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Typhoon Koppu death toll now at 22. Fears of new flooding

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Fears for agriculture, entire areas devoted to the cultivation of rice and corn affected. State of calamity declared. Downgraded to a tropical storm, Koppu persists in the region and could strike again in the coming hours.

Manila (AsiaNews / Agencies) - The provisional death toll from typhoon Koppu, which for two days has been ravaging the mountainous regions in the north of the Philippines has risen to 22. One of the worst affected areas is to Cabanatuan, north of Manila, where 70 villages are flooded with water.

While typhoon Koppu has abated and now became a tropical storm, it's passage struck the east coast of Luzon reaching a speed of 210 km / h. The authorities have issued a warning for possible new flooding and remain on high alert to prevent further damage.

According to reports from the Philippine Civil Defence, Koppu hit more than 300 thousand people in the island of Luzon. Floods, landslides and shipping accidents are the causes that have killed at least 22 people, but the fear is that the toll will worsen in the coming hours.

The floods have covered some of the most important centers for the cultivation and harvesting of rice and corn in the country, especially in lowland areas north of the capital. The authorities have declared a state of calamity.

Over 200 villages have been submerged by floods, some of which are covered by over a meter

of water. Meanwhile, heavy rains continue to fall in the mountainous region of the Cordillera. This will cause further flooding in the coming hours to the areas below.

Moreover, according to experts Koppu could strike again in the north of the island of Luzon in the early hours of tomorrow, after collecting more water passing over the South China Sea. This would cause further damage to agriculture, a sector already hard hit by flooding.

Typhoons and tropical storms are a common occurrence in the Philippines, with an average of 20 per year and some of them fatal. However, Koppu has been anomalous in its slow moving pace because of the obstacle formed by the typhoon Champi further east. This causes heavy violent and prolonged rains, that exacerbate the effects of floods.

Koppu is the second typhoon of some force to befall the Philippine archipelago, the 12th in total. In November 2013, the typhoon [Yolanda](#) hit the central provinces of the country, causing more than 7,300 dead or missing and serious damage to homes and agriculture.

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