

# Duterte to decide on possible extension of ECQ in 'due time'

**LUZON-WIDE ENHANCED COMMUNITY QUARANTINE**

**EXTENDED UNTIL APRIL 30, 2020**

- SEC. KARLO NOGRALES, INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE SPOKESPERSON

PAMANTASAN NG LUNGSOD NG MAYNILA UNIVERSITY OF THE CITY OF MANILA  
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MANILA — President Rodrigo Duterte will decide whether he will approve of a possible two-week extension of the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) "in due time", Malacañang said Sunday.

Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo acknowledged the "emerging consensus" from medical experts, businessmen, gov-

ernment officials, and others that the extension is necessary since lifting it could be "premature."

Citing these experts, he said the President recognizes that lifting the quarantine as scheduled on April 12 "might wipe out the gains we have so far achieved in containing the virus."

"The President is all ears and eyes on this unfold-

ing reality and expert opinions. He is evaluating the best option to take that will effectively ensure the success of our war against this wily and faceless global enemy. He will make his decision in due time," he said in a statement.

He also urged Filipinos to do their part in help

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## Additional P5-B needed for COVID-19 assistance programs – DOLE

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) said it would need another P5 billion to finance the assistance programs for workers affected by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

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 "The Labor Department would need another P5 billion for the remainder of

the month to help more workers affected by the COVID 19 crisis which has ballooned to more than 600,000 based on DOLE's field monitoring reports," the department said in a statement

According to DOLE, it has already released some P622 million in assistance funds as of April 04, 2020,

covering 180,000 workers affected by COVID-19.

The figure includes some 102,895 formal sector workers who have received the P5,000 cash assistance under the COVID-19 Adjustment Measures Program (CAMP) rolled out last month.

Meanwhile, some 8,000 workers were beneficiaries of the Tulong Pangkabuhayan sa Dis-

# COVID-19 patients told to disclose illness

THE INTEGRATED Bar of the Philippines (IBP) and other medical organizations want coronavirus patients to waive the confidentiality of their medical condition.

In a joint statement, IBP, the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) and Philippine College of Surgeons (PCS) said this would allow people who have had close contact with them to seek treatment.

They also urged the government to provide health institutions and law enforcers the medical data of patients so these can conduct contact tracing to avoid the spread of infection.

"The present pandemic requires proactive and decisive steps that must be based on facts, science and



the law, not on politics, posturing or partiality," according to the statement.

The groups said medical data confidentiality is "not absolute" and may be relaxed for public health safety.

"Being diagnosed as coronavirus disease 2019-positive is not a sin, a crime or a stigma," the groups said. "But it is inequitable and counter-productive for COVID-19 patients or per-

sons under investigation to conceal their true condition."

Justice Secretary Menardo I. Guevarra agrees. "This will enable other people they have been in close contact with to take the necessary precautions or remedial measures to protect themselves, without having to further burden the Department of Health with the tedious task of contact tracing," he said in a mobile-phone message.

## 3.4-magnitude quake hits Davao Occidental



(Eagle News)—A 3.4-magnitude earthquake struck Davao Occidental on Sunday, April 5.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said the quake, which struck at 10:39 a.m., hit 49 kilometers southeast of Jose Abad Santos.

Depth of focus was 126 kilometers.

No damage to property nor aftershocks were recorded.

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placed/Underprivileged Workers (TUPAD) program.

"DOLE hopes to aid more than 350,000 formal and informal sector workers by the middle of the month utilizing over P1.5 billion in assistance funds under CAMP and TUPAD," the

department said.

Labor group Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) last week called for the immediate release of financial assistance to the workforce, as it said only 8,641 workers have received P5,000 in cash grants during the past two weeks of

the enhanced community quarantine.

For his part, President Rodrigo Duterte last week also announced that the government set aside P200 billion for low-income households affected by the ECQ. — Jon Viktor

## What Pinoys need to know about nCoV

MANILA -- As the number of cases and deaths due to novel coronavirus or 2019-nCoV continues to rise, the Department of Health (DOH) has met these reports with equally heightened monitoring of patients who have been suffering from "flu-like" symptoms while visiting the country.

Apart from clinical tests on people suspected of carrying the virus, the DOH's Bureau of Quarantine has placed thermal scanners at the airports for quick surveillance of potential cases.

As the government exerts effort to prevent the virus from entering the Philippines, ordinary Filipinos should arm themselves of knowledge on how to do their part to protect themselves from being infected.

### Origin

The World Health Organization (WHO) received reports of several cases of pneumonia of unknown cause in Wuhan City, China on Dec. 31, 2019. Wuhan City is considered as ground zero of the outbreak.

Initial investigation showed the virus which caused the pneumonia did not match any other known virus.

On January 7, Chinese authorities identified the new strain as 2019-nCoV belonging to a family of viruses that include the common colds and the more serious ones — Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS).

To date, there are more than 830 confirmed 2019-nCoV cases and 26 deaths linked to the virus in China.

### Symptoms

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most people get infected with coronaviruses with symptoms ranging from typically mild to moderate and it can cause lower-respiratory tract illnesses like pneumonia and bronchitis in some cases.

The CDC added such viruses are common among animals but can evolve and spread from animals to humans, hence, the existence of SARS and MERS coronaviruses.

In a health advisory, the DOH said its symptoms include cough and colds, fever, difficulty in breathing and shortness of breath.

Aside from pneumonia and bronchitis, the DOH said its symptoms could lead to kidney problems and even death.

### No confirmed nCoV case in PH

DOH Undersecretary Rolando Domingo, in a media briefing on January 24, said: "There is no verified nCoV case in the country until now".

The DOH said specimen samples from the five-year-old Chinese boy suspected of having the virus was tested negative.

The test was performed at the Victorian Infectious Disease Reference Labora-

tory in Melbourne, Australia.

On Jan. 21, 2020, the DOH disclosed that the boy, manifesting pneumonia-like symptoms and with a history of travel from Wuhan, China, was admitted in Cebu City for observation.

After yielding a positive result for the pancoronavirus assay, oropharyngeal and serum specimens from him were sent to Australia for identification of the specific coronavirus strain.

Three other Chinese nationals, who arrived at the Kalibo International Airport and went to Boracay, were first suspected to have the illness but turned out to be negative.

### Another suspected case

Domingo said a 36-year-old American male from Tacloban is suspected of having contracted the virus but he has not been clinically screened.

"Even the one in Tacloban is a suspected case of new coronavirus. Wala pa naman siyang positive test for the pancoronavirus (He doesn't have a positive test result for the pancoronavirus yet)," he added.

Pancoronavirus screening is a test done on a person suspected of contracting a strain of coronavirus.

### Prevention

Regular handwashing can prevent the spread of nCoV, the DOH said in its health advisory.

"Iwasan and kontak sa mga hayop, umiwas sa mga may ubo at sipon at takpan ang bibig at ilong kapag umuubo at bumabahing (Avoid contact with animals, avoid those who have cough and colds and to always cover one's mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing)," it added.

The DOH also stressed the importance of drinking plenty of water, proper cooking of food, and consultation with a health facility if symptoms of cough and colds persist, especially if they come from Wuhan, China.

Citing the outbreak of the virus in China, Domingo advised the public to temporarily suspend their travel to the country.

"It might be prudent to delay the flight

until the disease is completely understood and it is more contained," he added.

Not a public health emergency of int'l concern

In a statement, the WHO said the Wuhan nCoV "is not a public health emergency of international concern as its emergency status is contained in China".

WHO defined a public health emergency of international concern as "an extraordinary event" constituting a "public health risk to other States through the international spread of disease and to potentially require a coordinated international response."

## Class Opening...

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infected, clean, and safe for use.

She said an entire month should be devoted for decontamination of all school and sports facilities, including dormitories, that were used for COVID-19 response measures.

At the same time, Tulfo said delaying the opening of classes would also allow the national and local governments to come up with solutions to ensure that every student will be able to attend school amid the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While all education agencies have existing electronic voucher systems, there may be a need to double or triple the funding for these considering the situation, she said.

She added that the government could also give food and transport fare vouchers for students who may need them.

"I ask the Departments of Finance, Department of Budget and Management, and the education agencies to recommend to Congress a Pantawid Edukasyon conditional cash

transfer program for all students in the low income and lower-middle income brackets," Tulfo said.

"It would be easy for families in financial distress because of COVID-19 to stop sending their kids to school. Government must assure them that they must keep their kids in school and government will be there to help because it is a must," she added.

As of Sunday afternoon, the country recorded a total of 3,246 COVID-19 cases; 152 deaths; and 64 recoveries.

"One thing I ask of the LORD; this I seek: to dwell in the LORD's house all the days of my life, to gaze on the LORD's beauty, to visit His temple."  
—Psalm 27:4

To keep the virus from spreading, the WHO recommended exit screening at airports as part of a comprehensive set of containment measures, set up of mechanisms and measures to detect cases of coronavirus and reiteration on hand hygiene and cough etiquette. (PNA)

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** All comments and opinions submitted by our contributing writers and herein published shall remain as personal opinion of our column writers. Viewliner shall not be held liable to any legal issues related to any commentaries that may appear herein.

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## Weekly Horoscope

**AQUARIUS:** (Ene. 20-Peb. 18) Ipakita ang kakayahan sa isang Taurus na nililigawan. May pakakataon para matupad ang pinapangarap kung magiging matiyaga at masikap sa iyong pag-aaral. Laging maging handa. Lucky numbers at color for the day ang 7, 19, 25, 29 at beige.

**PISCES:** (Peb. 19-Mar. 20) Magtatagumpay sa binabalak na negosyo, kapag ang life partner ang kasama mo sa pagtataguyod nito. Maaa-ring magiging malubak ang daan sa simula, pero magpakatatag dahil nasa landas mo ang tagumpay. Lucky numbers at color for the day ang 11, 13, 21, 29 at indigo.

**ARIES:** (Mar. 21-Abr. 19) Sino man ang wala sa grupo, siya ang nagiging paksa ng usapan. Magbibigay ng kabuluhan ang magandang payo na matatanggap kung ia-apply ito sa gawa. Ibigay ang nararapat sa taong pinangakuan. Huwag kang paasa. Lucky numbers at color for the day ang 3, 11, 19, 39 at sky blue.

**TAURUS:** (Abr. 20-May. 20) Kung ano man ang kwento mo sa iyong kapwa, 'yan ang mararanasan mo. Lahat ng maaa-ring maranasan ay nagsisimula sa bawat mong hinahangad. Maging matalino sa pagtuntong kung anong landas ang gusto mong marating. Lucky numbers at color for the day ang 9, 18, 21, 31 at bottle green.

**GEMINI:** (May.21-Hun. 21) Makulay ang romansa kapag dumating ang sorpresa. Tapusin ang gawain para ma-enjoy ng husto ang oras ninyo ng iyong mahal. Nakatakda kang pagpalain sa mga mabuting gawain. Lucky numbers at color for the day ang 7, 15, 23, 27 at violet.

**CANCER:** (Hun. 22-Hul. 22) Purihin ang ina para matamo ang swerteng hinahangad. Kung pananatilihin ang positibong pag-iisip, walang hindi malalampasan. Huwag lang ipagsawalang bahala ang kalusugan para walang maging hadlang sa iyong mga balak. Lucky numbers at color for the day ang 9, 15, 25, 41 at green.

**LEO:** (Hul. 23-Ago. 22) Masaya ang biruan kapag hindi umabot sa asaran. Positibo ang paraang kailangan para akitin ang suwerte. Huwag haluan ng ilegal na gawain para hindi maunsyami ang bawat hakbang. Makinig sa payo ng nagmamalasakit. Lucky numbers at color for the day ang 5, 9, 15, 33, 43 at ivory.

**VIRGO:** (Ago. 23-Set.23) Isang desisyon ang haharapin. Ang payo ng kaibigan ay dapat pakinggan dahil maaasahan ang tunay nilang pagmamalasakit sa iyong kapakanan. Baguhin ang ganitong ugali, bago ka pa makahanap ng katapat. Lucky numbers at color for the day ang 7, 17, 31, 41 at fuchsia pink.

**LIBRA:** (Set. 24-Okt. 23) Lahat ng issue sa araw na ito ay madaling malulutas, kapag ang iyong kalooban ay maaliwalas. Kaya lumayo sa tsismisan at tiyakin na hindi masangkot sa gulo para hindi ka malagay sa alanganing situwasyon. Lucky numbers at color for the day ang 3, 17, 21, 35 at lavender.

**SCORPIO:** (Okt. 24-Nob. 22) Masigla ka sa buong araw at maraming gawain ang matatapos. Huwag basta magdesisyon sa isang bagay, lalo na kung kakailanga-ning maglabas ng malaking halaga. Lucky numbers at color for the day ang 15, 19, 22, 39 at blue.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (Nob. 23-Dis. 21) Isaisip at iayon sa tibok ng puso ang mga bagay na may kaugnayan sa pakikipagrelasyon. Hindi dapat pinaghahalo ang love life sa iyong trabaho. Kung pamilyado na, tantanan na ang paglalaro ng apoy. Lucky numbers at color for the day ang 11, 27, 37, 45 at tangerine.

**CAPRICORN:** (Dis. 22-Ene. 19) Masayang balita mula sa internet ang matatanggap. Pero kung ito ay nag-aalok ng investment na nanga-ngako ng agaran at malakihang kita, mag-isip muna dahil posibleng ma-scam ka. Lucky numbers at color for the day ang 17, 25, 39, 41 at pink.

## Possible extension of ECQ... from page 1...

ing reduce the transmission of the highly-infectious disease.

"In the meantime, we call on our countrymen to be steadfast in our commitment to take care of each other in this imminent threat to our nation's survival," he said.

Panelo's statement came after Peace Adviser and National Task Force (NTF) Covid-19 chief implementer Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. said the government is currently studying whether to extend the quarantine for another 15 to 20 days after its scheduled end on April 12.

Galvez, in an interview over DZBB, said it would be difficult to "rush into normalcy" only to revert to another lockdown if it turns out the infection rate continued to surge.

"(What) we're seeing is that one of the big possibilities is we will have an extension of 15 days or maybe 20 days so that we can really sustain it. Because right now, it's still rising, it hasn't plateaued," he said.

In an interview with CNN Philippines, Galvez noted that the government has not yet seen any significant flattening of the curve and that the next two weeks will be critical for their observation.

He said the task force will not rush into making a decision and consider all factors on the situation at hand.

Currently, the task force is gathering self-assessment from local government units (LGUs) to consider their side in making a decision.

The task force is also considering the economic impact of the quarantine extension, he added.

He said the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) is expected to come out with its final recommendation to the President before April 14, the day mass-testing is expected to start.

Earlier, Galvez said the task force wanted to fast-track the accreditation of subnational laboratories to start the massive testing of persons under investigation (PUI) and persons under monitoring (PUM) for Covid-19.

There are currently four Covid-19 sub-testing areas in the country.

Luzon has been placed under ECQ from March 17 to April 12 to minimize the number of Covid-19 cases in the country.

As of Sunday, health authorities reported 152 new cases of Covid-19 infection, bringing the country's total to 3,246 and eight new deaths bringing the total to 152. (PNA)

## Philippine volcano recharging, scientist says, as shops, hotels told to keep shut

**MANILA (Reuters)** - A restive volcano in the Philippines has a high risk of eruption as it is "recharging" with fresh magma and rising emissions of toxic gas, a top scientist said on Monday, while authorities ordered commercial establishments to stay shut.

Earthquakes were still happening at the Taal volcano, which shot giant clouds of ash miles into the air on Jan. 12, and levels of the gas were rising, a sign of magma "recharging" and "resupplying" beneath it, a Philippine volcanologist said.

"If it reaches the crater, it could cause a strong explosion," Renato Solidum, director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs), told DZMM radio.

Authorities have thrown a 14-km (9-mile) exclusion zone around the volcano, with experts saying an eruption could bring a devastating rain of rocks and magma and unleash a tsunami in the lake around it.

Graphic: Earthquake activity near Philippine volcano Taal <https://tmsnrt.rs/2sJlycI>

Several establish-

ments reopened last week in the tourist resort of Tagaytay after the volcano, 70 km (45 miles) from the capital, Manila, had shown signs of calming, but authorities urged them to heed orders to close.

"We asked them to cease operations so no tourists or locals would be lured to that area," Epimaco Densing, an undersecretary of the interior ministry, told reporters.

Just 311 meters (1,020 feet) high, Taal is one of the world's smallest active volcanoes, but it can be deadly, having killed more than 1,300 people in an eruption in 1911.

More than 100,000 people have abandoned homes around the volcano and flocked to evacuation centres after it blanketed homes, schools, and farms with ash.

The education ministry said it was ready to send teachers to run classes for more than 1 million students in nearby towns after displaced people had to be accommodated in some schools.

No deaths have been reported and the volcano's impact has proved just a blip for the \$330-billion national economy, despite cancelled flights and a day of work lost on Jan. 12 because of a heavy fall of ash in Manila.

Taal has erupted more than 30 times in the past five centuries, most recently in 1977. The Philippines lies on the "Ring of Fire", a belt of volcanoes girdling the Pacific Ocean that is also prone to earthquakes.



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## Solon wants class opening moved to August or later amid virus threat



ACT-CIS party-list Representative Jocelyn Tulfo is urging concerned government agencies to move the opening of classes for the next school year to either August or September to give schools time to recover from the impact of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) situation.

In a statement, Tulfo recommended to the Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases to "synchronize the opening of the new school year either in August or September" on a trial

basis.

"Huwag po nating ipilit buksan ang school year sa June. Mabuti nang nag-iingat at daig ng maagap ang masipag," she said.

"Maraming eskuwelahan ang kinailangang gamitin bilang staging area, relief goods distribution center, o temporary community quarantine facility. Marapat lamang na malinis nang maigi ang bawat sulok ng mga paaralan," she added.

According to Tulfo, the week-long Brigad Eskwela will not be enough to ensure that every school and classroom is dis

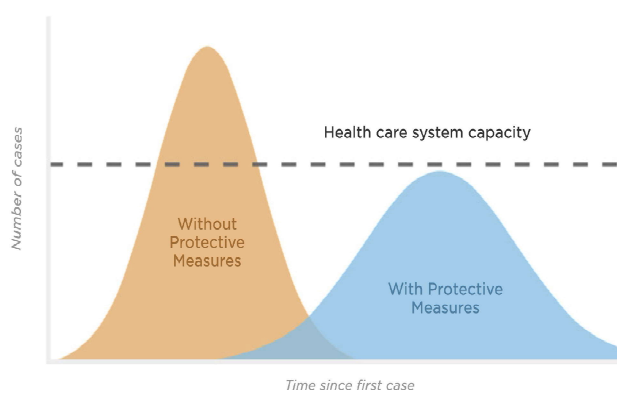
*See Page 2...*

## Quarantine extension would flatten COVID-19 curve – UP team

The University of the Philippines COVID-19 Pandemic Response Team said an extension of the enhanced community quarantine may help control the further transmission of the novel coronavirus.

According to a Sunday report by Dano Tingcungco on "24 Oras Weekend," the UP COVID-19 Pandemic Response Team projected that, left on its own, the number of COVID-19 cases in the country could reach 600,000 to 1.4 million.

But due to the implementation of the enhanced community quarantine, the number of projected number of cases is expected to go down.



UP Executive Vice President Teodoro Herbosa Jr., however, said cases could rise steeply if the quarantine was lifted.

"Our sciences know you cannot release it yet because you will lose the gains because you saw in the graphs, there will be a peak. Uulit lang parang dineley lang 'yong pag-happen

noong epidemic," Herbosa said.

The Luzon-wide quarantine took effect on March 17 and would end on April 13.

With this, the UP team recommended a "modified quarantine" instead.

"Still no schools, work *See Page 2...*

**PAHAYAGAN NG**  
***Kabitenyo***

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## Number of cops with coronavirus rises to 14



MANILA-- The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Sunday confirmed that another police officer tested positive for the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), bringing the total number of cases in the police force to 14.

PNP spokesperson, Brig. Gen. Bernard Banac said in a radio interview that the number of police frontliners affected by Covid-19 continues to increase.

He said 237 PNP personnel were classified as patients under investigation (PUIs) while 1,620 were listed as persons under monitoring (PUMs). There

were also two reported deaths among the police personnel.

The Kiangan Billeting Center in Camp Crame has admitted nine PNP personnel listed as PUIs who are undergoing self-quarantine.


Biosafety protocols such as decontamination and provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) for all PNP health workers in the building are strictly implemented.

Banac also said there are enough policemen deployed in Luzon as well in Visayas and Mindanao and there is no need for augmentation from the other regions.

"Sa buong Luzon may kabuuang bilang tayo mahigit kumulang 70,000 na PNP personnel at yung mga ating na-pull out from the front line dahil nga sila ay under strict quarantine ay meron na tayong napalit sa kanila. Wala dapat ipangamba, sapat ang ating bilang (We have a total of more or less 70,000 PNP personnel in the whole of Luzon and those we have pulled out from the front line because they are under strict quarantine, we have already replaced them. There is no need to worry, we have enough personnel)," he said.

Meanwhile, Banac said the enhanced community quarantine will continue to be implemented as the country commemorates the Holy Week this year to ensure that the people will stay in their homes.

He said the traditional religious activities will be observed through social media due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



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