

DATE: August 12, 2020

DAY: Wednesday

# DENR

## IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service

## SAF troops a huge help in COVID response in Cebu City– Cimatu

By: Alven Marie A. Timtim - Multimedia Reporter - CDN Digital|August 11,2020 - 03:37 PM



Secretary Roy Cimatu, the IATF implementer in Cebu, and retired general Mel Feliciano, the deputy implementor of the IATF in Cebu, grace the send-off ceremony for SAF personnel in Cebu. CDN Digital photo | Alven Marie Timtim

CEBU CITY, Philippines — The presence of troops from the Special Action Force (SAF) was a huge boost in Cebu City’s drive against the spread of COVID-19.

This is what Secretary Roy Cimatu, overseer of the Inter Agency Task Force (IATF) in Cebu, revealed in an interview on Tuesday morning, August 11, 2020, during the [send-off ceremony](#) for the elite troops who were sent to Cebu City to help out with the implementation of health protocols in the city last June.

“They [SAF] are group of professionals. They are group of disciplined personnel and they imparted whatever the orders given them and we are very fortunate that the number of cases dropped. So I had to attribute it openly to them [SAF],” said Cimatu.

Cimatu also said that coordination and proper execution of the plans from the highest in-charge persons down to the implementers also helped greatly with the decrease of cases in the city.

He said that even when they had the best plans, if it was not properly imposed in the barangay and sitio level, the chances of success was lower.

“Kung maganda ang plano, maganda ang pag execute ng mga barangay captains, sitios, purok leaders, ay talagang ito yung sekreto... Sabi ko sa kanila na alam ko you belong to different political groups but at this time our enemy is the COVID. We have to work as one. Nagawa natin yan dito,” said Cimatu.

(If the plan is good, the execution from the village chiefs, sub village leaders is also good. This is the secret [to success]. I told them that I know you belong to different political groups but at this time, our enemy is the COVID. We have to work as one. And we were able to do that here.)

Cimatu, together with the other IATF officials, will be meeting on Tuesday afternoon to discuss on the latest updates on the situation in Cebu City. After the meeting, he said he will be making a decision on what his recommendation will be for the next quarantine classification of the city. /bmjo

## DENR, Cebu City to 'revive' Kinalumsan River, Mambaling coastal area

By: Rosalie O. Abatayo - Multimedia Reporter - CDN Digital|August 11,2020 - 04:37 PM



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources or DENR and the Cebu City government conduct a cleanup drive in Kinalumsan River and the coastal area of Barangay Mambaling on Tuesday, August 11, 2020. (Photo courtesy of DENR-7)

CEBU CITY, Philippines— Household wastes comprised most of the trash hauled from the heavily silted and highly contaminated Kinalumsan River in Cebu City during a massive cleanup drive held on the river and the coast of Barangay Mambaling in this city on Tuesday morning, August 11.

The cleanup drive is part of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Central Visayas (DENR-7) and the Cebu City government's plan to rehabilitate the river and the coast of the south district barangay of Cebu City.

DENR-7, in a news release, said Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu personally had ordered the regional office through the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) and the local government to conduct a massive cleanup in the area alongside other sustainable activities to "revive" the water bodies upon personally seeing their present condition.

Cimatu has been frequenting Cebu since his appointment as the Inter-Agency Task Force's (IATF) overseer for the COVID-19 response in the city.

"A dirty river or any water body present in the area is not conducive to the healing process that we are all aiming and working for," DENR-7 quoted Cimatu.

The cleanup drive was spearheaded by the Cebu City Department of Public Services and the City Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) with the participation of Bantay Dagat and River Troopers will be conducted for five consecutive days.

An action planning workshop will be conducted within the week in order to identify the applicable interventions for the rehabilitation of the bodies of water.

"All private establishments located near and in the area will also be coordinated to forge more partnerships and ink an agreement to do the rehab process together. A webinar will be conducted for the Barangay Environment Officers, River Troopers, and Sangguniang Kabataan leaders as part of the sustainable approach in the process," DENR-7 said.



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE



PAGE



UPPER  
LOWER



PAGE 1  
STORY



BANNER  
STORY



EDITORIAL



CARTOON

August 12, 2020

TITLE : \_\_\_\_\_

PAGE 1/ \_\_\_\_\_

DATE

## DENR, Cebu City to 'revive' Kinalumsan River, Mambaling coastal area

Page 2/2

EMB-7 Regional Director Lormelyn Claudio also echoed Cimatú's concern on the effect of the state of the bodies of water to the health of the residents surrounding the area.

Claudio said that "the river's deterioration has reached the point where it has posed threat to the safety and health of the communities along its banks, and which the residents and the government can no longer address effectively without help from the non-government sector."/db

Read more: <https://cebudailynews.inquirer.net/332942/denr-cebu-city-to-revive-kinalumsan-river-mambaling-coastal-area#ixzz6UqRNfgkx>

Follow us: [@inquirerdotnet on Twitter](#) | [inquirerdotnet on Facebook](#)

## Gov't runs after firm selling land along Laguna de Bay shores

LLDA, Rizal town sue developer of housing project as complaints over fee collection mount

By: [Maricar Cinco](#) - Reporter / [@maricarcincoINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:20 AM August 11, 2020



LAKESIDE LIVELIHOOD Laguna de Bay yields small blessings for residents of lakeside communities, like these men in Calamba City in Laguna, who catch fish in the lake's shallow portion. The protected shoreland of Laguna de Bay, however, is facing threats of encroachment as the value of land continues to increase. —KIMMY BARAOIDAN

A developer, earlier called out by Malacañang for misrepresenting President Rodrigo Duterte's message as a company endorsement, is facing a string of complaints and investigation by different government agencies over a project that sold cheap parcels of land along the shores of Laguna de Bay in Rizal province.

The Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) on Monday said it filed complaints of grave coercion and violations of Republic Act No. 4850 (the law that created the LLDA) against Torque Village Development Inc. (TVDI), a company based in Cainta, Rizal, which is behind the mixed-use development of 115 hectares of land in Taytay town, also in the same province.

The government property in Sitio Tipayan, Barangay San Juan, falls within the 14,000-ha shoreland, whose sale is not only illegal but also at risk of liquefaction and flooding, according to the LLDA.

The lots are also conveniently located close to C-6 Road, where real estate value suddenly rose after the construction of the thoroughfare between Rizal and Metro Manila.

### Buffer zone

The charges were filed by the LLDA and the municipal government of Taytay in the Rizal prosecutor's office on Aug. 4.

According to Jaime Medina, LLDA general manager, a shoreland, also known as buffer zone, is that part of the lake bed along the lakeshore, lying at an elevation of 12.5 meters and below and is alternately submerged or exposed by the normal annual rising and lowering of lake water level.

"Any form of use is strictly prohibited unless sanctioned by the government for public use," he added. But TVDI's former vice president, Frederick Berry, in a telephone interview on Monday, said the firm



## Gov't runs after firm selling land along Laguna de Bay shores

LLDA, Rizal town sue developer of housing project as complaints over fee collection mount

Page 2/2

did not intend to sell the lots but rather “distribute” them to 2,000 beneficiaries composed of poor families, policemen and soldiers.

In December 2019, TVDI launched the project, touted as a “Lakeshore Smart City,” featuring street lights and trash cans equipped with security sensors and structures that could self-monitor energy consumption.

Berry, who identifies himself as an advocate of organic farming, said the company wanted to build a modern “model city” where a community could live in affordable housing and sustain its own food production. The LLDA said it received numerous complaints about the company’s collection of P10,000 to P20,000 as membership fees or down payment to reserve a slot in the project.

“It’s just for equity,” said Berry, who claimed to have funded the feasibility studies and project design with P5 million sourced from private groups based in Europe and Singapore.

The project was “lauded” by President Duterte, through a message of support featured in a souvenir program, “for offering informal settlers and indigent families a vibrant, peaceful and productive living space.” But after the LLDA flagged the project, Malacañang, in February, wrote TVDI stating that Mr. Duterte’s message was not meant to endorse it “nor provide any color of authority to [the company] to convey property which [is] otherwise available for disposition.”

“[T]his Office has already barred any presidential message request from you or any group you represent,” Gregorio Deligero, head of the Office of the President’s correspondence office, told TVDI.

LLDA counsel Hazel Garduque said the case was filed to “warn the public” against what she described as a “squatting syndicate,” which the agency learned was planning to resume construction in September. Berry said he had resigned from the company in June after learning that the money collected from the beneficiaries “was not remitted” at all.

He said no construction had been made since due to “internal problems” in the company and an ongoing investigation by the Department of Agrarian Reform.

Read more: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1319674/govt-runs-after-firm-selling-land-along-laguna-lake-shores#ixzz6UqMCoTgO>

## USAID, DENR launch \$22-m biodiversity project

posted August 11, 2020 at 11:40 pm

by [Rey E. Requejo and Nash B. Maulana](#)

THE US government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has launched a P1.1-billion (\$22 million) biodiversity project with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Dubbed the Philippines Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans, and Landscapes (SIBOL), the project is designed to support the continuing management of the country's natural resources and combat environmental crimes and hazards.

Lawrence Hardy II, Mission Director of USAID Philippines, said: "Through SIBOL, USAID is pleased to support the Philippines' efforts to conserve the country's rich biodiversity while improving the livelihoods of Filipinos whose incomes depend upon these natural resources."

DENR Policy and Planning Undersecretary for International Affairs Juan Miguel T. Cuna welcomed this important partnership with USAID, saying: "Ensuring ecosystem integrity and human well-being are among the key priorities of DENR,"

The five-year project will provide support to the Philippine government to achieve its goals at improving on natural resource governance and stimulating public and private investments, leading to greater ecosystem stability and inclusive green growth.

The USAID will work closely with the DENR as well as the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources in implementing the SIBOL project.

"Effective conservation management and measurement of the value of natural resources contribute to the Philippines' economic development and environmental resilience," Hardy II explained.

RTI International, a US-based non-profit organization, will lead the implementation of the SIBOL project, building on its three decades of experience providing technical assistance, institutional strengthening, programmatic support, and research in a variety of sectors in the Philippines.

The Center for Conservation Innovations, Forest Foundation Philippines, Internews, Zoological Society of London, and the Resources, Environment, and Economics Center for Studies (REECS), comprise the consortium in partnership with RTI.

Cuna said: "We look forward to partnering with USAID in advancing our goals of environmental sustainability and strengthening DENR's capacity to combat environmental criminals, enhance the adaptive capacities of communities against natural disasters, as well as improve the economic conditions of affected local people," he added.

Since 2014, USAID has provided more than Php5 billion (\$100 million) in assistance to the Philippine government in conserving the country's biodiversity and protecting its landscapes and seascapes.

**Topics:** [United States Agency for International Development](#) , [USAID](#) , [Department of Environment and Natural Resources](#) , [DENR](#) , [biodiversity project](#)

## USAID launches P1.1-B Philippine environmental sustainability project

August 11, 2020 | 7:25 pm



*PHOTOS COURTESY OF DR. WILFREDO Y. LICUANAN*

THE United States Agency for International Development (USAID) said it launched a P1.1 billion biodiversity project for the Philippines.

In a statement, USAID said the five-year project aims to assist the Philippine government in improving its management of natural resources and boosting public and private environmental investment.

USAID said it will work with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

RTI International, a US non-profit, will lead the implementation of the project, alongside the Center for Conservation Innovations, Forest Foundation Philippines, Internews, Zoological Society of London, and the Resources, Environment, and Economics Center for Studies.

USAID Philippines Mission Director Lawrence Hardy II said the project will support the country's efforts to conserve its biodiversity while increasing livelihood opportunities for Filipinos dependent on natural resources.

"Effective conservation management and measurement of the value of natural resources contribute to the Philippines' economic development and environmental resilience," Mr. Hardy said.

DENR Undersecretary Juan Miguel T. Cuna said that the DENR is looking forward to the partnership with USAID.

"We welcome the opportunity in advancing our goals of environmental sustainability and strengthening DENR's capacity to combat environmental criminals, enhance the adaptive capacities of communities against natural disasters, as well as improve the economic conditions of affected local people," Mr. Cuna said.

USAID said it has given more than P5 billion worth of assistance to the Philippine government to conserve biodiversity and protect its landscapes and seascapes. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**



## U.S.-Phl project to combat environmental crimes



Published 4 hours ago  
on August 12, 2020 02:00 AM  
By [Sundy Locus](#)



USAID is committed to help the Philippines sustain and protect its ecosystem. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF USAID  
PHL FACEBOOK

The \$22-million United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has launched the Philippines Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans, and Landscapes (SIBOL) project that will support the sustainable management of natural resources and combat environmental crimes.

The five-year project, equivalent to about P1.1 billion, will support the Philippine government achieve its goals of improving natural resource governance and stimulating public and private investments, leading to greater ecosystem stability and inclusive green growth.

USAID will work with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

Since 2014, USAID has provided more than P5 billion (\$100 million) in assistance to the Philippine government in conserving the country's biodiversity and protecting its landscapes and seascapes.

"Effective conservation management and measurement of the value of natural resources contribute to the Philippines' economic development and environmental resilience," Lawrence Hardy II, mission director of USAID Philippines, said.

"Through SIBOL, USAID is pleased to support the Philippines' efforts to conserve the country's rich biodiversity while improving the livelihoods of Filipinos whose incomes depend upon these natural resources."

RTI International, a US-based nonprofit organization, will lead the implementation of the SIBOL project, building on its three decades of experience providing technical assistance, institutional strengthening, programmatic support, and research in a variety of sectors in the Philippines.

The Center for Conservation Innovations, Forest Foundation Philippines, Internews, Zoological Society of London and the Resources, Environment and Economics Center for Studies, comprise the consortium partnering with RTI.

"Ensuring ecosystem integrity and human well-being are among the key priorities of DENR," DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, and International Affairs, Juan Miguel Cuna, said

## House Majority Leader and Leyte Rep. U.S. launches new biodiversity project to protect PH environment

August 11, 2020 [People's Tonight](#)



USAID's new biodiversity project will protect Cleopatra's Needle in Puerto Princesa City as a critical habitat for wildlife (Photo credit: Samuel Villanueva/Center for Sustainability PH).

THE United States government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), launched the Philippines Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans, and Landscapes (SIBOL) project that will support the sustainable management of the country's natural resources and combat environmental crimes.

The five-year, P1.1 billion (\$22 million) project will provide support to the Philippine government to achieve its goals of improving natural resource governance and stimulating public and private investments, leading to greater ecosystem stability and inclusive green growth. USAID will work closely with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources to implement the SIBOL project.

"Effective conservation management and measurement of the value of natural resources contribute to the Philippines' economic development and environmental resilience," explained Lawrence Hardy II, Mission Director of USAID Philippines. "Through SIBOL, USAID is pleased to support the Philippines' efforts to conserve the country's rich biodiversity while improving the livelihoods of Filipinos whose incomes depend upon these natural resources."

RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit organization, will lead the implementation of the SIBOL project, building on its three decades of experience providing technical assistance, institutional strengthening, programmatic support, and research in a variety of sectors in the Philippines. The Center for Conservation Innovations, Forest Foundation Philippines, Internews, Zoological Society of London, and the Resources, Environment, and Economics Center for Studies (REECS), comprise the consortium partnering with RTI.

DENR Undersecretary for Policy, Planning, and International Affairs Juan Miguel T. Cuna welcomed this important partnership with USAID. "Ensuring ecosystem integrity and human well-being are among the key priorities of DENR," he said. "We look forward to partnering with USAID in advancing our goals of environmental sustainability and strengthening DENR's capacity to combat environmental criminals, enhance the adaptive capacities of communities against natural disasters, as well as improve the economic conditions of affected local people," he added.

Since 2014, USAID has provided more than Php5 billion (\$100 million) in assistance to the Philippine government in conserving the country's biodiversity and protecting its landscapes and seascapes.

: "We have no choice but to adapt to the new normal. The soonest time possible, the better. We have to act decisively. Not tomorrow, but today."

## Local execs' verdict: cut upper half of 300-year-old Toog tree

By [CHRIS V. PANGANIBAN](#)-AUGUST 11, 2020 7:20 PM

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur (MindaNews / 11 Aug) – Local government officials here have decided to just cut down the upper half portion of the iconic giant 300-year-old Philippine Rosewood tree (*Petersianthus quarialatus*) or locally known as Toog and let the lower portion continue to stand as an ecotourism heritage of the townsfolk even though experts said it could still be saved.



Engr. Marjun Ursos, a structural engineer and member of Save the Toog tree Please (STOP) movement, presents to local officials of San Francisco, Agusan del Sur on Monday (10 August 2020) engineering interventions to preserve the giant Toog tree. MindaNews photo by CHRIS V. PANGANIBAN

The verdict on the fate of the tallest and the oldest Toog tree in the country was handed down by Mayor Solomon Rufila and Sangguniang Bayan (SB) members in a consultative meeting on Monday wherein they decided for the retention of about 30 meters of the tree trunk.

Moves to cut down the tree, which has developed advancing decay on its buttress due to fungi and termite infections, have been pushed since last week allegedly because it already put the houses near it in jeopardy and the hazard it poses to motorists along the Agusan del Sur-Surigao del Sur highway.

But a known tree surgeon, Dr. Amando Palijon, former forestry professor of the University of the Philippines – Los Baños (UPLB), has recommended that despite its defects, the landmark tree can still be saved through appropriate technological interventions if comprehensive assessment proves that it can be done.

He, however, said he still needs assessment by personally seeing the tree in its actual condition.

For her part, Dr. Jurgenne Primavera, a Pew fellow and pioneering member of Philippine Native Tree Enthusiasts (PNTE), said the tree can be cured with best scientific expert advice as she recommended tree surgeons like Palijon and his colleagues at the UPLB to examine the tree.

Local officials at the meeting reached a consensus to preserve half of the trunk in the lower portion of the tree as heritage landmark that will serve as memorabilia for residents without compromising public safety.

## Local execs' verdict: cut upper half of 300-year-old Toog tree

Page 2/3

Rufila said the findings by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources that the tree is already at the high risk status prompted the SB to pass an ordinance expressing their no objection for the cutting down of the Toog.

The municipal council passed Resolution No. 127 last June 15 after they agreed with the findings of the DENR's Forest and Wetland Research Development and Extension Center (FWRDEC) in Bislig City that the hardwood species poses high potential hazard with a rating of 5.4 based on biomechanical and structural analysis.

It was not, however, clear during the discussions if they will still pursue the treatment of the fissure of the buttress even as they agreed to retain the lower part of the trunk to remain standing.

Palijon has warned the tree will gradually die if the upper portion will be cut. "If you notice the tree is devoid of lateral branches from the base to the general crown level which is normal architecture of the tree. This means that this will not assure the tree will produce sprouts that will develop into branches that will subsequently form the crown that is needed to make it function physiologically," he said.



The proposed design of the triangular retrofitting structure with two elevated platform levels that will serve as a view deck for tourists and visitors to get a panoramic view of the magnificent Mt.

Magdiwata presented by Engr. Marjun Ursos, a structural engineer and member of Save the Toog tree Please (STOP) movement, to local officials of San Francisco, Agusan del Sur on Monday (10 August 2020). MindaNews photo by CHRIS V. PANGANIBAN

A local environmental movement called Save the Toog tree Please (STOP) led by Engr. Mauro Bravo Jr., a retired district engineer at the Department of Public Works and Highways and a long-time local resident, has asked the local officials during the meeting to preserve the tree by following the recommendation by experts to pursue the scientific treatment to cure the tree.

STOP even presented at the meeting a proposed retrofitting structure with two elevated platform levels that will serve as a view deck for tourists and visitors to get a panoramic view of the magnificent Mt. Magdiwata.

Dr. Marcelina Pacho, a tree surgeon who was a former pathologist of DENR's Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau, said last year the tree can still be treated by pruning the branches and cleaning the cavities with fungicide.

Pacho made this recommendation during her visit here in September last year per upon the request of the local government to let her personally see the state of the giant Toog tree.



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE



TITLE : \_\_\_\_\_

PAGE 1/ \_\_\_\_\_

August 12, 2020  
DATE

## Local execs' verdict: cut upper half of 300-year-old Toog tree

Page 3/3

For 10 months, there was no intervention undertaken by the local government to treat the tree except from the spraying of the fungi at the decayed buttress twice in December last year.

Elmer Luzon, general manager at the San Francisco Water District, has called for the preservation of the tree rather than cutting down half of it.

“Let’s exhaust all means to save the three,” Luzon said as he suggested during the meeting to consider a third party that will reexamine and reevaluate the real situation of the Toog tree. (Chris V. Panganiban / MindaNews)

## Animal rights groups kinondena ang pagkatay, pagkain sa namatay na viral ostrich sa QC

Josiah Antonio, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Aug 11 2020 03:17 PM



Larawan mula sa DENR

MAYNILA — Kinondena ng ilang mga animal rights groups nitong Martes ang pagkatay at pagkain sa namatay na ostrich na nakawala sa isang subdivision sa Quezon City.

Ito'y matapos aminin ni Charlie Pascual, abogado ni Jonathan Cruz na may-ari ng 2 ostrich, na ginawang adobo ang ostrich at kinain ng mga nag-aalaga rito.

Ayon kay Anna Cabrera ng Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), "iresponsable" ang pagkain ng naturang hayop dahil hindi tiyak kung may sakit ba ito na maaaring makahawa sa mga kumain.

"Iresponsable ang pagluto at pag-consume sa kahit anong hayop na namatay on its own without determining yung cause of death. Kung ito ay may sakit, maaaring naipasa na sa mga taong nag-consume nito," sinabi ni Cabrera sa ABS-CBN News.

"Ang statement na "namatay sa stress ang ostrich" ay galing ba sa beterinaryo na nag-conduct ng necropsy? Kung hindi ay maaaring gawa-gawang kuwento lang ito upang iwasan nila ang iba pang katanungan ukol sa totoong nangyari sa ostrich na (nakawala)," dagdag pa niya.

Ayon naman kay Nirali Shah, senior campaigner ng People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) Asia, kinakailangan ng agapay ng veterinarian sa tamang pamamaraan ng pag-asikaso sa namatay na ostrich.

"It's always best to speak with a veterinarian as there are appropriate ways to handle deceased animals in accordance with existing sanitation guidelines," sinabi ni Shah sa ABS-CBN News.

Dagdag pa niya, ang sinapit ng ostrich ay paalala na may tamang pagtrato sa mga wild animals.

"It's impossible to comprehend the magnitude of the stress and confusion that this ostrich must have felt in their last few hours alive. The animal risked it all to escape from a place where he or she never belonged in the first place, only to be tackled down and recaptured before dying a miserable, premature death," ani Shah.



## **Animal rights groups kinondena ang pagkatay, pagkain sa namatay na viral ostrich sa QC**

Page 2/2

"Their tragic life serves as a reminder to everyone that ostriches – and all other wild animals – should never be held captive, let alone kept in a backyard," dagdag pa niya.

Panawagan ni Cabrera sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at Bureau Of Animal Industry (BAI), magkaroon pa ng mas malalim na imbestigasyon hinggil sa naturang isyu.

"We call on the DENR and the BAI to ask for an in-depth investigation as to how many more exotic animals are in the custody of Mr. Jonathan Cruz and to have a veterinarian check on their health and well-being- and if he has the necessary permits to hold these animals as he is clearly unfit to care for the ostriches."

Sinabi ni DENR undersecretary Benny Antiporda sa ANC na patuloy pa rin ang kanilang imbestigasyon hinggil sa isyu.

"I'll refer this to our legal department. Our issue is only permit to possess, which is the wildlife registration permit. Dun ako may nakikitang violation, rather than making it as adobo. Kasi 'yun talagang ano eh, based on IRR, pwede 'yun eh, walang problema dun," ani Antiporda.

"Ang problema is yun nag-possess ka and wala kang permit... How did it end up in Quezon City?... 'Yun ang pinag-aaralan namin," dagdag pa niya.

## Rescued cockatoo hatchling doing well in Palawan's Dumarán habitat

Published August 11, 2020, 5:38 PM

[by Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

A critically endangered Philippine cockatoo, locally called “katala,” has successfully bred after it was released back in the Dumarán Island Critical Habitat in Palawan.

According to non-government organization Katala Foundation Inc. (KFI), “Gold,” a female cockatoo, was named after the color of its leg band, bearing the number DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) 055-16.

Gold was among five cockatoo hatchlings rescued due to lack of food caused by the extreme dry months in 2016. When it was rescued in May of 2016, KFI noted that Gold weighed only 60 grams.

The rescued cockatoos were brought to the Katala Institute in Narra, Palawan for proper care and rehabilitation.

“This is one success story we are proud of. To rescue hatchlings is a tough decision to make and the great challenge is releasing them back to the wild and monitoring whether they are accepted by the wild flock. So far we have been lucky in Dumarán with our re-introduction since the integration of the released birds is well accepted by the wild individuals,” KFI species conservation programs director Peter Widmann said in a statement.

“We have done supplementation of the natural population in Dumarán since 2014 to help the aging population of existing cockatoos on the island. Rescued katalas either from starvation or persecution or poaching, are rehabilitated at the Katala Institute in Narra. If found fit, they are later released in Dumarán. Birds undergo the soft release program where they are acclimatized to the natural environment, fed with natural foods and learn basic training such as avoiding predators. “They are also monitored carefully,” he added.

Widmann said Gold came back to Dumarán Island in August 2016 and was released to the wild in January 2017.

“The supplementation is also a way of improving the genetic diversity of the species,” he said.

The supplementation initiative is part of the joint Philippine cockatoo conservation efforts with the DENR and PCSDS.

Michael Plazos, field officer for Dumarán under the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program, said that seeing the cockatoos flying after having seen them starving back in 2016 and now successfully breeding “is just incredible and overwhelming.”





## Rescued cockatoo hatchling doing well in Palawan's Dumarán habitat

Page 2/2

“Our collective decision to rescue was then worth all the hassles. It is just so great a relief,” he said.

Maximo Pineda, who is in-charge of checking Gold's nest, expressed fulfillment knowing that the cockatoo was able to integrate with the wild population and finally bred with a healthy hatchling this year.

KFI also underscored the awareness and vigilance of Dumareños in monitoring the birds.

The global population of the katala is between 640-1,120 and 70-90 percent of this could be found in Palawan.

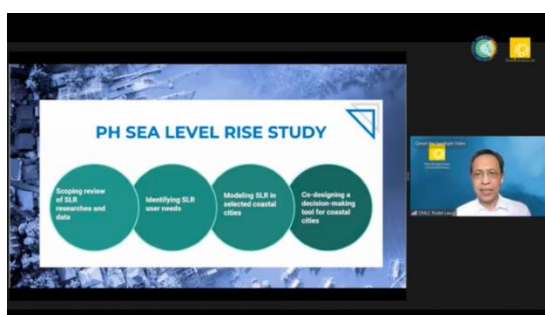
<https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/11/rescued-cockatoo-hatchling-doing-well-in-palawans-dumaran-habitat/>

## Multi-year comprehensive study on impacts of climate change now in the works

Published August 11, 2020, 1:37 PM

[by Ellayn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

A multi-year comprehensive study to assess the potential impacts of different climate change scenarios including rise in sea levels among associated hazards in key cities across the Philippines is now in the works.



(MANILA BULLETIN)

According to Dr. Rodel Lasco, Executive Director of the Oscar M. Lopez Center, 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.

The first of a two-part virtual fora last Aug. 5, which gathered members of the academe and research institutions in the Philippines and abroad, government agencies, policymakers, and organizations leading community-based initiatives, was among activities for the multi-year comprehensive study, Lasco said.

The forum “Taking stock: Why should we be concerned about the climate and sea level changes?” was organized by the Climate Change Commission (CCC) and its National Panel of Technical Experts (NPTE), in partnership with the Oscar M. Lopez Center, to mobilize community-based climate action and mainstream climate change knowledge into development policies and practices.

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.

The event included presentations by Dr. Benjamin Horton, Director of Earth Observatory of Singapore on “Mechanisms of Sea Level Changes: Global/Regional/National Perspective.”

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.

The 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. 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," Horton said.

 PAGE UPPER  
 LOWER PAGE 1  
STORY BANNER  
STORY EDITORIAL CARTOON

August 12, 2020

TITLE : \_\_\_\_\_

PAGE 1/ \_\_\_\_\_

DATE

## Multi-year comprehensive study on impacts of climate change now in the works

Page 2/2

"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.

Dr. Laura David, Director of the University of the Philippines-Marine Science Institute (UP-MSI) also explained about the "Current And Future Risks And Impacts of Sea Level Changes."

She 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.

Dr. Fernando Siringan, Professor of UP-MSI likewise discussed "Sea Level Rise from the Perspective of Marine Geophysics/Geology."

He 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," Siringan said.

CCC Secretary Emmanuel de Guzman emphasized the importance of convergence of different sectors in advancing climate research to help the communities survive and thrive.

"This forum is one important step toward a broader cooperation across sectors on dealing with the increasing threat of rising sea levels to our communities. Rest assured that the Climate Change Commission shall continue to advance research on the slow onset impacts of climate change in the country. We shall also hold more online learning exchanges such as this — experts' forums that inform and explain climate science to the public," he said.

<https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/11/multi-year-comprehensive-study-on-impacts-of-climate-change-now-in-the-works/>

## Gov't asked to woo foreign investors to mining sector

August 11, 2020

By [Ryan Ponce Pacpaco](#)

[People's Tonight](#)

**SURIGAO del Norte Rep. Robert Ace Barbers on Tuesday urged the country's economic managers to revisit and come up with new sound policies to attract foreign investors in the mining sector and help alleviate the coronavirus disease-19 (COVID19)-impaired economy.**

"Mr. Speaker, I think this is a feasible and realistic solution. While we are months or years away to a COVID vaccine, our economy needs immediate vaccination. And mining is the solution," Barbers said in a privilege speech delivered last Monday.

"With the end goal of increasing our mining output's contribution to our currently threatened economy, I shall be reviewing our current laws and attempt to aggressively drive it forward to dramatically allow for increased financing, exploration, production and regulation in the mining industry," Barbers stressed.

Barbers, the chairman of the House committee on dangerous drugs, said proper exploration, exploitation and utilization of the country's mineral resources would help the government repay its massive debt accumulated to fight COVID-19 and recover from the -16.5% GDP (gross domestic product) drop in the 1st quarter of this year. Two of the country's main sources of dollar revenues, the BPO (business process outsourcing) and OFWs (Overseas Filipino Workers), which combine for an estimated US\$60 billion annually and has kept the economy afloat for two decades, are also under threat, he said. "If we simulate a 10% to 20% decline in these 2 sectors, our net dollar position will suffer by 6 to 12 billion US dollars. Before the economy could spiral down, both in GDP in dollar reserves, Barbers said the government would need to have a concerted effort with the private sector to aggressively advance and finance the mining sector.

"Exploration to production takes time, and we can reap the benefits probably 5, 10 years down the line, depending on the various stages of exploration between our existing mining companies. If we target, say a 5 to 10 percent share in GDP, the mining sector can contribute 18 to 36 billion dollars, more than enough to cover the gap that will be created by the reduced OFW and BPO sectors," he explained.

From a global perspective, he said the total value of the top 50 mining companies in the world stood at 957 billion US dollars as of June 30. In comparison, the entire value of listed companies in the Philippines stood at 260 billion dollars. "And I imagine that the mining sector only contributes to a fraction of that."

In terms of GDP contribution, prominent mining countries such as Australia have mining contributing 6%. "With Australia's GDP at 1.37 trillion dollars, this translates to 82 billion dollars, almost 38 times the value of our mining output. If we indeed believe that our resources are among the best in the world, then the solution is obvious," Barbers said.



## Gov't asked to woo foreign investors to mining sector

Page 2/2

The lawmaker from Mindanao said value-added mining is also a concern as the current state of this sector is yet to be fully integrated. The Philippines, he said, exports nickel, iron ore and copper to developed countries who possess the technology to further refine the products to stainless steel and copper wires, among others. "We, therefore, sell low value output only to import them back in its final form, putting us in a negative foreign exchange position.

To optimize the value of our exports, I would strongly consider capital formation with respect to smelters and refineries so that value is enhanced before it leaves our shores," Barbers said.

## 'Better normal' bill step toward 'resilient pandemic recovery,' say House leaders

Published August 11, 2020, 1:24 PM

[by Charissa Luci-Atienza](#)

The House of Representatives has finally [approved the proposed "Better Normal for the Workplace, Communities, and Public Spaces Act of 2020."](#)

On Monday, a total of 242 House members voted for the passage of HB 6864, which establishes public health and environmental standards and safeguards for the better normal in the workplace, public places, and communities.



Deputy Speaker and Antique Rep. Loren Legarda (Congresswoman Loren Legarda Official Facebook Page / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

House Deputy Speaker and Antique Lone District Rep. Loren Legarda has applauded the measure, describing it as a step toward the country's sustainable and resilient pandemic recovery.

House Majority Leader and Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez said, "As soon as we adapt to the new normal, businesses can resume operations and workers can go back to their jobs without fear of contracting the dreaded coronavirus."

He added that "through physical distancing and other stringent safety and health protocols, we can also keep our families safe and prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our communities."

"This measure will help improve our policies and actions in the context of the pandemic, ranging from health, environment, education, agriculture, labor and industrial sector, tourism, arts and culture, and how we can all adapt and adjust to the current situation of our society." Legarda, the main proponent of the bill, said.

Legarda said HB 6864 aims to foster a just and equitable transition to a climate-resilient, inclusive, and sustainable future, and further details the policies governing the management of public spaces and public transportation and the Better Normal for the education sector, e-governance, and in the workplaces to help stem the spread of the virus.

"The bill strengthens the synergy between and among national government agencies, local government units, and the private sector by defining their roles and responsibilities in the better normal," she said.

## **‘Better normal’ bill step toward ‘resilient pandemic recovery,’ say House leaders**

Page 2/2

She also cited that the measure seeks to develop the country’s digital infrastructure through the National Broadband Plan of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT).

Under HB 6864, owners, managers, or administrators of public spaces and workplaces are required to establish handwashing facilities or sanitizing stations and to monitor the temperature of their visiting guests. The bill also promotes “contact-less” payment mechanisms, Romualdez noted.

The bill also requires physical distancing of at least one meter between individuals whenever in public spaces and in the workplace.

According to the House leader, the bill also aims to address issues on water supply, sanitation, and waste management, which are key in containing the spread of the virus.

“The bill also seeks to protect the vulnerable sectors of our society not only from the affliction of COVID-19, but also by helping them cope with the changes brought about by the pandemic,” Legarda said.

She noted that HB 6864 also provides for a Sunset Clause, such that after its enactment, the law will be effective for three years, or sooner upon official declaration that the pandemic caused by COVID-19 has already been eradicated.

“With the growing number of recorded cases and resurgence of infections in other countries, including the disturbing studies that the manner of COVID-19 transmission is evolving, we remain susceptible to the novel coronavirus. I hope that the approval of this bill will educate and empower our people as we work together to diminish our present vulnerabilities and pursue a sustainable and resilient pandemic recovery,” Legarda said.

<https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/11/better-normal-bill-step-toward-resilient-pandemic-recovery-say-house-leaders/>

## Up next, pandemic of garbage



By [Ingming Aberia](#)

August 12, 2020

NOT to crow about days of doom and gloom, which are upon us anyway and therefore need no further repeating, but hopefully to keep us awake when another calamity strikes.

We know that tons upon tons of used virus-protective supplies (face masks, face shields, etc.) are being dumped every day. Many of these find their way to nearby waterways and eventually end up in the oceans and open seas.

Even as early as two months ago, there were already reports of a looming environmental crisis brought about by a “pandemic of garbage.” For example, [TheGuardian.com](#) reported on June 8, 2020 that there are “More masks than jellyfish: coronavirus waste ends up in ocean.”

The report highlighted what it observed as “a glut of discarded single-use masks and gloves [that] is washing up on shorelines and littering the seabed.” It added: “Conservationists have warned that the coronavirus pandemic could spark a surge in ocean pollution — adding to a glut of plastic waste that already threatens marine life — after finding disposable masks floating like jellyfish and waterlogged latex gloves scattered across seabeds.”

Just how much trash are we dumping every day? Intuitive calculations indicate that billions of these protective items are being thrown away as waste, on the assumption that more than 7 billion of the world’s population who are affected by the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic are using them.

While global figures are not yet readily available, snippets of them can be drawn from country data. It is estimated that in Wuhan, China — where Covid-19 originated — for example, hospitals “produced 240 tons of waste daily at the height of the outbreak, compared with 40 tons during normal times.” Daily production of face masks “soared to 116 million in February, 12 times higher than the previous month.”

The Asian Development Bank in a recent report titled “Managing infectious medical waste during the Covid-19 pandemic,” found that “cities such as Manila, Kuala Lumpur, Hanoi and Bangkok experienced similar increases, producing 154 to 280 tons more medical waste per day than before the pandemic.”

In Thailand (where a tabloid recently flashed a headline that referred to the Philippines as “land of Covid”), its Environment Institute reported that “plastic waste has increased from 1,500 tons to 6,300 tons per day, owing to soaring home deliveries of food.” In the United States, consulting firm Frost & Sullivan predicts that the US could generate an entire year’s worth of medical waste in just two months because of Covid-19.



## Up next, pandemic of garbage

Page 2/2

Managing Covid-19 wastes should compel us to prepare for any eventuality on account of at least four grizzly phenomena: 1) the threat of plastic pollution (already a global environmental issue even before the pandemic); 2) oceans treat garbage that are being dumped into them in ways that do not recognize national boundaries (which is why countries need to address the problem as a single protagonist and not as a diverse mix of individual entities); 3) the recycling industry is half-paralyzed (with arguably heavy toll on the long-term outlook of the global economy); and 4) compromised oceans due to pollution undermines their capacity to “fix” carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere, which directly impacts on the promotion of health and overall well-being of living things, including humans.

Face masks (not to mention face shields) and personal protective equipment (PPE) often contain plastics such as polypropylene. Expert opinion places the lifespan of masks at 450 years, enough to mark these as ecological time bombs.

And ocean debris does not stay in one place. This should still make the relatively Covid-free Thais uncomfortable if their neighboring countries are not as disciplined and hygienic as they are. Gary Stokes of OceanAsia, for example, found in a survey that there were about 70 face masks on a 100-meter stretch of a beach in Soko Islands (near Hong Kong), which is inhabited. He adds: “We’re finding them [face masks] everywhere. Ever since society started wearing masks, the cause and effects are being seen on the beaches... another item we’re leaving as a legacy to the next generation.”

The pandemic-worsened sea pollution is also seen as adversely impacting the recycling industry and the capacity of oceans to fix carbon dioxide levels.

[TheConversation.com](http://TheConversation.com) reports on April 30, 2020 that while “the amount of waste generated in commercial and industrial workplaces has drastically reduced... home clear-outs and renovations during the lockdown are creating domestic waste that can’t be disposed of at recycling centers... Industries that rely heavily on recycled materials are therefore the ones feeling the most pressure in terms of getting hold of resources. The United States plastic recycling industry has asked Congress for a \$1-billion bailout ‘to meet the demands of this crisis.’ There are warnings of cardboard shortages for future packaging as we produce and recycle less at work, and sharp increases in online shopping brings more card and paper into our homes.”

Finally, we also need to be wary about how pollution can hasten ocean acidification. According to a 2019 report (published by [ucsusa.org](http://ucsusa.org)), the exchange of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) between the surface of the ocean and the atmosphere has remained constant for millions of years. But in the past 150 years, humans have greatly increased the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels and changing land-use practices (e.g. increased soil erosion brought about by mining and logging). As a result, the ocean has absorbed about 29 percent of this additional carbon. This debases the capacity of our oceans to support marine life and, as a consequence, threatens the rest of the environment, the economy and human life itself.

If something good can come out of this looming disaster, that would be the epiphany-like realization that a global crisis can be best addressed by nations acting as one, not as separate, and sometimes competing, groups of peoples.

## Kahunari creek filled with garbage

August 11, 2020

By [Edd Reyes](#)

[People's Tonight](#)

**NAVOTAS City Mayor Toby Tiangco is considering to give the responsibility of cleaning the waterways to the person who would be caught dumping and disposing garbage into the creeks.**

The seemingly disgusted city chief executive aired his displeasure after seeing a blanket of garbage along Kahunari Creek in Bgy. San Jose, a waterways which leads to Navotas River.

“Hindi naman tumutubo ang mga basura. Galing ‘yan sa mga taong basta-basta na lang nagtapon nang hindi iniisip kung ano ang perwisyong maidudulot nito sa ating lahat: baha, dengue, pagdumi at pagkamatay ng creek, at pagdaloy ng nakalalasang tubig nito papunta sa karagatang pinagkukunan natin ng kabuhayan,” Mayor Tiangco said.

Mayor Tiangco said just like COVID-19, the only solution to solve the perennial flood problem is human discipline, adding that the city government only asked residents to be responsible, follow the proper waste disposal and practice waste segregation.

He said discipline and proper waste disposal had no cost and its free but when garbage went to esteros and creeks, the local and national government have to spend money to clean the waterways.

The mayor added that the money allocated by the government in cleaning waterways came from taxes paid by the people. “Mas konti ang gastos dito, mas maraming salapi ang mailalaan ng lokal na pamahalaan para sa pangangailangan ng mamamayan,” Tiangco said.

## Wild monkeys sighted in Oslob, Cebu

Published August 11, 2020 11:37pm

Wild monkeys Oslob, Cebu province



Wild monkeys seen on the railing of a bridge in Oslob, Cebu

There is a new attraction in Cebu, particularly the town of Oslob, which is known as the tourist destination for those who wish to see whale sharks up close.

Wild monkeys can be seen along the side of the road in Barangay Hagdan in Oslob, which is located south of Cebu.

In these photos taken by Minerva Gerodias, shows several monkeys lined up on the railing of a bridge.

GMA Regional TV's Balitang Bisdak reported that the monkeys go out of their habitat during feeding time, which is about 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

They are regularly given food by a resident living near the bridge. Visitors are discouraged to touch the monkeys.

There used to be a signage in the area that says monkeys can be viewed at the site. This was stopped, however, during the COVID-19 pandemic. -- **BAP, GMA News**

## Taganito Mining to give free diving to recruit environment warriors



By [BMPlus](#)

August 11, 2020



Agapito S. Cuadra, Jr., TMC's dive master prepares employees of the mining company as first time divers.

Taganito Mining Corp. (TMC) launches 'DiSCUBA', a program that aims to get more people in the mining community of Claver and adjacent towns in Surigao del Norte to experience and appreciate diving.

Diving has been considered a sport for the elite due to the expenses for a single dive plus the cost of travel to dive spots.

TMC, a subsidiary of Nickel Asia Corp. (NAC), has a different objective for introducing the sport and that is to invite more people to become environment warriors – protector of the environment especially of the marine resources around the mine site.

Agapito S. Cuadra, Jr., a marine biologist and TMC's Coastal Resource Management Specialist, says that part of his job is to research on the characteristics of marine landscapes and help design programs for environment enhancement and protection.

*"I have seen many dive spots, in and out of protected areas, near and far from mine sites, and the learnings are the same, that if we do not introduce structured protection programs, these dive spots will be endangered,"* explains Cuadra.

But, Cuadra says, seeing is believing. Thus, DiSCUBA, a portmanteau of Discover and Scuba, was launched to bring more people to see the underwater beauty around the mine site.

*"The pilot program will first have TMC employees as participants – 2 per department – each of whom will go through a medical check-up and thorough orientation before the actual dive. And as soon as necessary clearances are in, we will open it to the community hopefully by January,"* Cuadra details.

## Taganito Mining to give free diving to recruit environment warriors

Page 1/2



*“Seeing is believing. It makes one feel part of a grander world and to become an environment warrior”*

TMC is the first mining company to have this kind of program and Engr. Artemio E. Valeroso, Resident Mine Manager, is proud and excited.

*“Our challenge has always been to make more people appreciate what we do as a responsible mining company and what it means that as miners we are also environment protectors and we are environment warriors,”* exclaims Valeroso.

Valeroso is confident that once people experience actual diving, there will be many more to link arms with TMC in its campaign to protect and enhance the environment.

As a dive master, Cuadra explains why TMC is proud of a dive spot that the mining company has adopted – the Malingin islet, some 791 meters from the wharf of TMC and about 1,234 meters or 1.2km from the mouth of Taganito river.

*“The beauty of the natural corals around the dive spot in Malingin, right in front of the mine site, is proof that responsible mining and the sport of diving can co-exist,”* declares Cuadra.

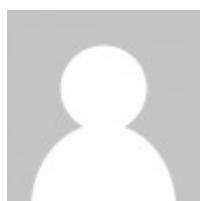
Cuadra shares that the cost of a basic dive in a commercial setting starts at around P6500 pesos so he believes that the success of *DiSCUBA* is a matter of commitment from TMC.

*“First off, DiSCUBA is possible because TMC has a dive master like myself, which is a strict requirement in diving. The use of the equipment, the orientation and snacks, and the dive certificate to be given to participants, are courtesy of TMC,”* Cuadra excitedly shares.

And because of strict health protocols due to the pandemic, participants will be limited and dive suits will not be shared and will be disinfected for 7 days before it can be used again.

*“Diving makes one feel part of a much wider, much grander, world and I believe after a dive, everyone will want to be part of TMC’s campaign to convert everyone to become environment warriors,”* Cuadra ends. TMC mine site is located in barangays Cagdianao, Hayanggabon, Taganito and Urbiztondo, municipality of Claver, province of Surigao del Norte. Its area of operations is within the Surigao Mineral Reservation.

## Covid-19 pandemic: Now is the time for us to stand as one nation



By [Dr. Jesus Lim Arranza](#)

August 12, 2020



**Dr. Jesus Lim Arranza**

**MAKE SENSE**

AS the nation was revving up its engine of growth to drive our economic recovery, people from the National Capital Region (NCR), Bulacan, Laguna, Cavite, and Rizal were slowly picking up the pieces of what was left of their economic lives when the Covid-19 community quarantine protocol in these areas was downgraded to general community quarantine (GCQ) from modified enhanced community quarantine. The downgrade allowed businesses to re-open and gave people the chance to get back to work. Most everyone pinned their hopes of getting back their lives with the economic reopening. But those hopes crumbled again when the community quarantine protocol in these areas reverted to MECQ.

Under the MECQ, only certain businesses are allowed to operate and strict home quarantine is observed in all households. Movements of residents are also limited to accessing essential goods and services, save for work in permitted offices or establishments. Public transport is also not allowed, except public shuttle for frontliners and workers in allowed industries.

Triggered by the medical group's call on President Rodrigo Duterte to place NCR back to ECQ, the group through a virtual press conference asked for a recalibration of the strategies against Covid-19 and the resignation of Health Secretary Francisco Duque III due to his alleged "shortcomings" in dealing with the pandemic as chairperson of the IATF. The health workers said they are already worn out due to the rising number of Covid-19 cases, especially in Metro Manila.

I empathize with the sentiments and concerns of health workers, knowing fully well that they are the most qualified to handle the pandemic. They cannot be easily replaced in the middle of the war against the coronavirus, unless qualified health workers succeed them and the change is really necessary.

Like firefighters, they do not ask for a break in the middle of a fight against a blazing inferno because every minute counts in terms of saving people's lives.

Moreover, the substitution can be strategic where health workers from hospitals in areas with the least number of confirmed Covid-19 cases can substitute the already overworked health workers in hot Covid-19 treatment centers and/or hospitals.

## Covid-19 pandemic: Now is the time for us to stand as one nation

Page 2/2

However, I have my reservations on some of the health workers' demands because, while the burden to save lives is inherent upon their profession, the task of saving the nation's economy is a constitutional responsibility of the government. A more objective and constructive approach could have been made to address the pressing pandemic concerns of health workers, like enhancing the government's contact tracing program (CTP). This program was implemented by the government to establish the database on the extent of Covid-19 infection in the country, such as how many people are suspected to be infected with the virus, where are they now, and where did they get the infection. Did they get it from barbershops, supermarkets and informal settler communities? And, most importantly, what areas have the most number of Covid-19 cases.

With these available data, the community quarantine program can be strategically tightened by enforcing strict lockdowns, not only in Covid-19 infected areas, but most importantly in areas found to be the source of infections as well. Then areas with the least Covid-19 cases can be re-opened, if only to allow people to get back their economic lives.

Asking for the Duque's head in the middle of the war against Covid-19, in my view, is counter-productive and might even worsen the situation. Should Duque be replaced, the new Czar in the war against Covid-19 might even have to start the campaign all over again. Like in a basketball game, changing the coach in the middle of a crucial game is a bad idea.

As Chairman of the Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI), at 78 years old and as a cancer survivor, I am just as concerned about my health and that of all my countrymen. But to address the basic elements for survival under the pandemic, we need to have that crucial balance between the physical and economic well being of the people. Remember, we cannot separate people from business. Businesses manufacture food and non-food products, and they need people to buy their products, as well. Moreover, the government also needs taxes for the social and economic services needed by the people. That is the reason why people and business will always co-exist and work in tandem for the common good of all citizens.

Yes, health is wealth. But to have good health, we need nourishment. And to be well nourished, we need food and nutrients. To be able to buy food for our nourishment, we need money. And to earn money, we have to work. This cycle of life means that while public health is important amid the pandemic, the people's economic life is just as important as their physical health.

Now is the time for us to stand as one nation, one mind and one purpose that should be anchored on survival. Let us not be social Darwinists. After all, the Covid-19 pandemic is a health catastrophe that affects the nation and the rest of the world.

*Dr. Jesus Lim Arranza is the chairman of the Federation of Philippine Industries and Fight Illicit Trade; a broad-based, multisectoral movement intended to protect consumers, safeguard government revenues and shield legitimate industries from the ill effects of smuggling.*

## No MECQ extension



Published 5 hours ago on August 12, 2020 12:05 AM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#)



WORKER on bike is stopped on his way home by policemen manning a checkpoint to ensure the limited movement of people during the modified enhanced community quarantine due to the spread of COVID-19. Ted ALJIBE/Agence France-Presse

President Rodrigo Duterte on Monday rejected calls from doctors to prolong strict lockdown measures in Metro Manila as he admitted that the government no longer has funds for financial assistance to give the poor.

The tighter modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) is expected to be lifted on 18 August. In his televised address, the President expressed frustration that he cannot heed the request of medical workers and health experts to extend the implementation of MECQ in Metro Manila and nearby areas.

“To the doctors, I will tell you this. I cannot stop the public because I don’t have any money to give them. That’s why they need to go out of their house to work. If I will place again on lockdown, the funds given by Congress for assistance have been depleted. I don’t have money to spend anymore,” Duterte said.

“So I’m telling the doctors, as much as I want to give in to your demands, especially in the matter of lockdown... I want it because I don’t want the contamination to continue... it’s a continuing thing,” the President added.

Public health expert Dr. Tony Leachon urged government officials to extend the MECQ for two more weeks, claiming that efforts previously earned may go to waste if the restrictions are eased anew.

Since MECQ was a compromise to the request of medical societies for a stricter enhanced community quarantine (ECQ), Leachon said another round of stringent protocols — which he called a “one-time bigtime arrest of cases” — is needed.



## No MECQ extension

Page 2/2

He also noted that the present positivity rate of the country is at 11 to 12 percent, higher than the five percent benchmark of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The Philippine College of Physicians also said last week it is not contented with the imposition of MECQ in the capital region and the provinces of Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal effective 4 August.

Duterte's spokesman Harry Roque defended the President's remarks, saying that the billions-worth of funds for the Social Amelioration Program had been spent to aid about 18 million families.

Asked if the Metro Manila will be placed under MECQ anew after 18 August, Roque said: "Anything is possible but highly unlikely."

"People who can't go to work might die due to loss of jobs. Unless Dr. Leachon can give cash aid to residents of areas under MECQ. But it cannot be done anymore," Roque said.

Leachon is no longer part of the Inter-Agency Task Force fighting the spread of the virus. He resigned after disagreements with its policies.

He added that the government has been focusing on strengthening its coronavirus response since Metro Manila loses P18 billion a day while under MECQ.

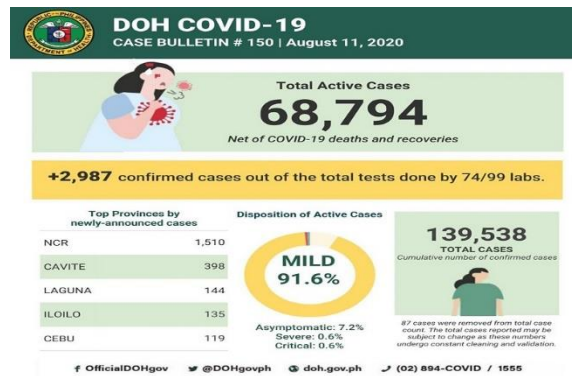
Experts from the academe said the two-week MECQ is not enough to control the continuous surge of COVID-19 cases which soared to 136,638 on Monday after record-high 6,958 new infections were tallied.

The Department of Health has earlier encouraged the public to wear masks within households if there is a COVID-19 positive individual or if there are vulnerable members in the family.

**with GABBIE PARLADE**

# BREAKING: Mga tinamaan ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas, mahigit 139,000 na; halos 3,000 ang nadagdag

By Dona Dominguez-Cargullo August 11, 2020 - 04:27 PM



Halos 3,000 ang nadagdag sa bilang ng mga tinamaan ng Coronavirus Disease o COVID-19 sa Pilipinas.

Sa huling datos ng Department of Health (DOH) araw ng Martes (August 11), umabot na sa 139,538 ang confirmed cases ng nakakahawang sakit sa bansa.

Sa nasabing bilang, 68,794 ang aktibong kaso.

Sinabi ng kagawaran na 2,987 ang bagong napaulat na kaso ng COVID-19 sa bansa.

Nakuha ang mga datos mula sa 74 out of 99 licensed laboratories.

Nasa 19 ang napaulat na nasawi.

Dahil dito, umakyat na sa 2,312 ang COVID-19 related deaths sa bansa.

Ayon pa sa DOH, 280 naman ang gumaling pa sa bansa.

Dahil dito, umakyat na sa 68,432 ang total recoveries ng COVID-19 sa Pilipinas.

Read more: <https://radio.inquirer.net/258838/look-mga-tinamaan-ng-covid-19-sa-pilipinas-mahigit-139000-na-halos-3000-ang-nadagdag#ixzz6UqdTMTef>

## Philippines' COVID-19 tally breaches 139,000 with 2,987 new cases

**Published** August 11, 2020 4:09pm

**Updated** August 11, 2020 4:30pm

By JULIA MARI ORNEDO, GMA News

The Department of Health (DOH) on Tuesday announced 2,987 new cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), bringing the country's tally to 139,538.

### advertisement

The bulk of the new cases were still recorded in Metro Manila at 1,510, followed by Cavite with 398 new infections, Laguna with 144, Iloilo with 135, and Cebu with 119.

Among the newly reported cases, 1,374 caught COVID-19 between July 29 and August 11, 1,591 got the virus from July 1 to 28, while the rest got sick from March to June.

The total number of recoveries also rose to 68,432 after 280 more patients recovered from the respiratory illness, while the death toll climbed to 2,312 with 19 new fatalities.

Eight of the newly reported deaths occurred in August, seven in July, one in June, while the three

There are also 68,794 active cases undergoing treatment or quarantine, still the highest across Southeast Asia.

The DOH said figures reported on Tuesday were based on data submitted by 74 out of the 99 operational laboratories.

The department also removed 87 duplicate cases from the total tally of infections.

As of August 10, the Philippines had 77 certified polymerase chain reaction facilities and 24 GeneXpert laboratories that had tested a total of 1,701,234 individuals.

Meanwhile, 54 percent of intensive care unit beds for COVID-19 patients nationwide were occupied while 32 percent of mechanical ventilators were in use.—LDF, GMA News

## DOH: Physical distancing, wearing face mask & face shield cuts virus transmission by 96%



By [Claudeth Mocon-Ciriaco](#)

August 12, 2020



(CNN PHL)

As the the confirmed Covid-19 cases rose to 139,538 on Tuesday, the Department of Health (DOH) urged the people to follow the behavioral changes that can cut down the virus transmission by up to 96 percent.

Dr. Beverly Ho, Director IV of Health Promotion Bureau in the DOH's Public Health Services Team, said, "physical distancing, wearing of face mask and face shield can lower the chances of virus transmission."

She said that according to recent studies, the wearing of masks reduces transmission by 96 percent for N95 masks and 67 percent for non-N95 masks, while the observance of physical distancing by one meter can reduce the chance of transmission by 82 percent with protection increasing as distance is lengthened.

Moreover, studies also showed that the use of face shields can be used complementary to face masks to further reduce transmission.

However, DOH emphasizes that face shields should not be used as substitutes for face masks and should only be used in addition to masks as added protection.

To achieve this, the DOH is urged the public to practice the "BIDA Solusyon sa COVID-19 Campaign" by regularly adopting the minimum health standards as a behavioral lifestyle as the country course through the new normal.

The acronym "BIDA" stands for the following:

B stands for *bawal and walang mask* or not wearing of a mask is prohibited; I stands for *i-sanitize ang mga kamay, iwas hawak sa mga bagay* or always wash or sanitize and avoid touching things; D

## DOH: Physical distancing, wearing face mask & face shield cuts virus transmission by 96

Page 2/2

means *dumistansya ng isang metro* or maintain a distance of at least one meter; and A stands for *alamin ang totoong impormasyon* or know the correct information and updates about the pandemic.

As part of the BIDA campaign, the Department released a habit forming checklist which summarizes and simplifies the minimum public health standards.

The first item on the checklist is the wearing of masks: this prevents a person from releasing droplets through the nose and mouth while protecting him from inhaling bacteria and viruses in the air. The second focuses on hand hygiene and disinfection: hand washing has been proven to greatly minimize the chances of contracting the virus as it destroys the structure of the virus. Furthermore, frequent disinfection of commonly touched areas or things is a must.

Also part of the checklist is maintaining physical distance as it reduces the transmission of the virus which happens through close contact, while wearing eye protection is recommended as it shields the virus from entering the eyes, which is another entry point.

As a reminder to maintain a healthy lifestyle, the checklist also encourages the public to always bring water and stay hydrated. According to DOH, ensuring that one's well-being is in optimal condition lessens the likelihood of a person from falling ill. Bringing your own water prevents the public from fetching water through water dispensers which are high touchpoints and possible source of the virus.

For her part, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire reminded the public to remain vigilant and continue championing the BIDA solution by following the health protocols, especially when leaving the house.

"It is much better if we just stay at home. But if we need to go out, just follow the BIDA checklist and always disinfect when we arrive home to protect our self, family, and community," Vergeire said.

### Covid cases

As of 4 p.m. of August 11, the DOH logged a total of 2,987 confirmed cases are based on the total tests done by 74 out of 99 current operational labs.

There were also 280 recoveries. This brings the total number of recoveries to 68,432.

Of the 2,987 reported cases, 1,374 (46 percent) occurred within the recent 14 days (July 29-August 11, 2020).

The top regions with cases in the recent two weeks were from NCR (614 or 45 percent) Region 4A (275 or 20 percent) and Region 6 (156 or 11 percent).

Of the 19 deaths, 8 (42 percent) in August, 7 (37 percent) in July, 1 (5 percent) in June, and 3 (16 percent) in April. Deaths were from NCR (7 or 37 percent), Region 7 (6 or 32 percent), Region 4A (3 or 16 percent), Region 6 (1 or 5 percent), Region 1 (1 or 5 percent) and Repatriate (1 or 5 percent).

## Global coronavirus infections pass 20 million

posted August 11, 2020 at 12:00 pm

by [AFP](#)

More than 20 million coronavirus cases have been now been registered across the world, over half in the Americas, according to an AFP tally of official sources at 2215 GMT on Monday.

At least 20,002,577 cases and 733,842 deaths have now been reported. More than four out of 10 coronavirus cases have been in the United States and Brazil, the two most affected countries in the world.

While the US has logged 5,075,678 cases and 163,282 deaths, Brazil has recorded 3,057,470 infections and 101,752 deaths.

The pace of the pandemic appears to be stabilising across the world with an additional one million cases detected roughly every four days since mid-July.

It took 94 days for one million infections to be registered, after the announcement of the first official case in China. Eighty-six days later, on 28 June, the 10 million barrier was broken. The number of known infections has since doubled in a month and a half.

Latin America and the Caribbean, the hardest-hit region with 5,601,470 cases and 221,281 deaths, continues to experience rapid spread with 576,583 new infections reported in the last seven days.

It is followed by Asia (495,663), Canada and the US (379,017), Europe (153,879), Africa (89,644), Middle East (74,588) and Oceania (3,372).

Canada and the United States make up the second hardest-hit region overall, having recorded 5,195,417 cases and 172,300 deaths, ahead of Asia (3,493,026 cases, 72,486 deaths), Europe (3,374,166 cases, 213,484 deaths) and the Middle East (1,257,417 cases, 30,363 deaths).

Africa (1,057,730 infections, 23,582 deaths), which is the least-affected continent after Oceania (23,351, 346), has recorded more than half of its cases in South Africa.

India is the country with the most new infections over the last week (402,287), ahead of the United States (376,471), which on Sunday passed the five million mark of officially reported cases. Brazil (301,745), Colombia (69,830) and Peru (49,174) are the next most affected nations.

The figure for the number of infections reflects only a fraction of the actual number of cases, as many countries use the tests only for tracing or do not have sufficient resources to carry out widespread testing.

**Topics:** [coronavirus pandemic](#) , [cases](#) , [global tally](#) , [death toll](#)



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATION  
INITIATIVES  
SERVICE

**GMA NEWS ONLINE**  
YOUR NEWS AUTHORITY

PAGE

UPPER  
LOWER

PAGE 1  
STORY

BANNER  
STORY

EDITORIAL

CARTOON

August 12, 2020

TITLE :

PAGE 1/

DATE

## Habagat to bring rainshowers, thunderstorms over Metro Manila, other areas

Published August 11, 2020 5:12pm

The Southwest Monsoon is expected to bring cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms over Metro Manila and several areas, [according to PAGASA on Tuesday.](#)

### advertisement

In its 24-hour forecast, the weather agency said the Ilocos Region, Batanes, the Babuyan Group of Islands, Zambales, Bataan, Tarlac, Pampanga, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, and Rizal will also be affected.

PAGASA said flash floods or landslides are possible due to moderate with, at times, heavy rains.

Localized thunderstorms may, meanwhile, bring partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers over the rest of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

Flash flood or landslides are also possible during severe thunderstorms.

The PAGASA synoptic station at the Science Garden, Quezon City recorded a minimum temperature at 24°C at 6 a.m. and a maximum temperature at 30.6 p.m.

Meanwhile, Tropical Storm Mekkhala (formerly Ferdie) was located at 770 kilometers northwest of extreme Northern Luzon at 3 p.m. on Tuesday.

Mekkhala [exited the Philippine Area of Responsibility on Monday morning.](#) — **Joahna Lei Casilao/BM, GMA News**

## Masbate niyanig ng M4.5 lindol

August 11, 2020 @ 6:17 PM 13 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Niyanig ng magnitude 4.5 na lindol ang Masbate kaninang alas-03:26 ng hapon, ayon sa Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

Ayon sa Phivolcs, yumanig ito sa layong 15 kilometro timog silangan ng bayan ng Caitingan sa nasabing lalawigan kung saan may lalim itong 28 kilometro at tectonic ang origin.

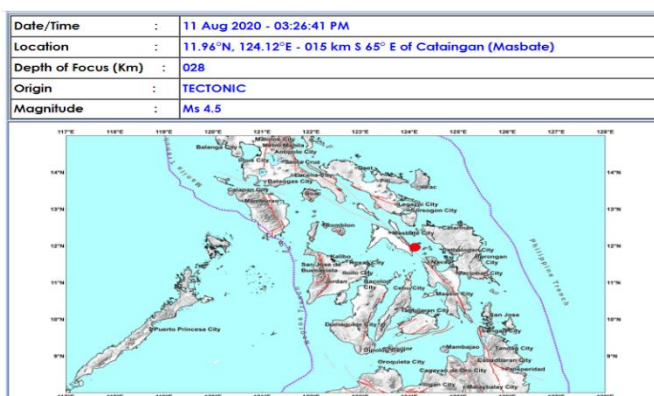
Nabatid na naramdaman ang intensity II sa Masbate City; Naval, Biliran at Legazpi Cty habang intensity I naman ang naramdaman sa Malinao, Aklan; Ormoc City at Roxas City.

Hindi naman ito magdudulot ng pagkasira o anomang aftershocks. **RNT/LF**



## Catangian, Masbate niyanig ng magnitude 4.5 na lindol

By Dona Dominguez-Cargullo August 11, 2020 - 04:13 PM



Niyanig ng magnitude 4.5 na lindol ang bayan ng lalawigan ng Masbate.

Ang pagyanig ay naitala sa layong 15 kilometers southeast ng Cataingan alas 3:26 ng hapon ngayong Martes, August 11.

May lalim na 28 kilometers ang pagyanig at tectonic ang origin nito.

Naitala ng Phivolcs ang sumusunod na intensities:

Intensity II – Irosin, Sorsogon

Instrumental Intensities:

Intensity II – Masbate City; Naval, Biliran; Legazpi Cty

Intensity I – Malinao, Aklan; Ormoc City; Roxas City

Kaninang alas 4:43 ng madaling araw ay una nang nakapagtala ng magnitude 4.0 na lindol sa Catangian.

Read more: <https://radyo.inquirer.net/258832/catangian-masbate-niyanig-ng-magnitude-4-5-na-lindol#ixzz6UqeKryAu>

## Exploiting arbitration ruling, Malaysia claims most of our Kalayaan Island Group



By [Rigoberto D. Tiglao](#)

August 12, 2020

WHAT did former President Benigno Aquino 3rd, his Foreign Affairs secretary Albert del Rosario and his solicitor general Florin Hilbay do when they brought the arbitration suit against China before the Permanent Court of Arbitration in 2013?

They shot themselves in the foot. Correct that, they shot the Philippines in the foot.

Two of the major provisions of the arbitration award handed down in 2016 for that case emboldened Malaysia to claim that its continental shelf would include most of our territory called the Kalayaan Island Group (KIG), which the strongman Ferdinand Marcos had created by decree in 1978.

On Dec. 12, 2019, Malaysia submitted to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (UN CLCS) a claim that its continental shelf extended beyond 200 nautical miles in the northern part of the South China Sea. The northern outer limits of Malaysia's submission, as its accompanying map and its geographical coordinates show, are even 100 to 150 kilometers north of our KIG. (Lime and red lines in figure accompanying this column.)

While Malaysia has not yet submitted the coordinates of the eastern and western limits of this newly declared continental shelf, it would logically encompass two-thirds of the KIG territory as well as a huge part of our exclusive economic zone (EEZ) passing through it.

It was only two months later that our Foreign Affairs department understood the meaning of Malaysia's submission in December 2019. (China protested on the same day that the submission was filed.) Through the Philippine representative in the UN, it filed a note verbale March 6, 2020 protesting the Malaysian claim.

"The Malaysian submission covers features within the Kalayaan Island Group over which the Philippines has sovereignty," the diplomatic note said.

### North Borneo

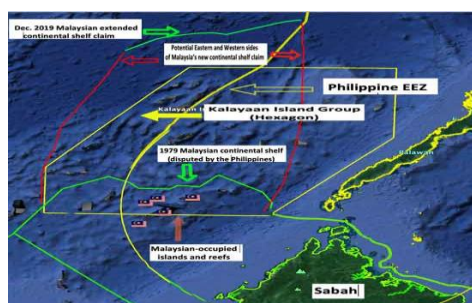
It added that the continental shelf was projected from "portions of North Borneo" — Sabah — which the Philippines "had never relinquished its territory." In other words, Malaysia was claiming a continental shelf drawn from a territory that the Philippines claims ownership of — Sabah.

Under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos), a state's exclusive economic one is set as the area that extends seawards by 200-nautical miles from the country's so-called baselines, roughly

# Exploiting arbitration ruling, Malaysia claims most of our Kalayaan Island Group

Page 2/3

defined by its outermost land points. The continental shelf on the other hand is a geological feature: the prolongation of the coastal state's landmass, determined by geological investigation.



Malaysian expansionism: it will eat up the Kalayaan Island Group and EEZ part. Image by author using Google Earth Pro

The EEZ and the continental shelf in most cases are assumed to cover the same maritime territory, in which the coastal state has exclusive rights to explore and develop its natural resources, including those in its seabed. Beyond the EEZ, the coastal state has to submit geological data on the area — called the extended continental shelf — to the UN CLCS for evaluation and approval as its extended continental shelf.

This was done for Behnam Rise (east of Luzon), which was approved by the UN CLCS in 2012. Duterte through an executive order in 2017 ordered it to be named Philippine Rise, which is “subject to the Philippines’ sovereign rights and jurisdiction.”

## Philippine Rise

If the UN CLCS approves the Malaysian submission of its extended continental shelf, it could claim rights to a vast swath of waters, especially those in our Kalayaan Island Group, in which it will have rights to explore for living and nonliving resources in the same way that an EEZ and Philippine Rise, for example, do.

Malaysia could only have been bold enough to claim a new extended continental shelf for itself because of the provisions of the arbitral award in the suit that the Aquino regime brought against China.

First, the award categorically ruled that no feature in the Spratlys is an “island” under the Unclos definition. Therefore, no island, reef or rock can have a 200-nautical mile exclusive economic zone, at most, and only for the few the arbitral award ruled as high-tide elevations, a small 12 nm territorial zone. That leaves most of the area Marcos created as our Kalayaan Island Group as international waters.

But Malaysia with its submission claims these aren't international waters but part of an extension of its continental shelf. It implied that it would not claim the features, including their territorial waters, of islands and reefs occupied by other nations.

A second ruling bolstered this provision that made the KIG mostly international waters. The award in effect dismantled the KIG Marcos created in 1978, on the ground that this violates Unclos, which the Philippines is a signatory to, and especially since it called for the arbitration, and agreed to its rulings. The arbitral panel ruled (paragraph 574):

## Exploiting arbitration ruling, Malaysia claims most of our Kalayaan Island Group Page 3/3

“The Philippines could not declare archipelagic baselines surrounding the Spratly Islands. Article 47 of the Convention limits the use of archipelagic baselines to circumstances where ‘within such baselines are included the main islands and an area in which the ratio of the area of the water to the area of the land, including atolls, is between 1 to 1 and 9 to 1.’ The ratio of water to land in the Spratly Islands would greatly exceed 9:1 under any conceivable system of baselines.”

### Tribunal award

As an article on Malaysia’s new claim in the magazine *The Diplomat* put it: “The Malaysian submission implicitly shows support for the 2016 Tribunal Award that qualified all insular features of the Spratlys archipelago as having only 12 nm territorial sea and no claim to generating their own exclusive economic zones and continental shelves. Interestingly, the cover page of this Partial Submission dates back to 2017; perhaps that file was prepared not long after the judgment.”

What is worrying is that Malaysia already expanded its continental shelf way back in 1979, when it unilaterally issued an official map (see Figure 1) that overlapped with parts of our Kalayaan Island Group and our EEZ, without the UN CLCS approving that claim.

It was obviously to justify its seizure in 1986 of two features within our KIG, Mariveles Reef and Antonio Luna Reef. But not only that, invoking its new continental shelf, it seized in 1999 two other features in our KIG, Pawikan Shoal and Gabriela Silang Reef, on grounds that it was after all within its continental shelf.

As I explained in my column on Monday, the Philippines has hardly protested these seizures, that most international maps put these islands inside Malaysia’s continental shelf.

After extending its continental shelf to and even beyond our KIG in 1979, it is not unlikely that it would unilaterally enforce those claims by seizing other uninhabited features there.

### UN CLCS

It would take the UN CLCS to rule on Malaysia’s claim, and it could even outrightly dismiss it, as other states — the Philippines and China — have protested it.

Malaysia’s claim though adds another country, after us, China, and Vietnam (as well as Taiwan) to those claiming the Kalayaan Island Group as theirs.

Duterte had said in his recent State of the Nation Address. “China is claiming it. We are claiming it.”

His first sentence is only partially true. He should have said: “China, Vietnam, and now Malaysia are claiming it.” And I would have added if I were his speech writer, “You want us to go to war with these three?”

Nations often are like boys in the schoolyard. Fights are usually between students of the same grade, and only in the movies between David AND a Goliath. The Philippines, Vietnam and Malaysia are roughly all in the same weight class, and the two Goliaths — the US and China — would likely just sit back and watch a fight among them.

As an article in a Thai newspaper on Malaysia’s expanded claims said: “Many regional analysts note that, if not managed properly, this flashpoint may lead to miscalculation that teeters out of control into a regional flare-up.”

# Singapore crushes massive ivory haul on eve of World Elephant Day

Agence France-Presse

Posted at Aug 11 2020 05:21 PM

Singapore began destroying nine tonnes of seized ivory Tuesday, the largest such action globally in recent years, including contraband tusks that came from more than 300 African elephants.

The destruction by an industrial rock crusher was held on the eve of World Elephant Day, and aims to prevent the items from re-entering the market and disrupt the global supply chain of illegally traded ivory, Singapore's National Parks Board said.

A spokeswoman for the board told AFP it would take three to five days for all of the ivory -- seized between 2014 and 2019 -- to be crushed, after which the fragments will be incinerated.

"This ivory crushing event, the largest globally in recent years, demonstrates Singapore's strong determination and commitment to combat the illegal trade in wildlife," the board said in a statement.

The items include 8.8 tonnes of ivory seized last year in Singapore's biggest haul worth Sg\$17.6 million (US\$13 million), it said.

Singapore also Tuesday launched a Centre for Wildlife Forensics to "identify and analyze specimens involved in the illegal wildlife trade".

By using DNA analysis and other methods to study the specimens, the center can determine where the items were poached from -- a useful tool in the fight against illegal wildlife trade.

Elephant ivory is coveted because it can be fashioned into items like combs, pendants and other exotic jewelry.

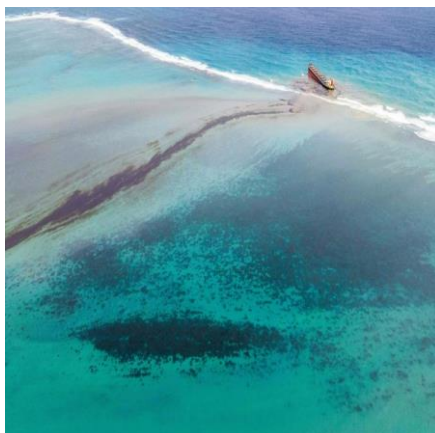
The global trade in elephant ivory, with rare exceptions, has been outlawed since 1989 after the population of the African animals dropped from millions in the mid-20th century to about 600,000 by the end of the 1980s.

## The ship that leaked oil into pristine Mauritian waters could break in two. That would be an environmental catastrophe



By [Helen Regan](#), CNN

Updated 1426 GMT (2226 HKT) August 11, 2020



(CNN)A stricken ship off the coast of Mauritius [which has already leaked](#) about 1,000 metric tons of oil into a pristine Indian Ocean lagoon could be about to break in two, experts fear -- spelling disaster for the ecologically rich area.

The Japanese-owned ship, MV Wakashio, ran aground at Pointe d'Esny in late July. A massive clean-up operation has been launched from the shore since oil began leaking on Thursday, with thousands of local volunteers heading to the eastern side of the island nation to help.

However some on the ground said Tuesday that new cracks had appeared -- and if the ship broke up, thousands more tons of fuel would be released into the lagoon.

"The way the leakage and the break in the ship are increasing, there is huge probability that this ship will break into two. And we still have around 2,500 metric tons of fuel on the tanks of the ship," said Sunil Dowarkasing, a former strategist for Greenpeace International and former member of parliament in Mauritius.

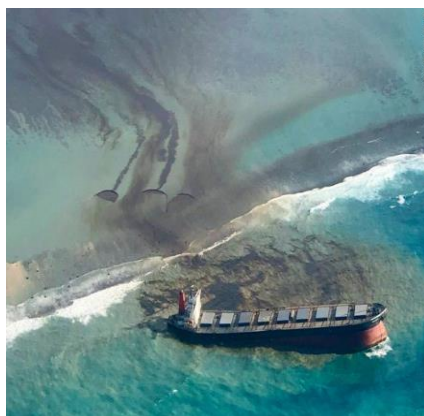
Dowarkasing said the ship has three oil tanks, one of which had leaked into the ocean. That leak has since stopped, and an operation is now underway -- utilizing a tanker and salvage teams -- to remove the oil from the other tanks before the ship breaks up.

"That's the immediate danger facing us," Dowarkasing said. "The weather was good yesterday and seems to be today, which is an advantage."

On Friday, Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth declared a state of environmental emergency, with the country's environment minister, Kavy Ramano, saying: "We are in a situation of environmental crisis."

## The ship that leaked oil into pristine Mauritian waters could break in two. That would be an environmental catastrophe

Page 2/4



Oil leaking from the MV Wakashio that ran aground off the southeast coast of Mauritius, Friday, Aug. 7, 2020.

### Ecological disaster

The spill is close to two environmentally protected marine ecosystems and the Blue Bay Marine Park reserve. Nearby are a number of popular tourist beaches and mangrove plantations.

Vikash Tatayah, conservation director of the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation, said teams have been working to save the many different species of plants and wildlife from a nearby island, Ile aux Aigrettes.



A man scoops leaked oil from the vessel MV Wakashio, that ran aground near Blue Bay Marine Park on August 8, 2020.

"We actually removed thousands of plants that were in the nursery and we have moved fruit bats that were captive on the island. We've also taken off a small number of threatened birds," Tatayah said Tuesday.

The oil has seeped into Mahebourg Lagoon, a scenic spot known for its turquoise waters. Rejuvenation efforts have been ongoing in this area since 2001, when the government banned sand extraction from the lagoon. Dowarkasing said marine life had returned and corals were slowly growing before the spill.

"With this oil spill we may lose that again," he said. "There will be mass damage to the marine ecosystem."

## The ship that leaked oil into pristine Mauritian waters could break in two. That would be an environmental catastrophe

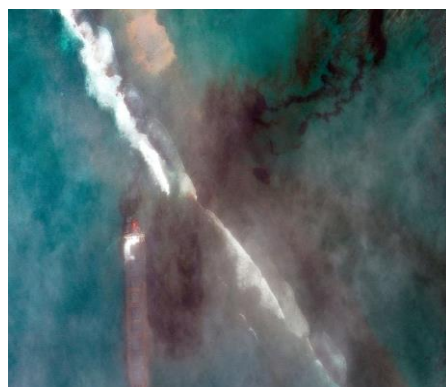
Page 3/4



An aerial view shows a large patch of leaked oil from the stricken vessel near Blue Bay Marine Park. Conservationists at the scene say it is too early to assess the extent of environmental damage and want the government to conduct proper assessments.

Concerns are also growing for the thousands of local people whose livelihoods will be impacted by the spill. The island relies heavily on fishing and tourism, and was already affected by the coronavirus pandemic putting a halt to international travel.

"People are furious that this has happened," said Tatayah. "Thousands and thousands of people who work in tourism will be badly affected by this wreck."



In this satellite image provided by 2020 Maxar Technologies on Friday, Aug. 7, 2020, an aerial view of oil leaking from the MV Wakashio.

On Saturday, French President Emmanuel Macron said France was deploying teams and equipment from the nearby island of Reunion in response. Japan's Foreign Ministry also said a six-member team from Japan Disaster Relief had also been dispatched to help with the response "upon the request" of the Mauritian government.

The ship

The MV Wakashio is a cargo ship operated by Japanese company Mitsui OSK Lines. It was on its way from China to Brazil when it ran aground on the reef on July 25. Last Thursday, the ship began leaking oil into the ocean.



## The ship that leaked oil into pristine Mauritian waters could break in two. That would be an environmental catastrophe

Page 4/4

"Due to the bad weather and constant pounding over the past few days, the starboard side bunker tank of the vessel has been breached and an amount of fuel oil has escaped into the sea," the ship's owners Nagashiki Shipping [said in a statement](#) to the operator Mitsui OSK Lines on Friday.



Workers look from a ship towards the vessel MV Wakashio that ran aground.

The company said it had contracted a "specialist oil response and salvage team" to work with Mauritian authorities.

"Nagashiki Shipping takes its environmental responsibilities extremely seriously and will take every effort with partner agencies and contractors to protect the marine environment and prevent further pollution," the statement said.

In an updated statement on Tuesday, Mitsui OSK Lines said about 1,180 metric tons of oil had leaked from the vessel's fuel tank -- with about 460 tons manually recovered from the sea and coast. The ship was carrying about 3,800 tons of Very Low Sulphur Fuel Oil and 200 tons of diesel oil, according to the operator.



Bystanders look at MV Wakashio near Blue Bay Marine Park in Mauritius.

Mitsui OSK Lines on Tuesday confirmed that the crack inside the hull of the ship had expanded, adding: "Since this ship is unable to navigate by itself, it is moored to a tugboat so that it will not drift even if it is broken."

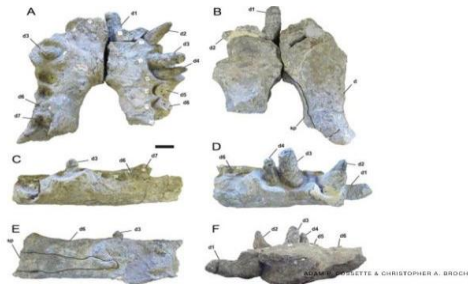
On Sunday, Akihiko Ono, executive vice president of Mitsui OSK Lines, apologized for the accident and the environmental damage.

*CNN's Zehra Jafree, Kaori Enjoji, Yoko Wakatsuki and Akanksha Sharma contributed to report*

# The earth was once home to 'terror crocodiles' nearly the size of city buses

By Allen Kim, CNN

Published Aug 11, 2020 3:49:21 PM



(CNN) — A new study has shed more light on gigantic "terror crocodiles," that once roamed the world and preyed on dinosaurs with teeth "the size of bananas."

The research, which was conducted in 2018, published this week in *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*. It found that the *Deinosuchus* -- a lineage of giant Late Cretaceous crocodylians from North America -- were nearly as long as city buses, growing up to 33 feet in length, according to the study authors.

"*Deinosuchus* was a giant that must have terrorized dinosaurs that came to the water's edge to drink," Dr. Cossette, co-author of the study, said in a news release announcing the research's findings. "Until now, the complete animal was unknown. These new specimens we've examined reveal a bizarre, monstrous predator with teeth the size of bananas."

*Deinosuchus*' name means "terror crocodiles," but the study's authors say that they more closely resembled alligators. However, the *Deinosuchus* snout was long and broad, and it had two mysterious holes at the tip of its snout, which differentiated it from both alligators and crocodiles.

There were at least three species of *Deinosuchus*, and they lived in the west of America from Montana to northern Mexico and along the Atlantic coastal plain from New Jersey to Mississippi, the researchers said.

The *Deinosuchus* was likely the largest predator in its ecosystem, outweighing even the largest predatory dinosaurs living in the same era. Researchers discovered bite marks on everything from dinosaur bones to turtle shells.

Luckily, these "terror crocodiles" lived between 75 and 82 million years ago.

"It was a strange animal," Professor Christopher Brochu, co-author of the study, said in the news release. "It shows that crocodylians are not 'living fossils' that haven't changed since the age of dinosaurs. They've evolved just as dynamically as any other group."

It is unknown what happened to the *Deinosuchus* and how they became extinct, as the study authors found that they disappeared before the main mass extinction at the end of the age of dinosaurs.

*This story was first published on CNN.com, ["The earth was once home to 'terror crocodiles' nearly the size of city buses"](#)*