

PDRF to help Marawi recover; Clark EOC to open



The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), the country's major private sector coordinating body for disaster management, has pledged to further help in the recovery of Marawi, including assistance in planning the new city that will rise from the ashes of the ongoing conflict, during its recent annual board meeting.

The board, co-chaired by PLDT and Smart chairman and CEO Manuel V. Pangilinan, Ayala Corp. chairman and CEO Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala and Manila Archbishop Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle, also announced that the Clark Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be operational by early next year.

PDRF through the Makati Medical Center Foundation (MMCF) has led the medical mission that helped over 1,300 Marawi evacuees and was supported by Cebuana Lhuillier employees, the US Philippines Society, Coca-Cola Philippines, Zuellig Pharma, Unilab, Loida Nicolas Lewis, SM Foundation and PLDT.

Marawi Mayor Majul Gandamra expressed his gratitude for the aid of the business sector while both Task Force Bangon Marawi head Undersecretary Cesar Yano and Lanao del Sur Vice Gov. Bombit Adiong presented their plans.

Meanwhile, PDRF is finalizing the transfer of its current EOC at the Shell House in Makati to a bigger and more modern facility in Clark, Pampanga. The EOC monitors incidents and hazards, and serves as the coordinating platform for member-company needs and response initiatives.

The EOC is a collective effort supported by many of PDRF's partners and sponsors. According to PDRF's chief resilience officer and National Competitiveness Council co-chair Bill Luz, the EOC is a platform that emphasizes the importance of disaster preparedness and response – an investment that saves lives.

Continuing its efforts in innovating disaster preparedness and rehabilitation, PDRF's business continuity manager Rhiza Nery reported on business continuity programs in partnership with a national coalition including the Department of Trade and Industry, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, PhilExport and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center along with other business continuity projects supported by Asia-Pacific Alliance for Disaster Management (APAD), the Humanitarian Leadership Academy and Unilever.

PDRF and its partners have trained 1,200 communities nationwide.

Mapping Officer Carl Vincent Caro unveiled a new product, WHERE (Workforce Hazard Evaluation for Resilient Enterprises), that allows companies to geo-tag their employees and provide them with individual hazard report cards.

Training Officer Anthony Zuniga elaborated on disaster resiliency workshops for employees and their families. These programs belong to PDRF's preparedness and capacity-building initiative.

The Makati Medical Center Foundation Emergency Response Team also reported during the PDRF board meeting their findings on the current avian flu crisis.

The PDRF meeting reaffirms the view of what the private sector can do together with the government in preparing for natural or man-made calamities and ensuring an organized and well-thought out mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation. Business continuity, an indispensable pillar of preparedness, is one of its major objectives, said Mike Toledo, SVP of corporate affairs for Philex Mining Corp. and head of the MVP Group Media Bureau.