V. Francisco is a partner of Mata-Perez, Tamayo & Francisco (MTF Counsel). He is a corporate, deal, litigation and employment lawyer.

The contents of this article are intended for general information purposes only and do not constitute legal advice. If you have any question or comment regarding this article, you may email the author at info@mtfcounsel.com or visit MTF Counsel’s website at www.mtfcounsel.com.



ABS-CBN NAMATAY AT MULING MABUBUHAY?

May 7, 2020 @ 7:10 PM 13 hours ago

MATAPOS ang 25 taong prangkisa ng ABS-CBN na inisyu ng Kongreso noong 1995, kusa itong namatay nitong Mayo 4, 2020.

May gumawa ng first aid habang naghihingalo ito ngunit nabigo gaya ng pagsulat ng magkahiwalay ng House of Representatives at Senate sa National Telecommunications Office para bigyan ang broadcasting company ng provisional authority.

Parang tinamaan ng severe COVID-19 ito at nang itakbo sa ospital, dead on arrival na.

Upang hindi magkandaletse-letse ang NTC na pilit na itinutulak ng mga pro-ABS-CBN at anti-ABS-CBN dala ng kani-kanilang interes, pinakamainam na naisipan nitong mag-isyu ng cease and desist order na naaayon sa paniniwalang “no franchise, no operation.”

PANGUNAHING LIGAL NA USAPIN

Naghahalo ang balat sa tinalupan sa hanay ng mga dalubhasa sa batas ang pagkamatay ng nasabing istasyon ng telebisyon.

Hindi natin iisa-isahin ang mga nagkokontraahan o gumigitna sa usapin.

Makinig na lamang tayo kung ano-ano ang kanilang mga sinasabi.

Halimbawa kung tama o hindi ang NTC.

Kung totoo o hindi na inupuan ng mga kongresman at senador ang aplikasyon ng istasyon at hindi dapat na NTC ang sisihin.

Ang Kongreso sa kabuuan kasi ang nag-iisyu ng prangkisa at susunod lang ang NTC sa utos ng Kongreso na may pag-apruba ng Malakanyang.

Kung totoo o hindi na nagpabaya mismo ang ABS-CBN sa karapatan nitong mag-renew ng prangkisa.

Lalabas naman ang dapat at katotohanan kung magkasundo ang Kongreso at Malakanyang sa pagbuhay muli o paglilibing nang tuluyan sa istasyon.

At nasa Supreme Court ang huling bola kung hindi magkasundo ang Kongreso at Malakanyang.

Pero pansamantala, dahil may naka-pending naman umanong aplikasyon para sa renewal, may nagsasabing pupwede pang apelahin ng istasyon ang “cease and desist order” o tumakbo kaya ito sa hukuman para hilingin ang “temporary restraining order” para makapapatuloy ang operation nito.

MGA SAMPOL

Ayon kay ex-Chief Justice Reynato Puno batay sa kasong Associated Communications & Wireless Services vs National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) na siya mismo ang gumawa noong 2003, basta walang prangkisa, walang operasyon at sinuportahan naman ito ni Fr. Ranhilio Aquino na dean ng San Beda Graduate School of Law.

Diin pa ni Fr. Aquino, labag sa Konstitusyon at sa Doctrine of Undue Delegation ang basta na lang pagpasa ng resolusyon ng Kongreso at atasan ang NTC na bigyan ng kahit provisional authority ang isang franchisee.

Kailangan umanong gumawa ang Kongreso ng batas saka isasalang sa pirma ng Pangulo ng Pilipinas at kung oks, saka na maatasan ang NTC umaksyon pabor sa franchisee tulad ng ABS-CBN.

Hindi umano batas ang isang resolusyon lamang.

Nakisama rin kina CJ Puno at Fr. Aquino si retired Supreme Court Justice Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez sa pagsasabing walang kapangyarihan na mag-isyu ng provisional authority sa ABS CBN.

Ayon naman kay Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon, dapat bigyan ng higit na bigat ang sinasabi mismo ni Justice Secretary Meynardo Guevarra na pupwedeng magbigay ang NTC ng provisional authority basta may pahintulot ang Kongreso.

Katwiran ni Drilon, abogado ng gobyerno si Guevarra at dapat itong paniwalaan.

Pero sa huling araw, kung aakyat sa Korte Suprema ang usapin sa gitna ng hindi pagkakasundo ng lahat, doon tayo sa huling salita ng mga Hukom.

LABANAN SA NEGOSYO

Ang isa pang mahalagang usapin dito ay ang pagiging negosyo ang isang istasyon ng telebisyon.

Ayon mismo sa ABS-CBN habang may imbestigasyon sa Senado ukol sa prangkisa nito, bumagsak sa P16 mula sa P60 ang halaga ng bawat sapi o stock nito sa nakalipas na ilang taon at nangangahulugan na may panahong umabot halaga ng stock nito sa mahigit P100 bilyon.

Ayon sa iba mga rekord, may total asset noong 2018 ang kompanya na P84.599 bilyon, kabuuang kita o revenue na P40.130B, Operating income na P8.053B at netong kita na P1.908B.

Batay rito, totoo nga na malaking higitang kompanya ito at maaaring totoo ang sinasabing pinakamakapangyarihan itong broadcasting company sa mahal kong Pinas.

Isa sa pinakamahalagang sangkalan nito para hindi dapat isara kahit darating na ang expiray date noon ng prangkisa nito ay ang malungkot umanong pagkasibak sa trabaho ng nasa 11,000 empleyado nito.

Sa kabilang banda, ito namang samahang Federation of International Cable TV Associates of the Philippines (FICTAP) na pinamumunuan ni Estrellita Juliano-Tamano ay nagsasabing pinapatay sila ng ABS-CBN at kung sila ang magsasara, nasa 22,000 empleyado naman ang masisibak sa kanila.

Binubuo umano ng FICTAP ang maliliit o micro, small and medium cable operators.

Ginagamit umano ng ABS-CBN ang TVplus upang agawan o patayan sila ng negosyo at nakapagbebenta na umano ang ABS-CBN ng nasa 10 milyong piraso nito na nagkakahalaga ng P1,500 bawat piraso.

Ayon sa FICTAP, wala umanong prangkisa para sa TVplus ngunit ginagamit ito para agawan sila ng mga subscriber na tiyak umanong ikamamatay nilang maliliit na cable operator.

Kaya para hindi sila magsara o mapatayan ng negosyo kailangan umanong matigok ang ABS-CBN.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND OF EXPRESSION

Nang magsara ang ABS-CBN, kasabay ang pagngangawa ng iba na itinatali ang freedom of the press and expression sa buhay at kamatayan ng istasyon.

Kesyong patay na umano ang ABS-CBN, kasama ang iba pang sanga nito, patay na rin umano ang kalayaan sa pamamahayag at paghahayag ng damdamin.

Ang masasabi lang natin, nakalimutan ng mga ito ang daan-daan o libo-libong sinasakyan o ginagamit para sa exercise ng freedom of the press and expression.

Nakatayo ang napakaraming istasyon ng telebisyon, radyo, pahayagan na print at online, cable at maging ng social media, kasama na ang facebook, twitter, instagram at marami pang iba.

Higit na marami pa nga ang mga pribado kaysa mga government owned and controlled media.

At isang grupo o network lang ang ABS-CBN.

Pawang malalaya ang mga ito na nag-eeenjoy ng nasabing mga karapatan sa malayang press at expression.

Ngunit napakahirap unawaing hindi nila maunawaan ang napakasimpleng takda ng batas na kung nag-expire na ang prangkisa, tigil na rin ang operation ng franchisee.

Ang masasabi lang natin, may karapatan ang ABS-CBN at mga kaugnay ng media group nito na nasara rin, na mag-aplay ng bagong prangkisa o mag-renew kung papayagan sila ng batas.

Iwasan ang pagmamalaki, kung meron man, na sila ang pinakamapangyarihang at pinaimpluwensyang network sa Pinas at maipilit nila ang gusto nila kahit kanino at kahit kailan.

Mas makapangyarihan ang pamahalaan na na siyang nagbibigay ng prangkisa bilang pribilehiyo na pupwedeng bawiin rin nito sa anomang tamang dahilan sa anomang oras.

Wala namang mawawala sa pagpapakumbaba at pagkilala sa awtoridad na naglalayong pinagsilbihan ang lahat nang pantay-pantay.

The greatest recession

posted May 08, 2020 at 12:00 am

by [Tony Lopez](#)

The economy slumped in the first quarter of 2020. Production of goods and services, what we call Gross Domestic Product or GDP during January-March this year, declined by 0.2 percent, in real terms, or minus the effect of inflation.

This is the first and steepest drop in production since 1998, ending 84 quarters or 21 years of frenetic growth, the longest economic expansion in the country's history.

The economic collapse is likely to extend into the second and third quarters of 2020. Thus, we have the grim prospect of having the Greatest Recession ever.

The only way to stop that economic Armageddon is to revive the economy, dead for the last 50 days. Revival means lifting the so-called Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) or even the GCQ on Luzon and key cities in the Visayas and Mindanao. These areas account for more than 75 percent of economic production.

The lockdown has meant economic loss of P2 trillion so far and unprecedented hunger, malnutrition, poverty, joblessness (easily 25 million have no jobs, a third which will not be restored), restiveness, and outrage. It has made the government bankrupt by this time. Government deficit as a percentage of GDP will hit 8 percent –the highest in our country's history.

This year, Filipinos were going to join the upper middle class, with per capita income nearing \$4,000. Instead, easily half of Filipinos will cross the poverty line downward. The rich become poor, and the poor become poorer. We will have the most number of poor in Southeast Asia.

The 1998 recession was triggered by the combined effects of the El Niño and Asian Financial Crisis.

This quarter's end to unprecedented robust growth was triggered by the novel coronavirus (SARS-Cov-2) which causes the disease called COVID-19 -- coronavirus infectious disease 2019.

Reporting on the unusually bad economic news yesterday (May 7), Acting Economic Planning Secretary Karl Kendrick Chua cited what he called three "significant socio-economic risks and shocks during the first quarter of 2020, all totally unexpected: the Taal volcano eruption in January; a significant decline in tourism and trade starting in February due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and the need to implement the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) in Luzon and other parts of the country starting March."

Assuming positive growth averaged 5.5 percent in January, February and the first two weeks of March, economic production must have declined by 5.7 percent in the last two weeks of March to bring net negative growth to 0.2 percent for the whole first three months of 2020 (5.5 minus 5.7).

Since March 2020 inflation was 2.5 percent in the first quarter, the nominal drop in economic production in the second half of March alone was probably 8.2 percent (5.7 plus 2.5). That would be the worst decline since the drop of 7.4 percent during the political crisis of 1984 triggered by the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino Jr.. In 1984, credit stopped, production stopped, the economy slumped.

The Philippines' 2020 economic crisis is easily ten times the 1984 crisis. This year's crisis is not just local, not just regional but global. The United States will have huge negative growth rate (-4.8 percent first quarter 2020), as will entire Europe (-3.8), China (-6.8), Japan (-7.1) and possibly every country on earth.

All for what? Just to save at most 500 Filipino lives through ECQ. In the long term, because today's hunger, malnutrition, poverty and joblessness, more lives will be lost due to diseases occasioned by such mass misery.

The ECQ was like looking for a couple of cockroaches. The whole building was evacuated and burned to the ground. And still, it did not find the cockroaches.

Admits Secretary Chua: "Containing the spread of the virus and saving hundreds of thousands of lives through the imposition of the ECQ has come at great cost to the Philippine economy. Our economic growth is showing weaker performance compared to the past two decades. Even so, our priorities are clear: to protect lives and health of our people."

Chua has two solutions: ramp up agricultural production and go digital. We grow food. That is agriculture. We process the food. That is manufacturing. We deliver the processed food to consumers. That is logistics and services. Food is half of the consumer basket.

The NEDA chief's other solution is go digital. Everybody will have an ID, a bar code or a QR code. That is easier said than done. Why? The government itself is not digitalized. Why? Well, it has something to do with graft. Graft from human contact. Obviously, you cannot collect money from a computer, a bar code or a QR code. But a human being can be very susceptible to suggestion by a bureaucrat.

Relief could be coming though. Even government itself seems tired of having the ECQ, mainly because it is rapidly running out cash to dole out to some 25 million families rendered poor by the coronavirus.

The only way to generate money is to borrow (about P1.45 billion has been raised, but that will be good for only a month) and to collect and or raise taxes. But how can you collect taxes from a dead business? You cannot tax something you don't earn or have. It is like squeezing blood from turnips. Let's lift ECQ. It has not been worth it.

LPA outside PAR has low chance of intensifying into storm —PAGASA

Published May 7, 2020 6:25pm

The low pressure area (LPA) outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) has a low chance of intensifying into a storm, PAGASA said Thursday.

In a daily video update, weather specialist Loredin De La Cruz said the LPA was last estimated at 1,145 kilometers east of Mindanao.

It may enter PAR within the next 24 hours, according to the weather bureau.

Meanwhile, partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers are expected over Metro Manila and the rest of the country due to easterlies, the ridge of a high-pressure area, and localized thunderstorms.

According to PAGASA, this has no significant impact on the country.

The Science Garden in Quezon City [recorded](#) a maximum temperature of 35.8 degrees celcius and a heat index of 43 degrees celcius at 3 p.m. —**Joahna Lei Casilao/LDF, GMA News**



4.1-magnitude quake hits Davao Occidental

Updated May 7, 2020, 9:20 AM

By Mike Crismundo

BUTUAN CITY – A 4.1-magnitude earthquake hit Sarangani, Davao Occidental early Thursday morning, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) reported.

In its bulletin, Phivolcs said the earthquake, which occurred at 3:32 a.m., was tectonic in origin and was traced 407 kilometers (km) southeast of Sarangani, Davao Occidental province.

The tremor had a shallow depth of only 1 km, it said.

No aftershocks and damages are reported from the earthquake.

The Southern Mindanao Office of Civil Defense and disaster risk reduction and management council reported no injuries.

Heat is on! 42°C heat index to bake Sangley Point,

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TITLE: Cavite: 40s in other areas

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Heat is on! 42°C heat index to bake Sangley Point, Cavite; 40s in other areas

By: [Cathrine Gonzales](#) - Reporter / [@cgonzalesINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 10:00 AM May 07, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — The highest heat index forecast in the country on Thursday is at Sangley Point in Cavite at 42 degrees Celsius, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

Information from Pagasa’s website showed that the maximum heat index may reach 41.5 at the Science Garden in Quezon City, 41. 2 in Port Area, Manila and Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Pasay City, and 41. 3 in Cabanatuan.

On Wednesday, the highest heat index in the country was recorded in Butuan City, Agusan Del Norte at 53 degrees Celsius

Here is the five-day heat index forecast issued by Pagasa valid beginning 8 a.m. Thursday.

Station	7 May 20		8 May 20		9 May 20		10 May 20		11 May 20	
	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Alabat	35.9	39.2	35.4	37.7	34.6	37.1	35	38	33	37.1
Ambulong	34.5	39.5	33.5	38.5	32.8	38.1	32.8	37.4	32.3	37.5
Aparri	32.2	35.7	31.5	35.3	31	35.6	31.5	38	34	39.2
Baguio	24.7	28.8	22.8	30	23.9	29.5	25.2	28.5	24.1	29.4
Baler	34.1	37.4	35.4	36	32.1	35.9	33.5	36	32.5	35.5
Basco	28.2	30.3	30.4	30.6	30.8	31.4	31.3	32.3	33.4	34.4
Borongan	34.9	37.7	33.4	35.9	33.8	35.9	32.2	35.5	30.7	35.5
Butuan	33.9	39.4	34.5	39.7	32.2	37.3	34.3	39	30.7	36.8
Cabanatuan	35.8	41.3	36.5	40.9	29.5	40.4	36	39.4	33.6	39.6
Calapan	34.3	38.9	35.9	38.2	35.9	37	35.3	37.7	31.9	36.9
Calayan	32.7	35	32.6	34.1	32.5	33.3	32.6	34.3	33.8	37.3
Casiguran	34.2	36.8	33.3	36	33	35.5	32.6	35.5	32.6	34.9
Catarman	35.5	39.6	34.3	38.7	34.5	38.3	34.8	39	34.1	38.3
Catbalogan	33.3	38.4	35	38	33.4	37.1	34.5	38.7	34.3	37.9
Clark	33.1	40.4	31.6	38.8	31.5	38.6	32.7	38	31	37.8
CLSU	35.3	40.3	34.6	40.5	33.7	39.4	33.6	39.8	31.1	39.7
Coron	35.3	38.5	36.3	38.7	35.8	38.4	35.5	37.6	34.3	37.3
Cotabato	33.3	39.2	32.3	39.6	31.3	38.7	33.2	38.1	32.2	37.6
Cuyo	32.9	37	36.9	38	36.5	37.4	35.5	36.8	32.5	35
Daet	36.8	39.2	35.3	37.3	35.3	37.2	35.2	37.7	34.3	38.2
Dagupan	36.5	40.9	36.5	42	35.5	40.5	34.8	39.5	33.5	39.5
Dayao	33.2	39.3	33.4	40.1	31.6	37.6	33.4	39.3	31.5	38.3
Dipolog	35	38.8	35.5	39.5	34.2	38.2	34.5	38.6	33.3	36.5
Dumaguete	32.5	34.4	32.2	34.5	32	33.3	32.6	34.4	30.9	33.4
GenSantos	34.3	39.9	34.8	39.7	33.5	38.8	32.3	38.5	31.9	37.6
Guluan	35.3	36.4	34.8	35.2	34.8	35.8	31.9	34.7	32.4	33.1
Hinatuan	35	37.9	33.4	37.4	32.9	37.8	32.2	36.6	31.2	36.3
Iba	35.9	38.9	36.2	39	36.3	38.6	34.5	37.8	33.7	38.1
Iloilo	37.1	40.7	36.8	38.6	36	38.5	35.5	38.6	33.4	39.1

Heat is on! 42°C heat index to bake Sangley Point,

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Infanta	35	38.7	34.5	37.2	33	36.8	34.5	37	32.4	36.5
Itbayat	28.6	29.8	29.9	30.5	30.9	31.5	31.1	32	31.9	33.9
Laoag	35.7	37.9	34.5	37.5	33.4	36.5	33.8	36.5	32.8	39.3
Legaspi	34.3	37.9	33	36.5	32.1	35.8	33.9	36	32.1	35.2
Lumbia	35	39.4	34.7	39.1	34.3	38.1	34.3	38.4	33.1	37.9
Maasin	34.2	38	33.9	36.9	33.6	37.1	33.7	36.6	31.3	35.7
Mactan	35.5	36.9	35.6	38.4	34.7	35.7	34.9	38.4	33.8	37.9
Malaybalay	26.2	32.4	25.7	32.4	26.2	31.2	24.7	32.2	19.8	31.2
Masbate	34.1	37.3	33	37	32.1	36.5	33.4	36	32.5	34.4
NAIA	36.4	41.2	35.5	40.1	34.6	39.7	34.2	39.4	34.8	39.7
Pili	35.7	39.8	34.8	38.7	34.1	37.9	33.7	37.6	30.4	38.3
PortArea	36.4	41.2	35.5	40.1	34.6	39.7	34.2	39.4	34.8	39.7
PuertoPrincesa	34.7	35.4	34.8	35.9	35.9	36.6	35.4	35.9	34.1	35.5
Romblon	34.2	37.8	34.8	36	33.8	35.6	34.8	35.8	31.4	35.8
Roxas	32.3	38	32.5	37.9	31.6	36.5	31.6	37.1	29.6	37.1
Sangley	36.8	42	36.3	43.4	35.5	39.8	34.3	43.3	35.2	41.5
SanJose	35.5	40.4	36.3	39.1	35.4	37.9	35.2	38.1	32.6	37.8
ScienceGarden	36.6	41.5	35.2	40.5	34.2	39.7	36	39.6	34.5	39.7
Sinait	35.5	37	34.4	37.1	34.5	36	33.8	36.3	34.6	38.5
Sorsogon	35.7	37.1	35.3	36.3	34.3	35.5	35.6	36.5	32.2	36.2
Subic	34	39.5	33.6	38.9	32.7	37.5	32.1	37.6	31.3	37.5
Surigao	35.5	39.1	34.3	37.4	34.3	37.9	34.4	37.8	31.3	36
Tacloban	34.7	40.3	36	38.9	34.3	38	34.5	38.9	34	37.4
Tagaytay	32.2	36.6	30.4	36.2	27.8	35.7	30.1	35.5	29.7	35.4
Tagbilaran	35.5	38.1	36.3	38.9	34.4	36.8	32	38.3	28.4	36
Tanay	33.8	38.5	32.9	37.6	32.9	36.8	32.9	36.1	32.3	36.5
Tayabas	32.1	36.9	30.8	34.7	31.1	34.5	31.1	35.3	29.2	34.2
Tuguegarao	34.3	39.8	32.3	38.9	32.9	38.8	32.2	38.9	33.6	38.5
Virac	35	37	33.7	36	32.8	35.5	33.3	36.3	32.6	35.3
Zamboanga	33.7	37.1	33.2	35.9	33.5	35.6	33.7	35.8	32.9	35.3

Below are details on the maximum heat index observed in different parts of the country on Wednesday.

Station	Date	Time	Dry-Bulb Temperature [°C]	Relative Humidity [%]	Heat Index [°C]
Ambulong, Batangas	6 05 2020	14:00	36.3	63	51
Aparri, Cagayan	6 05 2020	11:00	32.6	66	41
Butuan City, Agusan Del Norte	6 05 2020	14:00	36	69	53
CLSU Muñoz, Nueva Ecija	6 05 2020	14:00	38	46	46
Calapan, Oriental Mindoro	6 05 2020	14:00	32.6	69	42
Casiguran, Aurora	6 05 2020	14:00	33.5	67	44
Catbalogan, Western Samar	6 05 2020	14:00	34	65	44
Clark Airport (DMIA), Pampanga	6 05 2020	14:00	38.3	44	46
Cotabato City, Maguindanao	6 05 2020	11:00	35	55	43
Cubi Pt., Subic Bay Olongapo City	6 05 2020	14:00	33.5	66	43
Cuyo, Palawan	6 05 2020	14:00	33	58	39
Dagupan City, Pangasinan	6 05 2020	11:00	33.6	68	45
Davao City, Davao Del Sur	6 05 2020	14:00	33.5	61	41
Dipolog, Zamboanga Del Norte	6 05 2020	14:00	33.8	60	42
General Santos City, South Cotabato	6 05 2020	14:00	35.5	48	41
Hinatuan, Surigao Del Sur	6 05 2020	14:00	31	69	37
Iba, Zambales	6 05 2020	11:00	34.1	65	45

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Laoag City, Ilocos Norte	6 05 2020	14:00	33.2	66	42
Legazpi City, Albay	6 05 2020	14:00	33.2	70	44
Maasin, Southern Leyte	6 05 2020	11:00	34	69	46
Mactan International Airport, Cebu	6 05 2020	14:00	33	61	40
Malaybalay, Bukidnon	6 05 2020	14:00	33.6	50	38
NAIA Pasay City, M.Manila	6 05 2020	12:00	35.9	56	46
Port Area, Manila	6 05 2020	14:00	34.4	58	42
Puerto Princesa City, Palawan	6 05 2020	14:00	33.2	59	40
Romblon City, Romblon	6 05 2020	17:00	30.9	70	37
Roxas City, Capiz	6 05 2020	14:00	34.6	64	46
San Jose City, Occidental Mindoro	6 05 2020	11:00	34	65	44
Sangley Point, Cavite	6 05 2020	14:00	36	65	51
Science Garden Quezon City, Metro Manila	6 05 2020	14:00	36	44	41
Sinait, Ilocos Sur	6 05 2020	14:00	33.1	63	41
Tanay, Rizal (Radar)	6 05 2020	14:00	30.8	64	35
Tuguegarao City, Cagayan	6 05 2020	14:00	38.6	41	45
Zamboanga City, Zamboanga Del Sur	6 05 2020	10:00	34.3	62	44
MAXIMUM	PROVINCE		TIME	Heat Index [°C]	
	Butuan City, Agusan Del Norte		14:00	53	

Pagasa defines heat index as “human discomfort index that gives the ‘apparent’ temperature or what humans 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 degrees Celsius,” it added.

Pagasa advises the public to stay indoors as much as possible, wear lightweight and light colored clothing, drink plenty of water or hydrate regularly, and to avoid eating food high in protein which can increase metabolic heat.

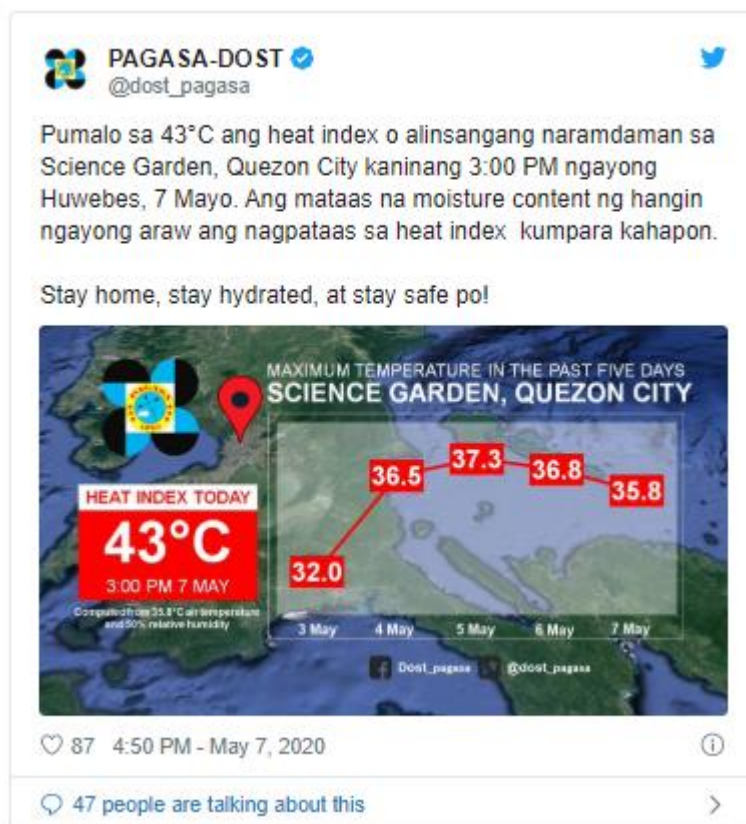
Heat index in Quezon City reaches 43°C —PAGASA

Published May 7, 2020 5:30pm

By JOAHNA LEI CASILAO, GMA News

The heat index, or the human-perceived temperature, at the Science Garden in Quezon City hit 43 degrees Celcius on Thursday afternoon, according to PAGASA.

PAGASA also recorded a 35.8°C temperature at 3 p.m.



Meanwhile, the highest heat index for Thursday was recorded at the Sangley Point, Cavite at 49°C.

This was followed by the Science City of Munoz with 48°C, Legazpi City and San Jose, Occidental Mindoro with 47°C, and Clark, Pampanga, Davao City and Iba, Zambales with 46°C.

PAGASA said that a heat index ranging from 41 to 54°C may cause heat cramps and heat exhaustion, which may lead to heat stroke amid continued physical activity.

PAGASA-DOST @dost_pagasa

TINGNAN: Top 7 PAGASA Synoptic Stations na nakapagtala ng pinakamaalinsangang panahon ngayong Huwebes, 7 Mayo.

Panganib ang dulot ng 41-54°C na heat index. Posible ang heat cramps at heat exhaustion na maaaring mauwi sa heat stroke kapag tuluy-tuloy ang physical activity.

PAGASA STATIONS WITH THE HIGHEST RECORDED HEAT INDEX THURSDAY, 7 MAY 2020		
SANGLEY POINT, CAVITE CITY	49°C	2:00 PM
SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ	48°C	11:00 AM
LEGAZPI CITY	47°C	2:00 PM
SAN JOSE, OCC. MINDORO	47°C	2:00 PM
CLARK, PAMPANGA	46°C	2:00 PM
DAVAO CITY	46°C	4:00 PM
IBA, ZAMBALES	46°C	2:00 PM

174 4:54 PM - May 7, 2020

71 people are talking about this

In an earlier post, the weather agency denied that the Philippines is experiencing a heatwave.

"Ang mga temperaturang nasusukat sa PAGASA stations sa buong gbansa ngayong tag-init ay kadalasang hindi lumalampas ng 5 degrees celcius sa average maximum temperature o kung lumampas may ay hindi umaabot ng limang araw," it said. —LDF, **GMA News**

Pandemic taking toll on weather and climate watch —UN

Published May 7, 2020 6:56pm

GENEVA — Meteorological measurements have plummeted amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN said Thursday, warning of the impact on weather forecasts and climate and atmospheric monitoring used to predict natural disasters.

The World Meteorological Organization cautioned that measurements taken from aircraft had declined dramatically during the crisis, by an average of 75-80 percent.

The WMO said its Aircraft Meteorological Data Relay program, which uses sensors on board commercial flights and other aircraft, usually produce more than 800,000 high-quality observations per day, including of air temperature and wind speed, along with temporal information.

But the novel coronavirus pandemic, which has killed more than 260,000 people globally, has taken a heavy toll on the airline industry as lockdown measures and travel restrictions have grounded flights worldwide.

The United Nations agency said some regions were hit harder than others, with the southern hemisphere showing a loss of aircraft-based meteorological observations of closer to 90 percent.

At the same time, surface-based weather observations have also declined, especially in Africa and parts of Central and South America where many stations are run manually.

This is worrying, WMO said, pointing out that the data usually compiled by its Global Observing System provides vital observations used for the preparation of weather analyses, forecasts, advisories and warnings.

"The impacts of climate change and growing amount of weather-related disasters continue," WMO chief Petteri Taalas said in a statement.

He pointed to Cyclone Harold, which last month left a trail of destruction across four South Pacific island nations and claimed more than two dozen lives.

"As we approach the Atlantic hurricane season, the COVID-19 pandemic poses an additional challenge," Taalas said, stressing it was "essential that governments pay attention to their national early warning and weather observing capacities."

WMO said that much of the global observation system, using satellites and ground-based networks, were either partly or fully automated, and was therefore expected to continue functioning "without significant degradation for several weeks".

But it warned that if the pandemic drags on, "missing repair, maintenance and supply work and missing redeployments will become of increasing concern." — **Agence France-Presse**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/science/737299/pandemic-taking-toll-on-weather-and-climate-watch-un/story/>

Japan approves experimental drug for treating coronavirus patients

By Yoko Wakatsuki, CNN

Published May 7, 2020 11:38:59 PM



(CNN) - Japan has approved the use of the experimental anti-viral drug remdesivir, for the treatment of coronavirus patients with severe symptoms.

Researchers in the US released some good news last week about a possible treatment for coronavirus — evidence that the experimental drug may help patients recover more quickly from the infection.

The US Food and Drug Administration has authorized remdesivir for emergency use in patients with severe Covid-19.

The Japanese Ministry of Health and Welfare granted special approval of the drug, developed by the US's Gilead Pharmaceutical, just three days after it applied for approval.

Coronavirus, climate change cause food shortages in

TITLE: parts of Indonesia

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DATE

Coronavirus, climate change cause food shortages in parts of Indonesia

[The Jakarta Post/Asia News Network](#) / 11:34 AM May 07, 2020



Farmers plant rice during the second planting season in 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic near the village of Tunggulwulung in Malang, East Java, on April 10. The Jakarta Post/Asia News Network/Aman Rochman

JAKARTA — Shortages in key commodities have been reported in most of Indonesia’s 34 provinces as the nation copes with the double whammy of the coronavirus outbreak causing supply chain disruption and a dry spell hurting harvests.

Garlic, sugar, chili and chicken eggs are in short supply in more than 20 provinces, while rice, a staple food for Indonesians, is in deficit in seven provinces across the archipelago, according to government data presented by President Joko “Jokowi” Widodo.

The data clash with the Agriculture Ministry’s claims that stockpiles, especially of Indonesia’s 11 key commodities, are “safe” and sufficient to meet nationwide demand during the annual peak consumption season of Ramadan, which began on April 24.

The Food Security Agency’s head of food availability and security, Andriko Noto Susanto, said Indonesia had recorded surpluses in the 11 key food commodities at the national level, and any shortages at the regional level were “a normal situation”.

“That is because there are provinces that serve as production centers, and there are those that do not,” Andriko told The Jakarta Post in a phone interview on Wednesday. “Provinces not producing rice may record a short supply of rice.”

The Home Ministry went as far as encouraging district heads to empower local communities across Indonesia’s regions to plant their own staple foods, especially those in territories facing shortage. The COVID-19 pandemic will disrupt food supply within the country and around the world, exacerbating the situation.

Making matters worse, a dry season is looming on the horizon and may impact the overall output of the agriculture sector, which employs more than a quarter of the national workforce.

Coronavirus, climate change cause food shortages in

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The Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency (BMKG) has projected that more than 30 percent of the country's regions, including parts of Bali, Java, Sumatra and Sulawesi, might face an unusually harsh dry season this month.

"So there are two challenges right now: climate change and supply chain disruption due to the outbreak," Institute for Development of Economics and Finance (Indef) researcher Dhenny Yuartha told The Jakarta Post.

Of the 11 commodities, sugar, garlic and beef are the most at risk of short supply. The Food Security Agency has suggested speeding up the import of 207,743 tons of garlic, 85,474 tons of beef and 622,123 tons of sugar to ensure enough supplies for the April–June period.

For sugar, for instance, shortages have been recorded in 30 provinces, causing prices to soar to Rp 18,250 (US\$1.21) per kilogram, 46 percent higher than the government's price ceiling of Rp 12,500 per kg.

Dhenny said the shortages and soaring prices were mainly caused by late imports and disrupted supply chains. East Java, the country's largest sugar cane producer, is a COVID-19 red zone.

Center for Indonesian Policy Studies (CIPS) researcher Galuh Octania said the government should pay utmost attention to food stocks beyond November, because some of the regions hit by the worse-than-normal dry season were staple food production centers.

President Jokowi has ordered his administration to store rainwater and start filling reservoirs, retention ponds and other artificial water storages to mitigate the impact. The government is also easing import processes to ensure sufficient food stocks, although the logistics of this are challenging as some producing countries have imposed lockdowns.

Coordinating Economic Minister Airlangga Hartarto reported Tuesday that 94,000 tons of garlic had arrived from China in April and estimated that 78,000 tons more would be shipped this month. As a result, the average price of garlic declined by 5 percent to Rp 42,650 per kg between March and April. However, it is still far higher than the government's target of below Rp 30,000 per kg.

Soaring food prices also hurt farmers, since two out of three farmers in the country are classified as "net consumers" and some of them are poor, according to Galuh. Food accounts for more than 60 percent of the monthly expenses among poor citizens, those who spend around Rp 500,000 a month, according to a 2019 survey by Statistics Indonesia (BPS).

The government plans to provide Rp 300,000 in cash and production inputs like seeds and fertilizer valued at another Rp 300,000 per month to 2.7 million poor farmers. Eligible households can also get the Rp 200,000 monthly assistance to purchase food with the Staple Food Card program.

"Rising prices may lower farmers' purchasing power," Galuh told the Post via text message. "Amid the coronavirus outbreak, farmers must fear that either they cannot sell their produce due to logistical disruption or their products may spoil." saying in a statement released on Tuesday.

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The Agriculture Ministry is considering making available 600,000 hectares of peatland in Central Kalimantan to produce buffer stocks. The government has yet to work out the details, but a similar measure under former president Soeharto on 1 million ha of peatland in the province resulted in crop failure.

“If done in a hurry, the costly project to open a new field will lead to crop failure that hurt farmers and a greater risk of environmental damage,” CIPS researcher Felipa Ann Amanta was quoted as saying in a statement released on Tuesday.

Coronavirus: Indonesian zoos appeal for funds to feed

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Coronavirus: Indonesian zoos appeal for funds to feed and care for hungry animals

The Straits Times/Asia News Network / 05:47 PM May 07, 2020



A Sumatran elephant at Lembah Hijau Zoo in Lampung, Indonesia. PHOTO: INDONESIA ZOO ASSOCIATION (PKBSI) via The Straits Times

JAKARTA — In a desperate bid to save hungry animals from being killed and fed to one another, the Indonesian Zoo Association has kicked off a fund-raising drive as the coronavirus pandemic takes a toll on zoo coffers.

Closed since mid-March, the 57 zoos across the country had enough funds to last only three to six months, mostly to feed and provide vet care for 70,000 animals and paying the wages of 22,000 employees, association chairman Rahmat Shah told The Straits Times.

The zoos, whose income largely depended on ticket sales from the 50 million annual visitors, make around \$10 million a month in total. Some \$6 million go towards their upkeep and operations.

“The zoos may be closed, but the animals still need to be fed and cared for, and their cages cleaned,” said Dr Rahmat. “Our priority is to keep the animals healthy, look after their welfare and make sure their care and maintenance can run normally.”

The association wrote to President Joko Widodo two weeks ago seeking financial assistance, but has yet to get a response.

On their part, the zoo operators have used cheaper feed substitutes, shortened the work hours of staff and even slashed their salaries by up to 50 per cent to cut costs.

The fund-raising drive, called Food For Animals, launched last Saturday (May 2), was the association’s latest attempt to ensure the animal’s survival.

Some \$50,000, including a contribution from Dr Rahmat’s own pocket, has been raised so far.

Pleading for more support from the government, community leaders, businessmen and animal lovers in Indonesia and around the world, Dr Rahmat said: “We are fighting hard and desperately. We need all the help from various groups.

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“We are in crisis and the situation is worrying. If we get no donations by the end of May, the lives of the animals will be threatened.”

Ask what would be the worst-case scenario, he said the last resort would be to euthanize the old and sickly animals.

The meat that is fit to be eaten, as well as that from animals which are abundant such as deer, would be fed to fitter animals and endangered species such as the Sumatran tigers and Javan leopards.

“We are the last bastion of endemic endangered Indonesian species,” he said.

“But that’s the last, last, last resort,” he added. “What choice do we have? Let’s say we have 500 animals, and 100 of them are endangered.

“If we are not allowed to kill, all the 500 will die. We have nothing to lose from killing the others because we can get them again anytime anywhere.”

According to the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (Waza) website, euthanasia is allowed under the code of ethics and animal welfare when all options have been studied, but it must be carried out in a manner that ensures a “quick death without suffering”.

“Euthanasia may be controlled by local customs and laws but should always be used in preference to keeping an animal alive under conditions which do not allow it to experience an appropriate quality of life,” Waza said.

For now, Dr Rahmat as well as animal groups interviewed are only hoping for the coronavirus pandemic to end.

He said: “We all hope that the pandemic will pass quickly, and we can go back to living normal lives as we should, and people can return to the zoo to see the animals with their loved ones.” For more information on Food For Animals fund-raising drive and to donate, go to its Facebook page.

Thia elephants, out of work due to coronavirus, trudge

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Thai elephants, out of work due to coronavirus, trudge home

Associated Press / 06:43 AM May 07, 2020

BANGKOK — The millions of unemployed in Thailand due to the coronavirus include elephants which depend on the tourist industry to feed their voracious appetites.



In this Thursday, April 30, 2020, photo provided by the Save Elephant Foundation, a herd of 11 elephants walk along a dirt road during a 150-kilometer (93 mile) journey from Mae Wang to Ban Huay in northern Thailand. Save Elephant Foundation are helping elephants who have lost their jobs at sanctuary parks due to the lack of tourists from the coronavirus pandemic to return home to their natural habitats. (Save Elephant Foundation via AP)

With scant numbers of foreign visitors, commercial elephant camps and sanctuaries lack funds for their upkeep and have sent more than 100 of the animals trudging as far as 150 kilometers (95 miles) back to their homes.

The Save Elephant Foundation in the northern province of Chiang Mai has been promoting the elephants' return to the greener pastures of home. The foundation supports fundraising appeals to feed animals still housed at tourist parks, but also believes it is good for them to return to their natural habitat where they can be more self-sufficient.

The situation is critical. London-based World Animal Protection says as many as 2,000 tame elephants are at risk of starvation because their owners are unable to feed them.

Since last month, more than 100 of the animals have marched from all over Chiang Mai to their homeland of Mae Chaem, which is dotted with villages where members of the Karen ethnic minority live and traditionally keep elephants.

Save Elephant's founder, Saengduean Chailert, said the project to bring unemployed elephants home was launched in response to appeals from their owners.

Her group promotes settling elephants where they can live alongside villagers in sustainable eco-friendly communities. It believes the animals are abused at many high-profile tourist attractions.

Sadudee Serichevee owns four elephants in Chiang Mai's Mae Wang district. He followed the foundation's approach in setting up his own small Karen Elephant Experience park with elephants brought from Mae Chaem's Ban Huay Bong, his wife's village.

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But his good intentions were no match for the coronavirus.

“At first I thought the situation would be back to normal within a month or two. At the end of April, I lost all hope,” Sadudee said.

He and his wife agreed to bring their elephants back to her village because they could no longer shoulder the monthly expenses of close to 200,000 baht (\$6,250) for rental of land and facilities, salaries for handlers — known as mahouts — and food. Elephants eat as much as 300 kilograms (660 lbs) a day of grass and vegetables.

They convinced some other owners to make the 150-kilometer (95-mile) trek on foot with them. Trucking the animals is prohibitively expensive for owners of small parks, and elephants can maintain a walking speed of 7.25 kph (4.5 mph).

Their caravan of 11 elephants, their owners and their mahouts, set out on April 30, traveling over hills, on paved and dirt roads. They were greeted by a welcome-home party on their arrival at Ban Huay Bong on Monday.

“These elephants have not had a chance to return home for 20 years. They seem to be very happy when arriving home, they make their happy noises, they run to the creek near the village and have fun along with our children,” Sadudee said.

The project is also active in the northeastern province of Surin, famous for its annual elephant festival. The province’s Tha Tum district, home to hundreds of elephants, welcomed about 40 of them back last month.

“We don’t know when COVID-19 will go away,” said Save Elephant’s Saengduean. “So this is our task, to help feed the elephants that were laid off because of the outbreak.”

Forest loss seen slowing globally, but progress patchy

Published May 8, 2020 2:18am

By THIN LEI WIN, Reuters

ROME, Italy - Global forest loss has slowed over the past five years, UN researchers said on Thursday, but progress has been uneven, with population growth driving a rise in deforestation in Africa.

Over the past decade, forest loss halved in South America, long a hotspot, according to the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020, while parts of Europe and Asia saw a rise in forest cover as more trees were planted.

The United Nations study found 10 million hectares of forest were destroyed annually in the past five years, down from 12 million hectares a year in the previous half-decade.

It did not include figures from the Amazon last year, when large swathes of forest were burned in wildfires. But even if it had, the trend would likely have been positive.

Anssi Pekkarinen, who coordinated the assessment, said net forest loss was decreasing, the size of protected areas increasing and more forests now have sustainable management plans.

However, there are regional differences, said Pekkarinen, a senior forestry officer with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

"In Africa, the situation is getting worse and this is most likely because of population pressure," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone.

The losses occurred mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, where the population is expected to double by 2050, said Pekkarinen, adding more efficient farming methods would allow more forest to be protected.

"The fact that the people rely on small scale agriculture for their livelihoods and that wood and charcoal are the main source of energy for a huge number of people in this area," he added.

"We need to change this trend somehow."

Scientists say protecting forests is one of the cheapest and most effective ways to curb climate change because trees suck carbon dioxide, the main gas heating up the planet, from the atmosphere.

Health and environmental experts have also said rapid loss of forests is a major factor in the spread of infectious diseases, including the current coronavirus pandemic that has so far killed nearly 250,000 people worldwide.

While the trend is broadly positive, Pekkarinen said the world had a long way to go to achieve an internationally agreed goal to halt deforestation by 2020.

"Deforestation is still going on," he said.

"In the Global Forest Goals, it was to increase the forest area by 3% between 2017 to 2030 but the forest area is still decreasing," he added, referring to a set of voluntary targets agreed in 2017. --

Reuters

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/world/737343/forest-loss-seen-slowing-globally-but-progress-patchy/story/?just_in