



NEWS ROUNDUP

10 MARCH 2026 | 08:00 am

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By: Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

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By: Ariel Rojas

Two weather systems will bring rainy conditions over many parts of the country this Monday, according to PAGASA.

The trough or extension of a low pressure area (LPA) east of the country is affecting central and southern Philippines, bringing scattered rains over Masbate, Sorsogon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

The weather bureau warned residents of these areas against possible flooding and landslides during periods of heavy and prolonged rainfall.

As of 3 a.m., the LPA was located 1,470 km east of northeastern Mindanao, outside the Philippine area of responsibility.

It now has a medium potential for tropical cyclone formation in the next 24 hours but is not expected to enter the PAR.

Meanwhile, a strong northeast monsoon or Amihan surge is currently affecting almost the entire Luzon, although without a significant dip in temperatures.

Light to occasionally moderate rains will be experienced in Cordillera Administrative Region, Cagayan Valley, Aurora, Quezon, Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, and most of Bicol Region.

Flooding and landslides may also be likely over these areas during periods of moderate rainfall.

Better conditions will prevail over Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon, with only isolated or passing light rains expected, also due to Amihan.

HEAT INDEX

Forty degrees Celsius heat index is forecast over Coron, Palawan; Puerto Princesa City; and San Jose, Occidental Mindoro. In Metro Manila, heat index of 34 to 36 degrees Celsius may be expected.

Heat index is the perceived heat of the body based on the combined effects of the measured temperature and amount of moisture in the air.

The current Amihan surge will weaken beginning Wednesday but a much stronger surge is expected from Friday and may even reach Visayas and the northern parts of Mindanao by weekend.

Nippy conditions may be likely in Northern Luzon from Friday to Sunday, with temperatures in Baguio City and La Trinidad, Benguet possibly dropping to 10 to 12 degrees Celsius.

Moreover, another LPA may be borne out of the elongated trough of the first LPA east of the country, but is also unlikely to enter the PAR nor develop into a tropical cyclone.

AL JAZEERA

[At least 42 people killed in days of floods across Kenya](#)

At least 42 people have been killed in days of floods across Kenya, the government has said. Heavy rains have triggered flash floods across several regions of the country since Friday.

Kenya's Public Service and Special Programmes Minister Geoffrey Ruku told reporters on Sunday that police had documented 42 deaths since then, including 26 in the capital, Nairobi.

Police said deaths were reported in multiple counties as torrential rains battered large parts of the country over the weekend, flooding roads and disrupting transport and daily activities in several towns. The floods had also done extensive damage to infrastructure and livelihoods.

In Nairobi, floodwaters swept through low-lying neighbourhoods and informal settlements, submerging homes and carrying away vehicles as rivers overflowed their banks.

Kenya Airways also said the rains had disrupted flights to Nairobi and forced some to divert to the coastal city of Mombasa.

On Saturday, aid workers pulled bodies from floodwaters across the capital.

Kenyan President William Ruto said he had deployed a team of emergency responders, including soldiers, to coordinate rescue efforts, while offering condolences to the affected communities.

"I have also ordered that relief food from our national strategic reserves be immediately released and distributed to families affected by the floods," he said in a statement on social media on Saturday.

"In addition, the Government will meet the hospital bills of those injured or affected by the flooding and currently receiving treatment in public health facilities," Ruto wrote.

Authorities said the support aims to ease the burden on households affected by the tragedy.

"These floods once again highlight the urgent need for lasting solutions to the perennial challenge of flooding in our urban areas," the president said.

Scientists say global warming is worsening floods and droughts across East Africa by concentrating rainfall into shorter, more intense bursts.

Neighbouring countries like Somalia and Ethiopia are also affected.

A 2024 World Weather Attribution study found climate change had made devastating rains in the region twice as likely as before.

The Kenyan Red Cross said hundreds of households in neighbouring counties had also been affected, and vast swaths of farmland destroyed.

“I would call for joint efforts between the government humanitarian agencies to deal with this problem, and to understand why we are having this havoc,” Red Cross spokesman Munir Ahmed told the AFP news agency.

MANILA BULLETIN

[PAGASA declares end of La Niña; neutral climate conditions return](#)

By: Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) on Monday, March 9 announced the end of the La Niña phenomenon, saying climate conditions in the tropical Pacific have returned to neutral levels.

In an advisory, PAGASA said the Oceanic Niño Index in the tropical Pacific now indicates a return to El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO)-neutral conditions, prompting the agency to release its final advisory for the 2025–2026 La Niña episode.

With this development, PAGASA said its ENSO Alert and Warning System has been lowered to ENSO-neutral status.

ENSO-neutral refers to a climate state when neither El Niño nor La Niña is present.

During this phase, sea surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific Ocean are generally near average and the atmosphere-ocean system does not strongly favor either wetter or drier climate conditions.

Model forecasts also suggest that ENSO-neutral conditions are likely to persist from the January–February–March season through the June–July–August 2026 period.

PAGASA earlier raised a La Niña Alert on Sept. 15, 2025, indicating a high likelihood that the phenomenon would develop between October and December 2025.

The agency later confirmed the onset of La Niña in early December 2025 and said the weak episode could persist until the first quarter of 2026.

La Niña is characterized by cooler-than-normal sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, a condition that typically enhances rainfall in parts of the Philippines and increases the likelihood of floods and landslides.

Despite the end of La Niña, PAGASA said other weather and climate systems may still influence rainfall distribution across the country.

Rain-bearing weather systems could still bring occasional heavy rainfall that may trigger flash floods and rain-induced landslides in vulnerable areas.

PAGASA said it will continue to monitor weather and climate conditions in the country and provide updates when necessary, while advising the public and concerned government agencies to remain vigilant and take appropriate precautionary measures to minimize the impacts of weather- and climate-related hazards.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[DOST highlights bamboo's potential for innovation, climate action in Cebu meet](#)

By: Jositte Ann Tista

Bamboo has long been valued as a traditional resource for building Filipino homes and crafting furniture. But at the 2025 Bamboo Technology and Innovation Summit, the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and other stakeholders looked at the bamboo through a new lens.

As the global economy shifts toward green and resilient solutions, DOST highlighted bamboo's potential as a strategic material for economic growth, inclusive enterprise, and climate action.

Beyond traditional uses

DOST Undersecretary Sancho A. Maborang, reading the message of DOST Secretary Renato U. Solidum Jr., said bamboo has long played a vital role in Filipino communities.

"Bamboo has been part of Filipino lives. It has sheltered families, supported livelihoods, and shaped communities," Maborang said. "Today, we are no longer looking at bamboo only through the lens of tradition. We are looking at it through the lens of science, innovation, and global competitiveness."

Four pillars of development

Guided by its four pillars – human well-being, wealth creation, wealth protection, and sustainability – DOST sees bamboo contributing significantly to each area.

Maborang said bamboo supports human well-being by enabling climate-resilient housing and community-based enterprises. Under wealth creation, bamboo can open new markets for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and position the country in high-value industries.

He added that bamboo contributes to wealth protection by stabilizing slopes, rehabilitating degraded lands, and mitigating climate risks, while advancing sustainability by ensuring that current development does not compromise future generations.

DOST Central Visayas Regional Director Tristan L. Abando outlined the summit's objectives:

- Showcasing innovative bamboo technologies and products, highlighting the sector's potential
- Strengthening collaboration among research institutions, industry, local government units, and stakeholders
- Identifying priority technologies for commercialization and scale-up
- Developing policy and program recommendations to support research, enterprise growth, and technology transfer
- Providing strategic inputs for a national bamboo science, technology, and innovation framework
- Exploring bamboo-based carbon credit opportunities within climate and green finance strategies
- Carbon credit opportunities

"One of the most promising discussions in this summit is the exploration of bamboo-based carbon credit opportunities," Maborang said.

Abando highlighted the participation of international carbon solutions firm Ecoguard Global as a key feature of the event. The firm will lead discussions on verification, measurement, and global standards, helping stakeholders understand how Philippine bamboo can participate in emerging carbon markets while supporting sustainable rural livelihoods.

“Through science-based measurement, monitoring and verification systems, bamboo’s carbon sequestration capacity can be quantified and translated into credible climate finance instruments,” Maborang said.

Carbon sequestration is the process of capturing and storing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to reduce greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. Bamboo stands out as a strategic resource in the global transition to renewable and resilient materials because it grows rapidly, regenerates naturally, and captures carbon efficiently.

“This is where science creates value. This is where innovation creates opportunity. This is where science transforms potential into real benefits for people,” Maborang said.

Circular economy principles

The summit also explored how bamboo’s carbon absorption capacity can be measured and potentially monetized. Other discussions covered bamboo research, development, and innovation; species and environmental benefits; processing technologies and applications; DOST circular economy programs; and sustainable plantation models for a resilient bamboo industry.

“Bamboo naturally aligns with circular economy principles,” Maborang said. “It is renewable, biodegradable, and adaptable across multiple life cycles.”

However, unlocking bamboo’s full potential requires coordinated efforts, strong research and development pipelines, and effective technology transfer mechanisms, he added. Maborang also emphasized the need for industry standards, quality assurance, improved access to finance and markets, and stronger partnerships that bridge science and enterprise.

Collaborative effort

The summit was organized in collaboration with the Cebu Bamboo Industry Development Council, a group of bamboo farmers and advocates, which serves as a local counterpart of the Philippine Bamboo Industry Development Council, established through Executive Order No. 879.

“Our task is to strengthen this mandate through science, technology, and innovation-based frameworks,” Maborang said.

The event brought together bamboo farmer associations, local government representatives, academics, MSMEs, researchers, and private investors. Beyond discussions on initiatives and technologies, the summit also served as a platform for linking research, innovation, and industry applications.

“We are now consolidating and integrating our efforts on how we can further support the bamboo industry in Central Visayas,” Abando said.

The summit also highlights Cebu's positioning as a hub for bamboo innovation and carbon-linked enterprise development.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[Mangrove ecosystems to be protected vs. extreme climate effects – PCIC](#)

By: Stephanie Sevillano

The Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on Monday signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) for the launching of a pilot climate-risk insurance program aimed at mitigating the effects of extreme climate conditions on the mangrove ecosystem in Eastern Visayas.

In a press conference, PCIC President Jovy Bernabe said the pioneering move will help cushion the economic impact of rising risks associated with climate change – including typhoons, storm surges, and flooding – in the region.

“Protecting mangroves through insurance of PCIC helps safeguard coastal livelihoods by reducing recovery costs after disaster or extreme climate events,” he said.

Mangroves have an estimated economic value of about PHP50,000 to PHP200,000 per year, with Eastern Visayas being third among regions with high mangrove extent, according to the GIZ.

Under the partnership, the PCIC will develop a parametric insurance product set to be simulated in Northern Samar and Southern Leyte.

“This pilot site has long been at the forefront of climate impacts. The lessons from major storms remind us that strong ecosystems are the most effective forms of natural protection,” Bernabe said.

For its part, the GIZ will fund the risk-financing mechanism and provide technical assistance under the Strengthening Disaster Resilience and Risk Mitigation through Ecosystem-based Planning and Adaptation (E4DR) Project.

“By piloting mangrove insurance in this region, we demonstrate how nature-based solutions and innovative insurance mechanisms can work together to protect both ecosystems and coastal communities,” GIZ Philippines and the Pacific Island Countries Climate Action Cluster Coordinator Nicole Kranz said.

Local government units (LGUs) will be the policyholders under the pilot project.

In 2022, the GIZ provided about EUR5.5 million for the E4DR, which will also cover the PCIC’s insurance project for mangroves.

“We are working to develop the product in two to three months, and then, hopefully, we are going to do a simulation for a couple of months again. If there’s a good dataset, results of that simulation can be piloted within the year,” PCIC business development and marketing department manager Israel dela Cruz said.

The PCIC official said the parametric insurance will cover the effects of storm surge and tropical cyclone wind signals (TCWS) in the said region.

“We have indices that represent a proxy for the damages— indices to be used for these are storm surge, which is the wave height. And also, the wind speed of typhoons or signals. So, we are looking into signal number 3,” dela Cruz said.

The typical restoration expense will be considered as a baseline for determining the cost of indemnity.

Once the product development and simulation are completed, the PCIC will conduct the pilot launch in Eastern Visayas in December.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

[A Big Night Light in the Sky? Start-Up Wants to Launch a Space Mirror.](#)

The company is seeking F.C.C. approval to test an idea to reflect sunlight to Earth at night, possibly powering solar panels. Critics say it could be bad for people and wildlife.

A start-up company wants to light up the night with 50,000 big mirrors orbiting Earth, bouncing sunlight to the night side of the planet to power solar farms after sunset, provide lighting for rescue workers and illuminate city streets, among other things.

Scientists have questions about that.

It is an idea seemingly out of a sci-fi movie, but the company, Reflect Orbital of Hawthorne, Calif., could soon receive permission to launch its first prototype satellite with a 60-foot-wide mirror. The company has applied to the Federal Communications Commission, which issues the licenses needed to deploy satellites.

If the F.C.C. approves, the test satellite could get a ride into orbit as soon as this summer. The F.C.C.'s public comment period on the application closes on Monday.

"We're trying to build something that could replace fossil fuels and really power everything," Ben Nowack, Reflect Orbital's chief executive, said in an interview. The company has raised more than \$28 million from investors.

It's not the first time someone has thought of doing this.

In 1977, a German-born rocket engineer, Krafft A. Ehrlicke, proposed space mirrors to prevent crop freezes and to illuminate disaster-struck areas. And in 1993 a Russian satellite carrying a mirror about 80 feet across briefly reflected a narrow beam of sunlight across the planet as part of an experiment to extend daylight hours in Arctic Siberia.

And the idea is controversial. "We just don't have a regulatory process for these types of novel space activities yet," said Roohi Dalal, an astronomer and director of public policy at the American Astronomical Society.

Opponents say the mirrors could distract airplane pilots, mess up astronomical observations and interfere with circadian rhythms — the light-and-dark cycles that help people, creatures and plants know when to wake and sleep, when to bloom, when to migrate and so forth.

If animals were to get confused by the extra light, they might breed at the wrong time, when food is scarce, said Martha Hotz Vitaterna, a research professor of neurobiology at Northwestern University and co-director of the Center for Sleep and Circadian Biology.

Hibernating insects and migrating birds might also become confused. Light at the wrong times of day could also lead to flowers blooming when pollinators are not active, Dr. Vitaterna said. "The implications for wildlife, for all life, are enormous," she said.

But those are generally not concerns for the F.C.C. when it reviews satellite applications. Rather, the agency checks to ensure that a spacecraft's radio communications do not create interference problems for others and that the spacecraft will be safely disposed of at the end of its operational lifetime.

The agency's stance is that activities in space — which, by definition, are not on Earth — are not subject to environmental review. The agency did not respond to a request for comment about the Reflect Orbital application.

Reflect Orbital's first prototype, which will be roughly the size of a dorm fridge, is almost complete.

Once in space, about 400 miles up, the test satellite would unfurl a square mirror nearly 60 feet wide. That would bounce sunlight to illuminate a circular patch about three miles wide on the Earth's surface. Someone looking up would see a dot in the sky about as bright as a full moon.

Two more prototypes could follow within a year. By the end of 2028, Reflect Orbital hopes to launch 1,000 larger satellites, and 5,000 of them by 2030. The largest mirrors are planned to be nearly 180 feet wide, reflecting as much light as 100 full moons.

The company said its goal was to deploy the full constellation of 50,000 satellites by 2035.

How much does it cost to order sunlight at night?

Mr. Nowack said the company would charge about \$5,000 an hour for the light of one mirror if a customer signed an annual contract for 1,000 hours or more. Lighting for one-time events and emergencies, which might require numerous satellites and more effort to coordinate, would be more expensive. For solar farms, he envisions splitting revenue from the electricity generated by the additional hours of light.

Mr. Nowack says that Reflect Orbital's satellites could be a tool to reduce the burning of fossil fuels and thus slow climate change. One of the biggest weaknesses of solar power is that electric generation stops when the sun goes down.

Astronomers have raised alarms about the toll taken on their observatories by the rapidly rising number of satellites crisscrossing the night sky. The constellation of nearly 10,000 Starlink satellites operated by Elon Musk's SpaceX now routinely produces bright streaks across photographs of the universe taken by ground-based telescopes.

Some companies, including SpaceX, have voluntarily worked to minimize light pollution in the night sky by making their satellites less reflective.

For critics, even one Reflect Orbital satellite is worrying, because the whole point is to be as bright as possible.

Michael Brown, an astronomer at Australia's Monash University, calculated that the reflected sunlight from one satellite would be spread over about 18 square miles. That would mean that the number of photons hitting a solar panel would be about 1/140,000th of the rate during midday.

Even with the 180-foot-wide mirrors, "over 3,000 satellites would be required to produce the equivalent of just 20 percent of the midday sun at a single site," Dr. Brown wrote in his comment to the F.C.C. about Reflect Orbital's application.

With 87,000 satellites, the company could provide, at best, 20 percent of midday illumination to 27 sites, Dr. Brown said. He said that a network of mirror satellites was not an efficient means to augment energy production.

"I think his idea keeps coming up because it has a certain simplicity and elegance," Dr. Brown said in an interview. "But when you start crunching the numbers, and the numbers are pretty easy to crunch, then you find there's a lot of serious issues with it."

Gaspar Bakos, an astronomer at Princeton University, questioned the company's claim that the reflected light would be visible only in the targeted area. Light is inevitably scattered by particles of air, and glow from the beam could brighten the night sky miles farther away, an effect that is evident with the street lighting of even small towns, he said.

Mr. Nowack of Reflect Orbital said that the company had studied the scattering issue in simulations, and that the effects were not as dire as critics portrayed. The test satellite will try to validate that, he said.

"We plan to show exactly what's happening with real measurements in the real world from our actual satellite," he said. "That's going to help a ton. You can't fake that."

So, do space mirrors have a role to play in helping humanity see in the dark? Dr. Bakos is actually enthusiastic about the concept. Not on Earth, but on the moon.

With NASA and other space agencies planning to build lunar outposts in the coming years, reflected sunlight could provide a workable energy source and brighten the two-week-long nights. The moon also lacks an atmosphere, eliminating the problems of scattering.

"This thing is basically designed for the moon," Dr. Bakos said. "They found the wrong celestial body."

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By: Mel N. Velez

The local government here expects to cut its electricity expenses by as much as 80 percent once solar panels installed across major government buildings become fully operational, a move projected to save millions of pesos annually and ease pressure on the town's operating budget.

Officials said the municipality currently spends about P12 million a year on electricity, prompting the shift to renewable energy to lower costs and improve long-term efficiency.

Officials said the municipality had long struggled with rising power costs, at times allocating supplemental funds just to pay its bills to the local distribution utility.

With the transition to solar energy, the savings are expected to be redirected to essential public services.

The project is financed through the People's Survival Fund (PSF) of the Climate Change Commission, making Maramag the only local government unit in Bukidnon granted access to the national climate adaptation financing program.

Mayor Jose Joel Doromal thanked climate officials for approving the town's P126-million grant aimed at shifting to renewable energy and strengthening disaster resilience.

"LGU Maramag was selected through a rigorous process, and we are humbled to utilize these funds effectively for the betterment of our community," Doromal said.

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