

PDRF inaugurates world's first private sector-led national emergency operations center



Clark, Pampanga—The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), one of the leading business networks in disaster management, opened the world's first national emergency operations center (EOC) run by the private sector. The EOC acts as a self-sufficient operations hub geared towards training for disaster preparedness and the coordination of relief and response efforts during major disasters.

The EOC also provides alerts and updates to the PDRF network and coordinates asset inventory as well as the status of lifeline services during emergency situations. These complement government efforts and highlight private sector initiatives in all aspects of response and early recovery.

“PDRF builds platforms in establishing a disaster resilient Philippines. PDRF’s formation is premised on the conviction that disaster management is not solely up to the government. The despair of one must touch us all and everyone must help,” said PDRF co-chair Manuel V. Pangilinan, who is also the CEO of PLDT-SMART and Metro Pacific Groups.

The central feature of the facility is the command center which harnesses data from local and international sources to enhance PDRF’s capacity to monitor earthquakes, tropical cyclones, volcanic eruptions, and pandemics. It also maps data on public infrastructure to help protect them from hazards.

“PDRF is part of a large collaborative effort that led to the realization that we needed to look at our response to natural disasters in a different manner and from a different perspective. We had to look at it from the paradigm of resilience and focus more efforts on preparedness, prevention, and mitigation,” said PDRF co-chair and Ayala Corporation Chairman and CEO Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala.

Clark, Pampanga was the chosen location for the EOC due to its close proximity to the Clark International Airport and the port of Subic Bay. More importantly, it is one of the designated recovery sites identified in the government's national contingency plan.

"The Clark EOC empowers the private sector in all aspects of disaster resilience, which is essential to the safety and welfare of the Filipino people," said PDRF President Butch Meily.

"Our search for solutions at PDRF led us to think about resilience, the ability to bounce back. But we wanted to do more than bounce back. We wanted to move to a better state than what we were in. To do this, we needed to build a culture of disaster preparedness and prevention," said PDRF Chief Resilience Officer Guillermo Luz.

Two years prior, PDRF launched a smaller operations center at Shell House, Makati City.

Also co-chaired by Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, PDRF was established in 2009 as a public-private sector partnership in response to the devastation caused by Typhoon Ondoy. Serving as the critical link among government agencies, civil society groups, international institutions, and local government units, PDRF acts as the umbrella organization of the private sector for disaster preparedness, relief, and recovery.