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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service

DENR naabot ang 80% 2020 seedling production sa

July 19, 2020

TITLE: panahon ng pandemya

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DENR NAABOT ANG 80% 2020 SEEDLING PRODUCTION SA PANAHON NG PANDEMYA

July 18, 2020 @ 12:53 PM 17 hours ago

Bagama't nasa COVID-19 pandemic ang bansa, nakapaghanda naman ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ng 36 na milyong binhi para sa Enhanced National Greening Program (ENGP) sa unang kalahati ng taong 2020.

Halos 80 porsyento ito ng 45.2 milyong binhi na naka-target para sa buong taon sa ilalim ng flagship reforestation program ng pamahalaan, ayon kay DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu.

"This speaks well of how the DENR and its partners have carried out the ENGP in the face of challenges and constraints created by the pandemic," sabi ni Cimatu.

Ang DENR ay "on track" sa ENGP seedling production, na tatama ang pagtanim ng mga ito ngayong tag-ulan, dagdag pa niya.

Sa ulat ng Forest Management Bureau, kasama sa seedling production ang paghahanda ng binhi ng plantation species at indigenous species dahil kasama ang pagtanim ng ganitong mga puno sa rehabilitasyon ng mga nakakalbong bahagi ng watershed, mangrove at protected areas.

Kasama rin ang binhi ng commodity species na ginagamit sa pagtataguyod ng agroforestry plantations.

Noong Hulyo 9, ang naihandang mga binhi ay ang mga sumusunod: 20 milyon na binhi ng indigenous at plantation species; 3.4 milyon na binhi ng bamboo; 2.98 milyon na binhi para sa agroforestry; 1.2 milyon na binhi ng prutas; 796,600 binhi para sa fuelwood; 131,775 binhi ng rubber; 65,000 binhi ng nipa; at 50,000 binhi ng ilang-ilang.

Bukod sa bamboo, ang iba pang commodity seedling species na naihanda ay 598,907 binhi ng cacao, 212,047 binhi ng kape; 837,525 binhi ng iba pang value crops; 163,500 binhi ng mangrove; at 262,000 binhi ng rattan.

May 537,638 binhi rin na galing sa private sector na partner ng DENR katulad ng National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) na nakapagbigay ng 400,000 na binhi.

Kasama rin ang 4,265,662 binhi na galing sa modernized at mechanized forest nurseries (MMFN) sa 10 rehiyon.

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Bahagi rin ang naitanim noong Mayo na halos 1 milyong binhi ng gulay, habang patuloy ang paghahanda sa binhi ng mga native at mabilis na lumaking mga puno sa ilalim ng ENGP.

Ang vegetable seedling production ay kontribusyon ng DENR sa programa ng pamahalaan na *“Ahon Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat Laban sa COVID-19”* na nagkakampanya ng urban agriculture sa panahon ng pandemic.

DENR-EMB NCR, Manila LGU unveil Air Quality Monitoring Station at Mehan Garden

By Ma. Alaine P. Allanigue Published on July 18, 2020



DENR EMB NCR Regional Director, Atty. Domingo M. Clemente, Jr. and Manila Mayor Francisco 'Isko Moreno' Domagoso sign an agreement for the turnover of an onsite Air Quality Monitoring Station (AQMS). (Photo credit: DENR-NCR)

QUEZON CITY, July 18 (PIA) –The Department of Environment & Natural Resources' Environment Management Bureau in the National Capital Region together with the City Government of Manila unveiled on Thursday, 16 July 2020, the Teledyne T640 PM Analyzer at the Mehan Garden in Manila.

The Teledyne T640 PM Analyzer, the first of its kind in the Philippines according to EMB-NCR Regional Director, Atty. Domingo M. Clemente, Jr., is an onsite Air Quality Monitoring Station (AQMS) that measures ambient particulate matter (PM) in real-time, providing concerned government agencies with much-needed data for planning and monitoring air pollution in the city.

Air pollution, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), is one of the leading health hazards in many countries today, killing an estimated 7 million people every year (<https://www.who.int/.../how-air-pollution-is-destroying-our-h...>). Improving air quality thus is important and should be among the top priorities of local governments.

Prior to the unveiling, Manila City Mayor Francisco 'Isko Moreno' Domagoso and RD Clemente signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on the AQMS.

Mayor Isko revealed that he specifically requested DENR to install the AQMS in Manila, "para naman masukat natin ang effort ng city in making more open green spaces and cleaner air". He also expressed the firm commitment of the City Government to expand and enhance 'green spaces' in Manila.

Atty. Alvin Joseph G. Constantino, Licenses, Patents and Deeds Division (LPDD) chief and concurrent Chief Environmental Officer of the West Field Office (WFO) of DENR National Capital Region, represented Regional Executive Director Jacqueline A. Caanacan in the ceremony.

RED Caanacan said that the AQMS will help fill data gaps on air quality monitoring, allowing policymakers to prepare more responsive plans on air pollution interventions.

"The AQMS not only measures ambient air pollution; it also helps determine possible sources of air pollution, providing environment officials science-based insight on the issue", RED Caanacan explained. (DENR-NCR/PIA-NCR)

Source: <https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1047946>

NV PLGU, DENR forge mutual pact for env't protection

By Benjamin Moses M. EbreoPublished on July 18, 2020

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya, July 18 (PIA) - The provincial government here and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) recently came into a mutual agreement on the protection and development of the environment in the province.

The mutual agreement came with the visit of DENR Regional Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan to Governor Carlos Padilla recently as a gesture of courtesy as the new RED for Cagayan Valley.



Nueva Vizcaya Gov. Carlos Padilla and DENR RED for Cagayan Valley Gwendolyn Bambalan recently discussed various dev't projects for the environment during a courtesy call of the latter to the provincial government. # Photo from PLGU NV FB Post/ DENR2

"It was a sincere expression of mutual partnership when it comes to doing one's role for the protection, care and development of the environment that we both shared during the meeting," Padilla said.

He added that their talking points centered on the co-management of the environment and natural resources in the province.

Padilla said they have agreed to focus their efforts on the sustainable ecotourism development of the Capisaan Cave system in Kasibu town and the Lower Magat Ecotourism Park in Diadi town.

"As I have been doing before, I have reiterated that I will always consult the DENR on any development project the province will do and assured her that it should be mutually acceptable before its implementation," the governor added.

Padilla said that Bambalan was grateful for the PLGU's support in the protection and management of the natural resources of Nueva Vizcaya, being a watershed for Cagayan Valley.

He further said that Bambalan also assured him that while the DENR is the lead agency in the management and protection of caves and other resources, the DENR needs the support of the local government units having territorial jurisdiction of these natural resources. (MDCT/BME/PIA-2 Nueva Vizcaya)

DENR issues ATN permit

The DENR's Mines and Geosciences Bureau (DENR-MGB) Region 4-A issued to ATN Holdings Inc. a mineral processing permit for 2.65 million tons per year of aggregates through its 500-ton per hour rock crushing plant which is valid for five years and renewable for the same period but not to exceed a total of 25 years. Also obtained from the agency was a permit for commercial disposition of rock resources and aggregates from the corporation's 256-hectare property located at Rodriguez, Rizal. The permit substantiated the Philippine Mineral Reporting Code-compliant final exploration report on 82.7092 hectares exploration area within ATN property, with indicated resource of 66.13 million tons of rock aggregates and 31.2 million tons of fill materials available for processing.

To be established in baragay Sapangdaku: Council supports COVID-19 cemetery

By [Mary Ruth R. Malinao](#)(The Freeman)

- July 19, 2020 - 12:00am



"The Cebu City Council, across party lines, concludes to urgently act on this measure while maintaining and preserving the individual member's right and duty to highlight the city's obligation to comply with all the laws, rules, and regulations in relation to or in connection with the establishment of a public cemetery," he explained.

CEBU, Philippines — Members of the Cebu City Council posed no objection to the move to establish a cemetery for victims of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in an upland barangay.

The council, however, said the project should fully comply with national and local laws, and other regulations.

Councilor Phillip Zafra sponsored a resolution regarding the matter, which was approved by the council during a special session last Friday.

"This laudable measure is urgent, essential, and necessary in order to strongly prepare and strategically position the City of Cebu towards a holistic yet realistic approach to confront the COVID-19 pandemic in all fronts," said Zafra in his resolution.

"The Cebu City Council, across party lines, concludes to urgently act on this measure while maintaining and preserving the individual member's right and duty to highlight the city's obligation to comply with all the laws, rules, and regulations in relation to or in connection with the establishment of a public cemetery," he explained.

The city government proposes to establish a public cemetery at Sitio Patayng Yuta, Baksan in Barangay Sapangdaku.

The city residents will be free to use the cemetery, which covers an area of two hectares. Zafra said the cemetery is intended to be the final resting place of those who lost their lives to COVID-19.

To be established barangay Sapangdaku: Council
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Earlier, Councilor David Tumalak proposed an ordinance entitled "An Ordinance Establishing the Cebu City Memorial Garden for COVID-19 Victims, Setting Initial Guidelines for its Operation and Providing Funds Therefore," which is now pending at the council.

The proposed ordinance, among other features, calls for the creation of a technical working group to ensure the city complies with the required clearances and permits for the establishment of the cemetery.

The committee is tasked to oversee the development and management of the project to ensure the city's interests are protected and upheld.

"With the unprecedented rise of death due to COVID-19 pandemic and the urgency to bury the human remains, the public cemeteries are now at full capacity and the private cemeteries are costly while the private crematorium facilities can no longer accommodate timely and dignified service to the victims," said Zafra.

"This unparalleled crisis, with no end in sight in a foreseeable future known in modern history, will bring the Cebu City's overall government healthcare infrastructure to the brink of disarray if no immediate intervention related to the disposal of human remains will be in place," he added.

Another resolution

The council also approved another resolution sponsored by Zafra authorizing Mayor Edgardo Labella, on behalf of the city, to apply for a reclassification of the area to a manner that would allow the city to use it for the cemetery's establishment.

Council members likewise requested the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to approve with urgency the city's application for the Special Land Use Permit and the Forest Land Use Agreement.

They also requested DENR to waive rental, fees and bonds in favor of the city government associated with the issuance of such required permits and agreement. Based on the Department of Health-7 Official Facebook Page, as of July 17, 2020, Cebu City's total COVID-19 death toll is at 408.

The data also showed that Central Visayas has confirmed COVID-19 cases of 13,172. Of this number, 7,910 cases are from Cebu City, with 3,166 active cases and 4,336 recoveries. The city government earlier abandoned its plan to build a public cemetery in the upland barangay of Guba after it was met with condemnation from several environmental advocates for supposedly violating existing laws. **LPM (FREEMAN)**

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/the-freeman/cebu-news/2020/07/19/2029041/be-established-baragay-sapangdaku-council-supports-covid-19-cemetery/amp/>

Dolphin sightings prove Sarangani Bay is healthy –

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Dolphin sightings prove Sarangani Bay is healthy –environment execs

By: [Edwin O. Fernandez](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Mindanao](#) / 01:27 PM July 18, 2020



Photos courtesy of the Protected Area Management Office –Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape (PAMO-SBPS)

KORONADAL CITY—Environment officials and conservationists sighted about 30 dolphins of various species in Sarangani Bay between July 7 to 10 during regular monitoring of marine mammals in the area.

Joy C. Ologuin, protected area superintendent (PASu) of Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape, said the phenomenon is an indication that the bay has become a haven of large marine mammals.

According to Ologuin, the monitoring team spotted 16 Risso’s dolphins (*Grampus griseus*), also known as Monk dolphins, and around 10 to 15 spinner dolphins (*Stenella longirostris*), which are smaller and are known for their acrobatic stunts.

The monitoring team is composed of personnel from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Sarangani provincial government, and Sarangani Environmental Conservation and Protection Center.

Ologuin explained that food hunting is one of the reasons why the dolphins are in the bay. “There are lots of juvenile species of fish in the Sarangani Bay which serve as the food of these marine mammals,” Ologuin said.

She added that the dolphin sightings show that Sarangani Bay is healthy, safe and a food harbor for large marine mammals.

Declared a protected area in 1996, the 215,950-hectare bay straddles the towns of Glan, Malapatan, Alabel and Maasim in Sarangani province, and General Santos City.

With strict implementation of marine conservation laws, authorities have maintained the bay’s bounty even as its pristine waters draw tourists for swimming and water sports activities.

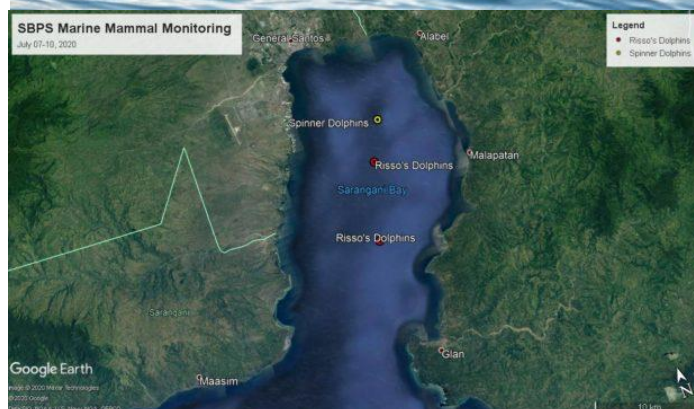
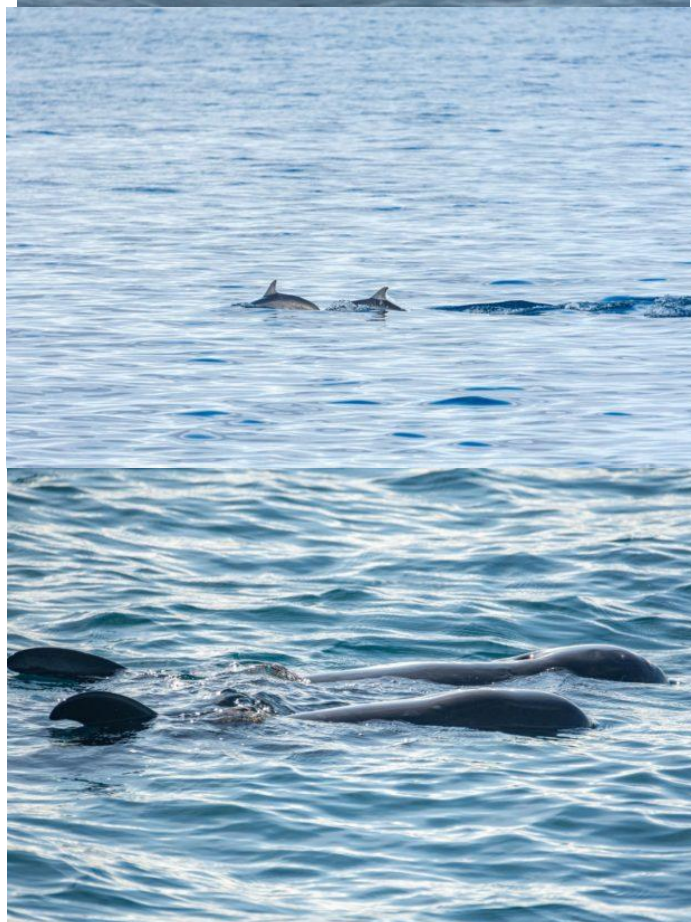
From August to September last year, the same monitoring team sighted dwarf or pygmy sperm whales in the waters of Malapatan, between 40 to 60 spinner dolphins off Glan and Malapatan, between 150 to 200 Fraser’s dolphins off General Santos City and Glan, four pygmy killer whales off Malapatan, and six Risso’s dolphins off Glan.

Dolphin sightings prove Sarangani Bay is healthy –
environment execs

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Lawyer Felix S. Alicer, DENR-12 regional executive director, lauded the different stakeholders for maintaining the health of the bay and for continuing to preserve its marine riches.



Source: https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1308607/dolphin-sightings-prove-sarangani-bay-is-healthy-environment-execs?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR08O5s9Ohh3wjAWs3NI8GmOHmFUuweZ4DTcOei3oF18_zrkV1CFGx1YNng#Echobox=1595050403

Fundraising campaign for 59 Tamaraw protectors launched

By [Nikki Delos Reyes](#)

July 19, 2020

A fundraising campaign to assist park rangers and wardens of the endangered tamaraw, who have been affected by the Mount Iglit-Baco National Park in Occidental Mindoro. Rep. Josephine Sato told The Manila Times that the United Nations Development Program, Biodiversity Financing Initiative, and Department of Environment and Natural Resources Biodiversity Management Bureau launched a fundraising campaign for the salaries, allowance and food supply of 24 rangers and 35 wardens, who serve as the frontliners in ensuring the protection and conservation of the country's remaining 480 tamaraw, also known as the Mindoro dwarf buffalo. She said the rangers and wardens are young Mangyans. During the global launch via Zoom of the Together for Tamaraws, Mayor Romulo Festin of San Jose donated P250,000 while Vice Governor Pater Alfaro donated P50,000 on behalf of the provincial council. Donations have reached P365,300 since it was launched on July 15.

Source: https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/07/19/news/regions/fundraising-campaign-for-59-tamaraw-protectors-launched/743306/?utm_term=Autofeed&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR0JWuL9P5UyU5IdUnlu3prAkD6keQt2Ai272OJpJ5wp4S0p9XF_tzf0Tic#Echobox=1595106500

Proyektong plastic-palit -pera para sa sari-sari store vendors, ilulunsad sa Maynila

By Susan G. De Leon Published on July 18, 2020



Ipinakikita ni Mayor Isko Moreno ang kasunduang nilagdaan Pamahalaang Lungsod ng Maynila sa Plastic Credit Exchange ng Hopex Environment Group Inc. para sa paglulunsad ng proyektong plastic-palit pera para sa mga sari-sari vendors noong Huwebes, ika-16 ng Hulyo. (Larawn mula sa PIO Manila)

LUNGSOD CALOOCAN, Hulyo 18 (PIA) –Lumagda sa kasunduan ang Pamahalaang Lungsod ng Maynila sa Plastic Credit Exchange ng Hopex Environment Group Inc. para sa paglulunsad ng proyektong plastic-palit pera para sa mga sari-sari vendors noong Huwebes, ika-16 ng Hulyo.

Layunin ng proyekto na makapagbigay ng karagdagang pagkakakitaan para sa mga vendors sa pamamagitan ng pangongolekta ng plastic waste at upang tulungan ring mabawasan ang basura sa lungsod sa pamamagitan ng mga Material Recovery Facilities o MRF.

Ayon kay Department of Public Services (DPS) Director Kenneth Amurao, lahat ng uri ng plastic waste ay tatanggapin ng programa at mayroong kapalit na halaga.

"Yung mga basura o plastik na akala niyo ay wala nang halaga ay mabibigyan ng halaga sa programang ito. Lahat ng klase ng plastik ay tatanggapin katulad ng mga plastic sachets, single used plastics, sirang tabo o timba at kahit mga gulong pa," payagag ni Amurao.

Binigyang-diin rin ni Amurao ang kahalagahan ng proyekto bilang pagsusulong ng tamang pagsisilid ng basura upang hindi ito bumara sa mga katubigan ng lungsod.

"Madadivert na natin ang mga ito mula sa mga estero, karagatan at landfill, makakadagdag pa sa ito sa iyong kita," aniya. (Manila PIO/PIA-NCR)



Plastik palit pera program, ilulunsad sa Maynila

July 18, 2020 @ 4:48 PM 14 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – May pagkakataon na mabigyan ng karagdagang pagkakakitaan ang mga sari-sari vendor sa lungsod ng Maynila sa ilulunsad na programa kung saan lahat ng klase ng plastic na maiipon nila ay maaaring palitan ng pera.

Lumagda sa isang kasunduan sa pagitan ng lokal na pamahalaang lungsod ng Maynila sa pangunguna ni Manila Mayor Isko Moreno Domagoso at Plastic Credit Exchange ng Hopex Environment Group Inc. na kinatawan naman ng dating aktres na si Nanette Medved kamakailan para sa proyektong “Aling Tindera a waste to cash program”.

Layunin umano ng nasabing programa na magkaroon ng dagdag na kita ang mga vendor sa pamamagitan ng pangongolekta nila ng mga basurang plastik kung saan malaking tulong na rin ito na mabawasan ang basura ng lungsod sa pamamagitan ng Material Recovery Facilities o MRF.

Ayon kay Department of Public Services (DPS) Director Kenneth Amurao, lahat ng uri ng plastic waste ay tatanggapin ng programa at mayroong kapalit na halaga.

“Yung mga basura o plastik na akala n’yo ay wala nang halaga ay mabibigyan ng halaga sa programang ito. Lahat ng klase ng plastik ay tatanggapin katulad ng mga plastic sachets, single used plastics, sirang tabo o timba at kahit mga gulong pa,” ani Amurao.

Dagdag pa ni Amurao, na malaking tulong ang naturang proyekto dahil malaking kabawasan ang mga plastic kung saan maaari itong bumara sa mga estero na nagsasanhi ng pagbaha sa lungsod.

“Mada-divert na natin ang mga ito mula sa mga estero, karagatan at landfill, makakadagdag pa ang mga ito sa inyong kita,” aniya. **Jay Reyes**

2 Chinese, Filipino interpreter post bail after arrest for possession of Agarwood

By: [Joey Gabieta](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 12:21 PM July 18, 2020

TACLOBAN CITY – Two Chinese nationals and their Filipino interpreter stepped out of jail here on Thursday after posting bail for charges of possession of pieces of Agarwood, an endangered tree species sought after for its supposed medicinal properties.

Li Lingkuan, 33, and Li Kiampo, 32, both residents of Quianznun City, Fujian province in China, as well as Victor Lopez, 58, of Surigao City each posted bail worth P102,000 in a court in Tacloban City.

They were charged for violation of the Revised Philippine Forestry Code after they were arrested for allegedly keeping Agarwood valued at P700,000 in Tanauan town, Leyte last Wednesday, July 15.

Police Master Sergeant Zacharias Mosca, the investigator of the Tanauan Police Station, said the three accused were on board a private vehicle on their way to Tacloban City from MacArthur town, also in Leyte, when they were apprehended by the Tanauan police and members of the Leyte Provincial Police Office.

“We received a tip that the suspects were on their way to Tacloban City so we right away positioned ourselves at Barangay Calogcog where we were able to apprehend them,” he said. Mosca said the accused declined to provide information as to where they got the Agarwood. Also seized from the accused were three units of weighing scales, a flame gun, and cash amounting to P503,000.

Agarwood, aloeswood or gharuwood is a fragrant dark resinous wood used in incense, perfume, and small carvings. It forms in the heartwood of aquilaria trees when they become infected with a type of mold.

Agarwood is sought after primarily for its warming qualities and for its soothing effects when burnt as incense. Powdered form of the species is also used to treat diarrhea, dysentery, vomiting, and anorexia.

/MUF

Source: https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1308584/2-chinese-filipino-interpreter-post-bail-after-arrest-for-possession-of-agarwood?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR3cUJrxOOtp4ZA87FGhF4Iajw4ufsl1aBHqSr-LMMtXoS5m5oAN4bsrp74#Echobox=1595046227

Holcim bats for sustainability in COVID recovery

posted July 18, 2020 at 06:50 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

Cement manufacturer Holcim Philippines, Inc. recently reiterated its commitment to improve environmental and social performance as it supported calls for COVID-19 recovery programs to be aligned with efforts to address larger sustainability challenges.



Holcim Philippines progressed in its 2030 targets of reducing carbon emissions by 40% vs. 1990 levels, and freshwater withdrawal per ton of cement by 30% vs. 2015.

Among the drivers of its lower emissions blended cement options and use of low-carbon fuels. Solido, a blended cement designed as a better alternative to Ordinary Portland Cement, has become a significant portion of Holcim's product mix in 2019 with its lower environmental footprint among its main selling points.

Holcim also used more than 170,000 tons of alternative fuel and alternative raw material processed from biomass and waste materials from industries.

"We are determined to help where we can to ensure that new ways of doing business supports the overall efforts to build resilience against similar global challenges," explained Holcim Philippines president and CEO John Stull.

Cebu City sees improvement in healthcare capacity, anti-COVID measures

By IATF Visayas Published on July 18, 2020



Retired MGen. Mel Feliciano (left), who is assisting Cebu overseer Sec. Roy Cimatu, discussing in a press conference the aggressive interventions carried out by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) Visayas to address the COVID-19 situation in Cebu City. (IATF Visayas)

CEBU CITY (15 JULY 2020) -- The aggressive interventions carried out by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) Visayas to address the COVID-19 situation in this city have resulted in significant gains in the last three weeks.

This was announced by retired MGen. Mel Feliciano in a press conference on Wednesday, this city.

Feliciano, who is assisting Cebu overseer Roy Cimatu, said the city's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has played a key role in unifying COVID-19 efforts among government agencies and other stakeholders.

"There is now a system that is being followed by the EOC, especially on the referral system at the barangay level. This is very important, to (be able to) give the immediate health care program to probable COVID patients," Feliciano said.

"The aim is to maximize the utilization of level one facilities, which are the barangay isolation centers. We want them to be fully utilized, which will help decongest hospitals," he added.

According to Dr. Jaime Bernadas, Regional Director of the Department of Health (DOH) for Central Visayas, Cebu City has also seen an improvement in terms of its critical care utilization rate, or the number of occupied beds and facilities dedicated to patients under critical care.

"We used to be in the 87 to 89 (percent) level, but now we are at 72 percent or lower," Bernadas said.

Meanwhile, Councilor Joel Garganera, who has been designated as the deputy chief implementer of operations of the IATF EOC-Cebu City, shared ongoing efforts to ensure the integrity of COVID-19 data being processed by the EOC, especially those coming from contact tracing teams.

"We will conduct data verification (and analysis) in order to guide us in transitioning towards our new normal. We have also been receiving support from data analysts in order to improve the integrity and accuracy of our data," Garganera said.

Cebu City sees improvement in healthcare capacity,
anti-COVID measures

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Also present during the press conference was Interior and Local Government Assistant Secretary for Public Safety and Security Alexander Macario, who expressed optimism that the city will soon recover from the pandemic.

"We are confident that we will overcome the obstacles in fighting this pandemic. We hope that Cebu City will rise again to a new normal," Macario said.

For his part, Cebu City Mayor Edgardo Labella enjoined Cebuanos to do their part in ensuring the health and safety of everyone, as the city awaits the IATF's recommendation to the President regarding its quarantine status beyond July 15.

"We cannot win this battle alone. This battle can only be won if we act as one, so that we can heal as one," Labella said. (IATF Visayas)

Curve may flatten by September

Published 6 hours ago on July 19, 2020 12:07 AM

By [Gabbie Parlade](#)



Health Secretary Francisco Duque III

An expert from the University of the Philippines on Friday said the Philippines may possibly flatten its coronavirus case curve by September if the management of emerging cases is sustained.

Dr. Guido David said at present, it is impossible for the country to achieve it by July or August due to the fast transmission of cases especially in the National Capital Region with an R-naught of 1.7.

“The trajectory is fast so of course that is our goal (decrease cases) but that will not yet happen in July or August because it is still too fast,” he said in a radio interview.

David said this could be more easily achieved with “hard lockdowns” on certain areas.

“Our findings show a hard lockdown will more easily control the spread of the virus.

However, what we only recommended is not to relax NCR to MGCQ (modified general community quarantine) as we see a significant surge in community transmissions in NCR. We saw two possibilities, GCQ with stricter controls or MECQ,” he told the *Daily Tribune*.

In the report presented by UP experts to President Rodrigo Duterte, at the current rate cases are projected to reach more than 85,000 by the end of July including an increase in reported deaths by 2,200.

This is higher than its earlier forecast of reaching 60,000 to 70,000 cases mostly caused by increased community transmission.

Although with possible effects on the economy, David emphasized the need to initially control the spread of the virus so that the country can fully recover.

“Yes I agree the lockdown will really affect the economy, but once we have controlled the virus, our economy will go back to nearly 100 percent. If we are in GCQ (general community quarantine) or MGCQ, the economy will be open but will not be back to 100 percent until we solve the pandemic,” he told the *Daily Tribune*.

“If it takes longer to solve it, the longer our economy will suffer as well,” he also added.

David said the decrease of cases will likewise be made possible with stricter implementation of protocols especially on targeted local government areas such as what happened in Cebu.

Cebu example

“What we see in Cebu is that cases are slowing because of stricter protocols, the trend of the transmission has decreased by a reproductive number (R-naught) of 1.14, closer actually to flattening the curve,” he said.

Although he said that the national government’s decision to retain the community quarantine level at GCQ will also assist in suppressing the transmission.

“It will help instead of shifting to more eased restrictions under MGCQ because the increased mobility may spread the virus more,” he said.

David also noted the need to identify asymptomatic cases as they may likewise be “silent spreaders” of the coronavirus disease.

“We need to identify asymptomatic cases that are there because we detect mostly symptomatic cases,” he said.

On the other hand, he also said that because of the significant increase in the number of cases conducting contact tracing may be difficult as it is instead ideal among emerging hotspots.

“Because our contact tracing is a little late it’s harder to keep up, we can use contact tracing instead in emerging hotspots because cases there aren’t yet that many so contact tracing is easier,” he said.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III on Wednesday said that the Philippines has already flattened its curve since April despite the obvious increase in the number of cases reported.

He later clarified the statement and said that the country had instead ‘bent’ the curve in April after the enhanced community quarantine was implemented.

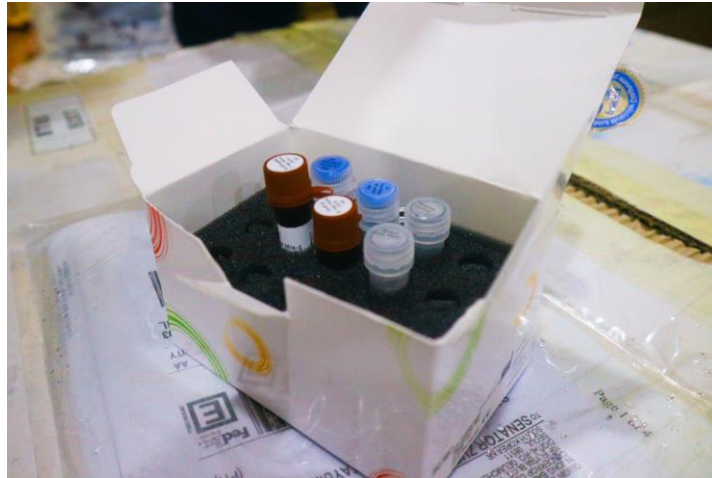
“We bent the curve in April after the March ECQ but we are seeing an increase in cases due to the expanded testing capacity and community transmission as we allow movement of people,” he said.

At present, the Philippines has been averaging at around 20,000 tests daily with cases now at more than 61,000 placing second among countries with the most number of cases in the Western Pacific Region, according to data from the World Health Organization.

Senators urge gov't to allow the use of UP-made test kits

Published 15 hours ago on July 18, 2020 03:07 PM

By [Miguel Paolo Togonon](#)



SENATORS on Saturday urged the government to allow the use of coronavirus 2019 (Covid-19) test kits developed by the University of the Philippines National Institutes for Health.

Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon, and Senators Risa Hontiveros and Kiko Pangilinan said Inter-Agency Task Force should consider the use of the UP test kits that are cheaper and at par with the imported ones.

The reverse-transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) test kits from China and Korea cost around P4,000 to P8,000, while UP-test kits could only cost P1,300.

The senators have expressed confidence over the quality and effectiveness of the UP test kits, citing an interim report showing “93.96% sensitivity and up to 98.04% specificity,” indicators that can detect SARs-COV-2, the virus that caused COVID-19.

However, The senators still questioned the Department of Health (DoH) on why they have not started using or mass producing these test kits.

“What seems to be holding Secretary Duque and the DOH (Department of Health) back from giving the go-signal for the use and mass production of this Filipino-made, quality yet less expensive test kit? May kumikita ba sa mas mahal na imported test kit?” the senators said in a joint statement.

Earlier, the Health department had recalled the UP-made test kits due to a “minor defect,” specifically, contaminated reagents which 30% of the test samples came back with “indeterminate” results.

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) has procured some of the UP test kits in order to donate them to certain laboratories.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/18/senators-urge-govt-to-allow-the-use-of-up-made-test-kits/>

COVID-19 WATCH

Public warned vs masks with valves

Published 3 hours ago on July 19, 2020 03:15 AM

By [Gabbie Parlade](#)



The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Saturday reminded the public not to use masks with valves as it defeats the purpose of reducing transmission of the coronavirus disease.

FDA Undersecretary Dr. Eric Domingo said that these masks are not built for medical purposes rather for an industrialized setting where it functions against the entry of dust particles.

“The truth is most of these masks with valves are not registered for medical purposes, these are not medical or surgical masks instead industrial masks,” he said in an interview.

Domingo said that although it provides protection for the user, it however harms people that it may come in contact with due to less barrier with air breathed out.

The intention of it really is to bar the entry of dust inhaled by the person but it does not give protection, if for example, you’re the one who’s sick then the infection can still be breathed out of the mask’s valve,” he said.

Some hospitals such as the Medical City, have advised individuals that those wearing masks with valves will not be allowed to enter the premises due to possible transmission.

“While masks with valves are designed to ease exhalation and decrease humidity for the wearer, they do not block transmission of COVID-19 because they allow exhaled air and droplets to escape,” it stated.

Domingo instead urged the public to use makeshift cloth masks that cover both the mouth and nose as it provides more protection, while medical and surgical grade masks are advised among hospital settings.

“If we’re caring for people who are sick we advise using medical or surgical grade masks but for everyday use, the cloth mask can already provide protection,” he said.

At present, the Philippines has reported over 63,000 cases ranking at the second spot with the most number of COVID-19 infections across the Western Pacific Region as seen in the data from the World Health Organization.

PH cases breach 65,000; 'Prevention still the best'

posted July 19, 2020 at 01:10 am

by [Willie Casas](#)

Coronavirus cases in the Philippines surpassed 65,000 on Saturday as the Department of Health (DOH) reported an increase of 2,357 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the country.

This brings the total to 65,304 cases and 1,773 dead from the pandemic since the lockdown in mid-March after 113 additional fatalities.

"As of 4pm today, July 18, 2020, the Department of Health reports the total number of COVID-19 cases at 65,304," said DOH COVID-19 Case Bulletin #126.

The five areas with the highest number of new cases are the National Capital Region with 1,1824, Laguna with 105, Cavite with 62, Cebu with 49, and Rizal with 39.

A total 2,357 confirmed cases are reported based on the total tests done by 76 out of 84 current operational labs, the DOH said.

DOH also announced 321 recoveries, bringing the total number of recoveries to 22,067.

"Of the 113 deaths, 40 (35 percent) in July, 58 (51 percent) in June, and 15 (13 percent) in May. Deaths were from Region 7 (87 or 77 percent), NCR (23 or 20 percent), Region 4A (1 or 1 percent), Region 5 (1 or 1 percent), and Region 6 (1 or 1 percent)," said the DOH.

"Fifty-four duplicates were removed from total case count. Of these, two duplicates previously reported as recovered have been removed from the total count of recoveries after final verification," the DOH said.

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

The DOH at the same time said getting tested for COVID-19 was not an "immunity passport," and the best way to avoid getting COVID-19 was to adhere to preventive measures.

"We are still reminding the general public that prevention is still the best, and testing is not an immunity passport," Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said in a virtual press briefing after being asked that some cities have opened drive-through testing sites to combat the spread of COVID-19.

"If you have been infected with COVID, and you recovered, the chances of you getting the virus again would be still there," Vergeire said.

Preventive measures include frequent hand washing, wearing of face masks in public and physical distancing. Meanwhile, Vergeire said Filipinos would have to align their behavior to the new normal if the country wanted to succeed in stemming the spread of COVID-19.

"In our battle against the pandemic, behavior would be very, very critical," Vergeire said.

The same point had been made by testing czar Vince Dizon on Thursday as he stressed that discipline was the common denominator among countries such as South Korea and Taiwan.

If all minimum health standards such as the proper wearing of face masks, social distancing, and regular handwashing would be followed, the risk of getting COVID-19 would significantly be reduced, he said.

At the same time, the Food and Drug Administration is discouraging the use of masks with exhalation valves as the protection it provides is only "one-way" or only for the wearer.

"The truth is many of the masks with valves are not registered for medical purposes," FDA Director General and Health Undersecretary Eric Domingo said in an interview on Dobol sa News TV on Saturday.

Domingo noted that cloth masks were much better than masks with valves in terms of providing “two-way” protection, meaning the wearer and the people nearby are both protected.

The FDA has advised hospitals to prohibit entry of people wearing masks with valves as well as those who are not wearing their masks properly.

The FDA is also looking at issuing an advisory to other establishments such as malls and restaurants about the risks of wearing masks with valves, Domingo added.

Meanwhile, ten members of Senator Richard Gordon’s “immediate” staff at the Senate and the Philippine Red Cross tested positive for COVID-19, prompting him to get tested as well.

In a statement, Gordon said he, his wife, and their household staff all tested negative, but have decided to go into a self-imposed home isolation.

As for his infected staff members -- who all tested positive following the PRC’s routine testing -- Gordon said they were now in quarantine and contact tracing had been conducted.

“I am sharing this information with the public in the interest of transparency and so that all potentially affected persons may be attended to,” said Gordon, who also chairs the Philippine Red Cross.

The legislator said the nature of their job at the PRC -- which includes relief missions and supervision of COVID-19 initiatives -- puts them at risk of contracting many illnesses.

In a related development, leading COVID-19 firm LabX Corp. has refuted the claims of Philippines’ FDA that antigen test had low sensitivity rate.

In a television interview yesterday, LabX Corp. CEO Thomas Navasero said antigen test had 93.8 percent sensitivity rate, contrary to PH FDA’s claim that antigen tests had only 30 to 80 percent sensitivity rate in identifying the presence of COVID-19 virus.

“Sensitivity in antigen tests measures the false negative test results for the virus. Antigen tests have a sensitivity rate of around 93 percent contrary to the claim of Philippine Food and Drug Administration Director General Eric Domingo that antigen tests have only 34 to 80 percent sensitivity rate,” Navasero said.

“In the last four to six months, technology and research have improved the sensitivity of antigen testing. The 93.8 percent is probably the highest sensitivity in the world,” Navasero added.

The LabX founder pointed out that the U.S. and many European countries were using antigen tests as the main COVID-19 testing method, along with the reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) tests.

Navasero mentioned that both RT-PCR and antigen tests could identify the protein of the coronavirus, resulting in higher chances of detecting the virus’ presence in a patient.

Navasero hoped that antigen tests could also be recognized as the gold standard for COVID-19 testing, as it could detect the presence of virus in just 15 minutes.



Kaso ng COVID-19 sa Pinas, pumalo na sa higit 65K

July 18, 2020 @ 4:15 PM 15 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Umakyat na sa 65,304 ang kaso ng coronavirus disease o COVID-19 na naitala sa buong bansa dahil sa karagdagan pang 2,357, ayon sa submission report ng 76 mula sa 84 licensed laboratories sa bansa ngayong Sabado, July 18.

Sa nasabing kabuuang bilang nasa 41,464 naman ang aktibong kaso mula sa mga namatay at nakarekober.

Karamihan pa rin sa may naitalang kaso ay sa National Capital Region o NCR.

May nadagdag namang 321 sa mga gumaling sa sakit kaya umabot na sa 22,067 ang kabuuang recoveries laban sa COVID-19.

Habang nakapagtala naman ng karagdagang 113 sa mga pumanaw dahilan para umabot na sa 1,773 ang COVID-19 related deaths sa bansa. **Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden**



GIYERANG HOUSE-TO-HOUSE VS COVID-19 MAHALAGA

July 18, 2020 @ 10:47 AM 19 hours ago

Hindi maganda ang kalagayan natin ukol sa coronavirus disease-19.

Noong buwan ng Mayo 2020, naglalaro ang may impeksyon sa 200-500 kada araw.

Pagdating ng buwan ng Hunyo, naglaro na ang dami ng biktima mula 500 hanggang mahigit 2,000.

Ngayong Hulyo naman, hindi malayo ang kalagayan sa buwan ng Hunyo.

Kaya naman, pangalawa na tayo sa Indonesia na may 83,130 naimpeksyon at 3,957 patay sa pagkakaroon natin ng 63,001 naimpeksyon at 1,660 patay.

Sa loob lang ng mahigit isang linggo, mabilis nating naungusan ang Singapore sa pagkakaroon lamang ng 47,453 naimpeksyon at 27 patay at dating pangalawa sa Indonesia.

KAYA GCQ PA RIN

General Community Quarantine ang pangkalahatang patakarang pinaiiral sa mahal kong Pinas.

Ito'y para muli tayong makapaghanapbuhay sa anomang paraan at hindi mabuhay sa gutom, pamamalimos at magkaroon din ang gobyerno ng pagbangon o panibagong lakas para isulong ang serbisyong bayan para sa lahat.

Simple lang ang pag-ikot ng relasyong mamamayan at gobyerno, may COVID-19 man o wala.

Lumilikha ang gobyerno ng lahat ng pagkakataon para tayo'y makapaghanapbuhay o makapagnegosyo at sa pamamagitan ng ating buwis, magkakaroon ng buhay ang pamahalaan para gampanan ang pangunahing tungkulin nitong pagsilbihan at proteksyonan ang taumbayan sa lahat ng larangan sa buhay.

Bilang halimbawa nito, kung tinamaan tayo ng COVID-19, gastos ng pamahalaan ang pagpapaospital sa pamamagitan ng PhilHealth at kung namatay man tayo, wala rin tayong alalahanin sa cremation.

Gumagana ang ibinabayad nating buwis.

Magkakagastos lang tayo kung aakuin natin nang personal ang mga responsibilidad dito.

MAY COVID-19 DUMAMI

Siyempre pa, sa paglabas natin sa ating mga tahanan para maghanapbuhay at magnegosyo at hindi katulad sa Enhanced Community Quarantine o lockdown na bawal gawin ito, naririyang na ang pagkalat ng COVID-19.

Sa GCQ na kung tawagin ngayon ay “new normal” na pamumuhay, naririyang na ang mga pagsasama-sama natin sa transportasyon, trabaho, palengke at marami pang iba at nagbubunga ito ng hawaan.

Hindi kataka-taka na libo na at hindi lang daan-daan ang karaniwang bilangan ng naiimpeksyon araw-araw sa buong Pinas.

At napatutunayan ito sa pamamagitan ng 82 testing facility na nakakalat sa buong kapuluan.

HOUSE-TO-HOUSE CONTACT TRACING

Kung mapapansin ninyo, talagang gusto ng pamahalaan na kontrolin ang pagkalat ng COVID-19 para sa kapakanan din nating lahat.

Kung dati-rati ay pinairal ang home quarantine, ngayon mas gusto na ng pamahalaan na dalhin lahat ang may COVID-19 sa quarantine facility.

Ito’y para matiyak ang mas epektibong giyera sa sakit.

Malinaw na hindi sapat ang pagsusuot ng face mask, hand washing, social distancing at iba pang mga patakaran na pamigil sa hawaan.

Sa bisa ng paghihiwalay sa ating mga pamilya at komunidad ng mga may sakit na naging positibo, asymptomatic o walang sintomas, mild o katamtaman ang kalagayan at kritikal man ‘yan, makasisiguro tayo na makokontrol nang husto ang hawaan.

MAGSABI LANG

Siyempre pa, kung mga haligi ng tahanan o mga bumubuhay ng pamilya ang mahihiwalay, naririyang ang tiyak na paghihirap o gutom ng mga maiiwanan, lalo na sa hanay ng mga mahihirap.

Pero klaro namang patakaran na riyang papasok ang pamahalaan upang umayuda at napakaaktibo rito ang mga lokal at pambansang pamahalaan.

Sakaling kulang o walang serbisyong pamahalaan na dumarating, hindi tayo dapat magsawa na manawagan ng ayuda.

Halimbawa namang may mang-abuso sa mga isinasagawang contact tracing, huwag magtiis sa katahimikan kundi magpahayag ng pagtutol.

Meron at merong makikinig na awtoridad sa mga karaiyan sa ayuda at reklamo sa mga abusado.

Hindi rin dapat katakutan ang mga unipormadong tauhan ng pamahalaan dahil karaniwang pinangungunahan ang mga ‘yan ng mga awtoridad sa kalusugan.

‘Yun bang—kailangang-kailangan.

Bibihira lang ang pagkakataon na mauuna o hiwalay na kikilos ang mga unipormado sa mga oras ng mabilisang pagkilos.

‘Yun bang—kailangang-kailangan.

KARAPATANG-PANTAO

Ang karapatang-pantao na manatili sa loob ng sariling pamamahay ay dapat na busisiin sa harap ng banta ng pagkakasakit at kamatayan sa COVID-19.

‘Yun bang — kung binisita ka at nagpositibo ka sa rapid o swab test, gaya ng aktibong ginagawa ng maraming lokal na pamahalaan na katulad sa mga Lungsod ng Navotas sa ilalim ni Mayor Toby Tiangco at Maynila sa ilalim ni Mayor Isko Moreno, sumama ka sa imbitasyon nila patungo sa quarantine o isolation facility.

Hindi lang ikaw at pamilya mo ang makikinabang kundi ang buong komunidad na kinalalagyan mo.

Kung gagawain ito sa bansa, tayong buong sambayanan ang makikinabang.

Pero ibang usapan na kung may warrant of arrest ka na inisyu ng hukuman o isa kang malinaw na terorista.

Tatandaan din na may pananagutan ka sa batas na “Bayanihan to Heal as One Act” kung itago mo ang iyong sakit na COVID-19 o magtago ka ng taong mayroon nito.

Isasagawa at nasimulan na ngang isagawa ang giyerang house-to-house sa lahat at walang mayaman at mahirap dito, sa mga informal settler man na pook o condominium at mga subdibisyon.

Demand transparency, public urged

Published 5 hours ago on July 19, 2020 01:20 AM

By **TDT**



The Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) on Friday urged the public to assert their right to a transparent and efficient government service through a properly-implemented Citizen's Charter, an official document that communicates, in simple terms, the information on the services provided by the government to its citizens.

More than serving as a basis for the recognition of performance, the Citizen's Charter shall be the basis for establishing accountability in the delivery of government service, which is stated in the implementing rules and regulations of Republic Act (RA) 11032 or the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018.

RA 11032 entitles the transacting public to a Citizen's Charter that must be placed at the main entrance or the most conspicuous or visible place in a government office.

This shall be in the form of information billboards such as touchscreen information kiosks, electronic billboards, posters, tarpaulins or any other readable materials written in a manner that is easily understood by the public.

The Citizen's Charter must also be available for perusal in the form of a handbook with a soft copy uploaded to the respective websites of the government agencies.

"A Citizen's Charter is akin to a menu in a restaurant. It is there that you can see what dishes are being served and how much. Likewise, a Citizen's Charter is required of every government office big or small, because it reflects all the services being offered, fees to be paid, requirements needed to be submitted and most of all the processing times per service. This must be posted in the most prominent place in the entrance of every office so the people may hold the agency to those standards as listed in the Citizen's Charter. In short, the Citizen's Charter is the agencies' social contract with the people," ARTA Director General Jeremiah Belgica said in a news release.

When transacting with government agencies, ARTA urges the public to look out for the following information on Citizen's Charters: (a) a comprehensive and uniform checklist of requirements for each type of application or request; (b) a step-by-step procedure in obtaining a particular service; (c) person/s responsible for each step; (d) maximum time to conclude the process; (e) the document/s to be presented by you; and the (f) amount of fees that you should pay and where the payment shall be made. Lastly, the transacting public shall also be informed in the Citizen's Charter with the (g) procedure that they could undertake to file any complaints to the agency.

For the 25 July deadline set for government agencies to submit their revised Citizen's Charter, ARTA also requires that the new processes implemented and all other revisions on existing services that are being adopted in consideration of the declaration of a State of Public Health Emergency be reflected in their respective Citizen's Charter.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/19/demand-transparency-public-urged/>

Septuagenarians from Cabanatuan lead latest batch of land transfer beneficiaries

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

July 18, 2020

Two 70-year-old farmers were among a batch of 20 agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) who received their certificate of land ownership awards (CLOAs) from the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR).

Paciano Vicente, in a news release issued by DAR, expressed his gratitude to the government saying the land awarded to him is “a dream come true.”

DAR Secretary John R. Castriciones personally led the distribution of the CLOAs during simple rites in Cabanatuan City recently.

Vicente and Bernardino Torillo, another farmer-beneficiary, were surprised when Castriciones visited them at their farm to turn over the CLOAs.

“I personally gave these CLOAs to them to give them hope, to let them feel that despite this pandemic, the government is here ready to give them help and support,” Castriciones was quoted as saying.

The rest of the ARB was awarded with CLOAs in a ceremony held on July 7, at the Cabanatuan City municipal hall.

The distributed lands covered a total of 16 hectares of agricultural land located in Cabanatuan City, Bongabon, and Gen. Natividad.

“With this land and the other projects turned over today, I am confident that my family’s future is secured. I am looking forward to earning more this coming years,” said Vicente, a rice farmer most of his life.

Torillo, 70, said he is very happy because he now has something to hand down to his children.

Castriciones, meanwhile, said the CLOA recipients will also receive support from the government.

“No matter what circumstances we face, pandemic or no pandemic, we will follow the President’s national goal of improving the economic lives of farmers by pouring various support services to farm communities,” Castriciones said.

During the CLOA distribution, Castriciones, together with Undersecretary for support services office Emily O. Padilla, also turned-over support services for the ARBs worth P4.8 million.

Septuagenarians from Cabanatuan lead latest batch of

July 19, 2020

TITLE: land transfer beneficiaries

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DATE

Turned over were the following: two Kubota four-wheel drive, 35-horsepower Diesel farm tractors complete with rotary tiller and trailer to two agrarian reform beneficiaries organization (ARBOs); productivity assistance consisting of vegetable seeds, seedling trays and fertilizers given to 27 ARBs; and poultry egg-laying business given to five ARB women.

“These provisions are highly significant in achieving food security in the country. These [support services] would greatly help the farmers in fulfilling their role as frontliners by continually producing and delivering food crops in critical areas affected by the pandemic,” Padilla said.

The provision of support services is being implemented under the project called “The PaSSOver: ARBOld Move to Heal as One Deliverance of our ARBs from the Covid-19 Pandemic.”

Maritime dispute not 'sum-total' of Philippines-China
relationship; temporarily bypass contentious issues and

July 19, 2020

DATE

TITLE: concentrate on joint projects in West Philippine Sea

PAGE 1/ 1/2

Maritime dispute not 'sum-total' of Philippines-China relationship; temporarily bypass contentious issues and concentrate on joint projects in West Philippine Sea

Published July 18, 2020, 11:00 PM

by Former House Speaker Jose C. De Venecia Jr.

PEACE-MAKER



Jose de Venecia Jr.
Former Speaker of the House

Indeed the maritime dispute in the West Philippine Sea-South China Sea is not the "sum total" of the bilateral relationship between the Philippines and China.

We agree with Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. and Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi to "continue to manage issues of concern" between our two countries and to "promote maritime cooperation in friendly consultation."

As we have written before, both the Philippines and China should for the meantime bypass the contentious issues and concentrate on a possible unifying objective, a project which both countries can undertake almost immediately or at least relatively shortly.

Both governments can direct their petroleum ministries to identify areas for possible oil-drilling in the West Philippine Sea-South China Sea, preferably in the petroleum-capable Philippine locations in the Recto (Reed) Bank where hydro-carbon discovery of significant commercial content is anticipated.

An initial program of say six exploratory wells to development wells might be programmed under a 60-40 sharing of costs and production with the Chinese state oil companies owning 40 percent, but of course depending on the ownership of the actual site.

Once negotiated and signed by both sides and confirmed by their petroleum ministries, representing both central governments, a drilling program in the sea by a Filipino-Chinese consortium, with a Filipino or Chinese entity designated as drilling operator of the consortium for both sides by common agreement, might designate a third party, say, an experienced American or European oil exploration company, as operator of the consortium.

Both Filipino and Chinese sides must now think in these terms if we are to quickly mobilize a drilling program for the West Philippine Sea-South China Sea, with great anticipation on both sides, since both are starved for crude, and are presently spending great amounts in critical foreign exchange to purchase crude oil from afar in the Persian Gulf or Arab Gulf to the Arabs in the Middle East, from suppliers in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates, and Iran. Oman has very much less petroleum.

Maritime dispute not 'sum-total' of Philippines-China
relationship; temporarily bypass contentious issues and

July 19, 2020

DATE

TITLE: concentrate on joint projects in West Philippine Sea PAGE 1/ 2/2

We have always believed that the raging flashpoint in the South China Sea, with conflicting sovereignty claims, may be settled by temporarily shelving the issue of sovereignty.

We envision joint oil/gas exploration and joint development with an equitable sharing of production and profits; designate "fishing corridors"; convert existing long-standing or newly-built bases into joint tourism sites, weather stations, logistical ports facilities, bases for joint seismic and oil exploration and mining in the South China Sea; eventually demilitarize the disputed islands through the phased withdrawal of armed garrisons; and convert the zone of conflict into a zone of peace, friendship, cooperation, and development.

We believe this is the most realistic, most common-sensical solution to the problem of the Spratlys among the so-called frontline states of the Philippines, China, and Vietnam, which should be joined by Malaysia, Brunei, and Taiwan.

This could also be the solution to the perilous problem between China and Japan in the Senkaku or Diaoyu Straits in the East China Sea.

Of course, it is easier said than done but we should consider the most practical, most sensible, and most realistic win-win compromises necessary for the geo-political settlements in the South China Sea conflict.

In Western Europe, the North Sea powers, including the United Kingdom, Norway, and Germany, undertook a peaceful median line partition of the North Sea. In the Norwegian oilfield of Ekofisk, the oil flows to Teesside in England and Stavanger in Norway and the gas to Bremen, Germany, the result of peaceful, friendly dialogue and practical geo-political settlement.

We remember leaving behind our son Joey III and daughter Vivian, who were both under ten years old then, in Stavanger in Norway when we boarded a helicopter, accompanied by our nephew Ramon San Jose III, to visit the petroleum operations in the North Sea in the 1970s. We were then president of the Petroleum Association of the Philippines.

The North Sea agreement among the United Kingdom, Norway, and Germany is a classic example of how we should resolve the problem in the South China Sea where the Philippines, China, and Vietnam can and should enter into a consortium and share the cost and benefits of stratigraphic drilling and production and where American and European participation can even be considered.

What is important is that the parties must agree on a location of the drilling site whether on the Philippine side, China side, or Vietnam side so that the sharing of petroleum discovery can be distributed accordingly, including the engagement of American or European participants in the event that the consortium engages a Western drillship or a designated common consortium operator.

Mayon calms down; Alert Level 1 still up

Published 1 day ago on July 18, 2020 03:00 AM

By [Larry Payawal](#)



Mayon: A calmer volcano. TED ALJIBE/Agence France-Presse

LEGAZPI CITY — Mount Mayon on Friday was placed under Alert Level 1 (low level of unrest) from Level 2 (moderate level of unrest).

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said the downgrade was due to the continued decline in its monitored parameters.

The declaration means the likelihood of an eruption occurring within the immediate future has weakened. There was a decline in volcanic earthquake activity observed in the past six months.

Seismic activity has also declined to a daily average of one volcanic earthquake typically attributed to rock fracturing beneath the edifice and occasional rockfall.

The overall low-level seismicity signifies that there is no active magma intrusion at the volcano's vent.

The sulfur gas output has stabilized between 300 tons and 700 tons per day since January.

The low level of SO₂ gas emission indicates a passive degassing (free of unwanted gas of stalled magma) beneath the volcano's edifice.

Steaming activity at the crater has ranged from weak to moderate.

Crater glow associated with superheated gas escaping the summit vent has been faint and only visible through the aid of a telescope.

The observation of stable lava dome, faint crater glow, and low gas emission since the beginning of the year signifies the cessation of magmatic activity.

The public is still reminded to avoid entry into the 6-km Permanent Danger Zone due to perennial hazard of rockfall, avalanche, ash puff, and sudden steam-driven or phreatic eruption at the summit area.

Davao Occidental hit by mild quake

Published July 18, 2020, 8:59 AM

by Mike Crismundo

BUTUAN CITY – A 4.3-magnitude earthquake jolted Davao Occidental province Saturday morning, July 18, 2020, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said.

In its bulletin, Phivolcs said the tremor was recorded at 6:12 a.m., with the epicenter plotted 169 kilometers (km) southwest of Sarangani, Davao Occidental province.

The tremor had a depth of 89 km, Phivolcs said.

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

The Davao Occidental provincial disaster risk reduction and management council did not report any damage or injury.

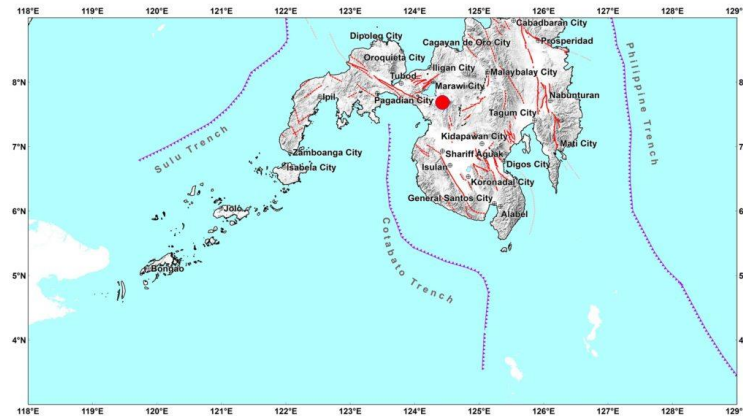
Earlier, a 3.2-magnitude tectonic earthquake was also registered at 4:22 a.m. Saturday, with its epicenter traced 90 kms southeast of Tarragona town of nearby Davao Oriental province, with a depth of 33 kms, Phivolcs also said, in its bulletin.

No damage, aftershock or tsunami alert was raised by the state agency.

Butig, Lanao Del Sur nilindol

Balita

July 18, 2020



Naramdaman ang magnitude 3.2 na lindol sa Butig, Lanao Del Sur Sabado ng umaga.

Ayon sa Phivolcs, ang episentro ng lindol sa layong 18 kilometers Southeast ng Butig bandang 9:09 ng umaga.

Walong kilometro ang lalim ng lindol at tectonic ang origin.

Wala namang napaulat na pinsala sa lugar.

Wala ring inaasahang aftershocks matapos ang pagyanig.

Source: https://bandera.inquirer.net/259699/butig-lanao-del-sur-nilindol?utm_term=Autofeed&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR2AAPN32T5PI4y3iHgduzkndRz1pPg7ekjYVCx75PmDAB-1NkZ2WYhNho#Echobox=1595040133

Filipinos warned as weak La Nina seen to develop later this year

Published July 18, 2020, 12:32 PM

by Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration warned Filipinos to prepare as a weak La Niña may develop in October or November this year.

PAGASA Administrator Vicente Malano said they have been continuously monitoring the possible development of La Niña since March 2020.

La Niña is characterized by the unusually cooler-than-average sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific.

Based on the PAGASA's La Niña Watch issued on July 16, current conditions and model forecasts show that there is more than 50 percent chance that a weak La Niña will develop in either late October or November 2020, which may last through the first quarter of 2021.

“With this development, above normal rainfall conditions are expected over some parts of the country in the coming several months,” Malano said. “The potential adverse impacts of the developing La Niña include floods and landslide over vulnerable areas with varying magnitude,” he added.

The PAGASA chief advised all concerned agencies to take precautionary measures to mitigate the potential adverse impacts of the developing La Niña.

“PAGASA will closely monitor these conditions and regular updates and advisories shall be issued as appropriate,” Malano said.

A weak La Niña last occurred in the fourth quarter of 2017 until the first half of 2018.

Currently, neutral conditions, which means neither La Niña nor El Niño are present, are still prevalent in the tropical Pacific.

Methane emissions rose by 9% in past decade

Cow burps, leaky pipelines put earth on high-end warming track

By [BusinessMirror](#)

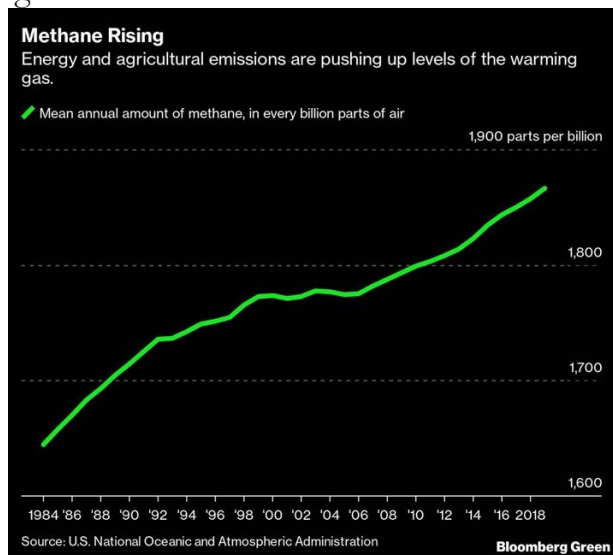
July 19, 2020



Cows stand in a holding area after being sold at auction at the Kentucky-Tennessee Livestock Market in Cross Plains, Tennessee, US, on July 13. The USDA raised beef projections from 260 million pounds on the month to 26.934 billion because of higher slaughter rates and heavier carcass weights, lowering the average steer price outlook by \$1.80 to \$106.80 per hundredweight, with lower exports and higher imports and domestic consumption, Brownfield Ag News reported.

Global emissions of methane—a greenhouse gas multiple times more potent than carbon dioxide (CO₂)—rose by 9 percent in the decade through 2017, putting Earth on a track to warm by more than 3 degrees Celsius (C) by the end of the century, according to an international study released last Wednesday.

Atmospheric levels of the gas—emitted by digesting cows, leaky gas pipelines and natural sources, such as wetlands—have increased two-and-a-half times from preindustrial levels, researcher Marielle Saunois said in a news briefing in Paris.



Human activity accounts for about 60 percent of methane emissions, led by growing herds of livestock and emissions linked to oil and gas production.

Methane's warming potential over a century is 28 times that of an equivalent mass of CO₂, the researchers said.

The current path of methane emissions lies between the two warmest scenarios used in projections by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, implying large cuts are needed to meet Paris Agreement targets.

Warming by 3 degrees C would be double the rate scientists have identified as needed to constrain the worst impacts of climate change.

“We’re on track for a scenario that is rather hot, and above 3 [degrees] to 4 degrees,” Saunois said in her presentation of the study. “Emissions are rising, particularly in tropical zones.”

After stabilizing in the late 1990s and early 2000s, methane emissions have been rising since 2007, accelerating since 2014, according to the study. Average annual emissions of methane rose to an estimated 596 million tons in the period through 2017, from 546 million tons in the 2000-2006 period.

23 percent of warming

The study, the work of more than 90 researchers as part of the Global Carbon Project, was published in the journal *Earth Systems Science Data*. A related paper on methane sources published in *Environmental Research Letters* found agriculture and fossil fuels were the main drivers behind increased emissions.

Methane—chemical formula CH₄—is responsible for about 23 percent of all warming produced by greenhouse gases so far, the researchers said.

Its lifetime in the atmosphere of around nine years makes the gas a good target for climate-change mitigation.

Stabilizing or reducing emissions would have an impact on global warming within a few decades, they said.

Tropical regions were the source of 64 percent of global methane emissions, while northern high latitudes contributed 4 percent.

The study didn’t find a significant effect from melting permafrost, though Saunois said “if the permafrost melts strongly, the emissions will increase.”

Agriculture and waste represented 56 percent of anthropogenic methane emissions, mainly linked to growing numbers of ruminant livestock that burp it up as they digest, the study found.

Contributions from Asia and Africa increased as livestock herds expanded there, Saunois said.

Europe was the only region to lower methane emissions over the period, helped by a drop in dairy cattle numbers and changes in how farms store and treat manure.

Production and use of fossil fuels accounted on average for 35 percent of emissions linked to human activity. Oil and gas accounted for almost two-thirds of the fossil emissions, notably leaks during drilling of wells and from cast-iron natural gas distribution grids in older cities.

Coal mining made up most of the remainder, mainly due to methane pumped from mine-ventilation shafts. *Bloomberg News*

Brazil's Bolsonaro under pressure to protect Amazon

Published July 18, 2020, 9:59 AM

by Agence France-Presse

Faced with investors demanding “results” in the fight against Amazon deforestation, Brazil’s government seems to be performing something of an about-face, although it will have to work to convince skeptics.



This file photo taken on August 24, 2019, shows burnt trees in the Amazon rainforest, near Abuna, Rondonia State, Brazil. (Photo by CARL DE SOUZA / AFP)

The simple fact that Vice President Hamilton Mourao committed on Wednesday to cutting deforestation and forest fires “to an acceptable minimum” was a mini-revolution in the administration of far right President Jair Bolsonaro.

Less than a year ago the international community watched in horror as the number of forest fires in the Amazon soared to their highest levels since 2013.

Ireland and France threatened to scupper a trade deal between the European Union and Mercosur — of which Brazil is a member — unless Bolsonaro acted to protect what French President Emmanuel Macron described as a “common interest.”

Macron called the fires an “international crisis” and Bolsonaro fired back at his counterpart’s “colonialist mentality.”

“Europe is an environmental cult,” Bolsonaro said Thursday on Facebook. “They haven’t preserved their environment, almost nothing... but they hit us all the time over this, and unfairly.”

“We have problems because Brazil is an agribusiness power.”

But at the end of June, investment funds from Europe, Asia and South America that collectively administer close to \$4 trillion in assets cranked up the pressure in an open letter to Bolsonaro, urging the end of projects that threaten to accelerate destruction of the world’s largest rainforest.

That seems to have hit home.

“The fact that the pressure comes from investors and not from heads of state, that gives it a different tone,” Andre Perfeito, an economist at Necton consultants, told AFP.

Last week those investors held a video conference with the government, after which Mourao admitted words were not enough.

“At no time did investors commit with resources, they want to see results... to do with the reduction in deforestation,” said Mourao, who heads the National Amazon Council.

‘Much more serious consequences’

The threat from foreign investors is taken very seriously by a government that needs capital to reignite an economy ravaged by the coronavirus.

“Brazil is banking on foreign investments to emerge from the crisis. These foreign investments are important for a number of areas: sanitation, infrastructure,” said Rubens Barbosa, former Brazilian ambassador to the United States and now director of an international relations and foreign trade institute.

Several former finance ministers and ex-presidents of the Central Bank stressed in an open letter this week that failure to take action against climate change “could have much more serious consequences than the pandemic.”

Environmental campaigners are not holding their breath though, given the government’s history of wanting to remove protections afforded to indigenous land and natural reserves to help expand mining and farming.

“What is the goal? It doesn’t exist. What is the budget? It doesn’t exist... What is the method? It doesn’t exist. There’s no change in conduct that gives us the minimum hope that the government will change its behavior,” said Marcio Astrini, executive secretary of the Climate Observatory, a collective of NGOs fighting against global warming.

The numbers certainly make grim reading, with record deforestation in the first half of 2020, up 25 percent from the same period last year.

In May, the government sent the army to the Amazon to battle forest fires with the dry season fast approaching, but Mourao admitted those operations were launched “too late.”

The result was the worst June for forest fires in 13 years, with the blazes often started by farmers in deforested areas looking to create pastures for their cattle to graze on.

‘Swimming against the current’

Agriculture Minister Tereza Cristina recently said Brazil doesn’t need to deforest the Amazon to develop its huge agricultural potential.

Cristina, an ardent supporter of Brazil’s agribusinesses, knows her sector depends on exports to countries increasingly reticent about buying products from deforested land.

A report in Science magazine Thursday claimed a fifth of beef and soybean exports to the EU was produced on illegally cleared land.

“The main thing to recover external credibility is to present results. Rhetoric isn’t enough,” said Barbosa. The government has signed the trade deal between the EU and Mercosur, which includes a chapter on sustainable development.

“The Bolsonaro government accepted, so it will have to demonstrate with results that it is fulfilling those agreements,” added Barbosa.

Some remain unconvinced, though, that a leopard can change its spots.

“The world has changed, the Bolsonaro government hasn’t and is swimming against the tide,” said Astrini.

Cool plan: Better aircon can slow global warming, study says

Associated Press / 03:38 PM July 18, 2020



Plastic-bottled soft drinks are displayed in fridges at a store in Tokyo. Image: AP/Koji Sasahara

BERLIN — Making air conditioners and fridges more energy-efficient and using more climate-friendly refrigerants can significantly slow global warming, according to a United Nations-backed report released Friday.

The report published by the U.N. Environment Program and the International Energy Agency claims greater efficiency and the replacement of harmful refrigerants could prevent the equivalent of four to eight years of current global greenhouse gas emissions over the next four decades.

Demand for cooling appliances is predicted to almost quadruple by 2050 as the planet heats up and more people need air conditioners. But cheap devices often consume a lot of electricity that's generated from coal or gas-fired power plants, which in turn fuel global warming.

“Air conditioning is a two-edged sword,” said Durwood Zaelke, a U.S.-based environmental lawyer who contributed to the report. “You need it because the world is warming, but it contributes to warming unless you make it super efficient.”

Another problem with cooling devices is that many still use hydrofluorocarbons, or HFCs, a group of potent but short-lived greenhouse gas. Experts say banishing them is one of the fastest ways to curb global warming — up to 0.4 degrees Celsius (0.72 Fahrenheit) by the end of the century.

In 2016, countries negotiated a binding treaty to phase out HFCs known as the Kigali Amendment — tacked onto the highly successful Montreal Protocol that helped repair the ozone hole. But major polluters such as the United States, China, India and Russia have yet to ratify it.

Even countries that have ratified the treaty struggle to crack down on illegal refrigerants smuggling. Earlier this month, the European Union's anti-fraud unit OLAF announced that the Netherlands had seized 14 metric tons of HFCs — with a potential environmental impact equivalent to 38 return flights from Amsterdam to Sydney.

The authors of the new report call for “national cooling action plans” that include minimum energy performance standards and clear labeling of devices to help consumers choose the most efficient and climate-friendly refrigerants.

They also urge governments to promote ways of reducing the need for refrigerants, with energy-efficient buildings, tree-planting to cool cities and district-wide cooling systems.

A further upshot of more efficient air conditioners, according to the 48-page report's authors: trillions of dollars in electricity cost savings by mid-century. **CL**

Source: <https://technology.inquirer.net/102208/cool-plan-better-aircon-can-slow-global-warming-study-says>

Ecuadorian hummingbirds chirp ultrasonic songs of seduction

Associated Press / 03:15 PM July 18, 2020



A male Hillstar hummingbird perched on a Chuquiraga jussieui flower in Ecuador. Image: AP/Paolo David Escobar/Neoselva Photography

WASHINGTON — Perched on a flowering shrub on a windy Andean mountainside, the tiny Ecuadorian Hillstar hummingbird chirps songs of seduction that only another bird of its kind can hear.

As the male sings, he inflates his throat, causing iridescent throat feathers to glisten princely purple. The female may join in a courtship dance – or chase him off.

For the first time, scientists have shown that these hummingbirds can sing and hear in pitches beyond the known range of other birds, according to research published Friday in the journal Science Advances.

The male’s ballad is sung at around 13.4 kilohertz. That’s considered “ultrasonic” for birds, which generally can’t hear above 9 or 10 kilohertz.

“Something very interesting is going on in the ears of these hummingbirds to allow them to hear such sounds,” said Christopher Clark, a biologist at the University of California, Riverside, who was not involved in the study.

“That’s just an incredibly high pitch for a bird.”

Among birds, only some owls have previously been shown to hear ultrasonic sounds — which they use to locate prey, but not to communicate. Biologists have studied other hummingbird species in South America that make high-pitched sounds, but it’s been difficult to confirm whether those birds also hear the sounds.

For the new study, scientists climbed into the Ecuadorian Andes to reach high grasslands called paramos and locate the Hillstars’ breeding grounds. There they recorded the males singing, then played back their romantic ballads to test the reactions of other birds.

Other Hillstars craned their necks and turned toward the speaker as it played the high-pitched chirps; one also flew over the speaker to inspect it. In the lab, the scientists verified that the part of the brain typically engaged in auditory communication had been activated.

Ecuadorian hummingbirds chirp ultrasonic songs of

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“We confirmed that this song has a social function,” said Fernanda Duque, a study co-author at Georgia State University, where she researches hummingbird brains.

Mammals generally hear a wider range of pitches than birds. Humans can hear pitches up to about 20 kilohertz, but lose sensitivity to high-pitch sounds with age.

During fieldwork, the younger scientists could usually hear the Hillstar hummingbird songs, but the older participants couldn't, Duque said.

The researchers believe the birds may have evolved to sing at high pitches so that their love songs wouldn't compete with background noises in their environment, such as mountain winds, streams and the songs of other birds, said Marco Monteros, a study co-author and biologist at Universidad Técnica del Norte in Ibarra, Ecuador.

“For some hummingbirds, it's like a private channel of communication — other bird species don't use these high-frequency sounds,” said Timothy Wright, a behavioral ecologist at New Mexico State University, who was not involved in the study. *CL*

TITLE: A swarm of flying ants stretched for miles over the UK and looked like rain on weather radar

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A swarm of flying ants stretched for miles over the UK and looked like rain on weather radar

By [David Williams](#), CNN

Updated 1853 GMT (0253 HKT) July 18, 2020



It's not rain, it's a swarm of flying ants.

(CNN) You can add giant swarms of flying ants to your 2020 scary-sounding insects Bingo card alongside [murder hornets](#) and [hordes of noisy cicadas](#).

The [UK's Met Office](#) shared radar imagery that showed the ants flying over the southeast part of the country.

"It's not raining in London, Kent or Sussex, but our radar says otherwise," it [said in a tweet on Friday](#).



TITLE: A swarm of flying ants stretched for miles over the
UK and looked like rain on weather radar

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It looked like rain on the radar, but a meteorologist with the country's weather agency said it was "dry, hot and sunny" at the time. The swarm was visible on radar for about two hours on Friday morning.

The forecasters' satellites didn't show enough clouds to produce rain in the area, she said.

They suspected insects because the particles didn't look like raindrops and were longer than they are wide -- like a bug.

Their hunch was confirmed when people in the area started posting about the swarm with the hashtags #flyingants and #flyingantday.

There were also reports along the eastern part of the country that did not show up on radar, she said.

The ants' have become a summer tradition in Britain and many people [call their annual appearance Flying Ant Day](#).

The phenomenon occurs when young queen ants, followed by males, leave their nests to breed and start new colonies. The weather conditions have to be just right, which is why so many ants choose to take off at the same time, according to the [Royal Society of Biology \(RSB\)](#).

They may be annoying, but the ants are also good for the environment, according to the RSB. They improve soil fertility and aerate the ground so more water, oxygen and nutrients can reach plants' roots and wind up as meals for birds and other predators.

The ants aren't harmful, so the RSB suggests ignoring them until they fly off on their own.