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Swarms of jellyfish in Palawan ‘nothing out of the ordinary’ during dry season—DENR exec

By
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A swarm of jellyfish taking over El Nido, Palawan’s waters is nothing out of the ordinary, especially during the summer season, an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

“Like in Boracay, there’s this natural phenomenon that happens every year—the algal bloom. In Palawan, it’s jellyfish. These jellyfish were brought by the ocean current and usually, they end up in Corong-Corong Bay,” according to Benny Antiporda, DENR’s undersecretary for Local Government Units (LGUs) and Solid Waste Management Concerns.

He added that the exceptional number of jellyfish caught on video by a netizen in El Nido is due to the fact that harvesting of jellyfish had stopped because of the Luzon-wide enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) following President Duterte’s declaration placing the entire country under a State of Public Health Emergency due to health threats brought about by Covid-19.

Antiporda, receiving reports of the awesome sight of a big swarm of jellyfish, immediately consulted DENR experts to explain the phenomenon.

“When the harvesting stopped, naturally, there was more jellyfish. But the jellyfish phenomenon is naturally occurring. After summer, they will migrate and leave Palawan,” Antiporda said.

The subject species of jellyfish is said to be edible and do not pose serious threats to humans, or other species, along with the ecosystem in the area.

But the official said swimming in the waters taken over by jellyfish is not advisable, especially because of the fact that the entire Luzon is still under ECQ.

“[But the real] reason, why it is also not advisable to swim in areas with jellyfish, is because they still sting and may cause skin irritation,” he said.

The DENR official advised the public to stay at home and avoid close contact with people to help the government’s effort to prevent the spread of Covid-19, which has so far claimed the lives of about 1,500 Filipinos since its outbreak in the country.

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