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IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service



Agri growth key to lower poverty rate—Diokno

By BERNADETTE D. NICOLAS

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FINANCE Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno said a robust agriculture growth will be a key to reducing poverty incidence in the country.

Diokno expressed optimism that the agriculture sector, which he described in the past as a “laggard,” will be among the drivers of the country’s economic growth as he vowed that the government will work hard to achieve this.

The government expects the economy to grow 6.5 to 7.5 percent this year and 6.5 to 8 percent starting next year until 2028.

The Philippine economy grew 8.3 percent in the first quarter of

this year, with agriculture, forestry, and fishing sector posting 0.2-percent growth.

Improving the agriculture industry also plays a crucial role in developing the agri-business sector that has an impact on manufacturing, he said.

“If we achieve our objective of making the agricultural sector more vibrant, more organized, and more productive, [I think that will have a big] impact on poverty incidence in the Pilipinas,” Diokno said, partly in Filipino, in an interview over a public affairs program recently, noting that poverty incidence in the agriculture sector is also high.

“With agriculture, mining, and then industry and services

all growing, then we can actually lift a lot of people out of poverty,” he added.

The latest official data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed poverty incidence increased to 23.7 percent in the first semester of 2021 from 21.1 percent in the first semester of 2018. This translates to 26.14 million Filipinos who lived below the poverty threshold—estimated at P12,082 on the average, for a family of five per month—in the first semester of 2021.

President Marcos Jr., who has taken leadership of the Department of Agriculture, said in his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) that the agricultural sector will be “[o]ne of the main

drivers of our push for growth and employment.”

“Before the crisis, the Philippine economy was growing between 6 to 7 percent and, in fact, we were close to our original target of reducing poverty to around 14 percent in the country by the end of President Duterte’s term, but of course the virus—the pandemic—intervened,” Diokno said.

“We were not able to do that, but we are back to where we want to be. Maybe by the end—that’s the promise of [President Ferdinand ‘Bongbong’ Marcos Jr.]—by the end of his term, 2028, we will cut poverty incidence in this country to single digit—to

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9 percent,” he added.

Apart from agriculture, Diokno said another key driver of economic growth are foreign direct investments that would enable the introduction of new technology.

He expects more foreign investments to come in following the passage of recent economic liberalization bills, including the amendments to the Retail Trade Liberalization Act, Foreign Investments Incentives Act, and the Public Service Act.

“When all the foreign direct investments we are expecting finally come in, we will achieve our target of 6.5 to 8 percent [gross domestic product growth] towards the last five years of the Marcos administration,” Diokno said.



Diokno banking on agriculture revival to reduce poverty rate

By CHINO S. LEYCO

The Department of Finance (DOF) stressed the critical role of a robust agriculture industry in growing the economy at a sustainable and inclusive pace and supporting poverty alleviation in the long term.

In a statement on Tuesday, Aug. 2, Finance Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno said a more vibrant, more organized, and more productive agriculture sector will have a significant impact on the reduction of the poverty incidence of the country.

Diokno noted that the agriculture industry was not working in the past, with fluctuating and almost negligible contribution to the economy.

The finance chief added that poverty incidence in the agriculture sector is also high.

He said that based on previous performances of the economy, sustained growth will help drive poverty incidence rate reduction.

"Before the crisis, the Philippine economy was growing between six to seven percent and, in fact, we were close to our original target of reducing poverty to around 14 percent in the country by the end of President Duterte's term, but of course the virus—the pandemic—intervened," he said.

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we are back to where we want to be. Maybe by the end – that's the promise of [President Marcos] – by the end of his term, 2028, we will cut poverty incidence in this country to single digit – to nine percent," Diokno explained.

Diokno said that the agriculture industry is also crucial for the development of the agri-business sector that has an impact on manufacturing.

He cited the high cost of the country's agricultural products and basic needs as the reason for the continued high dependence on the importation of commodities.

He said in earlier that the government will continue importation until domestic production increases.

President Marcos, who has taken leadership of the Department of Agriculture, said in his first State of the Nation Address that the agricultural sector will be "one of the main drivers of our push for growth and employment".

According to Diokno, another key driver of economic growth are foreign direct investments that would enable the introduction of new technology.

"When all the foreign direct investments that we are expecting finally come in, then, really, we will achieve our target of 6.5 to 8 percent [gross domestic product growth] towards the last five years of the Marcos administration," Diokno said.



Robust agri to support poverty reduction

BY ANGELA CELIS

THE country's finance chief stressed the critical role of a robust agriculture sector in having a sustainable and inclusive economic growth, as well as supporting poverty alleviation in the long term, according to a statement released by the Department of Finance (DOF) yesterday.

"If we achieve our objective of making the agricultural sector more vibrant, more organized and more productive, I think it will have a significant impact on the (reduction of the) poverty incidence of the Philippines," said Benjamin Diokno, DOF secretary.

Diokno said the agriculture industry was not working in the past, with fluctuating and almost negligible contribution to the economy. He also noted the high poverty incidence in the agriculture sector.

Based on previous performances of the economy, sustained growth will help drive poverty incidence rate reduction, he added.

"Before the crisis, the Philippine economy was growing between 6 to 7 percent and, in fact, we were close to our original target of reducing poverty to around 14 percent in the country by the end of President Duterte's term, but of course the virus – the pandemic – intervened," he said.

"We were not able to do that, but we are back to where we want to be. Maybe by the end – that's the promise of (President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.) – by the end of his term, 2028, we will cut poverty incidence in this country to single digit – to 9 percent," Diokno said.

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DIOKNO

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Marcos, who has taken leadership of the Department of Agriculture, said in his first State of the Nation Address the agricultural sector will be "one of the main drivers of our push for growth and employment."

Meanwhile, Diokno said another key driver of economic

growth are foreign direct investments that would enable the introduction of new technology.

"When all the foreign direct investments that we are expecting finally come in, then, really, we will achieve our target of 6.5 to 8 percent (gross domestic product growth) towards the last five years of the Marcos administration," he said.

Another strategy of the government under its Medium-

Term Fiscal Framework is digitalization to promote easier business transactions and support micro, small and medium enterprises.

"If we become a digital economy, poor Filipinos, using their cellphones, can transact business and they can do a lot of things with digitalization. Plus, government efficiency will improve. They can just pay their taxes in their app on their smartphone," the finance chief said.

Diokno also cited the mining sector as having a great potential for supporting economic growth, especially with the high world metals prices.

He said the government will focus on ensuring that all sectors, such as agriculture, industry and services, are growing.

"With agriculture, mining and then industry and services all growing, then we can actually lift a lot of people out of poverty," Diokno said.



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ADB HELPS CITIES MAINSTREAM CLIMATE RESILIENCE

THE Asian Development Bank (ADB) has launched a new initiative to help cities across Asia and the Pacific to meet their climate resilience goals while improving their infrastructure and urban services.

In a statement on Tuesday,

ADB said the Creating Investable Cities initiative unveiled at the World Cities Summit in Singapore will provide "hands-on advisory support and capacity-building resources" to 20 cities in Asia and the Pacific in the initial phase.

"The initiative will support these partner cities in mainstreaming

climate resilience into their policies and projects, developing local resources mobilization strategies, and improving their access to private sector finance," read the statement of ADB.

The regional development bank underscored that urbanization is a powerful force in

Asia and the Pacific. In fact, by 2030, the region will have nearly 200 cities each with more than a million people.

ADB noted that while cities are the engines of global growth, generating 80 percent of GDP

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worldwide, they also produce nearly 70 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions and 50 percent of the waste.

With six of the top 10 vulnerable countries of the world located in Asia and the Pacific amid rapid urbanization, its urban poor are particularly vulnerable to the harsh effects of climate change.

"Cities are the front lines in the fight against climate change, especially as the world looks to recover and rebuild from the pandemic," said ADB Vice President for Private Sector Operations and Public-Private Partnerships Ashok Lavasa.

Lavasa added that the Creating Investable Cities initiative provides practical and end-to-end advisory service to policymakers, enabling them to tap directly into ADB's expertise and finance.

Meanwhile, ADB noted that collaborations with Makassar, Indonesia; Penang, Malaysia; Tbilisi, Georgia; and Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia are underway.

Further, the regional development bank noted that each of these cities is seeking advanced solutions to help them to decarbonize their electricity grid, green their built environment, improve urban mobility including through electric vehicles, transition to a circular economy, conserve water, and enhance their urban service delivery and asset management through smart and integrated planning and investment.

For his part, Bruno Carrasco, the Director General of ADB's Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, stressed that the cities need to intensify their efforts if they intend to attain climate resilience.

"Cities cannot continue on a business-as-usual approach if they want to meet their climate targets," said Carrasco.

"The CIC initiative will help cities to mainstream climate into their urban policymaking by leveraging ADB's climate, urban, and governance expertise and by mobilizing partnerships for knowledge transfer and capacity building," added Carrasco.

Prior to the onslaught of the Covid-19 pandemic, ADB estimated that Asia-Pacific needs to raise almost \$1.7 trillion per year to close its infrastructure gap, \$200 billion of which should come from the private sector.

"Covid-19 highlights the urgency of preparing cities to leverage the private sector's innovation, efficiency, and finance to close the huge infrastructure gap that prevents cities from reaching their economic potential," said Head of ADB's Office of Public-Private Partnership F. Cleo Kawawaki.

According to Kawawaki, improving cities' local resource mobilization and financial quality are crucial in attracting private sector and climate finance for their greener, resilient futures to enhance the quality of life in the cities.

"ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. Established in 1966, it is owned by 68 members—49 from the region," read the ADB statement. Andrea E. San Juan



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'FALSE SOLUTIONS' Climate-change campaigners stage a protest in front of the Japanese Embassy in Manila to call on the Japanese government and corporations to stop financing fossil fuels and the promotion of technologies that they say are false solutions to the climate crisis. **ROY DOMINGO**



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Abra quake revives lawmakers' call for permanent evacuation centers

By JOVEE MARIE N. DELA CRUZ

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WITH more than 8,000 families or over 33,000 persons displaced by the magnitude 7 earthquake that jolted Northern Luzon last week, lawmakers are pushing for the establishment of fully equipped, fully operational evacuation centers in the country.

Camarines Sur Reps. LRay Villafuerte, Miguel Luis Villafuerte and Tsuyoshi Anthony Horibata and Bicol Saro Rep. Nicolas Enciso VIII filed House Bill 1091 providing for immediate and temporary accom-

modation for people who have been evacuated or dislocated from their homes because of emergency events such as earthquakes, typhoons, floods, storm surges, droughts and other severe climate disturbances, fires and disease outbreaks that present imminent danger to life and property.

As thousands of families were forced to flee their homes and seek shelter in temporary evacuation centers or makeshift tents or stay with their relatives or friends after the July 28 temblor, President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. ordered during his subsequent inspection of the

quake-hit areas the distribution of tarpaulins for the temporary makeshift shelters of the affected families.

"The dislocation of thousand of families as an offshoot of the magnitude 7 earthquake that jolted Abra and other parts of the North has underlined anew the urgency of establishing disaster-resilient evacuation centers for the temporary shelter of those adversely affected by the onslaught of natural calamities and disease outbreaks," said Rep. LRay Villafuerte.

"The Covid-19 pandemic, the climate crisis and this latest earthquake have heightened

the need for the construction of permanent evacuation centers in every city and municipality to ensure that evacuees have enough safe, well-ventilated, comfortable private spaces to go to during times of disasters," added Villafuerte, who is also the vice president for political affairs of the National Unity Party (NUP).

HB 1091 provides that evacuation centers shall be constructed and designed to withstand super typhoons or wind speeds of at least 300 kilometers per hour and seismic activity of at least 8.0 magnitude.

The bill specifies that these fa-

cilities must be calamity-resilient, built with sturdy materials and in accordance with the specifications of Republic Act (RA) No. 6541, otherwise known as the "National Building Code of the Philippines," or shall be at par with the standards set by the International Building Code.

"The Philippines is susceptible to natural hazards, unforeseen disasters and other calamities because of its location along the so-called 'Pacific Ring of Fire,' an area where earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are more recurring than in any other areas of the world," Villafuerte and his three HB 1091

co-authors said in their bill.

They pointed out in HB 1091 that catastrophic incidences create a disastrous state in the lives of the Filipino, and that "among the Filipinos, the underprivileged are the ones who suffer the most during these times. They have lost their shelters; they have no food to eat; sometimes, even lives are taken by these calamities."

The bill tasked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to determine the location of every evacuation center, in close coordination with the particular local government unit (LGU) concerned.



PHL to participate in ASEAN program to jointly manage large marine ecosystems

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said it is preparing to participate in an ASEAN collaborative project on large marine ecosystems (LMEs), which is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

"The project is expected to complement our existing efforts in the Philippines towards productive partnerships with the neighboring countries in terms of scaling up management under the regional marine protected area network approach," DENR Foreign-Assisted and Special Projects Service Director Al O. Orofio said.

According to the DENR, ASEAN coastal and marine areas are home to 20% of the world's seagrass beds, a third of the world's mangrove forests with 45 to 75 true species, and a third of the world's coral reefs, with more than 75% of coral species and 40% of fish species.

The project aims to manage networks of marine protected areas in LMEs, which are a source of

livelihood for fishermen. LMEs are marine areas extending beyond national boundaries.

"It aims to develop and improve the management of networks of marine protected areas (MPAs) and marine corridors within selected LMEs in the ASEAN region for the conservation of globally significant biodiversity. It will support sustainable fisheries and other ecosystem goods and services," the DENR added.

The collaboration will involve the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand, with ultimate participation targeted at least five ASEAN members.

Mr. Orofio said the collaborative management approach hopes to address climate change, marine pollution and biodiversity loss.

The GEF tallies about 66 LMEs worldwide, with the program supporting the sustainable governance of 23. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson**



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Solon sees consensus on disaster agency creation

HOUSE Ways and Means Chair Albay Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda sees a consensus in the creation of a disaster agency among colleagues in Congress, and vowed to support a proposal that places it under the Office of the President, "if the bill is pushed to the finish line."

Salceda crafted the first version of the Disaster Risk Reduction (DDR) bill in the 17th Congress. The agency will be a full blown government department. He has since then pushed the bill several times, which the lower house has twice approved, but failed to get off the Senate.

The creation of a DRR has once again become an urgent issue in the wake of the earthquake that ravished Abra province, with no less than President Marcos conceding that it should be legislated.

Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri, in a recent statement, said senators pressing for the creation of the DRR are

willing to support a version downgrading it to an agency under the Office of the President as long as it would address the 'unresponsiveness of the current set-up.'

Salceda concurs with Zubiri's proposal of a down scaled version of a disaster agency, saying he will endorse it as a compromise with his colleagues in the House, "as long as it moves forward towards PBBM's desk."

He had earlier challenged the Senate to take the bill up and said he was more optimistic about the bill's chances under Zubiri's Senate presidency. The DRR bill has been declared a priority legislation by the past administration.

Salceda said a downsized agency from his original proposal will do as long as it retains its key elements, foremost of which "is the institutionalization of resilience initiatives; it can't be ad hoc in operationalization,

the way the OCD-NDRRMC (or the Office of Civil Defense-National Disaster and Risk Reduction Management Council) relationship is."

"Another key element is proximity to the President. If it is an office under the President, it will be good. I also suggest that the agency chair be a Presidential Adviser with cabinet rank so that he or she can work with the rest of the Cabinet," he added.

Salceda said the critical aspect will be the abolition of the NDRRMC. "Instead of a council, the management of disasters must be institutional instead of collegial. As long as it is not a council but an agency, I am okay. That is my position," he stressed.

Another element, Salceda said, would be the ability to mobilize national resources at the most crucial moments. "So, control over the NDRRMC Fund will be critical," he pointed out.

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"The ability to mobilize civil defense units such as the BFP, the Engineering Brigade of the AFP, and other units relevant for disaster response is also critical. We just need a call-out provision for that," he explained.

"You also need the abil-

ity to work closely with PHIVOLCS, PAGASA, MGB, and other disaster research and detection agencies. At least now we are trying to manage the costs, but there is consensus on the principles," he stressed.

Salceda said the "cabinet rank for the head is also crucial, because that will allow the head to determine the risk profile of all national priority projects."

"The advantage of a new agency is that unlike the multiple mandates of the existing agencies, the new agency can focus on continuous capacity building, leading to culture building," he noted.

"Actually, we just filed the 3rd reading copy because it allows us to bypass certain procedures in the House, but we are ready with the amendments which we can introduce on the floor, to reflect the Pres-

ident's position," he further explained.

Salceda has been known as an expert in disaster risk reduction during his term as Albay governor. Many of his strategies have been adapted by local government units. He was a constant awardee in national and international disaster events and was spokesman of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.



Chemical spill affects 2 Davao rivers after trailer truck crash

By ANTONIO COLINA IV

DAVAO CITY – Residents have been warned to avoid fishing and swimming in Davao River and its tributary Suawan River after a trailer truck fell 50 feet off a cliff in Barangay Suawan, in Marilog District, and spilled some of its cargoes containing hazardous substances around 8 a.m. yesterday.

Retired Police Col. Alfredo

Baloran, chief of City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO), said in an interview over Davao City Disaster Radio (DCDR 87.5) that the incident killed the driver and injured another worker.

He said authorities have seen dead fish floating along the Suawan River, an indication of water contamination, but added that they are currently assessing the extent of the chemical spill.

He said it is possible that the poisonous substance has travelled further downstream, reaching as far as Davao River.

“In our investigation, there were dead fish in this tributary river. It’s dangerous. If you see dead or weakened fish, you cannot catch and consume them because it might affect your health,” he said.

He said the chemical could potentially cause health hazards to people who come in direct contact with the contaminated water as it could cause severe burns of the skin, vomiting, and diarrhea.



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Regional Updates

Over 48,000 still displaced with aftershocks, monsoon rain affecting earthquake-hit areas

MORE than 48,000 people remain displaced in the aftermath of the magnitude 7 earthquake that struck northwestern Luzon on July 27, according to the latest report from the national disaster management agency.

The 48,379 displaced are among the 404,370 affected by the earthquake, which had been followed by at least 2,286 aftershocks, as of the Aug. 2 monitoring report of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

Some earthquake-hit areas are also affected by landslides triggered by the tremor and compounded by continued southwest monsoon rains, said the Office of Civil Defense's (OCD) Cordillera regional center.

OCD-Cordillera announced on Tuesday the opening of the newly-built warehouse in Tabuk City, Kalinga.

"With the exigency of the situation and following the magnitude 7 Northwestern Luzon Earthquake that affected most of the Cordillera, the Cordillera RDRRMC (Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council) has opened its newly constructed OCD-RDRRMC Inter-Agency Warehouse in Tabuk City, Kalinga," it said.

"This is important as our goal is to further develop and maintain primary and secondary logistics hubs in the region to be used for the prepositioning of food and non-food items and to support the needs and augment the



PIA-ABRA VIA OCD-CORDILLERA

TEMPORARY shelters were being set up on Aug. 1 in San Quintin, Abra as residents were forced to evacuate due to a landslide threat triggered by the July 27 earthquake.

resources of our provinces in the northern part of the region."

Aid has also been coming in from local and international sources.

The government of Japan has sent relief goods, including generators, camping tents, sleeping pads, water containers, and tarpaulins, the Japanese Embassy said on Tuesday.

"At present, we are planning to deliver the emergency relief goods to disaster-hit areas including Abra. The specific destinations are still currently under coordination with DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development)," the embassy told *BusinessWorld* in an email.

Temporary shelter materials were also turned over on July 31 by the United States Agency for In-

ternational Development (USAID), and the United Nation's International Organization for Migration in Abra province, the earthquake epicenter.

The death toll from the earthquake has reached 10 while 394 others were injured, as of the August 2 report of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

There were 413 totally destroyed houses while 28,702 were partially damaged, NDRRMC said.

BILL ON NDRRMC

Meanwhile, Senator Francis Joseph "Chiz" G. Escudero on Tuesday pushed for the creation of a new government office, either a depart-

ment or an agency, that will address red tape in disaster response operations to ensure faster delivery of needed aid and services.

"The law creating a strengthened disaster response agency should have an anti-red tape provision and must ban complex rules that impede the flow of rehabilitation funds to calamity-stricken areas," he said in a statement.

Senator Maria Imelda "Imee" R. Marcos has filed a related bill seeking to expand the authority of the NDRRMC.

The NDRRMC is an inter-agency body under the Department of National Defense. Its role was expanded under Republic Act 10121, the law passed in 2010 strengthening the Philippine disaster management system.

Mr. Escudero, citing his experience as a former governor of Sorsogon, said the release of funds during emergencies was always delayed due to the cumbersome process and voluminous documents required by the national government from the local government units.

"There is room for improvement that can speed up the process," he said.

A bill creating a new department on disaster management was approved by the House of Representatives in the 18th Congress but did not pass the Senate as several legislators questioned its cost and practicality. — **Marifl S. Jara and Alyssa Nicole O. Tan**



SULTAN KUDARAT

5.6 QUAKE SHAKES

By **ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ**

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) has recorded a 5.6-magnitude earthquake in Sultan Kudarat province Tuesday afternoon.

Phivolcs said the quake struck 36 kilometers northwest of Lebak, Sultan Kudarat at 1:24 p.m., with a depth of 36 kilometers.

Cotabato City felt the quake at Intensity III (weak), while General Santos City felt it at Intensity II (slightly felt).

Meanwhile, it was "scarcely perceptible" at Intensity I in Zamboanga City.

Phivolcs' instruments also recorded the quake at Intensity IV in T'boli, South Cotabato; Intensity III in Santo Niño and Koronadal City in South Cotabato and Kiamba in Sarangani; Intensity II in General

Santos City and Cotabato City, and Malungon and Maasim in Sarangani; and Intensity I in Zamboanga City, Davao City, Cagayan de Oro City, and Kidapawan City.

Phivolcs noted that the earthquake was tectonic, which means it was caused by the movement of an active fault near the area.

It advised the public to stay vigilant as aftershocks may occur.



Magnitude 5.1 quake jolts Eastern Samar

A MAGNITUDE 5.1 earthquake jolted Eastern Samar early Tuesday, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) reported.

The tectonic quake struck 13 kms. northeast of the municipality of General MacArthur at 1:10 a.m. yesterday and had a depth of 57 kms..

Intensity 5 was felt in General MacArthur, Hernani and Quinapondan in Eastern Samar; Pastrana, Palo and Tacloban City in Leyte.

Phivolcs also recorded the following instrumental intensities:

Intensity 3 - Abuyog, Alangalang, Leyte

Intensity 2 - Hilongos, Mahaplag, Baybay, Leyte; Hinunangan, Southern Leyte

Intensity 1 - Ormoc City, Albuera, Leyte; Sogod, Southern Leyte

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Phivolcs detects 4 volcanic tremors in Taal

By JUNI LEGASPI

THE Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said Taal Volcano remains under Alert Level 1 after the agency detected four volcanic tremors for the last 24 hours that lasted from two to seven minutes. //Page 1

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"The tremors are volcanic earthquakes signifying fluid or gas movement," said Phivolcs Director Renato Solidummay Jr.

Under Alert Level 1, hazards that could threaten areas within Taal's permanent danger zone are sudden steam-driven or phreatic explosions, volcanic earthquakes, minor ash falls, and expulsions of volcanic gas.

Entry into the permanent danger zone remains prohibited, especially in the vicinity of the main crater and the Daang Kastila fissure. Occupancy and boating on Taal Lake are likewise prohibited.

The agency is also urging pilots to avoid flying close to the volcano. Airborne ash, ballistic fragments from explosions, and wind-remobilized ash may pose hazards to aircraft.

Phivolcs said that sulfur dioxide flux averaged 2,306 tons on August 1.

In addition, a voluminous plume emission reaching 1,200 meters high was also observed for the past 24 hours.

Phivolcs added that these tremors have no relation to the magnitude 7.0 earthquake that jolted Northern Luzon.