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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service

Cebu City recovering COVID cases, death rate decline

Published 3 hours ago on August 7, 2020 03:16 AM

By [Rico Osmeña](#)



Cebu City is on its way to recovery with its coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases and death rates dropping.

Inter-Agency Task Force Cebu overseer and Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said the welcome development can be attributed to stricter implementation of quarantine protocols and Cebuanos' compliance with rules.

"There was a time when the National Capital Region and Cebu City were taking turns as epicenters of COVID-19," Cimatu said.

Cimatu said the death rate averages one or two daily, although new cases have remained in double figures since the end of July.

However, Cimatu reiterated it is not a time to be complacent yet as cases continue to rise, albeit slower.

As of 5 August, Cebu City has 2,623 active cases (out of 9,150 confirmed), 5,992 recoveries and 535 deaths.

Cimatu is optimistic Cebu City's risk classification by 16 August will be downgraded to modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) from the current GCQ.

Cimatu is likewise hoping for MGCQ status for Talisay City and the municipalities of Minglanilla and Consolacion.

"That is our direction for now. We are already headed there. We will be making recommendations regarding that," Cimatu said.

Talisay has 91 active cases out of a total 790, 620 recoveries and 79 deaths; Minglanilla has 99 active cases out of 415 total confirmed, 297 recoveries and 19 deaths; and Consolacion has 172 active cases out of 413 confirmed cases, 216 recoveries and 25 fatalities.

Denied access to ostriches, DENR mulls legal action

Published August 6, 2020, 7:05 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is mulling to take legal action if its personnel will continue to be denied access to the ostriches that were seen running loose in a Quezon City village.

Undersecretary Benny Antiporda on Thursday said a technical and medical team from the DENR-National Capital Region (NCR) and Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) immediately proceeded to the subdivision the day the ostriches were spotted in a viral video.

“Apparently, they were denied access to the village/subdivision by the guards. As of this moment, the team is again in the area to coordinate with the subdivision’s HOA (homeowners’ association) and LGU (local government unit) to investigate and get details on the matter,” he said.

Antiporda said the team was also expected to conduct regular inspection and monitoring of wildlife permittees in the village concerned.

“In case we will be denied access (by the owner of the ostriches), then we will be constrained to explore legal action and to deal with the matter accordingly,” he pointed out.

Antiporda however said the DENR-NCR and BMB team is still determining who is the real owner or caretaker of the ostriches because they found out that the cage was located in a vacant lot inside the subdivision.

On Thursday, the Philippine Animal Welfare Society also called on the DENR to revoke the wildlife permits of those who are clearly unfit to care for wild animals noting that the ostriches “did not appear to be in good health in the videos.”

Their feathers were covered in grime and there were bald spots on their bodies, the group said.

PAWS also asked the DENR to enforce stricter screening measures in granting wildlife permits.

QC suburb denies DENR access to ostriches who breached lockdown

By: [Katrina Hallare](#) - Reporter / [@KHallareINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 07:42 PM August 06, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — A team from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) was denied access to the Quezon City subdivision where two ostriches ran loose days ago, an official of the department said.

DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, in a message to reporters, said that on the day the ostriches were spotted taking a stroll in Mapayapa Village III in Diliman, the DENR-NCR immediately deployed a technical team, accompanied by experts from the Biodiversity Management Bureau Veterinary Medicine, to the area to conduct an inspection and to check whether the owners of the wild birds have secured the necessary permits.

“Apparently, they were denied access to the village/subdivision by the guards... As of this moment, the team is again in the area to coordinate with the subdivision’s [home owners association] and [local government unit] to investigate and get details on the matter,” he said.

Antiporda said that the department will resort to legal action if the subdivision will continue to bar the team from conducting its inspection.

“Likewise, they will be conducting the regular inspection monitoring of wildlife permittees in the village.”

“In case we will be denied access, then we will be constrained to explore legal action and to deal with the matter accordingly,” he added.

As of writing, it was not determined however, if the team was allowed to enter inside the village.

The two ostriches running loose inside the subdivision became a [social media spectacle](#), with some speculating that the wild animals could have been trying to make a quarantine breach. They were eventually caught by a security guard and several construction workers in the area, apparently after the wild birds failed to produce a quarantine pass.

After the incident, the Philippine Animal Welfare Society, meanwhile, then urged the DENR to enforce tighter measures in giving permits to carers of wild animals.

EDV



Members of the DENR Biodiversity Management Bureau proceeded to the subdivision but they were denied access by the security guards, according to Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda.

STAR/ File

DENR mulls suit vs subdivision over loose ostriches

[Elizabeth Marcelo](#) (The Philippine Star) - August 7, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is considering taking legal action against the subdivision association in Quezon City for denying entry to its team to investigate the incident of two ostriches seen running loose around the village on Tuesday.

Members of the DENR Biodiversity Management Bureau proceeded to the subdivision but they were denied access by the security guards, according to Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda.

The team again went to the village yesterday to get details about the incident. But as of late afternoon, Antiporda said it remained unclear whether they were allowed entry to the area.

Antiporda said they coordinated with the homeowners' association and the local government unit.

On Tuesday, two ostriches were seen running loose at Mapayapa Village 3 in Barangay Pasong Tamo, causing a stir among residents and visitors of the subdivision.

Nag-viral na 2 ostrich sa QC 'di na matunton, may-ari 'nagtago' na



August 6, 2020 @ 8:11 PM 10 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Naglahong parang bula ang dalawang nag-viral sa social media na ostrich matapos makitang nakawala o pagala-gala sa isang village sa Quezon City nitong Martes.

Kinumpirma ito ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) undersecretary Benny Antiporda matapos na agad rumesponde ang ahensya sa Mapayapa Village III.

“Ang masakit, wala na ‘yung ostrich doon... since wala na ‘yung ostrich ine-establish pa namin kung sino’ng may-ari ng kulungan na ‘yan at kung sino ang pwedeng kasuhan so we’re trying to check on it pa kung ano talaga ang sitwasyon niyan and ‘yung source o pinanggalingan ng ostrich,” ani Antiporda sa panayam ng ABS-CBN News.

Ayon naman kay Ana Cabel, kawani ng QC Veterinary Office, nakausap umano nila ang katiwala ng may-ari ng dalawang ostrich ngunit hindi naman ito umamin sa kinororoonan ng dalawang hayop.

Tanging transport permit lamang mula DENR ang ipinakita nito.

“Nilayo na daw ang ostrich, hindi alam kung saan dinala. Hanggang ngayon hindi nagpapakita ang may-ari, katiwala lang ang nakausap nila.”

Giit ni Antiporda, walang saysay ang transport permit dahil hindi naman nito mapatutunayan ang legalidad ng pagmamay-ari sa naturang mga hayop bagkus ang sadyang kinakailangan ay wildlife permit.

“Kasi transport (permit) ‘yan eh, kailangan from where to where ... ang tanong ... paano napunta ‘yan (ostrich) sa QC ‘yan? Kaya titingnan din natin sino ang nag-issue ng transport permit na ‘yan,” ani Antiporda.

“As of now wala kaming permittee kaya hinahanap namin ‘yan,” dagdag pa niya.

Patuloy ang isinasagawang imbestigasyon ng dalawang opisina para matunton ang dalawang hayop maging ang mga may-ari nito. **RNT**

DENR hinarang sa subdivision na may ostrich

By Abante Tonite — Last updated Aug 6, 2020

NEWS



Magsasagawa umano ng ligal na aksyon ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) kung patuloy pang haharangin na makapasok ang kanilang team sa isang subdibisyon sa Quezon City kung saan nakunan ang viral video ng tumatakbong mga ostrich.

Noong Martes unang kumalat sa social media ang video, noong araw ding iyon nagpunta umano ang team ng DENR at Biodiversity Management Bureau Veterinary Medicine pero hindi pinapasok ng mga guwardiya ng subdibisyon, ayon kay Undersecretary Benny Antiporda.

Kahapon muling nagpadala ng team ang DENR para magsagawa ng monitoring sa mga may hawak ng wildlife permit sa lugar.

Ayon sa DENR, pinapayagan naman ang pag-aalaga ng ostrich basta sumusunod ito sa Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act at may kaukulang dokumento.

DENR denied entry to subdivision with ostriches, mulls taking legal action

Published August 6, 2020 5:22pm

By JOVILAND RITA, GMA News

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Thursday threatened to take legal action if its team will continue to be barred from entering a Quezon City subdivision where ostriches were earlier sighted running loose.

On Tuesday, [videos showing ostriches running](#) around a subdivision went viral online.

That same day, a technical team from the DENR–National Capital Region with the Biodiversity Management Bureau Veterinary Medicine went to the area but failed to enter the subdivision.

“Apparently, they were denied access to the village/subdivision by the guards,” Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said in a message to reporters.

He said the DENR returned to the subdivision on Thursday to coordinate with the homeowners' associations and concerned local government unit officials to investigate and get details on the matter.

“Likewise, they will be conducting the regular inspection monitoring of wildlife permittees in the village,” Antiporda said. As of this posting, it was not yet known if the team had been finally allowed entry to the subdivision.

“In case we will be denied access, then we will be constrained to explore legal action and to deal with the matter accordingly,” he added.

According to the DENR, keeping an ostrich in subdivisions is legal, as long as it is compliant with [Republic Act No. 9147](#) and supported by necessary documents.

The keepers of wildlife should have financial and technical capability, as well as facility to maintain them, the DENR noted.

Following the incident, the [Philippine Animal Welfare Society](#) urged the DENR to revoke the wildlife permits issued to “unfit” carers and enforce stricter screening measures. **-MDM, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/metro/750150/denr-denied-entry-to-subdivision-with-ostriches-mulls-taking-legal-action/story/>

2 viral ostrich sa QC village inilipat sa di tiyak na lugar, may-ari tinutukoy pa, ayon sa mga opisyal

Josiah Antonio, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Aug 06 2020 06:47 PM | Updated as of Aug 06 2020 07:30 PM

MAYNILA — Wala na sa village sa Quezon City ang 2 ostrich na nag-viral matapos makuhanang tumatakbo sa lugar nitong Martes, ayon sa mga opisyal.

Ayon kay Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) undersecretary Benny Antiporda, pumunta ang ahensya sa Mapayapa Village III pero hindi na nakita ang mga hayop sa lugar.

"Ang masakit, wala na 'yung ostrich doon... since wala na 'yung ostrich ine-establish pa namin kung sinong may-ari ng kulungan na 'yan at kung sino ang pwedeng kasuhan so we're trying to check on it pa kung ano talaga ang sitwasyon niyan and 'yung source ng pinanggalingan ng ostrich," sinabi ni Antiporda sa panayam ng ABS-CBN News.

Kinumpirma rin ni Ana Cabel mula sa veterinarian's office ng siyudad na nakausap nila ang katiwala ng may-ari ng 2 ostrich at tumangging sabihin kung nasaan ang mga hayop at tanging transport permit lang mula sa DENR ang naipakita.

"Nilayo na daw ang ostrich, hindi alam kung saan dinala. Hanggang ngayon hindi nagpapakita ang may ari, katiwala lang ang nakausap nila," aniya.

Ayon kay Antiporda, hindi mapapatunayan ng transport permit ang legalidad ng pag-aari ng naturang hayop. Aniya, ang kailangang prweba ng legal na pag-aalaga ng ostrich ay isang wildlife permit.

"Kasi transport (permit) 'yan eh, kailangan from where to where ... ang tanong ... paano napunta 'yan (ostrich) sa QC 'yan. Kaya titingnan din natin sino ang nag-issue ng transport permit na 'yan," ani Antiporda.

"As of now wala kaming permittee kaya hinahanap namin 'yan," dagdag pa niya.

Patuloy pa rin ang imbestigasyon ng dalawang opisina hinggil sa naturang insidente.

Epekto sa biodiversity

Ayon kay Cabel, hindi maayos ang lote na tinirahan ng mga ostrich at hindi sang-ayon sa ostrich brooding management protocols ng Philippine Ostrich and Crocodile Farms Inc, partikular sa espasyo.

"Hindi s'ya sang-ayon sa isang animal control facility, bare open lot lang s'ya, no roof or any housing, ano kaya pinapakain n'ya?" ani Cabel.

Dagdag pa ni Antiporda, may negative impact sa biodiversity ang pag-aalaga sa mga hayop tulad ng ostrich.

"Mayroon tayong endangered species, this shall promote a negative impact to the biodiversity. Kasi first of all, 'yung mga endangered species natin ginagawang pet sa bahay na para bang trophy nila without even thinking about the situation of the animal," ani Antiporda.

"So 'yun 'yung bagay na ating pinangangalagaan as of now na masiguro sa taumbayan na kapag nag-alaga ka ng mga endangered species o ano pa mang bagay na kailangan ng permit eh kapag nilabag mo 'yan talagang hahabulin ka ng DENR o labag sa batas 'yan," dagdag pa niya.

Saan dapat nakatira ang mga ostrich?

Ayon kay Anna Cabrera ng Philippine Animal Welfare Society, hindi mainam na mag-alaga ng mga wild animal katulad ng ostrich dahil may ilang mga pangangailangang hindi maibibigay sa kanila lalo na't sila'y nasa isang urban area.

"Hindi talaga dapat kine-keep as pets ang mga wild animals. Maraming needs o pangangailangan ang mga ostrich na hindi mapo-provide ng mga tao in terms of space, proper nutrition, exercise and socialization - lalo na't kung nakatira sa isang residential subdivision," sinabi ni Cabrera sa ABS-CBN News.

"Maaaring katuwaan lamang ang pag-keep ng exotic animals sa isang kolektor ngunit nagsa-suffer ang mga ostriches when they are kept as pets," aniya.

TITLE: 2 viral ostrich sa QC village inilipat sa di tiyak na
lugar, may-ari tinutukoy pa, ayon sa mga opisyal

PAGE 1/ 2/2

August 07, 2020

DATE

Dagdag pa ni Cabrera, maaaring nakakatuwa sa una ang pagtangkang pagtakas ng mga ostrich ngunit bakas sa hayop na ito ang takot na nararanasan nila.

"While the incident may have been humorous at first glance, medyo nag-worry kami about the handling of the ostrich. For sure, matinding takot ang naramdaman ng mga ostrich habang sila ay tumatakbo sa daan," ani Cabrera.

"Ang mga hayop na ito ay nase-stress sa loud sounds at vibrations. May mga enrichment, space and enclosure requirements na obviously ay hindi nasunod kaya't nakawala sila. The people who tried to capture the ostrich probably did not know that adult ostriches can kill lions with a powerful kick," dagdag pa niya.


Ayon kay Cabrera, mas mainam na sa mga santuaryo manatili ang mga ostrich kung saan handa silang alagaan at maibigay ang kanilang mga pangangailangan.

"The ostriches should be placed in sanctuaries instead and the DENR or animal welfare groups can coordinate with international wildlife protection organizations who may be willing to spend to place these ostriches in sanctuaries," aniya.

"More importantly, people should not be allowed to keep them as pets."

News5 9h · 🌐

Agad daw pinuntahan ng DENR ang lugar kung saan natagpuan ang viral na ostrich sa Quezon City noong Lunes, pero hindi sila pinapasok roon. Pumunta muli ang kanilang team ngayong araw para makipag-coordinate sa home owners association at local government unit para mag-imbestiga at mag-inspeksyon.



“
The DENR NCR technical team together with [Biodiversity Management Bureau Veterinary Medicine] immediately proceeded to the area that day. Apparently, they were denied access to the village/subdivision by the guards.
”
In case we will be denied access, then we will be constrained to explore legal action and to deal with the matter accordingly.

USEC. BENNY ANTIPORDA
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
AUGUST 6, 2020

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PAWS calls on DENR to review wildlife permits after

August 07, 2020

TITLE: 2 ostriches ran loose in QC

PAGE 1/ 1/2

DATE

PAWS calls on DENR to review wildlife permits after 2 ostriches ran loose in QC

Published August 6, 2020, 9:14 AM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) deplored how loosely permits are handed out to people who keep animals as pets in the country, after ostriches were spotted running carefree in a private subdivision in Quezon City.



(PAWS / MANILA BULLETIN)

“Loud sounds and being near roads or running vehicles cause ostriches great stress. For this reason alone, permits should not be granted for the keeping of these animals in residential areas,” PAWS said on social media on Thursday.

“The ostriches in the video were confused and terrified. The birds could have easily been injured or could have caused harm when they were cornered. The ordinary citizens who attempted to capture the animal were probably not aware that ostriches can inflict lacerations with their sharp toe nails or break human bones with one powerful kick,” it added.

Seeing the ostriches running around without a caretaker chasing after them only demonstrates that the owner is not capable of effectively controlling the animals or monitoring them, PAWS pointed out.

It called on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to revoke the wildlife permits of those who are clearly unfit to care for wild animals and to enforce stricter screening measures in granting permits.

PAWS explained that a wild animal’s needs can never be sufficiently met by its keepers. Ostriches, for instance, aside from a special diet, need at least 1,100 square meters of space and extremely tall fencing to prevent escapes.

“A wildlife permit holder is required to have a wildlife veterinarian check regularly on the animals. However, the ostriches did not appear to be in good health in the videos. Their feathers were covered in grime and there were bald spots on their bodies,” it said.

The group also reminded authorities of how virulent zoonotic diseases could rise out of man’s exploitation of wild animals as demonstrated by the coronavirus pandemic.



PAWS calls on DENR to review wildlife permits after

August 07, 2020

TITLE: 2 ostriches ran loose in QC

PAGE 1/ 2/2

DATE

PAWS said the DENR should clamp down on wildlife collectors and strictly implement the Republic Act (RA) 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001.

Under RA 9147, the penalty depends not only on the act committed but also on the conservation status of the wildlife.

The highest penalties are imposed on those guilty of killing critically endangered wildlife—jail term of six years and one day to 12 years and/or payment of fine ranging from ₱100,000 to ₱1 million.

For hunting and trading, the penalty ranges from two to four years of imprisonment and/or fine of ₱30,000 to ₱300,000 for hunting and ₱5,000 to ₱300,000 for trading wildlife.

For the transport of wildlife, the penalty is six months to one-year imprisonment and/or ₱50,000 to ₱100,000 fine.

PAWS to DENR: Enforce tighter measures on those keeping wildlife as pets

By: [Katrina Hallare](#) - Reporter / [@KHallareINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 11:39 AM August 06, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — Days after two ostriches ran loose in a Quezon City subdivision, the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) is urging the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to enforce tighter measures in granting permits to keep wildlife as pets.

PAWS, in a statement on Wednesday, also asked the DENR to revoke the permits of those “unfit” to care for wild animals.

“PAWS calls on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to revoke the wildlife permits of those who are clearly unfit to care for wild animals and to enforce stricter screening measures in granting permits,” the animal welfare group said.

The recent incident involving the ostriches, PAWS added, showed “how loosely permits are handed out to people who keep wild animals as pets in our country.”

“Loud sounds and being near roads or running vehicles cause ostriches great stress,” the group said. “For this reason alone, permits should not be granted for the keeping of these animals in residential areas.”

The two “quarantine violators”, who were spotted running loose inside Mapayapa Village III in Diliman, Quezon City on Tuesday, became a spectacle on social media. They were eventually caught by a security guard and several construction workers in the area.

“The ostriches in the video were confused and terrified,” PAWS said of the birds’ conditions. “The birds could have easily been injured or could have caused harm when they were cornered.”

PAWS also slammed the owner of the ostriches, saying: “The fact that the ostriches were running around for as long as they did with no caretaker chasing after them demonstrates that the owner is not capable of effectively controlling the animals or monitoring them.”

“PAWS condemns the keeping of wildlife as pets as it is unethical to allow people to keep them at the cost of these animals’ misery. Further, a wild animal’s needs can never be sufficiently met by its keepers.”

The animal welfare group also urged the DENR to clamp down on wildlife collectors, as well as to strictly implement the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act.

PAWS said the DENR should clamp down on wildlife collectors and strictly implement the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, especially during this time of a pandemic “when Mother Nature has firmly demonstrated that virulent zoonotic diseases arise out of man’s exploitation of wild animals.”

/MUF
Source: https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1317529/paws-to-denr-enforce-tighter-measures-on-those-keeping-wildlife-as-pets?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR3MxsnWEI22P1KiJyFTnN8IHMYZGibUlgOfXGp7BmGkelOaYQ4AfE3euY4#Echobox=1596685388

Sa ostrich incident: Pag-iisyu ng permit sa 'unfit' carers pinahihigpitan



August 6, 2020 @ 2:35 PM 18 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Hinikayat ng Philippine Animal Welfare Society ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources na paghigpitan ang wildlife permits na iniisyu sa “unfit” carers at magpatupad ng mas maigting na screening measures.

Ito ang naging pahayag ng PAWS makaraang maganap ang insidente kung saan dalawang ostrich ang tumatakbo sa isang pribadong subdibisyon sa Quezon City.

Maaari anila ito magresulta sa serious injury sa tao na huhuli sa kanila at ang mga natatakot na hayop.

“Loud sounds and being near roads or running vehicles cause ostriches great stress. For this reason alone, permits should not be granted for the keeping of these animals in residential areas,” saad sa pahayag.

“The birds could have easily been injured or could have caused harm when they were cornered.”

“The ordinary citizens who attempted to capture the animal were probably not aware that ostriches can inflict lacerations with their sharp toenails or break human bones with one powerful kick,” dagdag pa ng grupo.

Samantala, batay naman sa DENR ay legal ito hanggat sumusunod sa Republic Act No. 9147 at suportado ng ilang dokumento. **RNT/FGDC**

Bayawak nakitang gumagala sa isang subdivision sa Davao City

Andoreena Causon, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Aug 06 2020 05:59 PM

Kung may tumakas na ostrich sa isang village sa Quezon City at nakawalang baboy at baka sa gitna ng trapiko sa mga kalsada sa Cebu at Iloilo, isang monitor lizard o bayawak naman ang namataang gumagala sa Davao City.

Kuwento ng nakakuha ng video na si Maverick Dave Cantillo, palabas siya ng isang subdivision sa Barangay Ma-a nitong Miyerkoles nang nakita ang bayawak na gumagapang sa daan na tila naghahanap ng pagkain.

Agad namang tumakbo sa damuhan ang bayawak nang nakatunog na may parating na kotse.

Ayon kay Cantillo, namangha siya lalo't unang beses niyang makakita ng bayawak.

Pero hindi ito ang unang beses na may nakitang bayawak sa lugar.

Ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources Region XI, tahimik kasi ang lugar kaya posibleng lumabas ang bayawak para maghanap ng pagkain.

Noong nakaraang buwan, limang tarsier naman ang namataan at na-rescue ng mga residente ng Megkawayan, sa Calinan sa parehong siyudad.

"Actually dili lang man bayawak ang makita dinhi sa atong City kundi halos tanan mga wildlife nanggawas na siya. One of the possible reasons is kanang mag-search sila og food. Maybe because of the absence of noise na nanggagaling sa mga tao even though na MGCQ na ta still limited lang gihapon ang movement sa mga tao," ani Jayvee Jude Agas, chief ng regional public affairs office ng DENR XI.

(Actually hindi lang bayawak ang makikita dito sa lungsod kundi halos lahat ng mga wildife lumalabas sila. One of the possible reasons is maghahanap sila ng pagkain. Maybe because of the absence of noise na nanggagaling sa mga tao. Even though na MGCQ na still limited pa rin ang movement ng mga tao.)

Paalala ng DENR na huwag galawin at i-report agad sa ahensya kung makakita ng wild animals.

Kapwa itinuturing na vulnerable species o under threat ang bayawak at tarsier at nanganganib na mawala kapag hindi naprotektahan.

Rising volume of intercepted PH pangolins tied to Chinese influx

By: [Jhesset O. Enano](#) - Reporter / [@JhessetEnanoINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:44 AM August 06, 2020



IN DEMAND Philippine pangolins—like this batch confiscated from a wildlife trafficker in Palawan in July 2018—have been found kept in residential subdivisions in Metro Manila where Chinese Pogo workers are known to stay, according to the Traffic report. —

PHOTO COURTESY OF TRAFFIC

MANILA, Philippines — Nearly 7,000 Philippine pangolins (*Manis culionensis*) were seized in various areas nationwide between 2018 and 2019, marking a ninefold increase in the numbers compared to the period 2000-2017, according to a new study on the illegal pangolin trade in the country.

The stunningly high figures are recorded in the study by the wildlife monitoring network Traffic and can be attributed to the increased demand for pangolin meat and scales. The demand is primarily driven by the influx of foreign workers, mainly Chinese nationals employed in Philippine offshore gaming operators or Pogos.

The study, titled “Endangered by Trade” and published on Monday, presents yet another grim reality for the Philippine pangolin, one of the eight pangolin species. These shy, nocturnal and elusive animals found in Asia and Africa are widely considered the most trafficked mammals in the world.

Among the eight species, the Philippine pangolin locally known as “balintong” has the most restricted range and can only be found in the jungles of Palawan province.

Because of their fast-dwindling numbers, Philippine pangolins were classified as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature last December.

Largest seizure ever

The Traffic report states that over 90 percent of Philippine pangolins intercepted in the illegal trade in the last two decades were seized in just the last two years of the observation period.

Records show that between 2000 and 2017, an estimated equivalent of 740 Philippine pangolins were seized from the illegal trade. But between 2018 and 2019, an estimated 6,894 pangolins were seized, including 1,154 kilograms of scales discovered in a warehouse in Palawan’s capital city of Puerto Princesa—the largest seizure ever recorded in the country.

The scales, valued up to P46 million, came from at least 3,900 killed Philippine pangolins, according to Emerson Sy, one of the report’s authors.

The traffic in pangolins is mainly driven by the belief—largely unsubstantiated—that their scales have medicinal purposes.

Rising volume of intercepted PH pangolins tied to

August 07, 2020

TITLE: Chinese influx

PAGE 1/ 2/2

DATE

“There really has been an increased demand, especially with the foreign workers that are here in the Philippines, or foreign tourists who really come to specifically consume wild meat,” Sy said in an interview with the Inquirer.

The report notes the series of unusual rescues (called “retrievals”), in which individual live pangolins were found wandering the streets in Metro Manila, some 600 kilometers away from their natural habitat in Palawan.

Sy said some of these pangolins had been caught in residential subdivisions in the cities of Pasay, Parañaque and Manila, where Chinese nationals working in Pogos are known to stay.

Restaurants, traditional meds

Also highlighted in Traffic’s report is the presence of restaurants serving dishes made with pangolin meat.

“Conversations with contacts and restaurant workers pointed to mainland Chinese nationals who are looking to consume wild meat and reportedly willing to pay the high asking price as the primary consumer of pangolins in the Philippines,” the report states.

Off the menu and prepared on a preorder basis, these exotic dishes command exorbitant prices ranging from P30,000 to P40,000 per stew.

The study also documents traditional Chinese medicine stores in Manila offering pills claiming to contain pangolin derivatives.

Slap on the wrist

Lack of investigations, few successful arrests and prosecutions, and low penalties remain the greatest challenges to efforts to curb pangolin trafficking in the country, according to the report’s authors.

For example, the first conviction of pangolin traffickers outside Palawan took place only in July 2019, when a court in Cavite province sentenced three traffickers for illegally transporting 10 pangolins. But the convicts were simply slapped on the wrist with jail time of up to three months and a fine of P20,000 each.

Of the 10 trafficked pangolins, only three survived and were returned to Palawan.

Sy said Philippine courts should have a deeper appreciation and understanding of the impacts of wildlife crime.

“[To] use an analogy, the Philippine pangolin is like the Philippine eagle [among] birds. That’s its level,” he said. “Unfortunately, many do not appreciate the importance of the Philippine pangolin, not just ecologically but also as a national heritage.”

In order to curb pangolin trafficking and save what remains of the species, everyone—including the public—should come together to protect it, Sy said.

“By nature, the illegal wildlife trade is not only confined to one person. Many people know about it. They have to come forward and work with wildlife authorities to stop the illegal trade,” he said.

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1317400/rising-volume-of-intercepted-ph-pangolins-tied-to-chinese-influx>

MGB denies bid to shut down Runruno Gold Project in Nueva Vizcaya

posted August 06, 2020 at 06:31 pm

by [Manila Standard Business](#)

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau denied the request of a lawyer for a cease-and-desist order against the Runruno Gold Project of FCF Minerals Corp. in Nueva Vizcaya province.

“We find no legal basis to issue a cease-and-desist order against the mining operation of FCF and/or cancel FTAA [financial or technical assistance agreement] No. 004,” MGB acting director Wilfredo Moncano said in a letter dated Aug. 5, 2020 to Atty. Victor Valeña of Valeña Law office.

MGB issued the statement in response to a July 13 letter sent by Valeña who was acting on behalf of the non-government organization Action for Consumerism and Transparency in Nation-Building.

Valeña said in his letter that “the entire area of FCF Minerals Corp.’s FTAA or the Runruno Gold Project is within the Magat Watershed Area—a declared protected area under Proclamation 573 series of 1969.

Valeña said that “the mine tailings and other toxic materials of the Runruno Gold Project may be spilling into the Magat River and other connecting waterways”. He also demanded the issuance of cease-and-desist order against FCF Minerals Corp., a wholly-owned British company.

Moncano said that contrary to Valeña’s claim, the contract area under FTAA No. 004 granted to FCF Minerals is outside the area covered by Proclamation No. 573 issued on June 26, 1969.

“The FTAA contract area is located about 64 kilometers south of Parcel No. 1 [Magat River Forest Reserve] of the area under Proclamation No. 573,” MGB said.

“With regard to your concern on the mine tailings and other toxic materials, please be informed that FCF has been granted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources the environmental compliance certificate [ECC-CO-1001-0001] for its mining operation. Likewise, the contingent liability and rehabilitation fund steering committee has approved the environmental protection and enhancement program [EPEP] of FCF through certificate of approval no. 100-2011-03,” the agency said.

It said the ECC and the EPEP bear the commitment and plan of FCF for the comprehensive and strategic environmental management, including the tailings storage facility.

“Please note that the mining operation of FCF is being regularly monitored by the MGB through our Regional Office No. 2. It is also subject to the monitoring of a multipartite monitoring team pursuant to the provisions of Section 185 of DENR Administrative Order No. 2010-21, the consolidated implementing rules and regulations of Republic Act. No. 7942, the Philippine Mining Act of 1995,” Moncano said.

Valeña earlier submitted a map indicating that FCF’s Runruno Gold Project was “clearly within the Magat Watershed where mining activities are expressly prohibited under the Mining Act of 1995 and the NIPAS [National Integrated Protected Areas System] Act of 1992.”

“Moreover, it is also a matter of grave concern that the mine tailings and other toxic materials of the Runruno Gold Project may be spilling into the Magat River and other connecting waterways,” Valeña said in the letter.

MGB denies bid to shut down Runruno Gold Project

August 07, 2020

TITLE: in Nueva Vizcaya

PAGE 1/ 2/2

DATE

Valeña said the Magat River “feeds into the Magat Dam which is the source of irrigation for agricultural lands in the Cagayan Valley, thereby threatening the agriculture and ecosystem of the basin of the Cagayan Valley.”

Magat watershed irrigates 84,984 hectares of agricultural lands in Region 2, serving 61,812 farmers and 360 irrigation associations.

ACTION earlier called on President Duterte to exercise his executive powers and cancel FCF’s mining franchise, underscoring that protected areas including watersheds are “strictly and absolutely beyond the commerce of man.”

ACTION in a statement cited NIPAS law which explicitly categorized watersheds as protected areas where mining operations are prohibited under Section 19 of the mining law.

“We respectfully ask President Rodrigo Duterte to cancel the FTAA of FCF Minerals Corp., which is located within the Magat River watershed forest reserve. Not only is the company mining in a protected area which is clearly prohibited under the Mining Act of 1995, but the Magat River also feeds into the Magat Dam which is the source of irrigation for agricultural land in the Cagayan Valley,” ACTION said in the statement.

Solon urges gov't to use income from mining for COVID-19 response

By: [Neil Arwin Mercado](#) - Reporter / [@NAMercadoINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 08:11 PM August 06, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — A Mindanao congressman on Thursday urged the government to utilize income from local metallic and non-metallic mining operations as funding source for the government's coronavirus pandemic response.

Surigao del Norte Rep. Robert Ace Barbers, in his privilege speech, said the industry is “the only answer to our economic woes... that could pay off all the debts incurred now and stimulate growth in our economy.”

Citing data from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), Barbers said the country has an estimated \$840 billion worth of untapped mineral wealth.

“Those estimates by the MGB were made eight years ago... And the continuing rise in the worldwide prices of precious metals, particularly gold, makes the value of our untapped minerals increase to trillions of dollars,” he said.

Barbers said the current international trading price of gold had already reached more than \$2,000 per ounce, pointing out that the country has “millions upon millions of ounces of gold deposits.”

“Aside from gold, we also have lots of other minerals and precious metals. Just imagine the prosperity that we have been missing all this time,” Barbers said.

Barbers said that as of September 2016, there are about 40 metallic mines and 62 non-metallic mines operating in the country, and these mining companies have already committed P13.1 billion for the development of their host and neighboring communities under their Social Development and Management Programs.

Further, citing MGB's 2016 data, Barbers said that the industry employs 236,000 workers in the country, with a 0.6 percent contribution to the country's GDP.

EDV

Gov't asked to tap mining as fund source vs COVID

August 06, 2020 By [Ryan Ponce Pacpaco](#) [People's Tonight](#)

SURIGAO del Norte Rep. Robert Ace Barbers has urged government policymakers to reconsider, revisit and reinvigorate the local metallic and non-metallic mining operations and tap them as funding source for the gloomy post-coronavirus disease-19 (COVID-19) economic scenario being faced by the country.

Barbers, chairman of the House committee on dangerous drugs, said in the very near future, the country would start feeling the shockwaves of the humungous debts incurred by the government to combat the Covid-19 pandemic and implement various economic stimulus programs.

In a privilege speech delivered at the House plenary on Tuesday, the Surigao del Norte lawmaker said: "It is high time that we take a good look at our mines. This is the only answer to our economic woes. This is the only source of funding that could pay off all the debts incurred now and stimulate growth in our economy."

As of September 2012, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) has estimated that the country has an estimated US\$840 billion worth of untapped mineral wealth.

The Philippines is the fifth most mineral-rich country in the world for gold, nickel, copper, chromite, iron ore, lead, and zinc, many of them drawn from major deposits in the islands of Luzon and Mindanao.

"Those estimates by the MGB were made eight years ago," he said. "And the continuing rise in the worldwide prices of precious metals, particularly gold, makes the value of our untapped minerals increase to trillions of dollars."

Barbers said the current international trading price of gold had already reached more than US\$2,000 per ounce and our country is sitting on millions upon millions of ounces of gold deposits while other countries sits on indefinite economic uncertainty.

"Aside from gold, we also have lots of other minerals and precious metals. Just imagine the prosperity that we have been missing all this time," he said. "Are we waiting for another country to again lay claim over these wealth of ours?"

The solon from Mindanao cited the case of Canada and Australia, two of several countries that have prospered from mining, employing hundreds of thousands of people, and have contributed much to their local economy.

"They (Canada and Australia mining industry) contribute as much as 6% to their GDP (gross domestic product) compared to our 0.6% mining contribution. Let us use their experience as our template. They were able to mine in their countries with minimal environmental disruptions," he said.

"With the advanced technology, we can do the same here. Natural resources are God-given endowments to be utilized by mankind for his prosperity. They were not intended to remain hidden forever while people starve and wallow in misery."

As of September 2016, there are about 40 metallic mines and 62 non-metallic mines operating in the country, and these mining companies have already committed P13.1 billion for the development of their host and neighboring communities under their Social Development and Management Programs.

According to MGB's 2016 data, there are 236,000 workers in the mining industry. The mining industry's contribution to the country's GDP is at 0.6 percent in the same year.

The contribution of minerals and mineral products to the country's total exports is at 4 percent and 0.3 percent for non-metallic mineral manufacturers.

The MGB said the mining industry's gross production value declined in the last two years, from P208.2 billion (\$4.2 billion) in 2014 to only P100.6 billion (\$2 billion) in 2016.

The Mining Act of 1995 allows for foreign ownership of mining assets and exploration permits. The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the foreign investors' participation in mining activities in 2004.

Mining tax is low at 4 percent for metallic and non-metallic minerals.

During the Aquino administration, a mining reform bill was drafted to increase revenues of the government. In the bill, companies will either pay 10 percent tax on gross revenues or 45 percent to 55 percent tax on adjusted mining revenues plus a percentage of windfall profit, whichever is higher.

During her short stint as DENR chief, Secretary Gina Lopez ordered the closure of around 26 mining companies citing environmental and other violations.

Her successor, Secretary Roy Cimatu, has recently ordered the re-opening of at least five of these suspended firms while reviewing and assessing others for re-opening after they have corrected their lapses.

DENR taps Plastic Credit Exchange to support Manila Bay cleanup

By [...](#) -August 7, 2020

In response to the government's call-to-action on rehabilitating Manila Bay, Plastic Credit Exchange (PCEX) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), with the support of the PepsiCo Foundation, partnered to roll out a long-term 'Aling Tindera' coastal cleanup program.

PCEX Chairperson Nanette Medved-Po and DENR Regional Executive Director Jacqueline A. Caanacan announced the strategic partnership at the DENR headquarters in Quezon City.

Through this initiative, PCEX incentivizes fisherfolk and their families to 'catch' plastic waste in and around Manila Bay and sell these in exchange for cash at Aling Tindera collection points stationed along coastal areas.

The Aling Tinderas (women sari-sari store owners) aggregate the plastic, and then turn a profit by selling these to sustainability-conscious companies through PCEX.

"The conservation of Manila Bay should not come to a halt while we address the global pandemic. We need to collaborate to create long term solutions for the health of our oceans and waterways because it is very much tied to our own health," said Medved-Po.

DENR data has shown that five days of coastal cleanup on the Manila Bay island could yield 16,000 kg of trash, the bulk of it plastic sachets. With increasing concern about safety and cross-contamination due to COVID-19, there has been a heightened demand for single-use plastics, which means that hard-won environmental measures to rehabilitate Manila Bay have once more been undone.

"This partnership comes at an opportune time as the Manila Bay Task Force, led by no less than our DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu, is in the thick of its commitment to clean up and rehabilitate the Manila Bay, including all tributaries that drain to the bay," said Caanacan.

"The Aling Tindera project represents an alternative solution of collecting used plastic packaging. At the same time, it also provides economic incentives to the sari-sari store owners and to their suki."

The 'Aling Tindera' initiative forms part of PCEX's broader plastic offset mechanism inspired by the carbon offset industry. Plastic offsetting enables businesses to take action in stopping plastic waste from polluting our waterways and ending up in nature.

"We invite businesses who would like to responsibly offset their plastic footprint to join our growing movement," Medved-Po said. "It's only through collective action that we can continuously reduce the flow of plastic into our environment."

"PepsiCo realizes no single organization or industry can solve the plastic waste challenge on their own. That is why we're working with PCEX and communities in Manila through the Aling Tindera program to accelerate systemic change and meaningful progress through collaborative, holistic and sustainable solutions in the Philippines," PepsiCo Corporate Affairs Head for the Philippines and Asia, Anne Marie Corominas emphasized.

Plastic Credit Exchange (PCEX) is a Philippine-based non-profit organization that partners with sustainability-conscious businesses around the globe to responsibly offset their plastic footprint, and reduce the flow of plastic waste into our landfills and oceans.

Source: https://malaya.com.ph/index.php/news_special_feature/denr-taps-plastic-credit-exchange-to-support-manila-bay-cleanup/

Used face masks pose threat to environment, must be disposed of properly, say groups

Published August 6, 2020 9:24pm

The improper disposal of used surgical face masks has become a threat to the environment.

In Maki Pulido's report on "24 Oras" Thursday, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority said many citizens had been recklessly throwing away their used masks in different areas.

This could pose a problem and cause floods especially amid the rainy season, it said.

"Yung balat nga lang ng candy cause na ng pagbaha. What more this surgical mask?" said MMDA Assistant Secretary Celine Pialago.

According to the Ecowaste Coalition, the surgical masks polluting the bodies of water can also threaten marine life.

"Actually pwede ito makain ng mga isda. Kung ito naman ay tatagal sa tubig, ito ay pwede maging microplastic at eventually kakainin din ng ating mga marine species na kapag nakita natin syempre cycle so kinakain din natin itong isda," said Ecowaste Coalition's Aileen Lucero.

Asia Development Bank also stated that before the pandemic hit Metro Manila, only 47 tons of medical waste from hospitals were collected. However, now, over 280 tons of medical waste are collected on a daily basis.

From just 23 garbage trucks, Metro Manila now needs 140 garbage trucks to collect that amount of waste every day.

According to nonprofit organization Medical Care Without Harm, the amount of medical waste increased because hospitals no longer segregated trash amid the pandemic and just treated their garbage as infectious waste.

"Kahit balot 'yan ng pagkain or papel na galing sa opisina, as long as andoon ka sa red zone, treated na siya as infectious waste," said Medical Care Without Harm's Paeng Lopez.

To properly dispose of surgical masks and other PPEs, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environment Management Bureau said people should put used masks, gloves, and tissue in a separate waste bag.

If possible, dispose of these in a yellow bag and label them as "hazardous health care waste" or "infectious waste" to protect the garbage collectors who pick them up. - **Kaela Malig/RC, GMA News**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/healthandwellness/750186/used-face-masks-pose-threat-to-environment-must-be-disposed-of-properly-say-groups/story/>

Borongan City employees plant trees on Arbor Day

By Samuel D. Candido Published on August 6, 2020

BORONGAN CITY, August 5 (PIA) - - A total of 156 participants most of them employees of Borongan City led by City Mayor Jose Ivan Dayan C. Agda, Vice-Mayor Emmanuel T. Tiu Sonco and Sangguniang Panglungsod Members planted trees on Arbor Day, July 30, 2020 at Sitio Cagsawa, Brgy. Cabalagnan, Borongan City.

According to Vicky Mae C. Gavilan, environmental management specialist II of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) close to 3,000 Narra trees and 2,000 more fruit bearing trees were planted.



"The city employees hiked the uphill planting area, undeterred by the muddy elevation," Gavilan said.

During the planting of trees, the participants were also advised to observe health protocols such as: wearing of face masks and maintaining social distance.

"I thank Mayor Agda for being supportive. I did not expect that he would join the team, until reaching the elevated planting area," the CENRO officer said.

The area consists of four project sites which are the area on assisted natural regeneration (ANR). The four projects are: reforestation project, city tree-park, wildlife rescue project, and agro-forestry projects.

Other local officials and national agencies that joined the tree planting are: Sangguniang Kabataan Officials and Brgy. Councils of Canyupay and Cabalagnan, DENR-CENRO, Philippine Army, PNP, Coast Guard, BFP, BJMP, CDRRMO, DTI, and DPWH.

The private organizations that also joined the tree planting are the LGBTQ team and local bikers who were greeted with an 800-meter hike from the main road which offered great views of the verdant hills of Borongan and Maydolong.

Arbor Day celebration is provided in the approved Ordinance No. 119, series of 2015 which mandates the city-wide tree planting aimed in restoring the forest cover to mitigate the impact of green-house effect. (nbq/SDC/PIA-E. Samar with reports from Borongan City Information Office)

Source: <https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1049533>

Fish kills in Lake Sebu ease as rehab efforts gain ground

By Allen Estabillo August 6, 2020, 4:45 pm



LAKE CLEANUP. Workers clean up water lilies and unauthorized structures at a portion of the critical Lake Sebu in South Cotabato last Monday (Aug. 3, 2020). The regular cleanup is part of the continuing conservation and rehabilitation measures being implemented by the provincial government of South Cotabato and the municipal government of Lake Sebu for the area's three mountain lakes. (*Photo grabbed from the Facebook post of the Provincial Environment Management Office*)

GENERAL SANTOS CITY – Fish kills in the three critical mountain lakes of Lake Sebu town in South Cotabato have eased in the last two years reportedly due to their improving condition.

Engr. Siegfred Flaviano, head of the South Cotabato Provincial Environment Management Office, said Thursday the ecosystems of lakes Sebu, Seloton and Lahit have continued to recover due to the sustained implementation of enhanced conservation and rehabilitation measures.

He said these include the regular cleanup of water lilies and the dismantling of illegal structures within the lake as well as their immediate easement.

The demolition covered fish cages that have no permits, excess fish cages, guardhouses, and other abandoned structures within the lakes.

The move was in compliance with the provisions of Section 51 of Republic Act 8850 or the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998, which set the areas for aquaculture use at 10 percent.

In partnership with the municipal government of Lake Sebu and other stakeholders, Flaviano said they strictly enforced the zoning of the lakes and maintained developments to their allowed capacity.

It covered the town's three lakes -- Sebu (354 hectares), Seloton (48 hectares) and Lahit (24 hectares).

"As you can see now, we have not recorded any massive fish kill in the area," he told reporters.

The last series of major fish kill in Lake Sebu occurred in 2017 that destroyed over PHP120 million worth of tilapia.

Flaviano said they also studied the pattern of the previous fish kills, which was blamed on the occurrence of the "kamahong," a phenomenon that is mainly caused by the sudden rise in the water's temperature.

"Kamahong," which usually occurs during the rainy season, triggers the rise of sulfuric acid that eventually lowers the dissolved oxygen in the lakes' waters.

"We identified the months as to when the lake's dissolved oxygen was usually low and regularly monitor their status. Our fisherfolk now minimize their activities while some opted to stop their operations during the period," he said.

Fish kills in Lake Sebu ease as rehab efforts gain

August 07, 2020

TITLE: ground

PAGE 1/ 2/2

DATE

As part of the rehabilitation efforts, he said they expanded the rollout of the hydroponics program for residents and fisherfolk using pollutants found on the lakes as materials.

He said they planted trees in at least 12 hectares of watershed areas adjacent to the three water sources of the lakes.

Flaviano added they are currently studying measures to regulate the operations of piggeries and duck farms situated at the easement of the lakes. (**PNA**)

Bahura, wasak; fishing vessel sumadsad sa Palawan



August 6, 2020 @ 5:14 PM 14 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Tumugon ang mga tauhan ng Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) sa isang fishing vessel na sumadsad sa isang protektadong lugar na mayaman sa coral reefs na matatagpuan sa Ursula Island, Barangay Rio Tuba, Bataraza, Palawan.

Agad namang ininspeksyon ng PCG ang fishing vessel na Chris Paul Bill-III para tiyakin na hindi ito nakapagdulot ng oil spill.

Ayon sa kapitan ng Barko, nakasalubong nila ang malakas na hangin at malalaking alon habang nangingisda sa 13 nautical miles o layo mula sa coral reefs nang pansamantalang tumigil sa Ursula Island.

Sa 'di inaasahan, napunta sila sa mababaw na bahagi ng karagatan kaya sumadsad.

Pinayuhan naman ng PCG ang kapitan ng fishing vessel na tumuloy sa Rio Tuba Port habang hinihintay ang imbestigasyon na isinasagawa ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) kaugnay sa naging pinsalang idinulot nito sa coral reef sa isla.

Inatasan din ang kapitan na magbigay ng certificate of seaworthiness mula sa Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) bago sila payagang muling magsagawa ng fishing operation. **Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden**

Experts discuss PH climate, sea level changes at online forum

By Jerome Carlo R. Paunan Published on August 6, 2020

CALOOCAN CITY, Aug. 6 (PIA) -- Experts on Wednesday discussed the current and future state of climate and sea level change in the Philippines during an online forum hosted by the Climate Change Commission (CCC) and its National Panel of Technical Experts (NPTE), in collaboration with the Oscar M. Lopez (OML) Center.

Dubbed, "Taking stock: Why should we be concerned about the climate and sea level changes?" the forum was streamed and can still be watched over CCC's Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/CCCPH. The event examined how the impacts of climate change, specifically sea level rise, is affecting the Philippines as an archipelago of more than 7,600 islands, with 822 coastal municipalities, and one of the longest coastlines in the world estimated at 36,289 kilometers.

CCC Secretary Emmanuel M. De Guzman, Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda, Representative from the Lone District of Antique, and Representative Edgar Chatto, Chair of the House Special Committee on Climate Change, delivered special messages to participants.

Citing a report from the Partnerships in Environment Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), gradual changes in climatic parameters have a direct relationship to the rise of sea level, mean temperature and change in precipitation patterns will affect the health, food, water and livelihood of vulnerable coastal communities particularly those in low-lying areas.

To recall, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (AR5) cited that global mean sea level has increased by about 0.19 m from 1901 to 2010 at a mean rate of 1.7 mm per year. However, between 1993 and 2010, global mean sea level has been increasing at a faster rate of about 3.2 mm per year. Under the 1.5°C warming scenario, global mean sea level is expected to be about 51cm by 2100. Moreover, the global sea level is expected to continue to rise past 2100 even if temperature rise has been limited to 1.5°C before the end of the 21st century.

As of 2005, the total population in the country's coastal areas was estimated at 43 million and majority are dependent on fishing as their main source of livelihood. Fisherfolk remain as one of the poorest sectors with poverty incidence at 41.2% and with the least resources to cope with the changing climate.

The online forum on sea level rise also featured a discussion on the observed and projected changes and impacts of sea level rise from the perspective of a climate scientist, a geographer, a geologist, an oceanographer and a social scientist.

Relatively, the channel also presented the current state of knowledge on the current and future state of sea level change in the Philippines.

The CCC said the forum also aimed to identify gaps in information gathering, monitoring and communication of sea level rise in the country and facilitate the sharing of good practices, innovative technologies, and latest policy reforms on sea level rise.

Experts discuss PH climate, sea level changes at
TITLE: online forum

PAGE 1/ 2/2

August 07, 2020
DATE

Members of the NPTE who joined the virtual forum include Dr. Carlos Primo David, current chairperson; Dr. Laura David and Dr. Fernando Siringan of the UP Marine Science Institute; and Dr. Rodel Lasco, Executive Director of the OML Center.

Other leading climate experts and scientists who also participated include Dr. Benjamin Horton, Director of Earth Observatory of Singapore; and Dr. Ma. Laurice Jamero, Head Resilience Collaboratory, Manila Observatory.

A distinguished roster of reactors from different agencies and organizations were also been invited. They were: Dr. Enrico Paringit, Executive Director of the Department of Science and Technology – Philippine Council for Industry, Energy, and Emerging Technology Research and Development; Dr. Eulito Casas, Associate Professor from UP Visayas - Tacloban College; Atty. Josine Alexandra Gamboa, Manager of Government Initiatives of Rare, Inc.; and Dr. Bjoern Surborg, Principal Advisor and Cluster Coordinator for Climate Change of the GIZ. (PIA NCR)

Cleaner, safer air campaign set for Manila

posted August 06, 2020 at 09:00 pm

by [Manila Standard](#)

With a vision of cleaner air and a healthier, more livable urban environment, the City of Manila has embarked on the landmark Asia Blue Skies Program that is bringing science-based air quality solutions to the Philippine capital, which has dubbed as “Hinga Maynila” (Breathe Manila) by the local government unit of Manila.

Under the stewardship of Mayor Francisco “Isko” Domagoso, and in alignment with the city’s Bagong Maynila (New Manila) initiative, the 449-year-old city is partnering with international non-governmental organization Clean Air Asia and science company 3M.

The five-year program kicked off in November 2019 to improve air quality in the second most-populous city in Metropolitan Manila, and that in turn will advance the Clean Air Initiative announced by UN Secretary-General António Guterres in July 2019.

Over the next five years, 3M will assist Clean Air Asia in its efforts to assess baseline air quality conditions, design capacity-building programs for air quality management, implement awareness and education campaigns, develop Clean Air Action Plans with selected city and district governments, and measure the resulting impact on air pollution levels.

According to a 2018 Clean Air Asia analysis on ambient air quality in Asia, 98% of Asian cities are still at risk of the health impacts of exposure to PM2.5—particles that are 20 times smaller than the width of a human hair.

Because of their size, they can pass directly into the bloodstream and lungs, and have been linked with respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, asthma, cancers, and other serious health conditions.

PM2.5 in the air predominantly emanates from combustion processes from industries, powerplants, vehicles, and other burning activities.

The same report also found that the inadequate response of cities to this health threat was attributable to weak institutional capacity, gaps in policies, a lack of awareness of the health and environmental impacts, a lack of information about technology solutions, and the absence of financial support for clean air measures.

In response to this, Manila, home to nearly 1.8 million residents, has committed to achieving safer air quality and to meeting the World Health Organization’s air quality targets by 2030.

“As one of the densest cities in the region, the City of Manila recognizes the need to improve air quality, and we are dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of our people by eliminating the imminent risks that air pollution poses,” Mayor Domagoso said.

“By doing so, we are not only preserving the rich culture and strong heritage of the city, but also ensuring that it will thrive for the generations to come.”

“With the data and expertise provided by Clean Air Asia and the genuine commitment of 3M to sustainability, I’m convinced that in five years’ time, residents will be able to enjoy safer and cleaner air, and I’m hopeful that other cities will follow suit.”

To assist the City in achieving those goals, Clean Air Asia and 3M will spend the next five years assessing baseline air quality conditions.

They will design capacity building programs for air quality management, undertake awareness-raising and education campaigns, develop a Clean Air Action Plan (CAAP), and measure the resulting impact on air pollution levels.

The first year involves the development of the CAAP, the second and third years are focused on implementation of the CAAP, and the fourth and fifth years on scaling up the air quality solutions to other cities.

“We advocate for an evidence-based and participatory approach to addressing air pollution,” said Clean Air Asia Deputy Executive Director Glynda Bathan-Baterina.

“This is demonstrated by the Asia Blue Skies Program, wherein the development and implementation of science-based clean air action is at the very core of a sound air quality management system.”

“3M has accelerated its long-standing commitment to sustainability over the past year, in both strategy and action. Science is in everything we do, and the ultimate goal is to make lives better through it.”

“With air pollution being one of the more pressing health and environmental threats in urbanized areas around the world, we are actively seeking ways to support cities where it is critical,” said Bettina Luz, 3M Philippines’ Country Leader.

“Working with the Philippines and the City of Manila gives us an opportunity to help where we can, to improve the lives of Filipinos. And working together with the local government of Manila alongside Clean Air Asia is a great example of collaboration crucial to nation-building.”

Earlier this year, three air quality sensors were installed in Manila City to gather baseline data that, together with an emissions inventory and health mapping, will form the basis of the city’s CAAP, to be mapped out by the end of the year.



News5

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Naharang ng mga tanod ng Brgy. Caypombo sa Sta. Maria, Bulacan ang isang truck ng medical waste na itatapon sa illegal dumpsite. | via Gary de Leon



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LGU urged to prepare recovery plan

Published 5 hours ago on August 7, 2020 01:00 AM

By [Paula Antolin](#)



The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) has urged local government units (LGU) to start planning for recovery from the coronavirus pandemic despite the ongoing crisis.

DILG spokesman Jonathan Malaya said areas deemed as “low-risk” for COVID-19 can now begin recovery efforts on the need to stimulate economic activity.

“We need to recover now even though the COVID-19 crisis is not yet over, because the effect on the economy and livelihood of our countrymen will worsen,” he said in a Thursday briefing.

“With private consumption and investment still down, it is now up to the national and local governments to drive consumption and investment with government spending and policies that support the growth and recovery of local businesses,” he added.

Malaya said that LGU need not create a new local body to facilitate the recovery planning and budgeting.

He said this can be done through the creation of an economic cluster within the existing Local COVID-19 Task Force headed by a mayor or governor.

The DILG has prepared a local recovery and planning guide for LGU which has sample frameworks, templates and suggested programs, Malaya said.

At least 10 fund source options can be tapped by implementing agencies or LGU to help address the challenges of fund availability, he added.

Among these options are the national government programs and financing assistance programs of select government financial institutions and government-owned and controlled corporations.

Health workers' pleas will be addressed

Published 6 hours ago on August 7, 2020 12:05 AM

By [Francis Wakefield](#)



President Rodrigo Duterte listens to the pleas of health care workers and will address all their concerns amid the coronavirus pandemic, Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles has assured.

In an media forum held Wednesday, Nograles said the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID), will discuss this urgent matter to give concrete solutions to problems facing health care workers, even as they continue to provide medical assistance to persons infected with the virus.

Nograles, who is also the IATF co-chair, said the IATF will formulate policies to be implemented by the National Task Force (NTF) and the chief implementer.

The Department of Health (DoH), he said, is recruiting additional nurses and health workers in the fight against the scourge.

Around 9,365 positions, according to Nograles, need to be filled up for immediate deployment, to supplement the current number of 6,510 that are actively working in various health institutions.

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), meantime, is focusing efforts on hiring contract tracers, supplementing the 73,000 tracers who have already made 200,000 searches of those who have come into contact with COVID-19 patients.

Nograles expressed confidence that the number of Filipinos tested for COVID-19 in various parts of the country will steadily increase because of this.

He said at present, 1.536 million tests have already been conducted and the government is hitting its target of 30,000 tests per day.

During the forum, Nograles strongly encouraged people under modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) areas — NCR, Bulacan, Laguna, Cavite and Rizal — to abide by the prescribed health protocols.

“Let’s continue supporting the government. We need to be united in this fight,” he said.

“Government is pouring massive resources to combat COVID-19 because every life is precious and we all want this pandemic to end,” he added.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/08/07/health-workers-pleas-will-be-addressed/>

Doctor warns vs rapid tests use

Published 5 hours ago on August 7, 2020 01:10 AM

By [Michelle R. Guillang](#)

An epidemiologist has expressed concern anew over the extensive use of the rapid antibody test kits by local government units and business establishments.

Dr. Antonio Dans, a member of the Philippine College of Physicians and the Philippine Society of General Internal Medicine, noted that rapid antibody tests cannot be used to identify whether a person is infected with COVID-19 or not.

It only detects the presence of antibodies which can only be developed by a COVID-19 positive patient several days after getting infected, he said.

In a radio interview Wednesday, Dans stressed that the acceptable COVID-19 test must find the virus itself, not only the antibodies, which the RT-PCR (reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction) test is capable of.

RT-PCR test is tagged as the gold standard method for detecting COVID-19 by the Department of Health (DoH).

“Rapid antibody tests can be used for research, survey... not to tell if the person has COVID or not. Swab test (RT-PCR test) should be used there,” said Dans, who is also the spokesman of Healthcare Professions Alliance Against COVID-19.

He said the rapid antibody test provides 50 percent false negative — which may give people a false sense of security.

“If there are 100 COVID-19 positive patients, the test can tell some 50 of them that they are negative. While thinking that they are not infected, they will go back to the communities, to their workplaces, which may have caused the pandemic,” Dans explained.

Malacañang has repeatedly defended the use of rapid antibody tests, saying that this has a purpose in the country’s pandemic response strategy.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said the test serves as “initial screening” for the virus.

Meanwhile, Dans said the rapid antibody test kits bought beforehand will not be wasted because they can be used as devices in the vaccine development.

“We are making a study now... to know how long the antibodies can remain in the blood,” he shared.

Dans said he and other health workers have already talked to DoH secretary Francisco Duque III and testing czar Vince Dizon regarding strategies against the COVID-19 crisis.



This was the worst quarterly slump on record since the contraction of 10.7 percent in the third quarter of 1984 and 10.5 percent in the first quarter of 1985.

The STAR/Michael Varcas

Philippines economy crash-lands into recession

[Czeriza Valencia](#) (The Philippine Star) - August 7, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The country plunged into a recession in the second quarter of the year, with output contracting by a record 16.5 percent after a months-long government-enforced lockdown paralyzed 75 percent of the economy.

This was the worst quarterly slump on record since the contraction of 10.7 percent in the third quarter of 1984 and 10.5 percent in the first quarter of 1985.

After a downward revision of first quarter economic decline to 0.7 percent, first half contraction could average around nine percent, Philippine Statistics Authority head Dennis Mapa said yesterday.

“The Philippine economy crash-landed into recession with the Q2 GDP (gross domestic product) meltdown showcasing the destructive impact of lockdowns on the consumption-dependent economy,” said ING senior economist Nicholas Antonio Mapa.

The country’s second quarter decline was steepest among neighboring Asian countries that also reported declines during the quarter such as Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

Malacañang expressed concern over the steeper-than-expected economic contraction but remains optimistic that the sectors worst hit by the pandemic would recover with help from the government’s proposed stimulus package.

As of the first semester of the year, the economy is valued at around P8.6 trillion versus P9.28 trillion in the first semester of 2019.

Among major industries, only the agriculture sector registered growth in the second quarter at 1.6 percent. The industry and service sectors, meanwhile, realized contractions of 22.9 percent and 15.8 percent, respectively.

Sectors that contributed to growth in the second quarter were financial and insurance activities, public administration, defense and compulsory social security, and information and communication.

Mapa said this reflected the demand for loans and financial services during the quarter, as well as heightened demand for IT and communication tools during the lockdown period.

Contributing to the decline were the manufacturing, construction and transportation and storage sectors at 3.9 percent, 2.5 percent and 2.5 percent, respectively.

On the expenditure side, household consumption declined by 10.7 percent, reflecting diminished demand.

Spending for construction and durable equipment also declined by 5.5 percent and 4.2 percent, respectively, as consumption and business expansions were put on hold due to the lockdown.

Economic performance in the third quarter risks being affected by the re-imposition of a stricter community quarantine in Metro Manila and nearby growth areas from Aug. 4 to 18.

Acting Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Karl Chua maintained yesterday that the economy remains in a good position to weather the public health crisis.

“Without doubt, the pandemic and its adverse economic impact are testing the economy like never before. But unlike past crises, the Philippines is now in a much stronger position to address the crisis,” he said.

“Reverting back to MECQ may be one step back for the country’s economic recovery, but the government remains committed to addressing immediate challenges without losing sight of our medium- and long-term goals,” he added. MECQ or modified enhanced community quarantine is a notch lower than the strictest enhanced community quarantine or ECQ.

Target adjustments

Factoring in the re-imposition of the MECQ, the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) has revised the growth estimates this year to a negative 5.5 percent from the previous projection of negative two to negative 3.4 percent.

“That incorporates already the effect of the MECQ. We hope to maximize this two-week period to strengthen the health system so we can boost consumer confidence in the remaining five months of the year,” said Chua.

The government has allocated some P655 billion to help people cope with the pandemic and P59 billion to improve the healthcare system, but this has done little to ease the pain of a population facing record-high unemployment.

Jomar Santos, who used to earn P350 a day delivering school supplies to stores in Caloocan city, has been at home since the lockdown resumed on Tuesday and worries about his wife and one-year-old child.

“It’s really very hard. No work, no food to eat,” said the 23-year-old Santos.

“There’s nothing we can do except to bear it. That’s better than me and my family getting sick,” he added.

The stock market largely shrugged off the data and rose 1.2 percent, having already underperformed its regional peers this year. The local currency closed slightly firmer at P49.05 to the dollar from Wednesday’s P49.075.

Pressure is mounting on the government to deliver more far-reaching support, given the central bank has already cut interest rates to record lows this year and that economists see little room for more monetary easing as inflation rises.

“The worst is behind us, but we’re not out of the woods yet,” Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Benjamin Diokno said yesterday.

The central bank has slashed interest rates by a total of 175 basis points this year to a record low of 2.25 percent.

Michael Ricafort, economist at Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., said it is “fundamentally tougher to further cut local policy rates at the moment” when inflation is at a six-month high of 2.7 percent in July, above the central bank’s key interest rate.

Instead, policy support will have to come from further reductions in banks' reserve requirement ratio, which would inject liquidity into the market, or more government stimulus, economists said.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr. said that while the second quarter growth figure was alarming, "our resolve to recover at the soonest time possible, however, remains strong."

"We expect an improvement in the performance of these sectors during the second semester of the year, with our gradual reopening of the economy, as well as our proposed stimulus measures," Roque said, referring to manufacturing, construction, transportation and storage sectors.

Recovery program

Economic managers, Roque said, have crafted a "phased and adaptive" economic recovery scheme called the Philippine Program for Recovery with Equity and Solidarity or PH-Progreso to counter the pandemic's effects on business and livelihood.

"We have likewise recalibrated our budget for next year and restarted our Build, Build, Build programs, subject to health and safety protocols, to create jobs," the Palace spokesman said.

"The Palace is aware of the hardships and the sufferings of our people. We thus provided an emergency subsidy program, which is considered the largest single relief program in the country's history, when we took the painful choice of imposing the strictest quarantine measure on our people," he added.

Although blamed largely for the economic contraction, presidential communications Secretary Martin Andanar emphasized that the lockdowns helped safeguard public health and prevented the spread of the virus.

"Although our lockdown and community quarantine implementation had an impact on our economic performance, it served as a cushion to our society's general health, protection and well-being against COVID-19," Andanar said in a statement.

"Furthermore, it served as a safety net to suppress the collapse of our healthcare system and assist our frontline healthcare workers, who have been tirelessly responding to the pandemic since it began," he added.

Andanar said the quarantine measures prevented an estimated 1.3 to 3.5 million cases, which would have overwhelmed the country's healthcare system. The move also saved some 59,000 to 171,000 lives, he added.

"It is worth noting that while facing this crisis, we are now in a much stronger economic position to address such circumstances in the long-term," Andanar said.

"Apart from strong economic foundations established by the successful enactment of economic, social and institutional reforms, we continue to capitalize on and to reform our socio-economic advantages so that we can weather any potential, foreseen and unforeseen crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic," he added.

Andanar said the government would continue to strike a balance between supporting the economy and ensuring everyone's protection from infection. – **Alexis Romero**



The new 2020 borrowing program is higher than the original target of P1.4 trillion set by the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr) before the pandemic hit the country.

Edd Gumban, file

Government plans to borrow record P6 trillion until 2021

[Mary Grace Padin](#) (The Philippine Star) - August 7, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The government plans to borrow a record P6 trillion from domestic and foreign lenders this year and next as it expects the fiscal deficit to widen further amid the coronavirus pandemic, according to Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez.

In a press briefing yesterday, Dominguez said borrowings for 2020 and 2021 are expected to reach P3 trillion, the bulk of which will be sourced from domestic lenders.

“For 2021, we expect to borrow roughly P3 trillion, roughly the same as what we will borrow in 2020,” Dominguez said, adding that the financing mix will be around 75:25, in favor of domestic sources.

The new 2020 borrowing program is higher than the original target of P1.4 trillion set by the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr) before the pandemic hit the country.

For 2022, borrowings may go down to P2.3 trillion, Dominguez said.

The government is ramping up its borrowings to bridge the expected deficit in its budget, which the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) expects to widen further in the medium term.

For 2020, DBCC said the budget shortfall may reach P1.82 trillion or 9.6 percent of gross domestic product, higher than the previous estimate of 8.4 percent of GDP announced last May.

The deficit figure was revised upward as the inter-agency body sees revenues may fall deeper, while disbursements are projected to increase due to the various stimulus packages being pushed in Congress to recover from the pandemic.

In particular, the DBCC said the revenue program for 2020 was adjusted to P2.52 trillion from the P2.61 trillion projection in May.

“The decline is a result of deeper contraction in real GDP growth and the P42 billion in estimated foregone revenues from the implementation of the proposed Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (CREATE) Act,” the DBCC said.

The CREATE bill pushes for the immediate five-percentage point reduction in the corporate income tax to 25 percent from 30 percent to provide relief to the business sector.

According to estimates from the Department of Finance (DOF), the bill is expected to cost the government P42 billion in foregone revenues in the second half alone. Over the next five years, this is expected to reach P625 billion.

On the other hand, DBCC said the estimated disbursements for this year inched up by P110 billion to P4.34 trillion, equivalent to 23 percent of GDP.

“The additional spending anticipates the P140 billion additional appropriations for the proposed Bayanihan to Recover as One (Bayanihan II) Act which is being pursued in Congress,” the DBCC said.

For 2021, revenues are projected to slightly recover to P2.72 trillion, equivalent to 13.2 percent of the GDP. This is, however, lower than the previous estimate of P2.93 trillion.

Disbursements are expected to increase to P4.47 trillion or 21.6 percent of GDP, higher than the previous program of P4.36 trillion.

As a result, the budget deficit next year is expected to widen to 8.5 percent of GDP in 2021 from the initial forecast of 6.6 percent.

For 2022, revenue and disbursement projections are estimated at P3.03 trillion, and P4.68 trillion, respectively, translating to a 7.2 percent fiscal deficit.

“Despite these adjustments in deficit spending, the DBCC is confident that the national government’s debt will be kept at a sustainable and responsible level, within the 60 percent internationally-recommended debt threshold, by 2022,” economic managers said.

Earlier, the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr) reported that the national government’s outstanding debt as of end-June reached a new record high of P9.054 trillion, 1.8 percent up from the P8.89 trillion recorded in the previous month.

BTr data also showed that gross borrowings have already reached P1.72 trillion in the first half of the year alone.

PINAS NO. 1 NA SA COVID-19; SUMALI LAHAT SA GIYERA



August 6, 2020 @ 11:11 AM 19 hours ago

Nalagpasan o naoberteyk na ng Pilipinas ang Indonesia sa rami ng may impeksyon sa corona virus disease-19 at tayo na ang nangunguna sa listahan ng 10 miyembro ng Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Kumamada sa araw na ito ang mahal kong Pinas ng 3,480 habang ang Indonesia ay 1,882 lang kaya naman may kabuuang impeksyon na tayong 119,460 kumpara sa 118,753 ng Indonesia.

Nalamangan na natin ang Indonesia ng 707 may impeksyon ng COVID-19.

Kung magpapatuloy ang bilang ng impeksyon natin sa 3,500 pataas araw-araw at mananatili ang Indonesia sa 2,000 impeksyon araw-araw, mabilis nating mapag-iwanan ang huli at mabilis din nating mahabol ang Iraq na sinusundan natin sa pagkakaroon ng impeksyon na 137,556 lang sa araw na ito.

Ang tanging konswelo natin, mas kakaunti ang namamatay sa atin (2,150 ngayon) dahil nasa doble ang bilang ng mga namamatay na Indonesian sa bilang na 5,521 sa araw ring ito.

LUMAHOK LAHAT SA GIYERA

Ang kauna-unahang panawagan sa lahat sa ating mga Pinoy ay lumahok sa giyera laban sa pandemya dahil sa paglala ng sakit sa ating bansa.

Bawat isa, pamilya, barangay, bayan, lungsod, lalawigan at rehiyon sa atin ay may kanya-kanyang papel laban sa COVID-19.

May kanya-kanyang papel din ang mga pambansang ahensya ng pamahalaan, kasama ang mga pulis, sundalo, doktor, ospital at iba pa, gayundin ang mga nasa pribadong sektor na health worker, pagawaan, transportasyon at iba pa.

Kung iisipin, nasa ilalim ng general community quarantine ang buong bansa maliban lang sa Mega Manila na binubuo ng Metro Manila at mga lalawigan ng Rizal, Cavite, Laguna at Bulacan na nasa ilalim naman ng modified enhanced community quarantine.

Sa mga nasasakupan ng GCQ, maluwag-luwag nang kauntin ang galaw at paghahanapbuhay ng mga tao bagama't istriktong ipinatutupad ang social distancing, pagsusuot ng face mask sa labas ng bahay at paglabas-labas ng mga taong may edad na lalagpas sa 60-anyos at may edad na 20-anyos pababa.

Pwedeng magtatag o mag-operate ng mga essential na produkto at serbisyo gaya ng medisina, pagkain at panggagamot at maging ng mga tinatawag na non-essential gaya ng barber shop at pagdalo sa mga pagsamba at iba pa.

Sa MECQ, hinigpitan ang transportasyon kaya halos bawal ang lahat ng pampublikong sasakyan at paglilipat-tirahan ng mga tao; nasa 50 porsyento lang ang operasyon ng lahat ng negosyo; bawal ang mga non-essential na produkto at serbisyo at mahigpit na mahigpit sa mga patakaran sa face mask, social distancing paglabas-labas sa tahanan ng mga mamamayan.

Ang paglahok sa giyera ay pagsunod sa lahat ng mga batas at patakaran sa ilalim ng GCQ at MECQ.

MAGSAKRIPISYO, MAGTIIS

Talaga namang nagdudulot ng kahirapan at maaaring kamatayan din ang mga batas at patakaran sa GCQ at MECQ subalit malinaw na malinaw na higit na maghihirap at mamamatay tayo kung hindi tayo susunod at magpatupad ng mga batas at patakaran.

Kaya naman, kung malinaw na malinaw sa atin ang mga batas at patakaran, sumunod o ipatupad natin ang mga ito.

Kung may malabo, madali namang makipag-ugnayan kina kapitan at kagawad para sa ikalilina ng lahat.

Ang mahalaga, maitanim natin sa ating isipan na higit ang pagsunod at pagpapatupad sa batas kaysa anomang gusto nating gawin upang makatulong tayo sa pagpigil ng pagkalat ng COVID-19 at pagpapagamot sa mga tinamaan na bagama't wala pang saktong gamot laban dito.

Siyempre pa, may kasamang pagsasakripisyo at pagtitiis ang lahat subalit higit namang magbubunga ang mga ito ng higit na maganda at may kinabukasan nating kalagayan.

Muli sumunod at ipatupad natin nang sama-sama ang mga batas at patakaran sa giyera natin sa COVID-19.

Modular nuclear power plant balak itayo ng gobyerno

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Aug 06 2020 08:05 PM

Sariwa pa sa alaala ang aksidente sa Fukushima nuclear facility sa Japan noong 2011, kung saan libo-libo ang naapektuhan.

Pero sa kabila ng pangamba, tuloy ang interes ng gobyerno na dagdagan ng nuclear energy ang supply ng kuryente sa Pilipinas kasunod ng utos ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na pag-aralan ang polisiya.

"Lahat naman talaga may risk but puwede naman i-measure and to control," ani Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi.

"Huwag na tayong mamili. Kahit sa impiyerno 'yan galing, ita-tap natin para lang may kuryente," dagdag ng kalihim.

Ayon kay Cusi, kailangan ng bansa ng dagdag na mapagkukuhanan ng kuryente habang umaangat ang ekonomiya para maiwasan ang brownout at mahal na singil. Kukunsultahin naman daw lahat.

Modular nuclear plant ang target ng Department of Energy, at bukas daw ang probinsya ng Sulu, Cagayan at Palawan na ilagay sa kanila ang pasilidad.

"We are going to be very transparent in discussing. We will engage the public," ani Cusi.

Pero para sa grupong Advocates of Science and Technology for the People (Agham), hindi totoong bababa ang singil ng kuryente dahil imported din ang fuel para gumana at makagawa ng kuryente ang mga nuclear facility.

Kahit daw ang Bataan Nuclear Power Plant na binayaran ng bilyong piso pero hindi naman nagamit, hindi rin umano puwedeng buksan dahil paso at dispalinghado na ang maraming parte.

"Hindi timely itong gagawin ng gobyerno," ani Agham Secretary General Feny Cosico.

"Marami pa tayong ibang energy resources na puwedeng i-develop," dagdag ni Cosico.

Kung si Cusi umano ang tatanungin, dapat gamitin ang Bataan Nuclear Power Plant pero depende raw ito sa komunidad at local government unit.

Bukas naman ang Meralco sa paggamit ng kuryente galing sa nuclear power.

Pero aminado ang DOE na taon pa ang aabutin bago maitayo ang kauna-unahang modular nuclear power facility sa Pilipinas.

-- Ulat ni Alvin Elchco, ABS-CBN News

PH envoy tells China: What's our is ours

posted August 07, 2020 at 12:40 am

by [Manila Standard](#)

Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. on Thursday invoked the country's arbitral award against China in the disputed South China Sea, as it said Beijing was "reading too much" into Manila's refusal to join military exercises in the waterway.

The country's top diplomat insisted that the Philippines had been "consistent and clear" in its stand on the West Philippine Sea.

"What is ours is ours under the Arbitral Award and no one else can tell us different," Locsin said in a tweet.

"Our relations have been going really well. Let's keep it that way. We're sitting out this one, we don't know if we will [do] the next one. Okay?"

Locsin made his remarks after Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said Beijing welcomed President Rodrigo Duterte's order on Tuesday prohibiting the Philippine Navy from joining the exercises in the West Philippine Sea.

"We appreciate President Duterte's remarks and stand ready to properly resolve the maritime disputes with the Philippines through friendly consultations to jointly safeguard peace and stability in the South China Sea and the entire region," Wang was quoted in a China Global Television Network report.

The Philippines has asserted its arbitral victory against China's sweeping claims in the disputed waterway and Locsin said the country's position was non-negotiable.

Beijing has continued to ignore the ruling and said it was "illegal and invalid" and even warned the United States, the Philippines' longtime ally, for its "intensified meddling." Rey E. Requejo

Meanwhile, Locsin asked the Department of National Defense to "define properly" when it said it was "properly handling this issue in the interest of both China and the Philippines and regional peace and stability."

In a related development, the Philippine Navy's first missile-frigate, BRP Jose Rizal (FF-150), departed from Apra Harbor, Guam, on Wednesday, and is expected to arrive in Hawaii on Aug. 14 to participate in the two-week Rim of the Pacific or RIMPAC 2020.

"Participation in RIMPAC 2020 will serve as 'shakedown cruise' for the newly-acquired frigate BRP Jose Rizal to further test the ship's seaworthiness and performance," said Lt. Commander Ryan H. Luna, Naval Task Group 80.5 public affairs officer.

RIMPAC 2020 will run from Aug. 17 to 31 off Honolulu, Hawaii, and is described as the world's largest joint and combined naval exercises held biennially.

The BRP Jose Rizal arrived in Guam on Aug. 2, four days after departing from Subic Bay on July 29.

The NTG 80.5 is commanded by Captain Jerry Garrido, Jr., the commanding officer of BRP Jose Rizal, and is complemented by surface, services and support components.

Trough ng LPA, localized thunderstorm makaaapekto sa bansa



August 6, 2020 @ 7:33 AM 23 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Patuloy na binabantayan ang isang Low Pressure Area (LPA) Huwebes, August 6 sa layong 435 kilometro west southwest ng Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, ayon sa PAGASA.

Makararanas ang MIMAROPA, Bicol Region, Visayas, Mindanao, at Quezon ng mga pag-ulan, kulog, at kidlat.

Habang localized thunderstorm ang mananaig sa Metro Manila at nalalabing bahagi ng Luzon.

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

Save wildlife, save forests, and avoid pandemics

Covid-19 emerged from the wilderness. That alone is reason to protect the forests, control trade in wildlife – and avoid pandemics.



A pangolin pup and its mother: The species has been suspected of spreading Covid-19 to humans. Image: [Shukran888, CC BY-SA 2.0](#)

By Tim Radford, Climate News Network

Aug. 6, 2020

If the world wants to avoid pandemics like Covid-19 in future, it has a lot to learn. This coronavirus outbreak is likely to cost the world [somewhere between \\$8 trillion and \\$15 trillion](#).

It might have been 500 times cheaper, say US scientists, simply to have done what conservationists have sought for years: control trade in wildlife and stop destroying tropical forests.

The SARS-CoV-2 virus – also known as Covid-19 – is a new human infection that has been traced back to bats apparently traded as food in China. It has so far infected 15 million people around the planet and [caused nearly 700,000 deaths](#).

But it is just one of a series of viruses that have emerged from creatures in the wilderness, to cause a series of local or global epidemics: among them HIV, Ebola, MERS, SARS and H1N1.

Researchers calculate that, for the last century, [at least two new viruses each year](#) have spilled from their natural hosts [into the human population](#).

Nothing seems more prudent than to give ourselves time to deal with this pandemic before the next one comes.

Les Kaufman, ecologist, Boston University

And this has happened, they argue in the journal [Science](#), most often directly after people have handled live primates, bats and other mammals, or butchered them for meat, or indirectly after such viruses have infected farm animals such as chickens or pigs.

These infections are now so familiar they have acquired their own medical classification: they are [zoonotic viruses](#).

And [human exploitation of the world's last remaining wildernesses](#) – the tropical forests – and pursuit of exotic creatures for trophies, medicines or food can be linked to the emergence of most of them.

“All this traces back to [our indifference about what has been happening at the edge of the tropical forests](#),” said [Les Kaufman, an ecologist at Boston University](#).

He and 17 other experts argue that at a cost of somewhere between \$22 billion and \$30 billion a year, the transmission of unknown and unexpected diseases could be significantly reduced: chiefly by controlling logging and conversion of rainforest into ranch land, and limiting the trade in wild meat and exotic animals.

Clear argument

The sums are large. But the cost of the Covid-19 pandemic so far is likely to prove at least 500 times more costly.

Professor Kaufman and his colleagues did the calculations. They added up the annual costs of monitoring the world's wildlife trade; of active programmes to prevent what they call "spillovers" from wild creatures; of efforts to detect and control outbreaks; the cost of reducing infection to human populations and farmed livestock; the cost of reducing deforestation each year by half, and the cost of ending the trade in wild meat in China. Their highest estimate was \$31.2 billion a year, their lowest \$22 billion.

They offset this with the benefits simply in the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions linked to forest destruction, and then matched the total against the global loss of gross domestic product, the cost of the estimated 590,000 dead from the virus at the end of July, and so on, to arrive at a minimum cost of \$8.1 trillion, and a maximum of \$15.8tn.

The researchers see this balance of costs as a clear argument for [international and concerted action from governments around the world](#) to reduce an enduring hazard.

"The pandemic gives an incentive to do something addressing concerns that are immediate and threatening to individuals, and that's what moves people," Professor Kaufman said. "Nothing seems more prudent than to give ourselves time to deal with this pandemic before the next one comes."

This story was published with permission from [Climate News Network](#).

Biodiversity loss could be making us sick — here's why

By [Inter Press Service](#)

August 7, 2020

BY 2050, 70 percent of the world's population is expected to live in towns and cities. Urban living brings many benefits, but city dwellers worldwide are seeing a rapid increase in noncommunicable health problems such as asthma and inflammatory bowel disease.

Some scientists now think this is linked to biodiversity loss — the ongoing depletion of the varied forms of life on Earth. The rate at which different species go extinct is currently a thousand times higher than the historical background rate.

Microbial diversity is a large part of the biodiversity that is being lost. And these microbes — bacteria, viruses and fungi, among others — are essential for maintaining healthy ecosystems. Because humans are a part of these ecosystems, our health also suffers when they vanish, or when barriers reduce our exposure to them.

The inner ecosystem

Our gut, skin and airways harbor distinct microbiomes — vast networks of microbes that exist in different environments. The human gut alone harbors up to 100 trillion microbes, which outnumber our own human cells. Our microbes provide services that are integral to our survival such as processing food and providing chemicals that support brain function.



Children need diverse microbiomes in their environment to develop healthy immune system. PHOTO BY JOSH CALABRESE ON UNSPLASH

Contact with a diverse range of microbes in our environment is also essential for bolstering our immune system. Microbes found in environments closer to the ones we evolved in, such as woodlands and grasslands, are called “old friend” microbes by some microbiologists. That's because they play a major role in “educating” our immune systems.

Part of our immune system is fast-acting and non-specific, which means it attacks all substances in the absence of proper regulation. Old friend microbes from our environment help provide this regulatory role. They can also stimulate chemicals that help to control inflammation and prevent our bodies from attacking our own cells, or innocuous substances like pollen and dust.

Exposure to a diverse range of microbes allows our bodies to mount an effective defensive response against pathogens. Another part of our immune system produces tiny armies of “memory cells” that maintain a record of all the pathogens our bodies encounter. This enables a rapid and effective immune response to similar pathogens in the future.

To help fight infectious diseases like the coronavirus, we need healthy immune systems. But this is impossible without support from diverse microbiomes. Just as microbes have important roles in ecosystems, by helping plants grow and recycling soil nutrients, they also provide our bodies with nutrients and health-sustaining chemicals that promote good physical and mental health. This strengthens our resilience when facing diseases and other stressful times in our lives.

But our cities are often lacking in biodiversity. Most of us have swapped green and blue spaces for gray spaces — the concrete jungle. As a result, urban dwellers are far less exposed to a diversity of health-promoting microbes. Pollution can affect the urban microbiome too. Air pollutants can alter pollen so that it's more likely to cause an allergic reaction.

“Germaphobia,” the perception that all microbes are bad, compounds these effects by encouraging many of us to sterilize all of the surfaces in our homes, and often prevents children from going outside and playing in dirt. The soil is one of the most biodiverse habitats on Earth, so urban lifestyles can really disadvantage young people by severing this vital connection.

People living in more deprived urban areas have poorer health, shorter life expectancies and higher rates of infections. It's no coincidence that these communities often lack accessible, high quality green and blue spaces. They're also less likely to be able to afford, or have the time and energy to enjoy affordable fruit and vegetables.

What can we do?

We need to get serious about the urban microbiome.

Restoring natural habitats can help increase biodiversity and the health of city residents. Growing more diverse native plants, creating safe, inclusive and accessible green spaces and rewilding inner city and suburban parks can restore microbial diversity in urban life.

Our research is helping urban designers restore habitats in cities that can promote healthy interactions between residents and environmental microbes.

But access to these green and blue spaces, and affordable nutrition must be improved. Support for allotments and community gardens could provide free, nutritious food and exposure to helpful microbes in one fell swoop, while sessions that teach people how to grow their own food could be prescribed by health professionals.

Promoting connections with nature — including the microbes many of us currently shun — should be a key part of any post-pandemic recovery strategy. We must protect and promote the invisible biodiversity that is vital to our personal and planetary health.

BY JAKE M. ROBINSON, IPS

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Covid came from bats 40 yrs ago – expert

By [Associated Press](#)

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Wuhan in Hubei province might not be the place where the virus causing the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) crossed from animals to humans, despite the first clusters of infections having been reported in the city, said Dr. Michael Ryan, executive director of the Health Emergencies Program of the World Health Organization (WHO) said.

He cited a study published in late July in the journal Nature Microbiology, which showed that scientists now have further proof that the coronavirus evolved in the wild and might have been circulating in bats for more than 40 years.

The study, conducted by scientists from China and Europe, said the virus might have been poised to jump to humans for some time. Meanwhile, this discovery discredits conspiracy theories that the coronavirus was bioengineered or escaped from a lab, it added.

The researchers compared the genetic makeup of the novel coronavirus with that of a close relative in bats — a virus called RaTG13. The latter was discovered by noted Chinese virologist Shi Zhengli in Yunnan province in 2013, according to the journal Science.

As a result, RaTG13 has been the centerpiece of many conspiracy theories claiming Dr Shi's team had genetically manipulated it to create the novel coronavirus. Shi rebutted all the accusations in an interview with Science last month.

The city had a surveillance system designed specifically for picking up atypical pneumonia cases, he said at a routine news briefing. "It was there for a very specific purpose. And the fact that the fire alarm was triggered doesn't necessarily mean that is where the disease crossed from animals into humans."

When commenting on the future joint investigation, Ryan said Chinese scientists had done a lot of great work and provided valuable preliminary data.

A more extensive epidemiological study to look at the first cases and clusters in Wuhan would begin with the participation of scientists from around the globe, according to the WHO.

Two WHO experts were in China to conduct groundwork for an investigation into the animal origins of the novel coronavirus from July 11 to August 2, according to information released by China's National Health Commission on Monday.

During their stay in China, they held many talks with their Chinese counterparts on scientific research, including the route of transmission and animal origin of the virus, and exchanged ideas on future scientific study plans.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said WHO and Chinese experts had drafted the terms for the studies and the program for an international team led by the WHO.

“The international team will include leading scientists and researchers from China and around the world,” he said. The origin of the novel coronavirus has puzzled scientists since its discovery.

The latest study found the two viruses shared a common ancestor, but their evolutionary path diverged some 40 to 70 years ago. The long divergence period suggests that there may be other undiscovered strains of bat coronaviruses that may cause disease in humans.

Unlike what previous research suggested, the study did not find evidence supporting pangolins playing a role in the evolution of the novel coronavirus or being the intermediate host. Instead, pangolins may have picked up the virus through contact with other wild animals, the study said.

David Robertson, a professor of viral genetics at the University of Glasgow and one of the key researchers behind the study, said the novel coronavirus is a “generalist virus” that could infect multiple species of animals.

“Current evidence suggests that the novel coronavirus acquired its significant traits from evolving in bats, not in some intermediate hosts,” he said in an online seminar last month.

This might help explain why the intermediate host had eluded scientists to this day because it may not have played a big role in the virus’ evolution, he said.