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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service

DENR to build three more solar-powered sewage treatment plants

August 3, 2020 | 7:10 pm



DENR SECRETARY ROY A. CIMATU

THREE ADDITIONAL solar-powered sewage treatment plants will be built along major river systems in Metro Manila as part of the government's efforts to rehabilitate Manila Bay, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

Environment Secretary Roy A. Cimatu said treatment plants will be installed at the Libertad outfall on the Parañaque River, the Tullahan-Tinajeros River in northern Metro Manila, and the Las Piñas-Zapote River.

"The sewage treatment plant is a big step forward to making Manila Bay safe again for swimming, bathing, boating, fishing and other forms of contact recreation," Mr. Cimatu said.

The DENR and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority inaugurated the first solar-powered sewage treatment plant in Manila Bay on July 30. It is capable of treating 500,000 liters of wastewater daily.

Mr. Cimatu said the treatment plant will ensure no untreated wastewater from the drainage outfalls of Padre Faura, Remedios, and Estero de San Antonio Abad reach Manila Bay.

"The treated water will be used for watering plants along Roxas Boulevard, maintenance of two solar-powered comfort rooms to be constructed at the bay walk area, and fire trucks of the cities of Manila and Pasay," Mr. Cimatu said.

Meanwhile, untreated water from the plant will be recycled and placed in an underground tank capable of storing 2 million liters of wastewater.

In 2019, the DENR started its Manila Bay rehabilitation project, with Mr. Cimatu designated chairman of the Manila Bay Task Force.

President Rodrigo R. Duterte has allocated P43 billion for the Manila Bay rehabilitation project over a three-year timetable. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/denr-to-build-three-more-solar-powered-sewage-treatment-plants/>

3 pang solar-powered STPs para sa Manila bay

August 04, 2020

TITLE: itatayo ng DENR

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3 pang solar-powered STPs para sa Manila Bay itatayo ng DENR



August 3, 2020 @ 8:34 AM 23 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Upang patuloy na maisagawa ang rehabilitasyon sa Manila Bay magdaragdag pa ng tatlong solar-powered sewage treatment plants (STPs) sa Metro Manila ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) matapos ang pagpapasinaya sa nauna na inilagay sa Roxas Boulevard sa Manila noong Hulyo 30.

Ayon kay DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, ang kahalintulad na solar-powered STPs ay ilalagay sa mga ilog na dumadaloy sa Manila Bay at ito ay ang Libertad sa Paranaque River, Tullahan-Tinejeros River at Las Pinas-Zapote River.

“The STP is a big step forward to making Manila Bay safe again for swimming, bathing, boating, fishing and other forms of contact recreation,” sabi pa ni Cimatu na punong abala sa rehabilitasyon sa makasaysayang Manila Bay.

Inihayag ito ni Cimatu matapos ang inagurasyon sa unang Manila Bay solar-powered STP na kayang magsala ng 500,000 litro ng wastewater kada araw.

Kasama din sa programa si Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chairman Danilo Lim.

Sinabi pa ng DENR chief, ang proyektong ito ay kayang sumala ng “untreated wastewater” mula sa tatlong daluyan ng tubig tulad ng Padre Faura, Remedios at Estero de San Antonio de Abad na dumadaloy patungo sa Manila Bay.

Dagdag pa ni Cimatu, ang “untreated water” ay ire-recycle at maiimbak sa underground tank na may kapasidad na dalawang milyong litro.

Ayon pa sa DENR ang maiimbak na tubig ay gagamiting pandilig sa mga halaman sa kahabaan ng Roxas Boulevard, pagmamantine sa dalawang solar-powered na palikuran na itatayo sa kahabaan ng bay walk area at magagamit din ng mga fire trucks mula sa Manila at Pasay.

Ang pagtatayo ng STPs ay isa lamang sa mga gagawing “geo-engineering interventions” para sa paglilinis ng Manila Bay.

Magugunitang noong Enero 2019 nang ilunsad ng DENR ang rehabilitasyon na tinawag na, “Battle for Manila Bay” kung saan nagsagawa ng malawakang paglilinis sa kahabaan ng Roxas Boulevard na dinaluhan ng mahigit 10,000 katao.

3 pang solar-p[owered STPs para sa Manila bay

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Makalipas ang isang buwan ay binuo ni Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte ang Manila Bay Task Force at itinalaga si Cimatú bilang punong-abala upang pabilisin ang pagtutulungan ng mga ahensiya ng pamahalaan na mapanumbalik ang heavily polluted bay sa dati nitong kaanyuan.

Naglaan din ang Pangulo ng P43 bilyon para sa implementasyon ng rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay sa loob ng tatlong taon kung saan ay 13 ahensiya ng gobyerno ang naatasan na magtulong-tulong para sa misyong ito.

Target ng gobyerno na maibalik sa dating ganda ang makasaysayang baybayin kung saan ay puwede na muli itong paglanguyan ayon sa ipinag-uutos ng “continuing mandamus” ng Korte Suprema. **Santi Celario**

Manila Bay clean-up

August 03, 2020

People's Tonight

WITH less than two years left before the end of the Duterte administration, it's time to step up the pressure on concerned government authorities to hasten the clean-up of the sun-kissed Manila Bay.

A natural harbor with an area of more than 1,994 square kilometers, the ancient but historic Manila Bay is a nice place to relax in the evening and enjoy its breathtaking sunset

Dubbed the "Battle for Manila Bay," the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), with 10,000 volunteers, launched the three-year, P43-billion rehabilitation project in January 2019.

A month later, President Duterte formed the Manila Bay Task Force (MBTF) and designated DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, a former chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, as its chairman.

As chairman of the 13-member task force, the highly-decorated four-star military general is mandated to hasten government efforts to restore the now heavily-polluted Manila Bay to its former glory.

Last week, the DENR installed the first solar-powered sewage treatment plant (STP) on Roxas Boulevard in Manila as part of the national government's highly-ambitious program to clean the bay.

Cimatu said three more STPs would be set up on major river systems that drain into the bay, namely the Tullahan-Tinajeros River, the Las Pinas-Zapote River and the Libertad outfall in Paranaque River.

The project is seen to ensure that no untreated wastewater from the three drainage outfalls – Padre Faura, Remedios and Estero de San Antonio Abad – flow into Manila Bay.

Under the project, the untreated water from the STP will be recycled and stored in an underground tank with a capacity of two million liters.

The treated water will be used for watering plants along Roxas Boulevard, maintenance of two solar-powered comfort rooms at the bay walk area, and fire trucks of Manila and Pasay City.

Why should the government spend multi-billion-pesos of the people's hard-earned money for cleaning Manila Bay?

It's because Filipinos, now numbering more than 100 million people, want to restore the historic body of water to a level fit for swimming, bathing, boating and fishing like in the good old days.

Cease and desist order ng DENR-EMB sa Calmaba

TITLE: Sanitary Landfill

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CEASE AND DESIST ORDER NG DENR-EMB SA CALAMBA SANITARY LANDFILL



August 3, 2020 @ 12:24 PM 18 hours ago

Ipinasara ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang sanitary landfill sa Calamba, Laguna, dahil sa kabiguan ng operator nito na mag-comply sa terms at conditions na nakasaad sa environmental compliance certificate (ECC) nito.

Isang cease and desist order (CDO) ang inihain ng DENR-Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) noong Hulyo 24 sa 6.6 na ektarya ng sanitary landfill facility (SLF) na pinatatakbo ng S.B. Hain Enterprises and General Services, Inc., sa Barangay Kay-Anlog.

Ayon kay DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns Benny D. Antiporda, ang CDO ay inisyu sa SLF bunsod ng maraming paglabag sa terms at conditions na nakasaad sa ECC nito na inisyu ng EMB.

“We cannot allow the landfill and its operator to continuously harm the environment. The Calamba SLF will remain closed until violations are corrected,” pagdiriin ni Antiporda.

Ang CDO na nilagdaan ni Acting EMB Director William Cuñado ay alinsunod sa ulat na isinumite ng team ng EMB inspector kung saan natagpuan nila na ang SLF ay nagkaroon ng siyam na paglabag mula sa 26 na conditions sa ECC nito matapos ang isinagawang inspeksyon sa pasilidad noong Hulyo 13.

Ang Calamba facility ay nag-o-operate bilang Category 4 SLF, ang pinakamataas na kategorya ng sanitary landfill at pinakamalaki ang kapasidad kung saan maaari itong makatanggap ng residual wastes na mababa o hanggang 250 metriko tonelada kada araw.

Dahil dito, ito ay pinapayagang maglagay ng hanggang limang unit ng landfill cells na kokonekta sa leachate collection at treatment pond.

Subalit napag-alaman ng EMB na ang Calamba landfill ay hindi naglagay ng isang working drainage at leachate treatment facility.

Nadiskubre rin ng EMB ang kawalan ng monitoring report para sa treated liquid waste ng SLF na siyang magsisiguro ng compliance nito sa DENR effluent standards.

Wala ring lining ang landfill area ng kinakailangang synthetic material na tinatawag na “high density polyethylene”, na siyang makatutulong upang mapigilan ang katas na tumagas sa lupa at maagapan ang groundwater contamination.

Cease and desist order ng DENR-EMB sa Calmaba

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Kasabay nito, naobserbahan din ng EMB na ang mga basura ay naka-expose at walang takip, isang paglabag sa Condition No. 22 ng ECC na nangangailangan ng hindi bababa sa anim na pulgadang lupa ang kailangang itapon sa mga nakabuyangyang na basura sa pagtatapos ng bawat araw.

Nagsimula ang Calamba facility bilang Category 1 SLF nang naisyuhan ito ng ECC noong Hulyo 30, 2018, na sumasaklaw sa 1.2 ektarya at may kakayanang magproseso ng 15 metrikong tonelada ng basura kada araw.

Noong Nobyembre 18, 2019, ito ay naitaas sa Category 4 na mayroong mas mahigpit na mga kondisyon sa ECC nito.

DENR, 28 firms tie up to revive Cebu river

By [Eireene Jairee Gomez](#)

August 4, 2020

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) recently secured the commitment of 28 private companies and organizations to revive the heavily silted Mahiga River in Cebu province.

A memorandum of agreement (MoA) was signed by Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu with Mayors Edgardo Labella of Cebu City and Jonas Cortes of Mandaue City as well as representatives of companies and organizations taking part in the rehabilitation efforts.

The MoA was also signed by the chairmen of six barangay (villages) that the 9.1-km river traverses, namely, Apas, Banilad (Cebu City), Kasambangan, Banilad (Mandaue City), Mabolo and Subangdako.

Through the DENR's Adopt-an-Estero (Creek)/Waterbody Program, the parties will develop a comprehensive rehabilitation program to reduce the pollution load of the Mahiga River and its tributaries.

“Mahiga River Creek is a critical waterway in the city and its current condition requires intensified actions from all stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of all rehabilitation measures,” Director Lormelyn Claudio of the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau in Region 7 said.

According to Claudio, the river's deterioration had reached the point where it had posed a threat to the safety and health of the communities along its banks, and which the residents and the government could no longer address effectively without help from the private sector.

She noted that the DENR had sought assistance and commitment from donor-partners and private entities and organizations as part of their corporate social responsibility programs for the provision of interventions to improve solid, hazardous and wastewater management of the river, and for the surface clean-up of specific segments.

The stakeholders would also assist in the information, education and communication campaign, and community mobilization activities of the DENR and local government units (LGUs) to foster harmonious relations with the community and solicit their participation, cooperation and support for the program, among others, Claudio said.

Meanwhile, the Cebu LGUs, in collaboration with the Environmental Management Bureau 7, shall ensure hazardous-waste management pursuant to existing environmental laws at the barangay level.

The DENR shall intensify the monitoring of industrial and commercial establishments, and undertake regular water quality monitoring of select points within Mahiga River and its tributaries to determine improvements in water quality.

The DENR's Adopt-an-Estero/Water Body Program is a collaborative undertaking between and among the estero community, donor-partners, LGUs, other government agencies and the DENR.

The program aims to clean the esteros of wastes, debris and silt; mobilize communities in cleaning the esteros; and enlist their active participation in the actual clean-up of the creeks.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/08/04/news/regions/denr-28-firms-tie-up-to-revive-cebu-river/750363/>

DENR to anti-mining groups: Don't mix up issue of insurgency and environment

Published August 3, 2020, 3:40 PM

by [Madelaine B. Miraflor](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said anti-mining groups should not mix up issues of insurgency and environment and must not irresponsibly tag mining companies in the killings of environmental defenders.

This came as a Global Witness report declared the Philippines as the second deadliest country in the world, with killings in the mining sector as one of the main culprits.

In a phone interview, Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda encouraged environmental defenders and people in mining communities to report to authorities whenever they feel they are being harassed by miners or if they think there's illegal activities going on in their areas.

"If there are issues [in mining communities], we meet them. If there is harassment, then report it to DENR or the authorities," Antiporda said.

Antiporda was particularly reacting to the statement of civil society organization Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM), which was "extremely distressed" with the Duterte administration for allowing killings in the mining sector to happen.

According to the group, red-tagging and legal harassments of anti-mining leaders were recently recorded in Nueva Vizcaya, Palawan, Masbate, Leyte and South Cotabato.

The harassment, according to ATM, happened as a response to the increased resistance activities that are happening now due to the recent decision of the DENR to reverse the suspension and closure orders issued by late and former Environment Secretary Regina Paz Lopez.

Antiporda said that reviewing the operations of suspended mining companies and allowing them to reopen once they became compliant of environmental laws is a legal process.

"We didn't reverse the suspension and closure orders of Secretary Gina. If anything, we even helped them in the enforcement of their orders. Closure orders and shutting down are two different issues. There was a closure order but there was no enforcement. We had to enforce their orders. We were the one that closed the mines and now we reviewed them," Antiporda further said.

Why protecting wildlife can prevent pandemics

Published August 3, 2020 12:20pm

MANILA, Philippines (FYT, July 30, 2020) — While Manila was in lockdown in June, a chained white-breasted sea eagle, a hood still covering its eyes, was rescued from an online wildlife trader in Sampaloc. A total of four raptors were recovered in the raid. This was the second time in a year the man was caught, agents from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

In the same month, 300 wild animals were seized from three poachers in Negros Occidental province. Some of the animals, which included an Asian palm civet, a sailfin lizard, and three Negros forest dragons, were already dead when they were found, the Philippine News Agency reported.

Earlier, in January, the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) documented the rescue of 20 pangolins from local poachers.

Conservationists are alarmed. Despite the pandemic, wildlife trafficking in the Philippines has not been tamed.

Indeed, poaching has even been on the rise since COVID-19 restrictions were imposed across the globe, according to a report from Conservation International (CI). It is both worrying and ironic: COVID-19 has been identified as a zoonotic disease, an illness passed on from animals to humans.

As of July, the number of confirmed COVID-19 has reached more than 17 million, with over 600,000 deaths worldwide.

The Philippines, after more than four months of community quarantine, reported its largest single-day surge recently. On July 30, it logged 3,954 new infections, bringing the total to nearly 90,000 with more than 1,900 deaths.

Wildlife and viruses

Studies show that the exploitation of wildlife and other human activities that degrade the environment lead to an increase of interactions between animals and people, elevating the risk of zoonotic disease transmission.

“Number one is the destruction of habitats. Because of that, animals are forced to transfer to places where humans also live,” Director Ricardo Calderon of the DENR Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) said.

“Number two is the wildlife trade. These animals are supposed to be in the wild, but because of illegal trade, they get to interact with humans,” he added.

And then there is also the consumption of wild animals. In some parts of the world, wild animals have become part of the menu. In China, where the COVID-19 pandemic is said to have originated, it is also used in traditional medicine.

According to the United Nations, the illegal exchange, smuggling, poaching, capture, and collection of endangered species or protected animals and plants, constitute the “fourth largest illegal trade worldwide.”

The Philippines has been identified as a consumer, source, and transit point for international wildlife trade, “threatening endemic species populations, economic development, and biodiversity,” the Asian Development Bank said. Rich in biodiversity, the country is said to contain about 80% of the earth’s plant and animal species.

“Based on the estimates of experts, we’re losing around P50 billion or \$1 billion (per year) to the illegal wildlife trade,” Calderon revealed.

The Palawan pangolin, which is critically endangered, is one of the country’s most illegally traded wild animals.

“They say that its scales can treat arthritis. Some also claim that because of its hard scales, it’s a natural aphrodisiac. But there’s no scientific evidence to support this,” Calderon said. “Besides, the bacteria and viruses are also there.”

When viruses jump from animals to humans

Although COVID-19 poses the most serious threat to public health in recent memory, it is not the first time that a zoonotic disease has threatened the country.

In 2002, 14 cases of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) arrived in the country after first being reported in Guangdong, China. Experts believe that the virus came from a bat, was passed on to a civet cat, before infecting a person in Southern China.

In 2009, some hog farm workers in Bulacan and Pangasinan were infected by the Reston ebolavirus. That virus also came from bats before making the jump to pigs.

In 2014, the country faced a Henipavirus outbreak in Sultan Kudarat, Mindanao. Just like SARS and Reston virus, experts say the virus likely came from bats before infecting horses.

According to Dr. Rontgene Solante, head of San Lazaro Hospital’s Adult Infectious Diseases and Tropical Medicine Section, most of the emerging infectious diseases that have been reported in the past 3 decades came from animals.

“Animals are becoming part of our life and way of living. That’s the most dangerous because the organism within them can also adapt and become a potential infecting agent to humans,” Solante said.

Scientists estimate that some 60% of known human infectious diseases and up to 75% of emerging infectious diseases also originate from animals.

Protecting wildlife to avert pandemics

Experts have warned that further outbreaks will occur unless governments take preventive measures.

“The science is clear that if we keep exploiting wildlife and destroying our ecosystems, then we can expect to see a steady stream of these diseases jumping from animals to humans in the years ahead,” United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) Executive Director Inger Andersen said.

The challenge on the country is not only to beat COVID-19 but also avert future pandemics. Plagued with multiple disasters, and with preparedness, response, and recovery mechanisms often found wanting, another outbreak would be devastating to the people and the economy.

Some of the steps that DENR-BMB is taking include advocating policy changes to strengthen the protection of wildlife.

“We’re moving for the amendment of Republic Act No. 9147 or the Wildlife Act so we can impose heavier fines or penalties. At the moment, after serving probation, those who get caught just go back to doing the same crimes,” Calderon said.

There is also a need to improve monitoring and regulation practices associated with zoonotic diseases. According to Solante, it is crucial to identify animals that are common sources of pathogens, like swine, exotic birds, and other wildlife.

“We have to have regulation in terms of handling exotic animals, that’s very important,” Solante added.

Further research and policy changes are key to addressing the danger of zoonotic diseases. In the end, future pandemics can only be averted if we protect our wildlife and environment.

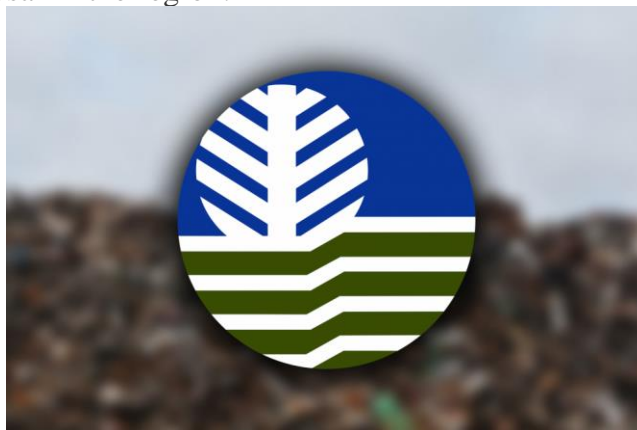
(The video explainer first appeared on FYT and was produced with the support of Internews and Earth Journalism Network.)

Garbage disposal in MIMAROPA to be improved with new facilities — DENR

Published August 3, 2020, 3:32 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) has assured that the installation of materials recovery facilities (MRFs) in four provinces in Region 4-B will be completed within the year to enable to address the problem of garbage disposal in the region.



(MANILA BULLETIN)

EMB-MIMAROPA Regional Director Michael Drake Matias has ordered the completion of the construction of MRFs in 25 municipalities in Oriental Mindoro, Occidental Mindoro, Romblon, and Palawan.

The MRFs will be located in Victoria and Bulalacao in Oriental Mindoro; Abra de Ilog, Calintaan, Mamburao, Paluan, Rizal, Sablayan, and San Jose in Occidental Mindoro; Corcuera, Sta. Fe, and San Jose in Romblon; and Araceli, Balabac, Bataraza, Brooke's Point, Coron, Cuyo, Dumarán, Magsaysay, Narra, Quezon, Roxas, and Taytay in Palawan.

Meanwhile, 14 newly-constructed MRFs in the region are set to be turned over to its recipient municipalities, namely Bansud, Gloria, Pinamalayan, Puerto Galera, Roxas, and San Teodoro in Oriental Mindoro; Buenavista, Gasan, Mogpog, and Sta. Cruz in Marinduque; and Odiongan, San Agustin, and Sta. Maria in Romblon.

The EMB in MIMAROPA has initiated the efforts to construct the said MRFs through contractors. Upon finishing the construction, the MRFs will be turned over to the respective local government units (LGUs) for their utilization.

According to the agency, the initiative was meant to assist LGUs in expediting the construction of MRFs, as the LGUs faced difficulties in looking for successful bidders for their projects, which caused the delay in the establishment of MRF in their area.

In the past two years, EMB-MIMAROPA was able to close down 19 dumpsites in the region. Four sanitary landfills are now operational, while two more landfills are set for construction.

In a statement, Matias emphasized the importance of LGU collaboration in the construction of MRFs as a solution to address the improper waste management in the region and divert other wastes into something that we may still be able to utilize.

DENR points out lack of discipline in waste disposal as medical wastes pile up

August 4, 2020



Environmental group Greenpeace disclosed the medical wastes such as disposable face masks have increased since the pandemic began. Based on a study cited by the group, daily additional medical waste can balloon up to 280 metric tons.

Given the circumstance, Ecowaste Coalition and Greenpeace are now calling for the use of reusable face masks for non-medical use.

“Kung ito ay mapupunta sa mga kalsada, estero, ay pwede itong pagsimulan ng baha. Kung ito ay pumunta sa dagat, mga bodies of water natin, dahil hindi ito natutunaw ay pwede itong mapagkamalan ng mga aquatic species na pagkain nila na pwedeng ikamatay nila (If the wastes go to the streets and waterways, it might cause flooding. If they go to the sea and other bodies of water, these insoluble materials might be mistaken as food by aquatic species which may result in their death),” Aileen Lucero of Ecowaste Coalition said.

Meanwhile, the DENR pointed out that the problem is improper disposal and not the type of face masks. It is also proposing to the IATF to impose sanctions for improper disposal of medical wastes.

“It’s not the problem of facemask or any medical mask. It’s the problem of the people... We will enforce the law in segregation,” DENR USec. Benny Antiporda maintained.

“You protected yourself using facemask, tapos (then) you dispose it just in front of you. Ito iyon na literally, basurang tinapon mo, virus ang babalik sayo (Literally, you dispose waste, the virus gets back to you),” Antiporda added. – *Report from Cleizl Pardilla*

Source: <https://ptvnews.ph/denr-points-out-lack-of-discipline-in-waste-disposal-as-medical-wastes-pile-up/>

EcoWaste: Cloth face mask ang gamitin



August 3, 2020 @ 8:46 AM 22 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Hinimok ng EcoWaste Coalition, isang environmental health group ang publiko na gumamit na lamang ng reusable cloth face mask upang kontrolin ang pagtatapon ng sing-use mask na gawa sa non-biodegradable at non-recyclable plastic.

Ito ay kasunod nang mga nadiskubreng nagkalat na surgical face mask sa Baseco Beach sa Port Area, Manila sa kahabaan ng pampang ng Port Area gayundin sa pampang ng Barangay Muzon sa Rosario, Cavite.

Ayon kay National Ecowaste Coalition Coordinator Aileen Lucero, habang sinusuportahan ang pagsusuot ng facemask bilang bahagi ng pangunahing health protocol laban sa COVID-19, ay nadismaya ang grupo dahil sa hindi maayos na disposal o pagtatapon nito dahilan para tangayin sa karagatan.

“This is very concerning as these throw-away masks, which are supposed to protect us and others from the dreaded virus, pose a real threat to aquatic life,” babala pa ni Lucero.

Kabilang aniya sa maapektuhan ang mga isda na maari nilang makain at kalaunan naman ay makakain ng mga tao.

Pinangangambahan din ng grupo ang mga parating na pag-ulan na maaaring makapagbara sa mga kanal na magdudulot naman ng panibagong pandemic dahil sa mga pagbaha.

Ayon kay Lucero, ito aniya ang nais nilang iwasan kaya naman hinikayat ng grupo kung hindi naman kinakailangang gumamit ng surgical mask ay huwag nalang gumamit at sa halip ay gumamit na lamang ng reusable o washable face masks.

Pinayuhan din ni Lucero ang publiko kung gagamit ng surgical face mask ay dapat ilagay sa tamang lalagyan at huwag itatapon kong saan-saan dahil ito aniya ay hazardous.

“To discourage the unrestrained use and disposal of throw-away masks, we urge the public to don reusable fabric masks, which can be easily washed with detergent or soap and safely reuse,” ayon pa kay Lucero.

“By opting for reusable or washable face masks, we avoid generating non-biodegradable and non-recyclable trash that only adds to the worsening plastic pollution crisis. Over time, discarded masks in the oceans will break down into extremely small particles and may contribute to the microplastic contamination of the food supply chain.” dagdag pa nito.

Sinabi rin ni Lucero na ang limitadong paggamit ng medical masks ay pagtiyak din upang magkaroon ng sapat na suplay sa mga mas nangangailangan partikular na ang mga health workers, mga pasyente ng COVID-19 at mga nangangalaga sa kanila.

Kaugnay sa COVID-19 pandemic, binigyan diin ng Ecowaste Coalition ang pangangailangan ng konkretong polisiya sa National Plan of Action for the Prevention, Reduction, and Management of Marine Litter (NPOA-ML) at hakbang upang mahinto ang coronavirus plastic waste upang ang nasabing basura ay hindi na pumunta pa sa karagatan.

Ang NPOA-ML ay kasalukuyan na umanong pinipinal ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa pamamagitan ng Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) at Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB). **(Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden)**

DENR, SMC Foundation partner in mangrove rehab

TITLE: to save Manila bay

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August 04, 2020

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DENR, SMC Foundation partner in mangrove rehab to save Manila Bay

By Carlo Lorenzo J. DatuPublished on August 3, 2020

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga, Aug.3 (PIA) -- About 1,000 propagules of Bakauan babae scientific *Rhizophora mucronata* were planted by Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and San Miguel Corporation (SMC) Foundation in a 10-hectare coastal area of Tibaguin village in Hagonoy, Bulacan.

DENR Deputy Director for Technical Services Arthur Salazar said the activity aims to fast-track efforts on reviving water bodies connected to the Manila Bay while protecting the coastal and inland towns of Bulacan from frequent flooding.

"This was a collaborative undertaking of the public and private sector to sustain and protect our mangrove areas and the lives of communities in these coastal areas of Bulacan from disaster. Planting mangroves plays a significant role in reducing flood incidences during habagat season and vital in the rehabilitation of Manila Bay," he furthered.

DENR provided technical assistance for the mangrove rehabilitation project, while the SMC Foundation provided necessary funding and planting materials.

For his part, SMC Foundation representative Elmer Bohol said the mangrove planting activity is the first part on the 190,000 mangrove propagules to be planted over the 76-hectare coastal area in Hagonoy and other parts of Central Luzon until December this year.



Department of Environment and Natural Resources and San Miguel Corporation Foundation plant about 1,000 propagules of Bakauan babae scientific *Rhizophora mucronata* were in a 10-hectare coastal area of Tibaguin village in Hagonoy, Bulacan. (DENR RPAO)

Aside from being a natural refuge and habitat to several wildlife species and marine life, mangrove forests also stabilize coastline, prevent coastal erosion and protection against threats of water pollution and siltation.

They serve as natural flood defense and reduce damages caused by typhoons, tsunami and sea level rise and tides.

In Central Luzon, there are about 1,901 hectares of mangrove forests covering the provinces of Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Pampanga, and Zambales.

DENR, SMC Foundation partner in mangrove rehab

August 04, 2020

TITLE: to save Manila bay

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DENR record shows that the Manila Bay cleanup and rehabilitation program, which started on January 2019, has already established 72 hectares of mangrove plantations planted with over 174,000 propagules covering the Manila Bay areas in Bataan, Bulacan and Pampanga.

This is in addition to the more than 1,000 hectares of mangrove plantations established in the region under the Integrated Coastal Resources Management Program and the National Greening Program since 2011. (CLJD-PIA 3)

80 container ng basura balik SoKor na

By Abante News Online — Last updated Aug 3, 2020

VISMIN



Photo courtesy of PNA



Kinumpirma ng isang opisyal ng Bureau of Customs sa Northern Mindanao (BOC-10) na dadalhin na ngayong araw, pabalik sa South Korea ang huling batch ng basura na nagmula rito.

Ayon kay BOC-10 district collector John Simon tanging mga opisyal at personnel ng ahensya ang magiging saksi sa pagbabalik ng shipment dahil sa pagpapatupad pa rin ng social distancing at pananatili ng ilang restricted na lugar sa port area.

Aniya, ang nananatiling 80 container ng Korean waste ay dadalhin ng BF Mahia. Nakatakda sanang ibalik ang mga basura sa nasabing bansa sa mas maagang panahon ngayong taon pero napigil dahil sab anta ng COVID-19.

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Matatandaan na dumating shipment na may lamang iba't ibang basura mula sa South Korea noong Hulyo at Oktubre 2018 nang i-import ng Verde Soko Philippines Industrial Corp. Nabatid na mali ang deklarasyon ng kompanya sa shipment kaya kinumpiska ito ng BOC-10 at dinala sa pasilidad ng kompanya sa loob ng Phividec Industrial

Estate zone sa Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental.

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Bigo rin ang kompanya na magkaroon ng kaukulang import permit mula sa mga ahensya ng pamahalaan.

Kinatuwa naman ng mga environmental group ang pagbabalik ng mga basura mula sa pinanggalingan nitong bansa. (PNA)



PHOTOGRAPH BY AL PADILLA FOR THE DAILY TRIBUNE @tribunephil_al

Sanitation With hygiene now a byword in the wake of the pandemic, garbage trucks make daily trash collection in the metropolis. This one's along Rotonda in Pasay City.

Quezon brgys pour P3.5M for sanitary landfill

By Benjamin Moses M. EbreoPublished on August 3, 2020

QUEZON, Nueva Vizcaya, July 31(PIA) - Village officials of the 12 barangays in this town recently poured in P3.5 million for their Sanitary Landfill Project (SLP).



Barangay officials of Quezon, Nueva Vizcaya, in a meeting recently shared their funds for the town's Sanitary Landfill to address solid waste management in the municipality. PIA Photo

John Babliing, barangay captain of Runruno said the setting aside of the fund for the town's (SLP) was the decision of the majority of barangay officials in order to support the Republic Act 9003 or the Solid Waste Management Act (SWMA).

"This was our agreement so that we can already go on with our SLP project that will benefit our barangays and constituents in general," he said.

The fund was sourced from the 2018 Annual Social Development and Management Program(ASDMP) of the barangays funded yearly by the FCF Minerals Corporation.

Babliing said the SLP will be constructed based on the national standards set by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

He added that the SLP will address the environmental issues and concerns in the municipality as it will also serve as a major dumping site for the growing waste among the villagers including mining company's waste.

FCF Minerals Corporation operates the gold-molybdenum project in barangay Runruno.(MDCT/BME/PIA 2-Nueva Vizcaya)

Groups band together to raise funds for Tamaraw Rangers

Published August 2, 2020, 12:14 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

A group of some 20 organizations collectively called the Tamaraw Society have banded together to raise funds for Mindoro's Tamaraw Rangers to enable them to continue conservation work amid the COVID-19 pandemic.



(Gregg Yan via Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz / MANILA BULLETIN)

Since March, most of the Philippines has been under general or enhanced community quarantine, causing the country's national parks to close to prevent the virus from spreading.

One of the parks that was left with little funding is the Iglit-Baco Natural Park (MIBNP) in Mindoro, which cut the sole source of income for 32 wardens and one ranger, all members of Mindoro's indigenous Taw'buid, Buid and Iraya tribes.



(Gregg Yan via Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz / MANILA BULLETIN)

To cover a years' worth of salaries for these tamaraw frontliners, the non-government organization-led Philippine Parks and Biodiversity has formed the Tamaraw Society.

Comprised of an initial 20 organizations, the society's members commit to donate or raise P20,000 each. The funds will be disbursed through the Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP) under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

"Our campaign is a COVID-19 emergency response to unite concerned groups by securing much-needed salaries and allowances for the retrenched frontliners who protect them," PH Parks and Biodiversity representatives Nella Lomotan and Ann Dumaliang said.

Groups band together to raise funds for Tamaraw

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TITLE: Rangers

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Eight entities have confirmed their commitments as of July — the World Wide Fund for Nature-Philippines, Masungi Georeserve, Eco Explorations, D’Aboville Foundation, Planet CORA, Fund the Forest, Ecoheroes Philippines, and Oscar Lopez Jr.

The initiative complements the #TogetherforTamaraws, a campaign launched in July by the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) project under the United Nations Development Programme and the DENR’s Biodiversity Management Bureau and DENR-Region 4B.

“Exotic places like the Iglit-Baco mountain range might seem distant to most people, but they must be conserved. Rangers and wardens need and deserve our support to keep doing good conservation work,” Onno van den Heuvel, BIOFIN global project manager said.

The park’s wardens serve as guides and porters for tourism and research expeditions while both TCP and park rangers keep poachers at bay, in case the lockdown entices some to illegally enter the park and hunt animals.

At present, only 23 TCP rangers and three MIBNP wardens are patrolling a core area of 2,500 hectares inside the 106,655-hectare MIBNP, which hosts at least 480 of the world’s last 600 tamaraws.

Lima Water laboratory gets DENR accreditation

By ... -August 4, 2020

The laboratory services unit of Lima Water Corp. (LWC) was recently accredited as an environmental testing laboratory of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), affirming LWC's commitment to outstanding water quality testing standards in its Batangas facility.

LWC's laboratory, which monitors and tests the quality of water and wastewater in the LIMA Technology Center (LTC), passed the stringent assessment of DENR conducted in the first quarter of 2020. The accreditation was conferred to LWC on June 30, 2020 and is valid for three years.

“DENR's accreditation is a validation of LWC's certified quality approach to ensuring that the treated water produced by our facilities pass the country's strict environmental standards. We will continue to uphold this approach as we expand our operations,” said LWC general manager Hazele Manalo.

Aside from demonstrating LWC's high standards on the quality and accuracy of the physico-chemical testing results it generates, the accreditation also designates the laboratory as a qualified and competent service provider. This will allow LWC to conduct internal testing for regulatory reports and provide support services to LTC locators for their own water discharge analysis requirements.

LWC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Aboitiz InfraCapital, is the only water services provider for an industrial park that has been granted such accreditation by DENR. It services LIMA Estate, a 700-hectare mixed-use development in Lipa-Malvar, Batangas which hosts 111 industrial locators.



Shift to MECQ not a sign of government failure — Palace

Published August 3, 2020 3:38pm

By VIRGIL LOPEZ, GMA News

President Rodrigo Duterte's decision to reimpose the modified enhanced community quarantine in Metro Manila and nearby provinces is not an admission of the government's alleged failure to address the COVID-19 crisis, Malacañang said Monday.

In a televised briefing, presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said the shift to MECQ was a step in the right direction.

"Alam niyo po, habang mababa po ang mga namamatay, tama po ang ginagawa natin," he said.

Asked if the decision to revert to stricter quarantine was a sign of failing response to the pandemic, Roque replied: "Hindi po. In fact, kung titignan ninyo ang datos, 'yung case doubling rate natin ay almost nine days at hindi po 'yan nagka-qualify for MECQ."

Duterte on Sunday placed Metro Manila, Bulacan, Laguna, Cavite, and Rizal [back to MECQ](#) from general community quarantine for 15 days effective Tuesday, August 4.

Duterte's decision came after the appeal of exhausted medical frontliners for stricter lockdown to "recalibrate strategies" against COVID-19 and the number of cases in the country surged past 103,000.

During this period, work and quarantine passes will be strictly implemented to minimize outdoor activities.

The public must also strictly follow minimum health standards such as mask wearing, observance of social distancing and frequent hand washing.

The local government units were directed to intensify the localized lockdown strategy and the implementation of Oplan Kalinga.

Under Oplan Kalinga, local health officials go house-to-house, searching for mild and asymptomatic cases who will later be transferred to isolation facilities. — **RSJ, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/749633/shift-to-mecq-not-a-sign-of-government-failure-palace/story/>

Diokno: Shift to MECQ has limited economic impact

[Lawrence Agcaoili](#) (The Philippine Star) - August 4, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said the reimposition of a stricter lockdown for 15 days would have limited impact on the country's economy that is being battered by the novel coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19 pandemic.

BSP Governor Benjamin Diokno said the pandemic has monumental economic implications, but the return to a modified enhanced community quarantine from general community quarantine in the National Capital Region (NCR) as well as nearby provinces is likely to have limited economic impact.

"This coronavirus pandemic is a public health issue with monumental economic implications," Diokno said in a tweet.

The BSP chief explained that each individual has a role to play in mitigating the effects of the once in a lifetime health crisis.

"The term public means that each individual has a role to play in mitigating the adverse impact of the crisis on the loss of lives, jobs, and livelihoods," Diokno added.

Last Sunday, President Duterte approved the imposition of MECQ in Metro Manila, Laguna, Cavite, Rizal, and Bulacan from Aug. 4 to 18 as recommended by members of the Cabinet.

This after the national caseload soared to 103,185 as of Aug. 2 with a an all-time high 5,032 new cases in a single day last Sunday.

"This highlights the inconvenient truth that the solution to this pandemic is not solely the responsibility of the government. It is equally the responsibility of the general public," Diokno added.

The BSP chief said each individual has a role to play in mitigating the effects of a pandemic.

"This coronavirus pandemic is a public health issue with monumental economic implications," Diokno added.

The economy ground to a halt and resulted to a gross domestic product (GDP) contraction of 0.2 percent in the first quarter, ending 84 straight

quarters of positive growth, after Malacañang placed Luzon under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) in the middle of March.

Last week, Diokno said the worst is over for the Philippine economy in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) contraction as the country is moving towards a recovery.

The BSP chief said a 10 to 15 percent GDP contraction from April to June would be tolerable.

“What I can see is if the contraction is single digit, that’s really nice, very nice. If it’s between 10 and 15 (percent) that is still tolerable, but anything that is higher than 20 percent, that could be problematic,” Diokno told reporters via an online press chat last Thursday.

Diokno is expecting a hockey-stick-like recovery for the Philippines with the slow and painful recovery starting the third quarter, paving the way for a very nice Christmas for the country.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) is set to release the second quarter and first half GDP figures on Thursday.

ING Bank Manila senior economist Nicholas Mapa said COVID-19 continues to act like Kryptonite to a once super-consumption.

“With the economic growth engine crippled, the continued spread of the virus weighs on any hopes of a recovery. Unless the Kryptonite is addressed, no amount of alphabet rearrangements to lockdown measures and relaxing of quarantine protocols will jumpstart the recovery,” Mapa said.

Mapa said the country’s GDP likely contracted by 6.3 percent in the second quarter before improving to a smaller contraction of 5.8 percent in the third, and 3.5 percent in the fourth quarter.

The Dutch financial giant is looking at a GDP growth of about five percent next year.

The Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) is looking at a strong rebound with a GDP growth of eight to nine percent in 2021 after a contraction of two to 3.4 percent this year.

Bayanihan 2 to include additional benefits for health workers – Sotto

Published 13 hours ago on August 3, 2020 04:49 PM

By [Hananeel Bordey](#)



Senate President Vicente Sotto III assured Malacanang the Bicameral Conference Committee will include additional benefits for health care workers in the final version of the Bayanihan 2 bill.

In a virtual presser, Sotto told reporters that the implementation of enhanced community quarantine at the Senate will exempt the bicams, especially for the Bayanihan 2 bill.

“The bicam on Bayanihan 2 cannot be suspended. In the Bayanihan 2, we can insert there all the issues that were tackled whether it comes from the House of Representatives or from the Senate,” he said.

“So the issues of risk allowance, life insurance, free accommodation, free transportation, free and frequent COVID testing and then P10,000 or P15,000 for every health worker who gets sick, yes, I assure you, we will incorporate it in Bayanihan 2,” Sotto said.

He, however, did not commit a higher amount for the Bayanihan 2 as the Department of Finance has set P140 billion cap for the law.

“I think it’s a matter of prioritization. The P140 billion will be the peg at this point. But if necessary, if they need to add more funds, the Executive Department can make a way,” he added.

On Sunday night, President Rodrigo Duterte asked Congress to include health workers’ benefits in the Bayanihan 2.

“Well, if you want to term it stipend or allowances, or pay, give us time, we will make the report. I hope it will be included in the second Bayanihan,” Duterte said.

“Regarding the benefits, we will also strongly recommend it to be included in the Bayanihan 2: insurance, then free accommodation, free transportation, free and frequent testing,” he added.

The House and Senate contingents for the Bayanihan 2 bicameral conference will convene to settle disagreeing provisions of the two versions, particularly the budget that the government will allocate for the same. The Senate is proposing a P140 billion for the measure while the House pegged it at P162 billion.

Bayanihan 2 seeks to replace Republic Act 11469 or the Bayanihan To Heal As One Act which gave Duterte additional powers to realign funds to respond to the pandemic.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/08/03/bayanihan-2-to-include-additional-benefits-for-health-workers-sotto/>

Gov't ramps up mobility restrictions in NCR, other areas

By Lade Jean Kabagani August 3, 2020, 7:02 pm



National Task Force (NTF) Against Covid-19 chief implementer and Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. (Screengrab from PCOO)

MANILA – The government will impose anew guidelines on the restriction of movement during the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) to contain the spike of coronavirus disease (Covid-19) and prevent local transmission in Metro Manila and its neighboring provinces, Sec. Carlito Galvez Jr., National Task Force Against Covid-19 chief implementer, said Monday.

"In implementing the MECQ, we will use the original version [of health protocols and guidelines]," Galvez, also the presidential adviser on the peace process, said in a virtual interview with Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque.

Galvez said the NTF will meet local executives in Metro Manila on Monday night, including mayors in its neighboring municipalities in Cavite, Laguna, Bulacan, and Rizal, to discuss the guidelines and various arrangements to be imposed in their localities and issues on the transportation.

"One of our [target] is to impose restriction of movement so that we can address and contain 'yung (that) seemingly increasing new cases," he said, noting that the new cases are an effective result of the government's extensive contact tracing and testing.

"We also know that more than 120 countries are also experiencing the same experience that we have -- that the new cases are increasing because of the aggressive testing and contact tracing," Galvez said.

Meanwhile, testing czar Vince Dizon said the government will strengthen the government's testing and contact tracing capacity while the MECQ within the Metro Manila and other four provinces are in effect.

Although Dizon cited the country's increasing testing capacity, he said there is still a need for the government to be more aggressive in intensifying Covid-19 testing, especially in areas where the spike of the disease is visible.

"Sa ngayon ang ating test per day ay umaabot na ng 35,000 at tayo na po ang isa sa mga pinakamataas sa Asia na nagte-test, halos doble po ng South Korea at ng Japan (As of now, we already reached 35,000 tests per day and we are one of the highest in Asia. That's double compared to South Korea and Japan)," Dizon said. "Pero kulang pa rin po ito dahil sa nakikita natin kailangan pa ring mas maging agresibo tayo sa pagti-test natin lalo na sa area ng NCR at Region 4-A (But still it's insufficient, as we see, we still need to be more aggressive in our testing capacity, especially in NCR and in Region 4-A).

He added that the NTF has already discussed the outline of the protocols and guidelines to be implemented in the coming days as Metro Manila and the other four provinces reverted to MECQ.

The measures include more aggressive testing and contact tracing to barangays and communities under lockdown under MECQ, Dizon said.

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TITLE: Gov't ramps up mobility restrictions in NCR, other areas PAGE 1/ 2/2

The government, he added, will intensify the testing, tracing, isolation, and treatment of patients in the coming days to contain new Covid-19 cases and to minimize the infection.

On the other, Galvez said the country is now facing the critical phase of coronavirus crisis management.

He said the behavior of the virus has changed as the country eventually experiences a spike of new cases.

"Once we open our economy and we already had our movement, it is expected that the cases will increase. At the same time, we have vigorous testing and tracing," Galvez said, explaining that the expanded testing will really contribute to the spike of Covid-19 cases.

Galvez said there is no need for the public to panic when there is an increase in the Covid-19 cases "because it's just an effective result of the country's expanded testing capacity."

He said the country has a more favorable coronavirus situation compared to the other countries "since we have the lowest number of critical cases with only 1 percent and we have a manageable treatment capability with only a few fatalities."

President Rodrigo Duterte has earlier reverted Metro Manila and the provinces of Laguna, Rizal, Cavite and Bulacan to a more stringent quarantine status beginning August 4 to 18 -- in response to medical front-liners' call for a "timeout" to prevent the collapse of the country's healthcare system amid the prevailing coronavirus pandemic. **(PNA)**

Govt urged to recalibrate Covid response during MECQ

By [Cai Ordinario](#)

August 4, 2020



Police and military personnel man the checkpoint between the cities of Las Piñas and Cavite, after President Duterte placed the National Capital Region and nearby areas back to modified enhanced community quarantine for 15 days effective Tuesday, August 4, 2020, in response to a call by medical frontliners for a "time-out" as Covid-19 cases continue to increase with the easing of quarantine rules.

Government should use the two-week Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ) period to recalibrate strategies to contain the spread of the coronavirus 2019 (Covid-19), which will help increase confidence in the Philippine economy, according to economists.

On August 2, the President decided to reimpose the MECQ in Mega Manila — Metro Manila, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal — upon the appeal made by the country's overwhelmed health workers.

Ateneo Center for Economic Research and Development (ACERD) Director Alvin P. Ang told BusinessMirror the two week MECQ should be used to "recalibrate, organize and align policy and practice." "What we need is an organized, easy to understand, step by step process on how to implement the test, trace, isolate and treat approach for the ordinary people," Ang said.

"This remains elusive to the general public and that is why this has to happen. They can actually just continue GCQ (General Community Quarantine) if they had the right and standard information for everyone," he explained.

Ang said the reimposition of the MECQ will definitely take its toll on the economy in the third quarter. However, its full impact remains to be seen given there's a month-long GCQ imposed in July.

This allowed firms to partially open and provide employment to some of their workers. The period, he said, also allowed some firms to adjust to the new realities during the pandemic.

Unionbank Chief Economist Ruben Carlo O. Asuncion agreed with Ang and said the projections for the third quarter will still not be as bad as the expectations for the second quarter.

However, Asuncion said the third quarter will still see the economy post a negative year on year growth. This, he said, is not only due to the return to MECQ but the slowdown in manufacturing.

Asuncion said that in July, the country's manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) hit below 50. This indicates that manufacturing production will continue to be lackluster in the months ahead.

"Definitely, jobs will be affected and the likelihood of certain jobs not coming back will be higher with the now stricter virus containment measure. The loss of jobs does imply the rise of poverty especially for virus-hit areas," Asuncion told this newspaper.

"However, we don't think that Q3 (third quarter) GDP's decline would be worse than Q2 (second quarter) because the MECQ is only in NCR (National Capital Region) and CALABARZON and not the whole of Luzon island back in March and April," he added.

Foundation of Economic Freedom President Calixto V. Chikiamco told BusinessMirror that the return to MECQ is a “big setback” for the economy, particularly for micro, small, and medium enterprises MSMEs.

He added that along with the MECQ, public transport will again be banned and would have a severe impact on employees dependent on them and retail establishments depended on consumption.

Chikiamco stressed that the return to MECQ is “a bad decision” since will not contain the spread of the virus. He said transmissions will continue to happen, especially in congested communities with crowded dwellings.

“A lockdown will affect a huge swath of economic activity while leaving the virus to multiply in communities.

Worse, there’s no plan to gather more reliable and granular data of where the transmissions are really taking place so that the government can resort to localized lockdowns instead of the general lockdowns they are doing,” Chikiamco told BusinessMirror.

Meanwhile, Acting Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Karl Kendrick T. Chua, through the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) Development Information Staff (DIS) Director Nerissa T. Esguerra said the oversight agency is still in the process of completing a technical analysis of the impact of the MECQ.

“In behalf of Secretary Karl, I’d like to inform you that NEDA is still doing the technical analysis. Please bear with us. We will however have a press conference on Thursday and I hope you can join us there,” Esguerra told reporters via the Neda Media Viber Group.

Earlier, Dozens of organizations representing health workers across all fields, led by the Philippine College of Physicians (PCP), said that after five months and with many health workers being infected along with their families, it is impossible to simply expand the Covid-19 care capacities of hospitals because besides the physical requirements, these institutions are hounded by crippling manpower shortages.

The medical community proposed that Mega Manila—NCR, Central Luzon and Calabarzon—be placed under ECQ from August 1 to 15, to provide a “timeout” to refine pandemic control strategies and address urgent problems.

Among the problems they raised are hospital workforce shortages, failure of case finding and isolation, failure of contact tracing and quarantine, transportation safety, workplace safety, public compliance with self-protection and social amelioration.

The medical community made the appeal a day after the government kept the National Capital Region under general community quarantine (GCQ). Along with NCR, 12 other areas in the country are under GCQ.

On Sunday, infections breached the 100,000 mark after the government reported new 5,032 cases—another record-high increase.

Image Credits: [Nonie Reyes](#)

MECQ may push up to 70K less Covid-19 cases: UP experts

By Marita Moaje August 3, 2020, 7:04 pm



MANILA – The number of new coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) cases in the country will be reduced to 50,000 or 70,000 after President Rodrigo Duterte reverted the National Capital Region (NCR) and nearby provinces to modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ), two University of the Philippines (UP) professors said Monday.

During a briefing aired over state-run PTV, Guido David of the UP Institute of Mathematics and Ranjit Singh Rye of the UP Department of Political Science said they forecast about 220,000 Covid-19 cases by the end of August if NCR and nearby provinces still remain under general community quarantine (GCQ).

After listening to the plea of medical and health professionals for a stricter form of quarantine, Duterte announced Monday night the re-imposition of MECQ for Metro Manila, Laguna, Cavite, Rizal, and Bulacan from August 4 to 13 based on his Cabinet's recommendation.

Rye said the reversion to MECQ has a big implication, especially on the transmission rate of the virus.

"Kung magtutulongan tayo, ang taong bayan, ang private sector at ang gobyerno, lalo na at mapaingting ang T3 (testing, tracing, treatment), mas mataas pa ang kasong mai-se-save natin. Malaki at maraming tao ang mase-save from Covid-19 lalo na yung sa mortality (If we will cooperate — the public, the private sector and the government — we will strengthen T3, we will be able to save more lives from Covid-19)," he said.

Both Rye and David are part of a UP research team that publishes reports on the Covid-19 pandemic since April.

They said the transmission rate in the country is now at almost 1.5, but because of the stricter protocols for the next 15 days, it is possible to go down to one.

The transmission rate or the "R-naught" or the reproductive number is an indicator of how contagious a disease is, or how easily it spreads from one person to another in a community.

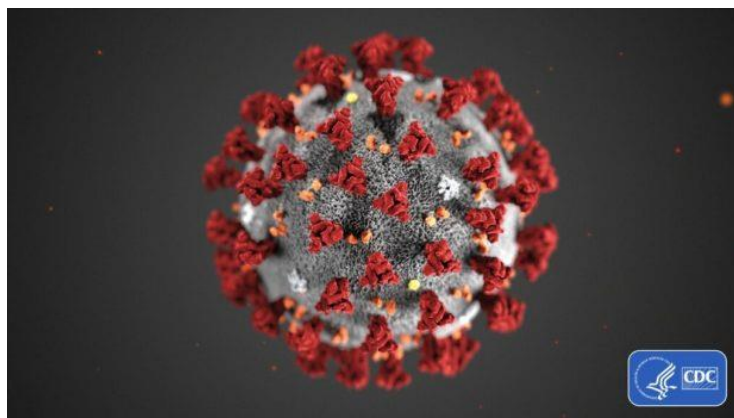
The two experts called on the public to cooperate with the government and help make MECQ work.

"Sa ating mga kababayan, importante kung gusto nating tumulong, gusto nating mag-ambag laban sa Covid, stay at home, yung practice ng physical distancing, pag praktis ng pagsuot ng PPEs lalo na ng mask at visor, paghugas ng kamay. Kung gusto nating tumulong sa komunidad natin gawin nating lahat to (To the public, it is very important that if we want to help in the fight against Covid, stay at home, practice physical distancing, wear your PP's especially face mask and the visor, wash your hands, let's do all this if we want to contribute)," they said. **(PNA)**

BREAKING: 3,226 latest COVID-19 cases bring PH's total to 106,330

By: [Gabriel Pabico Lalu](#) - Reporter / [@GabrielLaluINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 04:39 PM August 03, 2020



This illustration provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in January 2020 shows the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV). Image: CDC via AP, File

MANILA, Philippines — The country's total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases rose to 106,330 after the Department of Health (DOH) reported 3,226 new cases on Monday.

According to DOH's latest COVID-19 bulletin, the bulk of the new cases — at least 1,541 — came from the National Capital Region, followed by Cebu (503), Laguna (181), Rizal (158), and Cavite (129).

Meanwhile, 46 new deaths were reported on Monday, bringing the total to 2,104, while recovered patients are now at 65,821 after an increase of 275 recoveries.

“Of the 46 deaths, 37 (80%) in July, 6 (13%) in June, 2 (4%) in May and 1 (2%) in March. Deaths were from Region 7 (38 or 83%), NCR (3 or 7%), CAR (2 or 4%), Region 3 (1 or 2%), Region 4A (1 or 2%), and Region 6 (1 or 2%),” the DOH said.

The DOH noted that 81 cases were subtracted from the total count due to verification and removal of duplicate entries.

As of now, over 90 percent of the patients have mild symptoms, 8.2 percent are asymptomatic while 0.9 percent are severe, and 0.6 percent are in critical condition.

JPV

MECQ, para sa kaligtasan sa COVID-19 at krisis

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MECQ, PARA SA KALIGTASAN SA COVID-19 AT KRISIS PANGKABUHAYAN



August 3, 2020 @ 1:46 PM 17 hours ago

Alam na ng lahat na isinailalim na ang Metro Manila, Bulacan, Cavite at Rizal sa Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine dahil sa coronavirus disease-19.

Nagsimula ang MECQ dakong alas-12:01 ng madaling araw ngayong Agosto 4 at magtatapos sa Agosto 18.

Kasama sa mga idineklarang bawal ang biyahe ng lahat ng pampublikong transportasyon mula sa mga tren hanggang sa mga bus at traysikel at nadamay rin ang mga eroplano at barko.

Malaking epekto ito sa pagpasok natin sa trabaho at marami ang bawal na gawin na halos alam na nating lahat dahil naranasan na natin ang iba't ibang anyo ng community quarantine mula sa ECQ hanggang sa mga pinakamababang uri ng quarantine na home quarantine at kapitbahay lockdown.

'DI ECQ KUNDI MECQ

Pinagbigyan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang mga doktor, kasama na ang mga nurse at iba pang medical professional, sa kahilingan ng mga ito na bigyan sila kahit man lang 15 araw na pahinga sa giyera sa COVID-19.

ECQ nga ang hiniling nila na paiiralin.

'Yun bang === total lockdown ng lahat upang mapigilan ang mabilis na pagkalat ng sakit ngunit MECQ lang ang ibinigay ng Pangulo.

Sa ECQ, bukod sa pampublikong transportasyon, tigil lahat ang operasyon ng mga negosyo o hanapbuhay mula sa mga pabrika hanggang sa mga maliliit na buy and sell sa barangay, maliban lang ang mga importante gaya ng medisina, pagkain, tubig at kauri ng mga ito.

Ang ginawa ng Pangulo, tuloy ang operasyon ng mga negosyo ngunit limitado ang pasok ng mga obrero, tanging ang mga may sariling sasakyan at shuttle service ang pupwede at hindi 100 porsyento ang patakbo o operasyon ng mga ito.

Ito'y para hindi ganap na maparalisa ang ekonomiya ng bansa at kahit papaano, meron pa ring kikita sa mga mamamayan at maiwasan ang sobrang paghihirap at kagutuman ng marami.

Hirap na rin ang pamahalaan na magbigay ng libreng ayuda sa mga mahahalagang kailangan ng mga mamamayan dahil sa kawalan o kakulangan ng buwis na nasisingil nito at sa ngayon, sa pangungutang sa ibang bansa at bangko ang pupwede nitong gawin para magkaroon ng sapat na gastusin.

Kung ganap na mabangkrap ang pamahalaan, paano kung maparalisa at mawalan ng lakas ito para tupdin ang pangunahing tungkulin na pagsilbihan at protektahan ang bayan hindi lang sa problema sa kalusugan kundi sa problema rin sa seguridad, krimen at iba pa?

NAUBOS NGUNIT TULOY ANG LABAN

Isa pang mahalagang usapin sa kahilingang ECQ ang klaro namang kombinasyon ng paubos nang suplay ng mga health worker na nagdyu-duty o nag-aasikaso sa mga may COVID-19 at sobrang paglundag ng mga nahahawaan ng sakit na ito.

Kung iisipin, marami na ang patay na doktor natin at iba pang health workers at libo-libo na ang nagkakasakit sa hanay ng mga ito at pinagbabawalang pumasok upang hindi makahawa at hindi madagdagan ang bilang ng mga patay sa kanilang hanay.

Totoo na marami ang graduate sa pagkadoktor, nars, midwife, medical technologist, technician at iba pa ngunit nananahimik ang mga ito at hindi naman pupwedeng mapilit ang mga ito na lumahok sa giyera sa COVID-19.

Mapipilit lang ang mga ito kung darating na tayo sa puntong matinding-matindi ang kalagayan at magdedeklara ang pamahalaan ng kaukulang batas para tawagin ang lahat ng mamamayan na tumulong para iligtas ang buong bayan sa kapahamakan.

May mga ospital na ring maya't maya isinasara habang punuan na ang mga ospital na private at public ng mga pasyenteng hindi lang may COVID-19 kundi may ibang sakit.

Pero ipagpalagay na nating operational pa ang lahat ng ospital kung wala o kulang ang health worker, hindi rin gagana ang mga ito gaya ng inaasahan ng mga mamamayan.

Kaya hayan at pinagbigyan ang mga doktor at iba pang health workers sa kanilang kahilingan na bigyan sila ng luwag para makapagpahinga kahit kaunti at makaipon ng lakas laban sa pandemya.

Sa gitna nito, nagpahayag na rin mismo ang Philippine Medical Association na tuloy ang kanilang serbisyo at sa ilalim ng MECQ, mapipigilan ang sobrang pagdami ng mga nagkakasakit dahil marerendahan ang kilos ng mga tao na magdudulot ng malawakan na hawaan.

SUMUNOD TAYO

Dapat tayong sumunod sa MECQ na nagsimula nang pairalin para sa sarili nating kaligtasan.

Alam na nating sobrang dami na ang nadidiskubreng may COVID-19 at nakatatakot isiping umabot na tayo sa 4,000-5,000 may impeksyon kada araw.

Isipin na lang natin, pagtama sa kahit isa lang sa ating pamilya, damay-damay na ang lahat, pati ang mga kapitbahay.

MECQ, para sa kaligtasan sa COVID-19 at krisis

August 04, 2020

TITLE: pangkabuhayan

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Nasa 14 araw na paralisado ang lahat kung mangyari ito.

Kaya, hangga't maaari, mga Bro, istriktong sumunod tayo sa mga bawal at hindi bawal sa ilalim ng MECQ.

Kung hindi malinaw ang lahat, makipag-ugnayan lamang po tayo sa ating mga pamahalaang barangay at iba pang mga lokal na pamahalaan para sa kaukulan nating gabay.

Ang isang malinaw para payagan tayong makalabas ng bahay, magagamit pa rin natin ang mga naisyung travel pass.

Sana naman, magkaroon na ng bakuna laban sa COVID-19 at hindi lang tayo aasa sa mga gamot na hindi naman sako laban sa sakit bagama't nakatutulong.

Magtulong-tulong po tayo laban sa mapaminsalang sakit o pandemya na nananalasa sa buong mundo.

Huwag tayong maging sagabal o salungat sa mga hakbang na ginagawa ng pamahalaan para mapagtagumpayan natin ang pandemya.

Breathing space

posted August 04, 2020 at 12:20 am

"There must be a better plan than simply waiting for a vaccine."

Metro Manila returns to a modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) today, largely because of an appeal by the medical community, which says COVID-19 cases are overwhelming hospitals and health care workers.

The dozens of doctors groups led by the Philippine College of Physicians and the Philippine Medical Association sought a two-week lockdown under the more stringent enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) to give hospitals and health workers a breather—or a “timeout” -- from the rush of cases that was filling up beds and ICU facilities in the metropolis.

In response to the appeal, the President, in consultation with the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases, opted for the less restrictive MECQ—a compromise that seeks to balance health and safety considerations with the need to enable businesses to keep running and people to continue working, albeit at a reduced capacity.

Both politically and economically, a return to an ECQ would have been unthinkable, particularly since the country had already endured the longest COVID-19 lockdown in the world—80 days, even longer than Wuhan, China's --with precious little to show for it.

In the wake of the subsequent relaxation of quarantine restrictions, COVID-19 infections began to rise again at an alarming rate, triggering the public cry for help from the medical community.

We are compelled to ask, however, what can be achieved in the two weeks under MECQ that 80 days of ECQ failed to accomplish.

Is the Department of Health going to be any better equipped to deal with the pandemic than it was then? Have we improved COVID-19 testing, detection, isolation and treatment—as well as contact tracing—to the point that we can see an actual drop in cases? Can we make that happen during the two weeks?

Also, are our policymakers any wiser now, and acknowledge the dangers of opening up the economy much too quickly? Even as the medical community was appealing for help, some government officials were pushing for reopening gyms, internet cafes and tutorial centers—with hardly a word as to how these establishments might be made safe.

There must be a better plan than simply waiting for a vaccine.

What, we also need to know, can the hospitals do in two weeks to improve their ability to cope?

In the United States, where the use of face masks has been bizarrely transformed into a political issue, a Delta Air Lines flight was recently turned around because several passengers refused to wear a mask on board. Thankfully, we do not have this kind of trouble with illogical and recalcitrant citizens. Filipinos have been generally cooperative and compliant with community quarantine restrictions—but there is a limit to how much they will accept if no better results are shown.

Only up to 50% of workforce allowed to work on-site in gov't agencies under MECQ

Published August 3, 2020, 8:35 PM

by [Genalyn Kabiling](#)

Government agencies have been directed to operate with up to 50 percent of their total workforce on-site during the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) in Metro Manila and four nearby provinces.



Executive Sec. Salvador Medialdea

In Memorandum Circular No. 79, Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea laid down the work arrangements government offices should observe under MECQ to ensure continuous delivery of services while observing the community quarantine guidelines.

The latest Palace circular defined operational capacity as the number of employees who can be permitted or required to physically report to work on-site in a government agency.

Skeleton workforce, on the other hand, refers to the operational capacity that utilizes the smallest number of people needed for a government agency to perform its function.

“All government agencies and instrumentalities of the executive branch, including GOCCs (government-owned or -controlled corporations), located in all geographical areas under MECQ shall adopt a skeleton workforce up to a maximum of 50 % operational capacity at any given time unless a higher operational capacity is required in agencies providing health and emergency frontline services, border control and other critical services,” the circular read.

All concerned government agencies have also been directed to ensure the delivery of their services are “not hampered or impaired.” In this regard, Medialdea said all heads of agencies must also adopt the “most appropriate alternative work arrangements” for their respective agencies in accordance with the Civil Service Commission’s rules and regulations.

The Palace has also urged the offices of the legislature and judiciary, independent constitutional commissions and bodies as well as local government units located in MECQ places to adopt the same work arrangements.

The order took effect immediately after it was signed by Medialdea on Monday.

President Duterte has placed Metro Manila, Laguna, Cavite, Rizal, and Bulacan under MECQ from August 4 to 18 following an appeal from the medical community for stricter measures to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

The tougher lockdown includes the reimposition of the ban on public transportation, limited operations of certain businesses, prohibition on mass gatherings, and domestic travel restrictions.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/03/only-up-to-50-of-workforce-allowed-to-work-on-site-in-govt-agencies-under-mecq/?fbclid=IwAR2oeLwDTu5dyPzoEtSjtibmxxC0SSmYoi3YUPOZXv5Y2jTVI5MlloCYxs>

Mass transport suspended, quarantine passes required under MECQ

Published 11 hours ago on August 3, 2020 07:27 PM

By [Kristina Maralit](#)



Mass transport services will be prohibited and quarantine passes required anew in areas reverted to modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) from general community quarantine, Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Eduardo Año reminded Monday.

Metro Manila, as well as the provinces of Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal, will shift back to MECQ starting midnight of 4 August until the 18th due to the continuing increase in coronavirus disease (COVID-19) cases, and to give medical workers some breathing space to avert the collapse of the healthcare system in these areas.

“We’ve been through MECQ before, so what we will enforce is the same starting midnight tonight,” he said in a radio interview.

To ferry essential workers and other authorized persons outside residence (APOR), Año said the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease (IATF-MEID) will allow point-to-point shuttle services and are also encouraging the use of bicycles and motorcycles but without passengers.

Tricycles, meanwhile, will be allowed to ply the roads subject to guidelines laid down by local government units.

“They will be allowed outside only if the purpose of their travels is for necessities and essentials. Quarantine passes will also be required again,” stated the DILG chief.

The issuance of quarantine passes, Año said, was upon the agreement of the DILG and mayors of LGUs comprising the National Capital Region (NCR).

Under the MECQ, the halfway point between the ECQ and GCQ, business previously allowed to resume operations have to close again or operate under limited workforce and capacity.

These include barber shops and salons, restaurants with dine-in services, pet grooming services, and drive-in cinemas, among others.



Issues on West Philippine Sea to be dealt peacefully — AFP chief Gapay

Published August 3, 2020 1:38pm

By ANNA FELICIA BAJO, GMA News

Newly-installed Armed Forces chief Lieutenant General Gilbert Gapay on Monday said territorial issues in the West Philippine Sea would be dealt with based on the rule of law.

At a virtual press briefing, Gapay said the Duterte administration is enforcing a "realistic and pragmatic approach" in addressing territorial issues in the resource-rich region, without undermining the Philippines' national interest.

Gapay said President Rodrigo Duterte never instructed the military to stop patrolling the area.

"Still, as part of the national direction in addressing the West Philippine Sea issue, we still abide by resolving this conflict or issues peacefully and based on the rule of law. That's our guarding principles and as we perform our mandate in upholding our sovereignty and preserving our territorial integrity in that Western part of the country," Gapay said.

Meanwhile, Gapay said he expects that the country's good relationship with China, which is claiming the entire South China Sea, would continue, especially now that there is a threat from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It has warmed up already, we have seen how China helped us [in] the onslaught of COVID-19 pandemic in terms of giving PPEs, medical supplies..." Gapay said.

Earlier, Gapay said he would continue to push for the modernization of the military in order to uphold the country's sovereignty as well as the integrity of the national territory.

He noted that the military is the protector of the people.

Gapay, who belongs to Philippine Military Academy "Sinagtala" Class of 1986, replaced retired General Felimon Santos Jr., who is his batchmate.

Earlier in the day, Defense chief Delfin Lorenzana presided over the change of command ceremony between Santos and Gapay at the Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City. — **RSJ, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/749618/issues-on-west-philippine-sea-to-be-dealt-peacefully-afp-chief-gapay/story/>

Meralco won't get away with steep electric bills under MECQ

By Azer Parrocha August 3, 2020, 7:05 pm



MANILA – Malacañang is confident that Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) will not charge subscribers with excessively high electric bills in areas under modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ).

Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said that since Meralco did not get away with charging jacked up fees in the past, the same would be true despite President Rodrigo Duterte's decision to revert Metro Manila, Laguna, Rizal, Cavite and Bulacan to MECQ.

"Hindi na po siguro mauulit 'yan dahil hindi naman sila nakalusot nung unang pagkakataon (I don't think it would happen again because they didn't get away the first time it happened)," Roque said in a virtual Palace briefing on Monday.

He said the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) was swift in addressing subscribers' concerns, even asking Meralco to give them refunds.

Meralco subscribers have been complaining about the sudden spike in their electricity bills since community quarantine was imposed in the country.

Lawmakers accused the power utility giant of overcharging since no meter reading took place during the quarantine.

There were also allegations over the lack of transparency on how the bills were calculated.

As of end-June, Meralco said it has already completed meter readings.

Currently, electric bills dispatched are already based on actual meter readings.

Meralco also vowed to refund overpayments that it had collected from its 6.9 million subscribers especially during the questioned billing months of March to May this year.

The power utility giant said it has been tending to subscriber complaints by answering questions on their electricity consumption, especially during the quarantine period.

Roque earlier said President Rodrigo Duterte has raised concern over the excessive electricity bills of Meralco.

On Sunday night, Duterte heeded medical front-liners' call to revert to a more stringent quarantine classification to prevent a collapse in the country's healthcare system. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1111013>

Magnitude 6.4 earthquake jolts Cotabato City

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Aug 2, 2020 7:03:38 AM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, August 2) — A magnitude 6.4 earthquake struck Cotabato City in Maguindanao early Sunday morning.

The tectonic quake, which was earlier recorded at 6.1 magnitude, hit at 1:08 a.m. and was located 13 kilometers (km) east of Cotabato, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said.

It had a depth of 543 km.

Intensity II was recorded in Alabel and Malungon in Sarangani.

Meanwhile, Intensity I was felt in Tupi, General Santos City and Koronadal City, South Cotabato; and Kiamba, Sarangani.

Phivolcs said no damage was recorded so far. However, aftershocks are expected.

"Pwede pong magka-aftershocks kasi mataas ang magnitude, pero hindi natin inaasahang maging damaging ang paglindol kanina," Phivolcs director Renato Solidum told CNN Philippines' Newsroom Weekend.

[Translation: Aftershocks are possible due to the high magnitude, but we are not expecting that the quake earlier would bring further damage.]

An earthquake also struck Surigao del Sur and other areas in Mindanao last week.

A magnitude [5.8 tectonic earthquake hit Hinatuan town](#), while a weak tremor was recorded in nine other nearby areas.

Solidum said last week's quake was not connected to the tremor in Maguindanao.

"Wala pong kaugnayan ang lindol noong July 31, dahil buhat ito ng pagkilos sa Philippine Trench sa eastern side ng Mindanao...hindi po sila magkaugnay."

[Translation: The quake that hit last July 31 was caused by a movement along the Philippine Trench on the eastern side of Mindanao...the quakes are not connected.]

Phivolcs reminds the public to conduct a self-check on the integrity of their houses and infrastructure to prepare for any strong earthquake that may cause significant damage to property.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/regional/2020/8/2/Cotabato-Maguindanao-quake.html>

Dindo exits PAR, now on way to China; Habagat to bring rains over Batanes, Babuyan

Published August 3, 2020 11:46am

Severe Tropical Storm Dindo (international name: Hagupit) exited the Philippine Area of Responsibility on Monday morning, PAGASA said in its severe weather bulletin.

Dindo has slightly intensified as it moves northwest toward the East China Sea. It may make landfall over Zhejiang Province in China on Tuesday morning.

Meanwhile, the southwest monsoon (habagat) continues to affect parts of Luzon.

The monsoon will bring occasional rains over Batanes and the Babuyan Islands.

PAGASA raised a gale warning over the northern and western seaboard of Northern Luzon and the western seaboard of Central Luzon. Coastal waters in these areas will be rough to very rough, with waves reaching as tall as 4.5 meters.

Small seacraft were advised to take precautions as coastal waters in other seaboard of Luzon will be moderate to rough.

PAGASA said Dindo exited PAR at 9 a.m. At 10 a.m., it was located 555 km north northeast of Basco, Batanes. Dindo had maximum sustained winds of up to 100 km/h near the center and gustiness of up to 125 km/h, and was moving north northwest at 15 km/h.

Meanwhile, PAGASA is monitoring a low pressure area (LPA) located 450 km east southeast of Davao City.

The LPA, which is less likely to intensify into a tropical depression in the next 48 hours, may bring scattered rains and thunderstorms over Caraga and the Davao Region. —**KG, GMA News**

Scientists study coronavirus outbreaks among minks in

August 04, 2020

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Scientists study coronavirus outbreaks among minks in Europe

By [Associated Press](#)

August 3, 2020

MADRID: Coronavirus outbreaks at mink farms in Spain and the Netherlands have scientists digging into how the animals got infected and if they can spread it to people.



In this Dec. 6, 2012 file photo, minks look out of a cage at a fur farm in the village of Litusovo, northeast of Minsk, Belarus. Coronavirus outbreaks at mink farms in Spain and the Netherlands have scientists digging into how the animals got infected and if they can spread it to people. (AP Photo/Sergei Grits, File)

In the meantime, authorities have killed more than 1 million minks at breeding farms in both countries as a precaution.

The virus that first infected people in China late last year came from an animal source, probably bats, and later spread from person to person, as other coronaviruses had done in the past. Some animals, including cats, tigers and dogs, have picked up the new coronavirus from people, but there hasn't been a documented case of animals spreading it back to humans.

The outbreaks among the minks on farms in the Netherlands and Spain likely started with infected workers, although officials aren't certain. But it also is "plausible" that some workers later caught the virus back from the minks, the Dutch government and a researcher said, and scientists are exploring whether that was the case and how much of a threat such a spread might be.

The outbreak at the Spanish mink farm near La Puebla de Valverde, a village of 500 people, was discovered after seven of the 14 employees, including the owner, tested positive in late May, said Joaquín Olona, regional chief of agriculture and environment. Two other employees got infected even after the operation was shut down.

More than 92,000 minks were ordered killed at the farm in the Aragon region of northeastern Spain, with nine out of 10 animals estimated to have contracted the virus.

After the Dutch outbreaks began in April, professor Wim van der Poel, a veterinarian who studies viruses at Wageningen University and Research, determined that the virus strain in the animals was similar to the one circulating among humans.

"We assumed it was possible that it would be transmitted back to people again," the virus expert said, and that's what appeared to have happened with at least two of the infected workers.

Richard Ostfeld, a researcher at the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook, New York, said that if confirmed, these would be the first known instances of animal-to-human transmission.

"With the evidence for farmed mink-to-human transmission, we definitely need to be concerned with the potential for domesticated animals that are infected to pass on their infection to us," Ostfeld said by email.

Scientists study coronavirus outbreaks among minks in

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The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says some coronaviruses that infect animals can be spread to humans and then spread between people, but it adds that this is rare.

Both the World Health Organization and the Paris-based World Organization for Animal Health are studying the transmission of the virus between animals and people. Several universities and research institutes also are examining the issue.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has noted that the transmission on the mink breeding farms could have happened both ways. But WHO's Dr. Maria Van Kerkhove said at a news conference last month that such transmission was "very limited."

"This gives us some clues about which animals may be susceptible to infection and this will help us as we learn more about the potential animal reservoir of (the virus)," she said, referring to cases in the Netherlands and Denmark, another major producer of mink fur.

While scientists think the virus originated in bats, it may have passed through another animal before infecting people. A WHO team is currently in China, planning to study the issue.

More than 1.1 million minks have been killed on 26 Dutch farms that recorded outbreaks, according to the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority. The government announced Thursday that minks at a 27th farm also were infected and would be killed.

The Netherlands, which has some 160 mink farms, is the world's fourth-biggest producer of the prized fur after Denmark, China and Poland, according to Wim Verhagen, director of the Dutch federation of fur farmers. Spain has 38 active mink breeding operations, most of them in northwestern Galicia.

Both Spain and the Netherlands have tightened hygiene protocols at mink farms and banned transportation of the animals and visits to the buildings where they are kept.

China, which produces about a third of the mink fur market, and the US have not reported any virus outbreaks in minks or in animals at other farms.

Source: https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/08/03/news/latest-stories/scientists-study-coronavirus-outbreaks-among-minks-in-europe/750084/?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR2TN5x0vgx9oHw_1DWySUvzRtrDIPBBVe3-HzZopdHi1Fx2hosyv2V1jpQ#Echobox=1596441826

Firefighters struggle to contain blaze in southern California

Published 13 hours ago on August 3, 2020 05:32 PM

By [Agence France-Presse](#)



Record low moisture in the vegetation, low humidity and high temperatures are fueling the Apple Fire. (Yahoo)

More than 2,200 firefighters were battling a blaze that was burning out of control Monday in southern California, threatening thousands of people and homes east of Los Angeles.

The Apple Fire, which broke out Friday near the city of San Bernardino, has so far burnt more than 20,000 acres (8,000 hectares), sending up columns of smoke visible for miles.

Record low moisture in the vegetation, low humidity, and high temperatures are fuelling the blaze, the United States Forest Service said.

At least 2,600 homes and nearly 7,800 people were evacuated. Officials said it was not clear when they might be able to return.

By early Monday about 2,260 firefighters backed by helicopters, water-dumping planes, and trucks were working to put out the fire.

Crews managed to contain five percent of the fire by Monday, after losing control of the blaze during Sunday afternoon.

There were no reports of casualties, and the only damage so far has been to two buildings and one home.

The edges of the fire are burning on rugged hills hard for crews to reach, authorities said.

Dense vegetation fueled the blaze near homes, said Fernando Herrera, fire chief in Riverside County, while hot and dry conditions Monday will help the flames keep alive.

Officials said the fire may have been set deliberately and a probe is underway.