

# DENR Region 2 rehabilitates 12 critical watersheds

By [Leander C. Domingo, TMT](#)

June 4, 2020

**TUGUEGARAO CITY:** At least 12 critical watershed areas in Region 2 (Cagayan Valley) were placed under priority rehabilitation by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) under the National Greening Program (NGP).

Felix Taguba, DENR Region 2 assistant director for technical services, said the 12 watershed areas in the region are part of the 131 priority critical watersheds in the country targeted for the reforestation program this year.

Taguba said these 131 critical watersheds support the national irrigation systems, 12 of which in Region 2 cover some 870,013 hectares.

These are the Pared Watershed, Pinacanauan de Tuguegarao, Dummon Watershed, Baua Watershed and Zinundungan Watershed in Cagayan; Pinacanauan de San Pablo, Pinacanauan de Tumauini, Ilaguen Watershed and Divilacan Watershed in Isabela; Magat Watershed and Casecnan Watershed in Nueva Vizcaya; and Upper Cagayan River Watershed in Quirino.

Taguba said the rehabilitation of these watersheds through the NGP will protect and conserve the water supply in the Cagayan Valley which includes Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino and the island province of Batanes.

“The water will be beneficial to the people not only for domestic consumption but also for irrigation and other agricultural purposes,” he said.

Earlier, the DENR Central Office has ordered the regional field offices in the country to prioritize sites within critical watersheds in the NGP targets for 2020.

The sites included to be prioritized are villages identified with communist armed conflicts as well as the poorest and most vulnerable provinces.

“The rehabilitation of the critical watershed areas also aims to sustain growth and inclusive peace through the provision of livelihood opportunities and development of forest-based enterprises,” Taguba said.

He said that for this year, DENR-Region 2 is targeting to establish NGP plantations in 1,649 hectares which consist of 754 hectares in Isabela, 484 hectares in Nueva Vizcaya and 411 hectares in Quirino.

The DENR Region 2 is also doing efforts to protect and maintain the more than 12,000-hectare plantations established since 2018, he added.



AngMinero

19 hrs · 🌐



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) together with Philippine National Police (PNP) conducted a joint anti-illegal logging operation at Sitio Tinago, Brgy. Kansungka, Baybay City.

The personnel seized 497 board feet of illegally cut lumber with a market value of P 24,850.

"Continued vigilance of the public and the judicious response of environmental law enforcers have led to another seizure of illegally cut lumbers and the apprehension of the timber poacher," Tirso P. Parian Jr., regional executive director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 8 was quoted in a report.



**DENR CONFISCATES P24K  
WORTH OF ILLEGAL LUMBER  
IN BAYBAY CITY**



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# Business groups seek liberalization of wood processing

posted June 03, 2020 at 10:10 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

Business and advocacy groups are pushing for the approval of an administrative order from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to liberalize wood processing in the Philippines in anticipation of renewed investments.

The groups noted that current regulations, premised on the protection of natural and residual forests, had discouraged investments in tree plantations and wood processing.

“A solution is to customize the current regulations to provide a policy environment conducive for tree plantations to thrive. We, therefore, support the Department’s proposed administrative order to promote and liberalize tree plantations,” the groups declared in a position paper.

The paper was jointly drafted by the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc., Australian-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Employers Confederation of the Philippines European, Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Foundation for Economic Freedom Inc., Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Philippines Inc., Korean Chamber of Commerce Philippines Inc., Organization of Socialized and Economic Housing Developers of the Philippines, Philippine Association of Multinational Companies Regional Headquarters Inc., Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc., Philippine Wood Producers Association Inc., Society of Filipino Foresters Inc. and the Sustainable Tree Farmers Group of the Philippines.

Some recommended a reduction of the inventory requirement from 100 percent to zero prior to the harvest of planted trees in private lands. Inventory requirement should be maintained in forest lands prior to the harvest of planted trees based on Presidential Decree 705, or the Revised Forestry Code.

If products are to be transported outside the tree plantation area, the government should just require a certification that the products came from tenured tree plantations in forest lands and the landowner’s property in private lands.

Others want to allow private tree plantation owners and holders of tenure arrangements to establish their wood processing plants to encourage vertical integration. They want to institutionalize a training program for tree plantation certification and issue the guidelines for the recognition of third-party certifiers.

The Philippines has a growing wood demand but the current supply is unable to keep up. From 2006 to 2016, the average wood supply of the country is 5.17 million cubic meters while the wood consumption is 6.94 million m<sup>3</sup>, resulting in an average deficit of 1.77 million m<sup>3</sup>.

Promoting tree plantations can help meet the country’s local wood demand to support the government’s infrastructure projects and develop downstream wood industries, such as furniture and housing construction.

It can reduce the country’s reliance on imports and increase the contribution of the forestry sector to the gross domestic product.

With an estimated 8 million hectares of land for timber, studies show the Philippines has the capacity to produce at least 100 m<sup>3</sup>/ha of wood annually with high returns on investment.

If at least a million hectares is used for tree plantations that are sustainably managed, it could generate \$1 billion or P50 billion revenues annually.

The industry can generate jobs especially in the uplands where around 25 million Filipinos reside in poverty and curb upland insurgency.

The average contribution of the sector to country’s GDP is just 0.08 percent or P4 billion from 1998-2018.

Source: <https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/325191>

# Groups appeal for proper waste disposal

Published June 3, 2020, 2:27 PM

By *Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz*

Various groups on Wednesday appealed to the public to observe proper waste management, noting a surge in the usage of single-use plastic from food packages, and medical and healthcare materials.

“We are seeing a shift in consumption patterns. More people are opting for deliveries and that will only mean that there is more plastic packaging usage to be expected, especially for food packaging,” said Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability (PARMS) president Crispian Lao.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources Undersecretary Benny Antiporda expressed the need for waste segregation to begin at home to ensure easier recycling at dump sites.

Aside from an increase in plastic packaging use for food, a sharp increase in plastic medical and healthcare materials for hospitals’ use has been observed.

“What we should be alarmed about is how these wastes, plastic or not, are being managed,” the groups said.

“If we look at waste management under the new normal, we can’t highlight enough that waste avoidance should be top priority, and segregation at source is critical to any form of waste management programs,” Lao said.

He suggested that industries “need to design packaging under the new normal focused on waste avoidance and make a decision on whether a product should be reusable, recyclable, durable, repairable, have less packaging, or even no packaging at all.”

Edwin Seah, head of Sustainability and Communications of Singapore-based Food Industry Asia, raised concerns against hastily and indiscriminately banning all forms of single-use plastic, like those used in food packaging.

“The fundamental purpose and function of food packaging is to protect the contents, to keep it fresh, to keep it safe, especially in a climate like the Philippines—the humidity, the diverse networks, and the challenges of distributing food, and getting it stored safely,” he said.

“You can’t just invent food-grade packaging overnight. It takes a lot of time and research. You have to pilot it, scale it, and you have to go through a regulatory process,” he added.

Seah noted that plastic waste collection in the Philippines is not a problem.

“It’s probably the highest in the region but the problem is what happens after it’s collected,” he pointed out.

Most often, waste materials that have already been collected have not been properly disposed of and end up in the ocean as marine litter.

“The problem really is in terms of the facilities of waste management,” Toff Rada, country manager of corporate and government affairs of Mondelez Philippines.

“So, after it’s collected, what’s next? That’s the imperative for us to craft solutions. Not looking at plastic as the problem but in taking plastic waste management as a potential solution to this problem that we’re facing,” he said.



Rada said the company has been working closely with the city government of Parañaque to help improve waste collection and has already invested P2 million for the construction of a plastic waste recycling plant together with PARMs and its member-companies.

“We have a PARMs pilot recycling facility that we have put some investment in and that we hope will be a showcase if we finally get it at full scale,” he said.

“We hope that it will be a showcase also for other cities and local governments to emulate and to see that it is something that can be done and can help improve the entire recycling infrastructure in the country,” he added.

## Walang Plastikan: Plastic's place in the 'new normal'

posted June 03, 2020 at 03:35 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

As parts of the country are placed under varying degrees of eased quarantine schemes, this has caused a surge in the usage of single-use plastic due to a need for affordable, disposable or easy-to-clean packaging and a rise in deliveries for households under lockdown.



“We are seeing a shift in consumption patterns. More people are opting for deliveries and that will only mean that there is more plastic packaging usage to be expected, especially for food packaging,” said Crispian Lao, president of the Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability.

PARMS is a non-profit multi-stakeholder organization that aims to develop and implement a comprehensive waste management program to increase resource recovery, such as plastics and other packaging materials, and reduce landfill dependence leading toward a zero waste Philippines.

Lao was one of five speakers during the recently concluded online forum “Walang Plastikan: An honest conversation on plastic packaging in the Philippines’ food industry.”

Lao said while the use of plastic packaging and the sharp increase in plastic medical and healthcare materials for hospital use are not alarming on their own, what is critical is how these wastes, plastic or not, are being managed.

“If we look at waste management under the new normal, we can't highlight enough that waste avoidance should be top priority and segregation at source is critical to any form of waste management programs,” Lao said.

“We need to design packaging under the new normal focused on waste avoidance and make a decision on whether a product should be reusable, recyclable, durable, repairable, have less packaging, or even no packaging at all.”

Recycling activities have been put on hold due to the unprecedented situation caused by the pandemic.

Edwin Seah, the Head of Sustainability and Communications of Singapore-based Food Industry Asia, raised concerns against hastily and indiscriminately banning all forms of single-use plastic like those used in food packaging.

“The fundamental purpose and function of food packaging is to protect the contents, to keep it fresh, to keep it safe, especially in a climate like the Philippines—the humidity, the diverse networks, and the challenges of distributing food, and getting it stored safely,” Seah said.

"You can't just invent food-grade packaging overnight. It takes a lot of time and research. You have to pilot it, scale it, and you have to go through a regulatory process...In the Philippines, plastic waste collection is not a problem. It's probably the highest in the region but the problem is what happens after it's collected," he added.

According to Toff Rada, country manager of corporate and government affairs of Mondelez Philippines, the problem lies in the country's waste management program.

"So, after it's collected, what's next? That's the imperative for us -- to craft solutions, not looking at plastic as the problem but in taking plastic waste management as a potential solution to this problem that we're facing," Rada said.

Based along Parañaque city, Mondelez Philippines has worked closely with the city's local government to help improve waste collection and has already invested P2 million for the construction of a plastic waste recycling plant together with PARMS and its member-companies. "We have a PARMS pilot recycling facility that we have put some investment in and that we hope will be a showcase if we finally get it at full scale," Rada said.

"We hope that it will be a showcase also for other cities and local governments to emulate and to see that it is something that can be done and can help improve the entire recycling infrastructure in the country," he added.

As a company globally renowned for its portfolio of snacking brands which uses plastic to keep its food safe and secure, Mondelez Philippines acknowledges its responsibility to its stakeholders and the environment at large.

"As a company, we are putting our stake in the cause. We have made commitments to try and reduce our carbon footprint, and we're going to make all our packaging recyclable by 2025. And in the short term, we've also committed to reduce the amount of global packaging material that we use for our products by 65,000 tons by the end of this year," Rada said.

# Suplay ng tubig ngayong may pandemic ng COVID-19 sapat ayon sa Manila Water

By Dona Dominguez-Cargullo June 03, 2020 - 07:48 AM



Sapat ang suplay ng tubig ngayong panahon ng pandemic ng COVID-19 ayon sa Manila Water.

Sa panayam ng Radyo Inquirer, sinabi ni Manila Water spokesperson at head of corporate strategic affairs Jeric Sevilla, tuloy ang suplay ng tubig 24/7 sa east zone.

Ito ay maliban na lamang kung magkakaroon ng emergency repairs sa ilang lugar.

Sinabi ni Sevilla na dinadagdagan ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) ang alokasyon ng tubig para sa Manila Water na ngayon ay 48 cubic meter per second na.

Mas mataas din ang antas ng tubig ng Angat dam at La Mesa dam sa ngayon kumpara sa water level nito noong nakaraang taon kung saan nakaranas ng krisis sa suplay ng tubig.



# Air pollution levels rebound after quarantine eased

Published June 3, 2020, 5:02 PM

By *Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz*

Air pollution levels have rebounded in Metro Manila since the gradual easing of travel restrictions and other activities in May, a study by Greenpeace and the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) on Wednesday, June 3, showed.



Workers commuting on bicycles pass by augmentation buses for train passengers near a train station in Manila on June 1, 2020. (Photo by Ted ALJIBE / AFP / MANILA BULLETIN)

The Special Report on Managing Air Quality Beyond COVID-19 revealed that pollution levels in Metro Manila have been steadily increasing since the beginning of May, as industries restart and cities that have major connecting highways reportedly began seeing more vehicles on the road.

The report compiled data of two major air pollutants that are emitted from fossil fuel combustion, namely nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>).

Analysis of these two pollutants from March 15 to May 15, 2020 showed an initial and dramatic drop in air pollutant concentrations at the beginning of the lockdown, and the gradual rebound during the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) on May 16.

With the metropolis shifting to looser restrictions on travel and other activities under the general community quarantine (GCQ) starting June 1, a return to smog and pollution levels prior to the enhanced community quarantine may not be far behind, the study pointed out.

While the report looked at the entire Metro Manila, it gave a closer examination to the air quality in seven major cities in the metropolis, namely Makati, Pasig, Manila, Quezon, Marikina, San Juan, and Caloocan, to show that the rebound trends are consistent across the capital.

A detailed analysis showed that levels of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> drastically diminished within the first two weeks of ECQ, with the exception of Caloocan). Quezon City and Manila saw the highest reductions of the six.

Although the metro's overall air quality remained much improved compared to previous years, the air quality gains are sliding back in all the cities.

The groups pointed out that this change was expected as the country remains heavily reliant on highly polluting fossil fuel energy sources across all sectors.

NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> are linked to severe respiratory and cardiovascular health illnesses, they noted.

Exposure to high levels of air pollution affects the body's natural defenses against airborne viruses and increases vulnerability to COVID-19.

Greenpeace and CREA called for the immediate adoption of measures that would safeguard the air quality in cities and municipalities, noting that while the restriction of movement during the ECQ was largely responsible for the improved air quality in the past 10 weeks, stringent policies and better city and mobility planning will, moving forward after the pandemic, truly address Metro Manila's transportation emissions problem and improve its air quality.



“Air pollution doesn’t have to be an inescapable reality. The ECQ gave Filipino citizens a glimpse of what cities can be like with healthy, clean air. It also showed us that air pollution can be solved without sacrificing people’s access to mobility,” Greenpeace campaigner Rhea Jane Pescador-Mallari said.

“Moving forward, if the government is willing to use the opportunities and lessons learned from the pandemic and amplify it through policies and infrastructure, active mobility and micro mobility, as well as invest in efficient and safe mass public transport, then a return to the massive pollution levels before COVID-19 can be avoided,” she added.

The report also recommended recovery efforts that prioritize clean energy sources, green transportation options, and enhanced micro mobility around localities, to keep air pollution at manageable levels, and to reduce the compounding risks to human lives and livelihoods brought about by the health and climate crises.

“Our recommendations capitalize on opportunities for environmental, economic and social development in the short and long term, with efforts across local and national governments and the private sector. The ‘better normal’ must be imaginative, and better air quality must be a part of it,” CREA analyst Isabella Suarez said.

In Davao City, British documentarist films plight of a  
young Philippine Eagle

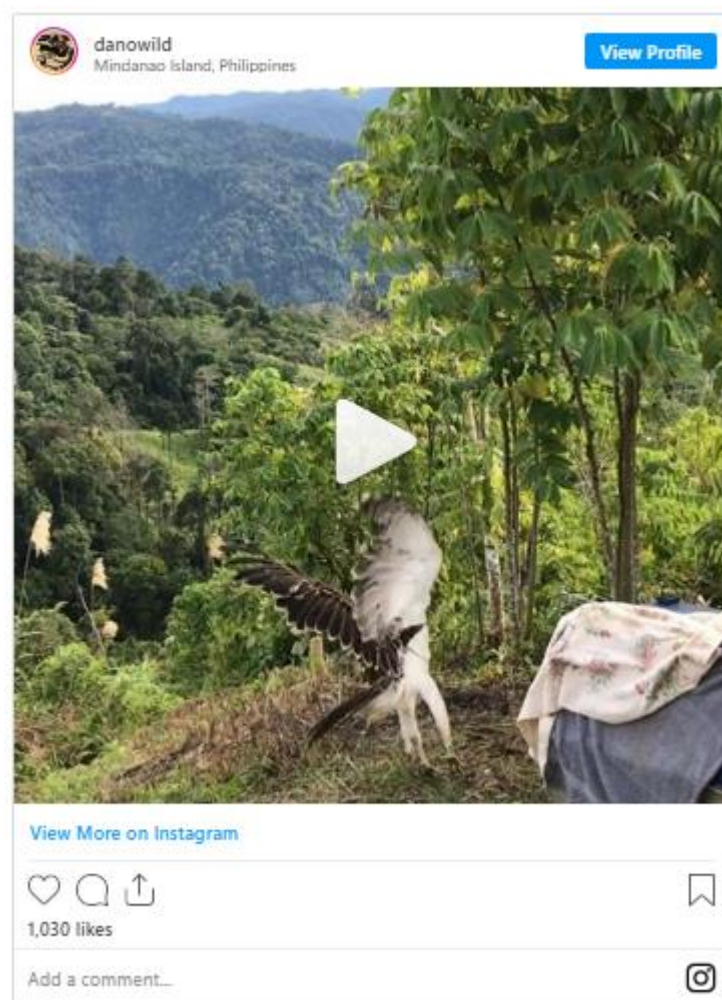
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# In Davao City, British documentarist films plight of a young Philippine eagle

**Kenneth Mheil Mangaya-Ay, Choose Philippines**

Posted at Jun 03 2020 01:12 PM



DAVAO CITY -- The great Philippine Eagle is one of our planet's most unique, beautiful animals. Sadly, it is also considered an endangered species, with just 400 pairs left in the wild.

Protecting and ensuring their survival is a challenge bravely faced by the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) in Davao City, who keeps a population of these animals alive both in the wild and at their center. This initiative inspired a biologist to make a masterpiece that will make us appreciate and protect our national bird.

The documentary is the brainchild of British wildlife documentary presenter, filmmaker, and biologist, Dan O'Neill, who has an insatiable love for adventure and wildlife conservation.

"I met with Jayson Ibanez in London and he told me the story of a young female Philippine eagle who was rescued from the ocean in the Sarangani Province. Coming to the Philippines and following her story made me more in awe of these mythical eagles that I ever imagined and have been sharing stories of them ever since, as well as now having very recently been named patron of the PEF," shared O'Neill.

O'Neill has traveled to some of the world's most remote places in search of iconic animals: from the mountains of North Africa, the ancient Mayan temples of the Yucatan, and to the deepest parts of the Amazon rainforest, among others. He documents his explorations through film, leading to an understanding of how to stop wildlife crime.

This year, he began his doctoral research into the effects of war on wildlife across the world.

In Davao City, British documentarist films plight of a young Philippine Eagle

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“I have always been passionate about birds of prey. At the age of 14, I trained my own hawk, Alto -- which sparked a life-long wish to conserve these magnificent birds in the wild,” said O’Neill.



His film, "Queen of Birds," follows the story of one young female eagle who was found drowning in the ocean by two fishermen. They saved her life and called in help from the PEF which set in motion this whole project.

“I came across to Mindanao with Ben Harris, a camera operator, and planned to learn about how vital Philippine eagles are and release her back into the wild. What happened was never what we could have expected,” teases O’Neill.

In Davao City, British documentarist films plight of a young Philippine Eagle

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The production experience made O'Neill feel at home in the Philippines.

“To see the connection people in the Philippines have to these birds was incredibly transformative for me. To see people so passionate about conservation because of the Philippine eagle proves the power one animal can have to inspire change and gives me so much hope. The incredible work of the PEF has kept the brilliant national bird of the Philippines alive and living in the wild today! I'm incredibly honored to work with the PEF moving forward and to help encourage support for their work,” shared O'Neill.



O'Neill is also running a fundraiser for the PEF during the COVID-19 crisis. “In these unprecedented times, the foundation needs as much help as possible to care for the 100+ animals at the Philippine Eagle Center including 31 stunning Philippine eagles.” Donations can also be coursed directly to the Philippine Eagle Foundation.

In Davao City, British documentarist films plight of a young Philippine Eagle

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The short film is set to have a Digital Premier on June 10 in line with the celebration of the Philippine Eagle Week 2020.

This article was originally published on the [Choose Philippines website](#).

Source: [https://news.abs-cbn.com/life/06/03/20/in-davao-city-british-documentarist-films-plight-of-a-young-philippine-eagle?fbclid=IwAR1oXLKxg\\_qYUKbMTgXaQdAgf2a4jgA3bpX6qGuQY-8VxXD2-IZ2ofWM4](https://news.abs-cbn.com/life/06/03/20/in-davao-city-british-documentarist-films-plight-of-a-young-philippine-eagle?fbclid=IwAR1oXLKxg_qYUKbMTgXaQdAgf2a4jgA3bpX6qGuQY-8VxXD2-IZ2ofWM4)

# BFAR raises red tide alert over Tacloban's Cancabato Bay

By Sarwell Meniano June 3, 2020, 3:53 pm



**RECURRING.** A portion of red tide-infested Cancabato Bay in Tacloban City. The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) imposed a shellfish ban in this city's Cancabato Bay due to the recurrence of the red tide bloom. *(Photo courtesy of Camera ni Juan Photography)*

**TACLOBAN CITY** -- The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has imposed a shellfish ban in this city's Cancabato Bay due to the recurrence of the red tide bloom.

BFAR found the red tide toxin in both shellfish meat and seawater of Cancabato Bay after a series of laboratory analysis.

BFAR Regional Director Juan Albaladejo said in a mobile phone interview on Wednesday that the presence of red tide in both meat and water calls for the prohibition of gathering, trading, and consumption of shellfish from Cancabato over the possibility of shellfish poisoning.

He told the Philippine News Agency (PNA) that the mixing of warm and cold water due to sudden heavy rains triggered the phenomenon.

This is the second red tide recurrence in Cancabato this year with the first recorded in early February.

BFAR conducts weekly monitoring of seawater in bays hit by red tide in the past, but for positive areas, authorities examine water and meat samples three times weekly.

The fisheries bureau advised the public to refrain from eating, harvesting, selling, and buying shellfish products and *Acetes* sp. (small shrimps) from the affected bay until such time that the shellfish toxicity level has gone down and the authority will lift the shellfish ban.

Fish caught in these areas are safe for human consumption provided that these are fresh, washed, and cooked thoroughly, according to the BFAR advisory. *(PNA)*

Source:

[https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1104776?fbclid=IwAR0cIGYd7hQdYxSOSBugzdVKOmJ7NqSyzghV\\_xsKywonR\\_pboaZ9WaKUPKY](https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1104776?fbclid=IwAR0cIGYd7hQdYxSOSBugzdVKOmJ7NqSyzghV_xsKywonR_pboaZ9WaKUPKY)

# Go sees IBC-13 potential as learning platform

Published 13 hours ago  
on June 3, 2020 06:55 PM  
By **TDT**



As the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) continues to hamper businesses, livelihood and school preparations, Senator Christopher "Bong" Go on Wednesday welcomed state media company Intercontinental Broadcasting Corporation's (IBC-13) offer to use its television facilities as a remote learning platform.

In a statement, the senator said that the proposal should enable the Department of Education (DepEd) to air curriculum-based programs when schools reopen on 24 August 2020.

Previously, Go had urged the Education department to explore alternative means to ensure continued learning process of students amid COVID-19 pandemic, as such alternative modes should ensure the safety of the students and without unnecessarily putting additional burden on the part of their parents.

The senator cited Republic Act No. 8370, also known as the Children's Television Act of 1997, which requires a minimum of 15 percent of a network's daily total air time to programs that further children's positive development.

He also called for a review of teaching strategies that were based on new technology whilst taking into consideration the availability of the internet, as the use of broadcast media would ensure a more inclusive access to learning by allowing students without internet access to participate.

President Rodrigo Duterte – in his latest report to Congress — revealed that the satellite television industry is in active dialogue with the government regarding remote learning opportunities.

The government also aims to use the state-owned IBC-13 to air curriculum-based television programs to students in Metro Manila, Central Luzon and Calabarzon. Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Martin Andanar said the network, currently underutilized, would require a P100-million investment to widen its reach.

Go also underscored that the use of broadcast media would enable rural schools, which often lacked an adequate supply of teachers and classrooms, to accommodate more students, including the beneficiaries of the Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa program.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/06/03/go-sees-ibc-13-potential-as-learning-platform/>



# Roque says youth virus spreaders

posted June 04, 2020 at 01:30 am

by [Vito Barcelo and Willie Casas, Rey E. Requejo, Joel E. Zurbano](#)

The government wants to limit the movement of young people and advised them to stay at home for they play a big role in the spread of COVID-19, Palace spokesman Harry Roque said Wednesday.

“We are doing this based on science. It has been shown that in addition to the threat to young people, it is a fact that they are the spreaders. That’s the more important consideration,” Roque said in an interview over ANC’s Headstart program.

“Young people, according to studies and this is now accepted, are actually the spreaders in any pandemic. That’s why we are trying to limit the movement of young people,” Roque said.

He said many young people who are below 21 years old may be infected by the coronavirus—even if they don’t show symptoms—and have likely played a role in the spread of the virus.

The Palace official has advised young people as well as senior citizens to stay at home unless they need to obtain essential goods and services.

In the interview, Roque encouraged young people to abstain from going to malls or gathering in groups and said they should avoid any unnecessary trips.

Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire, meanwhile, reported that the COVID-19 mortality rate continues to fall, after the Philippines recorded its lowest number of deaths in a single day on June 1.

At a virtual press conference, Vergeire also emphasized how the average number of deaths recorded per day has been dropping over the past few weeks.

Starting at an average of 25.3 deaths every day in April, this has dropped to 1.6 deaths a day by the end of May, she said.

The steady decrease in the number of recorded deaths per day is an indicator that the country’s hospitals and health facilities are successfully coping with COVID-19 cases, she added.

At the same time, Vergeire said, some COVID-19 cases may have been counted twice.

“After the laboratories submitted their complete line list, we found out that many of the 23,000 recorded cases were duplicates from other laboratories,” Vergeire said in Filipino.

Vergeire said 38 of 42 reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) laboratories have already submitted their complete line list, which lists tests conducted by laboratories from the time they began operating.

In validating cases, a laboratory has to send their full line list of positive patients to the epidemiology bureau, which identifies and removes duplicate entries such as multiple tests done for one patient.

The epidemiology bureau proceeds then to identify new confirmed cases that have not been previously encoded in the system.

“If all laboratories submit their daily accomplishment reports on time, we won’t have backlogs for validation anymore and we will only be reporting fresh cases,” Vergeire said. “When this happens, we can say that the daily situation is more accurate based on the new cases added on our case bulletin.”

On Tuesday, the Department of Health (DOH) reported 63 more health care workers have been infected by COVID-19, bringing the total to 2,669 as of June 1.

The DOH said 1,438 of these health workers have recovered from the respiratory illness, while the death toll has remained at 32 since May 29.

The DOH said 1,438 of these health workers have recovered from the respiratory illness, while the death toll has remained at 32 since May 29.

The other 1,199 medical workers are active cases and are undergoing treatment or are under quarantine. Of the number, 997 are mild cases, 201 are asymptomatic, while one is in severe condition.

Health workers still account for 15 percent of the total cases nationwide.

A Supreme Court associate justice meanwhile revealed that some lower court judges in the National Capital Region refused to undergo rapid testing for coronavirus.

During a virtual seminar about "Challenges to Rendering Justice During and After the Pandemic" hosted by the Court Appointments Watch, Associate Justice Marvic Leonen expressed disappointment over the refusal of some judges to get tested for COVID-19.

Leonen said the SC has offered first and second court judges the opportunity to undergo rapid testing as part of its measures to prevent spread of COVID-19 infections among justices, judges court employees and litigants.

The magistrate admitted that he was disappointed because of the different excuses being given by judges who did not avail of the rapid testing.

"Here we are, the Court spending as much of its resources as possible to protect its personnel and they do not want to take advantage of it," he said.

Court Administrator Jose Midas Marquez said the free rapid testing was offered only to National Capital Judicial Region (NCJR) because NCR is the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country.

"It was voluntary so there were a number of judges who availed. Others maybe did not see the need because they had no symptoms," he said.

There are around 400 lower court judges in the NCJR.

Marquez said some judges didn't avail of the rapid testing because some local government units such as Marikina and Paranaque have made such tests available to their constituents.

As of May 31, a total of 1,698 Supreme Court personnel including five justices have tested negative for coronavirus diseases (COVID-19) after undergoing rapid tests that started last May 26.

The rapid testing will continue until all of the 2,700 officials and employees have been tested as part of the SC's complementary efforts to the government's drive against COVID-19.

Earlier, Chief Justice Diosdado Peralta announced that all courts nationwide will be fully operational starting June 1, although there would be a limit to the number of people who will be allowed inside the courts.

Cases, pleadings, and required documents may still be filed either manually or electronically.

Also on Wednesday, Senator Franklin Drilon on Wednesday proposed to use the 5 percent franchise tax on Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGOs) to fund the government expenses for COVID-19 activities.

"This is a significant amount that the government should be able to utilize. We must exert every effort to make these POGOs comply with our tax laws and settle their unpaid dues. This is nothing compared to the social problems their continued presence has brought to the country," Drilon said.

"The main justification for allowing the POGOs to stay in the country and even to operate ahead of other businesses during the enhanced community quarantine was to help fund the COVID-19 measures. My amendment will bring teeth to this policy," he added.

# Palace ensures strengthened response to transportation problem amid GCQ

June 3, 2020



Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque ensured that concerned agencies will continue to strengthen the response to the transportation problem in Metro Manila amid the General Community Quarantine.

“Ang DOTR naman po ay tumugon at nag-authorize ng mga pribadong bus at lumarga po sa dalawang ruta. Yung galing po sa Angat papuntang EDSA, at saka ‘yung galing po sa Dasmariñas papunta rin ng EDSA. Nagbigay po ng libreng sakay ang MMDA, nagbigay po ng libreng sakay ang Hukbong Sandatahan. So hindi po natin kagustuhan na ma-inconvenience ang ating mga mananakay pero binibigyan po natin ng priority yung social distancing. (The DOTr has responded and authorized private buses to take two routes. From Angat to EDSA, and those from Dasmariñas going to EDSA. The MMDA and Armed Forces have also provided free rides. So we do not want to inconvenience our commuters but we are giving priority to social distancing.)”

Pres. Spokesperson Roque stated that there is no need for a “commuter challenge” since the government feels the hardship of the people from the start.

Meanwhile, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) will have a meeting that aims to improve the policy of the government against the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

-Mela Lesmoras

Source: [https://ptvnews.ph/palace-ensures-strengthened-response-to-transportation-problem-amid-gcq/?fbclid=IwAR19MwEYpmOjgXZ4Kn5nypOVtW7CcqTRTeYPrQuzbfBT3oqu\\_Cit99f0aMk](https://ptvnews.ph/palace-ensures-strengthened-response-to-transportation-problem-amid-gcq/?fbclid=IwAR19MwEYpmOjgXZ4Kn5nypOVtW7CcqTRTeYPrQuzbfBT3oqu_Cit99f0aMk)

# DoTr easing commute for workers

Published 8 hours ago  
on June 4, 2020 12:05 AM  
By **Francis Wakefield**



Transport officials no longer need to commute to understand the hardships workers have to endure while going to work due to lack of available public transportation, Malacañang said Wednesday.

This came after Senator Nancy Binay challenged officials from the Department of Transportation (DoTr) to join the public commute while the general community quarantine (GCQ) is ongoing in Metro Manila. She criticized the agency's alleged lack of a clear plan for public transport which left workers scrambling for vehicles.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said officials understand the realities on the ground and assured the public that the government is doing everything it can to solve transport woes.

"Oh, no. That was done before. Either way, the public will criticize us. So, I will not do that," Roque said.

"We understand the sentiments of commuters. We are calling on employers to implement a 50-50 work scheme similar to what the government is doing," he added.

Binay noted that those with private vehicles can freely travel around the metropolis to go to work, but the commuting public is left with "very limited" choices for transport.

Despite the transportation chaos on the first day of relaxed quarantine in Metro Manila, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said buses plying city or provincial routes and traditional jeepneys are still not allowed to operate.

In a Palace briefing on Tuesday, LTFRB chairman Martin Delgra claimed undecided when to allow these transport modes under the planned dual-phase reopening of transportation in the region.

Meanwhile, Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade said they are thoroughly studying how provincial buses and jeepneys could soon return to the road to cater commuters that are now going back to their workplaces.

The Philippine National Police has mobilized additional buses and trucks to ease the burden of commuters in Metro Manila and other areas.

Police mobile units have been used to provide free rides to the elderly, pregnant women, nursing mothers and those with small children.

From 1 to 21 June, trains, buses, taxis, transport network vehicle services, shuttle services, point-to-point buses and bicycles are allowed to operate but with limited passenger capacity.

The DoTr currently implements a rationalized bus route in Metro Manila — bringing down the number of routes from about a 100 down to 31.

From 22 to 30 June, public utility buses, modern PUV and the UV Express may be allowed to operate with limited passenger capacity as well as the transport modes already allowed earlier.

All of these modes implement reduced capacity, cashless payments, and health protocols such as wearing of face masks, disinfection of vehicles, availability of sanitizers and use of thermal scanners.

Disinfection facilities are also installed in public transport terminals and contact tracing will be conducted.

**with Kristina Maralit**  
**@tribunephil\_tina**

# Metro Manila ramp up bike lanes as more workers opt for bike-to-work routine

Aileen Cerrudo • June 3, 2020



Several cities in Metro Manila ramped up their bicycle lanes as more workers opted for bike-to-work routine amid the limited public transportation due to community quarantine.

In San Juan City, yellow markers and bike lane signage were placed along bicycle lanes to guide cyclists. Bollard will also be installed to ensure their safety.

According to San Juan City Mayor Francisco Zamora, they launched their pop-up bicycle on Wednesday (June 3) in celebration of World Bicycle Day.

“Wala siyang polusyon, siya ay nag-oobserve ng physical at social distancing kaya kung mapapansin mo iyong bike lanes natin talagang good for one bike at tsaka one direction lang (*There is no pollution, and [it] observes physical and social distancing. You can notice that our bike lanes are only good for one bike and one direction*),” he said on Wednesday (June 3).

Taguig City reopened the bike lane along C6 road and installed additional bike lanes along Cayetano Boulevard and Bayani Road. The local government said they will add more bike routes, as well as launch a Bike Lending Program for employees in the city.

Meanwhile, Quezon City aims to extend its 55-kilometer bike lane to 161 kilometers and upgrade its signage and infrastructure for the safety of the cyclists.

As more workers riding their bicycles to work, EDSA Evolution Spokesperson Keisha Mayuga said it would be a big help to install protected bike lanes to prevent unnecessary accidents.

“Importante na markahan iyong bike lanes para aware din ang mga motorists and road users na may bike lanes. And iyong pinakamaganda talaga is for protected bike lanes (*It is important for bike lanes to be marked so that motorists and road users will be more aware of bike lanes. And what is even better are protected bike lanes*),” she said. **AAC (with reports from Asher Cadapan Jr.)**

Source: <https://www.untvweb.com/news/metro-manila-ramp-up-bike-lanes-as-more-workers-opt-for-bike-to-work-routine/>

# MMDA removes improvised 'bike lane' barricade in QC

June 3, 2020 | Filed under: [Headlines, News](#) | Posted by: [Tempo Desk](#)

BY JEL SANTOS

\*

THE Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) removed yesterday plastic bottles placed by a group as a barricade for a "bike lane" along Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City. On Tuesday morning, a group placed colored plastic containers to create a "bike lane" along Commonwealth Avenue.

Assistant Secretary Celine Pialago, MMDA spokesperson, said that the water colored containers used as barricade along the avenue does not ensure the safety of bikers.

"There is no bike lane yet, and we cannot just put barricades there especially 1 litter plastic container. It is not safe for bikers, because that is not enough to ensure their safety," she said. "It is very dangerous."

"MMDA has a plan for a safe bike lane,, but it will take time for it to be constructed," the agency spokesperson explained.

Pialago stressed that the safety of bikers is their primary concern, saying the improvised barricades will not protect them from speeding motor vehicles.

The members of United Marshall Bikers will be given citation tickets for obstruction, she said.

According to her, they will be fined P1,000 each for what they did.

"We are now coordinating with PNP to know what are the possible charges that will be files against them. They are putting the lives of people in danger," she said.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many workers in the metropolis has turned to biking as their primary mode of transportation.

Senators defend bikers' group after MMDA  
threatened to punish them

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# Senators defend bikers' group after MMDA threatened to punish them

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Jun 3, 2020 9:25:02 PM



*A bikers' group has found an ally in some senators who defended it from the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) after the agency threatened to penalize it for creating a temporary bike lane on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City (FILE PHOTO)*

**Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, June 3)** — A bikers' group has found an ally in some senators who defended it from the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) after the agency threatened to penalize it for creating a temporary bike lane on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City.

Among those senators is Francis Tolentino, himself a former chairman of MMDA, who said he did not find anything wrong when Bikers United Marshalls put up temporary lane markers along the busy Commonwealth Avenue.

The agency earlier threatened to charge and fine the group with ₱1,000 for obstruction.

"I think this is too harsh a penalty to impose on well-meaning citizens that are just going to work," Tolentino told the Senate on Wednesday during a session that also tackled the creation of bike lanes in major thoroughfares amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The MMDA on the same day removed the six-liter plastic bottles the bikers group placed on one side of the road.



Senator Risa Hontiveros also aired her disapproval of the MMDA's action.

"The anticipated punishment for those bikers who put up temporary lane protectors...made of plastic bottles is excessive," noted Hontiveros.



Senators defend bikers' group after MMDA  
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Senator Pia Cayetano, author of the Safe Pathways Bill which seeks to create pop-up bike lanes among other measures for sustainable transportation, agreed.

"If the bike group did not put up makeshift cones to protect themselves, would that have been more acceptable to MMDA?" she asked.

Cayetano added that there is no better time to sponsor the Safe Pathways Bill "than today, as we join other nations in celebrating World Bicycle Day (June 3)."

MMDA Spokesperson Celina Pialago warned the group not to place the markers again without coordinating with the agency first. She said they will seek a dialogue with them.

"*Muli magsilbing paalala sa lahat na may kaukulang penalty po iyan. Huwag na pong ulitin,*" Pialago said in a message to reporters. "*Makipag-coordinate po tayo para po maging smooth ang mga activities na kagaya nito.*"

[Translation: This will serve as another warning that there is a corresponding penalty to that action. Do not repeat it. Let us coordinate so these activities can be done smoothly.]

The Bikers United Marshalls earlier slammed the MMDA, defending that its members were practicing safety. They even assigned volunteers to stand along the makeshift lane to guide bikers.

"The fact that volunteer marshalls are signaling bikers to remain in the rightmost lane and motorists to share the road creates a much safer road," the group said in its Facebook page. "Doing nothing is more fatal."

The group added it is ready to face the charges the MMDA may file against them.

"We believe we have done our bikers (mostly without protective gear) our humble service," it said. "If the MMDA sees otherwise, then we have to be ready for the consequences of the incompetence of our leaders."



Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/6/3/senators-bikers-group-mmda-fine.html?fbclid=IwAR25qCUIhKOW72TyIUwZLleN6aa7T-IBLRi19zr2Gq21XmzhDKZSRypUPbY>

# CSC Bicol clarifies guidelines on Covid-19 work arrangement for gov't workers

By Sally Atento-Altea Published on June 2, 2020

LEGAZPI CITY, May 29 (PIA) – To ensure safety and continuous service of government workers despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the Civil Service Commission – Region 5 (CSC-RO5) clarified the guidelines for alternative work arrangements and support mechanisms especially for workers belonging to the vulnerable groups.



"Government agencies may adopt any or a combination of five alternative work arrangement to ensure safety and continuous service of government workers despite the Covid-19 pandemic," CSC-RO5 information officer Rona Jane Nuñez said at the "Ugnayan sa Bicol" radio program of PIA Albay.

"Government agencies may adopt any or a combination of five alternative work arrangements: work-from-home, skeletal workforce, compressed workweek, staggered working hours or other alternative work arrangements," CSC-RO5 information officer Rona Jane Nuñez said.

These work arrangements, added Nuñez, shall be adopted while the country is on the period of state of national emergency due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Under the CSC guidelines, employees aged below 21 and above 60 years old, as well as those with health risks, pregnant and residing in areas under general community quarantine shall be under work-from-home arrangement except when their services are indispensable under the circumstances or when office work is permitted.

"Work-from-home refers to an output-oriented work arrangement that authorizes the worker to produce outputs/results and accomplishments outside of the office," Nuñez said.

Skeletal workforce on the other hand refers to a work arrangement where a minimum number of employees is required to man the office to render service when full staffing is not possible.

Government workers may also opt for four-day or compressed workweek so long as the required 40-hour workweek has been delivered.

"In our CSC offices, we adopt the four-day workweek from Monday to Thursday. Our Fridays are allotted for disinfection and decontamination activities in our office.

CSC Bicol clarifies guidelines on Covid-19 work  
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Offices that observe work shifting or flexible working time may adopt the staggered working hours. Moreover, the agency head shall ensure that the employees are available for required work duties outside of core hours.

Furthermore, agencies may adopt other alternative work arrangements or combine work arrangements that are appropriate to their functions and their place of work.

Likewise, government offices are directed to implement proper health protocols and precautionary measures and ensure the safety of their workers in rendering office operations.

For CSC-Region 5, the No Visitor/No Walk-In Clients Policy has been implemented in view of the pandemic.

"Services shall be on per-appointment-basis only. Queries and requests must be sent thru e-mail, messenger, phone call or text message," Nuñez said.

The CSC Eligibility Exam has been suspended as well. Notice on resumption of application will be posted. (SAA-PIA5/Albay)



## ANG AMERICAN O SPANISH FLU AT COVID-19

June 3, 2020 @ 4:23 PM 16 hours ago

MAGANDANG pumulot ng mga leksyon sa tinawag noong 1918-1920 na Spanish o American Flu na pumatay ng nasa 50 milyong hanggang 100 milyong mula sa nagkasakit na 500 milyong katao sa buong mundo.

Ang mahahalagang leksyon ay magagamit natin laban sa Coronavirus Disease-19 na nananalasa sa ating panahon na may biktima nang halos pitong milyon at halos 400,000 ba ang namamatay.

### SPANISH O AMERICAN FLU

Bagama't tinawag na Spanish Flu o trangkaso, walang palatandaan na nagmula sa Spain ang flu na ito na gawa ng virus mula sa mga ibon at nanghawa sa mga manok at baboy sa kalaunan.

Tinawag lang itong Spanish Flu dahil sa kalayaan sa pamamahayag sa bansang Espanya habang neutral ito sa mga bansang naggigiyerahan sa paligid nito noong World War 1.

Laman ng mga diaryo ang flu na ito na pilit na pinagtatakpan ng mga bansang Amerika, Britanya, France at maging ng kalaban nilang Germany at iba pa upang hindi mabuking na nanghihina na silang lahat dahil sa sakit na maaaring ikatalo nila sa digmaan.

Nang matamaan ng sakit at muntik mamatay si Spanish King Alfonso VIII, dito na tinawag ang sakit na Spanish flu.

Nagsimulang manalasa sa buwan ng Marso 2018 hanggang sa Agosto 2019 ang Spanish Flu bagama't nagpatuloy ang pananalasa nito hanggang 1920 nang kumalat na ito sa buong mundo mula sa Amerika at Europa makaraang ang World War 1.

### MULA AMERIKA

Depende sa mga siyentista at historian na nag-aaral sa kasaysayan ng American o Spanish flu, taong 2015 pa nang mapansin ito sa bansang Austria na kasali sa digmaan at kakampi ng Germany sa World War 1 na nagsimula noong Agosto 2014.

May nagsasabi ring galing ito sa China gaya ng pagkakasakit ng 3,000 Chinese worker mula sa nasa 24,000 Tsino na dumaan sa Canada papuntang Britanya noong Nobyembre 1917 na dahilan umano ng pagpasok ng sakit sa Amerika.

Pinabulaanan naman ito ng iba pang siyentista sa pagsasabing sa 94,000 Tsino na kinuha ng Britanya at nasa 35,000 na kinuha ng France bilang katulong nila sa digmaan, walang nabalitaang nagkasakit sa mga dinaanang bansa ng mga ito gaya ng mga dumaan sa Suez Canal at Africa.

Ang malinaw, noon pa lang Marso 1918, nagsimula nang magkamatayan sa Fort Riley, Kansas sa Amerika, kampo militar ng Amerikano, dahil sa flu na na naobserbahang nagsimulang tumama sa mga Amerikano ilang taon pa bago ang pangyayaring ito.

Habang lumilipas ang mga buwan, naging patindi nang patindi ang sakit na tumama sa mga sundalong Amerikano. Lalo't siksikan sila at walang social distancing sa mga barko na pinadadala sa France simula noong Hunyo 26, 1917.

Alalahaning nagdeklara ng giyera ang Amerika laban sa Germany noong Abril 20-1917 at kasunod na ang pagpapadala nito ng nasa dalawang milyong sundalo sa Europa, lalo na sa France at nag-landing nga ang unang 24,000 sundalong Amerikano sa France noong Hunyo 1917.

Mula noong Marso 1918, nagsimula na ring mahawa ang mga sundalong Pranses at British mula sa mga Amerikanong naihalo sa kanila sa digmaan.

Nasa 350,000 Amerikano ang namatay umano sa labanan habang nasa 45,000 ang namatay sa American Flu.

Sa namatay sa Europa na nasa 11 milyong sundalo at nasa 13 milyong sibilyan, tinatayang mahigit sa dalawang milyon o mahigit ang namatay sa American Flu.

## **KUMALAT NA**

Matapos ang digmaan na sinimulan ng Armistice o ceasefire noong Nobyembre 11, 1918 at tinapos sa Treaty of Versailles noong Hunyo 28, 1919, dito na nagsiuwian ang mga sundalo mula sa iba't ibang bansa.

Ang India na nagpadala ng isang milyong sundalo para ayudahan ang mga British at Pranses, nang magsiuwian ang mga buhay rito ay humawa ng humawa sa mga Bumbay hanggang sa mamatay ang nasa 17 milong mamamayan sa India.

Sa Japan, nasa 300,000 umano ang nahawa at namatay habang pinasok naman ang Indonesia ng may sakit mula Singaporena ikinamatay ng nasa 1.5 milyong Indonesian.

Sa Pilipinas, may 80,000-90,000 ang namatay dahil sa pagdating ng mga Amerikanong sundalo na nagsanay sa ilang libong Pinoy para isalang sa World War 1 at inipon ang mga ito sa Camp Claudio na sakop ngayon ng Parañaque City.

Napurnada ang biyahe ng mga ito dahil sa Armistice at nang nagsiuwian ang mga ito, kumalat na rin ang American Flu sa buong bansa na ikinamatay nga ng 80,00-90,000 Pinoy.

Hindi sasapat ang espasyong ito kung isasama natin ang iba pang bansa sa Europa, Africa, America, Middle East at Asia na kinalatan ng American Flu na sa tantiya mismo ng World Health Organization ay pumatay ng nasa P50M ngunit nasa 100M naman para sa iba pang mga siyentista at historian.

## **VIRUS HINDI BAKTERYA**

Noong una, inakalang kolera o kaugnay na sakit na bakterya ang sanhi kaya ang mga bakuna noon na laban sa bakterya ang ginamit laban sa American Flu.

Pero naging waepek ang lahat na anti-bacteria na gamot.

Palibhasa, noon lang taong 1931 nagsimulang makita ang virus nang buo dahil sa pagkakaimbento ng electron microscope.

Noon pang 1892 nadiskubre ang virus, lalo na sa foot and mouth disease ng mga baboy at iba pang hayop.

Pero dinaraan sa pagsagat sa mga pino na bagay gaya ng mga damit.

“Yung iba, dinaan naman sa mikroskopyo na naimbento noong 1873 ngunit hindi makita ang mga virus sa liit kahit 1,000 libo pa ang kaya ng mikroskopyo na palakihin ang imahe ng isang napakaliit na bagay.

Nang maimbento ang electron microscope na isang milyong beses na palakihin ang larawan ng isang napakaliit na bagay, noon na nagsimulang makita at mapag-aralan ang mga virus na kakaiba sa bakterya.

### **AMERICAN FLU AT COVID-19**

Noong World War 1 na naganap simula noong 1914 at ganap na nagwakas noong 1920, wala ngang bakuna dahil walang nakaaalam na virus na pala ang H1N1 na American Flu.

Pero nag-isip ang mga awtoridad, lalo na sa parte ng mga Amerikano kung ano ang gagawin.

At alam ba ninyo ang naging remedyo?

Kung ano ang ginagawa laban sa COVID-19 sa mga araw na ito, ‘yun din ang ginawa noon.

‘Yun bang === nagpairal sila ng social distancing, pagsusuot ng face mask at palagiang paghuhugas ng kamay; ipinagbawal ang maramihang pagtitipon maging sa mga simbahan at ibang lugar, okasyon at pinaghiwalay ang mga negro at puti ngunit hindi uso noon ang cremation bagama’t may mabilisang paglilibing.

Ngayon naman, wala pa ring bakuna laban sa COVID-19.

Kaya naman, kung ano ang ginawa laban sa American Flu noon na nagpatigil sa H1N1 noon, dapat ganito rin ang ating gagawin na ginagawa na nga natin upang matigil ang pananalasa ng virus ng COVID-19.

# Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pagasa

Published June 3, 2020, 11:07 PM

## METRO CORNER

By **ERIK ESPINA**



Erik Espina

The Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa Program (BP2) is a commendable effort initiated by new Senator Christopher Lawrence “Bong” Go via Senate resolution, and President Rodrigo Duterte’s institutionalizing it under Executive Order 114. It is a program long overdue in the Philippines. The program under a similar administration would have done wonders in our grandfathers’ generation. Today, we would be reaping the fruits.

The program “aim is to provide hope for a better future through equity in resources throughout the country in boosting country-side development... primarily geared to addressing Metro Manila’s congested urban areas, to return to their home provinces, assisting them in the transition with support, and incentives on transportation, subsistence, education, among others. A pillar of balanced regional development, 22 government agencies in partner with respective LGUs, will ensure continuous improvement in the economy and the quality of life with long-term plans on various investments in infrastructure, agri-business, transportation, skills training, livelihood, etc.” A significant percentage of economic activity, e.g., investments, projects, trade, etc. is located in the NCR and Region 4. Manila is the most congested city in the world (2019) registering 41,500 persons per square mile. The effects as felt in traffic, pollution, long-lines, & overwhelmed public. BP2 must, however, incorporate the de-listing of individuals/families from Metro Manila barangays along with the transfer of their Comelec registration to the province. A necessary measure, to empower MM local executives.

# Key elements of an anti-Covid strategy

posted June 04, 2020 at 12:15 am

by [Rudy Romero](#)

## "Management, fiscal policy, consumer sentiment"

There are many things that people still don't know about the virus that has been virtually ravaging the whole universe. But some things they have come to know, and one of these is that dealing with the economic crisis that the coronavirus has created is a three-part matter. One part has to do with management, the second has to do with fiscal policy and the third has to do with consumer sentiment.

The COVID-19 outbreak has been a battle the likes of which the world has not seen since the Great Depression and the Spanish flu pandemic that came a decade earlier. As with any battle, the first thing that the government needed to do was to make an assessment of its human and physical resource capabilities – the available number of doctors, nurses, hospitals, beds, ICUs (intensive care units), ventilators, respirators, test kits and PPE (personal protective equipment) sets. The next step that the government needed to take was to create a body that would conduct the war against the enemy in a unified and focused manner.

That body has been IATF (Inter-Agency Task Force on COVID-19). With DOH (Department of Health) and DILG (Department of the Interior and Local Government) as its co-lead agencies, IATF has performed commendably despite the initial inadequacy of resources. To date, IATF's most important recommendations to President Rodrigo Duterte have been those relating to Metro Manila's ECQ (Enhanced Community Quarantine) categorization and to the recent change in that categorization to GCQ (General Community Quarantine).

Thus, people already know that application of the basic principles of good management is key to the success of a campaign as the one being waged against the coronavirus.

People also know now that a robust, all-out fiscal response by the government is a decisive element of coping with a crisis such as the one that the nation is now facing. Filipinos belonging to the C, D and E income classes – Filipinos who have the least savings – are the people most badly hit by the COVID-19 crisis, and the vast majority of business enterprises are MSMEs (micro, small and medium-scale enterprises). At a time when jobs and livelihoods have suddenly disappeared, it is aggressive fiscal policymaking – outright grants under programs like SAP (Social Amelioration Program) as well as tax moratoria of all kinds – that ought to be at the center-stage. There is little point in talking about the debt-to-GDP ratio and bank lending rate reductions when millions of Filipino families don't know where tomorrow's meals will be coming from.

Economic theory says that people will be more active consumers when they are reasonably confident that their jobs will be there one year into the future. But a public-health concern has intruded into the picture, threatening to linger in the environment without vaccine protection, with the result that people become hesitant to consume goods and services that are not basic items. Thus, the third thing that has been taught by the public-private effort to defeat COVID-19 is that the consumer non-confidence shown by recent opinion surveys must be countered with measures intended to convince Filipinos that economic recovery is on the way and that they can confidently raise the level of their consumption. That, of course, will mean destroying the specter of a second wave of infections during the remainder of 2020 or the early part of 2021.



# 'No registration, no swimming' policy implemented as Boracay transitions to modified GCQ

Published June 3, 2020 8:17pm

A "no registration, no swimming" policy has been implemented in Boracay as it transitions to the modified general community quarantine.

[Swimming with physical distancing](#) is now allowed in the island, but those who wish to do so will need to log their information for contact tracing purposes.

According to Emil Sumangil's report for "24 Oras," Boracay will start accepting tourists but only those who have prior bookings or reservations in hotels and resorts.

"Incoming tourists shall be verified at the Caticlan and/or Tabon Port by the Department of Tourism VI and Municipal Tourism Office," read Executive Order No. 27 of the Municipality of Malay.

Four beaches have been opened for swimming from 6 am to 6 pm. Tourists must maintain two meters distance from each other.

They are also encouraged to bring their own gear such as goggles and snorkeling masks, as renting equipment is still prohibited.

Other establishments in Boracay have been allowed to reopen, provided that the local government unit has given them a certificate and they maintain minimum public health standards.

Restaurants are allowed to accept customers at half capacity, but diners are required to bring their own eating utensils. "Clean as you go" policy is also imposed.

Tourism establishments who wish to resume operations must apply to the Department of Tourism Region VI. **—MGP, GMA News**

Source: [https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/travel/741063/no-registration-no-swimming-policy-implemented-as-boracay-transitions-to-modified-gcq/story/?fbclid=IwAR1gzfa3rIKi0wmvTZ\\_oALDZ2VTYfnl8tUMq2ioam\\_LAInolnwn8-Iz55PI](https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/travel/741063/no-registration-no-swimming-policy-implemented-as-boracay-transitions-to-modified-gcq/story/?fbclid=IwAR1gzfa3rIKi0wmvTZ_oALDZ2VTYfnl8tUMq2ioam_LAInolnwn8-Iz55PI)

# Virgin coconut oil clinical trials for severe COVID-19 cases in PGH gets greenlight

Arianne Merez, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jun 03 2020 05:57 PM



Virgin coconut oil is extracted from fresh coconut meat. *File*

MANILA - Clinical trials on the efficacy of virgin coconut oil for severe COVID-19 cases were already approved for patients in the Philippine General Hospital in Manila, the Department of Science and Technology said Wednesday.

The ethics board of the University of the Philippines-Manila has approved the conduct of clinical trials on patients with moderate and severe cases of COVID-19.

"Ang good news, iyon pong sa PGH which is for moderate and severe cases ay inaprubahan na finally ng Ethics Board ng UP Manila, so I am just waiting for the report that they have already started," Science Secretary Fortunato Dela Peña said in a virtual press briefing.

(The good news is that the Ethics Board of UP Manila has approved the testing for moderate and severe cases in PGH.)

A group of patients will be given VCO as part of their daily diet, Dela Peña said, to see if they would recover faster than those who don't drink the oil for 14 days.

Some 100 patients are eyed for the clinical trials, he added.

"As I have indicated earlier, we are planning—or they are planning for 100 patients; half will be on VCO and half will not be given VCO, so for comparison purposes," Dela Peña said.

So far, the world has yet to find a cure or vaccine for COVID-19 but clinical trials are ongoing on drugs seen as possible treatment for the respiratory disease.

Aside from PGH, the DOST earlier said it would also run clinical trials at the Santa Rosa Community Hospital in Laguna for mild cases of COVID-19.

There are, however, not enough COVID-19 patients in the hospital for clinical trials, which prompted the DOST to include 2 other facilities with COVID-19 patients, Dela Peña said.

As of Wednesday, the Philippines has confirmed 19,748 COVID-19 cases. This includes 974 deaths, and 4,153 recoveries.

Source: [https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/03/20/virgin-coconut-oil-clinical-trials-for-severe-covid-19-cases-in-pgh-gets-greenlight?fbclid=IwAR1rmOqED4eCmobthbxI7YazxvQbzy3NpZNT\\_Gf8\\_E356GlaqxWp1EQNM4s](https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/03/20/virgin-coconut-oil-clinical-trials-for-severe-covid-19-cases-in-pgh-gets-greenlight?fbclid=IwAR1rmOqED4eCmobthbxI7YazxvQbzy3NpZNT_Gf8_E356GlaqxWp1EQNM4s)

# Abaca face masks now available in Catanduanes

Published June 3, 2020, 4:47 PM

By *Jann Tatad*

**VIRAC, Catanduanes** – A handicraft entrepreneur here has come up with an eco-friendly alternative to disposable and reusable cloth face masks as protection against the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).



Photo by Denise Jean Taperla / DTI – Catanduanes / MANILA BULLETIN)

Teresita Sebastian, owner of Ody's Homecraft in Barangay Valencia here, has re-purposed her production by creating abaca face masks which can be availed for only P20 a piece.

The product comes in two types: dual-ply, where the outer part is made of abaca paper and the inner part is made of thin cloth; and single-ply facemasks made of abaca paper only with a slot for tissue paper or thin gauze.

Abaca is said to be effective than a regular cloth and N95 mask in terms of filtration based on a test conducted by Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Region 10.

Sebastian said that the abaca masks are washable and reusable. She also assured that despite its papery texture because of abaca fiber, the facemask was still comfortable to use.

Moreover, the crafter said that they were now looking into ways on how to easily produce more abaca handmade face masks, as well as shipping products to interested buyers from outside the province.



# Water sample from Ligasong Creek in Calamba found positive for poliovirus type 3

Published June 3, 2020, 3:35 PM

By *Carla Bauto Deña*

**CALAMBA, Laguna** – Water sample taken from Ligasong Creek here last month was found positive for poliovirus type 3, the City Health Office confirmed on June 3, Wednesday.

The city government has been conducting monthly water sampling in San Juan River and Ligasong Creek since October 2019 as per the recommendation of the Department of Health (DOH) and the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM).

Due to the water test results, the City Health Office warned residents against going down the creek to avoid exposure to the virus.

Residents were also reminded to practice hygienic defecation, and to avoid throwing wastes such as diapers into bodies of water.

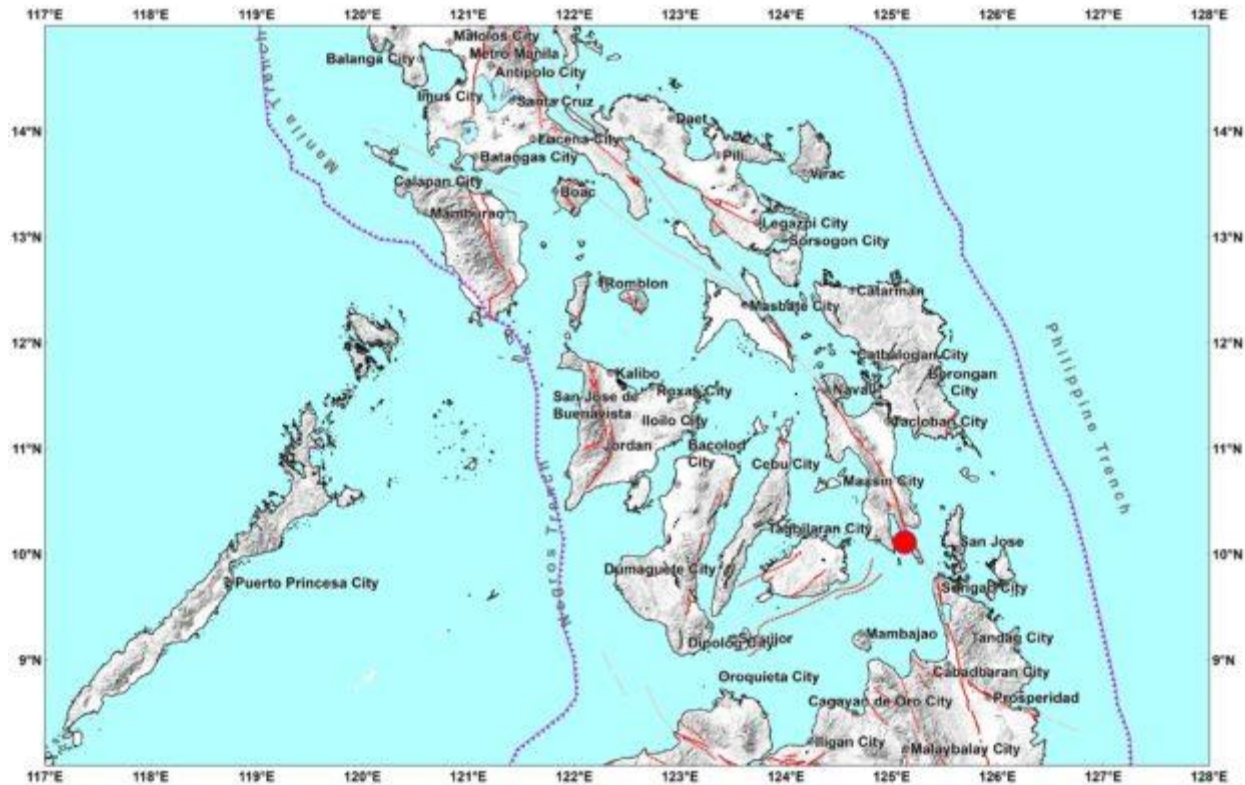
Amid speculations, the City Health Office clarified that water from Calamba Water District was not contaminated.

The monthly water sampling is part of the monitoring measures put in place after a polio case was recorded in Barangay Lingga September last year, nearly two decades after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Philippines to be free of the deadly disease.

# Magnitude 3 quake strikes Southern Leyte

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

[Inquirer Visayas](#) / 12:32 PM June 03, 2020



**TACLOBAN CITY** – A magnitude 3.0 earthquake struck parts of Southern Leyte at 8:54 a.m. on Wednesday (June 3).

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said the tremor was traced to San Francisco town.

The quake was tectonic in origin.

It was felt at Intensity 3 in the towns of San Francisco and Limasawa, and Intensity 2 in Pintuyan town.

Phivolcs said it does not expect any damage or aftershocks.

*Edited by TSB*

# Magnitude-4.3 quake hits waters off Davao Occidental

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jun 03 2020 04:34 PM



Courtesy of the Phivolcs website

MANILA — A 4.3-magnitude earthquake hit the waters off Davao Occidental on Wednesday afternoon, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

The tremor struck at 2:58 p.m., approximately 211 kilometers southeast of Jose Abad Santos town, with a depth of 129 km.

The temblor was tectonic in origin.

The Phivolcs said aftershocks and damage to structure are not expected.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/03/20/magnitude-43-quake-hits-waters-off-davao-occidental?fbclid=IwAR2snnxF4dXeoC246L6apByM9jB7EwyLtjIZ31FpCniVjxWyGRTA3vH3vHo>



# 4.2-magnitude quake jolts Tawi-Tawi

Published June 3, 2020, 9:56 AM

By *Mike Crismundo*

**BUTUAN CITY** – A 4.2 magnitude earthquake jolted Tawi-Tawi province early Wednesday morning, June 3, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said.

In its bulletin, Phivolcs said the tremor was recorded at 12:37 a.m., with the epicenter plotted 320 kilometers (km) southeast of South Ubian, Tawi-tawi province.

The tremor had a depth of 31 km, Phivolcs said.

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

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

Meanwhile, a 3.8-magnitude tectonic earthquake was also registered at 2:23 a.m. on the same day, and its epicenter was traced 97 kms northeast of Baganga, Davao Oriental province, with a depth of 19 km, Phivolcs also said, in its latest bulletin.

No aftershock or tsunami alert was raised by the state agency.

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

# Aurora niyanig ng magnitude 3.1 lindol

## Balita

By Leifbilly Begas June 03, 2020



NIYANIG ng magnitude 3.1 lindol ang Aurora kanina.

Ayon sa Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology naramdaman ang lindol ala-1:24 ng hapon.

Ang epicenter nito ay anim na kilometro sa kanluran ng Casiguran. May lalim itong 29 kilometro. Nagdulot ito ng Intensity II paggalaw sa Santiago City, Isabela.



# LOOK: Pitong lugar na nakapagtala ng pinakamataas na heat index, June 3

By Mary Rose Cabrales June 03, 2020 - 09:48 PM

PAGASA STATIONS WITH THE HIGHEST COMPUTED HEAT INDEX WEDNESDAY, 3 JUNE 2020		
SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ	48°C	2:00 PM
SANGLEY POINT, CAVITE CITY	48°C	2:00 PM
AMBULONG, TANAUAN CITY	46°C	5:00 PM
GUIUAN, EASTERN SAMAR	46°C	2:00 PM
CALAPAN CITY	45°C	2:00 PM
DAGUPAN CITY	45°C	2:00 PM
TUGUEGARAO CITY	45°C	2:00 PM

Nakapagtala ng mataas na heat index ang pitong lugar sa bansa, araw ng Miyerkules (June 3).

Ayon sa huling datos ng PAGASA, nakapagtala ang Science City of Muñoz at Sangley point, Cavite City ng pinakamataas na heat index na umabot sa 48 degrees Celsius (alas-2:00 ng hapon).

Naitala naman ang 46 degrees Celsius na heat index sa sumusunod na mga lugar at oras:

- Ambulong, Tanauan City (5:00 ng hapon)
- Guiuan, Eastern Samar (2:00 ng hapon)

Samantala, 45 degrees Celsius na heat index alas-2:00 ng hapon naman ang naitala sa sumusunod na lugar:

- Calapan City
- Dagupan City
- Taguegarao City

Ayon sa weather bureau, mapanganib ang dulot kapag umabot sa 41 hanggang 54 degrees Celsius ang heat index dahil sa sobrang init, maaari itong magdulot ng heat cramps at heat exhaustion na posibleng mauwi sa heat stroke.

Paalala ng PAGASA sa publiko na dalasan ang pag-inom ng tubig at iwasan na muna ang anumang physical activities tuwing tanghali at hapon.

# Air quality matters more than ever

By [Amor Maclang](#)

June 3, 2020



Although overall air quality has improved during the lockdowns, pollution is expected to again increase once things normalize.

WHETHER at home or in our respective workplaces, we spend much of our lives breathing indoor air that is often contaminated by numerous pollutants.

Prior to the community quarantines that we've needed to be in, we are already spending around 85 percent of our lives indoors.

Nowadays, we spend practically all our time inside houses or buildings.

This is the reason why now, more than ever, air quality is a crucial element not only in managing existing residential and office spaces but also in the planning and designing of properties for development in the new normal.

## Indoor air quality: Crucial yet oft-ignored

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) is the term for air quality within and around buildings and structures, especially related to the health and comfort of building occupants.

It should be noted, however, that even before the outbreak of Covid-19, the global market for the IAQ category has been predicted to already grow, due to obvious factors such as pollution and its overall effects on wellness. In fact, poor IAQ has been said to contribute to poor health like asthma, nausea and eye irritation. It can even affect concentration, mood and energy levels.

According to the World Health Organization, "Air pollution kills an estimated 7 million people worldwide every year. WHO data shows that 9 out of 10 people breathe air containing high levels of pollutants."



*"Now more than ever, companies and property owners need to protect their most important assets: their people. Ensuring that there are no compromises with indoor air quality is a nonnegotiable," Michael Dargani, CEO of Ananta Industries, local distributor of AtmosAir*

The surprising thing is that I've come across studies that claim that in terms of property purchase, air quality is not one of the three main factors that people consider when buying residential property. The most common factors in buying a house were price, location and amenities—which are, to a certain extent, understandable.

But among all environmental issues out there, air pollution is actually the most relevant for the property sector, with its direct adverse effects on human lives. In fact, the IAQ of a space is one of the most important considerations for occupant wellness.

## Improving air quality and property management

In a time when people have become increasingly conscious of the air they breathe, it would be wise for property managers to exert extra effort in ensuring that the IAQ of the spaces they manage are within acceptable levels.

Regular testing of air in the residential or office space is imperative to identify any potential threats. It is crucial to test for all possible contaminants to ensure that they are checking for all possible hazards. Another important way to improve IAQ is the use of an effective air purifier system.

We all know that Los Angeles is not actually known to have clean air. But even before California's shelter-at-home initiatives started, the Los Angeles International Airport has gotten rave reviews in terms of how its indoor air quality has tremendously improved. And to think that LAX is ranked as the world's fourth busiest airport in terms of total passenger traffic.

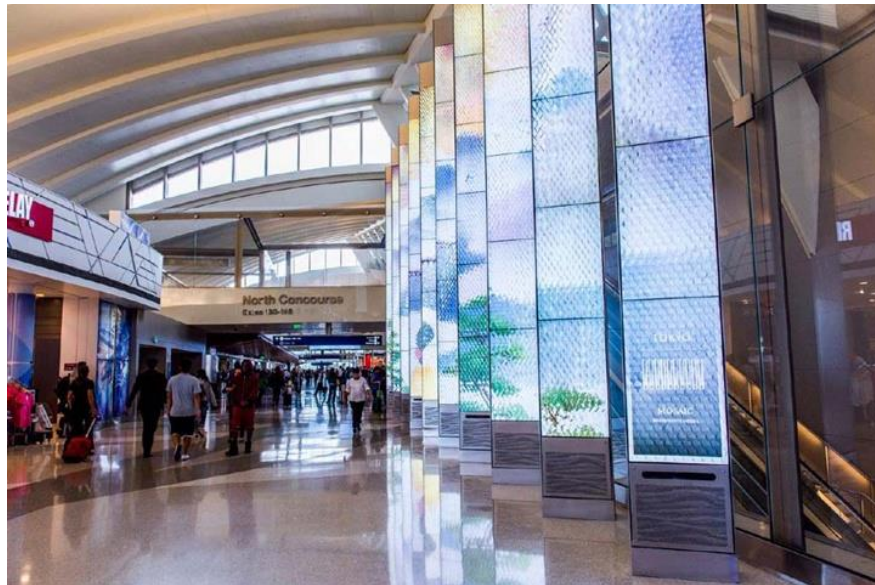
The reason for the improvement is the ongoing LAX Air Quality Improvement Plan, a major part of which is the use of an air purifier system that neutralizes the pollutants and allergens carried by the thousands of people who go through the airport every single day.

According to the Airport Improvement web site, "the significant reduction in dust, allergens and mold spores has been stunning," since the airport started using AtmosAir, a state-of-the-art air purifier system.

This air purifier system was able to deliver bipolar ions directly into the air supply thus providing cleaner and healthier air to the vastly populated indoor sections of the airport. Since LAX started using the system, there have been less odors, bacteria, viruses, and molds while substantially improving indoor air in food court areas.

Another venue that has benefited from the same system is none other than the home of the Los Angeles Lakers and Clippers—the famous Staples Center, which accommodates up to 20,000 people for hockey and basketball games and concerts.

According to Michael Dargani, CEO of Ananta Industries, local distributor of AtmosAir, IAQ has always been an important issue but because air is invisible, it tends to get overlooked. "The air we breathe is a shared resource. Now more than ever, companies and property owners need to protect their most important assets: their people. Ensuring that there are no compromises with indoor air quality is a non-negotiable," he stressed.



*Through an effective air-purifying system, the air quality in LAX has tremendously improved in recent time.*

## Air quality in the time of Covid-19

While pollution levels have drastically gone down during the quarantine period for obvious reasons, the truth is that pollution may once again spike once we start going out of our homes when the lockdowns are eased.

And while WHO has been adamant about Covid-19 not being airborne, there are still studies that say it is possible. Dr. Philip M. Tierno Jr., professor of Microbiology & Pathology at the New York University School of Medicine stated last March that although Covid-19 is clearly spread through person-to-person transmission, it is spread in the air as well.

And so, with the possibility of the aerosolized spread of Covid-19 and the ability of particles to hang in the air for extended periods of time, an active air cleaning strategy would be especially advised for households, according to Tierno. This is something we should take into consideration as the ECQ is extended, modified, or even lifted.

It is also especially important to consider an active air purifying strategy as establishments such as malls and restaurants reopen. Whether or not air purifiers help mitigate the spread of the novel coronavirus, having a quality air cleaning strategy in our residential properties or office spaces would be useful for all of us in more ways than one.

Image Credits: [lawa.org](http://lawa.org)

# The planet after the pandemic

Covid-19 has spurred unprecedented state intervention, with governments developing and implementing comprehensive recovery strategies. This provides a golden opportunity to entrench environmental protection in our economic systems.



From intensive farming and deforestation to mining and the exploitation of wild animals, destructive practices that we dismiss as “business as usual” place us in ever-closer contact with animals, creating the ideal conditions for disease spillovers. Image: [CC BY 2.0](#)

By [André Hoffmann](#)

June 3, 2020

Scientists have little doubt: the destruction of nature makes humanity increasingly vulnerable to disease outbreaks like the Covid-19 pandemic, which has [sickened](#) millions, killed hundreds of thousands, and devastated countless livelihoods worldwide.

It also will impede long-term economic recovery, because [more than half](#) of the world’s GDP depends on nature in some way. Could the Covid-19 crisis be the wake-up call—and, indeed, the opportunity—we need to change course?

While some politicians have claimed that a pandemic of this scale was [unforeseen](#), many experts believed that it was all but inevitable, given the [proliferation](#) of zoonotic diseases (caused by pathogens that jump to humans from other animals). More than 60 per cent of new infectious diseases now originate in animals.

This trend is linked directly to human activities. From intensive farming and deforestation to mining and the exploitation of wild animals, [destructive practices](#) that we dismiss as “business as usual” place us in ever-closer contact with animals, creating the ideal conditions for disease spillovers.

**But, to achieve a sustainable global recovery, many more governments will have to embrace green-recovery policies. And, so far, many are doing the opposite, directing resources toward environmentally destructive industries and activities.**

In this sense, Ebola, HIV, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS)—all of zoonotic origin—were warnings the world failed to heed.

But Covid-19 could be different. After all, it has demonstrated more starkly than any of its predecessors just how fundamentally linked human health and prosperity are with the wellbeing of our planet—and how vulnerable that leaves us.

Claims that protecting the environment would crash economies were not only shortsighted, but also counterproductive. It is environmental destruction that has ground the world economy to a halt.

Moreover, unlike previous recent disease outbreaks, Covid-19 has spurred unprecedented state intervention, with governments worldwide developing and implementing comprehensive recovery strategies. This provides a golden opportunity to entrench environmental protection and restoration in our economic systems.

Two principles should shape recovery strategies. First, stimulus alone is not enough; better environmental regulations, conceived with the active participation of business and investors, are also crucial.

Second, public spending should be allocated in ways that support a better balance between the health of societies, economies, and the environment. This means investing in green industries, especially those that move us closer to a circular economy.

Leading economists such as Nobel laureate [Joseph Stiglitz](#) and [Nicholas Stern](#) have [found](#) that green recovery packages would offer much higher rates of return, more short-term jobs, and superior long-term cost savings than traditional fiscal stimulus. For example, building clean-energy infrastructure—a particularly labor-intensive activity—would create twice as many jobs per dollar as fossil-fuel investments.

Other priorities include investment in natural capital, such as large-scale restoration of forest ecosystems. This would yield many valuable benefits, ranging from bolstering biodiversity and mitigating floods to absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. To complement such efforts, banks and other financial entities should be held responsible for lending practices that fuel the nature and climate crises.

Some decision-makers recognise this imperative. The International Monetary Fund has published broad guidance for a green recovery, and IMF Managing Director [Kristalina Georgieva](#) has [called](#) for environmental conditions to be attached to corporate bailouts. The French government is already pursuing such an approach.

Furthermore, the European Union is drawing up a green Covid-19 recovery plan that would complement its European Green Deal, which aims to restore biodiversity and accelerate the shift to a zero-carbon economy. A group of 180 European politicians, companies, trade unions, campaign groups, and think tanks recently [released a letter](#) urging EU leaders to adopt green stimulus measures.

But, to achieve a sustainable global recovery, many more governments will have to embrace green-recovery policies. And, so far, many are doing the opposite, directing resources toward environmentally destructive industries and activities.

For example, according to the research involving Stiglitz and Stern, unconditional airline bailouts perform the worst in terms of economic impact, speed, and climate metrics. And yet billions are being [channelled](#) toward airlines, often with few strings attached.

In fact, according to a recent Green Stimulus Index [report](#), more than a quarter of the stimulus spending implemented so far in 16 major economies is likely to cause substantial and lasting environmental damage. Some, such as US President Donald Trump's administration, have also [relaxed](#) existing environmental rules, in order to help major polluters recover.

It is increasingly difficult to justify this approach. Lest we forget, just before the pandemic, countries were experiencing unprecedented wildfires and devastating flooding. As climate change advances, the extreme weather events that produce such disasters will become more frequent and severe.

Politicians and vested interests can try to divert attention from the challenges ahead. But this will not prevent future crises; it certainly won't make them wait until the Covid-19 recovery is complete. On the contrary, a return to business as usual could hasten their arrival.

Rather than continue to stumble from one crisis to the next, we must build more resilient systems today. Putting environmental preservation and restoration at the center of the Covid-19 recovery is the perfect place to start.

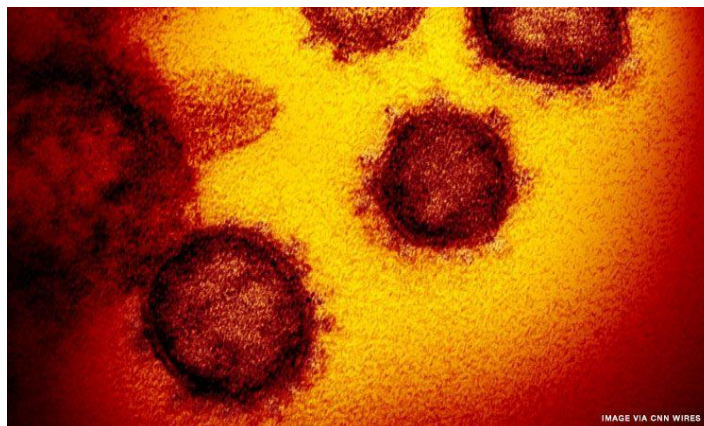
*André Hoffmann, a businessman and philanthropist, is President of the MAVA Foundation and Vice-Chair of Hoffmann-La Roche.*

Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/opinion/the-planet-after-the-pandemic/>

# WHO says coronavirus is not mutating, but that doesn't mean it is not dangerous

By Amanda Watts, CNN

Published Jun 4, 2020 2:05:26 AM



(CNN) - The World Health Organization (WHO) said a large number of scientists across the world are studying coronavirus and none of the genome sequences show the virus is mutating to become more dangerous.

But WHO warns that doesn't mean the pandemic is not getting more dangerous.

"There are more than 40,000 full genome sequences that are available," WHO infectious disease epidemiologist Dr. Maria Van Kerkhove told a briefing.

"Scientists are looking to see, are there changes in the virus? And as it is a coronavirus — it is an RNA virus — there are normal changes in this virus that one would expect over time," she said. RNA viruses such as influenza and coronaviruses are generally more unstable and prone to mutation than viruses that use DNA to replicate.

"None of these changes so far indicate that the virus itself is changing in terms of its ability to transmit or to cause more severe disease," Van Kerkhove added.

But Van Kerkhove said that doesn't mean the spread of the virus isn't becoming more dangerous. "People grow tired," she said. They may become lax in the measures needed to control the spread of the virus, such as social distancing. "It's very difficult to keep up all of these measures and we must remain strong and vigilant," she said.

As lockdowns are lifted, slowly, across the globe, some "social measures may need to be reintroduced again, and that may frustrate people," Van Kerkhove said.

"And that, in a sense, could make the virus more dangerous because people become complacent. And it's important that no one becomes complacent. This is far from over."

Dr. Mike Ryan, WHO executive director of Health Emergencies Program, said the virus does remain stable, but added, "This is already a dangerous virus; we've been seeing this consistently for months now."

*This story was first published on CNN.com, "[WHO says coronavirus is not mutating, but that doesn't mean it is not dangerous](https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/04/who-coronavirus-not-mutating-but-doesnt-mean-it-is-not-dangerous)"*

Source:<https://cnnphilippines.com/world/2020/6/4/WHO-says-coronavirus-is-not-mutating--but-that-doesnt-mean-it-is-not-dangerous.html>