

DENR's Antiporda named as Lions' Club gov

posted May 25, 2020 at 10:00 pm

by [Rio N. Araja](#)

With the election of Undersecretary Benny Antiporda as Lions Club International district governor, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is looking forward to building stronger partnership with the group.

Antiporda was elected unopposed as governor of District 301-A2 of the Lions Club International, "the world's largest civilian service organization," through an online election last May 24, during which canvassing and proclamation of winners were live-streamed on Facebook.

Antiporda is expected to leverage the organization's social mobilization work to help the DENR in promoting the conservation, management, development and proper use of the country's environment and natural resources.

"My dual role as DENR undersecretary and official of a civilian service organization allows me to expand my reach, help even more people and champion the cause of environmental protection," he said.



Leader News Philippines

21 hrs · 🌐

Ugnayan ng DENR at Lions Club mas titibay dahil sa pagkahalal kay Antiporda bilang District Governor

Mas magiging matibay ang ugnayan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at Lions Clubs International (LCI) dahil sa pagkahalal kay Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny D. Antiporda bilang Governor ng District 301-A2 na tinaguriang "largest civilian service organization.

Si Antiporda ay naihalal na "unopposed" bilang District Governor sa pamamagitan ng online election na pinamahalaan ng LCI Multiple District 301 Philippines noong Sabado (Mayo 23). Ang naturang halalan at bilangan ay ginanap sa pamamagitan ng "live stream" sa Facebook.

Sa pamamagitan ng LCI District 301-A2, inaasahan ni Antiporda na mas lalakas pa ang ugnayan ng organisasyon sa DENR sa pangangalaga at tamang paggamit ng kalikasan at likas na yaman ng bansa.

My dual role as DENR Undersecretary and official of a civilian service organization allows me to expand my reach, help even more people and champion the cause of environmental protection," sabi pa ni Antiporda.

Ang District 301-A2 ay binubuo ng 84 Lions Clubs na mayroong 3,000 miyembro sa 8 rehiyon ng Pilipinas. Bilang bagong halal na District Governor, inaasahan din ni Antiporda na magsisilbi siyang coordinator ng LCI.

Ayon pa kay Antiporda, mas palalakasin pa niya ang ugnayan ng DENR at LCI sa pamamagitan ng pagbibigay ng proteksiyon sa kalikasan. Aniya, mas magiging aktibo ang LCI particular na ang District 301-A2 sa pagkakaroon ng coastal at river cleanups, tree planting activities at solid waste management projects.

"We will engage in pro-environment activities as we have done in the past. We do these activities not only here in Metro Manila, but also in provinces like Quezon, Palawan and Masbate," dagdag pa ni Antiporda.

Sinabi pa nito na bibigyan niya ng prayoridad ang pagkakaroon ng "environmental lectures sa mga paaralan upang magkaroon ng partisipasyon ang mga kabataan sa pagbibigay ng proteksiyon sa kalikasan base narin sa nakasaad sa Republic Act 9512 o ang National Environmental Awareness and Education Act of 2008.

"I want to target the school children, especially those who are in the rural areas and mountain barangays," pagdidiin pa ni Antiporda at kabilang sa pagtutuunan nitong pansin sa "environmental lecture" ay ang tungkol sa waste management, clean air, clean water at pagpapahalaga sa biodiversity.

Dahil naman sa COVID-19 pandemic, sinabi din ni Antiporda na susundin nila ang ipinatutupad na alituntunin sa "new normal" at pag-aaralan din ang mga isasagawang hakbang tungkol sa environmental lectures kapag nagsimula na ang pasukan ng mga estudyante.

We want to instill behavior change among our children today because once they acquire the proper information and knowledge on how to take care of our environment, they will become our staunch partners in environmental protection," sabi pa ni Antiporda.

Like and share our page Leader News Philippines



Various species of birds seen in Calabarzon during ECQ

Share it!

Updated May 25, 2020, 3:33 PM

By Danny Estacio

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna – Various species of birds and other wildlife have been seen in some parts of Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon) region since the whole of Luzon was placed under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Region 4A (DENR-4A) reported.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources (MANILA BULLETIN)

According to DENR-4A Executive Director Gilbert Gonzales, bird species such as the Chestnut munia, Asia Glossy Starling, and Eurasian Tree Sparrow have been sighted in the town of Catanauan, Quezon since March 16.

Also seen were other bird species such as the Lowland White Eye, Olive-backed Sunbird, Yellow Vented Vulvul, and White-collared Kingfisher in the same town in Quezon.

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu has called on the public not to capture the wildlife and urges to residents to report any infected bird they found or other wildlife to the DENR 4-A Wildlife Rescue Center in Calauan town for proper treatment.

Gonzales has also directed all Provincial and Community Environment and Natural Resources Officers (PENROs-CENROs) in the region to closely monitor the said wildlife in their areas of jurisdiction. Gonzales expressed gratitude to local governments units (LGU), as well as to communities, for their continued cooperation in protecting the wildlife.

Philippine Information Agency Calabarzon
17 hrs · 🌐

Iba't ibang species ng mga ibon at iba pang wildlife ang namataan sa ilang bahagi ng Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, at Quezon), magmula ng isailalim ang buong Luzon sa community quarantine dulot ng coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Ayon sa DENR CALABARZON, iba't ibang klase ng ibon gaya ng Chestnut munia, Asia Glossy Starling, at Eurasian Tree Sparrow ang namataan sa bayan ng Catanuan, Quezon mula noong Marso 16.

Naging madalas din anilang namataan sa Catanuan ang iba pang uri ng ibon tulad ng Lowland White Eye, Olive-backed Sunbird, Yellow Vented Vulvul, at White-collared Kingfisher.

Ayon kay Herbert Hutamares na nagbahagi ng larawan ng mga namataang wildlife, naging madalas ang wildlife sightings sa nasabing bayan magmula ng ipatupad ang lockdown sa buong bahagi ng Luzon.

Kaugnay nito ay nanawagan naman si DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu sa publiko na huwag hulihin o galawin ang makikitang mga wildlife.

Sakali naman aniyang mayroong mamataan na sugatang ibon o iba pang wildlife ay maaaring ipagbigay alam o i-turn over sa pangangalaga ng Wildlife Rescue Center ng DENR 4A na matatagpuan sa Calauan, Laguna upang mabigyan ng karampatang lunas.

Kasunod nito ay inatasan ni Regional Executive Director Gilbert Gonzales ang mga PENROs at CENROs sa rehiyon na maigting na i-monitor ang mga protected areas sa mga bahaging sakop ng mga ito.

Nagpaabot naman ito ng pasasalamat sa mga lokal na pamahalaan gayundin sa mga komunidad na patuloy ang kooperasyon upang protektahan ang mga wildlife sa kanilang mga lugar.

Ayon sa DENR 4A, sa ilalim ng Republic Act 9147 o Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act ay may parusang naghihintay para sa mga indibidwal na nanghuhuli at ilegal na nangangalaga ng mga wildlife species.

Hinihikayat naman ng ahensya ang publiko na i-report ang mga ilegal na gawain na may kinalaman sa kalikasan at likas yaman sa pamamagitan ng Hotline 8888 at DENR 4A hotline numbers +639456215007/ +639083340224. Maaari ring magpadala ng mensahe, lawaran o video sa kanilang email denr4a.ord@gmail.com.



Nagkalat na kabibe sa beach front ng Boracay, agaw-atensiyon sa social media

Cherry Palma, ABS-CBN News

Posted at May 25 2020 07:34 PM



Kuha ni Toti Arcibal Saluna.

Agaw-atensiyon sa social media ang mga larawan ng mga kabibe na nakakalat sa beach front ng Boracay beach.

Makikita ang mga nakakalat na kabibe sa dalampasigan ng Boracay beach sa mga larawang kuha ng residenteng si Toti Arcibal Saluna nitong Linggo.

Magaganda at tila parang kakaiba ayon kay Saluna ang mga kabibe kaya maraming residente at netizens ang namangha.

Umabot sa mahigit 4,600 shares at 3,000 reactions sa social media ang mga larawan ng mga kabibe.

Ayon kay Haron Deo Vargas, isang marine biologist ng City Environment and Natural Resources Office ng Boracay, ito ang unang pagkakataong nakitang nakakalat ang naturang mga kabibe sa dalampasigan.

Aniya, maaaring may mga nanguha ng scallops at itinapon ang mga kabibe.

"Siguro may nag-gather sa area ng scallops then tinapon lang ang shells. Siguro may nag-hunt doon ng scallops sa ilalim mismo ng dagat, napabayaan ang shell then na-ano, nadala ng alon. Siguro isa din sa possibility is siguro ang mga shells, sabay-sabay na namatay sa ilalim during ng decomposition stage nila, 'yung soft part ng shell, kinain ng isda," paliwanag ni Vargas.

Maraming mga residente ang nangongolekta ng mga kabibe ayon kay Vargas.

"Magaganda po ang shells. Puwede po siyang gawing designs... Kung patay na bawal na kainin, baka makompromiso ang health ng kakain," dagdag ni Vargas.

Nakakatulong din umano ang pangongolekta ng mga kabibe para maiwasang masugatan ang mga lumalangoy o naglalakad sa beach.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/05/25/20/nagkalat-na-kabibe-sa-beach-front-ng-boracay-agaw-atensiyon-sa-social-media?fbclid=IwAR1XR3gy7i-HLfP4nAI-oyxGexMnR-aAYaJX3NSqPOQ8zr9Q5qsXdTKeXZs>

Puting paniki, may dala nga kayang pag-asa para makahanap ng lunas vs COVID-19?

Mayo 26, 2020 1:25am GMT+08:00



Nang may namataan na isang puting paniki sa isla ng Samal sa Davao, ang ilan sa mga residente, nabahala. Pero may iba naman umaasa na baka may dala itong suwerte at maging hudayat upang makahanap ng lunas sa COVID-19.

Bagaman wala pang opisyal na kumpirmasyon na galing nga sa paniki ang COVID-19, may mga umaasa na baka may hatid na suwerte ang puting paniki na pangontra sa virus dahil sa kakaiba nitong kulay kumpara sa mga karaniwang paniki na itim.

Ayon sa mga dalubhasa, albino ang tawag sa mga puting paniki. Bagaman pambihirang makakita nito, hindi naman daw ito unang pagkakataon na may nakitang albino bat sa Davao, at maging sa iba pang lugar.

Pero paglilinaw pa ng dalubhasa, walang kinalaman ang kulay ng paniki para sa inaasahang lunas sa COVID-19.

Tunghayan sa video na ito ng "Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho" ang paliwanag ng mga dalubhasa tungkol sa nakitang albino bat sa Samal, at ang video para patotohanan na hindi edited ang lumabas nitong larawan sa social media. Panoorin.

--FRJ, GMA News

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/talakayan/739743/puting-paniki-may-dala-nga-kayang-pag-asa-para-makahanap-ng-lunas-vs-covid-19/story/>

Balintong isinurender sa Bataraza

May 25, 2020 Ruil Alabi

Isinurender ang balintong ni Anthony Vergara, residente ng Barangay Marangas, sa monitoring unit ng PCSD sa munisipyo.



Hawak ni Anthony Vergara ang balintong na kanya ring isinurender sa PCSD. Kasama niya sa litrato ang kaibigang si Jairus Villapa. (Photo courtesy of Anthony Vergara)

BATARAZA, Palawan — Isang nasagip na balintong (pangolin) ang isinurender sa pangangalaga ng Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) noong Sabado sa bayan na ito.

Isinurender ang balintong ni Anthony Vergara, residente ng Barangay Marangas, sa monitoring unit ng PCSD sa munisipyo.

Ang balintong ay isang “critically endangered species” at ipinagbabawal sa batas ang panghuhuli o pag-aalaga nito ng walang pahintulot.

Ayon kay Vergara, ibinigay sa kanya ang balintong ng kanyang kaibigan na si Jay Ar Reyes na nadaanan ito noong madaling araw ng Sabado malapit sa zigzag ng Puerto Princesa habang nagmamaneho ng truck papuntang Bataraza.

Sabi ni Vergara, nagpasya si Reyes na dalhin na lamang ito dahil sa pangamba na masagasaan ito ng ibang sasakyan.

“Sa kwento niya sa akin nadaanan niya na tumatawid ang pangolin sa gitna ng kalsada at hininto niya amg truck niya. Naghugis bola ang pangolin ng maramdaman ang sasakyan, doon niya na napagpasyahan na dalhin para mailigtas ito,” sabi ni Vergara.

Sa data ng PCSD may sukat ang balintong na two feet ang haba at four inches ang lapad.



Palawan Council for Sustainable Development

11 hrs · 🌐

ISANG PANGOLIN, NATAGPUAN SA TABING-DAGAT SA RIZAL PALAWAN

Isang Balintong o Pangolin (Manis Culionensis) ang isinailalim sa pangangalaga ng Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSDS) ngayong araw, Mayo 25, 2020.

Sa mabilis na pag-report nina Renita Genita at Amelito Masangcap, ang nasabing babaeng Pangolin na may habang 23 pulgada at 5 pulgadang lapad at may bigat na 1.5 kilograms na natagpuan sa tabing-dagat sa Purok Old Site, Bgy. Ransang, Rizal, Palawan ay agad na na-rescue ng PCSDS-Wildlife Traffic Monitoring (WTM) officer sa tulong ni Bgy. Kagawad Charlie Cudog Sr.

Pagpapaalala mula sa ahensya ng PCSD, ang Pangolin ay kilala bilang isang Critically endangered species na nanganganib na mawala sa ating kapaligiran. Ito rin ay kabilang sa "World's most trafficked mammal species" at isa sa walong uri nito sa buong mundo ay makikita lamang sa Palawan.

Malaki ang benepisyong naitutulong nito sa ating ekosistema lalo na sa larangan ng agrikultura.

Kung may mga ganitong uri pa ng insidente o makitang illegal na gawain patungkol sa ating mga Pangolin, mangyari lamang na tumawag o mag text sa aming PCSD hotline numbers, 0935 116 2336 (Globe/ TM) at 0948 937 2200 (Smart/ TNT)

Maraming Salamat!



👍❤️👎 214

8 Comments 35 Shares

Settlers threaten takeover of Iwahig property

Published 5 hours ago
on May 26, 2020 01:30 AM
By **Andrio Atienza**



Photo courtesy facebook/BJMP

The vast track of unguarded idle land of the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm had long been the target for takeover of several groups of landless organizations in Puerto Princesa City, according to the chief of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources-Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (DENR-CENRO) in Puerto Princesa City.

DENR-CENRO forester Felizardo Cayatoc disclosed that there were an estimated 39.19 hectares of land that had been denuded by intruders inside the Iwahig property located along Kilometer 31 south of Barangay Luzviminda in the city, which is under the care of the Department of Justice.

Cayatoc said his office would be ready to file appropriate charges against the culprits, who were said to have cut trees and burned other forest products inside the property, allegedly done by the group of Francisco Caboverde, president of Zigzag Landless Association.

He added that he will recommend the cancellation of the application of Caboverde's group to claim part of the land with the Department of Agrarian Reform for violation of forestry laws.

Despite this, Cayatoc pointed out that their jurisdiction is limited as the role of DENR-CENRO would just be to provide "slight technical assistance" in terms of claiming proper ownership of the land.

"In the first place, it is the responsibility of the BuCor (Bureau of Corrections) officers because of the executive order that the land is allocated to the BuCor," Cayatoc said.

Several landless organizations are also claiming their right to the land, including Sta. Lucia-Luzviminda Landless Farmers Association (SALUFA) which is said to have a pending claim of 2,400 hectares in the area of Kilometer 28 to 31 adjacent to their barangay.

Barangay Luzviminda chieftain Laddie Gemang said SALUFA would be giving out a one-hectare farm lot and a 600-square meter residential lot for each member as long as they can prove that they do not own any land.

Sources said that Mayor Lucilo Bayron allegedly promised barangay residents that they would be helping for the release of the land to the settlers if they win in the May 2019 local elections.

Two decades ago, Barangay Luzviminda was said to be part of the Iwahig reservation and the land was being claimed by hundreds of settlers, which was eventually granted to them by the national government.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/05/26/settlers-threaten-takeover-of-iwahig-property/>

Caraga mining firms spend P73.5M for COVID-19 response

By CMCRIPublished on May 25, 2020

SURIGAO CITY, Surigao del Norte, May 25 -- Member-companies of the Chamber of Mines of Caraga Region Incorporated (CMCRI) have already spent a total of P73.567 million in their respective mining communities and surrounding areas to help the government ease the impact of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) crisis.

CMCRI is composed of large-scale mining firms and mineral processing companies that either have active operations in Caraga region or are in 'care and maintenance' status.

Based on the consolidated reports received by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau-Region 13 (MGB-13), a total of 14 mining and mineral processing companies under CMCRI have readily responded to the call of the national government to help affected communities that are struggling following the imposition of lockdowns or quarantine measures.

These containment measures restrict the movement of people and temporarily shuttered businesses, prompting the government to ration food and other essential services to residents, even as it called on the private sector to help.

CMCRI member-companies spread in the region's five provinces immediately heeded to the call of President Rodrigo Duterte, who has earlier signed the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act [Republic Act No. 11469] to boost the government's response to the pandemic.

Of the total cash aid as of May 13, CMCRI member-companies released the following amount per province: Agusan Sur - P5.19M; Agusan Norte- P4.001M; Surigao Sur - P9.043M; Surigao Norte - P52.388M; Dinagat Islands - P2.945M.

CMRI emphasized that the running figures are still subject for auditing and validation of MGB-13.

Further, the region's premier mining organization has also committed to spend some P105.903 million based on the realigned budgets mandated by MGB for COVID-19 assistance and other relevant purposes. (CMCRI)

Baguio water quality improved during ECQ

Published May 25, 2020, 11:27 AM

By Zaldy Comanda

BAGUIO CITY– It was not just the quality of air that improved in the eight weeks of restrained human activity under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ), but also the city's water quality.



(MANILA BULLETIN)

City Environment and Parks Management Officer-in-Charge Rhenan Diwas said that since the start of the ECQ, a marked improvement had been observed in the wastewater influent and effluent of the 34-year-old Baguio Sewerage Treatment Plant (BSTP).

Diwas said the influent and effluent not only significantly decreased but also became compliant with the water quality standards of the Dept of Environment and Natural Resources.

Based on the water test result conducted by the CEPMO-Wastewater, Water and Air Monitoring Division (WAMD), the wastewater influent (raw) in February 2020 reached almost the maximum level at 8,557.18 m³/day but suddenly dropped at 4,369.97 m³/day in March 2020.

The wastewater quality also improved and now falls within the standards set under DENR Administrative Order 1990-35 (Effluent Standards for Different Water Quality Parameter and DAO 2016-08 (Water Quality Guidelines and General Effluent Standards) whereas it gained failed laboratory results from January to February 2020.

Diwas attributed the improvement to decreased population as most tourists, university students (boarders) and migrant workers left the city at the onset of the ECQ.

He noted that the City was packed with tourists in the month of February 2020 in anticipation of the 25th Panagbenga which was cancelled due to the threat of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

“Likewise, the closure of majority of the commercial activities (restaurants) and limited operation of public market and slaughter house were seen as contributory to the less turbid wastewater discharges,” Diwas said. Diwas said that while population and economic activities are the major factors of environmental pollution, these too are recognized forces that boost the city's economy thus he suggested measures to balance human activities and environmental sustainability:

- The City should pursue the rehabilitation and upgrading of the Baguio Sewerage Treatment Plant to expand its coverage to other barangays;
- Continue the rehabilitation of sewer lines;
- Improve Septage Management System, which include additional Septage Facility;
- Rehabilitate the public market to include its own sewerage facility;
- Transfer the Slaughter House outside CBD and to include a sewerage facility for animal waste and others.

“Most importantly, discipline among the populace. Change should begin within ourselves,” he said.

53,000 Pinoys apply for 'Balik-Probinsya'

[Elizabeth Marcelo](#) (The Philippine Star) - May 26, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — More city dwellers are opting to return to the provinces due to the economic uncertainties posed by the coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19.

More than 53,000 applications have been received for the government's "Balik-Probinsya" program since the online application was opened on May 8, according to National Housing Authority (NHA) general manager Marcelino Escalada Jr.

"Right now, we have 53,218 (applicants) over the last 10 days," Escalada, who serves as executive director of the program, said yesterday.

Of the figure, 29,104 are single applicants and 24,207 are families.

Aside from the online application, more than 10,000 application forms were distributed to interested residents of Metro Manila.

Earlier, Escalada said the government expects around one million residents of Metro Manila to avail themselves of the program.

Last week, the first batch of "Balik-Probinsya" beneficiaries composed of 112 individuals returned to Leyte in a shuttle bus provided by the government.

Leyte is among the provinces participating in the program's pilot run. The others are Bohol, Camarines Sur, Lanao del Norte, Marinduque, Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental, Pangasinan, Quirino province, Samar, Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga del Sur.

Qualified beneficiaries will receive financial assistance, which includes P35,000 in transportation allowance; P60,000 in transitional allowance, including food and non-food items, and P15,000 in livelihood allowance.

The financial assistance would be released gradually through vouchers after the beneficiaries arrived in the provinces, Escalada said.

He assured the beneficiaries that they would be provided with jobs based on the qualifications that they stated in their application forms.

The "Balik Probinsya" program is ready to provide jobs to about 1.5 million people, Escalada said.

Beneficiaries who have no houses will be offered housing loans by the government's shelter agencies such as Pag-IBIG, National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. and NHA.

NCR's shift to modified GCQ will again be 'science-based'-Roque

TITLE:

PAGE 1/ 1/2

May 26, 2020
DATE

NCR's shift to modified GCQ will again be 'science-based'-Roque

By Jerome Carlo R. Paunan Published on May 25, 2020



CALOOCAN CITY, May 25 (PIA) -- Presidential spokesperson Secretary Harry Roque on Monday said President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's decision to extend or lift the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) or shift into a modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) over Metro Manila after its May 31 expiration will again be based on science.

Speaking before the Laging Handa public briefing hosted by the Presidential Communications and allied state media, Roque said few days before the scheduled expiration of MECQ, Roque said the decision to whether lift the lockdown and transition to "MGCQ" across high-risk areas will be based on scientific data and the country's capacity to provide care for those who will get sick.

"Siyensya ang magiging basehan natin. Antayin natin ang magiging desisyon ng IATF [Inter-Agency Task Force]," he said.

"Antayin na lang po natin ang magiging desisyon ng IATF... IATF ang magdedesisyon. Ang Presidente kinokonsulta ang lahat, ang DOH at iba pang mga dalubhasa at mga doktor," he added.

The official explained that the imposition of lockdowns would be based primarily on whether medical and health authorities can provide critical care to those who might get sick, then the next thing to consider is in terms of the economy.

"Paulit-ulit ko pong sinasabi na yung doubling rate ng COVID-19 kung patuloy na bumagal at yung ating kapasidad to provide critical care at syempre 'yung concern sa ekonomiya,'" he said.

To recall, President Duterte earlier relaxed the stringent ECQ into a more economic-friendly MECQ version after basing it on trending scientific data.

Roque said the current trend is showing the country still has the capacity to take in more critical patients, which is why some areas have already been placed under the GCQ. He, however, cautioned that the public still have to be careful.

So far, the number of COVID-19 cases have reached 14,035 with an additional 258 cases confirmed yesterday. Of the number, around 72 cases have been added to those who got well, that brought the total to 3,249 recoveries, while fatalities have reached 868. Of the tally of positive cases nationwide, 75% were from Metro Manila while 5% came from repatriated overseas Filipino workers. While there are currently around 9,981 active cases in the country.

TITLE: NCR's shift to modified GCQ will again be 'science-based'-Roque

PAGE 1/ 2/2

May 26, 2020
DATE

Meanwhile, Roque also reported on the Philippines' increased testing capacities for COVID-19.

"Naabot na natin ang ating target na 30,000 PCR tests per day...Noong Mayo 20, nakaabot na tayo sa 32,100 tests per day," he said the accomplishment is a few days earlier than the May 31 target.

"Meron na tayong 66 COVID laboratories sa bansa," he added. (PIA NCR)

Drilon wants 'science-based' decision in transition to GCQ

By: [Daphne Galvez](#) - Reporter / [@DYGalvezINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 10:27 AM May 25, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — Metro Manila's possible transition to general community quarantine (GCQ) status must have scientific basis, Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon said on Monday, six days before the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) is set to lapse.

"It is up to the IATF. But we would like to see a science-based decision," he said in a statement. He noted that the number of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases is still increasing, exceeding 14,000 as of May 24.

He also pointed out that there are 6,000 individuals who tested positive for the coronavirus that is yet to be validated.

"They may be silent carriers who unknowingly spread the virus. Where are they?" Drilon asked. "The confidence of our people on the handling of COVID-19 has eroded because of the lapses of the DOH, primarily by Sec. Duque, and the violations committed by the implementors of the lockdown," he added.

Even though the government eased up strict quarantine protocols across the country starting May 16, Metro Manila, Laguna province and Cebu City remained under [MECQ](#) due to high occurrence of COVID-19 cases.

The MECQ is set until May 31, unless the government decides on an extension.

To date, there are [14,035 confirmed cases of COVID-19](#) in the country. Three thousand two hundred forty nine patients have recovered while 868 others perished.

GSG

Selective lockdowns in Metro Manila eyed

May 25, 2020 | Filed under: [Headlines, News](#) | Posted by: [Tempo Desk](#)

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) on Monday said that the lockdown in high-risk barangays may be an option in the event Metro Manila transitions from the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) to the less restricted general enhanced quarantine (GCQ) after May.

DILG Interior Secretary Eduardo Año noted that the scheme is “more applicable” to restart the economy in the area and make the residents acclimatize to the “new normal” with the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic still hounding countries worldwide.

He said that this is the most likely course of action as the local government units (LGUs) and the citizens responded well to the government’s quarantine protocols that were enforced to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

However, Año reminded the public that ECQ, MECQ or GCQ is still a quarantine where wearing of face masks, social distancing, observing curfew hours, staying home as much as possible and proper hygiene should still be strictly observed.

With the selective lockdowns, Año in an interview over ABS-CBN said that a selective barangay lockdown will provide the government to target specific locations that are in dire need of attention in dealing with COVID-19.

Explaining further, Año said that the selective lockdown in high risk places may not be limited only to the barangays but to the streets, alleys, compounds, subdivisions, neighborhood and other similar sections.

In these lockdown areas, Año noted that more law enforcers will be on stand-by to prevent anyone from entering and leaving these places.

Año explained that areas under selective lockdown have high cases of COVID-19 which will be referred to as critical zones while the adjacent barangays will be called container zones. **(Chito Chavez)**

Most metro mayors favor shift to GCQ by June — MMC chair

By: [Darryl John Esguerra](#) - Reporter / [@DJEsguerraINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 05:58 PM May 25, 2020



Joint Task Force Covid Shield Commander, Police Lt. Gen. Guillermo Eleazar and Highway Patrol Group Director Eliseo Cruz lead the inspection of checkpoints in Marcos Highway at the boundary of Metro Manila and Rizal on May 18, 2020, during the modified enhanced community quarantine. (Niño Jesus Orbeta/Philippine Daily Inquirer)

MANILA, Philippines — Fourteen of the 17 mayors in Metro Manila favor the shift from the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) to a general community quarantine (GCQ) by June, Paranaque City Mayor and Metro Manila Council chairman Edwin Olivarez said Monday.

“Prolonged community quarantine will have severe economic effects which in and of themselves, will impact the lives of people so negatively,” Olivarez said.

Olivarez also said that the council is set to meet again on Wednesday, to come up with single recommendation on whether or not to downgrade the community quarantine status in the metropolis.

Several sectors were [allowed to partially operate](#) starting May 16 in areas under MECQ in areas deemed high risk to COVID-19 infection including Metro Manila—the country’s economic center— in a bid to restart the country’s economy heavily battered by the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Meanwhile, areas with “low” to “moderate” risk for an outbreak are placed under GCQ, where some movement restriction will be lifted.

The order will be in effect until May 31.

Under GCQ, public transportation resumes at a reduced capacity, people can go back to work in certain sectors, and “non-leisure” establishments can open apart from essential ones.

JPV

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1280645/most-metro-mayors-favor-shift-to-gcq-by-june-mmc-chair#ixzz6NUb4Dgb6>

14 Metro Manila mayors payag na sa GCQ

By: Liza Soriano - 05/25/2020

ILANG alkalde ng Metro Manila ang pabor na paluwagin na ang ipinaiiral na quarantine restrictions.

Nais ng mga alkalde na mula sa modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) ay ilagay na ang kanilang mga lugar sa general community quarantine (GCQ) simula Hunyo 1.

Sinabi ni Paranaque City Mayor Edwin Olivarez, sa 17 alkalde sa Metro Manila 14 dito ay payag na isailalim sa GCQ ang buong kamaynilaan. Hindi naman niya tinukoy kung sino-sino ang mga ito.

Ayon sa alkalde , ang COVID-19 ay lumikha ng “devastating effect” sa kabuhayan ng mga empleyado ay employers.

Muling magpupulong ang mga mayor ng Metro Manila sa Miyerkules para desisyunan kung papayagan nang i-lift ang MECQ at ilagay ang kamaynilaan sa ilalim ng GCQ.

157 patients in Philippines taking part in WHO's solidarity trial for COVID-19 treatments

Published May 25, 2020 8:31pm
By VIRGIL LOPEZ, GMA News

Nearly 160 patients in the Philippines have signed up for the World Health Organization's (WHO) solidarity trial aimed at finding a treatment for the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

In his weekly report to Congress submitted on Monday, President Rodrigo Duterte said 157 patients are taking part in the clinical trials to determine the safety and effectiveness of possible therapies in treating COVID-19.

Twenty-four hospitals are currently participating in the WHO initiative, with 16 of them "actively recruiting participant-patients," Duterte said.

The Department of Health earlier said at least 500 Filipino patients would be tapped for the solidarity trial.

The President also reported that two additional sites have been identified for the clinical trials of anti-flug drug Avigan, bringing the total to five identified sites. Chinese authorities said in March that Avigan could be effective for treating COVID-19 patients.

As of Monday, the Philippines had 14,319 COVID-19 cases, with 873 deaths and 3,323 recoveries. — **BM, GMA News**

Palace urges LGUs to establish bike lanes

By Azer Parrocha May 25, 2020, 5:55 pm



MANILA – Malacañang on Monday urged local government units (LGUs) to establish bike lanes in their respective localities due to limited public transportation in areas under community quarantine.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque made this call as he acknowledged that Filipinos have turned to biking since it is an ideal mode of transport that allows for physical distancing.

"Nanawagan po kami sa mga LGUs, mag provide po kayo ng mga bike lanes at ito nga po ang pet project ng ating Senator Francis Tolentino (We appeal to the LGUs to provide bike lanes in their places and this is a pet project of Senator Francis Tolentino)," Roque said during the Laging Handa public briefing.

Tolentino was Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) chairman during the previous administration.

Public transportation is temporarily suspended in areas under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) and modified ECQ.

LGUs have been providing healthcare workers and other front-liners in ECQ and MECQ areas with transportation.

Companies have been encouraged to provide shuttle services to employees working in areas under general community quarantine (GCQ).

In areas under GCQ, public transport can operate from a 10 to 50 percent capacity, Roque said.

There will be 50 percent capacity in areas under modified GCQ, he added.

ECQ, the most stringent community quarantine, has been imposed in Cebu and Mandaue cities until May 31.

Metro Manila, Laguna, Bataan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Zambales and Angeles City have been placed under MECQ while the rest of the areas in the country are under GCQ.

Interior Secretary Eduardo Año said the government eyes the implementation of a barangay-based lockdown after the end of the MECQ in Metro Manila on May 31.

He said villages identified as "critical zones" or with many cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) could be placed under lockdown while the nearby villages are called "containment zones," and the ones with no cases of Covid-19 are the "buffer zones".

Buffer zone villages could ease the restrictions on the movement of the people and open some business establishments, he said

However, he said the lockdown is not limited to villages as it could be implemented to smaller units such as subdivisions and neighborhoods.

The Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases will decide on the fate of the ECQ, MECQ, and GCQ nationwide based on scientific and economic factors, subject to the approval of President Rodrigo Duterte. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1103881>

Bicycle sales boom amid MECQ in Metro Manila

Published May 25, 2020 5:33pm

By TINA PANGANIBAN-PEREZ, GMA News



Customers line up at a bike shop on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City on May 25, 2020. Tina Panganiban-Perez
Some bicycle stores in Metro Manila are seeing an increase in sales as many in the national capital region have returned to work while transportation options remain limited.

Shop owner Marilou Roquero told GMA News that sales have jumped almost tenfold when the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) transitioned to a modified version (MECQ) that eased some restrictions.

However, as demand for bicycles increased, so have the price—not just of the bikes, but also of spare parts.

“Grabe talaga 'yung demand ngayon ng mountain bike. Pagkatapos shortage po talaga tayo ng mga units ngayon. Talagang hirap na rin po kami sa spare parts,” Roquero said.

“Yung prices ho namin, medyo nag-increase since walang delivery. Transportify yung ginagamit namin. Extra charge din yon. Saka 'yung piyesa, talagang tumaas din. Yung manufacturer, wala pa po. Galing lang 'yan sa ibang tindahan. Ilang pasa-pasa na nangyari kaya tumaas ang ating presyo,” she added.

Roquero said that customers prefer bikes over other modes of transportation because they are cheaper.

“Mas mura. Wala nang gasolina. Yung motor ngayon, sitahin din po kasi,” she added.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), meanwhile, [has set up a bike lane on a segment of EDSA from the corner of Whiteplains Avenue to the corner of Col. Bonny Serrano Avenue](#) as part of a dry run for a possible new traffic scheme in the "new normal" of the coronavirus pandemic.

Earlier this month, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) [said two-wheel vehicles will play an important role in the "new normal."](#) — **BM, GMA News**

ON THE MOVE

An emergent bike culture

By: [Segundo Eclar Romero](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:04 AM May 25, 2020

Many Metro Manilans have taken to bicycles under the mobility restrictions occasioned by the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ). The visible increase in young and old people, men and women, using this “pedestrian” mode of transport indicates just how critically the bicycle has filled a tremendous need for mobility.

Come to think of it, one of the neglected essential services during the ECQ were bike stores and bike repair shops. The availability of these stores and service shops would have helped people without private vehicles cope with the precipitate suspension of public transport.

If COVID-19 were temporary, lasting only weeks and months, the surging recourse to bicycles may also be temporary. Mobility preferences will snap back to public transport and private vehicles as soon as they become available. But with the prospects of a long-term regime of social distancing and the unfeasible return of half-empty public transports, COVID-19 might yet induce an emergent bicycle culture in the Philippines.

This trend is not lost on many people who have been advocating inclusive and more sustainable mobility. There have been a flurry of advocacy and promotions activities among bicycle-oriented organizations, calling for more bike promotion laws and regulations, bike lanes, bike parking, local bikeways offices, and bike safety and insurance services. A lot of NGOs have undertaken laudable bike distribution and lending projects under the current pandemic to enable frontliners to do their jobs.

What is critical is the surge in demand and use of bicycles by the people under long-term COVID-19 conditions. The emergent bicycle culture is not dependent on the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) or the Department of Transportation (DOTr). In fact, the MMDA and DOTr have been caught flatfooted by this biking surge. Despite a decade of conscious promotion of biking as an alternative mode of transportation (2013, Bike-Sharing Program; 2014, Bike-Kadahan Scheme; 2015, Bike-Sharing revival), the MMDA has surprisingly not taken advantage over the past two months to plan and use the nearly empty Metro Manila streets to install the necessary bike lanes, bike parking facilities, and systems for promoting and regulating the use of bikes in Metro Manila.

The MMDA on Wednesday advised bicycle riders to avoid main thoroughfares and stick to secondary roads for their safety. The agency acknowledges that bicycle lanes are lacking in main roads. General Manager Jojo Garcia says the agency promotes bicycle use, but without bike lanes, the main roads are too dangerous for bikers. The DOTr, on the other hand, is “eyeing” to use the Mabuhay Lane on Edsa and other portions of Metro Manila as exclusive bicycle lanes.

While the DOTr is still “eyeing,” Marikina City and Pasig City are already “doing.” Marikina has long been admired worldwide for establishing a 52-kilometer bicycle lane network that comprehensively interconnects all major destinations—offices, schools, malls, markets, and transport hubs, especially the LRT Line 2 Station in Santolan, Pasig. The integrated bikeways, funded through a \$1.3-million World Bank grant in 2002, is the level of effort that made Marikina the biking capital of the Philippines.

The adjoining Pasig City has also quickly responded to the biking surge. It realigned its ongoing Pasig Bike Share program to enable frontliners to bike to work. It also obtained bicycle donations and matched them with health worker mobility needs. More important for the long term, the city government is extending sidewalks and adding bike lanes along Market Avenue, Caruncho Avenue, and Amang Rodriguez Avenue.

We have reached an inclusive mobility tipping point. The MMDA and DOTr should support the initiatives of local governments, enabling them to replicate the successes of Marikina City and Pasig City. Support is also needed from Congress, where at least 10 bike-oriented bills have been filed. Critical initiatives are the creation of local bikeways offices in LGUs and the grant of funds to enable them to build bikeways and other infrastructure. The Marikina case is instructive—bike lanes cannot be installed piecemeal. Like railroad tracks, they have to be complete end-to-end to be functional.

Coping with COVID-19 appears to be the impetus for the emergence of a bike culture in the Philippines. Hopefully, there will follow other transformative inclusive mobility changes, so that the vision of that champion of inclusive and sustainable environment and mobility, Antonio A. Oposa Jr., may come true: “Tomorrow, those who have less in wheels will have more in roads.”
doyromero@gmail.com



MGA BENEPISYARYO NG AYUDA NG GOBYERNO, ILABAS SA MEDIA

May 25, 2020 @ 11:41 AM 21 hours ago

NAKATUTULONG ng malaki ang paglalabas sa media ng ngalan ng lahat ng nakatanggap ng benepisyaryo mula sa Social Amelioration Program (SAP), Financial Subsidy to Rice Farmers (FSRF), Small Business Wage Subsidy (SBWS), COVID-19 Subsidy at iba pang ngalan ng programa o tulong ng pamahalaan sa mga nawalan ng pagkakitaan at kabuhayan sa mga panahong ito ng Coronavirus Disease-19.

Kung bakit iminumungkahi natin ito, lumalabas na makatutulong ang mga mamamayan sa pagtukoy sa mga pagkakamali at pagtutuwid na rin dito.

Maaaring sadya o hindi ang mga pagkakamali ngunit ang mahalaga ay matukoy ang mga ito at maituwid, kasama na ang pagpapanagot sa mga sadyang kumalikot sa pondo para hindi tularan at maibalik ang kinurakot nila sa pamahalaan upang maibigay nang tama sa mga mamamayan.

DAPAT SA BARANGAY

Maganda kung ilabas ang listahan ng mga benepisyaryo ng mga pamahalaang barangay dahil magkakakilala ang mga magkakabarangay.

Siyempre pa, may mga magkakabarangay na hindi magkakakilala, lalo na sa mga highly urbanized area na marami ang nakatira sa mga condominium at iba pang katulad na lugar at mismong sina kapitan at kagawad ay hilong-talilong sa pagkilala sa mga ito.

Subalit sa kalahatan, bantad kina kapitan ang katauhan ng kanilang mga nasasakupan dahil kamag-anak, botante, kaibigan, kumpare, kainuman at iba pa ang mga ito.

Ganito rin ang mga mamamayan sa kalahatan na magkakakilala ang nakararami sa kanila sa barangay.

Kaya walang makalulusot sa kanilang mga mata na mali kung ilalabas sa media ang ngalan ng lahat ng nakatanggap na benepisyaryo...at hindi nakatanggap.

TRANSPARENCY ANG KAILANGAN

May isang barangay sa Bulacan na gustong patunayan na walang korapsyon sa pamamahagi ng ayuda sa mga mamamayan, lalo na ang mga ayuda na galing sa iba, ang pamahalaang pambansa, lalo na.

Kaya naman, sa ngalan ng kung tawagin ay transparency, inilabas niya noong isang araw ang ngalan ng lahat ng mga nakatanggap ng SAP dahil ito ang programang kinalalalahanan niya.

Wala siyang poder sa iba pang nakatanggap ng ayuda dahil dumaan ang mga ito halimbawa sa mga padala sa Land Bank at padala center gaya ng Palawan Express at MLhuillier.

Transparency ng pamahalaan ang gusto niyang maganap sa mga transaksyon sa kanyang barangay.

Heto ngayon ang isang nakita ng magkakabarangay at magkakamag-anak.

May isang residente na nakalistang nakatanggap ng dalawang beses ng SAP ngunit ang totoo, wala siyang natatanggap kahit isa sa mga ayudang ito.

Isa siyang mananahi, single, walang anak at siyempre pa no work, no pay.

Ito ngayon ang pinaiimbestigahan ni Kapitan: kung qualified ang benepisyaryo; kung paano nangyari 'yung doble-bigay ngunit wala namang ni anino na natanggap ng benepisyaryo; kung nagkaroon ng paboritismo ang mother leader na nakatalaga sa mga sitio para mangalap ng mga qualified na benepisyaryo; kung may kamag-anak sa Municipal Social Welfare Development na nakialam sa listahan ng mga benepisyaryo at kung kanino napunta ang dalawang tig-P5,500 na SAP.

INAAWAY SI KAPITAN

May mga kapitan naman na inaaway ng ilan nilang residente makaraang magkaroon ng SAP ang umano'y hindi dapat na magkaroon nito at tila maling koordinasyon sa pag-qualify at pag-disqualify sa mga benepisyaryo.

May tagubilin kasi sa mga kapitan mula sa Department of Interior and Local Government na tulungan ang mga taga-Municipal Social Welfare and Development na kumilatis sa mga kwalipikado at hindi kwalipikado sa SAP at nag-iisyu ng sertipikasyon sina kapitan para sa mga kwalipikado.

May mga listahan ng mga kwalipikado at hindi kwalipikado na gabay kina kapitan sa pagpili sa mga nagnanais na maging benepisyaryo.

Heto ang mga kaso.

May mga public school teacher na gustong magkaroon ng SAP ang kanilang mga magulang na senior citizen kahit pensionado.

Ang rason, nabibigyan daw ng SAP ang mga pamilyang may miyembro na overseas Filipino worker na single at ang nag-apruba ay taga-DSWD sa rasong biktima ng lockdown ang mga OFW.

May mga nakatanggap naman ng Financial Subsidy for Rice Farmers mula sa Department of Agriculture katulong ang mga taga-Land Bank pero nakatanggap din ng SAP.

Bakit daw pinabalik ng mga kapitan ang SAP sa munisipyo kung ang isang benepisyaryo ay nakatanggap din ng subsidyo mula naman sa Department of Labor and Employment?

Heto pa, bakit daw sinasabi ngayon ng ilang taga-munisipyo na hindi dapat na tumanggap ng Financial Subsidy for Rice Farmers na P5,000 ang mga nakatanggap na ng SAP?

KISKISAN NINA KAPITAN AT DSWD

Heto pa, makaraan ang bigayan ng SAP, anak ng tokwa, kahit na honest ang mga kapitan sa pag-certify ng mga kwalipikado at hindi kwalipikado dahil kilala nila ang kanilang mga kabarangay, dini-disqualify ang mga kwalipikado ng mga taga-DSWD at pinababalik ang SAP sa gobyerno.

Naiipit na tuloy ang mga kapitan sa mga problemang ito.

Isa pa, ang mga kapitan na hindi dinaraan ng mga sariling pamimigay ng subsidy ng DA, DOLE, Social Security Sytem, Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board at iba pa ang inaaway rin ng kanilang mga nasasakupan.

Napakagulo.

At alam ba ninyo ang nagaganap?

Pati ang susunod na halalan ay iniuugnay na sa kaguluhan sa pamimigay ng ayuda na ang mga honest na kapitan ay lumalabas na biktima.

ITUTUWID SA MEDIA

Tulad ng nasabi natin sa itaas, mga Bro, napakagandang mai-publish o mailantad sa mata ng mga mamamayan sa anomang paraan ang mga nakatanggap na ng anomang uri ng ayuda mula sa pamahalaan.

Ito'y para maituwid ang mga pagkakamali at mapanagot ang mga may maruruming kamay na sumawsaw sa mahigit P200 bilyong ayuda ng pamahalaan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa lahat ng biktima ng COVID-19, lalo na ang mga higit na nangangailangan.

Ito'y sa pamamagitan ng pamamahagi ng mga listahan sa mga mamamayan sa kanilang mga tahanan o pagpaskil nito sa barangay hall o matataong lugar o sa barangay netizen o kahit dito sa Remate online news.

Kung nagawa ng LTFRB na ilabas sa media ang mga benepisyaryo nitong mga tsuper at kung nagawa ng ilang kapitan ng barangay ito, hindi masamang ilabas din ng lahat ng ahensya ng pamahalaan ang kanilang mga benepisyaryo para sa kaukulang pagtutuwid.

Transforming values and behavior is as important as restoring global ecosystems

By [Inter Press Service](#)

May 26, 2020

By Ana María Hernández Salgar

BONN: Restoring damaged ecosystems is vital to avoid the collapse of nature's most valuable contributions to people, but International Day for Biological Diversity 2020 should also be a wake-up call about the importance of addressing our social, economic and systemic values, because it is these that are driving the destruction of nature.

We are part of nature, but our choices and behaviors have pushed the rest of the natural world to the brink of disaster. Hunger, disease, loss of livelihoods and rising levels of risk and insecurity are the direct result of our own actions. To shift to a more sustainable future, the best available expert evidence tells us that we need transformative change to reset our fundamental relationship with our environment.

This will require us to tackle the nature and climate emergencies directly and simultaneously, uniting behind both climate and biodiversity science. We have already hit “snooze” for too many decades on the warnings of experts from every discipline and every region — further delays are entirely at our own peril.

Transformative change means a fundamental, system-wide reorganization across technological, economic and social factors. It means addressing not just the direct and most visible threats to biodiversity — such as land-use change, overfishing, pollution, climate change and invasive alien species — but also tackling the values and behaviors that find expression through indirect drivers such as population trends, production and consumption patterns, weak governance and conflicts.

The way we lead our lives and do business has effectively been freeloading on the bounty that nature contributes to people, taking for granted the natural processes that revitalize our environment. Instead of living within our means, we've been using up more and more “natural capital” — well beyond what nature can replenish — and it's a debt that is now past due. This is one of the reasons that the World Economic Forum's latest Global Risks Report recognized that the top five risks to business around the world are all environmental.

With the publication last year of the IPBES Global Assessment Report, science has spoken: the damage we do to nature can no longer ever be justified as an externality. When we harm nature, we directly hurt ourselves as well. When we fail to act as responsible stewards of the environment, it is our future that we jeopardize.

The good news, however, is that many sustainable solutions to these problems can also be found in nature — and are, therefore, still within reach. The efforts that many countries, organizations, communities and institutions have already put into recovering biodiversity are beginning to bear fruit.

It is important for us to learn from these good examples, and from our mistakes, to chart a realistic and rigorous path, with concrete actions, but based on our different national and regional circumstances.

Transforming values and behavior is as important as
restoring global ecosystems

PAGE 1/ 2/2

May 26, 2020
DATE

Investing in nature holds great promise. Nature-based solutions to climate change, for instance, such as restoring degraded lands, can provide more than a third of the mitigation needed by 2030 to keep climate warming well below 2 degrees Celsius.

Implementing both existing and new policy instruments through interventions that are integrative, informed, inclusive and adaptive will enable the global transformation that we need.

Coordinated action at local, national, regional and international levels is needed to safeguard remaining habitats, undertake large-scale restoration of degraded habitats, and more broadly to place nature at the heart of decision-making and sustainable development.

Importantly, this will also entail a change in our understanding of what constitutes a good quality of life — decoupling the idea of a good and meaningful life from ever-increasing material consumption and forging individual, collective and organizational actions toward sustainability.

The coronavirus pandemic has caused an unavoidable delay in the planned global negotiations on the post-2020 framework for biodiversity, but 2020 is still a “Super Year for Nature.” The world has had the chance this year to see very directly the importance of changing values, approaches and behaviors, and to better understand the vital connection between people and nature.

After this crisis we will confront a “new normal” — hopefully this will also be a watershed moment with values, approaches and behaviors — the indirect drivers of change in nature — at the forefront of policy and action.

The available evidence makes it clear that going back to ‘business as usual’ — ignoring our collective impacts on nature — would be a grave mistake.

The burning question on this day to commemorate the importance of nature is if and when we will change and seriously face the emergencies unfolding around us. IPS

Ana Maria Hernandez Salgar is the chair of IPBES — the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, which, much like the IPCC does for climate change, provides objective scientific assessments about the state of knowledge regarding the planet’s biodiversity, ecosystems and the contributions they make to people, as well as options and actions to protect and sustainably use these vital natural assets.

Covid-19 impact on the built environment

By [ARCH. JUSTO I. SANTOS JR](#)

May 26, 2020

THE coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic is testing our creativity, resourcefulness and resilience at a time when time and decisiveness are of utmost consideration.

Just like the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the built environment is presented with new major design considerations. Recent developments force us to question our standard norms and review our design approaches and priorities. It may vary from regions, but the objective will be the same.

In the post-Covid-19 scenario, we may have to add and expand the scope of health specialist and the Department of Health in the earliest stages of the design other than our original stakeholders. Some of the practices are already in place. We may now have to consider them seriously.

Space and area size considerations on public areas

Social distancing is an accepted norm that aims to minimize physical contact between individuals and thereby to reduce the possibility for new infections. In terms of the built environment, ample movement space like corridors, generous congregation area, segregation of movements and the like should be considered.

Limiting and strategizing the ingress and egress

Controlling the number of entrances not only helps in monitoring and securing the building, but it also reduces the resources in order to maintain it.

As the first layer of defense of the building, entrances will reduce risk of carriers. It can provide a decontamination area, ante room, hand sanitation, sanitizing doormats and heat sensors. However, a legal issue may ensue with the denial of access of the person if found to be a carrier of certain disease.

Wider use of thermal cameras or images



Thermal cameras or imagers would be useful in detecting people, who show signs of illness, to allow precautionary measures to be taken immediately.

A thermal imager is essentially a heat sensor capable of detecting tiny differences in temperature. Used in variety of applications, thermal cameras are being widely used as an initial assessment of an individual at the point of entrance.

It detects if a person has a fever that is an initial symptom of a sickness, thereby allowing precautionary and preventive measures to be taken.

Provision for hand sanitizers and support devices

There is already a growing trend for provisions of water stations and hand sanitizers in public facilities like malls, airports, schools and places of worship.

While washing hands with soap and water is the best way to ensure hands are properly cleaned to eliminate germs, it is not always a viable option. A hand sanitizer is one of the best tools available to avoid spreading germs. By placing hand sanitizers in strategic locations throughout the built environment and other high traffic areas, it helps to promote a healthier indoor environment.

Sensor-based fixtures and devices

Automatic doors, motion sensor lights, faucets, toilet flush and the like are becoming more hygienic. They are also considered both economical and eco-friendly.

The infrared sensor detects a person's body heat and uses it to determine activation of the mechanism, thereby eliminating contacts.

Door-free main toilet core entrances

By allowing free flow of access to toilets, users minimize hand contact and also allows better air ventilation. Bearing in mind the privacy requirements, the concept also addresses issues of safety, especially to lady patrons. In order to address the control issue, providing roll-up shutters after operation hours is an option.

Open-planning approach

If possible, encourage an open environment planning that promotes barrier-free flow.

However, this should be balanced with efficient space planning to avoid a crowded working environment. It cannot be avoided though that employees will still interact, use office equipment and perform duties that may negate the objective of minimizing contacts. This is where the office policies have to be implemented.

Air exchange factors and indoor air flushing

The growing proliferation of chemical pollutants in consumer and commercial products, the tendency toward tighter building envelopes and reduced ventilation to save energy, and pressures to defer maintenance and other building services to reduce costs have fostered indoor air quality (IAQ) problems in many buildings.

By increasing the frequency of air flushing and efficient mechanical ventilation maintenance, complaints of odors, stale and stuffy air and symptoms of illness or discomfort can be avoided.

IAQ-friendly materials

Avoid finishes that breed bacterial growth and the use of low VOC (volatile organic compounds) products improve IAQ.

Manufacturers are now beginning to consider green ratings into their products and further research are being undertaken to improve material performance and compliance.

Retrofitting to present needs

Managers of facilities should also be encouraged to consider the above in their maintenance and renovation plans whenever possible. Adopting these measures can only increase the value of its development.

In summary, various approaches, solutions and technologies are already in place and further developments are coming in due time. The fight against this new threat requires the cooperation of various stakeholders. It may push the cost of the development but this is nothing compared to the dangers we are facing.

A new culture and thinking have to be in place the soonest. That is where the challenge starts. Mabuhay ang Arkitektong Pilipino!

Architect Justo I. Santos, Jr. is the current District B3 Director of the United Architects of the Philippines and the first district director based overseas. A product of Saint Louis University, Baguio City, he has been in the practice for 30 years mostly spent in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and has been involved in some of the prestigious and pioneering developments in that country.

Subsidy for Palawan seaweed farmers sought



By [Eireene Jairee Gomez](#)

May 25, 2020

FISHERFOLK and indigenous peoples farming seaweeds in Coron, Palawan are appealing for government support through livelihood subsidy and economic aid, amid the socioeconomic impacts of the community quarantine prompted by the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic.

In a statement on Sunday, the national fishers group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) said the seaweed farmers' local cooperative has reached out to the group through social media asking for help, as their livelihood has been severely affected since the entire Luzon was placed under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) on March 16.

“Nasisira na lang ang mga produkto nilang seaweeds dahil sa kawalan ng buyers na nanggagaling pa sa mainland. Dahil sa mga checkpoints at mahigpit na quarantine restrictions, hindi nakakatawid sa isla ng Calamianes ang mga buyers kung saan nila kinukuha ang seaweeds (Nobody from the mainland was able to buy their seaweeds. Because of checkpoints and quarantine restrictions, buyers can't go to Calamianes island where they get their seaweeds),” Pamalakaya National Chairman Fernando Hicap said.

The fisherfolk group said the indigenous peoples and fisherfolk on the island only rely on seaweed farming.

Earlier, the Department of Agriculture (DA) vowed to provide a substantial budget to bankroll the enhanced food production program in the countryside, which is part of the agency's P31-billion Plant, Plant, Plant Program, also known as “Ahon Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat Kontra sa Covid-19.”

Various programs under the initiative cover the rice and corn industries, coconut, livestock, poultry, fisheries and high value crops, among others.

Pamalakaya said rural people seeking help “manifests the failure of the DA to aid the agriculture sector amid the huge budget and purported accomplishment reports,”



ABS-CBN News

11 hrs ·

TINGNAN: Kita sa video na ipinadala ni Bayan Patroller Rowie Wilkerson ang pagtutulungan ng ilang residente ng San Fabian, Pangasinan para muling ibalik sa mas malalim na parte ng dagat ang isang butanding.

Ayon sa Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, natural na lumalapit ang mga ganitong species dahil sa pagsisimula ng tag-ulan. "Dadami yung plankton yung mga pagkain, natural food, ng isda ang susunod 'yung maliliit na isda tulad ng dilis yung maliliit na hipon medyo dadami sa gilid sa coastal area lalo dito sa Lingayen gulf... ito yung nag-aattract dun sa mga butanding na pumunta rito sa atin," paliwanag ni BFAR NIFTDC, Interim Dir. Westly Rosario.

Nanawagan din ang BFAR sa publiko na panatiliing malinis ang dalampasigan nang hindi makain ng mga sea mammal ang mga plastic na nagiging sanhi ng kanilang pagkamatay. | Ulat ni Noriel Padiernos, ABS-CBN News



Maynilad, Manila Water to start meter reading on June 1

May 25, 2020

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) Regulatory Office has ordered the start of meter reading in households on Monday, June 1.

The two water concessionaires, Maynilad and Manila Water, are also expected to release water bills on the said date.

The bill will cover the water consumption of households from March to May.

The MWSS has reiterated that lifeline users or the households that consume a maximum of 10 cubic meters per month have until August 31 to pay for their bills while the non-lifeline users have until July 31. – *Report from Cleizl Pardilla*

Oil firms impose another big-time price hike

By [Jordeene B. Lagare](#)

May 26, 2020

OIL companies again imposed a hefty price increase today, Tuesday.



PUMPED UP Oil firms announce an increase of up to P2 in petroleum products starting on May 26, 2020. PHOTO BY JOHN ORVEN VERDOTE

Chevron Philippines, Cleanfuel, Flying V, Petro Gazz, Petron, Phoenix Petroleum, Pilipinas Shell, PTT Philippines and Seoil announced big-time increase in pump prices this week.

Gasoline prices rose by P1.75 per liter, diesel by P2.10 per liter and kerosene by P2.65 per liter.

The oil companies said the increase in pump prices did not reflect the additional 10-percent import duty on crude oil and refined petroleum products recently imposed by the government to boost efforts against the coronavirus pandemic.

On May 2, President Rodrigo Duterte signed Executive Order 113, which temporarily imposed the collection of extra levies to fund the Social Amelioration Program and other forms of assistance for those affected by the pandemic.

The Department of Energy had said the move could rake in about P6.8 billion in revenues.

Last week, the price of gasoline went up by P1.25 per liter, diesel by 55 centavos per liter and kerosene by P2.35 to P2.40 per liter.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/05/26/news/national/oil-firms-impose-another-big-time-price-hike/727171/>

Phivolcs: Mayon's crater glow, rumblings signify normal behavior

By Mar Serrano **May 25, 2020, 3:24 pm**



Mayon Volcano in Albay province. (PNA file photo by Connie Calipay)

LEGAZPI CITY – The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) on Monday allayed fears of increased signs of abnormalities by Mayon Volcano.

In a phone interview, Dr. Renato Solidum, Phivolcs director, said the crater glow and rumbling sounds signify normal behavior and only show that the volcano is still under Alert Level 2, which means moderate level of unrest.

Mayon volcano has been under the same alert level since February 2019.

Residents near the volcano's slopes earlier reported faint crater glow and rumbling sounds but Solidum said these should not be a cause for alarm as there has been no significant consideration that the volcano's state of unrest has intensified.

“The crater glow brightness has not yet increased while the rumbling sounds are caused by sudden rock falls but we assure the public that we are closely monitoring developments surrounding the volcano,” he said.

Phivolcs's seismic monitoring network recorded one volcanic earthquake during the 24-hour observation period.

Weak to moderate emission of white steam-laden plumes that crept downslope before drifting east-northeast to northeast was also observed.

Faint crater glow from the summit can be seen at night.

Sulfur dioxide (SO₂) emission was measured at an average of 324 tonnes/day last May 18.

Bulging at the middle to upper portions of Mayon's edifice has been observed as inflationary trend that began in February 2019, as recorded by continuous Global Positioning System (GPS) monitoring.

Entry into the six kilometer-radius Permanent Danger Zone or PDZ and the precautionary seven kilometer-radius Extended Danger Zone or EDZ in the south-southwest to east-northeast sector of Mt. Mayon, stretching from Barangay Anoling, Camalig town to Barangay Sta. Misericordia, Sto. Domingo is still strictly prohibited. **(PNA)**



4.3-magnitude quake jolts Davao Oriental

Published May 25, 2020, 12:09 PM

By *Mike Crismundo*

BUTUAN CITY – A 4.3 magnitude earthquake jolted Davao Oriental province on Sunday night, May 24, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said.

In its bulletin, Phivolcs said the tremor was recorded at 10:54 p.m. with the epicenter plotted 75 kilometers (kms) southeast of Governor Generoso town, Davao Oriental province.

The tremor had a depth of 59kms, Phivolcs said.

The earthquake was tectonic in origin and no aftershock or tsunami alert was raised by the agency.

The regional office of the Southern Mindanao Office of Civil Defense and provincial disaster risk reduction and management council there reported no damage or injury.

Meanwhile, on Monday, May 25, a 3.2-magnitude earthquake was also registered at 12:18 a.m. and its epicenter traced 95 kms northeast of nearby Baganga town of that same province, with a depth of only one km, Phivolcs also said in its latest bulletin.

The tremor was tectonic in origin and no aftershock or tsunami alert was raised by the state agency.

The Davao Oriental provincial disaster risk reduction and management council there also reported no damage or injury.



Frontal system magdadala ng kalat-kalat na pag-ulan sa Extreme N. Luzon

May 25, 2020 @ 8:15 AM 1 day ago

Manila, Philippines – Makakaapekto ang frontal system sa Extreme Northern Luzon ngayong araw ng Lunes, Mayo 25, na magdadala ng kalat-kalat na pag-ulan sa lugar, ayon sa eastrly morning forecast ng PAGASA.

Makararanas ng kalat-kalat na pag-ulan na may pagkidlat ang Batanes at Babuyan Group of Islands.

Samantala, isang southwesterly windflow naman ang makakaapekto sa Northern at Central Luzon.

Bunsod nito, maulap na kalangtan na kalat-kalat na pag-ulat at isolated thunderstorms ang mararanasan sa Ilocos Region, Cordillera Administrative Region, Central Luzon, at sa nalalabing bahagi ng Cagayan Valley.

Bahagyang maulap hanggang sa maulap na kalangitan na may hiwalay na pag-ulan naman ang iiral sa Metro Manila at sa nalalabing bahagi ng bansa dahil sa localized thunderstorms. **RNT/MM**

Legazpi City sizzles with 49°C heat index

Published May 25, 2020 7:03pm

The highest heat index forecast in the country for the day was recorded in PAGASA's synoptic station in Legazpi City, Albay at 49°C, the weather bureau said Monday.

This is followed by the readings in the stations in Ambulong in Tanauan City with 48°C and Guiuan in Eastern Samar with 47°C.

Dagupan City, Roxas City, Sangley Point in Cavite City and Tuguegarao City, meanwhile, [all experienced 45°C each.](#)

PAGASA warned that a heat index ranging from 41°C to 54°C may lead to heat cramps and exhaustion.

Heat stroke is also possible amid continuous physical activity, it added.

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

PAGASA's heat index chart

Meanwhile, the PAGASA station at the Science Garden in Quezon City [recorded a heat index of 38°C at 1:30 p.m.](#)

A maximum temperature of 34.8°C was also recorded in the area at the same time. — **Ma. Angelica Garcia/BM, GMA News**

Coronavirus threatens to undo gains on single-use

May 26, 2020

DATE

TITLE: plastics

PAGE 1/ 1/2

Coronavirus threatens to undo gains on single-use plastics

The Korea Herald/Asia News Network / 04:28 PM May 25, 2020

SEOUL — From the masks, gloves and gowns used on the front lines of the war against COVID-19 to food delivered in disposable plastic containers and coffee served in takeaway cups, single-use products are finding their way back into daily life in South Korea.

In the face of an unprecedented health crisis, it may be understandable that the impact of disposables on the Earth becomes an afterthought. But eco-minded citizens and activists are worried that people may settle into new life patterns and undo hard-won gains toward a greener economy.

For An Seong-hyun, alarm bells ring whenever he takes out the trash. The 26-year-old college student, just like many Koreans, has stayed indoors as much as possible since the coronavirus outbreak started, heavily relying on delivery services for food and groceries.

“Every item that I ordered came in plastic containers, and I was taking out the trash at least twice as much as usual before the outbreak,” said An, a final-year student at Hanyang University in Seoul.

He added that he ordered food almost every day from nearby restaurants, many of which have started delivering food in plastic containers.

An is one of an increasing number of customers opting to order in. Woowa Brothers, operator of Korea’s No. 1 food delivery app Baemin, saw the number of orders on the platform surge 66 percent on-year in February and 67 percent in March — higher than expected, as a result of the nationwide social distancing campaign.

The company said it doesn’t have control over how its 140,000 partner businesses throughout the country package their food and beverages. Restaurants and cafes are increasingly choosing to pack items in disposable plastic boxes because customers worry about catching the virus from dishes someone else has used.

Those restaurants and cafes are backed by the government, which temporarily relaxed a ban on disposable packaging. Korea in February opened up regulatory leeway for restaurants and cafes to reintroduce plastic and paper cups for in-store customers until the virus outbreak is brought under control.

In May last year, the country introduced a rule banning the use of plastic cups for in-store customers at all cafes in response to the massive plastic waste crisis that ensued after China halted imports of plastic waste early in 2019.

The overall amount of waste collected in recent months has not changed drastically compared with the same period a year earlier, according to preliminary data from the Ministry of Environment. However, the amount of household waste has been on the rise since the virus reached the peninsula.

“The amount of trash from regular households has certainly increased, but waste output from the industrial sector — meaning restaurants, factories and other businesses — dropped,” said Hong Su-yeol, head of Resource Recycle Consulting. “There is some sort of contradictory force working between the two sides.”

Environmental activists are worried that the weeklong liberty from green initiatives paved the way for people to permanently shift their lifestyles and disrupt Korea’s progress toward a greener economy.

According to the environmental group Greenpeace, Korea in 2017 used 469,200 tons of plastic bags, 71,400 tons of plastic bottles and 45,900 tons of plastic cups. Plastic causes long-lasting pollution because it contains chemicals that do not break down after disposal.

The government had set its sights on cutting plastic waste in half by 2030 while increasing the recycling rate to 70 percent, from just 34 percent in 2018. It was looking to phase out colored plastic bottles and replace them with clear plastic this year, as colored plastic is harder to recycle.

Coronavirus threatens to undo gains on single-use

May 26, 2020

TITLE: plastics

PAGE 1/ 2/2

DATE

“Some people might say this will be over by the time we are done with the coronavirus outbreak, but we don’t know that,” said Green Korea activist Heo Seung-eun in a phone interview.

“People could still prefer to have their coffee in paper or plastic cups, and delivered food could still come in plastic containers. Demand for disposable items can stay strong even if people start going out again.”

Activists urge the government to adopt a longer-term perspective and find ways to fight the virus more sustainably.

Many take issue with the way the elections took place last month, entirely at the cost of the environment.

More than 29 million citizens cast ballots at polls on April 15, using an estimated 58 million single-use gloves provided by election authorities as a precaution against COVID-19 infection. Voters were required to wear face masks, many of which were also single-use.

Earlier, local NGO Korea Zero Waste Movement said if the disposable gloves used for the election were piled on top of each other, that pile might be 1.7 kilometers high — as tall as seven 63 Buildings, referring to a skyscraper in Seoul. The group said at the time that voters should be allowed to bring their own gloves from home instead.

“The amount of trash from regular households has certainly increased, but waste output from the industrial sector — meaning restaurants, factories and other businesses — dropped,” said Hong Su-yeol, head of Resource Recycle Consulting. “There is some sort of contradictory force working between the two sides.”

Environmental activists are worried that the weeklong liberty from green initiatives paved the way for people to permanently shift their lifestyles and disrupt Korea’s progress toward a greener economy.

According to the environmental group Greenpeace, Korea in 2017 used 469,200 tons of plastic bags, 71,400 tons of plastic bottles and 45,900 tons of plastic cups. Plastic causes long-lasting pollution because it contains chemicals that do not break down after disposal.

The government had set its sights on cutting plastic waste in half by 2030 while increasing the recycling rate to 70 percent, from just 34 percent in 2018. It was looking to phase out colored plastic bottles and replace them with clear plastic this year, as colored plastic is harder to recycle.

“Some people might say this will be over by the time we are done with the coronavirus outbreak, but we don’t know that,” said Green Korea activist Heo Seung-eun in a phone interview.

“People could still prefer to have their coffee in paper or plastic cups, and delivered food could still come in plastic containers. Demand for disposable items can stay strong even if people start going out again.”

Activists urge the government to adopt a longer-term perspective and find ways to fight the virus more sustainably.

Many take issue with the way the elections took place last month, entirely at the cost of the environment.

More than 29 million citizens cast ballots at polls on April 15, using an estimated 58 million single-use gloves provided by election authorities as a precaution against COVID-19 infection. Voters were required to wear face masks, many of which were also single-use.

Earlier, local NGO Korea Zero Waste Movement said if the disposable gloves used for the election were piled on top of each other, that pile might be 1.7 kilometers high — as tall as seven 63 Buildings, referring to a skyscraper in Seoul. The group said at the time that voters should be allowed to bring their own gloves from home instead.

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1280606/coronavirus-threatens-to-undo-gains-on-single-use-plastics#ixzz6NUc3GtNe>

World's deepest gold mine shut down due to Covid-19

May 25, 2020, 9:27 pm



Anadolu file photo

ANKARA – The coronavirus outbreak in South Africa has closed Mponeng, the world's deepest gold mine after 164 workers tested positive for the disease.

The global gold mining company AngloGold Ashanti said it conducted 650 tests since last Thursday, including primary contacts and many others wished to be tested voluntarily.

“All positive cases will be isolated in line with national health protocols, with on-site facilities available for those who may need them,” it said in a statement on Sunday.

“As a precautionary step, and after discussions with the regulator, operations at Mponeng Mine -- which were running at 50 percent capacity -- have been temporarily halted voluntarily, to complete contact tracing and to again deep clean and sanitize the workplace and key infrastructure,” it added.

Mponeng is located in the West Wits mining district, south-west of Johannesburg.

The operating depth at the Mponeng mine ranged from 3.16 to 3.84 kilometers (1.96 to 2.38 miles) below the surface by the end of 2018, according to the Mining Technology.

AngloGold Ashanti is the third-largest gold producer globally and the largest on the African continent, producing 3.3Moz and employing 34,263 people in 2019, according to information on its website.

In a national address, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa that his country will further ease its strict nationwide lockdown imposed several weeks ago to curb the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), allowing most of the economy to function starting June 1.

South Africa is the hardest-hit country in Africa with 22,583 cases and 429 deaths, and 11,100 recoveries, according to the Africa Centers for Disease Prevention and Control. **(Anadolu)**

Thailand enters global race for vaccine with trials on monkeys

Updated May 25, 2020, 5:21 PM

By Agence France-Presse

Thailand is conducting tests on macaque monkeys as it races to produce a cheaper, alternative coronavirus vaccine it hopes will be ready by 2021, a top researcher said Monday.



The testing phase on the macaque monkeys came after trials on mice were successful, researchers said (AFP Photo/Mladen ANTONOV/MANILA BULLETIN)

More than 100 candidate vaccines are currently in various stages of development around the world, at least eight of which are in clinical trials with humans, according to the World Health Organization.

Oxford University researchers are considered the frontrunners in the race, starting clinical trials last month on a version based on a different virus that causes infections in chimpanzees.

Dr. Suchinda Malaivijitnond, director of the National Primate Research Center of Thailand who oversaw Saturday's vaccine injections to an initial group of 13 monkeys, said she hoped a "Made in Thailand" vaccine would be cheaper than a European or American drug.

The testing phase on the macaque monkeys came after trials on mice were successful, researchers said. They are working in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania in the US using a new technology based on mRNA, a type of genetic material never before used to make a vaccine.

The process entails injecting a short sequence of viral genetic material to trigger an immune response by producing proteins acting against the virus.

At least two other companies — pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and US-based Moderna — are developing vaccines using the same technology, with the latter reporting positive preliminary results last week from clinical trials.

Thailand was the first country outside of China to detect an infection in mid-January but has so far reported just over 3,000 cases and 57 deaths.

If the tests on the macaques go well, human trials should start in October, said Dr. Kiat Ruxrungham, chair of the Chula Vaccine Research Center at Chulalongkorn University.

"Our dream is that low- and middle-income countries should not stay a buyer for our whole lives."

Thailand enters global race for coronavirus vaccine with trials on monkeys

Agence France-Presse / 05:50 PM May 25, 2020



The testing phase on the macaque monkeys came after trials on mice were successful, researchers said. —AFP

SARABURI, Thailand — Thailand is conducting tests on macaque monkeys as it races to produce a cheaper, alternative coronavirus vaccine it hopes will be ready by 2021, a top researcher said Monday.

More than 100 candidate vaccines are currently in various stages of development around the world, at least eight of which are in clinical trials with humans, according to the World Health Organization.

Oxford University researchers are considered the frontrunners in the race, starting clinical trials last month on a version based on a different virus that causes infections in chimpanzees.

Dr. Suchinda Malaivijitnond, director of the National Primate Research Center of Thailand who oversaw Saturday's vaccine injections to an initial group of 13 monkeys, said she hoped a "Made in Thailand" vaccine would be cheaper than a European or American drug.

The testing phase on the macaque monkeys came after trials on mice were successful, researchers said.

They are working in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania in the US using a new technology based on mRNA, a type of genetic material never before used to make a vaccine.

The process entails injecting a short sequence of viral genetic material to trigger an immune response by producing proteins acting against the virus.

At least two other companies — pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and US-based Moderna — are developing vaccines using the same technology, with the latter reporting positive preliminary results last week from clinical trials.

Thailand was the first country outside of China to detect an infection in mid-January but has so far reported just over 3,000 cases and 57 deaths.

If the tests on the macaques go well, human trials should start in October, said Dr. Kiat Ruxrungtham, chair of the Chula Vaccine Research Center at Chulalongkorn University.

"Our dream is that low- and middle-income countries should not stay a buyer for our whole lives."

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1280642/thailand-enters-global-race-for-coronavirus-vaccine-with-trials-on-monkeys#ixzz6NUdO51G1>

Bust-up over climate weighs on EU-UK talks, risks trade rifts

PAGE 1/ 1/2

May 26, 2020
DATE

Bust-up over climate weighs on EU-UK talks, risks trade rifts

Published May 25, 2020, 8:48 PM

By Reuters

BRUSSELS – Britain's refusal to seal climate commitments in a new deal with the European Union to govern their relations after Brexit has become a stumbling block in their deadlocked talks and raises the risk of future trade disputes.



European Union chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier and British Prime Minister's Europe adviser David Frost 5 are seen at start of the first round of post -Brexit trade deal talks between the EU and the United Kingdom, in Brussels, Belgium March 2, 2020. (Oliver Hoslet/Pool via REUTERS/File Photo/MANILA BULLETIN)

While Britain has joined the global Paris agreement to fight climate change and has its own ambitious emissions-cutting goals, London has refused to make binding commitments in the area in the new deal it is seeking with the EU from 2021.

“This creates big problems with the level playing field and is increasingly politically sensitive in the EU,” said an official from the 27-nation bloc.

Britain has a legally-binding target to reduce its net greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050. The EU's executive Commission wants to set the same goal for the bloc, although it has yet to secure the support of all member states.

Yet their bust-up over climate provisions in the new deal reflects fundamental differences about the nature of their future relationship.

“The EU is trying to put this into the trade deal in another example of how it is seeking to continue influencing domestic UK policies,” said a British official.

The EU wants to keep Britain closely aligned under a broad deal that, beyond trade, would cover security, fisheries and multiple other fields, including climate.

But London wants to break away from the EU's orbit and prefers a trimmed-down trade deal only.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

The ‘level playing field’ – extensive guarantees of fair competition ranging from labour and climate standards to state aid – is a key EU demand in the talks with Britain, a large economy on its doorstep. Brussels fears that UK imports could otherwise undercut the EU's cherished single market.

London rejects such commitments after Britons voted narrowly to leave the EU in 2016 under the slogan of “taking back control” of their own laws and regulations.

The rift raises the possibility of future trade disputes over climate as Brussels has pledged to impose carbon border costs on imports from countries with less stringent climate policies than its own.

Britain's long-term emissions targets currently match the EU's ambitions.



Bust-up over climate weighs on EU-UK talks, risks
trade rifts

PAGE 1/ 2/2

May 26, 2020
DATE

But Brussels officials say that – without binding climate commitments in the new EU-UK deal – it is unclear what would happen if one party set a more ambitious emissions-cutting goal or amended its carbon pricing policies in a way that ended the current “level playing field” on climate policies.

Britain formally left the EU in January and is now in a status-quo transition period till December. The two sides have given themselves until the end of June to assess progress in the talks, now largely stalled, on their new relationship.

They can either agree to extend their negotiations beyond the end of the year – something London refuses to do – or face an economically disruptive no-deal Brexit.

Thai researcher eyes affordable, accessible coronavirus vaccine for SE Asia

Published May 25, 2020 10:07pm

By PANU WONGCHA-UM and JUARAWEE KITTISILPA, Reuters



This picture taken on May 23, 2020 shows a laboratory technician holding a tray with doses of a COVID-19 vaccine candidate ready for trial on monkeys at the National Primate Research Center of Thailand at Chulalongkorn University in Saraburi. After conclusive results on mice, Thai scientists from the centre have begun testing a COVID-19 novel coronavirus vaccine candidate on monkeys, the phase before human trials. Mladen Antonov/AFP

BANGKOK — A researcher leading Thailand's push to manufacture a coronavirus vaccine says its aim is to make it cost-effective and accessible to Southeast Asia, and play a part in preventing a supply shortage globally.

Thailand's government announced last week its plans to have a vaccine ready for deployment next year after researchers at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University successfully conducted trials on mice.

"We don't aim for making money. It's not a money issue but an accessibility one," said Kiat Ruxrungtham, director of the university's coronavirus vaccine development.

Thai trials of the experimental vaccine using monkeys started on Saturday, one of at least 100 potential vaccines in the works around the world.

Kiat's group has partnered with scientists and biotech companies in North America and wants to mass produce the vaccine in Thailand, at a price more affordable there and in nearby markets like Indonesia, Malaysia, Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar.

With just over 3,000 cases and 57 deaths, Thailand has had some success in controlling the spread of the coronavirus and has started easing some restrictions.

In the past month it has typically been reporting cases each day of less than 10, compared to hundreds being confirmed daily in Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines.

"If our neighbors still have high infection numbers then we won't survive as well in the long term," Kiat added.

He said it was important not to rely only on major economies to develop and manufacture coronavirus vaccines, or there could be supply bottlenecks.

"Let's say there is proof that it works, how can the manufacturing facility make millions or billions of doses?" he said.

"So a country like us, a small country, we need to step up and then do our own work as well." —
Reuters

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/world/739724/thai-researcher-eyes-affordable-accessible-coronavirus-vaccine-for-se-asia/story/>