

Transport joins testing, tracking as urgent problems, but 'ghosted' by gov't stimulus plan

"Test, track and treat" are not the only concerns of workers. Travel and transport are, too. They can only get back to work if they can go to places of work safely without COVID hitching a ride. But the new normal in the pandemic world calls for public transport with reduced capacity and higher operating expense, and yet financially viable to operate.

The adjustments will cost money—small by Ramon Ang standards, but a fortune for a jeepney driver or an independent taxi operator who hasn't seen a fare for more than two months.

>> P3



Cavite LCEs join USAPANG DIBDIBAN

Carmona Mayor Roy Loyola is one of the 17 local chief executives (LCEs) that participated in the online discussion on TB response thru USAPANG DIBDIBAN: the 1st Webinar for local government officials in Cavite sponsored by USAID Philippines. (Photo from Diwata Paredes of USAID TB Platforms Project)

TRECE MARTIRES CITY, Cavite May 16 (PIA) -- About 17 local chief executives (LCEs) of the province's cities and municipalities participated in the first ever online discussion on

>> P3

IATF grants Bacoor City's appeal for Modified ECQ



Bacoor City, Cavite May 16 (PIA) -- The Regional Inter-Agency Task Force granted the local government's appeal for the reconsideration of the General Community Quarantine (GCQ) and placed the city under the Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ) effective today.

This was revealed by Mayor Lani Mercado-Revilla as she addressed her constituents in a video post yesterday, a day before the lifting of the ECQ and moving to the GCQ status in the province.

Mayor Lani Revilla said that, "The move was for the best interest and safety of all the Bacoorēños in the wake of the COVID-19 threat that is still very much present in our midst."

The MECQ brings not much difference because the same limitations on the move-

>> P2



Remulla orders temporary closure of malls in Cavite

Cavite Governor Jonvic Remulla recently announced the temporary closure of all shopping malls in the province due to violation of social distancing guidelines.

"LAHAT NG MALL SA CAVITE ay panandalian SARADO dahil sa kanilang pakawalang bisa ng social distancing. Sa labas Ng mall Bago magbukas; sa luob Ng mall habang operations; Wala po nakitang pinasusunod na patakaran ukol sa social distancing. Kung akala ng lahat ay kung pati sa mall ay PNP pa rin ay para na rin

ninyo sinabi na kalimutan na Ang ibang trabaho at si-tahin na lang ang nasa mall," Remulla said in a Facebook post.

The governor said supermarkets and drug stores inside malls will also be closed until social distancing measures are put in place.

>> P2

More wildlife sightings in CALABARZON amidst the ECQ

P3



Gatchalian seeks support for learners with disabilities

P2



Carmona starts CCT app for town's COVID-19 mitigation efforts

CARMONA, Cavite May 20 (PIA) -- This municipality commenced its Carmona COVID-19 Tracker (CCT) app yesterday, one of the local government's mitigation efforts against the corona virus disease (COVID)-19.

The application was developed by the Municipal Information Technology (IT)

Unit headed by Municipal IT Officer Mr. Angelo Macha which could be installed on Android phones or iOS that will make contact tracing in the town much easier.

Early yesterday, members of the Municipal Information Technology (IT) Unit started posting QR codes on front doors and areas visible

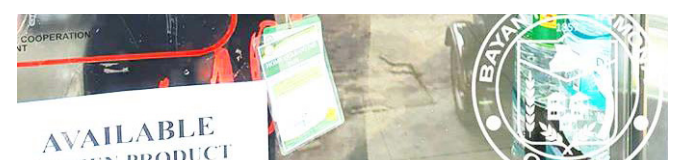
and accessible in establishments often frequented by the residents. The QR codes should be scanned by residents on their smart phones or iOS to input the log interaction feature of the CCT.

An orientation was conducted by Mr. Macha on May 18, 2020 together with Sangguniang Kabataan Chairper-

sons on the procedures for the use of the CCT, with the information they would disseminate to other residents.

Likewise, Atty. Roy Loyola also discussed in a meeting with industrial estate administrators, Carmona Business Club President,

>> P3



The municipality of Carmona commenced its COVID-19 Tracker (CCT) app May 19, 2020, one of the local government's mitigation efforts against the corona virus disease (COVID)-19. The application could be installed on Android phones or iOS that will make contact tracing in the town much easier. (Photo from Atty. Roy Loyola FB Page)

Gatchalian seeks support for learners with disabilities

Senator Win Gatchalian urged the Department of Education (DepEd) to ensure the continued education of learners with disabilities or special needs in the roll-out of its Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) for school year 2020-2021. Gatchalian said that addressing the needs of these learners would prevent them from dropping out.

While DepEd is set to utilize alternative learning delivery modalities such as online learning, radio, television, and printed packets for learners without gadgets and connectivity during this time of the pandemic, Gatchalian said that these should also be available in formats that are conducive to learners with disabilities.

Printed learning packets, for example, can be made available in braille or as audiobooks for visually impaired learners, Gatchalian suggested. Sign language interpreters should also be tapped for television-based instruction, he added.

Under the Filipino Sign Language (FSL) Act (Republic Act 11106), which Gatchalian co-authored, government, schools, and media are mandated to use FSL when relating to the deaf in the Philippines. The FSL Act also requires news and public affairs programs to have FSL interpreter insets.

Gatchalian added that DepEd should work with local government units (LGUs) to ensure that learners with disabilities have access to health care services and therapies. He emphasized that the input of health professionals, including developmental pediatricians, is important in the formulation of individualized education plans (IEP), which identifies the learners' academic goals and how they can be achieved.

Teachers and parents of learners with disabilities should

also be supported, Gatchalian said. Teachers, he emphasized, should be adequately trained on how to remotely support learners while parents should be prepared for homeschooling. The senator said that without adequate preparation, these new learning environments could inflict a heavy burden and emotional toll on both teachers and parents.

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (Phil-Health) estimates that there are around 5.1 million Filipino children living with disabilities. Data from DepEd's Learners Information System revealed that in 2018, there were 231,631 learners with disabilities enrolled in special classes and who were not integrated in regular classrooms.

On the other hand, a discussion paper in December 2017 of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) said that a significant proportion of Filipino children with disabilities were not able to go to school either because of financial challenges faced by households or lack of access to educational facilities, such as SPED centers and qualified teachers.

Last year, Gatchalian filed Senate Bill No. 171 or the Inclusive Education for Children and Youth with Special Needs Act, which aims to establish Inclusive Education Learning Resource Centers in all public schools divisions that will



boost capacity-building on inclusive education and disability awareness.

"Sa pagpapatuloy ng edukasyonsagitna ng krisis COVID-19, lalongdapatnatingtutukan ang mga mag-aaral-na may kapansanan at siguruhinghindisilamaiwan. Kailangangmatiyak at maiparatingnatin samanganaturang mag-aaral at kanilangmagulangnamananatilangligtassapagpapatuloy ng kanilangpag-aaral," said Gatchalian.

DBP releases more than P1.4B cash aid to nearly 300k farmers

State-owned Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) has released more than P1.485-billion in assistance to small-scale farmers under a cash aid program administered by the Department of Agriculture (DA), a top official said.

DBP President and Chief Executive Officer Emmanuel G. Herbosa said a total of 297,000 farmers received the cash assistance of P5,000 each under the DA's Rice Farmers Financial Assistance (RFFA) Program.

"DBP has taken the necessary steps to fast-track the distribution of this assistance to help our farmers cope with the on-going COVID-19 pandemic and to compensate for the income loss due to falling prices of unmilled rice," Herbosa said.

The RFFA is an unconditional cash transfer program for rice farmers in 33 rice-producing provinces across the country who are tilling a land area ranging from 500 square meters up to two hectares. Each beneficiary receives a P5,000 cash aid which can be used for farm inputs and implements.

DBP, along with Land Bank of the Philippines, have been tapped by DA in the payment and distribution of cash grants. DBP has partnered with BSP-licensed cash outlets to expedite the release of funds to farmer beneficiaries.

"Our partnership with cash outlets allowed DBP to leverage on the nationwide coverage and network of these firms enabling the Bank to complete the pay-outs seamlessly and more efficiently," Herbosa said.

IATF grants Bacoar City's << P1

ment of the residents remain in effect. Q-passes are still required for persons allowed to access food and essentials and to the employees/workers needed for establishments permitted to operate.

Mandatory wearing of face mask and social distancing will always be the rule when outside the residence.

Likewise, clustering of barangays and the clustering schedule of public markets, supermarkets, groceries and other establishments still remain in effect and curfew will be from 8pm - 5am with the exception of workers' duties beyond these hours.

Mass gatherings are strictly prohibited while meetings are limited to 5 persons only with social distancing strictly observed.

Outdoor exercises like walking, jogging, and biking are allowed within prescribed hours of 5am-7am and 4pm-6pm while senior citizens will have to exercise within house premises or backyards.

Schools remain closed and transactions are limited to electronic transactions or online banking only.

The Barangay will issue new Q-passes to Q-pass holders who will return to

work while Travel Pass are required for those transferring to new residences within the province and to job applicants for their job applications outside the city.

Mayor Revilla said, "It will be difficult because there is still no public transportation," as she pertains to IATF ruling on transportation limited to company and government shuttles and the allowance for social distancing in private vehicles allowed for Authorized Persons Outside

of Residence (APOR).

Establishments and companies who are allowed to operate under IATF ruling will be controlled by IATF's operational procedures.

"Let us all be patient because in the right time we can move to GCQ and slowly start the city's economy," said Mayor Lani Revilla (Ruel Francisco, with reports from the video of Mayor Lani Revilla and from the FB page of the City Government of Bacoar)

Remulla orders temporary << P1

"Pasensya na sa taga bacoar, alam ko na ang malaking grocery ay nasa mall. Sandali lamang Ito hanggang maka bigay Ng plano ang may kanya ukol sa social distancing," he said.

Remulla said people flocked to shopping malls over the weekend thinking they can do leisurely malling since they have quarantine passes and company IDs.

"Karamihan Ng pumunta ay akala mauutakan ang sistema:

- A. Nag employees ID Ang gamit kahit hinde duty
- B. Pinagsabay ang Employees ID at q-pass para sabay ang pasyal.
- C. Pumunta sa restaurant (jollibee, mcdo) kumuha Ng take-out at kumain sa luob ng mall at sa labas ng restaurant," he said.

Remulla advised Caviteños not to abuse the system, reminding them that Cavite is still under quarantine and residents need to stay home.

"Isa po na paki-usap sa may company ID. HUWAG

NINYO ABUSHIN ANG SISTEMA. Sa araw ng inyong trabaho ay kumuha ng certificate of duty mula sa HR. May palugid kami ng 1 hour before and 1.5 hours later para kayo ay maka pasok at maka uwi. Pag wala sa araw ay oras ng duty ito ay bawal gamitin para gumala. Please stay at home. Pag Ito ay abusuhin pa lalo, ay baka ikansala ko ang pribeleyo ng mga nagka sala sa work ID," he said. Remulla said he has ordered the temporary closure of shopping malls via an executive order he signed on Sunday night. He added that he coordinated with mayors before signing the EO.

The governor said the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Cavite rose from 239 on Wednesday, May 13 to 275 on Sunday, May 17.

"Apat na araw lang kung kailan nagumpisa ang pasok ng GCQ ay halos 40 na bagong kaso. Akala ninyo ang GCQ ay FREEDOM PASS. Akala ninyo na ang pag bawas ng checkpoint ay pwede na ipagbaliwala ang

mga pass para maka labas ng bahay. Akala ninyo na ang work ID ay lakwatsya pass. Ito ngayon ang aking patakaran," Remulla said.

The governor said he is aware his constituents may resent him for ordering the temporary closure of shopping malls but he said it was necessary in order to ensure public health and safety.

"Marami sa inyo ang magagalit sa akin. Mas mabuti na galit kayo sa akin at Wala kayong Covid kaysa natutuwa kayo sa akin at nadadagdagan ang may sakit," he said.

Remulla advised those who need to buy groceries and medicines to go to establishments located outside shopping malls.

"Marami ang magtatanong... 'paano kung pauwi lamang sa trabaho at dumaan sa mall?... 'Paano kung emergency?' Pasensya na kayo, inabuso ang sistema at kailangan higitan. Marami naman grocery at drug store sa inyong bayan. Duon muna Ang kailangan bilhin. MAG-BUBUKAS RIN naman pag

napakita ang plano ng operators ukol sa social distancing," he said.

"Tandaan, Ang Q sa GCQ ay 'Quarantine.' Hinde pa po tapos ang sakuna," Remulla said.

Cavite has been placed under the more relaxed general community quarantine (GCQ) starting May 16 after being under the more strict enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) with the rest of Luzon for almost two months.

The quarantines have been imposed to prevent the further spread of COVID-19.

The Joint Task Force COVID Shield on Sunday warned that it would shut down malls violating physical distancing protocols and initiate filing of appropriate charges against management.

Interior Secretary Eduardo Ano directed all LGUs and the Joint Task Force COVID-19 to inspect all malls and talk to its management regarding their observance of the DOH Minimum Health Standards and Quarantine Protocols.

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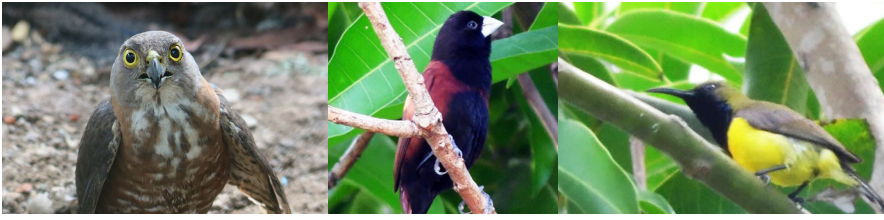
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More wildlife sightings in CALABARZON amidst the ECQ



Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu in a statement said, "with the increased sightings of wild animals occurring in the CALABARZON Region, it is important that we remind the public to leave them alone, unless they are sick, orphaned or injured as we have wildlife experts who can take care of them." He further highlighted that it is important that these wildlife be left alone, unless injured or orphaned. Regional Executive Director Gilbert Gonzales has directed the PENROs and CENROs in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon, to strictly monitor the Protected Areas in their jurisdictions. He also acknowledged the LGUs and the communities for their cooperation in protecting the wildlife in their areas.

Since March 16, the whole island of Luzon has been declared under the Enhanced Community Quarantine. Since then, citizens have been uploading various bird photos on social media. In Catanauan, Quezon, Mr. Herbert Hutamares, got a glimpse of a couple of Chestnut munia, Asia Glossy Starling, Eurasian Tree Sparrow, Lowland White Eye, Olive-backed Sunbird, Yellow Vented Vulvul, White-collared Kingfisher among others. "As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to put city after city under lockdown, birds have been frequently seen flying and heard chirping and singing from the trees in Catanauan, Quezon", Hutamares said. According to the Chief of Licenses, Patents and Deeds Division, Engineer Olivia Bejo, "Wildlife plays an important role in balancing the environment. Wildlife provides a stability to different natural processes of nature." In cases of injured, orphaned or turned over wildlife, these will be under the custody of DENR CALABARZON and will be placed in the Wildlife Rescue Center in Calauan, Laguna. They will then be on queue, following a release program. Anyone who will be caught with possession of any wildlife species without necessary permits will be charged for violation of Republic Act no. 9147. This RA is otherwise known as the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act. DENR CALABARZON is urging the public to report Environment and Natural Resources-related, especially illegal trading operations via hotline 8888, sms to +639456215007/ +639083340224, email to denr4a.ord@gmail.com or send us photos, videos and other information via <https://www.facebook.com/DENR4AOfficial/>

DTI 4-A turns over PPE donations from Japanese companies to Cabuyao City



To help protect the frontline workers in the fight against the COVID-19, the Department of Trade and Industry Region 4-A turned over 9,000 surgical masks and 50 face shields donations from Japanese companies Tsuneishi Shipbuilding Co., Ltd. and Taiheiyo Cement Corporation, respectively, to Cabuyao City Mayor Rommel A. Gecolea last May 9, 2020. With the help of Ibiden Japan, the aids were shipped for free.

"We are very thankful for these generous donations of Tsuneishi and Taiheiyo to our health workers and front liners in the Cabuyao City

Hospital and health centers. It is the unstinting support of the private sector, government, and partner agencies and organizations in and outside the country that help sustain the health and well-being of our frontline workers," said Mayor Gecolea.

"Our front liners are considered heroes in the battle against the pandemic, and these valuable donations of Tsuneishi and Taiheiyo will surely be of help to our heroes. We are deeply grateful for the benevolence and bravery of the people who continue to serve and help our nation despite the crisis," said DTI CALABARZON Director Marilou Q. Toledo.



Cavite LCEs join usapang << P1

TB response in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic.

The webinar dubbed as "USAPANG DIBDIBAN" was sponsored by USAID Philippines through its TB Platforms Project with Chief Party facilitator USAID's TB Platforms for Sustainable Detection Care and Treatment Project Head, Dr. Marianne Calnan together with Region IV-A Field Operations Area Manager, Dr. Karen Dalawangbayan which tackled the role of the local government units in responding to tuberculosis, the world's number 1 killer disease, in the midst of

the ongoing health emergency crisis.

According to statistics, 70 Filipinos die of TB every day and TB patients are of higher risk to get infected of COVID-19 especially the senior citizens, pregnant women and children. TB centers are now being used as COVID-19 Centers and doctors and nurses are being pulled out to join the COVID emergency response.

"It is a daunting task for the province and LGU heads to move fast and implement local TB-COVID-19 actions," said Dr. Dal-

wangbayan. Thus, Governor Jonvic Remulla along with all the mayors agreed to strengthen the province's and the respective localities' TB response by maximizing the available support from the national government and the private sector to be able to provide continuous TB treatment in TB DOTS and Barangay Health Centers, and in government hospitals in the province.

Likewise, USAID's TB Platforms will provide continuous technical assistance to the local chief executives as well as their health

and information officers in spearheading a massive information and education campaign on infection prevention and control for TB and COVID-19.

With the General Community Quarantine in place, stricter guidelines for the implementation of proper hygiene, social distancing and maintaining of safe and healthy workplaces will be ensured and monitored by the LGU thru the concerned local government agencies. (Ruel Francisco, PIA-Cavite with reports from USAID TB Platforms Project FB post)

Transport joins testing << P1

The installation of plastic dividers in taxis, dividing curtains in jeepneys, the migration to cashless fare will be a big investment for them.

Even the regular disinfection of vehicles is another cost that will whittle down their daily income. Alcohol "na hindi lang pang-sports, pang-pasada pa" will not be given for free.

Add to these the requirement for jeepney and van drivers to record the names and contact numbers of their passengers and they will have their hands full, literally.

Government should assist their transition to the new normal.

Their crucial role entitles them a place in front of the line for the stimulus fund. After all, what they get from the government will

not be for their personal consumption, but to retool the vehicles for the riding public's safety.

Such assistance also does not require project proposals or complex financial spreadsheets. It is retail spending, which can be carried out with ease.

But in the plethora of government proposals—PH-PROGRESO Plan of the economic managers, to cite one—the transport sector does not seem to have a prominent and urgent role. It appears they have been ghosted by the government.

No discussion sa emergency stage. Ganoon din sa recovery at resilience stages.

Hindi dapat, lalo na't napakalaki ng problemang kinakaharap nila at ng ibang uri ng mass transport tulad

ng tren, airlines, mga bus, at barko.

Even before COVID, MRT, LRT and PNR were already struggling to operate above capacity. Social distancing now forces them to deeply slash their ridership: LRT-1 by 85%, LRT-2 by 90%, MRT-3 by 87%, PNR Metro North Commuter by 81%, and PNR Metro South Commuter by 80%.

Ang sa LRT 1 na 347 passengers per train car, magiging 52 na lang; sa LRT, ang dating 407 passengers per car, magiging 40; at sa MRT, from 394 per car down to 51.

To say this is catastrophic for passengers, who months ago would queue for hours for the chance to squeeze themselves into packed coaches is an understatement. An LRT and MRT

with reduced capacity will be more fearsome than the Train to Busan.

If social distancing will be enforced on domestic airlines and provincial buses, it will result in higher ticket prices, and longer waiting time to book passage.

Ganoon din sa mga pampasaherong barko. 228 RORO ships, 68 fast crafts and 402 conventional ships will face existential challenges.

Any semblance of normalcy requires us to move people and products around safely. Absent this, is a picture of an economy at a standstill.

Kaya dapat pagdating sa government spending, attention and resources, hindi dapat nakikiangkas lang sa estribo ang transportasyon—dapat sila ay nasa front seat.

Carmona starts CCT << P1

and PEZA manager via ZOOM the installation and use of the CCT app in their companies for the monitoring of their workers and employees.

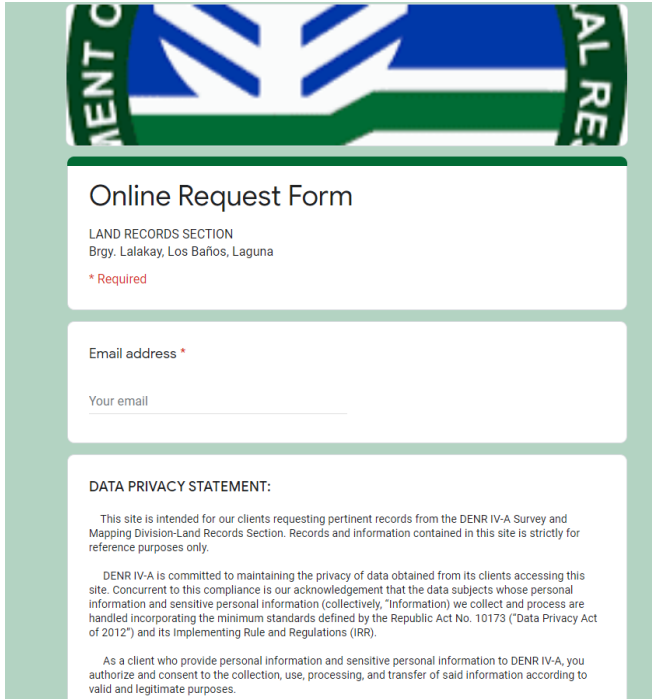
For those that have not installed the application yet, they could just scan either one of the small QR codes (one for iOS and one for Android phones) found on the lower corners of the posted QR sheets.

For the residents who do not have a smartphone or cellphones, their barangay personnel or police officers will log them in.

Mayor Roy Loyola enjoins everyone saying, "Let us participate in the contact tracing efforts of the municipal government thru the installation and use of the Carmona COVID-19 Tracker app."

The CCT app could be installed by downloading these links; for Android phones: https://carmona.gov.ph/covid_tracker/app/cvapp-realease.apk while for iOS: <https://carmona.gov.ph/pwa1/c19tracker>. (Ruel Francisco, PIA-Cavite with report from Atty. Roy Loyola's FB page)

DENR CALABARZON Pioneers Online Submission of Requests for Survey Records Amid the MECQ



DENR CALABARZON continues to innovate ways by providing access to selected services, by enabling online submission of requests for survey records. It is the first DENR Regional Office to migrate online, the submission of requests for survey records. This is to ease the processing of requests amidst the implemented Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) in the Province of Laguna.

Regional Executive Director Gilbert Gonzales highlighted that “this is part of our preparation to transition to the new normal”. According to the SMD Division Chief Engineer Edgar Barraca, “online requests will be accepted with a limit of one (1) request per client per day, and a maximum of three (3) documents per request will be accepted.”

With the online submis-

sions, requests pertaining to survey records and other similar documents to be secured from the Land Records Section at Brgy. Lalakay, Los Baños, Laguna is continuously being processed by the Office through its skeletal workforce.

The requested survey records will be sent within three (3) days upon receipt of request and/or depends on the scheduled dates of the personnel in the Land Records Section. The processing time imposed in the citizen's charter shall be suspended. Further, the counting of processing time shall commence upon resumption of regular working days.

For inquiries and further details, you may contact the SMD through surveysandmapping4a@yahoo.com.ph. For requests, the tool may be accessed through: <http://tiny.cc/onlinerequestsr>.

Dahil nasa ilalim ng Public Health Emergency ang buong bansa, hindi muna ipatutupad ng PhilHealth ang Single Period of Confinement at 45-day benefit limit para sa miyembro.

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NU Bulldogs cager Michael John “Man of Steel” Malonzo and his passion for the game



Inside the bright lights of stardom and fame, character and attitude stands tall amidst its glitter and hustling world. An armada of patience, faith and resiliency will really bring one to the real meaning of stardom and success. This is what holds true to the young, humble and talented Michael John Malonzo who is treading his studies and basketball sports at the same time. Blessed with both good looks and talent inside the hard court, let's take a peek at this young future superstar's career and more.

Born Michael John Torres Malonzo on October 23, 1999 in Guagua Pampanga to Mr. Rommel Malonzo and Ms. Lucia Malonzo. The 6-foot-3 cager is playing as a forward for National University and is taking up BSBA Marketing Management. Asked how he manages his studies and basketball, “I train from 7:30am to 12:30 pm then I go to class from 3pm to 9pm.”, quipped MJ. His idols in the NBA are Dennis Rodman of the Chicago Bulls and Derrick Rose.

His career high in points is 24 during his high school days. He makes sure that he obeys their team nutritionist about their proper diet for him to keep his body fit and healthy for the game. His ambition in life is for people to recognize his role as a player and as a teammate and be a professional basketball player in the near future.

Blessed with good looks, humility, perseverance and talent combined with unceasing faith in God, this lad will definitely reach his dreams in the very near future. It takes a lot of guts, courage, and hard work to attain such discipline in the world of sports like basketball and MJ is definitely on a mission this year. With the help of God and his determination to succeed in his chosen path, the road to glory should indeed be on sight. Photo courtesy of Julius Dondon.

ter in Bataan and Talon General Hospital in Tarlac City for a better COVID-19 response. With the world in unison, we truly will heal as one.”

Over the next month, this medical equipment will be distributed to fourteen medical clinics, hospitals, and local Departments of Health in Palawan, Isabela, Tarlac, Laguna, Bataan, Bulacan, Sulu, Zamboanga del Sur, Maguindanao, and Basilan. The supplies include disposable gloves, masks, medical clothing, various types of face protection, and tools such as infrared thermometers.

“With this effort, we are trying to do our part to provide the heroes of this fight, the medical professionals, with the necessary tools that they need to protect their fellow workers and citizens. Times like these show the strength of our friendship, partnership, and alliance as we work together to combat this virus,” said Captain Tim Johnson, Team Leader, Civil Military Support Element – Philippines.

The United States has provided more than Php228 billion (\$4.5 billion) in development assistance to the Philippines over the past 20 years, including over Php29 billion (\$582 million) in health assistance.

U.S. Military Provides Php10 Million in Medical Supplies to Philippine Frontliners



U.S. and Philippine service members pose with donated PPE.

Manila, May 19, 2020 - Service members from the U.S. Army, Marines, and Air Force delivered over Php10million (\$203,000) in personal protective equipment (PPE) and medical supplies to hospitals in ten provinces across the Philippines, working in partnership with the Philippine Coast Guard, Army, Marines, and Air Force. This new donation brings total U.S. government COVID-19 assistance to the Philippines to more than Php780 million (nearly \$15.5 million).

The assistance, delivered in conjunction with the U.S. Embassy and Philippine Department of Health, will provide

medical clinics from Luzon to Mindanao with much-needed PPE and other essential equipment to support frontline workers battling COVID-19. This joint U.S.-Philippine operation builds on decades of bilateral military cooperation in counterterrorism, humanitarian relief, maritime security, and many other fields.

Lt. General Ramiro Manuel Rey, AFP Northern Luzon Commander, expressed thanks for the donation, “Indeed, there is strength in unity. We would like to express our gratitude for the aid given by the U.S. Embassy. These items will greatly benefit the Bataan General Hospital and Medical Cen-