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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service

Talamak na illegal trade ng wildlife animals kinumpirma ni DENR Usec. Antiporda



August 10, 2020 @ 8:09 AM 23 hours ago August 10, 2020 @ 8:09 AM 23 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Kinumpirma ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Spokesperson Undersecretary Benny Antiporda na talamak pa rin umano ang illegal trade ng wildlife animals gaya ng Pangolin na matatagpuan sa lalawigan ng Palawan.

Ayon kay Antiporda, sa kabila na nagpapatuloy ang illegal wildlife trade nagbabantay pa rin ang mga tauhan ng DENR 24/7 kahit na naka-lockdown ang ilang lugar sa bansa.

Sa isang panayam, iginiit ni Antiporda na mabenta umano ang Pangolin na kinukuha pa sa Palawan na itinuturing na endanger species dahil sa malaking market nito sa ibang bansa.

Sinabi pa ng naturang opisyal na dahil may market umano ang Pangolin, naipalulusot umano nila ito palabas ng bansa dahil malakas ang bentahan umano nito sa bansang China, Vietnam at Thailand.

“Naipapalusot nila yan malakas sa China, Vietnam at Thailand dahil yung medical value po nyan” kwento ni Antiporda.

Kaugnay nito, tiniyak ni Antiporda na patuloy na nagbabantay ang DENR na para protektahan ang Pangolin at sa katunayan nakasalang sa kongreso ang panukala para bigatan umano ang mga nag-i-smuggle ng mga ito.

Idinagdag pa nito na isinusulong nila sa Kongreso na gawin 10 hanggang 20 taon ang sintensya sa mga mahuhuling nag-i-smuggle ng Pangolin na may dating parusa na anim hanggang 12 taon.

Sa kabila nito, sinabi ni Antiporda na sasampahan nila ng kaso ang may-ari ng ostrich sa oras na may problema ito sa permit o may kapabayaang hinggil sa dalawang ostrich na nasa kanilang pangangalaga sa Maligaya Village. **Santi Celario**

DENR probes legality of keeping ostriches in QC

Published August 10, 2020, 6:07 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The two ostriches that were caught running free in a viral video were bought from a farm in Misamis Occidental for P30,000, according to an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Monday.

Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said the owner of the ostriches, Jonathan Cruz, told the DENR that the birds were bought from the Philippine Ostrich and Crocodile Farm, Inc. in Misamis Oriental on Oct. 28, 2019.

Based on Cruz's affidavit, a certain Edwin Jara, a consultant for the Philippine Ostrich and Crocodile Farm, Inc. allegedly sold the birds for P30,000, Antiporda added.

A technical conference was called by the DENR-National Capital Region on Monday to let Cruz explain how he got possession of the ostriches.

Cruz, together with his lawyer Charlie Pascual, submitted some documents that include the local transport permit, invoice receipt from the transaction, and photos of the dead ostrich.

Antiporda said the respondent presented a local transport permit to transfer the ostriches from Misamis Oriental to Nueva Ecija but the permit has expired the day the ostriches were bought on Oct. 28, 2019.

“Ang ibinigay sa kanila na permit is the local transport permit. Nung Oct. 28, 2019, expiry date din nung ibinenta sa kanila yung ostrich. Sa halip na maibyahe yung ostrich papunta pang Nueva Ecija na may farm din itong respondent, temporary nilagak nila sa Mapayapa Village. (The only permit given to them is the local transport permit, which was on Oct. 28, 2019, also the expiry date when the ostrich was sold to them. Instead of being able to transport the ostrich to Nueva Ecija where the respondent's farm is located, they temporarily placed it in Mapayapa Village in Quezon City),” Antiporda said.

Cruz said he received an emailed copy of the ostriches' veterinary certificate after the transaction has been made.

“Yung wildlife registration permit hindi naibigay at inabot na ng COVID kaya hindi na daw nila naibyahe ang dalawang ostrich. (The wildlife registration permit was not given to them (Cruz) until the COVID lockdown was implemented so they said they could not travel the two ostriches anymore),” Antiporda said.

A certificate of wildlife registration (CWR) is a permit that enables wildlife keepers and owners to legitimize their ownership of the animals. If the owner plans to relocate the animal, they also have to secure a local transport permit from the DENR.

“From their statement they are trying to say that this is a livestock, a farm animal, hindi nila alam na considered as wildlife siya (they did not know that it is considered wildlife),” he added.

Antiporda pointed out that an ostrich is not a domesticated animal and is still covered by the Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001.

He said those with farms should also have the proper registration when obtaining ostriches. “But if they want to eat it or katayin pwede naman dahil pinapayagan naman ito ng ating regulasyon at batas (if they want to eat or slaughter it, they can do so because our regulations and laws allow it),” Antiporda said.



“So since pinapayagan na katayin at kainin, hinihintay namin ang sagot ng legal department kung may cruelty or anything. Kailangan namin marinig ang aming legal department on this. (So since it is allowed to be slaughtered and eaten, we are waiting for the legal department’s answer if there is cruelty or anything. We need to hear our legal department on this),” he said.

“There is a thin line of confusion when it comes to the issue on wildlife and farm or livestock. These are two issues that only our legal team can answer,” he added.

Antiporda said the DENR-NCR will be reviewing the documents that Cruz has submitted.

“They will study it first so they will know what other steps will be taken. But basically after the review of their documents, maybe tomorrow (August 11), another technical conference will be conducted,” he said.

DENR probes violation of possessing ostriches after viral video

By Marita Moaje August 10, 2020, 8:55 pm



MANILA – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is looking at violations that may have been committed by the alleged owner of the two ostriches that ran loose inside a subdivision in Quezon City.

DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said they conducted a technical conference on Monday to investigate the matter.

The alleged owner of the ostriches, a certain Jonathan Cruz, attended the conference with his counsel.

Antiporda said according to Cruz, “the ostriches were sold to them by a certain Edwin Jara last October 2019”.

When asked for the documents pertaining to the animals, Cruz said the only documents given to them were the transport permit from Misamis to Nueva Ecija, a payment voucher showing that he bought the two animals for PHP30,000 pesos, an invoice which shows that the ostriches came from a crocodile farm in Misamis, and a veterinary certificate.

Antiporda said according to Cruz, the animals may have gotten tired when they were transported from Misamis, so he decided to place them temporarily in his property inside Mapayapa Village in QC.

Unfortunately, Antiporda said, Cruz was not able to show them a wildlife registration permit — which is the most important document that they should have — for them to be able to possess the said animals.

The wildlife registration permit or the certificate of wildlife registration (CWR) legitimizes their ownership of the animal.

One of the two ostriches was already turned over by Cruz to the DENR Biodiversity Management Bureau and Wildlife Rescue Center on Friday.

The other ostrich “died due to stress” according to Cruz.

During the technical conference, Cruz said his helpers cooked the dead ostrich and ate it.

“Basically ang violation nila na nakikita namin is dun sa possession nila nung ibon nung buhay pa (Basically, the violation we see here is the possession of the ostrich when it was still alive);” Antiporda said.

He said pictures of the dead ostrich were presented during the conference.

Aside from the illegal possession of wildlife, Antiporda said they are also looking into the issue of illegal wild trade.

He said they are still studying the case and that another technical conference may be done.

Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001 states that owning and possessing wildlife animals without the necessary permits could be charged with “illegal possession” and may be penalized which includes fines and imprisonment of up to four years. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1111816>

Viral QC ostriches not covered by permits, says

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Cruz decided to temporarily keep the ostriches in the Quezon City village as he waited for the seller to give him other necessary documents as regards their possession, Antiporda said.

Viral QC ostriches not covered by permits, says DENR

Published August 10, 2020 6:25pm

By JOVILAND RITA, GMA News

The owner of the ostriches which escaped their enclosure at a Quezon City subdivision last week didn't have the necessary papers to legitimately keep the flightless birds, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has said.

Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said the DENR's regional office in Metro Manila had already met with the camp of the ostriches' owner Jonathan Cruz.

One of the ostriches has died due to stress after it was captured to be returned to its pen.

Antiporda said the ostriches were bought for P30,000 on October 28, 2019 from an ostrich and crocodile farm.

The seller, it is claimed, failed to provide the necessary documents.

On October 28, 2019, Antiporda said Cruz bought the wildlife from an Edwin Hara.

Cruz's lawyer Charlie Pascual told GMA News Online that the seller introduced himself as a consultant of the Philippine Ostrich and Crocodile Farm when they bought the pair of ostriches, male and female.

Antiporda said the seller only gave Cruz the payment voucher and an expiring local transport permit for the travel of the two ostriches from Misamis Oriental to Nueva Ecija.

Cruz decided to temporarily keep the ostriches in the Quezon City village as he waited for the seller to give him other necessary documents as regards their possession, Antiporda said.

According to Pascual, Cruz assessed that the ostriches would not survive the long trip to Nueva Ecija and decided to keep them in the QC village for the meantime.

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Cruz said he asked the seller to obtain a new and valid local transport permit and had been following up with him almost every day about the documents.

"Ang sabi niya to follow 'yung ibang documents, based on the statement of the lawyer. Ang binigay na mga samunod na documents is 'yung veterinary certificate at saka 'yung invoice ng Philippine Ostrich and Crocodile Farm," Antiporda said.

"Yung pinaka-wildlife registration permit, e hindi naibigay at inabot na nitong COVID-19 incident kung kaya hindi na raw nila naibiyahe 'yung dalwang ostrich," he added.

According to Antiporda, the document for wildlife registration serves as a permit to possess wildlife.

Antiporda said the DENR was still studying the case to determine steps to address the matter.

"After the review of their document later, maybe tomorrow mag-conduct ulit ng isang technical conference," Antiporda said.

"Then with that, we can say kung ano ang magiging hakbang, action ng ating pamahalaan against the owner of the said ostriches," he added.

According to Antiporda, the camp of Cruz argued that they were not aware that ostriches are considered as wildlife since they will keep them for poultry.

Pascual said the ostriches were categorized as livestock, which was also reflected in a DENR document presented by the seller.

"Kaya pa po pares ang kinuha, magpaparami po sana," Pascual said.

Pascual said the seller had stopped communicating with Cruz when the videos of the running ostriches in subdivision went viral online.

"Wala na nga po. Magmula po noong mangyari 'yung insidente. Wala na, hindi na po siya ma-kontak," Pascual said. **-NB, GMA News**

‘Ostrich could be kept as a pet with proper
registration,’ says DENR

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‘Ostrich could be kept as a pet with proper registration,’ says DENR

Published August 10, 2020, 3:22 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Filipinos were amused by the sight of ostriches running free in a private subdivision in Quezon City last week but many have been asking how the wild animals found their way there.



(PIXABAY / MANILA BULLETIN)

The animals’ owner Jonathan Cruz has already turned over one of the ostriches to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), while he claimed the other ostrich has died due to stress.

Under the Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001, collection of wildlife may be allowed provided that appropriate and acceptable wildlife collection techniques with least or no detrimental effects to the existing wildlife populations and their habitats will be done.

However, the collection and utilization of animals does not include threatened species. Threatened species is a general term to indicate that a species or subspecies is critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable, or other accepted categories of wildlife whose populations are at risk of extinction.

RA 9147 states that the DENR has jurisdiction over all terrestrial plant and animal species, all turtles and tortoises and wetland species, including but not limited to crocodiles, water birds and all amphibians and dugong, while the Department of Agriculture has jurisdiction over all declared aquatic critical habitats, aquatic resources, including but not limited to all fishes, aquatic plants, invertebrates, and all marine mammals, except dugong.

The law however clearly states that no person or entity shall be allowed possession of wildlife unless such person or entity can prove financial and technical capability and the appropriate facility to maintain said wildlife.

Taking into consideration that the ostrich is a non-threatened species, it is allowed to be kept as a pet provided that a certificate of wildlife registration (CWR) has been obtained from the Biodiversity Management Bureau or its regional or local offices.

A CWR is a permit that enables wildlife keepers and owners to legitimize their ownership of the animals.

‘Ostrich could be kept as a pet with proper
registration,’ says DENR

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Animal species acquired from DENR-registered breeders or sellers are eligible for CWR, while those obtained through other means are deemed illegal and are therefore not qualified for CWR.

A CWR, meanwhile, is not required for domesticated farm and pet animals.

To apply for a permit, one should go to the Wildlife Resources and Permitting Section (WRPS) of the DENR regional office near the area where they keep their pet wild animal.

A duly accomplished application form and proof of legal acquisition of wild animal e.g. official receipt, deed of sale, deed of donation, etc. should be submitted.

Applicants need to bring their pets for inspection to the WRPS office or schedule an on-site inspection for animals that are difficult to transport.

After animal inspection and documentation, they will have to pay the assessed fees. For one to 50 heads, P50; 51 to 100 heads, P500; 101 to 200 heads, P750; and 201 and above heads, P1,000.

After payment, the official receipt will have to be presented to the WRPS staff and they will be advised on the release date of CWR. Processing usually takes one to three days.

DENR said that if they plan to relocate the pet, they have to secure a local transport permit first from DENR.

Viral runaway ostrich in QC cooked by caretakers after it died of stress

Published August 10, 2020, 7:26 PM

by [Minka Klaudia Tiangco](#)

One of the two ostriches that went viral after running loose in Quezon City was cooked by its caretakers after it died of stress, the owner's legal counsel confirmed on Monday (Aug. 10).

Atty. Charlie Pascual said Jonathan Cruz, the owner of the ostriches, told the two caretakers to bury the remains of the dead ostrich last week.

But upon checking the next day, Cruz found the two caretakers had cooked the ostrich into an adobo dish, saying that they felt it was a waste to just bury it.

"Parang wala lang doon sa dalawang boy (It was like nothing to the two boys)," Pascual told the Manila Bulletin. "Wala silang alam sa impact n'on sa public (They know nothing about its impact on the public)."

Pascual offered his apologies to the public, saying a lot of people were affected by the incident, including the ostriches' third caretaker, who quit his job after the birds escaped while under his care.

"This is a decent family, tahimik na pamilya, maganda ang intensiyon nila (a quiet family, their intentions were good)," he said. "I would just like to relay my apologies to the public for all the distress this has caused."

Cruz reportedly bought the ostriches from the Philippine Ostrich and Crocodile Farm, Inc. in Misamis Oriental. He planned to open a farm in Nueva Ecija, where the ostriches were to be transferred.

However, quarantine restrictions prevented him from transporting the birds outside Metro Manila. Cruz also claimed he was not given a certificate of wildlife registration that legitimizes one's ownership of wildlife.

The lawyer assured the public that the ostriches received proper care under Cruz, amid concerns raised by Filipinos online after seeing that the ostriches' feathers were falling out.

Pascual explained that this could have been because it was molting season for the birds.

The other ostrich was turned over to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) which launched an investigation into the legality of keeping ostriches.

In explaining that they did not violate any laws, Pascual said an ostrich is considered livestock and not wildlife.

However, DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said an ostrich is not a domesticated animal and is still covered by Republic Act No. 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001.

Antiporda also said slaughtering and eating the ostrich is allowed under existing regulations and laws. "If they want to eat it or katayin, pwede naman dahil pinapayagan naman ito ng ating regulasyon at batas (if they want to eat or slaughter it, they can do so because our regulations and laws allow it)," he said.

"So, since pinapayagan na katayin at kainin, hinihintay namin ang sagot ng legal department kung may cruelty or anything. Kailangan namin marinig ang aming legal department on this (So since it is allowed to be slaughtered and eaten, we are waiting for the legal department's answer if there was cruelty or anything. We need to hear our legal department on this)," he added.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/10/viral-runaway-ostrich-in-qc-cooked-by-caretakers-after-it-died-of-stress/>

Ostrich na namatay sa stress, inadobo, kinain!



August 10, 2020 @ 6:50 PM 12 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Inadobo at kinain pa umano ang namatay na ostrich dahil sa stress na nakawala at nagtatakbo sa subdivision sa Quezon City.

Ito ang pag-amin ni Attorney Charlie Pascual, abogado ni Jonathan Cruz na siyang nagpakilalang may-ari at nag-aalaga sa dalawang ostrich.

Matatandaang ang isa sa mga ostrich ay naisurender na nitong Biyernes sa Department of Environment And Natural Resources.

Samantala, kinumpirma naman ni DENR Spokesperson Undersecretary Benny Antiporda na kulang ang wild life registration permit at transport permit ng may-ari ng mga viral na ostrich.

Sa isang virtual conference sinabi ni Antiporda na malaking katanungan kung bakit napunta sa Quezon City ang ostrich gayong ang permit nito ay mula sa Misamis at dadalhin ito patungong Nueva Ecija.

Ayon pa kay Antiporda kulang din umano ang ipinakitang dokumento ng may-ari ng ostrich para sabihin legal ang pag-alaga nito ng ostrich at pagbiyahe nito.

Sinabi pa nito na bagamat nagpakita umano ng magandang hakbang ang may-ari ng ostrich na si Jonathan Cruz nang isinurender nito ang isang ostrich binigyan umano ito ng DENR ng sapat na panahon para makapagpaliwanag hinggil sa tunay na nangyari sa pagkamatay ng isa sa ostrich. *Santi Celario*

Namatay na ostrich dahil sa stress, inadobo

By [Mer Layson](#)(Pilipino Star Ngayon) - August 11, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Inadobo umano ang karne ng isa sa dalawang ostrich na unang namataang pagala-gala sa isang subdibisyon sa Quezon City at malaunan ay namatay dahil sa stress.

Inamin ni Atty. Charlie Pascual, na abogado ni Jonathan Cruz, may-ari ng ostrich, na kinarne at ginawang adobo ng mga tauhan ni Cruz ang namatay na ostrich.

Nabatid na nang malaman ni Cruz na namatay ang ostrich ay inutusan niya ang kanyang mga tauhan na ilibing ito.

Gayunman, nagulat na lang umano ang may-ari nang malaman na sa halip na ilibing ay kinarne at inadobo ng mga tauhan ang ostrich kaya't wala na itong nagawa.

Matatandaang noong Agosto 4, na unang araw nang muling pag-iral ng modified - enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) sa Metro Manila, ay namataan ang dalawang ostrich, na isang lalaki at isang babae, na pagala-gala sa Mapayapa Village 3, Quezon City.

Isa sa mga ito ang nakuhanan ng video at ipinaskil sa social media, kaya't nag-viral pa.

Kaagad rin namang nahuli ang mga ostrich ng ilang security guard ng subdibisyon.

Malaunan, inamin ni Cruz na namatay ang isa sa mga ostrich dahil sa stress, habang ang isa pa ay itinurn-over na sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) para maalagaang mabuti.

Viral ostrich inadobo, kinain ng caretakers: abogado

April Raffles, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Aug 10 2020 09:38 PM | Updated as of Aug 10 2020 11:44 PM

MAYNILA — Adobo ang kinahinatnan ng isa sa mga viral ostrich na namatay noong Sabado matapos umano itong iluto at kainin ng mga caretaker.

Inamin ni Charlie Pascual, abogado ni Jonathan Cruz na may-ari ng 2 ostrich na nakawala sa isang subdivision sa Quezon City, na ginawang adobo ang ostrich at nilantakan ng mga nag-aalaga dito.

Ayon sa kanya, ang mga caretaker ang nagluto at kumain sa ostrich nang hindi nalalaman ni Cruz.

"Nung mahuli po ito, sobrang pagod po, nai-stress... Bigla hong namatay yung ostrich eh. Pinaubaya nalang po ni Mr. Cruz sa mga taga-alaga kung paano to ililibing... Nabigla nga po si Mr. Cruz, eh nailuto po yung namatay na ostrich. Kinain po nila," ani Pascual.

SAAN GALING ANG MGA OSTRICH

Paliwanag pa ni Pascual, binili ni Cruz ang mga ostrich bilang livestock animals mula sa isang farm sa Cagayan de Oro City para paramihin sana.

May vouchers na rin umano ang mga ito pero ibabalik na sana ni Cruz ang mga ostrich dahil hindi makapagbigay ng kumpletong papeles ang pinagbilhan, pero hindi na niya nagawang ibyahe pabalik dahil sa lockdown.

Ang isa pang nakawalang ostrich ay kusa namang itinurnover ni Cruz sa Wildlife Rescue Center ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Biodiversity Management Bureau.

Ayon naman kay Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda, kahit livestock animals ang mga ostrich ay maaari pa ring may mga paglabag sa batas si Cruz kaya ito ay iniimbestigahan pa nila. Handa naman makipagtulungan ang may-ari sa DENR.

Adobo after death: Ostrich was made into a meal after death

August 10, 2020 11:35 PM by [Rita Salonga](#)



The ostrich who died due to stress after roaming around a village in Quezon City last week was allegedly turned into the nation's comfort food, adobo.

This was confirmed by Atty. Charlie Pascual, the legal counsel of Jonathan Cruz, owner of the two ostriches.

On Friday, the two ostriches were turned over to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

DENR Spokesman Usec. Benny Antiporda said that the owner lacked the necessary wild life registration and transport permits for the two viral ostriches.

Based on the DENR's report, the two birds came from Misamis and were supposed to be transported to Nueva Ecija. However, it is still unclear why they ended up in Mapayapa Village.

The owner is being asked to explain what cause the death of the ostrich.

Last week, the story of the two birds went viral on social media after they were found roaming around the said Quezon City village. A video even turned into a meme when one of the ostriches made to turn around because they closed the gate on him, apparently, it had no quarantine pass.

What's up with exotic animals roaming PH streets?

Published August 10, 2020, 8:23 PM

by [Jules Vivas](#)

All there is to know about the recent and past cases of rare animals on the loose in the metro



Early August was like a round of a fictional board game—action-packed with a touch of the absurd.

The government has reimposed the Modified Enhanced Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious Community Quarantine or ME[S]CQ in Metro Manila and, all of a sudden, various animals have been spotted nationwide casually strolling in cities. *Sana* all, right?

The million-dollar question of the month: Who's playing *Jumanji*?

Some take the idea of wildlife entering our concrete jungles as nature's way of reclaiming the world. This could be true, or the quarantine blues may have turned many of us into mad conspiracy theorists. Suffice it to say, we're biting down hard into these beastie stories, a very hot topic on social media right now, especially here in the Philippines.

Exotic animals loitering in urban areas from around the globe have become everyday news. These feral creatures have started to take advantage of places that are mostly empty and on lockdown thanks to the pandemic. From Buenos Aires to New Delhi, parcels of deer, troops of lemurs, bands of coyotes, and other rare animal groups you don't usually see in human territory have started to come out to explore, search for food, or play around.

In our country, however, exotic animals running wild where they don't belong is all together another story. How so? The answer lies in the present and past cases of unusual animals lost in our cities.

2020

Most of us may be aware of the recent exploit of two ostriches in a subdivision in Quezon City (QC) on Aug. 4. The large flightless birds were seen running around the streets of Mapayapa Village 3 early morning that day. This occurrence is where the entire *Jumanji* hullabaloo and the string of reports about exotic animal sightings in major cities began. Netizens poked fun at the unusual circumstance by claiming that someone must have been playing the magical board game. Everyone had a good laugh. But not all took this lightly. In fact, because of this event, the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) urged the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to carry out tighter measures in granting permits to keep wildlife as pets. Of course, the DENR had taken action way before the appeal by investigating the matter.



Meanwhile, on Aug. 5, a pig disrupted the flow of traffic in Cebu City when it traversed the northbound lane of the flyover in Barangay Banilad at 8:30 a.m.. On the same day, but this time in the Western Visayan region, at 3 p.m., a cow surprised motorists by moseying in the middle of Iloilo's Diversion Road.



The brahminy kite seen hovering over CCP, photo by Donald Pancho

The following day, Aug. 6, photos of a brahminy kite or red-backed sea-eagle circulated online. It was reported that the eagle would frequently visit the harbor square of the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Complex in Pasay City. It is also believed that the eagle comes from the sanctuary called Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area, popularly known as the LPPCHEA or LaPPaCHEA, the only remaining bird sanctuary in Metro Manila.

The million-dollar question of the month: Who's playing Jumanji?

2013

It's not peculiar to see squirrels in highly urbanized places such as Metro Manila. Seven years ago, on June 21, a tarsier, one of the smallest known primates in the world, was found in the posh Manila Golf and Country Club in Forbes Park, Makati City. To be clear, the Philippine tarsier is an endemic species supposedly found only in the southeastern part of the archipelago, particularly on the islands of Bohol, Samar, Leyte, and Mindanao. So then how did it get to Manila?



OH, HELLO A Philippine tarsier, not exactly the one from Forbes Park (Photo by Klaus Stiefel)

The saucer-eyed little creature was clinging on a low-lying branch of a tamarind tree near the caddies' barracks. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (DENR-PAWB) eventually took custody of the animal. A month before this incident, the DENR also noted that a baby tarsier was seen at the house of a famous singer in the private subdivision. It died of stress, however, before the agency was able to rescue it.

2003

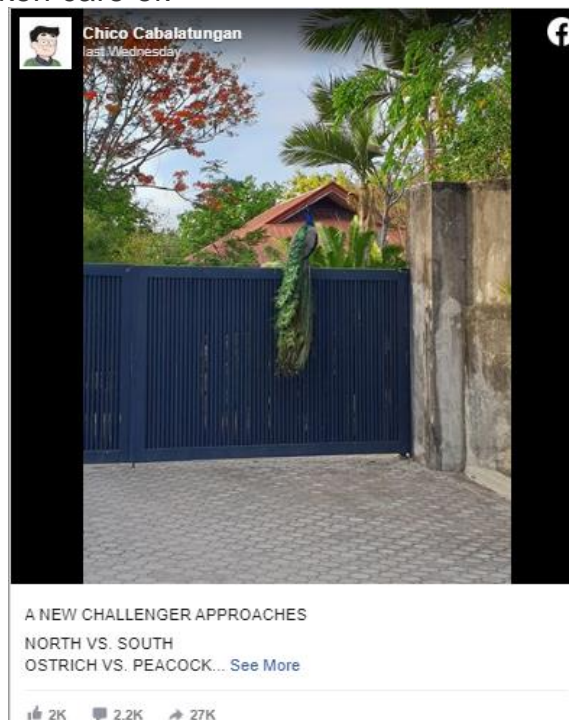


MUMBO Dumbo the Disney character—because the file photos of Jumbo is mostly low resolution

Jumbo, 21 years old, was the largest—and perhaps the most deviant—among the 10 elephants from Thailand, which were at the time in the country to perform at a show at the Araneta Center, Quezon City. The eight-foot-tall mammal broke his way out of the circus tent in Cubao, injuring two animal trainers. The rest of the animal caretakers were helpless against the giant elephant, which was able to cross the road from Araneta Center toward Ramon Magsaysay High School, even going against the flow of traffic on Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA). Some theorized that Jumbo was agitated by the summer heat while veterinarian **Oyi Sebastian** speculated that it was the elephant's mating season. On the other hand, PAWS thought that Jumbo was being mistreated, hence his action. Having calmed down at 3 p.m. the elephant was retrieved by the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

2020, again

On Aug. 7, "Pharsa" became one of the top trending hashtags on Twitter for two reasons. First because of the new skin for a character named Pharsa released by the multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game Mobile Legends. And second, because of a photo of a peafowl chilling outdoors in a subdivision in Alabang, Muntinlupa. In an interview with *Manila Bulletin Lifestyle*, the owner of the post that went viral, **Chico Cabalutungan**, confessed that he would always see the birds—yes, there were more than one—near the house of their keeper. "They're non aggressive and opt to shy away from people," he said. "Several times, I saw two of them walking together." The non aggressive behavior of a peafowl or any animal for that matter is an indication of how well it is taken care of.



While there are responsible exotic pet owners, there are also neglectful ones. On Aug. 8, one of the two ostriches that ran amok in QC died. Environment undersecretary **Benny Antiporda** claims that the death of the bird was due to stress considering it was chased after on the streets. The exact cause of death is still unknown. It was also learned that the owner of the exotic pets did not have the proper paper work to keep them. The other ostrich is currently in custody of Wildlife Rescue Center in QC.

By now you should've seen the pattern. The animals that have been wandering around some of our cities in the Philippines are those that have been brought in by people themselves. Yes, owning exotic pets is legal, as long as legal permission has been obtained. Owners would need to secure a Certificate of Wildlife Registration (CWR) from the DENR. This document would cost about P50 to P1,000 depending on the number of species you are planning to register. Another restriction is that only exotic pets acquired from DENR-registered breeders and sellers are eligible for CWR. Threatened and endangered species will never be allowed as pets.



OSTRICH-CIZED One of the two ostriches that recently ran amok inside a Quezon City had passed away due to stress (Photo by DENR)

Tips for exotic pet owners

If you're thinking of adopting an exotic animal, an important thing to consider is that they are extremely delicate and a couple of times more high maintenance than regular domesticated pets. Here are helpful tips from animal experts—hobbyist and Keepers of Extreme Exotic Philippines (KEEP) member **Vixvy Panugayan**, administrator of the Nueva Ecija Exotic Club **Joane Cruz**, reptile breeder and enthusiast from Zoo Med Philippines **Lendl Christopher Lin**, and hobbyist **Arjan Cheng**—that new and even seasoned exotic pet owners should know.

1. Buy only from legal sources.

As previously mentioned, keeping exotic animals needs proper papers and permits from the DENR. Purchasing from DENR-registered breeders and sellers is the only way to go.

2. Research is a must.

Before getting an exotic pet, you should first do extensive research on the animal you're planning to get. For example, snakes are easier to keep than mammals since they do not need to eat daily. There are other exotic animals that have strict husbandry requirements, including proper humidity, substrate, temperature, and lighting. Another thing to look up is its feeding needs and behavior.

3. Keep interaction to a minimum.

There are thousands of years of evolutionary difference between a domestic and a wild animal. The former, like dogs and cats don't do well without people, while the latter is the exact opposite. Remember to respect the animal's space at all time.

4. Take extra care and safety.

Be sure you can keep exotic animals in safe places, where they won't be able to get out of their enclosures. This is for the safety of those around them and for the animal itself.

Exotic pets are harder to care for in terms of the special food considerations and the special housing you need to provide for them, which cannot be obtained from the normal suppliers. One needs to provide the utmost care and living areas for them to thrive and grow the right way.

Endangered freshwater turtle rescued, returned to its habitat in Cagayan town

By: [Villamor Visava Jr.](#) - Correspondent / [@VillVisavaJrINQ](#)

[Inquirer Northern Luzon](#) / 06:52 PM August 10, 2020



ENDANGERED. The Cantor giant softshell turtle which was rescued in Baggao, Cagayan and was recently released back to its natural habitat. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**

TUGUEGARAO CITY—An endangered soft-shelled turtle was returned to its natural habitat after it was rescued in Baggao town, Cagayan province recently.

Known as Cantor's giant softshell turtle or frog-faced soft-shelled turtle, the freshwater turtle was released to a river at the village of Taguntungan.

This kind of turtle can grow up to at least 1.7 meters long and weigh at least 250 kilos, according to research.

The rescued turtle weighed about one-half kilogram and was about 22 centimeters long, said Frederick Tomas, Baggao municipal environment and natural resources officer.

Cantor's giant softshell turtles are classified as endangered species by the International Union of Conservation of Nature due to its declining population.

The last known sighting of this turtle species in Cagayan Valley was in the Addalam River in Cabarroguis, Quirino in 2001.

Last week, Baggao officials also set free three serpent eagles, two Brahminy kites, and a Philippine north hawk-eagle.

TSB

Designation of a Pollution Control Officer

By [Persida Acosta](#)

August 11, 2020

Dear PAO,

I own and operate a barge which transports oils from one island to another. I was required to hire and maintain a pollution control personnel. Can I be held liable should I refuse to comply?

Sincerely yours,
Fernicus

Dear Fernicus,

The law that addresses your situation is Section 27 (n) of Republic Act 9275, otherwise known as the “Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004,” which reads:

“SECTION 27. Prohibited Acts. — The following acts are hereby prohibited: xxx

“(n) Refusal or failure to designate pollution control officers whenever required by the Department in accordance with this Act; and”

Relatedly, Section 28 of the same law provides for the penalty:

“SECTION 28. Fines, Damages and Penalties. — Unless otherwise provided herein, any person who commits any of the prohibited acts provided in the immediately preceding section or violates any of the provision of this Act or its implementing rules and regulations, shall be fined by the Secretary, upon the recommendation of the PAB in the amount of not less than ten thousand pesos (P10,000) nor more than two hundred thousand pesos (P200,000) for every day of violation. The fines herein prescribed shall be increased by ten (10) percent every two years to compensate for inflation and to maintain the deterrent function of such fines: Provided, that the Secretary, upon recommendation of the PAB may order the closure, suspension of development or construction, or cessation of operations or, where appropriate disconnection of water supply, until such time that proper environmental safeguards are put in place and/or compliance with this Act or its rules and regulations are undertaken. This paragraph shall be without prejudice to the issuance of an ex parte order for such closure, suspension of development or construction, or cessation of operations during the pendency of the case. xxx”

It is clear from the cited provisions that it shall be illegal to refuse or fail to designate a pollution control officer when required by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and any offender may be held liable under the above-mentioned law. In your case, you can be penalized with a fine or closure of business or both if proven guilty by the court.

We hope that we were able to answer your queries. This advice is based solely on the facts you have narrated and our appreciation of the same. Our opinion may vary when other facts are changed or elaborated.

Editor’s note: Dear PAO is a daily column of the Public Attorney’s Office. Questions for Chief Acosta may be sent to dearpao@manilatimes.net

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/08/11/legal-advice/dearpao/designation-of-a-pollution-control-officer/753568/>

Climate Change Commission holds forum on impacts of sea level rise in PH

By Jerome Carlo R. Paunan Published on August 10, 2020

CALOOCAN CITY, Aug. 10 (PIA) -- The Climate Change Commission (CCC) and its National Panel of Technical Experts (NPTE), in partnership with the Oscar M. Lopez Center, have successfully convened the first of its two-part online webinar, which discussed knowledge on the current and future state of sea level change in the Philippines.

Entitled, "Taking stock: Why should we be concerned about the climate and sea level changes?" the virtual forum gathered members of the academe and research institutions in the Philippines and abroad, government agencies, policy makers, and organizations leading community-based initiatives, to assess the current science on sea level rise and to identify gaps in information gathering, monitoring and communication in the country.

Facilitated by Dr. Carlos Primo David, chair of the NPTE, the forum aimed to share good practices, innovative technologies, and latest policy reforms on sea level rise.

According to Dr. Rodel Lasco, Executive Director of the OML Center, the forum will be part of a multi-year comprehensive study assessing the potential or likely impacts of different climate change scenarios on sea-level rise and the associated hazards. The study will look at key hotspots as case studies in selected cities of the Philippines, and will include coastal mapping and decision-making tools.

Highlights of the event were presentations by Dr. Benjamin Horton, Director of Earth Observatory of Singapore on "Mechanisms of Sea Level Changes: Global/Regional/National Perspective"; Dr. Laura David, Director of the University of the Philippines - Marine Science Institute (UP-MSI) on "Current And Future Risks And Impacts of Sea Level Changes"; Dr. Fernando Siringan, Professor of UP-MSI on "Sea Level Rise from the Perspective of Marine Geophysics/Geology"; Dr. Enrico Paringit, Executive Director of the Department of Science and Technology - Philippine Council for Industry, Energy, and Emerging Technology Research and Development (DOST-PCIEERD) on "Data Availability and Coastal Mapping"; and Dr. Ma. Laurice Jamero, Head for Resilience Collaboratory of the Manila Observatory on "Limits to Adaptation: Perspectives from Small-Island Communities."

Horton introduced the South East Asia SEA Level Program (SEA2), an initiative of the Earth Observatory of Singapore which aims to understand and integrate the internal and external mechanisms that have determined sea level changes in the past, and which will shape such changes in the future. This research program impacts upon the ecological, ethical, social, economic, and political challenges specifically facing coastal regions.

"This is a holistic program. We aim to understand what is happening on the solid earth, what this has to do with groundwater withdrawal, with tectonics. We want to understand an array of local, global, and regional processes in sea level," Horton said.

"These will combine together with future projections of daily sea level and extreme events. It's a holistic program where we look at the impacts of coastal adaptation measures. The Earth Observatory of Singapore wants to work with our partners in South East Asia to provide projections of sea level at the local scale, at decadal time scales, to make countries of Southeast Asia a safer and more sustainable place," he added.

David, for her part, presented data on Climate Exposure Clusters and Coastal Marine Habitat Distribution which shows that the entire Philippines will actually experience significant amounts of sea level rise, accounting for about twice to even three times that of the global average.

She also discussed the declining mangrove forests of the Pacific Islands and resulting – increased exposure to storm surges, increased coastal sedimentation, decrease in biodiversity and biomass, and release of sequestered carbon. She also discussed the effects of sea level rise on the fisheries sector.

“There are about 1.6 million fishers in the Philippines. Twenty-seven percent of them belong to the municipal fishery, or associated directly with the habitats of coral, mangrove, and seagrass. So if these (marine resources) start dying off, we’re talking about loss, not only of food availability for the entire Philippines, but of labor, of loss of livelihood for our fishers,” David said.

Siringan, for his part, emphasized the connection to sea level rise of groundwater withdrawal, and of aquaculture as an economic activity that provides benefits to the people but is also a threat and a factor.

“It is essential that we know the direction, style, and rate of vertical motions of our coasts. We should minimize the local human-induced causes of sea level rise. There is a need to shift the focus of development to higher grounds accompanied by continuing efforts to protect our coastlines,” said Siringan.

On the other hand, Paringit shared that coastal communities are vulnerable to climate change, as he and his family personally experienced the challenges brought about by constant flooding in their area. He presented case studies of communities eventually adapting to sea level rise and land subsidence.

“Marami pa akong nakikita na we need to work on, it’s not just the availability of the data but how it’s going to be analyzed, how we’re going to project scenarios in the near future and in the far future. We need the tools in order to make this happen. Over all, I wanted to see how data sets could be used to actually create scenarios on impacts to certain sectors or to certain areas in the environment,” Paringit said.

Meanwhile, Jamero shared the experiences of the small island communities of Tubigon, a municipality located in the North Eastern side of Bohol. The area was severely affected by tidal flooding due to land subsidence that was, in turn, induced by the 7.2 magnitude earthquake in 2013. She shared the strategies implemented such as to retreat as a way to adapt to relative sea level rise and its social impacts.

“We should also take control of the narrative and shift away from sinking islands to resilient islands. We should stop thinking of island communities as a basket case and force them to relocate when they aren’t ready yet, and rather start to recognize how resilience has always been part of the island life,” Jamero said.

The forum also featured responses from different stakeholders, including Dr. Eulito Casas, Associate Professor of UP Visayas Tacloban College; Atty. Josine Alexandra Gamboa, Manager for Government Initiatives of RARE Inc.; and Dr. Bjoern Surborg, Principal Advisor and Cluster Coordinator for Climate Change of GIZ Philippines.

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The event is part of a series of the National Panel of Technical Experts' Fora aiming to mobilize community-based climate action and mainstream climate change knowledge into development policies and practices.

The full discussion of Taking stock: Why should we be concerned about the climate and sea level changes? can be accessed through this [link](#).

Part 2 of this online forum will be soon announced in the Facebook pages of the Climate Change Commission at www.facebook.com/CCCPhl, and the Oscar M. Lopez Center at www.facebook.com/OscarMLopezCenter. (PIA NCR)

Ilocos Norte to distribute garbage compactors to every LGU

By Leilanie Adriano August 10, 2020, 3:21 pm



LITTER-FREE. The province of Ilocos Norte aims for a litter-free community. Backing this move, at least 17 garbage compactors will be distributed to the different local government units of the province. *(File photo courtesy of the local government unit of Vintar)*

LAOAG CITY – In a bid to manage the disposal of solid wastes in various parts of the province, local government units (LGUs) of Ilocos Norte will soon have their own garbage compactors and receive cash aid for the creation of a sanitary landfill courtesy of the provincial government.

Sourced from the province's 20 percent development funds, at least 17 garbage compactors worth PHP2.7 million each are already up for bidding, Estrella Sacro, head of the Environment and Natural Resources Office of Ilocos Norte, said on Monday.

"The purchase of garbage compactors is a priority program under the administration of Governor Matthew Joseph Manotoc and we hope to distribute the equipment the soonest," she said.

Sacro said the province is also in the process of establishing a PHP24-million plastic waste recycling and resource recovery facility in Barangay Imelda in Marcos, Ilocos Norte.

Once completed, the recycling facility will reduce the volume of waste being generated in the province with the aid of garbage compactors.

For LGUs with existing garbage compactors, the provincial government will also provide equivalent cash assistance for the full establishment of a sanitary landfill.

In compliance with the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act or Republic Act 9003, the local chief executives of the 21 towns and two cities of Ilocos Norte vowed to have their own operational sanitary landfills by the end of this year.

"We are thankful that our governor gives priority on environment protection, particularly addressing our worsening problem on garbage collection and disposal," Sacro added.

In Laoag City, the city government of Laoag announced that starting this month, garbage collectors will no longer pick up biodegradable wastes, urging every household to have their own compost pit.

For urban residents without space for compost pits, the barangay concerned shall have their respective materials recovery facility and communal composting and recycling facilities. **(PNA)**

BAGYO, ULAN AT ANGAT DAM MAGKAKAUGNAY



August 11, 2020 @ 12:38 AM 7 hours ago

Bahagyang tumaas nitong nagdaang weekend ang antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam matapos magbuhos ng ulan ang tropical storm *Enteng*, nasa 182.30 meters above sea level, mas mataas ng .69 masl mula sa 181.67 masl noong August 7, 2020.

Para sa buwan ng Agosto, ang alokasyon ng tubig na inaprubahan ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) ay 48 cubic meters per second para sa Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System at 30 cms para sa National Irrigation Administration.

Pero kung pagbabasehan ang tunay na bugso ng tubig, hindi natutupad ang mga aprubadong alokasyon para sa MWSS at NIA.

Ang alokasyon ng MWSS ay nagmumula sa Angat Dam sa pamamagitan ng Ipo Dam at kanyang auxiliary units at sa Bypass 1 and 2.

Kung susumahin ang kombinasyon ng buhos ng tubig na dumaloy rito sa unang anim na araw ng Agosto (August 1 to 6, 2020), nasa 17.12 cms at 22.30 cms o kabuuang 39.42 cms, kulang ng 8.58 cms.

Sa tubig para sa irigasyon na nagmumula sa Angat Dam sa pamamagitan ng Bustos Dam na siyang nagpapatubig sa bukirin sa mga lalawigan ng Bulacan at Pampanga, nasa 14.37 cms lamang ito, lubhang malayo ng 15.63 cms sa aprubado ng NWRB.

Bagamat sinasabing nakaapekto ang isinasagawang minor repair sa Bustos Dam, ang itinuturong dahilan ng hindi akmaang projected allocation ay sa limitadong tubig na mayroon din ang Angat Dam.

Bagamat operational ito, medyo malayo pa rin ang antas ng tubig sa 210 masl, nagbabawas ng tubig ang dam kapag naaabot nito ang 217 masl.

Sa ating bansa, batay na rin sa record ng Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, nasa dalawa hanggang tatlong bagyo ang pumapasok sa Philippine Area of Responsibility, pero nitong July 2020 ay dalawang tropical depressions lamang ang pumasok sa PAR, ang *TD Carina* at *TD Dindo* na bahagyang nagdala ng ulan.

Batay sa weather forecast ng PAGASA, inaasahan ang dalawa hanggang tatlong bagyo ang mabuo at pumasok sa PAR ngayong buwang ito na magdadala ng bahagya hanggang malalakas na pag-ulan.

Ang buwan ng Agosto ang siyang pinakamaulan sa Pilipinas noon, pero nagkakaroon ng pagbabago dulot na rin ng nararanasang epekto ng climate change sa Pacific Ocean region.

Kaya kahit na may malalakas na pag-ulan tayong nararanasan, hindi nangangahulugan ito na nasa normal ang water level ng Angat Dam lalo pa't nasa *near normal rainfall condition* ang bansa, ibig sabihin, hindi naaayon sa nakasanayang datus ang buhos ng mga ulan.

Mahalaga pa rin ang pagtitipid sa tubig, sa totoo lang, normal o may naka-ambang water crisis man, dapat ay nasa tamang paggamit lang talaga tayo ng tubig.

Malaki ang maitutulong ng pag-iipon ng mga tubig-ulan lalo pa't may kalakasan ito sa hapon.

Alternatibong gamit sa paglilinis ng bahay, pangbanlaw ng mga damit na nilabhan, panghugas, pambuhos sa banyo at iba pa.

Malaking tulong din ang malalakas na ulan para manatili sa mga tahanan ang mga hindi naman dapat lumalabas sa lansangan lalo na ngayong nasa ilalim muli ng Modified Enhance Community Quarantine ang buong National Capital Region, at mga lalawigan ng Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna at Rizal.

TRASH BIN FOR FACE MASKS, SHIELDS A MUST IN BARANGAYS



August 11, 2020 @ 12:17 AM 7 hours ago

CITING the health and safety of everyone, Caloocan Councilor Orvince Howard Hernandez is urging the city's 188 barangays to provide a separate trash bin or well-covered disposal area where residents can properly dispose of used face masks and other personal protective equipment.

By doing this, community transmission of COVID-19 can be effectively lessened as the residents including garbage collectors can be protected from these wastes if properly segregated, according to Councilor Hernandez, Sangguniang Kabataan Federation head and Caloocan Youth Development Council chair.

"Make no mistake about it. The new normal does not mean COVID-19 is completely gone. That's why as early as now, we should start setting up common trash containers or designating isolated areas in barangays solely for the disposal of used face masks, face, shield, and other PPEs," Councilor Hernandez said.

Mayor Oca Malapitan has urged his constituents to adhere to the proper disposal of garbage by observing the segregation scheme.

The young councilor, son of City Administrator Oliver Hernandez, said the containers and isolated areas would segregate the infectious materials from household, commercials, industrial, and other common wastes.

He urged the city youth to join in the undertaking by propagating through the social media the importance of segregating the used face masks and face shields from other sorts of garbage.

More patients recovering in Navotas

Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco was extra elated over the increasing numbers of recovered patients compared to the number of reported new Covid-19 cases in the city.

The City Health Office reported that for the latest 278 residents, who had swab tests, 255 were found negative while 23 were tested positive.

Also, some 39 patients were allowed to go home to be with their families after recovering from the virus.

"Nagpapasalamat po tayo na mas marami ang naitalang gumaling kaysa sa nadagdag na mga bagong kaso at wala rin pong naiulat na nasawi nitong linggo dahil sa COVID-19," Mayor Tiangco said.

He continues to remind residents to continue to take precautionary measures and make sure that before and after they return home from work these weekdays, no virus attaches on their bodies.

The mayor also advised working residents to leave their shoes or slippers outside before entering their home, take a bath right away and separate their garments from other laundry and eating and laughing together to prevent the spread of the virus.

Free bikes for deserving residents – Rep. JRT

Rep. John Rey Tiangco, Navotas' former mayor, is giving away at least three bikes to deserving residents weekly as there was already the first batch of lucky beneficiaries.

He's only asking those who want to avail of the free bikes to submit their personal stories and experiences and how the bikes can help them amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Ako po ay lubos na naantig sa mga ibinahagi ninyong kwento. Sana'y maging malaking tulong ang bisikleta na ito para sa inyo," the young Navotas lawmaker said.

For those who did not qualify from the first batch, he said they worry not because he'll continue to give away in the coming weeks.

There you go!

Philippine trash trawlers earn little from virus-boosted surge in plastics

August 10, 2020 | 3:42 pm



Waste picker Virgilio Estueta, 60, carries bags of trash out of his junk shop amid the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak, in Quezon City, Metro Manila. Image via Reuters.

Virgilio Estueta has picked through trash in the Philippines' biggest city for four decades, and is noticing an unusually large amount of plastics during his daily trawl of about 15 kilometers.

Tough curbs re-imposed to combat a surge in daily coronavirus infections are squeezing income for the 60-year-old, as many of the junkyards and businesses in Manila that buy his recyclables have been closed since March.

Plastic items, such as bottles and containers, dominate the contents of the rickety wooden cart Mr. Estueta pushes through the deserted streets, far more than metals and cardboard, yet the money they bring in is not enough to get by.

"It's been really hard for us, it's been difficult looking for recyclables that sell high," he said. "Recently we've been seeing a lot more plastics, but the problem is they don't really sell high."

Environmentalists say the Philippines is battling one of the world's biggest problems stemming from single-use plastics, and ranks among the biggest contributors to plastic pollution of the oceans. It has no reliable data for its plastics consumption.

Greenpeace campaigner Marian Ledesma said consumers and businesses are now using yet more single-use plastics, in a bid to ward off virus infections.

"The pandemic has really increased plastic pollution," she added. "Just because there's a lot more people using disposables now, due to misconceptions and fears around transmitting the virus."

Since March 16, Manila has experienced lockdowns of varying levels of severity, in some of the world's longest and tightest measures to curb the spread of the virus.

They are taking a toll on Mr. Estueta, who hopes to start earning soon.

"When you go out, the police will reprimand you," he said. "I was stuck at home and had to rely on government aid, which was not enough. I had to resort to borrowing money from people."

— Reuters

Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/philippine-trash-trawlers-earn-little-from-virus-boosted-surge-in-plastics/>

Groups debunk environmental charges against

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TITLE: coconut farming

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Groups debunk environmental charges against coconut farming

Published August 10, 2020, 3:00 PM

by [James A. Loyola](#)

Philippine coconut industry stakeholders, advocacy groups, and academicians debunked recent international articles singling out coconut oil production as both environmental and biodiversity threats. Dr. Victoria Espaldon, former Dean of University of the Philippines-Los Banos School of Environment Science and Management (UPLB-SESAM), finds the online post “generally a half hazard work.”

She noted that, “the article is vague on whether it is the coconut oil production itself or that landscapes are transformed to coconuts as environmental issues.”

The International Coconut Community (ICC) finds it “intriguing” that the author, Borneo-based Eric Meijaard, chose to headline the threat from coconut oil to shield palm oil, which is under intense attack for its harmful environmental effects. “Apparently, Mr. Meijaard considers this as a zero-sum competition between coconut oil and palm oil, when there should be none,” said ICC.

ICC is a Jakarta-based UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific inter-government organization.

The articles, published online on Bloomberg Green and two other independent industry news portals, practically indicted the coconut industry, particularly the process of producing coconut oil as an environmental threat, as worse than palm oil production.

Quoting a report from the U.K.’s University of Exeter, Bloomberg Green stated that production of coconut oil threatens around 20 animal species for every million tons made.

Dr. Espaldon explained that “the transformation of Philippine landscapes to coconut began hundreds of years ago. At the moment, it is not expanding, rather, coconut areas are receding and being transformed into other land uses or mixed uses (agroforestry).”

She also cited unpublished theses done at the UPLB-SESAM that run counter to the biodiversity hazard angle of the story against the coconut industry noting that, “Coconut-based diversified farms are turning into habitats for wildlife, particularly for birds and insects.”

American Asa Feinstein, a coconut advocate and CEO of Coco Asenso, debunked the articles primarily sourced from Meijaard, a Dutch conservation scientist.

Feinstein explained that “Coconuts are mentioned as a factor that has threatened 66 species, while oil palm has threatened 321 species. If you didn’t catch that, according to the IUCN and contrary to the title of Meijaard’s article, palm oil production has threatened five times more species than coconuts!”

Feinstein also noted that, “the expansion in land area of coconut over the past three decades was 1.8 million hectares” while “oil palm is a rapidly expanding crop that is currently one of the largest drivers of tropical deforestation. Over the past three decades, 12.1 million hectares...”

Ateneo School of Sciences Professor Emeritus Toby Dayrit was quick to point out that “no rain forests have been burned in the past 200 years to plant coconuts.”

Dayrit explained that coconuts are “pioneer species in island ecosystems, and coconuts actually promote biodiversity in barren islands and seashores where no other plants grow.”

The United Coconut Associations of the Philippines (UCAP) clarified that only Indonesia and Malaysia are open to corporate farming.

Groups debunk environmental charges against
coconut farming

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UCAP said that the main problem facing the local industry is actually the near extinction of coconut trees, most of which were planted during the Spanish colonial times two hundred years ago.

The Philippine coconut advocacy group is pleading government regulators to immediately address and avert the collapse of the industry. Palm oil corners nearly 45% of the global market while coconut oil accounts for just about 2%. But coconut's usefulness compared to palm goes beyond oil. Coconut, many times referred to as a low-cost but nutritious poor man's food, is being used to manufacture VCO and MCT oil health supplements, beauty products, biodiesel, and even aesthetic decors. Palm, on the other hand, is solely for industrial usage only. The use of palm oil as biodiesel ingredient is banned in the European Union.

CARP beneficiaries installed in Boracay property

[Elizabeth Marcelo](#) (The Philippine Star) - August 11, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Thirty-one agrarian reform beneficiaries have been installed in two landholdings on Boracay Island in Malay, Aklan, following a brief tension between authorities and security officers of a private agency.

Accompanied by a team composed of police officers and officials of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR)-Western Visayas and provincial agrarian reform office, the beneficiaries successfully entered the property, with a total combined area of 1.98 hectare, located in Barangay Manoc-manoc over the weekend.

The property, declared under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) by President Duterte, were awarded to members of the Boracay Tumandok Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association (BTARBA) on March 20.

The beneficiaries were not immediately able to occupy the property as watchmen from a private company prevented them from entering the area, the DAR said.

Tension escalated when the watchmen prevented a team led by DAR-Western Visayas legal chief Geony Licera-Gregorio from entering the property.

A representative from the security agency ordered the watchmen to stand down and allowed entry to the combined team of DAR officials and policemen.

The installation came at a time when the beneficiaries' old dwellings were set for demolition as part of the government's rehabilitation efforts for the tourist destination.

Palace says up to IATF to decide on calls to extend

TITLE: MECQ

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Palace says up to IATF to decide on calls to extend MECQ

By Azer Parrocha August 10, 2020, 3:02 pm



MONTH-LONG MECQ. President Rodrigo Roa Duterte talks to the people after holding a meeting with the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) core members at the Malago Clubhouse in Malacañang on August 2. Malacañang on Monday (Aug. 10, 2020) said the IATF-EID will decide on calls to extend modified enhanced community quarantine in Metro Manila, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal up to a whole month. *(Presidential photo by King Rodriguez)*

MANILA – The Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) will decide on calls to extend the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) up to a whole month, Malacañang said Monday.

Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque made this remark after former National Task Force Against Covid-19 special adviser Dr. Tony Leachon said an extended MECQ is necessary to flatten the country's coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) epidemic curve.

Leachon said a month-long MECQ would also allow the country to bridge its healthcare gap.

Roque, however, reiterated that the IATF-EID will have to consider not only people's health, but also the economy which officially entered a recession with a 16.5 percent economic plunge in the second quarter this year due to lockdowns.

"It entails a delicate balancing of protecting and saving people's health to protecting and saving the economic health of the nation," he said in a statement.

He recognized that the effects of the MECQ in Metro Manila and nearby provinces would be felt two to three weeks after its enforcement.

Since the incubation period for Covid-19 is 14 days, Roque said it is best to wait for that time to ascertain the health impact of the MECQ classification.

President Rodrigo Duterte on Aug. 2 approved the recommendation to revert Metro Manila, Cavite, Laguna, Rizal and Bulacan to stricter MECQ from Aug. 4 to 18 after medical front-liners called for a timeout to allow the government to recalibrate its Covid-19 response efforts.

Last week, Roque said the Philippine economy will not be able to withstand the impact of a longer MECQ in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

"Tatapatin ko po kayo, hindi na po kaya ng ekonomiya ang mas matagalan pang lockdown (I will be blunt, the economy cannot withstand a longer lockdown)," he said in a virtual Palace briefing on August 4.

While an ECQ might be the most ideal solution to mitigate the risk of spreading Covid-19, Roque said the national government is still looking for where to source funds for another tranche of cash assistance for low-income families.

Palace says up to IATF to decide on calls to extend

August 11, 2020

TITLE: MECQ

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DATE

Health Undersecretary and spokesperson Maria Rosario Vergeire, in the same press briefing, said the MECQ did not aim to flatten the curve, but allow the healthcare system to take a "breather."

University of the Philippines Political Science Prof. Ranjit Rye earlier said Covid-19 infections are projected to rise to 220,000 this month if Metro Manila remains under general community quarantine (GCQ).

However, he said cases may be fewer by 50,000 to 70,000 if Metro Manila is under MECQ. **(PNA)**

NCR ready to go back to GCQ: Lorenzana

By Priam Nepomuceno August 10, 2020, 3:16 pm



National Task Force Against Covid-19 chairman Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana (File photo)

MANILA – With the number of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) cases slowly going down, National Task Force Against Covid-19 chairman Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the National Capital Region (NCR) is ready to return to less strict general community quarantine (GCQ).

"I think the trend is going down, yesterday (Sunday) *mga 3,000 na lang yung bagong* (there were only 3,000 new cases) down from 6,000 previously. So, I think we are ready to go down," Lorenza said in an interview with ANC's Headstart on Monday.

President Rodrigo Duterte on Aug. 2 approved the recommendation to revert Metro Manila, Cavite, Laguna, Rizal and Bulacan to second most stringent modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) from Aug. 4 to 18 after medical front-liners called for a timeout to allow the government to recalibrate its Covid-19 response efforts.

Lorenzana said the country cannot continue imposing lockdowns as it would further hurt the economy which suffered deepest contraction in 29 years after the economic output shrank 16.5 percent in the second quarter this year.

"*Sa katunayan nga, kahapon (Sunday) nagsalita na si (Finance) Secretary (Carlos) Dominguez (III) na ang sabi nya, we have to do something to open up the economy, hindi pwedeng lockdown na lang tayo ng lockdown dahil nga baka mas marami pang mamatay sa gutom kesa sa Covid kung walang trabaho ang mga tao* (Yesterday, Secretary Dominguez said we must do something to open up the economy. We cannot go on imposing more lockdowns as many more people might die of hunger than of Covid-19 if people will no longer have jobs)," he added.

Lorenzana said Phase 2 of the National Action Plan to combat Covid-19 is already in place since Aug. 1 and some of its strategies include identifying areas with outbreaks and containing them.

The plans were approved by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease and aim to prevent lockdowns of towns or cities if outbreak areas can be identified.

Lorenzana said the strategies will also minimize disruption caused by quarantine measures. **(PNA)**

House approves P162-billion Bayanihan II

By [Jovee Marie de la Cruz](#)

August 11, 2020



Manila Police Traffic Department personnel do a routine check of the 20 patrol cars donated by the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce to be used for patrolling the streets of the capital city.

THE House of Representatives on Monday approved on third and final reading the proposed Bayanihan to Recover as One Act or the Bayanihan II, which seeks to mitigate the economic cost and losses from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Voting 242 affirmative, 6 negative and zero abstention, lawmakers approved House Bill 6953 providing for a standby fund to support the response measures to the pandemic.

Six members of the Makabayan bloc voted against the bill as they want first the national government to fully disclose how it spent the P3.7 trillion of the 2020 national budget before “it can be trusted to spend the P162 billion under the proposed Bayanihan II.”

The bill provides assistance, subsidies and other socioeconomic relief while restoring public trust and confidence in social economic institutions.

The measure seeks to arm President Duterte with continued special powers and funds to deal with Covid-19.

Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano said the bicameral conference committee is set this week to reconcile gaps between the House and Senate versions of the bill.

The House version provides for P162 billion in funding for the government’s response measures; the Senate version sets a smaller budget of P140 billion.

According to Cayetano, Congress is eyeing to ratify the Bayanihan II on Tuesday next week. After the ratification by both houses, the bill will immediately go to Duterte for signature.

Deputy Speaker Luis Raymund Villafuerte, sponsor of the bill, said the government is targeting to implement Bayanihan II in September.

Villafuerte said the next step after enactment is to “work closely with the government to raise revenues” so it could sufficiently bankroll Covid-19 response.

He described it as a “stop-gap measure,” deeming it inadequate to prepare the economy for recovery.

He said swift action by the House on Bayanihan II was in response to the President’s appeal in his State-of-the-Nation Address (Sona) for urgent passage so the government could continue to effectively address the international health emergency and economic fallout arising from the pandemic.

House Committee on Ways and Means Chairman Joey Sarte Salceda said the approval of the bill, hopefully, begins to turn the economic tide for the better.

“This will not be the beginning of the end. Certainly, until we have a vaccine, we cannot let our guard down. But this, I hope, will be the end of the beginning, the start of a new phase where we make significant economic and public health gains,” he said. While the enactment of the Bayanihan II is already a significant win, Salceda still called for the passage of a “bigger package” in the future.

“Our most immediate next task is the enactment of the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (CREATE) Act. The House already has its version, so we are just waiting for the Senate. Together with the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act, CREATE will help stem negative sentiment in the market and instill more confidence in our economy,” he said.

“In the coming weeks, we will continue working on economic reforms to build more resilient industries, capitalize on our strongest sectors, and assist sectors in great need. This is the hardest I’ve worked in my whole life in public service. Rest assured that I will continue to study and listen and work as hard,” he added.

Cayetano said the government still needs both a roadmap and a pragmatic plan that can be funded and implemented effectively.

“We have put the people – their lives and livelihood – first in this law. And at its center we have placed Public Health, MSMEs, OFWs, our Athletes, the Creative Industry, social amelioration, and Jobs, Jobs, Jobs. We want Bayanihan II to be a living piece of legislation that will power our industries and revitalize sectors of society that have been decimated by this virus, or were otherwise forgotten and neglected in the past,” added Cayetano.

According to Cayetano, agriculture and tourism sectors, essential to the country’s economy and which can create employment and livelihood for tens of millions of Filipinos in the countryside, will receive a boost in Bayanihan II.

“So too will the manufacturing industry, which with the right elements to create the environment wherein manufacturers will return and thrive, will form the third leg in this triumvirate. These three sectors will form the spear-tip of our recovery effort, and underlies our key philosophy of putting people back to work so that we can all get back on our feet,” he added.

Minority Leader Bienvenido Abante, Jr. said proper planning and execution, or PPE, is needed to ensure that P162 billion earmarked for the Bayanihan II is fully utilized to contain the Covid-19 outbreak and address the adverse economic effects of the pandemic.

“We do not have a lot of money to begin with, and this pandemic is not a problem we can simply throw money at,” the lawmaker added.

The bill allocates the following to support operation and response measures to address the impact of Covid-19.

- P10 billion as subsidy to the National Health Insurance Program of PhilHealth to be used solely to cover Covid-19 expanded testing based on DOH Protocol and for allocation of Covid-19 confinements (inpatients)
- P10.5 billion to hire additional Health Care Workers and arrange for risk allowance, life insurance, compensation, and compensation for death and critical illness
- P3 billion to buy face masks, personal protective equipment (PPE) sets for frontliners and indigents
- P4 billion to finance construction of temporary medical isolation and quarantine facilities, field hospitals, dormitories for frontliners, and expand government hospital capacity all over the country
- P20 billion for appropriate cash-for-work programs for displaced workers

- P51 billion to infuse capital to government financial institutions
- P20 billion as direct cash or loan interest rate subsidies, under the programs of the Department of Agriculture- Agricultural Credit Policy Council (DA-ACPC)
- P10 billion to finance DOTr programs to assist the critically impacted businesses in the transportation industry – P10 billion to finance the programs of the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (Tieza) to help the tourism industry recover
- P100 million to finance the training and subsidies for tourist guides
- P3 billion to assist SUCS in the development of smart campuses through investments in ICT infrastructure
- P600 million for subsidies and allowances to qualified students of public and private Tertiary Education Institutions
- P300 million for subsidies and allowances of affected teaching and non-teaching personnel, including part time faculty, in private and public Tertiary Education Institutions
- P1 billion as additional scholarship funds of Tesda
- P12 billion to finance DSWD programs
- P4 billion to assist the DepEd in the implementation of Digital Education, Information Technology (IT) and Digital Infrastructures and Alternative Learning Modalities
- P1.5 billion as assistance to local government units (LGUs)
- P180 million to finance allowances for national athletes and coaches whose allowances were reduced to 50 percent due to the pandemic
- P820 million as assistance for DFA programs for displaced migrant workers.

The bill said these subsidy and stimulus measures, as well as all other measures to address the Covid-19 pandemic shall be funded from the 2020 national budget, savings, revenue collections, proceeds from loans and other foreign borrowings and funds from GOCCs.

The proposed Bayanihan II shall be in full force and effect until December 31, 2020.

Negligible impact

The coalition of the country's largest labor groups on Monday said the proposed amount of stimulus package in Congress to too low to make any dent on the economic impact novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19).

In a statement, Nagkaisa said the P162-billion stimulus package under Bayanihan II bill, which is being proposed by the House of Representatives (HOR) and its counterpart bill in Senate, which has P140-billion stimulus package, will have negligible impact on the country's GDP.

No time for austerity

Instead of the coalition is backing P1.3-trillion stimulus package under the Accelerated Recovery and Investments Stimulus for the Economy (ARISE).

“The proposed fiscal stimulus from the government economic managers, not to belittle it, is not enough to reverse the dive of our GDP,” Nagkaisa chair Sonny Matula told BusinessMirror in a SMS. For the second quarter of the year, government economic managers said the country's GDP contracted by 16.5 percent.

Nagkaisa said the country's economy is unlikely to recover in the second of the year if the stimulus package of the government to address the effects of Covid-19 will be lower than P1.3 trillion.

“Our labor economic consultants are of the opinion that government needs to upgrade it to P1.3 trillion to have a modest response to the crisis,” Matula said.

Different expectations

Citing the arguments of Marikina Rep. Stella Quimbo, one of the principal authors of ARISE, Nagkaisa said that a one-peso spend by the government that a one-peso government spending will generate 1.53 pesos in output.

“Based on this value, Bayanihan 2 [of the House of Representatives will cause roughly 248 billion-peso increase in output and even this amount is not enough to offset what the economy already lost,” Nagkaisa said.

This was contrary to the projection of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), which said that the P140 to P162 billion “fiscal support” to the economy will have a multiplier effect of P995 billion.

The Department of Finance (DOF) earlier thumbed down the ARISE bill saying it is unconstitutional since it needs to be funded by foreign loans so the government will be able to afford it.

Nagkaisa is pushing for the imposition of a “solidarity tax,” which aims to tax sources of wealth such as shares of stocks; bank deposits; securities (domestic); cash; as well as land and real estate to generate fund for ARISE. **(Samuel Medenilla)**

Gov't assures balance between health, economy

The Duterte administration will not rest until we have prevailed over this extraordinary challenge.

Published 4 hours ago on August 11, 2020 03:00 AM

By [Joshua Lao](#)



Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III has assured the business community that the administration will continue to carry out the difficult balancing act of saving lives with as little damage to the economy as possible amid the new coronavirus pandemic.

“The Duterte administration will not rest until we have prevailed over this extraordinary challenge, we will redouble our efforts to protect our economic gains over the past three years, prepare our economy for a strong recovery, strengthen our resilience and solidify our return to the path of inclusive growth,” Dominguez said.

While at it, the Finance chief urged the business community to continue its support towards their efforts to curb the pandemic until a vaccine becomes available.

Dominguez admitted that the 16.5 percent drop in gross domestic product (GDP) in the second quarter this year was brought by the strict quarantine measures imposed by the government to prevent the spread of the virus.

Still, the decision to revert Metro Manila along with its nearby provinces to a modified enhanced community quarantine will benefit the country in the long-term as the two-week lockdown will be used to boost medical resources.

The Finance chief likewise shared that the Philippines is not alone in facing the virus as other countries posted similar economic contractions, reflecting a global crisis.

“We are not alone in our struggles, although the unique fiscal and macroeconomic strengths with which we entered 2020 will continue to provide us with solid footing as we confront our economic challenges,” he said.

The Cabinet official also stressed on the emerging signs of recovery, including the increased import volumes and the higher excise and value-added tax collections as reported by the Bureaus of Customs and of Internal Revenue.

“We have also learned from the industry leaders that business activities in various sectors of the economy have started to pick up following the economic standstill during the lockdown,” Dominguez said.

“In general, most firms reported that they have begun to see a gradual sales recovery in June, coinciding with the partial reopening of the economy. Every effort is also being exerted to ensure that we restore consumer and business confidence,” he added.

Further, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Benjamin Diokno disputed negative reactions towards the sharp GDP drop, citing it is grossly exaggerated and the Philippine economy remains fundamentally sound.

“The 16.5 percent contraction of second quarter GDP does not mean that the Philippine economy is structurally weak. It is inappropriate to compare the second quarter performance of the economy with other crises in recent Philippine history,” Diokno said.

“In the most recent economic episode, the economy plunge because of the strict, nationwide lockdown to save lives and to allow the build up of health facilities and testing capacity due to the pandemic. It is not because the economy was weak,” he added.

PRRD accepts Russia's Covid-19 vaccine offer

By Azer Parrocha August 11, 2020, 12:53 am



President Rodrigo Duterte

MANILA – President Rodrigo Duterte on Monday accepted the offer of Russia to supply the Philippines with its coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) vaccines once mass production starts.

In a public address in Davao City, Duterte said he is “very happy” by the news that Russia would provide vaccines free of charge.

“*Maligayang-maligaya ako kasi ang Russia, kaibigan natin ito. Ang ano nila is magbigay sila ng bakuna. Wala naman silang sinasabi bayaran mo. Ito, tingin ko kay President [Vladimir] Putin, tulong niya sa atin, libre (I am very happy because Russia is our friend. They’re going to give free vaccines. They didn’t say anything about paying for it. I think this is President Putin’s way of helping us, by giving it for free),*” he said.

He added that the Philippine government will accept it and talk about how much of a supply the country needs.

Russian Ambassador Igor Khovaev on Friday said the country has developed an “effective and safe” vaccine created by the Gamaleya National Research Center of Epidemiology and Microbiology.

The Department of Foreign Affairs earlier conveyed its appreciation for Russia’s willingness to assist the Philippines, as well as its offer to supply the vaccine developed by Gamaleya.

The offer has been referred to relevant agencies for proper assessment and evaluation, DFA said.

First volunteer

Duterte volunteered to be the first person to be injected with the Russian vaccine in public.

“*Pagdating ng bakuna, in public, para walang satsat diyan magpa-injection ako. Ako yung maunang maeksperimentuhan. Okay para sa akin (When the vaccine arrives i will have the public witness my vaccination so people won’t say anything, I’ll agree to be injected. I’ll be the first to be experimented on. It’s fine with me),*” he said.

He said he wanted to show Putin that he has full trust in Russia’s scientific studies and believes that the vaccine produced is “good for humanity.”

“*Para ipakita ko sa kanila na tiwala ako at hindi sila nagkamali mag-offer ako pagdating, yung doctor nila o doctor natin, ako ang unang magpabakuna (To show them that I trust them and they didn’t make the mistake of offering us a vaccine, I will be the first to be injected with the vaccine),*” he said.

If the vaccine can be administered to him, Duterte said it could most likely be administered to everyone.

“*Tingnan natin kung puwede ba. Kung puwede sa akin, puwede sa lahat. Ngayon, kung hindi puwede sa akin, ‘yan nga yung problema (Let’s see if it’s recommended for me. If it’s okay for me, it’s recommended for everybody. Now, if it’s not recommended, that’s the problem),*” he said.

He also asked Health Secretary Francisco Duque III to coordinate with the Russian government for the possible transfer of the technology for Covid-19 vaccine to the Philippines.

'Friends forever'

During one of his state visits to Russia, Duterte said Putin told him that if he had any medical-related concerns, he is free to approach the Russian government.

Duterte visited Russia twice — in 2017 and 2019.

"Sabi niya noon nung nagbisita ako sa kanya, sabi niya (He said during the time I visited him) 'if you have a question on anything about medicines or cures, feel free to call me and anyone you'd like to be confined and treated here in Russia and we will help you develop the medicines that your country needs'," he said.

While other nations also offered to provide the Philippines with Covid-19 vaccines, Duterte said there is no certainty if it would be given for free.

He, however, feels Russia would not renege of its promise.

He also vowed to pay his debt of gratitude to Russia and keep their friendly ties.

"Someday we will, makabayad man kami sa utang ng loob sainyo but I promise you that the Philippines and Russia would remain friends forever," he said.

Covid-free Christmas

With a possible Russian vaccine in the works, Duterte expressed hope that the world would be Covid-free by December.

"Maghintay kayo. Actually ang vaccines they are to be distributed worldwide na 'yan by September, October. Bibitawan na nila dahan-dahan (Just wait. Actually, the vaccines are to be distributed worldwide by September, October. It would be slowly released)," he said.

He admitted that there would still be a need for clinical trials to be completed, but the waiting will be much shorter from now on.

"By December, sabi ko (I said) in the fullness of God's time, we will have a hopefully a Covid-free December and we can enjoy this Christmas season," he said.

Earlier, Russia said it aims to launch the mass production of Covid019 vaccines in September and turn out "several million" doses per month by next year.

Russian scientists said results from clinical trials have been "promising." **(PNA)**

PH starts Avigan clinical trial on 17 August

Published 15 hours ago
on August 10, 2020 03:47 PM
By [Gabbie Parlade](#)



The Philippines will start its Avigan clinical trials on 17 August after the Department of Health received the donated tablets from the government of Japan.

Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said the medicines will be tried with 100 patients infected with the coronavirus disease and confined at various hospitals.

She explained the trial will be done randomly where patients are grouped, and only one will receive Avigan on top of the usual treatment for COVID-19 cases.

This is to determine the effectiveness of the Japanese-developed anti-flu drug.

“Hindi alam ng pasyente ano yung matatanggap nila,” she said.

Vergeire also emphasized that guidelines will be regulated to ensure that they are eligible for the trial.

It consists of patients who are 18 to 74 years old, with no comorbidities, and should agree to use contraceptives.

The DOH earlier said that among the possible sites for the trials may include Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital in Caloocan City, the Sta. Ana Hospital in Manila, and the Quirino Memorial Center in Quezon City.

Among the countries worldwide which are also conducting trials include Russia, India, and the United States (US).

BREAKING: Another highest single-day surge for PH at 6,958 new COVID-19 cases

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

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 08:26 PM August 10, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health (DOH) on Monday reported yet another highest single-day increase in new COVID-19 cases at 6,958.

Based on DOH's latest COVID-19 bulletin, the country's coronavirus caseload now stands at 136,638.

Of this, 66,286 are tagged as "active" with 91.6 percent of which experiencing mild symptoms while 7.2 percent are asymptomatic, according to DOH. The rest are either in severe or in critical condition, it added.

DOH also said that of the 6,958 newly-reported COVID-19 cases, a staggering 4,163 came from the National Capital Region (NCR) while 400 were from Laguna, 363 from Rizal, 132 from Cavite, and 178 from Bulacan.

NCR, Laguna, Rizal, Cavite, and Bulacan are currently under a modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ).

DOH explained that at least 5,789 of the new cases were recorded from July 28 to August 10; 993 from June 1 to July 27; and 176 from March to the end of May. Moreover, DOH said 43 of the cases confirmed on Monday were infections that happened in March — or over four months ago — while 69 occurred in April. Another 35 were recorded in May.

Additionally, the health agency reported that 633 more patients were able to recover from the potentially deadly respiratory disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, the latest coronavirus strain. This increased nationwide total recoveries to 68,159.

Meanwhile, DOH said 24 infected people have succumbed to COVID-19, driving the Philippines' death toll to 2,294.

The [previous highest single-day jump was recorded last August 4](#) at 6,352.

Earlier, DOH said the daily COVID-19 bulletin, which is usually released around 4:00 p.m., will be [delayed due to "system error" in its database](#).

DOH noted that 233 cases were removed from the total count this time after validation and removal of duplicate entries.

KGA

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1319633/another-highest-single-day-surge-for-ph-at-6958-new-covid-19-cases>

MABILISANG IMBESTIGASYON AT PAGLILITIS VS KORAP



August 10, 2020 @ 11:43 AM 19 hours ago

Hindi maubos-ubos ang mga korap sa mahal kong Pinas gaya ng nagaganap sa PhilHealth na sangay ng Departamentong Ehekutibo.

Kung titingnan, hindi lang sa nasabing departamento at ahensya nangyayari ang korapsyon.

Maging ang Social Amelioration Program na panlaban sa krisis na dulot ng coronavirus disease-19 ay sinasalakay rin at lumalabas na may mga lokal na opisyal na sangkot.

Maging sa antas ng Kongreso, hindi rin maikakaila na grabe rin ang korapsyon at magkasunod nang taon na tsinugi ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang multi-bilyong tinangkang nais pagkakitaan ng may maruruming kamay na kongresman at senador.

'YANG PHILHEALTH

Matagal nang may problema sa PhilHealth.

Pinaghalong maling sistema at sadyang pangungurakot ang natatagpuang dahilan kung bakit nauubusan ng pondo ang ahensya.

Isa umano sa malalaking problema ng ahensya ang sistemang sinimulan ni ex-President Noynoy Aquino noon pang 2011.

Rate system ang tawag dito na sa isang tingin ay maganda ngunit naging napakasama pala ang ibinunga dahil pinagmulan ito ng nasa P203 bilyong iskam mula 2013 hanggang 2018.

Sa sistemang ito, mga Bro, kapag nagkasakit ng sipon at naospital ka, gagawin ng ospital na pneumonia ang sakit mo na maaaring alam mo o gawa lang ng ospital at kasabwat nila sa PhilHealth.

Sa sistemang ito, kapag P5,000 ang gastos sa pagpapagamot mo, nagiging P15,000 ang sisingilin ng ospital na babayaran naman ng mga taga-PhilHealth dahil pinalala sa pneumonia ang sakit mo sa papel.

Ngayon, sinasabing nasa P150B-174 bilyon ang nawala sa PhilHealth bago dumating si Pangulong Duterte at dahil nagpatuloy ang sistema, hanggang ngayo'y palihim na ginagawa ito ng mga korap at kasabwat nila, lalo na ang pribadong doktor at ospital umano.

Ang pagkawala ng nabanggit na malalaking halaga sa korapsyon ang pinag-ugatan ng sinasabing maaaring pagkabangkarote ng ahensya sa mga susunod na taon.

May gusto ngayong ibalik sa dating sistema ang bayaran sa PhilHealth.

'Yun bang === kukwentahin talaga ang aktwal na gastos ng pasyente at aalamin ang tunay na sakit nito bago magbayad ang PhilHealth.

Sana, magagawa ito sa lalong madaling panahon.

MABILISAN ANG PAGSUGPO

Naging mabilis ang pagsugpo sa mga korapsyon sa SAP dahil nagkaroon ng mga ebidensya kaagad gaya ng mga video at testimonya ng mga sangkot na opisyal, misis o tauhan nila.

Nariryan ang pagpapalista ng benepisyaryo ng SAP na kalahati kina kapitan o kagawad ang mapupunta, halimbawa, ng P5,500 hanggang P8,000 habang 'yung iba, nangongolekta ng P500 mula sa bawat benepisyaryo.

Ngayon, daan-daan ang nakasakdal sa mga hukuman na lokal government unit officials na naaktuhang sumisipsip sa SAP na para sa mga biktima ng pandemyang gawa ng COVID-19.

Bilang pagbabago, ginawa nang online o sa pamamagitan ng mga bangko ang pamimigay ng SAP sa halip na bahay-bahay at mga opisyal ng bayan o barangay ang mamigay.

ANG PORK BARREL

Noong 2019, may pork barrel na halagang P99 bilyon na isiningit ng mga kongresman at senador para sa pambansang badyet ngunit vineto o sadyang hinarang ito ni Pang. Duterte nang kanyang pirmahan ang badyet.

Nitong 2020, meron ding ganitong halos katulad na halaga na isiningit ng mga kongresman.

Inaprubahan ni Pang. Digong ang badyet na hindi nagsasabing may hinarang siya ngunit sa kalaunan pala, hindi niya pinayagang magkaroon ng badyet ang mga panukalang proyekto na may pork barrel.

Siyempre pa, nagsiiyakan ang mga kongresman at senador na may nalalaman sa mga singit na pork barrel at bahala kayo, mga Bro, kumilala kung sino-sino sila.

At ito pa ang rason ng ilang kongresman at senador kung bakit madali silang makita pero mahirap hagilapin ng mga mamamayang nagkakrisis dahil sa COVID-19.

PHILHEALTH PROBE

Maganda ang ginawa ng pamahalaang Duterte sa pag-aksyon laban sa mga lumalabas na pandarambong at korapsyon sa PhilHealth.

Nagpabuo ito ng task force o pinagsama-samang ahensya para sa malaliman at malawakang imbestigasyon at kasama sa mga titingnan ng task force ang mga lumutang na rekord sa imbestigasyon ng Senado rito.

Siyempre pa, kikilos ang task force sa mga kaugnay na usapin na hindi nasasagi ng Senado.

Maganda ito dahil ang Department of Justice ang timon ng task force at hindi kung sino-sino lang.

Diyan sa DOJ, laging patas ang laban dahil binibigyan ang lahat ng mga isinasangkot sa korapsyon at pandarambong ng pagkakataon na sumagot sa mga bintang.

Ayaw naman kasi ng DOJ na maging hilaw ang mga kasong isinasampa nito sa mga korte at sa kalaunan ay mababasura lamang.

Kakaiba ang DOJ kumpara sa ibang ahensya o grupo na inuuna ang magpa-media kahit hilaw ang kanilang imbestigasyon.

Malaki ang tiwala natin kay Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra na hindi ito kukurap sa nalalabing dalawang taong laban ni Pang. Digong sa mga korap at mandarambong.

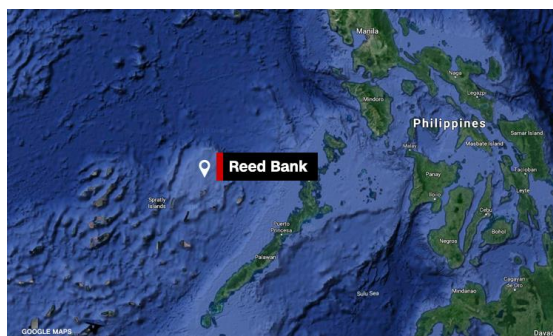
Anak ng tokwa, ngayon kitang-kita ang papel ng PhilHealth dahil sa pandemya ngunit lumilitaw na nanghihina ito sa pagtulong sa mga biktima dahil sa grabeng korapsyon na nagsimula pa noong panahon ni dating Pangulong Noynoy Aquino.

Ituwid ang dapat ituwid sa gobyerno at daanin ito sa mabilisan at malalimang imbestigasyon at mabilisan at patas ding paglilitis.

Navy chief wants 'protest' over the latest presence of Chinese survey ships in PH waters

By [David Santos, CNN Philippines](#)

Published Aug 10, 2020 9:40:29 PM



(FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, August 10) — The Philippine Navy said it would ask the Defense and Foreign Affairs departments to file a diplomatic protest over the presence of Chinese survey ships in the resource-rich Recto Bank (also known as Reed Bank) within the country's exclusive economic zone in the West Philippine Sea.

"It has come to my attention the presence of two Chinese surveillance vessels in the Recto Bank," Navy chief Vice-Admiral Giovanni Carlo Bacordo said in an online media forum on Monday.

"Right now, I think there's only one. We have reported this already. And we have checked if they have any clearance to conduct survey in the area. We have found out there is none," he added.

Reports said the two Chinese research vessels have been spotted alternately moving around the area inside Philippine territory since August 6.

"We'd like to conclude that indeed, they're conducting surveys because they have been there for about a week already. And the speed is something less than three knots. And you can only do that if you're doing actual surveys," Bacordo said. "So we will be submitting this report to the Defense department and request for the filing of a diplomatic protest."

He said sending a ship to Recto Bank will be an "option," but it will depend on the decision of the regional military commander based in Palawan who has jurisdiction over the area.

In the same forum, the Navy chief cited China's "many violations" of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct (DOC) of Parties in the South China Sea, as well as, its refusal "to adhere to the 2016 arbitral ruling," and pointed out, "that is China."

"We are guided by the rule of law. We want to maintain the moral high ground," Bacordo said, insisting that the Navy would rather provide the government "with all the data" and course the complaints against China through diplomatic means.

He added that China's aggression in the South China Sea may be seen as a way of provoking claimant countries, including the Philippines, to initiate a move "that may lead to a shooting war" but the Navy will continue to observe the "option of self-restraint" and "maximum tolerance."

"The first one to fire the shot loses public support. And I'm sure, they want us to take the first shot. But we will not." Bacordo said.

But despite their hostile actions, he said Chinese security forces in the South China Sea have also become "more accommodating" when President Rodrigo Duterte came to office in 2016.

He said unlike during the previous administration, the Navy carries out "rotation and replenishment" operations for troops deployed in the Philippine-occupied territories, "without China's intervention."

"We have observed them they are closely watching us — but they are not intervening," Bacordo said.

Source: <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/8/10/bacordo-navy-protest-chinese-survey-ships-recto-bank.html?fbclid=IwAR2NUaJ4zQXixmi0096OYHZ30NobjyB2xjl5hYG5VWOiixH3UnPhv1g7o-o>

TD 'Ferdie', southwest monsoon bring rains across Luzon Monday

By Ma. Cristina Arayata August 10, 2020, 9:47 am



Luzon will continue to experience rains Monday due to tropical depression Ferdie and the southwest monsoon. *(PNA photo by Avito C. Dalan)*

MANILA – Luzon will continue to experience rains due to tropical depression (TD) Ferdie and the southwest monsoon affecting the island, as several areas have been placed under tropical cyclone warning signal number 1, the weather bureau said Monday.

In its 5 a.m. bulletin, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said "Ferdie" was last tracked 210 kilometers west of Laoag City, Ilocos Norte.

It has a maximum sustained winds of 55 kms per hour (kph) and gustiness of up to 70 kph.

Ferdie is now approaching the northwestern border of the Philippine Area of Responsibility.

The combined effects of "Ferdie" and the enhanced southwest monsoon will cause strong breeze-force to near gale-force winds over Ilocos Region, Cordillera Administrative Region, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Metro Manila, Region 4-A (Calabarzon) and Region 4-B (Mimaropa). Gusty conditions are more likely in coastal and mountainous regions of these areas.

Monsoon rains was forecast over Ilocos Region, and the provinces of Abra, Benguet, Zambales, Bataan, Tarlac, Pampanga, both due to the TD and the southwest monsoon.

The southwest monsoon is expected to cause occasional rains over Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon.

Partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers due to localized thunderstorms will prevail over Visayas and Mindanao.

Areas under tropical cyclone wind signal (TCWS) no. 1 are the western portion of Ilocos Norte (Badoc, Pinili, Currimaog, Batac City, Paoay, San Nicolas, Laoag City, Pasuquin, Bacarra, Burgos), and and western portion of Ilocos Sur (Magsingal, Santo Domingo, San Ildefonso, San Vicente, San Juan, Cabugao, Sinit, Santa Catalina).

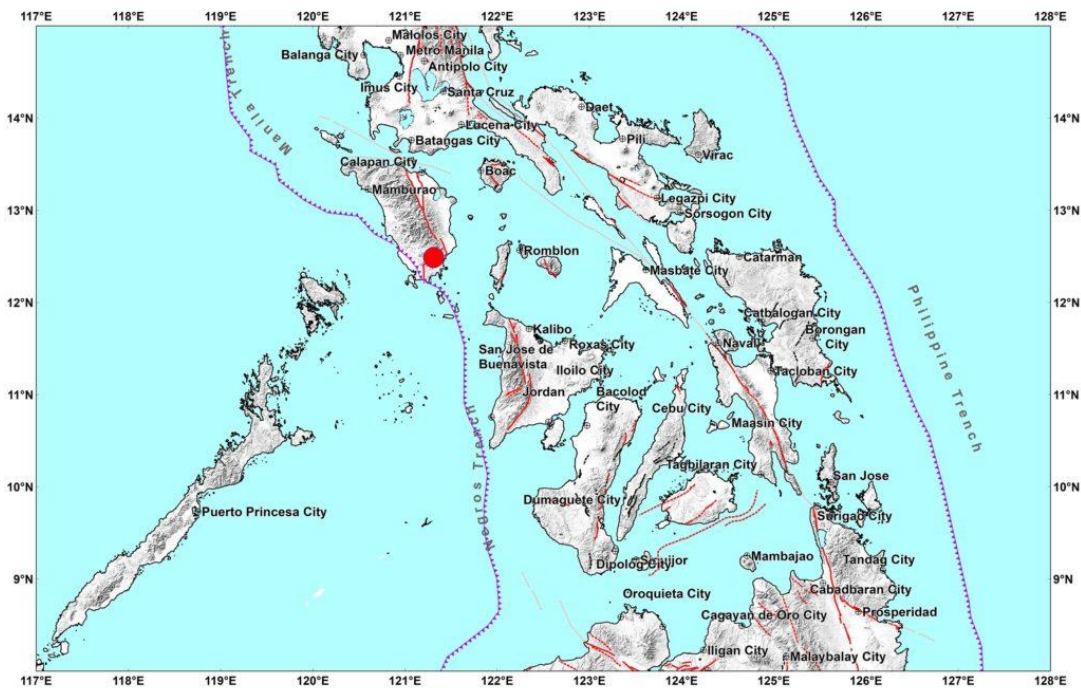
Sea travel is risky over the seaboard of areas under TCWS no. 1 due to rough to very rough seas.

Those with small seacrafts are advised to take precautionary measures while venturing out over the seaboard of Visayas and the rest of Luzon due to moderate to rough seas, PAGASA said. **(PNA)**

Mansalay, Oriental Mindoro niyanig ng magnitude 3.3

Balita

By Ulat ng Bandera at Radyo Inquirer August 10, 2020 - 10:22 AM



Niyanig ng magnitude 3.3 na lindol ang lalawigan ng Oriental Mindoro.

Ayon sa Phivolcs, naitala ang pagyanig sa 15 kilometers southwest ng bayan ng Mansalay, alas-9:25 umaga ng Lunes (August 10).

May lalim ito na 11 kilometers at tectonic ang origin ng pagyanig ayon sa Philvocs.

Wala namang inaasahang pagkasira sa mga ari-arian, intensities at aftershocks.

Source: https://bandera.inquirer.net/261231/mansalay-oriental-mindoro-niyanig-ng-magnitude-3-3?utm_term=Autofeed&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR3CEQIK35G2Q7MYuDP2fJ3-65hPkv-nT8-C2a0LI4DMGHnwjjDWi5luYLk#Echobox=1597074000

Marine lives matter: Plastic bag ban and further actions to reduce marine plastics

By [The Manila Times](#)

August 11, 2020

JAPAN and Indonesia both implemented new bans on single-use plastic shopping bags on July 1, 2020. The Minister of the Environment of Japan, Shinjiro Koizumi, said Japan aimed to increase the percentage of people who did not receive plastic bags up to 60 percent by the end of the year. As a result of the new regulations in Japan and Jakarta, many people started to use their own bags for shopping. According to a survey performed in August 2020 by the state-led NHK, more than 70 percent of customers refuse to pay 2 to 4 cents for a plastic bag at convenience stores in Japan since the implementation of the policy. However, enforcing these regulations has not been without challenges.

Indonesia and Japan can both be considered as latecomers to the application of single-use plastic bag bans in Asia where a number of cities and countries have already introduced similar policies. In Malaysia, Penang state adopted a plastics ban policy in July 2009. In 2010, Selangor state started a campaign to ban plastic bags one day a week, which became an everyday ban in 2016. In the Philippines, Siquijor island also prohibited the sales of new plastic bags in February 2019. Thailand has prohibited single-use plastic bags at major stores since the beginning of 2020. In Indonesia, before Jakarta, some big cities and provinces had already introduced bans, including Banjarmasin (2016), Balikpapan (July 2018), Bogor (December 2018) and Bali (December 2018).

Some have argued that bans on plastic bags are not effective to protect the environment because the volume of plastic bag waste is not massive. In Japan, for instance, the amount of plastic bags comprises only about 2 percent of the total amount of plastic waste. However, the main problem is with marine life. Scientists found that some marine species such as whales, manatees and turtles consume plastics from floating plastic bags in the oceans. For example, 80 pieces of plastic bags were found from the stomach of a male short-finned pilot whale that was found dead in Songkhla province, Thailand in June 2018. In March 2019, a young male Cuvier's whale washed up dead on the shores of Mindanao in the Philippines with 40 kilograms of plastic bags in its stomach. A green turtle was rescued in Rayong province, Thailand in May 2020 — it was found to have consumed 12 inches of plastic bags. Scientists believe that marine species may mistake floating plastic bags as jellyfish. In addition, the smell of plastic bags coated with algae and other micro-organisms attracts marine species, which often end up eating them. In other words, plastic bags are harming, and even killing, marine animals.

The plastic bag bans in Japan and Jakarta both permit some exceptions. In Jakarta, plastic bags without handles can be provided for vegetables, fish and other messy items. Japan also allows stores to provide customers with handle-free plastic bags for free. Customers who buy vegetables or other fresh foods can use plastic bags to wrap vegetables or fruits, and put them into their own bags. These exemptions are intended to prevent stains and to promote hygiene.

We can replace some specific plastics with alternatives. For instance, Banjarmasin (Indonesia) promotes the use of an alternative material called bakul purun, a reusable craft bag made from the leaves of purun plants. Cotton bud sticks made from plastic can be replaced with one made from paper. When food waste is collected for composting, it is good to use compostable plastic bags.

But it is very difficult to ban all single-use plastics immediately. Since the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic, many people have started to wear single-use masks made of plastic to limit the spread of the virus. But collection workers face a risk of infection from discarded masks. Waste masks were also found in beaches in various countries, which may affect marine species in the future. To prevent the spread of Covid-19 from masks, Japan's environment ministry recommends that people dispose of used masks into plastic bags, which should be securely tied to avoid contagion.

Marine lives matter: Plastic bag ban and further
actions to reduce marine plastics

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DATE

Other plastic products provide important functions such as PET bottles that offer access to safer drinking water where tap water is not clean enough. Plastic bottles are quite light compared with glass bottles and plastic packaging and containers can keep food safe. PET bottles are widely collected for recycling in Asia. So, recycling is another solution.

There is another opportunity to increase plastic recycling in order to minimize the plastic leakage to the oceans. Expanded polystyrene (EPS), known as styrofoam, has been banned in several countries, because of high transportation costs of EPS. However, they are recycled in Japan. Local government offices, supermarkets and others put collection boxes for trays made of EPS. Fish markets also collect discarded fish containers made of EPS. The key for such recycling programs is to invest in compressing machines, which can reduce the volume to one-fiftieth of the original volume. By using these machines, transportation costs are minimized.

Lastly, according to a study of plastic waste management in Indonesia, two-thirds of plastic waste leaked to the ocean, rivers and lakes are generated in rural areas. The major reason is insufficient waste collection services and waste disposal facilities in these areas. Investment for waste collection and proper disposal systems is also key, not only to reduce any potential contaminations during the Covid-19 pandemic, but also to reduce marine plastic debris.

Bans on plastic bags is a starting point and we must accelerate other strategic activities. Numerous single-use plastic products, which can be replaced with more environmentally friendly alternatives, should be reduced. Recycling activities must be enforced to reduce major plastic leakage to the environment. In addition, we should expand waste collection and proper disposal not only in urban area, but also rural areas. We must do all of this because “marine lives matter.”

BY MICHIKAZU KOJIMA, ELLEN PUTRI EDITA, HENDRO PUTRA JOHANNES AND FUSANORI IWASAKI

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WHO sees hope despite looming 750,000 virus death toll

Robin Millard, Agence France-Presse

Posted at Aug 11 2020 12:07 AM

The World Health Organization insisted Monday there was still hope of conquering the coronavirus pandemic despite the suffering behind the looming landmarks of 750,000 deaths and 20 million cases.

With both figures expected to be reached within days, the WHO stressed it was never too late to take action to suppress the COVID-19 crisis that has gripped the planet.

"This week we'll reach 20 million registered cases of COVID-19 and 750,000 deaths," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a virtual press conference.

"Behind these statistics is a great deal of pain and suffering. Every life lost matters. I know many of you are grieving and that this is a difficult moment for the world.

"But I want to be clear: there are green shoots of hope and... it's never too late to turn the outbreak around."

Tedros gave examples of countries that had successfully clamped down on the spread of COVID-19, citing New Zealand and Rwanda, and praised nations that had suffered major national outbreaks and were now responding quickly to local spikes.

"My message is crystal clear: suppress, suppress, suppress the virus," he said.

"If we suppress the virus effectively, we can safely open up societies."

The novel coronavirus has killed at least 731,500 people and infected nearly 19.9 million worldwide since the outbreak emerged in China last December, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP at 1100 GMT on Monday.

- Vaccine rush -

The race to produce a safe and effective vaccine is well under way at unprecedented speed.

A total of 165 candidate vaccines are being worked on around the world, according to a WHO overview.

Of those, 139 are still in pre-clinical evaluation, while the other 26 are in the various phases of being tested on humans, of which six are the furthest ahead, having reached Phase 3 of clinical evaluation.

However, WHO health emergencies programme director Michael Ryan said that finding a vaccine would not automatically spell the end for COVID-19.

"We have perfectly effective polio and measles vaccines, and we still struggle to eradicate or eliminate those diseases," the Irish epidemiologist said.

"Having an effective vaccine is only part of the answer. You've got to be able to deliver that vaccine to a population that want and demand to have that vaccine."

Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO's COVID-19 technical lead, said experts did not yet have an answer as to whether people infected with one of the four globally-circulating common cold coronaviruses had some level of protection against the new coronavirus.

- Outsmarting the enemy -

Scientists think COVID-19 originated in bats and could have been transmitted to humans via another mammal.

Ryan said that adding billions to the global population, living in densely-packed conditions and exploiting the environment was fostering the conditions needed for diseases to jump species from animals to humans.

"We are actively creating the pressures that are driving the breaches of those barriers. We need to do better at managing the risks associated with that," he said.

Ryan said the virus it was "brutal in its simplicity and its cruelty but it doesn't have a brain".

He said humanity could therefore outsmart it "but we're not doing such a great job right now".

Van Kerkhove said the goal of the new coronavirus was to "make more virus" and find individuals to pass between without killing too many of its hosts and thereby ending its chances of transmission.

The US expert said it could be beaten with the "very unsophisticated" measures available now, such as physical distancing, regular handwashing, wearing facemasks and respiratory etiquette.

"Everybody on the planet needs to understand they have a role to play," she said.