

DATE: JULY 16, 2020

DAY: THURSDAY

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service

New cemetery site for Cebu City identified as virus deaths rise

By: [Ador Vincent Mayol](#), [Nestle Semilla](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:00 AM July 16, 2020

CEBU CITY—Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu has identified a new cemetery site for the city government as the number of deaths from the new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) continues to increase here.

Cimatu, who was appointed by President Duterte to oversee the government response to contain the spread of COVID-19 in Cebu province and city, chose a 2-hectare area spanning Sitios Patayng Yuta and Baksan in the mountain village of Sapangdaku as the site of the Cebu City Botanical Memorial Garden.

“We have to immediately identify burial sites that are outside protected areas and will pose no harm to the immediate community,” he said. Cimatu said finding a new burial ground was among the priorities as there was no more space in all 11 private and 15 public cemeteries in the city.

Records as of July 14 showed that 388 people had died of COVID-19 in Cebu City, a significant surge from the 27 deaths recorded as of June 1. The Department of Health (DOH) recorded 7,589 cases in the city as of Tuesday.

Watershed

The city government earlier identified a lot in Barangay Guba as site for the new cemetery, but the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Central Visayas struck down the plan because it was within a watershed area under the Central Cebu Protected Landscape.

The DENR also called out city officials after 389 mahogany trees in the village were cut without a permit.

Cimatu reminded local officials to comply with requirements.

The project needs an approved resolution from the city council for the construction of a cemetery, an application letter for an environmental compliance certificate, a cemetery development plan and tree-cutting permits.

Cimatu organized a technical working group composed of the Environmental Management Bureau, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, and the DOH to fast-track the processing of documentary requirements needed for the construction.

Urgent

Mayor Edgardo Labella told the council that he needed its approval of the new cemetery. “In order to expedite the process, I certified as urgent the resolution pending before the council,” he said.

Councilor David Tumalak, the proponent of an ordinance creating a city-owned cemetery, said: “The lack of available grave sites in the city may lead to the delay in the burial of a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 [patient], which may cause the further spread of the virus and add to the problems faced by the city.”

He said not all Cebuanos could afford cremation services, costing between P30,000 and P60,000. An ordinary burial, he said, costs between P10,000 and P20,000.

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1307401/new-cemetery-site-for-cebu-city-identified-as-virus-deaths-rise>

Cimatu finds burial site for Cebu City

Published 17 hours ago on July 15, 2020 12:40 PM

By [Rico Osmeña](#)



DENR was able to prevent the cutting of more than 1,000 mahogany trees in the cemetery site. (PTV image)

Department of Environment and Natural Resources(DENR) Secretary and Cebu Task Force on Covid-19 overseer Roy Cimatu has turned down Cebu City's construction of a 3 to 5 hectares public cemetery in Barangay Guba.

Instead, he wanted it constructed in Barangay Sapangdaku.

"We have to immediately identify burial sites that are outside protected areas, and will pose no harm to the immediate community," Cimatu said.

Cimatu and other officials on Monday inspected possible burial sites in Cebu City in Barangays Sapangdako and Buhisan.

His decision on Sapangdako burial site implied that he has not approved the earlier proposal of Cebu City officials to construct the public cemetery in Sitio Catives II in Guba.

DENR has called for an administrative adjudication against Cebu City government set on 27 July 2020 for illegally cutting 389 mahogany trees in Guba last week.

DENR was able to prevent the cutting of more than 1,000 mahogany trees in the site.

MGen. Melquiades Feliciano, Cebu Task Force on Covid-19 deputy chief implementer, said, "Forward planning and swift implementation will give Cebu City the edge it needs to defeat COVID-19. There is an urgent public health risk posed by the lack of crematories, so we have to do what we can and do it quickly."

Earlier, Cebu City attorney and Mayor Edgardo Labella's spokesperson Rey Gealon said the cutting of trees in Guba was not illegal and had verbal approval from DENR.

Gealon also claimed that mahogany trees are not considered "endangered species" and needs DENR permit for cutting.

Gealon insisted the City Government will pushthrough with the Guba public cemetery.

p: wjg

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/15/cimatu-finds-burial-site-for-cebu-city/>

Cimatu orders transfer of cemetery project



SITE INSPECTION. Environment Secretary and Cebu Covid-19 overseer Roy Cimatu (second from right) and local environment officials visit Barangay Buhisan to inspect possible sites for the construction of a cemetery to address the shortage of burial areas in Cebu City. Cimatu and Cebu City officials eventually agreed to put up the cemetery in a two-hectare property in Barangay Sapangdaku. (Photo by IATF Visayas)

July 14, 2020

A TWO-hectare timberland area in Sitio Patayng Yuta and Sitio Baksan, Barangay Sapangdaku, Cebu City will be the new site of the Cebu City Botanical Memorial Garden, a public cemetery that the Cebu City Government intends to build up in the mountains.

This after Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu issued an order to transfer the planned cemetery to Barangay Sapangdaku following a DENR 7 Protected Areas Management Board (PAMB) resolution denying the application of the Cebu City government to construct the cemetery in Barangay Guba, a protected area under the Central Cebu Protected Landscape (CCPL).

Also, the PAMB denied the City's application for clearance pursuant to Republic Act 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (E-Nipas) Act of 2018 and Presidential Decree 856, or the Sanitation Code of the Philippines.

Since Barangay Guba is within a watershed area, constructing a cemetery there could affect Cebu's important water supply.

Cimatu and City Hall officials led by City Councilor Dave Tumulak, overseer of the cemetery project, met at the DENR Central Visayas office in Barangay Lahug on Tuesday, July 14, 2020.

To fast-track the processing of documentary requirements needed for the construction, Cimatu committed to assist the City Government by organizing a technical working group composed of the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), and the Department of Health (DOH).

Cimatu told officials that in strictly complying with the documentary requirements, no shortcuts to the process must be made.

Among the requirements the City Government needs to comply with are the following: a resolution from the City Council interposing no objections to the project, an application letter for an environmental compliance certificate (ECC), a development plan on the cemetery, and tree cutting permits.

Violations

Cebu City was supposed to build a five-hectare cemetery in Barangay Guba to address the increasing number of fatalities due to Covid-19. Site development started with the cutting down of 389 mahogany trees.

The DENR 7 ordered a stop to the cutting of trees in the area last week and warned the City against developing the site without a Protected Area Management Plan (PAMP) and without applying for an ECC. The City is also facing violations for cutting the trees without a permit.

New site

Cimatun tasked the DENR to find an alternative area where the cemetery could be constructed.

"He (Cimatun) recognized the urgency of the construction of the cemetery considering that the number of Covid-19 deaths in Cebu City is increasing," said Dr. Eddie Llamedo, DENR 7 Planning Division chief and the agency's spokesperson.

Since Monday, Cimatun and DENR 7 officials surveyed some potential timberland and government-owned sites in Cebu City.

"We have to immediately identify burial sites that are outside protected areas, and will pose no harm to the immediate community," Cimatun said on Monday, July 13.

Cimatun, who also serves as Covid-19 overseer in Cebu, said he supports the city's initiative to construct a new cemetery due to the number of dead bodies in some of the city's funeral parlors waiting to be cremated or buried.

He said some crematoriums are facing backlogs with dead bodies waiting for three to four days before they can be cremated.

As of July 13, Cebu City's Covid-19 death toll has reached 384.

Of this number, 193 fatalities or 53.76 percent of the total deaths, were recorded in the last two weeks.

Cebu City Mayor Edgardo Labella said he respects Cimatun's decision on the matter.

"For as long as it can comply with all the environmental requirements because putting up a cemetery is an undertaking that requires a more delicate environmental compliance under environmental laws, so it is all right with me," Labella said. **(MVG, JKV / with reports from IATF Visayas)**

Guba cemetery bid gets thumbs down

Published 3 hours ago on July 16, 2020 02:50 AM

By [Rico Osmeña](#)



Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary and Cebu Task Force on COVID-19 overseer Roy Cimatu has turned down Cebu City officials' bid to construct a public cemetery in a protected area in Barangay Guba and directed them to use a more suitable area in Barangay Sapangdaku instead.

The proposed site for the cemetery, which is within Central Cebu Protected Landscape and a watershed area, was thumbed down by the DENR 7 Protected Areas Management Board through a resolution pursuant to the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 2018 and the Sanitation Code of the Philippines.

Cimatu said while he recognized the city's growing need for burial sites following the increase in coronavirus disease (COVID-19) cases and fatalities, the site selected by the Cebu City Government might pose even higher risks as it will affect Cebu's most important water source since the proposed cemetery will be built within a watershed area.

He then directed the City Government to look into the alternative two-hectare Sapangdaku site and committed to assist them by organizing a technical working group composed of the Environmental Management Bureau, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and the Department of Health to fast-track the processing of documentary requirements needed for the construction.

"We have to immediately identify burial sites that are outside protected areas, and will pose no harm to the immediate community," Cimatu said.

The Cebu City Government has been is under fire after it commenced the illegal cutting of 389 mahogany trees in the Guba site development last week, with the DENR calling them for an administrative adjudication on 27 July 2020 to explain the matter.

The DENR, which ordered the City to stop the tree-cutting activity, was able to prevent the felling of more than 1,000 mahogany trees and warned the City against developing the site without a Protected Area Management Plan and without applying for an environmental compliance certificate.

Cebu City Mayor Edgardo Labella expressed his agreement to Cimatu's decision.

"For as long as it can comply with all the environmental requirements because putting up a cemetery is an undertaking that requires a more delicate environmental compliance under environmental laws, so it is all right with me," Labella said.

Earlier, Cebu City lawyer and Labella spokesman Rey Gealon said the cutting of trees came with a verbal approval from the DENR, while the tree-cutting permits were not necessary since mahogany trees are not considered as endangered species.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/16/guba-cemetery-bid-gets-thumbs-down/>

Civic sector to Cebu City gov't: Protect our environment

By: Delta Dyrecka Letigio - CDN Digital|July 15,2020 - 08:33 PM



Barangay Guba in Cebu City. | Google photos

CEBU CITY, Philippines — A group of environmentalists and civic society members is asking the [Cebu City government](#) to protect the environment even if it is facing a public health emergency.

Cebu City Councilor Alvin Dizon joined the group in their position paper against the cutting of 389 trees and the unpermitted development of a lot in Barangay Guba, which is supposedly part of the Central Cebu Protected Landscape (CCPL) and within the Kotkot-Lusaran Watershed Forest Reserve.

The lot was to be transformed into a new public cemetery for Cebu City until the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) stopped the project.

“We, the civic society, express our vehement objection against the ongoing development by the Cebu City government of the proposed 30-hectare cemetery botanical memorial garden in Sitio Catives II in Barangay Guba as it is located within the Central Cebu Protected Landscape (CCPL). “We also express our extreme outrage against the illegal cutting of 389 mahogany trees in a blitzkrieg fashion to rush the construction work of the public cemetery without the necessary permits and clearances from the concerned government agencies,” said the group.

The group said the cutting was a violation of the Constitutional Right to a Balanced and Healthful Ecology, and they maintained that the planned cemetery will have detrimental effects on the environment considering that the proposed site is inside a watershed area.

The group also condemned how the city bypassed the CCPL regulations that any development of lots in the area should be presented to the Central Cebu Protected Landscape Protected Area Management Board (CCPL-PAMB) for a permit.

The development did not acquire the other permits from the DENR as well including the cutting of the 389 trees.

“Clearly, the actions of the Cebu City Government in developing the cemetery botanical memorial garden without any kind of permit or license from the DENR or the PAMB in the protected area is a blatant violation of the provision of the NIPAS Act, as amended,” said the group.

Civic sector to Cebu City gov't: Protect your

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The group urged the city to investigate the incident and explain to the public how the trees were cut and how the laws were bypassed for the cemetery.

“We reiterate that the building of cemetery in Barangay Guba, even during an emergency situation, cannot be railroaded without undergoing the process as mandated by law. These processes are important in order that the constitutionally-enshrined right to a balanced and healthful ecology is protected.”

The group was composed of representatives from Phil. Earth Justice Center, Inc., Regional Center of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (RCE-Cebu), Normandy Chair for Peace, Kaabag sa Sugbo Foundation, Inc., Break Free From Plastic (BFFP) Philippines Project, Akbayan Women, STEP Philippines, Pagtambayayong Foundation, Lihok Pilipina Foundation, Inc., Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino BMP-Cebu, and other.

The position paper was also presented in the Cebu City Council’s regular session on July 15, 2020, where a public hearing was being conducted for the proposed ordinance for Councilor David Tumalak.

The city government already stopped the development in Guba as Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, who is also overseeing the Interagency Task Force (IATF) in Cebu, ordered an investigation on the incident and spearheaded the [hunt for a better location](#), now pegged at a lot in Barangay Sapangdaku.

The City Legal Office (CLO) also justified that the Mahogany trees cut were not endangered species, not endemic to Cebu, and can even be considered as invasive.

However, Regional DENR in Central Visayas (DENR-7) Executive Director Paquito Melicor told the council that even though Mahogany trees are not endemic, they still help in the environment and are still part protected along with the entire CCPL to which they belong.

The investigation is ongoing, says Melicor, and if proven guilty, the city government may be slapped with administrative charges for failing to protect its environment. /bmjo

DENR sets another inspection of the Zobel de Ayala project in Taytay

Jul 14, 2020 Patricia Laririt

De Ayala's legal counsel told Palawan News through an email reply on July 13 they had already turned over the project to the indigenous tribes in the area.



Image from Google Maps.

The camp of socialite entrepreneur Beatriz Zobel de Ayala insisted they have already vacated a farm property they previously occupied and found by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to be inside a protected area.

De Ayala's legal counsel told Palawan News through an email reply on July 13 they had already turned over the project to the indigenous tribes in the area.

This, after the Taytay Community Environment and Natural Resources (CENRO) said they will conduct another inspection of the area after having issued two consecutive notices of violation (NOV) to the group.

"Ms. Beatriz Zobel de Ayala has vacated the property you are referencing. She learned of the Notice to Vacate from the news only, after which she immediately requested a copy from the DENR and has since been coordinating directly with them on this issue," lawyer Christopher Louie Ocampo told Palawan News in an email reply.

De Ayala was cited by the DENR for violation of the Enhanced National Integrated Protected Areas System (E-NIPAS) Act of 2018 and the Forestry Code of the Philippines for building a cement structure in the property classified as timberland without a Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) permit, according to CENRO Allan Valle.

The property, which was initially meant to be a farm to grow vegetables for the local community, was determined by the DENR to be a timberland area in Sitio Maypa and is part of the Malampaya Sound protected landscape.

De Ayala camp said that the organic vegetables farm have been turned over to the local indigenous people's group in the area.

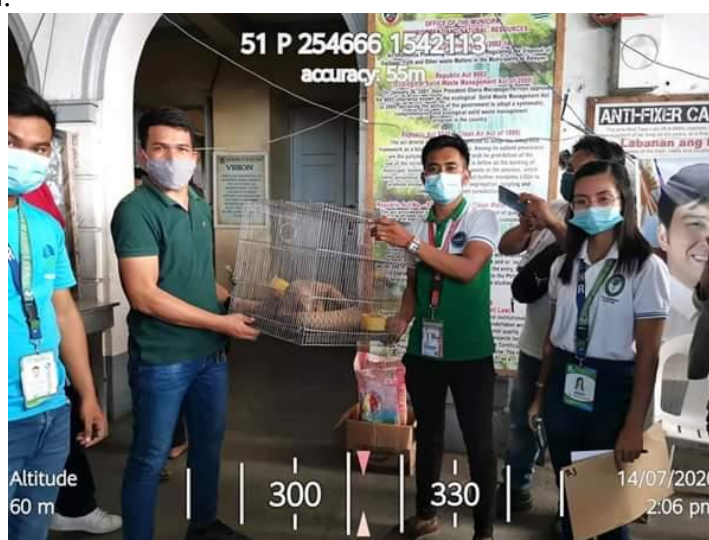
"The organic vegetables that were being grown on the land were turned over to the Indigenous Peoples of Barangay Pancol, Taytay to avoid wastage," Ocampo stated in his email.

Tagalog News: Balintong, naibalik sa tanggapan ng DENR

By Cornelia P. Cepeda Published on July 15, 2020

LUNGSOD NG LUCENA, Hulyo 15 (PIA) -- Isang (1) balintong o kilala sa tawag na Philippine pangolin (Manis culionensis) ang nai-turn over kahapon (July 14) sa tanggapan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources - City Environment Natural Resources (DENR- CENRO) Calaca, Batangas matapos makatanggap ng tawag mula sa munisipyo ng Balayan, Batangas.

Ayon sa ulat ng DENR, ang nasabing buhay-ilang ay naiulat na napadpad sa bakuran ng isang residente ng Brgy. Tanggoy, Balayan, Batangas habang kalakasan ng ulan noong Hulyo 13, 2020 bandang alas-10 ng gabi.



Pagbabalik ng naligaw na balintong o Palawan pangolin kahapon (July 14) sa tanggapan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources - City Environment Natural Resources (DENR- CENRO) sa Calaca, Batangas (Larawan mula sa DENR CENRO FB page)

Noong gabi ding iyon, ay agad namang isinangguni ng mga residente ang nahuling buhay-ilang sa Kapitan ng Brgy. Tanggoy at siya namang nakipag-ugnayan sa tanggapan MENRO- Balayan upang ma rescue.

Ang balintong (one who rolls over) ay isang pangolin species na endemic mula sa Palawan.

Ang tahanan nito ay mula sa primarya at sekondaryang kagubatan at sa mga madadamong lugar (grasslands).

Kasama ang balintong sa listahan ng mga nanganganib na maglaho o "Critically endangered" ng International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) at ng Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) sapagkat ito ay pinakapalagiang ipinupuslit ng ilegal sa ibang bansa dahil sa pinaniniwalaan umano itong nakapagpapagaling ng iba't-ibang sakit.

Nabubuhay ito ng 20 taon; "nocturnal and reclusive;" aktibo sa gabi kahit mahina ang paningin ay bumabawi lang siya sa lakas ng pang- amoy bilang depensa.

Mabagal rin ang paglakad, ngunit mabilis ang depensa pag may panganib. Nagtatago ito sa "tree canopy" at naglalabas ng mabahong amoy/ likido at ibinibilot ang katawan (roll over) sa oras ng panganib.

Tagalog News: balingtong, naibalik sa tanggapan ng

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Kung kumakain ang pangolin ng langgam/o tumpok ng anay, hindi nito inuubos o sinasaid lahat, bagkus ay nagtitira upang may mabalikan o makuha ang iba nitong kasamahan.

Critically endangered din ito sapagkat kalimitan ay isa lang ang nagiging anak nito at dala-dala nito hanggang 4 buwan bago mahiwalay sa ina.

Pinaaalalahanan ng DENR CENRO Calaca ang lahat na mahigpit na pinagbabawal ang pagpatay, pagkakalagal, pangkokolekta, pangangaso, pagmamaltrato, pagbiyahe, at pagsira sa tirahan ng mga buhay-ilang o "wildlife" ayon sa Batas R.A 9147 o Wildlife Resources and Conservation Act. (CPC/IDPD with additional information from DENR CENRO)

Cleanup

posted July 15, 2020 at 08:43 pm



People's organizations such as BUSILAK (Buhayin ang Sapa, Ilog, Lawa at Karagatan) and KASAKA (Kalinga sa Kalayaan) recently joined the DENR-PENRO in Rizal to clean up this garbage-clogged creek at Paso Bridge in Angono, Rizal.



Oil spill sa Iloilo cleared na – Navy Forces Central

July 16, 2020 @ 7:10 AM 36 mins ago

Manila, Philippines – Inanunsyong na-clear na ang oil spill na nakakontamina sa may karagatan ng Iloilo City at Guimaras province habang naabutan na rin ng tulong ang mga residenteng naapektuhan, ayon sa Naval Forces Central (NFC).

Sa pahayag, sinabi ng NFC na ang Naval Reserve Center-Western Visayas (NRCen-WV) at si Naval Task Group 1 commander Captain Stephen Tuballa sa tulong ng Coast Guard Station Iloilo ay naglaan ng response team para magsagawa ng oil spill recovery operation.

Pahayag pa ng NFC, nagtulong-tulong ang naval reservists mula NRCen-WV, naval-affiliated reserve squadron tugboat M/T Ana ng 502nd NARS (FF Cruz Inc.), patrol boat ng Philippine Navy (PB349) at Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) para sa skimming ng oil spill sa Iloilo/Guimaras Straits at sa shoreline ng Leganes at Dumangas.

Sa operasyon, pinangunahan ng navy vessel PB349 at coast guard floating assets ang survey at sweeping ng oil spill gamit ang sorbent boom sa kahabaan ng Muelle Loney Wharf, Iloilo City at Buenavista, Guimaras para matukoy ang contaminated coastal areas.

Kasama naman ng Philippine Navy ang local government units na magsasagawa ng coastal clean-up sa shoreline ng Guimaras.

Tinatayang nasa 40,000 litro ng bunker oil ang tumagas sa Zone 3, Barrio Obrero sa Lapuz, Iloilo. **RNT/FGDC**

Source: https://remate.ph/oil-spill-sa-iloilo-cleared-na-navy-forces-central/?fbclid=IwAR2frtvYYPMGzpSzfqwRd8WbVLv_KqWTQ9KAOFYWJjqXUmbwLTXV1tJdUJc

Oil spill in Iloilo, Guimaras cleared — Navy Forces Central

Published July 15, 2020 10:59pm

By MA. ANGELICA GARCIA, GMA News

The oil spill that contaminated coastal waters off Iloilo City and Guimaras province had been cleared and assistance was extended to affected residents, the Naval Forces Central (NFC) said in a statement on Wednesday.

In the statement, the NFC said Naval Reserve Center-Western Visayas (NRCen-WV) and Naval Task Group 1 commander Captain Stephen Tuballa in coordination with Coast Guard Station Iloilo provided a response team to conduct the oil spill recovery operation.

The NFC said naval reservists from NRCen-WV, naval-affiliated reserve squadron tugboat M/T Ana of the 502nd NARS (FF Cruz Inc.), patrol boat of the Philippine Navy (PB349) and the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) floating assets were augmented to conduct the skimming of oil spilled along Iloilo/Guimaras Straits and the shorelines of Leganes and Dumangas.

During the operation, navy vessel PB349 and coast guard floating assets conducted a survey and sweeping of the oil spill using a sorbent boom along Muelle Loney Wharf, Iloilo City and Buenavista, Guimaras to identify the contaminated coastal areas.

The NFC said the Philippine Navy, together with the local government units will now conduct coastal clean-up along the shoreline of Guimaras.

The NFC added the Navy, PCG and other LGUS will utilize all means for the decontamination and restoration of the sea waters in Iloilo and Guimaras for protection and preservation of marine aquatic resources.

They will also provide assistance for affected families residing along the shoreline.

In the same statement NFC will continue to conduct naval operations and extend assistance to the people in the Visayas.

On July 3, at least [63 households were displaced due to the fumes](#) that drifted to their area after the explosion of AC Energy's Power Barge 102.

An estimated 40,000 liters of bunker oil spilled in the waters off Zone 3, Barrio Obrero in Lapuz, Iloilo.

Meanwhile, AC Energy said initial investigation showed the oil spill was caused by a [rupture in its barge's fuel tank](#).

The [Department of Environment and Natural Resources](#) said the barge owner will be fined for the oil spill incident.

Oil spill in Iloilo, Guimaras cleared -Navy Forces

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On Saturday, the [PCG filed a criminal complaint](#) against AC Energy and two of its officers before the Iloilo Provincial Prosecutor's Office over the oil spill incident.

PCG spokesperson Commodore Armand Balilo said the basis of the complaint was Section 107 of Republic Act 8550 (The Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998) as amended by RA 10654 for aquatic pollution. -- **BAP, GMA News**

Use of plastic sachets a concern for environmental groups

Published July 15, 2020, 11:31 AM

by Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz

Environmental groups have expressed a growing concern for single-use plastics, specifically sachets, due to the affordability and convenience they give to Filipino consumers.



(FILE PHOTO / REUTERS/Eloisa Lopez/ MANILA BULLETIN)

A new report, titled “Sachet Economy: Big Problems in Small Packets,” which was released on Tuesday was commissioned by the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA) using the data from University of Santo Tomas’ Research Center for Social Sciences and Education to look into Filipinos’ sachet consumption habits.

“Sachets are perceived as inexpensive, and convenient because of their small and durable packaging, but in reality, they are expensive for cities to manage, difficult to effectively recycle, and cannot be reused,” GAIA Asia-Pacific program manager Miko Aliño said.

GAIA and the global movement Break Free From Plastic also lamented the “alarming” exclusion of sachets from local laws, even though some local governments have gone beyond the usual plastic bag bans by passing ordinances.

The report showed how corporations managed to evade responsibility for sachet waste, which leaves local governments and communities struggling with this non-recyclable waste to address the imminent sachet pollution crisis.

“Corporations have greatly benefited from these products by marketing them for their low cost and convenience but they are not made accountable for the pollution that comes along with its production and disposal,” Aliño said.

Moreover, the report found that sachet purchase and use tend to be higher among lower socioeconomic brackets. The groups said it is because multinational companies advertised them as affordable for daily-wage earners for them to be able to purchase branded quality products in small quantities.

It is based on the premise that sachets help consumers ration their use of a product better than big containers, thereby reducing product wasting, they added.

“Sachets may have brought better quality products to poor communities but the problem is that they have become a waste nightmare. When sachets are discarded indiscriminately, these clog drains and contribute to flooding or even pollute our oceans. With this data, we can really see that companies are really the ones to be blamed. We can also use this report’s findings to pursue regulations that would compel companies to acknowledge their liability for plastic pollution,” Aliño said.

LACK OF INTEGRATED NATIONAL POLICY

The report cited efforts of local government units and the need to step up to address a large part of the country’s plastic waste problem, including production of throwaway plastic packaging, and actions that companies must do to reverse plastic-related problems and pollution.

Use of plastic sachets a concern for environmental

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'TINGI' CULTURE

The report also presented the attitude of Filipinos towards plastics, such as how our culture is continuously redefined and assimilated in the tactics of big businesses in perpetuating decades of plastic pollution.

Furthermore, the report discussed public attitudes towards plastic pollution and laid out several recommendations and initiatives from the environmental organizations, private sector, and social enterprises towards efforts to address the situation.

“Filipinos had done very well without sachets in the past. We bought cooking oil and condiments in small portions or tingi in our community sari-sari stores with our own reusable containers and mugs. Wet goods such as fish and meat were usually wrapped in used paper or banana leaves,” Break Free From Plastic Philippines national coordinator Rei Panaligan said.

“With this, we want to encourage again our businesses and retailers to adopt alternative delivery systems by putting refilling stations and encouraging customers to bring their own reusable bags and containers. Moreover, this should be part of a better normal way forward in a post-COVID scenario wherein alternative delivery systems and refill stations are part of the plan. As shown by the latest statements of scientists worldwide, reusable is still safe to be used during this pandemic,” he added.

Metro Clark landfill adapts to new normal

posted July 15, 2020 at 10:30 pm

by [Jess Malabanan](#)

Clark Freeport—The country's lone-engineered sanitary landfill continues to boost its operational capabilities aimed at adapting to the new normal set-up in waste management and disposal.

Metro Clark Waste Management Corporation has poured in millions in capital investments for additional improvements inside its 100-hectare facility in Sitio Kalangitan in Capas, Tarlac, including constructing additional concrete roads, waste treatment and disposal facilities and its fleet of transport and heavy equipment.

MCWMC President and CEO, Rufo Colayco said that "these continuing developments and facilities improvements are integral to Metro Clark's overall development program."

"As we adopt our operations to the new normal brought on by the Covid 19 pandemic, our ongoing infrastructure developments and investments are all geared towards ensuring that Metro Clark continues to provide our world class service to our LGU and other clients, while protecting further the environment and ultimately, the public's health," said Colayco, adding that efficient and environment friendly waste disposal have been key to Metro Clark's steady growth over the past decade.

Almost simultaneously, Metro Clark's "Big ticket" on-site key disposal facility development projects were implemented early this year, up until the onset of this year's Q3.

These includes the Leachate Treatment Plant (Reed bed) at a cost of P70 million, earth-moving works for the 7-hectare cell expansion, P50 million and a transfer yard and workshop with a combined area of almost a hectare, P43 million.

Aside from this, similar road construction projects within the Kalangitan facility are currently being undertaken by MCWMC. The project cost is pegged at P30 million.

Colayco said that these projects are all programmed to better serve Metro Clark's expanding market and lately, to cater to the current demands of the 'new normal.'

"We owe it to our clientele's as well as stakeholders. These investments in infrastructure and on-site developments are all part of our commitment to continuously provide efficiency in our waste management and disposal service. as they steadily rely on our world class brand of service and efficiency," Colayco said.

From the main disposal facility to logistics and equipment maintenance Metro Clark ensures that the 100 hectare sanitary landfill operations is safe,environment friendly and at par with the global standards.

Meanwhile, Vicky Gaetos, Metro Clark's Executive vice-president, disclosed that more local government units in Central Luzon and some provinces in Northern part of Luzon are disposing their municipal wastes in Metro Clark's engineered sanitary landfill during the Covid 19 lockdowns and quarantine period.

"Clearly, more and more LGU's and other industrial and commercial centers have benefitted from our efficient and environment-friendly facilities. That's why we continue to grow our market in the region," Gaetos said.

Gaetos added that the Kalangitan waste disposal facility is more than ready to accommodate larger volumes of wastes as the company continues to expand its on-site waste management capacity as well as adopting to the new normal operational protocols.

"In hindsight, Metro Clark's decision to build a 7-kilometer concrete has paid off. Its construction and operation cut down the travelling time from the landfill to McArthur Highway from 1 hour to 25 minutes. Hence, more trucks reduced the hauling time by one half. This is not only true for MCWM trucks but also for those from our clients as well," Gaetos said.

The access road project, bankrolled by Metro Clark, traverse several barangays along Susuba-Mayamot Provincial Road, Capas, Tarlac was paved and concreted in 2018 as the access road direct to the landfill.

Waste disposal operations under the 'New Normal'

Metro Clark has also embarked on on-site facilities and machineries improvements (Adaptive to New Normal Operations).

Strict adherence to health and safety related protocols to prevent any transmission of COVID 19 disease such as mandatory PPEs for personnel, strict social distancing in offices and other on-site facilities are being practiced at all times.

On the waste being brought to Metro Clark's Kalangitan facility, VP-Administration and head of Human Resource, Victor O. Hontiveros of MCWM said that there is now a more detailed inquiry and inspection of waste especially from new clients.

"This is to determine if the waste the client declares really falls under the parameters set by EMB & DENR", Hontiveros said.

He said that the standard washing protocol of trucks after disposal of residual waste is being enforced more stringently. Trucks (both client and company owned) are not allowed out unless they are clean according to the standards set by the Company Health and Safety group.

Where company vehicles and personnel are used for picking up and transporting residual waste, the company has standards which the personnel MUST adhere to.

PPE MUST be worn at all times - NO STOPS along the way except when the crew needs to eat or relieve themselves. They maintain distancing when going to client areas for pick up. The normal covering of the bins is accomplished without coming into contact with the waste.

"These are just a few measures that we have been impleting since the start of the lockdowns in mid-March. The company from the very beginning has always been using sanitary and hygienic protocols and now there have been a few added safety protocols per the additional requirements of the DOH/DENR safety memoranda,"Hontiveros said.

Metro Clark engineered sanitary landfill is the only disposal facility in the country with triple ISO Certificates, namely ISO 9001 QMS (Quality Management Systems); 14001 EMS (Environmental Management Systems); 45001 OSHMS (Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems) certified.



Suplay ng tubig nagbabadyang kapusin muli – Marcos

July 15, 2020 @ 1:53 PM 17 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Nagbabala si Senadora Imee Marcos na posibleng lumala ang kakulangan sa suplay ng tubig habang may pandemya ng COVID-19, bunsod ng patuloy na pagbaba ng tubig sa Angat Dam sa kabila ng pag-ulan.

Sa pahayag, sinabi ni Marcos na patuloy ang pagbaba ng water level sa Angat Dam – ang pangunahing nagsu-suplay ng tubig sa Metro Manila – mula sa halos 200 meters simula nag-lockdown noong Marso pumalo sa mas mababang 186 meters nitong Martes, July 14.

“Tumaas ang demand sa paggamit ng tubig para sa pesonal hygiene pati public sanitation bunsod ng pandemya ng COVID-19 kaya hindi rin sumasapat ang tubig ulan na pamalit sana sa Angat,” ani Marcos.

Ang kasalukuyang water level nito ay halos 20 meters na mas mababa kaysa sa normal na operating level na 205 meters at halos masaid pa dahil 6 meters na lang bago ang minimum operating level na 180 meters.

“Baka umabot na tayo sa critical level na 160 meters pagpasok ng Oktubre, kung magpapatuloy ito. Alangan naman itigil ang paghuhugas ng kamay pati paglilinis ng paligid?” tanong ni Marcos.

Isinisi ni Marcos ang problema sa seguridad ng tubig sa kabiguan ng Manila Water at Maynilad na gampanan ang kanilang obligasyon sa publiko base sa 1997 water concession contract na kanilang nilagdaan sa gobyerno.

“Ang pagtatapos ng buwan ng Hunyo ay simbolo rin ng halos 20th anibersaryo ng kapalpakan ng Manila Water at Maynilad na tugunan ang pangakong magbigay ng 24-oras na suplay ng malinis na inuming tubig sa Metro Manila at mga karatig-lungsod sa Cavite at Rizal,” ani Marcos.

Mismong ang Korte Suprema ang nagpahayag na lumabag ang nasabing water concessionaires sa Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004 dahil bigong tugunan ang pagtatayo ng mga waste water treatment system sa kanilang mga lugar, limang taon matapos itong maisabatas, dagdag ni Marcos. **Ernie Reyes**

Sual operates at the highest levels of environmental compliance

By [BusinessMirror](#)

July 15, 2020

We write in reaction to a BusinessMirror news story published on July 14, 2020—*Reject 2nd coal-fired plant in Sual*—written by Mr. Jonathan L. Mayuga, where passing mention was made of TeaM Energy’s Sual Power Station.

Mr. Mayuga quotes a Ms. Rossana Soriano as saying that they have “lived with the smoke and pollution of the Sual Power Station, causing much suffering and health problems among residents.”

We feel that the quote attributed to Ms. Soriano regarding our power plant, as published in your newspaper, is not an accurate reflection of reality, and is devoid of any factual basis.

At TeaM Energy, we take great pride in generating the needed electricity to address the country’s development needs, while strictly adhering to all pertinent environment laws and regulations. We have in place an environmental management system that has been ISO 14001 certified since 2002. This helps us ensure that we continuously operate at the highest levels of environmental compliance.

Back in 2012, the Sual Power Station was named by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources as one of the 18 greenest companies in the Philippines in recognition of our environmental performance. We continuously monitor our environmental performance in real time using the best available technologies. It is a matter of public record, and it is something we are proud of.

Currently, Sual is a thriving first-class municipality—several notches higher than its fifth-class standing before we began plant operations. Our facility has helped create economic opportunities while being mindful of the need to safeguard the environment, and give utmost priority to the health and well-being of residents of our host community where our employees work, and where many of them reside.

Thank you for giving us the chance to clarify this matter.

Froilan Gregory H. Romualdez III

Head of External Affairs / TeaM Energy

Governor calls for mine pullout from NVizcaya

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

July 15, 2020

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya: Gov. Carlos Padilla has called for the pullout of the Australian -owned OceanaGold Philippines Inc. from the province for failure to get a renewal of its license to operate that expired a year ago.

Padilla said the call was in view of a recent decision of the Court of Appeals (CA) 16th Division denying OceanaGold's petition in connection with its claim that it can continue to operate the Didipio mine in Kasibu town, pending renewal of its financial and technical assistance agreement (FTAA).

“In view of such development, we now strongly demand the complete pullout of OceanaGold from the area,” he added.

OceanaGold's 25-year FTAA became effective on June 20, 1994 and that its initial term expired on June 20, 2019.

But the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) allowed the firm's operation pending its FTAA application for renewal with the Office of the President.

An FTAA is a permit issued to a multinational company that will share technology and resources to explore and extract minerals in the Philippines.

The MGB said: “[T]his office has taken its position that OGPI (OceanaGold Philippines Inc.) is permitted to continue its mining operation pending the approval of the renewal of FTAA 001.”

The continuous mining operation was put on hold when Padilla issued an order directing local government units to “restrain any operations” of the company.

The governor said the June 30 decision of the CA 16th Division only proved that the MGB position was not correct.

“It clearly belies the position taken by the MGB [that OceanaGold is permitted to continue its mining operations pending renewal of its FTAA,” Padilla added.

The CA decision denied OceanaGold's petition to continue its mining operations at the Didipio mine in Kasibu town, stating that the company's FTAA had expired and thus the company has no right to continue operating the mine.

“Since the initial term of the FTAA already expired without it being renewed yet, there is no prevailing agreement on which the petitioner can anchor its right to continue its mining operations,” the decision stated.

It was in July 2019 when OGPI applied for an injunction with the Regional Trial Court (RTC) here as a temporary measure to allow interim operations of the Didipio mine while it challenges the legality of the order issued by Padilla to restrain the activities of the company pending renewal of the FTAA.

The RTC denied the firm's application for injunctive relief, which was upheld by the CA.

Source: https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/07/15/news/regions/governor-calls-for-mine-pullout-from-nvizcaya/741887/?fbclid=IwAR2Lg51YQvt8TI2dDopPNVoaz_aX6rW2AgcA9qiyiJRhHJ34RIIpOIJGmDQ



INQUIRER.net

18h · 🌐

LOOK: A philippine tarsier, one of the smallest primates in the world, was turned over to local authorities in Panabo City in Davao del Norte.

📷 : Tadeco ko Bai/Facebook



👍❤️👏 301

17 Comments 53 Shares



ABS-CBN News

11h · 🌐

TINGNAN: Limang Palawan hill mynah at isang blue-naped parrot, na pawang critically endangered species, ang isinuko sa Palawan Council for Sustainable Development matapos ang ulat na isang residente sa Tiniguiban, Puerto Princesa City ang nag-aalaga ng mga ito nang walang kaukulang papeles.

Nasagip din nitong Martes ang isang Palawan bearcat o binturong sa Barangay San Jose. Pumasok umano ito sa bahay ng isang residente pero Hunyo 25 pa namamataan sa puno malapit sa kanilang bakuran.

Muling pinaalalahanan ang publiko na may batas kontra paghuli, pagpatay, o pag-alaga sa mga buhay-ilang nang walang kaukulang dokumento. | ulat ni Rex Ruta, ABS-CBN News



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News5

13h · 🌐

Natagpuang patay ang isang dugong sa Aborlan, Palawan noong Lunes ng umaga.

May timbang itong 250 kilo at nakitaan ng pagdurugo sa ilong. Agad itong inilibing para hindi na mangamoy sa paligid.

👤: Avien Hasan



👍👎 303

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Palawan Council for Sustainable Development

16h ·

2 UNREGISTERED CHAINSAW UNITS CONFISCATED IN RIZAL PALAWAN

Members of the PCSDS-Enforcement Team confiscated two (2) unregistered chainsaw units in Rizal, Palawan on July 9, 2020.

The first chainsaw unit was confiscated in Bgy. Culasian, Rizal Palawan, at 11 AM, after finding out that the unit has no metal seal and is not registered with PCSD/S. The same unit was allegedly used to cut a Nato tree.

The team seized another unit at Sitio Sicud, Bgy. Candawaga, Rizal, Palawan from a certain Marcelo Francisco after the latter was found illegally operating or using the unit without the necessary permit/s from the PCSD.

The PCSDS will be filing appropriate cases against responsible persons for violating the provisions of Chainsaw Act (RA 9175).



37

1 Comment 5 Shares

Duterte keeps Metro Manila under GCQ, downgrades Cebu City to MGCQ

posted July 15, 2020 at 11:23 pm

by [Manila Standard Digital](#)

Metro Manila will remain under General Community Quarantine until July 30.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said the University of the Philippines earlier recommended shifting to Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine for the National Capital Region.

President Rodrigo Duterte initially agreed to upgrade the quarantine protocol in Metro Manila, but was prevailed upon by mayors to retain the GCQ.

Roque said quarantine protocols will be enforced more strictly to stem the surge in cases in Metro Manila. Cebu City, according to Roque, is now under MECQ.

Aside from Metro Manila, the President likewise placed under GCQ the following areas: Laguna, Cavite and Rizal for Luzon; Lapu Lapu City, Mandaue City, Talisay, Minglanilla, and Concepcion in Cebu Province; Ormoc City, Southern Leyte; Zamboanga City; Butuan City; Agusan del Norte, and Basilan.

The following areas are now under Modified General Community Quarantine with zoning containment strategy and strict local action: CAR – Benguet, Baguio City; Region I – Ilocos Sur, Pangasinan, Ilocos Norte, La Union, Dagupan City; Region II – Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya; Region III – Bataan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Bulacan, Tarlac, Zambales, Angeles City; Region IVA – Batangas, Quezon, Lucena City; Region IVB – Oriental Mindoro, Occidental Mindoro, Puerto Princesa City; Region V – Albay, Masbate, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Sorsogon, Naga City; Region VI – Iloilo, Negros Occidental, Capiz, Antique, Aklan, Guimaras, Iloilo City, Bacolod City; Region VII – Negros Oriental, Bohol, Cebu Province; Region VIII – Western Samar, Leyte, Biliran, Tacloban City; Region IX – Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay, Zamboanga del Norte; Region X – Misamis Occidental, Bukidnon, Lanao del Norte, Cagayan de Oro City, Iligan City; Region XI – Davao Oriental, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao de Oro, Davao City; Region XII – Sultan Kudarat, Cotabato, South Cotabato, General Santos City; and BARMM – Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao.

The rest of the country will remain under MGCQ (low-risk), Roque said.

Drilon: Review 'house-to-house' approach

Published 13 hours ago on July 15, 2020 04:52 PM

By [Hananeel Bordey](#)



Senate Minority leader Franklin Drilon on Wednesday urged the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) to review its plan to do a house-to-house search for coronavirus disease (COVID-19) patients.

In a statement, Drilon said that it reminds the public of the government's "Oplan Tokhang" program.

"I would urge the DILG to review what they are proposing because it runs smack to the right of the people to be secured in their residences. I would strongly suggest that, because it reminds us of operation tokhang," Drilon said in an online forum, referring to the Duterte administration's campaign against illegal drugs.

"I urge a review of this system proposed by Sec. [Eduardo] Año because it infringes on the right of the people under our Bill of Rights to be secured in their houses and against unreasonable searches and seizures," he added.

Although he noted the importance of protecting the health of the people, he said that the COVID-19 pandemic should not be an excuse to set aside the rights provided by the 1987 Constitution.

"There is no question that there is a need to protect the people but we should do it with due deference to the Constitution. The pandemic does not set aside the Constitutional restrictions and protection under the Bill of Rights," he said.

Senate President Vicente Sotto III, on the other hand, clarified that the DILG may use this approach but it should be done with due bounds in its enforcement.

"It appears that they are dead serious in truncating the spread of the virus. As long as it is within due bounds then I don't see a problem," said Sotto.

DBM: Health sector remains priority for 2021

Published 13 hours ago on July 15, 2020 05:12 PM

By [Joshua Lao](#)



As the government continues its battle against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said that improving the country's health sector remains the top priority in terms of budget allocation for 2021.

"The DBM has just finalized conducting our executive review of the budget for fiscal year 2021, so the priority of the government moving forward, one is the focus on health sector," DBM Assistant Secretary Rolando Toledo said during the pre-State of the Nation Address virtual forum on Wednesday.

"This includes establishing more health facilities, purchasing necessary hospital equipment, test kits and COVID-19 vaccine," he added.

Still, the Budget executive said that ensuring the "efficient deployment" of health personnel to address COVID-19 and other infectious diseases along with the implementation of the Universal Health Care Law was included in their budget priorities.

Food security also ranked among the agency's budget priorities for 2021 as such is and will always be the basic need of the public, especially during the pandemic.

"This is to ensure unhampered movement of agricultural goods and services through efficient transport and logistics systems and also to intensify provision of farm machineries and equipment to farmers," Toledo said.

Budget for infrastructure development likewise will be prioritized by the DBM, Toledo said as he noted that it will focus on health-related facilities, digital infrastructure and the enhancement and construction of roads and highways in the country.

Toledo added that industry and livelihood programs were also considered in the 2021 budget through the implementation of funding assistance programs for micro, small and medium scale enterprises.

He also stressed that programs for the education sector will still be pursued, which includes the so-called blended learning plan of the Department of Education.

Oplan Kalinga pro-poor, anti-COVID-19 program

Published 6 hours ago on July 16, 2020 12:05 AM

By [Kristina Maralit](#)



With the rising number of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases in the country, the government is now looking to have more movement on the ground by mobilizing teams to encourage patients to make full use of isolation and treatment facilities.

The planned “Oplan Kalinga,” with police officers going house-to-house to fetch coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) patients and transport them to government isolation facilities, will be rolled in local government units (LGU) where confirmed COVID-19 cases have been listed.

This, even as Health Secretary Francisco Duque III claimed the country has already “flattened the curve” since April.

Duque pointed the “flattening” of the curve the length of case doubling time or rate at which the number of cases has multiplied as basis for his claim.

“The metrics for saying arriving at that conclusion of flattening the curve is one, case doubling time of the COVID-19 infection has actually become longer. It used to have a very short case doubling time of 2.5 days during the initial phase of the pandemic,” the Department of Health (DoH) chief said in a pre-State of the Nation Address (SoNA) forum on Wednesday.

Duque likewise said that the mortality doubling time has also been longer as it falls under the moderate risk classification, but at the same time did not discount the fact that cases have been rising due to increased community transmission due to the more relaxed community quarantine restrictions.

However, lawmakers, Senators Juan Miguel Zubiri and Sonny Angara, refuted the Health Secretary’s pronouncement and pointed out that even the World Health Organization (WHO) stated that the government should admit the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic before coming up with a solution.

This prompted the National Task Force Against COVID-19 (NTF COVID-19) to introduce “Oplan Kalinga,” a police-assisted house-to-house initiative to urge individuals already confirmed to have contracted the disease to recuperate at government quarantine facilities rather than at home.

Having the Philippine National Police (PNP) play a part in the campaign raised howls from the public as many have likened it to the infamous “Oplan Tokhang” where cops went to the houses of suspected drug users and asked them to surrender.

PLt. Gen. Guillermo Eleazar, Deputy Chief for Operations of the PNP, however, insisted that the police will be assisting local health workers in fetching and ferrying patients to the facilities. The health workers will be the ones to explain to the patients and their families about the viral respiratory illness and with the aim of convincing them to avail of the available treatment options. Eleazar, also clarified patients will not be forcibly taken from their homes.

“As per the instruction of Secretary of the Interior and Local Government (SILG) Eduardo Año, it is the health officers of the LGU who will lead the fetching of the COVID-19 patients from their homes. The local police forces’ presence is only in the form of assistance for any eventuality and especially in escorting the patients to the isolation facilities,” the police official explained.

He furthered stated that Oplan Kalinga is also a means to shield COVID-19 patients and their families from discrimination and other forms of harassment from their neighbors who see them as threats to community health.

“This is not anti-poor as some people would say. This is in fact pro-poor because we would be prioritizing COVID-19 patients who have no means to isolate themselves inside their houses because of the reality that they do not have a room to spare for self-quarantine. This is pro-poor because less fortunate COVID patients will be given the opportunity to stay in an ideal isolation facilities where all their basic needs will be provided by the government,” noted Eleazar.

He is also the commander of Joint Task Force COVID Shield, the enforcement arm of the government’s anti-coronavirus measures.

Initial guidelines issued by the National Task Force Against COVID-19 (NTF COVID-19) state that local health workers will verify the residences of those who tested positive for the virus and explain to them and their families the objective of Oplan Kalinga.

MGCQ not likely

Malacañang, meanwhile, said some parts of the country may revert to a stricter pandemic lockdown amid the continuing rise in COVID-19 infections.

According to presidential spokesman Harry Roque, ahead of President Rodrigo Duterte’s next announcement of fresh lockdown classifications, areas already in modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) may be downgraded to GCQ while GCQ areas are not likely to be upgraded to MGCQ.

Citing Metro Manila, currently under GCQ, as an example, Roque said relaxing restrictions in the region is “out of the question.”

“It was never considered, never agreed upon with the Metro Manila mayors because of the data,” the Palace official reiterated.

Metro Manila has been under GCQ since 1 June and the classification — the third most lenient in a four-step scale — allows the reopening of about 75 percent of the economy.

**with Gabbie Parlade,
MJ Blancaflor,
Elmer N. Manuel,
Hananeel Bordey
and Paula Antolin
@tribunephil_phau**

COVID-19, daig ang kuneho sa “humayo kayo at
magpakarami!”

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July 16, 2020
DATE



COVID-19, DAIG ANG KUNeho SA “HUMAYO KAYO AT MAGPAKARAMI!”

July 15, 2020 @ 12:27 PM 19 hours ago

TALAGANG nakababahala ang mabilis na paglawak ng coronavirus disease-19.

Sabi mismo ng World Health Organization, “...it is getting worse and worse and worse.”

Sa mahal kong Pinas, ramdam na ramdam ito sa araw-araw na daan-daan o libong iniuulat ng Department of Health at Local Government Units na tinatamaan ng nakamamatay na sakit na ito.

Ang bayan nga lang ng Doña Remedios Trinidad, Bulacan na malayo sa kabihasanan, bulubundukin at malalayo ang mga bahay at takbuan ng ilan para hindi mahabol at makapitan ng COVID-19, napasok na rin.

May dalawang bata umano na kapwa isang taong gulang ang nagpositibo sa sakit.

Kung nakikita natin ang kuneho na kabilang sa mga pinakamabilis na magparami ng lahi, aba, daig ito ng virus ng COVID-19.

NANGUNGUNANG BANSANG

Heto ang mga bansang grabeng sinasalanta ng COVID-19 batay sa mga ulat sa nakalipas na 24 oras.

Ayon sa [outbreak.my/world](https://www.outbreak.my/world), nangunguna ang Amerika sa listahan sa pagkakaroon ng impeksyon araw-araw sa bilang na nasa 55,000 at sinundan ito ng Brazil na may mahigit sa 42,000 at pangatlo ang South Africa na may mahigit sa 10,000.

Pang-apat sa listahan ang Mexico na may mahigit sa 7,000 at sinundan ito ng mga bansang India, Russia at Peru na naglalaro sa 4,000 ang bilang ng mga biktima habang naglalaro rin sa 1,000 ang biktima sa England.

ANG PILIPINAS?

Kitang-kita ang pagdaig ng COVID-19 sa kuneho sa pagpaparami ng lahing biktima.

Kung minsan maliit at kung minsan, malaki ang bilang ng maysakit.

Noong una, kinakabahan na tayo sa halos araw-araw na nasa 300 na biktima.

Ngayon, tila normal na ang 600-700 biktima araw-araw na kung minsan naglalaro sa mahigit 1,000 at mahigit 2,000.

Sabi, dumami kasi ang mga testing kit na gamit gaya ng rapid test at swab test o reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction at nasa 82 na ang laboratoryo na nakatayo sa buong Pilipinas.

COVID-19, daig ang kuneho sa “humayo kayo at
magpakarami!”

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July 16, 2020
DATE

Pero dapat tandaan na marami sa mga locally stranded individual na galing halimbawa sa Metro Manila ang negatibo sa rapid tests pero pagdating nila sa mga lalawigan, anak ng tokwa, positibo sila sa panibagong rapid tests at RT-PCR tests.

At paaano ang mga kasong gaya ng dalawang bata sa bayan ng Doña Remedios Trinidad?

Kaya naman, sa loob lang ng isang linggo, mas mabilis pa kay Philippine 100-meter dash champion Lydia de Vega ang paghabol at paglagpas ng Pinas sa Singapore na matagal na nasa ikalawang pwesto sa COVID-19 sa South East Asia.

Sa loob lang ng isang linggo, may 57,545 ang may impeksyon sa Pinas at may patay na 1,603 kumpara sa 46,630 impeksyon at 27 lang na patay sa Singapore.

Nangunguna sa SEA ang Indonesia na may impeksyon na 78,572 at may patay na 3,710.

MGA PANLABAN

Pakiusap ng WHO na laylay na ang balik at sa pakikipaggyera sa COVID-19, ang pagsusuot ng face mask at social distancing ang kabilang sa mga pinakamabisang paraan para hindi tayo mahawa o makahawa.

Ganito rin ang sa atin pero may batas tayo na nag-uutos na dapat tayong magsuot ng face mask at sumunod sa social distancing.

Sa pamamagitan face mask, ang malaking tulong nito ay mapigilan natin sa mismong mga ilong at bunganga natin ang COVID-19 na kumalat sa kung saan-saan, sa hangin man sa mga dinadapuan ng talsik ng ating laway at plema kung tayo’y nagsasalita, umuubo at bumabahing.

Mahalaga naman ang social distancing pero, hangga’t maaari, kung may espasyo, dapat 13 piye ang layo natin sa isa’t isa.

Itong social distancing ang napakahirap nating gawin lalo na sa pagpunta natin sa mga public market at pagsakay ng mga pampublikong sasakyan.

Lumilitaw pa ang mga pilosopo at tumatalima lang ang mga ito sa social distancing kung may mga pulis at sundalo na nakabantay sa kanila.

Ang paghuhugas ng kamay napakahalaga ring dapat na gawin lagi, maging ang paghawak ng pera sa mga suklihan sa bilihan.

Hangga’t maaari, huwag basta sumunod ding gumamit ng mga palikuran o kubeta o ihian sa mga pampublikong lugar dahil ang dumi at ihi, may kasama ring COVID-19.

At ang katigasan ng ulo o pagiging pasaway sa mga umiiral na batas, ordinansa at patakaran, dapat na ring itigil o iwasan.

Mahahalagang bagay na kaya nating gawin ang mga ito sa pakikipaggyera natin sa sakit.

Huwag nating hintayin na dumami sa ating mga pamilya, sitio, subdibisyon at barangay ang matamaan at kasunod nito ang mga lockdown, curfew at pagiging war zone ang ating mga lugar na pawang armadong sundalo at pulis ang maghahari sa atin.

Huwag nating hintaying matulad tayo sa panibagong lockdown na pinaiiral ng Navotas City na tumama sa nasa 240, residente nito dahil sa pagdami ng biktima ng COVID-19 sa lugar.

A delicate balance

posted July 16, 2020 at 12:20 am

by [Danilo Suarez](#)

We are halfway through July. Last month, we nearly reached the 40,000-mark on the number of COVID-19 cases. In two weeks, the number increased by almost 20,000. While we struggle to balance economic recovery and curbing COVID-19 transmission, the scale tilts against our favor.

The Department of Health (DOH) reports more than a thousand new COVID-19 cases each day since the end of June. The trend now is very alarming. If this continues, our health care system may not be enough to accommodate all COVID-19 patients. Just this week, major hospitals in Metro Manila have already declared full capacity of COVID-19 facilities. Other Metro Manila hospitals have earlier reached maximum capacity of their ICU facilities. DOH clarified that this full capacity only pertains to the dedicated COVID-19 beds and not the entire hospital. Despite this, the accelerated rise in the number of COVID-19 patients puts health care workers and health professionals in unfavorable and deleterious working conditions. Since March, our health care workers have been manning the frontlines, every day facing the risk of getting infected. Now, more patients come in with the still limited and even decreasing number of health care workers and personal protective suits and equipment available in hospitals.

Stringent public health standards are currently implemented. It cannot be emphasized enough that wearing face masks and strict physical distancing are our primary protection. However, many still do not wear masks properly, which tends to defeat the purpose of protecting one's self. Some stand too close together. At this point, we need radical solutions to resolve this COVID-19 crisis.

The government recently proposed quarantine in temporary isolation facilities for mild or asymptomatic COVID-positive patients, instead of home quarantine as the latter may contribute to the spread of the virus within the family and the community. At present, there are more than 12,000 suspect and probable cases nationwide. Our current available isolation beds are 52,223, sufficient to cater to these patients. This may be a viable solution to reduce risk of transmission in the community.

Work-from-home arrangements can limit the spread of the virus. In exchange, the government should provide incentives or tax breaks to these companies and to their employees to further promote this type of arrangement and encourage people to stay at home. Until a cure is found, this should be the preferred set-up. The reduction in overhead costs can be used by companies to give electricity and internet allowances to their employees who may have to pay extra amounts in their bills.

On the other hand, other companies who cannot avoid physical reporting to work must strictly comply with the set guidelines by the DOH and the Department of Trade and Industry. Perhaps, the DTI should implement issuing health permits and strict screening and evaluation of the companies' compliance to these health standards before allowing them to resume operations. Given the experiences of private and public entities in rapid testing, we can require companies to conduct rapid testing before allowing employees to physically return to work, subject to the guidelines imposed by the DOH.

These are drastic solutions we should consider in order to contain disease transmission. However, improving contact tracing to identify potential COVID-19 carriers remains to be the priority. I highly urge the government to look into these propositions. As we need to maintain economic activities, such sacrifices may be necessary in order to protect the people and the community. Should we fail to maintain this balance and community transmission becomes uncontrollable, reverting to stricter quarantine measures may be the only solution we have left.



ITCZ, localized thunderstorm iiral sa Pinas

July 16, 2020 @ 6:32 AM 47 mins ago

Manila, Philippines – Patuloy na makaaapekto ang Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) sa Palawan, Visayas, at Mindanao ngayong Huwebes, July 16, ayon sa PAGASA.

Dulot nito, makararanas ng pag-ulan at maulap na kalangitan ang Visayas, Palawan, Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao, at Caraga.

Habang localized thunderstorms naman ang makaaapekto sa Metro Manila at nalalabing bahagi ng bansa na magdadala nang maulap na kalangitan at pag-ulan.

Samantala, nagbabala naman ang PAGASA sa posibilidad ng pagbaha o pagguho ng lupa sa kasagsagan ng buhos ng ulan, kulog, at kidlat. **RNT/FGDC**

Palace says PH is asserting rights over disputed areas of WPS

July 15, 2020



Malacañang has assured that the Philippines continuously asserts its right over the territorial dispute on the West Philippine Sea in accordance with the 2016 Arbitral Ruling.

The government did not change its views regarding the matter. However, the Palace pointed out that the bilateral relations of Philippines and China does not sum up to the dispute. Other aspects such as economics and trade are going well.

“As we have said in previous occasions, the Philippine government continues to assert our rights over the disputed areas in the West Philippine Sea in accordance with the 2016 Arbitral Ruling. We have not waived nor have we relinquished these rights...While we are looking at peaceful and diplomatic means to resolve the issues surrounding the West Philippine Sea, these do not make up the sum total of our relations with China. We agree to disagree on the arbitral tribunal ruling and will proceed with our bilateral relations with China, especially on matters related to trade and the economics.” Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque has stated.

-PTV News

PH, China open to talk on sea issue

posted July 16, 2020 at 01:30 am

by [Rey E. Requejo and Macon Ramos-Araneta](#)

The Philippines and China have agreed to “manage issues of concern and promote maritime cooperation in friendly consultation” after trading strongly-worded statements over their dispute in the South China Sea.

The Philippines has been asserting its victory arising from the July 12, 2016 ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration rejecting China’s claims to the area, but China continues to reject that ruling claiming it is not valid.

During a video meeting on Tuesday, Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. and Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi “engaged in open, cordial and fruitful discussions” on the matter, the Department of Foreign Affairs said.

“Both sides reaffirmed that the contentious maritime issues are not the sum total of the Philippines-China bilateral relationship,” the department said in a statement.

Malacañang, meanwhile, said Wednesday the Philippines will pursue a “peaceful and diplomatic” approach to resolve its long-standing dispute with China in the South China Sea.

“We are looking at peaceful and diplomatic means to resolve the issues surrounding the West Philippine Sea,” presidential spokesman Harry Roque said in a statement.

He made the statement in response to a Social Weather Stations poll saying the majority of the Filipinos it surveyed wanted the Philippines to assert its rights to the South China Sea.

Senator Joel Villanueva on Wednesday supported the call of Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana to urge the Chinese government to submit to the ruling rejecting its claims to the disputed area.

“We appreciate the United States’ statement denouncing China’s claims to the offshore resources across most of the South China Sea and its campaign of bullying to control them as completely unlawful,” Villanueva said.

Foreign Affairs said the virtual meeting between Locsin and Wang was sought by Wang.

“With mutual respect, sincerity and adherence to sovereign equality, both sides will continue to manage issues of concern and promote maritime cooperation in friendly consultation,” the department said.

The meeting between Locsin and Wang came after Locsin declared as “non-negotiable” the Arbitral Award by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague on July 12, 2016, which invalidated China’s expansive nine-dash- line claim over the South China Sea.

The ruling also upheld the Philippines’ rights over its 200-nautical mile exclusive economic zone under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Locsin’s statement marking the fourth year anniversary of the Philippines’ legal victory against China over the disputed South China Sea was rejected by the Chinese Embassy in Manila, saying the PCA ruling was illegal and invalid.

But Locsin “reiterated the importance of a continuing dialogue to propel Philippines-China cooperation forward across various fronts under the new normal brought about by the global COVID-19 pandemic.”

US to back nations that say China violated their South China Sea claims

Published July 16, 2020 12:25am

By ARSHAD MOHAMMED, HUMEYRA PAMUK, Reuters

WASHINGTON - US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Wednesday the United States will support countries that believe China has violated their maritime claims in the South China Sea but suggested it would do so through diplomatic rather than military means.

"We will support countries all across the world who recognize that China has violated their legal territorial claims as well – or maritime claims as well," Pompeo told reporters.

"We will go provide them the assistance we can, whether that's in multilateral bodies, whether that's in ASEAN, whether that's through legal responses, we will use all the tools we can," he said at a news conference, referring to the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The United States on Monday rejected China's claims to offshore resources in most of the South China Sea, drawing criticism from China which said the US position raised tension in the region, highlighting an increasingly testy relationship.

Monday's statement reflected the first time the United States had taken the position that China's claims to the South China sea were "completely unlawful."

The United States has long opposed China's expansive territorial claims on the South China Sea, sending warships regularly through the strategic waterway to demonstrate freedom of navigation there. Monday's comments reflect a harsher tone.

China claims 90% of the potentially energy-rich South China Sea, but Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam also lay claim to parts of it.

On Wednesday, Vietnam's foreign ministry spokeswoman, Le Thi Thu Hang, said in response to the hardened US rhetoric on the region that Vietnam welcomed any views on the South China Sea that were in accordance with international law.

"Peace, stability, cooperation and development in the South China Sea are the common aspirations and goals of countries in the region and the international community." -- **Reuters**

China not afraid of any US sanctions over South China Sea

Published July 15, 2020 5:24pm

BEIJING - China said on Wednesday it was not afraid of any sanctions the United States might impose over the situation in the South China Sea, and accused Washington of stirring up trouble and destabilizing the region.

Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters during a briefing that Beijing hopes the U.S. will not go further down the wrong path.

The remarks came after the top U.S. diplomat for East Asia [warned of possible sanctions](#) against Chinese officials and companies involved in what Washington calls coercion in the South China Sea. **-Reuters**

The Philippines' future floats in the West Philippine Sea

Published July 15, 2020, 10:43 PM

by US Ambassador to the Philippines Sung Kim

At last month's ASEAN Summit, ASEAN leaders reaffirmed the importance of maintaining the South China Sea "as a sea of peace, stability, and prosperity." To strengthen our support for sovereignty and freedom of the seas, this week, the United States announced an important change in US policy regarding maritime claims in the South China Sea.

As US Secretary of State Pompeo explained, the United States rejects any People's Republic of China (PRC) maritime claims within the Philippine's Exclusive Economic Zone or continental shelf, and claims in waters beyond 12 nautical miles from the islands in the Spratlys. Beijing's harassment of Philippine fisheries and offshore energy development within those areas is unlawful, as are any unilateral PRC actions to exploit those resources. Under the 2016 Arbitral Tribunal Award, which is final and legally binding, the Philippines enjoys sovereign rights and jurisdiction with respect to the natural resources in its EEZ. As Secretary of Foreign Affairs Locsin remarked this weekend on the anniversary of the ruling, "The arbitral tribunal's award of 12 July 2016 represents a victory, not just for the Philippines, but for the entire community of consistently law-abiding nations."

Why is this important? Here in the Philippines, the West Philippine Sea epitomizes the rich marine diversity of this country. In its waters, scientists have discovered hundreds of species of fish, coral, seagrass, and other marine life existing in interdependent systems that teach us about the planet's complexity, fragility, and resilience. These habitats not only provide the fish that fill Filipino fishing vessels (and Filipino plates); they also serve as spawning grounds for schools that populate seas throughout Southeast Asia. Philippine scientists believe some of the species unique to these waters may also hold the key to biomedical breakthroughs, while climate researchers can study ecosystem changes to measure human impact on the environment.

Marine conservation begins with securing territorial integrity. When any nation uses coercion, subversion, disinformation, and other underhanded tactics to further its position in the South China Sea, it denies our friends and partners the right to build a sustainable future. ASEAN leaders expressed concern over activities and serious incidents in the South China Sea which have "eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions, and may undermine peace, security, and stability in the region." The United States remains committed to fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows, and will continue to defend the right of freedom of navigation in international waters and airways. Earlier this month, the Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group conducted dual-carrier operations with the Ronald Reagan and Theodore Roosevelt aircraft carriers, demonstrating US commitment to mutual defense agreements and promoting peace and prosperity throughout the Indo-Pacific. The United States supports Philippine Coast Guard capacity to defend its waters by supplying expert training and new equipment.

Since the 1990s, the United States has supported Philippine marine and biodiversity conservation efforts. Our P1.3-billion five-year Fish Right project works alongside Philippine partners to strengthen the sustainable use of critical coastal and marine resources to benefit more than 2 million people. When the COVID-19 pandemic further threatened marine livelihoods, Fish Right helped develop *Fish Tiangge*, an online marketplace connecting buyers and 6,000 fisherfolk in three of the Philippines' most important areas for marine biodiversity. American companies are also contributing, with Bloomberg Philanthropies' global development alliance promoting marine conservation and sustainable fishing in more than 150,000 hectares of biologically significant waters.

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US scientists and innovators are eager to join their Philippine colleagues in researching these waters to build a sustainable maritime framework – one that protects the West Philippine Sea's rich and irreplaceable biodiversity while ensuring that new generations benefit from its bounty and wonder. Through the recently ratified US-Philippines Science and Technology Agreement, together we are building new pathways to increased scientific collaboration in the West Philippine Sea and beyond. Youth play a central role in achieving long-term marine sustainability. We have partnered with alumni from the US Young South East Asia Leadership Initiative exchange program for Sea and Earth Advocates (SEA) camps to train young conservation leaders and sponsored programs like the "Haquathon Summit," where 35 teams developed tech-based solutions to save the seas.

Through these activities and our commitment to a free and open rules-based order that upholds the sovereign rights of all states regardless of size, power, and military capabilities, the United States will continue to support our Philippine friends, partners, and allies in conserving the rich marine biodiversity that make this island nation so special.

South China Sea is ours

[FROM THE STANDS](#) - [Domini M. Torrevillas](#) (The Philippine Star) - July 16, 2020 - 12:00am

It's comforting to note that our government officials have become aggressive over our sovereign rights over the South China Sea. For so long, we seemed to have kowtowed to China's aggressive claim of owning the territory.

In a statement, Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin said the Philippines "will adhere without compromise to a 2016 court victory that nullified China's claims in most of the China Sea."

"The award is non-negotiable," Secretary Locsin said during a program commemorating the fourth anniversary of the Permanent Court of Arbitration's decision which ruled China had no historic right to resources within the seas falling within its "nine-dash line."

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana called on China to comply with the arbitration ruling and international laws as regards its massive territorial claims in the South China Sea.

He said he "strongly agrees with the international community that there should be a rules-based order in the resource-rich region."

"We urge China to comply with the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) ruling, and abide by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS) to which it is a signatory," Lorenzana said.

"It is in the best interest of regional stability that China heed the call of the community of nations to follow international law and honor existing international agreements," he added.

Senate President Vicente Sotto III echoed the sentiment of Secretary Locsin and Secretary Lorenzana. He said the Philippine government should "continue asserting its sovereign authority over its exclusive economic zone in the South China Sea despite China's refusal to accept the 2016 ruling which invalidated its massive claims in the resource rich waters."

"We should never give up the fight for what is legally ours," the senator said in a statement. "We should never cower in fear from the harassment and political intimidation that foreign governments impose on us," he said.

"What is unlawful can never be made lawful by the whims and caprices of a foreign power which treats the entire South China Sea as its territory. We shall never give up our offshore treasures, Sotto said.

* * *

A news release tells us that the United States deemed Beijing's actions in the South China Sea as illegal. The country also vowed to oppose China's aggressive actions and ensure freedom of navigation in the area.

* * *

But we're running into trouble with President Rodrigo Duterte's statement last year where he said he would ignore the 2016 court ruling in order to advance oil exploration plans with Beijing.

My question is, did Secretaries Locsin and Lorenzana ask permission from President Duterte to close the door to China's claim over the South China Sea?

* * *

The Chinese embassy in Manila has quickly slammed Secretary Locsin's pronouncement that "certain actions of China within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone (EEZ) violated the Philippines' sovereign rights and were thus unlawful."

The embassy, as reported by the Philippine STAR, has not questioned the validity of Locsin's and Lorenzana's claim of the South China Sea belonging to the Philippines. Instead it talked about China and the Philippines "having reached consensus on properly handling the so-called arbitration case, which has laid down solid ground for the turning around of bilateral relations."

In recent years, the embassy said, "China-Philippines relations have maintained healthy and steady momentum, with exchanges and cooperation in various fields making continuous progress.

"It is hoped that the Philippines could make concerted efforts with China in jointly securing the hard-won sound memento of bilateral relations and upholding peace and stability in the South China Sea."

* * *

Vote according to your conscience, said a legislator. But doing so seems to put House Deputy Speaker Vilma Santos-Recto in hot water.

Representative Santos-Recto was one of the 11 legislators who voted "no" to the denial of ABS-CBN's franchise renewal application. Seventy of her colleagues belonging to the House committee on legislative franchises last week voted to deny the giant network's franchise application.

Santos-Recto said she is ready to face the "consequences" of her vote favoring the renewal of the network's franchise.

As to what consequences means, she said when she was interviewed on ANC, she recalled that in 2018 she lost a committee chairmanship after voting against the death penalty, which is favored by President Duterte.

Santos-Recto said (as printed in the Philippine STAR), "It happened to me already when I voted 'no' doon sa death penalty...sinabi nila na kailangan masuportahan 'yong major bill na 'yun, yung death penalty ... unfortunately, I stood my ground and I voted 'no'." So she lost her chairmanship, she said.

She is part of the "super majority," she said, but she is "an independent thinker."

Santos-Recto is a former movie actress and wife of Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto. She says she sees "no conflict of interest" over her vote since she and her son, actor and host Luis Manzano, are not stockholders of ABS-CBN and she has no existing contract with the network.

[Email: dominitorrevillas@gmail.com](mailto:dominitorrevillas@gmail.com)

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2020/07/16/2028272/south-china-sea-ours>



ANO NA ANG NANGYARI SA WEST PHILIPPINE SEA?

July 15, 2020 @ 12:53 PM 18 hours ago

Apat na taon na ang nakaraan mula nang ibinaba ng Permanent Court of Arbitration ng United Nations International Tribunal ang desisyon na nagbibigay sa atin ng karapatan sa West Philippine Sea (WPS) dahil napapaloob ito sa Exclusive Economic Zone ng bansa.

Masakit mang isipin ngunit mula noong 2016 ay hindi man lang nasubukang sumawsaw sa karagatan ng lugar 'yan ng sinomang Pinoy dahil bantay-sarado ito ng mga Chinese na naniniwalang pag-aari nila ang inangking teritoryong tunay namang sa atin.

Sa pinakahuling survey ng Social Weather Station (SWS), 7 sa 10 na kababayan natin ang naniniwalang kailangang panindigan ng gobyerno ang karapatan nito sa WPS na 'yan.

Ngunit paano?

Ito rin ang laging sinasabi ni dating Supreme Court Justice Antonio Carpio na marapat lamang na ipakita ng pamahalaan sa China ang karapatan ng bansa natin sa teritoryo na tuluyan nang pinatayuan ng mga dambuhalang puwersa militar ng China.

Patunay rito ang ilang insidenteng harassment na ginawa ng Chinese Coastguard sa ilang kababayan nating nangingisda sa WPS na paniniwalang atin ang lugar na 'yan ngunit hanggang diplomatic protest na lang ang ginagawa ng gobyerno dahil ang totoo ay wala tayong lakas na lumaban sa superpower na ito kung saan anomang oras ay kaya tayong tirisin na parang kuto.

Sabi nga ni Tatay Digong, gustuhin man niyang posisyunan ang lugar na 'yan ngunit malalagay sa panganib ang Pinas dahil sa isang iglap lang ay sasabog ito.

'Yung reklamo nga kamakailan ni DFA Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. na labag sa batas ang patuloy na panghihimasok ng China sa WPS ay sinagot agad ng Chinese Embassy rito na "non-negotiable" at walang pagbabago ang posisyon nito na pag-aari nila ang nabanggit na lugar.

Kaya wala ring saysay 'yung isinisigaw ni Sen. Tito Sotto at Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana na kailangang i-assert ng gobyerno natin ang karapatan sa lugar na 'yan.

Ang nakikita nating solusyon d'yan ay 'yung patuloy na pag-aalaga natin ng relasyon sa matagal nang kaalyadong Amerika na hindi naman kapritso tulad ng Tsina.

Tingnan ninyo, noong minsang magpatrolya ang ilang barko ng US Coastguard sa WPS, kaagad nagreklamo ang mga Chinese dahil takot din sila sa kapwa superpower kung saan masaklap man ang kalagayan natin ay para tayong bubuwit na manghihiram ng tapang at kamandag ng leon upang itayo ang karapatan natin sa kagubatan.

Sa totoo lang, kahit ano pa ang sabihin ng mga kontra sa Amerika, hindi tayo alipin sa sarili nating bansa.

Maganda na ring tingnan na sinuspinde ni Tatay Digong ang pagsibak nang tuluyan sa mga tratado o kasunduang militar sa pagitan ng Pinas at Amerika gaya ng Visiting Forces Agreement bilang sandata sa anomang pangyayari sa West Philippine Sea.

Source: <https://remate.ph/ano-na-ang-nangyari-sa-west-philippine-sea/>

Biden unveils \$2 trillion climate plan

Published 4 hours ago on July 16, 2020 02:00 AM

By [Agence France-Presse](#)



WILMINGTON, United States (AFP) — White House hopeful Joe Biden on Tuesday, 14 July, unveiled an ambitious, two trillion-dollar climate change plan that would revamp the US energy sector and seek to achieve carbon pollution-free power in just 15 years.

The clean energy proposal was fleshed out in a speech in Wilmington as the veteran Democrat drew a sharp contrast with President Donald Trump ahead of November's election by arguing that fighting climate change would be a massive job creator under a Biden administration.

Insisting that “there’s no more consequential challenge” today than climate change, Biden pledged to spend two trillion dollars over four years to promote his plan, a dramatic acceleration of the \$1.7 trillion he had proposed to spend over 10 years during the primary race.

“Transforming the American electrical sector to produce power without producing carbon pollution... will be the greatest spurring of job creation and economic competitiveness in the 21st century,” Biden said.

“That’s why we’re going to achieve a carbon pollution-free electric sector by the year 2035.” The plan also includes more ambitious goals than the proposal he released months ago when he ran as one of the more moderate Democrats in the party’s nomination race.

Summer-vacation initiatives to preserve the ocean

AFP Relaxnews / 04:37 PM July 15, 2020



Plastic pollution, overfishing, oil drilling... Human activity has an increasingly disastrous impact on the world's oceans, which provide 50% of our oxygen and feed more than a billion people on the planet. Image: Placebo365 / IStock.com

NGOs are now offering lovers of the ocean, who would like to do something about the sad spectacle of beaches littered with rubbish and waters polluted by plastic, the opportunity to make a difference by participating in one of the many eco-volunteer programs to preserve oceans and marine species that are underway around the globe. Summer is the ideal time to take advantage of these schemes, which offer a chance to take a politically committed vacation that can also contribute to a break for the planet.

A recent survey conducted by GlobeScan for the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) of over 20,000 individuals across 23 countries has shown a growing interest in the preservation of ocean environments: in particular, among young people (18-24 years old), who have indicated a willingness to change their consumer habits. For example, 89% of that age group indicate their willingness to take action in the future to protect fish and seafood in the ocean habitat.

Plastic pollution, overfishing, oil drilling... Human activity has an increasingly disastrous impact on the world's oceans, which provide 50% of our oxygen and feed more than a billion people on the planet, Greenpeace has warned. In response to this state of affairs, the international environmental NGO recently launched an online [petition](#) "to protect 30% of the world's oceans by 2030", which has already been signed by more than three million people.

Here is a roundup of just some of the programs around the world that may be of interest to those of you who are planning a beach vacation this summer and would like to take part in a politically committed initiative to protect marine fauna.

Collecting waste from beaches and the ocean floor

The Surfrider Foundation, a well-established American non-profit which has been involved in the protection of oceans and coastlines for decades, organizes a variety of initiatives in different countries around the world including schemes that enable tourists to participate in beach-waste collections and dives to remove plastic from the coastal seabed. On the foundation's website, there is an [interactive map](#) showing locations and dates for the different initiatives this summer

Fishing for nets in the Mediterranean

Strongly involved in the preservation of oceans and marine species, the American NGO Sea Shepherd, which is active in several countries around the world, offers volunteers an opportunity to participate in different types of initiatives: one that has been very successful in France is the "[Mare Nostrum](#)" operation, which involved an extensive series of dives in the Mediterranean Sea to recover abandoned fishing nets, which are a dangerous trap for marine species.

Protecting sea turtles

With the exception of polar regions, sea turtles are present in all oceans of the world. However, their continued existence is now endangered by plastic-waste poisoning and relentless hunting by poachers. The protection of critical sites where turtles lay their eggs is a crucial aspect of the drive to protect these species.

With this in mind, several NGOs have launched operations on the shores of the Pacific and Indian oceans, which enable volunteers to collect turtle eggs, supervise their hatching and feed baby turtles to boost their chances of survival when they are set free in the ocean. Tourists in these areas have an opportunity to donate to these programs and also to release the sea turtles into the ocean. This is notably the case in Kuta on the island of Bali (Indonesia) with an initiative organized by the [Bali Sea Turtle Society](#).

For those who have more time on their hands, it is possible to devote several weeks to programs of this kind, notably in Nicaragua with the non-profit [Cybelle Planète](#) or in Mayotte with Sea Shepherd's Operation Nyamba. *NVG*

160 turtles caught in plastic waste rescued from

TITLE: Bangladesh beach

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DATE



A dead sea turtle is seen on a beach in Cox's Bazar on July 12, 2020. Bangladesh green activists said on July 12 hundreds of sea turtles have floated ashore and at least 20 were killed as tonnes of plastic wastes invaded the world's largest unbroken beach in the country's southeast.

AFP/Suzuddin Rubel

160 turtles caught in plastic waste rescued from Bangladesh beach

(Agence France-Presse) - July 15, 2020 - 5:53pm

COX'S BAZAR, Bangladesh — About 160 sea turtles, many of them injured after getting entangled in plastic waste, have been rescued after washing up on one of the world's longest beaches in Bangladesh, an official and conservationists said Wednesday.

The Olive Ridley turtles began floating to shore at Cox's Bazar with a huge mass of plastic bottles, fishing nets, buoys and other debris at the weekend.

Survivors were released back into the Bay of Bengal, but some were returning to the beach that stretches 120 kilometres (75 miles).

About 30 had died and were buried in the sand.

"This is the first time we have seen such a large-scale death and washing up of injured turtles on the beach. It is unprecedented," said Nazmul Huda, deputy director of the local environment department.

"Around 160 turtles have been rescued alive... but after their release in the sea, some of these turtles have come back to the beach. I think they are too weak to stay in the sea."

Many of the turtles sustained injuries from being caught in the estimated 50 tonnes of waste floating in a 10-kilometre stretch along the coast.

"Some of the turtles did not have legs or heads," said Asaduzzaman Sayem from local conservation group Darianagar Green Boys.

"We rescued a 40-kilogramme (88-pound) turtle alive. It was entangled in plastic nets and it did not have legs."

Leading Bangladesh turtle and tortoise expert Shahriar Caesar Rahman of the NGO Creative Conservation Alliance said the creatures were "heavily stressed" and may not survive even after being freed from the waste.

160 turtles caught in plastic waste rescued from

July 16, 2020

TITLE: Bangladesh beach

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"Local volunteers are trying their best to release them in the sea. But considering the injuries of these turtles it is unlikely they will survive," he told AFP.

"So the best long-term solution will be to establish a rescue and rehabilitation facility for these turtles in Cox's Bazar."

The government is investigating why the turtles came ashore and sent two carcasses to a state-run university to be examined.

But Rahman said he believed the turtles may have become stuck in a massive plastic garbage patch floating in the sea.

"In the long term if we don't manage pollution in the Bay of Bengal, many of these marine species will face similar fate," he said.

Olive Ridleys are the most abundant of all sea turtles around the world, according to conservationists.

But their numbers have been declining and the species is recognised as vulnerable by the IUCN Red list.

Methane emissions rise nine percent in decade

Published July 15, 2020, 6:30 AM

by Agence France-Presse

Emissions of methane — a planet-warming gas several times more potent than carbon dioxide — have risen by nine percent in a decade driven by mankind's insatiable hunger for energy and food, a major international study concluded Wednesday.



Methane (CH₄) has a warming potential 28 times higher than CO₂ over a 100-year period (AFP Photo/Pablo PORCIUNCULA BRUNE)

Methane (CH₄) has a warming potential 28 times greater than CO₂ over a 100-year period and its concentration in the atmosphere has more than doubled since the Industrial Revolution. Over a 20-year period, it is more than 80 times as potent.

While there are a number of natural methane sources such as wetlands and lakes, the team behind the study concluded that 60 percent of CH₄ emissions are now manmade.

These sources fall principally into three categories: extracting and burning fossil fuels for power, agriculture including livestock, and waste management.

The 2015 Paris climate agreement saw nations commit to limit temperature rises to “well below” two degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels.

While emissions are expected to fall somewhat this year due to the pandemic, the levels of atmospheric methane are increasing by around 12 parts per billion each year.

This trajectory is in line with a scenario modelled by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that sees Earth warming as much as 3-4C by 2100.

“Regular updates of the global methane budget are necessary ... because reducing methane emissions would have a rapid positive effect on climate,” said Marielle Saunio, a researcher at France’s Laboratoire des Sciences du Climat et de l’Environnement and lead on the study.

“To meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement, not only do CO₂ emissions need to be reduced but also methane emissions.”

The Global Carbon Project, a consortium of more than 50 research institutions around the world, has gathered data from more than 100 observation stations.

The world now produces around 50 million additional tonnes of methane every year than it did between 2000-2006.

Around 60 percent of manmade CH₄ emissions were estimated to come from agriculture and waste, including as much as 30 percent from the digestive processes of cattle and sheep.

Twenty-two percent comes from the extraction and burning of oil and gas, while 11 percent leaks from the world’s coal mines, the study found.

But recent studies based on new techniques for spotting methane leaks using satellite data suggest that emissions from the oil and gas sector may be significantly higher than those shown in the study, which only included data through 2017.

– Short-term threat –

While the overall trend is upwards, emissions levels fluctuate between regions.

For instance, Africa, China and Asia each produce 10-15 million tonnes annually. The US churns out around 4-5 million tonnes.

Europe is the only region where methane emissions are falling — between 2-4 million tonnes since 2006, depending on the estimation method.

The United Nations says that to hit the more ambitious Paris target of a 1.5-C warming cap, all greenhouse gas emissions must fall by 7.6 percent annually this decade.

“The 20 year framework (of methane’s warming effect) may be more appropriate given our policy goals,” said Sauniois.

Snare used in illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia are

July 16, 2020

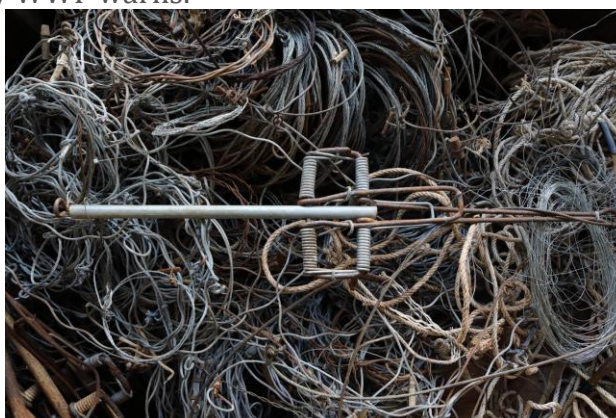
TITLE: increasing the likelihood of pandemics

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Snare used in illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia are increasing the likelihood of pandemics

From handling to consumption of wildlife, the use of snares might be the most insidious driver of zoonotic diseases, a report by WWF warns.



Snare traps showcased at a series of ranger trainings in Cambodia, aiming to strengthen enforcement levels to protect the Eastern Plains Landscape. Image: WWF

By [Sonia Sambhi](#)

July 15, 2020

While Covid-19 has highlighted the link between the illegal wildlife trade and public health, less has been said about the hunting techniques used to capture animals illegally.

The use of snares, the most prevalent hunting method in Southeast Asia, is devastating the region's wildlife populations even more than habitat loss and degradation.

A [report](#) by the world's largest nature conservation group, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), estimates that there are over 12 million snares present in the protected areas of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam alone.

Indiscriminately killing and maiming, snares are wiping out the region's wildlife, from tigers and elephants to pangolins and palm civets, and emptying its forests. These species don't stand a chance unless Southeast Asian governments urgently tackle the snaring crisis.

Stuart Chapman, lead of the World Wide Fund for Nature's Tigers Alive Initiative

From handling to consumption of wildlife, snare use increases human exposure to species carrying zoonotic diseases. The species targeted for snaring, most notably ungulates and carnivores, have been identified as among the highest risk mammal groups for zoonotic diseases transmission.

In addition, two Southeast Asian species—masked palm civet and Sunda pangolin—both of which are often snared, have been identified as possible intermediary hosts for zoonotic disease transfers.

Made from widely available household items like rope, wires and cables, snares are cheap and easy to produce. These rudimentary traps can be set in large numbers to capture animals illegally for wildlife meat and products.

Given that snares can capture all animals unfortunate enough to encounter them, they are a terrestrial equivalent to the drift-nets that have devastated marine and freshwater biodiversity, WWF said.

“Indiscriminately killing and maiming, snares are wiping out the region's wildlife, from tigers and elephants to pangolins and palm civets, and emptying its forests. These species don't stand a chance unless Southeast Asian governments urgently tackle the snaring crisis,” said Stuart Chapman, lead of the WWF Tigers Alive Initiative, in a statement.

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A snared barking deer discovered in Royal Belum State Park, Malaysia. The snare was suspected to have been set by Vietnamese poachers. Image: Lau Ching Fong/WWF-Malaysia

WWF noted that 58 per cent of all identified human pathogen species are known to originate from animals. Zoonotic diseases include rabies, Ebola, tuberculosis, and emerging coronaviruses such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (Sars), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (Mers), and most recently, Covid-19.

Covid-19 is believed to have jumped from an animal—possibly [a bat](#) or [a pangolin](#)—to a human in a wildlife market in Wuhan, China, before spreading around the globe and infecting more than 13 million people worldwide. In response to the pandemic, the Chinese government announced a [comprehensive ban on all wildlife trade and consumption](#) in February.

An [earlier survey by WWF](#) revealed that citizens in Southeast Asia support the closure of all illegal and unregulated wildlife markets in their respective countries. But in the region, [illegal wildlife trafficking continues to thrive](#).

The WWF report found that consumers in Southeast Asia purchase snared wildlife meat from a variety of sources, including markets, restaurants, traders, friends, associates, or even the hunters themselves. In Vietnam, 60 – 80 per cent of wildlife meat consumption in urban centres occurs in restaurants, while in North Sulawesi, Indonesia, 73 per cent of wildlife meat was found in supermarkets.

“Simply removing snares is not enough. Governments in Southeast Asia must improve national law enforcement and strengthen legislation to act as an effective deterrent against snaring, as well as engaging indigenous peoples and local communities as partners to stop this threat,” said Sophia Lim, executive director and CEO at WWF-Malaysia.

The authors found many loopholes within the legal regulation of snaring in Southeast Asia. For example, only Malaysia legally defines what constitutes a snare, and only Malaysia and Vietnam guarantee a serious minimum penalty for any type of hunting by snares within protected areas.

WWF and partners are leading [a global call to action on Covid-19 and the wildlife trade](#), calling policymakers to shut down high-risk wildlife markets, urgently scale up efforts to combat wildlife trafficking and halt the trade of high-risk taxa and strengthen efforts to reduce consumer demand for high-risk wildlife products.

Within a Southeast Asian context, the coalition calls on governments to prevent the purchase, sale, transport and consumption of all high-risk taxa in markets and restaurants, and ensure that criminal penalties like fines and licence revocation measures are strict enough to be effective.

They recommend introducing market and restaurant monitoring mechanisms to ensure high-risk wildlife products are not being sold. They also suggest involving ministries responsible for environment, health and public security in the development and implementation of regulations.

Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/snares-used-in-illegal-wildlife-trade-in-southeast-asia-are-increasing-the-likelihood-of-pandemics/>

Moderna COVID-19 vaccine enters final stage trial

Published 20 hours ago on July 15, 2020 10:01 AM

By [Agence France-Presse](#)



US biotech firm Moderna said Tuesday it would enter the final stage of human trials for its COVID-19 vaccine on July 27, to test how well it protects people in the real world.

The announcement came as the results from an earlier trial intended to prove the vaccine was safe and triggered antibody production were published.

The upcoming Phase 3 trial will recruit 30,000 participants in the US, with half to receive the vaccine at 100 microgram dose levels, and the other half to receive a placebo.

Researchers will then track them over two years to determine whether they are protected against infection by the virus. Or, if they do get infected, whether the vaccine prevents symptoms from developing.

If they do get symptoms, the vaccine can still be considered a success if it stops severe cases of COVID-19.

The study should run until October 27, 2022, but preliminary results should be available long before.

The announcement came shortly after the New England Journal of Medicine published results from the first stage of Moderna's vaccine trial, which showed the first 45 participants all developed antibodies to the virus.

Moderna is considered to be in a leading position in the global race to find a vaccine against the coronavirus, which has infected more than 13.2 million people and killed 570,000.

But scientists caution that the first vaccines to come to market may not be the most effective or safest.

Encouraging results

Moderna had previously published "interim results" from the first stages of its trial, called Phase 1 in May.

The early results were called "encouraging" by Anthony Fauci, director of the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which is co-developing the vaccine.

But some in the scientific community said they would reserve judgment until they saw the full results in peer-reviewed form.

According to the paper, 45 participants were split into three groups to test doses of 25 micrograms, 100 micrograms and 250 micrograms.

They were given a second dose of the same amount 28 days later.

After the first round, antibody levels were found to be higher with higher doses.

Following the second round, participants had higher levels of antibodies than most patients who have had COVID-19 and gone on to generate their own antibodies.

More than half the participants experienced mild or moderate side effects, which is considered normal.

The side effects included fatigue, chills, headache, body ache and pain at the injection site.

Three participants did not receive their second dose.

They included one who developed a skin rash on both legs, and two who missed their window because they had COVID-19 symptoms, but their tests later returned negative.

Amesh Adalja, an infectious diseases specialist at Johns Hopkins University, said it was encouraging that the participants developed high levels of an advanced class of antibodies.

He added, however: "You have to be very limited in how much you can extrapolate from a phase one clinical trial, because you want to see how this works when a person is exposed to the actual virus."

The Moderna vaccine belongs to a new class of vaccine that uses genetic material — in the form of RNA — to encode the information needed to grow the virus's spike protein inside the human body, in order to trigger an immune response.

The spike protein is a part of the virus that it uses to invade human cells, but by itself the protein is relatively harmless.

The advantage of this technology is that it bypasses the need to manufacture viral proteins in the lab, helping to ramp up mass production.

No vaccines based on this platform have previously received regulatory approval.

Early work using this technology backfired by making hosts more, not less, susceptible to infection, David Lo, a professor of biomedical sciences at University of California Riverside told AFP.

"One of the things we certainly want to look out for is whether there is a long term effect where the immune response... potentially develops an immunologic tolerance which would actually be detrimental to protection," he said.