

# DENR chief lauds rescue of endemic bird amid quarantine

Published May 11, 2020, 4:48 PM

By **Richa Noriega**

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu has lauded the wildlife officers who successfully rescued a blue-naped parrot in Manila amid the enhanced community quarantine in Luzon.



“Our wildlife enforcers deserve a salute for their efforts to recover a national treasure—the blue-naped parrot that is endemic to Luzon and classified as ‘near threatened’ or may be considered threatened with extinction in the near future,” Cimatu said in a statement on Sunday.

The environment secretary was referring to wildlife officers from DENR-National Capital Region (NCR), led by Special Investigator Rey Florano.

Last April 29, Florano’s team turned over the blue-naped parrot to the Wildlife Rescue Center of DENR’s Biodiversity Management Bureau in Quezon City for proper care and safe keeping.

According to DENR, the blue-naped parrot (*Tanygnathus lucionensis*) is included in the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s Red List of Threatened Species with “near threatened” status.

Cimatu said the department will continue to fulfill its mandate of protecting the country’s plants and animals amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

DENR takes custody of young hawk-eagle, or 'lawin'  
birds, recovered from Batangas woods

PAGE 1/ 1/2

May 12, 2020  
DATE

# DENR takes custody of young hawk-eagle, or 'lawin' birds, recovered from Batangas woods

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

May 12, 2020



*The hawk-eagles hours before turn over to the DENR.*

The pair of Philippine hawk-eagles voluntarily turned over to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) by a 22-year-old male student from Mabini, Batangas, are now in safe hands.

DENR wildlife law enforcer Rogelio Demelletes Jr. said the Philippine predatory birds were safely transported from Mabini, Batangas, to the DENR Wildlife Rescue Center in Quezon City on Sunday afternoon.

He said they could have fallen into the wrong hands had it not been to the wise decision of Christian Atienza, who rescued them from the wild.

Demelletes led the DENR team that picked up the hawk-eagle from Atienza, who for a while, kept the juvenile eagles safe in his home in Sitio Sto. Tomas, Mabini, Batangas. Atienza rescued the pair of hawk-eagles, then locally called *lawin*, while he was picking firewood in the forest. The birds were still too young to fly, then, and could not possibly survive on their own without the parents.

According to Demelletes, several exotic animal collectors have been targeting the Philippine hawk-eagle pair, offering Atienza huge amount of money in exchange for the rare species, which he posted through his Facebook account to seek help.

“There were a number of interested buyers to the point that some are already threatening the boy. But he decided to turn them over to authorities instead of handing them over to illegal wildlife traders,” Demelletes said.

Because of the lockdown in Luzon and some other areas in Visayas and Mindanao, Demelletes said threatened animal wildlife are surfacing in cities, making them vulnerable to captivity.

“Because of the lockdown, wild animals are thinking it is now safe to go out into the open in urban areas, that’s why sometimes, they get caught. We’ve been receiving reports of sightings of rare species being held in captivity, too,” he revealed.

According to Demelletes, the DENR is zeroing in on a group of Batangueño who uses an exclusive FB page to promote the exotic pet trade, selling or offering to buy exotic animals.

DENR takes custody of young hawk-eagle, or 'lawin'  
birds, recovered from Batangas woods

TITLE:

PAGE 1/ 2/2

May 12, 2020

DATE

“This group is openly transacting business, perhaps thinking that they can do it because of the lockdown. We’ll get them somehow,” he vowed.

Illegal wildlife trade has become rampant because of Internet technology and the proliferation of social-media platforms where they can create a secret page, or group. Demelletes said the DENR is constantly on the lookout for such illegal transactions.

On a positive note, he said through social media, the DENR is also receiving information about the illegal wildlife trade happening in various parts of the country. Social media has also become a channel for wildlife rescuers and authorities to bring in threatened animals to safety.

Assistant Secretary Ricardo Calderon, concurrent director of the DENR’s Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) credited the successful operations to rescue threatened wildlife to the increased awareness of the general public about the importance of protecting and conserving the country’s rich biodiversity.

The DENR, he said, is scheduling the turnover of the two rescued Philippine eagles from Zamboanga City and Palimbang, North Cotabato to the Philippine Eagle Center in Davao City. The Center is being run and managed by the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF), the DENR’s conservation partner for the iconic eagle and other birds of prey.

Image Credits: [Christian Atienza](#)

# DENR orders probe into case of dead whale found in Surigao del Sur

Published May 11, 2020, 11:10 AM

By *Mike Crismundo*

**BUTUAN CITY** – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Monday ordered a thorough into the large whale who was found by local fishermen dead near the shore in Barangay Baculin, Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur.



(DENR 13-RPAO / MANILA BULLETIN)

DENR Regional Executive Director Felix S. Alicer said he was waiting for the report of the DENR-Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer (CENRO) Victor Sabornido whom he instructed to conduct an inquiry on the 17-meter whale carcass that was found last Saturday, May 9. It was gathered that an investigation by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) was also reported underway.

Initial reports said the death of the whale could not be definitely determined, although it showed that the animal was of “old age”.

There could also be the possibility that floating plastic debris on the oceans might have contributed to the death of the whale found floating near the shore in Barangay Baculin.

There have been several reports in the past by marine experts about their findings on dolphins, whales and giant sea turtles that have died due to heavy ingestion of plastic wastes found floating in the oceans.

“And since the dead whale’s carcass is decomposing, it would take time to examine it through an autopsy,” he said.

Alicer added that they have yet to determine what kind of whale specie it was.

According to local DENR experts, there are seven kinds of whales in the world, some of them are considered extinct and endangered.

Source: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/05/11/denr-orders-probe-into-case-of-dead-whale-found-in-surigao-del-sur/>

DENR Cagayan Valley province to produce 2M  
vegetable seedlings amid COVID-19 pandemic

PAGE 1/ 1/2

May 12, 2020  
DATE

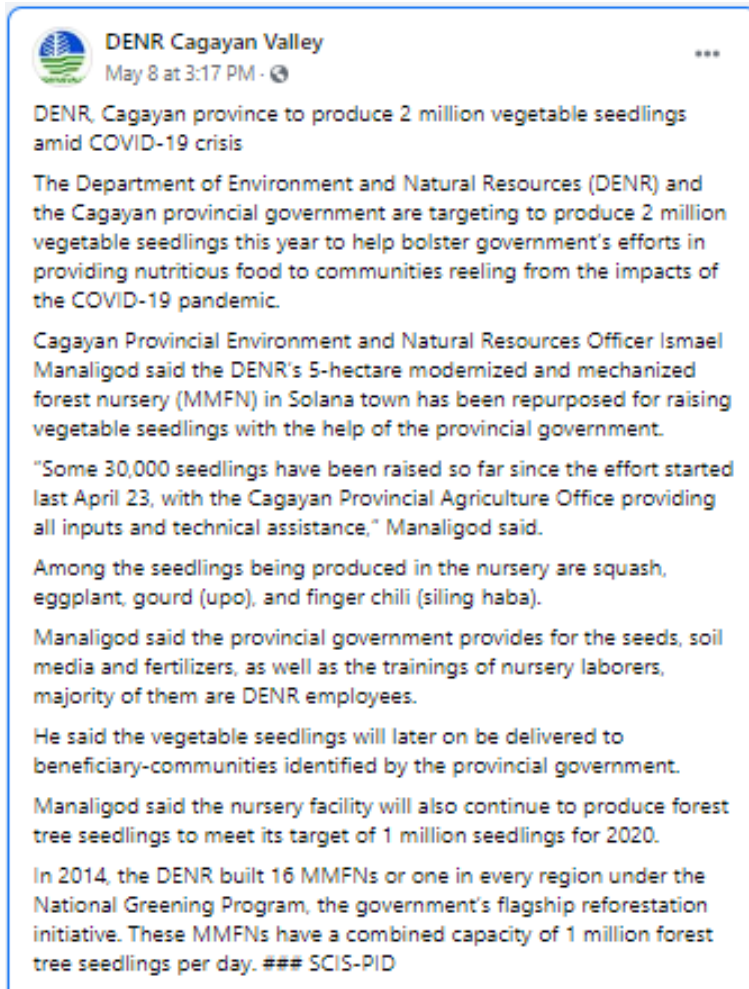
# DENR, Cagayan province to produce 2M vegetable seedlings amid COVID-19 pandemic

Published May 11, 2020, 3:29 PM

By **Richa Noriega**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Cagayan provincial government are set to produce two million vegetable seedlings this year to provide nutritious food to communities reeling from the impacts of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

In a statement on May 8, the Cagayan Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer Ismael Manaligod said the DENR's five-hectare modernized and mechanized forest nursery (MMFN) in Solana town has been used for raising vegetable seedlings with the aid of the provincial government.



DENR Cagayan Valley province to produce 2M

May 12, 2020

TITLE: vegetable seedlings amid COVID-19 pandemic

PAGE 1/ 2/2

DATE

“Some 30,000 seedlings have been raised so far since the effort started last April 23, with the Cagayan Provincial Agriculture Office providing all inputs and technical assistance,” Manaligod said.

Among the seedlings being produced are squash, eggplant, gourd (upo), and finger chili (siling haba).

He added that the provincial government provides for the seeds, soil media, and fertilizers, as well as the training of the nursery laborers which majority of them are DENR employees.

The vegetable seedlings will be delivered to beneficiary-communities that were identified by the provincial government.

Manaligod underscored that the nursery facility will also continue to produce forest tree seedlings to meet its target of one million seedlings for 2020. In 2014, the department built 16 MMFNs or one in every region under the National Greening Program, the government’s flagship reforestation initiative. It added that the MMFNs have a combined capacity of one million forest tree seedlings per day.

# LOOK: Mountains of Bohol can now be seen from Cebu City

By: Immae Lachica - General Assignments Reporter/CDN Digital|May 11,2020 - 01:17 PM



“Look at that visibility, all the way to the mountains of Bohol,” biker Mito Estrada captioned this photo. | Contributed photo

CEBU CITY, Philippines—With a lot of vehicles and factories on a break due to the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ), air quality over Cebu has improved a lot.

The Environmental Management Bureau in Central Visayas (EMB-7) already said in an earlier report that the implementation of the ECQ which, in turn, led to the suspension of public transport and limited the number of private vehicles plying the streets, reduced the number of air pollutants.

These are the reasons, the EMB-7 said, why the air quality in Metro Cebu has vastly improved. Minus the smog, the clear skies now allows us to see the mountains of Bohol from Cebu, as proven by a photo a netizen took last Saturday, May 9, 2020.

Mito Estrada, 35, was biking on his way to Cantipla Market in Barangay Tabunan in Cebu City when he chanced upon a clear view of the Cebu City and the beautiful mountains of the neighboring island, Bohol.

“[This is my] first time to see Bohol that visible from that area. Been biking in that area for years already,” said Estrada.

Estrada took a photo with just his mobile phone for proof of this experience and [shared it](#) in his social media account. It has since gone viral.

As of Monday, May 11, the photo has already been shared 4,800 times and has garnered 3,200 reactions. /bmjo

Read more: <https://cebudailynews.inquirer.net/309287/look-with-better-air-quality-mountains-of-bohol-can-be-seen-from-cebu-city#ixzz6MAevz3Kz>

## Manila Bay Looks Even More Beautiful As Pollution Reduces Due To ECQ

by [ittynG](#)

Date: May 11, 2020

in: [NEWS](#)

MANILA BAY – The country’s major center of economic activity, Manila Bay looks even more beautiful as pollution reduces due to ECQ.

Last year, Philippine President [Rodrigo Roa Duterte](#) ordered the rehabilitation of the Manila Bay. the [Department of Environment and Natural Resources](#) (DENR) led the cleanup drive.

The government and private sectors also help cleaning up garbage wastes. The [before and after photos](#) surprised the online community.



Photo lifted from Auto Industriya

Due to the [COVID-19](#) pandemic, lesser cars and people roaming the city streets. Metro Manila has been on “enhanced community quarantine” for almost 2 months now

While the coronavirus forced people to stay in their homes, nature bounces back. In a previous [article](#), photos of the rare sight of Sierra Madre amid ECQ went viral on social media.



Now, the recent photos of Manila Bay caught the attention of the netizens. Based on a report from GMA News, the photos were taken bt Danny Pata.



Manila Bay Looks Even More Beautiful As Pollution  
Reduces Due to ECQ

It can be seen in the photos that the country's major center of economic activity looks even more picturesque as pollution reduces due to the ECQ. The photos just show that COVID-19 had a huge impact on the environment. President Rodrigo Roa Duterte is expected to decide on the fate of ECQ on Monday, May 11.

Here are the photos:



Photo Source: Danny Pata/GMA News



Photo Source: Danny Pata/GMA News



Photo Source: Danny Pata/GMA News

Manila Bay Looks Even More Beautiful As Pollution  
Reduces Due to ECQ

TITLE:

PAGE 1/ 3/3

May 12, 2020

DATE

The recent photos of Manila Bay elicited mixed reactions from the netizens. Here are some of their comments on the [post](#):

@Jayson Zafra Esplaguera: *“how bout a yearly lockdown”*

@Lone Lee: *“Kuya This is the positive effect of COVID-19.”*

@Ken Neth: *“NCR are the center of all pollutions and toxication for nature.”*

@Jose Winston Leal: *“Maybe Covid-19 is Natures way of bringing back the healthy environment, reduced man made pollution”*

# Sen. Marcos bats for proper waste disposal as health measure vs. COVID-19 spread

Published May 11, 2020, 2:29 PM

By **Mario Casayuran**

Senator Imee R. Marcos today warned that improper disposal of hospital, laboratory and even household wastes might trigger a resurgence of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the Philippines.



Senator Imee Marcos  
(Senate of the Philippines / MANILA BULLETIN)

“Cases of infection seem to have gone down, but the government might be blind-sided if it underestimates the importance of proper waste disposal,” Marcos warned.

Marcos, chairwoman of the Senate economic affairs committee, said an increase in infectious waste from testing labs and hospitals is expected to result from two factors: wider mass testing and the lifting of community quarantines. Both factors have caused a new wave or spike in COVID-19 in other countries.

She urged the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) to propagate and enforce guidelines and compliance measures for the proper disposal of contaminated lab and hospital supplies such as used test kits, syringes, and personal protective equipment (PPE) like face masks, gloves, gowns, and shoe covers.

“The points of discard also include households because people use and throw away face masks, so the IATF guidelines must cover the general public to the municipal or city level, from segregation to final waste disposal,” Marcos said.

City ordinances regulating plastic use might have to be modified, Marcos added, if a new classification for COVID-19 related waste is adopted and their double-bagging prescribed, as in other countries.

Marcos also called on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to strictly enforce the Clean Air Act’s ban on incineration, citing a World Health Organization (WHO) report that developing countries still burn medical waste using poor-quality incinerators without pollution control.

The high plastic content and additives used to make PPE more repellent make them notorious for the amount of toxic dioxin that they produce when burned.

Marcos also alerted the government to the possible entry of hazardous waste related to COVID-19 from other countries, repeating her call in Senate Bill 408 for a total ban on waste imports. At least three companies being run by foreigners in Subic and Cagayan de Oro in 2019 were importing waste “under the guise of recycling” and should be investigated, she explained.

Source: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/05/11/sen-marcos-bats-for-proper-waste-disposal-as-health-measure-vs-covid-19-spread/>

# Improper disposal of medical waste could lead to COVID-19 resurgence

Published May 11, 2020, 1:26 PM

By **Freddie Lazaro**

**LAOAG CITY, Ilocos Norte** – Senator Imee Marcos has warned against the improper disposal of hospital, laboratory and even household waste, which could trigger a resurgence of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the country.



Senator Imee Marcos (Senator Imee Marcos Official Facebook Page / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN FILE PHOTO)

“Cases of infection seem to have gone down, but COVID-19 might blind side the government if it underestimates the importance of proper waste disposal,” Marcos said.

In a press statement, Imee said that an increase in infectious waste from testing labs and hospitals is expected to follow wider mass testing and the lifting of community quarantines which have seen a new wave of cases in other countries.

Marcos urged the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) not to overlook guidelines and compliance measures for the proper disposal of contaminated lab and hospital supplies such as used test kits, syringes, and personal protective equipment (PPE) like face masks, gloves, gowns, and shoe covers.

“The points of discard also include households because people use and throw away face masks, so the IATF guidelines must cover the general public to the municipal or city level, from segregation to final waste disposal,” Marcos said.

City ordinances regulating plastic use may have to be modified, Marcos added, if a new classification for Covid-related waste is adopted and their double-bagging prescribed, as in other countries.

Marcos also called on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to strictly enforce the Clean Air Act’s ban on incineration, citing a World Health Organization report that developing countries still burn medical waste using poor-quality incinerators without pollution control. The high plastic content and additives used to make PPE more repellent make them notorious for the amount of toxic dioxin that they produce when burned.

Marcos also alerted the government to the possible entry of hazardous waste related to COVID-19 from other countries, repeating her call in Senate Bill 408 for a total ban on waste imports.

At least three companies being run by foreigners in Subic and Cagayan de Oro in 2019 were importing waste “under the guise of recycling” and should be investigated, Marcos said.

## Marcos seeks rules on waste disposal

By [Bernadette Tamayo](#)

May 12, 2020

SEN. Maria Imelda Josefa “Imee” Marcos on Monday warned that improper disposal of hospital laboratory and household wastes might trigger a resurgence of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) in the country.

The senator said an increase in “infectious waste” from testing laboratories and hospitals is expected following the conduct of mass testing and the lifting of the enhanced community quarantine.

“Cases of infection seem to have gone down, but Covid-19 might blindside the government if it underestimates the importance of proper waste disposal,” Marcos added.

She urged the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) to issue guidelines for the proper disposal of used laboratory and hospital supplies such as test kits, syringes, personal protective equipment (PPE), face masks, gloves, gowns and shoe covers.

“The points of discard also include households because people use and throw away face masks, so the IATF guidelines must cover the general public to the municipal or city level, from segregation to final waste disposal,” Marcos said.

She added that city ordinances regulating plastic use might have to be modified if a new classification for Covid-related waste was adopted and its double-bagging prescribed, as in other countries.

Marcos also called on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to strictly enforce the Clean Air Act’s ban on incineration, citing a World Health Organization report that developing countries still burn medical waste using poor-quality incinerators without pollution control.

The high plastic content and additives used to make PPE more repellent make them notorious for the amount of toxic dioxin that they produce when burned, she said.

She also alerted the government of the possible entry of hazardous waste related to Covid-19 from other countries, as she reiterated her call for a total ban on waste imports in her proposed Senate Bill 408.

# QC residents inireklamo ang umano'y mabagal na paghahakot ng basura

Maan Macapagal, ABS-CBN News

Posted at May 11 2020 05:03 PM

MAYNILA — Inirereklamo ng ilang residente ang mabagal na paghahakot ng basura sa ilang bahagi ng Quezon City sa gitna ng umiiral na enhanced community quarantine kontra pagkalat ng coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

"Dapat kuha na 'yan ng Miyerkoles, pero hindi sila kumuha, tapos Biyernes hindi naman kumuha ulit... Mabaho na, kinakalat ng aso," ani Lily Soriano, residente ng QC.

Sa buong kalsada, nakasabit sa gate o nakatambak na sa labas ng bahay ang mga basura na naghihintay mahakot.

Matapos nilang maireklamo ito sa Facebook page ng Solid Waste Management ng Quezon City, dumating naman ang trak ng basura.

"Yung truck na po na 'yan bago pong contractor, pinapaliwanag ko naman sa mga tao na nag-iikot ako kasi nagbago... Marami po talaga mula nung nagbago 'yung contractor," paliwanag ni Rizza Alfaro, garbage collection area coordinator ng QC.

Ayon sa Quezon City Task Force (QCTF) on Solid Waste Management, lumaki ang volume ng residential waste ngayon sa lungsod.

Kung dating 70 porsiyento ang commercial waste at 30 porsiyento ang household waste, halos nagtriple na ang mga basura sa kabahayan.

"Beginning of the quarantine is na-offset lang 'yung 70 percent na na-generate ng commercial dahil nagsara. Kung babagsak 'yun tataas nang konti 'yung household volume. Pero so far na-exceed niya 'yung household projection natin by 3 folds," ani Richard Santuile, action officer ng QCTF on Solid Waste Management.

Nalagpasan na nito kahit ang garbage volume tuwing Kapaskuhan.

Dahilan daw nito ay nananatili lahat sa bahay ang buong pamilya kaya maraming naipong basura.

"Maraming activities ang tao ngayon na waste generating such as 'yung paggamit ng wet wipes saka tissue paper," paliwanag ni Santuile.

Kung dating isang pasada lang ang mga trak, ngayon kailangang mag-3 ikot para masimot ang mga basura.

Dahil naman sa COVID-19, hindi na rin binubusisi pa ang mga basura kaya madaling mapuno ang trak.

Ayon QC LGU, hiling lang nila ang pang-unawa sa mga residente ng QC sa pagkaantala sa ilang lugar.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/05/11/20/qc-residents-inireklamo-ang-umanoy-mabagal-na-paghahakot-ng-basura?fbclid=IwAR1YHtH29HaYn196s8ZspFzt8hZSXBkHzeGcpQyXwaFzhYeeL2JKdzkPCyM>

# Septic tank cleaners nabbed for improper sludge disposal

By Eldie Aguirre **May 11, 2020, 6:58 pm**

**DIGOS CITY** – Two employees of a septic tank cleaning business were arrested by elements of Sta. Cruz police in Davao del Sur after they were caught illegally disposing sludge on Sunday evening.

Major Crisaldo Gaila, Sta. Cruz acting police chief, said on Monday that truck driver Robert Alegria, 32, and his assistant, Albert Alegria, 35, were charged for violating Presidential Decree No. 984 commonly known as The Pollution Control Law.

Gaila said the Alegrias are from Barangay 76-A, Bucana, in Davao City.

Police said Elizardo Bacon, a security guard of a private lot located in Barangay Tagabuli in Sta. Cruz town, noticed the Fuso black truck bearing Plate No. YDT 197 emptying the fecal sludge in the area.

Bacon told police he tried to approach the crew, but they immediately got onboard the truck and fled.

He then called the hotline of Sta. Cruz police asking for coordination to catch the fleeing suspects, who were later intercepted at a Task Force Davao checkpoint in Toril, Davao City.

Gaila said the truck is registered under the name of Paulino Taño Alegria, the proprietor of Victory Septic Tank and Plumbing Services based in Davao City. **(PNA)**



## EDITORIAL - Ginamit na face masks itinatapon lang sa kalsada

(Pang-masa ) - May 12, 2020 - 12:00am

MARAMING walang disiplina sa pagtatapon ng basura. At ngayong nananalasa ang COVID-19, lalong umiiral ang kawalan ng disiplina o masasabing kamangmangan sa pagtatapon ng kanilang basura partikular na ang face masks. Yes! Sandamukal na face masks ang makikita ngayon sa mga kalsada sa maraming lugar sa Metro Manila. Karaniwang mga disposable face masks ang makikita na ang karamihan ay tinatangay-tangay pa ng hangin sa kalsada.

Mula nang kumalat ang COVID-19 sa buong mundo, isa sa mga naging mabenta ang face masks. Halos lahat ng tao ay may face mask sapagkat ito ang isa sa pananggalang para huwag mahawahan ng virus. Sumasama sa droplets ang virus kapag humatsing o umubo ang isang tao at ito ang nalalanghap kapag walang face masks.

Biglang nagmahal ang face masks at maraming negosyante ang kumamal ng pera dahil dito. Hanggang ngayon, mabenta pa rin ang face masks. Nauso na rin ang mga nilalabhang face masks kaya marami na rin ang gumagawa o nananahi ng mga ito.

Nagbabala ang mga environmentalists na hindi lamang ang pagkalat ng COVID-19 ang nangyayari kapag hindi isinaayos ang pagtatapon ng face masks. Apektado rin ng mga itinapong face masks ang marine life. Napo-pollute ang tubig dahil sa mga itinapong face masks. Isa pa sa sinabi ng mga environmentalist, kapag hindi isinaayos ang pagtatapon ng face masks maaaring may mag-recycle ng mga ito. Gaya nang nangyari sa Thailand na ang mga tinapong face masks ay ni-recycle at ibinenta muli.

Magkaroon ng disiplina sa pagtatapon ng face masks. Itapon sa tamang lalagyan. Huwag palubhain ang problema na dinaranas ng bansa ngayon.



# Decongesting NCR

“Current community quarantine in place in Metro Manila has made people realize how difficult life is here in the NCR.

Published 7 hours ago  
on May 12, 2020 12:21 AM  
By [Harry Roque](#)



In a move to decongest the National Capital Region (NCR), promote countryside development, and in light of our current coronavirus disease (COVID-19) situation — to help stranded people go back to their home provinces — the Duterte administration recently institutionalized the Balik Probinsya Program.

In my recent media briefing in Malacañang, I announced the signing by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte of Executive Order (EO) 114, or the Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa Program (BPP).

The BPP can be viewed as one of the possible long-term solutions to address the COVID-19 pandemic and other similar situations in the future.

A primary reason for EO 114 is to create a policy of balanced regional development. This can be realized by ensuring that the state’s wealth is equally distributed, that resources and opportunities that boost countryside development are in place, and that adequate social services are available for the people.

Balanced regional development is also possible if there are full employment opportunities and prospects for industrialization, as well as measures to ensure an improved quality of life in the rural areas.

To implement the measures under the BPP, a Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa Council will be established and will be headed by the Executive Secretary, assisted by the Secretary of the National Economic and Development Authority as vice-chair.

For the long-term, the program will introduce policy shifts to make way for countryside development, including the development of new economic zones or urban centers in provinces, among other measures that will ensure balanced regional development.

Meanwhile, the short-term goals of the program include the provision of financial and non-cash assistance, temporary lodging, daily sustenance allowance and transportation to facilitate the movement of people from the NCR to the provinces, including those who were stranded in Metro Manila because of the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ).

Initially, I was informed that two provinces, Leyte and Camarines Sur, voluntarily participated in the pilot implementation of the program and are now ready to accept those who will be going back to the said provinces through the Balik Probinsya Program.

To those who will avail of the BPP, coordination will be through the Department of the Interior and Local Government. The Department of Transportation will provide means of transport, while the staging area will be at the National Housing Authority (NHA), since the general manager of the NHA will be the executive director of the Balik Probinsya Program.

Of course, the Department of Health (DoH) will also be involved in the program because we have to follow the DoH testing protocols before we let people from the NCR go back to the provinces. We have to comply with quarantine protocols because we do not want to spread COVID-19 in the provinces.

The current community quarantine in place in Metro Manila has made people realize how difficult life is here in the NCR. There is a lot of clamor for a return to rural areas as soon as the COVID-19 pandemic ends. That is why the President has supported to have the Balik Probinsya Program in place as soon as possible to help those who have expressed interest to move back to their home provinces.

In the course of this pilot implementation, the various government agencies involved will find ways on how to improve it to ensure that the objective behind this is achieved.

This government trusts that with the support and cooperation of all, we can hope that the Balik Probinsya Program will truly pave way for faster economic development in provinces and an improved quality of life for all.

# Duterte's national address on quarantine decision to air Tuesday

By: [Krissy Aguilar](#) - Reporter / [@KAguilarINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 11:17 PM May 11, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — President Rodrigo Duterte's address to the nation on his decision on quarantine measures in various areas will air Tuesday at 8 a.m., presidential spokesperson Harry Roque confirmed in a message to reporters Monday night.

The President was supposed to speak to the nation on Monday about his decision on whether to relax or extend the enhanced community quarantine in Metro Manila and other areas after May 15.

Duterte placed the entire [Luzon](#) in mid-March under ECQ to curb the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

It was supposed to be lifted on April 13 but a two-week extension, [ending on April 30](#), was approved by the President.

Before April 30, however, the Palace announced that Metro Manila and other high-risk areas for the coronavirus transmission would be kept under ECQ until May 15, while low-risk areas would be placed under general community quarantine (GCQ), under which some restrictions were relaxed.

Earlier, Malacañang said [only parts of Metro Manila might remain under ECQ](#) after May 15, depending on the severity of contagion in various localities.

As of Monday, the Department of Health has recorded [11,086 confirmed COVID-19 cases](#) nationwide with 726 deaths and 1,999 recoveries.

/atm

# Palace: Life won't return to normal under GCQ as virus threat remains

By: [Krissy Aguilar](#) - Reporter / [@KAguilarINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 02:12 PM May 11, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — Even if some areas shift to general community quarantine (GCQ), Malacañang on Monday cautioned that this does not mean that life will return to “normal” as the threat of COVID-19 remains without available vaccine or cure.

“Dahil ang ibig sabihin lang ng pagbaba ng ECQ [enhanced community quarantine] sa GCQ, meron pa rin pong banta, hindi lang ganun katindi pero pag binaba po sa GCQ, yan po’y kritikal pa rin ang ating sitwasyon,” Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said in an online press briefing.

(Shifting from ECQ to GCQ means there is still a threat but not that bad. In shifting to GCQ, we’re still a critical situation.)

“Hindi na po tayo puwedeng bumalik sa normal na bago dumating ang COVID-19 habang walang bakuna, habang walang gamot sa COVID-19,” he added.

(We cannot return to normal like the time when COVID-19 was not around if there is still no vaccine or cure for the respiratory disease.)

Earlier, Roque said only parts of Metro Manila may remain [under ECQ](#) after May 15. He explained it would depend on the severity of contagion in various localities.

President Rodrigo Duterte [on Monday is expected to decide](#) on whether to relax or extend the ECQ in various areas after May 15.

Roque said the President is set to meet the members of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) to discuss the quarantine measures.

Among the matters on the table, Roque said, are [the recommendation of Metro Manila mayors](#) to extend ECQ for 15 more days, place the metropolis under GCQ, or allow local governments to impose a lockdown in specific barangays.

“Sa tingin ko po magkakaroon ng linaw ngayong araw, ayaw ko pong mag speculate, the recommendations of the mayors will be considered.” Roque said.

(I believe this will be cleared today. I don’t want to speculate but the recommendations of the mayors will be considered.)

As of Sunday, [there are 10,794 confirmed COVID-19 cases](#) nationwide with 719 fatalities and 1,924 recoveries.

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1272983/palace-life-wont-return-to-normal-under-gcq-as-covid-19-threat-remains#ixzz6MAhOVLjx>

# 'No going back to normal'

Palace: GCQ limitations to rule daily living from hereon

posted May 12, 2020 at 01:50 am

by [Vito Barcelo and Joel E. Zurbano, Maricel V. Cruz](#)

Whether Luzon will remain under the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) or a general community quarantine (GCQ), "life will not be back to normal," Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said Monday.



*TRANSPORT HEARING. 'Are we prepared to open public transport amid COVID-19?' Senator Grace Poe, chair of the Senate Committee on Public Services, says as she presides over a hearing on the resumption of public transport on Monday via video teleconferencing, where Senator Ralph Recto and LTFRB Chairman Martin Delgra (inset below) answered via video call. Senate PRIB*

"There is no way anymore for the country to go back to its normal state before the [COVID-19] pandemic. We are no longer back to normal as we know it," Roque said.

"The general community quarantine is now the new normal. Unless there is a vaccine, we cannot go back to normal as we know it," he added.

Under the GCQ, areas in Metro Manila with moderate to low risks of COVID-19 infection may gradually open industries after May 15, 2020 provided that the government's minimum health standards are imposed and observed.

These include strict physical distancing measures and proper hygiene.

Partial operations of public transportation will also be allowed.

The Department of Health recently said that there will be no return to normal life, such as eating out at restaurants, attending a concert or watching a live sporting event, until at least the end of next year because there will be no coronavirus vaccine available until then.

Meanwhile, Malacañang admitted that the government was unable to meet its goal of conducting 8,000 COVID-19 tests by the end of April.

However, Roque said the government is beefing up testing capacities by establishing more testing centers.

"First, I can't dispute that we did not meet the goal that by the end of April 30, the DOH can conduct 8,000 tests daily. We were delayed," he said. "One thing that I can assure you is that we're taking steps to increase our testing capacity."

Roque said the country has 28 testing centers so far, including four mega swabbing facilities. He said these would help achieve the target of conducting 30,000 tests daily.

Roque also said that while some parts of Metro Manila could shift to a GCQ after May 15, law enforcers would remain strict in implementing mandatory measures such as wearing of face masks and social distancing.

Senator Cynthia Villar on Monday said she supported the proposal to put parts of Metro Manila under GCQ after May 15.

"I agree that we should start re-opening the economy and begin the implementation of new normal measures in Metro Manila areas that have been successful in keeping their COVID-19 cases under control," Villar said.

The senator added that the prolonged ECQ is already taking its toll on the economy and employment and causing distress among workers and their families.

"We all know that the government cannot provide assistance to everybody affected by this public health emergency. We should now start re-opening the economy with health protocols such as the use of face masks and the practice of social distancing strictly implemented," Villar said.

Earlier, Villar recommended the return of workers in labor-intensive sectors such as construction, manufacturing and agriculture.

As of May 8, 2020, Metro Manila areas with the lowest number of cases per 100,000 population are: Caloocan (14.5), Navotas (14.9), Malabon (15), Valenzuela (17.1), Marikina (28.1), Las Pinas (32.6), Muntinlupa (32.9), Taguig (33.2), and Pateros (33.8)

In the House, Assistant Minority Leader France Castro said the two-month lockdown would amount to nothing unless the government sets in place a comprehensive and intensified medical plan to be implemented when the quarantine is finally lifted.

Castro added that community quarantines alone will not stop the spread of COVID-19. They should be paired with genuine and fast mass testing, systematic contact tracing and sufficient isolation and quarantine facilities so that communities can adequately contain the virus, she added.

"If the administration continues its snail-paced testing, contact tracing, inadequate isolation, and quarantine facilities, the nine weeks of ECQ would have been for nothing and prematurely lifting the ECQ without these vital measures in place, might only make things worse," Castro said.

Albay Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda agreed that "exhaustive" testing and tracing efforts will be necessary, as the country considers a possible shift from ECQ to GCQ.



*HOMESCHOOLED. Public school teacher Donabelle Bato (right) and her son spend time on basic reading lessons in Barangay Panghulo, Malabon on Monday as her daughter watches – another sign of the 'new normal' in a coronavirus-afflicted world. Norman Cruz*

"We need tools other than ECQ extensions. We need to really be exhaustive with testing and tracing. The national strategy has to shift to one where we leave no stone unturned when it comes to testing and tracing," he added.

# Gradual ECQ lifting urged

Published 3 hours ago  
on May 12, 2020 04:00 AM  
By [Keith A. Calayag](#)



Members of the minority bloc in the House of Representatives are calling for a gradual and cautious lifting of the enhanced community quarantine.

“In the interest of public health and safety, there is a need for a gradual, cautious and informed approach to modifying quarantine measures, where the resumption of economic activity is done in phases based on an area’s risk level, in order to allow rules and protocols to adapt as needed,” stated House Resolution 837 filed by 18 lawmakers from the minority bloc.

The resolution also said the country should follow the guidance of the World Health Organization to “test, test, test” all suspected and probable COVID-19 cases.

“Given the high number of confirmed COVID-19 cases that are asymptomatic, regular residence-based and work-based mass testing and contact tracing must also be implemented in order to accurately profile areas and limit disease transmission.”

The resolution calls for ramping of COVID-19 testing and production of testing kits.

It also urges the government to provide free testing for the poor, particularly suspected and probable cases and frontline health workers and to ensure that all COVID-19 patients receive free treatment in public hospitals.



## GCQ sa Metro Manila kinontra ni Sotto

Last updated May 11, 2020

Hindi pabor si Senate President Vicente `Tito` Sotto III na ipatupad ng sabay-sabay ang general community quarantine (GCQ) sa Metro Manila at iba pang lugar sa Luzon.

“Kung ako ang tatanungin, kung susundin ko `yung mga report ng mga health experts, hindi ko pa rin papayagan `yung GCQ over all, hindi pwede, hindi siguro,” pahayag ni Sotto sa panayam sa CNN Philippines.

Ayon kay Sotto, sang-ayon siyang isailalim sa GCQ ang ibang lungsod sa Metro Manila na mababa ang kaso ng COVID-19 subalit kung mataas pa rin, dapat lang na hindi tanggalin ang ECQ.

“Siguro modified sa ibang lugar, `yung mga kaunti lang `yung mga apektado, at saka `yung mga sumusunod talaga sa mga patakaran, ganoon siguro. Pero `yung ibang area na medyo malala pa, based on the statistics, ng mga numbers ng mga experts, hindi pa puwede,” ani Sotto.

“Puwedeng mag-GCQ sa ibang mga area. Pero kung hindi, hindi sila nakakasiguro, may second wave pa, we will be best advised na ECQ pa rin,” dagdag pa nito.

Nauna nang nagrekomenda ang mga Metro Manila mayor ng tatlong quarantine option habang papalapit na ang pagtatapos ng ECQ sa Mayo 15.

Isa sa mga opsiyon ng Metro Manila Council ay palawigin ang ECQ ng panibagong dalawang linggo para para makontrol ang coronavirus disease.

Inirekomenda rin ng konseho sa Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) ang paglipat sa GCQ mula sa ECQ, at ang pagkakaroon ng modified community quarantine, na kumbinasyon ng ECQ at GCQ sa ilang lugar sa Metro Manila.



UP experts recommend extending ECQ for Metro

May 12, 2020

TITLE: Manila, 4 other areas

PAGE 1/ 1/2

DATE

# UP experts recommend extending ECQ for Metro Manila, 4 other areas

**Published** May 11, 2020 10:59pm  
By JULIA MARI ORNEDO, GMA News

Experts from the University of the Philippines (UP) are urging the government to extend the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) over Metro Manila, Batangas, Cebu, Zamboanga del Sur, and Davao City beyond Friday, May 15.

In a study, researchers Guido David, Ranjit Singh Rye, and Ma. Patricia Agbulos said that the ECQ must be extended in these areas to sustain the gains achieved so far against the COVID-19 pandemic until the government has “scaled up and rolled out its programs and its initiatives for mass testing, contact tracing, and isolation of infective individuals.”

They added that the government may consider extending the ECQ over Albay, Bataan, Iloilo, Laguna, and Pampanga, depending on the health provisions in these areas.

“With a continued ECQ, the number of COVID-19 cases in NCR should be around 12,000 by June 15 with 800 deaths. Without any changes in the trend, the projection is 14,000 cases by June 15 with 1,000 deaths. A premature relaxation of the ECQ in NCR may result in an escalation of 24,000 cases and 1,700 deaths by June 15,” they warned.

The experts also underscored that a premature lifting of the ECQ could force the country to make further costly interventions that will drive up the death toll and total economic cost of the pandemic.

“We wish to emphasize that we are faced with a choice not between the economy and public health (lives vs livelihood), but between a less or more costly disruption to the lives of ordinary Filipinos,” they said.

President Rodrigo Duterte [was expected to decide on the fate of the ECQ on Monday.](#)

The Philippines [has logged 11,086 confirmed COVID-19 cases with 1,999 recoveries and 726 deaths as of Monday afternoon.](#)

## Metro Manila cities

The UP team noted that Quezon City had the highest number of new COVID-19 cases from April 30 to May 6 in Metro Manila, followed by Parañaque, Manila, Makati, Pasay, and Taguig.

They estimated that the reproduction number in Malabon, Navotas, Parañaque, Muntinlupa, and Pasay was greater than 1, meaning that each infected person in these cities could transmit the coronavirus to more than one person

UP experts recommend extending ECQ for Metro

TITLE: Manila, 4 other areas

PAGE 1/ 2/2

May 12, 2020

DATE

The experts also said it was possible that Makati, Taguig, and Quezon City had a reproduction number close to or greater than 1.

Meanwhile, the “best-performing local government units” were Marikina, Mandaluyong, San Juan, Valenzuela, and Pasig.

The experts also noted that over 1,000 cases in Metro Manila still had unvalidated data, “so it is not yet clear to which LGUs these cases belong to.”

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque earlier [said the ECQ may be downgraded to a general community quarantine in certain cities in Metro Manila after May 15.](#)

## Recommendations

The UP team said the “weakest link” in the Philippines’ COVID-19 response is effective contact tracing, stressing that identifying all the contacts of confirmed cases is crucial.

They urged the government to hire and train more contact tracers and make use of digital contract tracing applications.

The Department of Information and Communications Technology earlier [said it was eyeing a contact tracing app developed in Singapore.](#)

The experts also urged the expansion of the healthcare system’s capacity and the creation of more supportive isolation programs and facilities that will accommodate COVID-19 patients or suspects.

They also urged the Department of Health to hasten the accreditation of testing centers and called on government agencies to launch information drives for individuals and businesses about the “new normal.”

There are now [26 COVID-19 testing centers nationwide](#), with 90 others undergoing the laboratory accreditation process.

On May 10, Sunday, the country [finally achieved its goal for April 30 of conducting 8,000 tests daily.](#) — **BM, GMA News**

## COVID-19 WATCH

# Vaccine vital for normalcy return – Palace

Published 14 hours ago  
on May 11, 2020 05:25 PM

By [Francis Wakefield](#)



Malacañang reiterated on Monday that lives cannot yet return to normalcy regardless if their areas are still under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) or already under general community quarantine (GCQ) unless a vaccine has been discovered against the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

In a briefing, Palace spokesman Harry Roque reminded the public that their lives cannot return to normal even after a GCQ has been implemented, saying that things will never be the same again until a vaccine against COVID-19 will be discovered.

When asked if government can afford another extension for another 15 days in case the IATF decides in extending the ECQ in Metro Manila, Roque said he doesn't want to speculate on what will be their possible recommendation.

This after reports indicated that 10 of 17 Metro Manila mayors following the Metro Manila Council meeting on Saturday, 9 May, indicated that they are in favor of extending the ECQ for another two weeks.

With regards to the distribution of SAP to areas which will remain under ECQ, Roque said government will find ways to get the funding to provide financial assistance to those affected by the lockdown.



## Malacañang aminadong mabagal ang mass testing

Last updated May 11, 2020

Inamin ng Malacañang na mabagal ang pag-usad ng COVID-19 mass testing dahil nagkaroon ng pagkaantala sa pagsusulong nito.

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque na hindi nakamit ang target na 8,000 test kada araw ng Department of Health (DOH) pero tinitiyak nito na babawi sila sa mga susunod na araw.

Ito aniya ang dahilan kaya itinalaga ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte si Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) president at CEO Vince Dizon para magtatag ng maraming testing facility.

Matatandaang itinalaga ng Pangulo si Dizon bilang deputy chief ni Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. na siyang chief implementer ng National Police against COVID-19.

“Hindi ko madi-dispute na medyo hindi natin nakamit `yung goal na by April 30 mayroon ng eight thousand na daily testing ang DOH, na-delay po tayo. Pero one thing that I can assure you is we are taking steps to increase our testing capacity,” ani Roque.

Sa ngayon, sinabi ng kalihim na mayroon ng 28 testing center ang DOH, kabilang na dito ang mega swabbing facility at target na makagawa ng 30,000 test kada araw.

Sinabi pa ni Roque na aasahan nila sa mga susunod na araw na tataas pa ang target para sa mass rapid testing ng hanggang 2.2 million para matukoy kung nasaan ang hindi nakikitang kalaban.

“Ninanis natin ang 90,000 PCR tests ang magagawa ar ang gobyerno alone is aiming for 2.2 million rapid test kits. So combined, we are hoping that we will eventually upgrade and improve our testing capacity,” wika pa ni Roque.

Nauna rito, pinuna ni Senador Sherwin Gatchalian ang mabagal na pagkilos ng gobyerno sa pagsusulong ng mass testing sa mga local government unit kaya nabigo na mapigilan ang pagkalat ng coronavirus sa bansa. (Aileen Taliping)

# Gov't agency heads can combine, adopt own alternative work arrangements amid COVID-19 emergency — CSC

**Published** May 11, 2020 12:52pm

By NICOLE-ANNE C. LAGRIMAS, GMA News

Government agency heads can combine alternative working arrangements or adopt their own to fit the needs of their offices during the COVID-19 emergency, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) said Monday.

Days after the CSC issued revised [interim guidelines for alternative working arrangements](#), Commissioner Aileen Lizada explained the parameters of five possible setups government agencies may implement during the state of national emergency.

A work-from-home arrangement is applicable in areas under enhanced community quarantine or those under general community quarantine, where there are physical distancing requirements and reduced public transportation, Lizada said at the Laging Handa briefing.

Senior citizens, as well as those with immunodeficiency, comorbidities, or other health risks, and pregnant women should work from home "except when their services are indispensable under the circumstances or when office work is permitted," according to the [CSC guidelines](#).

Lizada said other arrangements are having a skeletal workforce, a four-day compressed workweek, staggered working hours, and other arrangements agency heads deem applicable to their office's functions.

In the compressed workweek setup, Lizada said employees need not stay in their offices for 10 hours in order to complete the 40-hour workweek in four days. She said they can be in their offices for a certain number of hours then take some work home.

According to the rules, employees who are part of the skeletal workforce are entitled to hazard pay on top of compensatory time off or overtime pay as well as other applicable allowances, subject to accounting and auditing.

Lizada said those working from home should not expect overtime pay and hazard pay.

For their part, government agencies are tasked to provide their employees health and psychosocial interventions like stress debriefing; appropriate personal protective equipment for frontliners, reduced working hours, reasonable transportation facilities and housing quarters when practicable, among others.

Lizada added that agencies should each designate a safety and health officer, create a safety and health committee and/or a special investigation committee, and provide emergency medical services to all employees, including job order and contractual staff, for work-related accidents.

The official said the revised guidelines will take effect on May 22 and apply retroactively. They will remain in force until President Rodrigo Duterte lifts the state of national emergency. — **RSJ, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/737672/gov-t-agency-heads-can-combine-adopt-own-alternative-work-arrangements-amid-covid-19-emergency-csc/story/>

Kung walang aberya, pagbabago sa community

TITLE: quarantine naiiralin na

PAGE 1/ 1/2

May 12, 2020

DATE



## **KUNG WALANG ABERYA, PAGBABAGO SA COMMUNITY QUARANTINE PAIRALIN NA**

May 11, 2020 @ 3:17 PM 16 hours ago  
Views: 113

Para magsimula nang gumana at bumalik kahit unti-unti ang serbisyo publiko ng gobyerno at ang paghahahanapbuhay sa parte ng mga nasa pribadong sektor, may kasunduan na sa pagitan ng Department of Health, Department of Labor and Employment at Civil Service Commission.

Magsisimula ito sa Mayo 22, 2020, depende sa kalagayan natin sa Corona Virus Disease-19.

At maging ang ibang departamento ng pamahalaan ay naghahanda na rin para sa mga pagbabago.

Kailangan nang gawin umano ito upang magkaroon ng buhay ang pamahalaan, ang mga negosyante, kasama ang mga operator ng mga pampublikong transportasyon, ang mga obrero sa lahat ng lararangan.

Pero lahat ng ito ay nakaangkla pa rin sa kung ano ang pagsisimulang kalagayang pangkalusugan ng higit na nakararami at kung magkakaroon ng pagbabago sa pinaiiral na community quarantine.

Habang tinitipa natin ito, isusumite pa lang ang rekomendasyon ng higit na nakararami sa mga mayor na bumubuo ng Metro Manila Council sa Inter-Agency Task Force na magsusumite naman nito kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte para sa kaukulang desisyon.

Siyam na mayor ang may gusto ng pagpapalawig ng Enhanced Community Quarantine, lima ang pabor sa General Community Quarantine at dalawa ang walang pang malinaw na posisyon.

Para sa ibang nasa ilalim ng ECQ gaya ng Central Luzon at Calabarzon, hindi pa rin malinaw kung ano ang patutunguhan ng mga ito...kung manatili sa ECQ o papunta sa GCQ.

### **PAGBABAGO SA COMMUNITY QUARANTINE**

Mayroon nang mga lalawigan, lungsod, bayan at barangay na ginawang GCQ mula sa ECQ.

Pero maaaring babalik sila sa ECQ kung biglang darami ang magkakasakit ng COVID-19.

Meron namang mga localized na manatili sa ECQ gaya ng mga barangay sa isang lungsod o bayan o bayan o lungsod sa isang lalawigan, depende sa desisyon ng mga lokal na pamahalaan.

Pero lumalabas na ang desisyon ng IATF ang masusunod sa lahat ng pagbabago sa anyo ng community quarantine sa mga malalawak na lugar at ang rekomendasyon nito ay maaaring siya ang aaprubahan ni Pang. Digong sa araw na ito.

Kung walang aberya, pagbabago sa community

TITLE: quarantine naiiralin na

PAGE 1/ 2/3

May 12, 2020

DATE

## **MGA MAHAHALAGANG USAPIN**

Kauna-unahan sa pinakamahalagang usapin ang kawalan pa rin ng masasabing gamot o bakuna laban sa Covid-19.

Hangga't walang gamot o bakuna, mananatili ang kalagayang quarantine sa iba't ibang anyo sa bansa.

At sa ilalim ng iba't ibang anyo ng quarantine, paiiralin pa rin ang mga patakaran para sa social distancing sa labas ng bahay, pampublikong lugar at maging sa mga transportasyon, pagsusuot ng face mask, stay at home, pagbabawal na lumabas nang walang kaukulang pass o permit, pagbabawal sa maramihang pagtitipon, maging sa mga simbahan at eskwelahan at iba pa.

Ang mga hindi nahatiran naman ng ayuda ay bibigyan pa rin ng ayuda, lalo na ang mga nasa ilalim ng ECQ.

## **ANG SERBISYO PUBLIKO**

Ewan natin kung papaano.

Pero gaya ng nabanggit natin sa itaas, mukhang pipipilitin ng pamahalaan na magbalik serbisyo na ito para na rin sa mga mamamayan.

Magtatrabaho na ang mga empleyado opisyal ng pamahalaan at maaaring mag-stay at home sa bahay lang ang trabaho ng mga may gamit para rito gaya ng kompyuter at internet.

Maaaring pumasok sa mga opisina ngunit skeletal ang pwersa.

Ito'y para matugunan ang pangangailangan ng mga pupunta sa mga opisina ng gobyerno na mga manggagawa, negosyante at iba pa ukol sa pagbabayad ng buwis o paniningil ng utang, kontribusyon o benepisyo sa sa Social Security System at Government Service Insurance System, rehistro ng mga sasakyan, pagkuha ng lisensya na kinailangan ang pagpapakita nang personal ng mamamayan, pagsasampa ng mga reklamo at marami pang iba.

Essential o mahahalagang serbisyo ang aasikasuhin ng mga skeletal force.

## **PAGBUHAY NG EKONOMIYA**

Ang mga manggagawa ay ibabalik na rin sa trabaho gaya ng mga pagawaing-bayan ng pamahalaan mula lokal hanggang nasyunal.

Maging sa mga pribadong kompanya, balik-trabaho na ang mga ito.

Sa transportasyon, sa pabrika, sa mga opisina, sa restoran, sa mga bukid at pangisdaan.

Pero paiiralin pa rin ang stay at home kung kaya, unti-unting pagpasok at hindi biglaang maramihan hangga't maaari, 50 porsyento sa pasahero sa pampublikong transportasyon at kontroladong pasahero sa mga pribadong sasakyan, maramihan kung kayang mabigyan ng lahat ng kondisyon na hindi magkasakit at makahawa sa COVID-19 ang mga obrero at iba pa.

Mananatili pa rin ang social distancing, pagsusuot ng face mask, paghuhugas ng kamay sa tubig o sanitizer at iba pa.

Ang mahalaga, dapat nang muling gumana ang mga trabaho at negosyong mahahalaga na makapagbibigay-buhay ng ekonomiya ng bansa.

Kung hindi, tuluyan nang babagsak ang ekonomiya ng bansa at ang buhay ng mga mamamayan.

Kung walang aberya, pagbabago sa community

May 12, 2020

TITLE: quarantine naiiralin na

PAGE 1/ 3/3

DATE

## SUMUNOD SA BATAS

Ang masasabi lang natin, lahat ay dapat sumunod sa mga patakarang paiiralin ng pamahalaan para sa kaligtasan ng lahat sa Covid-19 at manatiling malusog ang lahat.

Kung meron naman tayong naiisip na dagdag na magandang patakaran, gawin natin.

Kung meron namang palatandaan na may nagaganap na Covid-19 sa ating hanay, dapat tayong mabilis na mag-ulat sa mga kinauukulan para sa agarang aksyon.

Para naman sa mga inabutan na ng gutom at kawalan ng pagsimulan, huwag mag-atubiling lumapit sa mga kapitbahay na maaaring makatulong o kina kapitan at kagawad, kina mayor at konsehal, kina gobernador at bokal, kina kongresman, senador hanggang kina Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa Malakanyang.

May solusyon ang lahat basta maging bukas lang tayo sa lahat ng komunikasyon, pagpapasensya, pakikinig, pagtitiyaga at iba pa.

Good luck sa ating lahat.

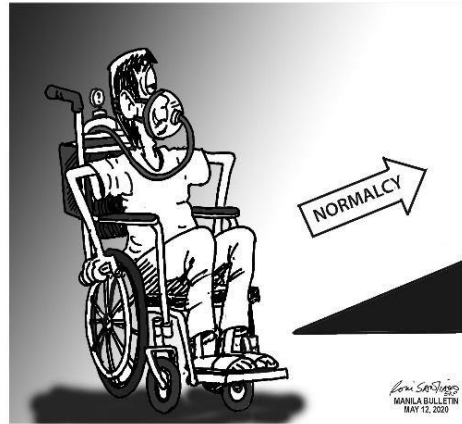


# Easing Metro ECQ basically a health issue

EDITORIAL

Published May 12, 2020, 12:37 AM

It may not yet be time to end the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) lockdown imposed on Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon, but it should be time to ease it, to allow for a gradual return to normalcy.



The ECQ stopped all mass transport systems, closed down all business operations, and banned all mass gatherings. These government restrictions came with personal precautions urged on individuals – social distancing – keeping a least one meter away from the next person, wearing of facemasks in public, constant checking of temperature, and higher levels of personal hygiene such as constant washing of hands and sanitizing them with alcohol.

The combination of all these restrictions and suggestions has kept COVID-19 infections and deaths down. We read of cases continuing to rise in some countries – 1.3 million cases and over 77,000 deaths in the United States; Brazil now having the most cases – 156,000 – in Latin America, with 10,656 deaths; a recurrence of cases in South Korea after it reopened its night clubs.

The world total of infections as of Sunday topped 4 million, with 227,000 deaths. But most of the world's countries are now moving to ease restrictions – Canada, Germany, Italy, Pakistan, Britain. Even in the US, despite its still rising numbers, 47 of its 50 states have eased their restrictions. The Philippines was one of the earliest countries to lockdown a major part of its territory – Metro Manila and all of Luzon – and that should explain our considerably favorable statistics—10,610 confirmed cases as of Sunday, 704 deaths, and 1,842 recoveries.

Businesses, offices, and factories have had to shut down since March 15, causing economic losses that will reflect in our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at the end of the year. The government has had to provide food and monetary aid to millions of people, but it cannot possibly reach all of them and meet all their needs.

Last weekend, Metro Manila's mayors met via teleconferencing and Manila, Quezon City, Makati, Malabon, and Las Piñas were for easing the ECQ to a less restrictive General Community Quarantine (GCQ). But ten other mayors wanted the ECQ lockdown to continue.

The Metro mayors' views, of course, are merely recommendatory. President Duterte and the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) on the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases will have the final say.

COVID-19 is ultimately a health problem. It has had economic repercussions for private industry and the national economy. It has upset the basic day-to-day lives of the people. But it remains primarily a health problem. Are cases in Metro Manila still rising unduly, for example, that it should remain under ECQ?

We thus urge that the views of health experts – in the government, in the private sector, perhaps in the World Health Organization – be considered in any decision on the level of restrictions in the country or in any of its parts.

Tags: [Roni Santiago](#)

Source: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/05/12/easing-metro-ecq-basically-a-health-issue/>

## Another extension

posted May 12, 2020 at 12:20 am

by [Emil Jurado](#)

After May 15, the Enhanced Community Quarantine in Metro Manila will most likely be extended another two weeks, up to the end of May.

This was the consensus among most of the mayors of Metro Manila, which is still considered a critical area as far as the COVID-19 pandemic is concerned. To what extent the quarantine will be modified, the Inter-Agency Task Force is still studying. We can only guess.

Santa Banana, I can understand the impatience of people who have lost their jobs and their livelihoods to return to what is called the new normal. We can understand the pressure that President Duterte must be under. But this pandemic is not something we can easily brush off. Otherwise, all the previous gains we have had in fighting the disease will be wasted.

This is why I am surprised that the Department of Health is now insisting that we are beginning to flatten the curve. I don't know how they can say that, when the numbers remain high.

At least we can be thankful that the number of recovering patients is increasing. But until the number of new coronavirus cases plateaus, we can neither rest nor heave a sigh of relief.

It is very likely that we will have two more weeks of sacrifice and distress on the part of the people. The IATF is studying modifications and other options.

There has been speculation that public transportation may resume, although I wonder how social distancing can be observed.

\*\*

It's amazing that comments and remarks against the ABS-CBN shutdown, solicited by the network itself, are straying from the core issues. Most of the arguments are irrelevant and even ridiculous!

It should be clear by now that the core issue is the absence of a franchise. This does not authorize the NTC to give ABS-CBN a provisional authority to operate. This is pursuant to a 2014 decision of the Supreme Court that said the NTC cannot give a public utility firm to operate for a lack of franchise. Otherwise, the commissioners would be committing graft and corruption.

It is for this reason retired Supreme Court Justice Antonio Carpio suggested that the company should seek a temporary restraining order and question the decision.

Aside from this, there are many unresolved issues against ABS-CBN like that quo warranto petition filed by Solicitor-General Jose Calida, citing violations of the terms of the franchise, and the issue of Philippine Depositary Receipts to foreigners who bought shares of the network in violation of the constitutional provision that says media should be owned and managed, 100 percent, by Filipinos.

ABS-CBN only has itself to blame for its predicament.

Now it is trying to twist facts, trying to show that the shutdown was illegal. Senator Grace Poe is among those saying this – an obvious conflict of interest, since her family has an exclusive contract with the network to show movies of her late father, Fernando Poe, Jr.

\*\*

The Department of Health feared the exodus of health workers because the American Embassy reportedly offered immediate granting of visas to nurses in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Consequently, the Department of Foreign Affairs came out with a statement that if health workers in the Philippines want to work abroad, there was nothing it could do because it is the workers' right to choose where they want to work. This came after the Department of Labor and Employment suggested a ban on health workers seeing employment abroad.

I believe, however, that if President Duterte wants to stop this exodus, he can legally do it using the police powers of the state.

\*\*

Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Ano has a list of no less than 50 local government officials who misused funds intended for social amelioration.

I had warned government that as long as there is human discretion and intervention, the opportunity for corruption will always be there.

Ano says he has the list – I wonder if he will make it public. These local officials need to be held accountable for their misdeeds!



## EDITORIAL - The other calamity

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

As in other calamities, the places that have managed to avoid the worst coronavirus disease 2019 contagion and at the same time avoid economically ruinous lockdowns are those that prepared early and efficiently for the pandemic, notably South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Without waiting for advisories from the World Health Organization or more information from Beijing on the extent of China's newest public health problem, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong initiated, as early as January, mass COVID-19 testing, required the public to wear face masks, boosted contact tracing supported by digital apps starting at airports, prepared isolation and quarantine facilities, and imposed various levels of physical distancing.

With the Philippines now preoccupied with battling COVID-19, the country should not overlook the other dangers that call for constant preparedness. The typhoon season is just a few weeks away, and physical distancing can quickly fly out the window in the typical disaster evacuation center.

Over the weekend, the country was reminded of yet another disaster that can strike any time. At 3:18 a.m. on Sunday, Metro Manila and neighboring provinces were rocked by a magnitude-5.4 earthquake whose epicenter was located 22 kilometers northeast of Lubang in Occidental Mindoro. Fortunately, no damage or injury was reported. The quake was strong enough to rouse people from sleep and make them rush out of several buildings in Metro Manila amid the COVID curfew and quarantine.

Seismologists have been warning that Metro Manila is ripe for the "big one" – a powerful shifting of the Marikina Valley Fault that could unleash apocalyptic death and destruction in the National Capital Region and parts of Bulacan, Rizal, Cavite and Laguna.

Since the warning was issued a few years ago, various government agencies have been boosting earthquake response capabilities and protocols. Even with the country focused on the COVID-19 pandemic, earthquakes pose a constant threat. Those earthquake preparedness measures must be constantly revisited to ensure their timely activation in case the worst scenario materializes.

# BFAR raises red tide warning over three provinces

May 11, 2020 | 12:01 am



THE BUREAU of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has warned consumers against eating shellfish harvested from three areas due to red tide contamination.

The BFAR said that shellfish from Dauis and Tagbilaran City in Bohol; Lianga Bay in Surigao del Sur; and Balite Bay, Mati City in Davao Oriental are not safe for human consumption for the duration of the red tide.

“All types of shellfish and *Acetes* sp. or *alamang* gathered from the areas are not safe for human consumption. Fish, squid, shrimp, and crab are safe for human consumption provided that they are fresh and washed thoroughly, and internal organs such as gills and intestines are removed before cooking,” the BFAR said. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

## Dynamite fishing sa Pilar, Capiz, talamak!

[BANAT NI BATUIGAS](#) - [Bening Batuigas](#) (Pilipino Star Ngayon) - May 12, 2020 - 12:00am

GRABE ang dynamite fishing sa Pilar, Capiz kaya ang mga mangingisda roon ay wala nang nahuhuli sa karagatan. Dahil dito, tinatawagan ko si Pilar Mayor Perez na gumawa ng hakbang upang mapigilan ang dynamite fishing. Ipapakalat naman ni Capiz Provincial Police office chief Col. Julio Gustilo ang kapulisan upang mahuli ang mga gumagamit ng dinamita. Ngayong marami nang naghihirap dahil sa COVID-19, dapat putulin na ang masamang gawaing ito para sumagana ang isda.

Noong early 80's naging fishing ground ang karagatan ng Pilar, Capiz. Dito nakukuha ang mga semilya ng bangus, sugpo at alimango na ipinupunla sa mga palaisdaan. Kaya ang Capiz ay itinuring na seafood capital of the Philippines. Ngunit ngayong talamak ang dynamite fishing, halos wala nang nahuhuling isda roon. Sa malalayong lugar na nagtutungo ang mga mangingisda upang makahuli nang binebenta nila sa palengke. Kaya ang panawagan nila kina Mayor Perez at Colonel Gustilo na hulihin at panagutin sa batas ang mga gumagamit ng dinamita sa pangangisda. Totoo kaya na ang mga Bantay Dagat ay kakutsaba ng mga gumagamit ng dinamita?

Samantala, muling pinalawig ng Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) ang kanilang serbisyo sa Metro Manila. Puntahan ang website na [www.pcso.gov.ph](http://www.pcso.gov.ph) at i-klik ang E-Service and NCR online application para maproseso ang medical assistance para sa chemotherapy, dialysis, hemophilia at post-transplant medicine. Ayon kay PCSO General Manager Royina Germa, "The agency, adhering and complying to the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act, emphasizes and strengthens this auxiliary role especially in providing healthcare to Filipinos, bearing a part of the weight and augmenting government efforts in these strained and challenging times."

## Probe sought on Meralco bills, power outages

*posted* May 11, 2020 at 10:40 pm

by [Willie Casas](#)

Clean energy and consumer rights group Power for People Coalition on Monday asked the Manila Electric Company (Meralco) to explain the sudden jump in consumption reported by some consumers in their bills even as they suffering from power interruptions during the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) period.

Meralco has recorded 52 tripping events since May 6, even as some consumers discovered increases in recorded consumption by as much as three times during the ECQ as tabulated in their bills.

“We cannot help but feel that Meralco is using the ECQ as a convenient scapegoat to cover up their shortcomings.

While it is understandable that people at home will consume more electricity, it is incredible that consumption would increase three or four more times in just a month. And it is unbelievable that when malls, factories, offices, and other large electrical consumers are closed, Meralco’s grid is suddenly incapable of coping with the demand,” said P4P Convenor Gerry Arances.

# PAGASA: 'Ambo' may boost water level of Angat Dam

Published May 11, 2020, 3:16 PM

By *Ellalyn de Vera-Ruiz*

Tropical depression "Ambo" may boost the water level of Angat Dam by at least two to three meters, as the cyclone east of the country is forecast to move across Luzon late this week.



A part of Angat Dam is seen at Norzagaray, Bulacan. (JANSEN ROMERO / MANILA BULLETIN)

Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) hydrologist Richard Orendain said "Ambo" is projected to dump 100 to 150 millimeters of rainfall over the Angat Watershed when the tropical depression is expected to traverse Central Luzon.

At present, the water level of Angat Dam is at 188.43 meters.

Orendain cited that at least 990 millimeters of rainfall over the watershed area is needed to reach the dam's 210-meter normal high water level.

The reservoir has been consistently declining due to deficiency of rainfall over the watershed area in the past weeks.

Orendain assured that there will be enough water supply as the current water level of Angat Dam is still 8 meters above its 180-meter minimum operating level.

Authorities also remain optimistic that Angat Dam's water elevation will be able to gradually recover when rainy season sets in.

Orendain said that the water level in Angat Dam usually recovers in July during the peak of southwest monsoon or "habagat" season.

## FLOOD, LANDSLIDE WARNINGS UP

Orendain warned of possible flash floods in Leyte, Southern Leyte, Northern Samar, Western Samar, and Eastern Samar as these areas may experience the initial impact of "Ambo" by Thursday.

As the cyclone traverses the landmass of Luzon towards the weekend, PAGASA warned of possible flooding in the low-lying communities of Albay, Catanduanes, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Sorsogon, Masbate, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon, Oriental Mindoro, Occidental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales, Batanes, Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, and Metro Manila.

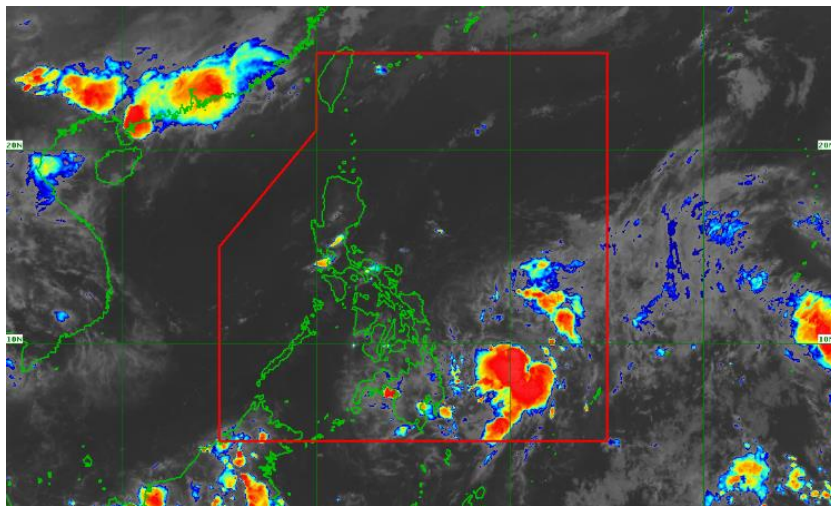
Landlides are also likely in the mountainous areas of Bicol, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon, Oriental Mindoro, Occidental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales, Batanes, Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Abra, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, and Apayao.



# PAGASA: 'Ambo' may become a tropical storm in the next 24 hours

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published May 12, 2020 12:43:33 AM



**Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, May 12)** – Tropical Depression “Ambo” is expected to intensify into a tropical storm for the next 24 hours, state weather agency said on Monday night.

As of 10 p.m. yesterday, PAGASA spotted “Ambo” 300 kilometers east northeast of Hinatuan, Surigao Del Sur with maximum winds up to 55 km/h near the center and gustiness of up to 70 km/h.

PAGASA added “Ambo” is slowly moving in northwest direction.

State weather agency also said “Ambo” will bring scattered light to moderate with at times heavy rains in Mindanao for the next 24 hours, coupled with thunderstorms.

Due to this development, PAGASA also warned residents in Mindanao to prepare for possible flooding and rain-induced landslides in highly vulnerable areas.

The state weather agency also cautioned fishermen in Eastern Visayas and CARAGA regions as there will be moderate to rough seas on the eastern seaboard of the two areas.

PAGASA did not discount the possibility of raising a Tropical Cyclone Wind Signal #1 in Eastern Visayas areas today due to the strong winds coming from “Ambo.”

“Ambo” is the country’s first tropical depression for this year. PAGASA earlier predicted the tropical depression will reach Bicol landmass either on Thursday or Friday.

## Bicol braces for 'Ambo's' landfall Thursday

*posted* May 12, 2020 at 12:50 am

by [Rio N. Araja](#)

Tropical Depression "Ambo" is forecast to make landfall in the Bicol region on Thursday.

Aldczar Aurelio, senior weather forecaster from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), said Ambo could strengthen into a tropical storm.

The country's first storm for 2020, "Ambo" on Monday slightly intensified while moving slowly westward over the Philippine Sea.

As of 11 a.m. Monday, the center of the tropical depression was estimated at 340 kilometers east of Hinatuan, Surigao del Norte.

Packing maximum sustained winds of 55 kms per hour near the center and gustiness of up to 70 kph, it was moving west slowly.

No tropical cyclone has so far been raised over any part of the country yet, the state weather bureau said Monday.

Chris Perez, a senior weather specialist of PAGASA, said Ambo "is still far from the landmass. It is still offshore within 24 hours. With Ambo's current location, no tropical cyclone wind signal was raised, and areas across the country do not experience (much) rains."

Based on PAGASA's forecast, the trough of Ambo will bring scattered light to moderate with isolated heavy rains during thunderstorms over Mindanao in the next 24 hours.

Further, moderate to rough seas will be experienced on the eastern seaboard of Eastern Visayas, Caraga, Davao Oriental and Davao Occidental.

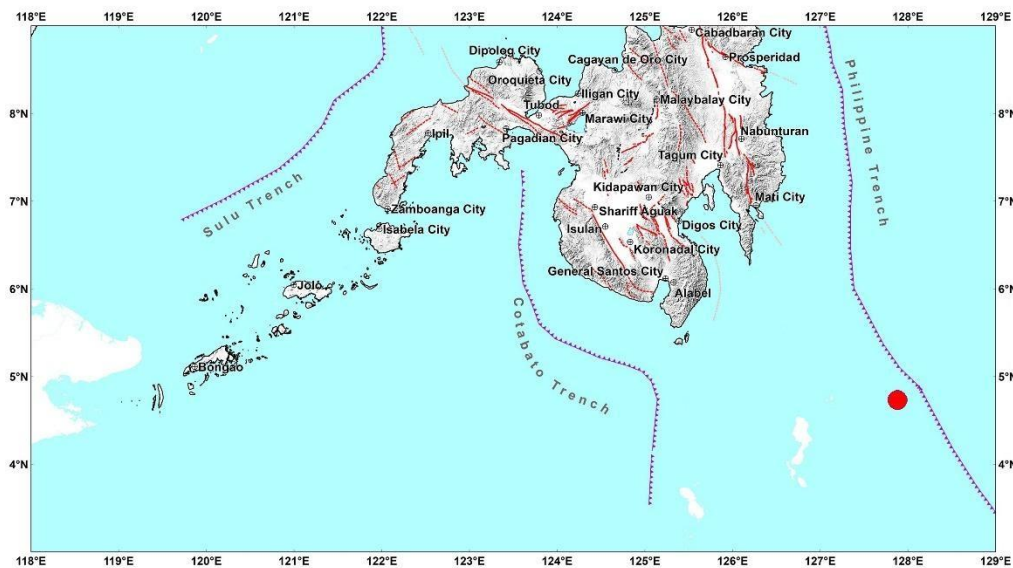
"Ambo is expected to be very near the Bicol Region by Thursday. Even before Thursday, areas around the Bicol Region may experience rains," Perez said.

# Phivolcs: 4.9-magnitude quake hits near Saranggani

Published May 11, 2020, 11:42 PM

By MB Online

A 4.9-magnitude earthquake struck Saranggani on Monday, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) reported.



(PHIVOLCS/ MANILA BULLETIN)

The earthquake, which occurred at 9:36 p.m., was tectonic in origin and traced to 284 kilometers southeast of Saranggani, Davao Occidental.

The quake had a depth of 83 kilometers.

No aftershocks or damages are expected from the tremor.

# Magnitude 4.9 quake strikes off southern Philippines

ABS-CBN News

Posted at May 11 2020 11:14 PM



Photo courtesy of Phivolcs

A magnitude-4.9 undersea earthquake struck off the southern Philippines Monday night, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said.

The tremor happened at 9:36 p.m., with its epicenter 278 kilometers southeast of Sarangani town in Davao Occidental.

It was tectonic in origin and struck at a depth of 83 kilometers, according to Phivolcs.

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

# 56°C heat index naitala sa Occ Mindoro

By: [Leifbilly Begas](#) - 05/11/2020



UMABOT sa 56 degrees Celsius ang heat index o alinsangan na naitala sa San Jose, Occidental Mindoro.

Ayon sa Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration naramdaman ito alas-2 ng hapon.

Naitala naman ang 50°C sa Dagupan City alas-2 ng hapon.

Sa Science Garden of Muñoz sa Nueva Ecija ay 49°C ang naitala alas-11 ng umaga.

Sa Sangley Point, Cavite ay 46°C ang naitala alas-2 ng hapon

Pare-pareho namang 45°C ang naitala sa Ambulong, Tanauan City, Dipolog City at Roxas City alas-2 ng hapon.

Sa Science Garden sa Quezon City ang heat index ay 40°C.

# Plastic piles up in Thailand as pandemic efforts sideline pollution fight

By Reuters

- May 11, 2020 - 6:56 PM



A man works in a recycling plant during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak in Bangkok, Thailand May 11, 2020.  
(Reuters/Jorge Silva)

BANGKOK— Thailand began the year with a ban on single-use plastic bags that Bangkok office worker Nicha Singhanoi hoped would cut back the waste that puts her country among the world’s top five choking the oceans with plastic.

Then the coronavirus pandemic forced school closures and authorities told people to stay home, and far from falling, Bangkok’s plastic waste has soared 62% in volume in April, as more people opt for food and goods to be delivered to homes.

“There is so much bubble wrap and product packaging, or bags and containers from food deliveries,” said Nicha, 27, an avid online shopper, who said that working from home deprived her of the time to cook.

Even if the pandemic eases, environmentalists fear Thailand is simply a pointer for the situation elsewhere in Southeast Asia, home to four of the world’s top five plastic polluters of the ocean. The biggest is China.

As much as 3,432 tonnes of plastic was thrown away in the Thai capital each day in April, up from last year’s average of 2,115 tonnes, city data shows. Contaminated items, from takeaway bags to containers, bottles and cups, made up more than 80%.

Thailand’s experience serves as a warning for the region, said Wijarn Simachaya, president of the Thailand Environment Institute, a think tank.

“The large increase is very concerning,” Wijarn told Reuters. “What progress we’ve made on the campaign against single-use plastic has gone back to square one.”

Despite a smaller pile of general waste as the lockdown halted businesses, Thailand, which usually generates about 2 million tonnes of plastic waste annually, is likely to see a surge of 30% nationwide this year, Wijarn added.

“There’s a lot of plastics in one order, whether hot food bags, sauce bags, or plastic utensils that also come individually wrapped in plastic.”

Plastic piles up in Thailand as pandemic efforts

May 12, 2020

TITLE: sideline pollution fight

PAGE 1/ 2/2

DATE

Environment Minister Varawut Silpa-archa acknowledged a setback in the fight on plastic waste, but said he remained hopeful Thailand could still regain lost ground.

“Don’t fight many battles at a time,” Varawut told Reuters. “Now it’s COVID first,” he added, referring to the respiratory disease caused by the virus, which brought 3,015 infections and 56 deaths in Thailand.

### Food delivery growth

The food delivery sector is estimated to have grown 33% in just over a month to about 4.5 billion baht (\$139 million; \$1=32.2700 baht), said Siwat Luangsomboon, deputy managing director of Kasikorn Research Center, a unit of the Thai bank.

“Thailand was on track to slash single-use plastics by 30% this year with the bag ban, but with consumer behaviour shifting towards food delivery, we may not be able to get back on that track,” Siwat told Reuters.

Food delivery service Line Man, owned by Japanese chat app Line Corp, has seen order numbers grow 300% from the beginning of Bangkok’s lockdown in March through the end of April, a company representative told Reuters.

Singapore-based Grab, another app, reported 400% growth in its food delivery business in the week after the lockdown, but said numbers later dropped to slightly above normal.

Foodpanda Thailand said it saw orders grow 50% in March from February, with a rise of 10% in April on the month, while weekly transactions hit a high in the first week of May.

### Ocean pollution

Southeast Asia has long been a major contributor to land-based plastic waste leaking into the world’s oceans, say environmentalists.

A region already grappling with poor waste management stands to be hit hard by the “sudden onslaught” of plastic waste from the pandemic, said the U.S.-based group Ocean Conservancy.

“We expect the damage will be significant in places already vulnerable to ocean plastic pollution, like Southeast Asia,” said Doug Cress, its vice president for conservation.

No pandemic-related plastic waste data has yet been made available in other countries besides Thailand.

Top polluter China and the Southeast Asian nations of Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, account for more than half of plastic pollution in the ocean, Ocean Conservancy said in 2015.

China has not released detailed data on plastic waste caused by more home deliveries, which were up by a quarter in March and April. Its environment ministry has focused on boosting capacity to tackle soaring volumes of medical waste.

—Reporting by Patpicha Tanakasempipat; Additional reporting by David Stanway in Shanghai;  
Editing by Kay Johnson and Clarence Fernandez

# Rhino killed as poaching attempts increase amid India virus lockdown

Published May 11, 2020, 6:17 PM

By *Agence France-Presse*

A rare one-horned rhino has been killed as poaching attempts increase in one of India's best-known national parks during the coronavirus lockdown, officials said Sunday.



Hunting and habitat loss have slashed the number of one-horned rhinos to just a few thousand, almost all in the northeastern Indian state of Assam (AFP / Biju BORO /

The lack of vehicles on the highway near Kaziranga National Park in Assam state — home to the world's biggest population of one-horned rhinos — amid the lockdown has seen animals move towards the boundaries, making them vulnerable to poachers.

"It is suspected that the rhino was killed at least two to three days ago," the park's director P. Sivakumar told AFP, adding that the rhino's horn was also missing.

Hunters can earn as much as \$150,000 for one rhino horn or around \$60,000 per kilo on a black market according to media reports, serving foreign demand for its use in traditional Chinese medicine.

"We have also recovered eight rounds of empty cartridge of AK 47" automatic rifle, Sivakumar said. The rhino carcass was found near a water body inside the park, he said, adding that it was a confirmed poaching incident.

Officials said it was the first poaching case in the UNESCO-listed heritage site in a year. Previous years had seen numerous poaching incidents.

Officials said poaching attempts have increased in and around the park since the start of the nationwide lockdown in late March.

In April, more than five attempts to slaughter the rare creatures were thwarted by park rangers and a special rhino protection force set up by the state government.

The one-horned rhinos used to be widespread in the region but hunting and habitat loss has slashed their numbers to just a few thousand, almost all in the northeastern state of Assam.

Their main haven now is Kaziranga, with 2,413 of the animals living there, according to a 2018 count.

The 850-square-kilometre (330-square-mile) park, created in 1908 after the wife of the British viceroy visited and complained there were no rhinos, is also home to tigers, elephants and panthers.



# WHO cautions against use of Madagascar anti-virus potion

Agence France-Presse May 11, 2020 - 11:56 AM



A young *Artemisia annua* plant at the Agroscope (Federal Competence Centre for Agricultural Research) in Conthey. Image: AFP/Fabrice Coffrini

The World Health Organization on Thursday advised governments to clinically test a herbal drink touted by Madagascar's President Andry Rajoelina as a remedy against coronavirus.

The Covid-Organics infusion is derived from artemisia — a plant with proven anti-malarial properties — and other indigenous herbs.

Rajoelina hopes to distribute the infusion across West Africa and beyond, claiming it cures COVID-19 patients within 10 days.

Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Niger have already received consignments of the potion. Others such as Tanzania have expressed interest.

But WHO has repeatedly warned that there are no published scientific studies of the herbal tea and that its effects have not been tested.

“We would caution and advise countries against adopting a product that has not been taken through tests to see its efficacy,” WHO Africa director Matshidiso Moeti said in a press briefing on Thursday, calling on Madagascar to take the drink “through a clinical trial.”

Moeti said that in 2000, African governments had committed to taking “traditional therapies” through the same clinical trials as other medication.

“I can understand the need, the drive to find something that can help,” Moeti said. “But we would very much like to encourage this scientific process in which the governments themselves made a commitment.”

South Africa's Health Minister Zweli Mkhize on Wednesday said Madagascar had reached out for “help” with scientific research.

“Our scientists would be able to assist with this research,” Mkhize tweeted, adding that South Africa would only “get involved in a scientific analysis of the herb.”

The country has the highest number of coronavirus cases in sub-Saharan Africa, with 7,808 infections and 153 fatalities recorded to date.

Neighboring eSwatini — a tiny landlocked nation wedged between South Africa and Mozambique — said it would not consider Rajoelina’s tonic for the time being.

“It is important as a country to first ascertain where such herbal products have been tested,” she said Health Minister Lizzie Nkosi on Thursday. “We have to do adequate proper research and be sure that the product works.”

To date, eSwatini has reported 123 cases of coronavirus, including two deaths.

Meanwhile, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has debunked claims that it had ordered a package of Covid-Organics from a “third country.”

“We are aware that several claims of a COVID-19 cure have been made in different parts of the world,” ECOWAS said in a statement on Wednesday. “But we can only support and endorse products that have been shown to be effective through scientific study.” RGA

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1272704/who-cautions-against-use-of-madagascar-anti-virus-potion#ixzz6MB5UyruY>

# Madagascar, may 'gamot' na raw sa COVID-19 na mula sa halaman; pero WHO, 'di kumbinsido

Mayo 12, 2020 12:22am GMT+08:00

For sale na ang umano'y plant-based “cure” o gamot sa COVID-19 na naimbento ng Madagascar. Ang ilang bansa sa Africa, nagsimula nang umorder sa kabila ng babala ng World Health Organisation (WHO) na hindi pa garantisado ang bisa nito.

Sa ulat ng Reuters, sinabing inilunsad ng presidente ng Madagascar na si Andry Rajoelina nitong nakaraang buwan ang umano'y gamot umano na mula sa halamang Artemisia annua na may anti-malarial properties.

Ang sinasabing gamot na tinawag na “COVID-19 Organics” o CVO, ay nabuo ng state-run Malagasy Institute of Applied Research. Gayunman, hindi pa raw ito sumasailalim sa internationally recognised scientific testing.

Kaya nagbabala ang WHO na kailangan pang masuri ang bisa at side effects nito.

Binigyan naman ng Madagascar ng libu-libong doses ng COVID-19 Organics ang Tanzania, Equatorial Guinea, Central African Republic, the Republic of Congo, at Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, at Guinea Bissau.

Sabi sa Reuters ng legal adviser ni Rajoelina, plano nilang ibenta ang umano'y gamot, na nabibili sa kanilang bansa sa halagang katumbas ng \$0.40 bawat bote.

Ang ilang pinuno ng bansa sa Africa, nagsimula na umanong umorder.

Nangangamba si WHO Africa head Matshidiso Moeti, na maging pabaya sa pag-iingat ang mga taong makakainom na sinasabing gamot dahil iisipin nilang may pangontra na sila sa virus sa kanilang katawan.

Mayroong mahigit 200 kumpirmadong kaso ng COVID-19 sa Madagascar, halos 100 na ang gumaling, at wala pang naiulat na nasawi sa virus.

Ayon sa African Union (AU), hihilingin nila sa Madagascar ang mga datos tungkol sa sinasabing gamot, at ipasusuri sa Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

“This review will be based on global technical and ethical norms to garner the necessary scientific evidence,” saad ng AU.--**Reuters/FRJ, GMA News**