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Maynilad calibrates systems to prepare for El Niño

By Othel V. Campos

MAYNILAD Water Services Inc. said it is calibrating its operational systems in response to a memorandum issued by the Office of the President to address the looming El Niño dry spell.

The memo signed by Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin required the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, concessionaires Maynilad and Manila Water Company, the National Water Resources Board and all local water utilities administration to submit a detailed month-

ly report on water supply and demand to the Water Regulatory Management Office.

Water agencies were also asked to instantly report aberrations in water supply, especially if there is a sudden spike in demand and a supply deficit.

They were also encouraged to implement water conservation measures, such as but not limited to non-revenue water management and water pressure management.

The memo asked all water-related projects to expedite completion to reduce non-revenue water and upgrade

water distribution pipes. Local government units were encouraged to process the requests of water service providers for waterworks within a reasonable period of time.

The WRMO, a newly-formed agency under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, oversees the implementation of strategies towards water conservation, monitor compliance of government agencies and instrumentalities with the aforementioned water conservation measures, and provide quarterly updates to the Office of the President.



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'BEAT THE DEADLINE'

OIL REMOVAL FROM TANKER COMPLETED BY JUNE 19

By Jerome Aning
[@JeromeAningINQ](#)

The removal of the remaining fuel oil from the sunken MT Princess Empress off Oriental Mindoro is expected to be completed on June 19, Rear Adm. Armand Balilo, spokesperson for the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), said on Saturday.

"Hopefully we can beat the target or we can beat the deadline by June 19 to end that oil spill," Balilo told a news forum in Quezon City.

Balilo said the siphoning operations began on May 29 with the help of the Fire Opal, a diving support vessel from the Malayan Towage and Salvage Corp.

"There is a hose attached and being brought to the tanks inside the ship and [the oil] is being siphoned out, and hopefully, by June 19, the siphoning operations will be finished," he added.

The PCG official said the oil could no longer spread to areas near the site of the sunken oil tanker as personnel used a catch can to con-

tain and collect the seepage.

"There's a catch can where the leaking oil go and the oil gathered is also siphoned to the tank of the Fire Opal," he said.

Balilo was referring to the specialized catch can, which was deployed to collect the remaining oil of the sunken tanker, which lies at a depth of 400 meters below sea level. INQ



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Mayon Volcano continues to emit ash, steam-laden plumes

Mayon Volcano's rockfall and moderate degassing activities have continued to produce ash and steam-laden plumes in the last 24 hours, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) on Sunday, June 11.

Based on the seismic and visual data collected by Phivolcs,

Mayon Volcano experienced 177 rockfall events and one volcanic earthquake during the 24-hour monitoring of the active volcano in Albay.

"The rockfall events emplaced lava debris on the south and southeastern gullies within 700 meters from the summit crater," Phivolcs said.

"Thin ash from the ► 7

Mayon Volcano continues to emit ash, steam-laden plumes 1◀

rockfalls and continuous moderate degassing from the summit crater produced steam-laden plumes that were bent and crept downslope before drifting to the general southeast," it added.

Moreover, Phivolcs observed a "fair crater glow or 'banaag' and incandescent rockfall shed from new fluidal lava" at the volcano's summit on Saturday evening.

As there is magma at the crater, Mayon Volcano's status was raised to alert level 3 on June 8, which means it is "currently in a relatively high level of unrest."

Phivolcs warned that "hazardous eruption is possible within weeks or even days."

It recommended the evacuation of residents within the six-kilometer permanent danger zone due to risk of pyroclastic density currents (PDCs), lava flows, rockfalls, and other volcanic hazards.

It also advised increased vigilance against PDCs, lahars, and sediment-laden stream flows along channels draining the volcano edifice.

Phivolcs said that heavy rainfall could cause channel-confined lahars and sediment-laden stream flows in channels where PDC deposits were emplaced.

Likewise, it said that ash fall events may "most likely" occur on the south side of the volcano based on the current prevailing wind pattern.

Phivolcs advised civil aviation authorities to request that pilots refrain from flying close to the volcano because ash from sudden eruption may pose hazards to aircraft.

Meanwhile, Department of Health (DOH) Secretary Dr. Teodoro "Ted" Herbosa reported that human resources and medical supplies have already been dispensed, and are on standby for distribution to the residents affected by the ongoing unrest of Mayon Volcano in Albay.

In a media forum, Herbosa said that 167 personnel from the DOH Regional Office have been deployed to assist the evacuees in 18 active evacuation centers in the province.

These evacuees, which total to up to 1,888 families, or 6,314 individuals, were from Bacacay, Santo



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Domingo, Tabaco, Camalig, Daraga, Legazpi, Guinobatan, Ligao, Malilipot, the DOH chief said.

The DOH Bicol Center for Health Development and DOH Operations Center have also been monitoring the situation non-stop since June 8, he added.

There was also ₱20,000 worth of medicines distributed in Tabaco, and medical teams from Bicol Medical Center are on standby for any volcano-related emergencies.

Moreover, the DOH warehouses in Bicol also have a stockpile of assorted medicines, anti-venom drugs, face masks, hygiene kits, and blood supplies.

Herbosa added that the Provincial DOH Office in Albay has prepositioned 360 hygiene kits in all its municipalities and distributed face masks to eight local government units.

Pledges of assistance have also come for those affected by the imminent eruption of Mayon.

The office of Speaker Martin Romualdez and Tingog Party-list facilitated the release of the funds for the three affected districts of the province.

These affected areas are the 1st district, under Rep. Edcel Lagman; the 2nd district, under Rep. Joey Salceda; and the 3rd district, under Rep. Fernando Cabredo. The assistance from the Speaker's office will be coursed through their respective offices.

According to a statement from Romualdez on Sunday, June 11, each of the three districts will receive ₱1 million worth of assistance or "ayuda"— specifically, ₱500,000 in cash and ₱500,000 in relief packs. The funds were sourced from Romualdez's personal disaster response fund.

"The members of the House are one with the people of Albay during this challenging time. Mayon Volcano's eruption is something that we cannot stop, but so is showing malasakit (compassion) to our countrymen when difficulties arise. Together, we will ride out this calamity," Romualdez, Leyte's 1st district representative, said. (Ellalyn de Vera-Ruiz with reports from Luisa Cabato and Ellson Quismorio)



ANIMAL SHELTER — A man coaxes his cow to follow him as residents start to shepherd their farm animals at a pooling center arranged by the local government in Barangay Matnog, Daraga, Albay, on Sunday, June 11, 2023. Barangay kagawad Oscar Odiver and the Albay Provincial Veterinary Office helped set up the shelter, one of 25 in the province, for about 1,000 farm animals at-risk due to the recent restiveness of Mayon Volcano. (Ali Vicoy)



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BUSINESS AS USUAL

Men work at a quarry at the Miisi Gully in Daraga, Albay, just outside the 6-kilometer permanent danger zone on Sunday, June 11, 2023. Hundreds of families have been evacuated as Mayon Volcano continues to show signs of an imminent eruption.

PHOTO BY MIKE ALQUINTO



JICA prioritizes 2 flood-control projects

THE Pasig-Marikina River and the Cagayan River basin are the priority flood control projects to be funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) said.

Public Works Senior Undersecretary Emil Sadain and Disaster Risk Reduction Global Environment Department Deputy Director General Hosokawa Yukinari signed over the weekend the agreement for the projects following a series of discussions between the JICA, DPWH and other concerned government agencies.

The DPWH and JICA have decided to include in the study the Pasig-Marikina River Basin project "because of the need for an urgent alternative flood control measures for the previously proposed flood storage dam due to the construction of water supply dam by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS)," said Sadain in his report to DPWH Secretary Manuel Bonoan.

The project will be under the supervision of the DPWH Unified Project Management Office-Flood Control Management Cluster.

It includes the river channel improvement of the Upper Marikina River,

Rosario Weir and Manggahan Floodway.

The flood control measures for Cagayan River Basin are considered a priority since only partial works such as slope protection and dredging were implemented in the original master plan.

"Our flood-control interventions along these river basins can be improved to better protect nearby densely-populated areas due to recurrent and extensive flooding during rainy and typhoon seasons," Sadain said.

DPWH flood control measures in the major and principal river basins are implemented based on master plans.

The DPWH-JICA joint study, which will span one-and-a-half years, will cover the assessment of existing flood-control master plans for the target river basins as well as updating of master plans and conduct of pre-feasibility studies in carrying out the master plans.

Expected outputs on the Pasig-Marikina and Cagayan River Basins include preliminary flood risk assessment; updated flood control master plan; pre-feasibility for priority projects; and promotion of basin-wide collaboration with concerned agencies and/or local government units.

WILLIAM B. DEPASUPIL