

16 SEPTEMBER 2020, Wednesday



DENR

NEWS ALERTS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Manila Bay restoration

posted September 15, 2020 at 08:44 pm



The Rotary Club of Manila expresses full support to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' commitment and efforts in the improvement, beautification, restoration and cleanup of Manila Bay. Shown are (from left) Rotary Club of Manila president Bobby Joseph, DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chairman Danilo Lim.



ANTIPORDA: Dolomite is not cancerous nor poisonous

[Tuesday, September 15, 2020](#) [Tess L. Lardizabal](#)



DENR Undersecretaries Benny Antiporda and Atty. Jonas Leones lead cleanup operations at the Manila Bay shore along Roxas Boulevard. Together with them are staff from the West Field Office of the DENR-National Capital Region and employees of the DENR Central Office. Source: Facebook

Manila Bay white sand project part of generations-saving vision in progress

DOLomite is not cancerous nor poisonous.

This, among others, was established in the webinar hosted recently by Manila Bay Coordinating Office (MBCO) Director Jacob Meimban and the Technical Working Group of the estero dredging project.

The webinar was also participated in by engineers from the Metro Manila Development Authority, Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Philippine Coast Guard and private contractors involved in the project.

Also present were the strategic communication and initiatives service officials led by Undersecretary Benny Antiporda and division chiefs.

“Dolomite is not listed among the substances with carcinogen. It has .00 number content of silica which is so small for anybody who might accidentally swallow it to be poisoned,” Antiporda pointed out as he countered claims that the dolomite being used in the Manila Bay white sand project is a health hazard.

The DENR has repeatedly explained that the dolomite being questioned doesn’t pose any risk to life or property.

Citing an explanation from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the DENR noted that any type of dust or inhalable matter (normally 10 micrometers and smaller) can pose as a health hazard because it can be inhaled and go deep into the lung tissues and blood veins.

Any particulate matter bigger than this is not inhalable anymore and poses no threat to health, the DENR added, still citing USEPA.

The department, however, clarified that beach sand and sediments are around 90 micrometers that is why these are not health hazards. The crushed dolomite particles that were placed on the baywalk measure two millimeters to five millimeters, which are 100 times bigger than any beach sand and are impossible to be inhaled, it added.



ANTIPORDA: Dolomite is not cancerous nor poisonous

DENR experts also assured that dolomite doesn't contain heavy metals and won't disrupt the coastal ecosystem balance.

"Dolomite is calcium magnesium carbonate. Sea coral itself is calcium carbonate. Therefore, dolomite which has similar composition with that of corals, is not foreign to the coastal ecosystem – it has even a property that lessens the acidity of water- this is the reason why it is widely used in fish aquariums," DENR experts expounded.

Antiporda also revealed that most if not all of the critics are unaware that the white sand project is just a part of a generations-saving vision in progress.

"Beach nourishment is only a small part of the huge project to rehabilitate the Manila Bay area along the baywalk in Manila. The project also includes dredging in that bay area; dredging of esteros, rivers and waterways that drain into the bay; setting up of trash booms, installation of sewerage treatment plants, construction of septic tanks and improvement of drainage systems, among others," said Antiporda.

Antiporda also dismissed flak that the DENR project is ill-timed as it is being implemented in the midst of a pandemic.

This, as protesters have been chanting "Kanin di buhangin!" to urge the government to focus its attention on the hungry, the sick and the dying.

"The DENR, DPWH, MMDA, Philippine Coast Guard and other mandamus agencies are not the Department of Health nor the DPWH, which have mandates for these purposes. These agencies have different and specific mandates to fulfill. It is not within the mandate of the DENR to spend its budget on medical, health, food or social welfare purposes. It is mandated to use its resources, whether financial, manpower, or any other type of resources for the protection and conservation of the environment and natural resources even in the midst of a pandemic," stressed Antiporda.

The DENR official also clarified that the beach nourishment was conceptualized, budgeted and approved by the Department of Budget and Management in 2019, when there was no incident yet of COVID-19 in the country. The memorandum of agreement with the DPWH was signed between October and November 2019, and the DPWH started its implementation in January 2020.

Antiporda also dispelled claims that the rehabilitation effort is overpriced.

"One critic divided the budget to 500 linear meters, which is quite deceiving. The project is estimated to cover 30,000 to 49,000 square kilometers. The P389 million if divided to 500 meters will result to P778,000 per meter, but if it is divided to at least 30,000 square meters, it would result to 12,967 per square kilometer, which is quite reasonable," he explained.

The DENR undersecretary added that the controversial beach nourishment project is part of a Supreme Court order, a writ of continuing mandamus issued on Dec. 18, 2008 directing 13 government agencies to spearhead the cleanup, rehabilitation and eventual preservation of Manila Bay.



ANTIPORDA: Dolomite is not cancerous nor poisonous

Contrary to protesters' unfounded fears on the project's negative impacts, beach nourishment may even boost tourism and commerce as well as rejuvenate the environment, said Antiporda.

According to the DENR official, beach nourishment may even counter the powerful erosional forces of seas and oceans and has become the common practice in many countries like the United States, France and Singapore.

"It was for this reason it was adopted in the rehabilitation of Manila Bay, particularly along the baywalk area in Manila, where coastal flooding often occurs," said Antiporda.



DENR to critics: ‘Where were you when people complained about how dirty Manila Bay has become?’

Published September 15, 2020, 7:15 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

More than a week since the controversial [“beach nourishment”](#) project drew flak from various groups, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has directly addressed its “blind critics” who “villified” its efforts to give [Manila Bay](#)’s shore the much-needed makeover.



(JANSEN ROMERO / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

In a statement Tuesday, the DENR said it “welcomes and respects” constructive criticisms, as words of encouragement help the agency keep its focus on getting the job done “notwithstanding criticisms made by some quarters.”

The department, however, lambasted its critics who have been “propagating lies and baseless accusations against the DENR and government in general in all forums, including social media, to advance their selfish interests.”

“Where were you when people complained about how dirty Manila Bay has become?” the DENR asked, noting it is “right and just” for supporters of the project to ask critics this all-important question.

The DENR reiterated that the beach nourishment project is a significant component of the Manila Bay rehabilitation program, which dates back in 2008 when the Supreme Court issued a writ of continuing mandamus directing the DENR and other government agencies to clean up, rehabilitate and preserve the historic bay known globally for its spectacular sunsets.

“More than a decade since the landmark ruling was handed down by the high tribunal, it was only under the administration of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte that the government finally set in motion an honest-to-goodness endeavor to bring Manila Bay back to its former glory,” it pointed out.

It further cited that since January, 2019, the DENR, along with other mandamus agencies that also constitute the Manila Bay Task Force eventually created by the President, has been conducting regular massive cleanups along the bay and its tributaries, preparing to install three more sewage treatment plants within Metro Manila after setting up the first one on Roxas Boulevard, and



DENR to critics: ‘Where were you when people complained about how dirty Manila Bay has become?’

closely monitoring compliance by commercial and residential establishments with the country’s clean water law and other pertinent rules and regulations.

The government has also started relocating informal settlers living along the coast of the bay since they are known to be largely contributing to pollution in the area, it added

“These are just among the accomplishments of the DENR and the Manila Bay Task Force that seemed to have been purposely disregarded by detractors, who chose instead to ignore facts and spouted conspiracy theories to cast aspersions on a well-meaning project,” the DENR said.

It said it does not see an end to critics whining about the alleged health hazards posed by crushed dolomite boulders placed along the shore of Manila Bay despite the assurance from the Department of Health that “no untoward incidents will occur as a result of the endeavor.”

The DENR also reassured the public that the funds used for the project will not be put to waste as engineering interventions are being made to prevent the artificial white sand from being washed away.

The project likewise passed the required environmental impact assessment, it said.

“The beach nourishment project is more than just aesthetics, it is a strategy to promote pro-environment behavior among Filipinos. It is our hope that the beautiful white sand would inspire people to be more mindful of their obligation to keep Manila Bay clean,” it added.

The department said it is determined to finish the project “to give our people a nice, cozy, and clean place to relax, recreate and enjoy the world’s most beautiful sunsets.”



BEAUTIFICATION | DENR defends Manila Bay clean-up against ‘misleading’ and ‘blind’ critics

September 15, 2020 , 07:39 PM

(September 15, 2020) – The department tasked to clean up Manila Bay defended the project against critics, insisting on Tuesday that the beautification which used artificial white sand passed the required environmental impact assessment.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) issued the statement on Tuesday as it hit on “deliberate attempt to mislead the public and vilify government efforts” in dumping crushed dolomite in Manila Bay.

“These blind critics have been propagating lies and baseless accusations against the DENR and government in general in all forums, including social media, to advance their selfish interests,” the DENR statement read,

“It is only right and just for supporters of the project to ask critics this all-important question: “Where were you when people complained about how dirty Manila Bay has become?””

Several environmental groups and think-tanks raised concerns about the project, such as its pricing, the results of its environmental impact assessment study, and the health hazard of using crushed dolomite.

The provincial government of Cebu even ordered the mining companies involved to cease operations as they were not informed of the project and cited potential hazards to the environment.

Infrawatch PH added that dolomite mined in Cebu was primarily used for construction, glassmaking, and soil conditioner—not as beach topfill.

Last Monday, the Department of Health (DOH) said inhaling crushed dolomite could cause respiratory issues.

“Kapag napunta sa mata, magkakaroon ng kaunting irritation. Kapag na-ingest, magkakaroon ng gastro-intestinal discomfort, pagkakasakit ng tiyan at pagtatae,” DOH Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said in an online briefing.

Two days later, the DOH clarified that dolomite in its bulk state “is not a known health hazard”; and that in dust form, like any other dust particle, “can lead to symptoms such as chest discomfort, shortness of breath, and coughing for this is our body’s normal reaction to irritants.”

DENR Sec. Roy Cimatu told lawmakers in a budget hearing that the crushed dolomite they procured from Cebu was thrice the size of sand granules, and would not be suspended in the air.

“The dolomite has been used in many beach areas for more than 20 years and there has not been any reported problem,” the DENR statement said.



BEAUTIFICATION | DENR defends Manila Bay clean-up against ‘misleading’ and ‘blind’ critics

“The DENR also reassures the public that the funds used for the project will not be put to waste as engineering interventions are being made to prevent the artificial white sand from being washed away. The project likewise passed the required environmental impact assessment,” they added.

The DENR added that the beautification and beach nourishment project was a culmination of its Manila Bay clean-up, which was mandated by the Supreme Court as early as 2008.

Three additional sewage treatment plants were installed within Metro Manila and relocated informal settlers living along the coast of the bay.

They plan to finish the project by September 19, in time for the International Coastal Cleanup Day.

“No amount of baseless and harsh criticisms will prevent us from performing the gargantuan and extremely difficult task of restoring our beloved Manila Bay,” the DENR said.



DENR: Measures in place so Manila Bay's white sand won't get washed away

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Sep 15, 2020 9:53:07 PM



The government has planned interventions to ensure that the white sand overlaid on part of Manila Bay's shoreline will not get washed away, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said Tuesday. (FILE PHOTO)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 15) — The government has planned interventions to ensure that the white sand overlaid on part of Manila Bay's shoreline will not get washed away, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said Tuesday.

The DENR assured that public funds will not be wasted amid concerns that the sand will eventually be swept away by storms and high tide to the bottom of the bay.

"The DENR also reassures the public that the funds used for the project will not be put to waste as engineering interventions are being made to prevent the artificial white sand from being washed away," said the agency in a statement.

Environment Undersecretary Benny Antiporda explained in a phone call to CNN Philippines that there is already a hidden "geotube" surrounding the beach area that serves as a barrier between the land and the sea. He added that erosion of the white sand is still expected but "it will not be that big."

The DENR also maintained that the white sand does not pose health risks since it cannot be suspended in the air or inhaled given that it is 100 times bigger than dust. The department also reiterated the Department of Health's statement assuring that no "[untoward incident](#)" will result from the white sand project.

Environment advocates have repeatedly [slammed the project](#) as merely "aesthetic", a criticism the agency dismisses as "misleading."

"These blind critics have been propagating lies and baseless accusations against the DENR and government in general in all forums, including social media, to advance their selfish interests," the DENR statement added.

It maintained that the white sand in the project has been used for years due to dolomite's capacity to filter water. The entire "beach nourishment" project of Manila Bay spans 120 meters across the shoreline and 60 meters towards the bay. Its cost is pegged by the DENR at P389 million, with P28 million used in the extraction and transportation of dolomite from Cebu province.



A bulldozer is seen working on the "white sand"—actually crushed dolomite rocks—poured along the shoreline of Manila Bay on September 6, 2020.
The STAR/Miguel de Guzman

'Discipline zone not enough:' DENR urged to declare Manila Bay a 'reclamation-free' zone

[Gaea Katreena Cabico](#) (Philstar.com) - September 15, 2020 - 3:54pm

MANILA, Philippines — Declaring Manila Bay a “reclamation-free” zone, not just assigning a “discipline” zone, will make the historic bay clean and healthy, a fishers group said Tuesday.

In a statement, Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA) criticized the proposal of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources to declare the entire stretch of Manila Bay’s baywalk a “discipline” zone to ensure its cleanliness.

DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said the department will submit a request to the Manila City government to pass such ordinance, CNN Philippines reported over the weekend. This, after he allegedly saw a man defecating along the baywalk area during the agency’s inspection of the artificial white sand being dumped along the bay’s shoreline.

For PAMALAKAYA, the proposal is a “misplaced priority” and “reeks poor-blaming.”

“While the DENR is making a fuss out of feces, it fails to recognize the actual and biggest threat in Manila Bay—the massive reclamation projects that wipeout mangrove forests and sea grasses and cause irreversible damage and pollution in the waters,” Fernando Hicap, PAMALAKAYA national chairperson, said.

Hicap called on the DENR, which heads the Manila Bay rehabilitation task force, to revoke all the environmental compliance certificates issued to several reclamation projects on the bay.

“How about declare the Manila Bay a reclamation-free zone to save it from further ecological destruction and revive its marine and fishery resources?”

Reclamation projects are seen to adversely affect the habitat of marine species and wetlands and wells as destroy a source of fish catch for fisherfolk.



'Discipline zone not enough:' DENR urged to declare Manila Bay a 'reclamation-free' zone

Scientists also said that coastal development projects will also make coastal communities susceptible to liquefaction — or when loosely packed ground surface loses their strength—during earthquakes and aggravate flooding in low-lying areas.

One of the biggest reclamation projects in Manila Bay is the proposed New Manila International Airport in Bulacan province, which will reclaim 2,500 hectares of fishing and mangrove areas.

The DENR in June issued an ECC to the land reclamation project in Bacoor City.

PAMALAKAYA earlier said that a better way to rehabilitate Manila Bay is restoring mangrove forests and wetlands.

Early in September, the department began filling a stretch of Manila Bay's coastline as a part of the government's effort to rehabilitate, a move feared to potentially harm not only the bay's marine ecosystem but also communities in and around the area. Critics also hit the project for its alleged failure to comply with environmental laws.



'Reclamation-free zone,' not just 'discipline zone' for Manila Bay, DENR urged

Published September 15, 2020, 3:53 PM
by [Raymund Antonio](#)

A fishermen's group on Tuesday rejected the proposal of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to the Manila city government to declare the entire stretch of Manila baywalk a "discipline zone" to keep it clean.



(MANILA BULLETIN)

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA) said the DENR should instead revoke all the environmental compliance certificates (ECCs) issued to several reclamation projects as it called the agency's proposal a "misplaced priority."

"How about declaring the Manila Bay a reclamation-free zone to save it from further ecological destruction and revive its marine and fishery resources," Pamalakaya chair Fernando Hicap suggested.

Hicap pointed out that Manila Bay is under serious threat because of massive reclamation projects that would cause water pollution and the destruction of mangrove forests and sea grasses.

The group was referring to 320-hectare reclamation in Bacoor City, Cavite, and the land development reclamation for the Bulacan airport project, both of which have been issued with ECCs.

DENR Undersecretary Benny Antiporda said the agency will request Manila Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso to pass an ordinance declaring the baywalk a discipline zone.

Antiporda made the proposal following an recent incident along the area where he himself spotted a man defecating during an inspection of the white sand project.

The DENR heads the Manila Bay rehabilitation task force.

Hicap said the agency's proposed discipline zone reeks of "poor-blaming while exonerating government agencies from accountability" for its projects harmful to the environment.

"From dolomite white sand filling to a discipline zone, the DENR's misplaced priorities and superficial solutions to the degrading Manila Bay are costing the Filipinos a fortune, instead of a community-based and science informed rehabilitation program that aims to restore the bay's fishery resources," he said.



Group reiterates call to declare entire Manila Bay a ‘reclamation-free zone’

By [Jonathan L. Mayuga](#)

September 15, 2020

A group composed mostly of small fisherfolk is reiterating its call to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to declare the entire Manila Bay as “off limits” to land reclamation activities.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) urged the DENR, which heads the Manila Bay rehabilitation task force, to revoke the environmental compliance certificates (ECCs) issued to several reclamation projects in the area and declare the historic bay a “reclamation-free zone.”

The group said the proposed 320-hectare reclamation project in Bacoor City, Cavite, and the land development reclamation for the Bulacan airport project, have already secured ECCs.

“While the DENR is making a fuss out of feces, it fails to recognize the actual and the biggest threat in Manila Bay—the massive reclamation projects that wipe out mangrove forests and seagrasses, and cause irreversible damage and pollution in the waters,” Fernando Hicap, Pamalakaya national chairman said in a news statement.

“How about declar[ing] the Manila Bay a reclamation-free zone to save it from further ecological destruction and revive its marine and fishery resources?” he asked.

The proposed “discipline zone” along the stretch of the Manila Baywalk “reeks poor-blaming,” while exonerating government agencies that facilitate destructively projects and those actual “big-business environmental plunderers” from accountability, Hicap alleged.

Hicap, also former Anakpawis Party-list representative during the 16th Congress, mentioned pending House Bills prohibiting reclamation in Manila Bay, namely, the HB 257 declaring the Manila Bay a reclamation-free zone which was re-filed by Bayan Muna Party-list along with the Makabayan bloc, and the HB 3169 seeking to ban reclamation in Manila Bay and to declare it as a heritage site, filed by Pangasinan Rep. Rose Marie “Baby” Arenas.

“From dolomite ‘white sand’ filling to a ‘discipline zone.’ The DENR’s misplaced priorities and superficial solutions to the degrading Manila Bay are costing the Filipinos a fortune instead of a community-based and science-informed rehabilitation program that aims to restore the bay’s fishery resources,” Hicap stated.



Lorenzana finds time to drop by Manila Bay

Published September 15, 2020, 8:06 PM

by [Martin Sadongdong](#)

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana on Tuesday visited Manila Bay along Roxas Boulevard where the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is currently dumping crushed dolomite rocks as part of a P389-million rehabilitation program of the natural harbor.



(photo from DND)

According to the Department of National Defense (DND), Lorenzana decided to pay a visit at the famed tourist attraction in the country's capital after a duty call at the headquarters of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) in Port Area, Manila.

There were no other details of Lorenzana's visit to Manila Bay as of this writing.

Meanwhile, several photos shared to the media by the DND showed Lorenzana as he met Admiral George Ursabia Jr., PCG commandant.

Lorenzana and Ursabia were also shown when they boarded the offshore patrol vessel BRP Gabriela Silang (OPV-8301) with its skipper, Commander Alberto Ferre.

The visit came a week after the DENR started putting crushed dolomite rocks on the stretch of Manila Bay as if to make it an artificial white sand beach.

The beautification project received mixed reactions with some people claiming that the crushed dolomite rocks might be harmful when inhaled by the people and damage marine life in Manila Bay.

There were also critics who called out the agency's supposedly misplaced priority in pushing through with the multi-million project amid the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meanwhile, others expressed support to the government's effort to save the Manila Bay from its degrading image due to decades of submersion to pollution.



Beach nourishment not permanent remedy to save Manila Bay — MGB

Published September 15, 2020, 12:13 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said [beach nourishment](#) is “not a permanent remedy” to combat erosion and increase the beach width of [Manila Bay](#).



Workers pile the “white sand” to be laid on Manila bay.
(Jansen Romero / FILE PHOTO / MANILA BULLETIN)

Citing previous studies and scientific researches, the MGB explained that “mechanically placed sand on beaches moves as affected by waves, currents, tides and wind and other potential impacts of anthropogenic and natural events.”

In one study conducted by the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California at San Diego, “they found out that added coarser sand to the beach stayed on despite of energetic waves (but) in one case, the sand moved both north and south along the coast that later contributed to the closure of a river estuary causing concentrated pollution and hypoxia.”

In the case of the dolomite sand spread along the beach of Manila Bay, it said it is necessary to have a systematic monitoring of monsoon or seasonal currents to follow the general pattern of the direction of movement and deposition of piles of sediments in the bay.

“The process will take for some time but regular monitoring and studies will enable DENR to predict or model on how the nourished sand will evolve,” MGB said.

MGB experts from the Marine Geological Survey Division have been also conducting coastal geohazard assessments across the country and found that most beaches in the Philippines are prone to erosion, “which cause adverse changes in the shape and position of coasts.”

It pointed out that beach nourishment, or beach replenishment, which is the practice of adding sand or sediment to beaches aims to combat erosion and increase beach width.



Beach nourishment not permanent remedy to save Manila Bay — MGB

“Beach nourishment is a soft engineering alternative to hard structures like seawalls, groins on the shore used to create a natural beach environment for the bay, eliminating detrimental effects of shore protection structures by burying them, and retaining sediment volumes to respond to sea level rise brought about by climate change,” the MGB explained.

After the dredging and clean-up of the Manila Bay, members of the different agencies involved in the rehabilitation of the bay have agreed that the initial beach nourishment to be implemented will be applied in the segment between the area fronting the US Embassy and the Manila Bay Yacht Club to mimic a “pocket beach.”

The DENR earlier said that beach nourishment was applied as part of the bay rehabilitation because “Manila Bay is not considered prone to coastal erosion as it is mostly protected by seawalls, but the beaches are very narrow.”

However, the MGB noted that “beach nourishment does not stop erosion, rather, it merely prevents erosion for a short time.”

The DENR has began laying out “white sand” made from crushed dolomite rocks early this month as part of the P389 million Manila Bay rehabilitation that started in 2018.

Due to criticisms with the use of dolomite as potential hazard to public health, the DENR clarified by citing the Grain Size Classification from the United States Geological Survey Open-File Report 2006-1195 dated 2011 that sand grains spread in Manila Bay is classified as coarse-grained sand to fine pebbles.

It said it was 2 millimeters to 5 millimeters in size or equivalent to 2,000 microns to 5,000 microns, and therefore almost 100 times bigger than dust. It is not “dust” which is 2.5 microns to 50 microns in size, according to the DENR.

They even cited the famous islands known for their fine sand such as Panglao and Boracay becoming world-renowned for their “powdery sugary sand,” which were derived from weathered coralline limestone and dolomitic limestone, and no health complaint has been filed by tourists and swimmers.

“In response to these clamor it is important that DENR had conferred the activity with other agencies before the implementation of the project,” the MGB said.



Potemkin by the Bay; whitewashing history



By [Marlen V. Ronquillo](#)

September 16, 2020

THERE are parts of the natural environment that are hostile to intrusion or intrusive materials. Covering a part of the beachfront of the so-called Manila Baywalk with dolomite to paper over the grim and blight that decades of garbage and septic tanks have dealt on a once spectacular beachfront is one.

Splashing artificial white to hide the hideous detritus stuck on the beachfront of the so-called Baywalk and create a faux Boracay without even a rudimentary environmental impact study is not only rude intervention on a blighted ecosystem; it is even questionable aesthetics.

At some point, after this P400-million project is over and done with, there would be a line where the grimy part would connect with the dolomite-covered portion of the Baywalk and the stark contrast cannot be papered over. The proponents of the dolomite project, it is all too clear, failed to read the lessons of history — specifically Russian history under the czarist regimes.

Potemkin villages, remember? Putting up facades to cover up the grime and the blight on entire impoverished Russian villages so the visiting queens and their retinue of bejeweled dowagers would not confront the brutal realities of widespread poverty and misery.

We saw this done in Metro Manila on a massive scale during the martial law regime when dignitaries visited and when international beauty pageants were hosted. Suddenly, the miserable slum areas along the route of the visiting beauties and dignitaries got fresh coats of paint to hide the blight. On a smaller scale, post-martial rule, this cosmeticizing was in vogue in Marikina City during the time of a certain mayor — with no measurable lift to the city's spirits.

Because creating Potemkin villages is just papering over blight and misery and is not a real take on lifting the blighted villages out of their systemic and deeply entrenched rot. The artificial coverings do not last, and the fakery quickly unravels.

A critic of the project said that the P400 million Potemkin fund for the Baywalk will just be money, which could have better uses, down the septic tanks and sewage pipes that pollute Manila Bay. That observation carries tons of weight because it was said by Rep. Jose “Lito” Atienza, who served nine years as mayor of Manila and was briefly the head of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the dolomite-dumping proponent.

Atienza did not exactly reference the Potemkin villages, but said that “cosmetics in the form of dolomite would not cover the stink” of the bay area. “What good will covering the Baywalk with artificial sand do when the waters of Manila Bay remain [as] polluted as ever,” he said.



Potemkin by the Bay; whitewashing history

At some point, the accumulated filth of the bay area — nature will always find a way — will pile up on the whitewashed portions, smudging the whole “beautification” project and rendering the grand purpose void. It will be, as former mayor and now Rep. Atienza said, money down the filth of the bay. In the time of Covid-19, how many personal protective equipment, or PPE, for our embattled health workers can be acquired with P400 million? Truckloads upon truckloads.

Even the safety aspect of the project is a question mark. When the Covid-weakened lungs of the bay’s promenaders inhale the dust of the dolomite, you put lives in peril. The expected respite from the swath of white in the bay area — which was how the Palace spokesman quantified the gains from the Potemkin project — will never outweigh the impact on the lungs of doses of inhaled dolomite. The Department of Health, in its initial but candid assessment of dolomite intakes, said dolomite is dangerous. A chorus of environmental voices also warned against the dangers posed by dolomite.

From Cebu, the word from the provincial government now threatens the dolomite shipments from that province into the bay area. The Cebu provincial government said that it would ban dolomite quarrying for that specific project.

While the dolomite is whitewashing the grime and blight of the bay, Congress is doing a parallel job of sprucing up history. It is about to pass a law (it breezed through the House and is expected to sail through the Senate with ease) that seeks to designate the birthday of the late President Marcos as a holiday in his home province of Ilocos Norte. From a hero’s burial segueing to the designation of a holiday to honor a former president whose indelible mark in history was to provide ample fodder for the writers of “Saturday Night Live.”

Men of a certain age cannot look back to the past without shedding a tear or two for the bright and idealistic young men and women who fell while fighting the dictatorship. Poet-warriors, peasant organizers, priests and lay leaders, trade unionists, student leaders and, like Andres Bonifacio, the fearless leaders who emerged from plebeian ordinariness.

Neither can we forget the dark period when the country had to pay for its basic imports in cash and the synonyms for the name Philippines were “economic pariah” and “basket case.” When loans from the multilateral institutions disappeared (the entire amount) and resurfaced in Swiss bank accounts. A time when a Philippine passport amounted to nothing.

While failed leaders create alternate universes and do historical rewrites to paper over their ghastly regimes, the truly egregious and incredulous chapters of history are often left as they are because no tortured rewriting can alter the historical truths. Our period under Marcos, due to the depth of our fall and disgrace, should have been left alone.

But no. No truths are sacred and sacrosanct. And a dummy Congress is at the lead of the great whitewashing of a dark, ghastly chapter in our history.

Habal-habal riders maghahakot ng basura sa mga estero



September 15, 2020 @ 5:55 PM 3 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Nakita ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang innovative na solusyon sa problema ng paghahakot ng basura sa komunidad ng estero sa kahabaan ng Tullahan-Tinajeros River System gamit ang kanilang bersyon mula sa “habal-habal”

Nabatid na ang “poor man’s motorcycle taxi” na habal-habal na isang improvised two-wheeled single motorcycle na ginagamit bilang passenger capacity lamang.

Subalit may sariling bersyon dito ang DENR na bilang isang utility vehicle na ginagamit bilang eco-friendly bicycle na may automatic foot break at may two-by-three sidecar para makahakot na mga basura ng kabahayan.

Ayon kay DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ang habal-habal ay gagamitin para sa pangongolekta ng basura mula sa mga komunidad ng estero na hindi naaabot ng mga dump truck at ang iba pang hindi nahahakot na basura sa Manila Bay.

Sa ibinigay na pag-aaral ng DENR, sinabi ni Cimatu na ang mga basura na nakukuha sa komunidad ng mga estero sa mga iskinita at alleys at hindi regular na nakokolekta dahil hindi ito madaanan ng mga dump truck.

“The accumulated uncollected wastes do not only pose health risks to the communities, but also clog canals, causing flooding in these areas. Uncollected garbage also end up in coastlines and waters of Manila Bay,” ayon pa kay Cimatu.

Si Cimatu na chairs ng Manila Bay Task Force ay nagsabi na ang tamang paghahakot ng basura at regular na cleanup sa mga estero ay isang malaking hakbang para muling mai-rehabilitate ang historic bay.

“Tough problems involving the presence of informal settlers directly dumping to the esteros, non-compliance of industries with discharge permitting regulations and lack of sewage management system are also being addressed under the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program,” dagdag pa nito.

Ayon pa kay Cimatu ang DENR ay mamamahagi ng habal-habals sa sampung (10) barangay sa Tullahan-Tinajeros River System na isang mataas na bilang ng informal settler families sa lugar na hindi naaabot ng truck para mahakot ang basura. **Santi Celario**



'Habal-habal' tack pushed by DENR in river clean-up

Published September 15, 2020, 6:17 PM

by [Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz](#)

Using its own version of “habal-habal,” the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) now employs an innovative solution to collect trash from hard-to-reach areas, particularly “estero” or waterway communities along the Tullahan-Tinajeros River System.



(MANILA BULLETIN)

“Habal-habal,” usually dubbed as the “poor man’s motorcycle taxi,” is a highly improvised two-wheeled single motorcycle usually ridden beyond its passenger capacity.

The DENR has its own version of the utility vehicle that uses an eco-friendly bicycle with automatic foot break and two-by-three feet sidecar, allowing it to carry household waste.

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu said the vehicle will be used to collect garbage from estero communities that are not reached by dump trucks and whose uncollected trash eventually ends up in Manila Bay.

Citing a recent DENR study, Cimatu said garbage generated by estero communities with narrow streets or alleys are not regularly collected since these areas are not accessible to dump trucks.

“The accumulated uncollected wastes do not only pose health risks to the communities, but also clog canals, causing flooding in these areas. Uncollected garbage also end up in coastlines and waters of Manila Bay,” he pointed out.

Cimatu, who chairs the Manila Bay Task Force, said proper garbage collection and regular cleanups in esterros are crucial to the ongoing efforts to rehabilitate the historic bay.

“Tough problems involving the presence of informal settlers directly dumping to the esterros, non-compliance of industries with discharge permitting regulations and lack of sewage management system are also being addressed under the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program,” he added.

Cimatu said the DENR will be distributing habal-habals to 10 barangays within the Tullahan-Tinajeros River System, where there is a relatively high number of informal settler families and with areas that are hard to reach by garbage collection trucks.



‘Habal-habal’ tack pushed by DENR in river clean-up

These are Barangays 160, 162 and 163 in Caloocan City; Potrero, Catmon, Tinajeros, and Maysilo in Malabon City; Ugong and Marulas in Valenzuela City; and Sta. Lucia in Quezon City.

Tullahan-Tinajeros River Commanders and DENR Undersecretaries Jonas Leones and Analiza Rebuelta-Teh, together with DENR-National Capital Region Executive Director Jacqueline Caanca, will lead the turnover of habal-habals to the barangay beneficiaries on Sept. 19.

The turnover ceremony forms part of the local celebration of the International Coastal Cleanup Day, with the theme “Safe Oceans Start at Homes.”

The Tullahan-Tinajeros River System measures 36.4 kilometers, traversing 44 barangays, covering the cities of Quezon, Caloocan, Valenzuela, Malabon and Navotas.



DENR turns to ‘habal-habal’ to tackle garbage collection woes

September 15, 2020, 6:06 pm



MANILA – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has found an innovative solution to trash collection problems in estero communities along the Tullahan-Tinajeros River System using its own version of the lowly yet dependable “habal-habal.”

Frequently dubbed as the “poor man’s motorcycle taxi,” habal-habal is a highly improvised two-wheeled single motorcycle usually ridden beyond its passenger capacity.

In a press release on Tuesday, DENR said it has its own version of the utility vehicle that uses an eco-friendly bicycle with automatic foot break and two-by-three feet sidecar, allowing it to carry household waste.

DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu said the habal-habal will be used to collect garbage from estero communities that are not reached by dump trucks and whose uncollected trash eventually ends up in Manila Bay.

Citing a recent DENR study, Cimatu said garbage generated by estero communities with narrow streets or alleys are not regularly collected since these areas are not accessible to dump trucks.

“The accumulated uncollected wastes do not only pose health risks to the communities but also clog canals, causing flooding in these areas. Uncollected garbage also ends up in coastlines and waters of Manila Bay,” Cimatu said.

Cimatu, who chairs the Manila Bay Task Force, said proper garbage collection and regular cleanups in esterros are crucial to the ongoing efforts to rehabilitate the historic bay.

“Tough problems involving the presence of informal settlers directly dumping to the esterros, non-compliance of industries with discharge permitting regulations, and lack of sewage management system are also being addressed under the Manila Bay Rehabilitation Program,” he added.



DENR turns to ‘habal-habal’ to tackle garbage collection woes

Cimatu said the DENR will be distributing units of habal-habal to 10 barangays within the Tullahan-Tinajeros River System, which have a relatively high number of informal settler families and with areas that are hard to reach by garbage collection trucks.

These are Barangays 160, 162, and 163 in Caloocan City; Potrero, Catmon, Tinajeros, and Maysilo in Malabon City; Ugong and Marulas in Valenzuela City; and Sta. Lucia in Quezon City.

Tullahan-Tinajeros River Commanders and DENR Undersecretaries Jonas Leones and Analiza Rebuelta-Teh, together with DENR-National Capital Region Executive Director Jacqueline Caancan, will lead the turnover of habal-habal units to the barangay beneficiaries on Sept. 19.

The turnover ceremony forms part of the local celebration of the International Coastal Cleanup Day, with the theme “Safe Oceans Start at Homes.”

During the event, the DENR will also distribute educational materials on climate and environmental protection, including UNICEF-assisted climate change flip charts and children storybook entitled “Ang Paglalakbay nina Niño at Niña,” as well as hygiene kits in support of the campaign against Covid-19.

The Tullahan-Tinajeros River System measures 36.4 kilometers, traversing 44 barangays, covering the cities of Quezon, Caloocan, Valenzuela, Malabon, and Navotas.

Dredging of the 5.25-km portion of the river system has recently started, with help from diversified conglomerate San Miguel Corporation, yielding about 2,500 truckloads of silt and garbage as of late August 2020. **(PR)**

World Bamboo Day 2020 suportado ng DENR



September 15, 2020 @ 5:02 PM 12 hours ago

Manila, Philippines – Bilang pagdiriwang ng World Bamboo Day sa buong mundo sa darating na Setyembre 18 nakikiisa ang Pilipinas sa naturang okasyon habang todo naman ang pag-promote ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) para sa mga pakinabang ng bamboo bilang sustainable resource.

Ang bamboo na pinapalagay ngayon bilang “green gold” ay nagkaroon ng mabilis na pagkilala sa mga nagdaang taon, kung saan ang kalihim ng DENR mismo na si Secretary Roy A. Cimatu ang nagpapatunay sa durability at sustainability nito.

Bilang katunayan, si Cimatu na isang bamboo enthusiast ay nagbigay ng bagong pahayag para sa “wonder plant” nang kalian lang dumalo siya sa budget hearing ng House of Representatives.

Ayon sa kalihim ng DENR, ang bamboo na isa sa “fastest growing renewable resource” sa mundo, ay hindi lamang sustainable na alternatibo sa kahoy, kung hindi, epektibo rin ito bilang solusyon sa climate change.

Sinabi pa niya sa mga mambabatas na ang direksyon ng Enhanced National Greening Program (ENGP), isang flagship reforestation na inisyatibo ng gobyerno, ay ang pagtatanim ng kawayan.

“We intend to make amendments in the ENGP to increase the country’s production of bamboo,” sabi ni Cimatu na naniniwalang ang pagtatanim ng kawayan ang makatutulong upang mapabuti ang forest cover ng bansa.

Para sa taon lamang, sinabi ni Cimatu na target ng DENR na mataniman ng kawayan ang 16,867 ektaryang lupa sa buong bansa.

Ang bamboo ay pinahahalagahan dahil sa ecological benefits nito. Kaya nitong sumipsip ng greenhouse gases, mag-insulate ng carbon dioxide mula sa kapaligiran at nakapagbibigay ng 35 percent higit pang oxygen kumpara sa kaparehong sukat na puno nito.

Dahil din sa matibay at mahahabang ugat nito, napipigilan ang pagkakaroon ng pagguho ng lupa at landslides. Kaya din nitong pabilisin ang ‘aquifer recharge’ sa watershed at pinagmumulan din ito ng pagkain at biofuel sa anyo ng charcoal at briquettes.

Ayon kay FMB Director Lourdes Wagan, dahil sa tumataas na pangangailangan sa kawayan, naging mabilis ang magandang pagturing nito mula sa tawag na “poor man’s timber” naging kahanap-hanap na gamit na ngayon ang tawag ay “green gold.” **Santi Celario**



Mining firms back DENR's project

posted September 15, 2020 at 10:30 pm

by [Maricel Cruz](#)

Two of the country's leading mining companies have expressed strong support for Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu's call to provide additional areas for bamboo plantations as part of the Duterte administration's post-coronavirus disease-19 (COVID-19) recovery efforts.

Marcventures Mining and Development Corp. and Benguet Corp.'s Nickel Mines Inc. welcomed the order of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' requiring mining firms to double their areas allotted for bamboo plantations from 10 percent to 20 percent of the declared final mining area as part of the government's economic recovery program.

The DENR issued the order on June 11, 2020 in memorandum titled "Establishment of Bamboo Plantation in Mining Areas" that the Mines and Geosciences Bureau sent to all mining companies.

The memorandum is meant to address soil erosion, landslides and flooding which are common occurrences in any mine site.

MMDC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of listed Marcventures Holdings Inc., pioneered the planting of bamboo trees in Surigao del Sur in its effort to provide livelihood, environmental benefits, absorb greenhouse gases and protect the soil.

"Marcventures is the acknowledged pioneer among mining companies in bamboo planting and has been cited by the DENR, and so far, with biggest bamboo planting area. The DENR has now mandated the planting of bamboo as a major activity for mine rehabilitation," said Isidro Alcantara, president and board director of MHI, which has mining operations in Cantillan, Carrascal and Madrid in Surigao del Sur.

With the celebration of World Bamboo Day on September 18, MHI reported that it has already planted a total of 34,375 bamboo seedlings covering over 54.3 hectares.

"Marcventures has pioneered bamboo planting in the mined-out areas and possibly in the non-mineralized parts as a potentially permanent livelihood to sustain the communities beyond the life of Marcventures," Alcantara added.

"In Marcventures, we describe our mining as clean and sustainable mining in addition to responsible mining," Alcantara pointed out. "We are therefore committed to sustain our business by practicing clean and sustainable mining."

For BNMI, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Benguet Corp., said bamboo planting will provide opportunities for local employment and establish bamboo-based community enterprise for home decors and furniture.



Mining firms back DENR's project

"This will help promote environmental wellness amid the pandemic and provide livelihood for the people," BNMI said. "Bamboo forest, aside from conserving biodiversity, contribute to purification and regulation of the environment as they function as carbon sink."

BNMI said it has complied with the DENR's directive and propagated an approximate 30,000 bamboo culms/seedlings of mixed species of Kawayang Tinik, Bayto, Boho and Kawayang Dilaw in sitio Binagbag, barangay Guisguis, Santa Cruz, Zambales.



On more bamboo plantation areas for post-COVID recovery efforts

[Tuesday, September 15, 2020](#) [Ryan Ponce Pacpaco](#)



Marcventures' bamboo planting project in Surigao del Sur.

MMDC, BNMI BACK DUTERTE, CIMATU

TWO of the country's leading mining firms responsible for the extraction of minerals on Monday expressed strong support for Environment Sec. Roy Cimatu's call to provide additional areas for bamboo plantations as part of the Duterte administration's post-coronavirus disease-19 (COVID-19) recovery efforts.

Marcventures Mining and Development Corp. (MMDC) and BenguetCorp Nickel Mines Inc. (BNMI) welcomed the decision of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) requiring mining firms to double their areas allotted for bamboo plantations from 10 percent to 20 percent of the declared final mining area as part of the government's economic recovery program amid the pandemic.

The DENR made the order through a June 11, 2020 memorandum issued by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) to all mining firms in the Philippines, one of the most highly mineralized countries in the world, titled "Establishment of Bamboo Plantation in Mining Areas" to address soil erosion, landslides and flooding which are common disasters in any mine site.

In fact, MMDC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of listed Marcventures Holdings Inc. (MHI), pioneered the planting of bamboo trees in Surigao del Sur as this would provide livelihood, huge environmental benefits, absorb greenhouse gases and protect the soil.

"Marcventures is the acknowledged pioneer among mining companies in bamboo planting and has been cited by the DENR, and so far, with biggest bamboo planting area. The DENR has now mandated the planting of bamboo as a major activity for mine rehabilitation," said Isidro C. Alcantara, President & Director of MHI, which has mining operations in Cantillan, Carrascal and Madrid in Surigao del Sur.

With the celebration of World Bamboo Day (WBD) this September 18, MHI has already planted a total of 34,375 bamboo seedlings covering over 54.3 hectares.

On more bamboo plantation areas for post-COVID recovery efforts

Currently growing at the mined out areas are Giant Bamboo (*Dendrocalamus giganteus*) and Kawayang Tinik (*Bambusa blumeana*), the two commercially viable varieties.

“Marcventures has pioneered bamboo planting in the mined-out areas and possibly in the non-mineralized as a potentially permanent livelihood to sustain the communities beyond the life of Marcventures,” Alcantara said.

“In Marcventures, we describe our mining as clean and sustainable mining in addition to responsible mining,” Alcantara pointed out. “We are therefore committed to sustain our business by practicing clean and sustainable mining.”

“Marcventures Holdings, Inc. continues to integrate its mining activities with programs that promote environmental protection and sustainable development of our host communities. We are committed to transform mined-out areas into productive agricultural lands,” he said.

In 2017, Alcantara recalled that Marcventures embarked on a Bamboo Plantation Development plan to help the community tap the country’s bamboo industry.

“It was promoted by the DENR at the initiative of Secretary Roy A. Cimatu for mine rehabilitation and the company pioneered the planting of bamboo in mined-out areas. The goal is to generate an income generating bamboo business anchored on the rehabilitation plan,” said Alcantara who stressed that bamboo farming is the heart of their mining rehabilitation program.

“MHI is also the leader in the propagation of bamboo as a sustainable and rewarding livelihood project for communities. Bamboo nurseries and revegetation are carried out to restore disturbed areas with the goal of returning the land to its natural state after operations. Fully-committed to forging partnerships for sustainable development, MHI leads the propagation of bamboo as a livelihood project endorsed by the DENR,” Alcantara explained.

In 2018, Alcantara said Marcventures formed the Pili Kawajan Association (PKJ) composed of community members to manage the company’s bamboo plantation.

“PKJ also completed a service excellence training that aims to strengthen their capacity to grow the bamboo plantation business,” he said. “Also known as the grass of hope bamboo, it has a wide range of application. It can be used for furniture, clothing fiber, pulp and paper products, food ingredients, beauty products, architecture and construction.”

BENGUET CORPORATION





On more bamboo plantation areas for post-COVID recovery efforts

For BNMI, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Benguet Corp., the said bamboo planting project will provide opportunities for local employment and establish bamboo-based community enterprise for home decors and furniture.

“This will help promote environmental wellness amid the pandemic and provide livelihood for the people,” BNMI said. “Bamboo forests, aside from conserving biodiversity, contribute to purification and regulation of the environment as they function as carbon sink.”

BNMI said it has complied with the DENR’s directive and propagated an approximate 30,000 bamboo culms/seedlings of mixed species of Kawayang Tinik, Bayto, Boho and Kawayang Dilaw in Sitio Binagbag, Bgy. Guisguis, Sta. Cruz, Zambales.

MARCVENTURES’ GOOD GOVERNANCE AND ADHERENCE TO MINING LAWS

For Marcventures, Alcantara said there are two major areas of sustainability for mining centric businesses.

“Of great importance to us is environmental compliance because we are in a protected watershed. We ensure strict adherence to environmental restoration and rehabilitation. Our waters are clean, which is true test of responsibility mining, and children play in our rivers and women wash there also,” Alcantara said.

“First, the long-term sustainability of the businesses of MHI and the nickel mines in Surigao del Sur itself through good governance and adherence to mining laws and regulations and ensuring faithful compliance to our economic and social obligations to the country: and, second, and of co-equal importance, if not more into beyond our corporate life, is the sustainability of the communities where we do business including their continuing livelihood, restoring and enhancing the environment for their future use and uplifting the standards of living in the host communities,” Alcanta stressed.

“The first part of sustainability is driven and achieved by the way we do mining relative to Universal Standards of Responsible Mining and the Unique Factors of Nature where we are. This covers our operating and business processes, our compliance with environmental laws, our compliance with mining laws and regulations and our endeavor to always consider the interests of the local communities. Specific areas of we always and consistently focus on are water resource and air quality management, corporate social responsibility, management of our people including health and safety, principles of good governance to guide all our corporate acts and lastly community engagement that always considers the common and greater good of the Peoples around us especially the Indigenous Peoples,” Alcantara explained.



On more bamboo plantation areas for post-COVID recovery efforts

BENEFITS OF MINING UNDER MARCVENTURES' CARE

While mining activities are ongoing, Alcantara said Marcventures provides jobs, health care, education through one of the largest scholarship programs up to college and through a community high school, community enhancement through the government's social development management program (SDMP) and through IP royalties and taxes.

"We have initiated and continue to create livelihood programs. We tell ourselves there has to be something more substantial and more permanent. This is where the second part of our sustainability proposition may be answered," Alcantara explained. "We intend to make this the center piece of what we feel is the probably more important part of sustainability for mining companies —to leave something permanent and meaningful to enhance people's lives when the mining stops. We are excited about the prospects of sustainability not just of our businesses but the creation of a sustainability structure for the communities we touch."

"We pray for Divine Providence to guide and help us realize a sustainable future for the people under the responsibility of Marcventures," he said.

Alcantara also assured that the host and neighboring communities will continue to thrive even after mining activities have drawn to a close.

"MHI considers mine rehabilitation as an important factor in sustainability. Apart from the initiatives to restore and enhance mined-out areas to its natural state, it is important to leave a sustainable livelihood for the community even after mining has stopped," Alcantara stressed.

"The company is also working with the Philippine Bamboo Foundation to conduct trainings on bamboo propagation, nursery establishment, and business management of small enterprises to be organized among the surrounding communities," he said.



EDITORIAL - Air pollution sa Metro, hamon sa DENR

(Pilipino Star Ngayon)

- September 16, 2020 - 12:00am



Nakatutok ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa pagpapaganda ng Manila Bay. Tinambakan ng puting buhangin ang dalampasigan na may pondong P389 milyon. Hindi naman masama ang pagpapaganda pero hindi muna sana ito isinabay habang ang bansa ay sinasalanta ng pandemya. At sana, mas inunang tinutukan ng DENR ang problemang air pollution sa Metro Manila sapagkat mas marami ang apektado nang nakalalasang hangin.

Ayon sa pag-aaral, 80 porsiyento na pinagmumulan ng air pollution sa Metro Manila ay mga hindi namimintinang sasakyan gaya ng mga karag-karag na dyipni, taxi, trak at traysikel. Pinagmumulan din ng pollution ang mga usok mula sa pabrika at ang mga sinusunog na basura. Ayon sa Department of Health (DOH), ang maruming hangin ay nagdudulot ng noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) gaya ng allergies, acute respiratory infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, cancer at cardiovascular diseases.

Nang mag-lockdown sa Luzon noong Marso dahil sa pananalasa ng virus, nakatulong ito nang malaki para mabawasan ang maruming hangin na nakakulapol sa Metro Manila. Ipinagbawal ang pagpasada ng mga pribado at pampublikong sasakyan. Pati train, eroplano at mga barko ay hinto rin. Wala ring usok na nagmumula sa mga pabrika, at iba pang establisimientong.

Dahil nabawasan ang air pollution natanaw nang malinaw sa unang pagkakataon ang bundok sa Antipolo. Napakagandang tingnan ang bughaw na bundok. Mayroon palang bundok na matatanaw sa Metro kapag walang smog (smoke at fog). Napakaaliwalas.

Gumanda ang kalidad ng hangin sa loob ng dalawang buwan na pagpapatupad na enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) dahil sa COVID-19. Inalis ang ECQ noong Mayo 15 at inilagay sa modified general community quarantine (MGCQ) ang Metro Manila. Lumuwag nang bahagya. Pinayagan na ang mga pribado at ilang pampublikong sasakyan, kasama ang taxi. Hanggang sa madagdagan pa ang mga bumibiyaheng at ngayon, may mga dyipni nang pinayagang makabalik sa kani-kanilang ruta.

Dahil balik pasada, bumalik na rin ang nakalalasang usok sa Metro Manila. At kapag tuluyan nang inalis ang lockdown at nagbalik sa normal ang pamumuhay, tiyak na balik ang hangin na may lason. Sana makagawa ng paraan ang DENR ukol dito. Magkaroon sana sila ng kampanya. Kung nagawang pagandahin ang lawa ng Maynila, kaya ring pabanguhin ang hangin sa Kalakhang Maynila.

KABALIKAT AWARD FOR GOVERNMENT AGENCY, IGINAWAD SA NWRB



September 15, 2020 @ 12:06 AM 1 day ago

BILANG paggunita sa ika-10 taong anibersaryo ng Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology (PCIEERD-DOST), may pagkilala sa mga partner o kasapi sa mga aktibidad na nagtutulungan sa pag-ambag ng kani-kanilang kaalaman upang mas mapahusay ang mga hakbangin sa agham at teknolohiya ng bansa. Ang isa sa mga pagkilala sa pakikipag-partnership na iginawad ay ang Kabalikat Award para sa ahensya ng pamahalaan.

Kinilala ng konseho ang pagsali at suporta ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) sa pagpapatupad ng mga proyekto sa pamamagitan ng pananaliksik, pag-unlad at pagpatibay ng nabuong teknolohiya.

Nagsimula ang partnership noon pang 2016 at nagpapatuloy hanggang sa kasalukuyan.

Nagbibigay ang NWRB ng mga pondo bilang pansuporta sa pagpapatupad at maisagawa ang mga proyekto na naglalayong i-upgrade ang kasalukuyang kakayahan sa pag-monitor o pagsubaybay para maging mas mabisa ang pagsubaybay at pamamahala ng reservoir ng tubig sa pamamagitan ng pag-install ng Automated Real Time Monitoring System (ARMS) para sa Ambuklao, Binga at San Roque Dams, Magat Dam at Reservoir at Pantabangan Dam at Reservoir.

Ang mga pagsisikap ng NWRB ay isinagawa rin sa pagpapaunlad ng Groundwater Management Plan at Monitoring System para sa lungsod ng Zamboanga at ang mga nasa paligid na lugar at disenyo at pagpaunlad ng Groundwater Monitoring System para sa Metro Manila, Lungsod ng Cagayan de Oro, Bukidnon at Lungsod ng Iloilo.

Isang pormal na parangal at pagkilala ang magha-highlight sa kontribusyon ng mga nakikipag-partnership sa Konseho, kung saan isasagawa ang 10 serye ng mga aktibidad ng pagdiriwang ng Webinar Anniversary na tatakbo hanggang sa katapusan ng taong ito.

Ang mga highlight ng pagtatanghal ng nabanggit na karangalan, ang mga awardee ay magpapakita ng isang maikling 2-3 minutong video message of acceptance para sa Kabalikat Award.

Gayundin, bilang isang pagkilala sa kanilang pagpapahalaga sa naturang selebrasyon, isang plake ng pagkilala ang maihahatid sa mga awardee sa kani-kanilang mga tanggapan.



Plant poachers hit Baguio parks



By [Gaby B. Keith](#)

September 15, 2020

BAGUIO CITY: The “plantdemic” and “plant-tita” (plant aunt) fever now sweeping the country has not spared the Summer Capital, which like other localities is now left to contend with a rise in plant-poaching incidents.

The City Environment and Parks Management Office (Cepmo) on September 10 reported losing some plant species in the city’s parks and greenbelts to plant thieves.

Cepmo assistant department head Rhenan Diwas said poachers nearly wiped out the monstera plants long inhabiting a portion of Mines View Park and Burnham Park.

Monstera is monstera deliciosa or Swiss Cheese plant has become an in demand indoor plant and now sells at a high price.

Diwas also reported that City Hall Park was divested of succulents, while the Upper Session Road greenbelt was stripped of rubber trees.

Both species also have great following in the plant market.

He said other parks and pocket gardens were now being inspected to check their conditions after discovery of the plant thefts.

A local netizen earlier posted a video showing unidentified women swiping plants from a public elementary school.

“While we appreciate the growing interest of the people to maintain plants in their homes and we understand the need of some to earn, let us be reminded to respect the natural habitat of these plants. Allow them to multiply in the forest rather than constricted in a pot.

Let them grow and bloom in public places for everyone to appreciate,” Diwas said.

“We should learn from this pandemic: It is dangerous to encroach into the habitat of wildlife,” he added.

To prevent similar incidents, measures will be undertaken to enhance security in the parks. Apart from the regular security personnel detailed in the parks, the city will also tap the Public Order and Safety Division to include the parks in their daily roving itineraries.

Vllages will also be asked to help by guarding the parks and greenbelts within their jurisdictions and to immediately report cases.

Residents are also being encouraged to help by reporting similar incidents by taking photos or videos of the thefts.



Plant poachers hit Baguio parks

Diwas warned that plant poaching and picking or cutting of plants within government properties such as parks, watersheds, forest reservations and other public spaces are criminal acts punishable by law.

Anyone caught will be charged for violation of the City's Environment Code (Ordinance 18 series of 2016) and can be subjected to a fine of P5,000, or imprisonment for a period of not less than five days or both.

If the plant belongs to the endangered or threatened species (such as particular species of Alocasia), the person will be charged too for violation of Republic Act 9147 or the "Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act."

"Violators can face imprisonment from six to 12 years and a fine of P100,000 to P1 million," Diwas said

‘Plantdemic:’ Reinvigorated Baguio parks hit by plant thieves

By [Artemio Dumlao](#)(Philstar.com)
- September 16, 2020 - 12:00am



Baguio residents enjoy a morning walk in Burnham Park as the city reopened its parks earlier this month.

BAGUIO CITY, Philippines — Even Baguio City’s reinvigorated parks have become victims of “plant poachers” as a so-called plantdemic sweeps the country.

Amid the craze that has gained popularity as a diversion, if not a cure for COVID-19 pandemic-induced boredom and depression, the City Environment and Parks Management Office yesterday reported losing some plant species in the city’s parks and greenbelts to plant thieves.

Assistance City Environment and Parks Management Officer Rhenan Diwas said poachers nearly wiped out the monstera plants that have long been inhabiting portions of Mines View Park and Burnham Park.

Monstera is the “monstera deliciosa” or “Swiss cheese” plant, which has become an in-demand indoor plant and is selling like hotcakes and valued like gold.

Succulents at the City Hall Park were also taken, according to Diwas, while the Upper Session Road greenbelt was stripped of its rubber trees.

Both species also have great following among “plantitas” and “plantitos.”

Other parks and pocket gardens in the city are now being inspected to check their conditions following the discovery of plant thieveries.

A video of unidentified women swiping plants from one of the city’s public elementary schools had earlier gone viral.

“While we appreciate the growing interest of the people in maintaining plants in their homes and we understand the need of some to earn, let us be reminded (of respecting) the natural habitat of these plants. Allow them to multiply in the forest rather than constricted in a pot. Let them grow and bloom in public places for everyone to appreciate,” Diwas said.



‘Plantdemic:’ Reinvigorated Baguio parks hit by plant thieves

“We should learn from this pandemic: it is dangerous to encroach on the habitat of wildlife,” he added.

To prevent the balding of city parks, security measures will be undertaken in the parks, according to Diwas.

“Apart from the regular security personnel detailed in the parks, the city will tap the Public Order and Safety Division to include the parks in their daily roving itineraries,” he said.

Barangays will also be asked to help by guarding the parks and greenbelts within their jurisdictions and to immediately report cases of plant theft.

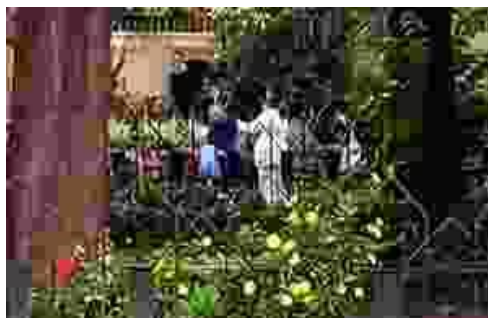
Residents are also being encouraged to help by reporting such incidents through captured photos or recorded videos of these acts.

Plant poaching, picking or cutting of plants within government properties such as parks, watersheds, forest reservations and other public spaces is a criminal act punishable by law, Diwas warned.

“Anyone caught will be charged for violation of the city’s Environment Code and can be subjected to a fine of P5,000 or imprisonment for a period of not less than five days, or both. If the plant belongs to the endangered or threatened species (such as particular species of Alocasia), the person will be charged, too, for violation of Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act. Violators can face imprisonment from six to 12 years and a fine of P100,000 to P1 million,” he said.

Pagnanakaw ng halaman, talamak... 12 yrs. kulong, P1-M multa sa 'Plantnapper'

ni [V. Reyes](#) | September 15, 2020



Kasabay ng pagdami ng mga plantito at plantita sa gitna ng pandemya, nagiging talamak na rin ang pagnanakaw ng halaman sa ilang mga lugar sa bansa. Nagbabala na ang Baguio City Environment Parks and Management Office (CEPMO) laban sa mga nagnanakaw, namimitas o pumuputol ng mga halaman lalo na ang mga pag-aari ng gobyerno. Partikular na ipinagbabawal at itinuturing na krimen ang pagkuha ng mga halaman sa mga parke, watershed, forest reservations at iba pang pampublikong lugar.

Kasunod ito ng nag-viral na video ng apat na babaeng kumukuha ng halaman sa tapat ng isang public elementary school sa lungsod.

Ayon kay Assistant CEPMO officer Rhenan Diwas, ang mahuhuling “plantnappers” ay makakasuhan ng paglabag sa Environment Code o City Ordinance 18, Series of 2016 na may multang P5,000 o kulong na hindi bababa sa limang araw.

Kung ang ninakaw ay kabilang sa endangered o threatened species tulad ng Alocasia, mahaharap ang sinumang mahuhuli sa paglabag sa Republic Act 9147 o Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act na may parusang pagkakakulong ng anim hanggang 12 taon at multang P100,000 hanggang P1,000,000.

Sa Lopez, Quezon naman, isa ring babae ang nakunan sa CCTV na dumadampot ng mga halaman sa isang bakuran.

Ayon sa may-ari ng CCTV, nagkunwari ang babae na magpapa-load pero ang mga halaman ang target.

Hindi na ipinagtataka ng mga awtoridad ang pagdami ng mga nagnanakaw ng halaman dahil ang mga dating tila ligaw lang sa tabing-kalsada ay naibebenta ngayon sa mas malaking halaga.



Courtesy: Ella Dedelis & Uswag Tacurong

Philippine Serpent Eagle rescued in Sultan Kudarat

Published September 15, 2020 4:19pm

A Philippine Serpent Eagle (*Spilornis holospilus*) was rescued in Sultan Kudarat on Sunday, September 13.

In a Facebook post, DENR Soccsksargen said the eagle was rescued by a concerned citizen while it was in a middle of a fight with a big snake in Barangay Lancheta, Tacurog City.

The rescued Philippine Serpent Eagle is now under the custody of DENR-12 Wildlife Rescue Center in Lutayan, Sultan Kudarat.

In-house veterinarian Dr. Neil Velasco said the eagle is in good condition, though it has yet to undergo formal medical check-up.

Philippine Eagles are marked as critically endangered by the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN), having only an estimated 400 pairs in the wild. — **Julia Medina/LA, GMA News**



Activists fighting to save a 300-year-old tree in Agusan del Sur

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Sep 15, 2020 8:28:10 PM



Metro Manila (CNN Philippines) — Activists are fighting to save a 300-year-old tree in Agusan del Sur from being cut down, saying it is worth saving because of its historical, environmental, and aesthetic value.

Speaking to CNN Philippines on Tuesday, Jurgenne Primavera said one report says the tree can be saved, while another said it posed a risk.

Primavera, a marine environmentalist who's been inducted as a member of the National Academy of Science and Technology, is a member of the Philippine Native Tree Enthusiasts who is working to keep the Philippine Rosewood tree, locally known as "toog."

It is the tallest tree of its kind in the country, and Primavera said it was worth saving on three levels.

"The value of this tree is...first it's historical. The age goes back centuries in time, that's our history. The second value is environmental... And lastly, of course, aesthetically. What a beautiful tree. Old trees, big trees are really majestic. On those three points, the value is really immeasurable," she said.

The fight for the tree has been going on for years, but Primavera said it has recently become more popular.

She said a permit to cut down the tree had already been secured, but "the groundswell was larger because of social media."

"We had consultations and feedback (with) the local government, provincial and municipal, and with DENR if we could hold, suspend the cutting because this year, another set of permits was also again approved," she said.

She said they also asked for a more complete study of the tree to determine what should be done.



2 lalaki huli sa tangkang pagpuslit ng nasa 500 kawayan

ABS-CBN News

Posted at Sep 15 2020 06:19 PM

NAGUILIAN, Isabela — Dalawang lalaki ang inaresto sa bayan na ito noong Linggo matapos mabuking ang kanilang planong pagpuslit ng tinatayang 500 kawayan, na isang paglabag sa Presidential Decree 705 o Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines.

Batay sa impormasyon ng Isabela Police Provincial Office, nagsasagawa ng monitoring ang mga pulis sa Barangay Magsaysay nang maharang nila ang isang forward truck na may lulan na humigit-kumulang 500 piraso ng kawayan.

Naghanap ang mga pulis ng kaukulang dokumento sa driver na si Rolly Malicad, pero wala umano siyang naipakita.

Kinumpiska ang mga hindi dokumentadong kawayan at inaresto ang driver pati ang kaniyang helper na si Johnny Rivera.

Hindi naman tinukoy ng pulisya kung pawang mga tauhan lang ang dalawang suspek at kung may mas malaking tao sa likod ng planong pagpuslit.

Alinsunod sa Section 72 ng Presidential Decree 705, itinuturing ang kawayan bilang isa sa mga minor forest products na pinapatawan ng 10 porsiyento ng kabuuang presyo kapag ibebenta sa merkado.

Pero noong nakaraang taon, inaprubahan sa Kamara ang House Bill 6625 na naglalayong gawing unregulated forest product ang kawayan. Ibig sabihin, ang pagkuha o pagbiyahe nito ay hindi na mangangailangan ng permit mula sa gobyerno.

Ilang panukalang batas ang isinusulong na rin para sa pagpapalago ng bamboo industry sa bansa kabilang ang Senate Bill 1478 o Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Act.

Sa Isabela, kabilang ang paggawa ng mga produkto mula sa kawayan sa mga lumalagong industriya, kung saan isa sa mga nangunguna ang bayan ng Angadanan.

—Mula sa ulat ni Harris Julio




PEOPLE'S *Monitor*

“The Weekly Newspaper” ISSN 0119-2663

Entered as 3rd Class (PM) Mail Permit at Manila Central Post Office under Permit No. 3C-99-01-1231, dated April 05, 1999. Postage Paid subject for postal inspection.

VOLUME XXIII NO. 03 Published every Monday SEPTEMBER 07-13, 2020 P10.00

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September 07 - 13, 2020
PEOPLE'S MONITOR



PEOPLE'S VIEW

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PINAGSAMANG DATA
BASE NG LBM AT LRA
MAGLALABAS NG MABILIS
NA TRANSAKSYON

MAGLALABAS ng online data-sharing system ang Land Management Bureau (LMB) ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at Land Registration Authority (LRA) upang mas lalong mapaayos at mapabilis ang transaksyon sa publiko. Gumagawa na sila ng joint memorandum circular na magbibigay daan upang mapagsama ang kani-kanilang land information database gamit ang software intermediary na tinatawag na Application Programming Interface (API). Maiuugnay ng API ang Land Administration and Management System (LAMS) ng LMB at ang Philippine Land Registration and Information System (PHILARIS) ng LRA.

Ayon kay LMB Director Emelyne Talabis, Ang data-sharing innovation na ito ay bahagi ng pinalakas na kampanya ng gobyerno para mapigilan ang red tape at mapabuti ang kalidad ng frontline service sa publiko, base na rin sa nakasaad sa Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018, ayon kay LMB Director Emelyne Talabis. Amga aplikante sa pamamagitan ng mga accredited na geodetic engineers (GEs) ay hindi na kailangang personal na humingi at magsumite ng mga kinakailangang dokumento tulad ng lot status certification mula sa LRA bilang requirement para sa beripikasyon at approval ng survey plans at pag-isyu ng patent ng DENR ayon pa sa plano. Hindi na rin daw kakailanganin ng GEs na magsumite sa LRA ng hard copy ng technical description ng aprubadong plano mula sa DENR, sa pagrehistro ng mga subdivision survey bilang pangunahing requirement sa pag-isyu ng mga land title certificate.

Ayon pa kay Talabis, sa pamamagitan ng paggamit ng API at alinsunod na rin sa napagkasunduang system protocol at format, ang pagkuha niya ng data mula sa LAMS at PHILARIS ay maaaring gawin kahit na walang pisikal na access sa database servers at compromising data security ng bawat ahensiya.

Ang LMB ay ang ahensiyang responsable sa pagbibigay ng direksiyon at suportang teknikal sa DENR field offices ng land management and administration, habang ang LRA naman ay isang attached agency ng Department of Justice na humahawak sa registration at transfer ng land titles na inisyu sa pamamagitan ng administrative at judicial proceedings, dagdag ulat pa mula sa dalawang otoridad.



COVID-19 cases in PH nearing 270,000 with 3,544 new patients

By [CNN Philippines Staff](#)

Published Sep 15, 2020 4:25:54 PM



The Department of Health reports 3,544 new COVID-19 infections, 536 of which were previously reported as recoveries but turned out to be active cases after final validation.

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 15) — The Department of Health reported on Tuesday a rise of 3,544 in the country's coronavirus case tally, bringing the total to 269,407. Leading the list of areas with the highest number of new infected residents is Metro Manila with 690, according to DOH. Cavite came next with 305, followed by Rizal with 201, Negros Occidental with 173, and Bulacan with 98.

In its case bulletin, the department also said that of the newly announced infections, 536 were earlier erroneously reported as recoveries.

This was not the first time the DOH reclassified cases as deaths or active cases after initially tagging them as recoveries. Just a day before, the country saw its [highest single-day increase in its coronavirus death toll](#) after the DOH announced 259 fatalities, of which 253 were previously reported as recovered but were re-tagged after final validation.

The department usually issues such a correction in its daily case report, as it earlier explained it is “reliant” on the submissions of regional epidemiological surveillance units, local government units and health facilities, which rectify from time to time their own data.

The DOH also reported another 395 survivors, along with 34 new deaths. These brought the total recoveries to 207,352 and deaths to 4,663.

Among the newly announced deaths, 29 occurred in September while the other five transpired in the April to August period.



COVID-19 cases in PH nearing 270,000 with 3,544 new patients

Taking into account the recoveries and deaths, the country now has 57,392 active cases or currently ill patients.

The DOH also said it removed 25 duplicates from the national case count as part of its constant cleaning process. It added that besides the 536 active cases incorrectly inputted as recoveries, two more cases previously announced as COVID-19 survivors turned out to be deaths after final validation.

Cases abroad

Meanwhile, the Department of Foreign Affairs confirmed 15 new cases among Filipinos abroad, pushing the total count in the sector to 10,329. Seventeen more have been cleared of COVID-19, while another died of the disease, raising the tallies to 6,571 recoveries and 773 deaths.

The DFA noted that the Middle East still accounts for the highest number of detected COVID-19 cases among overseas Filipinos, while the Americas ranks lowest among regions across the globe. To date, the viral disease has afflicted over 29.2 million people worldwide, according to data from the US-based Johns Hopkins University. Of this number, more than 928,000 have died, while around 19.8 million have recovered.



Dwindling water level in dams may be reversed by La Niña

Published September 15, 2020 10:20pm

The dwindling water levels in the country's dams may be reversed during the La Niña season, PAGASA said.

According to Tina Panganiban-Perez's Tuesday report on "24 Oras," the La Niña alert issued by PAGASA this month suggested that there was a 70 percent chance for the country to experience the weather pattern in the following months.

This means that the country may experience more rain than normal, especially over the eastern sections. Earlier on Tuesday, the water levels at the Angat Dam dropped to 176.2 meters, almost two meters below its level on Friday.

"Ito po ay puwedeng mag-dulot ng mas mataas kaysa normal na pag-ulan lalong lalo na po dito sa ating eastern section ng Pilipinas. Ito po sa parte ng Cagayan siguro, hanggang dito po sa parte ng Bicol," Hydrologist Oyie Pagulayan said.

PAGASA's rainfall forecast predicted normal or above normal rain over various dams in the country in the following months.

"Ine-expect natin na mas may impact ito sa water shed ng Angat pagka dating po nitong last quarter at maaring sa first quarter of... the following year," she said.

However, the La Niña season also came with consequences.

"If we have above normal rainfall, maari rin po itong makadagdag doon sa risk ng ating mga areas na, lalo na po 'yung sinabi niyo bahain o 'yung vulnerable for landslides, sa mga flash flooding, so mas nagiging vulnerable po sila," she said. — **Joahna Lei Casilao/DVM, GMA News**



Calamian Islands under Signal No. 1 as LPA turns into tropical depression

By: [Gabriel Pabico Lalu](#) - Reporter / [@GabriellaluINQ](#)
[INQUIRER.net](#) / 01:29 AM September 16, 2020

MANILA, Philippines — A low pressure area (LPA) located north of Palawan has developed into a tropical depression, prompting Signal No. 1 to be raised over Calamian Islands, according to the latest evening bulletin issued on Tuesday by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

The the eye of the depression, locally named Leon, was last seen 185 kilometers west-northwest of Coron, Palawan. It had maximum sustained winds of 45 kilometers per hour near the center and gustiness reaching up to 55 kph.

It was seen moving westward at 25 kph, possibly leaving the Philippine area of responsibility through the West Philippine Sea by Thursday morning.

Under Signal No. 1, Calamian Islands may have wind speeds of 30 to 60 kph in the coming hours.

The combined effects of Leon and the southwest monsoon is expected to bring gusty conditions over Palawan and the Mindoro provinces until Wednesday.

There may be moderate to heavy rainfall over Palawan, including Kalayaan, Calamian, and Cuyo Islands and Occidental Mindoro.

Meanwhile, there may be light to moderate rainfall over huge parts of the Visayas, Bicol Region, Calabarzon, the rest of Mimaropa, Metro Manila, Central Luzon, and areas in Mindanao like Caraga, Northern Mindanao, Zamboanga Peninsula, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi.

“Flooding and rain-induced landslide(s) may occur during heavy or prolonged rainfall especially in areas that are highly or very highly susceptible to these hazards,” Pagasa said.

“The public and local disaster risk reduction and management offices concerned are advised to monitor the Rainfall/Thunderstorm Advisories and Heavy Rainfall Warnings from PAGASA Regional Services Divisions and take appropriate measures,” it added.

Fisherfolk were also advised to take precautionary measures as moderate to rough seas would prevail over the northern, eastern, and southern seaboard of Luzon, the western seaboard of Occidental Mindoro and Palawan, and the seaboard of Visayas and Mindanao. Waves may reach heights of 1.2 meters to 3.1 meters.

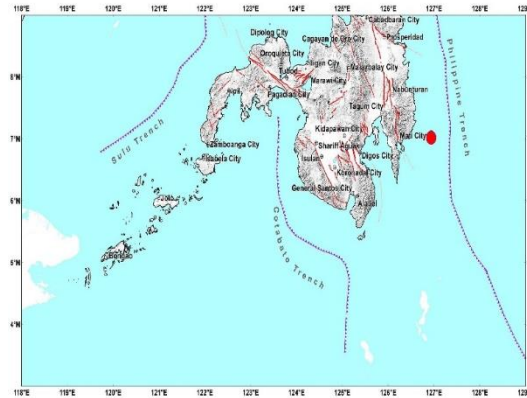
Read more: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1335814/lpa-turns-into-tropical-depression-leon-signal-no-1-raised-over-calamian-islands#ixzz6YgGDzQML>

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Manay, Davao Oriental niyanig ng lindol

By Ulat ng Bandera at Radyo Inquirer September 15, 2020 - 06:52 PM



Tumama ang magnitude 3.2 na lindol sa Davao Oriental.

Ayon sa Phivolcs, tumama ang sentro ng lindol sa layong 49 kilometers Southeast ng Manay dakong 4:46 ng hapon.

17 kilometers ang lalim ng lindol at tectonic ang origin.

Ayon sa Phivolcs, hindi naman nagdulot ng pinsala ang lindol sa Manay at mga karatig-bayan.

Wala ring inaasahang aftershocks matapos ang pagyanig.

Read more: <https://bandera.inquirer.net/264560/manay-davao-oriental-niyanig-ng-lindol#ixzz6Y963WxG5>

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House okays disaster resilience dep't on 2nd reading

By Filane Mikee Cervantes September 15, 2020, 7:36 pm



MANILA – The House of Representatives on Tuesday approved on second reading a measure creating the Department of Disaster Resilience (DDR), listed as legislative priority of the Duterte administration.

The chamber passed through voice voting House Bill No. 5989, otherwise known as the proposed “Disaster Resilience Act.”

Under the bill, the DDR shall be the primary government agency responsible for “leading, managing, and organizing national efforts to prevent and reduce disaster risks; prepare for and respond to disasters; and recover, rehabilitate, and build forward better after the destruction.”

The DDR would still have the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) as its core organization, to which will be integrated the Climate Change Commission Office, the Health Emergency Management Bureau of the Department of Health (DOH), the Disaster Response Assistance and the Disaster Response Management Bureau of Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, a principal author of the measure, said the creation of the DDR will ensure that the country is able to anticipate and proactively respond to emergencies and disasters, which he expects to intensify with worsening climate conditions.

Salceda said the DDR will help the country deal with disasters and emergencies “not as unfortunate incidents whose impacts are beyond our control, but as risks that can be mitigated.”

“We can no longer deny the fact that climate change is real, that we are a volcanically and tectonically active country, and that we face several typhoons each year. Disasters are a fact of Philippine life. But we can mitigate the human and socioeconomic costs of these disasters. DDR will help ensure that we have a full-time agency in charge of keeping us strong and ready for disasters,” Salceda said.

This year, the DDR was also identified by President Rodrigo Duterte as a priority measure during his fifth State of the Nation Address.

Once implemented, the DDR would be an institutionalized agency coordinating national response to disasters and emergencies, replacing the ad-hoc and primary secretariat-type work of the current National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).



House okays disaster resilience dep't on 2nd reading

Salceda said the DDR will lead in the continuous development of strategic, holistic and systematic approaches to disaster management, including prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery, and rehabilitation, and anticipatory adaptation strategies, measures, techniques and options.

“Fortune favors the prepared. We cannot avoid typhoons and other calamities that come with our geography. But we can keep the risks low and the damage controlled. That is resilience: being able to achieve meaningful progress despite natural and external adversities,” Salceda said. (*PNA*)



Editorial: Climate crisis exists

By [BusinessMirror](#)
September 16, 2020



A BP oil refinery is at work in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, on December 4. The UN Climate Change Conference COP 25 takes place in Madrid until December 13 under the presidency of the government of Chile.

The wildfires in California and the melting of the Arctic's largest remaining ice shelf are the latest developments that lend credence to the assertion of many scientists that a climate crisis exists and that the planet is in trouble. While there are many skeptics who believe that the climate crisis is a hoax, these disasters give us a good reason to take a second look at what climate scientists have been warning us about for years. We cannot see the ozone layer and greenhouse-gas emissions that harm us, but we have certainly felt the impact of strong typhoons and how these natural disasters have hurt our families and our sources of livelihood.

The Philippines is no stranger to the effects of global warming. In recent years, it has been struck by strong typhoons—Supertyphoon Yolanda, Typhoon Pablo and Typhoon Ondoy. These natural disasters have killed thousands of Filipinos and damaged crops in large swaths of agricultural lands, causing farmers to incur billions of pesos in losses

[\(See, “Disasters cost PHL P389 billion; recovery at P560 billion,” in the BusinessMirror, October 16, 2018\).](#) Of the natural disasters that struck the Philippines from 2011 to 2018, the largest damage cost was P125.56 billion incurred in 2013 when Yolanda unleashed its fury in the country, according to the National Economic and Development Authority.

The country is highly vulnerable to the adverse impact of climate change, including rising sea levels, increased frequency of extreme weather events, rising temperatures and extreme rainfall, according to Climatelinks. It also noted that sea levels in the Philippines are rising faster than the global average, increasing the hazard posed by storm surges and threatening permanent inundation of low-lying areas. Despite the risks posed by more intense typhoons and the threat posed by storm surges, a large segment of the Philippine population continues to depend on agriculture and fisheries for their livelihood.

This prompted the government to set up a Climate Change Commission following the enactment of Republic Act 9729, or the Climate Change Act of 2009. The commission is the lead policy-making body of the government tasked to coordinate, monitor and evaluate government programs and ensure mainstreaming of climate change in national, local, and sectoral development plans. It wants to see a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines with highly adaptive communities.



Editorial: Climate crisis exists

However, these efforts and those undertaken by other countries that are also highly vulnerable to climate change are not enough to shield them from the ill effects of a warming planet. The Philippines and other vulnerable countries are committed to ambitious goals that can help mitigate the effects of global warming, specifically the reduction of harmful greenhouse-gas emissions that cause the thinning of the ozone layer. However, countries that account for a huge chunk of emissions must do more to save the planet. While man-made greenhouse-gas emissions were steady at 33 gigatons in 2019, the International Energy Agency expressed hope that this will be further reduced in the near future.

Multilateral development banks and other organizations can play a key role in reducing energy-related emissions. We agree with civil society organizations, which stressed that there is a need to align their country partnerships with the Paris Climate agreement and to revisit its energy policy ([See, "ADB prodded to step up in climate finance," in the BusinessMirror, September 14, 2020](#)). The world must get rid of practices and technology that harm the ozone layer. This is crucial for the survival of vulnerable countries like the Philippines. Saving the planet from the adverse effects of climate change ensures the survival of mankind.



World lost 100 million hectares of forest in two decades: UN

Published September 16, 2020, 6:19 AM

[by Agence France-Presse](#)

The world has lost nearly 100 million hectares of forests in two decades, marking a steady decline though at a slower pace than before, a UN agency reported Tuesday.

The proportion of forest to total land area fell from 31.9 percent in 2000 to 31.2 percent in 2020, now some 4.1 billion hectares, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization.

It marks “a net loss of almost 100 million hectares of the world’s forests,” the FAO said.

Deforestation has hit particularly hard sub-Saharan Africa and southeast Asia, where it has accelerated in the last decade, but also Latin and Central America, where it has nonetheless slowed down.

Forests are being cut down mainly to make way for crops or farm animals, especially in less developed countries.

In southeast Asia, forest now covers 47.8 percent of the land compared to 49 percent in 2015. In sub-Saharan Africa, it covers 27.8 percent compared to 28.7 percent five years ago.

In Indonesia, it is 50.9 percent, down from 52.5 percent. In Malaysia, it is 58.2 percent, down from 59.2 percent five years ago.

A country strongly focused on agriculture like the Ivory Coast has seen forests reduced to 8.9 percent of the total land area from 10.7 percent in 2015. Kenya, Mali and Rwanda have largely held firm against forest loss.

In Latin and Central America, forest covers only 46.7 percent of the total land, compared to 47.4 percent five years ago.

In Brazil, forests declined to 59.4 percent of the country’s territory in 2020 from 60.3 percent in 2015. In Haiti, deforestation has continued apace — falling to 12.6 percent of the total land area from 13.2 percent in 2015.

In contrast, in many parts of Asia, Europe and North America forest area has increased or stayed the same in the last five years with policies to restore woodland and allow forests to expand naturally.

In China, forests make up 23.3 percent, up from 22.3 percent in 2015. In Japan, they account for 68.4 percent, the same as it was five years ago.

In France, forests cover 31.5 percent of the land in 2020, up from 30.7 percent in 2015. In Italy, they make up 32.5 percent of the national territory, up from 31.6 five years ago.

In Britain, they make up 13.2 percent, up from 13 percent five years ago.

In Canada, it is unchanged at 38.2 percent, and in the United States, unchanged at 33.9 percent.

In Australia the figure rose from 17.3 to 17.4 percent and in New Zealand from 37.4 percent to 37.6 percent over the five years.



Desperate race against fires in world's biggest tropical wetlands

Published September 15, 2020, 12:12 PM
by [Agence France-Press](#)

The smell of burnt vegetation and the red glow of flames welcome visitors these days to the Pantanal, the world's biggest tropical wetlands — a biodiverse paradise that is now partly reduced to ashes by record wildfires.



The Pantanal, a region famous for its wildlife, is suffering its worst fires in more than 47 years, destroying vast areas of vegetation and causing death of animals caught in the fire or smoke

In the northern Pantanal, in central-western Brazil — a region that formerly had a thriving ecotourism industry — hotel employee Felipe Maia is hosing down a wooden bridge, hoping to stop the nearby flames from igniting it.

There are scores of wooden bridges like this over the streams criss-crossing the wetlands along the dirt highway across the Pantanal, the 150-kilometer (95-mile) “Transpantaneira.”

But amid the region's worst drought in 47 years, many streams have run dry, and the fires often set this time of year on farms and ranches to clear land have spiralled out of control.

“Every day we drive along the road, check which bridge is closest to catching fire and douse it in water,” Maia told AFP after soaking the bridge, just meters (yards) from the flames.

The Pantanal sits at the southern edge of the Amazon rainforest, stretching from Brazil into Bolivia and Paraguay.

In normal times, it draws tourists from around the world with its lush landscapes and wildlife, including jaguars, jabiru storks, giant otters, caimans, toucans, macaws and monkeys.

But this year, around 23,500 square kilometers (9,000 square miles) of the wetlands have gone up in smoke — nearly 12 percent of the Pantanal.

have been a record-shattering 14,764 fires in the Brazilian Pantanal this year, according to satellite data from Brazil's National Space Research Institute (INPE).

In less than nine months, 2020 has already broken the annual record for the number of fires, according to INPE, with an increase of 214 percent from the same period last year.

“It's sad. Just when we thought tourism was about to bounce back from the coronavirus pandemic, these fires have destroyed 10 to 15 percent of the Pantanal,” said tour guide Roberto Carvalho



Desperate race against fires in world's biggest tropical wetlands

Macedo, part of an informal brigade of firefighters, local residents, officials and hotel owners who have banded together to patrol the area's bridges day and night.

– Animals in 'critical condition' –

Fellow guide Eduarda Fernandes Amaral was traveling by boat up a river in Encontro das Aguas State Park, known as the home to the world's biggest jaguar population.

She and a team of veterinarians and biologists were looking amid the charred remains of trees and shrubs for a jaguar that had reportedly been wounded in a fire.

"All the animals we've rescued so far have been in critical condition. Some of them have died, some are burnt all the way to the bone," she said.

She set out drinking water and baskets of fruit for animals that survived the fires. They now risk dying of dehydration or starvation.

It is impossible to estimate yet how many animals have died, but she said she fears the losses are enormous.

"I hope this makes people open their eyes and understand that the biodiversity here is unique. We have to preserve it," she told AFP.

– Causes and effect –

The scenes in the Pantanal are reminiscent of the wildfires devastating the US West Coast.

As with those fires, there is a complex web of factors driving the blazes.

The main cause in the Pantanal is drought.

From January to May, the usual rainy season, the region received just half the precipitation it normally does. As a result, many areas that are usually flooded this time of year are dry.

Exacerbating the problem, ranchers are increasingly introducing non-native plants for pasture land, weakening the region's natural resistance to fire, experts say.

Ecologists also blame funding and staffing cuts at Brazil's environmental protection agencies under far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, who took office in January 2019.

"There's a widespread sense of impunity" among farmers and ranchers who set fires to clear land for crops and pasture, said forestry engineer Vinicius Silgueiro of the Life Center Institute (ICV).

The crisis in the Pantanal has added to the criticism the Brazilian government faces over the Amazon.

There have been 62,627 fires in the Brazilian Amazon so far this year, an increase of 10 percent from the same period last year.