

DATE : 18 JUN 2019

DAY : Tuesday

# DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES SERVICE

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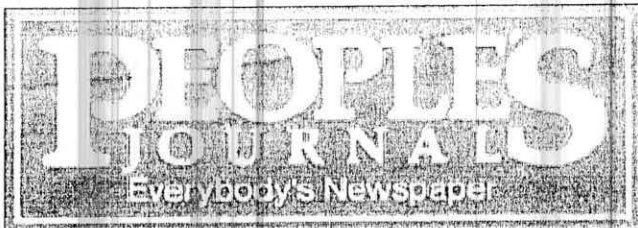
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INIABOT ni Environment Sec. Roy Cimatu ang plaque of appreciation kay Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año bilang pagkilala sa kontribusyon at suporta ng DILG sa rehabilitasyon ng Boracay Island at clean-up ng Manila Bay. Binigyan din ng katulad ng pagkilala ang DOT at DPWH sa ika-32 anibersaryo ng DENR kamakailan sa DENR Central Office sa Quezon City.



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## LAMUT RIVER IN IFUGAO CLEANEST RIVER IN PH

By Joel  
dela Torre

**A RIVER in Ifugao province was named cleanest in the Philippines besting 15 others, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) announced yesterday.**

In recognizing Ifugao's Lamut River as the country's cleanest in the Class C category, Secretary Roy Cimatu called on other provincial environment offices to exert more effort in keeping rivers in the country clean and away from degradation.

"Ensuring the cleanliness of rivers is among our top priorities," the Secretary said.

The Lamut River got the highest prize of P100,000 during the 2019 R.I.V.E.R.S for Life Award ceremony, which came as one of the highlights of the DENR's 32<sup>nd</sup> founding anniversary celebration.

It was followed by the Calbayog River in Samar while the Manaba River in Bohol got the third

place.

Calbayog River was awarded P75,000 while the Manaba River received P50,000.

The Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Offices (PENROs) and Community Environment and Natural Resources Offices (CENTROs) that have jurisdiction over the top three winning rivers received the cash prizes from Cimatu.

R.I.V.E.R.S stands for Recognizing Individuals/Institutions Towards Vibrant and Enhanced Rivers.

It aims to raise awareness on the need to protect and conserve rivers as lifeblood of the earth and human civilization.

"We aim to tap concerted action to protect the country's rivers from degradation and pollution and assure their suitability, sustainability, and further improvement," Cimatu said.

The DENR chief said that the R.I.V.E.R.s for Life Award is one way of ensuring that rivers across

the country are kept clean.

He said that rivers and creeks drain to bigger bodies of water and affect their condition, citing the case of Pasig River which drains into Manila Bay.

A total of 16 rivers under Class "C" were submitted as entries by the DENR regional offices.

Nominees were selected by the Regional Committee consisting of the regional offices of the DENR, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB).

The annual contest is open to all incumbent supervising and implementing PENROs, along with their respective CENROs.

Launched in 2017, the award intends to recognize individuals and institutions for their initiative and concerted efforts to protect the country's rivers from degradation and pollution and to improve their designated use and classification by coming up with appropriate mitigations and interventions.



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# BusinessMirror

*Always look at today's business*



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## Pasig River rehab body to build 1,411 m of linear parks on Manila, QC esteros



**A MEMBER of the River Patrols dismantles the settlements and obstructions to begin the 145 meters of Ermitaño Creek linear park.** PHOTO COURTESY OF PRRC

**F**IRST, there was Estero de Paco; then, Estero de San Miguel. This time around, the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) is looking to build a linear park along two creeks it is cleaning, one in Manila and one in Quezon City.

The PRRC said on Monday it will begin the construction of 145 linear meters along Ermitaño Creek, Quezon City and 1,266 linear meters along Estero de la Reina, Manila after its easement recovery operations.

PRRC's river patrol teams have been dismantling and removing the informal settlements to make the construction of the linear park possible.

According to PRRC, such rehabilitation strategies can transform any polluted waterway into an environmental preservation area (EPA).

Among its EPA success stories are Estero de Paco and Estero de San Miguel in Manila.

"Not only we will be able to get rid of the sources of pollution, but we will also improve the living conditions of

our communities for they can soon enjoy paved and lighted walkways along Ermitaño Creek and Estero de la Reina," said PRRC Executive Director Jose Antonio E. Goitia.

To date, PRRC has built 41.15 kilometers of linear parks, resettled almost 19,000 informal-settler families and dismantled 508 privately owned structures at no cost to the government.

PRRC also lauded the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and local government of Manila and QC for their assistance.



**CRITICAL LEVEL AT ANGAT DAM**

# NO DANCING JUST YET: RAINS FAIL TO RESOLVE WATER SUPPLY SHORTAGE

**By Ronnel W. Domingo**  
@RonWDomingoINQ

Water consumers in Metro Manila and adjacent provinces should prepare for another round of supply shortage as the stock level in the Angat Dam continues to go down despite the onset of the rainy season.

Sevillo David, Executive Director of the National Water Resources Board (NWRB), said Monday in a press briefing Angat was expected to reach its critical low level of 160 meters above sea level (masl) by this weekend.

As of Monday morning, water level at Angat—the main source of raw water for the metropolis and nearby provinces like Bulacan, Rizal and Cavite—was pegged at 162.39 masl. This has been going down at about 0.4 meter daily.

“Although Pagasa announced that the rainy season has officially begun, [there was] insignificant rainfall in the An-

gat reservoir area in the past weeks,” David said. “Further, the weather bureau forecast that heavy rainfall is highly unlikely this week due to a monsoon break in the country.”

He said if prevailing conditions persisted, the 160-masl low mark could be breached by the third week of June. The last time this happened was in 2010, when a strong El Niño brought extremely dry conditions.

He said if this happened again, Angat Dam would reactivate its Low Level Outlet, which makes possible the drawdown of water below 160 masl. Cloud-seeding operations and reactivation of deep wells would also be conducted.

The NWRB already reduced the allocation of water from Angat to MWSS from 48 cubic meters (cu. m) per second to 46 cu.m effective last June 1. At 48 cu.m, Angat is releasing the full allocation to MWSS—and used by its concessionaires, including Manila Water

Co. Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc.—equivalent to 4,000 million liters of raw water daily.

A reduction could “mean water service interruption, including reduced pressure and rotation of availability,” he added.

Ferdinand dela Cruz, president of Manila Water, said in a separate briefing reduced allocation could affect customers who are now enjoying 24-hour availability of water at 7 pounds per square inch at ground-floor level.

Dela Cruz said that as of June 16, 99.7 percent of Manila Water’s concession area—eastern Metro Manila as well as Rizal province—has water for at least eight hours daily. This includes about 90 percent of the East Zone that enjoys water for 24 hours daily.

Maynilad, meanwhile, has been announcing pockets of intermittent service interruption due to high demand and low water level at its reservoirs. INQ



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# Public urged to conserve water

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## Angat Dam nears 160-meter critical level mark

By **ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ** and **MADELAINE B. MIRAFLORE**

**R**educed water pressure, rotational service, or water interruptions may be implemented once the water level

at Angat Dam dips further to 160-meter critical mark in a few days, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) warned on Monday. ►9



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## Public urged to conserve... ◀1

As of Monday morning, the water level of Angat Dam has already declined to 162.39 meters from last Sunday's 162.82 meters. This is 17.61 meters below the dam's minimum operating water level of 180 meters.

Ipo Dam has also gone down beyond its maintaining level of 101 meters. As of Monday, its water level was at 100.73 meters. La Mesa Dam, on the other hand, was at 68.43 meters, slightly below its critical level of 69 meters.

With this development, Manila Water President and Chief Executive Officer Ferdinand Dela Cruz urged the public to conserve water.

The Ayala-led Manila Water Company, Inc. also began warning consumers of a possible supply interruption that may last for several hours every day as a mitigating measure to the declining water level from Metro Manila's major water source.

Dela Cruz said the company doesn't want to cause another panic, but Metro Manila is facing a water supply shortage and there is a need for the public to conserve water.

"The supply of Angat Dam is diminishing. It's no one's fault. It's just that the rains are not coming," Dela Cruz said.

"So there will be periods of service interruptions. We are just preparing the public," he added.

"As Angat level goes down and releases to concessionaires are reduced, there will be impact to our service," Dela Cruz said.

"We will try to make sure that reservoirs are build up, but we can't say that it is all good. We continue to appeal for the public to conserve water," he added.

NWRB Executive Director Sevilla David Jr. said that although the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) has already announced the official onset of rainy season in the country, there is an "insignificant" rainfall over the Angat watershed for the past weeks.

### 'Heavy rainfall unlikely'

Likewise, PAGASA says that heavy rainfall is "highly unlikely" this week due to a monsoon break, he cited.

It is estimated that water elevation in the reservoir will breach the low-level mark of 160 meters by this weekend

if the prevailing conditions in Angat Dam persist and no sufficient rainfall is received in Angat watershed.

The 160-meter level is considered critical for domestic water supply.

Under this scenario, David said several measures will be undertaken to manage the remaining water including the operationalization of the Angat Dam low level outlet, the bottom channel capable of releasing water below 160 meters.

He explained that they are currently testing the low-level outlet, which was last used in July 2010. The water level at Angat Dam then was 157.57 meters, the lowest in history.

So far, David said the initial releases from the low-level outlet are "manageable," meaning the water can still be treated or processed.

He also noted that the dam's low level outlet can supply water even if the Angat reaches the 150-meter level.

Cloud-seeding operations and the re-activation of Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System's (MWSS) deep wells are also continuously implemented to address the situation.

NWRB is also considering reducing the water allocation to MWSS, which is currently at 46 cubic meters per second (cms).

Angat Dam supplies about 96 percent of Metro Manila's domestic water needs, releasing about 4 million liters of water per day (mld). Of this, Manila Water gets an allocation of 1,600 mld, while West Zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services, Inc. is allowed to get the rest or about 2,400 mld.

David said the NWRB, MWSS, Maynilad, and Manila Water officials will be having a meeting today (June 18) to determine other measures and agree on the water allocation for the domestic water supply.

Should they agree on a lower water allocation, David said this could affect the regular delivery of water service provided by Metro Manila concessionaires, Maynilad and Manila Water.

Water pressure, service rotation, or interruption is expected in some areas served by the water concessionaires, he added.

NWRB cut water allocation to 32 cms in July, 2010, when an El Niño episode adversely affected the amount of rainfall over the Angat watershed.

But NWRB assured the public that the government and private sector are doing everything to lessen the adverse impact of the declining water level at Angat Dam.

### Worst year so far

Starting with its supply deficit issue back in March up until now, this could easily be the worst year for Manila Water. Dela Cruz thinks so, too.

He said it seems like this year is all about more expenses and less profit for the Ayala-led firm.

"There will be financial impact this year," Dela Cruz said. "But our focus is more on providing supply."

It was in March when the company caught itself in a supply mess that affected millions of its customers, which experienced low to no water supply for weeks.

To try to make up for it, the company implemented a voluntary and one-time bill waiver program for its consumers, a move that costs Manila Water P350 to P360 million.

This is on top of the penalties imposed by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to Manila Water for failing to meet its service obligation and provide its customers water supply 24/7.

The fine amounted to P1.13 billion, of which P534.05 million will be used by the company to implement bill rebates – as credit payment or as overpayment – for some of its customers beginning June, reflective of their May consumption.

"We can fund all of this internally so far," Dela Cruz said, adding that this will all add burden to the company's overall operational expenses for the year.

### Managing supply and demand

Meanwhile, David said managing both water supply and demand is essential to maintain water availability.

"We have been constantly appealing to the public to conserve water and we are now repeating the plea," he said.

It is expected that the water level in Angat Dam will increase in the coming months with the onset of rainy season.

Water supply will likely normalize during the peak of southwest monsoon or habagat season between July and September but the public is still encouraged to continue conserving water to help in the Angat reservoir's water level recovery.

PAGASA said the weak El Niño episode, which brought way below normal rainfall over most parts of the country will likely prevail through August, and has a chance to continue until the end of 2019.



# Rains to fill Angat Dam next month

By HELEN FLORES

Residents of Metro Manila and nearby areas must continue saving water as rains from the southwest monsoon that could normalize the supply in Angat Dam in Bulacan will not arrive until next month.

"We expect more rains come July and we expect the water level at Angat to gradually increase at that time," Esperanza Cayanan, chief of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA)'s weather division, said at a press conference.

Cayanan added that the occurrence of two to three tropical cyclones would also help Angat's water level rise back to its minimum operating level of 180 meters.

As of 6 a.m. yesterday, Angat dam's water level dipped

further to 162.39 meters.

The dam supplies 97 percent of Metro Manila's water needs.

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) warned yesterday of possible reduction of the approved water allocation to Metro Manila at 46 cubic meter per second once the dam's water level dips below the low-level mark of 160 meters.

Cayanan said July, August and September are normally the wettest months of the year.

PAGASA administrator Vicente Malano said even with the prevailing weak El Niño, they still expect a normal number of tropical cyclones this year.

About 19 to 20 cyclones visit the country every year.

But Malano warned that tropical cyclones are usually intense during El Niño years.

The El Niño phenomenon,

which triggered drought and dry spells in many areas in the past months, is likely to last up to November this year, according to PAGASA.

## 'New normal'

Malano said the country may also experience intense rains as heavy as that brought by Tropical Storm Ondoy (international name Ketsana) in September 2009.

Ondoy, which occurred during an El Niño year, dumped heavy rains for a day, which inundated Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

"The occurrence of intense rain is the new normal now because of global warming," Malano warned.

NWRB executive director Sevillo David assured the public that several measures will be undertaken to manage the remaining water, including the operationalization of the Angat Dam Low Level

Outlet (LLO), the bottom channel capable of releasing water below 160 meters.

"We have started to subject to tests and rehabilitate this LLO since March. It showed that we have manageable water quality here," he added.

This LLO was last used in July 2010 when an El Niño condition was experienced in the country, where the lowest water level recorded was 163.09 meters.

Cloud-seeding operations will also be conducted as well as reactivating the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) deep wells, David said.

David also said a reduction of the 46 cubic meter per second allocation to MWSS may be made once the water level dips below 160 meters.

East zone concessionaire Manila Water Co. Inc. warned its consumers of interrup-

tions in the next days.

"As Angat level goes down, release to the concessionaires is reduced and there will be impact on service rotation, but it does not mean that there will be no water totally," Manila Water president and CEO Ferdinand dela Cruz said at a briefing on Monday.

Manila Water assured its consumers that interruptions will be managed efficiently and will not be at peak hours.

## Farmers' lament

Based on the latest report of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, drought and dry spell damage to agriculture has reached P7.96 billion affecting 247,610 farmers.

As this developed, peasant groups urged government agencies and local government units to respond to the demands of farmers affected by El Niño's damage in agri-

cultural production.

The groups including peasant women from Occidental Mindoro, Bicol and Eastern Visayas lamented the lack of government support.

"With very limited irrigation facilities, farmers are left with nothing but barren lands," said Zenaida Soriano, Amihan chair.

Samahang Magsasaka ng Kanlurang Mindoro and Samahang Kababaihang Magsasaka sa Mindoro noted the provincial government's declaration of state of calamity last April, with damage in agriculture reaching P275 million.

According to Samahan Gudti nga Parag-uma ha Sinirangan Bisayas, farmers have not yet recovered from the devastation of Super Typhoon Yolanda as they suffered crop infestation. — **With Rhodina Villanueva, Ramon Efren Lazaro, Louise Maureen Simeon**





# Water supply crunch looms as Angat level drops

BY JED MACAPAGAL

THE National Water Resources Board (NWRB) warned of a possible Metro Manila-wide rotational water interruptions as water level in the Angat dam nears the critical level of 160 meters.

Sevillo David Jr., NWRB executive director, said as of 6 a.m. yesterday, water level in the dam

has declined to 162.39 meters, 17.61 meters below the normal minimum operating water level of 180 meters.

David said although the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) has officially declared the start of the rainy season last week, the rainfall in Angat reservoir area is deemed

insignificant.

David said PAGASA forecasts heavy rainfall is highly unlikely this week due to a monsoon break in the country.

David said based on estimates, water elevation in the Angat dam may hit below 160 meters by the third week of June if the prevailing weather condition persists and considering the current rate of

decline.

“Possible reduction of the approved 46 cms (cubic meters per second) allocation to MWSS (Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System) is foreseen once the water level dips below 160 meters. This will affect the regular delivery of water service provided by Metro Manila concessionaires, Maynilad and Manila Water. Pres-

sure reduction, water rotation and interruption are expected,” David told reporters in a briefing in Quezon City yesterday.

But David assured measures will be implemented to manage the remaining water, including the operationalization of the Angat dam low level outlet which is capable of releasing water below 160 meters, cloud seeding operations and the

re-activation of some deep wells.

“It is expected that the water level in Angat dam will increase in the coming months with the onset of the rainy season. Stable water supply will return to its normal state but the public is still encouraged to continue conserving water to help in the Angat reservoir’s

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## WATER

water level recover,” David said.

Ferdinand dela Cruz, Manila Water president and chief executive officer, said as of June 16, water availability in the east zone concession of at least 8 hours at 7 psi (pounds per square inch) at ground floor level is at 99.7 percent while 24/7 availability at ground floor level is a little over 90 percent.

Dela Cruz said when the 160-meter level of Angat is breached, availability of water level for at least 8 hours at ground floor level will remain at 99

percent but other times of the 24/7 availability of water will be affected.

“...we need to be conscious of our usage. There is no reason to panic but there is a reason to conserve water... The ideal level for Angat dam to operate normally and provide enough water for concessionaires, irrigation and hydro power would be at 180 meters but at yearend, we hope that it will be at 212 to 215 meters in order to be safe for the summer season next year,” Dela Cruz added.



## Angat level dips further despite rains

BY JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

[@jonlmayuga](#)

**A**S the water level in Angat Dam continues to go down, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) has appealed to Metro Manila's consumers to conserve water for a little longer or until the effect of the "wet season" is strongly felt—hopefully, by the end of the month.

To ensure that the supply coming from Angat Dam will last until fresh supply from the rains comes in, the NWRB advised people to minimize the use of water flowing from the tap, and use harvested rainwater to water plants, wash cars, or flush toilets for the meantime.

Angat is the source of about 96 percent of water for Metro Manila.

At a press conference in Quezon City on Monday, NWRB Executive Director Sevillo D. David Jr. said that as of 6 a.m. on June 17, 2019, the water level at Angat Dam went down to 162.39 meters. This is 17.61 meters below the minimum operating water level of 180 meters.

Although the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) announced that the rainy season has officially begun, rainfall has not boosted water supply at Angat for the past weeks, the NWRB said in a statement to media.

El Niño, David said, will continue to affect the weather systems. Moreover, the NWRB cited a weather bureau forecast that heavy rainfall is highly unlikely this week due to a monsoon break in the country.

"It is estimated that water elevation in the reservoir will breach the low-level mark of 160 meters by the third week of June 2019

if the prevailing conditions in Angat Dam persist and no sufficient rainfall is received [at Angat] watershed, considering the current rate of decline in water elevation," the NWRB said. The level is considered critical for domestic water supply.

According to Sevillo, in this scenario, several measures will be undertaken to manage the remaining water, including the operationalization of the Angat Dam Low Level Outlet (LLO), the bottom channel capable of releasing water below 160 meters.



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## Water interruptions seen if Angat level further dips

ANGAT DAM is seen to hit the critical water level of 160 meters by this weekend, with east zone concessionaire Manila Water Company, Inc. (MWC) warning its customers of more service interruptions.

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) said as of 6 a.m. on Monday, the water level at Angat Dam declined to 162.39 meters, 17.61 meters below the minimum operating level of 180 meters.

In a press briefing in Quezon City, NWRB Executive Director Seville D. David, Jr. said if there are no heavy rains soon, the water level at Angat Dam may fall to a new low.

"We are hoping *na dumating ang pag-ulan at 'di dumating sa ganung* level. (We are hoping that rain will come and it won't get to that level.) But we will see in the next couple of days until next week," Mr. David said.

Water elevation at Angat Dam last dropped below the critical level of 160 meters on July 13, 2010 when it registered a low of 157.57 meters, as the El Niño phenomenon affected the country.

"*Kailangan natin ma-manage yung supply until such time na umabot yung pag-ulan talaga sa watershed* (We need to manage the supply until such time that rain will come to the watershed,)" Mr. David said.

MWC President and Chief Executive Officer Ferdinand M. Dela Cruz said noted that its service will be affected as the Angat Dam's level goes down and water releases to concessionaires are reduced.

"There will be rotational interruptions, but it doesn't mean *na walang tubig* (there is no water).

We will try to make sure that the reservoirs are still filled up," Mr. Dela Cruz said in a briefing in Mandaluyong on Monday.

For the east zone, MWC said water availability for at least eight hours at the ground floor is at 99.7%. Meanwhile, its 24-hour availability at least at the ground floor is at "a little over 90%" of its water service connections as of Sunday.

Mr. Dela Cruz said Angat Dam's water level should be at 212-215 meters for it to comfortably service its customers.

The company has benefited from its supply augmentation efforts despite the lower levels at Angat Dam. This includes supply from its Cardona treatment plant which delivers almost 60 million liters per day (MLD), deep wells that provide 47 MLD, and cross border flows from west zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services, Inc. at 20 MLD.

"We've been successful in augmenting the supply that we could control...so we're about 107 MLD on the things we could control," Mr. Dela Cruz said, adding that the Cardona plant will reach 100 MLD by August.

Mr. Dela Cruz said that while the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration already declared the official start of the rainy season last week, water level at Angat Dam continues to go down since rains are not strong enough to bring it back to its normal level.

Mr. Dela Cruz however said that Angat Hydropower Corp. has assured them that even if the critical level is hit, they can continue operating until the dam hits 150

Water, SI/2

### Water, from SI/1

meters through a combination of low level outlet and bypass, which are other ways of drawing water from the dam.

"The caveat there, the lowest operating point we've done is 157. We've never crossed lower. This is new territory for us. What we're saying is we're happy that there is contingency — that's still 10 meters," Mr. Dela Cruz said.

NWRB's Mr. David said the dam's low level outlet, which was last used in July 2010, is now being tested. He said according to the tests, water quality coming from the low level outlet is "manageable."

MWC said it will continue to monitor the volume and water quality when the dam reaches its critical level. — **Arra B. Francia and Katrina T. Mina**



Trusted Since 1938

# The Manila Times

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## Brace for supply disruptions, Manila Water, Maynilad warn

METRO Manila residents need to brace for water supply disruptions as Angat Dam nears a critical mark, utilities Manila Water Co. Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. said on Monday.

"There will be service interruptions, but it does not mean *naman na walang tubig* (there will be no water)," Manila Water President and Chief Executive Officer Ferdinand de la Cruz told reporters.

"We're just appealing to the public for understanding when we do implement interruptions across the concession [area] because of the limited supply," he added.

Manila Water still has to fully recover from a supply shortage that hit the metropolis in March and de la Cruz reported that 99.7 percent of its customers currently enjoyed access to water for at least 8 hours.

Round the clock water availability at the ground floor level had also reached a little over 90 percent, he added.

Maynilad, for its part, also said Angat's hitting the critical mark could force it to limit water deliveries to customers.

"*Pag umabot na kasi ng 160 meters 'yung Angat Dam, kailangan na nating mag-implement ng rotational service interruptions...* (Once Angat Dam hits the 160-meter mark, we will need to implement rotational service interruptions)," Maynilad corporate communications head Jennifer Rufo said in an interview.

She added that a schedule of service interruptions would be issued in advance to allow customers to

store water.

Maynilad has been lowering pressure within its concession area since the National Water Resources Board reduced its water allocation to 46 cubic meters per second beginning this month.

Rufo said the firm started implementing pressure management last week.

Angat is the primary source of water for Metro Manila and neighboring provinces. Water from the dam is shared by Maynilad (60 percent) and Manila Water (40 percent).

National Water Resources Board Executive Director Seville David Jr. said on Monday they expect the 160-meter mark to be breached by the end of the week.

As of Monday morning, the water level at the reservoir had fallen to 162.39 meters, well below the minimum operating mark of 180 meters.

David said the dam's low level outlet, capable of releasing water below the 160-meter point, was being tested and could be reopened. It was last used in July 2010 when Angat's level hit 157.56 meters.

Water quality from the low level outlet is "manageable" based on initial tests, he added.

Heavy rains are expected to replenish Angat beginning next month.

**JORDEENE B. LAGARE**



■ National Water Resources Board Executive Director Seville David Jr. holds a poster urging the public to conserve water. PHOTO BY ROGER RAÑADA



## Magtipid ng Tubig

Alam nating lubhang mahalaga ang tubig sa tao. Ngunit nagsimulang maranasan ng Pilipinas ang *El Niño* kung saan nagkaroon tayo ng abnormal na panahon na naghahatid ng matagalang tagtuyot sa malaking bahagi ng bansa. Nagiging sakti ito upang makaranas tayo ng kakulangan ng tubig para sa irigasyon, hydropower, agrikultura, at sa mga pangangailangan pang-industriya at pambahay.

### NARIRITO ANG ILANG GABAY SA PAGTITIPID NG TUBIG:

- 1 Tiyaking hindi tumatagas ang gripo. Siguruhing mahigpit ang paghaksara ng gripo kapag hindi ginagamit. Umaabot sa 200 litro kada limang minuto ang naakapang kapag nailiwang tumutulo ang tubig sa gripo. Hangga't maari, maglagay ng low volume, high pressure (LVHP) nozzles o flow restrictors sa mga gripo sa lahat ng linya ng tubig. Mababawasan maakap ang tubig ng halos 50%.
- 2 Magtipid ng tubig sa paglilo. Gumamit lamang ng sabon na tubig at sabon. Huwag hayaang umaapaw ang tubig habang nagbabawaw. Ang bukas na gripo ay nakapag-aakap ng 6 na litro ng tubig sa bawat minuto.
- 3
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- 7 Tangaliin ang mga tirang pagkain sa pinggan bago ito iugasan. Hangga't maari gumamit ng patering-guro at maglagay nang iminahan upang makatipid sa tula at sabon.
- 8 Mag-recycle ng tubig. Ang pagpapalawig sa mga pagpapalawig gamit ang pagpapalawig sa mga pagpapalawig ng tubig.
- 9 Magkaroon ng puhunan para sa pagpapalawig ng tubig. Tapos bawat na gumamit ng tubig, ang tubig ay dapat itatagpuan sa tamang lugar.
- 10
- 11
- 12 Mag-imbak ng tubig sa mga lugar na hindi dapat itatagpuan. Ang tubig dapat itatagpuan sa mga lugar na hindi dapat itatagpuan.
- 13
- 14

EXECUTIVE Director Sevillo David Jr. of the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) briefs media on Monday on the current Angat Dam water level and its impact on Metro Manila's water supply. NONOY LACZA



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## Angat water level nears critical level

Reduced water pressure, rotational service, or water interruptions may be implemented once the water level at Angat Dam in Bulacan dips further to the 160-meter critical mark in a few days, the National Water Resources Board warned yesterday.

As of yesterday morning, the water level of Angat declined to 162.39 meters from last Sunday's 162.82 meters. This is 17.61 meters below the dam's minimum operating water level of 180 meters.

According to NWRB Executive Director Seville David Jr., although the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration has announced the official onset of rainy season in the country, there is an "insignificant" rainfall over the Angat watershed for the past weeks.

PAGASA said that heavy rainfall is "highly unlikely" this week due to a monsoon break, he cited.

It is estimated that water elevation in the reservoir will breach the low-level mark of 160 meters by this weekend if the prevailing conditions in Angat Dam persist and no sufficient rainfall is received in the Angat watershed.

The 160-meter level is considered critical for domestic water supply.

In this scenario, David said several measures will be undertaken to manage the remaining water, including the operationalization of the Angat Dam low level outlet, the bottom channel capable of releasing water below 160 meters. **(Ellalyn V. Ruiz)**



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# Interruptions loom as Angat Dam level dips

**By CNN Philippines**

**EAST zone concessionaire Manila Water on Sunday warned of possible rotational service interruptions as the water level in Angat Dam dips near critical levels.**

As of 6 a.m., the water level in the reservoir is at 162.78 meters, just two meters shy of the 160-meter critical mark.

"As a result, Manila Water may need to make further operational adjustments affecting water supply for our customers," it said in a statement.

In March, customers of Manila Water in Metro Manila and Rizal experienced week-long water shortages. The concessionaire had attributed the lack

of supply to La Mesa Dam water levels sinking below the critical mark.

Meanwhile, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) yesterday warned that Angat Dam's water may reach critical level by the end of this week, according to a Philippine News Agency (PNA) report.

NWRB Director Seville David Jr., in a press briefing yesterday, said Angat Dam's water level continues to decline, down to 162.39 meters as of yesterday, despite the rains in Metro Manila these past days.

"Although PAGASA announced that the rainy season has officially begun, insignificant rainfall showered in the Angat reservoir area for the past weeks," said David.

Meantime, PAGASA said that it is "highly un-

likely" that heavy rainfall will occur this week, David added.

The minimum operating water level (MOWL) of Angat Dam is at 180 meters, which means yesterday's level of the dam is 17.61 meters below the MOWL.

Considering the current rate of decline in water elevation of Angat Dam, David said this is considered "critical" for domestic water supply which will affect residents in Metro Manila, Bulacan, Rizal, and parts of Cavite.

"Possible reduction of the approved 46 cubic meters per second (CMS) allocation to MWSS (Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System) is foreseen once the water level dipped below 160 meters. This will affect the regular delivery of water service provided to Metro Manila concessionaires -- Maynilad and Manila Water. Pressure reduction, water rotation and interruption are expected," he noted.

David, however, assured that the government and the water concessionaires are doing everything to lessen the adverse impacts brought by the situation.

He said several measures are now being undertaken to manage the remaining water including the operationalization of the Angat Dam low level outlet (LLO), the bottom channel capable of releasing water below 160 meters.



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## Angat dam pa-kritikal na

MAAARING bumaba sa critical level ang tubig sa Angat Dam bago matapos ang linggo.

Kahapon ng umaga, ang lebel ng tubig sa dam ay 162.39 metro mula sa 162.82 metro na naitala Linggo ng umaga, ayon sa National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

Ang critical level ng dam ay 160 metro at ang normal high water level nito ay 210 metro.

Noong 2010 naitala ang pinakamaba-

bang lebel ng tubig na inabot ng dam.

Sa Angat dam kinukuha ang malaking bahagi ng isinusuplay na tubig sa Metro Manila.

Nitong Biyernes, inanunsyo ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration ang pagsisimula ng tag-ulan subalit hindi pa umano kalakasan ang Hanging Habagat kaya hindi pa bubuhos nang husto ang ulan. —  
*Leifbilly Begas*





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### Sa susunod na 4 araw

## **Angat dam posibleng umabot sa 160-meter critical level**

**KAHIT** may nararanasan nang mga pag-ulan sa Metro Manila at mga kalapit na lalawigan, hindi umano nakatutulong upang madagdagan ang water level sa mga dam.

Ayon kay National Water Resources Board Executive Director Seville David Jr., patuloy sa pagbaba ang antas ng tubig sa Angat dam sa Bulacan at malapit na itong umabot sa critical level.

Hindi umaabot sa watershed ng Angat Dam ang naiipong tubig mula sa pag-ulang nararanasan noong mga nagdaang araw.

Sinabi ni David, kung magpapatuloy ang kasalukuyang sitwasyon na walang pag-ulan na mararanasan sa bahagi ng Angat dam ay aabot sa 160-meter level ang antas ng tubig sa naturang dam sa susunod na apat na araw.

Napag-alamang ang 160-meter level ng naturang dam ang itinuturing na critical level para sa supply ng tubig sa mga kabahayan.

Hindi rin isinasantabi ng NWRB ang posibilidad na maulit ang nangyari noong taon 2010 na umabot sa 157 meters ang water level sa Angat dam.

(MICKA BAUTISTA)



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# TUBIG SA ANGAT DAM TULOY SA PAGBABA

**NABAHALA** na ang National Water Resources Board (NWRB) sa patuloy na pagbaba ng lebel ng Angat Dam bunsod pa rin ng kakapusan ng tubig ulan dagdag pa ang epekto ng El Niño.

Sa isang press conference, sinabi ni NWRB Executive Director Seville David, Jr. na bumaba na sa 162.39 meter ang lebel ng Angat dam kung kaya't nakatakdang magpu-long ang NWRB ngayong araw ng Martes sa iba't ibang ahensiya ng gobyerno kung paano matutugunan at i-manage ang natitira pang tubig sa naturang dam.

Layon ng gaganaping pulong na i-evaluate ang situwasyon ng kritikal na lebel ng dam at malaman kung ano ang magiging lagay ng panahon sa mga susunod na mga linggo upang makagawa ng karampatang aksiyon ang

ahensiya kung ipagpapatuloy ang mahinang pressure ng tubig sa Metro Manila o mag-sasagawa ng water interruptions.

Napag-alamang idaraos ang pagpupulong kasama ang NWRB gayundin ang pamunuan ng National Irrigation Administration (NIA); National Power Corporation (Napocor); mga concessionaires gaya ng Maynilad at Manila Water partikular ang Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) na ayon kay David ay napakahalaga ng papel bunsod ng nakadepende ang mga ahensiya sa magiging pagtaya sa panahon.

Kasunod nito, umapela naman si Seville sa local government units (LGUs) na makipagtulungan sa pamamagitan ng paghikayat sa kanilang nasasakupan na

gumamit ng recycled water at mag-ipon ng tubig-ulan.

Pinansin din ng opisyal ang mga car wash na dapat limitahan ang paggamit ng treated water at sa halip ay gumamit ng recycled water bilang tulong sa water conservation efforts ng ahensiya dulot ng lumulubhang problema sa kakapusan ng supply ng tubig sa Metro Manila.

Nabatid na 96 porsiyento sa Metro Manila ay umaasa sa Angat dam kaya masusing mino-monitor ng mga ahensiya ang pag-discharge ng tubig sa lugar.

Sinabi pa ng NWRB chief na ang nagdaang mga pag-ulan na naranasan sa Kalakhang Maynila ay balewala lamang bunsod ng hindi ito napunan ang kakapusan o bumababang lebel ng tubig sa Angat dam dahil sa hindi ito direktang tumatama rito. **BENEDICT ABAYGAR, JR.**



## TUBIG SA ANGAT, PABABA NANG PABABA

# Water shortage sa Metro Manila, nakaamba

Ni ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

Mababang water pressure, rotational service, o pagkaantala sa supply ng tubig ang maaaring maranasan kapag patuloy pang bumaba ang tubig sa Angat Dam sa 160-meter critical mark sa mga susunod na araw, babala kahapon ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB).

Kahapon ng umaga, bumaba ang water level ng Angat Dam sa 162.39 metro mula sa dating 162.82 metro nitong Linggo. Mas mababa ito ng 17.61 metro sa minimum operating water level ng dam na 180 metro.

Ayon kay NWRB Executive Director Seville David Jr., bagamat opisyal nang inihayag ng Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) ang pagpasok ng tag-ulan sa bansa, mayroon pa ring "insignificant" rainfall sa Angat watershed sa nakalipas na mga linggo.

Aniya, hindi rin maaasahan ang malakas na buhos ng ulan ngayong linggo, ayon sa PAGASA, dahil sa monsoon break.

Pinangangambahang bababa ang antas ng tubig sa dam sa low-level mark na 160 metro ngayong linggo kung magpapatuloy ang sitwasyon sa Angat Dam at walang sapat na tubig-ulan itong matatanggap.

Ang 160-meter level ay maikokonsiderang kritikal para sa domestic water supply.

Sa ganitong kondisyon, sinabi

ni David na ilang hakbangin ang kailangang ipatupad para sa natitirang tubig kabilang ang operationalization ng Angat Dam low level outlet.

Ipinaliwanag din niya na sinusuri na nila ang low level outlet, na huling ginamit noong Hulyo 2010 nang umabot sa 157.57 metro ang tubig sa dam, ang pinakamababa sa kasaysayan.

Patuloy rin ang pagsasagawa ng cloud-seeding at re-activation ng mga balon ng Metropolitan Waterworks

and Sewerage System's (MWSS) upang umagapay sa sitwasyon.

Pinag-aaralan na rin ng NWRB ang pagbaba ng alokasyon sa MWSS.

Habang nakatakda na ring magpulong ang NWRB, MWSS, Maynilad, at Manila Water officials ngayong araw para mapag-aralan ang mga maaaring gawing solusyon sa alokasyon ng tubig sa kabahayan.

Inaasahan namang tataas na ang tubig sa Angat Dam sa mga susunod na buwan sa pagpasok ng tag-ulan.



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## This column repeats its warning



**Cecilio T. Arillo**  
**DATABASE**

**L**ET this column repeat the warning it issued on May 16 that unless the government stops logging in the Angat Dam watershed, orders its immediate reforestation and cleans the heavily silted dam, Metro Manila residents will surely suffer again a severe water shortage and a possible deadly flooding in the coming rainy days.

If this warning continues to be ignored and a disaster happens, then let it be on the conscience of the concerned authorities, which, for sure, will hound them forever.

On June 14, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said the water level at Angat Dam reached its lowest level in five years and may even further decline in nine to 10 days.

The dam's original 217-meter water level is now only 85 meters, thus depriving Metro Manila the equivalent of 132 meters deep of reserved water as a result of siltation and unabated logging.

The Dam's aqueduct was supposed to allow unhampered water flow of 22 CMS (cubic meters per second) to La Mesa Dam and, thus, supply the water requirements of Metro Manila and the adjacent provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga and Nueva Ecija.

The dam's original 62,000 hectares reservation includes parts of Bulacan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija and the Sierra Madre Mountain. If reports are accurate, what remains of the dam's reservation is only about 25,000 hectares.

The National Association of Lawyers for Justice and Peace (NALJP) and The Confederation of Government Employees Organization (Cogeo), headed by Atty. Jesus I. Santos, wrote to Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), bringing to his attention the problem of water shortage, the unabated logging of the Angat Dam watershed and the continued siltation of the water reservoir.

In his letter to Cimatu, Santos cited in detail the destructive logging in the Angat watershed, the siltation of the dam's water reservoir, and the death and destruction due to flooding, which was proven in a Senate investigation on the complaint of the NALJP.

Angat Dam Watershed was then a Virgin Forest.

Sometimes after the declaration of martial law, a close kin of former President Marcos sent two engineering battalions to Angat to cut high-class trees, including Lawaan, Kamagong and other expensive varieties.

In reaction, President Marcos

ordered then-Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile to immediately stop the cutting of trees in the watershed and the cancellation of the permit granted to his kin, thus stopping the degradation of the watershed.

Unfortunately, the next administration of President Corason Cojuangco Aquino promulgated on July 16, 1987, Executive Order 224, empowering the National Power Corp. (NPC) to cut trees in the Angat reservation.

It was then that the sad story of the Angat Dam watershed began to unravel in 1989 when the NPC brazenly issued permits to cut trees in the Angat Dam reservation that saw the destruction of the watershed.

Because of the massive denudation, the dam is now terribly silted due to landslides and rampaging volumes of floodwater and debris coming from the mountain.

Sometime in 1978, floodwaters cascaded down from the watershed, flooding large parts of Bulacan, Pampanga and Nueva Ecija, killing more than 300 people and destroying houses, poultry, piggeries and other valuables.

On February 22, 2018, the NALJP and the Cogo wrote to call a meeting regarding the continuous illegal logging in the watershed. The DENR granted this meeting and the governor of Bulacan and the PNP area commander attended.

After this meeting, the DENR informed the group that there was a permit granted by the government to cut 26,000 trees but the DENR reduced it to 3,000 trees, based on a press release dated June 19, 2017.

The NALJP and Cogo asked the DENR local director as to what actions were taken on the following:



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This column repeats its warning

"The tree cutting projects granted to Angat Hydropower Corp. and Dyke Rehabilitation Projects, which was contained in a letter dated April 27, 2017."

"What happened to the 3,000 cut trees delivered to the compound of the controversial Hanjin Corp.?"

According to Director Francisco Milla of DENR Region 3, the 3,000 trees could only be taken out from the Hanjin compound with his consent.

Santos and the rest of his group never got a coherent answer.

What really surprised Santos and local officials is that instead of the national government stopping the denudation of the Angat watershed, it is, in fact, the one abetting the destruction of the watershed with NPC, in particular, issuing the permit to log the area.

The Angat watershed is mainly in the municipality of Doña Remedios Trinidad in Bulacan, with a smaller portion found within the municipality of Norzagaray, the Angat watershed has an original total land area of 65,707 hectares.

The water from the Angat Dam, where construction started in November 1961 and completed in July 1967, was supposed to run a 16-megawatt auxiliary generator and a 200-megawatt main generator to supply the power requirements of Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon.

The dam was also intended to irrigate 20 municipalities in Bulacan and Pampanga. The dam was also capable of irrigating an average area of 23,000 hectares during the wet season and 27,000 hectares during the dry season when the sluice gates were opened.

To reach the writer, e-mail [cecilia.arillo@gmail.com](mailto:cecilia.arillo@gmail.com).



# Wattah! Wattah! No Wattah?

Nope, but SJ's *basaan* will be scaled down

**By Neil Alcober**

This year's celebration in San Juan City of its Wattah! Wattah! Festival will center on water conservation aimed at raising environmental awareness.

This was disclosed by the city government, led by outgoing Mayor Guia Gomez, during a press briefing on Monday in preparation for the festivities.

It has been a tradition for the people of San Juan to celebrate the birthday of the city's patron saint, St. John the Baptist, through the "basaan" or dousing of water, which simulates the act of baptism.

Earlier in March, a water crisis hit many parts of Metro Manila.

In response, the Wattah! Wattah! Foundation plans to highlight the religious aspects of the festival while encouraging celebrators to conserve water.

Through water conservation activities, the festival will demonstrate the faith of San Juanenos to their patron and their responsible use of limited natural resources.

## Responsible fun

"While the city has already been advocating water conservation campaigns, we think it is about time that the festival will highlight the environmental aspect," said Dante Santiago, head of San Juan's City Environment and Natural Resources Office.

"We can all have fun and be responsible to Mother Nature at the same time," he added.

This year's Wattah! Wattah! Festival started with the observation of the World Environment Day on Wednesday, 7 June. The festival's grand weekend will kick off on Friday, 21 June,

and will culminate in the grand celebration on Monday.

Wattah! Wattah! will hold waterways and river cleanup programs, water caravan and tree planting activity. Organizers will also launch an online water conservation campaign.

## Binds community

"Wattah! Wattah! Festival binds the solid community of San Juan. But we also recognize that water is a blessing to cherish," Mayor Gomez said.

"This year, it's time for a change. It's time we renew our faith and life by showing our faith by how well we take care our blessings," she added.

In addition to the scaled-down "basaan," street dancing, float parades, concerts, masses, and other pocket activities will fall under the four main pillars of the festival — Conservation, Arts & Culture, Faith, and Solid San Juan — will be featured throughout the nearly month-long celebration.

## Festival to focus on water conservation and environmental awareness.

Mayor Gomez said that 16 firetrucks will be deployed in all barangays for the traditional dousing of waters.

"In the past years, many firetrucks have participated, but this time we limit it to 16 and the rest will have a caravan that will provide potable water from Manila Water," Gomez said

The mayor also wished that the next administration will continue the Wattah! Wattah! Festival.

"Hopefully, they will continue

it. Maybe they have better ideas than we have because the next mayor (Francis Zamora) is young, so he has to add his own ideas and level up the festivities," Gomez said.

## Institutionalized

In 2014, the City Council institutionalized the Wattah! Wattah! Festival in San Juan and appropriated funds for it.

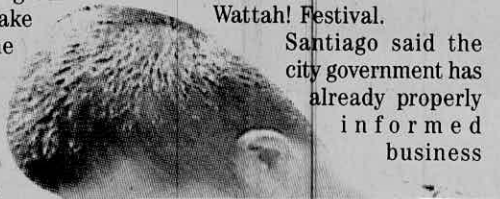
"It is already a tradition. It is just an institutionalized festivity just like any other festival in the country," Gomez said.

She said then vice mayor and now Mayor Francis Zamora was the head of the committee sponsoring the ordinance that institutionalized the Wattah! Wattah! Festival.

Santiago said the city government has already properly informed business

establishments in the city about water conservation tips.

"I just hope that other local government units can replicate what we are doing, because that's the only way that we can inform our business people to properly care for the environment," Santiago said.





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CELEBRATION TO HIGHLIGHT NEED FOR CONSERVATION

# WATER CRISIS LEADS SAN JUAN TO TWEAK WATTAH WATTAH FESTIVAL

By Matthew Reysio-Cruz  
@MatthewINQ

The San Juan City government said on Monday that it would forge ahead with the celebration of its annual Wattah Wattah Festival despite a water shortage problem in parts of Metro Manila that could worsen as dam levels continue to drop.

Mayor Guia Gomez said in a press briefing that rather than forgo the celebration altogether, they decided to refashion the festival, which began as a commemoration of the feast day of the city's patron saint, St. John the Baptist.

While previous Wattah Wattah festivities culminated in a parade of about 50 fire trucks, each one dousing residents and tourists with free-flowing water, the government now plans to deploy throughout the week up to three fire trucks daily to areas in the city beset by water interruptions.

Only 16 fire trucks, blessed by the parish priest and representing the festival's 16-year his-



**NEW THEME** San Juan's Wattah Wattah Festival celebration this year will not center on the "basaan" but the importance of conserving limited water resources. —GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE

tory, would be used during the grand celebration or *basaan*—said to imitate the act of baptism—on June 24.

There are still nine barangays in San Juan that experience water interruptions between 5 p.m. and 5 a.m. because

of their high elevation, according to city councilor Vincent Pacheco, Wattah Wattah committee chair.

Fire trucks from the city government and Manila Water Co. Inc., the concessionaire in charge of the city, will deliver

water to residents in the affected areas between 3 and 5 p.m. until June 24.

In March, parts of Metro Manila experienced a water crisis after La Mesa Dam's water level dropped to its lowest, with Manila Water saying it could not keep up with consumer demand.

Rather than ignore the problem, San Juan officials appeared ready to embrace the shortage as an opportunity to deepen the meaning of the festival and turn it into an opportunity to highlight the need to conserve water.

"While the city has already been advocating water conservation campaigns, we think it is about time that the festival itself will highlight the environmental aspect," said City Environment and Natural Resources Office head Dante Santiago.

He added that volunteers who used to assist in the "watercade," the city-wide parade with floats, street dancing and the *basaan*, would be sent instead to the affected barangays.

—WITH A REPORT FROM MAXINE STA. CRUZ INQ



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## San Juan to limit festival water use

By **ARLENE RIVERA**

**THE San Juan City government will only use 16 trucks of water from the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) during the yearly celebration of "Wattah, Wattah" Festival on June 24 due to the recent water crisis experienced by the metropolis.**

Outgoing Mayor Guia Gomez said this year's celebration will focus on water conservation due to the ongoing water crisis in Metro Manila.

San Juan Police chief, PCol. Ariel R. Fulo said all uniformed personnel will be deployed within the strategic areas to guard possible attempts by any group or criminal elements to disrupt the feast.

Fulo said, at least 50 personnel from the Eastern Police District (EPD) will be deployed to augment the police force.

Last year, over 50 fire trucks were used by the local government during the festivity.

Councilor Vincent Pacheco, chairman of the festival, said that Manila Water will provide potable water for seven consecutive days to the nine barangays in San Juan City whose water supply are being interrupted every 5 p.m.

"In 2018, we used more than 50 fire trucks from near-

by cities and provinces. This year, we only limited the number to 16 only because of the recent water crisis," he said during a press briefing in San Juan Monday.

"What's happening to us now is a wake up call. This is why we are teaching people how to conserve water," he added.

Earlier in March, a water crisis hit many parts of Metro Manila. Around 52,000 household experienced water shortage with countless residents lining up for water rations.





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# Puerto council grills PCSD

The PPCWD should have explained clearly how viable the Montible river is as an alternative source of water to Irawan river

**By Andrio Atienza**

PUERTO PRINCESA, Palawan – The City Council of this city on Monday grilled a top official of the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) due to alleged “intentional” delay in the approval of clearance for an additional source of water supply for the Puerto Princesa City Water District (PPCWD),

Councilor Roy Ventura said they wanted to know the status of the applied Strategic Environmental Plan (SEP) clearance of the City Water District in Montible connections to abate the water shortage. He said the application was made in 2016 but no action

was taken from the office of PCSD.

Nelson Devanadera, executive director of PCSD, denied the allegations that his office was holding the application. He said the PPCWD should have explained clearly how viable the Montible River is as an alternative source of water to Irawan River.

Devanadera said on 15 October last year, the PCSD sent a letter to Antonio Romasanta, general manager of PPCWD which referred to the application for the SEP Clearance of the Montible-Lapu-lapu Water Supply Improvement Project.

“After diligent evaluation of your project, the PCSD staff has determined the lack of technical integrity and therefore the feasibility

cannot be ascertained given the merits of your submitted documents. The area is low lying that depending on the gravitational pressure alone will not suffice for efficient water inflow towards the city proper where bulk of consumers and establishments are located,” Devanadera said.

He stressed that the diagram and plan missed out on the main component which is water balance capacity to guarantee the long-term sustainability of the project.

Romasanta did not attend the session in the City Council.

The PPCWD submitted the Initial Environmental Examination to the PCSD which Devanadera countered.



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## SHOOTING STRAIGHT

BOBIT S. AVILA

### Cleanliness is next to godliness

Yesterday morning, as I drove to my office, I couldn't help but notice

the numerous uncollected garbage bags alongside the streets of Cebu City. It just makes me wonder if this is also happening in many places in Metro Cebu. Then a few minutes later,

I read a news report that Pres. Rodrigo Duterte has one advice for new mayors who will be assuming their posts on June 30: Clean their cities or he will force the government's present mindset on them. This was during an interview with the President last Saturday in Davao City. We all know that the President was mayor of Davao City before he became president. DU30 pointed out that being mayor is just about making sure that the city is clean.



If there is anything I saw in the Scandinavian cities that I visited last month, it is that their streets are very clean and spotless. Even in St. Petersburg, Russia where we went it was spanking clean, which gives you an idea what Filipino tourists feel when they return home... to see for themselves how dirty our streets are. Indeed, despite our Christian heritage where we are taught that cleanliness is next to godliness, Filipinos don't mind their dirty surroundings. Sure we may clean ourselves by taking a bath even twice a day (that's if water is available), but within our homes we are still a very dirty people.

As President Duterte said, "It's just about cleaning the city, imposing law and order, and especially drugs, and try to limit the movements of criminals from other places." He added, "These are the things we would like to do which in the past had been there in the government agenda. It's either they accept the present mindset of the government, or if not, we will force it upon them. There's no other choice." According to Pres. Duterte, the Philippines is still a democratic country, but noted that democracy has good and bad effects on society.

But now, Pres. Duterte has three more years to go. Sure, he may have said that he regretted his decision to run for President but then this is the problem with Pres. Duterte who always talks when his mind is open and you get it regardless of its consequences. In effect, Pres. Duterte is a very honest person to a fault that he tells us what lurks in his mind. For instance in the social media too many Netizens question the President's silence on that raging issue of a Chinese fishing vessel supposedly ramming a Filipino fishing boat in the Recto Bank. People are saying that Pres. Duterte is scared of telling the Chinese President about this incident.

To add to the noise in the social media, Sen. Franklin Drilon demanded that China issue an apology to the Philippines on this maritime incident. An apology? How conveniently Sen. Drilon forgot that when he was Senate President, on Aug. 23, 2010, during the presidency of Benigno Aquino III, a hostage taking incident occurred in Quirino Grandstand in Rizal Park where a multi-awarded police officer Rolando Mendoza took hostage Hong Kong tourists on board a bus and at the end of this ghastly incident, eight tourists were killed.

Worse, Pres. Aquino was seen and photographed in the front pages of our newspapers smiling while he inspected the ill-fated tourist bus. Now, did the President of the Philippines issue an apology to China for that mishap? I don't think so! As columnist, I reminded P-Noy that as President he is on top of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and it was a police officer that did the hostage-taking. It was the poor implementation of an attempt to rescue the Hong Kong hostages that resulted in the deaths of the hostages. Yet Pres. Aquino did not apologize for that incident. So why should Sen. Drilon demand it from China?



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## Saving the environment and BBB

We give way to more readers who contributed their views on issues that were raised in past columns. Please hear them out.

The first two are comments on the plan to rehabilitate Manila Bay. Here's what Eduardo Agbanlog says: "Your article in ... **PhilStar** is quite compelling and right on point. I see an uphill battle in undertaking the cleanup of this iconic place mainly because of the culture of our people and the lack of enforcement of our environmental protection laws.

"We probably have one of the best laws written in the world, but sadly, implementation and enforcement of these laws are just a few of the glaring examples of why Manila Bay is where it's at in its very sad state today.

"By the way, do you have any information about the reclamation projects along the Manila Bay coastline that stretches the cities of Manila, Pasay, and Parañaque? Will the ongoing cleanup pose a delay in rolling out these projects? I'll continue to follow your posts, and more power to you."

### BIZLINKS



REY GAMBOA

This one is from Rod Estrella: "One of the great polluters in our city or any city for that matter are the market places, which more often than not are located near rivers and *esteros*.

"It has been this way since the beginning because it is so easy to dump trash in those places. (Market places) are the great polluters. There should be a law prohibiting markets from being located near (rivers and *esteros*).

#### Saving Baguio and Sagada

Noel C. Mallari gives some suggestions on how to save Baguio City and Sagada from further degradation.

"I have been to Sagada, and it is really beautiful. I am from Baguio, and they say Baguio was once like Sagada until it became a highly urbanized city, and its pristine beauty is now history.

"It is not too late to save Baguio if there is a concerted effort from the local tourist, locals and government agencies to make Baguio more beautiful, clean and with less pollution.

"Our population is growing fast yearly. More hotels and condos are under construction, but our parks, rivers, and mountains are in the state of fast degradation.

"All our parks should be maintained world class, super beautiful, clean, and with more flowers at that. They should impose (a rule) "one house, one tree" with no exemptions - not necessarily pine trees, any kind of trees, big or small.

"All sewers leading to our brooks should be plugged, and (government should) provide good sewer lines.

"On traffic, (plate endings of vehicles with) even numbers (should be banned) between 6 a.m. to 12 noon, and odd numbers, between 1 p.m to 7 p.m.

"Baguio should invest big on its parks, forests, waterways, sewers, and not only road construction. I believe Baguio can be saved, and Sagada for that matter will learn from Baguio."

### On BBB

Reader Federico I. Lojo of Lipa City gives his view on the government's Build Build Build initiatives. Let's hear him out.

"It is this BBB program of Mr. Duterte that gives me an eerie feel that it is not for our own national interest, but just the interest of a very few.

"I just cannot understand why the President would not publicize the finer details of the contract with China, and why this President would allow Chinese workers to come in lieu of Filipino labor.

"I am coming to the conclusion that this BBB is only for the very favored few corrupt, and plainly in favor of China, not of the Filipino people. Corruption goes on, and despite his unrelenting war on drugs, not a thing has changed."

#### China's hold on BBB projects

A reader, who wishes to keep his anonymity, speaks about the Chinese's involvement in the Lower Kaliwa water project, one of the flagship BBB initiatives of the current administration.

"The Ecuador hydro project raises a valid issue. If the Chinese contractor of Lower Kaliwa fails to deliver the project according to specs, and it fails to produce or is deficient, since China controls the arbitration, the country has no valid redress. It has to pay.

"With extremely critical projects contracted to China, where the country has essentially no control over the performance of the contractor, we have a real problem.

"The other issue of course is bad faith, if the non-performance is deliberate. China is party to this, as the site is beside an active volcano with periodic quakes.

"Finally, China's recourse. We have no choice but to pay. If we default, there is the patrimonial clause wherein they can choose any asset. Nobody can guarantee that we can never default.

"I think, it is important to have a review with possibly expert advice to redo the terms to provide proper protection, to ensure that if we wish to proceed, we are assured that the projects are built to specs and will perform. Finally, that recourse conditions will conform with accepted norms in Eximbank loans."

That's it for now. We return on Thursday with our commentary on some of the blazing issues of the day.

#### Facebook and Twitter

We are actively using two social networking websites to reach out more often and even interact with and engage our readers, friends and colleagues in the various areas of interest that I tackle in my column. Please like us on [www.facebook.com/ReyGamboa](http://www.facebook.com/ReyGamboa) and follow us on [www.twitter.com/ReyGamboa](http://www.twitter.com/ReyGamboa).

Should you wish to share any insights, write me at Link Edge, 25th Floor, 139 Corporate Center, Valero Street, Salcedo Village, 1227 Makati City. Or e-mail me at [reydgamboa@yahoo.com](mailto:reydgamboa@yahoo.com). For a compilation of previous articles, visit [www.BizlinksPhilippines.net](http://www.BizlinksPhilippines.net).



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# Turning waste into gold



**Manny F. Dooc**  
**TELLTALES**

**I**N a recent column, I praised Sen. Cynthia Villar's waste management and livelihood program, which she launched in Las Piñas City. Now that the elections are over, I can write a follow up story without being accused of partisanship. Obviously inspired by her seminal work on recycling in Las Piñas, the nearby city of Imus has collected the discarded campaign tarpaulins after the elections. All its 97 barangays were ordered to take down and collect campaign materials and turn them over to the local ecological center, which made them into colorful shopping bags sold in trade fairs for P60 each. This is not the first time that Imus has undertaken a program to reduce plastic waste and make useful products out of them. It has also launched plastic trash collection called "BasuRaffle" where residents exchange plastic waste for raffle tickets that can win them valuable prizes. Last year, Imus City turned over several tons of plastic waste to the recycling plant of the Villar-Sipag Foundation, which I discussed before in this column. The plastic waste was converted into hundreds of armchairs, which are being used by the schoolchildren in Imus. I'm sure that the children in our public schools who are now using the recycled armchairs will be greatly inspired to learn if they realize that waste matter can be turned into gold.

**T**HE Philippines's pivot to China is a bold foreign policy adopted by the Duterte administration. Some experts have doubted its wisdom, and even considered it imprudent to distance us from our oldest and traditional ally, the US. Since Admiral Dewey's navy subdued Admiral Montojo's naval fleet in Manila Bay, our foreign policy position has always been aligned with the Americans. In fact, it has been aptly observed that our foreign policy is just the tail of the American kite.

Initially, no other country in our region has followed a similar stance. We have been alone in favoring China over the US. The President has been mincing no words in expressing his disgust against the US, Canada and its European allies. Recently, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad is seen pivoting to China, as well. He acknowledged that countries should learn how to deal with China

since it is a strong and very rich nation. He was also quoted as saying: "We have to accept that the US cannot forever be the supreme nation in the world that can have the best technology." With the Road and Belt Initiative gaining greater momentum, China's sphere of influence will expand as more countries sign up. With this development, more and more countries will pivot to China

to reap the benefits of having a cozy relationship with the powerful Asian giant. The China pivot has also netted us economic gains. Aside from the expanding relations between the Philippines and China, which saw substantial Chinese investments in our country, highly noticeable are the recent benevolent gestures of both the US and Japan, which have been liberal in granting us economic and military assistance like the financial package given to PRRD during his recent visit to Japan. It seems that such generous acts were part of their government's initiatives to neutralize China's growing global influence. It now seems that PRRD's pivot to China has proven to be an original and wise move.



**ONE** remarkable project that's worth mentioning is the recent partnership between the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Metro Pacific Investment Corp. to rehabilitate the dirtiest "esteros" in Manila. An MOU was signed by the two entities undertaking "to clean up the esteros, assess their water quality and identify sources of pollution." The DENR pledged "to take appropriate actions against establishments discharging untreated wastewater to prevent them from further poisoning the waterways." The MPIC has agreed to fund the project and lead the mobilization of the communities to participate in the cleanup activities. After the rehabilitation of Boracay and the ongoing massive cleanup of Manila Bay, the successful implementation of the "estero cleanup project" will be another feather in the cap of DENR and its indefatigable head, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu. Matched by an equally determined partner, Manuel V. Pangilinan, the project may finally lead to the rehabilitation of the Pasig River and its tributaries, and restore life and commerce on the waterways.



**AFTER** their debacle in the last elections, a highly partisan political observer summed up the chances of the opposition in the next election. "With a very popular President, the opposition will not win unless things get worse, and things won't get worse unless they get elected."



# Sapol

NI JARIUS BONDOC



## Basura mula Canada panghuli na dapat

LEKSIYON hindi lang sa Canada kundi sa lahat ng maunlad na bansa ang pagpapahiya ng Pilipinas sa itinambak na basura rito nu'ng 2013.

Labag sa international law magtapon ng basura ang isang bansa sa iba. Panganib sa kalusugang publiko ang hazardous waste dahil may nakalalasong kemikal o nakahahawang sakit, at lalo kung may nuclear radiation ang basura.

Ganunpaman, naglagak ang Canada ng tone-toneladang nabubulok at umaalingasaw na basura sa 126 cargo containers at itinawid sa Dagat Pacifico. Binayaran ang isang kompanyang Pilipino, na siya namang nanuhol sa

gobyerno sa Pilipinas para tanggapin ang kontrabando. Inabandona ito sa pier sa Manila nang hindi nagbayad ng buwis at demurahe. Sa madaling salita, nilapastangan ang Pilipinas.

Hindi lang Pilipinas ang ginawang basurahan ng mayamang bansa. Simula dekada-1980, nang maghigpit ang Kanluran sa electronic waste, itinambak ito sa mahihirap na pook sa China. Sa baryo ng Guiyu, halimbawa, sa gilid ng mayamang siyudad ng Guangzhou (Canton), ay nag-export sila taun-taon ng milyong napaglumaan at sirang computers, tablets, cell phones, calculators, transistors, resistors, at chips. Malugod itong tinanggap ng baryo dahil nire-recover mula sa electronic waste ang mga precious at rare earth metals. Nire-recycle at binebenta ito sa mga industriyang telecoms, sasakyan, at armas sa China. Pero sa ano'ng kapalit? Daan-daang libong mamamayan ang nagkasakit sa utak, balat, baga at ibang lamanloob dahil sa toxins, asbestos, at lead (tingga).

Isa ring pinagsamantalahan ang mahirap na Somalia sa eastern Africa. Sa karagatan nito, bahagi ng Indian Ocean, ibinagsak ng Kanluran ang nuclear waste mula power reactors. Drum-drum nito ang basta na lang ibinagsak sa  
**(Sundan sa pahina 5)**

**SAPOL... Mula pahina 4**  
laot, kasama ang cadmium at mercury. Nagalit ang Somalian warlords sa

gobyerno nila. Naggiyera-giyera sila. Nalasog ang bansa. Naging mga pirata ang walang hanapbuhay.



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## 4 persons arrested for buying rare 'agarwood'

By **MARIE TONETTE MARTICIO**

**TACLOBAN CITY** – Two Chinese nationals and their cohorts were caught in the act of buying agarwood wedges, locally known as "Lanete/Lapnisan" in Abuyog, Leyte Sunday (June 16).

The suspects were identified as Shisheng Chen, 34, and Jiancong Zhu, 33. Both are Chinese citizens and residents of Fujian, China. Also arrested were Leo Lim, 36, Filipino, resident of Davao del Sur, and Grace Ann Austria, 34, Filipino, resident of Davao City.

Also known as Oud oil, agarwood is one of the most precious, rare and expensive essential oils in existence today. Sometimes called Aloeswood, Agarwood is a fragrant dark resinous wood used in incense, perfume, and small carvings.

PCapt. Ronald Espina, Abuyog Police chief, together with the representatives from the municipal environment and natural resources office, and Task Force Bantay Kalikasan, led by Forest Ranger Eugene Velasco, conducted the operation at Brgy. Burubud-an.

The report said that the apprehended persons were caught in possession and control of agarwood wedges, weighing 9.4 kilograms from illegally cut "Lapnisan/Lanete," an endangered tree species. The wedges had an estimated street value of ₱400,000, the report said.

Also recovered from their possession were 1 digital weighing scale and a Ford Ranger truck.

The arrested persons will face charges of violation of Section 68 of Presidential Decree 705 as amended by Executive Order Nos. 277 and 23.

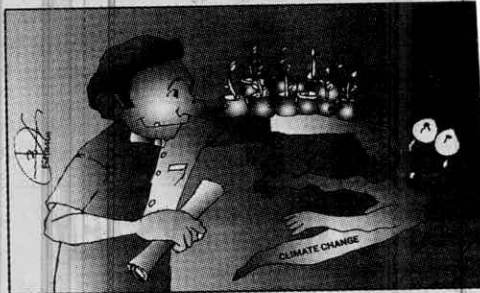


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*Ang aming pananaw...*



## 10 PUNO BAWAT ESTUDYANTE

*ISANG malaking pagbabago ang maidudulot ng panukalang batas na "Graduation Legacy for the Environment Act," House Bill 8728, na mag-oobliga sa mga high school at college students na makapagtanim ng sampung puno bago sila maka-graduate.*

*Kung sakaling tuluyang maaprubahan ito sa Senado, mahigit 175 milyong mga puno ang maaaring maitanim kada taon na makatutulong nang malaki hindi lang sa ating bansa kundi sa buong mundo.*

*Ang nasabing panukalang batas ay malaking tulong upang malabanan ang lumalalang climate change sa mundo. Kung maisasakatuparan nang maayos, maaring magresulta ito sa 525 milyong maitanim na puno sa loob ng isang henerasyon.*

*Hindi pa man tuluyang naisasabatas ang panukalang ito sana ay ngayon pa lamang tayo na mismo ang magsimulang magtanim ng mga puno sa ating mga bakuran na isang malaking hakbang para sa ating Inang Kalikasan.*

*Bakit hindi taniman ng mga puno ang mga bakanteng lote at paigtingin ang kampanya ng gobyerno laban sa deforestation o illegal logging.*



## METROLINE

### 'Chinese-only' food hub still without water treatment facility

The China Food City in Las Piñas City remains closed as the food hub's owners have yet to install a water treatment facility, an official said yesterday.

The food hub, lambasted on social media for accepting only Chinese customers, has yet to receive a discharge permit from the city government's environment and natural resources office, Wilfredo Gaerlan, business permits and licensing office chief, told **The STAR**.

The establishment was releasing wastewater, combined with oil and grease, straight into drainage pipes that empty into a nearby creek, he said.

Last May 10, the city government issued an order shutting down China Food City after Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez recommended that the establishment, with around 30 food stalls, be closed due to various offenses.

The city government issued a business permit to the food hub in February.

- Ghio Ong





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THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS  
SINCE 1900  
**MANILA BULLETIN**  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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## Flash floods, landslides warning up due to thunderstorms

By **ELLALYN-DE VERA-QUIZ**

The effect of southwest monsoon or habagat will only be felt over the extreme part of Northern Luzon this Tuesday but the weather bureau still warned of possible flash floods or landslides in the event of sudden rains due to thunderstorms in the afternoon or evening throughout the country.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said habagat will bring cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms over Batanes, Babuyan group of islands, and Palawan.

Meanwhile, Metro Manila and the

rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers due to localized thunderstorms.

PAGASA warned that rains, especially during severe thunderstorms, could trigger possible flash floods or landslides over low-lying and mountainous areas in the entire archipelago.

It has not issued a gale warning thus fisherfolk and seafarers are safe to sail.

Moderate to rough seas will prevail over the western part of Luzon, while slight to moderate seas will prevail over the rest of the country.

So far, PAGASA does not see the formation or entry of a tropical cyclone inside the country in the next few days.



# Pagasa improves warning system on storm surges

By **Jhesset O. Enano**  
@JhessetEnanoINQ

In a bid to save lives from the wrath of typhoons, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) launched its revamped storm surge warning system, this time underscoring the impact of storm surges on communities.

Instead of simply focusing on weather-related warnings, the updated system would highlight the hazards of storm surges, which could empower people to act swiftly in the face of disaster.

Similar to a tsunami, surges occur when the sea rises due to the winds and pressure changes associated with storms.

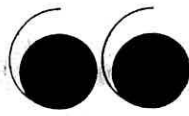
## Lessons from 'Yolanda'

The improvements to the state weather bureau's system were largely from lessons learned from Supertyphoon "Yolanda" (international name: Haiyan), where over 6,200 people were killed, mostly due to storm surges that reached as high as 5 meters.

"If they had a better understanding then on the impact of storm surges, perhaps the people could have then evacuated to safety," said Cecilia Monteverde, chief of Pagasa's Hydrometeorology, Tropical Meteorology and Instruments Development and Research Division.

Monteverde said the bulletins issued during Yolanda focused mainly on the typhoon, with only a brief mention of storm surges at the end.

This time, the improved



**If they had a better understanding then on the impact of storm surges, perhaps the people could have then evacuated to safety**

**Cecilia Monteverde**  
Chief, Pagasa Hydrometeorology, Tropical Meteorology and Instruments Development and Research Division

Pagasa forecasting and warning system would be composed of two categories, namely the storm surge watch and the storm surge warning.

The watch would indicate a moderate- to high-risk storm surge within the next 48 hours, while the warning would be for areas at high-risk of surges within the next 24 hours.

## Update every 6 hours

Both the storm surge watch and warning would be updated every six hours and would be available on the bureau's website.

Monteverde said issuing the alerts 24 to 48 hours ahead would allow decision-makers, particularly those in local governments, more time to prepare and plan for potential

evacuation and other disaster-related actions.

Surge heights would also be color-coded, depending on the severity of the tide.

Blue would indicate a surge of less than a meter; yellow, from 1 to 2 meters; orange, from 2 to 3 meters; and red for above 3 meters.

But more importantly, each warning would spell the impacts in the communities to be affected.

For instance, a surge height on orange alert is expected to result in severe damage to coastal infrastructures, significant beach erosion and possible river flooding.

The red alert, meanwhile, would spell catastrophic and extensive inundation, which would require evacuation in low-lying areas and cancellation of all marine activities.

"Some people would not take action if you only tell them the weather conditions," Monteverde said.

"Now that we show the impacts and the corresponding actions, they would have a better understanding of how these can affect them," she said.

Renato Solidum, science undersecretary for disaster risk reduction and climate change affairs, said equipping people with the proper information would allow for better preparedness against hazards brought by disasters.

"Warning is just one part, but there needs to be appropriate and timely response, in which everybody in the community plays a role," he said. INQ



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**WARM CLIMATE PHENOMENON**

# EL NIÑO TO AFFECT FREQUENCY, INTENSITY OF STORMS, SAYS WEATHER BUREAU

**By Jhesset O. Enano**  
@JhessetEnanoINQ

The persisting El Niño phenomenon may affect the frequency of tropical cyclones this rainy season, but Filipinos should still brace for potentially intense storms, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said on Monday.

Flaviana Hilario, Pagasa deputy administrator, said that during the warm climate phenomenon, which is expected to

last until year-end, the tracks and intensity of the cyclones were being affected.

"The storms usually recurve and change their track away from the country," Hilario said at a press briefing.

"These may not make landfall but the intensity of these storms can still be strong, based on our statistics," she said.

**Extended dry season**

El Niño is a climate event that takes place when the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean becomes abnormally warm.

For the Philippines, which currently experiences a weak El Niño, it marks an extended dry season, weak monsoon activity, above normal air temperature and below normal rainfall, with dry spells or drought in some parts of the country, according to Pagasa.

Hilario said that based on their rainfall forecast, some areas would experience below normal rainfall conditions from June to August.

"But we know that during these months, our rainfall is really quite high. So even if it's

a 50-percent reduction, it's still a very high amount," she said.

**Prepare for strong storms**

Despite the climate conditions, Vicente Malano, Pagasa administrator, said that Filipinos should still prepare for possibly strong storms, noting that Tropical Storm "Ondoy" (international name: Ketsana) happened during an El Niño period in September 2009.

The storm inundated Metro Manila and nearby provinces, after it released

rainfall equivalent to a month's volume of rain in just six hours. Over 400 deaths were recorded.

"But even without El Niño, we are expecting stronger storms with heavier rainfall due to global warming," Malano said.

Pagasa earlier reported that it was expecting five to eight tropical storms to affect parts of the country from June to August.

The country faces an average of 20 storms every year. INQ



Flaviana Hilario

PHOTO FROM PAGASA WEBSITE



## EDITORIAL

### TAG-ULAN, TAG-BAGYO NA

NGAYONG araw ang pasimula ng tag-ulan at tag-bagyo, ayon sa Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

Ibig sabihin nito, makararanas tayo ng siyam-siyam na ulan, 2-3 bagyo kada buwan hanggang Disyembre at mga bunga ng mga ito na baha, landslide at iba pa.

Magbubunga rin ang mga ito ng kamatayan na kung minsang maramihan, pagkasira ng marami at mahahalagang ari-arian, malaking problema sa trapik sa tao at serbisyo at iba pa.

Sa kabuuan, mapanira ang mga tag-ulan at tag-bagyo kaya naman dapat nang maghanda ang lahat para kung hindi man mapigilan ang paninira ng mga ito ng buhay at ari-arian, mabawasan man lang ito.

Maganda ang paghahanda kung may mahigpit na samahan ng pamahalaan, mamamayan at iba pa para magtulung-tulong sa oras ng pangangailangan.

Sa mga oras ng storm surge, tsunami at landslide lamang, napakarami ang namamatay at nasiraan ng ari-arian.

At alam naman ng lahat na may permanenteng perwisyonang nagaganap gaya ng pagkamatay ng tao at ganap na paglikas mula sa mga danger zone at ipinagbabawal ng pamahalaan.

Mga tao, pinansya, gamit, koordinasyon, kooperasyon at pagiging boluntaryo at masakripisyo, nasaan ang mga ito bilang bahagi ng laban sa mga masasamang kalagayang dulot ng tag-ulan at tag-bagyo?

Sa kabilang banda, may bunga ring magaganda ang tag-ulan at tag-bagyo gaya ng pagtubo at paglago ng mga halaman, kasama ang mga palay; paglinis ng mga kapaligiran, kasama ang hangin; pagiging maganda ng mga isda at iba pang yamang-dagat at marami pang iba.

Pagkakataon na pasiglahin ang lahat ng magagandang bagay sa tag-ulan.



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**'UNCOVERED'**



**NI MARLON  
PURIFICACION**

**OPISYAL** nang idineklara ng **PAGASA** ang simula ng tag-ulan o rainy season kaya't **a s a h a n g** makararanas na tayo ng malalakas na buhos ng ulan, **thunderstorm** o bagyo.

Tulad ng dati, asahan na rin ang malalaking baha o ang masama pa'y mga nakapanlulumong trahedya na puwede naman sanang maiwasan kung preparado ang pamahalaan at ang atin mismong mga kababay-an.

Tuwing tag-ulan, paulit-ulit ang lumalabas na ulat na malalaking baha at landslide na ang kalimitang sanhi rin naman ay dahil na rin sa ating kapabayaan at pagyurak sa kalikasan.

Katatapos lang ng

**Oplan kontra baha!**

mid-term elections at hindi natin alam kung pabor ba ito o hindi para maging handa ang ating mga kababayan sa ganitong uri ng panahon.

Likha ng natural na kalamidad ang mga bagyo, thunderstorm o tsunami. Ngunit hindi tulad ng lindol na hindi alam kung kailan tata-ma o aatake sa lupa, ang mga binanggit nating kalamidad ay naagapan ng ilang araw bago manalanta sa ating mga kababayan.

Maraming dahilan kung bakit binabaha ang ating kapaligiran. Una na rito ang hindi matapustapos na problema sa basura, baradong kanal, imburnal at iyong iba'y binabarahan pa ng ilang 'informal settlers.'

Durog na rin ang ating kalikasan. Mula sa polusyon, illegal mining, illegal quarry at iyong walang patumanggang pagtatayo ng matataas na gusali na walang malinaw na drainage system.

Kaya natin nabanggit ang 'mid-term elections' dahil malaking tulong ang lahat ng lokal na pamahalaan upang matugunan ang paghahanda

sa panahon ng tag-ulan.

Dapat ay noon pa o kahit na ngayon na mis-mo ay kumilos ang lahat ng local government units (LGUs) upang matukoy ang mga 'baha prone area' sa kanilang nasasakupan. Matukoy kung ano ang sanhi nito at kung saang lugar nag-mumula ang baha.

Malaking tulong dito ang ating barangay.

Sila ang unang makatutukoy ng mga dahilan ng pagbaha at sila rin ang unang lalapitan at tutugunan ng tulong ng mga kababayan nating mabibiktima ng kalamidad.

Malaking bagay din siyempre ang tulong mula sa pamahalaang nasyunal. Ang Department of National Defense (DND), Office of Civil Defense (OCD), Interior and Local Government (DILG), Bureau of Fire Protection, Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), PAGASA, Phivolcs, Department of Health (DoH), Department of Education (DepEd),

Napocor at iba pang ahensiya.

Alam nating ngayon pa lang ay preparado na ang ilang LGUs sa mga 'evacuation center,' mga gagamiting tent, relief goods at kung ano-ano pa. Pero tulad ng matagal nang kasabihan, mas mainam pa rin ang 'prevention,' kaysa 'evacuation.'

Dapat hindi tayo tumigil sa paglilinis sa ating kapaligiran, kanal at pagbantay sa kalikasan - panahon man ng tag-ulan o hindi.

Kung ngayon pa lang ay matutukoy na ang mga sanhi ng pagbaha; mapaalis ang mga informal settler at mailpat sila sa maayos na relokasyon; malinis ang ating mga kanal at mapanagot ang mga malalaking gusali na nakababara rin sa ating 'drainage system,' natitiyak nating mababawasan ang bilang ng biktima ng sakuna.

Hindi pa naman huli ang lahat. Ang nakayayamot lang, paulit-ulit na ang dinaranas na problema, pero paulit-ulit pa rin tayong nagpapabaya at di gumagawa ng kongkreto at pangmatalagalang solusyon.



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## Group urges public to plant more trees during rainy season

THE Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA) is urging all stakeholders in the country anew to plant more trees during monsoon season so they can take advantage of the frequent rains, which are good for the growth of the seedlings.

"The rainy season creates an excellent environment for the seedlings to take root," said PWPA chairman Charlie Liu. "Seedlings which are planted during the rainy season can get the most benefit as they generally fare better when they are exposed to moderate temperature and a healthy amount of rainfall."

The same can't be said during the warmer months of the year, especially around March to early May, where peak temperatures can leave the soil dry and even kill the seedlings. "Planting during the rainy season allows optimum growth, thereby giving the seedlings a better chance of survival during the summer months," he added.

He did warn that the moist environment provided by the rains is not enough, and utmost care is also needed for the seedlings to grow properly. This involves, among others, proper irrigation, efficient use of fertilizers, and ensuring the seedlings are shielded against factors that may damage them or hinder their growth. "A lot of water is good for seedling growth, but too much and they may

decay or washed away. They will also need healthy soil, as well as protection against plant diseases and pests. If proper care is given to the seedling,

it will surely grow into a beautiful and healthy tree," advised Liu.

Liu thus calls on government agencies, academic institutions, civil

groups, and the private sector to participate in more tree-planting activities during the said season, in order to slow down the rapid decrease in the coun-

try's overall forest cover, and assure the next generations of a future where trees abound.

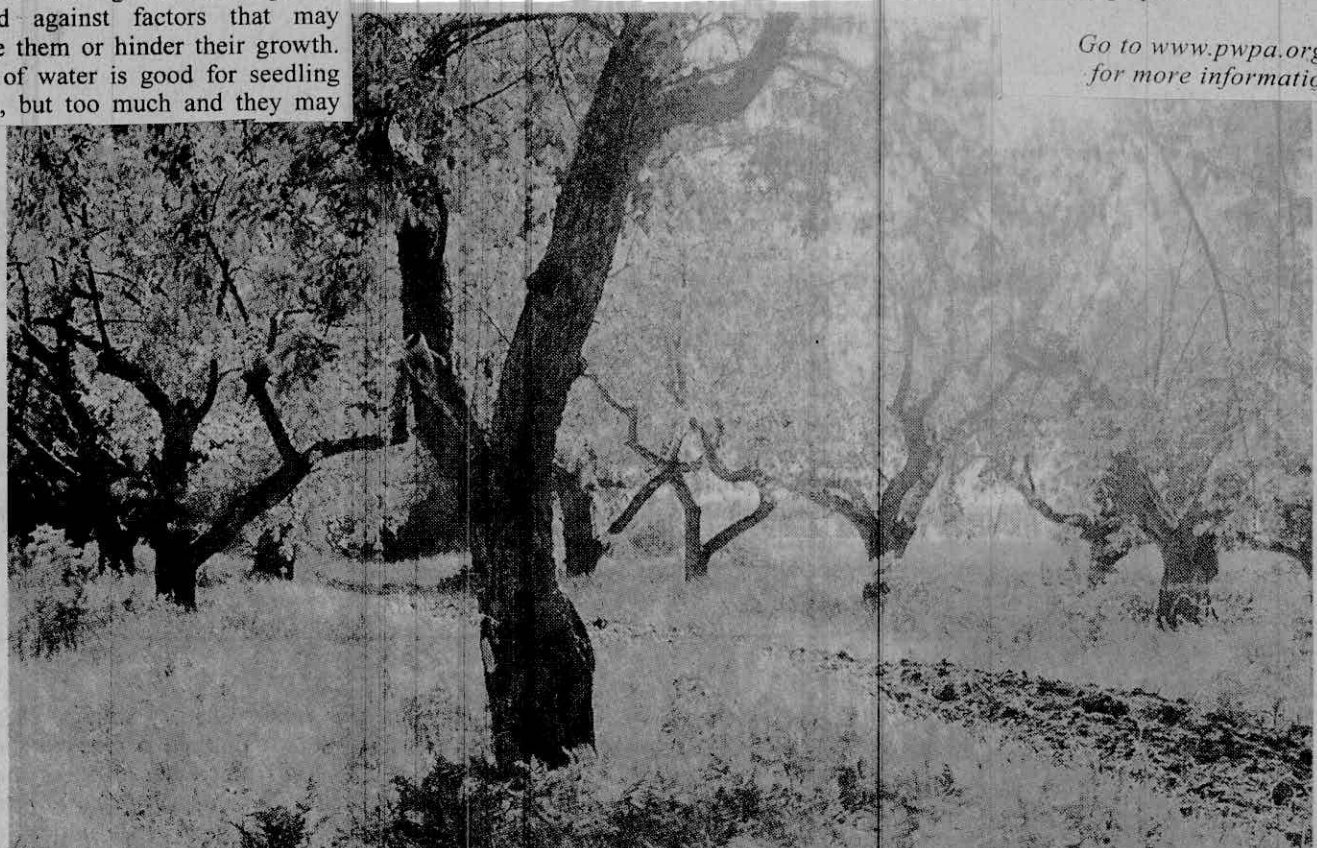
"While it may take a few years for the seedlings to mature, we can never go wrong in planting as many trees as we can today so that our children and their children can experience the beauty of Mother Nature and the high quality of life that she promises," said Liu.

Addressing the Philippines' rapidly decreasing forest cover is one of the primary goals of PWPA, an organization of wood suppliers and manufacturers that pushes for sustainable forest management to promote the well-being of the local forestry industry.

The organization continuously promotes wood, which, if used sustainably, can be an important driver of growth and development for many communities in the Philippines and its economy as a whole.

In line with its goal to increase the sustainable use of wood, PWPA is holding the Philippine Wood Expo 2019 at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza on October 21-22. The event aims to expand the reach of businesses in the wood sector by providing them with the opportunity to interface with other industry players.

Go to [www.pwpa.org.ph](http://www.pwpa.org.ph) for more information.



The Philippine Wood Producers Association urges all stakeholders in the country to take advantage of the monsoon season to plant more trees.



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## Chevron extends La Union marine sanctuary project

REAFFIRMING its commitment to support communities and the environment, Chevron Philippines Inc. marketer of the Caltex brand of fuels and lubricants, has extended its Marine Protected Area project in Barangay Poro in San Fernando City, La Union for another six months or until this June.

The Poro MPA project, which started in 2013 and is funded through a P7.2-million grant from CPI, has helped forge public-private partnerships. It has also set up self-reliant people's organization and established sustainable livelihood for the community.

The Poro MPA project is co-managed with the Poro Sea Lovers Association, a people's organization based in Barangay Poro. Select members of the PSLA are also part of the Poro MPA Management Council and Bantay Dagat, which oversee the management, patrolling, monitoring, law enforcement and integration of the Poro MPA into the city's MPA network.

CPI project partner Institute for Social Order proposed the extension after the five-year contract ended in 2018 to strengthen

the operation of the Poro MPA and, in the case of the PSLA, in attaining financial sustainability.

CPI approved the extension proposal in pursuit of its goal of empowering communities to become active and productive members of society.

"It has always been Chevron's mission to pursue projects that address community needs. We have seen how the MPA project significantly impacted the lives of the people in Barangay Poro. We hope the extension will bring even more opportunities for them and improve their quality of life," said CPI Country Chairman Louie Zhang.

The project encourages residents to be MPA guardians while providing them with livelihood opportunities such as an eatery, catering business, spicy dried anchovy production and rice trading. These livelihood projects augment families' income and help wean the community from overdependence on fishing.

Chevron operates three Caltex service stations in and around San Fernando, La Union and a terminal in Poro Point.



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## Editorial

### Premature to bring up PH-US treaty in Reed issue

**T**HERE is a segment of Philippine society that would, unfortunately, like nothing better than to see the United States dragged into a controversy concerning Philippine-China relations and conflicting claims on the South China Sea (West Philippine Sea). They want the US to get involved.

Therefore, to us, the remark by US Ambassador to Manila Sung Kim that the incident involving a Chinese militia vessel ramming a Filipino fishing vessel could trigger US obligations under the PH-US Mutual Defense Treaty looks as both surprising and suggestive.

In another report, the ambassador quoted US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo as saying "because the South China Sea is part of the Pacific, under the treaty itself, any armed attack on Filipino vessels, Filipino aircraft will trigger our obligations under the Mutual Defense Treaty."

Normally, before a government mentions a defense treaty to address a thorny issue or a conflict situation, a thorough study of the incident in question should first be done to ascertain whether treaty provisions can, indeed, be invoked.

The ambassador himself said the US has no independent information on what happened, adding that it requires a careful and thorough investigation by relevant authorities.

So it is not useful at this point to be talking about whether the provisions of the Philippine-US Mutual Defense Treaty will apply in this incident. It is only important that we know the US will honor its commitment to support the Philippines in case of an external attack.

From repeated assurances of both sides, it is clear that the South China Sea falls within the purview of the MDT, and that any armed attack on Filipino vessels would be covered.

But no one should be talking speculatively of an armed attack and aggression by a foreign government with respect to the Recto Bank incident, when there is no such threat.

It seems to us that it should be the principal business of the aggrieved party to be invoking the treaty to seek military assistance from its treaty partner, not the US to be more eager to discuss aggression and a breach of the peace in the South China Sea. It proffers the assurance that Washington fully understands the current situation and will not turn its back on us.

The problem at this point, however, is that we have yet to get a firm grip on the facts of the ramming incident, which can only be ascertained after a full investigation.

Before that certainty comes, comments and discussions about policies will not be useful but could only muddle the issue. They might even tend to make people talk themselves into a crisis.

So far as we can see, there is at this point no crisis as far as our relations with China are concerned. There will be one if we allow other people with their own agenda to dictate on our perception of the situation and the decisions we take.

It is good that the issue is now being studied by the Cabinet clusters. This way there will be more clarity and understanding of the situation.