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IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service

Cimatu wants homeless people off streets

By [Caacent No-ot Magsumbol](#)(The Freeman) - July 28, 2020 - 12:00am



Secretary Roy Cimatu, overseer of the fight against coronavirus in Cebu, had this to say in response to concerns on the plight of homeless people who have made Cebu City's sidewalks their dwelling place.

CEBU, Philippines — In this time of pandemic, street dwellers should be taken out of the streets.

Secretary Roy Cimatu, overseer of the fight against coronavirus in Cebu, had this to say in response to concerns on the plight of homeless people who have made Cebu City's sidewalks their dwelling place.

Cimatu, in a meeting with officials from the Cebu City Emergency Operations Center and barangay captains, said these homeless people should be removed from the streets for everyone's safety.

He made the remarks after a pathologist raised the importance of keeping the city clean as it continues to fight the spread of the virus. COVID-19 studies have reportedly found viral shedding in stool.

Street dwellers are often tagged as the culprits behind the human waste and urine that could be found on some of the city's sidewalks.

According to San Nicolas Proper barangay captain Clifford Jude Niñal, the barangay has rounded up and housed over 300 homeless and stranded individuals since the start of the lockdown.

When the city was downgraded to general community quarantine status, these homeless and stranded individuals left the barangay covered court where they were staying to go back to their respective provinces.

Others, unfortunately, went back to the streets.

When the city was reverted to enhanced community quarantine on June 16, Niñal once again ordered the rounding up of the homeless people.

Currently, there are over a hundred homeless individuals accommodated in the barangay. The main challenge, Niñal said, is feeding all of them without the support of the government, with the barangay relying mostly on donations from the private sector.

Homeless people in San Nicolas Proper alone can consume at least two sacks of rice a day, excluding viand, water, and diapers and milk for the babies.

When the plight of the homeless people was raised in the meeting with Cimatu, Niñal finally heaved a sigh of relief.

Yesterday, a team from the city's Department of Social Welfare and Services (DSWS) checked the condition of the homeless people in his barangay.

"I don't know what their plans for the homeless are, but I thank them for checking their condition here. I am okay with these people staying here as long as the barangay gets help," Niñal said in Cebuano.

Aside from food supply, the village chief has also requested for more security personnel in his barangay to prevent these homeless individuals from going in and out of their temporary shelter, which raises the risk of them contracting the virus. **JMD (FREEMAN)**

MAS MALAKING KRISIS DALA NG CLIMATE CHANGE KAYSA SA COVID-19

July 27, 2020 @ 11:33 AM 19 hours ago



Inihayag ni Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu na ang pagtugon sa climate change ay ang nangunguna pa ring prayoridad ng pamahalaan kahit na ito ay abala sa pagsupil ng COVID-19.

Ang climate change ay mas malaking krisis kaysa sa COVID-19 dahil mas malaking panganib ang dala nito sa mga susunod na henerasyon, ayon kay Cimatu na nagsisilbing tagapangulo ng Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation, Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction.

“The climate emergency remains as urgent as ever. It is like the COVID-19 emergency, just in slow motion and much graver,” ani Cimatu sa kanyang presentasyon para sa 2020 Pre-State of the Nation Address Report of the Cabinet Cluster on CCAM-DRR na may titulong “Pagkalinga Tungo sa Katatagan” sa Hulyo 22.

Ang pagbabago ng klima ay maaaring magkaroon ng mas malalang epekto na nagbubunga ng mas malalang problema, mula sa magiging epekto nito sa katatagan ng mga ecosystem hanggang sa produksyon ng pagkain at pagkakaroon ng gulo sa sangkatauhan.

Ang ecosystem at biodiversity loss ay nagsisilbing banta sa ating planeta na makapaghatid ng serbisyo at kailangan ng tao.

Ang pagkakalbo ng kagubatan ay nakagagambala sa weather patterns at water cycle, nakapag-aambag sa climate change, at sumisira sa mga tirahan ng mahahalagang species ng hayop.

Ang mga kemikal at basura ay nagdudulot ng polusyon sa hangin, sa lupa at sa tubig at siyang pumapatay sa maraming tao kada taon.

Bilang estratehiya, sinabi ni Cimatu na gagamitin ng pamahalaan ang COVID-19 bilang oportunidad upang pabilisin ang climate action sa “pagbuo ng mga tugon sa pinakamalalang krisis pangkalusugang ng henerasyong ito sa pamamagitan ng ‘climate lens.’”

“The government—through the Cabinet Cluster on CCAM-DRR—will prioritize actions and investments that will reduce long-term health impacts and increase our resilience and adaptive capacity to both the coronavirus pandemic and climate change,” ani Cimatu.

Ang Cabinet cluster, aniya, ay patuloy na tutugon sa mga extreme weather events at mga sakuna; daragdagan ang mga kapasidad sa pagtugon ng vulnerable communities; titiyakin ang sapat na suplay ng malinis na hangin, tubig, at likas na yaman; at daragdagan ang katatagan ng mga kritikal na imprastaktura.

Sinabi ni Cimatu na ang mga malalaking programa sa pagprotekta ng kapaligiran tulad ng solid waste management at biodiversity conservation, ay dapat nakaayon sa kabuuang pagtugon sa COVID-19, mga pandemya sa hinaharap, at krisis sa klima.

Mas malaking krisis dala ng Climate Change kasya sa

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“High volumes of hazardous waste and the dramatic spread of zoonotic diseases account to the growing challenges that the government has to face to help alleviate problems in this deadly pandemic,” dagdag pa niya.

Alinsunod sa Executive Order 24, Series of 2017, ang Cabinet Cluster on CCAM-DRR ay inaatasang magpokus sa pagprotekta at pagkonserba ng kapaligiran at likas na yaman, at magsilbing venue para sa talakayan ng inter-related concerns ukol sa climate change at disaster risk management.

Pinangungunahan din ng cluster and epektibong pagbubuo ng mga polisiya at programa para sa climate risk management, disaster risk reduction at sustainable development.

Boracay stakeholders support BIDA creation

By Perla Lena July 27, 2020, 8:49 pm



SUPPORT FOR BIDA. Boracay Island in this undated photo. President Rodrigo Duterte's push on Monday (July 27, 2020) for the creation of the Boracay Island Development Authority (BIDA) is a piece of welcome news as it would ensure the sustainability of the development on the island. (PNA file photo)

ILOILO CITY – Stakeholders support the creation of the Boracay Island Development Authority (BIDA) mentioned by President Rodrigo Duterte in his fifth State of the Nation Address (SONA) on Monday.

Acting Mayor Frolibar Bautista of Malay town, which hosts the world-renowned Boracay Island, said he welcomes the proposal since it is for the development of the island.

"As long as there is no encroachment in the function of the LGU (local government unit), then there is no problem," he said in a phone interview.

Natividad Bernardino, general manager of the Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Management Group (BIARMG), said the pronouncement of President Duterte is good news for them.

She said BIDA is the proposal of the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF). The task force as an ad hoc body was given an extension until May 2021.

BIARMG is the management office of the BIATF based in Boracay supervising the day-to-day implementation of rehabilitation projects and activities of the BIATF.

Bautista said a draft of the bill was presented to them by the task force last month and they suggested some amendments, which were also considered.

Those that were deleted concerned the encroachment on the function of the LGU, he said.

BIDA, as a whole, could help a lot, especially when there are projects that need bigger financial exposure because they will be infusing more funds, he added.

"It is good because their budget is included in the General Appropriations Act, so it is a big support to the development of the island. The LGU has limited resources," he said, adding that they just rely on tourism.

"BIDA once it becomes a law will be the permanent body that will oversee and ensure the sustainability of all the rehabilitation efforts that we've started in Boracay," Bernardino said.

The creation of the BIDA was discussed by the task force but it was only early this year that it was able to prepare its version of the bill that will serve as the official draft.

She said the draft might have been endorsed to Congress since the resolution endorsing the paper was already signed when the task force met in Boracay in June.

Bernardino said they are hopeful that BIDA will be signed into law before the term of the task force ends next year and the works will be properly turned over to them.

In the draft bill, BIDA is composed of different heads of agencies, the governor of Aklan, the mayor of Malay, and certain representatives from the private sector.

The task force is trying to complete the rehabilitation works on the island, Bernardino said.

Currently, they are about 70 to 80 percent of their target.

Since the rehab is mainly on infrastructure, she said, the completion of phase II of the road project is around 80 percent.

Bernardino hoped to finish the rehab by September this year since the civil works, which were temporarily stopped due to lockdowns amid the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic, have already resumed.

Projects implemented by the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) are expected to be finished in December because their completion rate is now at 60 percent.

Once the BIDA is already there, what they need to ensure is “the protection and maintenance” of what has been started by the task force and “continued enforcement of laws,” Bernardino added.

They were happy, she said, the President announced in his address that it means would be a priority bill of the administration. **(PNA)**



Kapaligiran, lupa pangalagaan; Boracay Dev' Authority, buuin

July 27, 2020 @ 5:27 PM 14 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Sinabi ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na napakahalagang pangalagaan ang mga lupain at kapaligiran ng bansa.

Sa kanyang ikalimang State of the Nation Address ay hinikayat ng Pangulo ang Kongreso na bumuo ng mga batas para sa regulasyon at paggamit ng mga lupa at kapaligiran upang mabantayan ang kayamanan at kagandahan ng mga ito.

Ginawa ng Pangulo na ehemplo bilang napakahalagang yaman ng bansa ang Boracay na dapat pangalagaan at dapat gawin din ito sa ibang lugar ng bansa.

Partikular sa Boracay, ipinanukala nito sa Kongreso na gumawa ng batas gaya ng Boracay Development Authority.

Matatandaang ipinasara mismo ni Pang. Duterte ang Boracay na isa sa mga pangunahing tourist spot ng bansa ng kung ilang buwan nitong nakaraang taon matapos na mababoy ito bilang labasan at tapunan ng mga dumi ng tao at basura mula sa mga establisimyento, turista at mamamayan.

Pinangunahan naman mismo nina Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu at DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda ang pagbabantay at rehabilitasyon ng lugar hanggang sa bumalik sa dating linis at ganda ng isla at karagatan nito. *RNT*

SONA 2020

Duterte wants Congress to create body to oversee Boracay

Published July 27, 2020 6:59pm

By JON VIKTOR D. CABUENAS, GMA News

President Rodrigo Duterte on Monday called on Congress to put up an authority that would oversee Boracay island.

In his penultimate State of the Nation Address (SONA), Duterte said lawmakers should push for the creation of a body that would ensure that the effects of the months-long rehabilitation of the island are sustained.

"We have shared remarkable emergence of the island back to its former glory. I want this sustained. I ask Congress to enact a law creating, importante ito, the Boracay Island Development Authority or BIDA," he said.

To recall, Boracay [was temporarily closed down for six months in 2018](#), to make way for its rehabilitation after Duterte called the tourist destination a "cesspool."

The six-month rehabilitation of the island [was recommended](#) by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Tourism (DOT), and the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

"For the rest of my term I hope to see concerted efforts in protecting the environment. The rehabilitation of Boracay island showcased our resolve to safeguard the environment," Duterte said.

"Boracay is doing well because of its scenery. If it's only a coconut and white sand and water, wala 'yan. Pero you add the visitors there then it becomes a very tempting destination," he added.

In the same speech, Duterte also said Congress should look into the National Land Use Act (NaLUA), which has long been pending.

"The responsible extraction and equitable distribution of natural resources remain among my non-negotiables," he said.

"I reiterate the need for the passage of the National Land Use Act which been pending for decades. Pakisilip na ho niyo 'yan," added Duterte.

The NaLUA is a measure that seeks to harmonize land use policies across the country. — **BM, GMA News**

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/748689/duterte-wants-congress-to-create-body-to-oversee-boracay/story/?fbclid=IwAR1daoR5ixSvWFaOKwaUCGd-cgK_LLz0KXUJQjgHg6hS5BiGvRMsfOiwPFU

6 eagles released back to wild in Cagayan Valley

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

July 28, 2020

BAGGAO, Cagayan: At least six eagles were freed back to their natural habitat in Baggao town, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 2 (Cagayan Valley). Frederic Tomas, this town's municipal environment and natural resources officer (Menro), said there were three Crested serpent eagles (*Spilornis cheela*), two Brahminy kites (*Haliastur indus*) and a Philippine hawk-eagle (*Nisaetus philippensis*) that were finally released after they were declared healthy. Tomas said the serpent eagles and one of the Brahminy kites were set free at Sitio Kapaniswan, Barangay Bitag Grande. "They were released by the local government unit (LGU) here and the DENR upon certification of the Regional Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory that these wildlife species were found to be in good health," he said. According to Tomas, the rescue of these species was made possible through a Facebook post asking for help. "We have responded to rescue the eagles in response to a Facebook post. We later turned them over to Rogelio Baggayan of the DENR's Nature Park and Wildlife Center in Tuguegarao City," he said. Tomas added that the other Brahminy kite was rescued after it was trapped in a fishnet along a pond in Barangay Dalin while the Philippine hawk-eagle was found in a house in Barangay Santa Margarita. "These eagles were temporarily housed in the municipal nursery to check on their health status before they were released in Sitio Anasian, Barangay San Miguel," he said. Mayor Joan Dunuan of this town said the LGU continues to intensify its forest protection efforts to rehabilitate and address habitat destruction. She urged residents to be vigilant and reminded them to immediately act and report illegal activities in Baggao's forests. Meanwhile, Ismael Manaligod, Cagayan provincial environment and natural resources office chief, said they had an agreement with Menro that whenever they rescue wildlife, they will have to immediately turn over to Penro or the community environment and natural resources office in Alcala town.

PH eagle 'Makilala Hiraya' to be released back to the wild Tuesday

Published July 27, 2020, 1:14 PM

by [Ivy Tejano](#)

DAVAO CITY – The Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) in Davao is set to release a female Philippine Eagle back to the wild on Tuesday, July 28, after the eagle has fully recovered from an injury sustained more than a month.



Philippine Eagle Foundation (Facebook / MANILA BULLETIN)

The eagle was named “Makilala Hiraya” after the municipality of Makilala in North Cotabato, where she was found and rescued by the concerned residents in the area.

In the official Facebook page of the Energy Development Corporation (EDC) BINHI, it said that the “Hiraya” was a name given by their #conservationpartner EDC, which meant dreams and aspirations.

After over a month of careful assessment, the PEF announced in its official Facebook page that the eagle can soon fly back to its natural habitat.

The PEF, through its partnership with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 12, the municipality of Makilala, and EDC, organized the return of Makilala Hiraya to the wild.

Makilala Hiraya was rescued in Makilala, North Cotabato last June 8. She was found on the ground by residents after being chased by a flock of large-billed crows the night before.

“Our team went to retrieve the eagle and brought her to the PEC for further check-up and to be closely monitored,” the EDC BINHI said.

Now, the EDC BINHI said, Makilala Hiraya is deemed healthy and fit for release.

Cebu town reclamation project gets green light from DENR

By Carlo Lorenciana July 27, 2020, 1:16 pm



RECLAMATION PROJECT. A flat aerial model plan shows the 100-hectare Ming-Mori Minglanilla Reclamation Project in Cebu. In a stock exchange disclosure on Saturday (July 25, 2020), Cebu Landmasters Inc. (CLI) announced that the DENR issued on July 22 an environmental compliance certificate in favor of the project. *(Photo from CLI's Facebook page)*

CEBU CITY – The 100-hectare reclamation project in Minglanilla town, 15-kilometers south of this city, is finally pushing through after obtaining an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

In a stock exchange disclosure over the weekend, project developer Cebu Landmasters Inc. (CLI) announced the ECC was issued in favor of the project last July 22 following a comprehensive two-year review.

Dubbed as Ming-Mori Techno Business Park, the project is a joint venture between the local government of Minglanilla and private consortium partners Ming-Mori Development Corp. (MMDC), an affiliate of publicly listed CLI.

It is envisioning a world-class estate that will generate over 75,000 jobs in the municipality.

The development will now be subject to the approval process of the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) after the issuance of the ECC, one of the major prerequisites and milestones of a reclamation project.

“We hope to achieve the best balance among economic, social, and sustainability goals and are pleased that our plans, which have been aligned to that ideal, passed the test of public hearings and DENR’s stringent review process,” Jose Soberano III, CLI chairman, and CEO said.

Mayor Elanito Peña of Minglanilla said, “the grant of the ECC has brought us closer to the materialization of the reclamation project which will propel the municipality of Minglanilla to higher heights and cements its role as a major economic player in the province of Cebu”.

“The development project will not just modernize the landscape of Minglanilla but will also create immeasurable socio-economic opportunities to all people, not just for the Minglanillahanons,” Peña added.

Following a memorandum of agreement between the municipality of Minglanilla and MMDC in 2013, CLI was appointed in 2015 to tap a roster of consultants with a track record in similar projects to create detailed design and engineering plans, feasibility and environmental studies.

In 2016, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the PRA and the municipal government with Ming-Mori as its private consortium partner.

Cebu town reclamation project gets green light from

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Soberano said that in addition to housing light industrial facilities, the future mixed-use township will also bring residential and commercial properties.

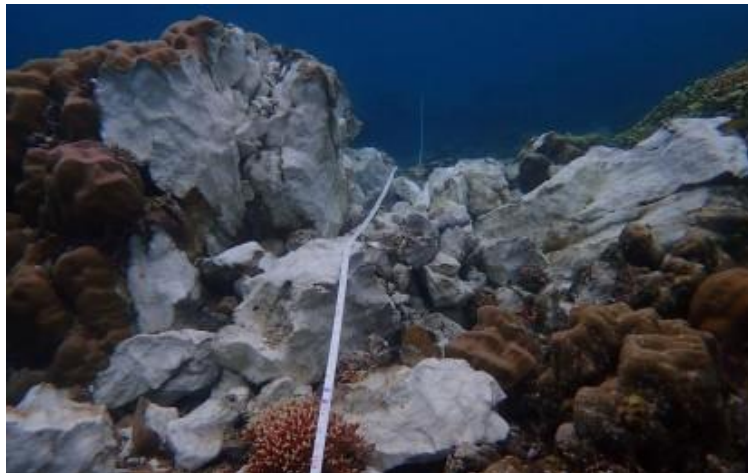
“The Covid-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) pandemic has shown us that well-planned communities that offer growth prospects alongside safety and security for employees and residents are the way to go. This township’s residents will have access to those benefits and more,” he explained.

The Ming-Mori Techno Business Park will be CLI’s third estate project. Land development of the 22-hectare Davao Global township is ongoing while its planned township in Cagayan de Oro is undergoing approvals.

CLI said more township projects are underway in the cities of Mandaue, Tagbilaran, Cagayan de Oro, and Bacolod City. **(PNA)**

Fishing firm pays P4.8-M fine over reef damage off Sarangani

By Richelyn Gubalani July 27, 2020, 2:51 pm



DAMAGED. Photo shows a portion of the coral reef off Barangay Batulaki in Glan, Sarangani province damaged by cargo and fishing vessel of Rodrigo Lorna Gere Fishing Industry Corp. that accidentally ran aground in the area last May 1. The company has settled the PHP4.8 million penalty assessed by the Protected Area Management Board of the Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape. (Photo courtesy of the Sarangani Protected Area Management Office)

GENERAL SANTOS CITY – A fishing company here has paid the government some PHP4.8 million in penalty over the destruction of coral reefs by one of its vessels that accidentally ran aground off Sarangani Bay last May.

Maj. Virgilio Carona, chief of the 1202nd Philippine National Police-Maritime Group in Sarangani province, said Monday the owners of Rodrigo Lorna Gere Fishing Industry Corp. (RLGFI) already settled the fine with the area's Protected Area Management Board (PAMB).

He said the company had acknowledged responsibility over the incident and agreed to pay the corresponding penalty.

"The company is also closely working with concerned agencies to address the problem," Carona told reporters.

A 125-foot cargo and fishing vessel owned by RLGFI ran aground 260 meters from the shores of Barangay Batulaki in Glan town, Sarangani last May 1, destroying around 45 square meters of coral reefs.

A PAMB report said the vessel, F/B Mark Anthony-17, had just delivered goods to this city when it drifted to the area due to inclement weather.

It said the company had cooperated with authorities regarding the situation and voluntarily paid an "indemnification" amounting to PHP500,000 pending the determination of the full penalty by PAMB's technical working group.

The assessment of the site was made by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Region 12, Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape (SBPS) Protected Area Management Office, municipal government of Glan, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, 1202nd Maritime Group and the Philippine

Joy Ologuin, SBPS superintendent, the collected fine will become part of the Integrated Area Protected Fund and will be utilized for the rehabilitation programs and management of the strict protection zones along the bay. (**PNA**)

Sea turtle found dead in Bohol town

By: [Leo Udtohan](#) - Correspondent / [@leoudtohanINQ](#)

[Inquirer Visayas](#) / 12:42 PM July 27, 2020



A sea turtle was found dead on the coast of Punta Cruz in Maribojoc town, Bohol, on Sunday morning, July 26, 2020. Photo courtesy of Jessica Gonzales Moraga

TAGBILARAN CITY — A green sea turtle was found dead by a resident on the shores of Barangay Punta Cruz in Maribojoc town on Sunday, July 26.

The marine reptile was 1.27 meters long, 102 centimeters wide, and weighed 200 kilograms. Jessica Gonzales Moraga, who found the dead turtle, said residents buried the turtle in the shoreline.

At least four sea turtles in Maribojoc died this month.

A green sea turtle was found dead in Barangay Guinsularan in Duero town on Saturday, July 25, 10 days after a juvenile green sea turtle was found dead by residents in Garcia Hernandez town on July 15.

On July 12, a giant leatherback sea turtle was also found dead in the island-barangay of Cataban in Talibon town.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources lists the sea turtle species as endangered and fast diminishing due to animal predation and human exploitation.

LZB

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1312582/sea-turtle-found-dead-in-bohol-town>

Republic Cement offers sustainable solution to plastic waste problem

By [...](#) -July 27, 2020

Republic Cement has been offering to its partner communities waste co-processing which uses alternative fuels in the manufacture of cement.

Practiced since the early 2000s, the method paves the way for the recovery of the energy and mineral content of waste materials that serve as substitute fuels or alternative raw materials to produce cement in a single operation.

The process burns waste materials such as plastics at 1450°C in a kiln chamber, recovering from them thermal and mineral properties that provide the energy needed to produce cement.

With co-processing, qualified wastes are completely destroyed while utilizing its energy and mineral components integrating into the manufacture of cement.

Co-processing enables Republic Cement to maximize the use of alternative fuels such as rice husk, saw dust, and refuse-derived fuel as a substitute for its fossil fuel requirements. Using these materials as fuel proved to be more environment-friendly, moving the company closer to zero waste and lower carbon dioxide emissions.

Having established its leadership in providing innovative construction solutions and manufacturing expertise, Republic Cement plants are equipped with state-of-the-art continuous emission monitoring systems that are calibrated and maintained.

Republic Cement also offers co-processing services to fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies through “Plastic Neutrality” option for partners. Plastic Neutrality is a scheme in which a waste plastic generator engages another party that provides a method or technology to reduce or offset their plastic consumption directly aimed at reducing waste plastics in the communities and landfills.

This helps reduce single-use plastics and transforming wastes into resources which in the case of Republic Cement is used as alternative fuel.

Republic Cement offers its use of post-consumer waste plastic as alternative fuels in cement production to offset the use of plastics in consumer goods packaging. Post-consumer plastics are the materials or finished plastic products that have served their intended use and have been diverted or recovered from waste destined for disposal, having completed their lives as consumer items.

In 2019, Republic Cement sealed three partnerships with companies looking to become plastic neutral including Nestle, Century Pacific Food and Shakey’s Pizza Asia Ventures.

Republic Cement has also established partnerships with local government units including the City of Manila; Valenzuela; Paete and Liliw in Laguna; Norzagaray, and San Jose del Monte in Bulacan; Teresa in Rizal; Taysan and Lipa City in Batangas, and San Fernando, Lubao Sasmuan and Mexico in Pampanga.

Source: https://malaya.com.ph/index.php/news_special_feature/republic-cement-offers-sustainable-solution-to-plastic-waste-problem/

Red tide alert raised in 4 Eastern Visayas bays

By Sarwell Meniano July 27, 2020, 11:36 am



RED TIDE HIT. Fisherfolk collects sea cucumber in Guiuan, Eastern Samar in this July 17, 2020 photo. The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources on Monday (July 27, 2020) raised red tide alert in four bays in Eastern Visayas due to the reappearance of red tide toxins in coastal waters. *(Photo courtesy of Guiuan Development Foundation, Inc.)*

TACLOBAN CITY – The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has raised red tide alert in four bays in Eastern Visayas due to the reappearance of red tide toxins in coastal waters.

In its alert, BFAR informed the public that red tide toxins are still present in Cancabato Bay in Tacloban City; Matarinao Bay stretching across the towns of General MacArthur, Hernani, Quinapondan, and Salcedo in Eastern Samar; Carigara Bay in Babatngon, San Miguel, Barugo, Carigara, and Capocan in Leyte; and coastal waters of Guiuan, Eastern Samar.

Through initial tests, BFAR found the toxins present in both seawater and shellfish meat beyond the regulatory limit, said regional director Juan Albaladejo in a phone interview on Monday.

The maximum regulatory limit of toxins is 60 micrograms for every 100 grams of shellfish meat. Above that, the government strictly prohibits shellfish harvesting in affected areas.

Albaladejo said the prevailing weather condition in Eastern Visayas contributed to the recurring red tide phenomenon in these bays.

“Long dry out period then sudden downpour produces a series of upwelling moving the sediments laden with cyst stages of red tide microorganisms and exposing it high densities organic matter causing red blooms,” Albaladejo told the Philippine News Agency (PNA).

“If areas previously have episodes of red tide occurrence, there’s a likelihood that these natural events will recur,” he added.

The red tide phenomenon has been recurring in Cancabato Bay several times this year. Toxins were found in Matarinao Bay on June 25, Carigara Bay on July 14, and Guiuan coastal water on July 21.

To safeguard human lives, the BFAR has issued the red tide alert as precautionary advice to the public to refrain from gathering, selling, and eating all types of shellfish.

The fisheries bureau also banned the trading and consumption of *Acetes* sp. locally known as "alamang" harvested from the bay to avoid possible poisoning.

Local government units are advised to regulate gathering, marketing, and transporting of shellfish in infested areas.

Fish, squid, shrimp, and crab are safe to eat “provided that they are fresh and washed thoroughly and internal organs such as gills and intestines are removed before cooking”, BFAR said.

Red tide is a term used to describe a phenomenon where the water is discolored by high algal biomass or the concentration of algae. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1110142>

'Reclaim what's ours'

Published 7 hours ago on July 28, 2020 12:07 AM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#)



As novel as it can get For his 5th State of the Nation Address, an austere-looking President Rodrigo Duterte faced not a jam-packed Batasang Pambansa, but a future rife with steep challenges brought about by the coronavirus crisis. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF PRESIDENTIAL PHOTOGRAPHERS DIVISION

President Rodrigo Duterte on Monday threatened to shut down and “expropriate” all telecommunication providers if their services would not improve by December.

In his fifth State of the Nation Address (SoNA), the firebrand leader went off script and gave an ultimatum to the duopoly of PLDT and Globe Telecom to improve services by the end of the year.

He vowed to spend the remaining 23 months of his term to ensure good telecom services with the help of the Congress.

“Kindly improve the services before December. I want to call Jesus Christ in Bethlehem, better have that line cleared... If you are not ready to improve, I might just as well close all of you and we revert to the line telephone and I will take that, expropriate to the government,” Duterte said.

“If that’s what you’re going to give us, we are a republic... sovereign country, bear that in mind because the patience of the Filipino people is reaching its limit and I will be the one to articulate the anger of the Filipino people,” he added.

In 2018, Duterte persistently attacked the two telco players that paved the way for the third telco player — Dito Telecommunity.

This was not the first time that the Chief Executive warned a takeover of private utility firms. He previously threatened jail time for “economic saboteurs” against executives of Maynilad and Manila Water, angered by supposed “onerous” provisions in the 1997 water concession agreement.

Pleads for vaccines

In the same speech, President Duterte revealed that he had “pleaded” Chinese President Xi Jinping to prioritize the Philippines in the procurement of COVID-19 vaccines should Beijing develop one. “About four days ago, I made a plea to President Xi Jinping that if they have the vaccine, can they allow us to be one of the first? If it is needed... Or we have to buy it or credit so that we can normalize as fast as possible,” Duterte said.

He has repeatedly vowed to purchase COVID-19 vaccines for Filipinos once they become available, even saying that he is willing to sell some government properties to source out funds.

The government’s task force on COVID-19 recently approved the country’s participation in Gavi COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX), a financing mechanism aimed at encouraging manufacturers to increase the supply of COVID-19 vaccines by giving them incentives.

Death penalty, Bayanihan 2

Meanwhile, the President also reiterated his call for the passage of a law reviving death penalty by lethal injection for those involved in illegal drugs.

Senate President Vicente Sotto III said that the measure has “better chances” in their chamber as the Chief Executive specified crimes under the Dangerous Drug Act.

“We can try again. (Give) another shot at it. Especially now that the President focused only on crimes in (Republic Act) 9165. Better chances,” Sotto told reporters in a text message.

He emphasized that the Senate did not outrightly “junked” the measure reviving the death penalty, saying that it was “simply not interpellated immediately and died with the adjournment of Congress.”

President Duterte also renewed his call to lawmakers to prioritize the passage of the measure granting him special powers for COVID-19 response as well as the second tranche of tax reform package proposed by his administration.

The President appealed to the Congress to approve the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act, saying that it would supplement funds for recovery and response against the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This health emergency stretched the government’s resources to its limits. In response, the Office of the President worked closely with Congress for the quick passage of the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act,” Duterte said.

“I hope that we can get some or the same treatment of clarity, purpose and the fastness to support the passage of the Bayanihan (to Recover as One Act),” he added.

Lawmakers have allocated P140 billion “standby fund” in Bayanihan 2 which would be used for the procurement of COVID-19 testing equipment and necessary materials, as well as emergency subsidy to workers such as the cash-for-work program. The bill also includes P17 billion for assistance to displaced workers and employees and P50 billion for infusion of capital to government financial institutions.

In his speech, President Duterte also called for the approval of the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises Act (CREATE) bill — the revised version of the tax reform package he had certified as urgent — which is touted as the “largest stimulus package” ever in the country for enterprises.

“I call on Congress to fast-track the passage of proposed measures such as the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises or CREATE Act,” Duterte said, which earned applause from the audience.

“This immediately cuts the corporate income levy from the current 30 to 25 percent and gives the government flexibility to grant a combination of fiscal and non-fiscal incentives, among others,” he added.

The other legislation he wants passed are the measures creating departments for overseas Filipino workers and disaster resilience, Boracay Island Authority, National Disease Prevention Authority and the Coconut Farmers’ Trust Fund.

He also reiterated his call to modernize the Bureau of Fire Protection and to approve the National Land Use Act, Nursing Education Act and Reserve Corps and Rural Agricultural Financing System.

Drilon a 'hypocrite'

In the first five minutes of his speech, President Duterte also took a swipe at Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon whom he called "hypocrite."

"In an interview, he (Drilon) arrogantly mentioned among others that oligarchs need not be reached. Then he linked the anti-dynasty system with oligarchy and the topic was my daughter and son. This happened after the (House) committee of franchise voted 70-11 to deny the grant of franchise to ABS-CBN," Duterte said.

No mention of Duque

While President Duterte lauded frontliners battling the pandemic, as well as the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) and the National Task Force on COVID-19, he did not mention Health Secretary Francisco Duque III.

In his speech which ran for nearly two hours, the President also did not mention the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) and its President Ricardo Morales who is now under fire due to allegations of massive corruption in the agency.

The President has called on Congress to pass bills to address future pandemics and concerns of health frontliners.

The Health chief has confronted clamor for his resignation, particularly after he had claimed that the country is experiencing the second wave of infections and it had flattened the COVID curve.

The Office of the Ombudsman is looking into alleged lapses of the Department of Health's handling of the crisis, including supposed delays in the procurement of protective suits for health workers and "confusing and delayed reporting" of coronavirus cases and deaths.

with FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD
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'Resources stretched to limits' — Rody

Published 7 hours ago on July 28, 2020 12:05 AM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#)



President Rodrigo Duterte renewed his call to lawmakers on Monday to prioritize the passage of a measure granting him special powers for COVID-19 response as well as the second tranche of tax reform package proposed by his administration.

During his penultimate State of the Nation Address (SoNA), the President appealed to the Congress to approve the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act, saying that it would supplement funds for recovery and response against the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This health emergency stretched the government's resources to its limits. In response, the Office of the President worked closely with Congress for the quick passage of the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act," Duterte said.

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The bill also includes P17 billion for assistance to displaced workers and employees and P50 billion for infusion of capital to government financial institutions.

The original Bayanihan Law ceased effect in mid-June and the Bayanihan 2 was not passed before the Congress adjourned for a two-month break.

In his speech, President Duterte also called for the approval of the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises Act (CREATE) bill — the revised version of the tax reform package he had certified as urgent — which is touted as the "largest stimulus package" ever in the country for enterprises.

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Duterte admits being 'inutile' in asserting rights in the
TITLE: South China Sea

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July 28, 2020
DATE

Duterte admits being 'inutile' in asserting rights in the South China Sea

Published July 27, 2020, 9:49 PM

by [Argyll Cyrus Geducos](#)

President Duterte admitted that his hands are tied when it comes to asserting the country's right in the disputed islets in the South China Sea because doing so will only start a losing war against China.



Pres. Rodrigo Duterte

In his fifth State of the Nation Address (SONA) on Monday, Duterte asked his critics to "call off" because he cannot afford to go to war against China.

"Now, plenty of critics, both sides, claim about nothing has been done to retake forcefully or physically the South China Sea. Alam mo (You know), unless we are prepared to go to war, I would suggest that you better just call off and treat it as a diplomatic endeavor," he said.

Duterte reiterated that the Philippines is claiming certain areas in the sea but China is in possession of the disputed waters.

"China is claiming it. We are claiming it. China has the arms, we do not have it. So? It's simple as that... China is in possession. So what can we do?" he said.

"We have to go to war and I cannot afford it. Maybe some other president can but I cannot. Inutil ako diyan, sabihin ko sa inyo. And I'm willing to admit it: Talagang inutil ako diyan. Wala akong magawa (I'm useless, I tell you, and I'm willing to admit it: I'm really useless in that part. I cannot do anything)," he added.

The President said that the moment he orders the Marines to Palawan, China's cruise missiles will hit them before they even set sail.

Despite this, President Duterte said the government does not fail in protecting the country's rights in the South China Sea. He said the Philippines is neither beholden nor a pawn to anyone.

"We broaden the boundaries of Philippine diplomacy. We build productive ties with everyone willing to engage us on the basis of equality and mutual respect," he said.

"We redefine our relationships with our most important partners, placing the economy in a far better position to advance our interests in an evolving regional order and emerging global problems," he added.

President Duterte, meanwhile, thumbed down the idea of America building military bases in Subic as it would be a magnet for attack if the United States gets into a shooting war.

"I'll just put on record my thoughts. I have nothing against America, I have nothing against China. But if you put bases here, you double the spectacle of a most destructive... just like Manila in the Second World War. One of the most devastated cities in the world," he said.

"Kaya mag-lagay-lagay ka ng (So if you will put up a) base at this time? This will ensure that a war breaks out because there will be atomic arsenals brought in. This will ensure the extinction of the Filipino race," he added.



TITLE: Duterte admits being 'inutile' in asserting rights in the
South China Sea

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July 28, 2020
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In his SONA in 2019, President Duterte reiterated his stand that he cannot assert the Philippines' rights over the disputed West Philippine Sea as it might spark a war with China.

In August last year, Duterte made his fifth visit to China where he hoped to discuss the 2016 Hague Ruling with Chinese President Xi Jinping. The latter, however, reiterated China's stand that they are not recognizing the ruling.

In an interview with Russian news outlet RT in January this year, the President said the Philippines "might just as well be friendly, improve our commerce, and let time heal" when asked about the disputed waters.

"Tomorrow will take care of itself, [that's] one thing for sure and like any other historical claim, the world is always changing and we did not really do it at the expense of the lives of Filipinos," he said then.

No more queues: Duterte wants paperless government

July 28, 2020

DATE

TITLE: transactions

PAGE 1/ 1/2



“We need to build trust and confidence in online transactions. Stronger protection for online consumers and enabling measures for online businesses are needed through the enactment of an Internet Transactions Act (ITA). This is very good,” President Duterte said in his fifth State of the Nation Address at the Batasan complex in Quezon City.

Video grab from RTVM Youtube channel

No more queues: Duterte wants paperless government transactions

[Christina Mendez](#), [Cecille Suerte Felipe](#) (The Philippine Star) - July 28, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — As thousands of Filipinos turn to online banking and cashless transactions under a so-called new normal, President Duterte last night pitched the need to build trust in the digital divide.

“We need to build trust and confidence in online transactions. Stronger protection for online consumers and enabling measures for online businesses are needed through the enactment of an Internet Transactions Act (ITA). This is very good,” Duterte said in his fifth State of the Nation Address at the Batasan complex in Quezon City.

He said he has directed the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and concerned agencies to push for the immediate approval of the ITA.

“I thus direct the DTI and other relevant [government] agencies to work closely with Congress in ensuring that the provisions of the proposed bill are responsive to the needs of the consumers while promoting the growth of e-commerce in the country,” he said.

He also underscored the need to prime up the economy and support micro, small and medium enterprises.

“The government will intensify its efforts to help businesses, especially our micro, small and medium enterprises or MSMEs, by providing responsive government assistance and services, capitalization and business operations support as we adapt to the next normal,” he said.

Since many businesses were affected by the crisis, Duterte said the DTI, through the Small Business Corporation, set up the P1-billion COVID-19 Assistance to Restart Enterprises or CARES Program to provide zero-interest loans for MSMEs affected by the pandemic.

“We pump-primed the recovery and rehabilitation of MSMEs,” he added.

As of July 10, Duterte said over 2,600 loan applications worth P182.5 million have been approved.

“We are optimistic that this initiative will help our MSMEs stabilize and recover from their losses,” the President said.

As if on cue, Sen. Bong Go has filed a measure that seeks to institutionalize the transition of the government to e-governance in the digital age amid the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Senate Bill 1738 or the E-Governance Act of 2020, the government is mandated to establish an integrated, interconnected and interoperable information and resource-sharing and communications network spanning the entirety of the national and local governments, an internal records management information system, information database and digital portals for the delivery of public services.

“The measure likewise pushes for the digitization of paper-based and other traditional modes of workflows for a more efficient and transparent public service,” Go said, pointing out that “the public will feel that the government is actually and truly at their fingertips.”

Senate President Vicente Sotto III expressed during the opening of the second regular session of the 18th Congress the need for the digitalization of government processes in the country amid the pandemic.

“For as long as the pandemic remains uncontrolled, there will be a need to upgrade and improve the digital highway for support of various communication and support of transactional needs,” Sotto said.

In the explanatory note of the bill, Go said that in an age “where almost everything can be done online and through other digital platforms, the government must harness the power of information and communications technology to better serve its purpose and bring the government closer to the people.”

He noted that the COVID-19 pandemic “highlighted gaps, both foreseen and unforeseen, in the delivery of government services in the country.”

Go admitted that major government social services and programs are being forced to shut down, limiting the public’s accessibility to public services at a time when these are needed most.

“The new normal warrants the government to consider and adopt, in a very radical but pragmatic way, the importance of digital transformation and use of electronic services and platforms to enable the government to do better,” he explained.

Under his proposed measure, the heads of government agencies are mandated to comply with the requirements of the bill, including related standards for all ICT infrastructure, systems, equipment, designs and other technologies promulgated by the Department of Information and Communications Technology.

The DICT will also be mandated to harmonize and coordinate all national ICT plans and initiatives to ensure knowledge, information and resource-sharing, database-building and agency networking linkages among agencies, consistent with e-government objectives.

The bill also provides for the establishment of the Integrated Government Network (IGN), which will act as the primary means for the sharing and communication of resources, information and data on digital and electronic platforms across all of government.

Bong Go: Red tape, korapsyon sa gobyerno pigilin



July 27, 2020 @ 10:50 AM 21 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Inihayag ni Senator Christopher Lawrence “Bong” Go na dapat nang matigil ang red tape at korapsyon sa mga opisina ng gobyerno upang mas maging episyente at produktibo ang pagseserbisyo sa publiko.

Ngunit ayon kay Sen. Go, mangyayari ito kung maisasakatuparan ang ineendorso niyang e-governance platforms o mga electronic na anyo ng pagbibigay ng impormasyon at serbisyo sa mamamayan.

“Having a transparent, efficient and responsive delivery of government services is key to reducing corruption and empowering the people to exact accountability from public servants,” anang senador.

Ipinaliwanag niya na sa pamamagitan ng electronic nature ng e-governance, maihahatid nang tama sa oras, matipid at episyente ang serbisyo sa mga tao.

Mabibigyan din nito ang bawat isa nang maayos na access sa government information nang hindi nadi-delay ang trabaho sa gobyerno.

“Hindi lamang po malaki ang magiging papel ng e-governance na maka-adapt ang bansa sa pagdating ng ‘new normal’, mas mapapabilis din po nito ang mga proseso at transaksyon sa gobyerno towards a ‘better normal’ when it comes to government service delivery,” ani Go.

Dahil dito, sinabi ni Go na mas magiging maluwag ang paghahatid ng serbisyo sa mga tao at mas magiging komportable po ang kanilang mga pang-araw araw na transaksyon sa gobyerno.

Sa tulong aniya ng e-governance, malulutas ang mga isyu gaya ng red tape at katiwalian na resulta ng mabagal na gawain sa mga sangay ng gobyerno.

“Kung may e-governance, mas magiging mabilis ang daloy ng proseso dahil sa paggamit natin ng makabagong teknolohiya. Maiiwasan din ang korapsyon dahil mas magiging transparent ang proseso at mababawasan ang face-to-face transactions,” igiiniit ni Go.

Bukod sa maiiwasan ang face-to-face transactions dahil sa COVID-19, mababawasan din ang personal interaction na madalas nagiging sanhi ng red tape at korapsyon sa gobyerno.

“You will be able to know exactly how the entire process works. You would be able to know the officials who are handling your request, the total amount of time they are spending handling it, and what exactly they are doing—all in real time and in the comforts of their homes,” aniya.

“This, in the long run, will effectively deter public officials from corruption,” idiniin ng mambabatas. **RNT**

President's SoNA must 'inspire' — economists

Published 19 hours ago on July 27, 2020 11:15 AM

By [John Henry Dodson](#)



Jess Varela of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Union Bank chief economist Carlo Asuncion on Monday said that President Rodrigo Duterte must inspire and rally the nation with his fifth State of the Nation Address (SoNA).

A columnist of the *Daily Tribune*, Varela said that the President is in an unenviable position along with the leaders of other countries who must strike a balance between health and wealth in navigating the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Varela and Asuncion were guests in a Zoom interview which served as the opening of the *Tribune* SoNA 2020 special coverage hosted by the paper's advertising and marketing executive Komfie Manalo.

"You cannot put a timeline on a virus. Recovery will be slow and sluggish until there is a vaccine. The challenge is to roll it out so billions of people (can be vaccinated) so we can stimulate economic activities," Asuncion said.

Manalo noted that while malls and other commercial establishments have reopened under a more relaxed quarantine guideline, very few people are going out to shop or eat out.

Varela said that the business sector is looking forward to being inspired by the President's SoNA, especially with the reported appointment of an economic czar and the announcement regarding much-needed pieces of legislation to address COVID-19 and the depressed economy.

He said that it's a very difficult task for any leader since "there is no playbook" that will tell anyone to "do this or do that" in dealing with the virus.

"All countries are on the same boat. How does one navigate during this perilous time requires leadership that inspires," the PCCI official said.

He noted that 52.6 percent of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) have shut down while 12 percent are on limited operations due to the virus and the lockdown that had to be put in place to stem its spread.

In June alone, 100,000 went jobless, bringing the total to 7.3 million unemployed since the start of the year, he said.

Others lined up by the *Daily Tribune* for interviews as part of its SoNA special coverage include former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, COVID-19 frontliner Dr. Brian Cabral and Department of Transportation spokesperson Goddess Libiran.

Former Senator Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito and Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) chairman Edgardo Lacson will be on board to analyze the President's SoNA right after its much-awaited delivery.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/27/presidents-sona-must-inspire-economists/>

No submission of 2021 budget proposal just yet – Malacanang

Published 15 hours ago on July 27, 2020 02:59 PM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#)



President Rodrigo Duterte will not submit to Congress the proposed national budget for 2021 when he delivers his fifth State of the Nation Address (SONA) on Monday afternoon, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said.

In a text message to the Daily Tribune, Budget Secretary Wendel Avisado said the P4.5 trillion spending plan is still undergoing review by the DBM.

Avisado added that a big portion of the budget will be used to fund programs related to health and economy as the nation continues to grapple with the coronavirus pandemic.

“The proposed 2021 national budget will not be submitted today because it’s being finalized for now. But for sure, it will be submitted to Congress on or before 27 August,” he said.

Under the Constitution, the Executive branch has a month to submit the national budget to Congress from the opening of the legislative session.

DBM assistant secretary Rolando Toledo has earlier said the budget ceiling for 2021 has been raised to P4.506 trillion from the previous proposal of P4.335 trillion to provide more funds to address the impact of the health crisis.

The Palace previously bared that President Duterte would discuss “in detail” the country’s recovery plan from COVID-19 which prompted the government to impose large-scale lockdowns.

PHL records 1,657 new Covid cases, total now at 82,040

By [Claudeth Mocon-Ciriaco](#)

July 27, 2020



Health workers conduct random rapid testing for COVID-19 inside a columbarium at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral of Cubao complex in Manila, Philippines, on May 20, 2020. (AP Photo/Aaron Favila)

The Department of Health (DOH) on Monday logged an additional 1,657 infections bringing the total number of Covid-19 cases in the country to 82, 040 based on the total tests done by 59 out of 90 current operational laboratories nationwide.

As of 4 p. m. of July 27, the DOH also reported 359 recoveries. This brings the total number of recoveries to 26,446.

There were 16 deaths recorded. A total of 1,945 have succumbed to the disease.

Of the 16 deaths, 14 (88 percent) happened in July, 1 (6 percent) in June, 1 (6 percent) in May. Deaths were from Region 7 (8 or 50 percent) , National Capital Region (7 or 44 percent), Region 12 (1 or 6 percent).

Sixty-five duplicates were removed from the total case count.

Of these, 23 recovered cases and two deaths have been removed.

Moreover, one case that was previously reported to have died has been validated to be an active case. These numbers undergo constant cleaning and validation.

Meanwhile, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire reminded the public to practice social distancing.

Vergeire gave the reminder after the situation of the local stranded individuals (LSIs) gathered at the Rizal Memorial Stadium in Manila were reported to them

“Nakakalungkot inspite of all our reminders, bagaman meron tayong protocols sa mass gathering pero nangyayari pa rin ito [violation of social distancing],” Vergeire said in a virtual media forum.

She said that when they learned about the situation, the LSIs were already at the area.

“When we saw it, we relayed it immediately to DILG [Department of Interior and Local Government] and other concerned national government agencies para magawan ito ng paraan,” she stressed.

To prevent the same incident to happen, the DOH official said that they will discuss with the concerned agencies the measures that will be taken.

“May pamantayan na. May guidelnes na issued way before. Bawal talaga ang mass gathering,” she said.

Kaso ng COVID-19 sa bansa, lagpas 82K na



July 27, 2020 @ 4:31 PM 15 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Nakapagtala pa ang Department of Health (DOH) ng karagdagang 1,657 na bagong kaso ng coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) ngayong araw ng Lunes, Hulyo 27.

Dahil dito, umabot na sa 82,040 ang kabuuang bilang ng kaso sa bansa.

Ang mga naidagdag na kaso sa kabuuang test na isinagawa ng 59 sa 90 kasalukuyang laboratoryo sa bansa.

Sa kabilang dako naman, nakapagtala rin ang ahensya ng 359 na gumaling sa sakit, kaya naman 26,446 na ang bilang nito sa ngayon.

Ngunit, nakapagtala ang DOH ng 16 na bagong bilang ng mga binawian ng buhay mula sa COVID-19. Bunga nito, sumirit na sa 1,945 ang bilang ng mga namatay mula sa nakahahawang sakit.

Sa 16 na naitalang namatay, 14 (88 porsyento) ang naganap ngayong buwan, 1 (6 porsyento) noong Hunyo at 1 (6 porsyento) rin noong Mayo. Walo o 50 porsyento naman ang nasawi mula sa Region 7, pito o 44 porsyento sa NCR at 1 o 6 porsyento sa Region 12.

Naalis na rin ang 65 duplicates mula sa kabuuang case account. Sa bilang na ito, 23 ang nakarekober at dalawa ang nasawi. Bukod pa rito, isa rin ang naitalang nasawi ngunit napag-alamang aktibong kaso ng sakit.

Sumasailalim sa patuloy na “cleaning at validation” ang datos na ito. **Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden**

140K virus victims by August?

Published 7 hours ago on July 28, 2020 12:05 AM

By [Gabbie Parlade](#)



The University of the Philippines' (UP) Octa Research Group is seeing a continuing rise in the number of COVID-19 victims, expecting the numbers to reach 90,000 by the end of this month and 140,000 in August.

Dr. Guido David, a member of the group, cited the still spiking cases in the National Capital Region (NCR) while those in Cebu have shown a marked decrease.

“They are now flattening the curve in Cebu which means that cases are now mostly in NCR with its increasing trend. But neighboring regions like CALABARZON are also affected,” he said.

David said the stricter health protocols imposed in Cebu had helped stem the spike, saying the NCR should revert to a general community quarantine (GCQ) to help curb the further ballooning of the number of virus victims.

“For now I think that would help (returning to stricter protocols) because we already have strict measures, random testing, localized lockdowns but it doesn't seem like it's working unless the government also has other ideas,” he said.

He also added that the mortality rate has not decreased especially with the two-week delay in the reporting of deaths.

“If we have already peaked, then cases decreased before it rose up again. Then that would be a second wave. But for now cases haven't been declining,” he reiterated.

Concerns are now focused on the hospitals which are now reaching their maximum capacities.

As of 26 July, data from the Department of Health showed that the capacities for ICU, isolation and ward beds are at more than 50 percent with only around more than 40 percent available beds.

with Elmer N. Manuel
@tribunephI_Imer

Ilang LSIs sa Rizal Stadium nakaalis na, nag-iwan ng gabundok na basura

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July 28, 2020
DATE

Ilang LSIs sa Rizal Stadium nakaalis na, nag-iwan ng gabundok na basura

July 27, 2020 @ 5:15 PM 14 hours ago



Manila, Philippines – Nitong nakaraang mga araw ay ikinagulat ng Department of Health maging ng pamahalaang lungsod ng Maynila ang biglaang pagdagsa ng locally stranded individuals (LSIs) sa stadium dahil sa pagbabakasakali na makapagpatest at makauwi na sa kani-kanilang mga probinsya.

Hindi na rin inalintana ng mga LSIs ang malakas na pagbuhos ng ulan kung saan nakalusong na sa tubig baha na hindi alintana ang maaring makuhang sakit tulad ng leptospirosis at maging ang kanilang mga dala-dalang mga bagahe ay nabasa na rin sa ulan.



Ang mga nagpositibo sa rapid test ay muling sasailalim sa confirmatory test o RT-PCR test.

Sakali namang lumabas na postibo sa swab test ang mga LSI ay agad silang dadalhin sa quarantine facility habang papayagan nang makabiyaha kasunod ng assessment ng doktor.

Nasa 3,800 LSIs na rin ang napauwi ng Hatid Tulong program kung saan isinakay ang mga ito sa apat na barko ng Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) patungong Caraga Region.

Ilang LSIs sa Rizal Stadium nakaalis na, nag-iwan ng
gabundok na basura

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Nabatid na umabot sa 8,000 ang mga LSI na dumagsa at nakipagsiksikan sa Rizal Memorial Stadium.

Una na ring sinabi ni Health Usec Maria Rosario Vergeire na ikinalulungkot ng Kagawaran ang biglaang pagdagsa ng mga LSI sa Rizal Stadium dahil hindi na aniya nasunod ang health protocols lalo na ang social distancing na maaring makapagdulot ng pagkahawa-hawa sa COVID-19. Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden/Crismon Heramis

Source: https://remate.ph/ilang-lsis-sa-rizal-stadium-nakaalis-na-nag-iwan-ng-gabundok-na-basura/?fbclid=IwAR2PIA2QY0Ph1edsc4fOL6dexD-iqvfBbIqI7GOE_PWWQ1LxmjjygWLeDaA

MAY COVID, PATAAS NANG PATAAS; PATAY, PABABA-PATAAS AT ANG SONA

July 27, 2020 @ 9:09 AM 22 hours ago



Ngayong araw isasagawa ang ika-5 State of the Nation Address ni Pangulong Rodrigo 'Digong' Duterte.

Tiyak na tatalakayin ni Pang. Digong ang coronavirus disease-19 dahil higit na nakaperhuwisyo ito sa buong bansa kaysa nakatulong.

Aasahan natin na isa sa mga pinakamahalagang mensahe nito ang kooperasyon ng buong bayan laban sa giyera at huwag ipabalikat ang lahat ng responsibilidad sa pamahalaan.

Tama lang naman na ito ang mangyari, lalo na kung ating iisipin na para naman sa kabutihan nating lahat ang ganitong sistema sa giyera laban sa pandemya.

MASAMANG KALAGAYAN

Sa kalagitnaan ng buwang ito, mga Bro, naglaro ang ranggo ng mahal kong Pinas sa pwestong pang-36 sa 215 bansa at teritoryo sa rami ng may COVID-19.

Sa oras na tinitipa natin ito, lumala ang ating kalagayan dahil umakyat na tayo sa pang-28 na pwesto at nasa pang-28 rin ang pwesto natin sa rami ng patay.

Sa 10 bansa na bumubuo ng South East Asia, dati tayong pangatlo sa Indonesia at Singapore sa rami ng impeksyon, ngunit simula sa kalagitnaan ng Hulyo, naungusan na natin ang Singapore at hinahabol na natin ang Indonesia na nangunguna pa rin sa rami ng may impeksyon at patay.

Heto ang mga rekord ngayon:

Indonesia – may impeksyon, 98,778; patay, 47,81; impeksyon araw-araw, nasa 1,500; gumaling, 56,655;

Pilipinas – may impeksyon, 80,448; patay, 1,932; impeksyon araw-araw, nasa 2,000; gumaling, 26,110 at

Singapore – may impeksyon, 50,369; patay – 27 at ilang araw nang walang patay; gumaling, 45,521.

Kung mananatiling nasa 1,500 araw-araw ang may impeksyon sa Indonesia at may 2,000 na impeksyon sa Pilipinas, hindi magtatagal, papantay na tayo sa una.

At dahil sa pagdami ng may impeksyon, hindi magtatagal, mahahabol din natin ang Indonesia sa rami ng patay.

Heto ang nakalulungkot: mahigit kalahati ng may impeksyon sa Indonesia ang gumaling na pero sa Pilipinas, nasa 25 porsyento lamang habang nasa 90 porsyento ang gumaling sa Singapore.

MGA KATANUNGAN AT KASAGUTAN

Isang mahalagang tanong: Paano nakakamit ng mga bansang Indonesia at Singapore ang malaking bilang ng gumagaling?

Isa pang mahalagang tanong: Ano ang nangyayari at pinakamabilis kumalat ang COVID-19 sa Pinas kumpara sa Indonesia at Singapore?

Sa unang tanong, hindi kaya dahil sa mahigpit na pagtutulungan ng mga pamahalaan ng Indonesia at Singapore at kani-kanilang mga mamamayan kaya marami ang gumagaling?

Sa ikalawang tanong, hindi kaya dahil sa kakulangan ng pagtutulungan ng pamahalaan at mamamayan ng Pinas ang dahilan ng paglala ng pandemya?

Hindi rin natin isinasantabi ang pag-uwi ng mga nadiskaril na overseas Filipino worker dahil klarong marami sa mga ito ang may dalang sakit at pagbubukas din ng ekonomiya ng Pinas para dumami ang kontak at pagsasama-sama ng mga Pinoy sa trabaho, transportasyon at iba pa.

Kung ano ang mga naiisip nating dahilan para lumalala ang ating kalagayan, hindi lang basta tayo mag-isip kundi kumilos at lumahok din nang aktibo sa giyera rito.

Dapat kumilos at lumahok din tayo nang aktibo sa mga programang pampabilis ng pagdami ng gumagaling sa sakit.

Para malinaw, isang malaking susi sa mga usaping ito ang paninindigang hindi tayo magtatagumpay hangga't ipinaubaya natin lahat sa pamahalaan ang pakikibaka sa pandemya.

Kailangan nating mamamayan ang paglahok sa giyera laban dito.

MGA BATIKUSERO

Kung walang magaganap na matindi ukol sa COVID-19 bago magkaroon ng SONA, inaasahang gaganapin ito sa loob ng Kamara.

At kung hindi naman pupwede dahil sa pagdami ng mga kinakapitan ng sakit mismo sa Kamara, maaaring sa Malakanyang gaganapin ang okasyon.

Maaari ring daanin ang SONA sa pamamagitan ng telebisyon, radio, social media at teknolohiya kung malaki ang banta ng pandemya at seguridad ng Pangulo at mga dadalo nang pisikal.

Ipagpalagay na nating gaganapin ang Kamara dakong alas-3:00 ng hapon sa Kamara, wala pang 100 katao ang papayagang lumahok sa loob ng bulwagan nito, kasama ang ilang imbitadong kinatawan ng ibang bansa, para matiyak ang social distancing at mabawasan ang banta ng mabilis at malawakang hawaan ng sakit.

Dati-rati, siksikan ang dumadalo na halos 400 na kongresman at senador at pwera pa ang kani-kanilang mga mister at misis.

Ngayon naman, bilang karagdagang patakaran, nagkaisa ang lokal na pamahalaan ng Quezon City at pambansang pamahalaan sa pagbabawal ng anomang rali sa kalsada, kabilang na ang Commonwealth Avenue na dating isinasara sa rami ng mga raliyista na pro at anti-administrasyon.

Kaugnay nito, gustong ipilit ng mga anti-administrasyon ang kagustuhan nilang mag-rally sa nasabing kalsada sa kabila ng pagpapakita ng pamahalaan ng disiplina sa paglimita ng dadalo sa SONA.

Iginigiit nila ang karapatan umano nila na maghayag ng damdamin at higit pa, ang bumatikos nang walang katapusan at walang ibang lugar umano na pinakamaganda kundi sa mga lansangan isagawa ang mga ito.

Okey lang ba na gawin ito sa gitna ng pandemya na ipinagbabawal ang anomang maramihang pagtitipon upang malabanan ang lumalalang hawaan sa sakit na walang lunas at nakamamatay, hindi lang sa tao kundi maging sa ekonomiya ng bansa at mamamayan?

WALANG HANGGANG PANAWAGAN

Kung iisipin, ilang saglit lang ang oras ng SONA kumpara sa pitong buwan nang paghihirap natin sa ilalim ng pandemya.

Ang katotohanan, matapos ang SONA, babalik tayo sa normal na buhay na naging new normal o abnormal.

Kaya, hangga't walang nagagawang panlunas o bakuna, walang hanggan din tayong nananawagan para sa pagsunod ng lahat sa mga batas at patakaran sa giyera sa COVID-19.

Dapat nating isapuso at isagawa ang mga ito sa loob at labas ng ating mga tahanan, lugar ng trabaho o opisina, transportasyon at iba pa.

Lalo ngayong nagbubukas na ang mga oportunidad para tayo makapaghanapbuhay at maka-surbayb sa krisis o paghihirap sa pamamagitan ng paglabas sa ating mga tahanan.

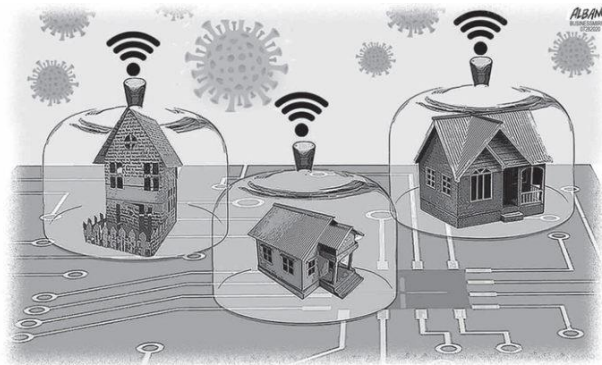
Hindi tayo dapat makalimot kahit sa mga simpleng batas at patakaran gaya ng pagsusuot ng face mask, pagsunod sa social distancing, pagiging malinis sa kamay at katawan hanggang sa pakikipagtulungan sa pagbabantay sa mga may dala ng sakit at iba pa.

Kaya nating igupo ang COVID-19 sa mahigpit na pagsunod sa mga batas at patakaran at pagtutulungan ng mga mamamayan at pamahalaan sa giyera sa sakit sa lahat ng mga barangay at sa buong bansa.

WFH

By [BusinessMirror Editorial](#)

July 28, 2020



More than a few companies have continued to let their staff work-from-home (WFH) even after quarantine measures have been relaxed in Metro Manila and other areas. Some businesses are even thinking of adopting this arrangement for good or at least for some time, a commendable policy as the number of Covid-19 cases continues to surge in the country.

Ayala Corp. Chief Executive Officer Jaime Zobel de Ayala told congressmen during a virtual hearing of the House of Representatives Committee on Economic Affairs last week that some 35 percent to 38 percent of the Ayala Group's work force are now on WFH arrangements.

"I think we're going to have to shift and take health issues into account and particularly, if a vaccine is not found in the near future, we will have to take people's health much more formally into account," Zobel said. "We're gonna think it through. Definitely, I can say that there will be a shift in the way we work, and working from home will become far more acceptable and much more of the norm than in the past."

"One can say that the shift is there. We should accept it, we should embrace it, and all of us in the sectors that can provide services particularly on technology to make life easier for everyone should really ramp up our investments in those areas and be able to give the Filipino consumer and employer the tools that they need to be able to do that," he said.

A law institutionalizing work-from-home arrangements in the private sector was enacted back in December 2018, officially known as the Telecommuting Act or Republic Act 11165.

The law says WFH employees should have compensable work hours and workloads, a minimum number of work hours, overtime pay and night shift differential, rest days and holidays, leave entitlements and career development opportunities similar to those who work in offices or in the traditional setup.

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry recently asked the government to allow the full operations of firms nationwide. While easing restrictions on businesses will help rev up our nation's economic engine, a top priority of employers should always be the health and safety of their employees, as well as their customers, partners and the communities where they operate.

As we slowly reopen the economy, and workers who are not able to do their jobs remotely are asked to return to work, it is also important to stress that employers are required to make sure that workplaces are safe and they should do everything to help their workers feel safe coming back to work.

Senate President Vicente Sotto III last week filed a bill seeking to protect employers from being sued by workers who would contract Covid-19 while on duty. This measure, however, even if enacted, does not excuse them from implementing the safety protocols that are mandated by the government to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in workplaces.

The safety of workers cannot be overemphasized enough since it is entirely possible that many workers have already contracted the virus while doing their duties and many have also died.

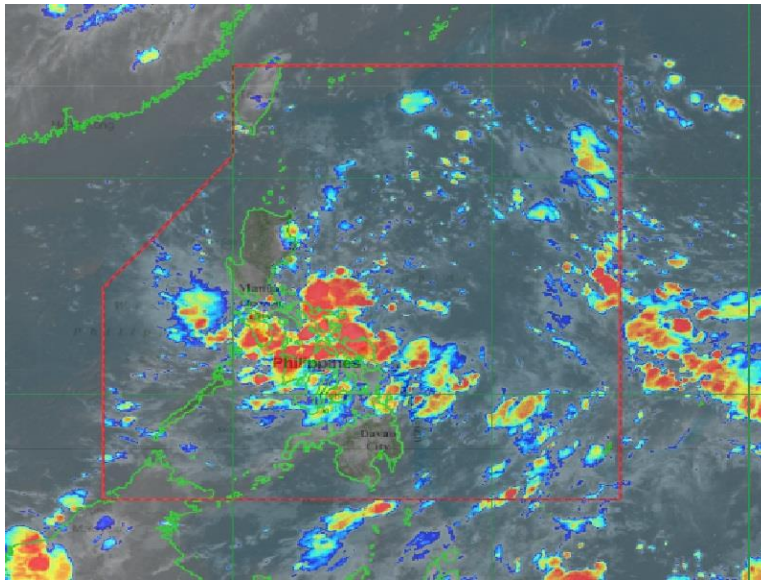
Last week, we wrote an editorial about our nurses and health-care personnel who have contracted Covid-19, comprising about 14 percent of the total cases in the country, which is fast approaching 85,000. In a nutshell, we said that without adequate and appropriate PPEs for frontline health-care workers, they will get sick.

Even in Sotto's home turf in the Senate, at least 20 cases of Covid-19 infection have already been recorded among Senate employees, and three have died—four if you include the unreported death of the staff of a senator who is currently in hot water for breaching quarantine protocols. Meanwhile, the House of Representatives last week confirmed the third Covid-19 death among its 18 infected employees.

The government and private employers should exert a lot more effort to protect their workers. They need stronger policies targeting zero infections and deaths in workplaces. If they cannot ensure the safety of their workers then they should at least explore and embrace flexible workplace arrangements in their day-to-day operations, allowing as many of their employees as possible to work from home to prevent the virus from spreading at workplaces.

Isang LPA, binabantayan ng PAGASA sa loob ng bansa – PAGASA

By Angellic Jordan July 27, 2020 - 06:00 PM



Inihayag ng PAGASA na may isang low pressure area (LPA) na binabantayan sa loob ng bansa.

Sa weather update, sinabi ni PAGASA weather specialist Benison Estareja na nabuo ang LPA sa loob ng Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) bandang 2:00 ng hapon.

Huling namataan ang LPA sa layong 410 kilometers sa Silangang bahagi ng Virac, Catanduanes.

Asahan aniyang unti-unting lalapit ang LPA sa bahagi ng Southern Luzon sa mga susunod na araw.

Sa susunod na 24 oras, maliit pa aniya ang tsansa na mag-develop ito at maging bagyo.

Sinabi pa ni Estareja na hindi nakapaloob ang LPA sa Intertropical Convergence Zone o ITCZ.

Mas mababa aniya ang ITCZ sa bansa at nakakaapekto sa bahagi ng Mindanao.

Asahan naman aniya na sa mga susunod na araw ay unti-unting lalayo ang ITCZ sa bansa.

Dagdag pa nito, asahang makararanas ng kalat-kalat na pag-ulan at thunderstorms sa mga susunod na oras.

Expand conserved areas to boost global economy

TITLE: ravaged by Covid-19, says report

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Expand conserved areas to boost global economy ravaged by Covid-19, says report

Protecting 30 per cent of the world's lands and oceans would cost US\$140 billion annually, with the target reachable by 2030, according to a study by an international team of scientists and economists released this month.



Green rice terraces amid a rainforest in Sulawesi Selatan, Indonesia. Image: [Club Med-Discover a New World, CC BY-SA 2.0](#)

By Chris Arsenault, Mongabay.com

July 27, 2020

As Covid-19 wreaks havoc on the world's people and the global economy, a group of international researchers is looking to the future. Their ground-breaking work underscores the immense economic benefits of expanding global protected areas to include 30 per cent of the world's land and oceans in order to accelerate recovery from the pandemic.

The report, authored by more than 100 economists and environmentalists for the advocacy group Campaign for Nature and published earlier this month, claims to be the first analysis ever to measure the economic benefits and costs of protecting 30 per cent of the planet's land and seas.

The UN Convention on Biological Diversity included this 30 per cent protected area goal as part of its ten-year conservation strategy which is expected to be ratified by 196 countries at an international summit in Kunming, China, next year.

Governments, non-profits and other institutions are currently spending about \$24 billion annually on protected areas. This dollar amount would need to be boosted to roughly \$140 billion to meet the 30 per cent goal by 2030, say the researchers. Currently, about 15 per cent of the world's land and 7 per cent of oceans have some degree of protection, the report revealed.

This major boost in funding would be used to better maintain and manage existing protected areas, and in some cases, to support national governments in the purchase of land from private owners in order to conserve it, said Enric Sala, one of the paper's coauthors and an Explorer in Residence at the National Geographic Society.

"This pandemic has shown the costs of our [current] relationship with nature," Sala told Mongabay, referencing how the coronavirus is thought to have spread to humans from bats in China.

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/748673/duterte-says-he-asked-xi-jinping-to-allow->

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“What is the cost of this pandemic?” Sala asked. “The latest IMF estimates are [\\$9 trillion](#) for the next two years. How much does it cost to protect 30 per cent of the planet? \$140 billion annually. Prevention is cheaper than responding to a crisis.”

The [UN and World Health Organization and WWF International](#) agree that maintaining our current course, the nearly wholesale destruction of nature — obliterating wildlands and increasing proximity between wildlife and humans — will almost certainly bring more pandemics in future if action isn’t taken now.

This pandemic has shown the costs of our [current] relationship with nature.
Enric Sala, explorer-in-residence, National Geographic Society

But the benefits of 30 per cent conservation extend beyond disease prevention. Increasing land and marine protected areas would boost ecotourism, while allowing declining fish stocks to regenerate, Sala said. Economic gains made by fisheries, tourism and other sectors would generate \$250 billion in extra economic activity, compared to today, the researchers estimate.

Increasing the amount of protected land would also generate enhanced ecosystem services related to climate change mitigation, soil conservation, protection from floods and cleaner water, the report says. The value of these ecosystem services compared to today’s status quo would come to about \$350 billion annually.

When both the economic and ecosystem service benefits of expanding protected areas are totaled, the paper said the gains resulting from meeting the 30 per cent target outweigh the costs by a ratio of at least five-to-one.

The costs of expanding protected areas represent [less than one-third](#) of the amount that governments spend on subsidies to various activities that destroy nature, such as oil extraction, Sala noted. The total cost of protecting 30 per cent represents 0.16 per cent of global GDP, he added, requiring less investment than global consumers spend annually on video games.

“Increasing nature protection is sound policy for governments juggling multiple interests,” Cambridge University conservation researcher Anthony Waldron, the paper’s lead author, said in a statement. “You cannot put a price tag on nature — but the economic numbers point to [the urgent need for] its protection.”

Some countries have already met or exceeded the 30 per cent target, including Bolivia, Germany, Namibia, Poland, Tanzania, Venezuela and Zambia, according to [World Bank data](#). But other nations have work to do, or are going in the wrong direction. Brazil, for example, guardian of the world’s largest remaining rainforest, has nearly achieved the target with 29.4 per cent of its lands considered protected, according to 2018 World Bank data. However, escalating deforestation there since January 2019 under the government of President Jair Bolsonaro has undermined conservation in the country.

In fact, [data released](#) by Brazil’s National Institute for Space Research (INPE) found that deforestation in the Amazon has increased 89 per cent compared to last year under Bolsonaro. INPE’s satellite-based deforestation alert system detected 1,034 square kilometers of forest clearing during June 2020 alone. The extent of deforestation over the past year is the highest recorded since INPE started releasing monthly statistics in 2007.

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And things could get a lot worse, fast. Earlier this year, the Bolsonaro administration [opened 9.8 million hectares \(37,830 square miles\) of traditional lands](#) claimed by Indigenous peoples to loggers, cattle ranchers, soy growers, and other outsiders.

Peter Veit, who directs the land rights programme at the Washington-based World Resources Institute and wasn't involved in producing the recent paper, said the report's broad conclusions on the value of expanding protected areas are laudable.

But he isn't convinced traditional protected areas administered by governments are the most cost-effective approach for meeting the 30 per cent UN conservation goal by 2030. "I have seen estimates on what it costs to manage protected areas over the long term... those costs are quite high," Veit told Mongabay. "From a cost effectiveness perspective, it is much better to support Indigenous people than to create protected areas governments have to manage at high costs."

Veit recommends that conservation groups work in tandem with Indigenous communities to improve formal recognition and titling of their traditional territories. "It is much less expensive for indigenous people to manage their lands."

He also questioned elements of the report's economic analysis on the financial benefits of expanded protected areas. "Not every place can become a world class ecotourism site," he noted.

But despite ongoing debate over the effectiveness of different types of conservation policies and practices, there is little disagreement on the benefits protected areas offer for human health. A 2019 [study](#) by Australian researchers published in the journal *Nature Communications* estimated the economic value of protected areas around the globe, based solely on improved mental health for visitors — the total came to \$6 trillion annually.

"The cost of creating a resilient, planetary safety net for all life on earth barely even registers as a statistical rounding error," Jamison Ervin, the manager for the Global Programme on Nature for Development, UN Development Programme, said in a statement following the report's release.

"The benefits to humanity are incalculable, and the cost of inaction is unthinkable," concluded Ervin.

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International team of scientists to preserve Lake Titicaca giant frog

Published July 27, 2020, 6:38 AM

by [Agence France-Presse](#)

An international team of scientific institutions will join forces to preserve the future of the Lake Titicaca giant frog, an endangered species, Bolivia's natural history museum said.



The Lake Titicaca water frog is the world's largest aquatic amphibian, growing up to six inches long (145 millimeters) (AFP Photo/Carlos MANDUJANO)

“In a coordinated effort, a cross-border team has been formed for the conservation and study of the emblematic Titicaca water frog (*Telmatobius culeus*) with the vision for the species' long-term future,” the La Paz-based Museum of Natural History said in a statement sent to AFP.

The team is made up of organizations from several countries, including Bolivia's Natural History Museum “Alcide d'Orbigny,” Peru's Cayetano Heredia University and environmental NGO NaturalWay, the Denver Zoo in Colorado and the Zoology Museum at the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador.

The mission also has the backing of the United Nations and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The Lake Titicaca water frog is the world's largest aquatic amphibian, growing up to six inches long (145 millimeters). It can even grow as long as 20 inches, according to a 1970 report by legendary French scientist Jacques Yves Cousteau.

The frog lives at depths of up to 109 yards (100 meters).

It is characterized by its soft, loose skin that resembles a sack with detached folds, allowing it to breathe in the water of Lake Titicaca, which are more than two miles (3,800 meters) above sea level, as well as some surrounding waters in La Paz and Puno, Peru.

The water frog is considered critically endangered, threatened by the overexploitation of the species for culinary purposes, ritual uses and the use of its skin for leather production.

It is also threatened by high levels of water pollution in Lake Titicaca, which has produced infectious diseases that negatively affect amphibian populations.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/27/international-team-of-scientists-to-preserve-lake-titicaca-giant-frog/>

WHO to reexamine COVID-19 emergency status, six months on

Published 9 hours ago on July 27, 2020 09:55 PM

By [Agence France-Presse](#)



WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters that the UN health body's emergency committee would convene to reexamine the declaration that the outbreak constituted a "public health emergency of international concern".

A so-called PHEIC declaration, which marks the highest level of alarm under international health rules, must be reevaluated every six months.

Prior to COVID-19, WHO had only made such declarations five times since the International Health Regulations changed in 2007, for swine flu, polio, Zika, and twice for Ebola outbreaks in Africa.

Of those, the current pandemic "is easily the most severe," Tedros said.

There is little doubt that the emergency committee will consider that the pandemic still constitutes a global public health emergency, but it could potentially alter some of its recommendations on how the WHO and the world should respond.

The situation has shifted dramatically since the declaration was made.

"When I declared a public health emergency of international concern on the 30th of January, ... there were less than 100 cases outside of China, and no deaths," Tedros said.

But since then, the case numbers have soared past 16 million, with close to 650,000 deaths around the world.

"COVID-19 has changed our world. It has brought people, communities, and nations together, and driven them apart," Tedros said.

The WHO has faced criticism from certain quarters for its response, with some charging it acted too slowly — something the organization itself strenuously denies.

"Over the past six months, WHO has worked tirelessly to support countries to prepare for and respond to this virus," Tedros said.

"I am immensely proud of our organization, WHO, and its incredible people and their efforts."

Tedros himself has for months faced relentless attacks from US President Donald Trump, who has accused WHO of being a "puppet of China".

Earlier this month Trump made good on his threat to begin withdrawing the US — traditionally WHO's largest donor — from the organization.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/07/27/who-to-reexamine-covid-19-emergency-status-six-months-on/>