NEWS ROUNDUP
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- 106 areas under state of calamity due to El Niño: NDRRMC
- El Nino will intensify, then peak in December: UN
- ITCZ to bring rains in Palawan, VisMin; northeasterly winds to affect Batanes, Babuyan
- UN: El Niño peaks by December
- Climate summit warns stronger action needed to curb global warming
- 6th ASEAN International Conference on Energy and Environment at AEBF-26 spotlights research and innovation to support ASEAN's Regional Energy Cooperation
- Philippines, South Korea Fast-Track Climate, Environmental Collab Pacts
- Baguio City intensifies anti-littering drive
- PH rice sector taps climate data as El Niño risks intensify
- W. Visayas TF El Niño strengthens measures vs dry spell, climate diseases
- Pacific presses world for help 'surviving' climate change at pre-COP summit

ABS CBN

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By: Jamaine Punzalan

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MANILA TIMES

Pacific presses world for help 'surviving' climate change at pre-COP summit

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PAGEONE

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The Philippines and South Korea are fast-tracking two agreements on environmental and climate cooperation ahead of the 49th ASEAN Summit in November, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said Wednesday.

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

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By: Franz Remar Garion

ILOILO CITY (PIA) — In response to the national government's call to build climate resilience, the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (RDRRMC) 6 has intensified its whole-of-government mitigation and preparedness efforts to cushion El Niño's impact in Western Visayas.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS CBN

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MANILA — A total of 106 areas have declared a state of calamity due to El Niño, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) said.

A state of calamity means local officials can tap emergency funds for the evacuees and impose a price freeze on basic commodities.

Cagayan Valley accounted for over half of the areas under state of calamity with 66, followed by Caraga with 23.

Bicol logged five areas under a state of calamity, Calabarzon tallied 4, and Soccsksargen had one.

The NDRRMC said El Niño so far caused some P5.5 billion in agricultural production loss.

The weather phenomenon has affected some 388,000 people, caused 39 forest fires in Caraga, and prompted water supply interruption in at least four areas.

The government has distributed some P39 million in assistance, the NDRRMC said.

El Nino is a natural phenomenon recurring every two to seven years owing to the warming of sea surfaces -- bringing worldwide changes in winds, pressure and rainfall patterns.

Global forecasters predict this year's event will peak at an intensity never observed in the modern era, compounding the effects of manmade climate change which drives extreme weather patterns.

El Nino will intensify, then peak in December: UN

El Nino will intensify even more before peaking in December, the United Nations said Thursday, warning it could be among the strongest witnessed since at least 1950.

The naturally occurring weather phenomenon is set to bring higher temperatures to much of the planet, the UN's weather and climate agency said, with its impact compounding the effects of man-made climate change.

"El Nino will continue to intensify ahead of its forecast peak in December," the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said in its monthly Global Seasonal Climate Update.

"It is likely to bring above-average temperatures to much of the globe and shift rainfall patterns, increasing the risk of drought and floods in different regions."

El Nino warms surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, bringing worldwide changes in winds, pressure and rainfall patterns.

It typically takes place every two to seven years and lasts around nine to 12 months.

Conditions oscillate between El Nino and its opposite La Nina, with neutral conditions in between.

EL NINO 'STRENGTHENING RAPIDLY'

"Sea-surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific are forecast to increase to record levels during October-November-December 2026, reflecting the strengthening of the El Nino event which will drive weather patterns and impact economies, ecosystems and communities across the globe," the WMO said.

The forecast is based on consensus across 13 leading national and international meteorological centres.

"El Nino is firmly established and strengthening rapidly," said WMO chief Celeste Saulo.

"WMO forecasts indicate a near-100 percent likelihood that it will persist through February 2027, potentially being one of the strongest since at least 1950."

Saulo explained that El Nino does not add new heat to the planet, but releases heat being stored in the ocean.

"The ocean it's drawing from is the warmest we've ever measured it. There is simply more heat available to release," she said.

SEA TEMPERATURES RECORD

The index which measures sea surface temperature anomalies across the central-eastern equatorial Pacific -- the region at the heart of El Nino -- increased from 1.6C above normal in June to 2.5C above normal in August.

For October-November-December, the anomaly is forecast to reach approximately 3.7C above normal.

This would be the highest since observations began, eclipsing the previous record of 2.6C set in 2015-2016.

The last El Nino contributed to making 2023 the second-hottest year on record and 2024 the all-time high at around 1.55C above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial average.

While El Nino usually peaks between November and February, the resulting spike in temperatures typically comes later.

This El Nino is already hitting some regions hard, including in Central America, where animals and crops are dying from drought.

ITCZ to bring rains in Palawan, VisMin; northeasterly winds to affect Batanes, Babuyan
By: Ariel Rojas

MANILA — Two weather systems will bring rains over some parts of the country Tuesday, according to PAGASA.

The Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) will bring scattered rains over Palawan, Visayas, and Mindanao.

The weather bureau warned against possible flash flooding and landslides during occasions of moderate to intense rainfall in these areas.

The ITCZ is the region where winds from the Northern and Southern Hemisphere meet, leading to the formation of clouds and thunderstorms.

It generally shifts south of Mindanao during the northeast monsoon or amihan season.

Meanwhile, the northeasterly winds – winds blowing from the northeast but are still not Amihan – will bring cloudy skies with light rains in Batanes and Babuyan Islands.

The northeasterlies are coming from transitory high pressure areas over mainland China.

Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon will have warm and humid conditions, with isolated rain showers or localized thunderstorms likely in the afternoon or evening.

PAGASA declared the end of the southwest monsoon or habagat season on Monday, also marking the end of the rainy season over the western sections of Luzon and Visayas.

The country is now in a transition period toward the Amihan season, which could begin late October or early November because of the intensifying El Niño, according to the weather bureau.

DAILY TRIBUNE

UN: El Niño peaks by December

‘WMO forecasts indicate a near-100 percent likelihood that it will persist through February 2027.’

GENEVA, Switzerland (AFP) — El Niño will intensify even more before peaking in December, the United Nations (UN) said Thursday, warning it could be among the strongest witnessed since at least 1950.

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El Niño ‘strengthening rapidly’

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GMA NEWS

Climate summit warns stronger action needed to curb global warming

NADI, Fiji/SYDNEY - Countries must urgently scale up their commitments to keep temperature rises within 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) to limit the impacts of extreme weather, a statement from a conference leading up to the UN's COP31 summit said.

The ministerial meeting, being held in Fiji and Tuvalu, said on Tuesday that "deep, rapid and sustained emissions reductions are required to minimize the magnitude and duration of overshoot" of the target.

"As global temperature increases approach 1.5C and we face strong El Niño conditions, we reiterate that every fraction of a degree of warming accelerates the impacts of climate change and increases the risk of irreversible loss and damage for climate vulnerable communities," the statement said.

Some Pacific nations face an existential threat from rising sea levels driven by climate change. Tuvalu's sea levels have risen about 15 cm (6 inches) in the three decades to 2023, according to NASA researchers, twice as fast as the global average.

Under the 2015 Paris Agreement, governments committed to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial period, a threshold the UN's environmental body warned last month the world would exceed "within a few years".

The pre-COP31 conference also reaffirmed the importance of continuing sovereignty and the rights of states to maintain maritime zones under international law, even as climate-related sea-level rise threatens to reshape coastlines in the Pacific.

Pre-COP events, preparatory meetings leading up to the United Nations COP31 climate forum in Turkey in November, are typically technocratic meetings of climate negotiators.

Australia and Pacific partners are working together through the COP31 Pacific Partnership to ensure Pacific voices and solutions are at the center of global climate action, while also seeking to strengthen regional ties ahead of the main summit. — Reuters

MANILA STANDARD

6th ASEAN International Conference on Energy and Environment at AEBF-26 spotlights research and innovation to support ASEAN's Regional Energy Cooperation

Manila, 5 October 2026 – The ASEAN International Conference on Energy Environment returns for its sixth edition at the 26th ASEAN Energy Business Forum (AEBF-26) held in conjunction with the 44th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) in Manila, Philippines. The conference is hosted by the Department of Energy of the Philippines (DOE) and organised by the ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE).

With more than 180 abstract submissions, the 6th AICEE brings together scholars, policymakers, industry practitioners, and financial experts to explore interdisciplinary solutions and evidence-based insights. Aligned with the Philippines' ASEAN Chairship in 2026, the theme of the 6th AICEE, "Sustainable Energy System, Resilient Infrastructure, and Innovative Finance for ASEAN Community", reflects ASEAN's efforts to strengthen its energy systems, build resilient infrastructure, and foster innovative financing solutions.

Scholars were invited to submit abstracts for seven (7) topics based on the programme areas of ASEAN's regional energy blueprint, the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2026-2030:

1. Programme Area 1: ASEAN Power Grid (APG)
2. Programme Area 2: Oil & Gas Connectivity, Security, and Sustainability (OGCSS)
3. Programme Area 3: Clean Coal Transformation (CCTR)
4. Programme Area 4: Energy Efficiency and Conservation (EE&C)
5. Programme Area 5: Renewable Energy (RE)
6. Programme Area 6: Regional Energy Policy and Planning (REPP)
7. Programme Area 7: Civilian Nuclear Energy (CNE)

At AEBF-26, selected submissions are invited to present their abstract during the full-day academic conference. A keynote presentation was also featured from Prof Raymond Tan, Vice-President Research of De La Salle University.

"The 6th AICEE topics are aligned with the seven programme areas of the APAEC 2026-2030, creating a stronger connection between research and innovation with ASEAN's regional energy priorities. The evidence and perspectives shared through AICEE can help inform the implementation of APAEC, while bringing forward practical ideas and solutions to support ASEAN's energy transition towards a more secure, sustainable, and resilient energy future," said Dr. Zulfikar Yurnaidi, Head of the Energy Modelling and Policy Planning (MPP) Department, ACE.

The success of the 6th AICEE is greatly facilitated by its co-host institutions: De La Salle University Manila and Gokongwei College of Engineering. Additional support is also provided by

knowledge partners from the ASEAN Climate Change and Energy Project (ACCEPT), Ateneo De Manila University, and Caraga State University Philippines. Manilacity guide

“As an academic institution, De La Salle University believes universities must do more than study the energy transition; we must help shape it. We are honored to be the co-host of the 6th AICEE. Through this, we hope to connect our researchers with ASEAN’s energy leaders and policymakers, and build partnerships that will develop solutions for a secure, affordable, and sustainable energy future,” said Kathleen Aviso, Lead of the 6th AICEE Scientific Committee, De La Salle University.

At the closing ceremony, selected abstracts were awarded Best Oral Presentation, Best Paper, and Honourable Mention for Oral Presentation.

The 6th AICEE marked another milestone in advancing regional dialogue and collaboration on energy and environmental solutions. The presented research may provide valuable input the APAEC and other regional energy cooperation frameworks. Through the exchange of research findings, industry perspectives, and policy insights, the conference contributed to strengthening ASEAN’s collective efforts towards a secure, sustainable, and resilient energy future.

The AICEE will return next year in Singapore, held at the 27th ASEAN Energy Business Forum in conjunction with the 45th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM), aligned with Singapore’s ASEAN Chairmanship of 2027.

MANILA TIMES

Pacific presses world for help 'surviving' climate change at pre-COP summit

NADI, Fiji — Pacific leaders pressed wealthy nations for more funds to help them "survive" climate change Wednesday at a gathering aimed at drawing the world's attention to life on the frontline of global warming.

This week's "pre-COP" meetings in the Fijian city of Nadi are a precursor to the larger UN-sponsored global climate summit — known as COP31 — to be held in Turkey next month.

The South Pacific is among the regions of the world most vulnerable to global warming — from rising seas jeopardizing homes to increasing temperatures causing coral bleaching.

Speaking on the sidelines of the summit, Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape told journalists Wednesday it was an issue of "morality."

"Nations who have sovereign borders are facing the threat of being nations no more," he said.

"We live with the burden of decisions made elsewhere."

Pacific nations are using the pre-COP platform to push for more backing for the countries most affected by climate change.

The EU's climate commissioner Wopke Hoekstra told journalists "we're clearly not doing enough".

A UN report released in August found developing countries needed $310 billion-$365 billion to adapt, yet had only $26 billion in adaptation finance available in 2023.

Regional leaders have set up the Pacific Resilience Facility with the hopes of raising $500 million, but has so far brought in commitments for less than half of that.

Fiji on Wednesday announced an addition $10 million for that fund.

"We need to be able to help our people to survive," Fiji's climate minister Lynda Tabuya said.

The Australian government also said it would invest AU$3 million (US$2 million) on a number of regional road and communications infrastructure projects in Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Kiribati and Tuvalu.

Australia's climate minister Chris Bowen said the money would "help these countries adjust to climate change, particularly focused on the coastlines with erosion, with rising sea levels."

'Keep 1.5C alive'

Also high on the agenda is a push by Pacific leaders for the world to stick to a target of limiting global warming to 1.5C.

Scientists agree that warming above 1.5C relative to pre-industrial times poses grave risks and nearly 200 nations committed a decade ago to try and keep global temperature rises to this safer threshold.

On Wednesday, AFP accompanied dozens of campaigners from the Pacific and Australia's Torres Strait Islanders on a flotilla which sailed past the summit venue and urged leaders to "keep 1.5C alive."

Advertisement
Poiongo Lisati from Fiji's Kioa Island said they hoped to "protect our people and also our land."

"If climate finance assistance can be made available for the maritime islands, it will be easy for us to get help," Lisati said.

Frontline of climate change

On Tuesday, over a dozen leaders visited the nearby Pacific nation of Tuvalu — one of the world's least-visited countries already laying plans to relocate its population of 10,600 if the island nation is consumed by the ocean.

A marine heatwave in 2024 wiped out an estimated 99.9 percent of the coral that built the remote Tuvalu islands.

With just a few hours on the remote archipelago before flying back to Fiji, there was a rush from organizers to get in as many events as possible.

"The objective of this Tuvalu event is for you, leaders, to experience and feel climate change first-hand, from being in the frontline of the impact of climate change," Tuvalu Prime Minister Feleti Teo told visiting officials.

But Australia drew criticism from a Tuvalu government adviser, who accused Prime Minister Anthony Albanese of disrespect by not wearing a traditional headpiece during an event and for overstepping during the running of the visit.

Australia is head of this year's climate negotiations but has faced accusations of hypocrisy given its role as a major coal exporter.

PAGEONE

Philippines, South Korea Fast-Track Climate, Environmental Collab Pacts

The Philippines and South Korea are fast-tracking two agreements on environmental and climate cooperation ahead of the 49th ASEAN Summit in November, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said Wednesday.

DENR Secretary Juan Miguel Cuna and South Korean Ambassador and Deputy Minister for Climate Change Jongho Kyun discussed the agreements during bilateral talks on Sept. 24 on the sidelines of the 81st UN General Assembly High-Level Week and Climate Week NYC 2026 at the United Nations Headquarters, according to a news release from the agency.

Manila and Seoul are negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Environmental Cooperation and an MOU on Climate Change Cooperation.

The agreements are expected to cover Article 6 carbon market mechanisms under the Paris Agreement, greenhouse gas emissions reduction, water resource management and ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction.

Cuna said climate commitments must be matched by policies, investments and technology, noting South Korea's extensive experience in linking climate action with economic development, technology and infrastructure.

"As we move toward COP31, we see the priority increasingly shifting from commitments to implementation and delivery—translating climate goals into policies, investments, technologies, and measurable outcomes," he said.

The DENR said the talks also tackled the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD), particularly the need for vulnerable countries to have clear access to financial support after climate-related disasters.

During the talks, Cuna also cited the deadly flood in Nepal, and the Philippines which continue to face significant climate-related risks.

He also emphasized the need to strengthen international support for countries facing climate-related loss and damage.

"There is a need to establish practical pathways so that countries most vulnerable to climate impacts can access support when loss and damage occur," Cuna stressed.

"The FRLD can play an important role in helping countries recover, rebuild, and strengthen resilience," he added.

Cuna also thanked South Korea for its Official Development Assistance through the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), which has supported marine plastics reduction and provided emergency aid during the Mindoro oil spill.

He also cited the recent deployment of the MV Nilad in Manila Bay as another area of cooperation.

“The recent transfer of the clean-up vessel MV Nilad through KOICA represents a major step in our efforts to remove marine litter and respond to pollution incidents in Manila Bay,” Cuna said.

He also noted additional support from South Korea, including a K-cleaner truck, which, he said, will further boost onshore waste management.

The DENR said the two MOUs are targeted for completion before the November summit, as the Philippines prepares to host the ASEAN Summit during its 2026 chairship. (PNA)

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

Baguio City intensifies anti-littering drive

BAGUIO CITY (PIA) — The City Government of Baguio is strengthening the enforcement of its anti-littering ordinance through increased monitoring and deployment of park rangers around Burnham Park.

The Anti-Littering Ordinance is jointly implemented and enforced by the Public Order and Safety Division (POSD), the Baguio City Police Office (BCPO), the City Environment and Parks Management Office (CEPMO), and deputized local barangay officials.

Known as Ordinance No. 54, Series of 1988, as amended by Ordinance No. 59, Series of 2020, the Anti-Littering Ordinance seeks to maintain cleanliness in public places and safeguard the health and welfare of residents and visitors.

The CEPMO has deployed park rangers in civilian attire to monitor the area and apprehend individuals found violating the anti-littering regulation.

Parkgoers expressed support for the continued implementation of the ordinance, noting that stricter enforcement helps discourage violations and promotes responsible waste disposal.

“It’s better nga i-stay da diyay nga implementation da tadta tapnu ma-lessen pay day jay violations nga mangmangyari ditoy Burnham Park. Very effective isuna, jay implement da kasi mas na-lessen ti problem iti Baguio ken mas natatakot ang mga violators na gawin ulit ‘yun,” parkgoer Angelica Mae Paggic said.

Meanwhile, Jerry Ngillod, another parkgoer, said this helps in maintaining cleanliness especially in areas where some people gather and garbage waste is left.

“Mayat met a tapnu malinisan t rugit dtoy karkaru dagitoy nakainum ket nu kwa ket ibelbeling da lang dita igigeden ngy nga han da la kitan day basuraan nga pangikabkabilan da,” Ngillod said.

The parkgoers encouraged visitors to comply with the ordinance and properly dispose of their waste to help maintain the cleanliness and orderliness at Burnham Park.

First-time violators of the ordinance are required to render 12 hours of community service or pay the corresponding P1,000 penalty. (JDP/DEG-PIA-CAR w/ GIP Stefanie Gum-oyen)

PH rice sector taps climate data as El Niño risks intensify

By: Camille N. Gavino

SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ (PIA) — The government is strengthening the use of climate and rice data to help farmers make timely decisions on planting, irrigation, and drought preparedness as El Niño risks intensify.

The Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) and the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) are working to translate weather forecasts and rice production data into practical information that farmers can use in managing their crops.

PAGASA Weather Services Chief Thelma Cinco said the partnership aims to make technical weather information more useful in guiding farmers' crop management decisions.

"This is not just about providing weather information. What matters is helping farmers understand what these data mean for their cropping management, when to plant, when to irrigate, and what steps they should take to prepare for an approaching drought or other extreme weather events," Cinco said.

PAGASA earlier warned that dry conditions may affect several provinces beginning October, with some areas potentially experiencing drought.

The agency also said El Niño may persist into the first half of 2027.

Under the strengthened data-sharing partnership, PAGASA provides weather and climate information, including rainfall, temperature, humidity, wind, cloud cover, and other available weather conditions.

PhilRice, meanwhile, contributes rice-related information covering planting dates, crop growth, rice areas, varieties, yield, production, and areas at risk.

PhilRice Executive Director John de Leon emphasized the need to align the cropping calendar with prevailing weather conditions and water availability to maximize rice production during the dry season.

"What the Department of Agriculture wants is for us to make the most of the dry season. If possible, we may be able to have two cropping cycles during this period. What matters is that we align the cropping calendar with weather conditions so that more farmers can continue rice production, especially during challenging periods such as the rainy season," de Leon said.

The initiative supports the efforts of the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to promote climate-resilient and data-driven agriculture, protect farmers' productivity, and strengthen the country's food security through science, technology, and timely information. (CLJD/CNG, PIA Region-3 Nueva Ecija)

W. Visayas TF El Niño strengthens measures vs dry spell, climate diseases
By: Franz Remar Garion

ILOILO CITY (PIA) — In response to the national government's call to build climate resilience, the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (RDRRMC) 6 has intensified its whole-of-government mitigation and preparedness efforts to cushion El Niño's impact in Western Visayas.

Aligning with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s priority to ensure food, water, and health security amid changing climate conditions, the Regional Task Force (TF) El Niño convened during the 3rd Quarter RDRRMC Full Council Meeting held Sept. 28 in Roxas City, Capiz, to operationalize sector-specific action plans.

Office of Civil Defense (OCD) 6 Officer-in-Charge lawyer Melissa P. Banias, who presided over the meeting, emphasized the urgency of proactive disaster resilience, noting that the regional El Niño team has been fully activated to address emerging hazards.

"As early as… second quarter, we have already issued a memorandum creating or reactivating the Regional El Niño team composed of five sectors. We organized water security, food security, energy security, health security, and public safety sectors. [With that] we'll also be having a series of meetings together with the different sectors to monitor updates as well as to ensure that this plan will be duly funded and will be implemented," Atty. Banias noted.

The OCD official further said that part of the RDRRMC Memorandum No. 40, series of 2026, is the submission of the Agency Action Plan in relation to El Niño, which was presented during the meeting.

"We already have an existing El Niño team. It was activated way back in 2023, and for now, we received a memorandum coming from the National DRRM Council for the reactivation of the said team in preparation for El Niño this 2026 and 2027," Banias added.

During the council meeting, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) reported that El Niño conditions are intensifying, predicting severe dry conditions and potential drought across the region from December through May 2027.

To prevent the surge of heat-related illnesses and manage climate-sensitive health risks, the Department of Health (DOH) Western Visayas Center for Health Development has rolled out its health security measures.

Florence Audrey Mamon-Pestaño, Medical Officer IV of the DOH WV CHD Regional Health Emergency Management Section, detailed the agency's interventions, including the prepositioning of health commodities, deployment of hospital safety index tools, and water safety monitoring.

Pestaño added that DOH has issued advisories to local government units for enhanced epidemiological surveillance, noting a 39 percent decline in dengue cases but a 29 percent increase in leptospirosis cases due to recent flood exposure in the region.

Meanwhile, the agricultural and water sectors are fast-tracking infrastructure to secure food production.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is constructing small water-impounding systems across four provinces of the region with a P53.9-million budget, while the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) is pushing for solar-powered irrigation projects.

The Department of Agriculture (DA), noting that approximately 3,500 hectares of rice areas are vulnerable to the dry spell, is undertaking cloud-seeding operations, crop-shifting strategies, and input distribution to maximize yields in unaffected areas.

To ensure public safety and continuous power supply, the Department of Energy (DOE) is promoting energy efficiency and solar roofing installations for government facilities to combat power outages, while the Philippine National Police (PNP) mobilized an 18-agency action plan focused on fire prevention and community support.

Through these integrated efforts, RDRRMC 6 aims to ensure no community is left vulnerable to impending extreme weather conditions, echoing the Marcos administration's mandate for a responsive and disaster-ready Philippines. (AAL/FRG/PIA6/Photo courtesy of PIA Capiz)

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