



Gamit na face masks, 'wag ihalo sa household waste: DENR

March 22, 2020 @ 1:39 PM 17 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Nagpaalala si Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Benny Antiporda sa publiko sa masusing paghihiwalay ng mga ginamit na facemask sa ibang basura sa mga kabahayan.

“Kung maaari po ihiwalay natin yung face mask. Kung meron pa tayong tinatawag na yellow bag, e hiwalay po natin huwag po nating isama sa household waste,” ani Antiporda sa isang radio interview.

Dagdag pa ni Antiporda na maari namang idisinfekt ang mga face mask gamit ang bleach para makaiwas sa paglaganap pa ng coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

“Kung sakali naman na mahahalo talaga natin, pakibugahan ng sodium hypochlorite... Bale 10 to 15%, puwede 'yun at 85 to 90% naman po 'yung tubig. Haluin lang natin 'yan. 'Yun ang ibuga natin diyan,” paliwanag pa ni Antiporda.

Siniguro rin Antiporda na sumusunod ang mga health facility sa maayos at tamang pagtatapon ng mga basura nito kung saan dumaraan sa treatment ang mga nakokolektang basura.

“Huwag tayong mag-alala, very professional po ang ginagawa diyan. Hindi po tayo talaga dapat matakot,” aniya pa. **Remate News Team**

Source: <https://remate.ph/gamit-na-face-masks-wag-ihalo-sa-household-waste-denr/>

Segregate used facemasks from household waste, DENR

March 23, 2020

TITLE: exec says amid COVID-19 threat

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Segregate used face masks from household waste, DENR exec says amid COVID-19 threat

Published March 22, 2020 8:34am

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary Benny Antiporda on Sunday advised the public to separate used face masks from their household waste.

Interviewed on Doblol B sa News TV, Antiporda said disinfecting the face masks using bleach can also be done to avoid further transmission of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

“Kung maaari po ihiwalay natin yung face mask. Kung meron pa tayong tinatawag na yellow bag, e hiwalay po natin huwag po nating isama sa household waste,” he said.

In hospital waste management, highly infectious wastes are to be discarded in yellow bags, according to the World Health Organization.

“Kung sakali naman na mahahalo talaga natin, pakibugahan ng sodium hypochlorite... Bale 10 to 15%, puwede ‘yun at 85 to 90% naman po ‘yung tubig. Haluin lang natin ‘yan. ‘Yun ang ibuga natin diyan,” he added.

Antiporda, who is under self-quarantine due to possible COVID-19 infection, assured that health facilities are disposing their hospital waste properly. He noted that the trash collected from hospitals undergo treatment.

“Huwag tayong mag-alala, very professional po ang ginagawa diyan. Hindi po tayo talaga dapat matakot,” he said.

Antiporda said most of their facilities are located in Ilocos Region and Central Luzon. He said some people worry about the disposal of hospital waste in their areas due to the fear of possible transmission.

During the first day of enhanced community quarantine over Luzon, he said some checkpoint personnel barred the entry of garbage trucks.

After some dialogue about the “misunderstanding” with the Philippine National Police, vehicles carrying waste have been allowed to pass the borders.

Segregate used facemasks from household waste, DENR

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Enhanced community quarantine was imposed over the entire Luzon starting Tuesday due to the threat of COVID-19. As part of this, the entry and exits at the borders of quarantine areas have been restricted.

Only health workers, supermarket employees, food delivery personnel, those with health emergencies and flight schedules, as well as garbage collectors are exempted from the restriction.

On Saturday, the Philippines reported 77 new cases of COVID-19, [bringing the total to 307](#). —**Joviland Rita/KG, GMA News**

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/730770/segregate-used-face-masks-from-household-waste-denr-exec-says-amid-covid-19-threat/story/?just_in?utm_source=GMAnews&utm_medium=Facebook



Maynilad, Manila Water suspend billing, meter reading

[Louise Maureen Simeon](#) (The Philippine Star) - March 23, 2020 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Concessionaires Maynilad Water Services and Manila Water are suspending their meter reading and billing to comply with the enhanced community quarantine in Luzon.

In separate advisories Saturday, Manila Water said the suspension will be effective until further notice while that of Maynilad is effective until April 14 or by the end of the quarantine period.

The current water bill of affected east zone and west zone customers will be computed based on the average consumption for the past three months.

“The implementation of this scheme is out of concern for the health and safety of our customers, as well as that of our employees and service providers,” Manila Water said.

Both Maynilad and Manila Water advised that any difference versus actual consumption will be reflected and charges will be adjusted on the customers’ next bill when Manila Water resumes read-and-bill operations.

Normal billing process will be observed when the government authorities officially confirm the end of the enhanced community quarantine.

The National Water Resources Board also increased the allocation of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System from Angat Dam from 42 cubic meters per second to 46 CMS. This, in turn, increases the water allocation for Metro Manila.

“This is to ensure steady water supply for Metro Manila considering the declaration of the state of public health emergency and the importance of water in undertaking the preventive measures against COVID-19,” NWRB said.

In Pampanga, the provincial government ordered public utility companies—electricity, water, internet and cable—to defer the deadline for payment of bills until the quarantine order is lifted.

Violators, Gov. Dennis Pineda warned, will be “penalized or given proper sanctions.” **– With Ding Cervantes**

Source: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/03/23/2002823/maynilad-manila-water-suspend-billing-meter-reading>

Manila Water to suspend meter reading, billing 'until further notice'

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Mar 21 2020 09:59 PM

MANILA -- Water concessionaire Manila Water on Saturday said it has suspended meter reading and billing activities from March 17 "until further notice."

Billing will be estimated based on average consumption in the past 3 months in accordance with policies imposed by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage Systems, the concessionaire said in a statement.

"Any difference versus actual consumption will be reflected and charges will be adjusted on your next bill when we resume read-and-bill operations," Manila Water said.

Normal billing will be implemented once the government finally lifts the Luzon-wide community quarantine, according to Manila Water.

Consumers may send a message to the concessionaire's Facebook or Twitter accounts for concerns.

Source: https://news.abs-cbn.com/business/03/21/20/manila-water-to-suspend-meter-reading-billing-until-further-notice?fbclid=IwAR2ANDVBXq5HoKNsSvP9d3HsJ2pqDqiXy11Fc_90xcSBkQoeHNWEqYKURmc



Dahil sa Luzon lockdown, antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam, bumaba

March 22, 2020 @ 4:11 PM 15 hours ago

Manila, Philippines — bumaba ang antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam kasunod ng mataas na konsumo ng tubig sa mga kabahayan dahil sa enhanced community quarantine, ayon sa isang hydrologist.

Naitala ang 198.79 meters na antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam ngayong Linggo, Marso 22, mas mababa ito ng 35 na centimeters sa water level nito noong Sabado, batay sa datos na nakalap sa hydrometeorology division ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration o PAGASA.

Giit ni PAGASA hydrologist Richard Orendain, bumaba na ng may average na 30 centimeters kada araw ang antas ng tubig sa naturang dam bago pa ipatupad ang enhanced community quarantine.

“Lalo na ngayon, lahat nasa bahay, mas malaki ’yung konsumo. Halos ’yung allocation niya, mauubos per day. Walang matitipid dito,” saad nito.

Pagtataya ni Orendain, maaaring umabot sa 185 meters ang antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam sa katapusan ng Abril, malapit na sa 180-meter critical level nito.

“Yong critical level na sinasabi natin, marami pang tubig ito eh, although nasa critical level, ang tatamaan lang dito ay ’yung irrigation,” sinabi nito. Remate News Team/MM

Source: <https://remate.ph/dahil-sa-luzon-lockdown-antas-ng-tubig-sa-ang-at-dam-bumaba/?fbclid=IwARo6OuAbSSq-ihci3zgProVvntTmCiguCiusqo-9mC88KanANqbHPweHsTQ>



† BETTY GO-BELMONTE
Founding Chairman (1986-1994)

† MAXIMO V. SOLIVEN
Founding Publisher (1986-2006)



Safe hands on World Water Day

Even under normal circumstances, people are aware of

EDITORIAL

regularly with soap and water.

the importance in life of the most basic need for survival, water. Residents of Metro Manila and several neighboring areas saw the consequences of an acute water shortage last year.

Now the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic has heightened this importance. For World Water Day 2020, observed on March 22, the theme shifted from the original emphasis on the inextricable link between climate change and water security, to the importance of water in fighting the contagion, with people urged to "show our best hand hygiene moments to fight COVID-19."

With community quarantines imposed in Luzon and other parts of the country, people are strongly reminded to observe proper hygiene, starting with the most basic - regular hand washing. Health professionals have stressed that instead of smothering hands with alcohol or sanitizers, it is better to wash hands

This simple advice is obviously difficult to observe in communities that lack running water. When you have to buy water by the container or fetch the day's supply for the household from a communal artesian well, regular hand washing becomes a luxury.

At the same time, the need to conserve water is emphasized on World Water Day. The global population continues to grow, putting a strain on fresh water resources. Analysts have warned that international conflicts are likely to be sparked by water resource exploitation. Water is used not just for sanitation and keeping pathogens at bay, but also for irrigation and energy generation. Efficient water resource management, through recycling and conservation practices, can prevent shortages. On World Water Day, as people are urged to promote "safe hands" amid the COVID-19 contagion, everyone is also reminded not to forget to turn off the tap.



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/111026632011/posts/10157652156342012/>

Cebu Co-op rolls out units in PUV modernization tack

By **BusinessMirror**

-March 23, 2020



Photo courtesy of the Cebu City Tourism Office shows units the Cebu People's Multi-Purpose Co-operative launched as part of the country's public-utility vehicle modernization program.

Aco-operative in Cebu City announced the roll out of 55 units as its support to the country's public-utility vehicle modernization program.

The Cebu People's Multi-Purpose Co-operative (CPMPC) said in a statement these units will ply key routes around Metro Cebu. The units are Durabus Zhongtong Class 2, which the co-operative said is compliant with the Philippine National Standards of the Department of Trade and Industry.

The rollout is by far the biggest launch in line with the implementation of the nationwide transport modernization program, according to CPMPC.

Each unit features a global positioning system device, speed limiter, front and rear cameras, indoor TV, air-conditioning, foam seats and security close-circuit TV (CCTV), "and will be a cheaper public conveyance in Cebu and neighboring cities, which is the hub of commerce and tourism in southern Philippines."

Each unit is powered by environmentally-compliant Euro 4/5 diesel engines, which significantly reduces carbon and sulfur emissions. Fare payment is through the automatic fare collection system required under the PUV modernization program. The co-operative said it has partnered with AF Payments Inc., the country's leading AFCS provider known for the Beep Card.

There are currently 12 units plying Route Number 13C which runs from Colon Street in downtown Cebu City to the outer barangay of Talamban.

The CPMPC is one of the country's biggest and multi-awarded cooperatives with more than 70,000 members nationwide. It was founded in 1972 in Cebu City to test the viability of a service-oriented organization of micro, small and medium enterprises, professionals, housewives, farmers, fisherfolk, and people from informal sector.

Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/03/23/cebu-co-op-rolls-out-units-in-puv-modernization-tack/>



Water supply in Metro Manila safe to drink – MWSS

Published March 22, 2020, 12:45 PM

By Ellalyn de Vera Ruiz

The water being supplied to Metro Manila households remains safe to drink, according to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System ((MWSS).

In a statement issued last Friday, MWSS assured Metro Manila residents that the drinking water supplied by its concessionaires, Maynilad and Manila Water, is safe and compliant with the Philippine National Standards for Drinking Water.

MWSS said it maintains the manning of Umiray-Angat-Ipo Dam and existing waterworks and water conveyance systems to ensure a continuous water supply amid the Luzon-wide enhanced community quarantine.

The agency pointed out the importance of water availability in undertaking preventive measures against the spread of coronavirus.

To ensure the unimpeded delivery of essential water-related activities and services, and continuous operation of treatment plants throughout the public health emergency, MWSS has endorsed the exemption of its concessionaire employees' from travel restrictions.

Those exempted are personnel involved in the management of water-related goods, importation, domestic transport and sale of equipment, devices, and chemicals; personnel involved in the management of employees and service providers such as contractors, haulers, and related service providers; and personnel of contractors that perform indirect services such as security, sales, technical and other support personnel as well as employees of third-party contractors during sales, installation, maintenance, and essential repair works.

The National Water Resources Board has earlier approved the request of MWSS to increase the concessionaires' allocation of water coming from Angat Dam.

The increased allocation from 42 cubic meters per second to 46 cubic meters per second or 4,000 million liters per day would allow 24-hour water supply in some areas and reduce water service interruptions in major parts of the MWSS service area.

MWSS however appealed to the public to store just enough water to ensure that there will still be sufficient water supply until the next rainy season.

Source: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/03/22/water-supply-in-metro-manila-safe-to-drink-mwss/>

Daily Tribune (Philippines)

ARTA suspends processing time for agencies on quarantine

The law aims to cut down the processing time for government agencies to three days for simple transactions, seven working days for complex transactions and 20 working days for transactions requiring highly technical assessment

23 Mar 2020 BY AJ BAJO @tri
buneph_AJ

The Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) is suspending the prescribed processing time for applications in government agencies affected by the enhanced community quarantine in Luzon that runs from 17 March until 12 April 2020.

The anti-red tape watchdog said this is among the two major points under Memorandum Circular 2020-03 released in line with the government's move to put the

region under lockdown to prevent the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019.

ARTA said the 3-7-20 prescribed processing time will automatically resume on 13 April or until the lockdown has been lifted. It added that the suspension only applies to affected areas.

“Other government agencies located in areas which are not placed under the Enhanced



CONSUMERS in a public market in Marikina seem to not mind social distancing as ordered by the government as a precautionary measure against the coronavirus disease 2019.

Community Quarantine shall OBSERVE the prescribed processing times stated in their Citizen's Charter,” ARTA said.

ARTA said the memo also extends the deadline of the submission of government agencies' updated Citizen's Charter, from 31 March 2020 to 20

working days from 13 April 2020, or until the enhanced community quarantine over Luzon has been lifted, whichever comes first.

“This covers the obligation of the covered agencies to post their updated Citizen's Charter as mandated under Section 3 (a), Rule IV of the Implementing 1 Rules and Regulations of RA 11032,” the agency's circular states.

ARTA is the lead agency mandated to implement Republic Act 11032 or the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018.

The law aims to cut down the processing time for government agencies to three days for simple transactions, seven working days for complex transactions and 20 working days for transactions requiring highly technical assessment.

BusinessMirror

'MSMES, import/ export bloc need Pts33.2B'

Agriculture · Industries
23 Mar 2020

www.businessmirror.com.ph

Agriya is an 88-hectare agri-tourism development located in Panabo City, Davao del Norte. With progressive agriculture at the center of this modern agropolis, Agriya helps enhance the quality of life of the community with its innovative amenities that are first of its kind.

Agriya will have four different zones—residential, commer-

cial, institutional and agri-tourism. What's unique about Agriya's agritourism component is Naturetainment.

"We are calling this feature Naturetainment, to be entertained by nature and by agriculture," says Ricardo "Cary" Lagdameo, Head of DLI. Naturetainment will highlight different kinds of agriculture, but the main highlight will be on the country's top exporting crop - banana.

"We are showing different kinds of bananas here. We've planted about 67 varieties out of the 300+ varieties available worldwide," Lagdameo states. He reiterated further that Naturetainment will also showcase how bananas are grown and packed and exported, through its "mini banana plantation".

Whether you're looking for adventure, a breather, an educational tour, or just sim-



ple family fun, Naturetainment is the right place to be. With a diverse mix of interactive farming, agri adventures, and a picturesque landscape, Naturetainment is a learning playground for all ages.

Exploring this side of Agriya will help give a real sense of what agricultural life is, and stimulate a different kind of thrill while encouraging the guests especially children to take care of Mother Nature.

"Everything that we do and what we're going to put in this project has some kind of connection to agriculture," Lagdameo said.

Naturetainment will open to the public this March.

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Garbage bags ginamit bilang protective gear sa ospital sa Laguna

Mar 22 2020 03:33 PM
ABS-CBN News



Nagsuot ng paper at garbage bags ang ilang medical personnel ng isang ospital sa Laguna matapos maubusan ng protective gear. *Retrato mula kay Tes Depano*

Umapela ng tulong sa gobyerno ang isang ospital sa Los Baños, Laguna para makakuha ng personal protective equipment (PPEs) na gagamitin ng kanilang medical staff na tumutugon sa coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak.

Naubusan na ng PPE ang pamunuan ng St. Jude Family Hospital at wala na rin umano silang makuhanan kaya gumawa na lang ng paraan ang mga tauhan ng ospital para maprotektahan ang sarili mula sa virus.

Sa isang Facebook post noong Huwebes, idinaan ni Tes Depano, officer in charge at medical records officer ng ospital, ang kaniyang panawagan para mabigyan sila ng PPE.

Makikita sa mga retratong ibinahagi ni Depano ang staff ng ospital na nagbalot ng plastic bag sa ulo at nagsuot ng garbage bag sa katawan bilang pamalit sa PPEs.

Tatlong staff umano ang nagsuot ng plastic at garbage bags nang kuhanan ng X-ray ang isang patient under investigation sa kanilang ospital.

Matapos mag-viral ang post, nagpadala naman daw ng 2 PPE ang municipal health office, na agad ding nagamit kaya ngayo'y wala na muling protective gear ang ospital.

Para sa mga nais magbigay ng PPE, maaaring makipag-ugnayan kay Depano sa numerong 09497964727 o sa ospital sa numerong 049-536-1982.

Samantala, sa Biñan City, patuloy ang pagtanggap ng ayuda ng mga residente mula sa pamahalaang lokal.

May 7,000 tricycle drivers ang nakatanggap ng tig-5 kilo ng bigas, face mask, at isang litro ng disinfectant.

Bahay-bahay din ang pamimigay ng relief goods sa mga residente ng 24 barangay ng lungsod.

Simula Lunes, ipatutupad ang total lockdown sa Biñan para maiwasan ang pagkalat ng COVID-19. -- Ulat ni Dennis Datu, ABS-CBN News



Baguio imposes anti-‘momma’ ordinance

Published March 22, 2020, 12:00 PM

By Zaldy Comanda

BAGUIO CITY – The chewing and spitting of betel nut in public places, and selling of “momma” products to minors in the city has been ordered prohibited under an ordinance passed by city government officials.



MOMMA UNDER REGULATION -Chewing, spitting of betel nut in public places and selling of ‘momma’ products to minors in the city is now prohibited under the approved ordinance passed by the Baguio City officials. (Photo by Zaldy Comanda / MANILA BULLETIN)

City Councilor Joel Alangsab, who authored the new ordinance, said it shall be unlawful for any person to chew or spit betel quid or “momma” in a private or public utility vehicle, government-owned vehicle or any other means of public transport for passengers, accommodation and entertainment establishment, public building and any public place.

“We know ‘momma’ is the habit of many people in Cordillera. We are not directly against the momma, we want to regulate the people in proper ways to use it,” Alangsab said.

Momma also refers to the mixture of betel nut, leaf, lime powder and tobacco that natives of Cordillera chew and spit.

Alangsab clarified that the ordinance will not prohibit people from chewing/spitting “moma” in their privacy of their houses. “A person can chew and spit anywhere in his private abode,” he said.

However, chewing or spitting betel quid in plain view of the public during indigenous gatherings shall not be prohibited, provided that, pertinent rules and regulations will be followed to maintain cleanliness and sanitation of the place.

Among the prescribed rules include prohibition on the chewing of momma without the required spittoon; no emptying, draining or scattering of spit or contents of the spittoon; and no throwing, dumping or leaving of used spittoon in the venue of the gathering, except in authorized places.

Any person or entity who commits any of the prohibited acts shall be penalized with a fine of P500 or four hours of community service for the first offense; a fine of P1,000 or six hours of community service for the second offense; and a fine of P2,000 or eight hours of community service or imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months or both at the discretion of the court. It also entails the suspension or revocation of business license or permit in case of a business entity or establishment if applicable for the third and succeeding offenses.



Entering the unknown...

March 23, 2020, 12:30 AM



By ATTY. GREGORIO LARRAZABAL

Atty. Gregorio Larrazabal

By the time you'll have read this, the Philippines would have been under lockdown for almost a week. Personally, I think the idea of locking down the country is a good idea. How it's implemented, I leave it to each and everyone to make his or her assessment.

Compared to other countries, the Philippines is no stranger to disasters. We're a country which experiences natural calamities all too often. Being in the Ring of Fire, we experience earthquakes almost on a regular basis (though some are not major). Facing the Pacific Ocean, super typhoons, and not just regular typhoons hit the major islands of the country (some places hit more now than before) every so often, with one of the most recent storms, Ursula, devastating several provinces in her path. Some of the areas hit, are still trying to recover now.

We are now in the midst of another disaster. The whole country has been declared by the President as under a State of Calamity (I think it was an excellent idea). Everybody's hunkering down and preparing for the worst.

But there's something divergent now. Something which makes this disaster dissimilar from the previous disasters we've been used to. While an earthquake lasts only seconds or minutes, with possible aftershocks felt even days after, you know the worst is, hopefully over. Same with a super typhoon. Days before it hits, we already have an idea how long it'll last. There have been instances in the past where the severity of the storm was inaccurate, but more or less we know how long the storm will hit, and when it moves forward, we know we can start rebuilding.

This is different now. Though many scientists predict it will end by October, for the Philippines, the projection is still fluid. Day by day, there are variances in the severity of the pandemic. Every day, many, including myself, are unsure on how long this will really last. Some say it will last two weeks to a month, at least. Some predict longer. So many people don't really know how long to prepare for. There lies the problem: The uncertainty of how long this will last. What preparations they should do? Should they hunker down and prepare to be in isolation for two weeks, a month, or longer? I have to stress that the duration of this crisis is no one's fault. However, the uncertainty is what is really troublesome.

Right now, many LGUs are providing assistance to their constituents. There have been changes in the process, to adjust to conditions on the ground, which (in some cases) may have caused confusion. But that's expected. We all learn and have to adjust. The local officials are doing what they can under these difficult times. I hope we all recognize their efforts. Many have hardly had any sleep trying to solve the problems.

But talking from an operations and logistics point of view, even if the LGUs want to continue helping, for how long can this assistance last? How long can private businesses keep on providing financial support to its employees? How long can the LGUs give financial assistance and food packs? How much is the QRF of the different LGUs, and how long will that last them?

Last week, we saw so many LGUs stepping up, taking bold steps to ease the suffering of their constituents. We also saw private businesses, both conglomerates and even small business owners, likewise digging deep to help their employees and the govt. We see and hear stories of even vendors who are giving the food they're supposed to sell, to the officials manning the checkpoints. Everyone is stepping up. We all need to. The health care community, our heroes, is really pushing itself to the limit, to ensure they continue to provide assistance to our fellow Filipinos.



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March 23, 2020

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TITLE: Entering the unknown

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Entering the unknown...

But we have to think.. What happens 2 to 3 weeks from now, when supplies are low, and people already exhausted? What plans are in place to ensure there's continuity in the services and supplies. From the national government to each and every household, we all need to do our part in this crisis. We ALL need to plan. No effort is too small. No sacrifice is insignificant. We all have a part to do, to make things better, not only for ourselves, but our family, our neighborhood, our city, our province, our country.

TOGETHER WE CAN OVERCOME THIS.

KAYA NATIN TO!

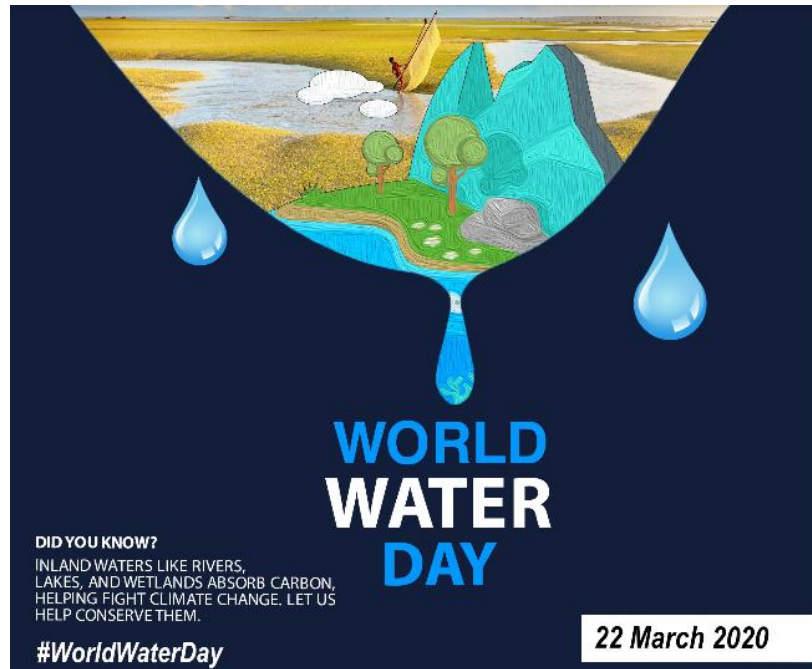
KAYA NATO NI!

Water access imperative now

Published 5 hours ago

On March 23, 2020 01:00 AM

By **Chito Lozada**



Access to clean water remains a global problem with 2.2 billion lacking access to safely managed drinking water, while three billion lacking basic handwashing facilities, according to the United Nations Children’s Fund and the World Health Organization.

“Water supports the sustenance of all life on the planet, more so in the time of the novel coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19 pandemic when handwashing and proper hygiene with clean water prove to be humanity’s best defense against the disease,” ASEAN Center for Biodiversity executive director Theresa Mundita Lim said.

The international community celebrates World Water Day with a focus on how water can help mitigate the impacts of climate change.

“We take this opportunity to emphasize the inextricable relationship of biodiversity and water,” Lim noted.

Inland waters such as lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, groundwater, springs and wetlands supply water for the irrigation of agricultural areas in the region. The agriculture sector alone consumes 85.5 percent of the total water withdrawals in the region. This is followed by the industrial sector at 7.8 percent and the domestic sector at 6.6 percent, according to the United Nations Environment Program.

Inland waters likewise support aquatic biodiversity including reptiles, amphibians, fish, mollusks, insects and other aquatic invertebrates and water plants and water birds and several other migratory species in this region.

Lim said in this time of climate crisis, conserving inland waters, which are known to sequester and release fixed carbon in the biosphere and protect communities from extreme weather events, contributes to ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation.

Seasonal changes disrupt supply

While the region's abundant freshwater resources are fortunate to get 9.5 per cent of the total global precipitation, water availability is largely influenced by seasonal changes and the rise of global temperatures.

"The increasing water requirements for agricultural, industrial and domestic uses of a growing Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) population also pose a threat to the region's inland waters, in effect putting the water supply at risk," Lim explained.

In the region, leading the inland waters conservation are the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance and the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership.

At present, the region has 54 Ramsar sites covering 25,160 square kilometers. In terms of coverage, Indonesia has the largest area (13,730 sq. km.), followed by Thailand (3,997 sq. km.) and the Philippines (2,440 sq. km.).

Preserve ecosystems

ASEAN member states recognise the value of robust ecosystems in meeting the region's water requirements, thereby integrating sustainable resource management measures into their respective national biodiversity strategies and action plans. The ACB has been mobilising initiatives across sectors and generating participation of governments and stakeholders to ensure that biodiversity targets are within reach.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/03/23/water-access-imperative-now/>

Air quality picking up in quarantined countries

posted March 22, 2020 at 11:04 am by **AFP**

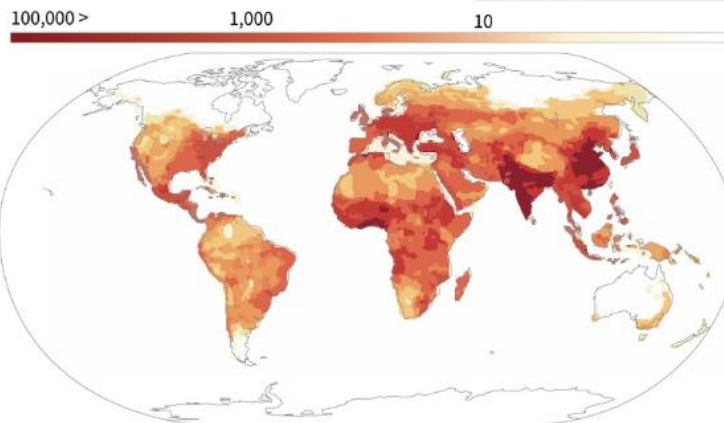
Air quality is improving in countries under coronavirus quarantines, experts say, but it is far too early to speak of long-term change.

Air pollution shortens lives

8.8 million premature deaths annually, according to a new study

Years of life lost
Annually, per 1,000 km²

Published March 3
in the journal
Cardiovascular Research



Source: European Society of Cardiology/Cardiovascular Research

© AFP

Map of the world showing areas affected by air pollution, according to a new report published in the journal Cardiovascular Research. A 'pandemic' of air pollution shortens lives worldwide by nearly three years on average, scientists say. AFP

Images by the US space agency NASA are clear, in February the concentration of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) fell dramatically in Wuhan, China, the epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic, passing from an indicator that was red/orange to blue.

NO₂ is mainly produced by vehicles, industrial sites and thermal power stations.

As China moves past the peak of its crisis, however, recent images by the European Space Agency (ESA) show a resurgence in NO₂ emissions.

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It is nonetheless hard to know how much benefit the world's population will actually experience because, according to the health experts, "what will have more impact is the long term exposure," Gonzalez Ortiz said.

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Source: <https://manilastandard.net/news/top-stories/320152/air-quality-picking-up-in-quarantined-countries.html>

Air quality picking up in quarantined countries

Agence France-Presse / 11:41 AM March 22, 2020



This aerial photo taken on March 16, 2020 shows a view of the Wuhan Yangtze River Bridge at night in Wuhan in China's central Hubei province. Photo by STR / AFP

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Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1246393/air-quality-picking-up-in-quarantined-countries#ixzz6HSuFDPEv>

Air quality picking up in quarantined countries

Published
19 hours ago

on March 22, 2020 01:13 PM

By **Agence France-Presse**

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Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/03/22/air-quality-picking-up-in-quarantined-countries/>

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By [Agence France-Presse](#)

March 23, 2020

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AFP

Source: https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/03/23/news/national/air-quality-improves-in-quarantined-countries/705024/?fbclid=IwAR0w-f60cHho9lqkr4IE5YuJCz8sIz1g8cBPfcVSpGe7DkoT__LaxYIUGCg

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Published March 23, 2020 12:30am

By LAURE FILLON, Agence France-Presse

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AFP

Source: https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/science/730842/air-quality-picking-up-in-quarantined-countries/story/?utm_source=GMANews&utm_medium=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR1GN_IdOh297kuqHSVd91LuEZMwXzAecur4dMYqBDDwoVgH6kEITRDV2Vo

Take care of forests, UN urges

Published
5 hours ago

on March 23, 2020 12:40 AM

By **Elmer N. Manuel @tribunephl_Imer**



United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres is calling for the year 2020 to be the year that the world turns the tide on deforestation and forestry loss in line with the observance of International Day of Forests, which falls on Saturday.

In a statement, Guterres said that the year 2020 — which has been referred to as a “nature super year” — highlights the connections between forests and biodiversity, following a 2019 UN report that sounded the alarm about accelerating species extinction rates and the unprecedented speed at which ecosystems are declining.

The UN chief pointed out that forests, and the global environment in general, are being severely degraded by the unsustainable way that we are consuming natural resources, which is accelerating biodiversity loss and exacerbating climate change.

Given the huge role that forests play in preserving life on earth and regulating the climate, Guterres expressed his alarm at the damage being wrought by drought conditions in many parts of the world, citing devastating forest fires, from the Canadian Arctic and Siberia to California and Australia.

Source: <https://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2020/03/23/take-care-of-forests-un-urges/>