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To end on April 28

Tacloban restrictive quarantine period extended

JOEY A. GABIETA

TACLOBAN CITY—The restrictive community quarantine prevailing in this city was extended until April 28 with residents from areas where there are confirmed coronavirus disease 2019(COVID-19) cases would not be allowed to enter the city save for some exceptions.

On Thursday (April 9), Mayor Alfred Romualdez issued Executive Order Number 2020—4-19 extending the quarantine period until April 28 since it was started on March 21.

The restrictive quarantine period was supposed to end on April 12.

Among the restrictions imposed under the order was the prohibition of people coming from areas where there are confirmed

COVID-19 cases.

Here in Eastern Visayas, the regional office of the Department of Health (DOH) has confirmed of COVID-19 cases from the town of Tarangan and Calbayog City, both in Samar province, and Catarman in Northern Samar.

In Tarangan, two COVID-19 cases were confirmed while one in Calbayog City. The one from see Tacloban /page 6 ...



EXTENDED. The implementation of the restrictive quarantine community in Tacloban City was extended until April 28 of this year by Mayor Alfred Romualdez. The extension means more police presence in the streets making sure that people who are out of their homes are wearing face masks and observe social distancing. (PNP Tacloban)

Soldiers, SK officials join forces in making face masks distributed to frontliners in Basey town

BASEY, Samar - Soldiers of the 63rd Infantry Battalion together with the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) of this town worked hand-in-hand in making artificial face shields and sanitizing rooms for their frontliners as the coronavirus disease 2019(COVID-19) continue to sweep around the world

Levy Ann Lozano, SK federation president of Basey, told Leyte Samar Daily Express in an interview, "during this crisis, we



Soldiers of the 63rd Infantry Battalion joined the call to help frontliners who are in need of personal protective equipment and face masks as the threat of the coronavirus disease 2019(COVID-19) continue. The soldiers were joined by the youth officials of Basey, Samar on this effort.

(JAZMIN BONIFACIO)



Chickens were among being distributed by the city government of Tacloban for families during this time of coronavirus disease 2019(COVID-19) pandemic. Photo shows personnel of the City Social Welfare and Development making their rounds among the city's villages to distribute the chicken to affected families. (TACLOBAN CITY INFORMATION OFFICE)

Taclobanons receive fish, veggies, and meat as COVID-19 food aid

TACLOBAN CITY—The city government here started on Wednesday(April 8) in providing appropriate relief goods that do not only aim for the purpose of feeding but also provide nutrients to the city residents amid the cri-

sis spawned by coronavirus disease 2019(COVID-19).

The first recipients of these relief items consisting of bangus, meat, vegetables and rice were families from Barangay 108 Tagpuro and Barangay Sta Elena, both in the northern part of the city.

City Mayor Alfred Romualdez told Leyte Samar Daily Express in an interview that instead of giving the families of rice and canned goods, he decided to give vegetables and fish instead.

see Taclobanons /page 7 ...



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feel the need to contribute something to protect our health workers, our frontliners. And this is our way of showing our support to them.

"We will be giving it to our health workers, volunteers, police, army, BFP personnel, to our barangay officials and our youth volunteers as well who help manned the checkpoints in

our barangays and highways. We believe this will reduce them from exposure to contamination," she said.

To date, they already finished more than 800 face shields and 10 sanitizing rooms to be distributed to different checkpoint areas spread across the town.

see Soldiers /page 6 ...

E. Samar town gives one bag of rice to families affected by COVID-19

BORONGAN CITY-

The local government unit of Hernani in Eastern Samar gave one bag of rice each to its 2,674 families affected by the general community quarantine (GCQ) due to COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019).

Hernani town Mayor Amado L. Candido said he felt the dire need of his constituents who could not work so he gave them rice, the most felt need of every household in these pressing time.

The mayor said that the mode of the distribution is door to door per family by barangay officials assisted by Department of Social Welfare and Development, Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office, General Service Office (GSO), and Municipal Treasurer's Office (MTO) personnel because people are not allowed to go out due to the GCQ.

Candido added that other barangays allow their constituents who wear masks to collect the rice but strictly observing



Mayor Amado L. Candido

social distancing.

He added that front liners such as the Philippine National Police, Philippine Army, and Bureau of Fire (BFP) personnel were also given one sack of rice because most of them are not from the place.

Mila R. Cabla, a resident of Brgy. 2, said that she is very pleased and thankful for the sack of rice.

"This is a big help for my family because my husband has no income anymore because he is a taxi driver in Manila," she said.

Ramon I. Antipolo, municipal treasurer, said that the fund is from the MDRRM unexpended balance from the disaster mitigation fund.

Antipolo disclosed that the unexpended balance from 2015 to 2019 totaled

around P4.5 million.

"That is why, the Sangguniang Bayan of Hernani passed and approved Appropriation Ordinance No. 4, series of 2020 appropriating the amount of P4,498,120.48," he said.

The municipal treasurer said the breakdown of utilization are as follows: purchase of 3,000 bags of NFA rice at P1,250 per sack as food assistance to affected families worth P3.7 million and procurement of personal protective equipment (PPEs) such as: gowns, gloves, mask, head caps, and boots worth P350,000. Another is the procurement of hospital equipment and supplies like disinfectants, sprayer, and misting equipment worth P298,120.48, and procurement of medicines and vitamins worth P100,000.

"This is the first wave of distribution, there is a second wave of distribution between May or June through the food-for-work program. This time though, rice will just be in kilos," the Mayor said.

see E. Samar/page 6 ...

DPWH installs decontamination areas to disinfect vehicles



CARIGARA, Leyte – Five decontamination areas have been positioned by the Department of Public Works and Highways-Leyte Second District Engineering Office along the national highways in the second district of Leyte.

In a press statement, District Engineer Gerald Pacanan said that sanitation tents and disinfection gantries are placed in the towns of Capoocan, Dulag, Jaro, Mac Arthur and in the district engineering office

in Carigara, to combat the 2019 novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

"Along with our mandate to maintain our national roads and bridges, is our duty to ensure the safety of our motorists. We have set up these sanitation areas to eliminate possible virus being transported by vehicles and help contain the spread of the disease," said Pacanan.

The engineering office also provided personal protective equipment such as

sanitation suits, surgical masks, gloves and rubber boots, and supplied vitamins to protect the staff manning the stations.

The activity was instituted by DPWH Secretary Mark A. Villar who directed Regional and District Engineering Offices to intensify preventive measures against the COVID-19, in support of the Republic Act 11469 or the "Bayanihan to Heal As One Act" of the government.

(LIZBETH ANN A. ABELLA)

DOT-Eastern Visayas lauds LGUs support on repatriation of tourists amid COVID-19

TACLOBAN CITY-The Department of Tourism (DOT) here in the region has lauded the local government units (LGUs) for their swift response on the agency's repatriation efforts for trapped foreign nationals and tourists in the region in the midst of the deadly coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

"The LGUs have been our perfect partners in this

operation. Given the border entry restrictions, we ask their permissions to allow exit and entry in their respective areas. For as long as we are able to provide them with the required travel details and documents, they immediately act on our requests," said DOT Regional Director Karen Tiopes.

Tiopes said that as of April 11, they continue to receive request for repatriation assistance from differ-

ent embassies in the country.

"The embassies are still organizing sweeper flights and repatriation flights. Sweeper flight are deployed to certain pick up points in the country. For the Visayas cluster, there are in Cebu, Bohol, Iloilo, and Bacolod," Tiopes told Leyte Samar Daily Express.

According to Tiopes, the bulk of the stranded nationals are located in the said

key places.

In Eastern Visayas, however, the tourism office is faced with the challenge of finding ways to bring the trapped tourists to the pick-up points.

"DOT no longer organizes sweeper flights but we still assist and find way to bring the stranded

The Department of Tourism (DOT) here in the region under Karina Rosa Tiopes conducted repatriation efforts for foreign tourists to depart outside the region. The Luzon lockdown resulted for the temporary stoppage of air, sea, and land transportation which stranded foreign tourists in the provinces. Photo by: DOT-8



tourists to the airports," said Tiopes.

She acknowledged the support of the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP), Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), Department of Health (DOH), and Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

"We also have to thank our tourist transport operators who agree, even on short notice, to provide land transport service to ferry these tourists from where they are in Eastern Visayas to the airport or seaport as the case may be," said Tio-

pes.

In repatriating the foreign visitors, Tiopes said the embassies work closely with the DFA and DOT.

"Others also go directly to the LGUs where these tourists are stranded, as the case of the Germans who were in Southern Leyte," she said.

On Friday, DOT in the region also moved 13 Europeans to Hilongos, Leyte where they took a boat ride to Bohol for their sweeper and repatriation flights on Saturday, April 11.

see DOT /page 6 ...

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FEATURE:

From free masks to free money delivery: COVID-19 Bayanihan in Eastern Visayas

RONALD O. REYES

CARLO NGOHO, 36, is a school head in Tabanago, Leyte, but for now he runs errands for his relatives and neighbors who are trapped in their homes due to the enhanced community quarantine amid the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

In between his assignment as leader of the emergency medical team in their town, Ngoho picked up and delivered money for his kababayans even up to the farthest barangay which requires him a one-hour drive on board his old motorcycle.

"It's very satisfying that you were able to help in a little way," said Ngoho of Pining Paglingap Elementary School, a remote and mountainous school located about 12 kilometers away from the town proper.

In Tacloban City, businessman Rhoel Ladera and lawyer Hermie Alcera II are organizing a drive to help the frontliners anywhere in the region through their car club Navara Nation Philippines -Eastern Visayas (NNP-EV) chapter.

On board their sleek pick-up trucks, NNP-EV members, dubbed as "Angels on Wheels," voluntary transport food supplies, medicines, and medical equipment, providing logistics support to the government's anti-COVID-19 response across the region, being deputized under the Inter-Agency Task Force CV Shield.

"As much as we want to stay in the safe confines of our homes, our hearts bleed at the thought that others are out there fighting for us while we belabor on what to watch next on Netflix. Despite the risk to us and our families, we dared to venture out as NNP-EV partnered with various organizations, giving a solution to their logistics problem," wrote Alcera on his Facebook account.

"Yes, we fear this virus. But we are filled with hope that humanity can survive this storm if we will take care of each other," he

added.

Irish national Pascal Canning, 58, did not also think twice about helping the residents and frontliners in

Maasin City.

Through his Star Apple Foundation, Pascal made and distributed masks, gloves, and other personal protective equipment (PPE) to the different barangays in the city.

"All masks are washed and packed in hygienic conditions," he said.

He also uploaded a video to help the public on how to make the three-layer cup masks for the frontliners. (Video here: <https://www.boopolo.com/2020/03/25/how-to-make-cup-masks-free-pattern/>)

He appealed for more cotton or fake cotton, light quilt filler cloth, and garters or elastics so they can make

As of Monday, April 13, Pascal and his wife Eden, along with a group of volunteers from Caimito Beach Resort, were able to make and distribute 960 masks. Pascal, who also built houses for the 2013 super typhoon Yolanda survivors in the region, also launched the "meals on the wheels" for indigent senior citizens in the city.



Despite being trapped in their homes, public school teachers Ma. Isolde Mangyao and Carol Edillo are leading a relief drive for the needy residents in Libagon, Southern Leyte.

Through the financial assistance from their classmates abroad, they were able to distribute 110 relief packs.

Marife Shikasho, a Filipino living in Japan, also rushed to send help to her kababayans in Maasin City while bracing for the same health crisis in her new-found country.

She donated 15 sacks of rice, benefiting some 170

households at her barangay in Maasin.

Charity also abounds online as people in the region used social media like Facebook and other crowdfunding sites for donation drives.

Facebook group Eastern Visayas COVID-19 Fighters, comprised of over 2,000 members, prioritized the delivery of PPE to hospital frontliners.

"It's been more than two weeks since we started this drive. Throughout the 14+ days of our operations, we were able to give to health institutions from the ends of Eastern Visayan Islands.

We would not have been able to give to our health-care frontliners had it not been for the spirit of kindness and generosity the poured from everyone who saw our calls for donation," the group said.

"We are more than grateful for everyone's help," it added.

Jen Garcia, administrator of another Facebook charity group Dum Spiro, Spero (As long I live, I hope), also thanked its non-cash and cash donors, donor artists from Isla, Kolor Banwa, Art Association of the Philippines, independent donor artists

(painters, sketch artists, photographers, and writers), and donor art collectors.

"Let us not lose any of our medical practitioners who are at the frontline. They are our helpers. Without them, we will be in chaos," wrote Garcia as she appealed for financial aid for additional 400 PPE, 700 n95/kn95 masks, and eight aerosol boxes for the medical frontliners across the region.

Garcia also invited the public to join their Facebook group and see for themselves the art collections they are selling, along with their accomplishment and status reports for transparency purposes.

University students and faculty members across the region also apply their knowledge and expertise to serve the public like the University of the Philippines Visayas Tacloban College (UPTVTC) which has produced and donated alcohol-based hand rub following the standards from World Health Organization (WHO) and the Leyte Normal University (LNU) continues to give PPE to hospitals, offices, and barangays in Tacloban and nearby towns.

PNP awards heroism medal to slain cop in Leyte

TACLOBAN CITY- Police Regional Director, Brigadier General Bernabe Balba awarded the "Medalya ng Kadakilaan (Heroism Medal) to Staff Sergeant Fernan Canuda in Leyte, Leyte on April 7.

"Your brothers and sisters in arms express gratitude for your invaluable service and dedication to the Eastern Visayas Police Force. Rest in peace," said Balba.

Canuda, who was assigned at the Regional Anti-Illegal Gambling Task Force (RAIGTF), was killed while serving the warrant of arrest to rank number 9 most wanted person-re-

gional level in Leyte town on April 5.

The suspect identified as Lionillo Medalla shot dead Canuda after sensing the presence of the operatives from Leyte Municipal Police Station and RAIGTF led by Lieutenant Kemy Bas.

The incident happened at around 10 p.m. Sunday at Sitio Macalapi, Barangay Libas of the said town.

Police are conducting hot pursuit operation against the suspect.

(RONALD O. REYES)



P402-M up for Samar's pandemic response

TACLOBAN CITY - A total of P402.6-million financial support will be granted to local government units (LGUs) in Samar to boost its response capabilities in fighting the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

The allocation per LGU is equivalent to their monthly internal revenue allotment (IRA), Samar Governor Reynolds Michael Tan said in a statement on Thursday.

The province's two cities - Calbayog and Catbalogan, will receive the highest allocation amounting to P118.9 million and P58.7 million, respectively.

On the other hand, its 24 towns will receive financial assistance ranging from P4-million to P17-million.

The Bayanihan grant to cities and towns from the national government will be solely used for COVID-19-related efforts,

the official said.

These include the purchase of relief goods for the constituents, personal protective equipment for frontliners, hospital supplies, and equipment, vitamins and medicines, establishments of mobile testing or standalone laboratory, among others.

"This will boost our capabilities to fight the virus and help the most affected ones in this health crisis. This will now depend on the LGU, on what needs priority on the ground,"

The Bayanihan grant will be sourced from discontinued projects of some government agencies under Republic Act 11465 or the 2020 General Appropriations Fund, according to the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

Tan has placed the province under preemptive enhanced community quarantine from April 1 to 15,

imposing mandatory measures to prevent the spread of the highly contagious coronavirus.

Three of the confirmed COVID-19 cases in Eastern Visayas were reported in the province - two from Tarangnan town who had close contact from an infected person from Calbayog City.

With this, the Department of Health confirmed local transmission in the province.

In response, the local government of Tarangnan on Tuesday has placed the communities where the two patients reside under total lockdown to prevent further spread of the virus.

As of Wednesday, the province has 71 patients under investigation for Covid19 - 10 currently admitted and 61 under strict home isolation.

(GERICO SABALZA/PNA)

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A stern reminder



mid the simultaneous checkpoints along LGU borders this lockdown season, when checkpoint personnel are demanding a number of things for people to be allowed in and out of vicinities, there is an austere reminder that these authorities must bear in mind—do not disallow the mobility of food supplies.

In other words, checkpoint authorities can demand from people quarantine passes, special permits, and other documents that could justify their seeming defiance against lockdown protocols. But when it comes to food deliveries such as farm products for delivery to the markets, checkpoint personnel should never subject the same to tough screening procedures, as if making the latter pass through the eye of a needle.

This is a government mandate, that food products must be free flowing and not in any way stranded along checkpoint lines of vehicles. Checkpoint authorities, of course, can take

a look at these cargoes because, who knows, they might be contrabands of some sort coated only by food items to avoid detection. But once the deliveries are confirmed to be genuine, without anomalies and irregularities, then they should by all means be allowed to pass through lockdown checkpoints.

The reason for this need not be elaborated to checkpoint personnel. No need for so much talk on the part of delivery folks knowing that food is a prime commodity, and people's need for it cannot wait. To mention a few, such deliveries could come as farm products such as cereals, vegetables, root crops, fruits, and meats; or they could be processed food items such as canned goods, noodles, drinks, and other grocery items.

Easing up checkpoint protocols relative to food deliveries, then, is our way of addressing another big problem that could be as awful as the virus itself, and that is hunger. If the virus kills, so does hunger. Take heed to this, therefore, our dear checkpoint authorities.



Things To Mind

DOMS PAGLIWAN

Were it not for COVID

We look at the Wuhan corona virus as something terrifying, a threat to our collective health, a destroyer of economy, a killer of people, an unseen, merciless foe. But that's as far as humans are concerned. If we will consider the rest of nature, it has something

else to show, something rather positive.

Yes, it's a stark contrast—while people are hurting and ailing, nature, on the other hand, is healing, recovering, and restoring itself. People then cannot accuse the God of creation for abandoning the world

in this pandemic crisis because it could be that He is just attending to the other portions of his creations that humans had destroyed over time.

In short, nature is benefiting from this current pandemic, as though the latter is giving it a break. So much of nature now is availing of the chances and benefits that it has been deprived of, for the past decades and centuries.

Because of the closure of factories, and the grounding of aircrafts and huge ships all emitting dark, toxic clouds of fumes into the air, the depleted ozone layer that protects life on earth from the direct rays of the sun is accordingly recovering. The huge holes caused by air pollutants are report-

edly closing in and narrowing down, thanks to the extended lockdowns that are being enforced in different countries. Should the situation continue, that ozone layer may perhaps cover the entire earth once again, thus protecting us from the sun's simmering heat. This is not just nature protecting itself; it is also nature protecting its destroyers—the people on earth.

Look at the seashores and beaches now, they appear clean and refreshed due to the absence of human activities. Human absence rids the environment of pollutants, on land, water, and air. The usual sight of trash floating on the seashore in front of Tacloban City public market, for see *Were it /page 6*



Foulshot

AL ELLEMA

Locked holy days

Confronted with the threat of an unseen enemy, the whole world is into a different observance of the holy days to reflect on the holy days marking the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. People of nations across the globe are in sec was recharging to both body and spirit. The holy days are set aside from the rest of the year to afford mankind enough time to retreat and reflect the supreme sacrifice that Jesus Christ made for the salvation of all. The days are determined by the Catholic Church based on its liturgical calendar that other religious sects do not

have. Government declares such days as identified by the Catholic Church as non-working holidays to allow workers from both public and private sectors to join in the commemoration. Business establishments also follow the days set for the observance of the holy days. There is therefore commonality among all sectors that the holidays are holidays that carries spiritual and religious significance more than anything thing else.

It runs a muck on the senses for people to abuse and misuse the holidays for unholy activities that mocks the spirituality of the

holy days. Drastic changes attending the commemoration of the holy week are very much conspicuous these days. In recent years, people would be busy preparing for religious activities set for the week by the Catholic Church.

The commemoration is full of holy activities that are all focused on the saga of man's salvation. Broadcast media plays a vital role in bringing to the people radio and television programs depicting the way that Jesus Christ obediently took in fulfillment of the will of the Father for the salvation of mankind. People would truly take a break from usual activities and be glued to homes listening to drama presentations over the radio and movies on television, all about the passion of Jesus Christ.

Those who live in the rural areas and hinterlands where mass broadcast media are not available for lack of electric power and electronic gadgets of information would spend the holy days reading and singing the passion of Jesus Christ from the holy bible as well

see Locked /page 6 ...

son, we will be repeating many times the responsorial psalm, "This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad." And we sing, "Alleluia, alleluia," in response. With these words, we are told that Christ is truly alive.

He is not dead, nor is he just a character in history, a significant one, no doubt, but just a historical figure. We are not left orphans. We need to adjust our consciousness to accommodate this fundamental, tremendous reality.

We have to understand that Christ's death was meant to conquer our sin and death. And he now invites us to die with him so we can also rise with him. This is the "happy exchange" he is offering us. He assumes all our sins without committing sin, dies to them to put our sins to nothing, then rises.

We then have to understand that our resurrection in Christ would always pass through his cross. We have to make sure that we pass through his cross, not our man-made crosses, which actually can also be made into Christ's cross as long



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DR. PACIENTE CORDERO, JR.

Bamboo-made armchair, another Filipino ingenuity

One need not earn a science or an engineering college degree to 'discover' the multifarious uses of Bamboo (*Bambusa vulgaris*), a member of the Grass Family commonly growing in tropical countries.

In the Philippines, our fore parents had long known about the conventional uses of bamboo, e.g. building light material houses, furniture, household fixtures, etc. I remember a friend (not even an engineering graduate, but a Doctor of Optometry), who constructed a vehicle body using one variety of bamboo processed into bound board (locally known to Waraynons as 'tangnan'). His invention was featured in a national magazine – a sample of a Filipino ingenu-

ity. Lately, a Bisayan inventor from Cebu, named Pedro Delantar, won second prize for his 'sustainable armchair' for schools made of bamboo material. The First Prize winner, a Hybrid Road Train, went to an engineering team of the DOST's MIRDC or Metal Industry Research and Development Center.

Mr. Delantar, affiliated with Nature's Legacy, a Cebu-based, received his award during the National Invention Contest and Exhibit 2020 held at the SMX Convention Center at SM Aura in Taguig City.

Region 8 or Eastern Visayas is dotted with natural growth of bamboo varieties whose only use is for the construction of light-ma-

terial houses in the rural areas. Only a negligible percent of the rural folks use bamboo to make antique-looking furniture and household ornaments.

This writer pins hope on the present headship of DA who has realized and plans to make bamboo materials as source of livelihood by rural folks. Burauen, Leyte with its 77 barangays, is rich in bamboo plants, which if tapped could mean an added source of revenue for the inhabitants. Indeed, despite the passage of the Bamboo Development Act meant to develop the resource as an alternative to wood), made Mr Delantar say that "It's just being wasted. We have a lot of this (bamboo), but we do not develop it (as an alternative to wood)". He (Delantar) hopes that the DepEd management will consider his school chair for the school children's use.

oo000ooo

NEXT TOPIC : "Durian and Nangka wastes as Super Capacitor Electrode"

SHARE S & T THOUGHTS through E-mail: drpacjr@yahoo.com.



Commentary

FR. ROY CIMAGALA

The joy of Easter

YES, we have every reason to be most happy when we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Let's hope that when we greet each other, 'Happy Easter,' we would really mean it and know what is behind that greeting. Let's exhume that happy greeting from the tomb of our usual formalisms and clichés. Let's get real!

With Easter, we celebrate the tremendous truth of our faith that Christ, our savior, is risen, never to die again. With his resurrection, he has conquered sin and death, and is offering us the way, the means and the power to do the same. This is the greatest news of all time. Nothing can outshine it.

Easter marks the completion of Christ's redemptive work on us. With it, we now have the way to reach the fullness and perfection of our humanity as truly the image and likeness of God, children of his, meant to share in the divine life, because that is what God wants for us. We are now given the way to arrive at that ideal meant for us.

It would be good if we can meditate more deeply on the significance of Easter and continue to draw practical resolutions to guide us in our earthly life. What a pity if Easter time would just be a feel-good moment with hardly any tangible effect on our lives, on the way we think, speak, react, behave, etc.

During this Easter sea-

as we refer our crosses to his. We should be ready for this.

That is why we really need to activate our faith to the full, and with it, the corresponding virtues of hope and charity. Everything else will flow from there insofar as our duty to correspond to Christ's redemptive work on us is concerned. All the human virtues we need to develop, all the means we need to develop our spiritual life, especially the sacraments Christ instituted for us, will come to mind as a consequence.

The only thing that can nullify this good news is our freedom, that is, when we would stupidly use it to deny Christ, either openly or secretly, directly or indirectly, without repenting. And we should not take this possibility lightly, because even Peter, the head of the apostles, came close to it by denying Christ, not only once, but three times. But he repented. That is the difference between our salvation and condemnation, between our glorifi-

cation and perdition.

With Easter, we can now face our life with confidence, even if we commit mistakes and fall into sin. Let's remember that Christian life is not so much a matter of avoiding sins as follow-

ing God's loving will. This means that we pray always, we follow his commandments, we do his will which is nothing other than for us to be holy and do continuing apostolate, helping one another to go to Christ.

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, signature address and phone numbers (if any) to: "Letter to the Editor", Leyte Samar Daily Express. They may be edited for length and clarity



Pray the Holy Rosary daily for world peace and conversion of sinners (The family that prays together stays together)

Prayer for the Nation and for Those who Serve in Public Office

God, our Father, you guide everything in wisdom and love. Accept the prayers we offer for our nation, by the wisdom of our leaders and integrity of our citizens, may harmony and justice be secured and may there be lasting prosperity and peace.

Almighty and eternal God, You know the longings of our hearts and You protect our rights in your goodness, watch over those in authority, so that people everywhere may enjoy freedom, security and peace.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever, Amen. (Courtesy of Daughters of St. Paul)

Tarangnan community hospital disinfected after 3 of its personnel tested positive of COVID-19

TACLOBAN CITY- The community hospital in Tarangnan town, Samar, has resumed its operation on Friday after it was temporary shut down last March 25 by the provincial government for disinfection after report of there were personnel who were infected by the coronavirus disease 2019(COVID-19).

Personnel of the 10-bed capacity health facility undergo home isolation and were issued certification that they completed the 14-day quarantine

An administrative aide and a nurse were tested positive of COVID-19 after having close contact with a co-worker, the region second confirm COVID-19 patient.

The two are now at the Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center (EVRMC), here in the city.

Based on Department of Health (DOH) information, the two manifested symptoms in the third week of March and had been under home isolation since they were identified

Were it...
...from Page 4

instance, is no longer there now. The seawater looks clean, though we know that it is not yet safe for wallowing as the city's drainage system ends up there.

High-rise mountains that used to be concealed by polluted air are now clearly visible, the sky being rid of too much fumes. From a long distance, Metro Manila's skyscrapers are now visibly lucid, unlike before when they were constantly blurred by the foggy, polluted air. The people there can now breathe in fresher air, sans the hazardous elements from factory and vehicular engines.

In some cities of the

Locked...
...from Page 5

as religious pamphlets on the passion. Contemplating on the sorrowful mysteries is the center of the observance and nothing of the joyful kind is done for the duration. The faithful used to troop in pilgrim fashion to churches and other religious sites that are apt for a good retreat and reflection.

This year however is different from the practices we had been used to all our lives. Instead of the usual rites, people were imprisoned in their homes in abidance of government directives that bar mass gatherings and assemblies. But the proscription imposed by government turned as a blessing in disguise. People around the globe were joining holy masses, recollections and other holy week activities through live streaming on social media platforms. This brought religious activities to far places at various timelines all over the globe. We had abundant grace amid being in locked holy days.

comments to allemma@yahoo.com

as patients under investigation.

The swab samples were sent to the Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center in Cebu City on April 3 and on April 7, the regional health office announced that they were positive of the virus.

With this development, the local government had imposed a lockdown the villages where the two health personnel resides as their food needs are being provided.

The rest of the town was placed under restrictive community quarantine.

Meantime, town Mayor Arnel Tan issued an appeal

for others not to discriminate the people of Tarangan.

"Our only appeal is for our rights to be respected and that the delivery of our basic needs will not be hampered. We hope that they'll be more understanding and open minded and instead of fearing us they'll treat us equally as fellow Samar-non," the mayor said.

The local chief executive added that the LGU is already imposing measures to prevent the spread of the disease by ordering its people to wear masks and asking assistance from the military to augment the police force in securing their borders. **(ROEL T. AMAZONA)**

world, various kinds of animals are roaming around, perhaps after noticing that their number one predators, the human beings, are nowhere in sight. They are partying in the streets, obviously excited and happy. Similarly, beach resorts are now home to various air and marine creatures that are seemingly reclaiming the areas. In one famous beach, sea turtles could be seen by the thousands, laying their eggs on the sand.

This pattern of a healing nature is notable everywhere, thanks to the virus that has paralyzed human activities that are injurious to the environment. Now they are recovering. Such a benefit drawn from the virus' advent.

DOT...
...from Page 2

Tiopes thanked Maasin City Mayor Nacional Mercado for his "big help" in repatriating the tourists.

She said Mayor Mercado himself volunteered to go and see Southern Leyte Governor Damian Mercado to get a permit for the DOT personnel to pick up the stranded Europeans in the province and bring them to Hilon-gos.

"Mayor Mercado also helped out get the approval of Bohol Governor Arthur Yap to allow four stranded Germans to enter Bohol early this week," Tiopes said.

"The sweeper and repatriation flights are paid for by the stranded tourists. That is why, whenever we are asked to bring them to pick up points, we have to make sure that they all have received a notification from their embassy regarding confirmed booking on the sweeper and repatriation flights," the tourism official said.

Meanwhile, Tiopes said the locals have to understand that Filipinos are not exempted from the travel restrictions imposed by the enhanced community quarantine (EQC).

"Only foreign nationals, balikabayans holding foreign visa and Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are exempted. And they even need to show proper documents like confirmed onward bookings to their home countries, quarantine certifications for the LGU where they

NGCP distributes goods as part of PhP1Billion COVID-19 relief assistance

On Saturday, April 11, NGCP commenced the distribution of PhP 500 million-worth of grocery items, in line with its PhP1 Billion assistance to the national government's COVID-19 relief and response efforts.

"We are very pleased to turnover these relief packs as we hope these will help sustain our partner communities given the extension of the Enhanced Community Quarantine. Distribution in select locations in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao will be made over the next weeks," stated the company.

Last March 30, NGCP wrote Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte pledging PhP 1 billion to help the national government in its efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

"NGCP's pledge of medical equipment is also in the process of procurement. The much needed equipment will be distributed to identified hospitals as soon as they arrive," added the company.

The donation is over and above earlier NGCP donations of personal protective equipment (PPE), meals, and other equipment for medical frontliners, as well as the Meals on Wheels program where hot meals are distributed to indigent members of the community. NGCP plans to continue helping various host communities, even beyond its previous efforts, and P1B pledge of assistance.

"We understand the importance of a collective, unified effort to combat this pandemic. NGCP assures its stakeholders that the company will continue to support the government in battling this global health emergency," stated the company.

NGCP is a Filipino-led, privately owned company in charge of operating, maintaining, and developing the country's power grid, led by majority shareholders Henry Sy, Jr. and Robert Coyiuto, Jr. **(PR)**

Tacloban...
...from Page 1

Catarman has been declared by the DOH as to have recovered from the ailment.

The city's five main checkpoints are being manned by police and soldiers joined by personnel of the city government.

However, people from these areas could still enter Tacloban on grounds of being medical personnel; those in need of medical assistance or surgical services; government officials or personnel, members of the PNP, AFP, BFP and Coast Guard; and in emergency cases relating to health, safety, security, public utility, infrastructure, and commerce though they have to comply of the required protocols.

The same order also mandated for all the people in the city to wear face masks, particularly if they go out in the streets; no public transport coming from outside the city would not also be allowed entry and those operating within the city should only carry half of their original capacity to practice social distancing.

All classes in all levels remain suspended as well as liquor ban continue to be imposed during this period.

City Hall personnel roams around the city to remind the residents that minors, senior citizens and those who have some health

problems are not allowed to go out of their homes.

Those who will violate this policy would be arrested by the police as only those with quarantine pass are allowed to go out to buy their household's needs.

Despite the current condition, the city government continue to provide assistance to its families to help them tide over of their food needs.

The city government provides rice as well as fish, meat, vegetables, and live chicken to the families.

All these produces were sourced by the city government from local producers and growers to also provide them assistance during this time of crisis.

E. Samar...
...from Page 2

He disclosed that as of now, Hernani LGU has a buffer stock of 726 bags of NFA rice wherein 506 sacks are in LGU-Hernani and a reservation of 200 bags in NFA warehouse in Guiuan, E. Samar.

The 13 barangays have also their initiative for distribution of relief packs to their constituents. The relief packs contain six kilos of rice, three bars laundry soap, and one bath soap. **(Nbq/SDC/PIA-E. Samar)**

Soldiers...
...from Page 1

"We know that our government is doing something but it could take a while so through our own little initiative with the youth here in Basey, we could help our frontliners quickly," Army Sergeant Brenan Mahayag, assistant civil military officer of the 63rd IB, said.

Sgt.Mahayag urged also his fellow soldiers to stay safe always.

"They are risking their lives every day for us so we need to help them protect themselves too. We will win this battle together by working together, supporting our frontliners who are at the forefront of this battle against this COVID 19 virus," he added. **(JAZMIN BONIFACIO)**



DOT joins campaign for people to stay at home amid COVID-19 scare

TACLOBAN CITY- The regional office of the Department of Tourism (DOT) has launched an online campaign urging residents in Eastern Visayas to stay at home.

The online campaign is one of the agencies contributions as the government fight for further spread of the coronavirus disease 2019(COVID-19).

DOT8 Regional Director Karina Rosa Tiopes said that the video campaign features tourism stakeholders in the region that includes tour operators, tour guides, and festival costume designers, among others.

“This campaign tells people to support the effort to curb the problem on COVID-19 by staying

at home and at the same time when it is over, let us visit destinations in Eastern Visayas,” Tiopes said.

The tourism industry was the first to feel the effect of COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to the health crisis, tourist destinations were temporary shut down their operations, to include hotels and other accommodation facilities.

Tour operators and guides and those at the tourism transport business were likewise badly hit by the crisis.

Travel restrictions suspended transportation operations in land, air and sea.

This resulted to for thousands of people who are working and depending their income in tourism related activities to be dis-

placed from work.

In the region alone, tourism department said that their initial data shows almost 3,000 individuals were out of job or working now in part-time basis.

To help the displaced workers, Tiopes said that they are coordinating with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to assist them through enrolling them at programs like TUPAD or Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantage/Displaced Workers and to CAMP or Covid-19 Adjustment Measure Program.

At least 59 applications from tourism establishment were endorsed by the agency to DOLE for these financial assistance program. **(ROEL T. AMAZONA)**

Over 51K families in Tacloban to get cash aid

TACLOBAN CITY – Some 51,635 families here displaced by the health crisis are expected to receive financial assistance from the national government.

Mayor Alfred Romualdez on Friday said he already signed the memorandum of agreement with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) for the implementation of the social amelioration program.

Under Republic Act 11469 or the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act, financial support will be granted to indigent families affected by the movement restrictions to prevent the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19).

Recipients in Eastern Visayas will receive P5,000 monthly emer-

gency subsidy from April to May, based on the current minimum wage rate here of P315 daily.

The city social and welfare development office will lead the distribution, with the assistance of the village officials on the selection and validation of qualified constituents.

Romualdez said he is ready to investigate any irregularities in the distribution and would run after officials who abuse their authority amid the virus outbreak in the country.

“Be very careful. I will exercise the full extent of the law and really prosecute these people. I don’t care if you’re an official or not, I will investigate you,” he said.

In a separate interview, DSWD Eastern Visayas director Marie Angela Gopalan said the national government has initially allocated P2 billion to help poor families

in the region.

She noted that the financial assistance prioritizes those in the most vulnerable sector and the informal workers granted per family, not individually.

“The government doesn’t have unlimited funds to cover all so we have to manage the fund and release them to the most deserving families,” Gopalan said, adding that other government agencies also provide social amelioration packages to those affected by the health crisis.

The regional office has started the cash release this week and targets to finish them in all six provinces within April, as ordered by President Rodrigo Duterte.

“We appeal to everyone who can afford to sustain their families during this time of crisis to give way to those who need them most,” Gopalan said. **(GERICO SABALZA/PNA)**

Taclobanons... ...from Page 1

“Instead of giving traditional na rice and canned goods, we want to give them nutritious foods that will help them strengthen their immune system and we want also to help our local farmers, fishermen and local producers here in the city,” the city mayor said.

“Let us support them (our farmers, fishermen) so will buy local products here and that is what we will give to the people,” Romualdez added.

The city mayor said that by not giving canned goods, the city’s landfill is also being spared of unwanted trash.

Meanwhile, Mayor Romualdez assured the public that the city has enough

funding to finance in the giving of this kind of relief goods.

“We are coordinating with the market where the city can get also a reasonable prices, and put on this goods to different areas (barangays) but we will not schedule that every day instead will have it twice a week per barangay,” he said.

Mayor Romualdez reiterated his appeal to the public to extend their whole support and cooperation to all the measures implemented by the city government like wearing face mask and practice social distancing to ensure that Tacloban City would remain COVID-19 free. **(JAZMIN BONIFACIO)**

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EDC helps workers shift to make face masks, PPEs to donate frontliners

ORMOC CITY- As the world has been thrown upside down caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) that resulted to deaths of tens of thousands of people, it is heart-warming that there are still good Samaritans that extended their help to those who are in need during this time of crisis.

When community quarantine was declared in various towns in Leyte following lockdown in Luzon as imposed by President Rodrigo Duterte, families were then advised to stay at home to avoid the spread of the virus resulting for temporary closure of business establishments and in the process, loss of jobs.

This crisis did not exempt the Lim-ao Integrated Farmers for Empowerment (LIFE), a small group of community cooperative in Barangay Lim-ao, Kananga town in Leyte, composed of 50 members whose occupation is into farming and sewing.

Good thing, the plight of these upland villagers did not get deaf ears from the neighboring geothermal company, the Energy Development Corporation

(EDC), with one of its geothermal power plants is located in Lim-ao.

Citing the scarcity of supply of face mask in the market, Engr. Erwin Magallanes, head of EDC's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Leyte, recommended to the LIFE members to temporarily shift from farming and bag production to making of face masks so as to aid the shortage of face masks in the market.

"We asked if they can make face masks that we can buy and distribute to our partner communities in Kananga and in Ormoc since they have sewing machines to produce the school bags that we order for the students in our partner schools. LIFE agreed and immediately started working on it," Magallanes said.

EDC has initially placed an order of 1,000 face masks, which are made of cloth and are washable, for distribution to its host communities and cost P18 each.

Those who received the face masks from EDC were the local residents of its host communities, barangay health workers and the rest of the front liners.



Lim-ao Integrated Farmers for Empowerment (LIFE) members are keeping up the sewing works to complete orders of face masks

Marilyn Tarranza, LIFE president, shared "COVID-19 has affected our livelihood so we want to help our front liners who are risking their lives out there to save lives, just as EDC has also committed to continuously provide power mainly for their sake".

"As we produce the

masks, we strictly follow the Department of Health's precautionary measures such as social distancing and frequent washing of hands to protect ourselves", she said.

Aside from face mask, LIFE is also exploring in the production of personal protective equipment (PPE) that will be sold to local

companies and hospitals in Ormoc City for which the Rotary Club of Ormoc had shown interest by initially placing order 500 pieces.

Magallanes said that LIFE members belong to the 80 families displaced when EDC, the world's 3rd geothermal power producer expanded its operation at its geothermal sites. They were relocated to Lim-ao village and became recipients of the EDC's CSR program since in the 1990's.

LIFE was organized and provided with sustainable livelihood wherein hus-

bands were assisted in farming and at the same get employment through the company's contractors and the wives were provided with sewing machines.

The bayanihan spirit shared by the EDC brightens the micro-enterprise and lifts their spirit to fight and win the COVID-19.

EDC reiterates its commitment to provide uninterrupted power to its customers in support of our country's fight against COVID-19.

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