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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service

'Plastic waste-to-cash' project for citizens, sari-sari store owners launched

Published August 17, 2020, 6:17 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Used plastic sachets and other plastic packaging that have been recovered from the Manila Bay can be exchanged for cash under a joint project of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region (DENR-NCR) and a non-profit plastic offset organization.

The Aling Tindera project of the DENR-NCR and The Plastic Credit Exchange (PCEX), founded by philanthropist and entrepreneur Nanette Medved-Po, seeks to incentivize fishermen and their families to collect plastic waste around Manila Bay and sell them in exchange for cash at collection points stationed in coastal areas.

DENR-NCR Executive Director Jacqueline Caanacan described the Aling Tindera program as an “innovative approach to addressing the problem of plastic waste in Metro Manila.”

Caanacan pointed out that plastic waste, particularly the post-consumer plastic packaging, constitutes a big part of the growing volume of solid waste in the metropolis.

“The program was designed to promote qualified ‘sari-sari’ stores as waste-to-cash collection centers at the barangay level,” she explained.

“We are not only systematizing the recovery of post-consumer plastic wastes such as empty sachets and other single-use plastic packaging from the waste stream, we will also be incentivizing the store owners, and also their suki for turning in their plastic wastes instead of just throwing them away,” she added.

Aling Tindera shops—“sari-sari” stores owned by women—are collecting the plastics before turning them into profit by selling them to sustainability-conscious companies through the PCEX.

Medved-Po said the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis should not be used as an excuse to discontinue the efforts to restore Manila Bay to its former glory.

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

DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said the residual waste recovery program is very timely as it augments government efforts to rehabilitate Manila Bay amid the pandemic where the use of sachets and other plastic packaging has become more rampant.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, Antiporda noted that majority of people run to the ever-dependable “sari-sari” stores to buy food and other essentials.

Antiporda said that people find consumer products sold in these stores “not only cheaper and affordable, but also practical to meet their daily needs.”

“Unfortunately, since these products come in small packages like sachet, more plastic trash are generated by the community which, if not properly disposed of, would find their way into our waterways,” he pointed out.

This is the reason why it is important for the public to religiously practice waste segregation at home and support solid waste management programs like Aling Tindera, he added.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/17/plastic-waste-to-cash-project-for-citizens-sari-sari-store-owners-launched/>

DENR todo-suporta sa waste-to-cash program para sa Manila Bay



August 17, 2020 @ 6:45 PM 12 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Upang maging matagumpay ang proyekto para sa rehabilitasyon ng Manila Bay ay buhos ang buong suporta ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa programang “Aling Tindera” na nagbibigay ng insentibo sa pangongolekta ng mga nagamit na plastic sachets na napupunta sa baybayin.

“This residual waste recovery program is very timely as it augments government efforts to rehabilitate Manila Bay amid the pandemic where the use of sachets and other plastic packaging has become more rampant,” sabi ni DENR spokesperson at Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management ang Local Government Units Concerns Benny D. Antiporda.

Ayon sa DENR ang Aling Tindera ay magkatuwang na proyekto ng DENR-National Capital Region (NCR) at Plastic Credit Exchange (PCEX) na isang non-profit plastic offset organization na itinatag ng philanthropist at entrepreneur na si Nanetted Medved-Po.

Sinabi pa sa ulat na layunin nito na magbigay insentibo sa mga mangingisda at kanilang pamilya para mangolekta sila ng mga plastic na basura sa Manila Bay at maibenta nila kapalit ay pera sa Aling Tindera collection points na naka-istasyon sa coastal areas.

Nabatid pa sa DENR ang Aling Tindera shops na mga “sari-sari” stores ay pag-aari ng mga kababaihan.

Nangongolekta ang mga ito ng mga plastic para pagkakitaan, sa pamamagitan ng pagbebenta sa mga sustainability- conscious na mga kompanya sa pamamagitan ng PCEX.

Ayon kay Antiporda, dahil na rin sa paglaganap ng COVID-19 pandemic, karamihan sa mga tao ay nagtutungo sa mga maaasahang “sari-sari” stores upang bumili ng kanilang pagkain at iba pang pangangailangan.

Aniya, bukod sa mura ay matatagpuan din ng mga tao sa mga tindahang ito ang mga praktikal na bagay na kailangan nila sa pang araw-araw.

“Unfortunately, since these products come in small packages like sachet, more plastic trash are generated by the community which, if not properly disposed of, would find their way into our waterways,” pinunto pa ni Antiporda.

Ito ang dahilan, sabi pa ni Antiporda, kung bakit mahalaga na ang publiko ay palaging nagsasagawa ng waste segregation sa kanilang mga bahay at sumusuporta sa solid waste management programs tulad ng Aling Tindera.

Samantala, inilarawan naman ni DENR-NCR Executive Director Jacqueline Caancan, ang programang Aling Tindera bilang isang innovative approach sa pagtugon sa problema sa plastic waste sa Metro Manila.

Ayon pa kay Caancan, ang mga plastic waste, partikular na ang mga plastic na pambalot sa mga produkto ay malaking bahagi ng lumalaking volume ng solid waste sa metropolis.

“The program was designed to promote qualified ‘sari-sari’ stores as waste-to-cash collection centers at the barangay level,” paliwanag pa ng regional director.

Dagdag pa nito: “We are not only systematizing the recovery of post-consumer plastic wastes such as empty sachets and other single-use plastic packaging from the waste stream, we will also be incentivizing the store owners, and also their suki for turning in their plastic wastes instead of just throwing them away.”

Para naman sa kay Medved-Po, hindi dapat gawing dahilan ang COVID-19 upang itigil ang mga nasimulan para panumbalikin ang Manila Bay sa dati nitong anking ganda at tanyag.

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

DENR: Trash traps spare Manila Bay 30 tons of waste from Central Luzon

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 04:17 AM August 18, 2020



GARBAGE TRAPPING Trash traps devised by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) are placed along the mouths of Central Luzon rivers so garbage will not reach Manila Bay. —PHOTO COURTESY OF DENR

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga, Philippines — Around 30 tons of solid waste have been caught by floating trash traps installed in rivers downstream of Central Luzon since early this year, preventing these from reaching Manila Bay, according to a top Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) official.

The 50 traps are nets filled with plastic bottles, Styrofoam and other recyclables, stretching 30 to 100 meters, according to Paquito Moreno Jr., DENR regional executive director.

These line the rivers of Lamao, Orani, Orion, Pinulot, Pangulisanin, Amo, Aguawan, Almacen, Bilolo, Talisay, Mabuco and Samal in Bataan province and Guagua-Pasac in Pampanga province. Reuse, reduce

The traps complement local cleanup activities by volunteers and trash collectors, and campaigns in communities to reuse, reduce and recycle waste. The nonrecyclables are brought to sanitary landfills.

Central Luzon produces an average of 5,598 tons of solid waste yearly, Moreno said, citing data from the Environmental Management Bureau.

In January 2019, President Rodrigo Duterte ordered the DENR to clean Manila Bay.

Bataan Rep. Jose Enrique Garcia III proposed the creation of the Manila Bay Development Authority to be “wholly dedicated to a singular, legal mandate: the rehabilitation, restoration and preservation of Manila Bay.”

Mr. Duterte ordered the cleanup although the Supreme Court issued on Dec. 18, 2008, a writ of continuing mandamus that directed 13 agencies to clean up, rehabilitate and preserve Manila Bay. —*Tonette Orejas*

42 more trash traps eyed in Region 4-A

Published August 17, 2020, 4:21 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region 4-A aims to install 42 additional trash traps along major rivers in Cavite, Rizal, Laguna, and Batangas until 2021 to hamper the discharge of wastes into the Manila Bay.

Regional Executive Director Nonito Tamayo said the establishment of trash traps should remind the public to responsibly handle wastes so as not to harm the environment.

He added that waste reduction, as well as efficient system of solid waste management, are key in fully rehabilitating the rivers and Manila Bay.

Manila Bay Site Coordinating/Management Office 4 (MBSCMO4) Deputy Regional Coordinator Cynthia Rozaldo said two trash traps were initially installed along Imus River in Dasmarinas City, Cavite and Hinulugang Taktak River in Antipolo, Rizal in 2014.

Four trash traps were established in 2018 along Labac River in Naic, Cavite and two along San Diego River in Nagcarlan, Laguna.

The DENR-Region 4-A was able to install four more trash traps along Zapote River in Bacoor City, Cavite; two along San Cristobal River in Calamba City, Laguna; one each along San Juan and Saran Rivers in Calamba and Los Banos, Laguna, respectively; three along Boso-Boso River in Baras, Rizal; and two along Taytay River in Taytay, Rizal from 2019 until the first half of 2020.

At present, six trash traps are being constructed along Zapote and Imus Rivers as part of the 2019 target of the DENR-MBSCMO Cavite.

For this year, the DENR-Region 4-A allotted a total of P16.8 million for the construction of additional trash traps — 20 in Cavite, 10 in Rizal, nine in Laguna, and three in Batangas.

By virtue of a memorandum of agreement, the maintenance of the established trash traps will be delegated to the concerned barangay government, while the hauling of the collected trash will be assigned to the concerned municipal/city environment and natural resources office.

EDITORIAL - Umabot na sa dagat itinapong face masks

(Pang-Masa) - August 18, 2020 - 12:00am



SA tinatawag na Baseco Beach sa Maynila, may face masks na inanod sa dalampasigan. Hindi lamang face masks ang nakita roon kundi mayroon ding gloves, mga plastic na bote ng alcohol at sanitizer. Maaaring sa mga sumunod na araw, makakita na rin ng face shields. Kamakailan lang, sa isang probinsiya sa South, kinunan pa ng environmentalists ang nasisid na face mask. Umabot na rin sa pusod ng dagat ang mga itinapong face masks.

Nakapagdudulot ng pangamba ang mga used face masks na nasa baybaying dagat hindi lamang sa Metro Manila kundi pati sa iba pang bahagi ng bansa. Nagpapakita ito ng kawalan ng disiplina at kamangmangan ng mga tao sa pagtatapon ng ginamit na face masks. Sa halip ilagay nang maayos sa basurahan, kung saan-saan na lang itinatapon.

Kung tapon lamang nang tapon ng masks at iba pang ginamit o sinuot na pamproteksiyon, maaaring kumalat nang kumalat ang virus. Wala nang pagtigil at maraming mahahawahan. Ang mga ginamit na disposable single-use masks at iba pang protective equipment ay nararapat nakahiwalay sa ibang mga lalagyan at itatapon nang maayos. Ang hindi maayos na pagdi-dispose ng mga ito ay magiging dahilan nang pagkalat ng virus. Ayon sa mga expert, ang virus ay nagtatagal sa masks at iba pang protective equipment ng siyam na araw kaya posibleng dito magmula ang pagkalat ng sakit.

Nagbabala ang environmentalists na ang hindi maayos na pagdi-dispose ng mga single-use face masks ay mako-contaminate ang kapaligiran at magkakasakit ang mga tao dahil source ito ng infection.

Maraming magkakasakit kapag hindi nagkaroon ng disiplina sa pagtatapon ng ginamit na face masks. Alam naman ng lahat na delikado ang basta magtapon ng mga bagay na ginamit sa panahong ito ng pandemia. Matuto sana ang mamamayan.

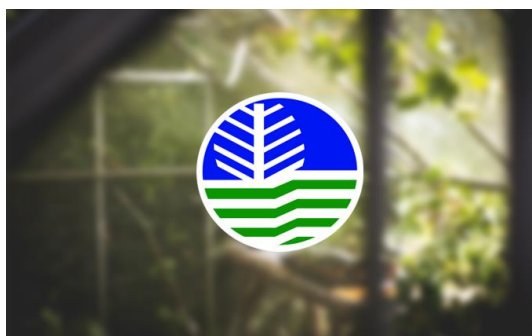
Source: <https://www.philstar.com/pang-masa/punto-mo/2020/08/18/2036084/editorial-umabot-na-sa-dagat-itinapong-face-masks/amp/>

DENR, ADB extend for 12 months anti-environmental organized crime project

Published August 17, 2020, 1:21 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

A Global Environment Facility-funded (GEF) project to combat illegal wildlife trade in the country has been extended for 12 months citing delays due to restrictions that have been imposed to prevent the spread of coronavirus.



(MANILA BULLETIN FILE PHOTO)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have decided to extend the implementation of the Project on Combating Environmental Organized Crime in the Philippines or CIWT Project during its 3rd project steering committee (PSC) meeting last July 16.

Aside from restrictions due to the coronavirus, the delays in the start of the project, and political and organizational changes within DENR and partner-agencies, have been considered for the extension of the CIWT project implementation.

As of June, 2020, the project had a total physical accomplishment of 38.4 percent.

By extending its implementation until December 31, 2021, the project will be given more time to complete all its policy, capacity development, demand reduction, and communication, education and public awareness outputs.

The CIWT Project is a three-year Biodiversity Tracking Tool or GEF-6-funded project executed by the DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) with the ADB as the GEF implementing agency.

It aims to combat environmental organized crime in the Philippines through legal and institutional reforms, capacity building in the full law enforcement chain, and reduction of demand for illegal wildlife and wildlife parts.

The PSC members include the DENR regional executive directors of the National Capital Region, Central Visayas, and Caraga, the directors of BMB and Foreign-Assisted and Special Projects Service of the DENR, and ADB.

Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/17/denr-adb-extend-for-12-months-anti-environmental-organized-crime-project/>

DENR retrieves 2 pythons in Malabon, Caloocan

By Marita Moaje August 17, 2020, 6:18 pm



The DENR National Capital Region's North Field Office retrieves two reticulated pythons from Malabon and Caloocan City late last week. (Photo grabbed from DENR NCR FB page)

MANILA – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region's North Field Office (DENR-NCR-NFO) recently retrieved reticulated pythons from residential areas in Malabon and Caloocan City.

In a Facebook post on Monday, DENR said the pythons (*Malayopython reticulatus*) were retrieved from Barangay Catmon, Malabon City, and Barangay 167 Llano, Caloocan City on August 13 and 14, respectively.

"The snakes were captured by residents of said places and turned-over to their barangay who, in turn, coordinated with the NFO for their safe retrieval," the post reads.

It added that reticulated pythons are native to the rainforests of Southeast Asia including the Philippines.

It lives in rain forests, woodlands, grasslands, rivers and nearby streams, and lakes.

Its conservation status is currently listed as least concern by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) because of its wide distribution.

According to wildlifelearningcenter.org, these snakes are heavily dependent on water and can often be found near small rivers or ponds and require tropical environments.

It states that these types of python can weigh up to 350 lbs and "considered by many as the largest and longest snake in the world".

The largest reticulated python ever measured was 32 ft 9.5 inches and holds the record for the largest snake in the world according to the Guinness Book of World Records in 1991.

Both snakes were turned over to the Wildlife Rescue Center (WRC) of the DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) in Quezon City for rehabilitation and possible release back in the wild.

On August 5, the DENR-NCR East Field Office retrieved an owl belonging to the Great Eared Nightjar species (*Eurostopus macrotis*) in Barangay Silangan, Quezon City.

The retrieval of the owl was made possible through a forwarded message sent by a certain Carlito Bayron, Jr.

The post stated that the owl "appeared to be weak and exhausted was surrendered by a resident who captured and kept it for several days".

The EFO team endorsed the rescued wildlife to the Enforcement Division (ED) for temporary custody prior to its release back in the wild.

The DENR is encouraging the public to get in touch with them or through their local offices in case they see or encounter any wild animals.

The department, issued warnings several times already that keeping wild animals as pets is illegal. **(PNA)**

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1112555>

Pampanga illegal loggers fall

Published 3 hours ago on August 18, 2020 04:00 AM

By [Jonas Reyes](#)



Loads of premium hardwood lumber were seized by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources (PENRO) in Pampanga and the Philippine National Police during an anti-illegal logging operation in Angeles City last week.

Authorities seized a total of 4,644.48 board feet of illegal lumber inside Angeles Romar's Trading, owned by Marita Yen, in Barangay Pandan.

PENRO chief Laudemir Salac said the illegal haul was discovered during a regular inspection and on-the-spot inventory of hardware stores in the region.

The confiscated items were mostly of hardwood trees Yakal and Luan, both prohibited for cutting, according to Salac.

"Even during this COVID-19 pandemic, Penro will not put its mandate to protect the environment to a halt," Salac said. "We need to stop illegal logging that cause huge damage to our forests."

During the spot inventory, the owner failed to show documents or permits for the lumber, valued at P250,000.

Salac warned other hardware and lumber stores from storing such endangered species.



Over P290-K illegally-cut lumber seized in Surigao Norte

By Alexander Lopez August 17, 2020, 8:41 pm



CONTRABANDS. Illegally-gathered lauan lumber with a volume of 10,335 board feet and estimated worth PHP292,533 are seized by the Community Environment and Natural Resources of Tubod town, Surigao del Norte, on Sunday evening (Aug. 16, 2020) at a quarantine checkpoint in Alegria town. Two suspects were arrested. *(Photo courtesy of DENR-13 Information Office)*

BUTUAN CITY – Authorities seized a 10-wheeler truck transporting around 597 pieces of illegally-cut lumber on Sunday evening (Aug. 16) at a checkpoint in Barangay Gamuton, Alegria town, Surigao del Norte.

The confiscated lauan lumber has a total volume of 10,335 board feet, said Joseph Leo Oconer, chief of the Community Environment and Natural Resources in the neighboring town of Tubod, in a report on Monday (Aug. 17).

“The illegal lumber products have no documents when the driver and his assistant worker were asked by the military at the checkpoint enforcing health protocol measures on coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19),” Oconer said.

He added that the lumber products came from the town of Lianga in Surigao del Sur, and they are checking reports that the owner of the apprehended illegal lumber products is a prominent civic leader in that town.

The truckload of lauan lumbers was bound for Cebu City via the Lipata port in Surigao City, he added.

Herzon Gallego of the information office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the Caraga Region (DENR-13) said the confiscated lumber products had a total value of PHP292,533 while the wing-van truck used as an accessory has an assessed value of PHP1.5 million.

“The law enforcement units in the municipal and provincial levels are active in performing their duties and responsibilities in safeguarding our forests,” Gallego told Philippine News Agency on Monday.

Gallego said that despite the Covid-19 pandemic, DENR law enforcers are present in quarantine checkpoints to ensure that illegally-gathered forest products are confiscated and those responsible arrested.

“DENR-13 OIC Executive Director Hadja Didaw D. Piang-Brahim commended Oconer for the accomplishment,” Gallego added.

In a separate report on Monday, Surigao del Norte Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (PENRO) Marites M. Ocampo lauded the efforts of CENRO-Tubod, adding that the truck driver and helper are now under the custody of the local police station in Alegria town.

The driver was identified as Richard Perill Esing and his helper as Regei Kosong Esing.

“They will be charged before the prosecutor’s office with violation of forestry rules and regulations under Section 77 of Presidential Decree No. 705 as amended and qualified theft for transporting wood products stolen from government property,” Ocampo said.

She added that the apprehended forest products were brought to the depository area in CENRO-Tubod. *(PNA)*

Source: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1112496>

Conservation Matters
with Errol A. Gatumbato
Illegal structures in NNNP
Monday, August 17, 2020

Once again, the issue of illegal structures in the Northern Negros Natural Park in Negros Occidental surfaced when Silay City Mayor Mark Golez issued notice of violations and subsequently cease-and-desist orders to business establishments catering to tourism in barangays Patag and Lantawon recently.

These two barangays of Silay are located within the NNNP, which has been declared as a protected area by virtue of Republic Act 11038, or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 2018.

Golez claimed the 36 establishments are operating without business permit, building permit and other necessary local permits, and the owners of these tourism enterprises are not paying taxes, depriving Silay City of millions of pesos, in terms of income. These business establishments include resorts, restaurants, and coffee shops.

Golez added that some owners had appealed to him to allow them to continue to operate, as they are willing to comply with the requirements of the city government. However, aware that these locations are within the NNNP, Golez said he should refer the matter to the Protected Area Management Board before taking any further action, which is basically the right thing to do.

The proliferation of illegal structures in the NNNP is not only limited in Silay City but is also true in the town of Salvador Benedicto, and most likely in other parts of the protected area, too. The NNNP covers the cities of San Carlos, Silay, Talisay, Victorias, Cadiz, and Sagay and the municipalities of Salvador Benedicto, Murcia, Calatrava, Toboso, and EB Magalona. It has the largest remaining forest cover among the protected areas in Negros Island and known for its amazing biological biodiversity, with confirmed presence of numerous threatened endemic species. It is also an important watershed.

The presence of illegal structures in the NNNP has been a concern for quite a time, and the PAMB did not take any decisive action on this. These structures were constructed without a permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and approval from the PAMB. Aside from tourism related facilities, there are private vacation houses owned by prominent families that have been constructed in the protected area.

The DENR had once issued cease-and-desist orders on these structures, but, to date, no concrete action has been done resulting in the proliferation of additional structures.

A number of original occupants of the former Northern Negros Forest Reserve had sold their lots to outsiders, who then constructed resorts and vacation houses in the area. Some of these former occupants were holders of the Certificate of Stewardship Contract issued by the DENR. Buying and selling of this land tenure instrument is illegal, as well as the construction of structures and fences without prior permit from the DENR and PAMB. These violations necessitate the conduct of administrative proceeding and eventual filing of cases in court. The local governments covering the NNNP, PAMB and the DENR were probably reluctant to take concrete measures, as reportedly, these new occupants are influential persons in the province.

It is good that the mayor of Silay City started to make appropriate action, and I wonder what would be the action of the DENR and PAMB. I learned that some DENR personnel in the province are insinuating to issue Special Agreement for Protected Areas to the owners of these resorts and private vacation houses, but this is not acceptable, as the occupants already committed violations and they are no longer in good standing.

I am also in the position that the SAPA shall only be issued for purposes of public good, services, and benefits, but not for personal advantage, like private vacation houses. Otherwise, how would the PAMB and DENR prevent others to follow such action?

In Barangay Patag, I am aware that some holders of the CSC started to develop their areas for tourism. This should be promoted by the PAMB so as to establish community-based tourism, but there should be clear regulations. The case of Patag is quite unique because it is also declared as a tourism site with the passage of RA 8059 way back in 1995. That was the time when the NNFR was not yet declared as a natural park. The purpose of Patag being declared as a tourism site and part of the NNNP should, therefore, be harmonized.*

20 juvenile sea turtles returned to sea in Isabela

Harris Julio, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Aug 18 2020 03:03 AM

Around 20 juvenile sea turtles were returned to the sea in the coastal town of Dinapigue, Isabela on Monday, as environment officials continue to release animals in Cagayan Valley back to their habitats.

According to Federico Cauilan Jr., community environment and natural resources (CENRO) officer, the hatchlings came from a batch of eggs found along the shore in Palanan town, Isabela several months ago.

These eggs were relocated to an undisclosed area for safekeeping before they were released in the village of Digumased in Dinapigue.

In a video taken by the employee of CENRO Palanan, the small sea turtle can be seen running after one another towards the water. To keep them on their path, the sea turtles were guided by CENRO workers.



"The turtles are among the most abundant but are still considered vulnerable because there are few places in which they will nest. Sightings of sea turtles indicate a healthy marine ecosystem within the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park," said Racquel Caldez, information officer of the provincial environment and natural resources office.

"The release of the turtles aims to instill the importance of protecting endangered species and to boost the population and promote environmental protection," added Cauilan.

In the last 2 weeks, Cagayan Valley environment officials also set free 3 serpent eagles, 2 Brahminy kites, an endangered Asian giant softshell turtle, and a Philippine North Hawk-eagle in different secured locations.

Some of the eagles were rescued from residents who kept them as pets.



News5
21h · 🌐

Isang kuwago ang nahuli sa residential area sa Mandaluyong kahapon. Kinausap na raw ng nakahuli ang DENR para kunin ito ngayong umaga.

👤: Franz Josef Javier



👍❤️😱 Josef Calica and 2.7K others

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Tarsier na natutulog sa gilid ng sapa, sinagip at pinakawalan sa gubat

Agosto 17, 2020 3:29pm GMT+08:00



Pinakawalan na sa gubat ang isang tarsier na nasagip ng isang residente sa M'lang, Cotabato.

Ayon sa ulat ni Mariz Umali sa "Unang Balita" nitong Lunes, nakita raw ng residente noong Sabado ang tarsier na natutulog sa gilid ng sapa.

Sabi ng residente, masigla daw at tila naligaw lang ang tarsier.

Ito na raw ang ikalimang beses na may nasagip na tarsier sa bayan ng M'lang. --**Ma. Angelica Garcia/FRJ, GMA News**

Support FTAA renewal, pro-mining groups urge Kasibu Mayor

posted August 17, 2020 at 10:00 pm

by [Abe Almirol](#)

Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya—In an unprecedented move, the biggest community-based cooperatives, people's organizations, local businesses and employees here called on the local government unit to support the renewal of the Financial or Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) of OceanaGold Philippines, Inc. (OGPI), a local subsidiary of the Australian-Canadian mining firm OceanaGold Corporation.

This development came after the Didipio barangay council issued a resolution asking President Rodrigo Duterte, through the Office of the Mayor, to deny the renewal application of the mining company.

The Didipio Community Multi-Purpose Cooperative (DCMPC) said Mayor Romeo Tayaban and Vice Mayor Alberto Bumolo Jr. should instead support OGPI's FTAA renewal, noting how the operation of the mining company has improved the quality of life for its more than 430 members.

"The company contributed to the economic stability of our members and the stoppage of its operation affected the economic power of our members to fulfill their obligations in the organization," DCMPC said in a resolution.

Adding another voice to the cooperative's call, the Didipio Community Development Corporation (DiCorp), a community-owned corporation which won service contracts inside the Didipio mine, also called for the renewal of the FTAA which expired last June 20, 2019. An application for renewal remained pending at the Office of the President.

DiCorp has around 215 employees and 328 shareholders.

"The move of the barangay council did not reflect the decision of the community. There is a misrepresentation of the people as it was crafted without proper public consultation, as the majority of Didipio residents support the renewal of OceanaGold's FTAA," a DiCorp statement reads.

DiCorp is one of the contractors of OceanaGold in Didipio and was awarded PHP1.7B-long-term contracts from 2011-2019.

"The community benefitted from various social development projects of OGPI, such as roads, schools, health facilities, trainings, seminars and enterprise development initiatives," DiCorp said.

Another cooperative, the Didipio Producers Cooperative (DIPCO) with its 185 members expressed the same sentiments. "OceanaGold benefitted [our] members through trainings, seminars and workshops on farming," it said.

Being the sector most affected by the closure of the mine due to the non-renewal of the FTAA, the Didipio Mine Employees Association (DMEA) and the Pun-o-o'haan-hi-kiphodan Labor Union also voiced out their support for the renewal of the FTAA.

"We are one of the many community sectors that will be severely affected by the closure of the mine," a statement from the mine workers said.

The union is an organization of workers and contractors of OGPI with over 309 members, who are mostly residents of Barangay Didipio. It denied allegations of environmental abuses by OGPI, saying the company ensured environmental sustainability during its resource development operations.

"The mine's ISO certifications, ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System), ISO 18001 (Occupational Health and Safety System), and ISO 50001 (Energy Management System) are the testaments of a successful and remarkable environmental programs and initiatives of the Didipio Operations," the mineworkers added.

Another cooperative of mineworkers, The Employees Alliances and Multipurpose Cooperative of OceanaGold (TEAMCO), joined the call with its 280 members. They echoed the same support to the renewal of the FTAA.

Support FTAA renewal, pro-mining groups urge

August 18, 2020

TITLE: Kasibu Mayor

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DATE

“The barangay council’s move is herding hundreds of community residents to uncertain and fearful future. We witnessed how the company valued us as part of the workforce by supporting all initiatives and endeavors to uphold the state of living of each member, providing us an avenue to see development in our families, community, and stakeholders,” TEAMCO noted in its resolution.

Also supporting the call of various community organizations, the Sangguniang Kabataan and Buklod Didipio, both representing the youth in Didipio, likewise issued resolutions calling on the municipal leadership to support the call for the renewal of OGPI’s FTAA.

“The non-renewal of OGPI’s FTAA poses severe threats, not only to the dynamics of economic activities of Didipio but also to the scholarship of students whose only hope for a better future is securing a better education,” the two youth groups expressed.

OGPI’s relationship with the Didipio Local Government Unit turned sour when Barangay Captain Ereneo Bobbola won the local elections of May 14, 2018.

Bobbola and OGPI have been locked in a protracted dispute related to the satisfactory compensation of the former’s piece of land acquired by the later during the construction of the Didipio mine.

Australian mining firm's permit renewal pushed

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

August 18, 2020

KASIBU, Nueva Vizcaya: Seven big community-based cooperatives, people's organizations, local businesses and employees here called on the local government unit to support the renewal of the Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) of OceanaGold Philippines Inc. (OGPI).

These community groups responded to a Barangay Didipio council's resolution, which asked President Rodrigo Duterte, through the Office of the Mayor here, to deny the renewal application of the Australian mining company.

These groups are the Didipio Community Multi-Purpose Cooperative (DCMPC), Didipio Community Development Corporation (DiCorp), Didipio Producers Cooperative (Dipco), Didipio Mine Employees Association (DMEA), Pun-o-o'haan-hi-kiphodan (Union) and Employees Alliances and Multipurpose Cooperative of OceanaGold (Teamco).

With 430 members, the DCMPC said this town's Mayor Romeo Tayaban and Vice Mayor Alberto Bumolo Jr. should instead support the Didipio mine's FTAA renewal, noting how the company has improved the quality of lives of its members.

"The company contributed to the economic stability of our members and the stoppage of its operation affected the economic power of our members to fulfill their obligations in the organization," it added in a resolution of its own.

A community-owned corporation with around 215 employees and 328 shareholders, the DiCorp said the move of the village council did not reflect the decision of the community, adding that the council's resolution was a misrepresentation of the people as it was crafted without proper public consultation considering that majority of Didipio residents support the company's FTAA renewal.

With OceanaGold's award of P1.7 billion long-term contracts from 2011 to 2019 to the corporation, the DiCorp noted that the community benefitted from various social development projects of OGPI such as roads, schools, health facilities, training, seminars and enterprise development initiatives

The Dipco with 185 members also expressed support to OceanaGold, saying its members have also benefitted through training, seminars and workshops on farming.

Fearing a severe economic impact from closure of the Didipio mines if the FTAA is not renewed is the DMEA and the Union, which is composed of workers and contractors of OGPI with over 309 members, mostly residents of Didipio village.

The Union denied allegations of environmental abuses by OGPI "when in fact the company ensured environmental sustainability during its resource development operations."

Union members said certifications awarded to OceanaGold including ISO 14001 Environmental Management System; Ohsas 18001 Occupational Health and Safety System and EnMS 50001 Energy Management System only proved the successful and remarkable environmental programs and initiatives of the Didipio mines.

Some 280 members of the Teamco echoed the same support, describing the village council's move as herding hundreds of community residents to an "uncertain and fearful" future.

"We witnessed how the company valued us as part of the workforce by supporting all initiatives and endeavors to uphold the state of living of each member, providing us an avenue to see development in our families, community and stakeholders," the Teamco said, also in a resolution of its own.

Representing the youth of Didipio village, the Sangguniang Kabataan (Youth Council) and Buklod Didipio have also rallied support for these various community organizations in their own resolutions calling on the municipal leadership to support the call for the renewal of OGPI's FTAA.

"The non-renewal of OGPI's FTAA poses severe threats, not only to the dynamics of economic activities of Didipio but also to the scholarship of students whose only hope for a better future is securing a better education," these youth groups said.

Manila city gov't cleans up trash dumped on Kalaw Avenue center island

Published August 17, 2020, 8:28 PM

by [Minka Klaudia Tiangco](#)

The Manila city government has cleaned up a center island along Kalaw Avenue in Ermita, Manila after a concerned citizen reported that had been turned into a huge dumping ground.

Manila Mayor Francisco “Isko Moreno” Domagoso said members of the city’s Department of Public Services were immediately deployed to the area on Monday morning (Aug. 17) to conduct mopping and hauling operations.

Domagoso, who has repeatedly promised to clean up the city during his administration, renewed his call to residents to cooperate with the government and practice responsible waste disposal.

“Sa mga kababayan kong Manileño, mahalaga po sa amin ang inyong pakikiisa upang mas maging mas episyente ang Pamahalaang Lungsod at ang bawat kagawaran sa ilalim nito sa aming mga mandato (To my fellow Manileños, your cooperation is important so that the city government and the departments under it will be more efficient in [fulfilling] our mandates),” he wrote on Facebook Monday.

“Sisikapin po nating tugunan ang bawat hinaing, lalo na po kung ukol ito sa kalinisan, kaayusan, at kaligtasan ng bawat mamamayan (We will strive to respond to all your complaints, especially if they pertain to cleanliness, orderliness, and the safety of each resident),” he added.

The city government has been continuously cleaning major thoroughfares and placing ornamental plants on the city’s center islands and vertical gardens in line with Domagoso’s vision to transform Manila into a clean and green city.

(Photos from Manila PIO)



Source: <https://mb.com.ph/2020/08/17/manila-city-govt-cleans-up-trash-dumped-on-kalaw-avenue-center-island/>

No oil spill from grounded cargo ship in Antique: PCG

By Raymond Carl Dela Cruz [August 17, 2020, 7:39 pm](#)



HULL INSPECTION. Divers from the Philippine Coast Guard's (PCG) BRP Cape Engaño (MRRV-4411) inspect the hull of Vietnamese cargo vessel MV Globe 6. The PCG on Monday (Aug. 17, 2020) said its divers found no signs of a possible oil spill after the ship ran aground in the waters of Antique. *(Screenshot of PCG video)*

MANILA – The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) on Monday reported that the Vietnamese-flagged cargo vessel, MV Globe 6, will not spill oil based on the underwater hull inspection by PCG divers.

In an update, the PCG said MV Globe 6, which ran aground in the waters between Nagubat Island and Liwagao Island in Caluya, Antique, “only acquired 80 percent minor scratches from the bulbous bow” to the bottom portion of its engine room at both sides of the hull, according to divers from the BRP Cape Engaño (MRRV-4411).

“Despite the impact of the incident, the ship’s rudder and propeller remained intact and in excellent condition, as well as the vessel’s ballast tank as reported by Captain Nguyen Hoai, skipper of MV Globe 6,” the PCG said.

Hoai added the incident occurred after their officer on watch fell asleep.

“Nevertheless, the 25 crew aboard the Vietnamese cargo vessel are all safe and in good physical condition,” the PCG said.

Prior to the hull inspection, it said the PCG and Port State Control–Semirara Division laid oil spill boom around the ship as a precautionary measure.

On August 13, MV Globe 6 ran aground on its way to Davao City from Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam to deliver its rice cargo. *(PNA)*

Greenpeace promotes protected bike lanes in Metro Manila

posted August 17, 2020 at 08:25 pm

by [Manila Standard Lifestyle](#)

Environmental organization Greenpeace reiterates the call for more protected bike lanes which it deems “essential for building better, more livable cities.”



Greenpeace pushes for more protected bike lanes in major roads and highways. Photo by Jilson Tiu Greenpeace

Greenpeace on August 15-18 joined the “Share the Road” exercise to emphasize the importance of bike lanes as part of city planning.

The environmental organization joined biking advocates, supported by key government agencies, as they provided frontliners and other bikers with pop-up bike lanes along Edsa during the four-day program.

During the program, Greenpeace urged Metro Manila mayors to include protected bike lanes in comprehensive city planning.

“Bike lanes are not just for bikes and bikers, but for everyone living and working in cities,” said Greenpeace Southeast Asia executive director Yeb Saño. “With the right planning, they could provide pedestrians and commuters with safer, wider room to move even at a busy road like Edsa.”

Greenpeace earlier reported that urban planning prioritizing only motor vehicles running on fossil fuels has made cities unhealthy for ordinary citizens.

“Globally, cities account for 75 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, a great part of it is from fossil-fueled transport. Cities that provide more opportunities for active mobility such as biking and walking will create less need for cars,” explained Saño. “This means less air pollution, and a huge opportunity for climate mitigation.”

Moreover, protected bike lanes are an important component in planning a healthier, greener design for our cities, he said.

“Imagine Metro Manila not just with bike lanes, but with more trees, more green public spaces, and more room for everyone to breathe,” said Saño. “This is what we want to see when we ask for livable cities, for a better normal beyond this pandemic.”

The “Share the Road” initiative on Edsa was the second wave of the event, which was first organized at Commonwealth Avenue by Biker’s United Marshall. The bike lanes were set up at six stations along the highway’s southbound side, from Aurora Boulevard to Magallanes.

Mga programa ni Gina Lopez muling inalala

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Aug 17 2020 08:08 PM

Buhay na buhay pa rin ang alaala ng environmentalist at philanthropist na si Gina Lopez sa mga taong binigyan niya ng malasakit.

"Madalas kami magbiyahe dati. Ang dami naming nakikilalang tao, ang dami naming ginagawa, ang saya-saya talaga kapag kasama si Gina," anang kapatid ni Gina na si Ernie Lopez.

"Mayaman ka o mahirap parehas pa rin angtrato niya sa'yo," dagdag niya.

"Dahil kay Gina, nakabisita ako ng maraming 'di kilalang lugar dito sa Pilipinas... marami akong nakilalang tao na magpakailanman hahawakin ko iyong mga kuwento nila at mga mukha nila sa puso ko," sabi naman ng kapatid na si Roberta Lopez-Feliciano.

"She's now somebody that will live in the hearts and minds of people. And become an institution that will drive Filipinos for decades to come," anang kapatid na si Eugenio "Gabby" Lopez III, chairman emeritus ng ABS-CBN.

Pumanaw si Gina noong nakaraang taon sa edad na 65 dahil sa brain cancer.

Malaking bahagi ng buhay ni Gina ang inilaan sa serbisyo sa kapuwa at mga komunidad.

Naging tagapagtaguyod din siya ng karapatang pambata at pangangalaga sa kapaligiran sa pamamagitan ng Bantay Kalikasan.

"Her bigness cannot be described by a few words," ani Bantay Kalikasan program director Jen Santos.

Hanggang ngayon, ang pagbabagong iniwan ni Gina ay patuloy na inaalagaan ng mga katutubong Mangyan sa Bantay Kalikasan site sa Victoria, Oriental Mindoro.

"Siya 'yong nagbigay ng liwanag. Na-involve sila sa iba't ibang mga ilegal na gawain. Si Ma'am [Gina Lopez] mismo 'yong nagsabi sa kanila na may pag-asa, na puwedeng gumawa nang tama at kumikita," ani Ellaine Deomampo, kinatawan mula sa Bantay Kalikasan.

Hinatiran din ng tulong ng Pantawid ng Pag-ibig ang mga Mangyan na nasa Bantay Kalikasan site ngayong panahon ng pandemya.

-- Ulat ni Bernadette Sembrano, ABS-CBN News

Metro Manila mayors want strict GCQ in NCR after Aug. 18: Palace

Arianne Merez, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Aug 17 2020 02:10 PM | Updated as of Aug 18 2020 02:18 AM



A sampaguita vendor makes a sale under the heavy rain in front of the Quiapo church in Manila on August 16, 2020. *George Calvelo, ABS-CBN News*

MANILA - Metro Manila mayors have recommended easing virus restrictions in the capital region, Malacañang said Monday, a day before the modified enhanced community quarantine expires.

The local chief executives in the capital were unanimous in calling for a transition to a strict general community quarantine after Aug. 18, Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said.

"I can confirm na ang rekomendasyon ng mga mayor ay GCQ, pero yung GCQ po noong buwan pa ng Hunyo na mas mahigpit kaysa sa eventual GCQ na pinapatupad na," Roque said during a Palace press briefing.

(I can confirm that the mayors recommended for GCQ, but similar to the version implemented in June which is much stricter than the current GCQ.)

"Unanimous naman po ang recommendation ng IATF (Inter-Agency Task Force) at ng mga Metro Manila mayors kay Presidente," he added.

(The IATF and Metro Manila mayors were unanimous in their recommendation.)

Metro Manila and nearby provinces Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal were reverted to MECQ category on Aug. 4 as President Rodrigo Duterte heeded the call of exhausted health workers for a "timeout" amid the continuing surge of COVID-19 cases.

Roque earlier said that it was "highly unlikely" for the government to keep Metro Manila and neighboring economic hubs under MECQ due to depleted resources to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

Duterte is set to meet virtually with members of the government's pandemic task force Monday evening, and is expected to decide on the community quarantine classifications of the capital region and nearby provinces as well.

The Philippines as of Sunday has recorded 161,253 confirmed cases of COVID-19, of which, 46,002 are active.

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/08/17/20/metro-manila-mayors-want-strict-gcq-in-the-capital-after-aug-18-palace?fbclid=IwAR0kcC_rKy8QkVE8NGhxIuF0uvWjwrj96lZxAjwj9UMy7YXLqAgIsqtwLG4

NCR, 4 provinces revert to GCQ

Published 6 hours ago on August 17, 2020 11:50 PM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#)



Pres. Duterte: Back to GCQ for Metro Manila. (PCOO image)

President Rodrigo Duterte on Monday eased quarantine restrictions in Metro Manila and nearby provinces despite fears that the healthcare system will collapse amid the continuous surge of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases.

In his public address Monday night, the President approved to return of the National Capital Region (NCR), Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal to general community quarantine (GCQ) from 19 to 31 August.

Duterte also announced that Nueva Ecija, Batangas, Quezon Province, Iloilo City, Cebu City, Lapu Lapu City, Mandaue City, Talisay City, and the municipalities of Minglanilla and Consolacion in Cebu province will also be under GCQ until the end of the month.

The rest of the country will remain under the modified GCQ, Duterte said.

The government has been struggling to walk the fine line between protecting the country's more than 109 million people from COVID-19 while reviving the economy that is facing its worst downturn in more than three decades.

Statisticians who closely monitor the pandemic curve and health workers in the frontlines of the crisis have been urging the administration to extend for another two weeks the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) in Metro Manila.

Professor Guido David of the University of the Philippines Institute of Mathematics recently said that a 15-day MECQ extension in Metro Manila could prevent up to 20,000 people from contracting the dreaded disease.

The country's COVID-19 tally surged to 164,747 on Monday afternoon with 112,759 recoveries and 2,681 deaths.

Duterte emphasized the need in ensuring the safety of the workforce and further expanding contact tracing efforts as the government strikes a balance in addressing concerns between public health and the economy.

He urges his 'kababayans' to faithfully observe safety protocols by wearing face masks, face shields, washing hands and maintaining physical distance, as well as cites that the collective resolve to stay healthy is key to winning the war against COVID-19. **With Francis Wakefield**

p: wjg

'Working isolation' for Rody

Published 6 hours ago on August 18, 2020 12:07 AM

By [MJ Blancaflor](#)



President Rodrigo Duterte is “fine” in his “perpetual isolation” and has been undergoing regular swab tests for COVID-19, Malacañang said Monday.

But it is going to be a “working isolation” as he still met his Cabinet and some member of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) dealing with the government’s response to the new coronavirus last night.

Presidential spokesman Secretary Harry Roque confirmed they were just waiting for the President’s online meeting with the other government officials early last night.

A Daily Tribune source said the President planned to face the nation after the virtual meeting with his official. Mr. Duterte had a scheduled televised appearance last night.

This was confirmed by Roque who disclosed that the President was joined by Senator Christopher Lawrence “Bong” Go and Budget Secretary Wendel Avisado in the Chief Executive’s home city.

The President’s isolation comes amid concerns on his health after Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año contracted the new coronavirus anew. Mr. Duterte did not have close contact with him, though.

In his earlier televised briefing, Roque assured the public that the Presidential Security Group (PSG) has been doing a “good job” in ensuring the safety of the 75-year-old Chief Executive.

The Internet was abuzz over the weekend with reports related to the President’s supposedly failing health.

A photograph of a Lear Jet 60 (7CO1D7 with a call sign VH-AND) also made the rounds on social media with a claim that it had landed in Davao City to pick up a patient for medical evacuation to Singapore.

It was the same type of Lear Jet that ferried Duterte to attend the ASEAN Summit in Singapore in 2018.

The news denied by Malacañang.

Roque’s remarks also came after Interior Secretary Eduardo Año announced Sunday that he tested positive again for COVID-19 — more than four months after he contracted the virus in March.

Año was among the members of the IATF who met with President Duterte at the Presidential Guest House in Davao City on 10 August.

“The President is in perpetual isolation because no one can come close to him. I think I’ve told you, whenever we meet with him, there is a velvet rope that keeps him at least six feet away from everyone else so no one can really come close to the President,” Roque said.

“He does undergo regular PCR (polymerase chain reaction) tests. He complains about the discomfort of the swab tests,” he added.

In a statement, Roque later clarified that “perpetual isolation” was only a figure of speech he used “to highlight the prudence exercised by the PSG in safeguarding the physical well-being of the President in this challenging time of COVID-19.”

He also underscored that during the IATF meeting last week, officials have observed proper physical distancing and health protocols.

Roque also denied rumors that the Chief Executive went to Singapore over the weekend for medical treatment.

“He’s been in Davao City and has not left the country and his health his fine,” the official said.

Following Año’s announcement, IATF members will hold virtual meetings as they go on self-quarantine.

They are expected to hold a virtual meeting with President Duterte on Monday night to discuss the new quarantine classifications of Metro Manila, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal which are all under the modified enhanced community quarantine until today.

Aside from their roles in the policy-making body of the government’s pandemic response, Cabinet members were also assigned as “big brothers” and “big sisters” in each Metro Manila city to assist local government units in addressing COVID-19 concerns.

PH COVID-19 cases, 164,474 na; 18 patay, 3,314 dagdag-kaso



August 17, 2020 @ 4:32 PM 15 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Nasa kabuuang 164,474 na ang kumpirmadong kaso ng coronavirus disease (COVID-19) sa bansa matapos madagdagan ng 3,314 ngayong Agosto 17 base sa total test na isinagawa ng 91 mula sa 105 operational labs.

Umabot naman sa 49,034 ang aktibong kaso o mga hindi pa gumagaling.

Sa 3,314 reported cases, 2,854 dito ang naitala 14-araw mula Agosto 4 hanggang 17.

Ang top regions na may bagong naitalang kaso ay ang NCR na may 1,656; Region 4A, 672 at Region 3, 131.

Nakapagtala naman ng 237 panibagong recoveries kung saan umabot na sa kabuuang 112,759.

Sa deaths, nasa 18 ang naitalang pumanaw dahilang para umabot na sa 2,681.

Apat dito ang pumanaw ngayong Agosto, 12 noong Hulyo, dalawa noong Hunyo.

Mula naman sa Region 4A ang limang pumanaw, Region 7, ay apat; NCR, apat din; Region 3, ay tatlo; Region 10 at BARMM ay may tig-isang pumanaw.

Nasa 93 naman ang duplicates ang inalis sa total case counts kung saan 64 ang recovered cases habang 2 ang deaths na pumanaw. **Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden**

Face shield raises COVID protection to 99%

Published 1 day ago on August 17, 2020 01:30 AM

By [Francis Wakefield](#)



In open air situations and with social distancing, a face shield would not be necessary.

The government decided to make face shields mandatory for individuals inside public transportation and workplaces because it provides additional protection against the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles said over the weekend.

“Pinakita sa amin ng doctors, scientists, and epidemiologists yung importance ng face shield. Sabi po nila kung gusto talaga natin ng 99% na proteksyon, importante talaga na isabay ang face shield sa face mask at social distancing,” Nograles said in a Facebook Live session on Saturday night, Nograles took time to explain how and why

(Doctors, scientists, and epidemiologists showed us the importance of face shield. They said that if we really want 99% percent protection, its really important to go with the face shield with the face mask and social distancing).

Nograles, who is the co-chair of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF), explained that masks normally used by the public do not offer as much protection as N95 masks, which are usually reserved for healthcare workers.

The cabinet official said scientists showed the IATF that non-N95 masks, when paired with a face shield, would offer wearers far more protection than wearing the masks alone.

Nograles said the scientists stressed that in open air situations and with social distancing, a face shield would not be necessary. However, in a closed setting that does not allow for social distancing, face shields paired with face masks would offer additional protection against the COVID-19 virus.

“Usually ang sinusuot ng ating mga kababayan ay cloth mask o surgical mask. Lower ang protection level,” he said.

(Usually, what our people wear are cloth mask or surgical mask. The protection level is lower).

Meanwhile, Nograles said that the IATF agreed with Department of Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade to make face shields mandatory in public transportation for the protection of drivers and passengers. The same input prompted the Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) to adopt a similar policy for employees in the workplace.

The Palace official said with a face mask and a face shield, people are safer when taking public transportation when going to workplaces.

p: wjg

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/08/17/face-shield-raises-covid-protection-to-99/>

PH starts 9-month Avigan trials

By [Gerard Naval](#)

-August 18, 2020



Japan may provide Asian countries to get the Avigan, a supposed coronavirus cure. (Photo by REUTERS)

THE Philippines started with the Avigan clinical trials yesterday on coronavirus disease (COVID-19) patients confined in four hospitals.

Avigan (favipiravir) is an anti-viral drug that is used to treat influenza in Japan. It is now under study as a potential treatment for COVID-19.

The clinical trials are being conducted at the Philippine General Hospital and Sta. Ana Hospital in Manila, the Jose N Rodriguez Memorial Hospital in Caloocan City, and the Quirino Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City.

“We started with the four but we will, of course, expand to other hospitals for us to be able to reach the 100 patients,” said Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire.

She also said trials will run for at least nine months.

Meanwhile, the East Avenue Medical Center (EAMC) unveiled the six-story Center for Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious Disease (CERID) that will handle severe and critical cases of COVID-19 in Metro Manila.

Dr. Alfonso Nuñez, chief of the EAMC Medical Center, said the CERID will have its own emergency room that can accommodate up to 40 patients; its own operating room and a labor and delivery room for COVID-19 patients who need to be treated for other medical conditions; two intensive care units (ICU) that can accommodate up to 30 critical patients, equipped with 8-10 hemodialysis units; and ward type and isolation rooms to ensure minimum health standards to prevent further spread of the infection.

He said the new building will also have an infirmary which will serve healthcare workers who will be infected.

Nuñez said the EAMC will hire personnel for the CERID, including 77 medical specialists, 279 medical officers, 177 nurses and nursing aides, 468 paramedical personnel, and other support services.

In the meantime, current EAMC personnel will serve part of the new center to augment the needs of the community.

Source: https://malaya.com.ph/index.php/news_news/ph-starts-9-month-avigan-trials/

SWITIK SA PAPEL, COVID-19 DAPAT DURUGIN



August 17, 2020 @ 11:59 AM 19 hours ago

Ngayon pa lang, dapat nang magbantay-bantay ang Department of Trade and Industry sa suplay at presyo ng papel.

At sa pagbabantay, dapat kasama ang pagdurog sa mga switik dito.

Nangangamba kasi tayong matutulad ang papel sa face mask, face shield at iba pang gamit laban sa coronavirus disease-19 na nagmamahal nang todo gawa ng mga switik o mapagsamantalang negosyante.

In demand o kailangan na kailangan kasi ngayon ang papel dahil sa programa ng Department of Education na blended learning.

'Yun bang — maghahalo ang sistemang modular, face-to-face, pure online, naghalong pure online at modular, radio, television at iba pang anyo ng pagtuturo at pag-aaral.

NAGKAKAUBUSAN SA LALAWIGAN

Madaling nararamdaman ang labis na kakulangan ng suplay ng papel sa mga lalawigan.

Dulot ito ng brigada eskwela na isa sa mga paraan ng mga titser sa pagkakaroon ng papel para sa modular system at mestisong online at modular na kailangang mag-imprensa ang mga titser ng mga leksyon saka nila ipamamahagi sa mga estudyante.

Nagso-solicit kasi ang mga titser ng ayuda sa papel sa mga may kayang magulang at residente sa mga barangay at wala nang mabili ang marami sa mga ito dahil ubos na raw at walang dumarating na suplay.

Dati-rati, sa face-to-face na sistema na nasa loob ng iskul ang mga bata, magkaroon lang ng nakapapel na lesson plan sina sir at madam, okey na dahil pinapalit-palitan lang nila ang mga petsa at ilang laman ng mga leksyon.

Ngayon, kailangan nilang mag-imprensa ng maraming kopya ng leksyon saka ipamahagi nang bahay-bahay at bara-barangay ang mga ito habang pinapupunta naman ang iba mismo sa mga eskwela para kumuha ng kopya.

Wala kasi ngayong face-to-face na pag-aaral kundi stay at home kaya hagip halos lahat ang mag-aaral ng lahat ng uri ng quarantine, enhanced man 'yan o general o modified na konektado sa pagkontrol sa COVID-19.

Bawal lumabas kundi mag-stay at home ang mga edad 20 pababa, kasama na ang mga estudyante.

'Yung iba naman, maging ang mga pribadong eskwela, hagip din ng sistemang modular at mestisong online at modular dahil walang internet o mahina ang internet sa kanilang mga lugar na basehan ng pure online na pag-aaral.

KWENTAHAN NG GASTOS

Heto ang ilang datos na padala sa ULTIMATUM ng ilang guro mula sa ilang public schools sa mga lalawigan.

Para sa isang iskul lamang, heto ang kwento ng mga titser.

May walong subject umano sa high school at para sa isang subject lamang, kinakailangan nilang gumamit ng 236 na ream dahil nasa 179 na pahina ang para rito para naman sa 620 estudyante.

Kung buuin umano ang walong subject, nangangailangan ng 1,888 na ream para lang halimbawa sa first year.

Eh, kung kwentahin mo ang pangangailangan ng mula first year hanggang senior high school, aba, kailangan mo ang humigit-kumulang sa 11,320 ream.

Sa mga private school naman, naglalaro sa 30 porsyento ang nangangailangan ng sistemang modular dahil sa kawalan o hina ng internet.

Pero ang punto, mga Bro, nagkakaubusan na ng suplay, lalo na ang A4 na klase ng papel dahil ito ang kailangan ng DepEd para sa pagpapa-xerox o printing machine nila.

Imadyinin natin na libo-libo ang mga eskwelang kindergarten at elementarya hanggang high school at senior high school, napakalaking bolyum ng papel ang kailangan ng mga ito na pwede o sinimulan nang pagsamanalahan ng mga mapagsamantalang negosyante.

Malaking bolyum din ng papel ang ginagamit ng mga titser para sa kanilang iba't ibang rekord na 24/7 ang pasok.

Sa 24/7 na pasok, mulas Lunes hanggang Linggo ang pasok ng mga titser at may mga hindi nakatutulong dahil pinupwersa sila ng DepEd ng magsumite ng mga daily record.

ALA-FACE MASK, FACE SHIELD

Noong bago pumutok ang Bulkang Taal sa Batangas, nasa P50 lang isang karton ng surgical mask na may lamang 50 piraso kaya P1 lang ang bawat piraso.

Nang pumutok ang bulkan at nangailangan bigla ng face mask ang milyones na katao sa Batangas, Cavite at Laguna para labanan ang abo ng bulkan, biglang may nagtago ng face masks at naglabas na lang nang maging P150-P300 ang bawat kahon.

Ngayon namang sumalakay ang COVID-19, nagkandaloko-loko rin ang suplay at presyo ng face mask at maging ang face shield na kasama na sa sapilitang isusuot ng mga mamamayan sa transportasyon at pagpasok sa mga opisina, trabaho at iba pa.

Mabuti na lang at nakialam ang DTI at nakontrol ang face shield na ang iba'y lumundag ang presyo mula P30 sa P75-P100 bawat piraso.

Sa presyong maximum retail price, hanggang P50 na lang ang face shield.

Sa face mask, meron na ring mga kinasuhan sa overpricing at may mga sinalakay nang bodega na roon itinatago ang mga face mask at face shield na hino-hoard o itinatago para lang magmukhang may krisis sa suplay na dahilan ng pagmamahal ng mga ito sa merkado.

Hindi imposibleng magtaas ng presyo ng papel ang mga anak ng pitong putakteng negosyante sa papel.

Sa ngayon, nasa P160 hanggang P210 kada ream ang A4, depende sa kalidad ng mga ito.

Posibleng maging ala-face mask at face shield ang presyo rito kung hindi maagapan ito ng DTI.

KAMAY NA BAKAL

Kailangan talaga ang kamay na bakal laban sa mga switik at mapagsamantalang negosyante sa paggawa, pag-import at pagbenta ng mga batayang pangangailangan ng mga mamamayan sa mga panahon ng sakuna.

Itong mga anak ng tipaklong na ito ang nakadaragdag ng pagdami ng mga may COVID-19 at kamatayan dito dahil nawawalan ng proteksyon ang mga mamamayan sa kawalan ng kakayahan na bumili ng mga pangontrang gamit at gamot na nagmamahalan sa merkado.

Sila rin tiyak ang magiging dahilan ng malaking paggagastusan ng pamahalaan sa pagbili hindi lang ng mga papel kundi maging ng mga kompyuter, printer, xerox machine at iba pang pangangailangan ng may 23 milyong mag-aaral ngayon.

Inaatake ng mga switik at mapagsamantalang negosyante ang kalusugan at edukasyon ng mga mamamayan kaya naman, ang kamay na bakal ang kailangan upang madurog ang mga ito.

Kung paano inaaresto at nire-raid ng gobyerno ang mga ito kaugnay ng pagsasamantala sa COVID-19, dapat ganito rin ang gawin sa mga switik at mapagsamantala sa edukasyon.

Let the people go back to work

By [The Manila Times](#)

August 18, 2020

THE cruelest dilemma that the coronavirus pandemic has imposed on the nation and our government is the dubious proposition that the health emergency impels them to choose between lives and livelihoods or between public health and the national economy and to tailor their policy strategy accordingly.

Believing without adequate policy study and debate that to get the viral outbreak under control, it was imperative for the government, as a matter of policy, to shut or lock down the economy, our government quickly imposed on March 16 an economic lockdown of the entire economy, which it sought to disguise at first as a “community quarantine.”

On March 12, President Rodrigo Duterte announced a partial lockdown covering Metro Manila that began on March 15. At one point during the President’s announcement of the Metro Manila community quarantine, he said “they are afraid to call it a lockdown, but it is a lockdown.” Later the quarantine was intensified through the imposition of an enhanced community quarantine (ECQ).

Localities under the ECQ are generally ordered to stay at home with its residents restricted from traveling to other cities or barangay (villages). Barangay governments can issue quarantine passes allowing residents to buy essential goods outside curfew hours and within the issuing villages’ jurisdiction. The Bayanihan to Heal As One Act also provides measures related to the ECQ such as:

- Limitations on an all forms of transportation
- Work suspensions and the setting up of alternative working arrangements such as teleworking
- Ensuring the supply of food and medical products
- Measures against profiteering and hoarding of essential goods

For some six months now, the ECQ has been repeatedly imposed across the country by the Inter-Agency for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID).

The effect of the lockdown on the economy has been nothing less than devastating and ruinous. Already the economy has plunged into a recession and is projected to contract by more than 12 percent this year. The lockdown has been merciless in throwing people out of their jobs and in causing businesses, particularly small businesses, to shut down, many permanently.

As the facts are pouring in, we are now seeing today the full extent of the toll on jobs and economic enterprise in the country. According to a Social Weather Stations national mobile phone survey, adult joblessness in the Philippines had risen to a record high of 45.5 percent in July with half of the unemployed saying they lost their jobs during the coronavirus pandemic.

The latest poll indicated an 86.4-percent labor force participation rate, or the proportion of adults in the labor force, estimated at 60 million adults.

This is an increase from the 68.7-percent labor force participation rate recorded in December 2019.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) in June reported an unemployment rate of 17.7 percent in April, reflecting an increase of 5 million jobless Filipinos to 7.3 million. Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello 3rd tried to belie the PSA's numbers, claiming there were only 69,000 unemployed Filipinos during the period.

His claim was refuted by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the country's largest business organization, which noted that its members alone reported a total of 3.5 million unemployed workers.

The incontrovertible message of all this data is that the joblessness has been principally caused by the economic lockdown. As the IATF-EID has mechanically imposed the lockdown policy, the lot of workers and their families have grown increasingly worse.

It was always incredibly stupid to suggest that the pandemic demanded of the nation to choose between public health and the economy. When jobs are cut down by public policy, public health and the economy automatically suffer.

It's been said before reversibly, that wealth is health and health is wealth.

We must send our people back to work.

No urgency to explore in West PHL Sea while pandemic depresses prices — academic

August 17, 2020 | 7:57 pm



WEAK OIL PRICES during the pandemic serve as a disincentive to joint exploration with China in the West Philippine Sea, a maritime law expert from the University of the Philippines said.

Jay L. Batongbacal, head of the University of the Philippines Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea, said in a virtual forum Monday that although global oil demand is starting to pick up, prices remain low, undercutting the case for exploration.

“With lower oil prices, (the) incentive to explore is not as high or not as urgent at this point,” he said.

“It’s a kind of a disincentive for us to really push hard and fast on joint exploration because ‘*di ganoon ka-urgent ‘yung need (the need is not really urgent) and the market is not favorable right now,*” he said.

Exploration typically needs to be supported by buoyant prices to offset the added expense and risk of prospecting. The oil industry works on the basis of tapping fields that cost least to produce from, which can be profitable even when prices are low. Such fields return high margins when prices are high. Marginal areas that are in deep waters, are hard to reach, or are subject to territorial disputes become more attractive as high prices make them profitable.

Representatives from China and the Philippines have yet to meet to discuss exploring the disputed sea, according to Energy Undersecretary Felix William B. Fuentebella, speaking at the same briefing.

“The legal groups between China and Philippine will still meet to discuss the details (of the joint exploration); that’s the latest for now,” he said.

Prof. Batongbacal claimed that foregoing the opportunities in exploring the WPS won't have "as big of an impact on our energy needs for now" as the need for it is not yet high.

The suspension of discussions has given the Philippines more time to study and to come up with a legislative framework required for exploration and development of the contested waters, the lawyer said.

"Yung rules kasi natin naka-set up na (Our rules are set up in a way that the) government is contracting to the private sector, at 'yung government-to-government, na may isyu pa ng pakikipag-agawan ng teritoryo, ay hindi covered (and they do not cover government-to-government deals where territory is disputed)," Mr. Fuentebella said.

"As it is right now, we have to update the exploration laws," he said, referring mainly to Presidential Decree No. 78 or the Oil Exploration and Development Act of 1972.

China is not receptive to deals structured as partnerships between a government and a foreign private firm, in which the company is subject to the laws of the government.

The Department of Energy's Philippine Conventional Energy Contracting Program seeks investments from both local and foreign entities who can either choose to bid among the 14 predetermined areas for exploration offered by the country or to nominate other areas.

The department has received offers from undisclosed investors to survey three oil prospects in the WPS under this program.

According to Mr. Batongbacal, there must be a framework that recognizes the equal legislative powers of two states entering into a joint agreement, which does not bind them to each other's laws.

Another crucial issue in the ongoing deal is the perception of surrendering the country's sovereign rights to its territory.

"The legislation has to make it very clear na (that) any action or agreement into, like this, wala talaga siyang prejudice sa ating position (it's without prejudice to our position)," he said.

He also proposed a treaty governing state-to-state partnerships. "It's basically another treaty with its own special legislation to implement that treaty," he said. — **Adam J. Ang**

Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/no-urgency-to-explore-in-west-phl-sea-while-pandemic-depresses-prices-academic/>

LPA north of Luzon intensifies into tropical depression

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

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 01:54 AM August 18, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — A low pressure area spotted north of Luzon has turned into a tropical depression, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said on Monday night.

According to Pagasa's severe weather bulletin, Tropical Depression Helen was last spotted 240 kilometers west of Calayan, Cagayan, with maximum sustained winds of 45 kilometers per hour (kph) and gustiness of up to 55 kph.

It is moving at a westward motion at a speed of 25 kph, which means that it could have a brief stay within the Philippine area of responsibility before moving out by Tuesday morning.

Helen may intensify further in the next 48 hours, but it might have left the PAR by this time. The cyclone is expected to make a slight northwestward turn and may make landfall over the southern part of China's Guangdong Province.

No storm warning signals have been raised as of now.

Rains would still be experienced on the western side of the country, especially over Batanes, Ilocos Region, Apayao, Abra, Kalinga, Mimaropa, Western Visayas, and Zamboanga peninsula due to the southwest monsoon or Habagat.

Meanwhile, another LPA being monitored east of Mindanao was last spotted 240 kilometers east southeast of Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur.

Despite hovering over the water, it is not expected to develop into a tropical depression in the next 48 hours.

[atm]

Magnitude 5.1 quake hits Sultan Kudarat

August 17, 2020

People's Tonight

A MAGNITUDE 5.1 quake hit Sultan Kudarat Sunday afternoon, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said.

The tectonic quake struck 66 kilometers southwest of the municipality of Kalamansig at 3:22 p.m.

It had a depth focus of 586 kilometers.

There were no reported intensities and Phivolcs said it is not expecting damages and aftershocks from this earthquake.

Earlier, a magnitude 5 earthquake jolted Batanes. Its epicenter was recorded 40 kilometers southeast of Sabtang, where intensity V was felt. PNA

Greenland ice melting past 'tipping point' - study

Published August 18, 2020 2:19am

By CAMILE BAS-WOHLERT, Agence France Presse

COPENHAGEN, Denmark - The melting of Greenland's ice cap has gone so far that it is now irreversible, with snowfall no longer able to compensate for the loss of ice even if global warming were to end today, according to researchers.

"Greenland's glaciers have passed a tipping point of sorts, where the snowfall that replenishes the ice sheet each year cannot keep up with the ice that is flowing into the ocean from glaciers," said a statement from Ohio State University, where several authors of a study published August 13 in Communications Earth and Environment are based.

Climate change is having a devastating effect on the world's glaciers, with the ice melt posing a threat to millions of people around the world.

Alarming reports about the ice melt on the vast Arctic island -- which is warming twice as fast as the rest of the planet -- have multiplied in recent years.

Eighty-five percent of the surface of Greenland, an island of two million square kilometres or four times the size of France, is covered in ice.

"The study confirms results from a lot of other studies ... that the combination of melt and calving of icebergs explains the large amount of ice lost from Greenland over the last couple of decades," Ruth Mottram, a climatologist at Denmark's Meteorological Institute told AFP.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the ice cap lost around 450 billion tonnes of ice per year, which was compensated by snowfall, the scientists said after analysing 40 years of data.

But the ice melt has accelerated this century, climbing to 500 billion tonnes and it is no longer sufficiently replenished with snow.

"The Greenland ice sheet is losing mass at accelerated rates in the 21st century, making it the largest single contributor to rising sea levels," the study said.

The melting ice actually causes more ice to melt, as the meltwater that collects on the ice sheet absorbs more of the Sun's radiative force than snow and ice do -- snow and ice reflect sunlight back into space.

In addition, the loss of ice exposes the permafrost, or frozen soil, which when thawed releases powerful greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, trapping heat.

Therefore the melting ice is not just a symptom of global warming, it is also becoming a driver of global warming.

Tipping point debate

While researchers are in agreement that the Greenland ice melt is worrying, not all agree that it has reached a 'tipping point'.

"We don't know how much greenhouse gas concentrations will rise," Mottram said.

The published results show that "even if we stabilised temperatures (and greenhouse gas emissions) at the present level, the ice sheet would still continue to melt, but only until the size of the ice sheet is once more in balance with the climate," she said.

As the ice sheet is rapidly losing mass in contact with the ocean, once the ice loses contact with the water the massive ice discharge will stop.

Meanwhile, a recent study from Britain's University of Lincoln concluded that Greenland's ice melt alone is expected to contribute 10-12 centimetres to the world's rising sea levels by 2100.

The UN's IPCC climate science advisory panel said in 2013 it expected sea levels to rise 60 centimetres by the end of the century. -- **Agence France-Presse**

New global temperature record set in California's Death Valley

Published August 18, 2020 12:23am

By KANISHKA SINGH, JONATHAN ALLEN, Reuters

The hottest air temperature recorded anywhere on the planet in at least a century, and possibly ever, was reached in Death Valley in California's Mojave Desert on Sunday afternoon where it soared to 130 Fahrenheit (54.4 Celsius).

An automated observation system run by the US National Weather Service at Furnace Creek reported the record at 3:41 p.m. local time.

It was a dry heat: humidity fell to 7%. But it felt "insanely hot" all the same, according to meteorologist Daniel Berc, who is based in the NWS Las Vegas bureau and forecast that the heat wave would continue all week.

"It's literally like being in an oven," he said in a telephone interview. "Today is another day we could take another run at 130F."

A temperature of 134F (56.7C) was recorded in Death Valley in July 1913. Some meteorologists dispute the older record, however, with recent research pointing to the likelihood it was the result of observer error.

"That's an official record until it's debunked through the scientific process and accepted by the World Meteorological Organization," Berc said.

The record comes as climate scientists warn of the dangers of a warming planet. Last month was the world's third-hottest July on record, and three of the hottest ever Julys all occurred within the last five years.

Sunday's temperature will undergo a formal review, Berc said. Technicians will check the thermometer out in Furnace Creek is working properly. The NWS will convene a so-called climate extremes committee to ensure there's no reason to doubt Sunday's data. -- **Reuters**

Source: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/world/751752/new-global-temperature-record-set-in-california-s-death-valley/story/>

Climate change could unleash new epidemics

By [Agence France-Presse](#)

August 17, 2020

Long-dormant viruses brought back to life, the resurgence of deadly and disfiguring smallpox, and a dengue or zika “season” in Europe.

These could be disaster movie storylines, but they are also serious and increasingly plausible scenarios of epidemics unleashed by global warming, scientists say.

The coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic that has swept the globe and claimed over 760,000 lives so far almost certainly came from a wild bat, highlighting the danger of humanity’s constant encroachment on the planet’s dwindling wild spaces.

But the expanding ecological footprint of our species could trigger epidemics in other ways too.

Climate change — already wreaking havoc with one degree Celsius of warming — is also emerging as a driver of infectious disease, whether by expanding the footprint of malaria- and dengue-carrying mosquitoes, or defrosting prehistoric pathogens from the Siberian permafrost.

“In my darkest moments, I see a really horrible future for Homo sapiens because we are an animal, and when we extend our borders things will happen to us,” said Birgitta Evengard, a researcher in clinical microbiology at Umea University in Sweden.

“Our biggest enemy is our own ignorance,” she added. “Nature is full of microorganisms.”

Think of permafrost, a climate change time bomb spread across Russia, Canada and Alaska that contains three times the carbon that has been emitted since the start of industrialization.

Even if humanity managed to cap global warming at under 2 degrees Celsius, the cornerstone goal of the 2015 Paris Agreement, the permafrost area would decrease by a quarter by 2100, according to the United Nations’ climate science panel, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

And then there are the permafrost’s hidden treasures.

“Microorganisms can survive in frozen space for a long, long time,” said Vladimir Romanovsky, a professor of geophysics at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.

As ground thaws, once-frozen soil particles, organic material and microorganisms that had been locked away for millennia are carried toward the surface by water flows, he explained.

There are already examples of ancient, long-frozen bugs coming to life.

“When you put a seed into soil that is then frozen for thousands of years, nothing happens,” said Jean-Michel Claverie, an emeritus professor of genomics at the School of Medicine of Aix-Marseille University in France.

“But when you warm the earth, the seed will be able to germinate,” he added. “That is similar to what happens with a virus.”

Claverie's lab has successfully revived Siberian viruses that are at least 30,000 years old.

These reanimated bugs only attack amoebas, but tens of thousands of years ago there were certainly others that aimed higher up the food chain.

“Neanderthals, mammoths, woolly rhinos all got sick, and many died,” said Claverie. “Some of the viruses that caused their sicknesses are probably still in the soil.”

The number of bacteria and viruses lurking in the permafrost is incalculable, but the more important question is how dangerous they are.

And here, scientists disagree.

“Anthrax shows that bacteria can be resting in permafrost for hundreds of years and be revived,” said Evengard.

In 2016, a child in Siberia died from the disease, which had disappeared from the region at least 75 years earlier.

Other pathogens — such as smallpox or the influenza strain that killed tens of millions in 1917 and 1918 — may also be present in the sub-Arctic region.

But they “have probably been inactivated,” Romanovsky concluded in a study published earlier this year.

For Claverie, however, the return of smallpox — officially declared eradicated 50 years ago — cannot be excluded. 18th- and 19th-century victims of the disease “buried in cemeteries in Siberia are totally preserved by the cold,” he noted.

The real danger, he added, lies in deeper strata where unknown pathogens that have not seen daylight for two million years or more may be exposed by global warming.

If there were no hosts for the bugs to infect there would not be a problem, but climate change, indirectly, has intervened here, as well.

“With the industrial exploitation of the Arctic, all the risk factors are there — pathogens and the people to carry them,” Claverie said.

The revival of ancient bacteria or viruses remains speculative, but climate change has already boosted the spread of diseases that kill about half a million people every year: malaria, dengue, chikungunya and zika.

For the moment, the signals for communicable tropical diseases “are worrying in terms of expanding vectors, not necessarily transmission,” said Cyril Caminade, an epidemiologist working on climate change at the Institute of Infection and Global Health at the University of Liverpool.

“That said, we’re only tasting the aperitif of climate change so far,” he added.

Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/08/17/news/top-stories/climate-change-could-unleash-new-epidemics/756542/>

China teenage climate warrior fights a lonely battle

August 17, 2020 By [Agence France-Presse](#) [People's Journal](#)



GUILIN, China, Aug 17, 2020 (AFP) - While most of her peers are preparing for university or enjoying summer vacation, 17-year-old Howey Ou is braving intimidation and criticism in China to save the world from climate catastrophe.

Young environmental activists around the world have skipped school to attend marches in protest at global inaction over climate change.

But in China, grassroots social movements are heavily suppressed by the government, and the movement is severely lacking in participants.

It has changed Ou's life though. She was inspired by Swedish teenage climate campaigner Greta Thunberg, and held her own week-long solo protest in May last year outside her local government buildings, gaining international recognition.

"The climate emergency is the biggest threat to the survival of mankind. I feel anxious every day about the climate and the extinction of animal species," said Ou, an intense figure who speaks in a fast monotone, reeling off a trove of scientific data from memory.

"I feel like we're all on a sinking ship but everyone is still eating, drinking and being merry."

While Thunberg has addressed global leaders at the UN Climate Action Summit and received awards for her work, the Chinese activist has been kicked out of school for refusing to give up her campaigning.

Known as Ou Hongyi in China, she has also faced run-ins with police, family pressure, and harsh online criticism.

But the teenager says it is her "life mission" to sound the alarm before it is too late.

She told AFP that although she "wasn't scared of the police", her parents were under pressure from authorities.

"After I was interrogated by the police, my parents tried to stop me by all means, such as by keeping me at home, not letting me accept interviews or take part in the climate movement, and searching my electronic devices," she said.

"One day I argued with them for eight hours. I found it very difficult and painful."

After her protest outside the government offices, she started planting trees in the surroundings of Guilin, the southern Chinese city where she lives, and studied methods of non-violent protest, poring over the works of Mahatma Gandhi.

She has also tried to recruit more young people to join her cause, but most of the time she is a lone figure, carrying hand-painted placards as people walk by, oblivious.

‘Never oppose the government’

As her campaigning attracted more attention, Ou chose to move out of her family home — highly unusual for a minor in China — and now lives alone at a hostel in Guilin.

Her parents worry about her safety, and her father is anxious that she may be lagging behind her peers due to start university.

“I don’t see a future for her if she stays on this road,” her father, who did not wish to be named, told AFP.

“I warned her never to oppose the government and the Party in her activism.”

Ou, however, insists she is not trying to go against authorities, and sees it instead as “a question of morality”.

Lone journey

Ou has thousands of followers on social media but has struggled to find wider support within China. Last summer she travelled solo around the country on a shoestring, meeting with environmental NGOs and activists.

But she says many had little understanding of the climate crisis — and the journey formed the loneliest period of her life.

“I didn’t know the way and didn’t know what kinds of people in China would support me... I felt like I was in a very open and empty place, isolated and cut off from support,” she recalled.

Then last October, she faced criticism from millions online when a German media interview with her went viral on Chinese social media.

Many accused her of attention-seeking and “armchair activism”, while others made unflattering comparisons to Thunberg, who is a frequent object of ridicule on the Chinese internet.

She avoided social media for several months after that.

During the hardest moments, Ou says she drew comfort and strength from the spectacular natural scenery in her hometown — something she has enjoyed since childhood.

“My reconnection with nature helped me to see my own value,” she said.

Ou believes the Chinese public are either ignorant or dismissive of the climate crisis, but she still hopes to build a youth movement, like her idol Thunberg.

“There are many young Chinese people who may only need a bit of encouragement to bravely step forward. But if my voice does not reach them... we can’t unite,” she said.

Offshore refuelling deepens fears for S. Africa's penguin haven

Published August 17, 2020, 1:59 PM

by [Andrea Aro](#)

Generators hum loudly in the background as a tour boat bobs past a towering vessel filled with ship fuel, anchored in Algoa Bay, a stone's throw away from the world's largest breeding colony of African penguins.



A colony of penguins is seen on St. Croix island in Algoa Bay outside Port Elizabeth, on July 08, 2020. (Photo by MARCO LONGARI / AFP)

Mid-way along the Europe-Asia sea route, the bay's deep-water port was an obvious choice for South Africa's first offshore bunkering operation.

Since 2016, mostly cargo ships have pulled in for ship-to-ship (STS) refuelling, allowing them to carry more freight, bypass port fees and save time.

But conservationists, ecotour operators and nature lovers are alarmed about the long-term impact in a marine biodiversity hotspot and major foreign tourist magnet.

They claim the bunkering takes place too close to foraging and breeding grounds, disrupting the ecosystem and exposing sea animals to oil spills.

The risk has been highlighted by the catastrophic oil spill which began earlier this month into a protected marine park off the pristine coastline of Mauritius, after a bulk carrier ran aground on July 25.

With the main storage tanker in Algoa Bay able to hold 100,000 metric tons of fuel, opponents fear a potentially massive leak.

In two minor spills, in 2017 and 2019, rangers rescued dozens of oil-tarred penguins.

Scientists are also studying whether the noise, pollution and increased ship traffic could affect the marine animals.

They are particularly worried that vibrations caused by the activity may drive away those that rely on sonar to hunt fish.

"This is too close to the Marine Protected Area, there are too many risks involved..." warned environmental scientist Ronelle Friend, of the Algoa Bay Conservation community group, calling for an end to bunkering in the bay.

Follow the sardines

Algoa Bay — an inlet off the city of Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape province — is home to myriad species of seabirds, including just under half the global population of African penguins, classed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

The world's largest group of bottlenose dolphins was recorded in the bay in 2018, according to a report last year by the Port Elizabeth-based Nelson Mandela University.

Offshore refuelling deepens fears for S. Africa's

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The site is also on the path of an annual sardine run, touted as one of the planet's most spectacular marine events.

"This (bunkering) operation is slap-bang in the middle of a hotspot for bait fish that birds feed on," said veteran whale watcher and tour operator Lloyd Edwards, who has run his Raggy Charters marine tours in the area for over two decades.

"People used to be blown away by the amount of animals we had in this bay," he said, adding he'd noticed that certain whale species were not easy to spot since the STS refuelling started. "They have all moved away," he complained, blaming the noise.

'Safe, regulated, environmentally friendly'

Three maritime companies have acquired bunkering licences since 2016.

Between them, they operate the main storage vessel and up to seven smaller bunker barges, according to Kosta Argyros, the South Africa representative for one of the three, Minerva Bunkering.

Sat on a key trade route, sea traffic has increased as a result of the fuelling hub, conservationists said.

Argyros stressed that bunkering was a "safe operation" in a "very regulated industry". When "two vessels are tied together they become like one entity," he told AFP.

"This is environmentally friendly no matter what the people say."

South African Marine Fuels, which was behind the July 2019 spill, said it "occurred due to an overflowing tank of the receiving vessel" and that between 200 and 400 litres (53 and 106 gallons) of oil fell into the sea.

The company "is highly committed to the safety of its operations and responsibility to people and the environment," it said in a statement to AFP.

Heron Marine, the third licensed company, said it operated according to all health, safety and environmental regulations.

Sludge-covered penguins

About 100 oiled penguins were recovered from last year's spill.

Seabird scientist Lorien Pichegru said that, while damage from the incident had been limited, bunkering posed yet another threat to a species whose global population fell below 40,000 last year.

"The oil on their feathers takes away their waterproofness," said the Nelson Mandela University researcher, who has been studying African penguins in Algoa Bay since 2007.

Eventually they die of "starvation and cold", plus oiled adults tend to abandon their eggs and chicks, she added.

In attempting to clean themselves, the birds also ingest toxins shown to damage their internal organs and breeding capacity.

African penguins, distinct by their bray-like call and black horseshoe marking across their chest, only breed in South Africa and Namibia but are found in Mozambique too.

Over three decades, their numbers have fallen by more than 60 percent due to climate change, oil spills, human activity, overfishing and habitat destruction, experts say.

In Algoa Bay, the population has also fallen sharply — from 10,900 breeding pairs in 2015, to 6,100 in 2019, according to figures from South Africa's Environmental Affairs department.

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"Any additional threat to them might kill the entire species," Pichegru warned.

Bad vibrations?

Parts of Algoa Bay last year were declared a Marine Protected Area.

The 2019 university report on the Eastern Cape coastline, centred around the bay, also highlighted that it was a foraging area for seabirds, sharks, cetaceans and turtles, on the migration route for loggerhead and leatherback turtles and home to the world's largest Cape gannet colony.

However, scientists and conservationists say they have observed changes in animal behaviour which they suspect are a consequence of bunkering activity — even without spillage.

"We think the noise of the engines disrupts the penguins' and dolphins' ability to find fish," said Gary Koekemoer, who heads the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa in Algoa Bay.

"Any animal that is using sonar or sound to locate its prey will have difficulty navigating with the vibration from the engines."

Jobs at stake

The loss of marine life could be devastating for tourism.

Ocean safaris have boomed in recent years, with visitors contributing more than nine billion rand (\$507 million) to the surrounding Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB) municipality in 2018.

Tourism generates some 40,000 direct and indirect jobs in the area, according to municipal figures.

"Beaches and wildlife are the two big drawcards for visitors and... offshore bunkering is bound to impact both of those," Shaun Fitzhenry, NMB Tourism board chairman, said.

The South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA), which licensed the bunkering operators, said STS refuelling generated employment but had to be balanced with environmental concerns.

"We need to sustain the protected area, but we need to use the opportunity to develop the economy," SAMSA acting chief executive Sobantu Tilayi told AFP.

"That is the balance we keep navigating around."

Since the 2019 spill, bunkering times have been limited, barges carry more oil containment booms and several response boats are on constant standby in case another leak occurs.

Kevin Kelly, owner of oil spill response company Xtreme Projects, agreed that bunkering had created "a lot" of jobs and a budding ship chandler industry.

But, out at sea, skipper Jake Keeton frowns, concerned at the sight of an unusually small cluster of penguins nesting on the outcrops of a rocky island.

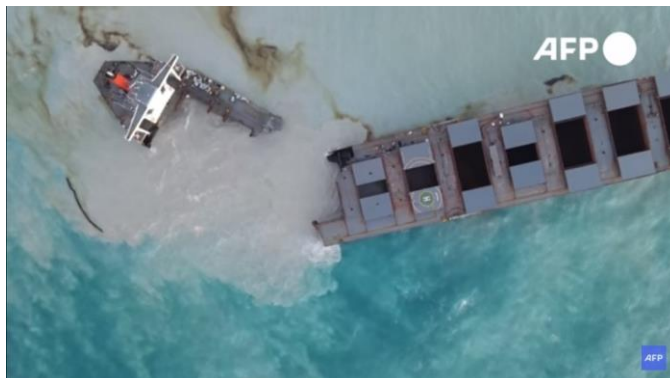
"Penguins push fish together into a bait ball that allows everything else to feed," he said.

"So if we lose the penguins here, dolphins, seals, gannets, cormorants and all your other seabirds will struggle."

Ship that oozed oil splits in two

Published 1 day ago on August 17, 2020 01:49 AM

By [Agence France-Presse](#)



The bulk carrier MV Wakashio. (AFP photo)

PORT LOUIS, Mauritius — A ship that has leaked more than 1,000 tons of oil in pristine waters off the coast of Mauritius has split in two.

The bulk carrier MV Wakashio ran aground on a coral reef off the southeastern coast of Mauritius on 25 July and began oozing oil more than a week later, threatening a protected marine park boasting mangrove forests and endangered species.

Mauritius declared an environmental emergency and salvage crews raced against the clock to pump the remaining 3,000 tons of oil off the stricken vessel.

“It was confirmed on August 15 that the vessel has broken into two,” the ship’s operator Mitsui OSK Lines said in a statement Sunday, noting that the information came from the vessel’s owner, Nagashiki Shipping.

The split was caused by a crack in a cargo hold on its stern side, Mitsui said.

Officials had been preparing for the development for days, and images taken Saturday indicated it was inevitable, with the two pieces only partially attached.

‘Worst ecological disaster’

Nearly all the remaining 3,000 tons of oil had been pumped off the ship by that time, though there were still 90 tons on board, much of it residue from the leakage.

Mitsui noted Sunday that “an amount of unrecovered oil is believed to have leaked out of the vessel”, without providing details.

Thousands of Mauritians have volunteered day and night to clean the powder-blue waters that have long been a favorite among honeymooners and tourists.

The spill is both an environmental and economic disaster for Mauritius, which relies heavily on tourism.

The spill already qualifies as the “worst ecological disaster” for the Indian Ocean island nation, Greenpeace Africa campaigner Happy Khambule said, adding that it “puts unique species under immediate threats”.

Now that the ship has split, the salvage team intends to pull the front two-thirds out to sea using two tugboats to avoid further damage to the Mauritian coastline, a police official in the capital Port Louis told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief the media.

The remaining portion is still stuck on the reef and officials have not yet determined how they might remove it, the official said.

That portion includes the ship's engine room, which still contains 30 cubic meters of oil, and rough weather will complicate efforts to pump that oil out, according to a statement Sunday from the Mauritian crisis committee formed to respond to the spill.

The crisis committee expects rough weather for the next five days, "with high energy swells of a maximum height of 3.5 meters (11 feet)", the statement said.

Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth has come under fire, including from opposition leaders, for doing too little after the ship ran aground.

His government has vowed to seek compensation from the owner and the insurer of the ship for "all losses and damages" caused by the spill as well as clean-up costs.

Nagashiki, the owner, has pledged to "sincerely" respond to requests for compensation over damage to the marine environment.

Japanese Environment Minister Shinjiro Koizumi said he planned to dispatch a team of environment ministry officials and other experts to Mauritius.

"We regard this as a significant crisis that could result in the loss of biodiversity," he told reporters in Tokyo on Saturday.

"We are making arrangements to dispatch a team of experts and environmental ministry officials so that we can swiftly assess what the ministry can do," he said.

Global clean-up effort

France is also contributing to the relief effort, and Sebastian Lecornu, minister of overseas territories, visited Mauritius Sunday to supervise the team sent to help mitigate the effects of the pollution.

He stopped first on nearby Reunion Island, and warned of the possibility that some oil could reach there.

"We remain vigilant about the fate of the wreck and the impact on our coasts," he said on Twitter.

A 10-member team from India's coast guard also arrived on the island Sunday with 28 tonnes of equipment including booms, barges and skimmers.

As of Sunday more than 800 tonnes of oil liquid waste and more than 400 tonnes of solid waste sludge and debris had been removed from the ocean.

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Three polar bears are seen on the Beaufort Sea coast within the 1002 Area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in this undated handout photo provided by the US Fish and Wildlife Service Alaska Image Library on December 21, 2005. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Alaska Image Library/Handout via REUTERS

Trump administration finalizes oil drilling plan in Alaska wildlife refuge

Published August 18, 2020 6:32am

By NICHOLA GROOM, Reuters

The Trump administration on Monday finalized a plan to allow oil and gas drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, putting it on track to issue decades-long leases in the pristine wilderness area before a potential change in US leadership.

The energy industry and Alaska Governor Michael Dunleavy said opening ANWR to drilling would create jobs and boost the state's economy, which is reliant on oil production. Democrats including presidential hopeful Joe Biden and green groups criticized the move as a giveaway to Big Oil that would harm the Arctic's unique ecosystem and native people.

The Interior Department could hold a sale of oil and gas leases in ANWR by the end of the year, Secretary David Bernhardt said on a conference call with reporters.

A Republican-passed tax bill in 2017 opened the area to oil and gas leasing, a key pillar of US President Donald Trump's agenda to expand fossil fuel production. However, lease sales in the state have been weak for most of the last decade, and statewide production has dropped steadily for the past 30 years.

If found, oil production could begin in ANWR in about eight years, Bernhardt said, with activity lasting about 50 years.

The 19 million acre (7.7 million hectares) refuge is home to wildlife populations including Porcupine caribou and polar bears and has been off-limits to drilling for decades. In recent months, several big US banks have said recently they will not finance oil and gas projects in the Arctic region.

The sloping terrain and lack of water makes ANWR less advantageous for drilling activity than the National Petroleum Reserve, or NPR-A, which occupies the westernmost part of the North Slope, scientists have said.

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The Gwich'in Steering Committee, which represents tribes that depend on the caribou for subsistence, tweeted that "the fight to protect the calving grounds of the Porcupine caribou is not over."

ANWR has been tested only once for the potential to extract fossil fuels. Bernhardt said companies would bid on leases despite a lack of seismic testing that is a precursor to drilling. A year-end sale could thwart subsequent efforts by a potential Democratic administration in 2021 to stop drilling in ANWR.

"I'm not really driven by the political dynamics" of the Nov. 3 presidential election, Bernhardt said.

Polls show the incumbent Republican Trump trailing challenger Biden, a Democrat. In a statement, Biden campaign spokesman Matt Hill said that if elected, the former vice president would permanently protect ANWR.

Environmental group Earthjustice quickly promised to launch a legal challenge.

Asked about the possibility of lawsuits, Bernhardt said he was "very comfortable with the lines that we drew in this case."

Alaskan oil production has dwindled in the last three decades. The state currently produces roughly 500,000 barrels per day of crude oil, down from more than 2 million bpd in 1988, according to US Energy Department figures. -- **Reuters**