



DENR appoints new RED in Cagayan Valley

Published June 19, 2020, 4:48 PM

By *Chito Chavez*

<https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/06/19/denr-appoints-new-red-in-cagayan-valley/>

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) announced the appointment of Director Gwendolyn C. Bambalan as the new Cagayan Valley Regional Executive Director (RED).

Bambalan replaced Antonio A. Abawag who was designated as the new officer-in-charge (OIC) RED of DENR in the Bicol Region.

The change of command was held via Zoom and administered by DENR Undersecretary for Field Operations, Enforcement and Muslim Affairs Jim O. Sampulna.

In her acceptance speech, Bambalan said her thrust is to strengthen the priority programs of the DENR as ordered by DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu.

“But we will do some refocusing of our efforts where it is most critical and impactful to the people of Region 2,” Bambalan said.

Bambalan enjoined her subordinates to “always adhere to the core values of Discipline, Excellence, Nobility and Responsibility.”

“As a civil servant, it has been my advocacy also to influence DENR colleagues and fellow civil servants to become E-CHAMPS (Excellence, Collaboration, Honesty, Accountability, Managing Ability, Participation and Simple Living),” Bambalan said.

Bambalan was designated by virtue of Special Order No. 2020-191 issued by Cimatu on June 5.

Prior to her assignment in Region 2, Bambalan was the Assistant Regional Director for Management Services in DENR National Capital Region.

From 2015-2018, Bambalan was also the Assistant Regional Director for Technical Services in Region 1 where she bagged the Civil Service Commission’s Pagasa Award.

Before the implementation of the rationalization program of the DENR, Bambalan also served as the Regional Technical Director for Protected Area, Wildlife and Coastal Zone Management in MIMAROPA from 2012 to 2015.

She also was the OIC Finance and Administrative Division at the Forest Management Bureau (FMB) for seven years.



Structures built by Balonglong demolished in Matahimik-Bucana

Jun 19, 2020 [Jayra Joyce Taboada](#)

https://palawan-news.com/structures-built-by-balonglong-demolished-in-matahimik-bucana/?fbclid=IwAR3cv60tcGSagIJqeDNYMb0Dj_4FPi62HZiSiivT8fTd-HIIIEFGXPqKaQ-M



(Demolition on the mangrove area allegedly owned by P/Col. Marion Balonglong.)

Environmental law enforcement and city anti-squatting authorities demolished Thursday the structures in the mangrove area in Barangay Matahimik-Bucana reportedly put up by former Puerto Princesa police director Col. Marion Balonglong.

Led by Alex Hermoso, the city anti-squatting program with the assistance of Matahimik-Bucana barangay officials, 3rd Marine Brigade, and the Anti-Crime Task Force (ACTF) demolished fences made of galvanized iron sheets, barbed wires, and cemented posts surrounding six hectares of mangrove land.

The team, which has been formed into the Inter-Agency Task Force for Environment (IATFE), proceeded to the area early on June 18 to begin the demolition after Balonglong reportedly maltreated a forester.

“Ito ay ipinagbabawal ang pagpuputol ng kahoy, nandito nga po tayo at ang nasasakdal ay isang mataas na opisyal na dapat hindi niya ginawa ito. Si Col. Balonglong ang [sinasabing] may-ari nito, siya nga ang dapat sanang pamarisan [na mangalaga sa kalikasan,] kaso baliktad,” he said.

On June 10, Balonglong arrested a team of government environmental enforcers investigating illegal settlers in Matahimik-Bucana. He was accused of holding at gunpoint forester Roldan Alvarez and arresting him with others for questioning.

Matahimik-Bucana village chief Ryan Abueme told Palawan News that Balonglong’s team was responsible for maltreating Alvarez and some of his tanod.



Structures built by Balonglong demolished in Matahimik-Bucana

“Tinutukan sila ng baril ayon sa kwento ng aking mga tanod. Nakadapa sila tapos tinutukan,” Abueme said.

Balonglong was relieved from his post in no time and was declared persona non grata by the City Council recently.

Removing illegal settlers

Meanwhile, Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (DENR-CENRO) chief Felizardo Cayatoc said also Thursday that the other settlers who have occupied other portions of the area informally will be ordered to vacate and face appropriate charges for violating environmental laws.



(Initiated by the Inter-Agency Task Force for Environment and City Anti-squatting team with the support of Barangay council, 3rd marine brigade and City Anti-Crime task force.)

Among these is Presidential Proclamation 2152 that declared the entire province of Palawan as a mangrove swamp reserve, and Presidential Decree 705 which prohibits the cutting of the coastal trees.

Cayatoc said the IATFE was purposely created to take charge of taking care of the mangrove area and help in its rehabilitation.

“Ipapa-vacate natin sila and then we will take appropriate charges sa kanilang violations. Dito sa Palawan may Presidential Proclamation 2152, declaring the entire province of Palawan as mangrove swamp reserve. Naka-state din sa Presidential Decree 705 na bawal talaga ang pagputol ng kahoy kasama na ang bakawan,” Cayatoc said.

“Kahapon nagcreate ng Inter-Agency Task Force for Environment at napag-usapan na bantayan at pagtulungan na i-rehabilitate [itong area],” he added.



Structures built by Balonglong demolished in Matahimik-Bucana

PCSD dismayed over wildlife habitat destruction

The Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD), a unique body in the province that carries powerful responsibility for the protection of the environment, also expressed dismay on the destruction of mangroves in the area that serve as habitat for wildlife.

Atty. Teodoro Jose Matta, executive director of the PCSD Staff said what was done by informal settlers in Matahimik-Bucana is lamentable as they destroyed the habitat.

“Nakakalungkot kasi ang tagal na nating naglalaban para ma-protect ang ating mangroves, ang ating wildlife, tapos ito, six hectares ang laki-laki,” Matta said.

“Nakakapanghinayang, nakakasira talaga ng damdamin na makita. Ganoon lang, because of some factors motivated by money gusto nilang kumita, sinira nila yong future, they put a threat to the future of our children, nakakaawa lang,” he added.

Matta vowed to support the DENR by providing technical and forensic support.

He said the PCSD Staff is going to assess the impact of the destruction and make necessary recommendations so the government can run after the perpetrators.

“Sa ngayon ang lead nito ay DENR, so we will provide them with technical assistance, as well as forensic assistance. Identifying the species, identifying the wildlife, at environmental impact ng destruction na ito. We will be giving them the technical know-how or assistance needed to substantiate the case that we will be filed against the perpetrators,” he said.

On the other hand, City ENRO chief Atty. Carlo Gomez considers the incident as a way to help decision-makers to consider environmental factors to avoid more destruction.

“I would like to take this opportunity to send a message to our decision-makers, kung sino man sila, it could be legislators, political leaders, heads of different agencies — please incorporate environmental factors sa desisyon nilang gagawin, otherwise, magkakaroon pa ng destruction,” he said.

DENR-Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) chief Eriberto Saños also called on the Matahimik-Bucana community to participate in the protection of the mangroves in the area.

Saños reminded residents that mangroves play important roles as they are the first line of defense for coastal communities against storm surges.

“Ang protection po ng ating environment ay hindi lang po nakasalalay sa DENR. Syempre hindi namin araw-araw din nakikita yan, kaya kami ay umaapela sa ating mga kababayan higit sa mga community, sa ating local government na laging makipag-ugnayan kung meron silang napapansing paglabag sa kalikasan,” he said.



JUNE 20, 2020 6:00AM



Philippine Wildlife News / PCTAR

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Pagkalbo sa bahagi ng mangrove area sa Puerto Princesa, iniimbestigahan

Rex Ruta, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jun 18 2020 06:01 PM

https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/18/20/pagkalbo-sa-bahagi-ng-mangrove-area-sa-puerto-princesa-iniimbestigahan?fbclid=IwAR2mdYFCWrtlUrUyOhz0e5UZyoSc1AQ9_Q8O-emBOI62pphLMnnrxlhhvCQ



Halos umabot umano ng anim na ektarya ng mga bakawan ang kinalbo at sinunog sa Barangay Iwahig at Bucana-Matahimik sa Puerto Princesa. *Kuha ni Rex Ruta*

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY, Palawan - Binisita Huwebes ng umaga ng mga representante ng iba't ibang ahensya ng pamahalaan, kasama ang ilang sundalo, ang kinalbong bahagi ng mangrove area sa Barangay Iwahig at Bucana-Matahimik sa lungsod na ito bilang bahagi ng kanilang imbestigasyon.

Inangkin diumano ang nasabing lugar ng kasisibak lang na hepe ng pulisya sa lungsod na si Col. Marlon Balonglong. Sinibak sa pwesto si Balonglong at iniimbestigahan matapos ang pambubugbog at pag-aresto noong nakaraang linggo sa grupo ng forest guards at mga tanod na nagsasagawa noon ng assessment sa mga bakawang pinasok ng informal settlers.

Ayon kay Forester Felizardo Cayatoc, officer-in-charge ng City Environment and Natural Resources Office, kailangan sumailalim sa assessment at imbestigasyon kung paanong nakalusot ang pagsunog at pagkasira ng halos nasa anim na ektaryang bakawan.

“Mayroong activity na ganyan, nag-i-encroach sila. Pero itong particular na area na ito na adjacent areas ay napakabilis. Of course, starting March 17, hindi na nakalabas ang mga tao natin hanggang katapusan ng April. Pero ito, naging buffer nila yung mga bakod. Kahit nasa highway siya, hindi mo mapapansin na may nangyayari dito sa loob,” sabi ni Cayatoc.



Pagkalbo sa bahagi ng mangrove area sa Puerto Princesa, iniimbestigahan

Sabay sa pagbisita sa lugar ay ang paggiba sa ginawang bakod at muhon. Katuwang rito ang demolition team ng city government.

Nauna na ring giniba ang nasa mahigit 70 inabandonang istruktura at mga binakod na pwesto na pasok sa timberland o pagmamay-ari pa ng gobyerno.

"Pati maliliit na species ng mangrove ay i-a-account kasi ang timber, mayroon pong definition ang timber, yung sukat. Pero, yung mangrove species ho, kahit kaliit-liitan na sukat, considered na timber po yan," saad ni Forester Eriberto Sanos ng Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office.

Kailangan anilang alamin ang kabuaang danyos ng nasirang bakawan, at ang lawak ng epekto nito sa mga buhay ilang at kalikasan.

Mahigit 200 kabahayan na rin ang binigyan ng notice to vacate sa loob ng isang buwan.

Ayon sa Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, malaking hamon sa probinsya ang pagpasok ng maraming immigrants na walang sariling lupa, at paglipana ng professional squatter dahil maraming mangrove area at kagubatan ang nasasalaula.

"May problema tayo sa ating human settlements at may problema tayo sa ating migration practices. Pag may magpasok na ibang tao galing ibang probinsya, ibang siyudad, tapos walang matirhan, ay magsi-settle yan kung saan may i-o-offer, or maghahanap ng ibang pwesto sa mga mangroves, sa mga timberland natin. Kaya marami tayong nakikitang mga sirang forestland natin," ani Atty. TJ Matta, executive director ng PCSD.

Maliban sa kasong administratibo ay handa na ring ihain ng awtoridad ang mga kasong paglabag sa Forestry Code at Fisheries Code of the Philippines laban kay Balonglong at mga kasabwat nito.

Aminado naman ang CENRO na malaki ang kanilang pagkukulang kaya muling naulit ang malawakang pagsira ng bakawan sa lungsod.

"This is a senseless destruction of biodiversity. Kung itsetsek ninyo ang background ng interview ninyo, you can hear the sound of birds in the background. Ibig sabihin, nagpapakita ang area na talagang very rich in biodiversity," sabi ni Atty. Carlo Gomez ng CENRO.

"But apparently, doon sa hanay ng kapulisan, kagaya ni chief Balonglong, wala sa kanyang vocabulary ang biodiversity," dagdag ni Gomez.

Marapat lamang din umano na maideklara si Balonglong na persona non-grata dahil sa pang-aabuso sa kalikasan at paggamit ng dahas sa kapwa empleyado ng gobyerno.

Magkakatuwang ang Inter-Agency Task Force on Environment sa pagbuo ng mga plano kung paano mapapanumbalik ang mayabong na bakawan.

Bisitahin ang Patrol.PH para sa iba pang mga balita.



Informal settlers destroy mangrove areas in Palawan

Published June 19, 2020 10:44pm

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/743413/informal-settlers-destroy-mangrove-areas-in-palawan/story/>

In a bid to make a home, informal settlers destroyed a portion of a mangrove forest in Palawan's Puerto Princesa City, according to a report by Chino Gaston on "24 Oras."



The informal settlers cut down several mangrove trees in Barangay Matahimik while some portions looked as if they had been landscaped like a resort.

Due to a fence built by the settlers, the cut-down trees were not visible from the highway.

Presidential Proclamation 2152 had declared the whole province a mangrove and swamp forest reserve while Presidential Decree 705 prohibited the cutting of mangrove trees.

"Ito po ay mayroong demolition order at bawal ho sa mga kababayan ho natin na magtayo ho ng istraktura sa mangrove areas," Alex Hormoso, of the City Anti Squatting Division, said.

"So yan po ay pinagbabawal kung halimbawa may mga kabakawan ho diyan, eh, bawal ho manirahan ang bawat isa," he added.

On Friday, personnel from the Puerto Princesa local government destroyed the fence and structures built by the informal settlers. — Joahna Lei Casilao/DVM, GMA News



DENR issues ECC to 320-hectare reclamation project in Bacoor, 700 fisherfolk families to be displaced

Published June 19, 2020, 11:17 AM

By Madelaine Miraflores

<https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/06/19/denr-issues-ecc-to-320-hectare-reclamation-project-in-bacoor-700-fisherfolk-families-to-be-displaced/>

Around 700 fisherfolk families fear that they will be displaced after the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) already gave the environmental clearance to the 320-hectare reclamation project in Bacoor City.



(DENR / MANILA BULLETIN)

In the environmental compliance certificate (ECC) granted to the project, which was proposed by Bacoor City Mayor Lani Mercado-Revilla herself, the DENR fully acknowledged the planned “land reclamation and horizontal land development” of around 320 hectares worth outer and inner islands along the coast of Manila Bay.



DENR issues ECC to 320-hectare reclamation project in Bacoor, 700 fisherfolk families to be displaced

“The project area shall be within the geographical coordinates specified in the project’s Environmental Impact Statement with the following components: internal road network, drainage system, containment structures, storm surge protection structures and access ways,” the ECC stated.

Militant fishers’ group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA) said more than 700 fishing and coastal families will be forcibly ejected from their houses to give way to the project.

“The interests of local political clans in Cavite and private businesses prevail over the interest of thousands of fisherfolk and coastal residents who stand affected by this destructive reclamation project,” PAMALAKAYA National Chairperson Fernando Hicap said.

“While the country is focused on containing the spread of the pandemic, the government, through the DENR, still managed to grant an environmental permit to a reclamation project that threatens the marine life of Manila Bay and will displace hundreds of fishing and coastal families in Bacoor town,” he added.

Hicap said this is “an obvious turnaround” of the DENR’s mandate in protecting the environment.



DENR warns public vs illegal online wildlife trade

Published June 19, 2020, 11:43 AM

By Richa Noriega

<https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/06/19/denr-warns-public-vs-illegal-online-wildlife-trade/>

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) warned the public on Thursday against buying and selling wildlife through social media.

The department made the statement after operatives of the DENR and the Bureau of Customs (BOC) seized a juvenile bearded dragon worth over P8,000 which was found and reported by a shipping company in Clark International Airport in Pampanga.



Based on the shipping manifest, the bearded dragon was sent from an online pet seller based overseas to the consignee who had no import permit on record.

The DENR said that authorities discovered that the bearded dragon had died during transport as it was shipped in a lidded plastic bowl without food, water, and appropriate padding inside the container.

DENR Executive Director in Central Luzon Paquito Moreno said that transporting and trading of wildlife without the necessary permit and proper documentation are prohibited under Republic Act No. 9147, the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001.

“Our citizens should obtain proper permits and not disregard the regulatory processes required in importing wildlife.” Moreno added.

The DENR has placed Clark and Subic Freeport Zones under tight watch as their strategic locations make them havens to smugglers attempting to transport wildlife from other counties and parts of the Philippines.

“We have tightened our watch on wildlife trafficking even during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in our airports and seaports in the region, since these are potential gateways for illegal wildlife trade,” Moreno added.

The DENR has seized a total of 311 species of reptiles, birds, and mammals since 2015.



Expedition to study PH eagle population in Zamboanga protected area mulled

Updated June 19, 2020, 12:05 PM

By Antonio Colina IV

<https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/06/19/expedition-to-study-ph-eagle-population-in-zamboanga-protected-area-mulled/>

DAVAO CITY – The Philippines Eagle Foundation (PEF) hopes to undertake a full scape study on the population of Philippine eagles in Pasonanca Park in Zamboanga City after the recent discovery of a pair of raptors in the 17,000-hectare protected area.

Dr. Jayson Ibañez, PEF's director of research and conservation, said an expedition was being planned for September 2020, but only for the purpose of checking if the newly discovered pair has re-nested after its two-month-old offspring died last January.

"That's our sole purpose (for this expedition). The checking of other eagle pairs within the park will be done in future expeditions," he said.

Among those who will join the expedition include representatives from Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Zamboanga, municipal and provincial environment offices of Zamboanga City and Zamboanga Sibugay, Zamboanga City Water District representatives and forest guards, and Protect Wildlife of United States Agency for International Development (USAID), he said.

He said experts could not ascertain the cause of the chick's death, but suspected it was due to natural causes.

"We can't know, for sure, the cause of death but we suspected it was due to natural causes, for example, sickness, naturally weak, or hypothermia. It's not human-caused because the place is very well-protected," he added.

He said the remains of the chick were sent to University of the Philippines (UP)-Diliman for deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) examination.

Ibañez said there was still no full-scale study on the eagle population of Pasonanca Park, but the foundation hopes to undertake one in the future.

He said the DENR-Zamboanga Peninsula is monitoring eagles across the region.

He said DENR-Zamboanga and Protect Wildlife of USAID have supported the proposed city ordinance declaring the Philippine eagle as a flagship species of Zamboanga City and appropriating funds for the continuous study of eagles at the park.

"Once passed, it will lead to city government-led projects to save eagles within Pasonanca park, including education campaigns with city residents and students about the eagles, funding that will subsidize scientific studies on the eagles, and the engagement of forest guards who will protect the eagles and forest among others," he added.

Mindanao is the "stronghold of the species," Ibañez said. Nesting sites are found in Davao Region, Sarangani Province, North Cotabato, Bukidnon, Misamis Occidental, and Misamis Oriental.

The country sent Geothermica and Sambisig, the pair to Jurong Bird Park of Wildlife Reserves Singapore last June 4, 2019, as part of the loan program agreement to save the genetic stock of the Philippine eagles.



PH marks 4th year since PH Rise was designated protected zone

Published June 19, 2020, 10:33 AM

By Freddie Lazaro

<https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/06/19/ph-marks-4th-year-since-ph-rise-was-designated-protected-zone/>

SAN FERNANDO CITY, La Union – The Philippine government, through the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), marked the fourth anniversary of the Philippine Rise at Port Irene, Cagayan Economic Zone Authority, Sta Ana, Cagayan province.



AFP Chief General Felimon T. Santos, Jr. (2nd from right) leads the sending – off of the Patrol Ship BRP Quezon PS70 of the Philippine Navy during the observance of the 4th Philippine Rise anniversary at the Port Irene, Cagayan Economic Zone Authority, Sta Ana, Cagayan province on June 10, 2020. (Photo courtesy of NFNL / MANILA BULLETIN)

Navy Lieutenant Geraldson J. Pascual, spokesperson of the Naval Forces North Luzon (NFNL) based in Poro Point, San Fernando City, La Union, said on Friday that personnel of the Northern Luzon Command (NOLCOM) and the Area Task Force (ATF) – North led the successful staging of the event on June 10.

AFP Chief General Felimon T. Santos, Jr., together with the local government officials of Cagayan province, graced the affair, which asserted the country's patriotic ownership of the Philippine Rise.

During the program, Santos cited the strategic and economic importance of the place.

The Philippine Rise is a seismically active undersea region, and an extinct volcanic ridge located in the Philippine Sea, approximately 250 kilometer east of the northern coastline of Dinapigue, Isabela.

In May 2017, the feature was designated by the Philippines as a “protected food supply exclusive zone,” prohibiting mining and oil exploration in the plateau.

Due to the prevailing pandemic, the Philippine Rise commemoration was delayed this year, but it did not stop the AFP from commemorating the event.

Pascual said the event serves as the government's renewal of commitment that ATF North will continuously sustain the protection and preservation of these vast marine resources for future generations.

Along with the event, Santos presided over the sent-off for Patrol Ship BRP Quezon PS70 and aircraft with tail number NV320 to establish a naval presence within the designated maritime patrol areas and exercise governance in the vicinity of Philippine Rise. (Freddie G. Lazaro)



Davao City 'pawikan' haven promotes conservation

[Leander C. Domingo, TMT](#)

June 20, 2020

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/06/20/business/green-business/davao-city-pawikan-haven-promotes-conservation/732987/>

Cleanergy Park at the coastal area of Punta Dumalag in Davao City is a sanctuary for pawikan (sea turtles), as well as for dozens of rare bird species that are able to thrive in a safe and secure environment.



PROTECTING OUR WILDLIFE Fermin Edillon of Davao Light (left) assists a veterinary team after a hawksbill turtle was discovered in a fishing accident. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Celebrating World Environment Month (WEM) for Fermin Edillon and his team at Aboitiz Power Corp. distribution unit Davao Light, they have focused their energies on pawikans, spearheading activities at the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park in Davao.

The WEM is commemorated every month of June with World Environment Day on June 5.

Edillon said that as the world celebrates WEM, it is important to reflect on the many ways humans impact the planet and its flora and fauna, which also serves as a reminder to spread positive energy to all aspects of life on Earth.

He said the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park is completely wireless and is built entirely using recycled materials.

“Even at night, lights and lamps are not used except for flashlights of roving guards and staff in order not to disturb or confuse the pawikans nesting in the area,” Edillon said.

He said his team educates students and guests by hosting tours around the park and allowing visitors to release baby hatchlings into the sea, and watch them crawl through the sand and swim into the ocean.

Edillon added that they teach visitors that it is critical to a pawikan’s early stage of life to grovel through the sand and into the ocean on their own, explaining the pawikans



Davao City ‘pawikan’ haven promotes conservation

imprint themselves onto their birthing place, wherein after a few decades, they will return and make their own nests as parents for a new generation of hatchlings.

“It is important to let the youth understand the situation of the pawikan and all other endangered species, so that while they are still young, they are already aware of what they should do and how they could take action to save our wildlife,” Edillon said.

The team at the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park also established a Pawikan Rescue Center inside the park as a testament to their commitment to conserve and protect the pawikans and their marine habitat. The team collaborates with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Region 11 (Davao Region) and the local government of Davao City. On May 20, an injured female hawksbill sea turtle, part of a critically endangered species, was discovered and immediately turned over to the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park to ensure its proper care and rehabilitation.

Edillon said the pawikan was a victim of spear-fishing practices and had to undergo critical medical procedures in order to survive.

“We at Davao Light and AboitizPower are fully committed to our cause of saving the pawikans. We must all carry this responsibility so that our future generations will be able to see them. It can be through small acts such as keeping our coastal areas clean, not littering and having safe practices when fishing. These are very simple but have a large impact on preserving our environment,” Edillon said.

Since Edillon’s team started collecting data in 2014, a total of 4,811 hatchlings across 42 nests have been discovered and released into the sea.

He said 14 pawikans have been rescued and they are currently nurturing five at the Cleanergy Park, which is one of the few identified nesting sites for the critically endangered hawksbill turtle.



10 stranded whales, dolphins die in Ilocos during lockdown

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1294029/10-stranded-whales-dolphins-die-in-ilocos-during-lockdown?fbclid=IwAR1jzVGRgJlo1URWO2AhEr17KSt8QjBVM58nvOokBJWKGv2KFDyU6VYqzNo) / 05:02 AM June 19, 2020

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1294029/10-stranded-whales-dolphins-die-in-ilocos-during-lockdown?fbclid=IwAR1jzVGRgJlo1URWO2AhEr17KSt8QjBVM58nvOokBJWKGv2KFDyU6VYqzNo>

DAGUPAN CITY—Ten marine mammals died after being stranded in various areas in the Ilocos region during the Luzon lockdown in the last three months, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) said on Thursday.

Most of the animals were adult whales and dolphins and died in rehabilitation facilities. They were rescued by the BFAR here and in Pangasinan, La Union, Ilocos Sur and Ilocos Norte provinces between March 14 and June 14.

In Bataan province, two short-finned pilot whales were found stranded along its shores.

An animal trainer from Ocean Adventure in nearby Subic Bay Freeport helped rescue one of the whales, which washed up on the coastline of Bagac town on Monday. It was taken to Las Casas Marina in Bagac for treatment.

The other whale was found stranded on Sunday in Morong town and was also rescued by a team from Ocean Adventure and Philippine Marine Mammal Stranding Network.

At least 53 marine animals had been stranded in the country since January, said Lemnuel Aragon, director of the University of the Philippines Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology, and head of the Marine Mammal Research and Stranding Laboratory.

But 37 of these were recorded in the last three months when the government imposed the lockdown.

Aragones said the 10 stranding incidents in the Ilocos were the highest among the regions.

“We may think that the sea creatures are safer now because people are in their homes. But the threats to these animals are still there,” he said.

Some of the animals were already sick when they were stranded, he said, adding that illegal fishing activities remained a threat to their survival. —REPORTS FROM YOLANDA SOTELO AND JOANNA ROSE AGL



4 beach resort personnel in Zambales arrested for violating environmental laws

Published June 19, 2020, 3:51 PM

By Jeffrey Damicog

<https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/06/19/4-beach-resort-personnel-in-zambales-arrested-for-violating-environmental-laws/>

Four beach resort personnel in Zambales were arrested by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) for violating environmental laws on the illegal occupation of protected foreshore land.

NBI Officer-In-Charge Eric Distor on Friday, June 19, identified those arrested as personnel of the Sunrise Paradise Resort in Botolan, Zambales, namely, resort manager Lovelian Reyes Bool, Renato Monsalud, Marcelino Gustero Manosa Jr., and Apollo Tabios Constantino.

The four were arrested last Monday, June 15, by agents of the NBI's Environmental Crime Division (NBI-EnCD) based on the complaint made by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) of Zambales.

"According to the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office, Iba, Zambales, the occupation of foreshore land of Sunrise Paradise Resort is illegal and despite the order to cease and desist from the on-going construction activities, Sunrise did not refrain from constructing and installing structures," the NBI said in a statement.

The NBI said the violations committed by the resort personnel included unauthorized construction of a jetski port made of steel on the seashore, unauthorized obstruction of waterway by constructing a jetski port, and occupying foreshore land.

The NBI explained that under the law, a foreshore is "owned by the state and an unclassified land of public domain."

During the NBI's June 15 visit, representatives of the PENRO and Masinloc's Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) conducted an ocular inspection and were "able to ascertain that some of the structures built were already on the foreshore area, some were in the salvage area, and one structure was already offshore."

"When asked for Environment Compliance Certificate and Miscellaneous Lease Agreement/Foreshore Lease Agreement issued by DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources, they cannot produce any," the NBI said.

Following their arrest, the resort personnel were charged before the Department of Justice (DOJ) with violation of Republic Act 8550, Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998; Presidential Decree 1067, Water Code of the Philippines; and PD 705 as amended by Executive Order 277 and RA 7161, Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines.



June 20, 2020 6:30AM



Philippine Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network

12 hrs · 🌐

A young man died after he was bitten by a cobra. The snake was supposedly sourced from Laguna PENRO Laguna and shipped illegally to Iloilo DENR - PENRO Iloilo to a certain Jose Nino Garcia.

What is the culpability of wildlife traffickers who sold or gave the snake? The family wants answer

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)



Search



Amhael Aled Olodnacatab ▶ Jay Paolo A. Batacandolo

7 mins · 👤

Ilang araw ko hinintay, ang daming version, ilang araw ko tiniis.. JN Garcia pm ako sau for the benefit of the doubt. Lain lain imo statements, ginadivert mo, na 21yrs old, weak, suicialad si paolo, matigas ulo etc. Pinakinggan kita. Pero God still is in control, maraming concern citizens ang nagbigay ng information kasi di na rin nila kaya lunukin ang mga pinagsasabi mo. My nephew is only 18 yrs. old last january 23, napasakamay niya ang highly venomous cobra nga ina last year which is 17yrs old sia. Yes, si paolo may katigasan ang ulo, pero hindi ka man siguro patyon ni paolo kung indi mo pag ihatag di ba? Gintangisan ina sang iloy kay paolo, pero sa sitwasyon wala silang nagawa, hindi kami naghuhugas kamay. Ngaun, ang point dito sino ang tunay nga may ari sa cobra??? Kung may balak ka na esurrender sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Iloilo, wala na ni ya natabo.. erefresh ta ka sa mga pm mo sa mga kagrupa mo. Dire mabal an sang tanan. Actually, gakashock kami kay damo ya concern nga gareport mismo sa DENR ,local Media, kag police kay sa mga nakakaintindi, you are liable and accountable of acquiring highly venomous species and that is illegal. Kay kung sa lahat ng version na nabasa ko, nabrainwash akon gumangkon kay ngaman, gusto niya man may mahambal sa iya "ASTIG SIA" dahil nga



Search

hahaha, kung kami nga nakakabasa ure sa social media. Walang magulang po na hangad ay mapahamak ang anak. Ilang po kami nananahimik. Pero biktima din po ang pamangkin ko, grabeh nga damaged sa buong pamilya namon. Gani, gapanawagan ako sa Government sang iloilo sa DENR, na econfiscate lahat nga illegal kag nakakamatay na mga alaga ni Niño Garcia aka Jn Garcia.

Sa amon mga kaparyentehan kag sa mga kaibigan ni paolo madamo nga salamat sa pag ugyon sang amon pagdadalamhati. Ang kasaypanan ni paolo hindi lang ni iya kundi sang ginhalinan sa Cobra. Amhael Aled Olodnacatab
Eva Batacandulo Gina Batacandolo Eahr Aled Oludnacatab Maricris B Ishizawa Luisa Batacandolo Takahashi James Amoruso Batacandolo Iff Bombo Radyo Roxas 93.9 Radyo Bandera Roxas Raffy Tulfo in Action

Notifications for this conversation are off. TURN ON

Notifications for this conversation are off. TURN ON

oih aysee swabe bro ah, believe gd ko sa mga gasagod cobra 🙏, muna never ko gd kaya mahimo sa kabuhí ko dean hahaha
Sent from web
Abelino Nino Garcia - jno
Anything pwde indi lang cobra haha so i have to house it somewhere else





Leader News Philippines

19 hrs · 🌐

June 20, 2020 7:30AM

<https://www.facebook.com/1535812816731782/posts/2585275245118862/>

Mining will not stimulate economic recovery

Green groups denounce DENR plan to mine and dredge rivers as economic stimulus

Alyansa Tigil Mina denounced the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) plan to push for more mining and river dredging to jumpstart economic recovery due to COVID19.

ATM said that the minuscule economic contribution of mining to the Philippine economy poses a bigger threat to rural and indigenous communities and the environment. The group urged the national government to find better, greener and more sustainable solutions to contribute in stimulating the economy under a new normal.

Economic data from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) reveal that the mining industry contributes less than 1% to Philippine GDP and employs only about 0.4% of total labor force of the country. Research by Bantay Kita also estimate more than Php 50 billion pesos of taxes are foregone by mining companies because of too much exceptions and incentives.

On June 10, 2020, DENR announced mining and river dredging as part of the country's economic recovery response amid the coronavirus pandemic. DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu noted their plan to treat mining as an essential industry rather than a destructive activity.

This was strongly condemned by green activists. "Just because they want to 'treat' mining differently, does not eliminate the reality of environmental destruction, displacement, and its adverse impacts on agriculture and livelihood," said Daipen Montes of Homonhon Environmental Rescuers Organization (HERO) from Homonhon Island, Easter Samar.

"Another thing is the arrival of foreign vessels that loaded chromite from our island. We do not have a doctor nor a functioning hospital. It threatens the safety of our families during COVID19," she added.



Leader News Philippines

19 hrs · 🌐

DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda clarified that they will be introducing responsible mining to resuscitate the economy; citing that the DENR will be stricter in the implementation of environmental policies on mining-activities.

ATM National Coordinator Jaybee Garganera however, criticized this claiming that, “responsible mining is fake news. It solely relies on the voluntary compliance of scale mining companies, there is no legal definition and therefore no parameters to monitor or measure compliance.”

While the country was under enhanced community quarantine in March, cargo ships allegedly staffed with Chinese crew operated in Homonhon Island, Eastern Samar. Additionally, mining companies in Didipio, Nueva Vizcaya; Brooke’s Point, Palawan; Aroroy, Masbate; and Macarthur, Leyte were also reported operating despite quarantine protocols.

“It is evident that the DENR’s approach to mining is irrational. They allowed the continued operations of mining and further endangering the lives of mining-affected communities with possible exposure from

COVID19. Human rights violations have also become more unrestrained during the quarantine,” Garganera concluded.

“It is a disgrace that DENR is campaigning for what they call as responsible mining”, said Judy Pasimio, National Coordinator of LILAK-Purple Action for Indigenous Women. She accused DENR of turning a blind eye to people’s complaints against mining.

In April, OceanaGold Philippines, Inc. (OGPI), together with about 100 elements from the Philippine National Police violently dispersed a peaceful sit-in protest of indigenous peoples in Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya. The protest was to prevent the entry of fuel tankers to the mine site whose mining contract has expired last June 2019. “It is laughable that DENR would call it “responsible” when human rights violations are rampant in mining-affected communities,” added Pasimio.

COVID-19 has multiplied the challenges faced by affected communities. Residents constantly fear for the health of their families, causing anxiety and sleepless nights especially to women who tend to the young and the sick. Livelihood and food security have also been affected. Similarly, areas with river dredging projects worry about the negative impacts of such extractive activity.

Bishop Gerardo Alminaza of the Diocese of San Carlos City said, “The concept of river dredging can easily be used as a front for magnetite mining activities. Our rivers in Negros are rich in black sand minerals. Without achieving the level of transparency needed by host communities, we will continue to disapprove of this development on our island.”



Leader News Philippines

19 hrs · 🌐

In Cagayan Province, the Provincial Board approved a resolution last August 7, 2019 asking President Rodrigo Duterte to suspend dredging activities at Cagayan River, in Aparri town. Dredged materials are shipped to a reclamation project in Hong Kong, according to the resolution. The exportation of black sand to Hong Kong was met with protests from locals.

ATM demanded the issuance of a moratorium of mining in environmentally critical areas such as watersheds, primary forests, small island ecosystems, and prime agricultural lands and the expansion and strict implementation of the No-Go Zones for mining should guide the government in crafting policies and guidelines moving to a new normal.

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Leader News Philippines

19 hrs · 🌐

June 20, 2020 7:30AM

<https://www.facebook.com/1535812816731782/posts/2585280858451634/>

Palawan farmers reclaim land from mining company

Members of the Samahan ng Magsasaka Ayaw sa Pagmimina (SMAP) led a protest action on June 17, 2020, against the Iplan Nickel Corporation (INC) that resulted in the withdrawal of its security forces.

In 2016, The Department of Environment and Natural Resources revoked the Environmental Compliance Certificate of INC. Additionally, on August 26, 2018, the company's Mineral Production Sharing Agreement with the government expired and has not been renewed since.

"Nag-desisyon kami na hindi na dapat mag patuloy at makabalik ang pagmimina sa aming lugar para maproteksyunan ang kalikasan at ang tubig sa taas na ginagamit namin sa aming mga gulay at palayan," said Rudy Cataluña, President, SMAP.

"We decided that mining should not continue and return to our community to protect the environment and the water source that we use for our crops."

The mining site covers hectares of prime agricultural land and siphons water from the mountains used for irrigation by the local farmers. On June 17, SMAP conducted a protest action and was determined to permanently close-off the mining area and prevent any mining company from operating. The protest action led to the withdrawal of INC's security forces. Wherein, members of SMAP continue to guard the mining site to prevent the security forces from coming back.

Brooke's Point Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (MENRO) have also been closely monitoring the situation in partnership with the local community. MENRO officers are now housed inside the barracks that were formerly used by the INC security forces.

"We support our community members' actions. We will continue to prioritize the welfare of our people and the protection of our environment," said Mayor Jean Feliciano, Municipality of Brooke's Point.

Local farmers started their campaign in March. SMAP conducted a protest action in front of the INC's main gate, last March 7, 2020, to question the continued construction of inner roads and a small hydroelectric plant within the mining site's compound. Their protest led to a dialogue led by Mayor Feliciano, resulting in the mine's declaration as permanently closed. Additionally, members of SMAP set-up a people's barricade in Brgy. Maasin to prevent entry into the mine site.



Leader News Philippines

19 hrs · 🌐

On May 6, while the province of Palawan was under Enhanced Community Quarantine, local community members discovered that trucks continued to enter the mine site. INC created a new road via Everlasting Street with direct access to their barge, and continued to build fences and waterways for their silting ponds.

On May 14, members of SMAP decided to close off the gate to the new entryway. Additionally, on May 26, SMAP confiscated the backhoe used by INC to build their fences and waterway.

"The actions of the local community in partnership with the LGU is a welcome development in a time when the national government is advocating for mining as the tool to resuscitate the economy. This only shows how little mining contributes to the local communities and how harmful it is to the livelihood and lives of mining-affected communities," stated Jaybee Garganera, National Coordinator, Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM).

ATM continues to support the actions of mining-affected communities in making a stand against destructive large-scale mining.

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ACB's Lim: Conserving biodiversity means good biz

By [BusinessMirror](#)

June 19, 2020

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/06/19/acbs-lim-conserving-biodiversity-means-good-biz/>

More businesses are undertaking efforts that support biodiversity conservation as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, but are these enough?

In her presentation in a webinar hosted by cement maker Holcim Philippines Inc. on June 15, Asean Centre for Biodiversity Executive Director Theresa Mundita Lim called on businesses to embrace nature considerations and sustainable management, and the use of biodiversity in their corporate strategy and practices.

This, she said, will ensure the business' long-term survival and prevent pandemics and outbreaks of infectious diseases.

"We hope we can dive deeper into biodiversity conservation and consider this not just as part of the CSR. We hope it will be embedded in your plans because conserving and protecting biodiversity is good for business," Lim said.

She commended Holcim's sustainability initiatives and encouraged other companies to follow suit.

Under the theme, "Building a Healthier World Together," the webinar was organized by Holcim Philippines for its employees in celebration of Environment Month in June.

Holcim Philippines Environment Manager Stephanie Anne Frogoso shared the company's commitment to strengthen sustainability initiatives and demonstrate leadership by connecting the dots between this unprecedented health crisis and the need for sustainable recovery.

"Our company takes part in addressing environmental issues and ensuring sustainability of operations. We reiterate our commitment to improving our environmental and social contributions and support calls to aligned Covid-19 recovery programs with the efforts to address sustainability challenges," Frogoso said.

As a member of the Lafarge Holcim Group, Holcim Philippines will continue to support the achievement of targets on climate and energy, circular economy, environment, and communities aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, Frogoso added.

Lim, a wildlife management expert, explained the connection between the loss of biodiversity and the rise of infectious diseases originating from wildlife.

"The Covid-19 pandemic may not be the last. Scientists have extrapolated that there may be around 1.7 million unidentified viruses that still exist in mammals and water birds and can potentially cause pandemics," Lim said.



ACB's Lim: Conserving biodiversity means good biz

She explained how viruses get amplified through biodiversity loss. Shrinking wildlife populations could weaken genetic diversity and reduce the capacity of species to stave off the spillover of viruses, which are dormant and inactive in wildlife, to domestic animals and humans.

Among the drivers of biodiversity decline that she cited are poaching and wildlife trade and habitat loss, which all increase opportunities for human interactions with wildlife.

“This is an opportunity for the business sector to do something more, especially to prevent future pandemics and transition to the new normal,” she said.

Lim said businesses are encouraged to help in the baselining and assessment of species and ecosystems that are unique in their business locations.

“Before identifying your locations, it is important to do baselining and assessment of the area because that will help you eventually in restoring the ecosystems to its approximate natural state,” Lim said.

The ACB executive director also suggested increased investments for green infrastructure and sustainability-driven innovation.

Holcim Philippines President and CEO John Stull said: “We are determined to help where we can to ensure that new ways of doing business supports the overall efforts to preserve gains in improving the quality of life for people all over the world and build resilience against similar global challenges.”



Degraded forests, then and now

By [THADDEUS MARTINEZ](#)

June 20, 2020

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/06/20/business/green-business/degraded-forests-then-and-now/732986/>

Degraded areas are the usual battlefield for many conservationists and civil society groups like Haribon Foundation, which work towards bringing back the country's forests through restoration campaigns.

A lot of work is needed to turn the dream of having a place full of trees, wildlife, abundant water and fresh air into reality. A typical citizen can help in realizing this aspiration by volunteering in tree planting activities as part of Haribon's Forest for Life Movement (FFL) or enlisting their own forest restoration efforts into the movement.

For Haribon, these people are much more than volunteers or supporters; they are the main agents of change whose contributions make renewed forests for future generations possible. Through FFL, Haribon and its volunteers are restoring the Philippine forests using native tree species.

Despite these efforts, however, bringing back the lost forests of the country is an endeavor that does not instantly bear fruit as it requires at least three years of intensive maintenance and monitoring activities to attain a higher probability of success.

A lot more work follows these efforts for a successful restoration, including forging a long-term commitment from local and national government agencies and local communities to ensure that planted seedlings will grow into its fullness even after the three-year assistance from Haribon.

Began in 2006, the degraded areas under FFL (previously ROAD to 2020) have now transformed into lush forests — thanks to the local partners who toiled in keeping the native trees healthy throughout the years.

More than a decade into the movement, Haribon has identified various local drivers affecting tree survival during restoration. Such factors are biological and social including site and species matching, appropriate land-use, presence of a legitimate community partner, consistent efforts to maintain the site, and protection through financial and policy support from local government units.

Poverty has also been identified as a factor that affects forest restoration, which Haribon has sought to address by enhancing its restoration protocols and introducing a community-based approach. Under this approach, Haribon provided incentives to its community partners in addition to increasing the years allocated for maintenance activities of planted trees (from one to three years).



Degraded forests, then and now

These incentives include increased cost of seedlings and maintenance fees and provision of livelihood funds and fruit trees to augment the income of community partners. By providing livelihood opportunities to community stewards, poverty has become less of a deforestation driver.

The sustainability of planted sites will ensure the continued provision of sufficient water, fresh air, protection against natural calamities, and long-term mitigation measures against climate change for us all.

Haribon continues to support its community partners so they can confidently respond to the challenges in restoring the country's lost forests, thereby lessening the deforested areas in various forest restoration sites in the country.

Lesser degraded areas, means more forests. And more forests means more resilient communities.

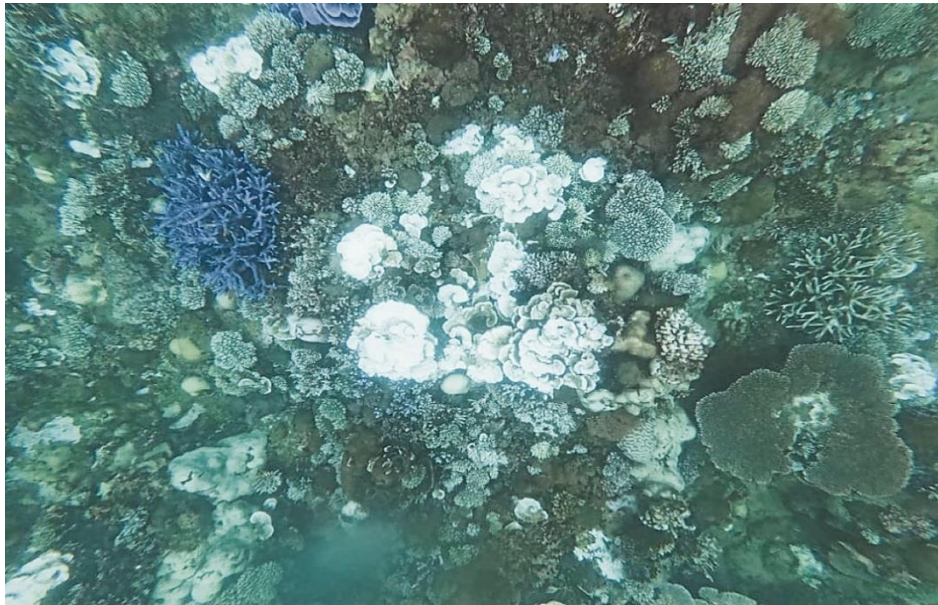


Massive coral bleaching hits Batangas waters

By: [Maricar Cinco](#) - Reporter / [@maricarcincoINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:06 AM June 20, 2020

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1294489/massive-coral-bleaching-hits-batangas-waters>



TURNED WHITE Coral enthusiasts sounded the alarm on Friday over the massive coral bleaching in Calatagan town, Batangas province, and in parts of the western coast of the Philippines. Reef Check Philippines documented reefs, as wide as “3 to 7 kilometers” that turned white underwater at a depth of 3 feet to 10 feet (0.9 meter to 3 meters). —JESSIE DELOS REYES/CONTRIBUTOR

SAN PEDRO CITY—Coral enthusiasts and marine conservationists on Friday raised the alarm over a “massive” coral bleaching going on across Calatagan town, Batangas province, and elsewhere on the western coast of the Philippines.

The Philippine Coral Bleaching Watch, an online citizen reporting platform, said it had “received multiple bleaching reports” in parts of the waters off the provinces of Batangas, northern Palawan, Mindoro and Negros Occidental, and on Panay Island.

It said bleaching, due to an increase in the sea surface temperature, was “likely happening” in these areas, placing them under alert level 1 as defined by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Worse condition

In Calatagan, a massive coral die-off is observed in the entire 72-kilometer shoreline of the Calatagan Peninsula from Barangay Gulod to Barangay Tanagan.

“While we’re too busy [battling the] pandemic on land, the same [problem] is going on underwater,” said Jessie delos Reyes, a local Bantay Dagat and team leader of the nongovernment Reef Check Philippines.

Aboard a small boat, Delos Reyes on Friday documented reefs, as wide as “3 to 7 km” as they turn white underwater at a depth of 3 to 10 feet (0.9 meter to 3 m) .



Strategic Communication
and Initiatives Service



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20 June 2020
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Massive coral bleaching hits Batangas waters

The corals, he said, were in a much “worse” condition than when previously seen in May.

Phenomenon Bleaching happens when corals lose the “colorful energy-giving plants” due to high temperature, the Philippine Coral Bleaching Watch said.

Marine conservationists have long blamed global warming for this phenomenon.

Delos Reyes said a massive bleaching hit Calatagan in 2014 and before that in 2012 and 2007.

“It’s massive because the whole area is bleaching and it’s continuing [as opposed to] concentrated [bleaching] when only small parts [of the reef is affected],” he said.

Delos Reyes said the bleaching might last for over a month.

“There’s really not much we can do to stop [the bleaching] except that we stop the coal-fired plants and open-dump burning in the communities,” he said.



'Bubble tourism' will be new norm in Philippines amid pandemic —stakeholders

Published June 19, 2020 8:58pm

By DONA MAGSINO, GMA News

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/743397/bubble-tourism-will-be-new-norm-in-philippines-amid-pandemic-stakeholders/story/>

Wanderlust in the Philippines amid the pandemic may be satisfied by "bubble tourism" or limited travels between safe zones, according to the Tourism Congress of the Philippines (TCP) on Friday.

During a Senate hearing, Senator Francis Tolentino raised that this has been practiced by New Zealand and Australia. He asked if the same can be expected in the country to resuscitate the tourism industry.

"Halimbawa kami sa Cavite, kami-kami na lang ang mag-iikutan doon sa Cavite. Ganoon ba ang nakikita mo? 'Yung mga taga-Kawit pupunta sa Tagaytay, 'yung taga-Alfonso pupunta sa Imus," Tolentino said.

"That (bubble tourism) was intended to restart tourism gradually as we look at the statistics of the infections... Bubble travel, for now, will be the norm as we gradually ease back into travel and tourism," TCP president Jose Clemente III said in response.

He cited Boracay which recently [reopened](#) to tourists from the Western Visayas region only as the area was placed under the modified general community quarantine (MGCQ).

"I think this is just a precautionary measure before we fully open tourism in certain destinations in the Philippines," Clemente said.

"Eventually, if our numbers become favorable, we are also looking at international [bubble tourism] depending on those markets that will accept our tourists going there, and if their numbers are also acceptable to the Philippine government," he added.

Clemente assured that all tourism establishments in areas with eased restrictions will have to go through a certification process—at zero administrative cost for the certificate—to ensure that they follow COVID-19 safety protocols.

The Department of Tourism (DOT) said it is conducting virtual inspections for the accreditation process.

"We have been very active in accreditation, we have been doing virtual inspections with our accommodation establishments since we cannot do inspections personally or physically," Tourism Assistant Secretary Myra Paz Abubakar said.

"So far, all the regions have really been working hard to accredit most of our accommodation establishments. Even the ones that we used as quarantine facilities were given already provisional accreditation," she added.

Tourism establishments in MGCQ areas are allowed to resume operations, according to the DOT. —LDF, GMA News



Boracay hotel may lose business permit for hosting partying staff of BFP

By [Ma. Stella F. Arnaldo](#)

June 19, 2020

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/06/19/boracay-hotel-may-lose-business-permit-for-hosting-partying-staff-of-bfp/>



File Photo: Tourism Secretary Berna Fatima Romulo-Puyat

“NO more accreditation, no more business permit.”

This was Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat’s response to a question on whether the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) was inclined to cancel a Boracay hotel’s business permits and licenses, after the Department of Tourism (DOT) moved to revoke the establishment’s accreditation.

In a phone conversation with the BusinessMirror late Wednesday, the DOT chief expressed disappointment at the incident on Boracay Island involving Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) personnel who checked into HUE Hotels and Resorts Boracay, ostensibly to render service during the official visit of Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) officials on June 11 and 12. One of the staff had tested positive for the novel coronavirus.

“First of all, those employees arrived on Boracay after we [BIATF] left,” said Romulo Puyat. “We were there on June 11 and left after lunch on June 12. They said they were going there for our conference.” Also, “Boracay was still not open to tourists. We said June 16 *pa*. The hotel had no certificate of authority to operate.”

She stressed, “I think it’s very unfair to the other hotels on the island who went through the process of securing their certificate of authority to operate (CAO). Everyone was excited that the island was reopening, then this happened. So we revoked their [HUE’s] accreditation.” (See, “DOT to revoke accreditation of hotel which housed ‘tourists,’” in the [BusinessMirror](#), June 17, 2020.)



Boracay hotel may lose business permit for hosting partying staff of BFP

Romulo Puyat was also incensed that even DOT staff who had gone to the hotel to check its health and safety protocols before a CAO was issued, “are now in quarantine as well. *Nadamay pa sila!*” The DOT has four teams on the island to check accredited hotels for their safety protocols in preparation for Boracay’s reopening to Western Visayas tourists, which has since been reduced to three due to the quarantining of one team.

As of press time, HUE Hotel had yet to send this paper a copy of their news statement, as promised by its management.

Under Republic Act 9353 (Tourism Act of 2009), local government units can only issue business permits and other licenses to tourism enterprises and establishments after these secure accreditation from the DOT.

As of June 17, only eight resorts on Boracay had received their CAO: Coast Boracay Isles, Henann Palm Beach Resort, Henann Prime Beach Resort, Henann Regency Resort and Spa, Paradise Garden Resort Hotel and Convention Center, Red Coconut Beach Hotel, Seawind Resort, Shangri-La’s Boracay Resort and Spa.

Meanwhile, primary tourism enterprises (PTEs) whose accreditations have been revoked by the DOT may reapply, according to Undersecretary for Tourism Coordination and Resource Generation Arturo P. Boncato Jr. “There is a reapplication process,” he said in a Viber message to this paper, but failed to expound on the reapplication procedure.

He added, before any accreditation is revoked, the agency first has to write a “show-cause” letter to the PTE to give it a chance to explain why no punitive actions should be taken against it.

As per the implementing rules and regulations of RA 9353, the DOT can, “after due notice and hearing, impose fines, downgrade, suspend or revoke the accreditation, for violation of the terms thereof; issue public notices and advisories pertaining to tourism enterprises found to have violated the terms of their accreditation; and notify the LGU concerned when a tourism enterprise [located] in their area fails to obtain or loses its accreditation and monitor the appropriate action taken by the LGU concerned.”

The DOT on Wednesday revoked the CAO of HUE Hotels and Resorts Boracay, after it accepted a booking for 26 personnel from the BFP office in Iloilo, who allegedly used the visit of BIATF officials on June 11 and 12 as cover for their trip to the island, but instead, held a party. The Covid-positive staff, along with 27 other personnel including the BFP regional director for Western Visayas, have since been put on preventive suspension, according to Interior Secretary Eduardo M. Año in an interview on ANC.

According to Boncato, “We revoked the CAO, and initiated accreditation revocation procedures” against the hotel. The DOT already sent HUE a show-cause letter.



Mga BFP-6 officials na naki-party kasama ang COVID-positive personnel, inisyuhan ng relief order

By [Bombo Radyo Iloilo](#)

June 19, 2020 | 7:37 PM

<https://www.bomboradyo.com/mga-bfp-6-officials-na-naki-party-kasama-ang-covid-positive-personnel-inisyuhan-ng-relief-order/>

ILOILO CITY – Nagpalabas na ng relief order si Fire Chief Jose Embang laban sa mga high ranking officials ng Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) Region 6 na lumabag sa quarantine protocol at nag party sa Antique at Boracay kasama ang isang firewoman na nagpositibo sa coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Sa eksklusibong panayam ng **Bombo Radyo** kay Iloilo Fire S/Insp. Stephen Jardeleza, tagapagsalita ng BFP Region 6, sinabi nito na pito sa 28 mga personnel ng ahensya ang unang sinibak sa pwesto.

Samantala, nakatakda namang ilabas ang relief order ng iba pa na lumabag sa quarantine protocol kasama na si dating BFP Region 6 Director Fire S/Supt. Roderick Aguto.

Ayon kay Jardeleza, ang nasabing mga high-ranking officials ay pansamantalang ipinadala sa national headquarters ng BFP.

Samantala, ni-relieve din sa puwesto bilang Provincial Fire Marshall ng Negros Occidental si Fire S/Supt. Pamela Candido na maybahay ni incoming BFP Region 6 Director Fire S/Supt. Jerry Candido at inilipat sa Region 7.



DOT, dismayado sa kinahinatnan sa reopening ng Boracay

June 19, 2020 @ 10:42 AM

<https://remate.ph/dot-dismayado-sa-kinahinatnan-sa-reopening-ng-boracay/>

Manila, Philippines – Negative impact ang dinulot ng Boracay quarantine breach sa muling pagbubukas nito sa turista.

Sinabi ni Department of Tourism (DOT) Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat na pitong turista lamang ang nagpunta sa reopening date ng Boracay kasunod ng kontrobersyal na isyu rito.

“Nakakapanghinayang lang kasi lahat excited na magbukas ang Boracay,” ani Puyat sa panayam sa Manila Bulletin.

Maalalang isang staff mula sa Bureau of Fire (BFP) Protection Western Visayas ang nagpositibo sa COVID-19 habang nasa Boracay mula June 12 hanggang June 14.

Hindi naman maitago ni Puyat ang kanyang pagkadismaya at panghihinayang sa nangyari. RNT/FGDC



Hundred Islands National Park reopens

[Eva Visperas](#)

June 20, 2020 - 12:00am

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2020/06/20/2022107/hundred-islands-national-park-reopens>

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ALAMINOS CITY , Philippines – The Hundred Islands National Park in this city will reopen to local tourists at 50 percent capacity starting next week.

Miguel Sison, city tourism officer, said this means only around 500 people would be accommodated per day.

Sison said health protocols, such as thermal scanning, foot baths, social distancing and wearing of face masks, would be strictly implemented to ensure the safety of visitors.

He said motorboats would be allowed to operate, also at 50 percent of their usual capacity.

Sison said there will be a gradual reopening of the park, starting with residents of this city in the first few weeks before it would accept local tourists from neighboring areas and other places.

He said the city government lost about P25 million in tourism revenues due to the community quarantine.

Weekend getaway

In Davao Oriental, known as Davao region’s “weekend getaway,” around 300 tourism establishments, mostly beach resorts, hotels and restaurants, reopened on Friday last week.

The provincial task force on the coronavirus disease 2019 met with owners, operators and managers of the establishments to discuss the guidelines set by the Department of Tourism.

Accommodation establishments can open only at 50 percent capacity to ensure physical distancing. They should also implement minimum health protocols.

Visitors are required to wear face masks and fill out a health declaration form.

Tourism operators should also designate a space where guests with symptoms can be isolated. **Edith Regalado**



Villar, BFAR nagtayo ng Urban Aquaponics facility sa Las Pinas

June 19, 2020 @ 4:08 PM

<https://remate.ph/villar-bfar-nagtayo-ng-urban-aquaponics-facility-sa-las-pinas/>

Manila, Philippines – Nagtayo si Senador Cynthia Villar kasama ang Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) ng isang aquaponic facility na mabibiyayaan ang isang komunidad sa Las Pinas na tinayuan din ng isang vegetable garden.

Sa pahayag, sinabi ni Villar na bahagi ang Urban aquaponics sa Fisheries Resiliency Projects ng BFAR upang tuguna ang food-related challenges sanhi ng corona virus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Isang pamamaraan ang Aquaponics o hydroponics sa pagtanim ng gulay nang walang lupa at kasabay nito ang pag-aalaga ng isda sa kaparehong set-up.

“It is really time for city dwellers to grow their own food even in an urban setting with limited space. Food self-sufficiency is very important especially during disasters or emergencies such as the ongoing pandemic,” ayon kay Villar, na nagtataguyod ng urban farming para labanan ang food poverty.

Matatagpuan ang urban aquaponics at vegetable garden sa Christ the King Subdivision, na nasa ilalim ng Community Mortgage Program (CMP).

“It is a mortgage financing program of the Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC) which assists legally organized associations of low-income groups, underprivileged or homeless citizens to purchase and develop a tract of land under the concept of community ownership,” paliwanag ni Villar.

Pangunahing layunin ng programa ay tulungan ang residente ng mga depressed areas na magkaroon ng sariling lote na maaaring sakupin at magtayo ng sustainable at resilient communities sa pakikipagtulungan sa local government units.

“I am glad to have been given an opportunity to help the association and the barangay residents as well,” ayon kay Villar. *Ernie Reyes*



National ID capture seen completed in 2022

June 20, 2020 12:05 AM

By [Francis Wakefield](#)

<https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/06/20/national-id-capture-seen-completed-in-2022/>



Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) projects capturing every Filipino in the database of the National ID System by 2022.

Roque made the remark at a virtual news briefing in Malacañang updating the status of the National ID System.

The Palace official said acting NEDA secretary Karl Chua is fast-tracking the implementation of the National ID System even with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and confident that by 2022 all Filipinos should already have been included.

“The President has instructed acting Secretary Karl Chua to accelerate the implementation of the National ID System because its future cash transfer programs will be quick,” Roque said.

According to Roque, the NEDA targets capturing five million households and on track towards achieving its goal by 2022.

In his public address to the nation in April, President Duterte said the distribution cash assistance during the Luzon-wide enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) would have been quicker had the National ID System been already implemented.

Chua, also undersecretary at the Department of Finance (DoF), was named acting Socioeconomic Planning Secretary on 17 April 2020 following then Secretary Ernesto Pernia’s resignation.

The government also said the National ID System would not only help efficiently distribute the social amelioration program but also help law enforcement agencies fight crimes and facilitate key government services and transactions.

“Like I said, the primary consideration for prioritizing the National ID System has much to do about extending assistance in times of crises. President Duterte has repeatedly said there would have been no doubling of assistance and verification of identities,” had there been a National ID System in place, Roque said.



ADB okays \$126-M loan to fund Angat tunnel for better water flow

(Philstar.com) - June 19, 2020 - 7:13pm

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2020/06/19/2022091/adb-okays-126-m-loan-fund-angat-tunnel-better-water-flow>

MANILA, Philippines — The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Friday announced the approval of a \$126 million loan to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to finance the construction of 15-kilometer water transmission pipeline in the capital's main dam.

In a statement, the Manila-based lender said the loan serves as additional credit for the the Angat Water Transmission Improvement Project, an undertaking meant to upgrade the flow of water in the system and thereby improve supply in Metro Manila.

Construction on the project will start this year.

"Climate change is making annual rainfall unpredictable, putting tremendous pressure on water resource use," Vijay Padmanabhan, the lender's Southeast Asia director for urban development and water, said.

"The Philippine government is increasing investments in clean infrastructure for environmentally sustainable water resource management across the country," Padmanabhan added.

The project is part of efforts by MWSS to rehabilitate the Umiray–Angat–Ipo dam system, which supplies about 90% of water to nearly 13 million residents in Metro Manila.

MWSS, a government-owned and -controlled corporation, owns and operates the National Capital Region's bulk water system, from which concessionaires Manila Water Company Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. source, treat and distribute water to customers.

According to ADB, the new aqueduct, with a 3.6-meter diameter, will have a welded steel, concrete-coated pipe. The facility will be constructed to withstand magnitude 7.2 earthquakes, reducing the risk of a system breakdown and increasing the resiliency of NCR's water supply.

"The aqueduct will increase the system's water transfer capacity to 66 cubic meters per second (m³/sec) by 2025, up from 50 m³/sec in 2019," the bank said. "It will allow MWSS to retire its two oldest aqueducts and repair others through 2032."

According to ADB, the loan supplements its 2016 financing to MWSS meant to pay for the construction of a 6.3-kilometer earthquake-resilient upstream water tunnel. Construction of the tunnel is ongoing and is scheduled to be completed this month, three months ahead of schedule. — **Ian Nicolas Cigaral**



Gov't secures \$126-M ADB loan

June 20, 2020 01:10 AM

By [Elmer N. Manuel @tribunephil lmer](mailto:Elmer.N.Manuel@tribunephil.com)

<https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/06/20/govt-secures-126-m-adb-loan/>

As part of strengthening the country's water delivery system, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Friday approved a \$126-million loan package support the construction of a 15-kilometer water transmission pipeline by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System's (MWSS) aimed at improving and securing water supply in Metro Manila.

The ADB said financing for the Angat Water Transmission Improvement Project will help strengthen the water system's downstream transmission capacity for the benefit of the capital region's nearly 13 million residents.

The multilateral lender said the project is part of the effort to rehabilitate the Umiray–Angat–Ipo dam system, which supplies 90 percent of Metro Manila's water. The water transmission pipeline is seen to increase the system's water transfer capacity to 66 cubic meters per second (m³/sec) by 2025 from 50 m³/sec in 2019.

The ADB said it will also allow MWSS to retire its two oldest aqueducts and repair others through 2032 and that the project will further enhance its capacity to operate and maintain the system's water tunnels and aqueducts and raise public awareness of water conservation.

The new aqueduct, with a 3.6-meter diameter, will have a welded steel concrete-coated pipe — with cutting-edge technology to help it withstand magnitude 7.2 earthquakes. The project will also reduce the risk of a system breakdown and increase the resiliency of Metro Manila's water supply.

The project is part of the government's "Build, Build, Build" infrastructure development program.

"Climate change is making annual rainfall unpredictable, putting tremendous pressure on water resource use," said ADB Southeast Asia Department's director of the Urban Development and Water Division of Vijay Padmanabhan.

"The Philippine government is increasing investments in clean infrastructure for environmentally sustainable water resource management across the country. Through this project, ADB is helping the Philippines secure Metro Manila's water supply," he added.



Foreign debt rises to \$81.4 billion

[Lawrence Agcaoili](#)

June 20, 2020 - 12:00am

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2020/06/20/2022090/foreign-debt-rises-814-billion>

Higher borrowings linked to COVID funding

MANILA, Philippines — The country's external debt inched up by 1.2 percent in the first quarter and is seen rising further as the Philippines turns more to the offshore debt market for funds to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19 pandemic, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said.

BSP Governor Benjamin Diokno said the country's foreign obligations reached \$81.42 billion as of end-March, \$990 million higher than the \$80.43 billion a year ago.

Diokno said the rise was due to the net repayment largely by private banks' short-term accounts amounting to \$2.2 billion.

The increase, according to the BSP, was more than offset by the transfer of Philippine debt papers from residents to non-residents at \$2.4 billion, prior periods' adjustments at \$482 million, and positive foreign exchange adjustments at \$266 million.

Despite the rise in external debt, Diokno said the country's key external debt indicators remained at prudent levels.

Diokno said the debt service ratio, which measures the adequacy of the country's foreign exchange earnings to meet maturing obligations, improved to 8.9 percent in end-March from 5.7 percent, while the external debt ratio decreased to 21.4 percent from 22.2 percent and remains one of the lowest in Southeast Asia.

Public sector external debt reached \$45.1 billion and accounted for more than half or 55.4 percent of the country's foreign debt. The national government accounted for 85 percent or \$38.3 billion of total, while government-owned and controlled corporations, government financial institutions and the central bank cornered the remaining 15 percent or \$6.8 billion.

On the other hand, the external debt of private companies amounted to \$40.8 billion for a share of 44.6 percent.

According to the BSP, major creditor countries include Japan with \$14.9 billion, followed by the US with \$3.6 billion, Netherlands with \$3.3 billion and the UK with \$3.2 billion.

Loans from official sources with multilateral lending institutions and bilateral creditors had the largest share of 33.6 percent, followed by foreign holders of bonds and notes with 31.6 percent, and obligations to foreign banks and other financial institutions at 28.9 percent.



Foreign debt rises to \$81.4 billion

In terms of currency mix, the country's debt stock remained largely denominated in US dollars with 55.7 percent and Japanese yen with 13.4 percent. Dollar-denominated multi-currency loans from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank represented 17.4 percent.

Data showed the maturity profile of the foreign debt remained predominantly medium and long-term in nature with original maturities longer than one year with share to total at 83.6 percent, while short-term accounts with maturities of up to one year comprised the 16.4 percent balance.

"This means that foreign exchange requirements for debt payments are well spread out and, thus, more manageable," Diokno said.

Latest data from the central bank showed the country's gross international reserves hit an all-time high of \$90.94 billion, equivalent to 5.5 times the country's short-term external debt based on original maturity.

The national government borrows heavily from foreign and domestic creditors to finance the country's budget deficit as it spends more than what it actually earns.

Economic managers are now expecting a wider budget deficit of 8.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) instead of the original 3.2 percent of GDP as revenue collections would drop 16.7 percent and disbursements jump by 11.3 percent this year due to the pandemic.

They are expecting a higher debt-to-GDP ratio of 49.8 percent this year, 51.5 percent next year, and 52.3 percent in 2022 due to additional borrowings. The country has obtained \$5.65 billion in budgetary support from the World Bank, ADB and dollar denominated bonds as it continues to boost its war chest against COVID-19.



Government urged to implement Universal Health Care Law

June 20, 2020 - 12:00am

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/06/20/2022120/government-urged-implement-universal-health-care-law>

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

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Bong Go urged the executive department to ensure the timely implementation of the Universal Health Care (UHC) law following the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth)’s recommendation to delay it.

With the current pandemic, the chair of the Senate committee on health and demography emphasized that Filipinos need the law now more than later.

“We urge the government to push through with implementing the UHC law that Filipinos need, especially with the threat of COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) and other illnesses,” Go said, emphasizing that the law was certified urgent by President Duterte.

“There is a reason why that was certified as urgent by the President when it was still a proposal. The medical needs of our countrymen are great, and that’s why it’s important to implement this,” he said.

The senator is also mindful that the start of the rainy season may result in significant spikes in the number of infectious diseases cases such as dengue.

“There are many illnesses that can strike our countrymen, it’s not just COVID-19... At the onset of the rainy season, we can expect other diseases. Add to that the many medical conditions of our countrymen – such as cancer, kidney failure and hypertension – that also need help from PhilHealth,” he added.

At a June 18 virtual press briefing, presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr. said that suspending the implementation of UHC is “against the literal provision of the law, and the intentions of those who pushed for the law.”

Roque also concurred with Go’s earlier statements that the law provides for the use of state funds, if needed, to ensure available health services to Filipinos in the event that PhilHealth premiums will not be able to cover all expenses.

“Sen. Bong Go is right. If needed, we will use the billions in public funds because that is the promise of the President and the obligation of the state to provide for the proper health of its citizens,” Roque stressed.

Meanwhile, Go also renewed his appeal for the investigation on alleged corruption cases in PhilHealth. “Let them be accountable even if we’re all in government and are



Government urged to implement Universal Health Care Law

friends, whatever is right. That is what the President always says – do what is right,” he said.

The senator also gave assurance that Malasakit Centers, one-stop shops established in government hospitals all over the country where patients can seek medical assistance from various government agencies, remain prepared to assist Filipinos in need. Go principally authored Republic Act 11463, the law that institutionalized this initiative.

Go said enough funds have been allotted or released for the services offered by Malasakit Centers. As for some concerns from overseas Filipino workers regarding their increased PhilHealth premiums, the senator proposed a review of pertinent provisions in the law if necessary.

He stressed that it is important to study the need to amend it in consideration of the concerns raised by some sectors given the pandemic and the financial hardship it has caused to affected Filipinos.



U-curve

FIRST PERSON - Alex Magno

June 20, 2020 - 12:00am

<https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2020/06/20/2022101/u-curve>

This dreadful virus is fighting back.

Experts have noted the virus that causes COVID-19 slightly evolved to improve its infectiousness. If this is true, humanity's fight against the pandemic will likely take longer than anyone thought.

The longer it takes us to quash this pandemic, the more difficult the economic recovery will take. No one is speaking about a V-shaped rebound anymore – except perhaps for Donald Trump in his alternative universe. Every responsible leader now calls on their people to prepare for a long and difficult recovery.

The standing estimate is that the global economy will shrink by 5.3 percent this year. It could be worse, as the pandemic begins spreading to new regions of the world.

Brazil has climbed to second place in the world in terms of the number of cases and number of deaths. It is now second only to the US as a pandemic hotspot. Its president Jair Bolsonaro is a Trump wannabe. He called COVID-19 “a little flu,” fought his health establishment's efforts to impose restrictions on movement and prescribed a questionable anti-malarial drug as therapy. As a result, Brazil has now become a cauldron for infections.

Meanwhile, in the US, COVID-19 cases are rising in 23 states – most of them in the Republican heartland that opened up too early. The Trump administration is pretending the pandemic is on the wane. A large indoor rally for Donald Trump is planned for today in Tulsa, Oklahoma even as cases are rising in that city.

The man chooses to taunt a deadly virus. More people will die because of this.

International agencies are straining under the weight of this pandemic. Several UN agencies are reporting they need more money to deliver critical medical supplies to the poorer countries. No one knows where that money will come from. The Trump administration recently cut its funding to the WHO at this most difficult time.

We are not spared the painful economic consequences wrought by this pandemic.

As we await the official second quarter economic figures, the indications are that it will be worse than we cared to predict. Our statistical authorities have put the May unemployment rate at 17.7 percent. The latest SWS survey shows 83 percent of Filipinos now feel life has been worse. Abroad, migrant Filipino workers who lost their jobs and could not return home are scrounging trash dumps to survive.

We will bounce back, of course, notwithstanding that a deep global recession will weigh us down. But it is not going to be a quick V-shaped recovery. It will be a U-shaped curve.



U-curve

In all likelihood a wide U-shaped curve. As a rising tide raises all ships, an ebbing tide will pull everyone down.

It will take us years to claw our way back to where we were before the pandemic struck. Some estimate it will take us 10 years to get back to the glowing February 2020 numbers.

In the first quarter, industry revenues contracted by 4.9 percent. The contraction will be sharper in the second quarter. Because of longer gestation, our industry sector will require time to get back to robust earnings.

While some might disagree with the online gambling operations we host, they are the quickest to recover and deliver the revenues government so badly needs. The tourism sector was hit badly by the pandemic but it should be among the quickest to recover when travel reopens.

We might have to wait until 2030 just to get back to where we were in terms of low unemployment and low poverty levels and high rates of economic expansion.

This brings to mind the two decades of austerity we needed to bring down our debt service levels. During that period of austerity, we did not put in the necessary investments in modernizing our infra. Health and education services deteriorated.

We were just preparing for high growth led by infra investments when the virus struck. We were expecting to grow our economy by 7 percent this year and perhaps bring down poverty incidence to near single-digit levels. That is the tragedy of it all.

Right now, we have not figured out a way to continue the educational process for our young. All this talk of “blended” education is much more aspirational than practical. The fact is we will not be able to deliver much structured education in two months. There is no broadband available, not enough internet penetration, no teaching kits ready and no laptops for our kids to use.

Interrupted educational formation will cause long-term damage to young Filipinos. Against all odds, we must try and minimize the disruption.

There are, to be sure, ten thousand things government must do to help the country cope with the health emergency. Getting the educational system to begin grinding again should be at the top of that list. Our future as a competitive economy depends on getting the educational system to work at the soonest possible time.

Community quarantines, in their various gradations, will likely continue for some time. Those leading the fight on the health front are not showing the grit and determination we see in those countries such as South Korea, Vietnam and Taiwan.

This late in the anti-COVID-19 fight, we still need to recruit about 85,000 contact tracers. Unless we are able to contact-trace effectively, no amount of testing will arrest the spread of infections. Our testing infrastructure continues to sputter.

We are not getting the best demographic information from the DOH. Let us get some social scientists reinforcing the doctors who seem so bad at managing statistics.



DOTr, sisiguraduhing ligtas ang bike lane sa EDSA

By Jimmyley E. Guzman Published on June 19, 2020

<https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1045203>

LUNGSOD PASIG, Hunyo 19 (PIA) – Sisiguruhin ng Department of Transportation (DOTr) na ligtas ang bike lane sa kahabaan ng EDSA para sa mga magnanais gumamit ng bisikleta bilang alternatibong transportasyon bilang bahagi ng tinatawag na 'new normal'.

Sa programang Laging Handa Public Briefing nitong Huwebes, sinabi ni DOTR Road Sector Senior Consultant Engr. Bert Suansing na sisiguraduhin nilang ligtas ang bike lane sa EDSA.

“Sisiguruhin nating ligtas para sa mga nagbibisekleta yung pagdaan nila sa EDSA,” ani Suansing.

Ayon kay Suansing, lalagyan nila ng guard rails ang naturang bike lane upang maiwasan ang pagdaan ng mga sasakyan sa naturang lane.

“Para masigurong hindi mag e-encroach yung ibang sasakyan dun sa bike lane, lalagyan natin yan ng fenders o yung guard rails para masigurong safe para sa mga nagbibisekleta ang bike lane.”

Idinagdag pa ni Suansing na ang lane na inilaan para sa mga nagbibisekleta ay ang isang lane na binakante na dating daanan ng mga bus. Sa ngayon, ang bus lane sa kahabaan ng EDSA ay inilipat sa inner most lane katabi ng MRT line.

Ang DOTr ay nakikipag-ugnayan sa Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), iba pang mga ahensya ng pamahalaan, maging mga lokal na pamahalaan para sa pagsasaayos ng bike lane sa EDSA. (PIA-NCR)



Close the toilet lid when you flush, DOH advises Pinoys amid COVID-19 threat

Published June 19, 2020 7:29pm

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/healthandwellness/743385/close-the-toilet-lid-when-you-flush-doh-advises-pinoys-amid-covid-19-threat/story/>

The Department of Health (DOH) has advised Filipinos to close the toilet lid when flushing to prevent the spread of the coronavirus and other diseases.

advertisement

According to Maki Pulido's report for "24 Oras," the virus which causes COVID-19 has been found in the feces of some patients which tested positive to the disease.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said there is still no evidence of transmission via fecal matter, but the DOH still urged the practice of proper toilet hygiene.

"When you flush it, it swirls. Some of it will be sprayed into the air so that's your droplet," said Dr. Eric Tayag, Director of Knowledge Management and Information Technology Service.

"When you did not put the lid cover back, that spread into the room and so everyone in that room can inhale," he added.

A study conducted by a Chinese university also found that 40 to 60 percent of particles from the toilet may be flung up to 3.49 feet into the air.

To increase protection against COVID-19, DOH encouraged the use of face masks inside public toilets.

The agency said everyday situations have the highest infection rate for COVID-19, so everyone should still maintain physical distancing and frequent handwashing. —**MGP, GMA News**



QC releases guidelines for rainy season amid pandemic

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

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 12:14 PM June 19, 2020

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1294250/qc-releases-guidelines-to-prepare-for-rainy-season-amid-pandemic>

MANILA, Philippines — The Quezon City government on Friday released guidelines to gear up for possible disasters during the rainy season while dealing with the coronavirus disease pandemic.

Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte said the guidelines will impose health requirements and identify evacuation centers for typhoon victims.

“Marami tayong dapat ikonsidera ngayon, lalo na pagdating sa physical distancing at paghihiwalay ng mga pasyenteng may COVID-19 kapag kinailangang lumikas at magtungo sa evacuation center ng mga tao,” Belmonte said in a statement.

(We have a lot of things to consider, especially physical distancing and segregating patients of COVID-19 if they are needed to go to evacuation centers.)

Under the guidelines, the mayor ordered the city’s Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (DRRMO) to “maintain a list of flood-prone areas and identify evacuation locations” in the city such as schools and covered courts.

It also mandated an updated list for suspected and confirmed cases of coronavirus disease for flood-prone areas in the city. The COVID-19 patients will be separated from the general evacuee population to suppress the spread of the novel coronavirus.

The guidelines also tasked DRRMO to ensure that their responders will wear personal protective equipment during rescue or evacuation operations.

The Quezon City Health Department will coordinate with the City Social Services Development Department and concerned barangay to designate a health officer for each evacuation center to ensure that health measures are observed in the facility.

The health officer must also conduct regular health checks for evacuees and responders.

Last June 12, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) officially announced that rainy season has started in the country.



Aetas in Zambales become online sellers

Published June 19, 2020 6:04pm

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/travel/743370/aetas-in-zambales-become-online-sellers/story/>

An Aeta community in San Marcelino, Zambales, has been selling fresh produce and other goods online since the COVID-19 lockdown took a toll on their livelihood.

On this week's episode of "Quarantours," Sitio Yangin chieftain Gabriel Cabalic said residents had not been able to sell their crops at the local market due to the lack of transportation.



"Laking epekto po ang quarantine sa amin dahil 'yung aming mga produkto, hindi namin maibenta sa bayan kasi po bawal na po kaming lalabas sa bayan," Cabalic said.

The sitio, once a popular destination for tourists, has not seen any visitors since the government banned all nonessential travel.

With the lack of income, residents in Sitio Yangin began running low on food and supplies.

Fortunately, with the help of an organization called Make a Difference (MAD) Travel, the sitio residents are now able to sell their products online, including mangoes, honey, coffee, baked goods, and vegetables.

Customers can simply place orders on the [MAD Market](#) website, and the items will be delivered right at their doorstep.

Buyers can also make a donation of at least P150 to help address the needs and ensure food security for MAD Travel's partner communities in Zambales and Bataan.

The initiative has so far raised 8,000 seedlings for Sitio Yangin residents. – **Margaret Claire Layug/RC, GMA News**



‘Ring of fire’ eclipse, summer solstice tomorrow

[Helen Flores](#)

June 20, 2020 - 12:00am

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2020/06/20/2022108/ring-fire-eclipse-summer-solstice-tomorrow>

MANILA, Philippines — Filipinos will witness two astronomical events tomorrow — an annular solar eclipse and summer solstice or the longest day of the year.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said the moon does not completely cover the sun in an annular solar eclipse, leaving edges of the sun visible. This creates a “ring of fire” around the moon.

PAGASA said the event would be observed as a partial solar eclipse in the country.

“Because the moon is farther away from the Earth, it seems smaller and does not block the entire view of the sun,” PAGASA said in its monthly astronomical diary.

A total solar eclipse, on the other hand, occurs when the moon passes directly between the Earth and the sun, completely blocking the sun’s light.

The annular solar eclipse will start at 3:01 p.m. and end at 5:31 p.m. The maximum phase of the eclipse, or when the moon is closest to the center of the sun, will occur at 4:23 p.m.

Eclipse obscuration or the fraction of the sun’s surface area covered by the moon is estimated at 68 percent visible in Manila.

PAGASA said the northernmost areas of Luzon would have a good view of the partial solar eclipse, with eclipse obscuration of up to 91 percent.

In Itbayat, Batanes, the eclipse will begin at 2:54 p.m. and end at 5:28 p.m. The maximum eclipse is 91 percent visible at 4:18 p.m.

PAGASA advised the public to use glasses, binoculars, and telescopes with solar filters during any type of solar eclipse.

“Looking at the sun is dangerous. It can damage your eyes,” it said.

Meanwhile, Dario de la Cruz, chief of PAGASA’s space science and astronomy section, said daylight in Manila will last for 13 hours tomorrow.

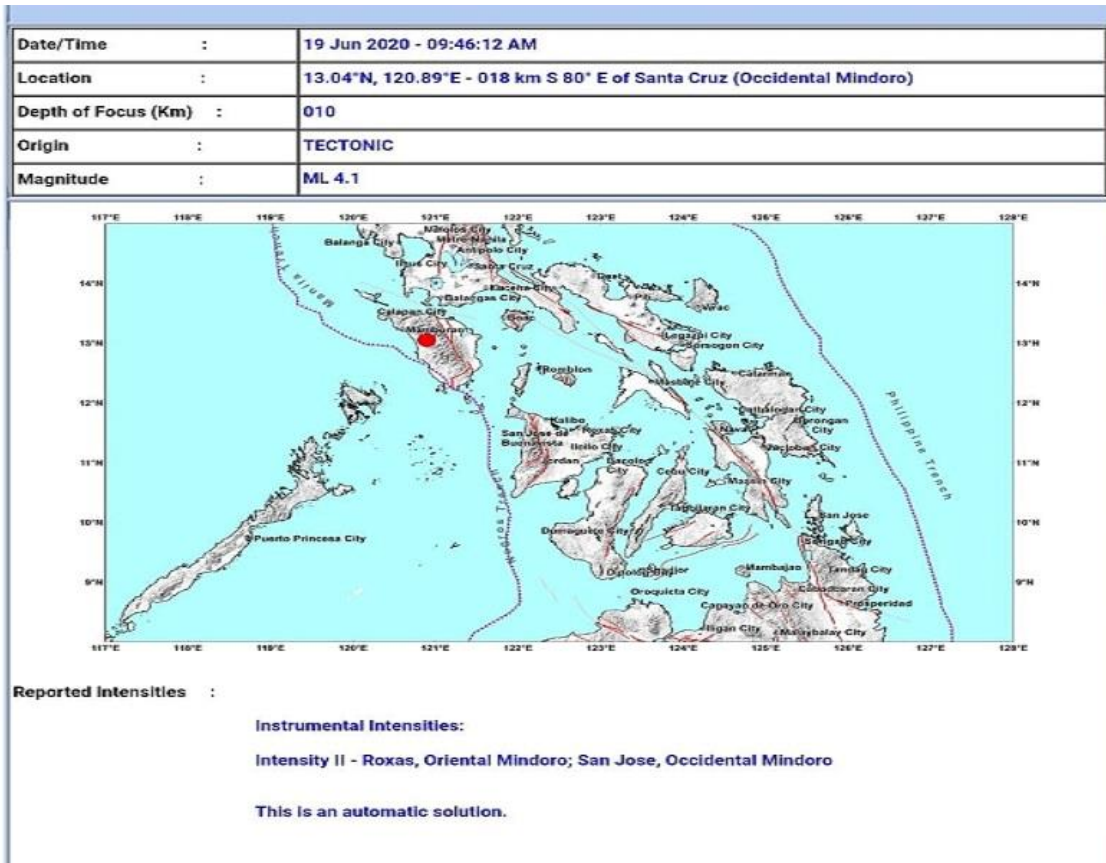
“Nights are at their shortest and daytime at their longest during summer solstice,” De la Cruz said.



Santa Cruz, Occidental Mindoro niyanig ng magnitude 4.1 lindol

By Dona Dominguez-Cargullo June 19, 2020 - 10:03 AMSHARE(S):

<https://radyo.inquirer.net/249802/santa-cruz-occidental-mindoro-niyanig-ng-magnitude-4-1-lindol>



Niyanig ng magnitude 4.1 na lindol ang lalawigan ng Mindoro Occidental.

Ayon sa Phivolcs, naitala ang pagyanig sa 18 kilometers southeast ng bayan ng Santa Cruz alas-9:46 umaga ng Biyernes (June 19).

May lalim na 10 kilometers at tectonic ang origin ng pagyanig.



Vatican calls on Catholics to divest from fossil fuels

By Jordan Valinsky, CNN Business

Published Jun 20, 2020 1:43:04 AM

<https://cnnphilippines.com/business/2020/6/20/Vatican-calls-on-Catholics-to-divest-from-fossil-fuels.html?fbclid=IwAR2>



(CNN) - The Vatican is urging Catholics and the private sector to "progressively and without delay" divest from fossil fuel producers and other entities that perpetuate climate change.

The announcement was made Thursday in "Laudato Si," a Vatican encyclical written by Pope Francis that is something of a best practices manual for church leaders and workers. In it, the pope said that "less harmful alternatives can be used transiently" and called on richer countries to help finance the costs so they don't "fall disproportionately on the poorest countries."

"Building safe, accessible, reliable and efficient energy systems based on renewable energy sources would make it possible to respond to the needs of the poorest populations and at the same time limit global warming," Francis said.

The pope called on Catholics to avoid "support for companies harmful to human or social ecology," such as weapon makers and abortion providers, as well as the fossil fuel industry.

Vatican News, the Holy See's official press website, also said that Francis is calling for carbon dioxide emissions to be taxed.

"The seas and oceans also cut to the heart of integral ecology. They are the 'blue lungs of the planet,' and require governance focused on the common good of the entire human family and founded on the principle of subsidiarity," the website says.

The Vatican's call follows an announcement last month from more than 40 faith organizations from 14 countries that they are divesting from fossil fuel companies, which, according to the Catholic online news publication Crux is the "largest ever such joint announcement from religious organizations."



Vatican calls on Catholics to divest from fossil fuels

Carbon dioxide emissions hit a record high last year. In 2019, the world pumped out almost 37 billion tons of carbon dioxide, driven by demand for oil and natural gas, according to an annual report from the Global Carbon Project, an international research initiative focused on sustainability.

However, global lockdowns implemented this year to prevent the spread of Covid-19 are bringing emissions down, and researchers estimate annual emissions could fall by between 4.4% and 8%. That would mark the largest annual decrease in carbon emissions since World War II, according to findings published last month in the journal Nature Climate Change.

This story was first published on CNN.com, ["Vatican calls on Catholics to divest from fossil fuels"](#)



Scientists fear deforestation, fires and Covid-19 could create a 'perfect storm' in the Amazon

By Hazel Pfeifer, CNN

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https://cnnphilippines.com/world/2020/6/19/Scientist-fear-deforestation--COVID-19--fires-perfect-storm-Amazon-.html?fbclid=IwAR2MrFt-XTkw5D6MBJSO_Tt19V1ljUtHny4VIkX1o0TYN8UF2FGG0CDI8ik



Bloomberg Best of the Year 2019: Smoke rises as a fires burn in the Amazon rainforest in this aerial photograph taken above the Candeias do Jamari region of Porto Velho, Rondonia state, Brazil, on Saturday, Aug. 24, 2019.

Photographer: Leonardo Carrato/Bloomberg via Getty Images

(CNN) -- New data shows that fires in the Brazilian Amazon are on track to be just as bad as last year, if not worse, with an estimated 150,000 hectares of land deforested so far in 2020 at risk.

The Monitoring of the Andean Amazon Project (MAAP), an initiative of the group Amazon Conservation, has used an archive of satellite data to track deforestation across the Brazilian Amazon and found that most of last year's fires occurred on recently deforested land, rather than in primary forest. Deforested land is often intentionally burned to clear it for farming and cattle ranching.

So far this year, MAAP has detected several large areas in the state of Mato Grosso that have been recently deforested, and could be the sites of fires later this year.

"Fire season doesn't start out of nowhere in August -- it started a year ago with deforestation," said Matt Finer, senior research specialist and the director of MAAP. He says their research suggests this year's fires will be "as bad if not worse" than last year's. "We need the intensity of the rage and concern that people had back in August, we need that now to ratchet up the urgency of the situation."

Finer and his team used a new method combining data from heat-tracking satellites with data monitoring levels of particles in the atmosphere to give a more accurate picture of where forest fires occur. They have developed an app to track the fires in real-



Scientists fear deforestation, fires and Covid-19 could create a 'perfect storm' in the Amazon

time and hope it will be of use to firefighters on the ground to focus resources over such vast areas.

Satellite data from NASA indicates this year could be another dry year for the forest, increasing the risk of fires spreading from deforested land into primary forest.

The increase in deforestation, combined with dry weather conditions and the challenges posed by Covid-19 have all converged to create a "perfect storm" for fires this summer, according to a recent report from the nonprofit Amazon Environmental Research Institute (IPAM).

As the Amazon burns, humans are to blame

Natural forest fires in tropical forests such as the Amazon are extremely rare due to high levels of humidity. That means humans are responsible for most of the recent destruction.

"All the fires we have seen in the Amazon have been set [intentionally]. Unlike some other forest systems that are dependent on fires, such as in California, Florida or Australia, the Amazon doesn't burn naturally," said Ane Alencar, IPAM's director of science in a press conference on Wednesday run by Columbia University's Earth Institute.

Last year's devastating fire season drew global attention to the plight of the Amazon and President Jair Bolsonaro's controversial dismantling of many of the state protections for the rainforest and indigenous lands. Under intense domestic and international pressure, the Brazilian Army was sent last year and again this year to protect the forest.

The move has had some success, Alencar said, but has not succeeded in combating the root cause -- deforestation.

RELATED: The world lost a football pitch-sized area of tropical forest every six seconds in 2019

According to Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE), deforestation has risen by over 50% in the first quarter of 2020.

These newly deforested areas, combined with ones that were cleared last year, leave a potential burn area of over 4,500 square kilometers -- roughly three times the size of greater London.

"Around half the deforestation that we have seen so far is happening on public lands, which means that people are going after and grabbing the land and provoking conflicts,



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which is illegal," says Alencar. "This can only be fought by strong enforcement and strong signals from the government that illegal deforestation is not allowed."

The Brazilian government has authorized the hiring of 1,481 temporary workers to help fight the fires. It also deployed thousands of soldiers beginning in May in an operation in the western state of Rondonia, near the Bolivian border, in an effort to fight deforestation ahead of the fire season.

Brazilian Vice President Hamilton Mourão has said the government will establish permanent bases for military, police and enforcement officials in the Amazon this year and that a plan is in place to combat deforestation and this year's fires.

Coronavirus is devastating Brazil's indigenous communities

Brazil has one of the world's worst Covid-19 outbreaks, with almost one million cases so far, second only to the United States.

Indigenous communities living in the Amazon region have been especially hard hit by the virus, with a mortality rate of twice that of the rest of the population, according to Articulation of the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB), an advocacy group which has been tracking cases and deaths amongst indigenous people in Brazil.

RELATED: Report: Brazil's indigenous people are dying at an alarming rate from Covid-19

This year, the risk of respiratory diseases due to air pollution from fires could exacerbate the impact of Covid-19, particularly for indigenous people whose lands may be nearer the fires. Such was the warning from former president of the U.S. Institute of Medicine and dean of the Harvard Chan School of Public Health, Dr Harvey Fineberg, at the press briefing.

Recent studies suggest a link between exposure to air particle pollution and more severe cases of coronavirus, and seasonal increases in malaria and dengue in the Amazon over the summer will put additional pressure on remote regions where hospital beds are hard to come by, according to Marcia Castro, chair of the Department of Global Health and Population at Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

She also warned that the health risks of the fires are not limited to the Amazon.

"The particulates from the forest fires can travel to other areas," Castro said at the press conference. "As cities relax social distancing measures in Brazil without adequate surveillance, testing and contact tracing, as we are seeing, an intense fire season could have devastating public health consequences, with the unnecessary loss of many lives and the widening of local inequalities."

As the eyes of the world remain focused on the pandemic, it remains to be seen whether the plight of the Amazon will receive the same attention that it did last year.

But Alencar says international pressure is key to tackling this problem.

"How international communities can help is to put pressure on the companies that buy products from the agribusinesses [and by] pressing the government to respect this amazing patrimony that we have, which is the forest."



The difference between a second wave and a second peak of coronavirus, according to WHO

By Amanda Watts, CNN

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<https://cnnphilippines.com/world/2020/6/20/difference-between-second-wave-and-second-peak-coronavirus.html>



ANTHONY WALLACE/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

(CNN) - There are no specific definitions for classifying a second wave or a second peak of coronavirus, Dr. Mike Ryan, executive director of the World Health Organization's Health Emergencies Program, said during a briefing on Friday.

Ryan did explain some differences between both:

A second wave, Ryan said, is when "a number of cases rises and it falls down to a very low or detectable level."

"There's a period of time in which there's very low or no activity, and then the disease returns in a large way. That's what we see with seasonal influenza," Ryan said.

A second peak is a different concept — one that "many countries are facing now," Ryan said.

"When they've come off the peak of the first wave, but they haven't reduced the disease down and they're in a steady state where they're struggling to reduce the incidence of the disease, and then they get a second peak," Ryan said. During a second peak, community transmission is still occurring, he added.

"You may have a second peak within your first wave. And then you may have a second wave. It's not either or," Ryan warned.

"The second peak depends on how good, how strong and how effective the control you have over the disease at this present moment. If you start to experience a second peak,



The difference between a second wave and a second peak of coronavirus, according to WHO

then the chances are that the disease is spreading in a way that you have not got full control over that,” Ryan said.

Ryan added that sometimes when countries get better at testing, their number of cases often goes up.

To gauge if this is part of a second wave or peak, Ryan said look for these markers: “It's very important at that time to look at things like hospitalizations and deaths. If you start to see hospitalizations going up, that's not because of testing.”

Equally important, Ryan said countries should be watching for clusters in places where transmission is very low.

“When you're down to a very low level of disease, and you see a cluster, you have to jump on the cluster. You have to take the cluster seriously, because you want to avoid that second peak, you want to avoid going back into community transmission.”