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Criticisms won't help win war vs virus—DENR exec

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AN official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Tuesday reminded critics of the Duterte administration that negative criticisms would not help win the war against the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19).

Benny D. Antiporda, DENR undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units (LGUs) Concerns, said while constructive criticisms are welcome as it helps the government realize its mistakes, ouster calls on social-media platforms, he said, are apparently not helping.

“I, myself, criticize the government but oust Duterte? That is not helping at all. We are fighting a war against an unseen enemy and right now, we need the people to fight like one,” he told the BusinessMirror in a telephone interview.

Antiporda defended at least two DENR officials from Regions 1 and 2 who issued memorandum circulars telling DENR regular, job orders and service contract employees to refrain from criticizing the Duterte administration in various social-media platforms in connection with the government’s Covid-19 response.

In separate memorandums circulating on social media, Marcos G. Dacanay assistant regional director for Management Services of DENR Region 2 and Crizaldy M. Barcelo, assistant director for Management Services of Region 1, called out on regional directors of the Environmental Management Bureau, Mines and Geosciences Board, and DENR officials from the provincial down to city and municipal levels, pointing out that there are social-media posts of persons under job order and contract of service criticizing the government’s response to Covid-19.

Such negative criticisms on social media are not helping any, they said.

Barcelo, in his order, directed job order employees and those under contracts of service, to submit their work-from-home accomplishment reports to him.

Sources said the issuance of the memorandum order reportedly emanated from Assistant Secretary Joan A. Lagunda of Administration, Human Resources and Legislative Affairs, who issued an “informal order” through their Viber chat room.

The order was apparently taken seriously and was put in black and white, drawing flak from “netizens” as the controversial memorandum orders and the Viber message started to circulate on various social-media platforms.

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