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DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



DENR: PH lacks sanitary landfills with only 108 nationwide

By ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

Only 108 sanitary landfills or six percent of the total required number of landfills nationwide have been established 20 years after the Republic Act (RA) No. 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act) took in effect.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units (LGUs) Concerns Benny Antiporda said the number of sanitary landfills in the country remains small.

"What we need in this country is about 1,700 sanitary landfills for all the municipalities and cities. But, sad to say, we only have 108 as of the moment and this number could even decrease in the future," he pointed out.

"Our sanitary landfills are filled up and what happens next is some might go back to open dumpsite, which is illegal under RA 9003. We will not allow this to happen," he added.

Sanitary landfill is the primary long-term method of solid waste disposal allowed under RA 9003.

Antiporda further noted that under the law, sanitary landfill is required in any LGU as a means of safe disposal of untreated solid waste or resource recovery residuals.

The DENR is looking at more engineered sanitary landfills that will be built before 2022 to address the growing problem of solid waste management in the country.

An "engineered" method of landfilling means that garbage is handled at a disposal facility that is designed, constructed, and operated in a manner protective of public health and the environment.

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu earlier ordered Antiporda, who also chairs the National Solid Waste Management Commission, to "review and revise" DENR Administrative Order 2001-34 or the implementing rules and regulations of RA 9003 to make the establishment and operation of a sanitary landfill easier and less expensive.

The DENR chief noted that a lot of LGUs find it difficult to comply with the law as building and maintaining a sanitary landfill can be costly and somewhat complicated.



Phl needs more sanitary landfills

By **Marla Romero**
@tribunephil_mbr

To address the growing problem of solid waste management, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is seeking to establish more engineered sanitary landfills

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Phl needs more sanitary landfills

Under the RA 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, a sanitary landfill is the primary long-term method of solid waste disposal

From page A1

before President Rodrigo Duterte's term ends in 2022.

Benny Antiporda, Environment Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units Concerns, yesterday said the government is now ramping up the construction of landfills to ensure the safe disposal of untreated solid waste or resource recovery residuals nationwide.

This statement came after the DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ordered Antiporda to "review and revise" DENR Administrative Order 2001-34 or the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9003 to make the establishment and

operation of a sanitary landfill easier and less expensive.

The DENR chief said a lot of LGU find it difficult to comply with the law as building and maintaining a sanitary landfill can be costly and complicated.

Antiporda noted the number of sanitary landfills in the country remains small even after 20 years since RA 9003, or the law that provides for an ecological solid waste management program, took effect.

"What we need in this country are about 1,700 sanitary landfills for all the municipalities and cities. But, sad to say, we only have 108 as of the moment and this number could even decrease in the future," he said.

"Our sanitary landfills are already filled

and what happens next is, some might go back to open dumpsite, which is illegal under the law. We will not allow this to happen," he added.

Under the RA 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, a sanitary landfill is the primary long-term method of solid waste disposal.

The law mandates every local government unit to secure sanitary landfills that utilizes an engineered method of waste disposal, primarily for municipal solid waste.

An "engineered" method of landfilling means that garbage is handled at a disposal facility that is designed, constructed and operated in a manner protective of public health and the environment.



Tugon sa problema ng solid waste management

Ni Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz

TANGING 108 sanitary landfills o anim na porsiyento ng itinakdang kabuuang bilang ng landfill sa bansa ang naitatag sa nakalipas na 20 taon matapos ipatupad ang Republic Act 9003 o Ecological Solid Waste Management Act.

Ibinahagi ni Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary for Solid

Waste Management and Local Government Units (LGU) Concerns Benny Antiporda na nanatiling maliit lamang ang bilang ng mga sanitary landfill sa bansa.

"What we need in this country is about 1,700 sanitary landfills for all the municipalities and cities. But, sad to say, we only have 108 as of the moment and this number could even decrease in the future," pagbibigay diin ng opisyal.

"Our sanitary landfill are filled up and what happens next is some might go back to open dumpsite, which is illegal under RA 9003. We will not allow this to happen," dagdag pa nito.

Ang sanitary landfill ay isang

pangunahing panmatagalang solusyon para sa solid waste disposal na pinahihintulutan ng RA 9003.

Nabanggit din ni Antiporda na sa ilalim ng batas, inakailangan ang isang sanitary landfill sa anumang LGU bilang paraan ng safe disposal ng mga untreated solid waste o resource recovery residuals.

Sa ngayon, tinitingnan na ng DENR ang pagtatayo ng mas maraming engineered sanitary landfills na itatayo bago 2022, upang matugunan ang lumalagong problema ng bansa sa solid waste management.

Gamit ang "engineered" method of landfilling, dadalhin ang mga basura sa isang disposal facility na

nakadiseno, itinayo at patatakbuhan sa paraang ligtas mula sa kalusugan ng publiko at sa kalikasan.

Una nang ipinag-utos ni DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, na siya ring pinuno ng National Solid Waste Management Commission, na i-"review and revise" ang DENR Administrative Order 2001-34 o ang implementing rules at regulations ng RA 9003 upang mas mapadala at mas mura ang pagtatayo ng mga sanitary landfill.

Binigyang-diin naman ng DENR chief, na maraming LGU ang nahihirapang makasunod sa batas lalo't magastos at komplikado ang pagpapanatili ng isang sanitary landfill.



MASAlamin ni Ed Cordevilla

16TH GAWAD TANGLAW BEST
NEWSPAPER OPINION COLUMNIST

NAGING saksi tayo, mga kamasa, sa isang teknolohiyang pambihira at tunay na makakalikasan. Naniniwala nga ang inyong lingkod na ito na ang matagal nang hinihintay ng bansa tungo sa mas feasible na sistema ukol sa waste management.

Sa Filipinas kasi ay may batas na umiiral, ang Republic Act 9003 o ang 'Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000', kung saan minamanduhan ang mga local government unit na magkaroon ng kani-kanilang engineered sanitary landfill. Ngunit imbes na masunod ito ay naglipana ang mga dumpsite na napakabaho at pinagmumulan ng

mga iba't ibang uri ng sakit, mula sa respiratory disease hanggang sa sakit sa balat.

Ang iba naman ay nauwi sa pagsusunog ng mga basura. Ang parehong practice na ito ay ipinagbabawal sa ilalim ng R.A. 9003. Bakit ba parang napakahirap sundin ang nasabing batas? Una po ay napakamahal na mag-construct ng isang tunay na engineered sanitary landfill, ikalawa ay napakamahal ding i-maintain niyan.

Ang masaklap pa nito, ang mga basurang nanggagaling sa mga ospital na may dalang sari-saring sakit ay karaniwang ibinabaon na lamang sa lupa. Ito ay ma-

HI-TECH NA WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

panganib at nagbabadya pang maaaring may sumabog na epidemya sa ating mga komunidad dahil sa mapanganib na practice na iyan.

Kasama nga si Quezon City Councilor Hero Clarence M. Bautista, na siyang chairman ng Sangguniang Panglungsod Committee on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction; Barangay Commonwealth Chairman Manny Co; mga kinatawan ng Nissho Global Solutions Incorporated; at mga eksperto mula sa bansang Japan, ay nasaksihan natin kung paanong ang tone-toneladang basura ay naglamang nang wala man lamang usok.

Ang mala-milagrosong makinarya ay

tinatawag na Organic Magnetic Pyrolysis Energy Conversion Equipment na mula sa bansang Hapon. Ang nasabing equipment ay tumutulong sa mas epektibo at murang pag-dispose ng residual waste na mula sa mga tahanan, factory, fast food chain, restaurant at mga hospital. Tumutulong din ang nasabing equipment sa pagprotektang sa kapaligiran at upang mapababa ang greenhouse gases sa bansa.

Sa pamamagitan ng breakthrough technology na ito sa waste management, ang lahat ng LGUs sa buong bansa ay mas reyalistiko nang makasusunod sa R.A. 9003. Ang isa pang advantage nito, kung ang isang landfill ay nangangailangan ng

ekta-ektaryang lupain para maging bagsakan ng basura, ang nasabing equipment ay mangan-gailangan lamang ng wala pa sa 60 square meter para paglagakan nito.

Matagumpay ang isinagawang test-run na ito sa Barangay Commonwealth, at nakita natin ang tuwa kina Councilor Bautista at Chairman Co dahil natagpuan na ang mahusay na katuwang para sa waste management hindi lamang para sa siyudad ng Quezon kundi para sa buong bansa, isang system at teknolohiya na hindi nakasisira sa kapaligiran at kalikasan, bagkus ay nakalilinis at nakatutulong upang gawin at mapanatiling ligtas ang mga ito para sa maiging kalusugan ng mga mamamayan.



**DILG OK
SA P1-M
PREMYO SA
MALINIS NA
BARANGAY**
BASAHIN SA PAHINA 4

**DILG OK SA P1-M PREMYO
SA MALINIS NA BARANGAY**

QUEZON CITY - PINA-PAYAGAN ng Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) ang pagkakaloob ng P1 million premyo sa pinakamalinis na barangay.

Paglililinaw ito sa plano ni Manila Mayor Isko Moreno na magbigay ng nasabing halaga sa mapipiling pinakamalinis at maayos na barangay sa buong Maynila.

Ayon sa pamunuan ng DILG hinahayaan ang P1 million premyo sa mga local government subalit mariin nitong nilinaw na gagamitin lamang ito para sa kanilang clean and green projects at pagsasaayos ng mga solid waste management facility.

Ang mga criteria o pamantayan sa timpalak ay: 30% sa segregation ng mga basura, 20% kailangang may material recovery facility, 20% mayroong greening program, 15%

may isinagawang barangay consultation at 15% para sa barangay clean-up.

Ang mga kinatawan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), DILG, Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) at Department of Science and

Technology (DOST) ang magba-validate ng shortlist bago ibigay kay Moreno.

Ang cash prize ay gagamitin ng mga chairman sa pagsasaayos at improvement ng kanilang Barangay Solid Waste Management.

VERLIN RUIZ



WILDLIFE TRADE

The Asean Centre for Biodiversity has advised organizations involved in the rescue of wild animals to take extra precaution and follow the World Health Organization's recommended measures to avoid contracting the deadly virus.

"While wild animals can carry organisms that could be pathogenic to humans, some can still appear healthy, especially if they are the natural hosts," said Theresita Mundita Lim, executive director of the ACB.

Lim is an authority on wildlife, a former chair of the Asean Wildlife Enforcement Network and former director of the Biodiversity Management Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Scientists have linked the novel coronavirus to a seafood market in Wuhan selling exotic live mammals, including bats and civet cats, which have previously been linked to the 2003 SARS outbreak. — *With Paul Icamina*



#nationataglance



DENR-DAVAO

DAVAO: DIGOS CITY, DAVAO DEL SUR

Confiscated lumber donated to earthquake victims

LUMBER confiscated through the government's anti-illegal logging operations have been donated to Davao del Sur province for distribution to families affected by the series of earthquakes in Mindanao last year, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Davao Region office said in a statement Monday. The timber, totalling 31,892.54 board feet, came from the DENR regional offices in Davao and Caraga. DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu issued a directive last year to its Mindanao offices to release confiscated lumber to help Mindanao earthquake victims rebuild their homes. DENR Undersecretary for Enforcement and Muslim Affairs Jim O. Sampulna said during the Deed of Donation signing that the move is a demonstration that the agency's "mission is not only to have a cleaner and greener environment, but it also includes looking at the welfare of the people." Davao del Sur was among the hardest hit areas by the series of earthquakes that shook Mindanao in the last quarter of 2019, the strongest of which had a 6.9 magnitude with the epicenter in the province's Matanao town. Latest data from the national disaster management council show over 32,000 families remain displaced, of which 9,269 are still staying in evacuation centers as of January. A total of 45,085 houses were damaged, with 7,324 totally destroyed.



1 LITRO TUBIG CHALLENGE!

NOONG November 2019 sinusuportahan ni executive director Dr. Seville David, Jr. ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) ang proyektong 'OPLAN TUBIG PARA SA KINABUKASAN' na kasama rin ang Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), at Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS).

Sa tatlong bagay nakasentro ang programa, ang MAKIBALITA, MAGHANDA at MAGKAISA.

Hinihikayat ng mga government stakeholder ang

mga mamamayan na alaming mabuti ang mga dapat nilang gawin sa oras ng kawalan ng tubig. Dapat masanay silang palagiang tingnan ang mga official social media pages ng NWRB, MMDA, DILG at MWSS para sa mga up-to-date na mga impormasyon at kaganapan kaugnay sa tubig sa inyong lugar. Iwasan ang pagpatol sa mga fake news na naglilipana.

Base sa Hydrological Information ng Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (PDRRMC), nasa 202.77 meters ang level ng tubig sa Angat Dam, base sa pinakahuling ulat (Enero 31, 2020, 8:00AM).

Humigit na sa Angat Dam's Minimum Operating Water Level (MOWL) of 180

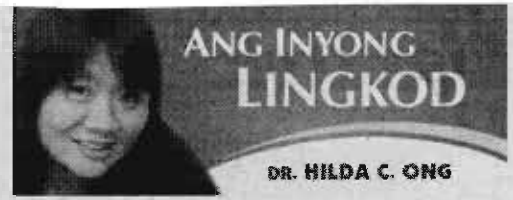
meters, ngunit hindi pa natin naabot ang inaasam na target goal na 212.00 meters, kaya kinakailangan ang pagtitipid upang may magamit sa panahon ng tag-init.

Dapat tayong magkaisa bilang mga mamamayan na magtipid sa tubig at gamitin ito sa tamang pangangailangan lamang.

Sa mga bahay, sabayang paghuhugas ng mga pinggan at iba pang gamit sa kusina gamit ang planggana.

Ang pinagbanlawan ay itabi dahil maaaring gamiting pambuhos sa banyo, panlinis sa mga sasakyan o sahig, o kaya'y pandilig sa mga halaman.

Gawin din ito kapag naglalaba ng mga damit. Huwag na rin munang gumamit ng



shower sa paliligo para kontrolado lamang ang tubig na magagamit.

Ang mga restaurant naman o karinderya, huwag na munang awtomatikong magdala ng tubig-inumin, kadalasan ay hindi ginagalaw ito ng mga kostumer. Hintayin na humingi sila tsaka magbigay para makatipid sa tubig.

Katulad ng nasabi ko na, dapat ay may rain harvester na ang mga business establishment para tubig-ulan ang gamitin nila sa kanilang mga palikuran katulad ng malls, supermarket, mga pabrika at iba pa.

Sabi nga ni Dr. David, kung susundin lamang ang tatlong 'M' na nabanggit natin, sigurado siyang makakayanan ang kakulangan ng supply sa tubig o maging krisis man ito.

Sa ngayon, ang mga mayor, vice mayor at mga government official ay sumasali sa "1L TUBIG CHALLENGE", kung saan ipinapakita nila kung papaano ang pagtitipid at pinagkakasya ang isang litrong tubig sa iba't ibang gawain sa bahay upang ipakita sa publiko ang tamang paggamit ng tubig at paghahanda sa pagpasok ng tag-init.



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SCREENING PROCESS

CHINA 'SLOW' IN PROVIDING LOANS FOR PH INFRA PROJECTS

By Ben O. de Vera
@bendeveraINQ

Japan is beating China in providing financial assistance to the Duterte administration's ambitious "Build, Build, Build" infrastructure program as Beijing itself had been slow in approving financing deals, the country's chief economist said.

"They (the Chinese government) are the ones slow, the processes from their part," Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ernesto M. Pernia said when asked why Chinese financing for big-ticket infrastructure projects were not coming in as fast as they should.

Pernia, who heads the state planning agency National Economic and Development Authority (Neda), said it would help if the Chinese side would push through with their proposal to regularly conduct meetings with Philippine officials to fast-track infrastructure partnership.

Huang Xilian, China's new ambassador to the Philippines, last December told Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III that the Chinese government wanted to institutionalize meetings between the two countries "to thresh out issues involving the Duterte administration's big-ticket infrastructure and development projects that are being implemented with funding support from China," the Department of Finance earlier said.

In contrast, the Philippines-Japan Joint Committee on Infrastructure Development and Economic Cooperation already held nine meetings since 2017, with another one scheduled in Bohol during the first half of 2020.

Another reason mentioned by Pernia that led to a slow inflow of official development assistance (ODA) coming from China was the Philippines' own doing—"we have been very cautious and strict in scrutinizing" potential loan agreements and their implementation contracts.

"We have the screening process on the China level and also on the Philippine side. They have to submit to us three names of companies that are reputable—no record of 'monkey business' before—and really credible. On our side, we also have to screen in terms of selecting the best of the three. So it has been rather slow," Pernia explained to members of the Nordic Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines.

Pernia was referring to the guidelines **B3**

CHINA 'SLOW' IN PROVIDING LOANS

FROM B1 issued by Neda's Investment Coordination Committee (ICC) in 2016, which detailed how contractors of China-assisted projects would be chosen as the economic team wanted to avoid a repeat of the ZTE and the Northrail debacles—anomaly-laden projects entered into with Chinese firms by former President Arroyo.

"The only China-funded project now actually going on is the Chico River Irrigation project in Cagayan. There's another one, Kaliwa Dam, but that has just barely started," Pernia said.

As for the Japanese government, Pernia said its aid arm, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica), has been disbursing ODA "much faster" than China did. "We have so many ongoing projects now being funded by Japan." INQ



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UNTV Cup: Judiciary gets last semis ticket

Two-time champion Judiciary outlasted Philippine International Trading Center (PITC), 65-55, in their do-or-die duel to clinch the fourth and last semis ticket in the 8th UNTV Cup held over the weekend at the Paco Arena in Manila.

The Judiciary Magis finally pulled away from a tight contest after former PBA players Warren Ybanez and Chester Tolomia connived with Eric Dionisio in a telling run to prevail and complete the semis cast in the annual tournament organized by UNTV President and CEO Dr. Daniel Razon for public servants.

Judiciary's victory earned for itself a semis date with No. 1 seed and defending champion Armed Forces of the Philippines starting this Sunday also at the same venue.

The other semis pairing — also a best-of-three affair — will have No. 2 seed Department of Environment and Natural Resources going up against National Housing Authority.

A tax-free P4 million grand prize will go to the chosen charity of the championship at the end of the once-a-week tourney next month. The runner-up's own charity will receive P2 million.

Frederick Salamat and Ybanez, who carried the fight for the Magis in the first half, finished with 16 and 15 points, respectively, while Tolomia added 12 and Dionisio 8 in posting their 7th win in 12 games after the quarterfinal round.



Judiciary completes UNTV Cup semis cast

**Games Sunday
(Paco Arena)**

**3:30 p.m. – DENR vs NHA
5 p.m. – AFP vs Judiciary**

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Department of Agriculture also finished with a 7-5 record following an 87-83 win over NHA early in the day but Judiciary took the last semis berth due to the winner over the other rule.

AFP and DENR advanced outright to the semis after finishing 1-2 in the two-stage elimination round.

The scores:

DA 87 - Fernandez 27, Dematera 16, Mastelero 13, Casaysayan 12, Silva 11, Hassan 4, Lim 2, Comercias 2.

NHA 83 - Prado 22, Vitug 14, Lust-estica 10, Tibay 9, J. Dizon 8, Tibay 8, Mercado 4, Crisostomo 3, Forbes 2, M. Dizon 2, Alastoy 1.

Quarters: 12-18, 38-34, 62-57, 87-83

Second Game

JUDICIARY 65 - Salamat 16, Ybanez 14, Tolomia 12, Dionisio 8, Dela Cruz 7, Bergonio 5, Marquez 3, Puno 0, Serrano 0, Mustre 0.

PITC 55 - Vasallo 19, Porto 15, Taplah 10, Lopez 6, Martin 5, Regalado 0, Juan 0, Barbers 0, Gecale 0, Almari-
nez 0.

Quarters: 24-15, 34-31, 48-46, 65-55



Magis nail last UNTV semis berth

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DA monitors migratory birds amid China bird flu

By **LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON**

Authorities ordered a strict surveillance of critical areas after an outbreak of a virulent strain of bird flu in China, which threatens the poultry industry should it enter the country.

At a briefing yesterday, chief veterinarian and Bureau of Animal Industry director Ronnie Domingo said the Department of Agriculture (DA) is monitoring wetlands and possible landing areas of migratory birds that may be carriers of the avian influenza virus.

"Our regular surveillance is continuous. We are looking at the landing areas of migra-

tory birds. These can be the entry points because we have already banned the countries with bird flu," Domingo said.

"Last year, we tested 9,000 samples and all those tested negative. We continuously do that, we get samples. There are 65 critical areas that we are looking at where there are lots of migratory birds like the Candaba swamp," he added.

Apart from the Candaba swamp in Pampanga, other wetlands in the country where migratory birds go include Buguey Wetlands in Cagayan, Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area, Naujan Lake in Mindoro, Olan-go Island in Cebu and Agusan Marsh in Agusan del Sur.

"Once it gets cold, migra-

tory birds start flying around and it really depends on where they will arrive," Domingo said.

While there are more than 190 subtypes of the avian influenza or bird flu, the highly pathogenic H5N1 is a killer strain as this can be transferred to humans. This is the same strain that recently killed 4,500 chickens in Shaoyang City of central Hunan province in China.

H5N1 is an avian influenza first detected in 1996 in geese in China. By the following year, the virus was detected in humans during a poultry outbreak in Hong Kong.

The virus reemerged in birds and other animals in 2003. It then affected people in "rare, sporadic" instances

in 50 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East, according to the United States' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Philippines also had to deal with bird flu in 2017 but it was the H5N6 strain that does not affect humans.

It was the first ever bird flu incident in the Philippines that killed 37,000 birds while about 600,000 more were culled following protocol. Affected areas were Pampanga and Nueva Ecija.

DA at the time suspected that the virus was either transmitted by migratory birds or through smuggling of Peking duck at the Subic Port.

Health officials in Zamboanga City are monitoring

the swarm of barn swallows and other migratory birds from China that nest in local swamps amid the recent outbreak of H5N6 avian influenza or bird flu in Chinese provinces.

Assistant city veterinarian Agbayani Arnedo said local officials were concerned over the bird flu that could also infect humans unlike African swine fever (ASF).

The latest outbreak of bird flu was reported in Hunan province last week.

Arnedo allayed fears that the swarms of barn swallows nightly perching on the labyrinth of electric and cable lines and the migratory birds nesting in mangrove areas are already considered "resident"

birds and no longer migratory, thus are not carriers of the influenza virus.

City health officials are also conducting regular fecal sampling on the birds to determine if they are carriers of avian flu," Arnedo said based on the 2015 inventory of the wildlife bureau of Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) the estimated number of barn swallows is listed at more than 300,000 and a lesser number has been monitored last year.

He said the DENR regional office continuously monitors the birds that seasonally migrate during the last quarter of the year, coming from the north toward Australia.

- With Roel Pareño



HIGHLY PATHOGENIC STRAIN OF H5N1 TYPE

PH ON ALERT AGAINST BIRD FLU AS ANOTHER OUTBREAK

REPORTED IN CHINA

Government efforts are being maintained to keep the Philippines free from avian flu, after another reported outbreak in China, this time of a "highly pathogenic" strain of the H5N1 type of bird flu, or avian influenza.

China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs reported on Saturday an outbreak of the H5N1 strain at a farm in Shaoyang City in the province of Hunan, some 400 kilometers south of Hubei province and 630 km northwest of Hong Kong.

The new coronavirus began spreading in Wuhan, Hubei province, in December.

Authorities have culled 17,828 poultry, following the reported outbreak.

Also last week, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned against an increase in bird flu outbreaks among poultry and wild birds in Europe.

"It is important that people take protective steps and avoid contact with sick and dead birds or contaminated environments," the WHO said in an advisory.

'Human cases'

According to the WHO, "human cases of H5N1 avian influenza occur occasionally, but it is difficult to transmit the infection from person to person. When people do become infected, the mortality rate is about 60 percent."

"Almost all cases of H5N1



**It is important
that people take
protective steps and
avoid contact with
sick and dead birds
or contaminated
environments**

World Health Organization

infection in people have been associated with close contact with infected live or dead birds, or H5N1-contaminated environments," the WHO said.

But it noted that the "virus does not infect humans easily, and spread from person to person appears to be unusual. There is no evidence that the disease can be spread to people through properly prepared and thoroughly cooked food."

Among the symptoms of H5N1 infection are high fever, diarrhea and difficulty in breathing.

Havens

Haribon Foundation said among the migratory bird havens in the Philippines are the Buguey Wetlands in Cagayan province, Candaba Swamp in Pampanga, Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area along Manila

Bay, Naujan Lake in Mindoro, Olango Island in Cebu, and Agusan Marsh in Agusan del Sur.

At a press briefing on Monday, Director Ronnie Domingo of the Bureau of Animal Industry pointed out, "Just last year, we tested around 9,000 samples from critical areas [nationwide], which are landing areas of migratory birds."

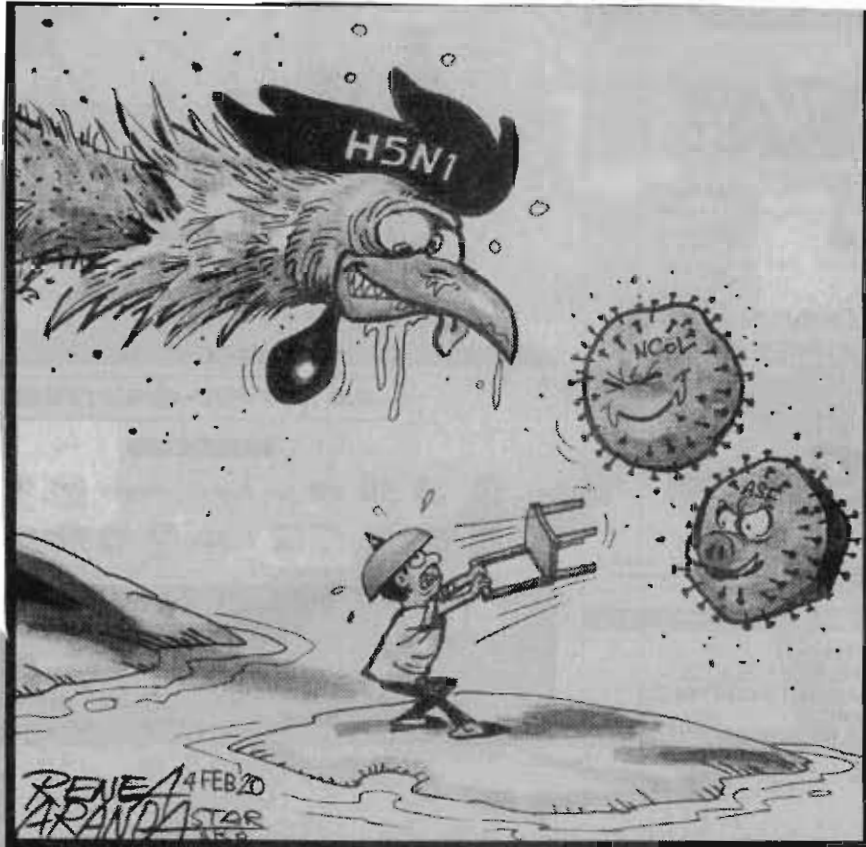
"It is through these areas that avian flu may enter the Philippines considering that we have issued bans on poultry and poultry products from countries where there are incidences of avian flu," he also said.

According to the Paris-based World Organization for Animal Health, or OIE

(Office International des Epizooties), H5N1 was initially diagnosed in humans in Hong Kong in 1997.

"The virus then reemerged in 2003 and 2004, and spread from Asia to Europe and Africa causing several hundred human cases and deaths, as well as destruction of hundreds of millions of poultry," the OIE said.

"This Asiatic form of H5N1 triggered concern from scientists and authorities and remains under close surveillance due to its feared pandemic potential if a mutation allows it to be transmitted from human to human," it added. —REPORTS FROM RONNEL W. DOMINGO AND REUTERS INQ



Now it's highly pathogenic bird flu

Authorities are still trying to determine how the African swine fever virus managed to jump from Luzon to Mindanao. A thousand pigs have been culled in Davao Occidental after confirmation of ASF contamination – the first outside Luzon since the virus was detected in Rizal province last year.

While ASF is not known to jump to humans, it has devastated the local hog industry, especially backyard swine raisers. With the virus reaching Mindanao, Cebu has further tightened measures to protect its local breeders as well as its thriving *lechon* and *chicharon* enterprises.

Even before authorities have established how ASF entered Davao Occidental, the national government will have to guard against the emergence of yet another pathogen. A statement over the weekend from the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs declared that H5N1 – a “highly pathogenic subtype” of avian influenza – had killed 4,500 chickens in a farm in Shaoyang City, prompting the local government to cull nearly 18,000 chickens.

Shaoyang is in Hunan province, which is located next to Hubei, epicenter of the raging novel coro-

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navirus outbreak.

Unlike ASF, bird flu can be transmitted to humans. Since 2003, the World Health Organization has recorded 455 human deaths in several countries due to H5N1 flu. The disease can also be as devastating to the poultry industry as ASF is to hog raisers. Highly pathogenic avian flu has killed millions of birds and domestic fowl around the world and caused the destruction of massive numbers of eggs.

Containing avian flu may be easier at this point for China, which has imposed unprecedented lockdowns of entire cities to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus. The Philippines, for its part, has dealt with a milder version of avian flu in the past, and has since attained bird flu-free status. This, however, can change overnight.

While no human deaths were recorded in the country during the 2017 avian flu outbreak, hundreds of thousands of chickens, quails and ducks were culled. Humans and the poultry industry must be protected from this more pathogenic version. With ASF still to be contained, the government must ensure that there are sufficient resources to deal with the H5N1 threat.



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As Australia's fires rage, we await our rains

It is the middle of the deep and dark winter in the northern hemisphere, but way down in the southern hemisphere of our Earth in Australia, bushfires which have been raging for four months and are now advancing and threatening the country's capital Canberra.

Fires were reported out of control in the Australian Capital Territory, with the worst blaze just a 20-minute drive south of Parliament House in Canberra. The temperature climbed to 42 degrees Celsius as the fire, fuelled by strong winds, continued to spread.

The Canberra fire has now destroyed over 35,800 hectares of forest and farmland with about 400,000 residents. This is about the area of Clark Green City in Central Luzon and half of Metro Manila's 64,000 hectares. In the entire country, 11 million hectares of land have now been scorched; that's about the size of Mindanao.

We are fortunate that fires of such magnitude do not happen in our country. We have our rains to thank for this. Local rainstorms are common in our islands. We also have the "habagat" winds bearing water vapor evaporating from the equa-

torial areas in the southwest starting in May. Then we have the heavy rains brought by the typhoons and tropical depressions blowing from the Pacific at various times of the year.

We deplore the floods that these rains bring, but without them, our lands would not be as green as they are today. They would be more like the arid areas in Australia which are now suffering from uncontrolled bushfires, mostly in the southeast part of the continent, and now directly threatening the national capital Canberra itself.

But before our rains come in May, we will have to go through the hot summer season which begins in about a month. We had a particularly hot and storm-less summer last year, so that the water level at Angat Dam fell below critical levels and water rationing hit eastern Metro Manila. We trust that the plans we approved last year - including the development of new dams and other water sources, are proceeding as scheduled.

Meanwhile, we continue to watch Australia's raging fires, hoping it will be able to stop them, especially the one that now threatens the capital Canberra.



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MAY patay na sa ating bansa na biktima ng Novel Corona Virus, ang lalaking Chinese national na dumating sa bansa noong Enero 21, 2020.

Ito ang kauna-unahang patay sa labas ng China at napag-alamang unang pumunta ito sa Cebu mula sa Hong Kong saka tumuloy sa Dumaguete City hanggang sa dalhin ito sa San Lazaro Hospital na roon na nalagutan ng hininga.

Kasama ng lalaking biktima na naka-confine sa nasabing ospital ang kanyang nobyang isa ring Chinese.

Kaya naman dapat nang ilagay sa pinakaseryosong antas ang ating isipan at pag-kilos laban sa sakit.

Kabilang sa mga dapat gawin ang pagtigil ng mga siraan o paninira sa pamahalaang Duterte sa paniniwalang hindi sapat ang ginagawa nito para protektahan ang mamamayang Filipino sa pagsalakay ng NCoV.

DAYUHAN BAWAL NA

Linggo ng umaga nang ipag-utos mismo ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte, ayon kay Senador Bong Go, ang pagbabawal sa lahat ng mga dayuhan na nanggagaling sa China, Macao at Hong Kong na pumunta sa Pilipinas.

Tanging mga Filipino lamang at dayuhang may permanent visa na inisyu ng pamahalaan ng Pilipinas ang tatanggapin na pumasok ng bansa.

Dati-rati, ang mga nanggagaling lamang sa Wuhan City, lalawigan ng Hubei at ilang lugar sa China ang binawalang pumasok sa Pilipinas ngunit nilahat na makaraan ang rekomendasyon ng Department of Health at ng Inter-Agency Committee para sa proteksyon ng lahat ng Filipino at iba pang naninirahan sa bansa ngayon.

MGA PINOY IUUWI NA

Naghahanda na rin ang pamahalaan na iuwi ang mga Filipino, lalo na ang mga nasa lugar na sinasalakay ng sakit gaya ng Hubei, capital nitong Wuhan City at iba pang idineklara ng pamahalaan China na may NCoV.

Sinabihan na ang lahat ng Filipino na kumontak at magpalista sa konsulado sa Shang-



MAY PATAY NA SA NCOV; SIRAAN ITIGIL!

hai para maisama sa biyahe.

Alalahaning hindi lahat ng Filipino sa China ay nakarekord sa konsulado at embahada ng Pilipinas, lalo na ang mga "undocumented" o ilegal ang pagpunta at paninirahan doon.

Ngunit tiyak na daraan ang mga ito sa mga patakaran ng China kaugnay ng sakit, clearance sa immigration at quarantine.

Maaari kasing pigilin mismo ng China ang pagpapauwi batay sa iba't ibang kadahilanan, particular ang pangkalusugang kalagayan ng Filipino.

Iuwi ang mga Filipino sa pamamagitan ng chartered flight o sadyang inilaan ng pamahalaan na pagbiyahe.

Maaari kasing tangihan ng mga eroplano ang mga pasaherong Filipino na makitaan ng anomang sintomas ng sakit ngunit wala ang ganitong patakaran sa chartered flight.

Inihahanda na rin ang mga military camp gaya ng Fort Magsaysay at ang Caballo Island sa Manila Bay para sa quarantine sa loob ng 14 na araw na paglitaw ng sintomas ng NCoV.

CONTACT TRACING

Ngayong may namatay sa dalawang kumpirmadong may NCoV, napakahalaga ang contact tracing o paghahanap ng lahat ng nakaugnayan ng mga nagpositibo sa sakit.

Kabilang sa mga kinokontak ang mga pasahero ng mga eroplano na sinakyan ng mga biktima sa kanilang pagpunta sa Pilipinas upang masabihan ang mga ito na magpatsekop o magpa-quarantine ng 14 araw sakaling may sintomas silang dala-dala kaugnay ng NCoV.

Kabilang sa mga sintomas ang pagkakaroon ng ubo, lagnat, malat, paninikip ng dibdib at iba pa.

Sa eroplano, maaaring mahawa ang katabi ng biktima na 5-6 katao sa harapan, likuran at mga tagiliran kaya aabot sa 36 ang posibleng mahawa.

Pwera pa ang mga flight attendant at pasa-

herong nakasalamuha nila sa mga paliparan bago sila sumakay at makaraan silang bumaba.

Dapat na ring isama sa mga kontak ang mga tsuper o pahinante ng mga taxi at iba pang sinakyan nila at mga sumalubong sa kanila, kung meron man.

Ang totoo, napakahirap isagawa ng kumpletong contact tracing dahil kung saan-saan na pumunta ang mga katabi ng biktima sa eroplano at ang mga tsuper, pahinante at sumalubong sa kanila.

Kaya naman, mga Bro, ang pakikipagtulungan ng lahat at aktibong pakikipag-ugnayan sa mga kinauukulan ay sadyang mahalaga.

Pupwede tayong kumontak sa pinakamalapit na mga opisyal ng barangay at sila na ang bahalang umugnay sa mga nakatataas o kaya'y gumamit tayo ng telepono at iba pang uri ng komunikasyon para sa mabilisang pakikipag-ugnayan.

BASHING, PANINIRA DAPAT ITIGIL

Ang mga kritiko ng pamahalaan o mga nanggagaling-galingan at nagtutuwid-tuwiran ay dapat na tumigil na sa pag-bash at paninira sa mga kinauukulan, kay Pang. Digong lalo na.

Alalahaning ang mga namamahala laban sa sakit ay kinokonsidera ang malawak at malalim na mga epekto ng bawat pagkilos nila ngunit nasa likod nito talaga ang kapakanan at interes pangunahin ng mga Filipino.

Ang dapat isipin ng mga kritiko, basher at iba pa ay kung ano-ano na ang kanilang ginagawa para sa mga Pinoy na apektado at para sa kapakanan ng buong bansa.

Kung wala, dapat silang tumahimik.

Anomang reaksyon o reklamo, maaaring iparating sa 0922840-3333 o i-email sa bantiporda@yahoo.com.