

13 June 2023 Tuesday



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

# **NEWS CLIPPINGS**

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



## DENR chief pushes for integration of 'waste pickers' into EPR system

**E**NVIRONMENT Secretary Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga is pushing for the integration of the informal waste sector into the expanded producer responsibility (EPR) system for plastic packaging waste to ensure that no one is left behind as the country transitions toward circular economy.

"A more holistic overall integration of the informal sector to the EPR system needs to be targeted. Economic incentives and social incentives may be established," the chief of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said in her remarks at the roundtable discussion entitled "Rethinking Plastics: EPR Paving the Way Towards Circularity" held in Quezon City last May 10.

The informal waste sector in the Philippines includes waste pickers in dumpsites and communal waste collection points.

Yulo-Loyzaga underscored the significant role of the sector in waste collection and management, and the potential contribution they could bring being the "backbone of the currently limited collection services and partly of recycling" in the country.

"Collection and sorting facilities from the informal sector may be transformed into formal activities and establishments. These can be duly registered and supported by the EPR system," she pointed out.

Yulo-Loyzaga added: "The informal sector can also be integrated as business partners, such as NGO-supported microenterprises, franchises of formal waste management companies, operating local collection centers, and forming co-operatives and collectives.

This social inclusion can be improved to develop alternative livelihoods and diversified livelihoods for our informal community."

Yulo-Loyzaga said the DENR has put focus on upcycling, envisioning that this will enable public and private investments in waste recovery, reuse, recycling as well as manufacturing and production using secondary raw materials.

Supporting the informal sector and establishing the right infrastructure were among the critical factors identified in order to accelerate the country's transition to circular economy and implement a successful EPR policy.

During the roundtable discussion, DENR officials and private sector representatives discussed key challenges, solutions, and opportunities for government-industry collaboration for the effective enforcement of Republic Act 11898 or the EPR Act of 2022.

The EPR law serves as the environmental policy approach and practice that requires producers to be environmentally responsible throughout the life cycle of a product, especially its post-consumer or end-of-life stage.

It aims to address the

mismanagement of plastic waste and uphold circularity through maximizing the material value of plastics, thereby, unlocking their full potential to help boost parts of the Philippine economy.

During the panel discussion, DENR Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems and Climate Change Analiza Rebueta-Teh—together with National Solid Waste

Management Commission Vice Chair Crispian Lao, Nestlé Philippines Senior Vice President and Head of Corporate Affairs Jose Uy III, and Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia Senior Advisor to the President on Environmental Issues, Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris Michikazu Kojima—discussed the urgent need for the establishment of the right recovery and recycling infrastructure to implement EPR and accelerate transition to circularity.

DENR Undersecretary for Planning, Policy and International Affairs Jonas Leones, and DENR Assistant Secretary for Field Operations-Luzon and Visayas, and Concurrent Environmental Management Bureau Director Gilbert Gonzales facilitated the discussions.

In order to achieve circularity through EPR in the long-term, Teh said the government should establish metrics to verify accomplishments versus targets in accordance with the law provisions, give financial support to the informal waste sector, and put in place resources to establish the infrastructure for circularity.

She said that capacity development, as well as incentives for complying enterprises, and impose fines and penalties are also needed to sustain the EPR system.



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# BusinessMirror

*A broader look at today's business*



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In addition, Teh reiterated the significance of continuing to implement RA 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, which establishes segregation, collection, sorting, and recycling in local government units as well as transparency and accountability in waste management.

With over 150 participants from the fast-moving consumer goods sector, development partners, policy leaders, members of the academe, non-government organizations, and key players in waste management, the roundtable dialogue is an event co-presented by the DENR and Nestlé Philippines and organized by Eco-Business.

"It is important to have the voices of all sectors be well-represented because the sustained collaboration among stakeholders and those impacted by these activities and the cooperation and compliance of companies from the private sector, are key to the successful implementation of the EPR Act," Yulo-Loyzaga stressed.



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# DENR wants 'mangangalakal' included in gov't plastic waste management system

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is pushing for the inclusion of waste pickers, or the "mangangalakal" in local parlance, in dumpsites and communal waste collection points into the expanded producer responsibility (EPR) system for plastic packaging waste.

DENR Secretary Antonia Loyzaga explained that waste pickers, described as part of the informal waste sector in the Philippines, is essential in the country's transitions toward circular economy.

The informal waste includes waste pickers in dumpsites and communal waste collection points and Loyzaga said their integration into the expanded producer responsibility (EPR)

system would further augment the currently limited collection services and partly of recycling" in the country.

The EPR law serves as the environmental policy approach and practice that requires producers to be environmentally responsible throughout the life cycle of a product, especially its post-consumer or end-of-life stage.

It aims to address the mismanagement of plastic waste and uphold circularity through maximizing the material value of plastics, thereby, unlocking their full potential to help boost parts of the Philippine economy.

"Collection and sorting facilities

from the informal sector may be transformed into formal activities and establishments. These can be duly registered and supported by the EPR system," said Loyzaga.

"The informal sector can also be integrated as business partners, such as NGO-supported microenterprises, franchises of formal waste management companies, operating local collection centers, and forming cooperatives and collectives. This social inclusion can be improved to develop alternative livelihoods and diversified livelihoods for our informal community," she added. (Aaron Recuenco)



*editorial*

## Averting a looming water crisis in PHL

**W**ATER is life, and access to safe water is a basic human need. In 2020, only 74 percent of the global population had access to safe drinking water. As a result, 2 billion people were without safely managed drinking water services, including 1.2 billion people lacking even a basic level of service, according to the United Nations.

Decades of misuse, poor management, over extraction of groundwater and contamination of freshwater supplies have exacerbated the world's water stress. The UN said countries are facing growing challenges linked to degraded water-related ecosystems, water scarcity caused by climate change, underinvestment in water and sanitation, and insufficient cooperation on transboundary waters—or the aquifers, lake and river basins shared by two or more countries.

To reach universal access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene by 2030, the current rates of progress would need to increase fourfold. The UN's Sustainable Development Goal 6 seeks to ensure access to water and sanitation for all. The UN 2023 Water Conference in New York in March culminated with a breakthrough response to the global water crisis, with governments, businesses and civil society committing billions of dollars to advance the water agenda.

"The commitments at this conference will propel humanity towards the water-secure future every person on the planet needs," said UN Secretary-General António Guterres at the closing ceremony.

In the Philippines, President Marcos is pushing for a whole-of-government approach to avert a looming water crisis in the country. In April, he signed an executive order creating the Water Resources Management Office (WRMO) under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to integrate and harmonize government efforts to ensure the sustainable management of the country's water resources.

Under Executive Order 22, the WRMO is mandated to "ensure the immediate implementation of the Integrated Water Resources Management in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and formulate a corresponding Water Resources Master Plan."

"To avert water crisis, minimize and avoid conflicts, and consistent with the State's sole ownership and control over the country's water resources, it is imperative for the government to integrate and harmonize the policies, programs, and projects of all relevant agencies in the water resource sector in the fulfillment of their complementary governmental mandates," the EO read.

Last month, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said El Niño is set to start in the third quarter of the year and might persist until the first quarter of 2024. This prompted Malacañang to require all national government agencies and instrumentalities (NGI) to reduce their water consumption by 10 percent ahead of the El Niño threat. (Read, "Palace orders national government agencies to implement water conservation measures ahead of El Niño," in *the BUSINESSMIRROR*, June 9, 2023).

Executive Secretary Lucas P. Bersamin issued the guidelines for the implementation of water conservation measures for NGIs under Memorandum Circular 22. "All national government agencies and instrumentalities, including government-owned and controlled corporations and state universities and colleges, are hereby directed to identify and implement specific, quantifiable and attainable water conservation measures that will result to 10 percent water volume reduction of their respective water consumption," Bersamin said.

He also encouraged government and private-controlled water service providers (WSP) to implement conservation measures such as, but not limited to, non-revenue water management and water pressure management.

MC 22 also instructed the Local Water Utilities Administration, National Water Resources Board, and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and private WSPs to regularly submit a monthly supply-demand projection highlighting the likelihood of possible water supply deficit. The WRMO was tasked to implement MC 22.

"The WRMO shall identify strategies towards water conservation, monitor compliance of government agencies and instrumentalities with aforementioned water conservation measures, and provide quarterly updates to the Office of the President, through the Office of the Executive Secretary, on the progress thereof," Bersamin said.

Sen. Grace Poe, who chairs the Senate Public Services committee, welcomed the creation of a water management office. "This is a timely intervention from the Executive, which will hopefully alleviate the creeping water crisis in the country," she said.

Currently, there are at least 30 government agencies that are tasked with the administration of the country's water resources, which has resulted in policy and regulatory conflicts among these agencies.

It would do well for both Houses of Congress to approve the bills seeking to establish the Department of Water Resources, which will harmonize the country's fragmented water policies and programs. We need a government agency whose sole purpose is to oversee and effectively manage the country's water resources.



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# Phl aims to become mineral processing hub

By DANESSA RIVERA

The Philippines is targeting to level up from just a seller of ores by developing its processing capabilities in the next two decades, based on the roadmap outlined by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB).

In a report, the MGB said the government is looking for ways to level up the country's mineral markets in the field of semi-processed and fully processed mineral products by pushing for the establishment of processing, refineries, and downstream industries.

"This move will also strategically position the country both in the value chain and the global supply chain and eventually level up its position from a mere vendor of ores," it said. This is highlighted in the MGB's minerals sector 2022 to 2040 roadmap, which is divided into three phases.

The first phase, which covers 2022 to 2024, entails enhancing investors' confidence in the mineral sector.

The second phase, covering 2023 to 2030, involves the expansion of domestic ore production and mineral assets. During the final phase, spanning from

2026 to 2040, the MGB aims to elevate the Philippines to the global mineral markets by focusing on the production of semi-processed and fully processed mineral products.

The MGB said the transition to electrification of cars on a global scale would increase demand for nickel, copper, and silver which are required to produce batteries for electric vehicles.

Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, the utilization of renewable energies and electric vehicles is the global focus and metals needed for

low-carbon technologies/clean technologies include lithium, cobalt, nickel, and copper.

"According to experts, increased deployment of low-carbon technology would mean producing countries will find their natural resources in high demand. This is beneficial for the Philippines considering our abundance of nickel ore," the MGB said.

However, the implementation of this roadmap will depend on the interplay of internal and external factors, according to the agency, as it assesses the performance of the minerals sectors

for the current year.

On the internal side, policy support from the government in terms of tax reforms, ease of doing business, foreign investments, effective processing, and regulation of small-scale mining would be critical.

External factors include global metal prices, foreign exchange rates, energy/fuel prices, the continuous Russia-Ukraine war, the speed of Chinese industrial/manufacturing sectors' recovery, disruptions in the supply chains of metals and geopolitical tensions.



## Magsasaka slams dredging allegation

THE Magsasaka party-list strongly denounced a recent letter to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. from Revor Lasay, who purports to be the party-list's national chairman.

This is a response from a faction of the aforementioned party list to a letter dated May 19, 2023, in which Lasay called for prompt action in response to the reported negative effects of dredging operations on several rivers in Occidental Mindoro.

Lawyer John Paul Nabua, counsel for Magsasaka party-list Rep. Roberto Gerard Nazal Jr., claimed Lasay is interfering with the party-list and the local government's initiative to ease the area's serious flooding concerns.

Nabua disputed that the letter from Lasay was penned by Magsasaka.

"There is no record of Revor Lasay's name in the party-list's registered members' roster submitted to the Commission on Elections," Nabua said.

Lasay claimed that dredging activities are taking place in the area, which is negatively impacting the rivers and lakes. However, Nabua stated that no dredging activities are currently being carried out.

"Contrary to allegations, no dredging activities have commenced in the designated areas. The process of securing necessary permits from both national and local government units is still ongoing. Until all permits are obtained and a notice to proceed is issued, no dredging activities can legally take place," Nabua said.

"All proponents of the dredging projects, including Magsasaka party-list congressman Robert Nazal, are diligently following the re-

quired approvals and assessments. As of now, no notice to proceed has been issued for the proposed dredging projects," he added.

Nabua also indicated that the dredging effort in Occidental Mindoro is being carried out in partnership with the local government as a "proactive measure" to solve flooding concerns.

"It is based on careful assessments and consultations with experts in the field," he said.

He added that extensive consultations with the residents have also been conducted as they are part of the permitting process.

Furthermore, Nabua gives insights into the legal setting, revealing that various national authorities are involved in the yet-to-be allowed and implemented initiative.

"River restoration efforts through dredging are part of a national government initiative led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of the Interior and Local Government, and Department of Transportation. The guidelines are provided by Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 1, 2019, issued by these agencies," Nabua explained.

"We appeal to our friends in the media to please be wary of fake party-list members. If there are any concerns or clarifications regarding any of our projects, please contact the Magsasaka party-list directly," he concluded.

The Manila Times also attempted to contact Mr. Lasay for clarification but had received no answer as of press time.

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# Mayon begins spewing lava

By BELLA CARIASO

Mayon Volcano in Albay started an "effusive eruption" and began spewing lava on Sunday night, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said, as it urged residents outside the six-kilometer permanent danger zone to prepare for possible evacuation.

"Mayon Volcano started an infusible eruption at 7:47 last night, meaning slow release of magma at the volcano edifice, that's why we experience lava flow. It reached more than 1.8 kilometers from the summit," Phivolcs director Teresito Bacolcol said yesterday in a radio interview.

Bacolcol said that Phivolcs is assessing the situation on a daily basis to see if it warrants raising the alert status to Level 4 from the current Alert Level 3.

"We are assessing this on a daily basis and we are closely monitoring the parameters. If there are significant dramatic increases, the alert level (will be raised) to Alert Level 4," he said.

Based on the latest bulletin of Phivolcs, lava flow activity from the summit crater of Mayon Volcano formed two lobes of lava that emplaced within 500 meters from the crater and shed lava debris on the

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## Mayon From Page 1

Mi-Isi (south) and Bonga (south-eastern), and Basud (eastern) gullies that fell within two kilometers from the crater.

State volcanologists said that the lava flow was accompanied by only weak seismic activity and a slight swelling of the upper portions of the edifice prior to lava flow based on electronic tilt data.

According to Bacolcol, there was a decrease in the sulfur dioxide emission. From 1,205 tons per day the other day, it went down to 642 tons per day yesterday. He also said that the slow release of lava flow indicates that activity of Mayon Volcano will persist for several months.

"If there is a sudden eruption, the explosive eruption will only last until several weeks but just like we experienced during the 2014 eruption, the activity persisted for several months," he added.

Bacolcol said that concerned local government units (LGUs) should prepare for the evacuation of residents beyond the six-kilometer danger zone.

"We are advising residents beyond the six-kilometers permanent danger zone, and those within the eight kilometers from the summit to prepare anytime just in case we raise the alert level or even we do not see the need but we will still recommend to increase the radius of those to be evacuated, they should be ready," he said.

Phivolcs said that at least 21 weak volcanic earthquakes and 260 rock-falls events were recorded in the past

24 hours.

Paul Alanis, Phivolcs resident volcanologist at the Lignon Hill Observatory in Legazpi City, said the eruption is similar to the 2014 eruption pattern that started with the quiet extrusion of lava dome and ended with lava flow. "Although the present eruption of Mayon is still a quiet one, we are not yet discounting the possibility that it could proceed to a violent episode similar to the 2018 eruption," Alanis told **The STAR**.

### 14,000 displaced

More than 14,000 people have now been pre-emptively evacuated from within the six-kilometer permanent danger zone (PDZ) of the Mayon Volcano in Albay.

As of yesterday, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) said a total of 3,934 families or 14,360 persons have so far been affected. Of the number, 3,782 families or 13,792 persons were served inside 22 different evacuation centers while 156 families or 584 persons decided to seek temporary shelter elsewhere.

The NDRRMC said a total of 18 cities and/or municipalities in the Bicol region have been placed under a state of calamity because of Mayon's unrest.

To date, more than P20.1 million worth of assistance has been provided to the affected population in terms of food, distilled water, family food packs, family tents, hot meals, hygiene kits, modular tents, rice, sacks and sleeping kits.

The NDRRMC has given assurance that it is continuously monitor-

ing the situation as concerned member agencies provide basic needs to affected residents.

For its part, the Albay local government clarified it did not order yet any evacuation of residents within the seven-kilometer radius extended danger zone around Mayon.

Albay Public Safety and Emergency Management Office officer-in-charge Eugene Escobar said that only those within the six-kilometer radius PDZ were ordered to evacuate.

"No evacuation yet is ordered for those residing inside the seven-kilometer extended danger zone," he told **The STAR**.

Albay Gov. Grex Lagman said Advisory 15 - 2023 placed the population inside the 7-kilometer extended danger zone (EDZ) under "preparedness status," and not yet evacuation.

"Preparedness status means evacuation will be executed anytime and should bring with them necessities in the evacuation center," the advisory read.

### Aid pours in

Help from abroad has started to pour in for residents of Albay province who were displaced by the quiet eruption of Mayon Volcano.

According to Social Welfare Secretary Rex Gatchalian, the government of United Arab Emirates has donated some 50 tons of different kinds of food items intended for those "most affected by the heightening unrest" of the volcano.

"We thank the UAE government and the royal family for their generosity in sending the much-needed humanitarian aid for those affected by



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Mayon's volcanic activities," he said.

Gatchalian noted the food shipment arrived yesterday morning at the Ninoy Aquino Airport Terminal 2 via Etihad Airways. He added it was UAE Ambassador Mohamed Obaid Salem Alqataam Alzaabi who requested humanitarian aid from his government.

Within 24 hours, UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan immediately ordered the shipment of 50 tons of humanitarian aid to the Philippines.

### Reminder

The Department of Tourism (DOT) has issued a reminder to the traveling public to monitor current bulletins and maintain an active awareness of local conditions of Mayon Volcano in Albay, Bicol and Taal Volcano in Batangas.

While tourism activities outside the PDZ of Mayon Volcano are permitted, caution is advised due to the Phivolcs advisory indicating a magmatic eruption of the summit lava dome.

All human activities, including tourism-related such as mountain climbing and ATV tours, are strictly prohibited within the PDZ, the DOT said.

In Taal Lake, boating and other tourism-related activities are also not allowed. However, tourism activities outside the PDZ of Taal Volcano are generally considered safe.

The DOT emphasizes that individuals and tourism stakeholders living within the concerned areas should refrain from entering identified high-risk areas and stay updated on emergency information and alerts

issued by authorities.

### Notice to airmen

The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines updated the Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) amid the increased volcanic unrest at Mayon, Taal and Kanlaon.

NOTAM B2083/23 was issued for Mayon Volcano on alert level 3 with the increased tendency toward a hazardous eruption. Flight operations are advised to avoid flying close to volcano's summit as ash from sudden eruption can be hazardous to aircraft if sucked by its engine.

NOTAM B2082/23 was issued for Taal Volcano (1400N 120593E) on Alert Level 1 (low-level unrest), flight operations are advised avoiding flying close to the volcano's summit as airborne ash and ballistic fragment from sudden explosions may pose hazard from the surface to 10,000 feet.

NOTAM B2081/23 was issued for Kanlaon Volcano effective June 12 at 8:50 a.m. to June 13 at 9 a.m. on Alert Level 1 (abnormal condition), flight operations are advised to avoid flying close to the volcano's summit due to possibilities of sudden and hazardous steam-driven or phreatic eruptions that may pose hazard to aircraft.

Meanwhile, Philippine Airlines spokesperson Cielo Villaluna said that flights PR 2921/2922 and PR 2023/2924 from Bicol pushed through.

Cebu Pacific also said that its flights to Bicol pushed through, with safety precautions. - **With Cet Dematera, Sheila Crisostomo, Rudy Santos, Michael Punongbayan, Mark Ernest Villeza**



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*Lava flow*  
*reaches*  
*1.8 kilometers*  
*from summit*

Mayon Volcano belches red-hot lava down its slope as seen from Legazpi, Albay the other night. Albay was placed under a state of calamity last week to allow more rapid disbursement of emergency funds in case of a major eruption. EDD GUMBAN



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## Albay folk stay alert for lava flow

LEGAZPI CITY—Albay officials have started to evacuate more residents within the extended 7-kilometer-radius danger zone of Mt. Mayon after the restive volcano started to release lava on Sunday night, which flowed down some 2 km before lodging on its gullies. While the lava has yet to reach populated areas, the evacuation of at least 6,000 families from Sto. Domingo town began on Monday. —STORY BY MA. APRIL MIER-MANJARES **A5**



# Albay folk 'sleepless' as lava flows from Mayon

**More residents within extended 7-kilometer-radius danger zone expected to be evacuated to join the nearly 14,000 people already in shelters**

By Ma. April Mier-Manjarés  
@MaAprilMierINQ

LEGAZPI CITY—From afar, Daniel Lasala, 44, saw the dreaded lava flowing out the crater of Mayon Volcano, which was facing his hometown of Sto. Domingo in Albay province, around 6 p.m. on Sunday.

The grim sight of the night glow from Mayon, which has been restive for nearly a week now, forced Lasala to immediately ask his wife and four children to prepare their personal belongings and move to his sister's house in another village.

An hour later, Lasala was knocking on his sister's door, asking her to let his family stay with them because of the threat of Mayon's eruption in his village of Lidong, which is around 7 kilometers from the volcano and within the expanded danger zone.

"During the first days of the activity of Mayon, the materials were deposited at Camalig [town] area, but last night, I saw that the lava was flowing in front of our town," Lasala said in a phone interview on Monday.

Lasala said his family later transferred to the evacuation center, but he stayed at their house to check on their belongings.

Sto. Domingo Mayor Joseling Aguas Jr. said they started the evacuation of families in the villages of Lidong and San Antonio, areas at risk in the 7-km radius extended danger zone, at 5 a.m. on Monday.

"The residents couldn't sleep last night, especially in Purok 1 of Barangay Lidong. As early as 2 a.m., I've been receiving numerous texts and calls, that's why we already decided to evacuate them," Aguas said.

At least 6,000 families from the villages of Lidong, San Antonio and Sta. Misericordia would be evacuated, the mayor said.

### Dome debris

As of noon on Monday, records from the Albay Public Safety and Emergency Management Office (Apsemo) showed that 3,876 families or 13,805 persons were already evacuated, most of them from the 6-km permanent danger zone, since alert level 3 was raised over Mayon Volcano on June 8, indicating an increased tendency toward a hazardous eruption.

Based on the latest record of Apsemo, about 5,817 families, or 21,717 people, were living inside the 7-km extended danger zone.

Around 90 livestock were also evacuated from the towns

of Malilipot and Daraga, the Apsemo said.

Paul Karson Alanis, resident volcanologist at the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) Legazpi, said the lava flow caused by the new lava dome shed debris within the gullies in Mi-isi in Daraga town, Bonga in Legazpi City and Basud in Sto. Domingo, about 500 meters from the crater of the volcano.

Alanis said there were no residents directly affected by the debris on the upper slopes of the volcano, as most of the residents inside the permanent danger zone had already been evacuated.

"Its behavior changed [but] I wouldn't say that this is worse than the past few days. It's close to the hazardous eruption because it's under level 3, but now we still can't see the indication or signal to raise it to level 4," Alanis said in an interview on Monday.

As of 3 p.m. on Monday, Alanis said they had recorded one volcanic earthquake, 89 rockfall events and continuous lava flow.

### Preparations

Camalig Mayor Carlos Irwin Baldo Jr. said they have prepared two additional evacuation centers that would house

2,000 families from the upper portion of the villages of Cabagnan and Salugan, areas within the 7-km danger zone.

The local officials evacuated about 1,000 families from the villages of Quirangay, Sua, Tumpa and Anoling, areas within the 6- to 7-km danger zone of the volcano.

In Legazpi City, no families were living within the 6- to 7-km danger zone, but residents in the 8-km extended danger zone were advised to prepare for a possible preemptive evacuation.

Phivolcs earlier said volcano debris could possibly affect the southeast portion of the volcano, including the upper villages in the towns of Camalig, Daraga and Sto. Domingo and Legazpi City.

In an advisory on Monday, Albay Gov. Edcel Greco Lagman said the population inside the 7-km danger zone was placed under preparedness status, which means that evacuation may be ordered anytime.

Eugene Escobar, Apsemo's chief of the research division, said at a press briefing on Monday that they had deployed vehicles in eight cities and municipalities surrounding the volcano to speed up the evacuation of residents. INQ



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TEMPORARY SHELTER Residents near the 6-kilometer danger zone around the restive Mayon Volcano are taken to a shelter in Barangay Mauraro, Guinobatan, Albay, on June 9 in a mandatory reemptive evacuation initiated by the provincial government as the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology continues to monitor the volcanic activity. —MARK ALVIC ESPLANA

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# Mayon spews lava in effusive eruption

By DHEL NAZARIO

Despite Mayon Volcano's effusive eruption, there is no need yet to raise its alert status to level 4, according to Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) OIC Director Teresito Bacolcol.

In a public briefing on Monday, June 12, Bacolcol explained that while

the volcano had an effusive eruption — spewing lava and ash — the alert level cannot be raised yet since they are looking at parameters before deciding to do so.

“Yung effusive eruption involves slow release of magma onto the edifice of the volcano. Usually, yung (the) lava coming from an effusive eruption medyo (slightly) low in dust:

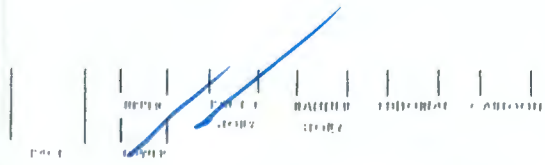
The lava flows are typically slow-moving and can be observed as rivers of molten rock,” he said.

In its latest Mayon Volcano bulletin, Phivolcs said that as of 7:47 p.m. on June 11, lava flow activity commenced from the summit crater of the volcano.

It added that this development was accompanied **► 4**



**RIVER OF MOLTEN ROCK** — Extremely hot magma flows from Mayon Volcano as an effusive eruption occurred at the mouth of the volcano on Sunday evening, June 11, 2023. According to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs), there's still no need to raise the alert status of Mayon Volcano to level 4. (Ali Vicoy)



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## Mayon spews lava in effusive eruption 1◀

by only weak seismic activity and a slight swelling of the upper portions of the edifice prior to lava flow based on electronic tilt data.

To raise it to alert level 4, Bacolcol said the specific parameters they are checking constantly such as the sudden decrease of sulfur dioxide gas and an increase in seismic activity.

"So, if there is a sudden decrease of sulfur dioxide, ibig sabihin na-trap yung gas doon sa loob ng lava dome and if there's a sudden release of sulfur dioxide then it could result in an explosive eruption," he explained.

In the bulletin Phivolcs released, it said they have recorded 21 weak volcanic earthquakes and 260 rock-fall events. While it increased, Bacolcol said these are not strong and the seismic energy that was released was only at the background level.

Bacolcol added that they are monitoring if there will be an inflation at the volcanic edifice, but so far they have only seen an inflation at the upper part or upper slope.

Lastly, he said they are also on the lookout for an increase in mass flux which means lava flows are getting longer, an increase in pyroclastic density currents (PDC) events, and the presence of lava fountaining. They are also monitoring if there will be minor explosions.

"Effusive eruptions are generally less violent than explosive eruptions and it could produce less ash. Hope-

fully, ganito lang yung magiging situation hindi na ito mage-evolve pa into an explosive eruption (Hopefully, the situation will remain like this and it will not evolve into an explosive eruption)," Bacolcol said.

### 13,000 Mayon evacuees

The lack of adequate space for evacuees in Albay due to the ongoing unrest of Mayon Volcano is a challenge for the government, data from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) showed.

A situational report from the NDRRMC on Monday said 3,934 families or 14,360 individuals from Camalig, Ligao, Daraga, Guinobatan, Malilipot, and Tobacco have already been affected by Mayon's volcanic activities.

Of the number, there are 3,782 families or 13,792 individuals packed in 22 evacuation centers in the six affected areas. Others are staying with their relatives or friends.

Local chief executives in Albay appealed to the government to build permanent housing for families who are constantly being evacuated as a recourse for those affected by Mayon's unrest and other calamities.

During the visit of Social Welfare Secretary Rex Gatchalian in Albay, mayors from different cities and municipalities in the province raised concerns about addressing the overcrowding in the evacuation centers.

Ligao City Mayor Fernando Gon-

zales emphasized the urgent need to address the traditional practice of using public schools as default evacuation centers, saying that such establishments are not well-equipped to accommodate evacuees.

Tabaco Mayor Grisel Lagman-Luistro also requested Gatchalian to persuade President Marcos and the Department of Human Settlement and Urban Development (DHSUD) to discuss terms about the President's Pambansang Pabahay Para sa Pilipino Housing (4PH) Program—a massive government housing program which aims to build six million housing units annually all over the country until 2028.

### Supplies

Meanwhile, food, water and other supplies were distributed to the evacuees to ensure that their primary needs are met.

The NDRRMC noted that ₱20,191,842.39 worth of relief assistance from the DSWD have been distributed to the affected residents including family food packs, potable water, family tents, hygiene kits, and sleeping kits among others as of June 12.

Diego Agustin Mariano, head of Office of Civil Defense's (OCD) joint information unit, had said the national government stands ready to augment the supplies of the local government units (LGUs) in Albay to ensure there is enough food and water for all evacuees. (With a report from Martin Sadongdong)



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# Rains to continue due to southwest monsoon

By **BELLA CARIASO**

Rains will continue until midweek despite the exit of Severe Tropical Storm Chedeng as the southwest monsoon affects many areas in the country, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

PAGASA weather specialist Ana Lauren said Chedeng (international name Guchol) left the Philippine area of responsibility at 7 p.m. Sunday.

Clauren added that the tropical storm was located 1,550 kilometers east-northeast of extreme Northern Luzon with maximum sustained winds of 110 kilometers per hour near the center, with gustiness up to 135 kph moving northeast at 35 kph.

"Severe Tropical Storm Chedeng will continue to enhance the southwest monsoon as it will affect the entire Luzon and the Visayas," Clauren said.

On Monday, heavy rainfall warning was raised in Metro Manila, Zambales, Cavite, Batangas, Pampanga, Bulacan and Rizal.

"Based on our forecast, rains brought by the southwest monsoon will persist early this week until midweek as we monitored another weather system, the frontal system, causing heavy rains in many areas in the country," Clauren added.

Based on the latest bulletin of PAGASA, monsoon rains will be experienced in the Ilocos region, Zambales and Bataan; while Metro Manila, Batanes, Babuyan islands, Abra, Benguet, the rest of Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Occidental Mindoro and Northern Palawan, including Calamian and Cuyo Islands, will be affected by the southwest monsoon.

According to the weather bureau, the rest of the country will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain-showers or thunderstorms.

## Angat dam

Meanwhile, the water elevation of Angat Dam has finally experienced a slight increase brought about by the southwest monsoon rains.

But the question is whether the monsoon rains can be enough to raise the water elevation of Angat Dam to a safer level, following reports that the National

Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the US issued on Thursday an El Niño advisory announcing the arrival of the climatic phenomenon.

Records from the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office of Bulacan showed that water elevation of Angat Dam yesterday morning was at 187.53 meters compared to Sunday morning's 187.42 meters.

Although the 11-centimeter increase was not significant, the southwest monsoon rains however beat the recent rainfall brought by Typhoons Chedeng and Betty — both of which failed to raise Angat Dam's water elevation.

Angat Dam supplies more than 90 percent of the raw water requirements

for Metro Manila residents, contributes hydropower generation to the Luzon grid and provides irrigation to ricelands in Bulacan and parts of Pampanga.

Its water level has been gradually receding toward minimum operating level of 180 meters.

Currently the dam's water elevation is 24.47 meters below its normal high water elevation of 212 meters and just 7.53 meters above its minimum operating level.

Normally, when the water elevation of Angat Dam reaches the 180-meter mark, water allocations for irrigation and hydropower generation are cut and the rest is reserved for the drinking water needs of Metro Manila residents.

— With Ramon Efren Lazaro