

28 JULY 2023 Friday



DENR

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Loyzaga courts US-Asean Business Council

support for DENR programs

SEEKING the support of the private sector, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) recently met with delegates from the US-Asean Business Council (US-ABC) to strengthen collaboration on sustainability, climate change, green finance, and environmental protection.

Held on July 12 in Taguig City, the meeting paved the way for the DENR chief and the US-ABC to discuss how both organizations can work together in the fields of climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction (DRR), and plastic pollution.

US-ABC is the premier advocacy organization for American corporations operating within the Southeast Asian region. Worldwide, the Council's membership of nearly 170 companies generates almost \$7 trillion in revenue and employs more than 14.5 million people.

In a news statement, Yulo-Loyzaga underscored the importance of cli-

mate change adaptation and stressed that any contributions by way of nature-based solutions for adaptation and for disaster risk reduction.

Under her watch, she said the DENR is looking at investment in prevention or ex-ante value from the private sector, particularly nature-based solutions such as forest conservation, control of river erosion, water conservation efforts, and investment in gray and green infrastructure.

"We realize that the goal of the private sector has been primarily in providing relief during disasters, which we understand is valuable but is essentially an ex-post value to the country and to the communities. We hope that the [US-ABC] can also be an advocate for adaptation and not just mitigation which are both sides of the same coin."

The other end of the stake, Loyzaga said, would be DRR, which is ultimately what would impact the country's trajectory towards economic and

social development.

Loyzaga encouraged the private sector to look beyond compliance to environmental, social, and governance or ESG in terms of emissions reduction, renewable energy, energy efficiency and pollution management.

She also urged them to look to adaptation and resilience building of the communities where they work, as well as the ecosystems that they rely on.

The DENR chief also urged the private sector to "clean up whatever it is you produced and released," highlighting the need for businesses to look at investment and research towards the replacement of plastic.

"What we want to do is to look for ways to produce materials which are sustainable, which are biodegradable, which are affordable but have the same functionality as the packaging materials that we now are using because they are optimal in terms of our products that we produce. That investment in the chemistry that is needed, I think,

is within your reach and so that is one of the big pushes," she said.

Loyzaga expressed hope the US-ABC can help the DENR bring forward the upliftment of the informal waste sector consisting of waste pickers in dumpsites and communal waste collection points.

"The sector is particularly impacted by hazardous environments because of the waste that we generate and their involvement in the solid waste management industry," Yulo-Loyzaga said. "We hope that we can share that advocacy and we look for ways to actually innovate."

"Waste picking, waste collection, waste sorting is a phenomenon not just in the Philippines, but in all countries in Asean. And so, we're not the only ones who have that informal sector involved in this whole circular economy. They have been locked out of the value chain but they are part of the supply chain of the circular economy," she ended.



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BusinessMirror

A broader look at today's business



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EGAY'S AFTERMATH Typhoon Egay's recent onslaught in northern Philippines brought contrasting impacts, affecting both human lives and the environment. The combined forces of strong gale winds and the southwest monsoon led to treacherous sea conditions, cancelling trips and leaving at least 414 passengers stranded at the North Port Passenger Terminal in Tondo, Manila, who were originally bound for the Visayas and Mindanao. The typhoon's fury didn't spare the artificial Dolomite Beach along Manila Bay, washing ashore an unsettling amount of debris and waste. The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and environment volunteers joined hands for a thorough cleanup along the shore. **ROY DOMINGO**



'Gibo' unveils DND's thrust for 'credible deterrent posture' and disaster response

DEFENSE Secretary Gilberto C. Teodoro Jr. said the Department of National Defense (DND) is continuing to address and develop the fundamental building blocks in the country's effort to create a "credible deterrent posture."

"We continue the upgrades, not only of our equipment, but [also by] bridging the gaps between the different horizons in our modernization timeframe and the skills of our people, both in the civilian side in the defense department and the five agencies," Teodoro said.

Attending the post State of the Nation Address discussions remotely on Wednesday as he was overseeing the government's response to typhoon "Egay," the defense chief said the DND is working with partner agencies to maintain internal peace and stability.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. instructed the DND to look for non-traditional partners and alliances in upgrading the country's defense capabilities as well as capabilities to predict and analyze trends in order to prepare for any eventuality that may befall the country and require the agency's resources in the future.

"We are also in the process of looking for partners, not only for pure defensive purposes, but also for the convergence of both the economic and security potentials of growth industries, particularly in technology and in cyber," the defense chief added.

Teodoro said the DND is also expanding its scope in order to create cross-border investments in disruptive and emerging technologies as it gears to achieve a self-reliant defense posture or program.

He said the country needs a stronger, real time and fully analyzed convergence of information, from point of occurrence to the de-

cision-making process, in as much real time as possible.

Teodoro also said the DND is likewise upgrading the morale and welfare of the men and women in uniform, including the retirees and veterans whom the department is mandated to care for.

"The President's instructions are that their welfare be made paramount in our mandate to uplift the lives and to continue the care, particularly of those who cannot care for themselves," he said.

During the discussions, the defense secretary also cited the importance of enhancing the Office of Civil Defense's coordinative functions in order to get reliable and timely information to the people in times of disasters and calamities.

"Great strides have been made by our partner agencies with the primary responsibility for preparedness and resiliency, namely, the DILG [Department of the Interior Local Government] because the first responders are local government units [LGUs]; in case of predictive capabilities for natural calamities, a lot has been done by the DOST [Department of Science and Technology] through PHIVOLCS [Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology] and PAGASA [Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration], and the DPWH [Department of Public Works and Highways], in terms of mitigation, and the DENR [Department of Environment and Natural Resources]," he noted.

"On our part, what we want to be is the bridge between concerted national government assistance and efforts in all these aspects and the local government units," he also said.

Rene Acosta



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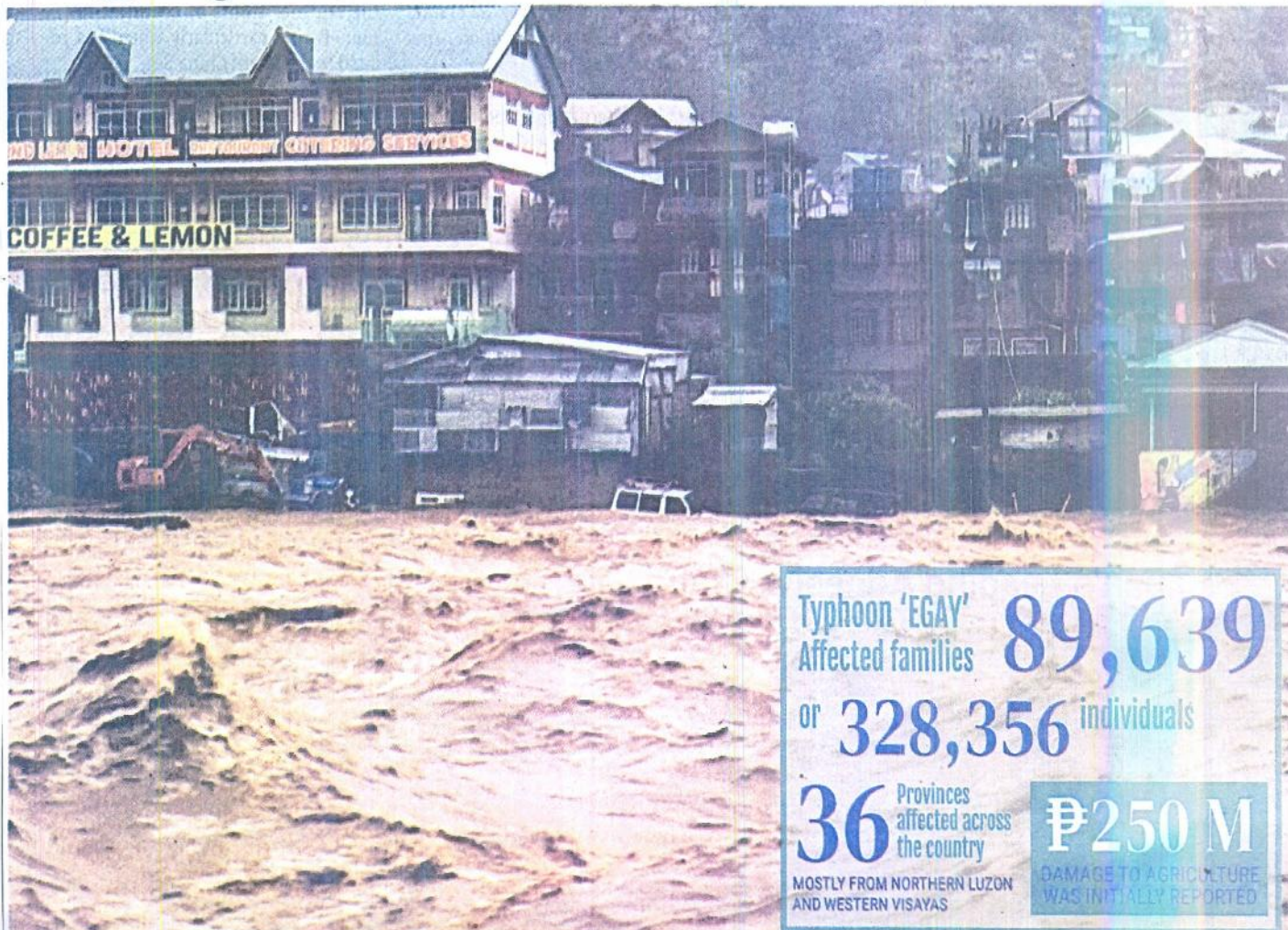
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'Egay' death toll rises to 5



Typhoon 'EGAY' Affected families **89,639**
or **328,356** individuals
36 Provinces affected across the country
MOSTLY FROM NORTHERN LUZON AND WESTERN VISAYAS
₱250 M DAMAGE TO AGRICULTURE WAS INITIALLY REPORTED

CHICO RIVER OVERFLOWS — Vehicles are submerged in the Chico River in Bontoc, Mountain Province as typhoon 'Egay' passed close to extreme Northern Luzon on Wednesday, July 26, 2023. (Mountain Province Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office via AFP)

New tropical depression spotted east of Visayas

By AARON RECUENCO, ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ, ZALDY COMANDA, and KHRISCIELLE YALAO

The death toll from the onslaught of typhoon "Egay" rose to five as four people were reported to have been buried in a landslide in Benguet, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) said on Thursday, July 27.

But NDRRMC officials said the four reported deaths in Benguet, along with the first reported fatality in Rizal, are still for validation if indeed they are related to "Egay." The two reported injuries are also being validated.

The first fatality was reported to have drowned in Cardona, Rizal.

Based on the latest NDRRMC data released on Thursday morning, the weather disturbance had so far affected 89,639 families, or 328,356 individuals in 36 provinces across the country, mostly from Northern Luzon and Western Visayas. ▶7



'Egay' death toll rises to 5

A total of 6,793 people were preemptively evacuated in Cagayan Valley Region, Central Luzon, Mimaropa (Oriental and Occidental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan), and Western Visayas.

They were among the 26,697 individuals who are so far inside 306 evacuation centers across the country.

The NDRRMC has yet to finalize the total damage to agriculture and infrastructure although in Cagayan province alone, around ₱250 million damage to agriculture was initially reported.

Egay exits PAR

Typhoon Egay (international name: Doksuri) left the country's area of responsibility at 8 a.m., Thursday, July 27, said the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

Egay was last seen 255 kilometers west of Itbayat, Batanes, with maximum sustained winds of 150 kilometers per hour (kph) near the center and gusts of up to 185 kph.

Although it was already outside the country's area of responsibility, Egay's strong winds may still affect parts of Luzon.

Tropical cyclone wind signal No. 2 remained in effect over Batanes, the northwestern portion of Cagayan, including Babuyan Islands, and the northern portion of Ilocos Norte.

Signal No. 1 was maintained over Pangasinan, La Union, Ilocos Sur, the rest of Ilocos Norte, the rest of Cagayan, Apayao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, Ifugao, Abra, Benguet, Isabela, Quirino, Nueva Vizcaya, the northern portion of Aurora, northern portion of Nueva Ecija, and northern portion of Tarlac.

PAGASA also warned that heavy rains may continue to affect Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Batanes, and Babuyan Islands.

The southwest monsoon, or "habagat," enhanced by Egay, may also bring occasional rains to the western parts of Central Luzon and Southern Luzon, including Metro Manila, in the next three days.

"Under these conditions, flooding and rain-induced landslides are possible, especially in areas that are highly or very highly susceptible to these hazards as identified in hazard maps and in localities that experienced considerable amounts of rainfall for the past several days," PAGASA said.

TD east of Visayas

The low pressure area (LPA) being monitored by the Philippine Atmospheric, PAGASA developed into a tropical depression on Thursday morning, July 27.

The tropical depression, which was last seen 1,585 kilometers east of Eastern Visayas as of 10 a.m., is still outside the

Philippine area of responsibility (PAR), said PAGASA senior weather specialist Chris Perez.

He said it may enter the PAR between Saturday evening, July 29, and Sunday morning, July 30.

Once inside, it will be given the local name "Falcon."

The tropical depression has maximum sustained winds of 55 kilometers per hour (kph) near the center and gusts of up to 70 kph.

It may move north-northwestward or northwestward within the next 36 hours, and turn north or northwest toward the eastern boundary of the PAR by Saturday.

However, the possibility of a "much closer approach to the country" is not ruled out.

Although it is unlikely to make landfall in any part of the country, the tropical depression may enhance the southwest monsoon, or "habagat," which may cause rains over the western parts of Luzon and Visayas as early as Saturday.

Perez said the tropical depression may leave the PAR between Monday afternoon, July 31, and Tuesday morning, Aug. 1.

Marikina River

The Marikina City Rescue 161, the city's Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (DRRMO) Command Center, raised the second alarm Thursday morning, July 27, after the water level of the Marikina River reached 16 meters due to heavy rains from Typhoon Egay.

As of 6:30 a.m., the water level was at 15.2 meters and was expected to rise gradually.

By 11:11 a.m., the water level reached 16 meters, triggering the second alarm.

With the raising of the second alarm, residents in low-lying areas, especially those near the river, are asked to voluntarily evacuate to their barangays' designated evacuation site, according to the city's early warning system.

If the water level rises further to 18 meters, forced evacuation will be imposed by the city government.

As of this writing, no major flooding has been reported in the city.

All gates of the Manggahan Floodway are open, said the Marikina Public Information Office (PIO) on its social media post.

In a radio interview, Marikina Mayor Marcelino "Marcy" Teodoro said the city government continues to monitor the river, and has prepared alternative evacuation centers in barangays.

He said the Palarong Pambansa, which will officially begin on Saturday, July 29 with the opening ceremony to be conducted on the 31st, will still push through.

Contingency plans have been prepared in case some games are rescheduled due to the storm or other disasters, he added.



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Luzon dam levels up, thanks to 'Egay' rains

Irrigation, power generation seen to benefit as water elevations in Angat, San Roque, Binga, Ambuklao and Magat improve

By Inquirer Luzon
@InqNational

DAGUPAN CITY—While heavy and continuous rains dumped by Typhoon "Egay" (international name: Doksuri) triggered widespread flooding and landslides in northern Luzon this week, the weather disturbance also helped improve the water levels in major dams in four provinces.

Administrators of the Angat Dam in Bulacan, San Roque Dam in Pangasinan, Binga and Ambuklao Dams in Benguet, and Magat Dam in Isabela said water elevations rose on Thursday due to the incessant rains brought by Egay, which continued to enhance the southwest monsoon, or "habagat," even as it was already out of the Philippine Area of Responsibility on Thursday.

The level of San Roque Dam in San Manuel town increased by more than 10 meters in the last 24 hours, according to the San Roque Power Corp., which operates the reservoir.

Data showed that the dam's elevation was at 238.25 meters above sea level (masl) at 6 a.m. on Wednesday but it increased to 248.83 masl by 11 a.m. on Thursday.

The spilling level of the multipurpose dam is at 280 masl, leaving around 30 meters more before the spilling gates are opened.

San Roque Dam catches water from Benguet's Ambuklao and Binga dams, both of which have opened gates and released water.



SWAMPED Low-lying areas of Barangay San Nicolas in Bulacan town, Bulacan province, are flooded due to intense rains dumped by Typhoon "Egay." The heavy downpour helped raise the level of Angat Dam, where Metro Manila sources its water. —CARMELA REYES-EESTROPE

Ambuklao and Binga continued to discharge rainwater to ease pressure on their reservoirs.

Ambuklao's reservoir in Bokod town was at 751.30 masl on Thursday, up from 746.43 masl on Wednesday when Egay unleashed its fury over Luzon. The dam's normal high water level is 752 masl.

Meanwhile, the water level at Binga's reservoir in Itogon town was 574.63 masl on Thursday, which was slightly higher than Wednesday's 568.52 masl. Its normal high water level is 575 masl.

The rising level at San Roque has elated farmers in Pangasinan, said Oftociano Manalo, president of the farmers' group Mannalon, Mag-uuma, Magbabaul, Magsasaka ng Pilipinas, noting that this would help irrigate their rice plants.

Manalo said the National Irrigation Administration had also

opened the dam's irrigation gates.

The torrential rains also raised the level of the Sinocalan-Pantal River in Pangasinan to a critical mark, causing the major tributary in the province to burst its bank.

The water level of the section of the Sinocalan-Pantalan River in Calasiao town reached 7.8 meters, above the normal level of 7 m.

Many areas in Calasiao were already submerged in floodwater due to the heavy downpour at the height of Egay, according to the municipal disaster risk reduction and management council.

Angat situation

In Bulacan, the elevation of Angat Dam also rose by more than 3 m due to the continuous rains since Wednesday, according to the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office.

Angat Dam supplies 97 percent of the water requirements of Metro Manila and the irrigation needs of Bulacan and Pangasinan farmers.

The dam's level began to drop below the 180 masl operating level on July 8 amid the El Niño phenomenon being experienced in the country.

In Isabela, the water level of Magat Dam reached 170.58 masl on Thursday afternoon, according to the National Irrigation Administration-Magat River Integrated Irrigation System.

It was a significant increase from 162.69 masl on Tuesday morning or before Egay pummeled the Cagayan Valley region. The dam's elevation on Thursday, however, was still below its 193 masl spilling level.

Magat Dam supplies irrigation to 88,000 hectares of rice farms in the province and nearby areas.

In Olongapo City, two rivers reached a critical level on Thursday due to nonstop rains.

Data from the city disaster risk reduction and management office (CDDRRMO) showed that as of 12:39 p.m., water levels underneath the Mabayan and Sta. Rita bridges were at 2.56 m.

According to the CDDRRMO, the critical mark for rivers in the city is between 2.50 and 2.99 m.

—REPORTS FROM YOLANDA SOTELO, CARMELA REYES-EESTROPE, VINCENT CABREZA, KIMBERLIE QUITASOL, VILLAMOR VISAYA JR. AND JOANNA ROSE AGLIBOT INQ



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Members of the Marikina Disaster Response Team check the water level at the Marikina River, which hit 16 meters yesterday, prompting the evacuation of residents.

MICHAEL YARGAS



Marikina River water level rises; residents evacuated

By **MARK ERNEST VILLEZA**

Residents of Barangay Nangka were evacuated yesterday after the second alarm was raised as the water level in the Marikina River continued to rise due to heavy rains brought by Super Typhoon Egay.

Eighteen families were evacuated to the barangay covered court while 11

families took shelter at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Marikina, city public information officer Lou Navarro told **The STAR**.

Navarro said the evacuation of residents was a preemptive measure. No flooding was recorded in the city.

Marikina River breached the 16-meter mark, raising the second alarm at past 11

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a.m. yesterday.

Under the second alarm, residents are required to evacuate. The third alarm will be raised and forced evacuation will be implemented if the river's water level rises to 18 meters.

Marikina River's water level went down to 15.9 meters at around 2 p.m. and dropped further to 15.7 meters at around 4 p.m.

Meanwhile, Mayor Marcelino Teodoro said the Palarong Pambansa hosted by the city would push through despite the bad weather. He said a contingency

plan has been put in place.

Parts of MM flooded

Heavy rains spawned by Super Typhoon Egay flooded several areas in Metro Manila yesterday.

Floodwaters submerged A. Bonifacio Avenue, particularly the intersection of C-3 and Sgt. Rivera in Quezon City, according to the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

Taft Avenue in Manila was also flooded, causing traffic jams in the area.

Personnel of the Manila city government and the MMDA conducted cleanup activities amid the intermittent rains and strong winds brought by Egay.

Members of the local government's department of public services collected trash along Quiapo, Binondo, Tondo and Mel Lopez Boulevard.

Roads in Malabon and Valenzuela were not passable to light vehicles due to flooding.

The Valenzuela City government suspended work as a pre-emptive measure.

No flooding was reported in Navotas, according to the city's disaster risk reduction and management office head Von Villanueva.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration had placed Metro Manila under yellow heavy rainfall warning.

- With Ghio Ong



Residents take shelter in modular tents set up by the Quezon City government at Bagong Silangan Elementary School following heavy rains brought by Super Typhoon Egay yesterday.

JESSE BUSTOS



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Egay leaves dozens dead across Luzon

• Ilocos Norte under state of calamity
• Up to 30 dead as boat capsizes off Binangonan

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

Typhoon Egay left dozens dead as it battered Northern Luzon this week before exiting on its way to Taiwan yesterday.

Even as cyclone wind signals were lowered, up to 30 passengers aboard a small boat in Rizal drowned yesterday after they reportedly panicked and moved to one side of the vessel due to strong waves.

In Buguias, Benguet, a mother and her three children died Wednesday morning when a landslide hit their house. In Abra, a 13-year-old girl died while trying to rescue goats from drowning. Two men in the province also died.

A 38-year-old man died in a mudslide in Mountain Province, while a woman in Isabela was killed when hit by an uprooted coconut tree. In Baguio City, a 16-year-old boy was crushed in a landslide.

Four Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) personnel went missing in Abulug, Cagayan after the aluminum boat they were using for a rescue operation capsized.

They were going to rescue seven stranded crew members of tugboat *Iroquois*, located 21 miles from Aparri, when their boat capsized while traversing

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the Cagayan River.

Egay (Doksuri) has affected an estimated 89,639 families or 328,356 individuals. Around 5,950 families or 19,826 individuals are staying in 306 evacuation centers across the country, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.

The NDRRMC added that the government has provided more

than P10.2 million in assistance to displaced and affected residents of various provinces.

Egay caused at least 16 landslide incidents, 108 flooded areas, five soil erosion incidents, and four fallen tree incidents, according to an emergency meeting presided by Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro on July 26.

President Marcos, who is on a

three-day official visit in Malaysia since Tuesday, said he is constantly in touch with officials in disaster relief operations.

"I think the (typhoon) has left... Rescue (is ongoing) as there were people stranded because of the flooding. Rescue and then eventually relief, we will do it immediately," Marcos said at a press conference in Kuala Lumpur.

Ilocos Norte

Ilocos Norte, under Signal No.

3, was declared in a state of calamity on Wednesday by the Provincial Board.

Ilocos Norte police director Col. Julius Suriben told **The STAR** that around 700 families were evacuated after the province experienced flooding and strong winds.

Suriben said the town of Adams has been isolated due to two landslides that blocked its main roads.

The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, the Office of Civil Defense Region 1 and La Union Gov. Raphaelle Ortega-David also sent teams to Ilocos Norte to help in rescue operations.

Pampanga

At least 30,616 families in Pampanga or 99,700 people were affected by flooding, comprised of 15,633 families in Macabebe and 14,983 in Masantol, according to the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office.

Reports indicate that 19 barangays in Pampanga towns are flooded. These include five barangays in Masantol and 14 barangays in Macabebe.

Negros

Egay affected 13,541 families or 54,041 people and damaged 668 houses in Negros Occidental, according to the Provincial

Social Welfare and Development Office.

Three persons reportedly drowned on July 25-26, while a fisherman went missing within Cadiz City waters.

Initial damage to livestock was at P104,450.

Bulacan dams

Angat Dam, Ipo Dam and Bustos Dam in Bulacan released water after water elevations increased by 183.48 meters, 101.37 meters and 17.44 meters, respectively, on Thursday afternoon.

The spilling level of Angat Dam is 210 meters, Ipo Dam at 101.00 meters and Bustos Dam at 17.00 meters.

Residents living near the Angat river system, particularly in the towns of Norzagaray, Angat, San Rafael, Bustos, Baliwag, Pulilan, Plaridel, Calumpit, Paombong and Hagonoy are advised to be on alert for the river water's elevation, Bustos Dam water control and coordinating unit chief Francisco Clara told **The STAR**.

The provincial government of Bulacan has suspended work in government offices.

- With Ric Sapnu, Rudy Santos, Jun Elias, Artemio Dumalo, Gilbert Bayoran, Michael Punongbayan, Ramon Efrén Lazaro, Ghio Ong



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A resident negotiates rising floodwaters caused by Typhoon Egay's heavy rains in Laoag, Ilocos Norte the other day. Egay lashed northern provinces with ferocious wind and rain, leaving dozens dead and displacing thousands of others as it blew roofs off houses, flooded low-lying villages and toppled trees. Inset video grab from the Coast Guard shows the motorized boat *Princess Aya*, which capsized off Barangay Kalinawan in Binangonan, Rizal yesterday, killing dozens of passengers. AP



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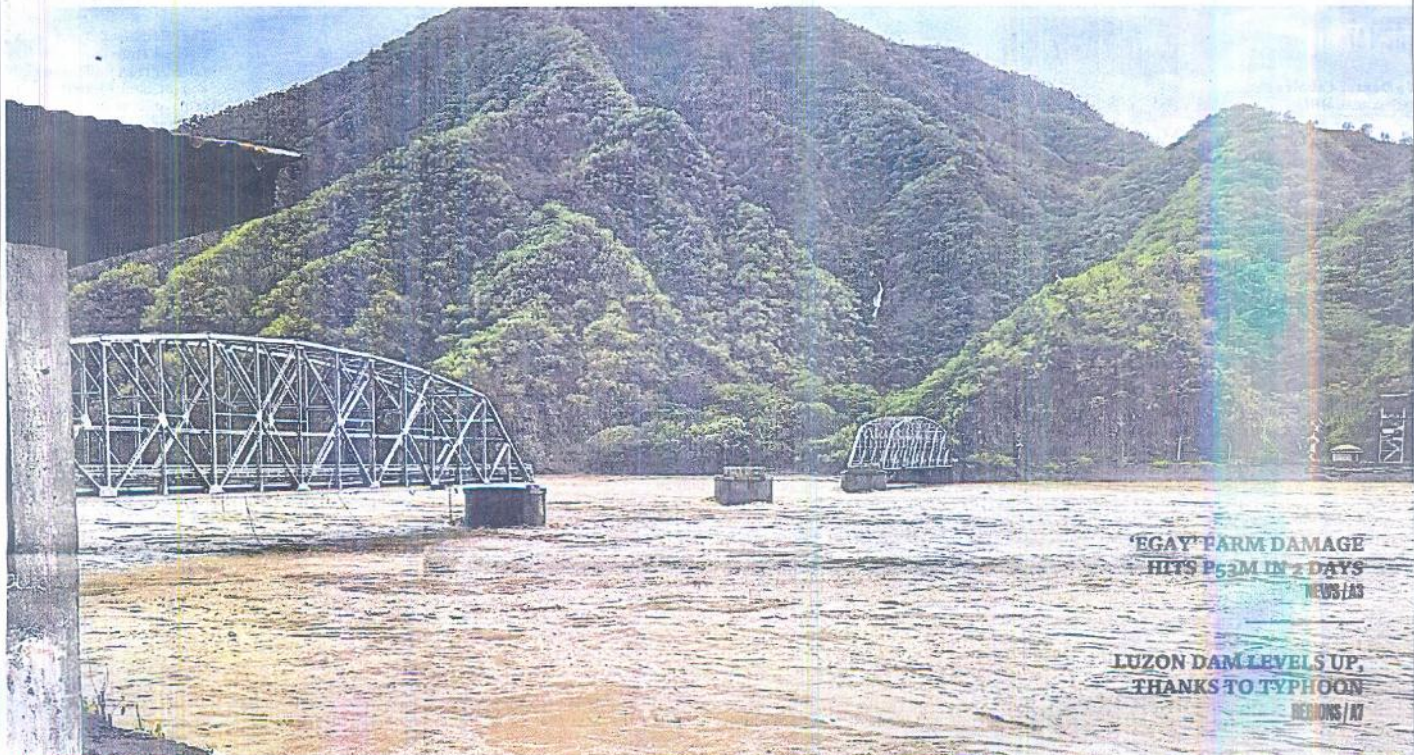
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'EGAY' TOLL UP: 25 DEAD IN LAGUNA LAKE TRAGEDY

STORY BY DEXTER CABALZA

The typhoon leaves at least 36 people dead, including more than two dozen in just one incident. Authorities say that the motorized banca flipped over and sank when its passengers panicked after strong winds and big waves slammed into it. **A2**



ILOCOS SUR CUTOFF Quirino Bridge in Bantay town, Ilocos Sur, had two sections washed away by the swelling, raging river, its water thickened with mud, during the onslaught of Typhoon "Egay" in northern Luzon on Wednesday. Among the worst hit by the typhoon, Ilocos Sur and neighboring Ilocos Norte have been declared under a state of calamity. —JOHN NOEL ANDAYA/CONTRIBUTOR



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FROM A1

By Dexter Cabalza
@dexcabalzaINQ

At least 25 people, including children, drowned after a motorized banca they were riding on Laguna Lake was overturned by strong winds and big waves whipped up by Typhoon "Egay" (international name: Doksuri) as it was blowing northwest out of the country on Thursday.

Authorities rescued 40 others as MBCA Princess Aya sank about 50 meters from the shore of Barangay Kalinawan in Binangonan, Rizal province, on its way to Talim Island, according to a report by Police Maj. Rhonnie Ariola, the officer in charge of the municipal police station.

The Rizal provincial police office said that two crew members were among those who drowned.

An initial Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) report said Princess Aya left for Barangay Gulod on Talim Island, also part of Binangonan, about 8.5 kilometers south of Kalinawan, at around 12:30 p.m. The trip was supposed to take about an hour.

Shortly after departure, the boat "encountered strong winds, prompting all passengers to panic and went to the port (left) side," which caused it to flip over.

Other victims

Among those who died was a boy wearing a blue Captain America shirt.

According to a partial list of survivors prepared by Kalinawan barangay officers, the youngest surviving passenger



BAGUIO IMPACT Linemen of Benguet Electric Cooperative help clear a road and reconnect power lines on Thursday, a day after "Egay" also left serious damage in the summer capital.

—ALLAN MACATUNO

was a 13-year-old boy and the oldest was a 71-year-old man.

The temporary suspension of ferry services due to the typhoon was lifted, based on a sea travel advisory published by the Coast Guard Station-Rizal at 8 p.m. on Wednesday.

Rizal PCG commander Arjohn Belumba cited the lifting of the tropical wind cyclone signal over the province in allowing vessels to resume sailing.

With 11 others killed in the typhoon—four in the Cordillera Region, three in Ilocos Sur province, one in the Calabarzon Region and three in Negros Occidental—the typhoon death toll has risen to 36.

The Negros Occidental disaster office said all three people drowned—two at sea and one in a river.

Victor Mahilum Moréno Jr., 32, a construction worker, was found on the shore of Purok Sigay, Barangay Singang-Airport, in Bacolod City,

around 3 p.m. on Tuesday.

The body of Arnold Billojan, 48, was found floating in the waters off Barangay 2, Quincihan in Hinigaran by a fisherman about 7 a.m. on Wednesday, a day after he was reported missing.

Police said 19-year-old Richard Espinosa tried to swim across Mansilingan River where he had been fishing but was swept away by the strong current. His body was found floating on a river in Murcia town at 12:20 p.m. on Wednesday.

The PCG said four of its rescuers went missing after their boat capsized in the Cagayan River around 4 p.m. on Wednesday.

They were headed to the MTug Iroquis to rescue seven crew members of the tugboat off Aparri town.

New LPA spotted

By Thursday afternoon, Egay was spotted about 280 km west-northwest of Itbayat,



AS FELT IN QC Some Quezón City residents take shelter at Barangay Bagong Silangan Elementary School on Thursday after fleeing flash floods triggered by “Egay” in various parts of Metro Manila. —**MARIANNE BERMUDEZ**

Batanes province, packing sustained winds of 150 km per hour and gusts of up to 185 kph, according to the weather bureau.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said that a new low pressure area (LPA) might enter the country in the next few days.

It has a high chance of developing into a tropical depression or typhoon in the next two days and may enter the country by Saturday.

The LPA is expected to strengthen the southwest monsoon “in the next few days,” said weather specialist Benison Estareja.

State of calamity

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) said Egay, which had gained supertyphoon strength as it entered the country, affected 382,385

people in 11 regions from Luzon to Mindanao.

As many as 26,697 sought shelter in 206 evacuation centers in areas affected by floods and landslides, the NDRRMC said.

Ilocos Norte province had been declared under a state of calamity.

On Thursday, workers continued to remove massive trees toppled by Egay’s winds, which hampered the restoration of electricity in the province and Baguio City.

Ilocos Sur, Cavite and Sabluyan town in Occidental Mindoro also declared a state of calamity.

The two Ilocos provinces were the hardest hit by the typhoon, which battered them on Tuesday and Wednesday. —**WITH**

REPORTS FROM FRANCES MANGOSING, ABBY BOISER, VINCENT CABREZA, CARLA GOMEZ, JOHN MICHAEL MUGAS, DELFIN T. MALLARI JR. AND MADONNA T. VIOLA INQ



Fossil fuel phaseout can no longer be delayed

Climate change is wreaking havoc on the planet. Millions of people across Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe, and North America are now suffering from a spate of heat waves caused by record-high temperatures. This extreme heat wave is predicted to continue, leading to more wildfires and other catastrophic consequences. Meanwhile, record monsoon rainfall has also been inundating parts of India, Japan, China, and South Korea causing flash floods, landslides, and power cuts that leave hundreds dead and thousands homeless.

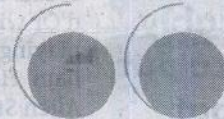
As the climate crisis takes hold, it is clear that there is no place on earth that is safe from the impacts of climate change. Despite this, there is tragically a lack of resolve and urgent action to stop the burning of fossil fuels and swiftly make a just transition toward clean, renewable energy. The amount of carbon emissions in the atmosphere due to the excessive and widespread use of coal, oil, and gas has risen by over 50 percent since the Industrial Revolution, and is still rapidly growing.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says we have a very small window of time to stop the worst consequences of climate change. Doing so requires the following: 1) ending the expansion of fossil fuel extraction and production; 2) slashing carbon pollution and fossil fuel use by at least two-thirds by 2035; 3) completely stopping the use of coal, oil, and gas before 2040 in rich countries and by mid-century for the rest of the world; 4) rapidly developing 100 percent renewable energy systems to supplant fossil fuel use and address energy poverty; and 5) fully delivering on the promise of rich countries to fulfill their climate finance obligations for a swift and successful energy transition in developing countries.

These demands are echoed in the recent impassioned plea of United Nations Secretary General António Guterres, who called for the phaseout of fossil fuels to avoid a climate ca-

COMMENTARY

LIDY NACPIL



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tastrophe, and massively boost investment in renewable energy. Yet the fossil fuel industry and its enablers are laying the groundwork for expanding fossil fuel production.

Last month, Norway's government gave oil companies the green light to develop 19 oil and gas fields, saying its oil and gas resources are essential to Europe's energy security and will be needed for decades to come. Governments in Asia and fossil fuel companies sing the same tune in pushing for the expansion of gas in the region as a transition fuel from coal.

Meanwhile, the biggest oil companies have most recently walked back on their pledges, saying that gas and oil projects must continue to ensure "security of supply and an orderly energy transition." These are deceptive and false claims. Oil and gas influence at crucial climate negotiations has been undermining efforts to forge bold commitments to lower emissions and phase out fossil fuels.

Last July 13, the president of COP28 climate summit, due to take place in November in Dubai, said that his plan of action for the summit would include the "phasedown of fossil fuels." A phasedown implies the use of carbon capture and storage (CCS) to reduce emissions to zero by 2050. This means fossil fuels would still be part of the energy mix, but the application of CCS on a massive scale will capture carbon emissions before they enter the atmosphere and are pumped underground. Sounds awesome except that CCS, as a technology for emissions reduction, remains unproven. Existing CCS plants have captured about 0.1 percent of the annual global emissions from fossil fuels; 81 percent of the carbon captured have been pumped into the ground to force more oil out. It is apparent that the push for CCS is a scam to legitimize continued fossil fuel production.

The goal of COP28 should be an agreement to phaseout fossil fuels, which means the progressive reduction in the use and production of fossil fuels to real zero by 2050.

According to the International Energy Agency, energy security concerns and the price spikes on imported fossil fuels have motivated countries to increasingly turn to renewables such as solar and wind, so much so that renewables are set to account for over 90 percent of global electricity expansion over the next five years.

Direct transition from coal to renewable energy can and should be done. The expansion of renewable energy systems can and should be pursued at a pace and scale that will address energy security and access, and ensure a swift, equitable, and just phaseout of fossil fuels. The phaseout can no longer be delayed. Humanity is racing against time to survive global warming.

Lidy Nacpil is coordinator of the Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development.



Water levels in major Luzon dams rise; 3 to release water

By ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ and FREDDIE VELEZ

The rains from typhoon "Egay" and the enhanced southwest monsoon or "habagat" caused the water levels in eight major dams in Luzon to rise, based on the 24-hour rainfall monitoring of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

PAGASA said the water levels at Ipo Dam, Ambuklao Dam, ▶3

Water levels in major Luzon dams rise; 3 to release water 1◀

and Binga Dam increased on Thursday morning, July 27 to 101.2 meters, 751 meters, and 574.63 meters, respectively.

These were significantly higher than the previous day's record of 99.5 meters, 746.43 meters, and 568.52 meters, respectively.

PAGASA warned of possible flooding as the three dams were expected to release water on Thursday.

"The water level of Ipo Dam as of 8 a.m. is 101.2 meters and continuously rising due to the expected rains caused by the current weather system. With this development, Ipo Dam will conduct a spilling operation, with one spilling gate to open at 11 a.m., with an initial discharge of 61 cms (cubic meters per second)," PAGASA said in a flood advisory.

It advised the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Offices, as well as residents living in low-lying areas and near the river banks of the Angat River in Norzagaray, Angat, San Rafael, Bustos, Baliuag, Pulilan, Plaridel, Calumpit, Paombong, and Hagonoy in Bulacan, to be on alert for a possible rise in the river's level.

In a separate advisory, PAGASA warned that water discharge from Ambuklao Dam and Binga Dam, both in Benguet, may affect Barangay Ambuklao in Bokod town, as well as Barangays Dalupirip and Tinongdan in Itogon town.

Ambuklao Dam will have eight gates opened at five meters each, while Binga Dam will have six gates opened at 5.5 meters each.

The water discharge will be caught by the San Roque Dam in Pangasinan, which is part of a series of cascading dams that include the upstream Ambuklao and Binga Dams.

As the Pangasinan dam is still at a low water level, it may benefit from the water released by the Ambuklao and Binga dams.

As of Thursday, the water level at San Roque Dam was 247.13 meters, much lower than the 280-meter normal water level. Its previous day's record was 238.25 meters.

Other dams

PAGASA said four other major dams also benefited from the light to heavy rains brought on by Egay and the enhanced habagat.

Angat Dam's water level slightly increased from 181.64 meters on Wednesday to 182.98 meters on Thursday.

Although it is already above the 180-meter minimum dam operating level, it is still much lower than the 210-meter normal high water level during the rainy season.

The Angat and Ipo dams are in Norzagaray, Bulacan.

La Mesa Dam in Quezon City and Pantabangan Dam in Nueva Ecija also saw a slight rise in water levels from 79.14 meters to 79.23 meters, and from 183.63 meters to 184.11 meters, respectively.

Meanwhile, Isabela's Magat Dam saw a notable rise in water level, from 165.39 meters to 169.32 meters.

Pantabangan and Magat dams remain significantly below their normal levels at 216 meters and 190 meters, respectively, while La Mesa Dam is near its spilling level of 80.15 meters.

Angat River

Ten municipalities in Bulacan are now on the alert due to the rising level of water in the Angat River and with two dams in the province nearing their spilling level amid heavy rains on Thursday, July 27.

As of 8 a.m. on Thursday, the water level of Angat Dam was at 183.13 meters, (normal high water level is 212 meters); the Ipo Dam was at 101.20 meters (spilling level is 101.00 meters); while Bustos Dam was at 17.17 meters (spilling level is 17.00 meters). The dams' water levels continue to rise due to heavy rains.

Ipo Dam authorities conducted a spilling operation at 11 a.m. with one spillway gate opened with an initial discharge of 61 centimeters per second (cms).

The Local Risk Reduction and Management Offices (LDRRMOs) and the residents living along the low-lying areas as well as those near the river bank of Angat River were advised to be on alert for the possible rise in the river elevation.

The alerted municipalities were Norzagaray, Angat, San Rafael, Bustos, Baliuag, Pulilan, Plaridel, Calumpit, Paombong, and Hagonoy.

As of this writing, the PAG-ASA and Ipo Dam authorities continue to monitor the hydrological condition of the Angat River.