



Cimatu: Cebu now better in complying with protocols

By Jan Karla MadrioPublished on July 3, 2020

<https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1046558>

CEBU CITY, July 3 (PIA) -- Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, the Chief Implementor of the COVID-19 response in the Visayas, has noted the improved compliance of Cebuanos to the imposed minimum public health standards and quarantine protocols.

“Hind na po katulad ng sinasabi nila na hindi sumusunod ang mga Cebuanos sa patakaran,” said Cimatu during the recent Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) press conference held in Mandaue City, Cebu.

Cimatu made the observation after his team’s almost two weeks of surveillance of the cases in the city.

This change of attitude paired with better uniform data reporting of cases are the game changers of Cebu City’s approach in countering the pandemic, he said.

“End Cebu’s Quarantine should be our new meaning of ECQ,” he added as the chief once again appealed for the continued cooperation of Cebuanos to the government’s measures in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new meaning of ECQ, according to Cimatu, should be the Cebuanos’ new mindset in fighting the pandemic.

Meanwhile, the IATF is optimistic that the situation here will soon get better as more medical practitioners are coming to augment both public and private hospitals, said Health Secretary Francisco Duque III in the same press conference.

Duque said around 30 physicians have expressed their desire to help Cebu.

On top of this, DOH Central Visayas has just deployed 200 more nurses and 40 doctors to private and public hospitals handling COVID-19 cases.

Continued leveling up of health and medical interventions like aggressive testing, proactive contact tracing, and decongesting of hospitals will remain the top priorities of the IATF to ensure that strict quarantine in Cebu will soon end.

(jktm/PIA7)



Divisions among political leaders, doctors hampering COVID-19 fight in Cebu City –Galvez

Published July 3, 2020 9:36pm

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/745398/divisions-among-political-leaders-doctors-hampering-covid-19-fight-in-cebu-city-galvez/story/>

“Divisions” among political leaders and even doctors in Cebu City are affecting the direction the city is taking in its battle against the COVID-19, the chief implementer of the National Task Force Against COVID-19 said.

According to a report by Ian Cruz on “24 Oras,” Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. appealed to the city’s political leaders to set aside their difference and work toward a common direction in dealing with the pandemic.

“There is yung tinatawag nating division, nakikita natin, and this is my call to everyone: Yung mga doktor hindi nagkakaisa, yung mga politiko hindi sila nagkakaisa. Isantabi muna natin yung politika,” Galvez added.

Cebu City was brought back to the stricter enhanced community quarantine due to the spike in number of COVID-19 cases in the city. The Department of Health also earlier said the four major hospitals in the city are “nearing critical point” in terms of resources like isolation beds, intensive care unit rooms and mechanical ventilators.

Galvez hailed the move of **Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu**, the overseer of COVID-19 response in the city, to try to unite all local leaders by gathering and talking to the city’s some 80 barangay chairmen.

The setting up of the NOAH Center along the South Road Properties will provide a command center on actions related to COVID-19.

The New Normal Oasis for Adaptation and a Home (NOAH) will serve as the city’s isolation center for asymptomatic and mild patients.

Meanwhile, Dr. Rabindra Abeyasinghe, World Health Organization representative to the Philippines, noted issues about the people’s compliance with health protocols in Cebu City.

“It becomes clear that compliance with quarantining guidelines and procedures were not optimum in Cebu. It becomes clear there has been some degree of stigma and people refusing to get tested, to practice isolation and quarantining, and all of these issues have contributed to increased transmission,” he said.

As of July 3, cebu City has a total of 5,824 COVID-19 cases, the report said.—LDF, GMA News



DENR-10 picks Bukidnon creek as 'Rivers' award reg'l winner

By Ercel Maandig July 3, 2020, 7:24 pm

<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1107918>

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY-- The Panlibatuhan Creek in Valencia City, Bukidnon, emerged as the regional winner in the recently- concluded regional search for Recognizing Institutions and Individuals Towards Vibrant and Enhanced Rivers (Rivers) for Life Award for the year 2019.

The award, announced by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Region 10 (DENR-10) the winner Friday afternoon, was need to protect and conserve rivers in the country.

DENR-10 Executive Director Arleigh Adorable said Valencia City Mayor Azucena Huervas received a plaque of recognition for having been instrumental in the improvement of water quality in the Panlibatuhan Creek, and for promoting solid waste management and sustaining partnership and community cleanups.

"The winner will be the official entry of DENR-10 for the National search for 2020," Adorable said.

The Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Clenro) of Valencia City was also awarded a plaque of appreciation for its "invaluable contribution" in the rehabilitation of Panlibatuhan creek and pursuing "environmental awareness and activism" in the locality.

The award's criteria include aesthetics and water quality improvement, solid waste management, partnership or community mobilization, and information education campaign.

Adorable said the contest's runners-up are the Manuto River in Quezon, Bukidnon, and Umalag River in this city.

The winning rivers are classified by Environmental Management Bureau as "Class C" or those assessed to be safe for the propagation of aquatic fish, boating, fishing, and other uses in agriculture, irrigation, and livestock watering. (PNA)



Black-winged endangered bird rescued in NoCot

By Edwin Fernandez July 3, 2020, 3:22 pm
<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1107849>



RESCUED. The Black-Winged Kite Bird (*Elanus caeruleus*) is turned over to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources 12 by a farmer from Kabacan, North Cotabato on Thursday (July 2, 2020). The bird showed no signs of injury. (Photo courtesy of DENR-12)

COTABATO CITY – Environment officials lauded a resident of North Cotabato for turning over on Thursday afternoon a juvenile Black-Winged Kite Bird (*Elanus caeruleus*) recently rescued in Kabacan town.

Bai Khadija Bayam-Benpolok, information chief of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) 12 (Soccsksargen), said the bird was turned over to Calil A. Bantuas, chief of the Matalam Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO), by Kenneth Balbin, a farmer residing in Barangay Malamote in Kabacan.

Balbin told environment officials he rescued the bird while it was being attacked by a group of crows in a rice field near his house.

A female friend of Balbin posted it on her social media page on Thursday morning, calling DENR personnel to take custody of the bird.

DENR-12 officials immediately went to the area to secure the wild bird.

Forester Rosalie P. Gasmin, chief of CENRO-Matalam's conservation and development section, said the black-winged bird showed no signs of any injury.



Black-winged endangered bird rescued in NoCot

“The wild bird is currently under the custody of the DENR office and will be released back to the wild on Monday (July 6) if it is ready,” Bantuas said in a statement Friday.

The bird is categorized globally as “species of least concern” by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and evaluated as not being a focus of conservation.

Meanwhile, DENR-12 officials also announced the confiscation of 3,074 board feet of illegally-cut forest products in Alamada, North Cotabato.

Badjury H. Mustapha of CENRO-Midsayap said the “hot” lumber, composed of the “Lauan” and “Gmelina” species, were cut in the mountains of Alamada. (PNA)



Nickel Asia, among first responders with donation of over P50M

By The Manila Times July 4, 2020

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/07/04/public-square/nickel-asia-among-first-responders-with-donation-of-over-p50m/737511/>

NAC mining firms respond to virus with P50 million in aid

posted July 03, 2020 at 07:40 pm by Manila Standard

<https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/327660>



Community Organizer Allan Bando Jr. from Hinatuan Mining delivers food packs to Sitio Campandan, Hinatuan Island, Surigao del Norte.

Nickel Asia Corp. (NAC) acknowledges the threats of any possible crisis in communities by immediately activating the company’s built-in system of methodically responding to any emergency.

So, when President Rodrigo Duterte declared the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) on March 15 in response to the threat of Covid-19, NAC through its subsidiaries – Cagdianao Mining (CMC), Dinapigue Mining (DMC), Hinatuan Mining (HMC), Rio Tuba Nickel Mining (RTN) and Taganito Mining (TMC) with Emerging Power Inc. (EPI) and Cordillera Exploration Inc. (CEXCI) – started expending more than P50 million from these companies’ realigned social development management program (SDMP) and corporate social responsibility funds.

Mining companies regularly assume the role of ‘first-responders’ during natural calamities such as typhoons and/or earthquakes, ensuring that the people in the mining communities get the necessary assistance they need. And the threat of Covid-19 was no difference.



Nickel Asia, among first responders with donation of over P50M

The SDMP is a five-year plan budgeted to use as tool for the implementation of development programs in the mining communities, which the **Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB)** has allowed to be realigned to assist the mining companies' host communities during the pandemic.

The accumulated P50M were used in part to buy sacks of rice, food packs, vitamins, and medical supplies such as alcohol and hand sanitizers that were distributed to thousands of families and frontliners. Some of the funds were used to build isolation and disinfecting facilities and to fund the extensive information campaign necessary to educate the communities about the pandemic and how they can be protected from the virus.

The Emergency Response Teams (ERTs) and Community Organizers (COs), whose members are regular employees of these mining companies, were immediately deployed to help the people cope with the health crisis.

"Food is the first requirement during a crisis, then medicine and first-aid kits, you have to have a steady supply of these to make the people feel protected, then everyone needed guidance and information so we provided those too," says Engr. Arnilo Milaor, resident mine manager for CMC.

A separate budget of P18M was turned over to the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) to build a molecular testing laboratory in Surigao City to support the province's efforts for early detection of Covid-19 cases.

"The lab will be built with the P18M funding from Taganito HPAL Nickel Corp. and from NAC subsidiaries – TMC and CMC. The host province of Surigao del Norte will provide the location while PRC will be the lead in the overall operations of the facility," explains Engr. Artemio Valeroso, resident mine manager for TMC.

As 'first responders', the mining companies also took care of the challenge of the face masks – the first supply to run out in the early days of the ECQ. NAC companies contributed more than 50,000 washable face masks and face shields allowing residents and frontliners.

"It is in our DNA as responsible miners, to be present at every opportunity to protect the people in the mining communities, we are mandated by law yes, but our support go above and beyond," says Engr. Francis Arañes, Jr., resident mine manager for HMC.



An extinct shark's fossil tooth as big as a palm is found in Bohol

ANCX | Jul 03 2020

<https://news.abs-cbn.com/ancx/culture/spotlight/07/03/20/an-extinct-sharks-fossil-tooth-as-big-as-a-palm-is-found-in-bohol>



A megalodon tooth fossil was recently discovered from the Bohol municipality of Maribojoc. Photo from NM Bohol Area Museum on Facebook

To cap off Philippine Environment Month in June as well as a campaign to #CelebrateTheSea, the National Museum Bohol presented a megalodon fossil tooth that was discovered recently in the municipality of Maribojoc. This is the second time a megalodon tooth has been found in the fourth class municipality, which counts fishing and agriculture as its main sources of livelihood.

Found by Maribojoc local Christian Gio Bangalao, the fossil tooth measures 7.6 cm by 6.5 cm, taking up most of its discoverer's palm. The young man found it in the inland barangay of Jandig, and donated it to the museum on May 28.

According to a Facebook post by the National Museum Bohol, the recent discovery is part of its Shark Encounters in Bohol series. "So far in the Philippines, only the teeth are found. Like other sharks, most of their skeleton, except for their teeth, is made of not bone but cartilage (like our nose and ears), which doesn't preserve well in the fossil record," says the Facebook post. "Consequently, their bodies never become fossils, and almost all things we know about the animal (size, diet, etc.) are based from their teeth."

Belonging to an extinct family of megatoothed sharks called the Otodontidae, the Megalodon lived about three million years ago during the early Miocene to



An extinct shark's fossil tooth as big as a palm is found in Bohol

Pliocene period. Since information about the Megalodon is based on fragmentary remains, its size and appearance are not certain. Previous estimates have pegged its length from 10.5 meters to 18 meters, or from 34 feet to 59 feet—a tad shorter than the one in the 2018 blockbuster directed by Jon Turteltaub. In that movie, which grossed USD 530 million worldwide, Jonathan Statham was dealing with a creature that measured 90 feet.

You may also like:

While megs are now extinct, local fishermen can still find modern shark pups at the mouth of Abatan river in Barangay Lincod, Maribojoc. “This could mean that the area could be a nursery for some sharks. Use of estuaries as nurseries is a known aspect of shark behavior,” the post continues. “As apex predators, sharks are important in maintaining the balance of our oceans' ecosystems. In this light, shark nurseries are essential habitats that must be conserved.”

Megalodon fossils have been found all over the world, mostly in subtropical to temperate latitudes: Europe, Africa, the Americas and Australia. The megalodon was also said to be transient. In the Philippines, Megalodon specimens have been found in Cagayan and Pangasinan apart from Maribojoc. These Megalodon specimens are currently displayed at the National Museum of Natural History in Manila, along with the first meg tooth found in Bohol, which was discovered by Venjo Busalla in Maribojoc's town plaza in 2018.

“There are still a lot we do not know about the sharks of Maribojoc, past and present, but they remain as an important part of the town's unique natural heritage,” according to the Museum's post.



Environment groups also hit Harry Roque for patronizing 'captive' dolphins'

By Catalina Ricci S. Madarang July 3, 2020 - 12:51 PM

<https://www.interaksyon.com/trends-spotlights/2020/07/03/172086/environment-groups-also-hit-harry-roque-for-patronizing-captive-dolphins/>



This composite shows presidential spokesperson Harry Roque's encounter with the dolphins at Ocean Adventure park, July 1, 2020. (Facebook/Ocean Adventure Subic Bay)

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque was once again criticized for his Subic trip, this time, by environmental organizations that took issue with the captive endangered dolphins in the photos.

In a statement issued on Facebook on July 2, environmental group Earth Island Institute in the Philippines raised its concern on Roque's patronage to Ocean Adventure Park in Subic, Zambales, which allegedly uses the marine animals for entertainment.

"There are businesses, most especially small and micro enterprises, that require the much-needed boost and support from the government. But instead, Secretary Roque seems to be favoring big businesses that support captive animal entertainment," EII campaign spokesperson Mark Louie Aquino said.

The group also alleged that since 2005, five bottlenose dolphins, one sea lion and "Tonka", the last false killer whale, have died in the facility of Ocean Adventure Park.

EII had also been calling for its management to release the captive dolphins for years.

"We urge the government to revoke the operating permit of Ocean Adventure, hold Secretary Roque to account, and free the remaining dolphins and marine mammals in the facility immediately. The 'new, sustainable normal' must now be to keep wild animals in the wild," Aquino said.



Environment groups also hit Harry Roque for patronizing ‘captive’ dolphins’

Another environment group called Balyena, which conducts research about whales and dolphins in the country, bared on Facebook that dolphin captivity for entertainment shows has been a long-standing issue in the Philippines.

The organization also re-shared EIIC’s post which includes Roque’s photos with captive dolphins.

“Sharing this because we do not support facilities keeping dolphins in captivity and dolphin shows. This has been a long-standing issue in our country,” Balyena said.

“Despite all the laws in-place, somehow facilities like this remain operational. The ill-timed visit of a government official during a time like this and all other issues considered leaves us extremely disappointed,” it added.

Roque came under fire and was also poked fun at on Wednesday after photos of him at the ocean park taking a dip with the dolphins circulated on Twitter and Facebook.

The presidential spokesperson defended himself against the criticisms and noted that tourism is already allowed in Zambales after being declared as among the places under modified general community quarantine.

Roque also considered himself as an “authorized person outside residence” or APOR, which are front-liners required to work during the pandemic.

Laws that protect dolphins and other endangered animals

The EII said bottlenose dolphins, that Roque was seen “touching” in one of the photos, were among the marine species cited in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora or CITES that Philippine laws prohibit to possess.

The CITES is an international treaty between governments that aims to “to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.”

The Philippines has been among the 183 signatories since August 18, 1981.

Species of dolphins and whales, including bottlenose dolphins, are listed in Appendix II of CITES.

The Fisheries Code of the Philippines, which was amended by Republic Act 10654, meanwhile, states that all aquatic species listed in Appendix II of CITES should be protected and conserved.

This was particularly stated in section 102 (b), wherein:

“It shall be unlawful to fish, take, catch, gather, sell, purchase, possess, transport, export, forward or ship out aquatic species listed in CITES Appendices II and III if scientific assessments show that population of the species in the wild cannot remain viable under pressure of collection and trade.”



House panel looking at banning single-use plastics

By Romeo A. Mataac, Jr. Published on July 3, 2020

<https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1046544>



The technical working group led by Velasco met on Tuesday to discuss the consolidated bills aiming to regulate the production, importation, sale, provision, use, recovery, collection, recycling and disposal of single-use plastic products. (FILE PHOTO)

BOAC, Marinduque, July 3 (PIA) -- A technical working group (TWG) looking into several proposals prohibiting the single-use plastic products filed with the House of Representatives is moving towards banning the non-essential single-use plastics in the country in order to promote and preserve a safe and healthy environment, according to Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Velasco.

The TWG, led by Velasco, met on Tuesday to discuss the consolidated bills aiming to regulate the production, importation, sale, provision, use, recovery, collection, recycling and disposal of single-use plastic products.

The TWG is under the House Committee on Ecology, which is headed by Zamboanga Rep. Glona Labadlabad.

Velasco, who chairs the House Committee on Energy, is a proponent of one of 33 bills filed in Congress seeking to ban the single-use plastics, in accordance with the provision of the Constitution that mandates the State to “protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.”

The Marinduque lawmaker’s bill, House Bill No. 2396 or the Ban of Single-Use Plastics Act, is also in line with President Rodrigo Duterte’s pronouncement to prohibit the use of plastics nationwide.



House panel looking at banning single-use plastics

“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,” Velasco said.

“We will try our best to come up with a bill that will ensure a healthy and safe environment for the generations to come,” he added, as he called on stakeholders to submit their position papers to help the panel craft a “very balanced bill.”

The final version of the proposal will incorporate the Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) to ensure the retrievability of plastics, according to Velasco, a certified diver himself who have witnessed the extent of the environmental damage caused by plastics.

Under the definition of the Overseas Economic Cooperation and Development, EPR is a policy approach in which producers are given the financial or physical responsibility for the treatment and disposal of post-consumer products to prevent wastes at the source, promote product design for the environment, and achieve public recycling and materials management goals. (RAMJR/PIA-MIMAROPA)



P8 na singil sa kada kilo ng hahakuting basura sa Boracay, pinalagan

By Bombo Radyo Kalibo July 3, 2020 | 8:27 PM

<https://www.bomboradyo.com/p8-na-singil-sa-kada-kilo-ng-hahakuting-basura-sa-boracay-pinalagan/>

KALIBO, Aklan – Pinag-aaralan pa ng lokal na pamahalaan ng Malay, Aklan ang panukalang pagsingil ng P8 sa kada kilo ng hahakuting basura sa isla ng Boracay at buong bayan ng Malay.

Ayon kay Malay Mayor Frolibar Bautista na layunin nito na mabawasan ang mga basurang hinahakot araw-araw mula sa mga resorts, hotels, restaurants, at iba pang establimento komersiyal at kabahayan, kung saan, halos mapuno na ang kanilang sanitary landfill.

Problemado rin aniya sila sa kanilang bayarin sa pribadong kompanyang naghahakot ng basura lalo na sa isla.

Ang naturang panukala ay pinalagan ng mga residente at grupo ng mga negosyante sa Boracay.

Sa position letter ng Boracay Foundation Incorporated (BFI) at Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI)-Boracay na kaisa sila ng gobyerno sa pagligtas sa kalikasan pero masyado umanong mabigat ang P8 singil sa kada kilo ng basurang hahakutin.

Sinabi naman ni Yapak Barangay Captain Hector Casidsid na hindi ito napapanahon sa harap ng epekto sa turismo ng coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.



Filipino makes it to list of top climate crusaders

Published July 3, 2020, 10:39 AM by Jaleen Ramos

<https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/03/filipino-makes-it-to-list-of-top-climate-crusaders/>

A Filipino program leader for the United Nations Environmental Program made it to the list of people leading the insurance industry's response to climate change.



Butch Bacani (Photo courtesy of Insurance ERM / MANILA BULLETIN)

Butch Bacani, 46 years old, has been working at the UN International based in Geneva, Switzerland for almost 14 years.

He leads the UN Environment Programme's Principles for Sustainable Insurance Initiative (PSI), the largest collaboration between the UN and the insurance industry.

Launched at the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development, the PSI is a global framework for the industry to address sustainability issues and to build resilient, inclusive and sustainable communities and economies.

With his career in the insurance industry and as an avid scuba diver, Bacani said he wanted to use his professional experience and passion for sustainability to tackle global sustainable development challenges without turning his back on his country.

"I'm from the Philippines, one of the most biologically diverse countries, and situated in the Coral Triangle— the global centre of marine biodiversity," Bacani said. "But the Philippines is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. I grew up in a country that was once one of the most prosperous nations in the Asia-Pacific, but then suffered from political instability, economic decline, human rights violations, social inequality, and environmental degradation for many years."

"In short, I had direct experiences with many sustainability issues," he added.



Filipino makes it to list of top climate crusaders

Bacani also leads activities supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the Financial Stability Board's climate risk disclosure recommendations (TCFD).

He co-led the development of the first global sustainability guide for the insurance business, led the creation of the Insurance Industry Development Goals for Cities, forged the PSI's partnership with the world's inclusive insurance community, and co-led the creation of UNEP's Sustainable Insurance Forum for supervisors and regulators.

Bacani is involved in the InsuResilience Global Partnership, Vulnerable 20 Group of Finance Ministers, Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Initiative, California Climate Insurance Working Group, Insurance Development Forum, and Microinsurance Network.

He also suggested two steps that the insurance industry needs to take to improve its response to climate change. "First, implement the TCFD recommendations across insurance and investment activities. Second, decarbonize insurance and investment portfolios and steer them in a way that they are aligned with the aims of the Paris Agreement and the SDGs."

Bacani decided to live car-free and mostly only walk to do errands to reduce his climate impact.

He said he only uses his bike when he goes to work, and only takes public transportation if walking or biking is impractical.

Bacani also said he lives in a small flat that uses renewable energy.

"My diet is mainly focused on grains, vegetables, fruits, and sustainable seafood. I use reusable bags for groceries and wear many clothes that I've had for years. I strive to reduce consumption and waste and recycle and upcycle as much as possible," he said.

"Most recently, I upcycled some of my old jeans and they've now become my baby daughter's very cool playmat!" he added.

Bacani said he is optimistic that the world can still avoid the worst effects of climate change.

"While the 2018 IPCC report highlights the rapid, far-reaching, and unprecedented changes needed to limit global warming to 1.5°C, it also means that we could still achieve that goal," he said.

"But that window will not be open forever, and the clock is ticking. So we need real leadership, ambitious and urgent action, radical collaboration, and stubborn optimism at all levels of society," he added.



Angeles City highlights efforts vs climate change

By Marie Joy S. Carbungco Published on July 3, 2020

<https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1046531>

ANGELES CITY, July 3 (PIA) -- The city government has laid down initiatives in its war against climate change.

Mayor Carmelo Lazatin Jr. said that recently, the United Nations Habitat has chosen Angeles City as one of its partner-cities in the Building Climate Resiliency thru Urban Plans and Designs Project (BCRUPD).

“Based on the assessments done by the city’s BCRUPD Technical Working Group, the city will experience water shortage in the coming years. This in turn will primarily affect our agricultural produce. Thus, we have to ensure food security and climate change adaptation,” Lazatin said.

With this, the city includes among its adaptive strategies a pilot demonstration project in Barangay Margot where more trees can be planted to help lessen the negative effects of water scarcity to the farmers and to the whole population.

The planting of more trees, Lazatin said, will protect water aquifers.

“We will also increase our ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, so as not to affect our food production,” the mayor said.

Earlier this year, the city government ordered the installation of ten garbage bins and the daily clearing of the garbage transfer station in Barangay Sta. Teresita.

The city is also planning to start the city-wide implementation of waste segregation at source this year.

In addition, the city also supervised the clearing of roadways and sidewalks in all 33 barangays, giving back the pedestrian to the public.

Records from the City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) showed that from July to December 2019, the city collected PhP377,400 in apprehension fines for different environmental violations including anti-littering, open burning, anti-smoking, plastic ordinance, solid waste management, open dumping, mending ordinance, environmental constraint, water quality and septage, and illegal cutting of trees, among others.

“The Anti-Smoking policy had the highest number of violations, with 176 fined establishments and individuals recorded,” the local chief executive said.

In closing, he said that to sustain its war against climate change, CENRO will continuously monitor and implement strict environmental rules, as well as conduct clean-up drive along waterways in Sapang Balen, and Abacan River and maintenance of eco-gardens and playgrounds in various barangays. (CLJD/MJSC-PIA 3)



Power barge explosion leads to massive oil spill on Iloilo Strait

Published July 3, 2020, 8:55 PM by Tara Yap

<https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/03/power-barge-explosion-leads-to-massive-oil-spill-on-iloilo-strait/>

At least 48,000 liters of bunker fuel were spilled into the Iloilo Strait, the body of water separating Iloilo City and the island province of Guimaras, after a power barge exploded Friday afternoon.



An aerial view of the spillage of the bunker fuel that gushed out of Power Barge 102 owned by AC Energy Corp. in Iloilo City Friday afternoon. (Leo Solinap)

Based on the incident report of the Iloilo City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (Iloilo City DRRMO), various government response teams and volunteer fire groups have been trying to contain the spillage of bunker fuel in an area of more than 1,299 square meters.

Power Barge 102 owned by AC Energy Corp. was carrying around 200,000 liters of oil. The barge was previously owned by National Power Corp. (NAPOCOR)

“A pre-deployment plan is in place covering the coastal areas occupied by informal settlers,” the Iloilo City DRRMO said in a statement Friday night.

The Western Visayas offices of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) have units on standby to monitor the status of the spillage that may spread due to current of the water.



Oil spill sa Iloilo, kinontrol na ng PCG

July 3, 2020 @ 7:50 PM

<https://remate.ph/oil-spill-sa-iloilo-kinokontrol-na-ng-pcg/>

Manila, Philippines – Tumulong na ang mga tauhan ng PCG Station-Iloilo at Marine Environmental Protection Unit-Western Visayas ng PCG para pagilan ang malawak na pagtagas ng langis mula sa sumabog na power barge sa Bo. Obrero, Lapuz, Iloilo City.

Ayon sa PCG headquarters, ang Power Barge Number 102 ay may apat na tangke.



Ang tank number 1 ay mayroong 48,000 litro ng bunker oil kung saan ito sumabog.

Tinatayang aabot naman sa 40,000 na ang tumagas sa katubigan.

Dahil dito, agad na inilagay ng Power Barge Number 102 ang kanilang Oil spill boom upang maiwasan na lalo pang kumalat ang langis.



Bukod dito, ang PCG ay naglagay na rin ng karagdagang oil spill boom bilang pangalawang layer para sa mas tiyak na pagpigil sa pagkalat ng tumagas na langis.

Gayundin gumamit na ng dalawang oil skimmers ang PCG at ang Power Barge upang makuha ang tumagas na langis. Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden



IATF allows more activities under GCQ

July 4, 2020 - 12:00am

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/07/04/2025491/iatf-allows-more-activities-under-gcq>

MANILA, Philippines — As part of the gradual reopening of the economy after almost four months of lockdown due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) on Emerging Infectious Diseases approved on Thursday the revival of more activities.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr. said yesterday that beauty salons and barber shops can now offer pedicure and manicure services.

The IATF also approved the training of professional basketball and football teams, as requested by the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) and the Games and Amusement Board (GAB).

“The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) shall issue the guidelines that would govern the gradual resumption of other services normally provided by these amendments, to the extent allowed by the minimum public health standards,” the IATF said in its resolution.

IATF Resolution No. 51 also approved the recommendation of the Department of Tourism (DOT) and DTI to allow travel agencies under Category IV to resume operations in areas under general community quarantine (GCQ).

“Provided that the operation shall be limited to skeletal workforce and primarily to do administrative works such as the processing of refunds and payments to suppliers,” the IATF said.

The IATF also gave the go signal to the PSC-GAB-DOH joint administrative order to issue guidelines on health-enhancing physical activities and sports during the COVID-19 pandemic.

IATF said that religious gatherings in areas under GCQ shall be allowed up to 10 percent of seating capacity, or up to 10 persons whichever is higher, after July 10.

“Provided that religious gathering shall be limited to the conduct of religious worship and/or service,” the IATF said. “Provided further, that there is no objection from the local government unit where the religious gathering may take place.”

The religious denominations should strictly observe their submitted protocols and the minimum public health standards, particularly the social distancing measures and non-pharmaceutical interventions such as obligatory wearing of face masks



IATF allows more activities under GCQ

and immediate availability of hand hygiene necessities in the premises, the IATF added.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, chair of the national task force on COVID-19, said that he expects about 80 percent of areas currently under GCQ to further ease restrictions on July 16.

Lorenzana said the easing of measures would still depend on data analytics by the Department of Health (DOH) but he sees the easing to a modified GCQ in most areas two weeks from now.

Metro Manila, some provinces like Cavite, Rizal and Leyte, and some cities in Cebu province are still under GCQ.

Cebu City is still on enhanced community quarantine due to the recent spike in COVID-19 cases.

Lorenzana said the public could expect further easing of restrictions in the country under the second phase of the national action plan to open up the economy to mitigate the effects of the pandemic.

He said the first phase of the action plan, which included the months-long lockdown over most of the country, was successful.

The Philippines has had one of the longest and strictest lockdowns in the world to combat the pandemic.

Lorenzana said the government was able to prevent the surge of COVID-19 cases in the country that would have reached 75,000 cases as estimated by the World Health Organization if measures were not imposed.

In a letter to the DOT dated May 11, the Philippine Travel Agencies Association (PTAA) had recommended that travel agencies be allowed to open voluntarily. "We requested the endorsement to the IATF to allow travel agencies to open their offices on voluntary basis since there are a number of them who service non-leisure travel markets such as but not limited to overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), ships crew movements including foreigners, returning stranded overseas Filipinos, BPO with expatriates, embassies and etc," PTAA president Ritchie Tuano said. "Tuano's sentiment was echoed by Tourism Congress of the Philippines (TCP) president Jose Clemente III. In May, the TCP also wrote to the DOT recommending the voluntary opening of travel agencies in GCQ areas, emphasizing that a majority of travel agencies and tour operators prefer to remain closed under GCQ. The number of hotels and restaurants accredited by the DOT



IATF allows more activities under GCQ

in Metro Manila increased this year as more establishments comply with health and safety protocols.

Year-to-date figures from the DOT showed that there are 336 accredited accommodation establishments in NCR, a 90 percent increase from the 177 firms accredited in 2019.

The DOT said a total of 159 establishments were accredited this year, while 187 applications remain in process.

Similarly, the DOT also saw an increase in application for the accreditation of restaurants in NCR, with a total of 133 accredited restaurants, a 70 percent increase from the 78 in 2019.

Some 55 restaurants in the metropolis have been accredited this year while 13 applications remain in process. The DOT stressed that accreditation of restaurants is not mandated by law.

The DOT said that all hotels and restaurants that would be allowed to operate in community quarantine zones would have to secure a DOT Certificate of Authority to Operate.

Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat and Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez led the inspection of selected hotels and restaurants in the Ortigas Center in Pasig on Wednesday to check compliance with health and safety protocols under Metro Manila's general community quarantine guidelines. Christina Mendez, Romina Cabrera, Catherine Talavera



80% ng bansa, maaaring isailalim na sa MGCQ sa July 16...

Doris Franche July 4, 2020

<https://www.philstar.com/pang-masa/police-metro/2020/07/04/2025474/80-ng-bansa-maaaring-isailalim-na-sa-mgcq-sa-july-16>

MANILA, Philippines — Posibleng mas maraming lugar na ang isasailalim sa modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) sa darating na July 16.

Ito ang inilahad ni Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana at iginiit na dedepende sa datos ng coronavirus disease o COVID-19 ang quarantine measures sa bansa na magmumula sa Department of Health (DOH).

“Sabi nga ng DOH, depende pa sa mga analytics na lalabas pero more likely siguro mga 80%, mag-MGCQ na tayo sa July 16,” giit ni Lorenzana.

Salons, barber shops no longer limited to basic hair cutting services — COVID-19 task force

“Dahil nga lumuluwag na ‘yung ating quarantine at saka gusto na nating buksan ‘yung ating ekonomiya, maraming pagbabago, mas marami ng tao ang makakalabas, pati mga simbahan magbubukas na rin, magdadagdag na rin ng transportasyon ‘yung DOTr so malaking pagbabago,” dagdag pa nito.

Lahad pa ni Lorenzana, ang second phase ng national action plan laban sa COVID-19 ay inaayos na at ipiprisinta sa IATF.

“Nagawa naman natin ‘yung ating objective habang pinipigilan natin ‘yung pagtaas ng infections ay inaayos naman natin ‘yung ating capabilities,” paliwanag pa ni Lorenzana.

“So ngayon, medyo nag-plateau na except ‘yung Cebu [City]... Ang ating objective diyan mag-plateau lang, hindi na magdadagdag every day or ‘yung case doubling.”



WHO endorses site-specific over citywide lockdowns

July 4, 2020 01:00 AM By Gabbie Parlade

<https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/04/who-endorses-site-specific-over-citywide-lockdowns/>

The World Health Organization (WHO) favors localized or site-specific lockdown of areas with the most infections instead of a citywide blanket that allows for the economy to recover more quickly.

According to WHO representative Dr. Rabindra Abeyasinghe, citywide lockdowns collaterally affect people who are not at risk, which is why information about the target areas must be shared with the public.

“Through those efforts, we will be able to hopefully minimize the need for large-scale lockdowns in geographic areas and impacting adversely on the socio-economic situation,” he said.

According to the WHO official, the Philippines quickly implementing community quarantine measures helped it boost its health infrastructure and testing capacity while managing the pandemic at the same time.

However, he said contact tracing and patient isolation efforts have not been able to keep up with the increase in isolation capacity that leads to virus transmission in other areas.

“The contact tracing isolation capacity has [not been] keeping pace with the expansion of the testing capacity so we see delays in the identification of contacts and quarantining and isolation,” he said.

Abeyasinghe also said even with guidelines from the Department of Health, most local government units have not been effective in their implementation.

“The Department of Health has developed very useful, practical guidelines, but unfortunately because of the way the response is being implemented through the decentralized systems, the compliance with those guidelines is not often universally adequate.



WHO: Rising cases of COVID in many regions worrisome

Shiela Crisostomo July 4, 2020 - 12:00am

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/07/04/2025483/who-rising-cases-covid-many-regions-worrisome>

MANILA, Philippines — The World Health Organization (WHO) yesterday described as a “worrying phenomena” the increasing cases of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in many regions of the Philippines.

At a press briefing, WHO Philippine Representative Rabindra Abeyasinghe said they are seeing a “concentration” of cases in many regions and oftentimes, this has been “influenced by people traveling from infected areas where there is an active transmission” of COVID-19.

He cited the National Capital Region (NCR), which is the epicenter of the pandemic in the country, and Central Visayas, particularly Cebu City now under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) due to rising cases.

“Worryingly, we are seeing increasing evidence of a large number of cases being reported from Region 4A, Region 3, Region 12 and Region 8 and maybe a few other regions. This is a worrying phenomena,” he noted.

Earlier, the Department of Health (DOH) described Cebu City and Cebu province in Region 7; Ormoc City, Southern Leyte, Leyte and Samar in Region 8 as “emerging hotspots for the virus.”

Other areas are Lanao del Norte, Bukidnon, Misamis Occidental in Region 10; Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur and Davao Oriental in Region 11; South Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat in Region 12 and Maguindanao in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

DOH data show as of July 2, NCR had 19,005 cases of COVID-19 while Central Visayas or Region 7 had 8,096; Region 8 or Eastern Visayas had 367; Region 10 or Northern Mindanao has 131, and Region 12 or SOCCSKSARGEN has 64 cases.

Abeyasinghe added the emergence of cases in these areas was driven by the “return of locally stranded individuals and repatriates coming from other countries.”

“The Philippines has pro-actively worked to bring back its citizens in large numbers who are working overseas... where they have lost employment because of COVID-19,” he said.



WHO: Rising cases of COVID in many regions worrisome

He maintained that “bringing these people back should require quarantining them, testing them and managing them so that they will not introduce new infections into the country and in their home provinces.”

“These particular challenges had also in, some respect, contributed to the large number of cases we are seeing in the Philippines,” he added.

The DOH yesterday documented a total of 1,531 new cases of coronavirus disease, the highest ever on a single day.

This is a big jump from the 294 new cases recorded on July 2 but the DOH said this is only because they shifted to a new “data extraction system to allow more time for the analyzation of data.”

Based on the DOH’s Case Bulletin for COVID-19, the new cases brought the total number to 40,336.

Of the 1,531 new cases, 413 came from Metro Manila while 301 were from Central Visayas.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) in Qatar has been placed on lockdown after more than 100 individuals there tested positive for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III said yesterday.

According to Bello, the infected individuals were either staying or working in the POLO facility, prompting them to “temporarily shut down” the office.

“We are on lockdown in Qatar. It is closed because 12 of our 15 employees got infected. In our Bahay Kalinga in Qatar, 92 of our wards were also infected by the virus,” he noted.

Bello added because of this, POLO personnel are now working from home.

Accept LSIs

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) has urged local government units (LGUs) to accept returning stranded individuals to their home provinces amid the pandemic.

DILG spokesman Undersecretary Jonathan Malaya said LGUs should accept locally stranded individuals (LSIs) as well as overseas Filipino workers returning to their localities from Metro Manila and other areas.



WHO: Rising cases of COVID in many regions worrisome

“We are reiterating the call to LGUs and the President’s appeal to them that locally stranded individuals have a right to return home,” he said in Filipino at a Laging Handa press briefing.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana earlier admitted that some LGUs have been reluctant to receive LSIs since they have been blamed for the surge of COVID-19 cases in the provinces.

Hundreds and possibly thousands of LSIs have been left stranded since the lockdown due to the pandemic, with some resorting to camping outside the airport and the pier for a chance to get back home.

Some regions and provinces have already suspended local repatriation in their areas due to the rising number of cases and limited healthcare and quarantine facilities.

Local repatriation has been suspended for two weeks in Negros Occidental, Iloilo and Eastern Visayas.

The government held a grand send-off ceremony for returning LSIs to Mindanao yesterday and will hold another one for Luzon on Sunday.

Around 4,000 LSIs are expected to be returned to their provinces during these two days, utilizing 100 buses, one Philippine Air Force aircraft, three government and commercial ships and one train.

Green lane

The Philippines has set up a “green lane” to facilitate the speedy and safe travel of seafarers, including swift disembarkation and crew change, during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr., Labor Secretary Bello, Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, Department of the Interior and Local Government Undersecretary Bernardo Florece, Department of Justice Assistant Secretary Nicholas Felix Ty and Department of Health-Bureau of Quarantine representative Edgar Maala signed the Philippine Green Lane Joint Circular on Thursday.

The green lane was created to “ensure that seafarers are accorded speedy and safe travel, subject to health protocols mandated by the Philippine government, including safe and swift disembarkation and crew change during the COVID-19 pandemic,” the DFA said in a statement. Romina Cabrera, Helen Flores



450 Pinoys in WHO COVID trials

July 3, 2020 07:16 AM By Gabbie Parlade

<https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/03/450-pinoys-in-who-covid-trials/>

The Department of Health (DoH) has announced that 450 patients have so far been enrolled in the World Health Organization (WHO) solidarity clinical trials.

Health Spokesperson Maria Rosario Vergeire said that these patients are confined within the 22 hospitals nationwide which are actively participating.

The WHO-led solidarity trials is an initiative joined by 100 countries worldwide including the Philippines which aims to conduct a study on a possible cure for COVID-19 among the available off-label drugs.

Among those included were the Remdesivir that was used to treat Ebola, the Lopina or Ritonavir for HIV treatment, the Interferon beta 1-a for Sclerosis, and initially the Hydroxychloroquine for treatment of malaria and rheuma.

However, Food and Drug Administration Director-General Rolando Domingo yesterday said that hydroxychloroquine has been removed from the list of drugs included in the trials as the WHO found no improvement on mortality rate.

Also, reports abroad showed that hydroxychloroquine may even cause adverse effects specifically on the heart rhythm.

But Rolando said that the Remdesivir, on the other hand, acquired positive feedback after it reduced the mortality rate among some COVID-19 patients from 15 to only 11 days.

Rolando said that worldwide there are currently 137 candidate vaccines being tested among various universities and hospitals

With this, he said the FDA and the Department of Science and Technology are currently coordinating for other more clinical trials around the globe that the Philippines may also join.

Earlier, Vergeire stated that the DoH has expressed its intent to join another trial led also by the WHO on the vaccine trials that will test different vaccine candidates against COVID-19.

At present, no vaccine or drug has yet been proven to cure COVID-19 as the DoH continues to warn the public against using any medication without the supervision of a licensed physician.



‘Sound fundamentals allow economic growth’

July 4, 2020 12:05 AM By Francis Wakefield

<https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/04/sound-fundamentals-allow-economic-growth/>

Malacañang on Friday said the Philippines was the best performing economy not only in South East Asia but the whole world even prior to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque pointed this out during a virtual press briefing at the Palace as President Duterte enters the penultimate phase of his six-year term.

Roque said if one looks into the administration’s achievements, what stands out is the success in ensuring the Philippines has a strong economy.

“Well, we have a limited time but I can say before we were hit by the pandemic, we have the best performing economy not just in Southeast Asia (but) one of the best in the whole world,” Roque said.

According to him, the economy grew an average 6.5 percent the past four years, inflation is under control and interest rates are low.

He also cited the country’s credit stature as rated by the sovereign credit watchers that according to Roque is proof “that lenders believe we are correct in making our policies.”

Roque said this assessment of the economy is validated by the approval rating of the President.

“He never rated below 80 percent and that means the general public approves of what the President is doing, including the campaign against illegal drugs,” Roque said.

Unfortunately for the Philippines, however, the pandemic struck although surveys show the overwhelming majority of Filipinos support what the President is doing, Roque said further.

He likewise asserted that based also on a study by the University of the Philippines, more than three million Filipinos would have had the COVID-19 by now had the lockdown not been imposed in mid-March.

In summary, Roque said it had been a great four years for the Filipino people: “While we also collectively suffer from these trials, we will rebound from the ravages of COVID-19 because our underlying fundamentals are sound.”



Kooperasyon' kailangan para sa muling pagbangon ng ekonomiya ng Cebu City – OPAV

By Bombo Radyo Cebu July 3, 2020 | 8:25 PM

<https://www.bomboradyo.com/kooperasyon-kailangan-para-sa-muling-pagbangon-ng-ekonomiya-ng-cebu-city-opav/>

CEBU CITY – Binigyang diin ni Office of the Presidential Assistance for the Visayas (OPAV) ASec. Jonjie Gonzales na hindi dapat magpapakampante ang mga tao kahit na may pag-unlad sa kalagayan ng Cebu.

Ayon kay Asec. Gonzales na dahan-dahan nang bumaba ang active cases ng COVID-19 sa Cebu City dalawang linggo na ang nakaraan, sitwayson na hindi dapat magpapakampante ang bawat isa.

Inihayag ni Gonzales ang kahalagahan ng pagpapanatili ng pagiging agresibo laban sa coronavirus sa pamamagitan ng pagtutulungan, lalung-lalo na sa bawat barangay na siyang may direktang control sa bawat konstituente.

Dagdag pa nito na hindi magtatagal at makaka-ahon na ang Cebu City sa kasalukuyan nitong quarantine status na Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) kung ang lahat ay susunod sa guidelines at patakaran ng gobyerno.

Samantalang ikinalungkot din ng opisyal ang pagbaba ng ekonomiya ng lungsod matapos naranasan ng halos lahat ng mga negosyante ang epekto ng pandemya.

Sa pinakahuling talaan mula sa Cebu City Health Department, nasa 5,824 ang kabuuang bilang ng COVID-19 cases sa Cebu City samantalang nasa 3,046 ang naka-recover sa sakit at 211 ang bilang ng mga pumanaw dahil sa deadly virus.



Duterte approves Anti-Terror Bill

July 3, 2020 06:13 PM By TDT

<https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/03/duterte-approves-anti-terror-bill/>

President Rodrigo Duterte has finally signed into law the Anti-Terrorism Bill which seeks to sharpen the Philippines' anti-terrorism campaign, according to Interior Secretary Eduardo Año on Friday.

The measure was signed just days before it was to lapse into law as Congress on 9 June transmitted the bill to Malacañang for the President's signature even as it is met with heavy opposition over fears it could be used to silence government critics.

The stricter anti-terror law comes as the Philippines continued efforts to stop terror activities, including kidnappings and bombing operations of the Islamic State-linked Abu Sayyaf group, extremists that the United Nations (UN) tagged as terrorists in 2001.

The proposed law also allows the police to make warrantless arrests and keep suspected terrorists detained for 14 days – which can be extended by another 10 days – as authorities build a case and to stop any planned criminal acts.

Previously, police and military officials have said there are enough safeguards in the measure to prevent abuse.



‘Very timely, historic’: Senators laud passage of anti-terror bill despite ‘pressures’

By: Christia Marie Ramos - Reporter / @CMRRamosINQ

INQUIRER.net / 07:02 PM July 03, 2020

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1301442/very-timely-historic-senators-laud-passage-of-anti-terror-act-despite-pressures>

MANILA, Philippines — Several senators on Friday lauded President Rodrigo Duterte for signing the Anti-Terrorism Act despite “the pressure coming from different directions” against the passage of the measure.

“Much credit goes to (President Duterte). With all the pressure coming from different directions against the signing of the Anti Terrorism Bill into law, at the end of the day, it is his strong political will that mattered most,” Senator Panfilo Lacson said in a message to reporters.

“I cannot imagine this measure being signed under another administration. If only for this, I take my hat off to the president,” he added.

The senator, one of the principal authors of the bill in the Senate, then assured that he would “exert extra effort in guarding against possible abuse in its implementation, notwithstanding all the safeguards incorporated in this landmark legislation.”

For Senate President Vicente Sotto III, he said he was “glad the President has sifted through the rubble and saw the importance of the law.”

“It’s full of safeguards but strong against terrorists. Unlike the old law, it was subject to abuse by the terrorists,” he said in a separate message.

According to Sotto, the new law brings the Philippines “at par with many countries in the region in capacity-building measures against terrorists.”

“A democratic republic like ours is not a lame and anemic form of government due to many liberties and due processes every step of the way. When its very survival is threatened, it can raise its arms in self-defense, protect the people from ruthless ideologies and stop unrepentant agitators from sowing mayhem and disorder,” he said.

“This new law against terrorism is the answer. The government’s hands are no longer tied. Law-abiding citizens have nothing to fear,” he added.

Meanwhile, administration Senator Francis Tolentino said the passage of the anti-terror bill into law was “very timely and historic as it is a measure needed by our nation.”



‘Very timely, historic’: Senators laud passage of anti-terror bill despite ‘pressures’

“It just goes to show that a stable peace and order climate should go hand (in hand) with economic rejuvenation post-COVID-19,” he added.

No less than the United Nation’s top human rights official had asked Duterte to “refrain” from signing the controversial measure, saying its passage intensifies concerns on the “blurring of important distinctions between criticism, criminality, and terrorism.”

The newly-signed law amends and repeals the Human Security Act of 2007 (HSA) and punish those who will propose, incite, conspire, participate in the planning, training, preparation, and facilitation of a terrorist act; including those who will provide material support to terrorists, and recruit members in a terrorist organization.

Before it was enacted into law, the measure has been met with widespread opposition from various groups, which raised fears that the measure could spur human rights violations and suppress dissent.

Its authors in Congress, particularly Lacson, have repeatedly defended the proposed law, saying the measure contained enough safeguards against abuse.



DROGA NG ISLAMIC STATE AT ANTI-TERRORISM BILL

July 3, 2020 @ 12:10 PM

<https://remate.ph/droga-ng-islamic-state-at-anti-terrorism-bill/>



Kahuhuli lang sa bansang Italia ang malaking bulto ng amphetamine na iligal na droga.

May timbang ito na 14 tonelada at nagkakahalaga ng \$1.2 bilyon o P60 bilyon kumbaga sa mahal kong Pinas.

Sisiw ang mga pinagtatalunan o pinag-aawayan nating nakalulusot sa mga daungan natin na nagkakahalaga lang ng nasa P5 bilyon.

Ang sabi ng mga taga-Italia, kaya na umano nitong suplayan ang mga pangangailangan ng mga adik sa ganitong uri ng droga sa Europa.

Nasa 84 milyon tabletang amphetamine ang nasabat at Captagon ang ngalan o tatak nito.

Nauna rito, nahuli na rin ang IS noong una na nagpapasok ng marijuana at amphetamine pa rin sa Italia ngunit mas maliit ang bolyum at halaga.

AMPHETAMINE, SHABU, PARTY DRUGS

Ayon sa mga pagsusuri, itong amphetamine ang grupo ng mga gamot o kemikal na kinabibilangan ng shabu, methcathinone at ecstasy na kasama sa party drugs.

Sa tatlong bansa sa South East Asia, ang Pilipinas ang nangunguna sa paggamit ng mga ito at halos doble ang konsumo ng mga adik na Pinoy kumpara sa mga adik sa mga bansang Thailand at Laos.

Hindi na natin kailangang magpaliwanag ukol sa masasamang epekto ng mga iligal na gamot na ito.

Pero gaya ng nagaganap sa ibang bansa, pinagmumulan ang grupong amphetamine ang pagkasira ng ulo ng mga gumagamit nito, pagkamatay sa sakit sa puso, pagkasira ng katawan ng mga obese o sobrang taba na gustong magpapayat at maging ng mga kababaihang gustong magpaseksi at maging slim sa pagkawala ng gutom nila kahit sa oras ng kainan.



DROGA NG ISLAMIC STATE AT ANTI-TERRORISM BILL

Sa rekord ng pulisya, ang mga gumagamit ng mga gamot na ito ang pinagmumulan din ng napakaraming krimen, kasama na ang rape, pananakit, pagpatay, pagnanakaw, panununog at iba pa, lalo na kung nagiging adik ang mga user nito.

IS SA PINAS AKTIBO

Ang Abu Sayyaf Group ang pinakamalaking grupo na kabagang ng Islamic State sa Pilipinas.

Pero meron ding iba gaya ng Maute Group na nanguna sa tangkang pagtatayo ng gobyernong Islamic State sa Marawi City noon.

Kamakailan lang, may apat katao, kabilang na ang isang babae, na miyembro umano ng ASG at Dawlah Islamiyah na napatay ng mga pulis at sundalo sa Don Bosco, Better Living Subdivision sa Parañaque City.

Nakumpiskahan ang mga ito ng mga armas, explosive at bandila ng IS ngunit wala namang shabu.

Subalit sa digmaan sa Mindanao, iniulat mismo ng Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency na gumagamit ang mga ASG/IS ng shabu.

Ayon PDEA, ang napatay noon na si ASG commander Mujiv Susukan ay isang adik sa shabu, na uulitin natin, isang uri ng amphetamine.

Maging ang kapatid ni ASG leader Doctor Abu na may ngalang Gafur ay user din.

At may natatagpuang mga foil at iba pang paraphernalia sa shabu sa mga kuta ng mga terorista na nare-raid ng mga awtoridad.

SAAN GALING ANG SHABU?

Isang katangungan ngayon kung saan galing ang suplay ng shabu ng mga terorista.

Galing ba sa IS sa Syria na nahuling nag-iismagel ng amphetamine sa Europa?

Noong wala pang coronavirus disease-19, isa sa mga problema natin ang pagpasok ng party drugs mula sa Europa.

Hindi kaya galing din ang party drugs sa IS sa Syria?

Ngayon, nang dumating ang COVID-19, tumigil umano ang mga sindikato sa droga sa Europa sa paggawa ng party drugs.



DROGA NG ISLAMIC STATE AT ANTI-TERRORISM BILL

Pero ang IS, hindi tumigil kaya nga ang mga sindikato ng droga sa Europa ang kontak ng IS para magkaroon sila ng suplay para ibenta at gamitin.

Kung magpapatuloy ang importasyon ng mga drug syndicate sa Pilipinas ng party drugs sa Europa, tiyak galing na 'yan sa IS.

ANTI-TERRORISM LAW

Sa paniniwala ng ating Uzi, mga Bro, ginawa ang panukalang batas na anti-terrorism laban sa mga terorista at hindi sa mga simpleng kritiko ng pamahalaan.

'Yun bang === proteksyon ang nasabing panukala ng mga Filipino laban sa mga terorista at hindi para gamiting pansupil sa mga karapatang-pantao sa bansa.

Dahil konektado ang pagpapalaganap ng droga sa impluwensya ng ASG at IS sa Pilipinas, pabor umano ang ating Uzi sa pagiging ganap na batas ng nasabing panukala.

Tatlong ibon o maaaring mahigit pa ang matatamaan ng isang bala ng batas: ang mga terorista, mga sindikato ng droga, mga adik at mga korap na kasabwat ng mga importer ng mga bawal na gamot, gaya ng amphetamine.



PHL airs 'some concern' over PLA's military drills in South China Sea

By Recto Mercene July 3, 2020

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/07/03/philippines-airs-concern-over-plas-military-drills-in-south-china-sea/>

THE Philippine government expressed “concern” on Friday over China’s conduct of military exercises in the waters off the Paracels, which are claimed by Vietnam, and reminded its Asian neighbor to respect the freedom of navigation of other countries.

In a video statement, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said the Chinese People’s Liberation Army’s (PLA) military exercises are being held in the waters off what China calls Xisha and Nansha islands, on July 1 to 5, as posted in “Navigation Notice 0069” dated June 27. Manila reminded Beijing to stick to their coordinates so that they will not “impinge” on Philippine territory.

“Should the exercise spill over to Philippine territory, then China is forewarned that it will be met with the severest response, diplomatic and whatever else is appropriate,” warned Foreign Affairs Secretary, Teodoro Locsin Jr. in the video statement.

Quoting the post on China’s maritime safety administration website, Locsin noted with concern that, “For this period, no vessel will be allowed to navigate within the prescribed area [of the PLA exercises], and all vessels shall have to follow the guidance of the commanding Chinese ship on the site.”

The exercises, Locsin noted, are being held in the Paracels, “over which Vietnam claims sovereignty.”

He said the Philippines had previously protested the establishment of districts Xisha and Nansha under the administrative jurisdiction of Sansha city. “The creation of Sansha city is null and void ab initio for being devoid of basis in international law,” he added.

He added, “this is the problem with playing fast and loose with historical narratives and historical names. They open themselves to error unless the real purpose is to excuse unchallenged mistakes that may over time harden into rights.”

He continued, “Unless again, the purpose is to establish a perennial and unchallenged presence that may in time congeal into rights.”

According to the former lawmaker and Harvard-trained lawyer, China is just as entitled as any other power to invoke freedom of navigation in its military exercises, but cautioned that that “freedom requires a straight and uninterrupted voyage.”

Locsin added that at a time like this — when the world is struggling to put out a pandemic — one would hope that “simulated military exercises would be more in keeping with the spirit of cooperation that China has encouraged everyone to take.”

He said the Philippines continues to look to China as its nearest and biggest trading partner. Locsin added that former US National Security Adviser, Gen. Herbert



PHL airs 'some concern' over PLA's military drills in South China Sea

Macmaster, had told him, "if China's mercantilist economic policy allows it to use trade and investment in the mutual interest, then China's participation is essential to the success of any post-Covid recovery of our national, regional and the global economy."

He cited China's success in the creation of an "800-million middle class that is still growing."

In closing, Locsin repeated previous reminders that Manila had aired each time there is an issue involving claimants in the South China Sea. All parties, he said, are being urged "to refrain from escalating tension and abide by their responsibilities under international law, notably Unclos," or the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, where China is a signatory.

He further urged China to adhere to the rule of law and its commitment to international instruments such as the 2002 declaration of the conduct of the parties in the South China Sea.

Of particular importance, the DFA chief said, is "the exercise of self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect the stability especially in this pandemic."

He said "the Philippines has consistently protested violations of international legal obligations and commitments, and strongly condemned the conduct of such activities in areas of the South China Sea within the Philippines's sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdictions, including waters off the Kalayaan islands and the Scarborough shoal."

Following the 36th Asean summit hosted by Hanoi on Friday (June 26), Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc, who chaired the meeting, emphasized "the importance of non-militarization and self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states ... that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea."

The U.S. also conducted a bilateral exercise with Japan; and Singapore's navy conducted training drills with the US and Japan in the South China Sea on June 17 and June 22, respectively.

The deployment of warships to disputed islets and rocks in the region raises concerns over the ongoing militarization of the South China Sea.



Locsin warns of ‘severest response’ if China’s army drills in SCS ‘spill over’ to PH domain

By: Christia Marie Ramos - Reporter / @CMRamosINQ

INQUIRER.net / 06:17 PM July 03, 2020

<https://globalnation.inquirer.net/189213/locsin-warns-of-severest-response-if-chinas-army-drills-in-scs-spill-over-to-ph-domain>



In this July 8, 2016 photo released by Xinhua News Agency, Chinese missile frigate Yuncheng launches an anti-ship missile during a military exercise in the waters near south China’s Hainan Island and Paracel Islands. They are controlled by Beijing but also claimed by Vietnam and Taiwan. – Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. on Friday, July 3, 2020, warns China that it would be met with “severest response” should its military exercises in the South China Sea “spill over” to the Philippine territory. The Chinese People’s Liberation Army is said to hold drills in the South China Sea, particularly in waters off Paracel Islands, from July 1 to 5. (Zha Chunming/Xinhua via AP FILE PHOTO)

MANILA, Philippines — Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. on Friday warned China that it would be met with “severest response” should its military exercises in the South China Sea “spill over” to the Philippine territory.

In a taped video statement, Locsin said the Philippine government views “with interest and some concern” reports on Navigation Notice No. 00-69 regarding the conduct of military exercises by the Chinese People’s Liberation Army in the South China Sea, particularly in waters off Paracel Islands from July 1 to 5.

The notice, Locsin said, states that “no vessel shall be allowed to navigate within the prescribed area and all vessels shall have to follow the guidance of the commanding Chinese ship on the site.”

“My first reaction was to check the coordinates in the Navigation Notice...The Chinese naval military exercises, if they stick to their coordinates, do not impinge on Philippine territory,” Manila’s top diplomat said.

“These exercises are taking place in waters off Xisha Islands —the Paracels — over which Vietnam claims sovereignty. Should the exercises spill over to Philippine territory then China is forewarned that it will be met with the severest response, diplomatic and whatever else is appropriate,” he added.



Locsin warns of ‘severest response’ if China’s army drills in SCS ‘spill over’ to PH domain

Manila and Beijing have long been locked in a maritime dispute. In 2013, the Philippines filed a case with the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) at The Hague in The Netherlands challenging China’s sweeping claim of nearly the entire South China Sea.

The Hague-based court then ruled in favor of the Philippines in July 2016 invalidating China’s nine-dash line claim.

President Rodrigo Duterte has been criticized for setting aside the landmark 2016 arbitral ruling against Beijing’s mythical nine-dash line claim in the South China Sea.

China refused to recognize the ruling, continuing its aggression in the disputed waters and building artificial islands to house military facilities.

Earlier, the Philippines lodged two diplomatic protests concerning China’s alleged pointing of a radar gun at a Philippine Navy ship and the establishment of two administrative units covering Philippine territories as part of the disputed South China Sea.

“We have previously protested the establishment of districts Xisha and Nansha under the administrative jurisdiction of Sansha City, noting that the creation of Sansha City is null and void ab initio for being devoid of basis in international law,” Locsin continued.

“This is the problem with playing fast and loose with historical narratives and historical names; they open themselves to error; unless the real purpose is to excuse unchallenged mistakes that may over time harden into rights,” he added.

However, the foreign affairs chief still recognized China as the Philippines’ “nearest and biggest trading partner.”

“China’s presence and participation is essential to the success of any post-COVID recovery of our national, regional, and the global economy,” he added.

Still, Locsin called on “erring” parties to “refrain from escalating tension” and abide by responsibilities under international law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

“We urge them to adhere to the rule of law and their commitments to international instruments such as the 2002 Declaration of the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea, particularly the exercise of self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability especially in this pandemic,” he said.

He further said that the Philippine government has “consistently” protested violations of international legal obligations and commitment and “strongly condemned the conduct of such activities in areas of the South China Sea within the Philippines’ sovereignty, sovereign rights, and jurisdiction — including waters off the Kalayaan Island Group and the Scarborough Shoal.”



Key destinations in Palawan lose over P3 billion in tourism receipts

By Ma. Stella F. Arnaldo July 4, 2020

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/07/04/key-destinations-in-palawan-lose-over-p3-billion-in-tourism-receipts/>

THE era of mass tourism is over. As far as Gov. Jose Ch. Alvarez is concerned, tourists for Palawan will be “selective, targeted, prioritized.” Last year, he said, the entire province recorded some 150 million in tourist arrivals.

In a news briefing live from El Nido, Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat added the three major tourism destinations in the province, namely, El Nido, San Vicente, and Coron, already lost P3.1 billion in tourism receipts from March to June this year. The travel restrictions and community quarantines implemented to contain the spread of Covid-19 has also “displaced 14,000 tourism workers” in these destinations alone.

Alvarez didn’t give a definite date when Palawan will start accepting tourists, preferring to wait for the results of a “dry run” to be conducted by the Department of Tourism from the Clark International Airport in Pampanga to El Nido Resorts. The province has been under modified general community quarantine since June 1 and is technically allowed to accept leisure visitors already, but so far, it is only to returning residents via the Puerto Princesa Airport.

He pointed out that he and Mayor Lucilo Bayron agreed to keep the Puerto Princesa Airport open “because this is the lifeblood of the province.”

Romulo Puyat said the tourism “dry run” in El Nido will be conducted soon after DOT’s dry run in Baguio City, which plans to reopen to tourism in September. El Nido and its beaches have been consistently on the list of the “world’s best” of various international travel publications.

She said, what is currently being discussed with Alvarez and other local government units in Palawan are for tourists to come in from Clark, or from Manila. “Pwedeng point to point muna, They can come from Clark or Manila,” she said.

But the tourists first have to undergo the RT-PCR tests in Clark, or any Department of Health-accredited hospital in Metro Manila, if flying in via from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. The tourists, stressed Alvarez and the DOT chief, will shoulder the costs of their Covid tests.



Key destinations in Palawan lose over P3 billion in tourism receipts

Alvarez said he expects the Palawan economy to be in recession by the third quarter, after recording contractions in the first half of the year. “There are no profits to be made in 2020,” he said of the local tourism players, “but we will target [for profits] in 2021 and onwards.”

Romulo Puyat said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is continuing its study on the carrying capacity for El Nido and other destinations, and a firm number on tourism limits will be set before these are finally opened to tourists.

She thanked El Nido Mayor Edna G. Lim for allowing the upcoming dry run to El Nido Resorts and hoped the mayors of Coron and San Vicente would soon follow suit.

She likewise challenged El Nido Resorts to adopt the health and safety protocols prescribed by the Inter-Agency Task Force in Emerging Infectious Diseases and the DOT for accommodation establishments. An Ayala Group subsidiary, El Nido Resorts is a DOT-accredited primary tourism enterprise.



Gov't eyes reopening El Nido, 2 other Palawan areas for domestic tourism

Posted at Jul 03 2020 02:01 PM | Updated as of Jul 03 2020 02:48 PM

<https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/07/03/20/govt-eyes-reopening-el-nido-2-other-palawan-areas-for-domestic-tourism>

MANILA (UPDATE) - The Philippine government is eyeing to restore domestic tourism in three areas in Palawan, months after the travel sector was brought to a standstill due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat is currently consulting with local executives from El Nido, Coron, and San Vicente, as they report some P3.1 billion in tourism revenue losses due to the pandemic.

Some 14,000 tourism workers in the said areas were also heavily affected by the pandemic, local officials said.

Puyat said they would aim for a "slow but sure" restart in Palawan tourism.

"We want to restart tourism in Palawan but we want it slow but sure. Talks underway for limited domestic tourism and a 'dry run' in El Nido resorts, Coron and San Vicente open to restarting tourism but LGU (local government) will still consult with constituents first," she said.

Palawan Governor Jose Alvarez echoed Puyat's sentiments in ensuring health and safety for these areas before opening up for tourism.

While Alvarez said the move is "necessary," he said "mass tourism" will be prohibited once things have been finalized.

Palawan is currently categorized under modified general community quarantine.

"Tourism in Palawan is necessary in order to survive but mass tourism will not be allowed," Alvarez said.

The DOT and local government units will also look into carrying capacities for these areas during the pandemic.

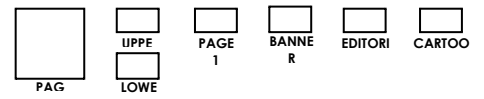
The move comes after Boracay, one of the country's biggest tourism spots, was opened to Western Visayas residents last June 16 as most parts of the country shifted to looser lockdown protocols in a bid to restart the economy.

It was shuttered for nearly three months.

The tourism sector has been heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic after the government sought to limit movement among people to prevent the spread of the virus.



Strategic Communication
and Initiatives Service



2/2
Page

04 July 2020
Date

Gov't eyes reopening El Nido, 2 other Palawan areas for domestic tourism

As a result, jobs in the tourism sector, particularly in the airline industry, travel agencies, and tourist spots have been heavily affected by the limited human movement with some being forced to lay off workers.

DOT is also in talks with Bohol officials regarding limited domestic tourism in the province.

But Bohol Gov. Arthur Yap first wants to secure enough RT-PCR (reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction) machines for coronavirus testing.

-- Report from Jeff Canoy, ABS-CBN News



Cusi to fully implement RE law

July 3, 2020 05:56 AM By TDT

<https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/03/cusi-to-fully-implement-re-law/>

TAGUIG CITY – Energy Secretary Alfonso G. Cusi on Thursday reaffirmed his commitment to fully implement Republic Act (RA) 9513 or the Renewable Energy Act of 2008 which promotes the development of the country’s RE resources.

RE promotion should be pursued alongside other energy sources that would give the Philippines sufficient power capacity, said Cusi at the Energy and Sustainable Development webinar organized by the Ateneo de Manila University- School of Government.

“I fully support the development and utilization of our renewable resources — but without sacrificing the attainment of our energy security,” Cusi said.

The Department of Energy (DoE) chief was invited by the Ateneo School of Government as one of the panel members, who provided the government’s response on the keynote presentation of Dr. Laurence Delina, Assistant Professor at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, on energy and sustainable development.

Other reactors were Senator Sherwin Gatchalian and former Public Works and Highways Secretary Rogelio Singson, who is now the president of Meralco PowerGen.

Energy security

Cusi admitted that the current energy situation “leaves much to be desired.” Hence, all options in power sourcing should be considered, including the possibility of tapping nuclear energy in the future.

“This is why the DoE is looking at developing all possible energy sources, including nuclear, to help the Philippines become energy secure,” he said.

“For those of us involved in policy and decision-making, we must strike a balance between meeting our current energy needs and building a better world for the coming generations. From where we are at right now, we cannot sacrifice one in favor of the other,” he stressed.

One key takeaway of the COVID-19 crisis for the energy sector, he said, is the importance of energy security. The pandemic has revealed the vulnerability of energy systems, which could be interrupted if industry stakeholders do not manage it well.

Commitment to RE

Focusing on RE, Cusi said the government has not reneged on its efforts to attract investors. In fact, he said, the DoE is working closely with the Philippine Export Zone Authority (PEZA) for the development of economic zones that would provide clean energy to the locators.

He also shared that since the Duterte administration started in 2016, the DoE has awarded a total of 472 RE service contracts, with a potential capacity of 20 gigawatts (GW), which may translate to an additional 8% RE share to our Total Primary Energy Supply (TPES).

“This is higher than our indicative and committed coal plants for the same period, which only has a potential capacity of 14.5 GW,” he added.



Cusi to fully implement RE law

Cusi also informed the webinar participants that the Philippines continues to have the highest RE generation mix within Southeast Asia.

In 2019, RE accounted for 33% of the Philippines' TPES, making the country 10% ahead of the regional target set forth in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Plan of Action on Energy Cooperation, which seeks to increase the RE component of the ASEAN Total Primary Energy Mix to 23% by the year 2025.

Among the array of the country's vast RE resources, Cusi said, it is best to focus on the resources that are readily available and extend all the necessary support to encourage its development. He cited the need to maximize indigenous resources like geothermal and hydro as they have proven their reliability as baseload power sources that are crucial for commercial and industrial needs.

In addition, the Secretary shared that the DoE immediately worked to implement a couple of RA 9513 policy mechanisms that have yet to be realized. These are the Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS), a supply-side policy, which mandates distribution utilities to source a minimum portion of energy from renewable sources; and the Green Energy Option Program, which empowers consumers to insist that the energy they consume is sourced from renewable resources.

"We are also determined to establish a Green Energy Auction Program with an initial 2000 MW, which would augment RE capacity in the grid. This pricing program will support RE generators in securing Power Supply Agreements and selling their energy through the establishment of a fair base-line price," he said.

Cusi added that the DoE is looking at other mechanisms where electricity end-users can share their RE generation during supply shortfalls, as well as further enhancements to existing Net Metering arrangements.

To help promote inclusive development in the provinces, he said the DoE is pushing the transition from oil-based technology utilization to cleaner energy sources, such as LNG to meet baseload requirements in these areas.

###

#DOEPH
#EPowerMo
#ESafety
#ESecure
#EDiskarte
#Ambisyon2040



EDITORIAL - Good manners, right conduct

July 4, 2020

<https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2020/07/04/2025460/editorial-good-manners-right-conduct>



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

The measure restoring subjects on good manners and right conduct as well as values education was signed into law by President Duterte yesterday. Proponents of Republic Act 11476 hope the implementing rules and regulations for the new law will be released in time for the incorporation of the subjects into the curriculum for the upcoming school year.

The law comes at a time when the country is battling a killer pandemic. Responding to the public health crisis calls for the matters emphasized in RA 11476. As Pasig Rep. Roman Romulo, who chairs the House committee on basic education and culture put it, the measure will help inculcate in the youth basic tenets such as “caring for oneself, giving concern for others, according proper respect to people, upholding discipline and order, and cultivating sincerity, honesty, obedience, and above all, love for country.”

Subjects on Good Manners and Right Conduct were scrapped in 2013 and replaced with subjects on Edukasyon sa Pagkakatao. Under the new law, GMRC will be integrated into daily activities in kindergarten, and taught as a separate subject from Grades 1 to 6. GMRC will be integrated into the Values Education subject from Grades 7 to 10. Values Education will be integrated into all subjects for Grades 11 and 12.

The coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic is best contained through the slogan adopted by the country: healing as one. This requires being mindful not only of one’s health but also those of others – we stay healthy so we don’t infect others, especially the elderly and those with comorbidities for whom COVID-19 infection could prove fatal. GMRC and Values Education can promote the behavior and attitudes that are critical for success in fighting COVID-19.

Public officials from the President down should lead by example and show proper manners, in both word and deed. Beyond the pandemic, practically all aspects of life can use good manners, right conduct and proper values. It’s high time that the subjects are given the emphasis they deserve.



Mayon showed magmatic activity; Alert Level 2 stays – PHIVOLCS

Published July 3, 2020 8:09am

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/science/745295/mayon-showed-magmatic-activity-alert-level-2-stays-phivolcs/story/>

Magmatic activity is occurring beneath the Mayon Volcano edifice in Albay province, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said Friday.

Citing PHIVOLCS' Mayon bulletin, Unang Balita reported that a slight inflammation at the summit was observed and the volcano continued to emit white steam, indicating magmatic activity underneath.

Also, PHIVOLCS recorded one volcanic earthquake in the last 24 hours.

Mayon Volcano was still at Alert Level 2, which means that it is under moderate unrest, the PHIVOLCS said.

Residents are strictly prohibited from straying into the volcano's 6-kilometer permanent danger zone (PDZ).

Late in June, the PHIVOLCS also reported that hydrothermal or magmatic activity was occurring beneath the Kanlaon Volcano edifice on Negros Island in Western Visayas.

Also, it recorded moderate emission of white steam-laden plumes that rose 200 meters before drifting northwest. Sulfur dioxide (SO₂) emission was measured at an average of 237 tonnes per day on 24 June 2020. —LBG, GMA News



Strategic Communication
and Initiatives Service

4.8-magnitude quake jolts Davao Occidental

Published July 3, 2020, 7:48 AM

by Mike Crismundo

<https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/03/4-8-magnitude-quake-jolts-davao-occidental/>

BUTUAN CITY – A 4.8-magnitude earthquake hit Davao Occidental in Southern Mindanao on early Friday morning, July 3, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said.

In its bulletin, Phivolcs said the tremor was recorded at 3 a.m., with the epicenter plotted 142 kilometers (kms) southeast of Jose Abad Santos town, Davao Occidental province.

The tremor had a depth of 83 kms, Phivolcs said.

In its instrumental intensities, Phivolcs also said Intensity II was registered in nearby Malungon town, Sarangani.

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

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



Global e-waste surges 21% in 5 years: UN report

July 3, 2020, 9:31 am

<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1107831>



(Anadolu photo)

GENEVA – The world produced a record 53.6 million tons of electronic waste in 2019, the weight of 350 big cruise ships, a UN report said on Thursday.

The report said the e-waste – discarded products with a battery or plug – surged 21 percent over the past five years, predicting that it will reach 74 million tons by 2030, almost doubling electronic waste in just 16 years.

E-waste, therefore, is the world's fastest-growing domestic waste stream fueled mainly by higher consumption rates of electric and electronic equipment, short life cycles, and few options for repair.

"E-waste is a health and environmental hazard, containing toxic additives or hazardous substances such as mercury, which damages the human brain and coordination system," said the report.

"An estimated 50 tonnes of mercury — used in monitors, PCBs [printed circuit boards], and fluorescent and energy-saving light sources — are contained in undocumented flows of e-waste annually."

The UN's Global E-waste Monitor 2020 was produced by the Global E-waste Statistics Partnership (GESP), that includes the UN University (UNU), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA).

In the middle- and low-income countries, the e-waste management infrastructure is not fully developed, and in some cases, it is entirely absent.

"Hence, e-waste is managed mostly by the informal sector. In this case, e-waste is often handled under inferior conditions, causing severe health effects to workers



Global e-waste surges 21% in 5 years: UN report

and the children who often live, work and play near e-waste management activities," the report said.

'Serious challenge'

Only 17.4 percent of 2019's e-waste was collected and recycled.

Gold, silver, copper, platinum, and other high-value, recoverable materials conservatively valued at \$57 billion -- higher than the gross domestic product of most countries -- were mostly dumped or burned rather than being collected for treatment and reuse.

The report said that Asia generated the highest volume of e-waste in 2019 -- some 24.9 million tons, followed by the Americas (13.1 million tons) and Europe (12 million tons), while Africa and Oceania generated 2.9 million tons and 0.7 million tons respectively.

Antonis Mavropoulos, president of the International Solid Waste Association, said at an online news conference: "Governments, municipalities and the big companies involved in electronic equipment, and the waste management, have a very serious challenge.

"They have to find a way to issue the maximum quality of recycling with children's environmental protection, without affecting the livelihood of poor people attending to the informal sector. And I think this is a serious governance problem we have."

One of the key findings from the E-waste Monitor is that proper e-waste management can help mitigate global warming.

In 2019, an estimated 98 million tons of CO₂-equivalents were released into the atmosphere from discarded fridges and air-conditioners, contributing roughly 0.3 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Europe ranked first worldwide in terms of e-waste generation per capita with 16.2 kilograms (37.5 pounds) per capita. Oceania came second (16.1 kg), followed by the Americas (13.3 kg). Asia (5.6 kg) and Africa (2.5 kg) were much lower. (Anadolu)



E-waste levels up 20% in 5 years – UN

By Agence France-Presse July 4, 2020

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/07/04/news/world/e-waste-levels-up-20-in-5-years-un/737375/>

PARIS: Humans discarded more than 50 million tons of electronic waste last year — an increase of 20 percent in just five years — making tech refuse the world’s fastest growing waste problem, the United Nations said Thursday (Friday in Manila).

In its annual report on e-waste — tossed away smartphones, computers, white goods and electronic car parts — the UN said that materials worth more than \$55 billion (50 billion euros) were being wasted every year.

In 2019 only 17 percent of the year’s 53 million tons of e-waste was recycled, with the rest ending up in scrapheaps or landfill.

With its unreclaimed deposits of gold, silver, copper and platinum as well as highly-prized rare Earth metals, nonrecycled e-waste means more must be mined to equip consumers with new products. The report’s authors blamed ever-shorter device lifespans and a lack of recycling infrastructure for the ballooning e-waste problem.

“E-waste quantities are rising three times faster than the world’s population and 13 percent faster than the world’s GDP during the last five years,” said Antonis Mavropoulos, president of the International Solid Waste Association.

“This sharp rise creates substantial environmental and health pressures and demonstrates the urgency to combine the fourth industrial revolution with circular economy.”

According to the report, Asia generated the greatest volume of e-waste in 2019, with 24.9 million tons, followed by the Americas (13.1 MT) and Europe (12 MT), while Africa and Oceania generated just 2.9 MT and 0.7 MT, respectively.

Europe had the highest e-waste figure per capita. To put the numbers into perspective, 53 million tonnes is substantially heavier than every adult in Europe put together, or as much as 350 cruise ships the size of the Queen Mary 2.

It equates to more than 7 kilograms of e-waste for every human on the planet. The UN warned that e-waste contained a number of toxic substances known to be harmful to human health.



Climate change caused havoc 2,000 years ago

By Tim Radford, Climate News Network July 3, 2020

<https://www.eco-business.com/news/climate-change-caused-havoc-2000-years-ago/>

An Alaskan volcano once spurred climate change, darkening Mediterranean skies, launching a famine and possibly changing history.



The crater of Okmok, the Alaskan volcano whose eruption in 43 BCE caused a distinct chill across the northern hemisphere. Image: J. Reeder, USGS, CC BY-SA 2.0

Once again, geologists have shown that climate change can be linked to some of the most dramatic moments in human history: civil strife in the Roman Republic that ended with the fall of a Greek dynasty in Egypt and the rise of the Roman Empire.

The summers just after the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 BCE (Before the Christian Era) were among the coldest in the northern hemisphere for thousands of years, and this sudden prolonged chill can be linked to lost harvests, famine, the failure of the all-important Nile flood and the death of the Roman Mark Antony and the last of Egypt's Ptolemaic rulers, Cleopatra.

The trigger for that cold shadow over the Mediterranean theatre of history? Summer and autumn temperatures fell to as much as 7°C below normal because on the far side of the hemisphere an Alaskan volcano erupted in 43 BCE to hurl colossal quantities of soot and sulphates into the stratosphere and dim the sun's radiation for much of the next decade.

And the evidence? Deposits of volcanic ash in the Arctic ice cores that can be linked directly to one once-smoking crater in the Aleutian islands now known as Okmok, according to new research in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Average temperatures fell dramatically. Summer rainfall in southern Europe rose by 50 per cent to 120 per cent above normal. Autumn rainfall rose fourfold.

The rest is history: literally. Roman and Chinese chronicles surviving from that time record what scientists call "unusual atmospheric phenomena" as well as "widespread famine."

Less directly, records of lead pollution preserved in the annual layers of ice in Greenland tell a story of economic decline, reflected in what might be the reduction of mining and smelting of lead and silver during the last years of the Roman Republic.



Climate change caused havoc 2,000 years ago

And the effect on the hemisphere's climate was also recorded in the annual flow and flood of the River Nile, a regular inundation that enriched the grain harvest of the Nile Valley, and supplied bread for Rome and its sister cities.

The research was led by Joe McConnell of the US Desert Research Institute in Nevada. "To find a volcano on the other side of the Earth erupted and effectively contributed to the demise of the Romans and the Egyptians and the rise of the Roman Empire is fascinating," he said. "It certainly shows how interconnected the world was even 2000 years ago."

And one of his co-authors, Joseph Manning of Yale University, said: "We know that the Nile River did not flood in 43 BCE and 42 BCE – and now we know why. The volcanic eruption greatly affected the Nile watershed."

Climate's role

That mass migration, conflict and the collapse of once-stable regimes can be linked to climate change is not news: researchers have repeatedly found that drought, cold and harvest failure can be matched with the collapse of ancient empires in the Middle East and in the Bronze Age Mediterranean.

Just 1500 years ago volcanic eruptions have been timed to the famine, the Plague of Justinian, and other turmoil in the Byzantine empire. Professor Manning had already linked a failure of the Nile flood to the collapse of the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt.

Neither the volcanic eruption nor the consequent climate disruption can be said to have "caused" ancient power struggles. But a backdrop of instability, hunger and famine can be linked to conflict, and climate is now seen as an inseparable factor. Cold, heavy rain at the wrong season can ruin any harvest.

"In the Mediterranean region, these wet and extremely cold conditions during the agriculturally important spring through autumn seasons probably reduced crop yields and compounded supply problems during the ongoing political upheavals of the period," said Andrew Wilson of the University of Oxford, another author.

"These findings lend credibility to reports of cold, famine, food shortage and disease described by ancient sources."

This story was published with permission from Climate News Network.

Thanks for reading to the end of this story!

We would be grateful if you would consider joining as a member of The EB Circle. This helps to keep our stories and resources free for all, and it also supports independent journalism dedicated to sustainable development. For a small donation of S\$60 a year, your help would make such a big difference.



Fish more vulnerable to warming water than first thought

Associated Press / 06:52 AM July 03, 2020

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1301130/fish-more-vulnerable-to-warming-water-than-first-thought>

Global warming looks like it will be a bigger problem for the world's fish species than scientists first thought: A new study shows that when fish are spawning or are embryos they are more vulnerable to hotter water.



FILE – This July 2019 photo provided by Peter Westley shows the carcass of a chum salmon along the shore of the Koyukuk River near Huslia, Alaska, July 2019 was the hottest month ever recorded in the state. Global warming looks like it will be a far bigger problem for the world's fish species than scientists first thought, since a study led by Dr. Flemming Dahlke released on Thursday, July 2, 2020 shows that when fish are spawning or are embryos they are far more vulnerable to hotter water. (Peter Westley/University of Alaska Fairbanks via AP)

With medium-level human-caused climate change expected by the end of the century, the world's oceans, rivers and lakes will be too hot for about 40% of the world's fish species in the spawning or embryonic life stages, according to a study in Thursday's journal *Science*.

That means they could go extinct or be forced to change how and where they live and reproduce.

Until now, biologists had just studied adult fish. For adult fish, around 2% to 3% of the species would be in the too-hot zone in the year 2100 with similar projected warming. So using this new approach reveals a previously unknown problem for the future of fish, scientists said.

In a worst-case climate change scenario, which some scientists said is increasingly unlikely, the figure for species in trouble jumps to 60%.



Fish more vulnerable to warming water than first thought

These vulnerable times in the life of a fish make this a “bottleneck” in the future health of species, said study co-author Hans-Otto Portner, a marine biologist at the Alfred Wegener Institute in Germany.

A marine heatwave last year, known as a blob, caused large numbers of migrating salmon to die throughout Alaska’s rivers. It also killed off cod eggs, showing what a warmer future might be like, said study lead author Flemming Dahlke, a marine biologist at the institute.

“With spawning fish and embryos most sensitive to warming waters, it means fish populations won’t be able to replace themselves,” said Rutgers University ecologist Malin Pinsky, who wasn’t part of the study but praised it. “Without reproduction and offspring, we have no fish, no fishing and no fish on our plates.”

In studying 694 species, Dahlke and Portner found some of the fish likely to be hardest hit by this phenomenon include Alaska pollock — the biggest fishery in the United States and the source of fast food fillets — and well-known species such as sockeye salmon, brown trout, bonito, barracuda and swordfish.

“The more we allow temperature to change ... the more we will lose the natural foundation of human life, including food from the sea,” Portner said.

When it gets too warm for spawning, the species could still possibly move to someplace cooler or spawn at another time, but that’s not easy, Dahlke said. “This could mean a lot of problems to many species.”



Botswana horrified over elephants' deaths

By Agence France-Presse July 4, 2020

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/07/04/news/world/botswana-horrified-over-elephants-deaths/737380/>

GABORONE: Hundreds of elephants have died mysteriously in Botswana's famed Okavango Delta, the Wildlife department said Thursday (Friday in Manila), ruling out poaching as the tusks were found intact.

The landlocked southern African country has the world's largest elephant population, estimated to be around 130,000.

"We have had a report of 356 dead elephants in the area north of the Okavango Delta and we have confirmed 275 so far," Cyril Taolo, the acting director of the department of Wildlife and National Parks, told Agence France-Presse (AFP) in a text message.

He said the cause of the deaths was yet to be established with anthrax having been ruled out. "We do not suspect poaching since [the] animals were found with tusks," he said. Samples have been collected and sent to specialized laboratories in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Canada for testing.

Similar deaths were first reported in May when authorities found 12 carcasses in just a week in two villages in the northwest of the country. "It seems they were dying very suddenly in some cases," conservation biologist, Keith Lindsay told AFP, adding that the deaths were sudden.

"The carcasses were animals that had fallen down while walking...right on their sternum which is very unusual," said Lindsay. "Up to now there doesn't seem to be any clear sign of the reason for it. When something like this happens it is alarming."

The latest discoveries were flagged by a wildlife conservation charity, Elephants Without Borders (EWB), whose confidential report referring to the 356 dead elephants, was leaked to the media on Wednesday. EWB suspects the elephants have been dying in the area for about 3 months.

According to the report dated June 19, 2020, "70 percent of elephant carcasses were considered recent, having died about a month ago, and 30 percent of the carcasses appeared fresh, ranging from one day to two weeks old."

"There was good evidence to show elephants of all ages and sex appear to be dying," said the report penned by EWB Director Mike Chase.



Botswana horrified over elephants' deaths

Several live elephants appeared to have been weak, lethargic, and emaciated, with some showing signs of disorientation, difficulty in walking or limping, EWB said. "One elephant was observed walking in circles, unable to change direction although being encouraged by other herd members," said the report.

For conservationist Neil Fritt the strange phenomenon is "tragic" but appears to be "more like a natural occurrence as opposed to direct human cause," he told AFP.

Botswana has an overpopulation of elephants which President Mokgweetsi Masisi has flagged as the source for much of the human-animal conflict in the country.

In February the southern African country held its first major auction for trophy elephant hunting quotas since controversially scrapping a hunting ban last year. But the hunting season was suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic.



More than 160 dead in Myanmar jade mine landslide

(Agence France-Presse) - July 3, 2020 - 7:59am

<https://www.philstar.com/world/2020/07/03/2025367/more-160-dead-myanmar-jade-mine-landslide>

HPAKANT, Myanmar — The battered bodies of more than 160 jade miners were pulled from a sea of mud after a landslide in northern Myanmar on Thursday, after one of the worst-ever accidents to hit the treacherous industry.

Scores die each year while working in the country's lucrative but poorly regulated jade trade, which uses low-paid migrant workers to scrape out a gem highly coveted in China.

The disaster struck after heavy rainfall pounded the open-cast mines, close to the Chinese border in Kachin state, where billions of dollars of jade is believed to be scoured each year from bare hillsides.

A slice of mountain collapsed, sending a churning torrent of mud into an aquamarine-coloured lake of mine waste water as workers scampered uphill.

"There are so many people floating in the water," said a bystander.

Dozens "were smothered by a wave of mud", the Myanmar Fire Services Department said in a Facebook post.

Rescue workers, including the fire department and local police, worked throughout the day to pull bodies out of a mud lake under a continuous deluge of heavy monsoon rain.

"By 7:15 pm, 162 bodies were found," said the department, adding that 54 people were injured and sent to nearby hospitals.

Mud-slaked and bloodied bodies of miners were laid out in grim rows under tarpaulins, some missing shoes as a result of the force of the wall of mud which hit them.

A woman grieved over the recovered victims, as rescue workers held her up.

Working through a torrent of heavy rain was a challenge, police superintendent Than Win Aung said, as it could spark another mine collapse on the unstable terrain.

"We can't dig and find the bodies buried underwater... so we are just picking up the dead bodies that float," he told AFP, adding that rescue efforts will be further hampered as night falls.

The workers were scavenging for gemstones on the sharp mountainous terrain in Hpakant township, where furrows from earlier excavations had already loosened the earth.

The victims had apparently defied a warning not to work the mines during the monsoon rains, local police told AFP.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres was "deeply saddened" by the deaths and said his organisation was ready to help those affected, a spokesman said.



More than 160 dead in Myanmar jade mine landslide

Chinese demand

Myanmar is one of the world's biggest sources of jadeite and the industry is largely driven by insatiable demand for the translucent green gem from neighbouring China.

The mines are mired in secrecy, although environmental watchdog Global Witness alleges operators are linked to former junta figures, the military elite and their cronies.

It said the landslide should serve as a "wake-up call" for Myanmar's government led by Aung San Suu Kyi -- whose party vowed to reform and stamp out corruption.

The watchdog estimated that the industry was worth some \$31 billion in 2014, although very little reaches state coffers.

The mine where Thursday's accident happened belongs to the Yadanar Kyay company, according to the military's official news site.

Police said the death toll could have been even higher if authorities had not warned people to stay away from the mining pits the day before.

Landslides in the area are common, especially during Myanmar's notoriously severe monsoon season, and a major slip in November 2015 left more than 100 dead.

Another last year buried more than 50 workers.

The workers combing through the earth are often from impoverished ethnic minority communities, looking for scraps left behind by big firms.

Low-quality stones can be exchanged for food or sold for \$20 to waiting brokers.

But workers risk their lives daily in the hope of hitting the jackpot — a good quality jadeite that could fetch tens of thousands of dollars, changing their lives.

Northern Myanmar's abundant natural resources — including jade, timber, gold and amber — help finance both sides of a decades-long civil war between ethnic Kachin insurgents and the military.

The fight to control the mines and the revenues frequently traps local civilians in the middle.



Monkeys infected with novel coronavirus developed short-term immunity

Agence France-Presse / 02:01 PM July 03, 2020

<https://technology.inquirer.net/101661/monkeys-infected-with-novel-coronavirus-developed-short-term-immunity>

WASHINGTON — Test monkeys infected with the novel coronavirus responsible for the COVID-19 pandemic were protected from reinfection for up to 28 days later, a Chinese study out Thursday in the journal Science said.



In this file photo taken on March 13, 2019 A Rhesus macaque, part of the 11 rescued monkeys from research laboratories, sits in the quarantine room of the future animal shelter 'La Taniere', in Nogent-le-Phaye near Chartres. Photo by JEAN-FRANCOIS MONIER / AFP

While the monkeys displayed initial immunity, it's unclear how long such immunity will last in humans – it will be necessary to wait months, or even years, to know if the millions of people infected at the start of the pandemic are protected from re-infection.

Scientists from Peking Union Medical College performed an experiment on rhesus macaques, often used because of their similarities to humans, to find out if they have a short-term immunity to the virus.

Six rhesus macaques were infected in their trachea with a dose of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They developed mild to moderate symptoms, and took about two weeks to recover.

Twenty-eight days after the first infection, four of the six monkeys received another dose of virus, but this time, despite a brief rise in temperature, they showed no sign of reinfection, the study authors wrote.

By taking frequent samples the researchers discovered that the peak viral load was reached three days after the monkeys were infected.

The monkeys showed a stronger immune response after the first infection, producing more so-called neutralizing antibodies which may have protected them against short-term reinfection, the scientists wrote.

More experiments are needed to see how long this immune defense remains, the authors said.



Canadian birds change their tune

posted July 03, 2020 at 06:05 pm by AFP
<https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/327649>

Members of a Canadian sparrow species famous for their jaunty signature song are changing their tune, a curious example of a “viral phenomenon” in the animal kingdom.

Bird enthusiasts first recorded the white-throated sparrow’s original song, with its distinctive triplet hook, in the 1950s.

Canadians even invented lyrics to accompany the ditty: “Oh my sweet, Ca-na-da, Ca-na-da, Ca-na-da.”

But starting from the late 20th century, biologists began noticing that members of the species in western Canada were innovating.

Instead of a triplet, the new song ended in a doublet and a new syncopation pattern. The new ending sounded like “Ca-na, Ca-na, Ca-na.”

Over the course of the next two decades, this new cadence became a big hit, moving eastward and conquering Alberta, then Ontario. It began entering Quebec last year.

It’s now the dominant version across more than 3,000 kilometers of territory, in an extremely rare example of the total replacement of historic bird dialect by another.

Scientist Ken Otter at the University of Northern British Columbia, and his colleague Scott Ramsay from Wilfrid Laurier University, described the dizzying pace of this transformation in the journal *Current Biology*.

“What we’re seeing is like somebody moving from Quebec to Paris, and all the people around them saying, ‘Wow, that’s a cool accent’ and start adopting a Quebec accent,” Otter told AFP.

Their work was based on 1,785 recordings between 2000 and 2019, the majority made by them but with contributions from citizen-scientists, who posted the files on specialist sites like xeno-canto.org.

In the western province of Alberta, about half of the recorded songs ended with the triplet in 2004; ten years later, all the males had adopted the doublet.

In 2015, half of western Canada had converted to the doublet version, and by last year, the new song had been well established on the western tip of eastern Quebec province.

At this rate, the historic triplet version may soon exist only in tape recordings.

So how did it happen?

Probably in the same way that children return from summer camp humming new tunes: songbirds from different parts of Canada winter in the same parts of the United States, then return to their own homes in spring.

The researchers verified this theory by tagging a few of the birds.

The hypothesis remains unverified.