



Ex-Puerto Princesa top cop faces illegal logging, land grab raps

By Jonathan L. Mayuga

June 16, 2020

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/06/16/ex-puerto-princesa-top-cop-faces-illegal-logging-land-grab-raps/>

<https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/6/16/MMDA-bike-lanes-public-utility-vehicles.html>



File photo: The mangrove forest area of the Puerto Princesa Underground River is now used by the community in offering mangrove tours to tourists.

AN estimated 3 hectares of mangrove forests have been cleared of trees on a piece of land allegedly being claimed by relieved Puerto Princesa Police Director Col. Marion Balonglong and his cohorts, an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) alleged on Monday.

Henry Adornado, DENR regional executive director in the Mimaropa, said an inventory of the felled trees in Sitio Bucana is still ongoing.

“So far, we have counted 73 trees. But I ordered our field personnel to return and count the stump of the trees, instead of the branches or trunks, that were cut off because some of them may have been burned or disposed of already,” Adornado told the BusinessMirror in a telephone interview.

Under PD 705, or the Revised Forestry Code, the penalty for illegally cutting trees on protected areas may depend on the number of trees that were cut down. “The more the trees that were cut down, the higher the penalty,” Adornado said.

According to Adornado, Balonglong was allegedly telling everybody, including barangay officials in the area, that he owns the property.



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“But that is not possible because the area is a mangrove area. All mangrove areas are forestland and are not alienable and disposable,” the DENR official pointed out. He added that occupying forestland is tantamount to illegal squatting.

Adornado said Balonglong and his men are facing multiple charges for the incident, including illegal arrest, serious physical injuries, or possibly grave threats on top of violation of environmental laws, particularly PD 705, or the Revised Forestry Code.

He also rejected claims made by Balonglong that he is the “owner” and has the right to develop and cut down mangrove trees within the property, stressing that the area is, in fact, a forestland and hence, is not alienable and disposable land.

“He cannot have a title for it because it is forestland. It is not alienable and disposable,” Adornado said.

To recall, Balonglong allegedly caused the detention of eight DENR employees and two others while they were doing fieldwork in Barangay Iwahig, Puerto Princesa City last June 10. Balonglong reportedly kicked and punched at gunpoint one of the forest rangers, Roldan Alvarez, whom he accused of stealing galvanized iron sheets.

They were later brought to the police station in Barangay San Pedro and were only released after Community Environment and Natural Resource Officer Felizardo Cayatoc, who approved of the DENR operation, pleaded for the release of his men.

Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, who learned of the incident, immediately informed Interior Secretary Eduardo Año about the incident, leading to Balonglong’s immediate relief from his post.

According to Adornado, the DENR-Mimaropa’s legal team is preparing to file appropriate charges against Balonglong and his men.

“Possibly, within the week, we will file the case against him,” he said.

The DENR is in the process of arming its field personnel in Palawan because of the serious threat posed by illegal loggers. But the incident involving Balonglong was a sudden twist as it turned out that policemen were the ones who may have been responsible in the crime against the DENR personnel this time around.



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“We were surprised because the police were supposed to be our partners. They were supposed to protect our field personnel from the bad guys,” Adornado lamented.

Adornado said Balonglong’s attempt to land-grab and threaten DENR field personnel with harm should send the message to all other erring personalities that the DENR will not be cowed.

The DENR-Mimaropa is in the process of arming *bantay gubat* volunteers together with DENR forest protection officers, starting with Palawan, which is considered an illegal logging hot spot.

Adornado said instead of the 150 shotguns initially approved for donation by Palawan Gov. Jose Alvarez, DENR *bantay gubat* volunteers and forest protection officers have requested for a short firearm, or a side arm, which they can easily conceal whenever on the move.

Arming DENR field personnel is strictly for self-defense purpose only and while on duty patrolling the forests.

“The shotgun is heavier and they don’t want going around with guns in plain sight. They want a sidearm which they can conceal [while on patrol]. Governor Alvarez has already approved the request so we are just waiting for it to arm our field personnel soon,” he said.



Palawan top cop linked to assault on environmental officer in the Philippines

By Keith Anthony Fabro, Mongabay.com

June 16, 2020

<https://www.eco-business.com/news/palawan-top-cop-linked-to-assault-on-environmental-officer-in-the-philippines/>

Police on the Philippine island of Palawan reportedly assaulted and arrested government environmental officials trying to serve a vacate notice to settlers occupying a mangrove area.



A mangrove forest at low tide in Puerto Princesa, Palawan. Image: [Dan Lundberg, CC BY-SA 2.0](#)

Lawyers have condemned police officers on the Philippine island of Palawan for holding at gunpoint and arresting environmental law enforcers who visited a coastal village on June 10 to serve a vacate notice to informal settlers occupying a key mangrove area.

Officers from the provincial capital Puerto Princesa, led by their chief, Marion Balonglong, reportedly accosted a team of environmental law enforcers from the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO), the city government's anti-squatting office, and village peace officers in the town of Matahimik-Bucana in Puerto Princesa, local news outlet *Palawan News* reported.

CENRO officials, appointed by the secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), are responsible for the implementation of the department's environmental policies and programs at the community level.



Palawan top cop linked to assault on environmental officer in the Philippines

The group, led by CENRO team leader Roldan Alvarez, was in the area to issue notices to vacate to informal settlers and after receiving reports of mangroves being cut down illegally.

The mangrove forest in the province spans 63,532 hectares (157,000 acres), or 4.4 per cent of Palawan's total area of 1.5 million hectares (3.7 million acres), government data show. The entire province has been declared a mangrove swamp forest reserve through a presidential proclamation in 1981, and mangrove cutting is prohibited under the country's forestry code.

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Incidents of this nature can weaken environmental enforcement efforts.

Grizelda Mayo-Anda, executive director, Environmental Legal Assistance Center

Alvarez's group was unable to continue their mission as they were stopped by members of the city's police forces. According to village chair Ryan Abueme, as relayed to him by his village peace officers, Alvarez's team showed a mission order and other documents proving the legitimacy of the operation. Instead, police questioned Alvarez's team about certain suspects in a reported robbery incident in the area.

“They were ordered to lay on the ground with a gun pointed at them,” Abueme told *Palawan News*.

One of the village peace officers, Steve Ferrer, who escorted the team, said Balonglong kicked and slapped Alvarez. “They [police] directed us to hop on a patrol car that brought us to the area he [Balonglong] fenced off,” Ferrer in an interview with local radio station [Radyo Bandera](#). “Back then, I thought they're going to summarily execute us as there were no other people around except us.”

The tension dissipated when local media arrived at the scene, reports said.

The group was arrested without a warrant and was detained until 4 p.m. the same day. Both the city police and Puerto Princesa's CENRO office declined to comment on the incident when Mongabay reached out.

The attack on Palawan's environmental officers by police forces is the first case of its kind in the province, alarming the conservation community that is already the target of attacks by illegal loggers.



Palawan top cop linked to assault on environmental officer in the Philippines

“Incidents of this nature can weaken environmental enforcement efforts,” Grizelda Mayo-Anda, a lawyer and executive director of the Palawan-based nonprofit Environmental Legal Assistance Center, told Mongabay.

“This is yet another blow to our environmental enforcement,” said Elizabeth Maclang, superintendent of Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park.

Environmental defenders in Palawan have in recent years faced a violent backlash in their efforts to tackle illegal logging. Last year, suspected illegal loggers hacked to death forest ranger [Bienvinido “Toto” Veguilla Jr.](#); in 2017, village official Ruben Arzaga was shot and killed while on a patrol.

On May 21 this year, Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park ranger Guillermo Celino survived an attack by alleged illegal loggers Fernando Mameng Jr. and his father, Fernando Mameng Sr., who were armed with a *paltic* (homemade shotgun). Celino sustained a gunshot wound in his leg and is recuperating. The elder Mameng is in police custody, while his son has gone into hiding.

“Mameng Jr. is at large and he’s charged for frustrated murder,” Maclang said. “The case has already been filed with the city police but the issuance of a warrant of arrest for him takes time. Until now, he’s a threat not only to our park rangers involved in that shooting incident but also to their respective families. We appeal to the authorities to expedite the release of the warrant and also file cases against owners of unregistered firearms here.”

Mayo-Anda called for “an impartial and transparent investigation” into the Balolong incident, which she said should be supported by the relevant government agencies. “[It] is important to ensure just and effective actions on this issue,” she said. “Accountability actions must be considered to obviate a repetition of this incident in the future.”

Robert Chan, a lawyer and executive director of the Palawan NGO Network Inc., called on his colleagues in environmental advocacy to condemn the police’s actions against environmental enforcers.

“Impunity happens by two things: first, when those with power wield it wantonly, and second, when those affected by that power remain silent,” he said. “If we, as environmental advocates, keep silent and allow them [police] to wield power wantonly, then we are promoting a system of impunity that will degrade our environment at the mercy of self-interests.”



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Illegal peddler of exotic animals nabbed again

INQUIRER.net / 02:37 PM June 16, 2020

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1292388/illegal-peddler-of-exotic-animals-nabbed-again>

MANILA, Philippines – A notorious online peddler of exotic and endangered animals has been arrested by agents of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) in Sampaloc, Manila.

In a statement on Tuesday, the DENR identified the suspect as Sharon Jonjon Lim, 45, a repeat offender of the Republic Act No. 9147 or the wildlife resources conservation and protection act.

Authorities were able to rescue four rare birds, namely: a white-breasted sea eagle, two brahmyny kites, and a changeable hawk-eagle.

The DENR said the suspect will be charged for violating the Republic Act No. 9147 to which he can serve up to six years in prison. He will likewise not be qualified for probation since he is a repeat offender.

Lim was first apprehended by authorities in a buy-bust operation also conducted in Sampaloc, Manila back in August of 2019. Jim Mendoza



DENR orders Zobel de Ayala family to vacate timberland in Taytay

Jun 15, 2020

<https://palawan-news.com/denr-orders-zobel-de-ayala-family-to-vacate-timberland-in-taytay/>



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has ordered Beatriz Zobel de Ayala and several other individuals to vacate a timberland area in Barangay Pancol, Taytay town, that is part of the Malampaya Sound Protected Landscape and Seascape (MSPLS).

In a statement it released Monday, the DENR MIMAROPA said the notice was signed by Taytay Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) chief Alan Valle on March 3, citing Zobel de Ayala and the others for violation of the provisions of Republic Act (RA) 7586 as amended by RA 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (E-NIPAS) Act of 2018.

The law prohibits (n) occupying or dwelling in any public land within the protected area without clearance from the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB).

The DENR said it also forbids (o) constructing, erecting, or maintaining any kind of structure, fence or enclosure, conducting any business enterprise within the protected area without prior clearance from the PAMB and permit from the DENR, or conducting these activities in a manner that is inconsistent with the management plan duly approved by the PAMB.

The PAMB, the sole policy-making and decision-making body of MSPLS pursuant to the provisions of the E-NIPAS Act of 2018 has neither accepted from the respondents, any application for tenurial instruments nor approved any construction of structures in the said area.

Also stated in the notices to vacate (NTV) was the respondents' violation of Presidential Decree 705 or the Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines which prohibits occupation of timberland areas without proper tenurial instrument issued by the DENR.

The release said Zobel de Ayala and the other illegal occupants only have 30 days upon receipt of the notices to comply or further legal actions will be taken against them



DENR orders Zobel de Ayala family to vacate timberland in Taytay

It said further that the DENR has been monitoring the respondents' compliance with the NTV, but was restricted due to the enhanced quarantine protocols implemented against the further spread of COVID-19.

The agency has likewise furnished a copy of the NTV to Felipe Valones in response to his letter dated May 18, 2020, which appealed for the agency to look into the alleged occupation and tree-cutting in the protected area.

Valones is the chieftain of the indigenous peoples (IPs) group Nagkakaisang Tribu Tandolanon Barangay Pancol.

In his letter to Valle on the said date, Valones said he sought the help of environment authorities to protect their ancestral land.

“Sa aming pag-iikot sa aming barangay ay napansin naming may mga permanenteng gusaling bato na naitayo sa Sitio Maypa, Barangay Pancol, Taytay na sinasakupan umano ni Gng. Beatriz Zobel de Ayala at ng mga tauhan niya,” Valones said.

“Ang pagkakaalam namin, isang ‘protected area’ ang lupain na ito at hindi maaaring magtayo ng mga permanenteng gusali dito, liban na lang kung pinahihintulutan ito ng inyong opisina,” he added.

Valones claimed in the letter that they also learned that centuries-old trees had been cut from the area, apparently without permits from the CENRO.

Valones had asked for an immediate investigation of the alleged illegal occupation, cease any activities in the area and remove the structures, stop the cutting of trees, and penalize the violators.

However, Valones had reportedly retracted his complaint to the CENRO.

DENR clarifies

The release also said that the DENR MIMAROPA wished to shed light on some information in the article “DENR probe urged on El Nido reclamation,” which was published by The Manila Times on June 13, 2020.”

The news story said that Palawan-based Environmental Legal Assistance Center (ELAC) headed by Atty. Grizelda Mayo-Anda has claimed that despite knowledge of the issue, the DENR has “not done any concrete actions to address these problems.

“Records and the date of the issued NTV show that even before receipt of the said letter from Mr. Valones, DENR has already conducted an investigation and has taken appropriate actions against the respondents, contrary to what was stated in the article,” regional executive director Henry Adornado explained.

“We earnestly hope that with the above-mentioned details, we have given ELAC and the general public, the clear course of actions that we have undertaken to address the matter. Our office is open for clarification so that confusion shall be avoided in publishing wrong information,” the Director remarked.



DENR seizes illegally cut lumbers

June 15, 2020

https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1860185/Zamboanga/Local-News/DENR-seizes-illegally-cut-lumbers?fbclid=IwAR2GRTbp-TR_0oTF4JnLI9GorWrEOezFCZkeS379N3OiORa-M6b-knrbPac



ZAMBOANGA. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has seized illegally-cut forest products in a series of apprehensions last week in the provinces of Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga del Sur. A photo handout shows some P9,794 worth of illegally cut lumbers aboard a tricycle intercepted along Punta National Highway, Katipunan, Zamboanga del Norte. (SunStar Zamboanga)

OFFICIALS of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) have seized lumbers in a series of anti-illegal logging campaign last week in the provinces of Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga del Norte.

The DENR said in a statement that two of the apprehensions were made through the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) of Guipos, Zamboanga del Sur headed by Mario Reyes.

The Cenro-Guipos seized some 490 board feet of undocumented Gemelina lumber worth P17,150 along the highway of Diplo village, Kumalarang, Zamboanga del Sur.

The lumbers, which were cut at the reforestation project of DENR, were stockpiled and abandoned along the highway.



DENR seizes illegally cut lumbers

The DENR said the other apprehension of Cenro-Guipos was in Poblacion village, San Pablo, Zamboanga del Sur.

The Cenro-Guipos Quick Response Team (QRT), with the assistance of the police, seized 166 board feet of Bakan flitches worth P8,300 and apprehended four undocumented Bakan flitches being ferried aboard a motorcycle taxi.

The driver, whose name has been withheld, and the motorcycle taxi, were taken to the police station of San Pablo, while the seized forest products were brought to Cenro-Guipos for safekeeping and proper disposition.

The DENR said the Cenro of Manukan, Zamboanga del Norte, headed by Christopher Babaran, and backed by policemen intercepted some P9,794 worth of illegally cut lumbers aboard a tricycle in Punta National Highway, Katipunan, Zamboanga del Norte.

Meanwhile, Cenro chief Dionisio Rago of Liloy, Zamboanga del Norte, backed by policemen, seized 429.04 board feet worth P25,760.40 of illegally cut Apitong and Lauan lumbers in Sandayong village, Tampilisan, in the same province.

The apprehension was made during the conduct of monitoring and patrol in Sandayong village as part of the anti-illegal logging campaign of Cenro-Liloy.

The DENR said appropriate charges are set to be filed against those behind the cutting and transport of illegally cut lumbers. (SunStar Zamboanga)



Philippine eagle nasagip sa Cotabato

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jun 16 2020 04:15 PM

https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/16/20/philippine-eagle-nasagip-sa-cotabato?fbclid=IwAR3_H97j0hBgkftGs1QDyxO2ww1-44cZ3myKvuZxgr7Sh7jFW2kbl-CZZ98

'Nasagip ang isang young adult na Philippine eagle ng ilang concerned citizens sa Makilala, Cotabato, ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Soccsksargen nitong Lunes.



Sa Facebook post ng ahensiya, sinabi na unang nakita nina Jeofrey Rodica, Artemio Hemilio at Joel Arombo ang ibon noong Hunyo 8 na tila nakikipag-away sa may 20 uwak sa Purok 3A, Barangay Kisante.

Matapos itong maligtas, agad na itinurn-over ng tatlo ang ibon sa mga awtoridad.

Sinabi ng ahensya na ayon kay Dr. Bayani Vandenbroeck ng Philippine Eagle Foundation, Inc., babae ang kasarian ng nasagip na eagle, may bigat na 5.8 kilos, at tinatantiyang 3 taong gulang na.

"According to reports, the eagle is generally healthy and not showing any forms of stress," ayon sa ahensiya.

"The eagle is now under the care of PEFI (in Davao City) after it was turned over by the DENR."

Critically endangered na ang mga Philippine eagle na siyang pambansang ibon ng Pilipinas.

Ayon sa January-March 2020 newsletter ng foundation, 31 Philippine eagles ang nasa inventory ng Philippine Eagle Center. Dati namang nasabi na hindi lalampas sa 400 ang wild population ng mga ito bunsod ng hunting at kabawasan ng forest habitat nila.



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Sea turtle, grass owl rescued in Negros town

Published June 16, 2020, 3:22 PM

By Glazyl Masculino

<https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/06/16/sea-turtle-grass-owl-rescued-in-negros-town/>

BACOLOD CITY – A sea turtle and an Eastern grass owl were rescued in the villages of Central Tabao and Mabini in Valladolid, Negros Occidental, respectively, on Monday.



A sea turtle and an Eastern grass owl were rescued in the villages of Central Tabao and Mabini in Valladolid, Negros Occidental, respectively, on June 15, 2020. (Photo courtesy of Mark Cabrillos / MANILA BULLETIN)

According to Mark Cabrillos of the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (Mdrmo), fisherman Benito Parrocho was on board a pump boat when he rescued a female Olive Ridley turtle that he found entangled in a fishing net.

The reptile weighing 15 kilos, 49 centimeters long and 51 centimeters in width was turned over to the Community Environment and Natural Resources (CENRO) in Bago City.

It was then released back to the sea later that day at the coast of Crossing Pacol, Barangay Poblacion.

Meanwhile, an Eastern grass owl was also turned over by Prince Matthew Arandilla of Barangay Mabini to CENRO.

It will be temporarily housed at the Wildlife Rescue Center until its scheduled release back into the wild.



Mga taga-Benguet namangha sa cactus na sintaas ng 2 palapag na bahay

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jun 16 2020 04:15 PM

<https://news.abs-cbn.com/classified-odd/06/16/20/mga-tag-a-benguet-namangha-sa-cactus-na-sintaas-ng-2-palapag-na-bahay?fbclid=IwAR1sOIRz8C57KiYVLoqGH6mvpCJppXYjsZihu6PGhf0E1vu86EVcd34wUCg>



Sintaas ng 2 palapag na bahay ang isang cactus sa bayan ng Kabayan, Benguet. Retrato mula kay Samson Osting

Namangha ang mga residente ng Kabayan, Benguet sa isang cactus doon na sintaas ng 2 palapag na bahay.

Nasa 45 talampakan ang cactus na nakatanim sa bahay ni Lorena Osting sa Barangay Kabayan Barrio.

Ayon kay Osting, galing ang cactus sa Nueva Vizcaya at itinanim niya sa kanilang bakuran noong 1989.

Hindi aniya niya inasahang tataas ang cactus.

Ilang bagyo na ang dumaan pero hindi pa rin ito nabuwal.

"Namamangha po kami. Minsan pa nga may mahiwagang kuwento ang cactus na 'yan kung bakit nabuhay nang matagal," sabi ng kapitbahay na si Rhine Camillo.

Ayon sa Benguet Cactus and Succulents Association, tinatawag na cereus peruvianus monstrose o apple cactus ang cactus ni Osting.

Ito ay isang edible fruit cactus o puwedeng kainin.

"Ang kaniyang natural habitat ay South America. Ang klima natin dito sa Benguet na mainit sa tanghali at malamig sa gabi ay naangkop sa pagtubo ng mga cactus," ani Dan Saclangan, miyembro ng Benguet Cactus and Succulents Association.

Sa tala ng Department of Agriculture-Benguet, nasa higit 3,000 magsasaka ang nag-aalaga ng cactus sa lalawigan.

-- Ulat ni Nathaline Daniel at Micaella Ilaog, ABS-CBN News



'Matangkad' na bulaklak na 8'7" ang taas, nakita sa Baras, Rizal

Hunyo 16, 2020 6:06pm GMT+08:00

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/umg/742894/matangkad-na-bulaklak-na-8-7-ang-taas-nakita-sa-baras-rizal/story/>



"Tinitingala" ngayon ang isang bulaklak na umabot sa walong talampakan at pitong pulgada ang taas na nakita sa Masungi Georeserve sa Baras, Rizal.

Sa ulat ng GMA News "Unang Balita" nitong Martes, sinabing nagmistulang puno na ang isang *Amorphophallus Rostratus* o kung tawagin ay Biga dahil sa taas nito.

Tinuturing ang *Amorphophallus Rostratus* bilang isa sa world's tallest flowers.

Napansin daw ng mga nagbabantay sa Masungi Georeserve ang kakaibang amoy nang mamukadkad na ang bulaklak.

Ayon pa sa kanila, hindi ito ang unang pagkakataon na nakita ang ganitong uri ng bulaklak sa kanilang lugar.--Jamil Santos/FRJ, GMA news



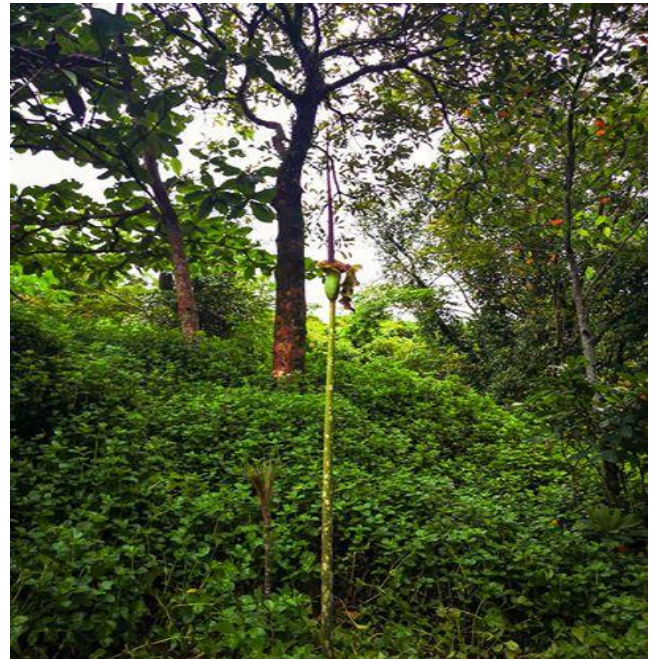
LOOK: Flower that towers over 8 feet spotted in Masungi Georeserve

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jun 16 2020 04:56 PM

<https://news.abs-cbn.com/life/06/16/20/look-flower-that-towers-over-8-feet-spotted-in-masungi-georeserve?fbclid=IwAR1YY1cPzR0MqiFWzBJ1xeFM2yy3QaHTY7FtWEX4vHStzCzk2GjGNlh6pLg>

MANILA -- The Masungi Georeserve on Tuesday reported that park rangers have spotted an 8-foot-7 flower while doing maintenance work last week.



In a Facebook post, the Baras, Rizal forest preserve said the park rangers reported the sighting of the *Amorphophallus rostratus* to their site officers "who confirmed the native species with friends from the academe."

"Park rangers noticed a slightly unpleasant smell when the flower bloomed," it said.

According to Masungi Georeserve, an indigenous ranger who lived in the mountains said the flower is called "biga" by the locals, who "cut and cook the stalk in boiling water before eating it."

"*Amorphophallus* species are known as some of the largest flowers in the world by their inflorescence. At least three species of varying sizes have been documented in Masungi," it said.

"Truly this is another native wonder that must be conserved from quarrying and other harmful activities in our forests and protected areas!"



Another endemic plant species discovered in Mount Hamiguitan, Davao Oriental

Published June 16, 2020, 11:49 AM

By Ivy Tejano

<https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/06/16/another-endemic-plant-species-discovered-in-mount-hamiguitan-davao-oriental/>

DAVAO CITY – Researches found a new endemic plant species on Monday in the Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary, one of the tourist destinations in Davao Oriental province.



Researches found a new endemic plant species on Monday in the Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary, one of the tourist destinations in Davao Oriental province. (Photo courtesy of Dr. Fulgent Coritico / MANILA BULLETIN)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Davao Region identified the plant in its official Facebook page as *Actinostachys minuta*, otherwise known as diminutive grass ferns.

Actinostachys minuta is a newly described plant species that is distinct from all other species of *Actinostachys* – a family of ferns mainly found in the tropics. It grows on a tree fern.

The researchers revealed that the plant has short and narrow fronds, distinct triangular stipe, which connects the frond to the root and spore-bearing part having a forked apex with white hairs that differ them from all other species, based on a datum.



Strategic Communication
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Another endemic plant species discovered in Mount Hamiguitan, Davao Oriental

“It seems like the ecological-wealth realm of Mount Hamiguitan never stops offering site-endemic new species. It means it cannot be found anywhere, at least not just yet,” the DENR-Davao said.

According to research, *Actinostachys* species are still limited as it is epiphytic or dependent to a tree fern. The species name refers to its small size even compared to other members of the genus.

DENR-Davao said with its diverse and intact ecosystem, it is believed that Mount Hamiguitan still hosts a long list of indescribable species that are yet to be discovered.

“This pushes the continuous and intensified conservation and protection efforts [by the citizens of the area and the concerned agencies] for this mountain,” the agency said, adding that in line with this development, the legislative protected areas will hold a live streaming program on June 22.

Mount Hamiguitan will be featured following the discovery of many species in the mountain. The program is organized by the DENR’s Biodiversity Management Bureau, in cooperation with the Office of Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda.



PH improves competitiveness ranking to 45th out of 63 nations

posted June 16, 2020 at 09:10 pm

by Othel V. Campos

<https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/326263>

The Philippines improved its ranking by one place in the 2020 World Competitiveness Yearbook to 45th among 63 countries from 46th in 2019.

It moved up the rankings this year, buoyed by an increase in international trade and steady performance in the labor market. The Philippines last year climbed four spots from its 2018 rank.

The report said the Philippines remained at 13th place out of 14 countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

The WCY has been published by the International Institute of Management Development since 1989 with the AIM Rizalino S. Navarro Policy Center for Competitiveness as its Philippine partner, supplying data from national sources and helping distribute the executive opinion survey.

The WCY evaluates competitiveness using 337 criteria spread across four competitiveness factors: economic performance, government efficiency, business efficiency and infrastructure.

About two-thirds of the indicators are based on hard data, while the remaining are perceptions-based indicators derived from an executive opinion survey.

Competitiveness is defined by the WCY as “ability of a nation to create and maintain an environment that sustains more value creation for its enterprises and more prosperity for its people”.

This year’s results reflect the immediate impacts the US-China trade friction in 2019 and the shifts in executive opinion that may have been influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic as captured by the executive survey that ran from February to April 2020.

The full impact of the pandemic on macroeconomic factors were not yet captured in the results since the latest statistical data used in the study were from 2019.

Despite moving up one spot in the overall ranking, the Philippines did not improve in any of the four main factors or dimensions of competitiveness when taken individually. Economic performance declined by six notches from 38th to 44th;



PH improves competitiveness ranking to 45th out of 63 nations

government efficiency went down one spot from 41st to 42nd; and business efficiency declined from 32nd to 33rd.

The Philippines did not improve its rank of 59th in infrastructure, an aspect where the country had been constantly faring poorly.

Some of the challenges that the Philippines face in 2020 include mitigating the economic impacts of COVID-19 and adjusting to the “new normal,” preparing the healthcare system for possible succeeding waves of COVID-19, ensuring adequate and prompt aid to vulnerable households and businesses, quickly resuming the government’s “Build, Build, Build” infrastructure investment program and reviving business and consumer confidence.

Singapore retained its top position for the second year in a row while Hong Kong dropped from its number two position in 2019 to 5th place this year due to weaker economic performance and concerns surrounding political stability.

The US experienced one of the largest declines in the overall ranking, falling from 3rd to 10th place this year due mainly to deterioration in levels of international trade and public finances as well as in employment and labor market numbers. China also dropped in the overall ranking from 14th to 20th place.



Hybrid na abaca nagawa ng DOST

By Leifbilly Begas June 16, 2020

[https://bandera.inquirer.net/257128/hybrid-na-abaca-nagawa-ng-](https://bandera.inquirer.net/257128/hybrid-na-abaca-nagawa-ng-dost?fbclid=IwAR2zUm6ZrcDBPNPafuDIgqqI93Y7QtXgv4_S_LMM6xMK7RdtJpr0ZGargSw#ixzz6PUV4xJ65)

[dost?fbclid=IwAR2zUm6ZrcDBPNPafuDIgqqI93Y7QtXgv4_S_LMM6xMK7RdtJpr0ZGargSw#ixzz6PUV4xJ65](https://bandera.inquirer.net/257128/hybrid-na-abaca-nagawa-ng-dost?fbclid=IwAR2zUm6ZrcDBPNPafuDIgqqI93Y7QtXgv4_S_LMM6xMK7RdtJpr0ZGargSw#ixzz6PUV4xJ65)



Abaca

NATUKLASAN ng Department of Science and Technology'-Forest Products Research and Development Institute (DOST-FPRDI) na mas maraming nakukuhang fiber na magagawang pulp at papel sa Bandala abaca hybrid.

Ang physical properties umano ng sample na papel na gawa dito ay maikukumpara sa mga papel na gawa sa commercial abaca.

Nagsasagawa ng pag-aaral ang DOST-FPRDI upang matulungan ang industriya ng abaca sa bansa upang mapalawig ang paggamit nito sa paggawa ng specialty paper at iba pang high-end products.

Sa pag-aaral at pinagsama ang klase ng abaca at saging upang makagawa ng halaman na marami ang produktong magagawa, drought-tolerant at matibay sa mga abaca bunchy-top virus (ABTV).

Ang Bandala ay resulta ng 60 taong pag-aaral ng Institute of Plant Breeding – University of the Philippines Los Baños.

“Our finding was that the physical properties (basis weight, thickness, folding endurance, and burst, tensile and tear indices) of the Bandala paper sheets we studied were comparable to those of commercial abaca,” ani DOST-FPRDI



Hybrid na abaca nagawa ng DOST

researcher Aimee Trixie Habon. “This is important because it shows that the hybrid has high economic potential.”

Ang abaca, na siyang kilalang pinakamatibay na natural fiber sa mundo, ay likas na tumutubo sa bansa.

Ang Pilipinas ang number 1 supplier ng abaca at ikinabubuhay ito ng 200,000 magsasaka sa 56 na probinsya.

Ito ang ginagamit sa paggawa ng ship at power transmission ropes, car interiors, well-drilling cables, furnishing, textile, at specialty at security paper.



Villar backs Duterte stand on Manila Bay reclamation

posted June 16, 2020 at 10:50 pm

by Macon Ramos-Araneta

<https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/326253>

Senator Cynthia Villar on Monday said that President Rodrigo Duterte's repeated opposition against the Manila Bay reclamation indicates how the government remains true to its commitment to rehabilitate and protect the bay.

Villar, chairperson of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, noted that in various times during his public address briefing the people on the state of the country under quarantine, the President has said that he will not allow the Manila Bay reclamation even in the face of the urgent need to fund the COVID-19 pandemic response.

She also noted that the President has advised private individuals lobbying for these reclamation projects to wait for the next presidency.

"Going into the new normal, there are a lot of things that will have to cease to exist but I am glad the policies that will help us achieve our goals for the preservation of our biodiversity, especially the protection and the rehabilitation of Manila Bay will continue," Villar said. Macon



Why we will never be able to recycle or incinerate away ocean pollution

By Vincent Kneefel and John Duncan

June 16, 2020

<https://www.eco-business.com/opinion/why-we-will-never-be-able-to-recycle-or-incinerate-away-ocean-pollution/>

The amount of plastic entering the ocean is projected to grow four-fold by 2050. Transformative changes, including moving away from single-use towards re-useable packaging, are needed to save our oceans, say Vincent Kneefel and John Duncan.



A river in Java, Indonesia. At least one third of global waste is currently mismanaged. Waste management systems cannot deal with current waste volumes, let alone the significant increases in waste projected. Image: WWF

Ocean plastic is killing millions of marine mammals, seabirds and many other life forms. Images of turtles eating plastic bags floating in the sea, whales starved by several kilograms of plastic debris in their stomachs and dolphins entangled in abandoned fishing nets have become iconic symbols of the impact of ocean plastic pollution.

It is estimated that a disconcerting 8 million tonnes of plastic waste enters the world's oceans every year, and these numbers are projected to increase four-fold by 2050. Marine plastic pollution also seriously affects fisheries, aquaculture, recreational activities, and tourism and is estimated to result in a [1- 5 per cent decline in the benefits that humans derive from oceans](#)—an annual cost of up to \$2.5 trillion.



Why we will never be able to recycle or incinerate away ocean pollution

The [leakage of plastic waste into the ocean is a global issue with a multitude of challenges](#) which vary considerably between geographies. The complexity of the issue demands a holistic, multi-level, multi-actor approach across the full life-cycle of the plastics value chain. There is no silver bullet or new wonder material that will solve all our problems quickly; we need to rethink the systems that got us here in the first place.

Recycling alone cannot solve the problem

While improving recycling systems is fundamental to improving the plastic pollution problem, it is important to recognise that [we have only managed to recycle 9 per cent of plastic ever produced](#) and we will never be able to recycle ourselves out of this problem, even a five-fold increase in recycling will still leave half of global plastic unrecycled.

Part of the problem is the economics of current recycling systems. As long as companies are not held accountable for the full life cycle costs of plastic pollution ([including the significant costs to nature and society](#)), recycling rates will simply remain linked to the price of oil, making it cheaper for companies to use virgin plastics instead of recycled plastics.

While consumer behaviour is a contributing factor to the success of recycling systems, at present, the fundamental economics of most plastic recycling industries simply do not work and in most countries the majority of all plastic produced is not collected or recycled because it is not financially viable to do so.

Current waste management systems unable to stem the flow

An estimated [75 per cent of land-based ocean plastic pollution comes from uncollected household waste, while the remaining 25 per cent](#) leaks from within the waste-management system itself. The total amount of waste is growing rapidly. The World Bank estimates that waste generation will increase by 70 per cent from 2.01 billion tonnes in 2016 to 3.40 billion tonnes in 2050.

With at least one third of global waste currently being mismanaged, it is clear that waste management systems cannot deal with current waste volumes, let alone the significant increases projected. While it is critical that every country has proper waste management infrastructure, the system at the moment is incapable of handling ever-increasing volumes of waste.

Incineration is not a silver bullet

[There are a number of people](#) who argue that incineration can address all of our plastic pollution problems, however, this is a very myopic view which fails to understand the challenges and tradeoffs associated with this approach. It is important to recognise that



Why we will never be able to recycle or incinerate away ocean pollution

even when burnt, plastic creates several other forms of pollution, which are poorly regulated in most developing countries around the world. Plastic production is also one of the fastest growing uses of fossil fuels, while waste incineration also releases significant amounts of greenhouse gases. By 2050, based on current projections, production and [incineration of plastics will account for 10 - 13 per cent of the annual carbon budget](#) (1.5C budget).

Accountability from main stakeholders is key

The trade in plastic across international borders remains largely unregulated and most plastic value chains do not have a global feedback loop [to hold upstream stakeholders accountable](#) for their products after the point of sale. As of now, there is no universal governance mechanism or regulatory body to ensure transparency and accountability of actors across the entire plastics value chain. Plastic pollution is a global problem that needs a global regulatory response that increases accountability from governments through elements such as the establishment of national reduction targets, monitoring requirements and harmonised global standards and definitions.

A fundamental change in mindset from key stakeholders is required in order to establish the foundation for transformative change. We need to start at the top of the waste hierarchy and prioritise the following principles:

Eliminating unnecessary and problematic plastic packaging through redesign and innovation and increasing recycled content in plastic packaging

Moving from single-use to reuse where possible

Ensuring all plastic packaging is reusable, recyclable, or compostable

Increasing the collection, reuse, recycling or composting of plastic packaging

World Wide Fund for Nature's (WWF) No Plastic in Nature initiative has three pillars: policy, business and cities. Through our policy advocacy, we support the creation of a global binding international agreement that increases accountability for all stakeholders on this issue. We engage with businesses to improve transparency and transform the plastic value chain by reducing use, redesigning packaging, increasing reuse and recycling, and the use of sustainable alternative materials where appropriate. Working with cities in Southeast Asian countries that have the highest plastic leakage rates, we are supporting the development of more effective waste management practices.

Effective, coordinated global actions and solutions are needed to address marine plastic pollution- only then can we achieve healthy oceans, for a healthy planet and society.



Mining firms fund 1st molecular testing lab in Caraga

By Alexander Lopez June 16, 2020, 8:19 pm
<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1106054>



COVID-TESTING FACILITY. Philippine Red Cross chairman and Senator Richard Gordon (center) receives from THPAL president Masahiro Kamiya (inner left) and Nickel Asia vice president for communications Jose Bayani Baylon (inner right) the amount of PHP18 million for the establishment of Molecular Testing Laboratory for the coronavirus disease in Surigao del Norte. They were joined by THPAL Comrel Manager Maan Baribar and VP for External Affairs Ryan Jornada on June 11, 2020 at the PRC Head Quarters in Mandaluyong City. *(Contributed photo)*

SURIGAO CITY – Several mining firms in Caraga Region have pooled their resources together to establish the area's first Molecular Testing Laboratory (MTL) for coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19).

In a statement sent to the Philippine News Agency Tuesday, the Taganito HPAL Nickel Corporation (THPAL) said it partnered with Nickel Asia Corporation (NAC) and the latter's affiliates--Taganito Mining Corporation (TMC) and Cagdianao Mining Corporation (CMC)--to establish the MTL through an PHP18-million donation to the Philippine Red Cross.

The Philippine Red Cross, in turn, will establish the MTO to further capacitate the Covid-19 testing needs in the region, THPAL said.

“The laboratory will be equipped with modern facility for the processing of Reverse Transcriptase-Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) testing in order to determine whether a particular individual is infected with Sars-Cov-2 virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19),” the company added.

THPAL underscored the importance of a Covid-19 testing facility, noting that Caraga is expecting the influx of returning residents and overseas Filipino workers who were stranded following the quarantine protocols nationwide to contain Covid-19.



Mining firms fund 1st molecular testing lab in Caraga

"It is also unfortunate that the Caraga Region has no accredited laboratory that has met the DOH standards should there be a case of local transmission. As part of solidary preparation, a joint Public and Private Partnership is being forged to fight this formidable enemy, the Covid-19," THPAL said.

THPAL thanked the Philippine Red Cross chairman, Senator Richard Gordon, director Glenn Marcel Noble of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau-Caraga, and Surigao del Norte Governor Francisco Matugas, for supporting the initiative.

THPAL, a hydrometallurgical processing plant operating inside the Taganito Special Economic Zone in the town of Claver, Surigao del Norte, is hosted by 14 barangays and four Mamanwa tribal Communities.

The mining firm converts low-grade nickel laterite ore to produce nickel and cobalt mixed sulfide, the end products of which are exported to Japan for further processing. The final products are used as inputs for the production of medical tools and equipment, electronic batteries, and other industrial materials.

THPAL started operations in 2013 with an investment value of USD1.6 billion.

NAC, on the other hand, is the largest nickel supplier in the country; its affiliate CMC is based in the Dinagat Island town Cagdianao, while TMC operates in Claver, Surigao del Norte. (PNA)



Konstruksyon ng kalsada sa gitna ng Mt. Guiting-Guiting Natural Park, itigil

(Pilipino Star Ngayon)

- June 17, 2020 - 12:00am

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2020/06/17/2021406/konstruksyon-ng-kalsada-sa-gitna-ng-mt-guiting-guiting-natural-park-itigil/amp/>

MANILA, Philippines — Nakiusap kahapon ang mga non-government organizations sa lalawigan ng Romblon sa administrasyong Duterte na agad ihinto ang kontrobersyal na pagpapagawa ng 3.8-kilometrong cross-country road project sa Mt. Guiting-Guiting Natural Park sa Sibuyan Island dahil masisira ang natural flora at fauna sa bundok.

Hinimok din ni environmentalist Rodne Galicha, chairman ng Bayay Sibuyan Inc., si Presidente Duterte na ilipat na lang ang nakalaan na P95 million sa road projects sa pondo ng COVID-19 at para mapondohan din ang cash aid ng gobyerno sa mga mahihirap.

Noong Abril 2018, hininto ng DPWH ang paglilinis ng operasyon para sa nakaplanong mga gawaing kalsada sa Magdiwang-San Fernando National Road, isang 3.8-kilometrong cross-country road na humantong sa Magdiwang Port, matapos umani ng batikos sa mga residente.

Gayunman, ang proyekto ay muling isinama sa 2020 General Appropriations Act (GAA) nang walang anumang pag-aaral o sinasabing anumang pagkonsulta sa mga tamang ahensya dahil ang proyekto ay nauna nang napahinto ng DPWH mismo.

Paliwanag ng mga tagapagtaguyod ng proyekto, kasama ang mga nakaupong pulitiko sa lalawigan, dapat daw ituloy ang proyekto dahil malaki ang magiging benepisyo nito sa ekonomiya sa isla.

Ngunit, sinabi ni Galicha na dapat seryosong isaalang-alang ito dahil tatawid ito sa Mt. Guiting-Guiting Natural Park, na isang protektadong lugar.



EDITORIAL - Balik ang air pollution

June 17, 2020 - 12:00am

<https://www.philstar.com/pang-masa/punto-mo/2020/06/17/2021460/editorial-balik-ang-air-pollution>



This content was originally published by [Pang-masa](#) following its editorial guidelines. Philstar.com hosts its content but has no editorial control over it.

SA loob ng dalawang buwan na nakasailalim sa enhanced community quarantine ang Metro Manila, nakita ang malaking pagbabago sa kalidad ng hangin. Nakalanghap ng sariwang hangin ang mga taga-Metro Manila at ang nakagigilalas, mayroon palang natatanaw na bundok kapag walang smog (smoke at fog) na nakabalot sa lungsod. Maaaring matanaw ang kabundukan sa dakong Antipolo at ganundin ang mountain range ng Sierra Madre. Napakagandang tanawin.

Nangyari ito noong lockdown. Mula Marso hanggang Mayo, nakita ang magandang kalikasan --- bughaw na bundok, luntiang kakahuyan at damuhan. Napakaganda at nakagiginhawa ng kalooban.

Ngayon ay may pagluluwag na sa Metro Manila. Pinayagan na ang pagbubukas ng mga establimento, pabrika at paktorya; pagbiyahe ng ilang pampasaherong bus, taxi, traysikel at iba pang pampasaherong sasakyan, maaaring hindi na uli makita ang magandang buhok at mga kakahuyan. Balik uli ang air pollution sa Metro Manila. Malalanghap muli ang hangin na may lason.

Marami nang yumayaot na sasakyan sa EDSA. Trapik na uli. Wala na namang tigil ang pagbuga ng nakalalasong usok mula sa tambutso. Ganundin naman, umuusok



EDITORIAL - Balik ang air pollution

na ang tsimneya ng mga pabrika. Pati na ang usok mula sa pugon ng mga pagawaan.

Ayon sa report, tinatayang 120,000 Pilipino bawat taon ang namamatay dahil sa pagkalahap ng hangin na may lason. Pangtatlo ang Pilipinas sa mga bansa sa Asia na marami ang namamatay sa air pollution. Nangunguna ang China at ikalawa ang Mongolia.

Karaniwang pinagmumulan ng hangin na may lason ang ibinubugang usok ng mga sasakyan. Walumpong porsiyento na pinanggagalingan ng air pollution ay mula sa mga hindi namimintinang sasakyan. Pinakamalala ang air pollution sa Metro Manila.

Ayon sa Department of Health (DOH), ang maruming hangin ay nagdudulot ng noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). Kabilang sa mga sakit na nakukuha dahil sa pagkalahap ng hangin na may lason ay allergies, acute respiratory infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, cancer at cardiovascular diseases.

Matinding kalaban ang air pollution at maihalintulad din sa COVID-19. Dapat ding pagtuunan ng pansin ang nakamamatay na air pollution. Kilos DENR!



ADB makes pitch for more clean energy investment in stimulus spending

June 16, 2020 | 8:35 pm

<https://www.bworldonline.com/adb-makes-pitch-for-more-clean-energy-investment-in-stimulus-spending/>

THE Asian Development Bank (ADB) encouraged governments to include more investment in renewable energy in their economic recovery plans after the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

“Increased investment in clean energy infrastructure should be an important part of post-pandemic stimulus packages,” ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa said at the opening of the bank’s annual Asia Clean Energy Forum Tuesday.

In the first five months of 2020, the ADB said it released around \$900 million out of the \$5 billion it set aside for clean energy development.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) is projecting a 20% decline in global energy investment this year to \$400 billion, describing it as a “historical drop” if the forecast is borne out.

“We have never seen such a big decline,” IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol said.

So far during the pandemic, renewable energy has been among the most resilient energy sources, David Turk, acting deputy executive director of the IEA, noted.

“This is a very promising sign about renewables’ potential, its importance for resilience, its importance in the decentralized solution for many parts of the world,” he added.

Mr. Turk, who is also the agency’s head of Strategic Initiatives, said the energy industry should take advantage of the opportunities in various economic stimulus programs for renewables, as well as energy efficiency.

In the Philippines, both the energy efficiency and solar industries have urged Congress to include incentives for more green projects and digitize energy infrastructure after the pandemic subsides.

According to the ADB, the pandemic has not tempered the need to transition to renewable energy.

“The urgency to address climate change by accelerating the clean energy transition has not been diminished because of the pandemic; in fact, the task is more important than ever,” Mr. Asakawa said.

Meanwhile, for Asia to meet its sustainability goals, including its shift to renewable energy, the IEA said, it must spend \$3 trillion each year over the next decade.

“Our numbers show that in order to (achieve a) sustainable future in Asia, we have to mobilize each year about \$3 trillion... in the next 10 years,” Mr. Birol said. — Adam J. Ang



Gordon bats for COVID-19 testing of tourism workers in Boracay, Siargao

Published June 16, 2020 9:25pm

By DONA MAGSINO, GMA News

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/742921/gordon-bats-for-covid-19-testing-of-tourism-workers-in-boracay-siargao/story/>

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) is eyeing COVID-19 tests for workers in some of the Philippines' top tourist destinations to help speed up economic recovery, Senator Richard Gordon said Tuesday.

"I am in coordination with the Secretary of Tourism. I would like to test for example all the workers in Boracay, all the workers in Bohol, in tourism establishments. I would like to test also El Nido and Siargao, so these are the four major beach destinations in the country," Gordon said during a joint congressional hearing on Universal Health Care.

"If we do that and we say all the people have been tested, there's no COVID here, right away we can start-up the economy for tourism right away for domestic and international tourism," he added.

Boracay [partially reopened to tourists from the Western Visayas region on June 16.](#)

Gordon, chair of the PRC, said the organization's game plan is not only to save lives but to uplift human dignity.

"For so long as these people have no work, they will be suffering and there will be no contributions from people who cannot afford to pay contributions because they have no work," he said.

During the same hearing, Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) President Ricardo Morales said the state health insurer's collection of contributions plummeted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"To tell you the truth, our collection is about 10% of what it was last year. The collection from the direct contributors is not significant kasi walang negosyo, walang nagbabayad ng premium sa mga direct contributors, and yung indirect that also depends on business activity, has also suffered a downturn," Morales said.

The PRC's daily testing capacity in Metro Manila is 12,000, according to Gordon. He said more COVID-19 testing laboratories in Surigao, Camarines Norte, Palawan, and Isabela are expected to become operational by the end of July and that similar facilities in Cebu, Negros, and Zamboanga are set to open next week. — BM, GMA News



Day 1 ng Boracay re-opening: In place according to plan'

By Bombo Radyo Kalibo

-June 16, 2020 | 7:13 AM

<https://www.bomboradyo.com/day-1-ng-boracay-re-opening-in-place-according-to-plan/>

KALIBO, Aklan – Maaga pa lamang ay nakahanda na ang Boracay Inter Agency Rehabilitation Management Group (BIARMG) na umalalay sa lokal na pamahalaan ng Malay na mag-accommodate ng mga domestic tourist sa soft re-opening ng Boracay na magaganap ngayong araw.

Ayon kay BIARMG General Manager Natividad Bernardino, “in place according to plan” ang muling pagbubukas ng tanyag na isla sa mga lokal na turista kahit pawang taga-Western Visayas muna ang pinapayagang makatawid sa Boracay.

Kaugnay nito, asahan na aniya ang ilang pagbabago katulad na lamang na kailangan magparehistro muna ang mga maliligo sa dagat, mandatory na pagsuot ng face mask at ang pag-oberba sa physical distancing kahit magkamag-anak lamang kayo.

Una nang iginiit ng BIATF na istriktong ipapatupad ang “no booking, no entry policy” kung saan tatlong establisyimento pa lamang ang nabigyan ng Certificate of Authority to Operate mula sa kabuuang 390 Department of Tourism-accredited hotels and resorts na mayroon sa isla.



Boracay gov't scrambles to trace contacts of BFP-6 personnel with COVID-19

Published June 16, 2020, 4:42 PM

By Tara Yap

<https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/06/16/boracay-govt-scrambles-to-trace-contacts-of-bfp-6-personnel-with-covid-19/>

ILOILO – While Boracay Island was supposed to focus on its June 16 reopening to regional tourist, authorities found themselves scrambling to trace people, who may have had come in contact with female personnel of the Bureau of Fire Protection in Region (BFP-6) found to have tested positive for the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).



This June 16, 2020 photo shows virtually no one at the beachside of Boracay Island despite the government allowing residents of Western Visayas region to visit the country's most popular beach destination to pump the economy affected by the COVID-19 lockdown. (Ernesto Bandiola Cruz / MANILA BULLETIN)

"I was shocked when I found out Monday night, but it is unfortunate that this has to happen now," said Mayor Frolibar Bautista of Malay town, Aklan province.

Bautista claimed that an initial probe found that the infected BFP-6 female personnel was among the 29 BFP officials and personnel from the Western Visayas regional office in Iloilo City, who went to the country's most popular beach destination last week.

"We want the regional BFP to cooperate and provide us where exactly they went and who they met so it is easier to trace," Bautista told The Manila Bulletin Tuesday, June 16.

Malay officials only knew about the possible spread of COVID-19 in Boracay after Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Treñas complained to the Western Visayas Task Force on COVID-19 that BFP-6 personnel went to Boracay Island last week even with their coronavirus tests still pending.



Strategic Communication
and Initiatives Service

Boracay gov't scrambles to trace contacts of BFP-6 personnel with COVID-19

Bautista confirmed that the group that arrived in Boracay last June 11-12 included BFP-6 Regional Director Sr. Supt. Roderick Aguto. They left the resort island in the afternoon of June 14, the same day the Department of Health (DOH) released the latest results of COVID-19 test.

Malay officials cannot ascertain which hotels or resorts the BFP personnel stayed at.

“We have received information where, but the management denied it,” Bautista noted.

BFP-6 Assistant Regional Director Supt. Crosbee Gumowang denied allegations that the female personnel with COVID-19 was in Boracay.

“She wasn’t there. They have the wrong person,” Gumowang told The Manila Bulletin in a separate phone interview Tuesday.



Boracay reopens but local tourists are nowhere

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jun 16 2020 06:45 PM

read://https://news.abs-cbn.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fnews.abs-cbn.com%2Fbusiness%2F06%2F16%2F20%2Fboracay-reopens-but-local-tourists-are-nowhere%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR1EKtHhd2UYYN_J_NO1OUdvkE8gHaALtVDViQtvHX1gYjcONjP3YVDhUI

MANILA - Business remained slow in tourist-favorite Boracay Island, local officials said Tuesday, as authorities continue to implement restrictions in a bid to curb the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

As of 10 am, personnel at the Caticlan Jetty Port had yet to record any visitors bound for Boracay.

Boracay remains off-limits to everyone except residents of the provinces of Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Guimaras, Iloilo, Negros Occidental; and the cities of Bacolod and Iloilo.

The resort island was closed last March due to coronavirus fears.

Visitors to Boracay have to prove that they live in Western Visayas, and need to show proof that they have a booking in a hotel that has been approved to reopen by the Department of Tourism. Only six hotels have been cleared so far by the DOT as of Monday.

Tourists need to declare if they recently traveled to places outside of Western Visayas.

Swimming is only allowed from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Seniors and those below 21 years old are not allowed on the island.

Boracay was already reeling from the drop in the number of tourists as early as February as COVID-19 cut the number of tourists from China and South Korea.

- Report from Joyce Anne Clavecillas, ABS-CBN News



Palace: Lockdown working

Government sees 'promising signs' to avert projected 40,000 cases by end-June
posted June 17, 2020 at 01:40 am

by Vito Barcelo and Willie Casas, Jimbo Gulle

<https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/326285>

By keeping Metro Manila and other areas under a general community quarantine (GCQ), the government is hoping to avert a projection that the number of coronavirus cases in the country would reach 40,000 by the end of June, Malacañang said Tuesday.

[READ: NCR remains under general community quarantine \(GCQ\)](#)

Experts from the University of the Philippines (UP) arrived at the 40,000 figure—nearly double the current number of cases at 26,781 as of 4 p.m. Tuesday—based on their own study, which Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque admitted was “more or less” happening at present.

The UP experts' recommendation was taken into consideration when the government decided to keep the National Capital Region (NCR) under GCQ from June 16 to 30, Roque said on the “Unang Hirit” TV show on GMA-7.

This developed as the Palace said government's effort to contain the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is showing promising signs of leveling off the infection rate, despite the rise of new cases, Malacañang said Tuesday.

[READ: PH death rate declining but new cases up](#)

Roque said the doubling rate for the entire country is now up to 10 days and slowed during the more than two months under a lockdown.

“Our mortality rate is also under 10 daily. So these are important details that prove that our lockdown works and since our lockdown is working, we are sure what we will do again in Cebu City and Talisay will still work,” Roque said, referring to a spike in new infections in those two cities.

While many areas have been put under less strict quarantine restrictions, Cebu City has been has reverted to an enhanced community quarantine (ECQ), while Talisay has been placed under a modified ECQ.

Metro Manila, which continues to record new cases, will remain under a general community quarantine (GCQ) until June 30 because its doubling time has slowed.

Placing Cebu City under the ECQ again is meant to curb the widespread transmission of the COVID-19 pandemic there, Roque said.

“If we cannot contain the spread of the disease in Cebu City, there is a big chance that this will spread in different parts of the Visayas,” Roque told reporters.



Palace: Lockdown working

Some 76 percent of the villages in Cebu City, or 61 of the 80 barangays, have active cases of COVID-19. Thirteen of these are considered "worst-hit" barangays by the Department of Health.

[READ: DND opting for modified GCQ](#)

Talisay City, also in Cebu province, was placed under the modified ECQ until the end of the month.

The Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Infectious Diseases (IATF) recommended that Metro Manila stay under a GCQ, even though half of the COVID-19 cases in the country are recorded in the NCR.

Other areas that will be under GCQ until June 30 are Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino and Santiago City in Cagayan Valley; Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Olongapo, Tarlac in Central Luzon; Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon in Calabarzon; Occidental Mindoro in Mimaropa all in Luzon; Bohol, Cebu province, Negros Oriental, Siquijor, Mandaue City, and Lapu-Lapu City in the Visayas; and Davao City and Zamboanga City in Mindanao.

The Department of Health (DOH) on Tuesday reported a single-day record of 301 COVID-19 patients who recovered from the disease, even as total infections climbed to 26,781.

It was the sixth straight day that new recoveries have surpassed 150. Total recoveries stood at 6,552.

Of the 364 newly reported cases, 249 were "fresh"—or recorded within the last three days—while 115 were "late"—or with results released four days ago or more.

[READ: DOH targets to test 1.65M Pinoy's end-July](#)

Of the fresh cases, 128 are from Metro Manila, 56 are from Region 7 (Central Visayas), and 65 are from other regions or do not have location information.

Meanwhile, 24 of the late cases are from Metro Manila, three are from Region 7, and 88 are from other areas.

There were also five new COVID-related deaths reported, raising the total fatalities in the country to 1,103.

The DOH said that it removed three cases from the total number of confirmed cases after they were "verified to be negative." One of them was initially reported to have recovered.

"The total cases reported may be subject to change as these numbers undergo constant cleaning and validation," the DOH said in its bulletin.



Palace: Lockdown working

The DOH started reclassifying additional cases into fresh and late cases in late May to assure the public that the spike in new patients was because of delays in validation. This was to allay fears that the government is failing to curb the spread of the virus.

The agency also started putting disclaimers in its number of new deaths, also because of the recent increase in reported fatalities. It said a large number of the recently reported deaths were from previous months as far back as April.

At a virtual press conference Monday, Health Undersecretary Dr. Maria Rosario Vergeire discussed the efficacy of the government's health initiatives and the country's way forward with members of the University of the Philippines' independent COVID-19 Pandemic Response Team.

Before the ECQ was declared, the Pandemic Response Team had projected that the country would see as many of 80,000 new cases in a day, said Emmanuel Baja of the response team.

"But yesterday, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Philippines was only 539. At the start of the ECQ, the highest count was 1,000 cases in a day," he said in Filipino.

The recovery rate has been increasing while the case fatality rate (CFR) has also been steadily decreasing. The recovery rate is currently at 22.96 percent while the CFR is at 4.24 percent. Baja said this is a good indicator that the health system was well-prepared and that health care workers are now more capable of dealing with the illness.

Baja, along with the other members of the response team such as the Executive Director of UP Resilience Institute Dr. Alfredo Mahar Lagmay and UP Executive Vice-President Dr. Teodoro Herbosa, emphasized the importance of public cooperation.

As the economy slowly begins to reopen, more people are finding themselves outside and potentially exposed to the virus. Vergeire appealed to the public to continue following the health guidelines such as physical distancing, use of masks, frequent hand washing and proper hygiene and limiting time spent in high-risk locations.



Duterte to tackle quarantine with business groups

Roel Pareño, Alexis Romero

June 17, 2020 - 12:00am

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/06/17/2021496/duterte-tackle-quarantine-business-groups>

MANILA, Philippines — President Duterte wants to meet with business groups to discuss possible adjustments to quarantine measures as well as ways to reopen the pandemic-battered economy.

“As we ramble on probably tomorrow or day after, after I shall have talked to the businessmen, then we can decide whether or not we can still modify the modified lockdown that we have imposed,” Duterte said at the meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) last Monday.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said changes in the quarantine restrictions may take effect after June 30, noting that the new area classifications approved by the task force would be implemented for two weeks.

It was not clear when the meeting with businesses will take place.

“All of us suffered losses. Nobody benefited from COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) because it shut down the economy,” Roque said at a press briefing yesterday.

“Perhaps during the meeting, the President would ask (businessmen) how we can fast-track the recovery from COVID-19, which has become a problem. The government needs to provide support to the private sector. The recovery would be difficult but we are behind you,” he added.

COVID-19 has infected more than 26,000 Filipinos and forced the closure of thousands of businesses. The government has allocated billions in emergency aid to low-income households and workers sidelined by the health crisis.

The economic shutdown resulted in the shrinking of the Philippine economy by 0.2 percent in the first quarter, the first since 1998 during the combined El Niño and Asian financial crisis. Officials expect second quarter figures to be worse because of the lockdown imposed to contain the virus.

Acting socioeconomic secretary Karl Chua has admitted that an economic recovery is “very uncertain” but the situation may improve if the public cooperates with efforts to prevent the spread of the virus by following health standards.



Duterte to tackle quarantine with business groups

At the same briefing, Roque gave assurance that the government has livelihood programs for jeepney drivers, who have been sidelined since the quarantine measures were imposed last March.

“Per (Interior) Sec. (Eduardo) Año, definitely they will become delivery service vehicles and for DOTr (Department of Transportation), they will help the jeepney operators avail of the jeepney modernization program,” he added. Roque previously said the government can hire jeepney drivers as contact tracers.

More relaxed quarantine

In Zamboanga City, businessmen have urged the IATF to place the city under the more relaxed modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) instead of GCQ, citing P3 billion in losses due to the impact of lockdowns.

The IATF has included Zamboanga City city in the list of areas in Mindanao, including Davao City, to remain under the GCQ until June 30.

Pedro Rufo Soliven, president of the Zamboanga Chamber of Commerce and Industry Foundation Inc. (ZCCIFI), said businesses and livelihood have already suffered greatly due to strict quarantine.

While the local IATF has reported an increase in cases to 185, it has not considered that 138 of infected individuals have recovered and that more than 40 cases were detainees from the City Reformatory Center (CRC) ordered freed by the court but placed under quarantine as part of release protocols.

Soliven said Department of Health (DOH) data showed 10 cases or about .001 percent per one million population, making a transition to lower level of quarantine “thoroughly justified.”

“Let’s focus on the economy. The small, medium and micro enterprise is really crying for help. Another extension would make it very difficult for them to bounce back,” Soliven said.

He said the government’s call for business to operate was inconsistent with its admonition for the people to stay home.

“Basically, you ask the people to operate and open up (business), but basically you have these road blocks for them to efficiently manage and at least operate viably,” Soliven



Duterte to tackle quarantine with business groups

“You ask all commercial establishment to open, particularly those essentials and those that can operate under the health protocol, but you ask people to stay at home. So, who is going to consume, patronize these stores?” Soliven said.

“There seems to be a disconnect. That is why we are raising all these issues, hopefully they are able to see from the perspective of the business community,” Soliven added.

Mayor Isabelle Climaco-Salazar said three measures should be set in place before the city is placed under MGCQ.

Salazar said the measures are strengthening the monitoring capability of the Barangay Health Emergency Response; improved data collection and contact tracing, and preparing a system that would ensure that every individual would conduct himself responsibly health-wise in public places.

“These three have to be set in place so that we will be able to be in a more relaxed new normal process in the city of Zamboanga,” Salazar said.



Sen. Go: Long way to go vs Covid-19

June 16, 2020 03:20 PM

By TDT

<https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/06/16/sen-go-long-way-to-go-vs-covid-19/>

Far from over.

Senator Christopher Lawrence “Bong” Go said this is the situation the Philippines is in, as far as the battle against the coronavirus disease is concerned.

“Hindi pa tapos ang laban. Andyan pa rin ang banta ng pandemyang ito. Kaya hinihikayat ko ang ating mga kababayan na huwag maging kampante. Sumunod tayo sa mga health protocols, lalo na ang social distancing at pagsuot ng face masks,” Go, chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Demography, said after Monday’s meeting with President Rodrigo Duterte and the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Disease in Malacañang.

“Magtulungan at magbayanihan tayong lahat. While government maximizes its limited resources, a lot of our fellow Filipinos have also lost jobs, livelihood and savings. Survival is the name of the game here.”

Duterte approved the recommendation of the IATF on quarantine levels in various areas in the country, particularly in Metro Manila and Cebu City.

“Hindi ko kayo mapigilan na lumabas, hindi ko kayo mahuli lahat, ang problema diyan if you allow your children to go out and the place is not ready for them to go outside. ‘Wag mo kaming sisihin, do not forget that we warned you about the grave consequences,” President Duterte said.

The President reverted Cebu City to enhanced community quarantine status starting Tuesday, 16 June, until the end of the month because of the spike in new cases and widespread infection in majority of its villages.

There is also a marked increase in the utilization of critical care facilities in the city.

Meanwhile, Metro Manila remained under general community quarantine (GCQ), together with Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Santiago City in Region II; Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Tarlac, Olongapo City in Region III; and Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon, and Occidental Mindoro in Region IV-A for Luzon.

Bohol, Cebu, Negros Oriental, Siquijor, Mandaue City, Lapu-Lapu City in Region VII; and Davao City and Zamboanga City in Mindanao were also placed under GCQ while the rest of the Philippines are under modified GCQ.

“Due to the increasing number of new cases and widespread community transmission in the majority of barangays in the city, as well as the consistent case



Sen. Go: Long way to go vs Covid-19

doubling time of less than seven days, and the significant increase in critical care utilization against critical care capacity, Cebu City shall be placed under enhanced community quarantine,” said Health Secretary Francisco Duque III.

Go urged the public to cooperate with authorities in order to ensure that the disease will not spread further.

“Patuloy pa rin dapat nating sundin ang lahat ng mga health protocols na pinapatupad ng mga otoridad natin. Mula sa simpleng bagay ng pagsuot ng face masks, paghugas ng mga kamay, pag-iwas sa mga non-essential travels muna—lahat ng ito maliliit na bagay pero malaki ang ambag upang malampasan natin ang krisis na ito,” Go said.

Go also explained that the President is carefully balancing everything, highlighting the need for the state to ensure and protect the health and safety of its people, the need to gradually open up the economy while ensuring that government’s health facilities are still capable of delivering the needed services.

“Let us work together to stop the spread of this disease, and at the same time, help our countrymen recover from this crisis. As the President said, we want to give Filipinos hope of a better life after the COVID-19 crisis,” Go said.

Go also urged the Executive Department to ensure that the objectives and commitments under the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act (Bayanihan 1) will be fulfilled.

“Halos tatlong buwan na ang nakalipas mula ng ipinasa ang Bayanihan to Heal as One Act. Pinaghirapan nating maipasa iyon,” Go, who also sits as a member of the Joint Congressional Oversight Committee on the implementation of the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act, said.

“Nagtiwala kaming mga mambabatas na magagawa ng mga ahensya ang lahat ng kanilang makakaya within that limited period that the law is in effect. Ngayon na pinag-uusapan na ng lehislatibo ang panukalang Bayanihan to Recover as One Act o ang Bayanihan 2 Act, sana po ay ma-ideliver na natin lahat ng kailangan pa nating gawin sa ilalim ng naunang batas.”



TAKOT MAPESTE SA COVID-19, MGA KANO TAKBUHAN SA OSPITAL

June 16, 2020 @ 9:06 AM

<https://remate.ph/takot-mapeste-sa-covid-19-mga-kano-takbuhan-sa-ospital/>



Nitong nakaraang Sabado, umabot sa 25,000 ang tinamaan ng COVID-19 sa Estados Unidos.

At malaki ang paniniwalang magpapatuloy ito sa mga susunod na araw.

Halos lahat ng estado sa bansang ito ay nagtala ng pagdami ng naiimpeksyon sa nasabing sakit.

Ang sabi, nauugat umano ito sa paglawak ng testing center nila at pagdami ng kanilang mga tinetesting.

Pero malaki umanong dahilan din ang pagluluwag ng mga lockdown at quarantine upang gumana ang mga negosyo at makapasok naman ng trabaho ang mga obrero na nawalan ng kita sa pagpapairal ng mga lockdown at quarantine.

Sa pagluluwag sa mga lockdown at quarantine, mas maraming tao ang naghahalubilo kaya mas malaki ang tsantsa na hawahan ng sakit.

Pinakamatindi ang pagdami ng may COVID-19 sa mga estado ng Florida, Texas, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, North Carolina, Oklahoma at South Carolina.

PASOK SA MGA OSPITAL

Sa takot na mamamatay at masama sa nasa 118,000 patay at 2,170,000 may sakit, napansing tumatakbo na sa ospital ang marami para magpagamot.

Lumalabas sa rekord sa mga estado ng South Carolina, North Carolina, Texas at Utah ang pagdami ng mga nagpapaospital.

Sa South Carolina lamang, may 69-77% nang kama sa mga ospital ang okupado ng mga pasyenteng may COVID-19.



TAKOT MAPESTE SA COVID-19, MGA KANO TAKBUHAN SA OSPITAL

Noong una, panay testing ang ginagawa ng mga awtoridad at hindi nila naisip na balang araw, tatakbo ang marami sa mga natatagpuang nagpopositibo sa mga ospital para makaligtas sa kamatayan.

Mahirap yatang mamatay at kahit mild lang ang tama ng mga Kano, natutunan na nilang magpaospital.

TAKOT SA PRESYO

May insurance ang maraming Amerikano at ang insurance company ang nagbabayad ng gastos sa ospital.

Pero hindi naman lahat ng gastos ay binabalikat ng mga insurance company dahil may binabalikat din nang personal ang mga pasyente.

Heto ang mga presyo.

Kung COVID-19 lang na walang komplikasyon, umaabot ang gastos sa \$9,763 o mahigit sa P450,000 sa Pinas sa palitang 1\$ laban sa P50 para sa pinagsamang testing at pagkakaospital.

Pero kung may komplikasyon na o seryoso na, doble na ang bayarin at nasa \$20,000 o P1 milyon.

Pero meron ding pinagbabayad ng \$34,900 o nasa P1.7M sa pinagsamang testing at gamutan mismo.

Meron pa ngang siningilan na senior citizen ng mahigit sa \$1M sa rami na ng komplikasyon ng inabot nito.

Eh kung hindi lahat babayaran ng insurance company?

Isipin na lang, ano ang mangyayari lalo't katulad din natin sila na nawawalan ng trabaho o anomang pinagkakakitaan dahil sa mga lockdown at quarantine?

Ang presyo sa testing at gamutan ang kinatatakutan ng mga Kano kaya todo iwas-sila noong una sa pagpapaospital pero baligtad na ngayon at napakarami na ang nagpapa-insurance para rito.

SA PILIPINAS?

Hindi kaila na parami nang parami rin ang natatagpuang dinadapuan ng COVID-19 sa mahal kong Pinas sanhi ng pinaraming testing center na nakakalat na sa iba't ibang rehiyon.



TAKOT MAPESTE SA COVID-19, MGA KANO TAKBUHAN SA OSPITAL

Iba pa ang mga ispesyal na pag-testing ng mga lokal na pamahalaan sa kanilang mga nasasakupan at pribadong kompanya sa kanilang mga empleyado.

Halimbawa ang pagpapa-test sa mga tricycle driver ng pamahalaang Mandaluyong City na nagresulta sa pagkakatuksa ng COVID-19 sa ilang daan sa mga ito.

May mga natutuksan ding may sakit sa mga obrero, kahit pa sa mga security guard ng mga establisimyento.

Nagbubunga ito ng paglalaro na sa 500-600 araw-araw ang nalalamang may sakit at paglalaro ng bilang ng patay sa 10-22 araw-araw kumpara sa nasa 5 araw-araw sa nagdaang linggo.

AKSYONG LGU

Mahuhusay trumabaho ang maraming Local Government Unit.

Kapag may mga nagpopositibo kahit sa mga rapid testing, karaniwang itinatakbo agad nina mayor at kanilang mga municipal health officer ang mga ito sa mga kaukulang ospital.

Kasama nito ang pag-quarantine at contact tracing sa mga pamilya at nakasalamuha ng mga ito.

At hinahangaan natin sila sa mga pagkilos nilang ganito.

Sa pagdami ng mga nagpopositibo, hindi kaya darating ang araw na maging punuan ang mga ospital?

Hindi naman uubra na sa mga tent na nakalagay sa binabahang lugar ipwesto ang mga pasyente.

HUMANAP, MAGTAYO NG OSPITAL

Sa ibang salita, mga Bro, panahon nang magprograma ang Department of Health at lahat ng mga kaukulang ahensya ng pamahalaan para sa pagkakaroon ng mga ligtas na lugar sa mga pasyente.

Kung naisipan, halimbawa, ng pamahalaang China noong kasagsagan sa kanila ang COVID-19 ang magtayo ng dalawang palapag na ospital sa loob ng 10-15 araw na may kompletong kagamitan para sa 1,000 pasyente at higit pa, dapat ganito rin mag-isip ang mga kinauukulan.



TAKOT MAPESTE SA COVID-19, MGA KANO TAKBUHAN SA OSPITAL

Pwedeng ring kumontrata ng mga nakatayo nang gusali at ihanda na ang mga ito sa hospital grade na kalagayan para agad magamit kung lalala ang COVID-19.

Isa pang mahalaga, hindi dapat hayaang magkaroon ng mga overpricing sa mga gastos sa testing at pagpapaospital ng mga pasyente at kung may mga mang-aabuso, dapat na kasuhan agad at ikulong.

O kayo riyan sa DOH, Secretary Francisco Duque, sir, aba, galaw-galaw na kahit wala kayong time.

Alalahanin ninyo, dumarami na ang may pneumonia ngayong panay-panay na ang pag-ulan na sinasakyan ng COVID-19 saka pumatay.



EDITORIAL - Huwag munang mag-relax narito pa ang kalaban

June 17, 2020 - 12:00am

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/opinyon/2020/06/17/2021367/editorial-huwag-munang-mag-relax-narito-pa-ang-kalaban>



Narito pa ang kalaban at nag-aabang nang makakapitan. Matindi ang kapit sa ikalawang pagkakataon kaya hindi pa dapat mag-relaks ang mamamayan. Mula nang payagan na makapagbukas ang ilang establisimento para may pagkakitaan at gumulong ang ekonomiya, pati na rin ang pagbiyahe ng ilang pampublikong sasakyan, tila nakakalimot na sa pag-iingat ang ilan at nawawala na ang physical distancing. Nagkukumpul-kumpol na naman at ang iba ay walang face mask. At kung may face mask, nakalitaw ang ilong at ang iba naman ay nasa dakong panga na. Mayroong nakasabit na lang sa taynga ang face mask. Meron na ring mga nag-iinuman sa kalsada at may nagkakaraoke pa. May mga nagtsitsismisan na sa kalsada.

Narito pa ang kalaban at naghihintay pa ng mga mabibiktima. Hindi pa dapat balewalain ang sinasabi ng mga awtoridad na mag-ingat para hindi mahawa ng virus. Kailangang panatilihin ang nasimulang paghuhugas ng kamay, umiwas sa karamihan ng tao, mag-face mask at huwag magkumpul-kumpol o magdikit-dikit.

Hindi pa bumababa ang kaso ng COVID-19 at tumataas pa. Araw-araw ay may nadadagdag na kaso at may namamatay. Ang isang magandang balita ay marami ang gumagaling. Mas maganda kung mararating ang numero na hindi na halos gumagalaw ang mga kaso at patuloy naman ang mga nakakarekober.



EDITORIAL - Huwag munang mag-relax narito pa ang kalaban

Nagdudulot naman ng pangamba ang sinabi ng isang propesor sa University of the Philippines (UP) na maaari raw umabot sa 40,000 ang kaso ng COVID sa Hunyo 30 kung patuloy na magluluwag ang gobyerno. Hindi pa raw nararapat ang pagluluwag sapagkat darami pa ang kaso.

May ilang local government units (LGUs) na humiling sa Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases na isailalim pa sa mahigpit na quarantine ang kanilang nasasakupan. Ayon sa report, 20 LGUs ang humiling na baguhin ang kanilang klasipikasyon at ilagay sila mula general community quarantine (GCQ) patungo sa modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) para ganap na mapigilan ang pagkalat ng virus.

Kailangang sumunod ang mamamayan. Huwag munang maging kampante sapagkat patuloy pang kumakalat ang sakit. Huwag nang maging pasaway at bumalik sa dating nakaugalian.



Who's telling the truth on COVID-19 situation? – SHARP EDGES by JAKE J. MADERAZO

June 16, 2020 - 05:08 AM

<https://radyo.inquirer.net/249073/whos-telling-the-truth-on-covid-19-situation-sharp-edges-by-jake-j-maderazo>

With the country now on its third month of community quarantine, medical experts continue to debate about the real new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) situation.

Based on the latest official figures, there are almost 26,000 confirmed cases with 1,088 fatalities and new cases (fresh and late) ranging from 500 to 600 a day. University of the Philippine scientists have predicted that by June 30, there will be 40,000 confirmed cases. The numbers are unsettling for the already stressed-out public who are worried about their health and financial stability.

The Department of Health (DOH) said that according to the results of its May 20-June 12 study, there was a big 29-percent decrease in COVID-19 cases in Metro Manila. It also said that the national fatality rate declined from 5.52 to 4.24 percent. Also, COVID-19 cases from Central Visayas, including Cebu City, increased from 13 to 24 percent.

Critics have lamented the backlog and delays in the DOH's daily results. A new group called Scientists Unite Against COVID-19 has urged the DOH to address "validation delays" and "laboratory testing" that created "two distinct but related backlogs."

They also questioned the median turnaround time of three days in which only one-third of results were released within two days of samples receipt. These delays, they say, hamper crucial public health interventions such as contact tracing and local policy decisions.

Analysts say that as of June 12, a total of 31,779 confirmed positives were reported by testing laboratories. This reveals a gap or backlog of 5,847 positives, still to be validated by the DOH. I must also mention that the health department, in the past, has repeatedly apologized for "errors" in its daily reports.

Inside the powerful Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF), officials are at loggerheads over the "real numbers" coming from the DOH, its lead agency.



Who's telling the truth on COVID-19 situation? – SHARP EDGES by JAKE J. MADERAZO

Special adviser to the national task force on COVID-19 Dr. Tony Leachon has criticized the DOH for its lack of focus in everything—from risk communication, priorities, data management and the execution of all plans.

Leachon also said that we shouldn't turn a blind eye to the “dropped ball” with people waiting for positive results from the DOH.

Sadly, this major disagreement among top medical experts inside the IATF are giving our countrymen a worrisome picture of how the government is failing in its efforts to handle this pandemic. Are the differences of opinion indicative of a power struggle, vested interests or genuine love of country? Take your pick.

My colleagues in the horse racing industry are praying that Metro Manila will soon be downgraded to a modified general community quarantine so that races can resume in Malvar, Batangas and in Carmona and Naic in Cavite.

The IATF has approved the restarting of the races on July 19 to resuscitate the P40-billion peso industry, which supports the livelihood of thousands of farmworkers, stable hands, jockeys, trainers, ticket tellers, off-tracking betting and race tracks employees, as well as feeds/supplement suppliers

Today, horse races without spectators are happening in Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia, England and the United States. I see no reason why the races here cannot resume very soon.



DPWH creates group to construct bicycle lanes in Metro Manila

By Azer Parrocha June 16, 2020, 8:14 am
<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1105989>



BIKE LANES. A folding bicycle parked by the riverside in Marikina City, one of the cities in Metro Manila that has established a bicycle lane network that connects to the offices, schools, malls, and the LRT-Line 2 along Marcos Highway. As the coronavirus pandemic discourages the use of public transportation, Filipinos have resorted to the use of the good old bicycle, one of the most basic forms of mobility. (Contributed photo)

MANILA – Filipinos can expect additional bicycle lanes in Metro Manila soon.

In his 12th weekly report to Congress on the government’s coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) response, President Rodrigo Duterte bared that the government has formed a team to prepare the design and construction of bicycle lanes in seven prioritized road sections in Metro Manila.

“With the aim of increasing mobility during the new normal, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has created a Technical Working Group to directly coordinate with the DOTr (Department of Transportation) and MMDA (Metropolitan Manila Development Authority) for the preparation of a conceptual design and construction of a Metro Manila-wide bicycle lane for national and local roads,” Duterte said in his report.

He said the group has started gathering data for the seven prioritized road sections namely EDSA, Quezon Avenue, Commonwealth Avenue, Roxas Boulevard, R-10, C-5, and Marcos Highway.

The shift to a general community quarantine (GCQ) in Metro Manila and other parts of the country has forced the public to find other ways to get around due to the reduced passenger capacity of public transport.



DPWH creates group to construct bicycle lanes in Metro Manila

Currently, only trains and bus augmentation services, taxis, transport network vehicle services, shuttle services, point-to-point buses with limited passenger capacity and bicycles are allowed to operate under GCQ.

Late last month, Interior Secretary Eduardo Año directed provincial governors, city and municipal mayors to coordinate with neighboring local government units (LGUs) to connect bicycle lanes and establish a bicycle road network.

Año said local governments must also ensure that all bicycle lanes are free from any obstruction to prevent any untoward road accidents.

LGUs should follow the DOTr design approach of putting up plastic bollards, stencil markings and signage in the designated bike lanes for the safety of the bicycling public especially in major thoroughfares where fast-moving buses and other huge vehicles are passing through the same road, he said.

He also reminded LGUs to strictly implement health and safety protocols including the mandatory wearing of face masks of the persons using the said lanes and in all public areas.

The DOTr is promoting the use of bicycles as an alternative mode of transportation that would be useful in maintaining physical distancing. It will also have substantial environmental and health benefits.

As more individuals are looking into the use of bicycles, the Department of Trade and Industry is also eyeing to impose price control on bikes now that sales are increasing. (PNA)



Davao City demarcates bike lanes

By Rudolph Ian AlamaPublished on June 16, 2020
<https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1044942>



A lone cyclists pedals his way along the newly demarcated bike lane along Quimpo Boulevard

DAVAO CITY, June 16 (PIA)- The City Traffic and Transport Management Office (CTTMO) has started demarcating portions of several streets in Davao as bike lanes.

Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte has earlier this month bared that the local government is initially implementing the bike lanes.

“Unahon sa nato ang route, ang pagconnect-connect sa rota and demarcation kay naa man ta paint machines (The routes will be first, the connection of the routes, the demarcation because we have paint machines), the Mayor said.

She said the Bicycle Ordinance authored by the late Councilor Leo Avila in 2010 has many requirements but had decided to implement the bike routes and bike lanes first.

Cyclists in the city welcomed the bike lane hailed the creation of the bike lanes.

“I think the city’s efforts on creating bike lanes would promote biking. It would encourage people to ride their bikes because they would feel safer on the road, they have a distinct place along with other vehicles compared to before when drivers would honk on slow-moving bikers,” says 21-year old entrepreneur Geia Uy Mendoza, who is a cyclist.

Mendoza spearheaded a cycling campaign, the “Mission for Emission” last March 1, 2020 participated by over 100 cyclists. The event aims to promote cycling as an alternative transportation for Dabawenyos.



Davao City demarcates bike lanes



The Mission for Emission event held on March 1, 2020 gathered a hundred bikers to call for biking as an alternative to mass transport in the city.

One of the event's advocacies was the creation of bike lanes and bike parking spaces in the city.

"I hope to see bike lanes around the city. So far I have seen bike lanes in Matina, it will be very good for our city," Mendoza said.

The CTTMO had initially demarcated a portion of Quimpo Boulevard as a bike lane.

The demarcation of the bike lanes is also following the directive of the Department of Interior and Local Government for LGUs to establish bike lanes and a bicycle road network. Bicycles are seen as alternative transportation with the shortage of public transportation due to COVID19 quarantine. (PIA/RG Alama)



Ex-MMDA chair: Do not focus on bike lanes, improve public transpo instead

By CNN Philippines Staff

Published Jun 16, 2020 2:51:36 PM

<https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/6/16/MMDA-bike-lanes-public-utility-vehicles.html>

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, June 16) – A former chairman of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) opposed plans to construct bicycle lanes along EDSA, noting that its implementation would only bring back a traffic-clogged highway amid the general community quarantine in Metro Manila.

"Ang dami nating roads, bakit sa EDSA natin pinagpipilitan? (We have a lot of roads, why are we forcing the implementation along EDSA?) Let's improve on public transport, focus on it," Marikina Rep. Bayani Fernando told lawmakers during the House hearing of the Committee on Metro Manila Development on the public transportation status of Metro Manila on Tuesday.

Citing his term as former Marikina mayor, Fernando said he was disappointed in putting up "the most expensive bicycle lanes" within the city, only to have very few cyclists using them.

"Bicycle lanes, they're free to use any road, but not our congested roads," he said.

Caloocan Rep. Edgar Erice added that bicycles cannot be an alternative to the public transportation system of the country's capital.

"Kailangan may ready na mass transport everyday...Kung pipilitin ho nating pigilan yung dami ng public transport, may mga bibili ng motorsiklo, mas dadami ang mga sasakyan," Erice said. "Ang kailangan natin sapat na bilang ng public transpo para sa manggagawa."

[Translation: We should have a ready mass transport everyday...if we would continue to limit public transport, more people will buy motorcycles, there will be more vehicles on the road. What we need is a sufficient number of public transportation for our workers.]

PH losing ₱1 billion from workers amid transport crisis

Marikina Rep. Stella Quimbo said the country is losing at least ₱1 billion every day from the lost wages of workers who fail to get to their workplaces while the country is under the general community quarantine.

"We can exceed over ₱1 billion on a daily basis in terms of economic cost because we fail to ferry our workers to their workplaces," she said.

In President Rodrigo Duterte's latest report to Congress, he said that the government has formed a technical working group to construct bike lanes along EDSA and six other major thoroughfares in Metro Manila.



Ex-MMDA chair: Do not focus on bike lanes, improve public transpo instead

Transportation officials earlier bared that [they are now fast-tracking the establishment of the protected bike lanes](#) as more people shift to bicycles as mode of transportation during the coronavirus crisis.

For transportation adviser Robert Siy of the MoveAsOne Coalition, implementing bicycle lanes would be the best solution to the transport crisis in Metro Manila.

"All of us who work in the public service should think of the welfare of those who do not have private vehicles," he told lawmakers.

"This is the best time to abandon our past practices which are no longer appropriate. I'd like to point out that we have to prioritize the welfare of the vast majority — those who do not use cars," he said.



QC fast tracks bike lane project, targets opening on July

By Susan G. De Leon Published on June 16, 2020
<https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1044915>

CALOOCAN CITY, June 16 (PIA) – The Quezon City government is fast tracking its Bike Lane Network project for implementation this coming July.

In a statement, Mayor Joy Belmonte said, the project which is set to begin its first phase, will provide a safe place for people who have shifted to biking due to limited transportation options during the community quarantine.

“We are working double time on this project so that the increasing number of bikers in our city will be able to travel safely without other vehicles running over their lanes,” Belmonte said.

The first phase will be a short-term development that will include the improvement and repair of existing bike lanes and placement of temporary and semi-permanent traffic separation devices.

New bike lane routes have also been identified to improve route connectivity while route signages and bike parking areas will also be included in the network.

Belmonte said she asked the permission from the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) to implement the program along Commonwealth Avenue, a national government highway.

“Commonwealth Avenue is one of the major thoroughfares in our city so it is fitting to include it in our bike lane network,” Belmonte added.

The city government is also drafting an ordinance to support the bike lane program, which will strengthen the protection and support for the cycling community.

In 2017, Belmonte, a biking advocate, pushed for the approval of SP-2636 or the Road Safety Code of Quezon City during her time as Vice Mayor and Presiding Officer of the City Council.

The Ordinance ensures the safety of all road users, including bicycle riders.

Assistant City Administration for Operations Alberto Kimpo revealed that the city is planning to put up permanent bike lane routes in the long term.

“For our long-term plan, the Quezon City bike lanes shall be integrated with the planned bus system routes and pedestrian network,” he said. (QC PAISD/PIA-NCR)



Did this science org throw shade at Duterte in its trivia on ‘dugong’?

By Catalina Ricci S. Madarang

June 16, 2020 - 9:14 PM

<https://www.interaksyon.com/trends-spotlights/2020/06/16/170874/did-this-science-org-throw-shade-at-duterte-in-its-trivia-on-dugong/>

A science organization recently shared a trivia about sea cows, also known as “dugong,” on Facebook which some Filipinos perceived to be a “shade” to President **Rodrigo Duterte**.

In a post last June 13, **Earth Shaker** posted that sea cows are marine mammals that don’t have excellent vision. The post also included a photo of a sea cow found in China.

“Dugongs (/Dugong dugon/), also known as “sea cows”, are herbivorous marine mammals that heavily rely on their hearing capacities to travel, find food, and mate, since they don’t have an excellent vision. They often create sounds, such as barking, to communicate with other dugongs,” the description said.

“Did you know? There are also dugongs in the Philippines!” it added.

The post had since earned more than 22,000 reactions and 15,000 shares on the platform.

Scientific shade?

Some online users perceived the post as a subtle criticism to **Duterte**, who is referred to as “Tatay Digong” by his supporters.

Comments section of the Earth Shaker post’s June 13, 2020 post. (Screenshot by Interaksyon)

“You threw shade as well as educated people about d.. dugongs. Well played! ”
Facebook user [Mark Nolloedo commented](#).

Some of them poked fun at the perceived similarity between the sea creature and Duterte under the comments section of the post.

Comments section of the Earth Shaker’s Facebook post. (Screenshot by Interaksyon)



Did this science org throw shade at Duterte in its trivia on 'dugong'?

They also perceived the caption: Photo of Dugong in China as another “shade.” Duterte is known for being pro-China.

“I see what you did there tas may ‘photo of a dugong in CHINA,’” Facebook user [Brandon Peña commented.](#)

Earth Shaker clarified that the sea cow in the photo was indeed located in China, citing that the photo was taken from a Chinese tour website that featured [Beihai Aquatic Museum in Guangxi Province.](#)

The organization also placed the link of the website where they lifted the information about sea cows and commented another related link for public’s further reading.

“For further reading: ‘In general, the classification of dugong sounds according to Andreason et al (1995) is grouped into three types of sounds: chirp-squeaks, barks, and trills’ https://www.dugongconservation.org/.../Report_Bioecology..” Earth Shaker’s [comment read.](#)

One of the links posted leads to a science website called the **Animal Diversity** stated that sea cows or dugongs can be found in at least 48 countries including the Philippines.

They are likened to dolphins in terms of the way they communicated.

“Much like [dolphins](#), dugongs use chirps, whistles, barks and other sounds that echo underwater in order to communicate. Each sound has its own amplitude and frequency that characterizes the signal, which implies a possible purpose,” the website [read.](#)

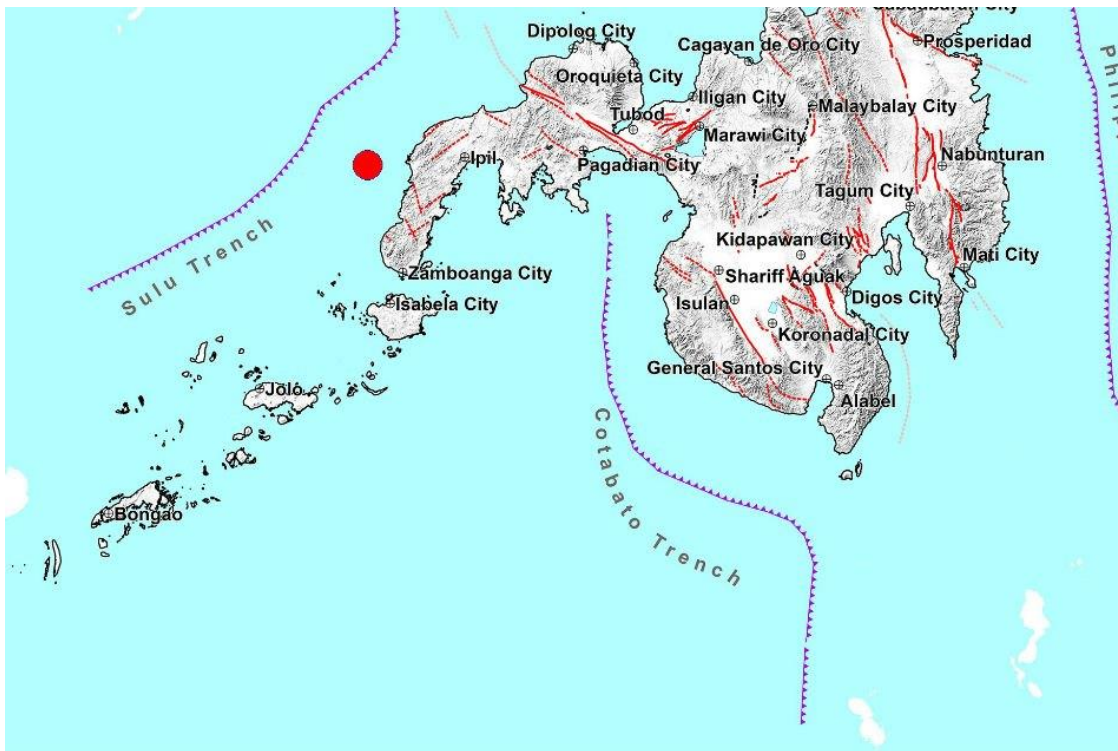


Magnitude 4.9 quake strikes off Zamboanga del Norte

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jun 15 2020 07:26 AM | Updated as of Jun 15 2020 04:04 PM

https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/15/20/magnitude-46-quake-strikes-off-zamboanga-del-norte?fbclid=IwAR3wZg5yYaadegyrAfOjfl-1D-4OntHfIO-HgKuSkcG5xSs566e_v5Rdwz8



MANILA (UPDATE) — A magnitude 4.9 earthquake struck off Zamboanga del Norte early Monday, Phivolcs said.

The tremor initially recorded at magnitude 4.6, happened at 6:29 a.m., 35 kilometers northwest of Siocon town.

It was tectonic in origin and had a depth of 25 kilometers, according to Phivolcs.

The tremor was not expected to cause damage and aftershocks.

Intensity IV was felt in Zamboanga City, and Sipocot and Sirawai towns in Zamboanga del Norte, while Intensity III was felt in Ipil, Zamboanga Sibugay.

Instrumental Intensity III was also reported in Zamboanga City.



Virus crisis torpedoes FDI – UN

By Agence France-Press

June 17, 2020

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/06/17/business/foreign-business/virus-crisis-torpedoes-fdi-un/732353/>

GENEVA: Global foreign direct investment flows are likely to plunge by 40 percent this year due to the coronavirus crisis, the United Nations (UN) said Tuesday, with worse expected in 2021.

FDI will shrivel from its 2019 value of \$1.54 trillion to below \$1 trillion for the first time since 2005, said the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

FDI — a measure of cross-border private sector investments — is forecast to decrease by a further five to 10 percent in 2021 and only start a recovery in 2022, UNCTAD said in its World Investment Report 2020.

“The global economy is in a direr situation than it was during the 2008 financial crisis,” UNCTAD secretary-general Mukhisa Kituyi told reporters. “The pandemic represents a supply, demand, and policy shock for FDI.”

Kituyi said the economic impact of Covid-19 would hit developing countries hard, with disruptions to major productive sectors and industries, declining remittances and receipts from tourism and contracting world trade.

“The shock will be further compounded by the impact on food security as production of major food items is concentrated in a few big countries where the pandemic is expanding,” he said. “Managing the disease is only part of the persistent challenges facing developing economies.”

In Asia, the pandemic is expected to precipitate a fall in reinvested earnings of foreign affiliates in the region, while the crisis has underscored the significance of China and other Asian economies as global production hubs.

Meanwhile all 32 landlocked less-developed countries were struggling with the economic impact of the pandemic on FDI flows — particularly with border closures, the report said.

Those countries cannot turn to direct sea transport — the mode that carries an estimated 80 percent of global trade, said UNCTAD.

“As we saw in the past, international investment played a lead role in recovery from global financial crises,” said James Zhan, UNCTAD’s director of investment and enterprise.

He said the recovery could create opportunities for middle-income countries as value chains become more regionalised. The report found that global FDI flows rose by a modest three percent in 2019, following sizable declines in 2017 and 2018.

The rise was mainly the result of higher flows to developed economies, as the impact of the 2017 tax reforms in the United States waned.



UN: Virus crisis torpedoes foreign investment

June 16, 2020 03:17 PM

By Agence France-Presse

<https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/06/16/un-virus-crisis-torpedoes-foreign-investment/>

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FDI can lead ‘recovery’

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China asks Canada to investigate pests found in logs

Published June 17, 2020 3:47am

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/world/742953/china-asks-canada-to-investigate-pests-found-in-logs/story/>

BEIJING - China's foreign ministry has asked Canada to investigate pests found in shipments of logs, spokesman Zhao Lijian told reporters at a daily briefing on Tuesday.

The move coincides with strained relations between China and Canada since the arrest of Meng Wanzhou, chief financial officer of telecoms firm Huawei Technologies Co Ltd, in December 2018.

Last year, citing pest concerns, Beijing blocked canola seed shipments from Richardson International and Viterra Inc - Canada's two top exporters. It also temporarily suspended imports of pork and beef from the country last year.

Canada's Trade Ministry confirmed later on Tuesday that on June 9 it received 16 notifications of non-compliance from China related to the discovery of pests in shipments of hardwood and softwood logs, spokesman Ryan Nearing said.

"Canada is investigating these notices as per standard response procedures," Nearing said. "Ongoing trade in forestry products to China continues without disruption despite the notices."

Meng suffered a setback last month in a Vancouver court that will prolong her efforts to avoid extradition to the United States. Analysts said at the time that the decision could leave Canada vulnerable to further retaliation from Beijing.

Zhao said some Chinese port authorities had detected pests in imported Canadian logs that were not permitted under Chinese quarantine rules.

Beijing had asked Canada to investigate and take measures to resolve the issue, he said.

"Protecting China's agriculture and forestry industries, as well as its ecological safety, is the Chinese government's obligation," said Zhao.

The move was "scientific and reasonable" and in line with international conventions, he added. (Reporting by Huizhong Wu; writing by Dominique Patton and Steve Scherer; editing by Barbara Lewis and Steve Orlofsky)