

Cimatu challenges Cebu City residents: “End quarantine”

PAGE 1/ 1/3

July 02, 2020
DATE



“ECQ-End Cebu’s Quarantine. We have to end your quarantine already and I’m making this a message to all the Cebuanos. You help us end Cebu’s Quarantine,” Secretary Roy Cimatu said during a virtual presser in Cebu yesterday, hours after the Inter-Agency Task Force decided to extend the city’s ECQ status.

The Freeman/Aldo Banaynal

Cimatu challenges Cebu City residents: “End quarantine”

[Mitchelle L. Palaubsanon](#), [Caecent No-ot Magsumbol](#), [Alicia Ivy L. Chua](#) (The Freeman) - July 2, 2020 - 12:00am

CEBU, Philippines — Secretary Roy Cimatu has a challenge to Cebu City residents after the city was placed under enhanced community quarantine for the third time: ECQ – End Cebu’s Quarantine.

“ECQ-End Cebu’s Quarantine. We have to end your quarantine already and I’m making this a message to all the Cebuanos. You help us end Cebu’s Quarantine,” Cimatu said during a virtual presser in Cebu yesterday, hours after the Inter-Agency Task Force decided to extend the city’s ECQ status.

Cimatu is assigned to oversee the government’s response to the COVID-19 situation in the city, particularly the implementation of ECQ protocols.

The good news, he said, is that behavior and attitude of locals have changed in the few days that the national government decided to augment local efforts in implementing the ECQ.

“Napansin namin in the second week ay nag-change kaagad ang image ng pag-comply ng mga Cebuanos. Ngayon, if you are there, makikita mo talagang very strict ang lockdown at the compliance ng mga tao; hindi na katulad noon. So yan siguro ang una. Second, ang kanilang compliance of the minimum health standards, sinusunod na rin nila yan,” Cimatu said.

(We notice that compliance of Cebuanos have changed in the second week. If you are there, you will see that the lockdown is very strict and, unlike before, people are complying. That’s the first. Secondly, they are also complying with minimum health standards.)

Around 2,000 additional police personnel from other police offices were deployed to Cebu City to help enforce the ECQ strictly. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) also sent a medical team.

Cimatu challenges Cebu City residents: “End
quarantine”

PAGE 1/ 2/3

July 02, 2020
DATE

Cimatu urged the barangays, Cebu City Health Department, and the Department of Health (DOH) - 7 to reconcile their data to avoid conflict, as well as to have a clearer picture of the situation for better responses moving forward, particularly in contact tracing, isolation, and treatment of patients.

Despite the positive numbers of recovery at the barangay isolation centers, Cimatu is bent on looking for other areas where asymptomatic patients can be housed to bring them away from the barangays. He has observed that the schools, which are converted into BICs temporarily, are located right in the middle of the barangay, at close proximity to residents.

Cimatu is also looking at the possibility of increasing the bed capacity of the NOAH Complex at the South Road Properties.

To decongest hospitals, some hotels are also being considered as recovery areas for those who are already recovering from COVID-19 but do not want to go home just yet.

Cebu City now stands as having the longest lockdown for a local government unit. Save for the time it transitioned to general community quarantine in the first half of June, it was placed under ECQ since March this year.

Cebu City is important

While President Rodrigo Duterte said he will not give preferential treatment to Cebu despite having won here during the elections – and did not hold back words in calling Cebuanos stubborn on livestream – Secretary Vince Dizon said the presence of the national government in Cebu City shows how important the city is for the entire country.

He called on the residents to help government fight the virus and stop the contagion by abiding by quarantine and health rules.

"Let's work together and beat COVID together. Every citizen has to do their part by following the rules," Dizon said.

Dizon is deputy chief implementer of IATF.

DOH Secretary Francisco Duque III reminded residents to continue being mindful of minimum health standards such as ensuring cough etiquette, hand washing, and proper wearing of mask.

DIL Secretary Año said that people should continue to obey quarantine protocols to and should stay at home in order for us to prevail over this COVID-19 crisis.

City action

Mayor Edgardo Labella said they have organized 80 contact tracing teams after DOH has provided the city with additional testing kits.

“We have already started training our contact tracers because the more important aspect of fighting this is contact tracing, and, of course, after contact tracing, isolation and treatment. We are going in that direction,” Labella said.

Labella said one of the problems in regards to testing and contact tracing in the past was the delayed release of results due to lack of testing laboratories.

Cimatu challenges Cebu City residents: "End
TITLE: quarantine"

PAGE 1/ 3/3

July 02, 2020
DATE

"There was a certain point in time that it took at least two weeks or even a month that the results of the testing and contact tracing were released in the previous set-up because of the lack of testing laboratories. But now that has been corrected already...in the new set-up, in a matter of 24 to 48 hours, the results are now released so that I think it's more effective to prevent the spread of the disease," Labella said.

Province

While Cebu City remains under ECQ, its neighboring local government units are on GCQ and even modified GCQ.

Mandaue City, Lapu-Lapu City, Talisay City, Consolacion, and Minglanilla are on GCQ while the rest of Cebu Province is now under MGCQ.

Governor Gwendolyn Garcia said the province will now focus on reviving the tourism industry, which has been affected greatly by the shutdowns, as well as in introducing the Enhanced Countryside Development (ECD) program.

"We will focus now on the resumption of our tourism industry," she said, emphasizing that reopening of attractions like whale watching, canyooning, and thresher shark watching, among others, will be under very strict health protocols.

Meanwhile, the ECD is geared toward agricultural production and in providing opportunity for residents to earn in their LGU. Among the first targets of the programs is corn production to utilize the 12 to 14 feed mills in the province, and production of cassava, vegetables, and herbs.

"And I have been repeating this: We must focus on boosting our immune system and we are encouraging people to plant calamansi, turmeric, and ginger because these can be easily availed of and taken as a preventive measure against disease, particularly COVID-19," Garcia said.

"If there is anything this quarantine or lockdown has taught us, it is that Cebu is not self-sufficient in food," she added.

Cebu Province has 44 towns and six component cities. **JMO (FREEMAN)**

Cimatu eyes Cebu gymnasiums, coliseums as quarantine facilities

Published July 1, 2020 5:00pm

By MA. ANGELICA GARCIA, GMA News

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu on Wednesday said he is eyeing the conversion of gymnasiums and coliseums in Cebu City into quarantine facilities for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19 patients.

“(We’re) looking into the possibility of converting some gymnasiums, coliseums into quarantine areas instead of (the patients) being located in (barangay isolation facilities),” Cebu’s COVID-19 response overseer said in a virtual press conference with other Cabinet officials in Mandaue City.

Cimatu said he suspects that the barangay isolation facilities contribute to the further spread of the virus.

Due to this, he said the government will relocate isolation facilities in Cebu City from barangays to the coastal area such as the Normal Oasis for Adaptation and a Home (NOAH) Complex.

He said the NOAH Complex, a project of the local government and private sector, can accommodate about 350 patients.

Cimatu added the government is also eyeing to add more cubicles in the complex to accommodate more patients.

“NOAH muna. ‘Yan muna ang pupuntahan if there will be additional infected individuals. We will not bring them anymore to their respective barangays. We will bring them sa NOAH and hopefully these 350 cubicles will be increased para kung may additional pa, mayroon pa,” he said.

Cebu City is one of the COVID-19 hot spots in the country. On Tuesday, it [logged](#) 353 new COVID-19 cases, the highest number of cases it reported in a single day, raising the total to 5,494.

The Cebu City Health Department also said total recoveries rose to 2,723 after 10 more patients recovered from the respiratory illness, while the death toll remained at 169 with no new fatalities.

To ensure the residents' compliance with ECQ protocols, the Philippine National Police has [deployed](#) over a hundred of its elite Special Action Force commandos to the city. —**LDF, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/745043/cimatu-eyes-cebu-gymnasiums-coliseums-as-quarantine-facilities/story/>

Cebu City health system breaks down – Solon

Published July 1, 2020, 9:03 AM

by Charissa Luci-Atienza & Noreen Jazul

DOH urged to address shortage of health workers, ambulances, medical supplies

Cebu City 2nd District Rep. Rodrigo Abellanosa is calling on the Department of Health (DOH) to address with dispatch the shortage of health workers, ambulances, and medical supplies in the city, which is now overwhelmed by the unabated number of patients who tested positive for coronavirus disease (COVID-19).



Cebu City PIO / MANILA BULLETIN)

He said the DOH should “immediately” step up and resolve the increasing number of COVID-19 cases, the depleting number of medical workers, and scarce medical supplies in the city, particularly in areas with high virus cases.

“With the daily unabated number of positive cases in Cebu City, the local health care system naturally breaks down. People are dying even before they could get admitted and tested,” Abellanosa lamented.

“Medical personnel, ambulances, equipment and supplies are running very low. I hope Secretary (Francisco) Duque (III) can have these addressed immediately,” he said in a text message.

Abellanosa expressed the same concern of the Cebu Medical Society, stressing that the city’s health system is “exhausted and overwhelmed” that has left many patients untreated.

“DOH should bring in more health workers now,” he said. Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu, who was tasked by President Duterte to oversee COVID-19 response in Cebu City, has recommended the deployment additional health workers in the city. “If we can have 30 percent more of what we have here,” Cimatu said.

With the current state of COVID19 infections, Cimatu said he has recommended to President Duterte to keep Cebu City under the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ).

“We have to maintain the quarantine level here,” Cimatu, head of Region 7 COVID-19 Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF), told ANC on Tuesday.

“Kung sa first aid, ito, stop the bleeding because it is bleeding now (If this is first aid, what we have to do is stop the bleeding first, because it is bleeding now),” Cimatu added.

Cimatu said he also requested for additional rooms in hospitals, additional quarantine stations for Cebu City, and is eyeing to convert large spaces in the city into isolation facilities like what the government did in Metro Manila.

He also said that isolation centers put up inside barangays in Cebu City will be transferred farther to further prevent the local transmission of COVID-19.

In an interview with ANC on Tuesday, Cimatu said the putting up of isolation centers within barangays has contributed to the increase in the number of cases in the city.

“I have to transfer iyong isolation structure nila outside of their respective barangays. Ilalayo ko para di na maulit ito (I have to transfer the isolation structures outside of their respective barangays. They need to be moved farther),” he added.

He is also eyeing the conversion of the Cebu Coliseum into a quarantine facility for coronavirus patients in the city and nearby areas.

While there are existing quarantine facilities in Cebu City, there is a need to pass a measure seeking the creation of regional quarantine facilities, Abellanosa said.

He rallied behind the passage of House Bill No. 7005, the proposed “Mandatory Quarantine Facilities Act of 2020, principally authored by Deputy Speaker and Camarines Sur 2nd District Rep. Luis Raymund Villafuerte Jr.

“We badly need these facilities. We are yet to see the light at the end of the tunnel in the darkness of this pandemic. This pandemic continues to be a knee on our neck,” he said.

Cimatu also defended the deployment of more military personnel in the city, saying it helped in terms of manning checkpoints and preventing residents from going out of their homes.

“The intention naman talaga (really) is not to actually show force. It’s a way of preventing them from going outside,” Cimatu said.

Reports said some 2,000 uniformed personnel from the Philippine National Police (PNP) and a 33-man medical team from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have been deployed in Cebu City as augmentation forces to help and assist in the implementation and enforcement of health and safety protocols under ECQ. *(With a report from Ellalyn de Vera-Ruiz)*

Around 12,000 stranded in Cebu City amid ECQ — Cimatú

Published July 1, 2020 8:49am

Updated July 1, 2020 11:17am

Due to the enhanced community quarantine, around 12,000 locally stranded individuals (LSIs) in Cebu City are being withheld from leaving the area, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatú said.

Cimatú, who is tasked to lead the COVID-19 response in the city, said the LSIs will only be allowed to leave Cebu City when the community quarantine restriction eases.

“Merong 12,000 rito na locally stranded individuals,” Cimatú said in an interview on GMA News’ Unang Balita on Wednesday.

“They are staying in their respective na pinagtirahan nila, mga boarding houses at tsaka mga relatives. Pero they cannot leave dito muna sila,” he added.

From general community quarantine, Cebu City returned to ECQ on June 16 due to the increase in new cases as well as in its critical care utilization against critical care capacity.

On Wednesday, President Rodrigo Duterte announced that [Cebu City will remain under ECQ](#), which means travel will still restricted.

“Dahil sa ECQ, they undergo naman mga proseso bago we will allow them after na ng pag-lift ng ECQ,” Cimatú said.

While he acknowledged the improvement in compliance of the residents to the quarantine measures, Cimatú said he personally recommended the extension of ECQ in Cebu to the Inter-Agency Task Force.

Cebu City is one of the COVID-19 hot spots in the country. On Tuesday, it logged 353 new COVID-19 cases, the [highest number of new cases](#) it reported in a single day, raising the total to 5,494.

The Cebu City Health Department (CHD) also said total recoveries rose to 2,723 after 10 more patients recovered from the respiratory illness, while the death toll remained at 169 with no new fatalities.

To ensure the residents' compliance with ECQ protocols, the Philippine National Police (PNP) has [deployed](#) over a hundred of its elite Special Action Force (SAF) commandos to the city. — **Joviland Rita/RSJ/KBK, GMA News**

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/744956/around-12-000-stranded-in-cebu-city-amid-ecq-cimatu/story/?utm_source=GMAnews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR3LYQdluZFS0YqiUsmwD-XI-vpi1J5gg6TKNODzRR1Y6r3cGTQeop7XOC0



GMA News

17 hrs ·

Hindi naman daw lahat ng Cebuano ay matigas ang ulo, ani Sec. Roy Cimatu, ang Cebu Overseer for COVID-19 Response. Dagdag pa niya, sumusunod naman daw sa guidelines ang tao sa lugar.



Hindi naman lahat [ng Cebuano ay matigas ang ulo]. Marami rin naman nag-comply. In fact, compared sa mga initial case, medyo dramatic ang increase ng compliance. Hopefully, tuloy-tuloy ang behavior na 'yan para mabawasan [ang bilang ng COVID-19 positive sa lugar].

DENR SEC. ROY CIMATU
Cebu Overseer of COVID-19 Response



UNANGHIRIT



Unang Hirit

20 hrs ·

Like Page

Sa eksklusibong panayam ng #UnangHirit, personal daw na inirekomenda ni DENR Secretary at Cebu Overseer of COVID-19 Response na si Roy Cimatu ang pananatili ng ECQ sa Cebu City. Pero ayon sa kanya, hindi naman daw lahat ng Cebuano ay matitigas ang ulo. Katunayan, marami raw ang nagko-comply sa guidelines.



James Arvin E. Ronquillo and 12K others · 1.2K Comments 309 Shares

Source:

https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10158981435101977&id=116724526976&fs=1&focus_composer=0

Indebtedness

[FIRST PERSON](#) - [Alex Magno](#) (The Philippine Star) - July 2, 2020 - 12:00am

Cebu City will be kept under hard lockdown at least over the next few weeks. The NCR will remain under general community quarantine.

President Duterte tasked Roy Cimatu to oversee operations to quell the outbreak of infections in Cebu. The former general is the President's most reliable troubleshooter. He has been given many missions in the past, from rescuing distressed OFWs in the Middle East to cleaning up Boracay and Manila Bay. Facing down the outbreak in Cebu would be his toughest assignment.

The effort to quell the outbreak in Cebu, that threatens to spread to the Eastern Visayas provinces, is vital to keeping the pandemic under control within our national borders. This could be the key battle to avert that feared second wave to infections.

Simply put, we cannot afford defeat in Cebu. Its population density notwithstanding, the city has much less hospital resources than the capital region. It is the hub of much movement of people coming from or going to the other central Philippine islands.

The large outbreak in Cebu happens at a time when the national government has nearly exhausted its resources to fight the pandemic. The first-round battle against the pandemic centered in Luzon forced government to realign funds for direct subsidies to poor communities, massive acquisition of medical gear and medicines, financial support to unemployed workers and financial support for small businesses and returning OFWs.

Public expenditure to fight the virus now runs into several hundred billion. The money that flows to the Social Amelioration Program and the local governments for their own social support programs is not free. They were realigned from savings and cancelled projects – and eventually from emergency borrowing.

By my own tally, we have added about \$6 billion to public debt over the last couple of months. The borrowing includes: about \$2.1 billion from the ADB under three different packages; about \$1.3 billion in four World Bank emergency loan programs; \$2.35 billion through two dollar-denominated bond offerings; and various other ODA loan contracts with friendly governments.

Over the next months, nearly every government on earth will be scrounging around for emergency funding both to fight the pandemic and restart their economies. Our sources of funding, notwithstanding our excellent credit ratings, will become tighter.

If we have to borrow more to continue this fight, the health crisis could soon transform into a debt crisis.

Understandably, we expect government revenues to drop in the coming months, reflecting the contraction of the economy and the business slowdown. We need every peso of revenue government could have its hands on, including from online business activities.

Otherwise, we will be facing the next stages of this long battle without much ammunition.

Pragmatic

Some of our politicians have made a cottage industry out of complaining about what they insist is special treatment given the Philippine Online Gaming Operations (POGOs). It is clear they are doing this in the hope of tapping into a xenophobic undercurrent and converting this into political capital.

They conveniently forget to mention two things. First, Beijing actually frowns on our hosting of the online gaming firms because this defies their own anti-gambling campaign at home. Second, the POGOs are rigorously regulated and heavily taxed by a government that is desperately scrounging for revenues.

Our government, to put it bluntly, hosts these enterprises for the revenues we need to continue fighting the pandemic. The POGOs might not be a virtuous goose. But it lays the golden eggs.

There is an effort led by politicians to either restrict the POGOs further or force them out summarily. It is an effort to score political points although guised in self-righteousness. It is an effort that deliberately underplays the economic benefits we derive from hosting this service industry.

The legitimate POGOs, properly registered with PAGCOR and strictly supervised by the BIR for taxation purposes, have banded together in an association called Accredited Service Providers of PAGCOR (ASPAP). The association's spokesperson Atty. Margarita Gutierrez claims its members contribute about P94.7 billion to the economy. This year, that number could grow to about P104 billion.

Apart from the hefty regulatory fees PAGCOR collects and the stringent taxes the BIR insists must be constantly updated, the this service industry provides employment to tens of thousands of Filipinos. The online operations account for a large amount of office space and pay rental for numerous residential units used by expatriate workers. Actual revenues from these service providers grew to P5.73 billion in 2019 and appear ready to grow even more dramatically this year.

In the first quarter of 2020, duly accredited POGOs have paid P1.8 billion in regulatory fees alone. That income, in turn, flows into the President's Social Fund that has been used to help our most disadvantaged communities including those hit by the pandemic.

Leaseholds and rentals amount to about P25 billion. The association's members account for about a million square meters of office space. All these are subject to VAT.

About 31,556 Filipinos employed by this sector pay income taxes. All the added consumption they add to the domestic economy helps prop up consumer demand. The multiplier effects of residential rentals and retail activities are enormous.

Gutierrez pleads with the politicians to carefully distinguish between duly registered online gaming operations and the clandestine ones. It is the latter that has produced much of the negative effects on the community and none of the direct revenues.

If the online gaming industry is forced to close tomorrow, that will blow a large hole in the domestic economy. We least need that in the midst of this pandemic.

DENR files raps vs. Puerto Princesa police chief

July 1, 2020, 8:08 pm



MANILA – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has filed several criminal and administrative charges before the Office of the Ombudsman against relieved Puerto Princesa Police Director Col. Marion Balonglong in line with the illegal arrest and maltreatment of eight DENR employees last June 10.

In a press release Wednesday, DENR said Balonglong is facing criminal charges of torture, unlawful arrest, slight physical injuries, obstruction of apprehension and prosecution of criminal offenders, and graft and corruption.

He was also charged administratively with grave misconduct, grave abuse of authority, and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service in violation of Republic Act 6317, or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

Earlier, DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu called for a swift resolution of the case even as he expressed hope such an isolated incident would not affect the cordial relationship and collaborative partnership between the DENR and the Philippine National Police in enforcing environmental laws.

In an 18-page complaint filed with the Ombudsman on June 21, the DENR provided full details of the illegal arrest and maltreatment suffered at the hands of Balonglong by eight workers assigned at the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in Puerto Princesa City.

The eight—three foresters, four forest rangers and a forest protection officer—were conducting a follow-up investigation in a mangrove area in Sitio Bucana of Barangay Iwahig-Matahimik when they were rounded up by a group of policemen “in full battle gear” led by Balonglong.

The investigation was in connection with an earlier discovery on June 7 of illegal occupation and massive mangrove cutting in the area where the DENR team seized some 73 cut mangrove trees, a galvanized iron sheet and four drum containers.

Forest Ranger Roldan Alvarez, one of the members of the DENR investigating team, identified Balonglong as the one who “repeatedly kicked and stomped” on him at gunpoint while they were being subjected to full body search and ordered to lie down on the ground.

At one point, Balonglong stepped on the head of Alvarez with his foot while wearing his combat boots, the complaint said.

Despite identifying themselves and their official mission to Balonglong, the DENR team was then brought to the site which they investigated on June 7 and there Alvarez was made to kneel for almost an hour while other members of the team were ordered to sit at one corner.

The DENR team was transported to the police station aboard three PNP vehicles while Alvarez aboard a separate white van with Balonglong and three other police officers.

July 02, 2020

DATE

TITLE: DENR files raps vs. Puerto Princesa police chief

PAGE 1/ 2/2

On their way to the police station, Balonglong put a transparent cellophane on the head of Alvarez and gradually pulled it until the latter found it difficult to breathe. This was an apparent attempt to force Alvarez to admit possession of some construction materials, which Balonglong claimed to be missing from the mangrove area.

The DENR workers were released following a long dialogue between Balonglong and CENR officer Felizardo Cayatoc, who was made to sign a document stating that the workers were in good mental and physical condition when they were turned over to him.

The complaint said Balonglong should also be held accountable for breaking the guidelines and protocols for physical distancing during a state of emergency because of the Covid-19 pandemic. (**DENR PR**)

DENR files criminal, administrative charges against former police chief

Published July 1, 2020, 7:57 PM

by Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has filed several criminal and administrative charges before the Office of the Ombudsman against the former police chief of Puerto Princesa City in connection with the illegal arrest and maltreatment of environment enforcers while doing fieldwork in the city last June 10.

In an 18-page complaint filed with the Office of the Ombudsman on June 21, the DENR provided full details of the illegal arrest and maltreatment suffered by eight workers assigned at the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in Puerto Princesa City at the hands of then city police chief Col. Marion Balonglong.

Balonglong is facing criminal charges of torture, unlawful arrest, slight physical injuries, obstruction of apprehension and prosecution of criminal offenders, and graft and corruption.

He was also charged administratively for grave misconduct, grave abuse of authority, and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service in violation of Republic Act 6317, or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

The DENR complaint said Balonglong should likewise be held accountable for breaking the guidelines and protocols for social distancing during a state of emergency because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Three foresters, four forest rangers, and a forest protection officer were conducting last June 10 a follow up investigation in a mangrove area at Sitio Bucana of Barangay Iwahig-Matahimik when they were rounded up by a group of policemen led by Balonglong.

The former Puerto Princesa City police chief allegedly kicked and punched at gunpoint one of the forest rangers while the DENR team was being subjected to full body search.

The June 10 investigation was in connection with the discovery of illegal occupation and massive mangrove cutting in the area last June 7, where the DENR team was able to seize 73 pieces of cut mangrove trees, one galvanized iron sheet, and four drum containers.

An enraged DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu earlier called for a swift resolution of the case even as he expressed hope such an isolated incident would not affect the cordial relationship and collaborative partnership between the DENR and the Philippine National Police (PNP) in enforcing environmental laws.

PNP chief Gen. Archie Gamboa on June 13 ordered the administrative relief of Balonglong over the officer's alleged involvement in the maltreatment of the environment enforcers.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/01/denr-files-criminal-administrative-charges-against-former-police-chief/>

Puerto's top cop charged over DENR team's arrest

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

July 2, 2020

MULTIPLE criminal and administrative charges were filed against relieved Puerto Princesa Police Director Col. Marion Balonglong in connection with the illegal arrest and maltreatment of eight employees of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and two others on June 10.

In a news release, the DENR said criminal cases were filed before the Office of the Ombudsman for torture, unlawful arrest, slight physical injuries, obstruction of apprehension and prosecution of criminal offenders, and graft and corruption.

Administrative charges filed against him include grave misconduct, grave abuse of authority, and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service in violation of Republic Act 6317 or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

In an 18-page complaint filed with the Ombudsman on June 21, the complainants said Balonglong should also be held accountable for breaking the guidelines and protocols for social distancing during a state of emergency because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In the complaint, the DENR provided full details of the illegal arrest and maltreatment suffered at the hands of Balonglong by eight workers assigned at the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in Puerto Princesa.

The complaint alleged that the eight DENR employees—three foresters, four forest rangers and one forest protection officer—were conducting a follow-up investigation in a mangrove area at Sitio Bucana of Barangay Iwahig-Matahimik when they were rounded up by a group of policemen “in full battle gear” led by Balonglong.

The investigation was in connection with an earlier discovery on June 7 of illegal occupation and massive mangrove cutting in the area where the DENR team seized some 73 pieces of cut mangrove trees, one galvanized iron sheet and four drum containers.

Forest Ranger Roldan Alvarez, one of the members of the DENR investigating team, identified Balonglong as the one who “repeatedly kicked and stomped” on him at gunpoint while they were being subjected to full body search and ordered to lie down on the ground.

At one point, Balonglong allegedly stepped on the head of Alvarez while wearing his combat boots, according to the complaint.

Despite identifying themselves and their official mission to Balonglong, the DENR team was then brought to the site which they investigated on June 7, and there Alvarez was made to kneel for almost an hour while the rest of the team was ordered to sit in one corner.

The DENR team was later transported to the police station aboard three PNP vehicles while Alvarez was placed aboard a separate white van with Balonglong and three other police officers.

On their way to the police station, Balonglong allegedly put a transparent cellophane on the head of Alvarez and gradually pulled it until the latter found it difficult to breathe.

Allegedly, this was to force Alvarez to admit possession of some construction materials, which Balonglong claimed to be missing from the mangrove area.

The DENR workers were released following a long dialogue between Balonglong and CENR Officer Felizardo Cayatoc, who was made to sign a document stating that the workers were in good mental and physical condition when they were turned over to him.

While hoping that the isolated incident would not affect the harmonious relationship of the DENR and the Philippine National Police in enforcing environmental laws, an enraged DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu called for a swift resolution of the case that prompted the DILG to immediately cause Balonglong's relief from his post as a preventive measure.

DENR sues Puerto Princesa ex-police chief

By [Eireene Jairee Gomez](#)

July 2, 2020

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has filed several criminal and administrative charges before the Office of the Ombudsman against relieved Puerto Princesa police director Col. Marion Balonglong because of illegal arrest and maltreatment of eight DENR employees.

Balonglong is facing criminal charges of torture, unlawful arrest, slight physical injuries, obstruction of apprehension and prosecution of criminal offenders, and graft and corruption.

The embattled police officer was also charged administratively for grave misconduct, grave abuse of authority and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service in violation of Republic Act 6317, or the “Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.”

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu earlier called for a swift resolution of the case even as he expressed hope such an isolated incident would not affect the cordial relationship and collaborative partnership between the DENR and the Philippine National Police in enforcing environmental laws.

DENR files cases vs Palawan police

posted July 01, 2020 at 11:05 pm

by [Rio N. Araja](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has filed several criminal and administrative charges before the Office of the Ombudsman against relieved Puerto Princesa City, Palawan's police director Col. Marion Balonglong in connection with the illegal arrest and maltreatment of eight agency employees last June 10.

Balonglong is facing criminal charges of torture, unlawful arrest, slight physical injuries, obstruction of apprehension and prosecution of criminal offenders, and graft and corruption.

The embattled police officer was also charged administratively for grave misconduct, grave abuse of authority and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service in violation of Republic Act 6317, or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu earlier called for a swift resolution of the investigation but assured the Philippine National Police that DENR's cordial and collaborative partnership with it would not change.

Patong-patong na kaso vs hepe ng nambugbog ng

July 02, 2020

TITLE: DENR workers

PAGE 1/ 1/2

DATE



Patong-patong na kaso vs hepe na nambugbog ng DENR workers

July 1, 2020 @ 4:22 PM 14 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Kinasuhan ng kriminal at administratibo sa Office of the Ombudsman ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang sinibak na police director ng Puerto Princesa City dahil sa iligal na pag-aresto at pambubugbog sa walong (8) empleyado ng DENR noong Hunyo 10, 2020.

Kabilang sa mga kasong kinahaharap ni Colonel Marion Balonglong ang torture, unlawful arrest, slight physical injuries, obstruction of apprehension and prosecution of criminal offenders at graft and corruption.

Ayon sa DENR, nahaharap din si Balonglong sa kasong administratibo, tulad ng grave misconduct, grave abuse of authority, at conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service at paglabag sa Republic Act 6317 o Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

Nauna rito, nanawagan si DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu sa madaliang resolusyon ng naturang kaso at umaasa rin ito na hindi maapektuhan ang relasyon at partnership ng DENR at ng Philippine National Police (PNP) partikular na sa pagpapatupad ng batas-pangkalikasan.

Sa 18 pahinang reklamo sa Ombudsman noong Hunyo 21, idinetalye ng DENR ang ginawang illegal arrest at pambubugbog ni Balonglong sa walong manggagawa na nakatalaga sa Community Environment and Natural Resources Office sa Puerto Princesa.

Nabatid sa ulat na ang walong empleyado ng DENR na kinabibilangan ng tatlong foresters, apat na forest rangers at isang forest protection officer ay kasalukuyang nagsasagawa ng follow-up investigation sa mangrove area sa Sitio Bucana, Barangay Iwahig-Matahimik nang iligal na arestuhin ang mga ito ng mga pulis na nakasuot ng full battle gear na pinangungunahan ni Balonglong.

Ang imbestigasyon ay may koneksyon sa pagkakadiskubre noong Hunyo 7 ng illegal occupation at illegal mangrove cutting sa naturang lugar kung saan ay nakakumpiska ang DENR ng 73 piraso ng pinutol na mangrove trees, isang galvanized iron sheet at apat na drum containers.

Patong-patong na kaso vs hepe ng nambugbog ng

TITLE: DENR workers

PAGE 1/ 2/2

July 02, 2020

DATE

Positibo ring itinuro ni Forest Ranger Roldan Alvarez si Balonglong na siyang sumipa at nanakit sa kanya habang nakadapa sa lupa na may nakatutok na baril at dumadaan sa full body search.

Bukod dito, inapakan din umano ni Balonglong ang ulo ni Alvarez habang ito ay nakasuot ng combat boots.

Bagama't nagpakilala na at sinabi ang official mission ng DENR team kay Balonglong, dinala pa rin ang mga ito sa lugar na kanilang iniimbestigahan noong Hunyo 7 at pinaluhod umano si Alvarez ng mahigit isang oras habang ang mga kasama nito ay pinaupo sa isang sulok.

Matapos ito, dinala ang DENR team sa police station sakay ng tatlong PNP vehicle habang si Alvarez ay hiniwalay at inilulan sa isang puting van kasama si Balonglong at tatlo pang police officers.

Habang patungo sa police station, nilagyan umano ni Balonglong ng transparent cellophane ang ulo ni Alvarez hanggang maramdaman nito ang hirap sa paghinga.

Dahil dito ay napilitan si Alvarez na aminin ang possession ng construction materials na sinasabi ng opisyal na nawawala sa mangrove area.

Pinakawalan lamang ang DENR workers matapos ang mahabang pakikipag-usap ni CENR Officer Felizardo Cayatoc kay Balonglong na napilitan umanong lumagda sa dokumento na nagsasabing nasa maayos ang pangangatawan at pag-iisip ng mga inarestong manggagawa.

Base pa sa reklamo, kinakailangan ding panagutin si Balonglong sa paglabag umano sa guidelines at protocols para sa social distancing habang nasa state of emergency ang bansa dahil na rin sa COVID-19 pandemic. **Santi Celario**



Balik-plastik system, mungkahi ng DENR sa Kamara

July 1, 2020 @ 5:22 PM 13 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Sinuportahan ng mga kongresista ang iminungkahi ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na retrieval o recovery ng mga ginamit na plastic na makakatulong sa publiko, sa mga negosyante at sa kapaligiran.

Sa ginanap na virtual hearing ng House Committee on Ecology, sinabi ni Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda na hindi nila tuluyang ipinagbabawal ang paggamit ng plastic pero kanilang mahigpit na tinututulan ang hindi tamang disposal o pagtatapon dito.

Bilang solusyon ay iminungkahi ni Antiporda sa mga kongresista na lumikha ng batas na obligadong mag-uutos sa mga plastic producer na gumawa ng sistema kung paano mare-retrieve o maibabalik sa kanila ang mga plastic na ginamit sa mga produkto.

Kasama din sa rekomendasyon na bigyan ng discount sa susunod na pagbili ng produkto ang consumers na nakapag-ipon at nakapagbalik ng ginamit na plastic mapa-sachet, bag o container man gayundin ang pagpaparusa sa producers na hindi makakasunod sa retrieval system.

Sa ganitong paraan ay walang masasaktan na mga manggagawa mula sa manufacturers ng plastic, makakamura pa rin ang publiko, at makakatulong pa ito sa kalikasan.

Kapwa naman sinuportahan nila Minority Leader Benny Abante at Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez ang panukala na anila'y win-win solution para sa lahat.

Tinalakay din sa pagdinig ang House Bill 6279 ni Rodriguez kung saan pinabubuo ng 'scheme' ang mga plastic producers para ma-retrieve ang mga plastic at gamitin sa energy o fuel gayundin ang House Bill 5773 ni Abante kung saan ipagbabawal naman ang paggamit ng single-use plastic. **Meliza Maluntag**

Source: <https://remate.ph/balik-plastik-system-mungkahi-ng-denr-sa-kamara/?fbclid=IwAR2Y4zBUGfDB8KFfoaTBfvuo8RWvtr5U1-kKv9-3uyg8QUqA7Uuw994yIYg>

Single-use plastic ibabawal sa non-essential products

Balita

July 01, 2020



Kamara

PINAPLANTSA ng isang technical working group sa Kamara de Representantes ang pagbabawal sa paggamit ng single use plastic sa mga non-essential products.

Ayon kay Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Velasco, head ng TWG ng House committee on Ecology, makatutulong ang panukala upang mabawasan ang paggamit ng plastik sa bansa.

“The direction of the TWG is to ban the non-essential single-use plastics and to clarify that other plastic products should be regulated and as much as possible, recovered and recycled/re-used,” ani Velasco na isa sa may-akda ng 33 panukala kaugnay ng single use plastic.

Sinabi ni Velasco na isasama sa panukala ang Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) upang magkaroon ng proseso sa pagkuha sa mga nagamit na plastik.

“We will try our best to come up with a bill that will ensure a healthy and safe environment for the generations to come,” saad ng solon.

Sa ilalim ng EPR ang gumawa ng plastik ang mayroong financial at physical responsibility sa pagkuha at pagproseso sa mga plastik kapag nagamit na ang produkto na inilagay dito.



PABATID-ABISO NG NWRB

July 1, 2020 @ 10:16 AM 21 hours ago

Ipinagbibigay-alam ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) sa pamumuno ni Executive Director Seville David, Jr. na pansamantalang isasara sa publiko ang tanggapan ng ahensya simula July 1 hanggang 3, 2020, sa loob ng tatlong araw mula Miyerkoles hanggang Biyernes, para magbigay-raan sa disinfection at paglilinis na gagawin sa lugar bling bahagi ng pag-iingat sa Coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic.

Ang opisina ng NWRB ay matatagpuan sa 8th floor, National Irrigation Authority Building, NIA Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Pero para sa mga urgent concern ng ating mga kliyente, maaari kayong magpadala ng inyong mensahe sa mga sumusunod na email address –

1. nwrphil@gmail.com para sa general NWRB concerns and queries;
2. wrd@nwr.gov.ph para sa issuance of conditional water permit, resolution of cases, resolution of petitions, issuance of permit to drill for observatory monitoring wells, registration of water use for domestic, at issuance of NWRB indorsement as requirement for registration with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).
3. wud@nwr.gov.ph para sa issuance of provisional authority for Certificate of Public Convenience and other related applications and petitioners;
4. ppd@nwr.gov.ph para sa Certificate of Water Availability at issuance of NWRB certification to the Philippine Export Zone Authority (PEZA);
5. med@nwr.gov.ph, billing@nwr.gov.ph at afd@nwr.gov.ph para sa application or renewal of registration of well driller, issuance of groundwater table depth for proposed memorial park, calibration of water meter, issuance of Statement of Accounts and other administrative concerns; at
6. foi@nwr.gov.ph at 8888@nwr.gov.ph para sa Freedom of Information (FOI) at complaints.

Nakatakda kayong sagutin at paglingkuran ng Office of the Executive Director, Water Right Division, Water Utilities Division, Policy and Program Division, Monitoring and Enforcement Division, Administrative and Financial Division.

Balik-regular ang opisina ng NWRB main sa July 6, 2020, araw ng Lunes.

Source: https://remate.ph/pabatid-abiso-ng-nwr/?fbclid=IwAR2dsRLHTbBy2PuAysdMtOhFmxiL0jJJ7bHGO6ECU3ckNB3lviCpUdID_5k

Fish kill in Laguna Lake traced to algae — LLDA

Published July 1, 2020, 3:23 PM

by Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz

Fish kills that occurred in certain areas of Rizal province in June may have been due to the rapid increase of algae in Laguna Lake, according to the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA).



LLDA personnel conducted an investigation of the reported fish kill in various parts of Laguna Lake, particularly in barangays Malaya and Quisao in Pililla, Rizal, and in barangays Kinaboogan, Kaytome, Clarity, Limbon-limbon, and Ithan in Binangonan, Rizal.

Earlier reports said that “hundreds” of fish such as tilapia and carp were lost due to the fish kill last month.

Based on the LLDA’s investigation, there may have been an increase in the number of “liya” or freshwater green algae in these areas caused by extreme heat. But when it rained, the water temperature in the lake possibly drastically changed that led to the death of the “liya.”

LLDA further explained that oxygen in the water has been depleted due to the decaying “liya” which caused the fish to die from their cages.

“Ang pagdami ng liya sa lawa ay nakakatulong sa mabilis na paglaki ng isda ngunit sa panahon na ito ay sobra ang dami ay maaaring magdulot ng masamang epekto sa mga isdang nasa fish cages o fishpens. (The increase in the number of liya in the lake contributes to the rapid growth of the fish but during this time too much liya caused adverse effects to the fish in cages or fishpens),” it said in a Facebook post last June 22.

The algal bloom may have been caused by the *Microcystis aeruginosa* that usually increases in number when the lake is calm, the weather is very hot, and there are many nutrients in the water that are mainly coming from households around the lake, the LLDA said.

It added that the increase in “liya” is noticeable when the water in the lake becomes green and as they increase they form a dense layer on the surface of the lake.

“May pagkakataon na ang lawa ay mistulang may pinturang kulay berde na nakalutang. (There is a chance that the lake would look like it has a floating green paint),” it pointed out.

LLDA advised fish cage or fishpen operators that if they notice that the fish are swimming and gasping for air on the surface of the water, it is recommended to run their motorboat in an area where there is less oxygen to compensate for the lack of oxygen in the water and to prevent the formation of “liya.”

They can also use gasoline aerators or paddle wheels to address oxygen deficiencies, it said.

These should be done every two hours at night until dawn, it added.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/01/fish-kill-in-laguna-lake-traced-to-algae-llda/>

Ilocos Norte lifts 6-month moratorium on quarrying permits

By Leilanie Adriano July 1, 2020, 6:29 pm



QUARRY. The Padsan River in Laoag has been declared open to quarry subject to all requirements under the Revised Ilocos Norte Quarry Ordinance of 2019. Under the ordinance, both the provincial and municipal governments have a share of 30 percent each from quarry fees and charges while the host barangay will get 40 percent share. *(PNA photo by Leilanie G. Adriano)*

LAOAG CITY – The province of Ilocos Norte is set to fully implement the requirements quarry permittees have to comply with to extract sand and gravel in its waterways.

This came following the passage of a provincial resolution declaring the termination of six-month moratorium of the requirements imposed under the Revised Ilocos Norte Quarry Ordinance of 2019.

From January 1 to June 30, 2020, Ilocos Norte through the directive of Governor Matthew Joseph Manotoc, suspended the voluminous number of requirements before a quarry applicant can be granted a governor's permit.

“For a period of six months, the quarry permittees were given enough time to secure all the necessary requirements for purpose of issuing a quarry permit,” said Provincial Board Member Da Vinci Crisostomo in an interview Tuesday.

He sponsored the said resolution on Monday along with the committees on laws and environment.

As the province has been placed under extended general community quarantine, all businesses including quarry operations are now back to normal subject to prescribed health protocol under the new normal condition.

The provincial government expects to generate more funds with the influx of quarry permittees now lining up at the Provincial Quarry Office to secure their permits.

In November last year, the Ilocos Norte board passed the Revised Ilocos Norte Quarry Ordinance to ensure quarry applicants comply with all the requirements before they are permitted to quarry and meet the demand for sand and gravel needed by various construction firms. **(PNA)**



GMA News

17 hrs ·

YouScoop: Mag-inang pangolin, kinupkop at ibinigay sa pangangalaga ng PCSD

Namataan ni Antonio Cuino ng Brgy. Luzviminda sa Puerto Princesa City ang mag-inang pangolin nitong Lunes ng hapon sa taniman nila ng mais.

Maingat na kinuha ni Cuino ang mga pangolin at ibinigay ang mga ito sa pangangalaga ng Palawan Council for Sustainable Development. Aniya, may mga gusali na malapit sa taniman niya at maaari raw hulihin ang mga pangolin ng ibang tao upang katayin para sa pagkain o sa gamot—may mga naniniwalang may bisa umano ang mga scales ng pangolin sa paggamot ng mga sakit.

Simula manirahan si Cuino sa lugar noong 2004 ay unang pagkakataon niya raw makakita ng mga pangolin.

📍: Palawan Council for Sustainable Development

Ibahagi ang inyong ulat sa:

Facebook: YouScoop

Facebook group: GMA News YouScoopers

Twitter: @GMANews



Dexter Arboladora and 19K others

232 Comments 451 Shares

Continuous consumption, illegal trade of wildlife may cause more pandemics

Published July 1, 2020 3:38pm

By JANNIELYN ANN BIGTAS, GMA News

The World Health Organization has confirmed that the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a zoonotic disease.

According to GMA Digital's "Need To Know" episode, zoonotic diseases originated from animals before it transferred to humans.

Citing reports, the "Need To Know" episode said COVID-19 possibly started in a wet market in Wuhan, China, where wildlife species including bats, and snakes, among other animals were being illegally sold.

Studies from the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) in America showed that 66 percent of the first 41 COVID-19 cases in Wuhan in December 2019 came from the said wet market.

COVID-19 is not the first zoonotic disease in history. In 1918 the Spanish Flu is believed to have come from chickens and transferred to pigs before it was transmitted to humans.

Meanwhile, the 2002 SARS-COV came from bats which spread among civet cats.

The report said the MERS-COV in 2012 came from bats which was then transmitted to camels.

Other zoonotic diseases include rabies, dengue, fever, malaria, Ebola, hepatitis E, and leptospirosis.

President and CEO of World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Joel Palma said studies showed that every three to four years, a new infectious disease was being discovered by medicine and science.

"Majority of these are actually coming from animals. Of course, zoonotic sources siya and most of them are coming from wildlife species," he said.

How virus transfer from wildlife species to humans

"Yong bats ang tawag dyan, sa wildlife usually ang tawag sa mga pinanggagalingan, origin, reservoir, natural reservoir," said Dr. Theresa Sison Lim said, executive director of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity.

She is also a licensed veterinarian from University of the Philippines and the former head of the DENR Biodiversity Management Bureau.

According to Lim, the natural reservoir doesn't die of the virus.

Continuous consumption, illegal trade of wildlife may
cause more pandemics

TITLE:

PAGE 1/ 2/5

July 02, 2020

DATE

“Nandoon lang sa bibig nila or in some of their organs makikita mo, made-detect mo ’yong virus. But it doesn’t immediately jump from the bats to humans,” she explained.

Lim said the strains or the types of viruses in domestic animals which were originally not infectious become one when they turn pathogenic or if the virus blended with the wildlife.

“It goes to domestic species, nagkakaroon ng mixing doon ng mga materials and then nagkakaroon ngayon ng capacity ’yong virus to infect humans,” she said.

According to the Centers for Disease and Control Prevention in the US, there are several modes of transmission for zoonotic diseases.

One is through direct contact with saliva, blood, urine, mucus, feces, and other bodily fluids of an infected animal.

The report said this happened when a person touched the infected animal or when a person got bitten or scratched.

The second mode of transmission is through indirect contact with contaminated places where the animals lived.

This can happen inside aquariums, chicken coops, on plants, or soil where the animals walk, and places where they eat, among other locations.

Another is called the vector-borne disease. This happens when a person gets bitten by insects including fleas.

The fourth mode is foodborne which means the disease comes from animal products such as unpasteurized milk, undercooked meat or egg, raw vegetables, and fruits contaminated by animals.

The report said aside from humans, these diseases could also infect pets.

Lastly, these diseases can also be waterborne. This happens when the water humans drink gets contaminated with animal feces.

The report stated that the WHO hadn’t identified the animal host of COVID-19.

According to a recent study, COVID-19 may have come from bats then transferred to snakes and to pangolins before it was transmitted to humans.

An NCBI study showed that viruses that came from bats may cause diseases to humans.

The report said it could also affect animal species or livestock.

According to WHO, 500 coronaviruses were discovered in bats in China.

Continuous consumption, illegal trade of wildlife may
cause more pandemics

TITLE:

PAGE 1/ 3/5

July 02, 2020

DATE

Consumption, illegal trade of wildlife species main cause of pandemic

Since Southeast Asia is one of the hotspots for wildlife trade, it serves as the supplier, consumer, and outlet of import and export of the species.

“We know that wildlife species are traded and marketed not just in China but also in many parts of Southeast Asia as part of cuisine,” Palma said.

Palma said this pandemic was an eye-opener that consumption and illegal trade of wildlife species “can cause more harm than good.”

“At the end of the day, just like we say in the Philippines, no matter how good laws are, if it’s not implemented well, it doesn’t make much of an impact.”

Lim said people should address “the opportunities for closer interaction with wild animals, and one of the opportunities closer to interaction is illegal wildlife trade.”

The report said one of the reasons why people were into wildlife species was because some believed it had medicinal properties.

Eating snakes in China and other parts of Southeast Asia is rampant.

According to belief, eating snakes has medicinal benefits, as reported by Xinhua News Agency on Feb. 7.

From 1,000 samples of wild animals, scientists discovered that what they found in pangolins was the same with 99 percent of the coronavirus found in patients.

Pangolins are anteaters and are the most trafficked mammals in the world, according to the report.

The Pangolin Reports said the animal’s scales sold for \$5 per kilo in Nigeria and \$1,000 to \$1,800 in China.

Pangolins are poached for their meat and scales, which are used in traditional medicine.

The mammal’s scales are in demand because it is rich in keratin, while the meat is considered a delicacy.

In the newest version of the Chinese Pharmacopoeia for 2020, however, pangolins have been removed from the list of traditional Chinese medicines.

This was done after China upgraded pangolin from first-class to second-class protected animals on June 5 because of the decrease in the number of the species due to overhunting and habitat destruction.

The “Need to Know” report said consuming wildlife animals would do more harm than good as it would damage human health and nature as well.

Continuous consumption, illegal trade of wildlife may
cause more pandemics

TITLE:

PAGE 1/ 4/5

July 02, 2020

DATE

“With this belief, this creates demand. Of course we are discouraging that because in the end ... the depletion of the wildlife population increases the vulnerability of the population to infectious diseases,” Lim said.

Lim said 10 countries in Southeast Asia were parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

“That means they comply to the agreements, to the decisions that are issued by the convention. they are of course ... if there are some violations, the convention actually calls their attention,” she said.

Lim said this would only be effective if the regulation would be strictly implemented by the government and if the ASEAN countries would work together to follow the law.

“It has negative impact to health. It could be a cause for future outbreaks. It could endanger the health of the population of the communities,” Lim said.

“So awareness raising and of course the social factor... socio-economic factor also needs to be considered,” she added.

The World Bank has a recommendation to strengthen the law enforcing to stop the illegal wildlife trade.

“Una, dapat mapigilan kaagad ang poaching o paghuli ng mga wildlife species. Maaari itong magawa sa epektibong pagpapatrolya ng mga alagad ng batas gaya ng park rangers,” said Lim.

“Pangalawa, para sa mga enforcement agency, kailangang maintindihan ng mga otoridad kung paano gumalaw ang mga kriminal,” she added.

However, the World Bank said enforcing the law was not easy since most cases were being junked due to corruption.

The report said halting the trade would be possible through effective intelligence monitoring, data gathering, and having a strong wildlife crime legal framework.

The World Bank stressed that a law would only be effective if the leader of the country had the political will to do so.

How to avoid future pandemics

Lim said to avoid future pandemics, the health of humans, environment, and animals should be separated from each other.

“If you want to prevent future pandemics as we move forward in addressing this current pandemic that we are experiencing, we need to think about solutions that will, that are medium term and long term,” she explained.

Continuous consumption, illegal trade of wildlife may
cause more pandemics

TITLE:

PAGE 1/ 5/5

July 02, 2020

DATE

“That includes nature as part of the solution. How we treat the environment, the environmental health is connected to human health and animal health.”

Citing experts from the inter-governmental panel on biodiversity and ecosystem services, there are 1.7 million more viruses from mammals and birds that have a potential to cause havoc in human populations.

“So if we are not careful in treating, in managing our contact with wild species and their habitats, you know there’s a potential that COVID-19 will not be the last pandemic that we will be experiencing,” she warned.

“We went into their space kaya nangyari sa atin ito. It’s not the fault of bats,” Palma said.

Palma said the reason for COVID-19 was because humans went into the habitats of wildlife animals.

“We are already encroaching into their habitats. That's why whatever they have, we have. And then the impact of whatever they have can be very fatal to humans. I would just like to point out, sabi nga, ‘This is a war with the virus,’” said Palma.

“Alam mo, this virus occurs naturally sa bats. Ang problema lang natin, ginulo natin sila, kinain natin sila. Nawala ang habitats nila that's why nakuha natin,” he added. – **RC, GMA News**

NATION

'PH won' remark won't be last

Published 5 hours ago on July 2, 2020 01:10 AM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#)



Presidential spokesman Harry Roque on Wednesday stood by his controversial remark congratulating the country for beating a COVID-19 case forecast, saying he will “keep on doing it” to encourage Filipinos amid the pandemic.

“I think, every month now, I’m going to keep on doing it, and I really don’t care about the critics. I think people should be reminded, that although there are mathematical models, we could still control what happens in our lives,” Roque said in an interview with CNN Philippines.

This came after he said in a Tuesday briefing that the country has defeated the projection of researchers and analysts from the University of the Philippines (UP) that there would be 40,000 COVID-19 cases in the country by the end of June.

His comment sparked criticisms from social media users, who said that the country still needs to curb coronavirus transmission as the World Health Organization recently warned that the pandemic could worsen.

Incongruency alleged

Some also questioned the official’s tone and gestures when the country continues to record rising number of infections.

In the interview, Roque agreed with the public’s sentiment that the virus — not UP projection — was the real enemy.

“COVID is the real enemy. Perhaps UP is only the ringside commentator, the ones who are telling the score. We’re asking for some understanding,” he said.

For the month of July, UP researchers projected the number of virus infections in Cebu province would be 15,000, assuming enhanced community quarantine will be in place there until 31 July. If the protocols will be relaxed, it may surge to 20,000 to 30,000.

Meanwhile, they said the current reproduction rate in Metro Manila leads to a projection of almost 30,000 cases, with 860 deaths by 31 July. If transmissions decrease, the lower estimate of 27,000 cases may be reached.

Philippines records 999 new cases as gov't claims winning COVID-19 war

Kristine Sabillo, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jul 01 2020 05:09 PM | Updated as of Jul 01 2020 08:18 PM



Commuters take a UV Express Van plying the Antipolo-Ayala route at a terminal in Antipolo City, Rizal on June 29, 2020, amid the general community quarantine. The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board initially allowed 980 UV Express vans in 47 routes to resume operations to accommodate the rising number of commuters returning to work onsite. *Mark Demayo, ABS-CBN News*

MANILA (UPDATE) — The Philippines registered nearly a thousand more cases of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on Wednesday, as the government eased quarantine restrictions in some areas while retaining General Community Quarantine in the capital region.

There are now 38,511 confirmed COVID-19 cases in the country after the Department of Health reported 999 additional patients. Of this total, 595 are “fresh cases,” which refer to test results released within the last 3 days, while 404 are “late cases,” or those whose results were released at least four days ago.

- [READ: Duterte: Metro Manila, other cities stay under GCO](#)

Of the fresh cases, 175 are from the National Capital Region while 134 are from Region 7 or Central Visayas. There are also 286 that are tagged as “Others” which refer to cases from other regions or those without location information.

Of the late cases, 131 are from NCR, and 57 are from Region 7 while 216 are tagged as “Others.”

There were also two cases that were identified as duplicates and were removed from the total count of cases.

“Ang mabilis na pagtaas ng mga kaso ay makikita po sa mga hotspots tulad ng Cebu na maaring dahil sa high community transmission,” Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said during a televised briefing.

(The quick rise in cases is from hotspots like Cebu which might be because of high community transmission.)

Earlier in the day, President Rodrigo Duterte's spokesman Harry Roque said he was confident the Philippines "can prevail over the disease... even if there is no vaccine and there is no cure as of yet."

Roque said the Philippine lockdown, one of the longest in the world, has cut down the time that it takes for cases of COVID-19 to double to 7 days, a "far cry" from the 3-day rate in March.

He also claimed the country's fatality rate was down to 10 per day while the positivity rate (the percentage of those who tested positive for the virus) was at 6 to 7 percent, which is below the international threshold of 12.

"It's a small victory, but still a victory, which means that with behavioral change, we can prevail over the disease," Roque said.

Philippines records 999 new cases as gov't claims
winning COVID-19 war

TITLE:

PAGE 1/ 2/2

July 02, 2020

DATE

But the World Health Organization (WHO) said the coming few weeks would be crucial for the Philippines as the body observed an increase in COVID-19 cases and hospital occupancy amid eased quarantine restrictions.

“Unfortunately, the data shows that there [are] ongoing infections,” Dr. Takeshi Kasai, WHO regional director for the Western Pacific said.

“And after gradually easing the lockdown, we [are] also carefully monitoring the data and then we are seeing... for example, the number of hospitals occupancy started going up,” he added.

The DOH earlier said that the NCR remains the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak in the Philippines. However, Cebu province and Cebu City in Region 7 are among the emerging hotspots.

The DOH, meanwhile, reported 205 new recovered patients or a total of 10,438 recoveries.

There were also 4 new COVID-related deaths or a total of 1,270.

Vergeire said that the increasing number of new cases is somehow offset by the increasing number of recovered patients.

“Makikita po natin sa trend na kahit dumadami ang kaso ng COVID-19, dumadami din ang recoveries at kumokonti ang mga namamatay, kumpara sa mga nakaraang buwan,” she said.

(We can see in the trend that even if the COVID-19 cases are increasing, the recoveries are also increasing and there are fewer people dying, compared to previous months.)

Worldwide, almost 10.5 million people have been infected with COVID-19, according to the Johns Hopkins University coronavirus dashboard. Of those, 511,000 have died while almost 5.4 million have already recovered.



UP researcher Prof. Ranjit Singh Rye said what their team does “has never been a game” where there are winners and losers, adding there was no reason to be happy when the country has registered 10,000 cases in two weeks up to the end of June.

STAR/File

UP team: COVID trend not a game

[Sheila Crisostomo](#) (The Philippine Star) - July 2, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The trend of COVID-19 cases in the country gives no reason for Filipinos to raise their fists in the air in exuberance, according to the University of the Philippines research team, whose projections Malacañang claimed the Philippines beat the other day.

UP researcher Prof. Ranjit Singh Rye said what their team does “has never been a game” where there are winners and losers, adding there was no reason to be happy when the country has registered 10,000 cases in two weeks up to the end of June.

Fr. Nicanor Austriaco, also of the UP OCTA Research team, said it was more important to look at the trend that figures from the government were showing rather than the target being hit, as the former was more representative of the pandemic happening in the country.

June 30 data from the Department of Health (DOH) showed that there were already 47,347 individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 out of the 666,678 individuals tested nationwide. Subtracting the 37,514 confirmed cases will yield a 9,833 gap between the number of confirmed cases and the number of positive individuals.

While the number of those who tested positive may not all turn out as confirmed cases after validation, it gives an approximation of what the trend could be in subsequent days.

“If there are 46,000 individuals positive for COVID-19 but there are only 38,000 that are validated, which number is more representative of the pandemic happening in the country?” Austriaco told “The Chiefs” the other night on Cignal TV’s One News.

“I think it’s important that we emphasize that it’s more important to look at a trend rather than a target. And the concern that many of us have is the trend is going up,” he added.

The research team’s statements came on the heels of presidential spokesman Harry Roque’s ecstatic welcoming of the country’s 37,000 cases the other day, “beating” the UP OCTA research team’s projection of 40,000 coronavirus cases nationwide by the end of the month.

The latest projection by the group of researchers estimated that cases may hit 60,000 by end of July if there is significant community transmission across the country.

In exuberance, Roque had said: “Let’s do it again in July! So we are winning.”

“We stand by our forecast, we missed it by less than 6 percent which is kind of good, but we’re also very sad that we’ve reached this far,” Rye said.

“While we respect the exuberance of our very hardworking and burdened spokesman, we should be more cautious. The message is: ‘the pandemic is here’ and it’s spreading and we need to work together and there’s so much work to be done,” he added.

Roque, however, remained unfazed as he set a goal to monitor the Philippines’ ‘successes’ against the virus. “Every month now, I’m going to keep on doing it and I really don’t care about the critics because, I think, people should be reminded that although there are mathematical models, we could still control what happens in our lives,” he said.

Meanwhile, Prof. Guido David, also part of the UP OCTA group, explained that the trend “slightly” slowed down because it did not reach the 40,000 prediction – mainly because of the government’s move to revert Cebu City back to the strictest enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) due to the continued rise of infection.

Had the government relaxed quarantine protocols in the territory, cases in Cebu City would have risen by 3,000 or 4,000 more cases, according to their projection.

“And we would say, we are over the projection and that means we were not able to manage the spread in Cebu,” the professor said.

“In some sense, there is some positive (outcome) there because the government made some right decisions, but we need a lot more positive (outcomes) to be able to beat this virus,” he added.

Upticks

Researchers also warned of the upticks being observed in several territories in Luzon and in Southern Philippines, citing mobility and proximity as some of the drivers of the high transmission rate.

Among these, according to Rye, were Leyte, Bulacan and Calabarzon, whose quarantine restrictions have since been relaxed – meaning, a significant amount of mobility through public transportation has been allowed.

The researchers also cited several areas which previously had little to no COVID-19 cases that now have a significant number of infected patients. These include Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur and Misamis.

The reasons why upticks were observed were, according to them, ramped-up testing in select areas, the real surge of cases in Cebu and the mobility, proximity and noncompliance in several areas that has caused the rise in the number of COVID-19 cases.

“We’ve been pointing out that while we have been scaling up testing in NCR, it was important to do so everywhere else and especially in hotspots,” Rye said.

Discrepancies explained

The DOH yesterday reiterated its explanation about the discrepancies in the daily testing data for coronavirus disease.

According to DOH Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire, the number of “unique individuals” tested pertains to those who have been tested for the virus.

She said the number of individuals tested will “never” be the same as the number of cases that were confirmed to be positive for COVID-19.

“People are asking why there has been discrepancies in the figures. It is because the cumulative number of unique individuals tested is being validated to remove duplicates,” she noted at a press briefing.

Vergeire was referring to the lists submitted by testing laboratories which may contain double names or entries and case numbers that have been tagged more than once in laboratories.

Meanwhile, National Task Force against Coronavirus Response chief implementer Carlito Galvez Jr. said the other day that the government is gaining ground in its fight against COVID-19.

“From the start of our fight against COVID-19, we have a plan. We have a National Action Plan. Majority of the areas in our country are now classified as moderate and low risk already,” Galvez said.

“What I’m seeing based on the plans that we do in the National Task Force is we are winning. From the threshold of WHO (World Health Organization), meaning our big positivity rate (which is below 10 percent), the situation is getting better,” Galvez said. **Christina Mendez, Jose Rodel Clapano**



EDITORIAL - Huwag munang magsaya di-pa natatalo ang virus

(Pilipino Star Ngayon) - July 2, 2020 - 12:00am

Natuwa ang Malacañang noong Martes dahil hindi nagkatotoo ang prediksiyon ng isang propesor sa University of the Philippines (UP) na aabot sa 40,000 ang kaso ng COVID-19 sa bansa bago mag-Hunyo 30. Ang prediksiyon ay sinabi ni Professor Guido David ng UP-Institute of Mathematics sa isang press briefing sa Department of Health noong Hunyo 11.

Tuwang-tuwa si Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque sapagkat katapusan na ng buwan at bigla niyang nasabi na “Panalo na tayo. We beat the UP prediction. We beat it! So congratulations, Philippines. Let’s do it again in July.”

Nakakatuwa naman talaga na hindi nangyari ang prediksiyon sapagkat nakapanlulumo ang 40,000 na kaso na kanilang sinabi. Pero malapit na rin ang bilang na iyon sa lumabas na kaso noong Martes na 37,514. Hindi rin naglalayo sa forecast.

Kung mapapaunti pa ang bilang ng kaso sa mga susunod na araw, dito lubos na mapapalundag sa tuwa ang mamamayan na sabik na ring mamuhay nang normal. Gusto na rin nang marami na makabalik sa dating sigla ang buhay at ganundin naman siyempre ang lakas ng ekonomiya.

Dapat paigtingin pa ang paghihigpit lalo sa mga lugar na mataas pa ang kaso ng COVID. Huwag hayaan ang mga nagkukumpol-kumpol para maiwasan ang paghahawahan. Higgpitan ang mga matataong lugar. Noong isang araw, dumagsa ang mga tao sa CCP complex para mamasyal. Nang bumuhos ang ulan, nagkumpulan sila sa shades at nawala na ang social distancing. Nagdikit-dikit na. Hindi pa dapat buksan sa publiko ang mga pasyalan o mga parke sapagkat dadagsain ito ng mga tao.

Huwag titigil ang mga awtoridad sa pagsaway sa mga walang face mask sapagkat napatunayan na ang face mask ang mabisang pananggalang sa droplets na may virus. Sa kasalukuyan, marami ang naka-face mask subalit hindi maayos ang pagkakasuot. May nakalitaw ang ilong at ang iba naman ay nasa dakong panga na. Mayroon din na nakasabit lang sa taynga ang face mask.

Narito pa ang kalaban at naghihintay pa ng mga mabibiktima. Huwag munang magkampante. Hindi pa dapat balewalain ang sinasabi ng mga awtoridad na mag-ingat para hindi mahawa ng virus. Kung hindi rin lang mahalaga ang gagawin sa labas, manatili na lamang muna sa bahay. Mas ligtas sa bahay. Kapag tuluyang bumaba ang kaso ng COVID dito tayo magsasaya.

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/opinyon/2020/07/02/2024960/editorial-huwag-munang-magsaya-di-pa-natatalo-ang-virus>

Co-exist, tame virus

Published 6 hours ago on July 2, 2020 12:07 AM

By [Francis Wakefield](#)



Urging an acceptance of the grim prospect of the world living with the highly contagious coronavirus for an undeterminate period, Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III sought the relaxing of the health protocols to modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) on Metro Manila and the CALABARZON (Cavite, Laguna Batangas, Rizal and Quezon).

Both regions which make up nearly 70 percent of the country's economic output are under GCQ in which most business establishments remain restricted.

The lead economic manager of President Rodrigo Duterte explained the need to boost the country's economy which was greatly affected by the lockdowns imposed due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic during the periodic Palace briefing on the health emergency situation Tuesday night.

Dominguez said moving both areas to a more relaxed MGCQ will help more people get back to their feet by allowing all businesses to reopen, which, in turn will benefit the economy.

"So we have to face the new reality. The reality today is that the virus is not going to go away. And we will have to live with it for a long period of time," Dominguez said.

"You know, you put NCR, CALABARZON, that is where the economy is based. About 67 percent of our economy is based on that area. Those places should move more to the MGCQ as quickly as possible because people have to start working."

"And I really believe, we really should begin opening," he added.

Barangay-level quarantine urged

Dominguez said if COVID-19 cases do go up after the restrictions are relaxed, barangay-specific lockdowns or isolation of offices could be implemented.

"Of course, for me, if... We should monitor it maybe on a barangay level and if you know, the cases go up, just close it down. But do it place to place. And do it also on a company-to-company basis.

So if a company has a big spike, close it down also," he said.

In his report, Dominguez also told the President that strong fundamentals allowed the economy to withstand the effects of the pandemic.

He said the Philippines was supposed to be an upper-middle income country by this year prior to COVID-19 but such prospect will now have to wait.

The country's growth has been 6.6 on the average — 6.6 percent per year on the average from 2016 to 2019.

“The inflation from 2016 to 2019 has been about three percent on the average, which is exactly where we are predicting — where we wanted it. We were in a strong fiscal position. We had the highest revenue and lowest death as a percentage of GDP,” he added.

Dominguez said the “Build, Build, Build” infrastructure program doubled in terms of its share to the gross domestic product (GDP) compared to the past five decades.

A-rating during crisis

“We averaged four and a half percent of GDP in 2019. On the average was only about two percent for 50 years of GDP. That’s spending on — on infrastructure,” he said.

“We had the highest credit rating ever. We got BBB+. And in one rating agency, the Japanese rating agency, we are actually A minus (A-). We had the lowest unemployment of 5.3 percent and underemployment of 14.8 percent in January of 2020. And the lowest poverty incidence of 16.7 percent ever in the Philippines starting on 2018,” he added.

Dominguez said when the President came into power four years ago, he promised to lift six million people out of poverty by 2022. And they were able achieved that in 2018.

“Our poverty rate when you came in was 23 and a half percent; and by 2018, it was 16.7 percent. And the dotted lines are what we were projecting “ he said.

Aside from Secretary Dominguez. other Cabinet secretaries present in the meeting were Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año, Presidential Peace Adviser Secretary and National Action Plan (NAP) against COVID-19 Chief Implementer Carlito G. Galvez Jr., Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, presidential spokesman Harry Roque and Senator Christopher Lawrence “Bong” Go.

Drilon back Dominguez

Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon agrees with Dominguez. “I’m afraid that any further delay in the easing of quarantine restrictions in these two economic centers will cause further damage to our economy and our people who have lost their livelihood,” Drilon said in a statement.

“The full opening of the economy in the country’s economy centers and the country’s seat of power, Metro Manila, is vital in our goal to revive the economy and provide jobs for our displaced workers,” he added.

The minority chief noted that bringing back normalcy in NCR and the CALABARZON will contribute largely to the national economy as most of the manufacturing special economic zones are located in the said regions.

He also mentioned Dominguez’s data citing that 67 percent of the national economy relies on the two regions.

On the other hand, Drilon asked the government to avoid implementing a “shotgun approach” against the COVID-19 pandemic noting the little efforts in containing the virus.

“What we see today is a shotgun approach to the pandemic, not an overall plan. It did nothing to contain the virus but only created fear among Filipinos and put the once strong and resilient Philippine economy to complete standstill,” he indicated.

Cebu recalcitrants scolded

During the appearance of the President with his Cabinet, the Chief Executive also approved the recommendation of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) to retain Cebu City under Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) due to the continued rise of COVID-19 cases there.

Department of Health Secretary Francisco Duque III made the announcement as he added Metro Manila remains under GCQ.

Mr. Duterte on Tuesday asked Cebu province residents to “shape up,” as he claimed that their area became a COVID-19 hotspot due to quarantine violators.

The President also appealed to Cebuanos not to be angry at him over his remark that they were “hard-headed” after their province saw a spike in the number of confirmed coronavirus cases.

“You have the highest. Cebu is now the hotspot for COVID. Why? Because many of you did not follow (the health protocols). So do not be angry at me,” Duterte said.

“Look, I am here to run government. I’m not here to stay forever. As a matter of fact, I am on my last two years. God, you better shape up,” he added.

Duterte earlier criticized Cebuanos for being too slow in complying with the national government’s measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 — a remark which hurt local officials.

Recently, a recent procession was held in Cebu City despite the prohibition on mass gatherings to lessen the risk of coronavirus transmission.

Residents of another subvillage are being investigated by authorities for violating health protocols during a fiesta celebration, as shown in photos and videos which circulated on social media.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu, who was tapped by President Duterte to oversee the government’s response in containing the spread of COVID-19 in Cebu City, warned that administrative cases will be filed against local officials linked to violations of quarantine restrictions.

City hall men infected

At least 71 Cebu City government officials and employees were found infected which included four who died, according Cebu City spokesman Rey Gealon.

“I am deeply saddened by the situation affecting our City Government workers who play a crucial role in our efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19,” Mayor Edgardo Labella said.

He added that more than 60 workers directly involved in responding to the outbreak have been affected. Four of them have died as a result of the disease. My deepest sympathies to their families and loved ones.

The four deaths were identified as incumbent City Councilor and former Congressman Antonio Cuenco, Engr. Fabiano of the Department of Public Services, Cebu City Health Department sanitary inspector Crisanto Ampler and a certain Garcia, a barangay health worker (BHW).

Gealon added that the death of former City Treasurer Arlene Rentuza is still being verified as to its cause.

Among the 67 city government workers infected by COVID-19, 12 were personnel of Cebu City Health Department, 19 were ambulance service employees and 36 BHW.

Hananeel Bordey
@tribunephil_hana
and Rico Osmeña
@tribunephil_rico

Gordon orders swift tests

Published 6 hours ago on July 2, 2020 12:05 AM

By [Michelle R. Guillang](#)



The testing of about 450 locally stranded individuals (LSI) temporarily sheltered at the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) PMO-NCR North in Port Area in Manila will be expedited to help them return to their home provinces immediately, Senator Richard Gordon, also the head of the Philippine Red Cross (PRC), said.

Gordon ordered swabbers sent to the area to take specimen samples.

The processing of LSI is hampered by health protocols which now requires a two-week quarantine period due to the spike in contaminations in provinces that had received LSI.

Provincial governments in the Visayas region stated LSI will be accepted only if they tested negative for COVID-19.

“Their trips were canceled because the province destinations declined to receive incoming residents and guests because of the pandemic,” PRC psychosocial services head Zenaida Paez-Beltejar said.

Some LSI were able to come home while the trips of about 200 were rescheduled two weeks later.

“Most of them were transient workers in NCR (National Capital Region), students and construction workers,” Paez-Beltejar shared.

Comfort for transients

PRC also set up a Rubb Hall or a large tent, to provide a decent accommodation facility to the LSI who used to sleep along the port’s passenger bay, using carton boxes as mats. The private group also regularly supplies hot meals to the LSI.

Also provided were a generator set for LSI who needed to charge their cellular phones and prepaid mobile load valid for one week so they could call their family members.

Welfare desks manned by PRC’s psychosocial team volunteers have been set up to attend to the psychological needs of the LSI.

“We will continue to provide assistance day and night to ensure the welfare of our countrymen. Great work to our staff and volunteers for their compassion and dedication to serve,” she said. Gordon’s family is also personally helping out with the PRC volunteers, she added.

Reignite ties with EU

Moreover, the lawmaker is calling for the strengthening of the country’s ties with the European Union (EU) especially during the existing challenging times.

“As the whole world battle with the coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19 pandemic, let us make this into an opportunity to reinforce our bilateral relations with other countries, to renew our ties with them, especially with the European community,” Gordon said.

He added that the EU has always been a friend and that it has always been helpful to the Philippines.

“While misunderstandings may have come up between our country and the European Union in recent years, it is time to mend our fences. We cannot ignore, especially in these difficult times, our friends from Europe.”

“Our country has been the recipient of numerous development assistance grants from Europe and they have also supported our projects in Muslim Mindanao,” he said.

The senator also shared that the PRC collaborates well with European national societies like the Red Cross in Germany, Spain, The Netherlands, Norway and Finland.

“They have always supported our disaster relief and management operations, immediately responding to our appeals for help whenever a disaster strikes in any part of the country,” he said.



According to the latest data on the DBM website, funds amounting to P374.89 billion have been transferred to state agencies and departments for their respective COVID-19 response efforts.

KJ Rosales

COVID releases hit P375 billion — DBM

(The Philippine Star) - July 2, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The national government has released almost P375 billion in funds for the implementation of measures against the coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) reported.

According to the latest data on the DBM website, funds amounting to P374.89 billion have been transferred to state agencies and departments for their respective COVID-19 response efforts.

DBM said P266.24 billion of the total allotment releases came from savings pooled following the discontinuance of programs, projects and activities in the 2019 and 2020 budgets.

Another P98.41 billion came from Special Purpose Funds, while the remaining P10.25 billion from regular agency budgets.

DBM said bulk or P200.98 billion of the total releases as of the end of June went to the Department of Social and Welfare Development for the implementation of the Social Amelioration Program.

This was followed by the Department of Finance (DOF), which received P88.52 billion. Of this amount, P51 billion was transferred to the Social Security System (SSS) for the Small Business Wage Subsidy (SBWS) program.

Another P37.02 billion was distributed as Bayanihan grants to local government units in order to improve their capacity in responding to the health crisis.

Meanwhile, funds released to the Department of Health (DOH) reached P48.23 billion, intended for the purchase of testing kits, personal protective equipment and medical supplies; hiring of medical staff; and other measures to contain the spread of the coronavirus in the country.

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) also received P12.58 billion, while the Department of Agriculture (DA) and Department of Education (DepEd) were given P11.1 billion and P10.91 billion, respectively.

Other agencies who received additional funds for COVID-19 response include the Department of National Defense (P1.16 billion), Department of Interior and Local Government (P747.93 billion), University of the Philippines- Philippine General Hospital (P400 million), Department of Trade and Industry (P203 million), Department of Science and Technology (P53.23 million), Department of Foreign Affairs (P5.09 million), and Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (P500,000).

Under the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act, which expired last June 25, President Duterte was authorized to discontinue programs in the 2019 and 2020 General Appropriations Act to generate savings for COVID-19 response.

He was also authorized to reallocate or realign cash, funds, investments, including unutilized subsidies held by government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCC) to address the health emergency.

Last week, Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez revealed that GOCCs have so far remitted a total of P149.2 billion in dividends since the beginning of the year to augment funds for COVID-19 response.

The government is also increasing its borrowing to bridge its budget deficit, which is expected to widen to P1.16 trillion or 8.4 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) this year.

Metro Manila to remain under GCQ until July 15

By Jerome Carlo R. Paunan Published on July 1, 2020

CALOOCAN CITY, July 1 (PIA) -- President Rodrigo Roa Duterte announced late Tuesday evening that Metro Manila will remain under general community quarantine (GCQ) until July 15 to curb the COVID-19 spread.

During his televised address multicast by the Presidential Communications and state media, the President stated his approval to place Metro Manila, the region that accounts for the majority of the COVID-19 cases in the country, under extended GCQ based on the recommendation of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF).

Duterte also announced the following areas under GCQ for the same period:

- Benguet Province;
- Cavite Province;
- Rizal Province;
- Leyte Province;
- Southern Leyte Province; and
- Cebu Province's Lapu-Lapu City, Mandaue City, Talisay City, and Municipalities of Minglanilla and Consolacion.

While only Cebu City remained under a more stringent enhanced community quarantine (ECQ), the President, however, placed the rest of the country under the most relaxed level of modified GCQ amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Duterte also took time to compare the residents of the City of Manila with that of other areas amid the lockdown.

"Ang Manila and the rest of the greater Manila area, medyo there was a substantial compliance. I wouldn't say that there were no violations. There were violations, but not in a scale I saw in other places," he said.

"Manila and its environment, maraming tao. Because sumunod sila, with few violations, we here in Manila [have] a very good chance of at least avoiding it because residents of Manila complied with lockdown rules, those in the capital have a good chance of at least avoiding [COVID-19]," he added.

As the President made his announcements, the country's COVID-19 cases rise to 37,514, with new cases totaling 1,080, which are the second highest single day tally, next to the 1,150 cases reported on June 23.

The death toll from the coronavirus, on the other hand, is now at 1,266, with 10,233 recoveries. (PIA NCR)

Cebu City, 'hotspot' of COVID-19, remains under

July 02, 2020

TITLE: ECQ; Metro Manila still under GCQ

PAGE 1/ 1/3

DATE

Cebu City, 'hotspot' of COVID-19, remains under ECQ; Metro Manila still under GCQ

Published July 1, 2020, 7:06 AM

by Genalyn Kabling

Cebu City will remain under the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ), the most stringent form of lockdown, as it became the "hotspot" of the new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) given the sharp surge in infections, President Duterte announced Tuesday night.



President Rodrigo Roa Duterte holds a meeting with the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) core members at the Malago Clubhouse in Malacañang on June 30, 2020. (SIMEON CELI JR./PRESIDENTIAL PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

The President has also kept Metro Manila and several other areas still under the more relaxed general community quarantine (GCQ) to stem the outbreak of the viral disease.

Most parts of the country will remain under modified general community quarantine (MGCQ).

The new quarantine classification of places will take place from July 1 to July 15.

In his televised address, the President approved the extension of the strict quarantine measures in Cebu City after lamenting the failure of the residents to observe health protocols. He reminded the people of Cebu City to "better shape up" and follow the rules to contain the spread of the infection.

"Ito yung enhanced community quarantine, ito 'yung pinakamataas kasi marami na ang taong may infection (The enhanced community quarantine is the highest form of quarantine because there are many people with infection). As a matter of fact, we know that the hospitals and everything there are having a hard time coping up," Duterte said. "Ang enhanced community quarantine, Cebu City. Kayo lang (It's only you)," he said.

According to the President, some people of Cebu have been "stubborn" after allegedly failing to observe the strict lockdown rules meant to slow down the transmissions. Others allegedly spotted drinking and gambling were also "nonchalant" to the coronavirus threat.

"Ngayon kita mo bakit marami? (Now you know why it has many cases?) Well, one of the reasons really I would say even without consulting the body because you did not follow rules. Hindi ganoon karami 'yan. You have the highest. Cebu is now the hotspot for COVID. Bakit? Eh wala mo musunod eh. Marami sa inyo hindi sumunod (Many of you did not follow the rules), the President said.

Cebu City, 'hotspot' of COVID-19, remains under

July 02, 2020

TITLE: ECQ; Metro Manila still under GCQ

PAGE 1/ 2/3

DATE

“Kaya huwag ninyo akong magalit-galit kayo sa akin (Don’t get angry with me). Look, I am here to run government. I’m not here to stay forever. As a matter of fact, I am on my last two years. God, you better shape up,” he said.

Duterte said the situation in Cebu City was unlike in Metro Manila and other areas where most residents have obeyed the quarantine rules for their own safety and health.

“Ang Maynila and the rest of the Greater Manila Area medyo — there was a substantial compliance (in Manila and rest of Greater Manila Area). I would not say that there was no violation. There were violations but not in a scale I saw in other places,” he said.

As of June 30, the health department has recorded 37,514 cases of coronavirus in the country with 1,266 deaths and 10,233 recoveries.

Areas under GCQ

Apart from National Capital Region, the areas under GCQ are Benguet, Cavite, Rizal, Lapu-Lapu City, Mandaue City, Leyte, Ormoc Southern Leyte, Talisay City, and the municipalities of Minglanilla and Consolacion in Cebu.

The GCQ areas are now fewer compared to the list of places last month after some have graduated to the MGCQ.

Areas downgraded to MGCQ

These areas that were downgraded to MGCQ are Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Santiago City, Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Tarlac, Olongapo City, Laguna, Batangas, Quezon, Occidental Mindoro, Bohol, Cebu, Negros Oriental, and Siquijor.

MGCQ areas

The places under modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) are Abra, Baguio City, Ifugao, Kalinga, Ilocos Norte, La Union, Pangasinan, Cagayan, Isabela, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Angeles City, Batangas, Laguna, Quezon, Lucena City, Palawan, and Puerto Princesa City.

Also under MGCQ are Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Naga City, Capiz, Iloilo, Iloilo City, Negros Occidental, Bacolod City, Cebu province, Bohol, Negros Oriental, Tacloban City, Western Samar, Zamboanga City, Zamboanga del Sur, Bukidnon, Misami Occidental, Misamis Oriental, Cagayan de Oro, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao City, Davao de Oro, Cotabato, South Cotabato, Agusan del Norte, Butuan City, Lanao del Sur, and Maguindanao.

In the report made by Health Secretary Francisco Duque III to the President, these MGCQ areas must have “strict local action” on localized community quarantine and zoning as well as strict enforcement of health standards. The concerned local government units must also scale up health system capacity as well as isolation facility of overseas Filipinos, locally stranded persons and close contacts.

Duque said other areas not mentioned in the list will be classified under the “low-risk” MGCQ.



Cebu City, 'hotspot' of COVID-19, remains under

July 02, 2020

TITLE: ECQ; Metro Manila still under GCQ

PAGE 1/ 3/3

DATE

The Philippines earlier gradually relaxed the lockdown measures in Metro Manila and other areas in a bid to jumpstart the economy. More businesses have been allowed to reopen while limited operations of public transportation are permitted in the community quarantine areas.

Early in the day, the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Infectious Diseases (IATF) approved the economic team's recommendations to "further open up the economy" while ensuring the public health amid the pandemic.

The government plans include more localized quarantine at the community level, strict enforcement of health protocols, optimized use of public transportation, and expanded testing efforts.

Duterte: Cebu City remains under ECQ

Published 1 day ago on July 1, 2020 03:01 AM

By [Francis Wakefield](#)



President Rodrigo Duterte on Tuesday night approved the recommendation of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) to keep Cebu City under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) due to the continued rise of COVID-19 cases there.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III made the announcement during their meeting in Malacanang.

Metro Manila also remained under general community quarantine (GCQ).

Other areas or provinces/cities placed under GCQ include Benguet, Cavite, Rizal, Lapu-Lapu City, Mandaue City, Leyte, Ormoc and Southern Leyte.

Duque, who acts as IATF chair, said GCQ will also be imposed in Talisay City, Minglanilla and Consolacion in Cebu province.

On the other hand, areas placed under a more loose modified general community quarantine include:

CAR: Abra, Baguio City, Ifugao and Kalinga;
Region 1: Ilocos Norte, La Union and Pangasinan
Region 2: Cagayan and Isabela;
Region 3: Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, and Angeles City,
Region 4A: Batangas, Laguna, Quezon and Lucena City;
Region 4B: Palawan and Puerto Princesa;
Region 5: Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur and Naga City;
Region 6: Capiz, Iloilo, Iloilo City, Negros Occidental and Bacolod City;
Region 7: Cebu Province, Bohol, and Negros Oriental;
Region 8: Tacloban City and Western Samar
Region 9: Zamboanga City and Zamboanga del Sur;
Region 10: Bukidnon, Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental and Cagayan de Oro;
Region 11: Davao del Norte; Davao del Sur, Davao City and Davao de Oro;
Region 12: Cobatabo and South Cotabato
Region 13 (CARAGA): Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur and Butuan City
BARMM: Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao

Duque said other areas not mentioned are included in the low risk modified general community quarantine.

p: wjg

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/01/duterte-cebu-city-remains-under-ecq/>

Cebu City to stay under ECQ, Metro Manila under GCQ -Duterte

Published July 1, 2020 12:08am

Updated July 1, 2020 12:30am

Cebu City will remain under enhanced community quarantine to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 in the area, President Rodrigo Duterte said on Wednesday past midnight.

Duterte said Metro Manila would also remain under general community quarantine as would nearby provinces Cavite and Rizal.

"Cebu is now the hot spot for COVID... Marami sa inyo hindi sumunod," Duterte said in a televised briefing following a meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases in Malacanang.

Prior to the President's announcement, the IATF informed the local government units about their possible quarantine status to give way to appeals.

Two weeks ago, Duterte placed Cebu City under enhanced community quarantine while its neighboring city of Talisay was placed under modified ECQ. The rest of the country was either under general community quarantine or modified GCQ.

Duterte earlier criticized the Cebuanos for being too slow in complying with the national government's measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. He described the Cebuanos as hardheaded and said they were too confident and complacent about the situation.

Though the residents eventually complied with the protocols, the arrival of overseas Filipino workers and stranded individuals from Metro Manila overwhelmed the city's quarantine facilities, resulting in more infections, according to Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, who was tasked by Duterte to oversee the containment measures in Cebu City.

Still, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Tuesday that the Philippines is doing "relatively well" in its handling of the public health emergency compared to other nations.

"We are happy that the Philippines went into a very early lockdown which actually helped prevent possibly hundreds of thousands of cases and thousands of deaths," WHO Representative in the Philippines Dr. Rabindra Abeyasinghe said in a televised briefing.

Abeyasinghe also urged the Philippines to strengthen its contact tracing, isolation and quarantining efforts.

"There is improvement in the last month but it's not keeping pace with the pace of the expansion of the testing capacity," he said. "Also, the compliance with the guidelines coming from the DOH [Department of Health] doesn't seem to be universally good." **-Virgil Lopez/NB, GMA News**

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/744928/cebu-city-to-remain-under-enhanced-community-quarantine/story/?utm_source=GMANews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR2CGtqIzyxv2xey_0We3lUYLpu12PT_H9Szde1l_4VCz2NGYszdLf6RBLg

IATF eyes intensified testing in Cebu City

By: Delta Dyrecka Letigio - CDN Digital|July 01,2020 - 05:43 PM

CEBU CITY, Philippines — The Interagency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-MEID) is planning to intensify the testing and contact tracing for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) patients to hasten the control of the rising cases in Cebu City.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque, III, said in a press conference in Mandaue City, Cebu, on July 1, 2020, that it is imperative for local government units (LGU) to conduct intensified testing in order to know the extent of the community transmission as well as the spread of the infection.

He also said that the bigger issue in Cebu City is its testing adequacy. As of now, the city only has a testing capacity of 6,000.

“Testing is a key measure that LGUs should endeavor, the less you test, chances are your positivity case goes up. One of the must-do is to test adequately,” said Duque.

Duque said this is one of the goals of the IATF to improve the situation of the city in the next 15 days of extended Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ).

Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Eduardo Año said in the same press conference that the country plans to hire 50,000 contact tracers to aid in the increased testing in the various local government units (LGUs).

The contact tracing is a delegated responsibility to the LGUs and the DOH do not really have a hand on it.

In Cebu City, [Mayor Edgardo Labella said](#) they have established 18 teams of contact tracers that have begun training on June 30, 2020.

The city targets 1,000 to 3,000 tests per day in order to reach the target of the IATF of 6,000 testing capacity.

“We are going into that direction (contact tracing). What is important is we are able to find out the extent of the infection of the pandemic,” said the mayor.

The mayor also said that the results of the test have been reduced from 72 hours to 48 hours allowing for faster testing, isolation of the patient, and contact tracing.

Coordinated release of info

The release of the results of this testing will also be coordinated better as the Department of Health in Central Visayas (DOH-7) said it will work in coordination with the Cebu City Health.

On June 30, 2020, City Health reported 353 new cases of the COVID-19 while DOH-7 reported only a hundred cases.

Labella said the cases were actually swabbed from June 22 to June 29, 2020, with an average of 38 new cases per day.

With this, the DOH-7 and City Health will work on a much more coordinated release of the information to avoid confusion.

Labella also promised that the cases per barangay will be reported again to the public, after they stopped reporting these since the beginning of June 2020.

However, Duque urged the LGU that only verified numbers must be released giving emphasis to active cases instead of total cases. /bmjo

'Titigas ng ulo': Duterte blames Visayans' 'stubbornness' for COVID-19 surge

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jul 01 2020 01:09 AM | Updated as of Jul 01 2020 08:14 AM

MANILA - President Rodrigo Duterte on late Tuesday night railed at the Visayan people for allegedly flouting lockdown rules that led to the surge of COVID-19 cases in their region.

In a streamed public address, the President said Cebuanos and Davaoños failed to comply with health guidelines set by the government to curtail the spread of the novel coronavirus.

"Mga Bisaya talaga, maski sa Davao, 'yung mga Bisaya doon, ang titigas talaga ng mga ulo. Hindi mo mapasunod. 'Yan ang totoo. 'Yan talaga, prangkahan ko kayo," he said.

"Masuko mo nako. Eh 'di masuko pud ko ninyo (You are angry with me. I am angry at you)."

"Do not F with me," he added.

Duterte said Cebu has emerged as a COVID-19 hotspot due to rising coronavirus infections there.

"Cebu is now the hotspot for COVID. Bakit?... Marami sa inyo ang hindi sumunod," he said.

Cebu City has recorded the most number of COVID-19 cases in the country, with 4,639 reported as of June 29. It is followed by Quezon City (3,212), Manila (2,309), Cebu (1,062) and Makati City (972).

Duterte also took to task Talisay City in Cebu, which he said was allegedly nonchalant on the risk of COVID-19.

"Talisay was like a market place everyday. Nag-iinuman kayo diyan, nagsusugal, almost nonchalant of the dangers that are lurking around," he said.

Meanwhile, the President praised Metro Manila and its neighboring provinces for obeying lockdown rules despite some violations.

"There was a substantial compliance. There were violations but not in a scale that I saw in other places," he said.

Data from DOH as of June 29 revealed that Metro Manila ranked first among regions for total number of COVID-19 infections, with 18,384 cases. It is followed by Central Visayas (7,255), Calabarzon (2,631), Central Luzon (942) and Davao Region (510).

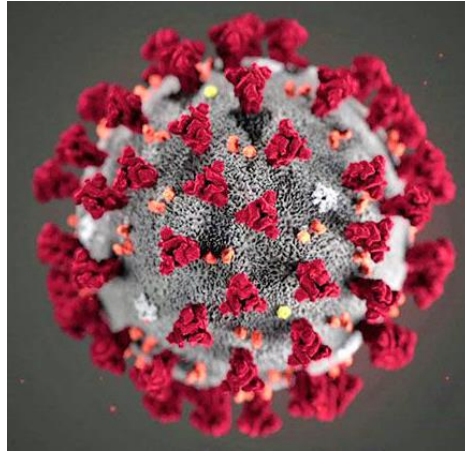
To date, the Philippines has recorded 37,514 coronavirus cases, of whom 1,266 have died while 10,233 have recovered.

Source: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/07/01/20/titigas-ng-ulo-duterte-blames-visayans-stubbornness-for-covid-19-surge>

E. Visayas cases breach 500

Published 1 day ago on July 1, 2020 04:50 AM

By [Elmer Recuerdo](#)



PALO, Leyte — The Department of Health (DoH) in Eastern Visayas confirmed on Monday that there are 25 new cases of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the region, which hiked up the region's total to 524.

The new cases were among the 547 laboratory results released by the Eastern Visayas Regional COVID-19 Testing Center 9 (EVRCTC) wherein 521 were cleared of the virus but the remaining 26 were marked positive, including a repeat swab of a patient admitted at the Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center (EVRMC).

The batch of tested specimens include 106 laboratory results of employees from EVRMC and 25 from DoH regional office that all turned out negative.

However, this also included the results of tests among locally stranded individuals (LSI), who were able to come home before the 14-day suspension on the return of LSI to the region which took effect in 28 June.

In Maasin City, Mayor Nacional Mercado confirmed that its four new cases were all LSI, bringing the number of cases in the Southern Leyte provincial capital to five.

Mercado said the patients are all in the city's isolation center and will be closely monitored by the local health personnel "so there is no chance to be in contact with the general public."

The EVRCTC said the 547 results were mostly from their backlog last week as the agency continues to be swamped with requests from the different local government units for laboratory testing of their suspected COVID-19 residents.

On Monday, EVRCTC announced there will still be a delay in the release of results due to the volume of samples that it receives daily, as it took in 480 samples on Monday on top of 2,500 other samples last week.

"We are doing our best to release these results as soon as possible. As of now, we are in the process of increasing our daily maximum capacity to 500. We are still using mostly manual RNA extraction which takes about 3 hours for 48 samples," the EVRCTC announced.

The EVRCTC also appealed to the local government units to organize their labeling and filling out of request forms to shorten the time in validating the specimens.

Gutom pangamba ng ilang residente sa pagpapalawig ng Cebu City ECQ

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Jul 01 2020 07:00 PM | Updated as of Jul 01 2020 08:22 PM

Nangangamba ang ilang mga taga-Cebu City dahil sa pagpapalawig ng enhanced community quarantine sa lungsod dahil wala na umano silang makain at wala silang hanapbuhay.

Isa rito si Amalia, na hinati ang dalawang ulam na talong sa walong miyembro ng kaniyang pamilya.

Kuwento niya, inutang pa niya ang pagkain sa isang kakilalang tindera.

Ngayong napalawig pa ang ECQ sa buong Cebu City, nangangamba siyang wala na talaga siyang makain sa mga susunod na araw.

Ganito rin ang agam-agam ng single mother na si Nanette Navarro, na kailangang pakainin ang siyam niyang anak.

Mas mamamatay anila sila sa gutom at hindi sa COVID-19.

Gabi ng Martes nang inanunsiyo ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na palalawigin niya ang lockdown sa siyudad, na itinuturing na high risk para sa virus.

Sinabi rin ni Duterte na matitigas umano ang ulo ng mga taga-Cebu City, bagay na sinang-ayunan ni Mayor Edgardo Labella.

Noong Martes din naitala ang pinakamaraming kaso ng COVID-19 sa loob lang nang isang araw na umabot sa 353.

Aabot na sa 5,494 ang nagkasakit sa COVID-19 sa siyudad.

“We have to face the reality that does not mean na hihinto tayo. We have to continue,” ani Labella.

Tingin ng ilang residente, gaya ni Johnray Villakima, lalabas talaga ang mga tao dahil kakaunti lang ang mga natatanggap na ayuda.

Ngayong naka-ECQ ang siyudad, mahigpit ang seguridad sa pagbabantay sa bawat barangay sa Cebu City.

— **Ulat ni Annie Perez, ABS-CBN News**

Helping Cebu fight COVID-19

[GO NEGOSYO PILIPINAS ANGAT LAHAT!](#) - [Joey Concepcion](#) (The Philippine Star) - July 2, 2020 - 12:00am

We are facing a big challenge in the economy at this point in time, that is why there is a certain urgency to contain the COVID-19 infection across the country.

Following a sharp increase in infections in the past few weeks, Cebu City is emerging as a new hotspot for COVID-19 in the country. The number of confirmed cases in the city passed the 5,000 mark by end-June, leaving the government no choice but to put the city under strict lockdown.

Last Tuesday, we met with chief implementor of National policy on COVID-19 Carlito Galvez Jr., Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources Roy Cimatu, House Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, CCCI President Felix Tagium, Go Negosyo mentor and CCCI past president Virgilio "Nonoy" Espeleta, and different conglomerates and business chambers in Cebu. During the meeting, Go Negosyo - through our initiative, Project ARK - expressed our commitment to support and extend help to the province of Cebu with hopes to better mitigate the surge of COVID-19 cases.

To stem the rapid rise of cases, I believe that the key here is a more surgical approach. Like Metro Manila, Cebu may have to lock down the entire area first and get the infection rate under control. Once the number of infections stabilizes, the city can consider a more granular lockdown approach. This is something I've been advocating to the President the past few months. In this approach, certain barangays with high infection rates will remain under lockdown, while quarantine rules may be eased for the rest of the city. This is so that economic activity may continue and businesses may resume operations.

No one wants to see Cebu fail, because down the road, we want to re-open the tourism sector that will bring in the jobs that are desperately needed at this time. It is critical for the private and public sectors to work hand-in-hand with urgency so that we can bounce back at the soonest possible time. The private sector will work with the IATF and different chambers, while the government, under the leadership of Sec. Galvez, will continue to construct more COVID-19 facilities.

We are currently working with the Philippine Society of Pathologists Inc. (PSPI) and Philippine Children's Medical Center (PCMC) to study and validate the accuracy of pooled PCR testing, which can also help in the mapping of the spread of infections in Cebu.

Pooled testing was first mentioned to me by ARK-PCR private chief implementor and former health secretary Rep. Jannette Garin. I strongly believe that RT-PCR pooled testing is a game-changer. It has the potential to increase the country's testing capacity while bringing down costs since it utilizes more swabs but fewer test kits.

With the support of Rep. Garin, we hope to bring expanded pooled testing to Cebu that will test 10,000 individuals and gain better visibility of the virus. Instead of going in blind, the visibility from testing will allow us to approach and respond to the problem better. We have to make sure that the situation does not worsen. We must try our best in opening the economy as quickly and as safely as possible. Testing is the only way. Testing, tracing, and isolating cases are key.

Another thing we had discussed during a dialogue with government officials and business leaders was to put up dialysis centers inside various malls in Cebu. This strategy stems from Sec. Galvez's request if we can help to set up dialysis center in malls. I immediately requested Rep. Garin to study this. To help the government in setting up dialysis centers, I got the CCCI and other business organizations involved to further talked steps in making this possible.

Instead of hosting renal patients in quarantine centers, individuals who need to undergo dialysis may do so at the malls. Here, they are safely protected from COVID-19 patients, limiting the risk of exposure and infection.

The malls are a good place to set up dialysis centers as long as they meet the 90-sqm requirement. A temporary facility can be set up in seven days and this can be converted into something more permanent after two weeks. We're exploring this with our partners in the private sector.

"Basically, it's providing a center that will temporarily serve (patients) and will be converted into a permanent (one), where non-COVID patients can be protected and their dialysis sessions will be ongoing," Rep. Garin said.

In the virtual meeting led by ARK project lead Josephine Romero, SM Investments Corp.'s Tessie Sy-Coson also expressed her support for this new initiative. Our other Big Brother partners who seek to back this effort include Wilcon Depot founder and chairman Emeritus William Belo, Aboitiz Equity Ventures President and CEO Sabin Aboitiz, LT Group president and COO Michael Tan, PCCI chairman Emeritus George Barcelon, Fil-Indian Chambers of Commerce chairman Rex Daryanani, and other members of CCCI.

In this time of crisis, it's very hard to tell how the future will be. The private sector and the government have worked hand-in-hand over the past few months, building a great partnership that is committed to addressing the pandemic. However, without a cure in the pipeline, for now, we have to learn to coexist and live with the virus.

In the end, all our efforts are aimed at giving hope to the people who have lost their jobs and whose businesses are running out of capital. We have to give them a plan. If we don't put the health situation under control, we will not be able to help people save their jobs and their livelihoods. As many know, numerous companies and MSMEs are facing a tremendous challenge - how to stay afloat during this pandemic.

Cebu and the whole country will definitely rise above this challenge. And we can do it with sound planning and strategy. Aside from tackling the surge of infection rates, we are also facing a huge economic challenge ahead of us. We must plan, work, and move forward with urgency, taking sure but cautious steps. Together with the government as partners, I'm sure we will succeed.

I believe Cebu City will stay on ECQ

[SHOOTING STRAIGHT](#) - [Valeriano Avila](#) (The Freeman) - July 1, 2020 - 12:00am

It is now the first day of July and we already learned that the Department of Health-7 would recommend to the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) to place Cebu City under General Community Quarantine (GCQ) after June 30. This was the recommendation of DOH-7 spokesperson Mary Jean Loreche, the same recommendation they had before June 15. She said that it is also their recommendation that sequential lockdowns be implemented in barangays and sitios with high number of COVID-19 cases. Of course, this is the best scenario but is the IATF buying it now that we have a high number of cases? Spokesperson Loreche added that the DOH-7 believes the entire city should not be locked down so that the economy will have a chance to recover.

I also believe in this theory. However, we learned that as of June 29, the Philippines has logged 36,438 cases of novel coronavirus, along with a death toll of 1,255. If you looked into our fatality rate for a nation with more than a hundred million people, that is a very small figure. With the strict implementation of safety protocols like wearing of masks and social distancing, the IATF must now focus on reviving the economy. Meanwhile, we are still in ECQ. I heard many netizens who are obviously anti-Duterte questioning, for instance, why Sec. Roy Cimatu brought along the PNP Special Action Force (SAF) troopers with heavy arms and armored personnel when it is obvious to us that this invisible enemy cannot be stopped by guns. Clearly, they are just trying to ridicule President Duterte even if they know very well that the SAF is not here to fight COVID-19 but take over the barangay tanods who failed to secure their borders. If SAF got here on time, that procession in Alumnus, Barangay San Nicolas wouldn't have happened.

At this point, I would like to believe that despite the recommendations of DOH-7, Cebu City would stay in our ECQ level

for at least 15 days until July 15. But we must prepare for the shift to a GCQ, which still means we would still be in community quarantine.

* * *

It seems that the Department of Tourism (DOT) released the results of the "Philippine Travel Survey: Insights on Filipino Travel Behavior Post-COVID 19" during a webinar on Monday. That report said that at least 77% of the respondents of a local online survey that seeks to define the "new normal" expressed their willingness to travel domestically even in the absence of a proven vaccine against COVID-19.

There is no question that a great majority of Filipinos are willing to travel within the country once restrictions are lifted.

The survey results also showed greater domestic confidence on the probability of domestic travel within six months from lifting

restrictions compared to international travel. Among the top destinations travelers said they would visit after the quarantine are Boracay, Siargao and Baguio. But don't get your hopes up too high as they would only travel after this pandemic is over. Now when is that?

* * *

In our stay-at-home routine, we get all news and online talks from all over the world. The United States would have another presidential elections three months from now, and the untimely death of George Floyd created a massive anti-police protest rallies all over the US. Unfortunately, this was hijacked by the Anti-Fascist (Anti-Fa) groups that ended up with street violence, looting stores, burning cars and man handling police officers.

Then came the Black Lives Matter (BLM) groups headed by a Marxist person who wanted to eliminate history by destroying statues of famous people like US First President George Washington who he had slaves during that time. They ended up even defacing and toppling down of statues of people who supported the abolition of slaves.

They even tore down the Statue of St. Junipero Serra in San Francisco. the founder of California. Now they want to tear down the statues of Jesus Christ and Mama Mary because they are white. This is nothing new; the Bolsheviks did this in Russia when the Communists took over. Now they want to go on election via email. Know too well that electronic elections, like what happened to the Philippines, would not happen in America. No doubt America is turning to communism until the American people stop this nonsense.

* * *

For email responses to this article, write to vsbobita@mozcom.com or vsbobita@gmail.com. His columns can be accessed through www.philstar.com.



FACE MASK MAS EPEKTIB KAYSA LOCKDOWN LABAN SA COVID-19

July 1, 2020 @ 8:47 AM 22 hours ago

Pinakamabisa sa ngayon ang face mask bilang sandata laban sa pagkalat ng coronavirus disease-19 habang wala pang bakuna o gamot dito.

Mas epektibo umano ito kaysa lockdown.

Ito ang lumabas na resulta ng mga eksperimento o pag-aaral ng mga doktor at nars sa America at England.

Pero ang face mask ay dapat na ginagawa nang tama at mabuti upang maging talagang epektibo.

N95 FACE MASK.

Ayon sa pag-aaral, pinakamaganda talaga ang N95 dahil sinasala nito ang 95 porsyento ng mga talsik ng laway o anomang katulad nito na pumapasok sa ilong o bunganga.

'Yun bang === naiwan ang 95 porsyento sa labas ng face mask ang laway o anomang sinasakyan ng virus o bakteria ng alikabok o pollutant para lumipat mula sa isang maysakit patungo sa walang sakit.

Kaya naman, hindi basta makapapasok nang ganoong kadali ang virus o bacteria na pinagmumulan ng nakahahawang sakit.

Ligtas ka sa COVID-19 ng 95 porsyento kapag may kausap ka o may kalapit kang may taglay ng naturang sakit na umuubo, nagbabahing at iba pa.

SURGICAL MASK

Ang surgical mask o ang karaniwang nakikita nating suot ng mga doktor at nars sa mga ospital ay mabisa rin.

Ito'y dahil may nakahalang kemikal na panlaban sa virus o bacteria.

May dalawang kulay ang surgical mask.

Ang may kulay umano ang may kemikal na anti-virus o bacteria.

Kapag isinuot mo ito at wala kang sakit pero ayaw mong mahawa ng sakit mula sa iba, nasa labas ang may kulay.

Ngunit kung ikaw ang may sakit, ang may kulay ang dapat na nasa loob o nakadikit sa iyong mukha upang hindi ka makahawa.

Nilalaban ng kemikal ang paglabas ng virus o bacteria mula mismo sa iyong ilong o bunganga.

Mas mahina ang proteksyon mo sa surgical mask kaysa sa N95 kaya hindi pupwedeng ito ang gamitin ng mga doktor at nars laban sa COVID-19.

Ang N95 ang kailangan nila.

Kung meron kang pambili nito, mas maganda.

TELANG FACE MASK

Gaya ng binabanggit natin, halos zero ang proteksyon natin mula sa face mask na gawa sa simpleng tela at isang layer o single na tela lamang laban sa pagkahawa mula sa isang positibo sa COVID-19.

Kung may epekto man nang kaunti, walang iba kundi ang pagkakapigil nang konti ng talsik ng laway natin kung tayo'y nagsasalita, umuubo at bumabahing.

Pero kung gawa ito ng tatlong banig, kahit papaano, may proteksyon umano tayo na 60 porsyento sa pagkahawa o manghawa kaya.

Rekomendasyon ng mga nag-eksperimento at nag-aaral na doktor at nars, gumamit ng tela na gawa ng cotton, plastik at hindi basta nababasa na tela gaya ng polyester.

Ang cotton o gawa sa bulak ang kakapitan ng ating droplet o talsik ng ating laway sa pagsasalita, pag-ubo o pagbahing.

Ang plastik na may butas-butang gaya ng pinambabalot sa mansanas ang ilalagay sa pangalawa o gitnang parte para hingahan natin.

Ang polyester naman na hindi basta nababasa ang nasa ikatlo o nasa labas na bahagi upang tumalsik o hindi basta kakapit ang virus o bacteria.

Kapag binaligtad mo ang pagsusuot ng ganitong may tatlong banig na face mask, anak ng tokwa, kakapit ang talsik ng laway sa cotton o bulak at diyan na gagapang ang virus o bacteria sa mukha, sa ilong, bunganga at mata natin.

WAEPEK DIN LAHAT

Heto pa ang lumabas sa pag-aaral.

Anak ng tokwa, waepek din lahat ng ito kung maya't maya ay hinahawakan natin, tinatangal at isinasauli ang mga face mask.

Lalo na kung hindi tayo naglilinis o nagdi-disinfect ng kamay kahit sa anong paraan gaya ng paggamit ng sanitizer, alkohol o tubig.

Imadyinin na lang natin na maya't maya ay nangungulangot o nagpupunas tayo ng laway o kaya'y nagtatanggal ng muta, ang mga droplet na may virus o bacteria na kumapit sa ating mga kamay, marami man o kakaunti, ay maipapasok natin sa ating mga ilong, bunganga at mata.

Paktay tayo ryan sa COVID-19.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Kung kakambalan natin umano ng social distancing ang pagsusuot ng face mask, aba, mas magaling pa umano ito na pamigil sa hawahan sa COVID-19 kaysa sa lockdown ng isang lugar.

Heto ang ilang dapat tandaan.

Ang virus o bacteria ay sumama sa mga talsik ng laway natin ng hanggang 13 piye at nagtatagal ang buhay ng mga ito sa ilang oras o hanggang sa pitong araw, depende sa init o lamig ng panahon at kinakapitan ng mga ito gaya ng tela, plastik, pera, salamin, bakal, kahoy at iba pa.

Kaya naman, sa social distancing ay dapat na malayo ang isa't isa.

Hindi rin tayo dapat kapit nang kapit o hawak nang hawak sa anomang bagay.

Pero ito ang problema: 'yang kapit-kapit at hawak-hawak.

Paano mo iiwasan ang kumapit at humawak sa mga kapitan sa umaandar na escalator at elevator at hagdan ng mga gusali?

Paano mo maiwasan ang paghawak ng pera sa suklian sa pamimili o pautangan?

O basta gawin natin ang lahat ng makakaya natin upang hindi tayo mahawa at makahawa sa COVID-19.

Tiny virus, big numbers

Published July 1, 2020, 5:22 PM

by Jullie Y. Daza

MEDIUM RARE



On June 30 Tuesday, 11 COVID-19 deaths were reported and recorded. In the last five years, the number of deaths in the Philippines has been placed at 236 a day or 7,085 each month, based on a population of 109 million.

Putting those figures in context, a chart showing 650 coronavirus deaths after 54 days comes down to 12 a day, which “is very much like the rate of those dying of flu.” (In the US, as of June 30, a total of 128,819 died from the virus; more than 130 Americans die from an opioid overdose daily, 3,900 monthly, 46,800 yearly.)

Where are we today? The numbers are seen rising with Cebu, the city and the province, emerging as a hotspot. Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, the guy who swept out the Boracay cesspool, was appalled that “from 20, 30 cases” the virus has infected 5,000, with 30 out of 100 persons testing positive: “Too high!” The Visayas and Mindanao are also reporting more infections. However, Secretary Harry Roque declares triumphantly that we have just beat the UP prediction of “40,000 cases by June 30,” i.e., by a close shave of about 3,000. At the same time, it’s not comforting to hear that many of our neighbors in Asia have kept their fatalities rate low, like zero to triple digits.

How did Vietnam keep out the virus? How did Taiwan protect its borders and people? Our embassy in Hanoi and the Manila Economic and Cultural Office (MECO) in Taipei could cite examples of their anti-COVID-19 struggles over there and share them with us, no offense to our IATF. In Taipei, as shown on a short segment of a US entertainment show, anyone walking around the city without a mask is fined \$33,000. In Metro Manila, quoting Prof. Guido David of the UP Institute of Mathematics, some 8,000 people who were not tapped or caught by a thermal scanner are casually walking around — “naglalakad lang sila” – without a care in the world. We have reached the stage of community transmissions, “nakakahawa” as pointed out by DOH Undersecretary Ma. Rosario Vergeire.

UP projects 27,000 infections in NCR by end-July, 70,000 nationwide. The virus is too pernicious, too tiny to be locked out.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/01/tiny-virus-big-numbers/>

PH needs 760-MW renewable energy projects annually until 2030

By Kris Crismundo July 1, 2020, 6:58 pm



Solar energy farm in Currimaos, Ilocos Norte (PNA photo by Leilanie G. Adriano)

MANILA – Investors in the renewable energy sector are urged to look into opportunities in the Philippines as the country targets to achieve the 15,304-megawatt (MW) renewable capacity by 2030.

During the German Energy Week online forum of the German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Wednesday, Renewable Energy Association of the Philippines (REAP) president Erel Nerida said the country needs at least 760 megawatts installed renewable energy capacity annually until 2030 to hit the target under the National Renewable Energy Program.

Nerida said installed capacity in 2019 reached 7,399 MWs.

This means that only 1,961 MWs of renewable energy was added in a decade from the country's existing renewable capacity of 5,438 MWs in 2010.

"Growth and development on renewable energy segment for installed generating capacity have been recently flat, averaging 5-percent increase after a jump of 12 percent in 2016 as compared to coal averaging almost 17 percent annually for the last five years," Nerida said.

While access to financing remains the main challenge in investing in renewable energy technology, excessive bureaucracy and transmission infrastructure are also some of the challenges faced by industry players in venturing to renewable energy projects.

"Sustainable energy does not only mean to build more renewable energy plants to address the increasing demand, but it should also go hand-in-hand with energy efficiency and conservation," he added.

Nerida also encouraged industries to look into productive use of renewable energy, such as solar water pumping system for irrigation of rice and high value crops, as well as water desalination and purification; renewable energy-powered rice thresher and mobile rice mill in agriculture, and food production; cold storage facilities; sprinkler system; and coffee pulper. **(PNA)**

Japan begins charging for plastic bags

Published 16 hours ago on July 1, 2020 02:21 PM

By [Agence France-Presse](#)



Much of Japan's recycling involves incinerating plastic -- a process that generates carbon dioxide and contributes to climate change (AFP)

Retailers in Japan began charging for plastic bags Wednesday, a move aimed at curbing Japanese consumers' love for packaging and finally bringing the country in line with other major economies.

Shops including the ubiquitous convenience stores can decide how much to charge customers for the bags, with a common price being three yen (around three US cents).

The new rule seemed to be having some effect, with one shopper telling public broadcaster NHK: "I buy things at a convenience store every morning. I knew the charge was starting so I brought my own bag."

Visitors to Japan are often surprised by the amount of packaging involved in even the most basic of transactions — most convenience stores wrap individual bananas in plastic.

The country produces more plastic packaging waste per capital than any nation apart from the United States, according to the UN, with campaigners criticizing Tokyo for moving too slowly on reducing plastic consumption.

With the measure, Japan has vowed to "curb excessive use of plastic and think about how to use it wisely," according to its most recent policy document.

Introducing a nationwide fee "is aimed at prompting people to think twice if a bag is really necessary and helping people to review their lifestyles," the government said.

In 2018, Japan vowed to reduce its annual 9.4 million tonnes of plastic waste by a quarter by 2030.

And meeting in Osaka last year, leaders from the G20 major economies agreed to reduce marine plastic waste.

Japan touts an enviable waste-management system, and the government says more than 80 percent of its plastic waste is recycled.

But much of that "recycling" involves simply incinerating plastic, often to produce energy — a process that generates carbon dioxide and contributes to climate change.

According to government data, bags account for two percent of the total amount of plastic waste.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/01/japan-begins-charging-for-plastic-bags/>

Japan begins charging for plastic bags

posted July 01, 2020 at 03:15 pm

by [AFP](#)

Retailers in Japan began charging for plastic bags Wednesday, a move aimed at curbing Japanese consumers' love for packaging and finally bringing the country in line with other major economies.



This photo taken on June 24, 2020 shows a cashier standing next to a sign reading "No shopping bag" to encourage customers to use fewer plastic bags at a supermarket in Tokyo. Retailers in Japan began charging for plastic bags on July 1, a move aimed at curbing Japanese consumers' love for packaging and finally bringing the country in line with other major economies. AFP

Shops including the ubiquitous convenience stores can decide how much to charge customers for the bags, with a common price being three yen (around three US cents).

The new rule seemed to be having some effect, with one shopper telling public broadcaster NHK: "I buy things at a convenience store every morning. I knew the charge was starting so I brought my own bag."

Visitors to Japan are often surprised by the amount of packaging involved in even the most basic of transactions -- most convenience stores wrap individual bananas in plastic.

The country produces more plastic packaging waste per capita than any nation apart from the United States, according to the UN, with campaigners criticising Tokyo for moving too slowly on reducing plastic consumption.

With the measure, Japan has vowed to "curb excessive use of plastic and think about how to use it wisely," according to its most recent policy document.

Introducing a nationwide fee "is aimed at prompting people to think twice if a bag is really necessary and helping people to review their lifestyles," the government said.

In 2018, Japan vowed to reduce its annual 9.4 million tonnes of plastic waste by a quarter by 2030. And meeting in Osaka last year, leaders from the G20 major economies agreed to reduce marine plastic waste.

Japan touts an enviable waste-management system, and the government says more than 80 percent of its plastic waste is recycled.

But much of that "recycling" involves simply incinerating plastic, often to produce energy -- a process that generates carbon dioxide and contributes to climate change.

According to government data, bags account for two percent of the total amount of plastic waste.



Japan begins charging for plastic bags

Published July 2, 2020 3:43am

TOKYO, Japan - Retailers in Japan began charging for plastic bags on Wednesday, a move aimed at curbing Japanese consumers' love for packaging and finally bringing the country in line with other major economies.

Shops including ubiquitous convenience stores can decide how much to charge customers for the bags, with a common price being three yen (around three US cents).

The new rule seemed to be having some effect, with one shopper making sure she brought her own bag.

"There are lots of issues now, like the environment and global warming. Each of us needs to be more aware of these issues, and that is why I am carrying my own shopping bag," Yoshimi Soeda, 66, told AFP outside a Tokyo store.

"I am worried. I want plastic bags and containers for food to be changed to something more environmentally friendly, although it may not be so easy."

Visitors to Japan are often surprised by the amount of packaging involved in even the most basic of transactions -- most convenience stores wrap individual bananas in plastic.

The country produces more plastic packaging waste per capita than any nation apart from the United States, according to the United Nations, with campaigners criticising Tokyo for moving too slowly on reducing plastic consumption.

With the measure, Japan has vowed to "curb excessive use of plastic and think about how to use it wisely", according to its most recent policy document.

Introducing a nationwide fee "is aimed at prompting people to think twice if a bag is really necessary and helping people to review their lifestyles," the government said.

In 2018, Japan vowed to reduce its annual 9.4 million tons of plastic waste by a quarter by 2030.

And at a meeting in Osaka last year, leaders from the G20 economies agreed to reduce marine plastic waste.

Japan touts an enviable waste management system, and the government says more than 80 percent of its plastic waste is recycled.

But much of that "recycling" involves simply incinerating plastic, often to produce energy -- a process that generates carbon dioxide and contributes to climate change.

According to government data, bags account for two percent of the total amount of plastic waste. -- **Agence France-Presse**

Gobyerno ng Nepal, may pabuya sa mga manghuhuli ng pesteng balang o kuliglig

Hulyo 1, 2020 7:03pm GMT+08:00

Dahil sa perwisyong dulot ng mga balang o kuliglig sa mga palayan, nag-alok ang pamahalaan ng Nepal ng pabuya sa mga manghuhuli ng naturang peste.

"Our decision is aimed at encouraging people to catch the insects instead of using pesticides which might be harmful to the environment," sabi ni Agriculture ministry spokesman Khagendra Prasad Sharma sa Agence France-Presse.

Bawat isang kilo ng mga mahuhuling balang o kuliglig ay babayaran ng 25 rupees o \$0.21.

Nahuhuli ang mga insekto gamit ang kulambo na inihaharang sa kanilang paglipad.

Mas madali rin daw mahuli ang mga ito sa gabi.

Sa nakalipas na tatlong araw, nasa 10 kilong balang na umano ang nakolekta sa Butwal, .

"They are being collected in other areas too. Depending on the volume, they might be used as feed for chicken and livestock," ayon sa province official na si Yam Narayan Devkota.

Maging ang mga magsasaka sa Pakistan ay nanghuhuli rin ng bala para ibenta sa kanilang mga opisyal. Ginagawa umanong chicken feed ang mga peste.

Ayon sa agriculture ministry ng Nepal, wala pa namang matinding pinsala sa kanilang taniman pero nais nilang agapan ang problema.

Nagiging sakit din ng ulo ang balang sa East Africa, Arabian Peninsula at bahagi ng India.

Nangangamba ang mga eksperto na dadami pa ang bilang ng peste pagsapit ng panahon ng tag-ulan.--AFP/FRJ, GMA News

These tortoises saved their species from extinction.
TITLE: Now they're back home

PAGE 1/ 1/3

July 02, 2020
DATE

These tortoises saved their species from extinction. Now they're back home

Megan Marples, CNN • Published 1st July 2020

(CNN) — Island life is treating 15 recently released giant tortoises well as they settle back into their home island after decades in a captive breeding program.

The tortoises, 12 female and three male, have been busy saving their species from extinction. Now they're slowly getting back to their roots on Española Island in the Galapagos, commingling with more than 2,300 descendants stemming from the program.

Representatives from the Galapagos National Park Directorate and Galapagos Conservancy returned the 15 tortoises to their home island on June 15. Each tortoise was outfitted with a GPS satellite device so the researchers could track their movements each day.

Washington Tapia, director of the Giant Tortoise Restoration Initiative through Galapagos Conservancy, has been tracking their whereabouts since they returned to the wild.



The 15 giant tortoises returned to Española Island in mid-June saved their species from extinction.
Andrés Cruz/GTRI - Galapagos Conservancy

"It's amazing because all of them are in the same place," Tapia says. "Two females moved around one mile from the (original) place."

Tapia says tortoises tend to move when they need to find food and since they dropped them off in a location with a large food source -- Opuntia cacti -- they won't need to move for nearly a month.

When they do move, Tapia says he is interested to see how the male tortoises will interact with the younger male tortoises they reintroduced to the island over the past decades.

One returning giant tortoise, named Diego, contributed to approximately 40% of the offspring repatriated to the island. His return came nearly 80 years after he was removed.

For the past 55 years of the program, which is located on Santa Cruz Island, the hatchlings were transferred to Española at around five years old. Over the years, the breeding program reintroduced 1,900 tortoises into the wild. Today, there are over 2,300 tortoises due to the natural reproduction occurring on the island.

These tortoises saved their species from extinction.
Now they're back home

TITLE:

PAGE 1/ 2/3

July 02, 2020
DATE



Diego fathered around 40% of the offspring brought to the island.

Andrés Cruz/GTRI - Galapagos Conservancy

The returning females weigh an average of 77 pounds and the males weigh close to 120 pounds.

While the final transfer of the giant tortoises happened in mid-June, it was originally supposed to occur in March. The trip had to be pushed out three months due to the pandemic.

Prior to the transfer, Tapia said the tortoises had to undergo two months of quarantine -- but not because of the coronavirus.

The food that the tortoises eat leaves seeds in their digestive system. It's a great way to keep the ecosystem thriving, according to Tapia, but it can also introduce foreign plants to the island.

Once the quarantine was over, Tapia led the team that transferred the tortoises to their final home. It was a bittersweet moment for Tapia, who had worked closely with the tortoises over the years.

"It's like when you send your children to university," Tapia says. "You are happy but at the same time you are sad."



The giant tortoises were carried to Las Tunas, where there's a large number of Opuntia cacti, or prickly pears.

Andrés Cruz/GTRI - Galapagos Conservancy

The tortoises were transferred at the end of the rainy season, which was the last possible moment they could've been moved, according to Tapia. When the dry season kicks in, it's harder for the tortoises to find food.

If they couldn't make the transfer in June, Tapia said they would've had to delay the transfer by a year.

These tortoises saved their species from extinction.

July 02, 2020

TITLE: Now they're back home

PAGE 1/ 3/3

DATE

In six months, a team will visit Española to see how the tortoises are adjusting.

In addition to the GPS devices on the animals, researchers also placed 40 motion-triggered cameras around the island. Unlike the GPS data, they are unable to access the cameras until they visit the island.

Tapia has worked with the tortoises for years and said he is excited to look at the camera footage and see how they adapt to their new home.

Created in the mid-1960s, the Española program is among the world's most successful captive reproduction and breeding programs.

The tortoises' return to the island marks the program's official end.

Beavers are gnawing away at the Arctic permafrost,
and that's bad for the planet

TITLE :

PAGE 1/ 1/3

July 02, 2020
DATE

Beavers are gnawing away at the Arctic permafrost, and that's bad for the planet

By [Katie Hunt](#), CNN

Updated 1602 GMT (0002 HKT) June 30, 2020



A beaver swims in a pond near the Tonsina River, Alaska. The master builders are enjoying a dam-building boom in parts of the Alaskan tundra where they previously haven't been established.

(CNN) The beaver may be an unlikely agent of climate change, but the cuddly-looking creatures are transforming the Arctic landscape in a way that could be exacerbating global warming, a new study has suggested.

With their sharp teeth, beavers fell trees and shrubs and build dams, which flood small valleys and form new lakes that can cover several hectares of land.

These new water bodies contribute to the thawing of the frozen permafrost soil, which is a huge natural reservoir of methane — a potent greenhouse gas.

Scientists are concerned that as the permafrost degrades, the climate-changing [methane and carbon leak into the atmosphere](#).

In the past few years, scientists have spotted beavers in the Alaskan tundra where they've previously never been seen before — and the animals have been enjoying a dam-building boom in their new neighborhood, according to the study of high-resolution satellite imagery published in the journal *Environmental Research Letters* Monday.

They also seem to be building their dams and creating new lakes in the very locations that are most likely to intensify the thawing of the permafrost.

"We're seeing exponential growth there. The number of these structures doubles roughly every four years," said Ingmar Nitze, a researcher from the Alfred Wegener Institute, Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research in Potsdam, Germany, and author of the study.

"Their methods are extremely effective."

The study found that the number of beaver dams in a 100-square-kilometer area surrounding the city of Kotzebue, northwest Alaska, increased from just two in 2002 to 98 in 2019 — a 5,000% increase. Beaver dams in the larger, 430-square-kilometer area on Alaska's Baldwin Peninsula have increased from 94 in 2010 to 174 in 2013 and 409 last year.

"It's possible to see them and spot them (the dams) in the imagery. It's also possible to see the development of lakes. They had a distinctive signal," said Nitze.



Beavers are gnawing away at the Arctic permafrost,
and that's bad for the planet

TITLE :

PAGE 1/ 2/3

July 02, 2020
DATE

Blame it on the beavers?

Several different factors explain why the beavers have occupied a region they wouldn't normally call home, said Nitze. One is climate change, which is altering the typically treeless tundra.

"We see an increase in vegetation. There are more shrubs coming in there so all the stuff beavers need to build their dams, or as food, is there," he said. Furthermore, the lakes, which used to freeze solid, now offer friendlier conditions for beavers, as a result of their thinner seasonal winter ice cover

The tundra is also not the beavers' usual habitat so they face no predators or competition for resources, plus the animals are better protected now by US federal law and hunted far less by humans than they used to be.



Beavers erected a dam and lodge in a small stream north of Nome, southern Seward Peninsula in western Alaska.

Because the lakes the beavers create contain water that is warmer than the surrounding soil, the new bodies of water accelerate the permafrost thawing.

"The thing about permafrost is that water interacts very strongly with the frozen ground beneath it," Nitze said. "The more surface water you have, the worse it is for the permafrost--because in the winter the cold air cannot penetrate again into the ground, and the water stores a lot of the heat and can even penetrate it into the ground," he said.

Lakes and water bodies influenced by beavers accounted for two-thirds of the 8.3% increase in total surface water area in the Kotzebue study area during a 17-year period, the study found.



Beaver dams created in lakes contain water that is warmer than the surrounding soil. They form new bodies of water that accelerate permafrost thawing.

The beavers also seemed to intuitively target drained lake basins, turbocharging the impact they had on the landscape and the permafrost.

"It's a special landscape. There's typically a lot of lakes but they are dynamic so they can drain and leave a lot of basins ... and these beavers are smart enough to block the outlet and refill the basin again. They dam up a lot of area with minimum effort."

Nitze said the beaver dam-building boom was also likely taking place in the Canadian tundra, and could also be happening in Siberia.

Beavers are gnawing away at the Arctic permafrost,
and that's bad for the planet

TITLE:

PAGE 1/ 3/3

July 02, 2020
DATE

"We're working to expand the analysis on a bigger scale."

Some climate scientists think that [we are underestimating the warming effect of the thawing permafrost](#).

"There are a lot of people trying to quantify methane and CO2 emissions from lakes in the Arctic but not specifically yet from beaver lakes," said Nitze.

"It's a very new topic and something we have uncovered over the past few years. Beavers can have a quite significant impact on these landscapes, so there's no real quantification yet for these lakes but it will be done in the future."

Correction: *An earlier version of this story misstated a year in the timeline of beaver dam increases on Alaska's Baldwin Peninsula.*

Most Asian markets up despite virus fears

Published 18 hours ago on July 1, 2020 11:29 AM

By [Agence France-Presse](#)



Eyes are on economic recovery as countries press ahead with the easing of lockdowns. (Photo: CA Finance)

Markets mostly rose in Asia on Wednesday as investors looked past spiking virus infections and warnings of a US surge in the disease, with eyes on the economic recovery as countries press ahead with the easing of lockdowns.

Traders took their lead from another rally on Wall Street, which was lifted by a forecast-beating jump in US consumer confidence, while eyes were also on the release later this week of key jobs data out of Washington.

And while equities are considered unlikely to kick on unless a major breakthrough in a vaccine is made, analysts said the trillions of dollars in government and central bank support continues to provide support.

In the United States, Donald Trump's top virus expert warned Congress that new daily cases could more than double unless officials step up efforts to control the pandemic.

"Clearly we are not in total control right now," Anthony Fauci said. "I would not be surprised if it goes up to 100,000 a day if this does not turn around."

He warned that a jump in infections in Texas and Florida are driving the daily national total to more than 40,000, and they need to be tamped down quickly to avoid dangerous surges elsewhere in the country, adding that the final death toll could be "very disturbing".

His comments come as some states reimpose measures only recently lifted, while reports of new clusters in several countries including Australia, Germany and Japan fuel worries of a second wave.

Still, there was a feeling that a return to widespread lockdowns seen earlier in the year was unlikely.

"The next couple of weeks may tell us much about how the rest of the pandemic develops as the renewed wave of the virus in some US states is starting to weigh on economic activity," said AxiCorp's Stephen Innes.

"But the restoring lockdowns so far are mostly concentrated on the service sector of the southern and western states. It certainly prolongs the rebound of the service sector, but the impact is much less than the first lockdown in March."

'Fear of missing out'

He added that some metrics indicated the death rate was much lower in the US.

“The optimist in me looks for potential drivers, including better medical treatment, healthcare systems that are no longer overwhelmed, younger patients, and mutation of the virus,” he said.

In early trade, Shanghai was up 0.4 percent, while Seoul rose one percent, Sydney added 0.7 percent and Singapore gained more than one percent.

Taipei put on 0.8 percent, though Manila, Wellington and Jakarta were all lower.

Tokyo went into the break with a loss after a closely watched Bank of Japan survey showed that confidence among the country’s biggest manufacturers had hit its lowest level since 2009 during the global financial crisis.

Hong Kong was closed for a holiday, though investors were keeping tabs on the city on the anniversary of the handover to China and after Beijing introduced a sweeping security law to prevent further unrest in the financial hub after a year of protests.

Markets have surged about a fifth from their March lows, thanks to the easing of lockdowns, improving economic data and the huge financial support.

And Rodrigo Catril, of National Australia Bank, said the worry of missing out on further gains is playing a role in continued support for prices.

“The fear of missing out, along with the need to put cash to work against a stimulus deluge backdrop, continues to be the overwhelming force, notwithstanding worrying virus infection rates and warnings from experts,” he said in a note.

Oil prices jumped more than one percent as investors cheered news that Saudi exports had tumbled in June, indicating it was sticking to a massive output agreement with other major producers including Russia.

It shipped 5.7 million barrels a day last month, compared with 6.2 million in May, a drop equivalent to seven full supertankers over the month.

Stop gap

Published 6 hours ago on July 2, 2020 12:04 AM

By **WJG**



Social distancing is not exclusive to humans. To wild animals, it is instinctive, though they do it privately in their forest or mountain realm so people don't always see or notice it. Between man and animals, distancing is also observed in a zoo for safety.

The purpose of physical distancing among humans is for safety — to avoid catching viruses from others. To wild animals, the distancing is to avoid getting preyed on and turned into another animal's meal.

Livestock, pets, circus animals and carriage horses transporting tourists in Manila's Binondo and Intramuros districts are the only animals that mingle with man. Familiarity with each other and interdependence have shed their unfriendly barriers.

Of late, social distancing between humans is being vigorously encouraged and followed in light of the coronavirus pandemic. However, the distance is only at least one meter and up to six feet, which is difficult to comply with in highly populated cities like Metro Manila.

Meanwhile, social distancing between animals and humans are reminded in zoos and wildlife parks. The applicable distance at Yellowstone National Park in California, USA is three to 91 meters, depending on the kind of animal.

Park officials and rangers always remind campers, hikers and visitors to be 23 meters away from all large animals, such as bison, elk, bighorn sheep, deer, moose and coyotes, and at least 91 meters away from bears and wolves.

But as in social distancing to avoid infectious diseases, including COVID-19, there are people who ignore such warnings. So, when a 72-year-old woman tried to take a picture of a bison by approaching multiple times to within 10 feet of it, the animal reacted in self-defense by goring her several times on 25 June.

Park rangers administered first aid to the badly wounded woman before she was airlifted to a hospital. Her condition as of this writing is unknown.

It's unfortunate that the bison attack happened. Ironically, the old lady was able to survive the pandemic, but only to put her life in danger by ignoring social distancing with a wild animal.