

Written by Bobby M. Reyes

Monday, 19 July 2010 07:37 - Last Updated Monday, 19 July 2010 07:41

At last the Philippine government has apparently reacted to the series of earthquakes that has rocked recently the world – from Haiti, Chile, Taiwan, Indonesia, Mexico, California and as of late, Papua New Guinea and Washington, DC

{xtypo_quote} At least 3,000 people may die in Metro Manila once a 7.2-magnitude earthquake hits the National Capital Region—then National Defense Secretary Norberto Gonzales said on June 18, 2010
{/xtypo_quote}

This writer does not know if Sec. Norberto Gonzales reacted to our correspondence sent to his boss, then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. We sent on Jan. 14, 2010, an unsolicited advice to Mrs. Arroyo: “The Philippine government must undertake long-delayed and neglected earthquake-education and building inspection-and-retrofitting programs in view of the Haitian and other recent earthquake-caused disasters.” To read more of our unsolicited advice, please click on this hyperlink,
[RP Must Undertake Earthquake-Education and Retrofitting Programs In View of Recent Quake-caused Disasters](#)

We followed up our unsolicited advice to Mrs. Arroyo by writing another article about earthquakes and the Philippines:

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[A Series of Temblors Is Coming Nearer to RP and Gloria Arroyo Remains Indifferent to Plea for Earthquake-preparedness Program](#)

As early as September 2005, we sent a proposal to then President Arroyo about the need to operate hospital ships, as earthquakes usually devastate land-based hospital and medical facilities. To read about it, please click on this link,

[Gloria Arroyo Misses a Golden Opportunity to Create a World-class Legacy of Leadership in Disaster Relief by Operating Hospital Ships](#)

We mentioned also on May 11, 2010, to now President Noynoy Aquino the need for earthquake-education and retrofitting programs, as stated in this article, [We Congratulate President-elect Aquino and Pledge to Observe the 100-Day Honeymoon Period with the Press But . . .](#)

Dr. Cora Claudio, our contributor and president of the EARTH Institute Asia, discussed with us in Los Angeles, California, her group's advocacy on disaster preparedness during her address to the Media Breakfast Club on March 24, 2010. More of Dr. Claudio's advocacy can be read in this article,

["Enhancement of Community Disaster Preparedness & Livelihood" Seminar on June 19 at Antipolo City](#)

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Here are more news about earthquakes that occurred before in the Philippines:

[Mindanao experiences two earthquakes](#) (on November 17, 2009, 10:09 a.m.)

[Mild tremor rocks North Luzon February](#) (on February 4, 2010, 7:16 p.m.)

One of our columnists, former Board of Investments Gov. Ben Sanchez, sent in these notes about earthquakes and the Philippines:

Manila will be next to be hit by an earthquake

It Is Just a Question of WHEN a Big Quake Will Devastate Areas in the Philippines - MabuhayRadio

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Manila will be next to be hit by an earthquake with a 7.0 magnitude mentioning Marikina Valley. Please watch the link below by CNN

<http://edition.cnn.com/video/data/2.0/video/tech/2010/04/21/coren.manila.unprepared.quake.cnn.html>

'7.2-magnitude quake can kill thousands in Metro Manila'

[Philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com) - Friday, June 18

MANILA, Philippines – At least 3,000 people may die in Metro Manila once a 7.2-magnitude earthquake hits the National Capital Region (NCR), outgoing National Defense Secretary Norberto Gonzales said today.

Gonzales revealed this grim scenario during the launching of the second-quarter nationwide simultaneous earthquake drill at the Benigno Aquino Jr. High School in Comembo, Makati City, this morning.

Citing a study conducted by the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), which he also heads, Gonzales said at least 2 million people will be rendered homeless, 500 fire incidents will

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occur and 400,000 people will need immediate hospitalization.

“At least 400,000 people will need immediate hospitalization once a 7.2-magnitude earthquake hits Metro Manila. It will be a big problem to authorities because there are only 30,000 beds combined in all hospitals all over Metro Manila. We will also need to feed two million people should this disaster come,” Gonzales said.

Gonzales said this is one of the reasons why the NDCC is conducting simultaneous earthquake drills to determine the readiness of the 17 local government units (LGUs) in Metro Manila.

“There will be 500 fire incidents to occur. I am not sure if our Fire Brigade can handle that. We are coordinating all over the world for assistance in times of disaster like this. Remember that in a big earthquake like 7.2 magnitude, time is very important. We must all learn how to help. If Metro Manila is hit by big earthquake, the people here cannot help themselves because they are victims themselves. If the other areas is hit by this, let’s learn to help them. It is important that Filipinos learn to help each other,” Gonzales said.

Gonzales admitted there is no level of preparedness that can prevent the possible damages that earthquake can cause to the country.

For his part, Philippine Volcanology and Seismology (Philvolcs) Director Renato Solidum said earthquake drills are important to impart knowledge on the people, particularly the students, on how to deal with the disaster.

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“It is important to have drills. Earthquake is a rapid event. That is why drills are important. We must also see the structural integrity of the buildings all over the country,” Solidum said.

{xtypo_quote} Director Solidum said that a 7.2-magnitude earthquake may come from the West Marikina Valley fault, which stretch passes through Makati all the way to Laguna. {/xtypo_quote}

During the earthquake drill at the four floor Benigno Aquino, Jr. High School in Comembo, Makati City, NDCC personnel with the coordination of the Makati Rescue Team, the Department of Education quick-response team, the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) from the National Capital Region (NCR), facilitated the mock rescue of the school’s estimated 7,000 students.

The students were ordered to put both their hands on top of their heads and fall in line at the school quadrangle.

Members of the Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP) were also mobilized to help in the drills.

The NDCC also conducted simultaneous earthquake drills at the East Avenue Medical Center in Quezon City and at Camp Aguinaldo

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in

Quezon City

. - By Jose Rodel Clapano (Philstar News Service,

www.philstar.com

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