



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel Nos. (632) 929-66-26/28; 929-6635/929-3618/929-4028
IP Phone Trunkline No. 988-3367
Website: <http://www.denr.gov.ph/> E-mail: web@denrgov.ph



3 August 2021

MEMORANDUM

FOR/TO : **The Undersecretary and Director**
Special Concerns and Biodiversity Management Bureau

The Undersecretary
Enforcement¹

The Bureau Directors
Environmental Management Bureau
Forest Management Bureau
Mines and Geosciences Bureau²

The Executive Director
River Basin Control Office³

The Regional Executive Director
Regional Office No. 2⁴

FROM : **The Assistant Secretary**
Field Operations – Mindanao and Legislative Affairs

SUBJECT : INVITATION TO A HYBRID MEETING TO INQUIRE ON THE
FLOODING IN THE PROVINCES OF CAGAYAN AND ISABELA
DURING THE ONSLAUGHT OF TYPHOON ULYSSES

This pertains to the letters dated 26 July 2021 and 02 August 2021 from the Office of Representative Joseph L. Lara, Technical Working Group (TWG) Chairperson on the Committee on Agriculture and Food, jointly with the Special Committee on North Luzon Growth Quadrangle, **inviting DENR to a 2-part hybrid meeting on 26 August 2021 (Thursday)** in consonance with the meetings held on 24 November 2020 and 28 January 2021 creating the said TWG to further look into the issues raised in the House Resolutions Numbered (HRN) 1345, 1348 and 1369.⁵

For Part 1 thereof, the Regional Executive Director of Regional Office No. 2 (RED-Region 2) or your duly authorized representative is enjoined to physically represent the DENR to the Committee's invitation for an aerial inspection of Magat Dam and Cagayan River on

¹ Mentioned in pages 6 and 8 of the enclosed document entitled "NOV 24 MINUTES MAGAT DAM" and page 8 of the enclosed document entitled "JAN 28 MINUTES MAGAT DAM"

² Mentioned and urged to appear in pages 9, 11 and 12 of the enclosed document entitled "NOV 24 MINUTES MAGAT DAM"

³ Mentioned in pages 9, 10, 12 and 13 of the enclosed document entitled "NOV 24 MINUTES MAGAT DAM" and pages 6 and 9 of the enclosed document entitled "JAN 28 MINUTES MAGAT DAM"

⁴ Mentioned in page 4 of the enclosed document entitled "NOV 24 MINUTES MAGAT DAM" and, pages 7, 8 and 9 of the enclosed document entitled "JAN 28 MINUTES MAGAT DAM"

⁵ For your convenience and reference, copy of the said HRNs and the minutes of the said meeting would be emailed as well.

26 August 2021 at 7:00 am. For this, the Committee would highly appreciate your immediate confirmation.

For Part 2, all the invitees are enjoined to attend the hybrid meeting on **26 August 2021, 2:00 pm**, at the **Grand Ballroom of Pulsar Hotel, Capitol Hills, Caggay, Tuguegarao City, Cagayan** or via the **Zoom platform** with the following details:

https%3A%2F%2Fus02web.zoom.us%2Fj%2F84884278232%3Fpwd%3DRHF5b2w5MmV0ZmhIWHREN0JPOVJoZz09&hyXsxSIhNE
Meeting ID: **848 8427 8232** | Password: **TUlysses**

For those who would physically attend the meeting at Pulsar Hotel, the said Committee request that you arrive at the venue not later than 1:30 pm for a mandatory antigen tests prior to the meeting.

The Committee is further requesting the submission of your assigned documents, as a result of the Joint Meeting dated 24 November 2020, through your Legislative Liaison Office⁶ at denrlegislative@yahoo.com, on or before 10 August 2021. As mentioned in the attachment⁷, the requested documents include:

Office/ Bureau	Document Requested
The Office of the Undersecretary for Enforcement ⁸	2.1 Submission of the official report on the created Environmental Protection and Enforcement Task Force.
Forest Management Bureau ⁹	2.2 Report on the percentage of degraded areas by illegal logging.
Environmental Management Bureau ¹⁰	2.3 Verification on the ECC of the Bambang Bypass Road.
Biodiversity Management Bureau ¹¹	2.4 Budgetary requirement of the Sierra Madre National Park Agency.
Mines and Geosciences Bureau ¹²	6.1 List of companies and their company profile, who applied for the dredging activities - joint project of the Build Back Better Task Force (DPWH), and, 6.2 Approved companies, who participated in the dredging task force.

For information and appropriate action.


JOAN A. LAGUNDA, DM, DPA


Encls: As stated.
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⁶ Legislative Liaison Office landline number: 8920-1761

⁷ Enclosed document entitled "Docs Requested DENR CENTRAL OFC"

⁸ Mentioned in page 5 of the enclosed document entitled "NOV 24 MINUTES MAGAT DAM"

⁹ Mentioned in pages 3, 5, 6, 8 and 14 of the enclosed document entitled "NOV 24 MINUTES MAGAT DAM"

¹⁰ Mentioned in page 8 of the enclosed document entitled "JAN 28 MINUTES MAGAT DAM"

¹¹ Mentioned in page 6 of the enclosed document entitled "NOV 24 MINUTES MAGAT DAM"

¹² Mentioned in pages 7 and 9 of the enclosed document entitled "JAN 28 MINUTES MAGAT DAM"



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD

3rd Flr., Ramon V. Mitra Building, Batasan Complex, Quezon City
Tel Nos : (+632) 931-5001 loc. 7139 Telefax : (+632) 951-4400
Email Address: agriculturefood@gmail.com

02 August 2021

SECRETARY ROY A. CIMATU

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

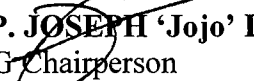
Dear Secretary Cimatu:

Please be informed that the joint Technical Working Group Meeting of the Committee on Agriculture & Food and the Special Committee on North Luzon Growth Quadrangle *set on 06 August 2021 at 2:00 P.M.* has been rescheduled to **26 August 2021** because of the heightened restrictions being imposed due to the surge of COVID-19 cases.

May we however request your agency to submit all documents requested during our November 24, 2020 meeting on or before August 15, 2021.

Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,


REP. JOSEPH 'Jojo' L. LARA
TWG Chairperson



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD

3rd Flr., Ramon V. Mitra Building, Batasan Complex, Quezon City
Tel Nos : (+632) 931-5001 loc. 7139 Telefax : (+632) 951-4400
Email Address: agriculturefood@gmail.com

26 July 2021

SECRETARY ROY A. CIMATU

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Dear Secretary Cimatu:

The *Committee on Agriculture and Food*, jointly with the *Special Committee on North Luzon Growth Quadrangle* in its meeting on January 28, 2021, created a **Technical Working Group (TWG)** to be chaired by the undersigned to further look into the issues raised in the following measures:

1. **House Resolution No. 1345** entitled: *A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE UNTIMELY AND IRRESPONSIBLE OPENING OF FLOOD GATES OF DAMS AND WATERSHEDS IN LUZON DURING THE ONSLAUGHT OF TYPHOON ULYSSES*, introduced by Rep. Bernadette “BH” Herrera-Dy;
2. **House Resolution No. 1348** entitled: *A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ON THE SEVERE AND UNPRECEDENTED FLOODING IN THE PROVINCES OF CAGAYAN AND ISABELA DURING THE ONSLAUGHT OF TYPHOON ULYSSES*, introduced by Reps. Lord Allan Jay Q. Velasco, Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez and Joseph Stephen “Caraps” Paduano; and
3. **House Resolution No. 1369** entitled: *A RESOLUTION URGING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE MASSIVE FLOODING IN THE PROVINCE OF CAGAYAN CAUSED BY TYPHOON ULYSSES AND WATER RELEASED FROM THE MAGAT DAM WITH THE END IN GOAL OF IDENTIFYING NEEDED INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AND GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION PROGRAMS TO PREVENT SIMILAR DISASTER FROM HAPPENING AGAIN*, introduced by Rep. Joseph ‘Jojo’ Lara.

The TWG will convene on **06 August 2021 at 2pm, at the Grand Ballroom of Pulsar Hotel, Capitol Hills, Caggay, Tuguegarao City, Cagayan**. In this regard, we would like to request your physical presence in the meeting. All participants will undergo antigen tests which will take about 20 minutes for the results to come out, hence, we would like to request that you come to the venue at least 30 minutes prior to the meeting. **Other members of your staff may join the meeting via this zoom platform:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84884278232?pwd=DRHF5b2w5MmV0ZmhIWREn0JPOVJoZz09&hyXsxSIhNE>

Meeting ID: 848 8427 8232

Password: Tulysses

We would also like to invite you to join us in the **aerial inspection of Magat Dam and Cagayan River, same day at 7:00 in the morning**. Your immediate response/confirmation to the said activities will be highly appreciated.

Attached are copies of the measures, list of documents to be submitted and the minutes of the meetings conducted by the joint Committees.

Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,


REP. JOSEPH ‘Jojo’ L. LARA
TWG Chairperson

Invitation/Hybrid Meeting on 26 August 2021 at 2PM re House Resolution Nos. 1346, 1348 and 1368

From: legis lative (denrlegislative@yahoo.com)

To: director@bmb.gov.ph; adirector@bmb.gov.ph; wrd@bmb.gov.ph; cmd@bmb.gov.ph; npd@bmb.gov.ph; usecdeleon@denr.gov.ph; od@emb.gov.ph; oad.emb@gmail.com; fatima_millan@emb.gov.ph; fmb@denr.gov.ph; denrfmb.ad@gmail.com; amierabang@gmail.com; fmbpolicysection@gmail.com; central@mgb.gov.ph; legal@mgb.gov.ph; rbco@denr.gov.ph; denr.rbco@gmail.com; r2@denr.gov.ph

Date: Tuesday, August 3, 2021, 06:28 PM GMT+8

Dear Sir/Mam,

Good Day!

Please find attached letter invitation from the Committee on Agriculture and Food for your perusal.

Kindly acknowledge receipt of this email.

Thank you and stay safe.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources Legislative Liaison Office

Visayas Avenue, Diliman, 1100 Quezon City, Philippines

denr.gov.ph

Tel: 9201761



JAN 28 MINUTES MAGAT DAM.doc
317.5kB



NOV 24 MINUTES MAGAT DAM.doc
348kB



HR01345 (1).pdf
1.4MB



HR01369.pdf
1.2MB



HR01348 (1).pdf
1.1MB



Docs Requested DENR CENTRAL OFC.doc
58.5kB



SEC. CIMATU DENR (1).doc
403kB



SEC. CIMATU DENR.doc
398.5kB

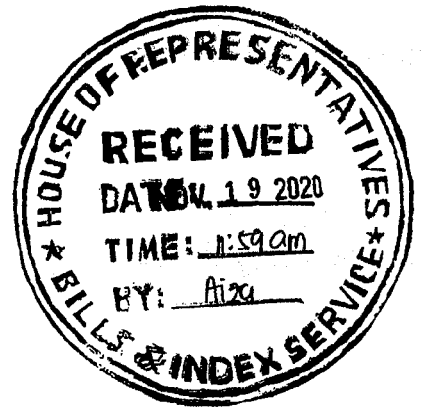


Memo Invite Rep. Lara Agrarian Reform Cagayan Flooding etal Aug 26-rescheduled.pdf
254.2kB

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1369



Introduced by **HON. JOSEPH "JOJO" L. LARA**

RESOLUTION

URGING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE MASSIVE FLOODING IN THE PROVINCE OF CAGAYAN CAUSED BY TYPHOON ULYSSES AND WATER RELEASED FROM THE MAGAT DAM WITH THE END GOAL OF IDENTIFYING NEEDED INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AND GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION PROGRAMS TO PREVENT SIMILAR DISASTER FROM HAPPENING AGAIN

Whereas, on November 11, 2020, Typhoon Ulysses started battering provinces in Luzon bringing about heavy rains and powerful winds that left destruction in its path;

Whereas, the Province of Cagayan experienced its worst flooding in the last forty five (45) years, submerging 24 of its 29 city/municipalities;

Whereas, in addition to flooded tributaries brought about by the rains of Typhoon Ulysses, Magat Dam added into the fray and started releasing water;

Whereas, on November 12, 2020, the Magat Dam opened seven (7) spillways, releasing enough water to fill 106,223 Olympic-sized swimming pools or about 2 pools per second from 5pm until 4am the next day;

Whereas, the combination of heavy rains and release of water by the dam resulted into the catastrophic flooding of Cagayan destroying homes and livelihood, property, agricultural crops and cattle, infrastructure, leaving 22 dead, several missing and scores injured;

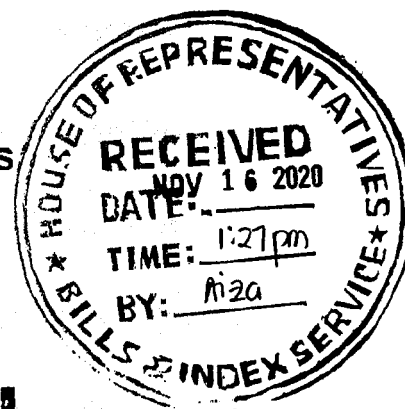
Whereas, days after Typhoon Ulysses left the Philippine Area of Responsibility, there are still areas under water, people have yet to come home and are in need of food, water and clothing;

Whereas, way back 1998 in the 11th Congress, the Committee on Good Government investigated the flooding in the Province of Cagayan, and the Magat Dam Management then promised to come up with measures and policies to prevent repetition of the flooding;

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Eighteenth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1348



Introduced by Rep. Bernadette Herrera

1 **A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF**
2 **REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION,**
3 **ON THE UNTIMELY AND IRRESPONSIBLE OPENING OF FLOODGATES OF DAMS**
4 **AND WATERSHEDS IN LUZON DURING THE ONSLAUGHT OF TYPHOON**
5 **ULYSSES**

6
7 **WHEREAS**, on November 11, 2020, the Philippines was battered by Typhoon Ulysses,
8 the 21st typhoon to hit the country this year. The storm first made a landfall in
9 Patnanungan, Quezon about 10:30 p.m. local time. Instead of weakening on its first
10 landfall, Ulysses grew stronger with a sustained wind of 150 kilometers per hour closer to
11 the center with gustiness reaching as high as 205 kilometers per hour. It moved north-
12 westward towards Metro Manila with a sluggish speed of 15 kilometers per hour.

13 **WHEREAS**, Typhoon Ulysses left Metro Manila with 40,000 houses submerged in
14 floodwater in the City of Marikina alone. Similar situations were also reported in the
15 provinces of Bulacan, Rizal, and Cavite. Cagayan was submerged in water in what local
16 authorities described as the "worst" flooding in the region since the 1980s. Out of 28 towns
17 and the City of Cagayan, 24 were flooded.

1 and irresponsible opening of floodgates of dams and watersheds in Luzon during the
2 onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

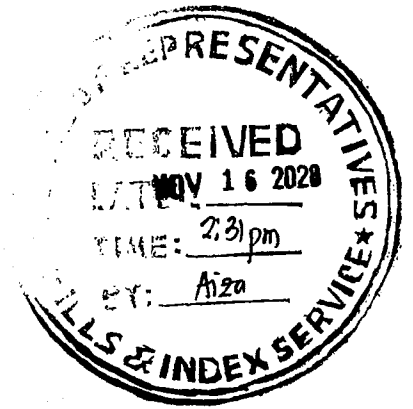
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7



BERNADETTE HERRERA-DY



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila



Eighteenth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1348

Introduced by Representatives Lord Allan Jay Q. Velasco, Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez and Joseph Stephen "Caraps" S. Paduano

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SEVERE AND UNPRECEDENTED FLOODING IN THE PROVINCES OF CAGAYAN AND ISABELA DURING THE ONSLAUGHT OF TYPHOON ULYSSES

WHEREAS, beginning on November 11, 2020, various areas of the Philippines were severely affected by Typhoon Ulysses (international name: Typhoon Vamco), the 21st typhoon to hit the country this year;

WHEREAS, to date, the death toll from Typhoon Ulysses has reached sixty-seven, with over twenty people missing, and the damage to agriculture and infrastructure estimated to be at least at 1 billion pesos and half a billion pesos, respectively;

WHEREAS, Typhoon Ulysses was predicted to make landfall in Luzon, and came in the heels of recent typhoons and heavy monsoon rains that battered the country;

WHEREAS, given the circumstances and the predicted Category-4 strength of Typhoon Ulysses, the forecast should have prompted concerned government agencies and local government units to take necessary preemptive action to mitigate possible adverse effects on local communities;

WHEREAS, as Typhoon Ulysses made the expected landfall, heavy winds and torrential rains battered parts of NCR, Bicol Region, Central Luzon, CAR, and CALABARZON, causing power failures, extreme flooding, and heavy damage to infrastructure and property, and threatened the lives and livelihood of many of our countrymen;

WHEREAS, the effects of the typhoon likewise caused massive destruction in Cagayan Valley, particularly in the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela, as the region experienced unprecedented flooding in the wake of Typhoon Ulysses;

Joint Meeting of C/Agriculture & Food and SC/North Luzon Growth Quadrangle
January 28, 2021

Documents requested/submitted	Date Received	Date Submitted (sent to Members)	Remarks
Presentations/Position Papers of the different agencies: a) NEDA – PPT of RD Ledres on Cagayan River Basin b) NIA -proposed dam protocols, dam manual	a) 01/27/2021 b) 01/27/2021	a) 01/27/2021 b) 01/27/2021	Sent via email
1. RCBO			
1.1 Report on the percent implementation of the different programs and projects as contained in the masterplan.			
2. DENR			
2.1 Submission of the official report on the created Environmental Protection and Enforcement Task Force			
2.2 report on the percentage of degraded areas by illegal logging			
2.3 verification on the ECC of the Bambang Bypass Road			
2.4 budgetary requirement of the Sierra Madre National Park Agency.			

3. DENR Region 2			
3.1 Proposed budget of the Bamboo Planting Program			
4. DENR-Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB)			
4.1 Copy of the list of mining firms and small-scale miners present in the 4.2 Report on what transpired during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses specifically in Region 2.			
5.DPWH			
5.1 Copy of the Dredging Scheme and its MOA			
6. DPWH/DENR			
6.1 List of companies and their company profile, who applied for the dredging activities - joint project of the Build Back Better Task Force			
6.2 Approved companies, who participated in the dredging task force			
7.Department of Science and Technology			
7.1 information on its Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) Technology			
8. OCD			
8.1 proposed budget for 2022			
8.2 documents on the dam safety			
8.3 report on the early stage of Kaliwa Dam			

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD
AND THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON NORTH LUZON GROWTH QUADRANGLE HELD
ON 28 JANUARY 2021, 9:00 A.M., VIA VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING**

AGENDA:

1. **HR No. 1345** entitled: *A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE IRRESPONSIBLE OPENING OF FLOOD GATES OF DAMS AND WATERSHEDS IN LUZON DURING THE ONSLAUGHT OF TYPHOON ULYSSES*, introduced by Rep. Bernadette “BH” Herrera-Dy;
2. **HR No. 1348** entitled: *A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ON THE SEVERE AND UNPRECEDENTED FLOODING IN THE PROVINCES OF CAGAYAN AND ISABELA DURING THE ONSLAUGHT OF TYPHOON ULYSSES*, introduced by the Honorable Speaker Lord Allan Jay Q. Velasco, Majority Leader Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez and Minority Leader Joseph Stephen “Caraps” Paduano; and
3. **HR No. 1369** entitled: *A RESOLUTION URGING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE MASSIVE FLOODING IN THE PROVINCE OF CAGAYAN CAUSED BY TYPHOON ULYSSES AND WATER RELEASED FROM THE MAGAT DAM WITH THE END IN GOAL OF IDENTIFYING NEEDED INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AND GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION PROGRAMS TO PREVENT SIMILAR DISASTER FROM HAPPENING AGAIN*, introduced by Rep. Joseph ‘Jojo’ Lara.

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 a.m. On a motion made and duly seconded, the calling of the roll was dispensed with.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING DATED NOVEMBER 24, 2020

On a motion made and duly seconded, the minutes of the 24 November 2020 was approved.

III. OPENING REMARKS OF THE CHAIRPERSONS

REP. WILFRIDO MARK M. ENVERGA, Chairperson, Committee on Agriculture and Food

Chair Enverga said that the meeting is a continuation of the 24 November 2020 meeting which seeks to look into the issues surrounding the unprecedented flooding brought about by Typhoon Ulysses which struck the country on 11 November 2020.

He apprised the Body on the preliminary findings that came forth during the initial joint meeting held on November 24, 2020:

- The discharge of water from Magat Dam was just one of the contributing factors attributed to the widespread flooding in Cagayan and Isabela. Other major factors include successive heavy rains that caused the saturation of large areas in Cagayan Valley; the massive siltation of the Cagayan River Basin; and the denuded mountains and watershed areas caused by illegal logging, mining, quarrying, and soil erosion due to deforestation.
- Magat River is just one of the twenty-one (21) major tributaries and contributed only 15% of the total volume of water that entered Cagayan River; and that the configuration of the Cagayan River is very susceptible to flooding.
- Before Typhoon Ulysses struck, Cagayan was already saturated due to the seven (7) weather disturbances that entered the country. Thus, before the release of water from Magat Dam, the level of water in Buntun Bridge was already in its alert/critical level.
- The carrying capacity of the Cagayan River Basin is 25,400 cubic meter per second as compared to the 6,000 cubic meter per second of rain water released from Magat Dam; the water released from Magat Dam which was 6,000 cubic meter per second can never be the major cause of flooding in Cagayan and Isabela.
- The underperformance of PAG-ASA is due to the lack of monitoring facilities and that the topographic features of the Cagayan River limit the installation of monitoring facilities.
- The structural design of Magat Dam does not include flood control function as emphasized in the handbook/manual of dam operation and management. Flood control is not among the functions unless it can still accommodate more water when dam water level falls below 193 meters. Magat Dam was built to irrigate 85,000 hectares of farmlands in Cagayan and Isabela, and supply hydro-electric power to Snap Magat, where NIA earns P150 Million a year.
- The last revision of the dam operation and management manual/dam protocol was done on 2007.

He also presented the following recommendations that the Members set forth during the meeting:

- Revisit and update existing disaster protocols especially on dam operation and management;
- Review the implementation of the country's environmental laws;
- Implement and strengthen reforestation projects to minimize landslides;
- Investigate the illegal logging operations particularly in the province of Isabela where the largest virgin forest in the country exists;
- Create the Cagayan River Basin and Tributaries Rehabilitation Plan to address the problem of flooding in Cagayan and Isabela; and to replicate the same in other areas to address the same problems of other river basins in the country;
- Construct retarding dams to avoid the overflowing of floodwater from Cagayan River Basin as these dams are used to retard the peak flow of floods by depositing excess water into the other dams; and
- Scrutinize all pending dam projects of the government especially the *Kaliwa Dam* located in Sierra Madre Mountain.

REP. JOSEPH ‘JOJO’ LARA, Vice-Chair, Special Committee on North Luzon Growth Quadrangle

Chair Lara opined that the joint committee meeting was called not to find faults nor point fingers at anyone, but to find solutions and avoid or lessen the damage if recurrence of disasters of similar magnitude occurs. He said that House Resolution No. 1369 which he filed seeks to identify needed infrastructure projects and government intervention programs to prevent similar disaster from happening again. He mentioned that he wanted to hold a meeting with the Unified Project Management Office (UPMO) – DPWH headed by USec. Emil K. Sadain and Director Ramon Ariola, Director for Flood Control, to discuss proposals for the immediate construction of the circumferential road dike in Tuguegarao City which serves as a permanent solution to the perennial flooding in Tuguegarao City.

He then informed the Body that he filed House Bill No. 5372, entitled: “*An Act Creating the Cagayan River Basin Development Authority, Prescribing its Powers, Functions, and Duties, Providing Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes*” which seeks to create a singular government entity that will manage and coordinate all efforts and provide overall planning, management, and coordinative services needed in the rehabilitation, development, and protection of the major rivers and tributaries in Cagayan Province.

Chair Lara then mentioned some important manifestations by his colleague during the initial meeting, as follows:

- Magat dam protocol was established in 2006, and was updated on 2007;
- There were suggestions about the need to strengthen the mandate of some agencies like the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), River Basin Control Office (RBCO), among others;
- Construction of infrastructure projects;
- Strict implementation of our environmental laws; and
- Rehabilitation of the provinces enormously damaged by recent typhoons and the need to update the JICA Masterplan on the Cagayan River Basin Flood Control.

He stressed that the Committees should come up with sound legislative measures to confront the challenges of the country brought about by perennial calamities.

IV. OPEN FORUM

At the onset, Rep. Solomon Chungalao suggested that both committees should conduct an ocular or aerial inspection of the Magat Dam to see the tremendous volume of water deposited in the dam. He forewarned that massive destruction of the dam may cause tremendous losses of life and livelihood to the people in Cagayan and Isabela. He said that Cordillera is the water table of regions 1 and 2, thus the attendance of the local officials and representatives from the government agencies in the said province is very essential in the committee hearing. He then informed the Body that there is a proposal to build upstream dams to support Magat Dam, and representatives from Napocor and SN Aboitiz should be present to answer questions regarding the said proposal.

Chair Enverga responded to consider the suggestion of conducting an ocular or aerial inspection in Magat Dam. He then informed Rep. Chungalao that aside from NIA, which was invited for having the jurisdiction over Magat Dam, representatives from Napocor and SN Aboitiz are also present in the committee hearing.

National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Administrator Ricardo R. Visaya informed the Committee that the NIA convened a technical working group (TWG) to review and amend existing protocols on dam discharge and flood warning operations of Magat Dam, which was chaired by Dr. Guillermo Q. Tabios III, and attended by representatives from the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Philippine Atmospheric and Geo-Physical Administration (PAGASA), Office of the Civil Defense (OCD), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), and National Power Corporation (NPC). Engr. Roderick Dela Cruz, a Filipino dam safety engineer from Southern California Edison, USA also joined the TWG.

At this point, Administrator Visaya shared a power point presentation detailing the output of the TWG regarding modification of the Magat Dam protocols, *to wit*:

a. *Before the Typhoon*

- Coordination with Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) includes:
 - a) Verification of the weather phenomenon;
 - b) Identification of affected regions of the typhoon landfall;
 - c) Establishment of date and time of typhoon landfall, directions, speed and gustiness;and
 - d) Verification of the intensity of the typhoon intensity of the rainfall and other weather disturbances.
- On warning procedures:
 - a) Manual inspections/check of all rainfall stations;
 - b) Activation of the warning stations and incorporate public announcement, Twenty-four hours before the pre-emptive release;
 - c) Acknowledgement of Local Government Unit (LGU) thru communication channels three hours after the announcement; and
 - d) Pre-emptive release will be done when the dam reaches 190 masl elevation, and the typhoon is expected to make a landfall within 3 to 4 days in the four regions mentioned.
- Back-up Planning Procedure:
 - a) Planning of possible communication disruption – utilize all radio communications with preset channels of concerned entities;
 - b) Planning on possible power interruption – manual check on standby generator units;and
 - c) Planning on possible warning malfunction – deployment of patrol cars in inundation areas equipped with loudspeakers, blinkers, and with onboard warning station equipment technician.
- Drawdown the Magat reservoir 3 to 4 days before the expected landfall of typhoon:
 - a) Pre-emptive release shall be done by lowering the dam water elevation from the spilling level subject to the forecasted rainfall intensity given by PAGASA; and
 - b) Release and develop flood operation rules of which must be three-tiered to address long-term, medium, and short-term reservoir operation objectives.
- Information Dissemination:
 - a) inform all concerned agencies three (3) times and with acknowledgment receipt of the pre-emptive release from NDRRMCs, Mainstream and Local Media, OCD,

DRRMCs, LGUS, PNP, NGOs, other GOs, IAs and Locals;

- b) Request NDRRMC Operation Center to issue Emergency Alert and Warning Messages and Information Dissemination from Mainstream Media and Local Media; and
- c) Release of stored water in the reservoir at certain level to accommodate the expected inflow.

b. *During the Typhoon*

- On dam discharge and flood operations:
 - a) Inflow forecasting is based on the amount of telemetered rainfall observed and recorded, and updating of flood data monitoring and instrumentation;
 - b) Warning on intensive rainfall issued by PAGASA – if inflow is increasing and exceeds 1,600 cu.m./sec. wherein discharge should be expressed in terms of meters or feet of flood for layman's easy understanding;
 - c) Issuance of dam discharge thru all available communication channels;
 - d) Regulation of outflow from the dam to mitigate damage to the downstream and will be based on updated flood data monitoring and instrumentation downstream;
 - e) To lessen the outflow discharge during typhoon, pre-emptive release of typhoon inflows should be adopted. But reservoir operations should be anticipatory and accompanied by computerized decision support systems;
 - f) Compute the equivalent height of the total discharge in meter per 50 km radius, based from the develop inundation mapping in affected areas; and
 - g) Acknowledgment from LGU thru phone calls and documentations three hours after public announcement.

c. *After the Typhoon*

- Regulation of the outflow of the dam.
- Termination of dam discharge warning.
- Filling the reservoir to full supply level (Elevation 190.00 masl during wet season and 193.00 masl during dry season)
- Post flood evaluation includes dam sedimentation measurements by conducting Bathymetric Survey.

On the clarification raised by Chair Enverga regarding the jurisdiction of NIA over Magat Dam, Admin. Visaya responded that NIA has jurisdiction over the whole area of Magat Dam except the watershed areas along Cagayan River basin.

National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) Director Dionisio Ledres, Jr. reported that NEDA-Regional Development Council 2 (RDC) has reviewed the Cagayan Valley Flood Mitigation and Rehabilitation Plan based on the previous studies undertaken by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), together with Dr. Fernando Siringan, a scientist and former director of UP Marine Science Institute. Under the proposal, DPWH will lead the structural measures that include dredging and removal of sand bars, desilting of Magat Dam, channel widening and realignment, constructions of dams, dikes, and small water impounding projects (SWIP); while the DENR will be responsible for the vegetative measures which include the establishment of buffer zones, strengthening of the National Greening Program, restoration of the riparian vegetation, and promotion of agro-forestry. Other measures include upgrading of flood early warning system,

procurement of rescue vehicles, communication equipment, and dredging machinery by the provincial government, and the involvement of SUCs on Research & Development. He stressed that the funding requirement on the proposed programs is the challenge that requires Congress' intervention.

At this point, Rep. France Castro lauded the programs presented by Regional Director Ledres. However, she expressed concern on the resettlement plan and its corresponding budgetary allocation which she feels is lacking at this point in time. She inquired if studies or consultations were being made regarding the livelihood of those who will be affected from the government's plan in reacquiring river easements.

In connection to the statement of Rep. Castro, Chair Lara acknowledged the efforts of the Local Government Units in Cagayan in the rehabilitation of its residents/people. He then shared his recent conversation with National Housing Authority (NHA) Region 2 Director Ferdinand Sales, stating that the good director has pledged NHA's support on the relocation programs of the LGUs. Rep Lara pointed out that the LGU can provide the land area needed for resettlement. However, the challenge lies on how to convince the affected families to relocate.

Tuguegarao City Mayor Jefferson Soriano assured the Committee that the Local Government of Tuguegarao has allocated funding for the rehabilitation plan which includes relocation of those families that are perennially affected by flooding. The local government of Tuguegarao is utilizing its local resources to help ease the suffering of its residents while waiting for the financial assistance from the national government.

Rep. Eufemia Cullamat manifested the need to stop the mining and logging activities in the country to protect and preserve the remaining forest from its eventual destruction/degradation. She then declared support to the indigenous people's steep opposition to the construction of the China-funded *Kaliwa* Dam located in the Sierra Madre Mountain.

DENR-River Basin Control Office (RBCO) Executive Director Antonio Daño explained that RBCO is mandated to rationalize various river basin projects in the country; promote and advocate an integrated river basin management; and ensure protection of the environment and the people. He said that the RBCO has spearheaded the formulation of the first Cagayan Integrated River Basin Development Master Plan which was approved by the Regional Development Council of Region II through Resolution No. 0217-2017. He added that the master plan was updated to be climate change responsive, and used as a guide in terms of implementing other river basin programs. Given the huge mandate of RBCO, Director Daño lamented that their budget was never enough to fulfill the same. He concluded by soliciting legislative support in the creation of the RBCO as an authority.

He added that one of the activities done by the RBCO is capacity building of the different stakeholders to better understand that river basin development is undertaken through a wholistic management approach. He continued saying that the RBCO formulates and monitors the plans and programs on river basins development being implemented by the different government agencies.

In response to the query of Chair Lara if the actions and activities conducted by the RBCO were done in coordination with the NEDA-Regional Development Council (RDC) Region 2, DENR, and DPWH, Director Daño said that RBCO does evaluation and monitoring on the percentage of implementation of the different programs and projects as contained in the master plan.

Thereafter, Chair Lara requested Director Daño to submit to the Committee the list of implemented programs and projects as based on the master plan.

Deputy Speaker Deogracias Victor Savellano manifested that he filed a resolution and delivered a privilege speech to strengthen the powers and functions of RBCO, citing the massive responsibility and challenging mandate of the RBCO which involved the development of 18 major river basins around the country. He then shared that he advocated the programs of planting bamboo trees to preserve not only the Cagayan watershed but the entire watershed in the country. DS Savellano then stressed the need to appropriate significant amount to the RBCO budget so that it can effectively discharge its mandate.

DENR Region 2 Assistant Regional Director Marcos Dacanay informed the Committee that the DENR continues to propagate bamboo planting materials and they have actually planted bamboo trees along the riverbanks in Cagayan River. He continued saying that DENR Region 2 is in the process of identifying areas along the river channels that are most suitable for bamboo propagation under the government's National Greening Program.

DS Savellano lamented that the number of bamboo planting materials/seedlings as reported by Director Dacanay is never enough to cover significant areas of the watershed and the DENR nursery can neither accommodate large numbers of the same. He then expressed his interest to conduct an ocular inspection on the nursery site of DENR Region 2 to validate the statement of Director Dacanay.

In response to the query of Chair Enverga regarding the budget of the DENR for FY 2021 allotted for bamboo planting project, Director Dacanay replied that he will coordinate with their finance officer and submit to the Committee the budget allocation for FY 2021. He added that the project covers planting of bamboo trees along Cagayan river banks at about 530-kilometer stretch including its major tributaries. DENR is also in the process of identifying areas suitable for bamboo plantation.

At this point, the Chair recognized Mr. Jesus Las Marias, policy researcher on irrigation system, who reiterated his position on the recurring problem of flooding in the country. He said that the country needs a nation-wide hydrogeological profiling to determine the volume of rainwater available for storage underground through artificial aquifers or the artificial underground recharge which he recommended to be constructed by the national government in flood-prone areas. The system is not costly compared to other technologies. He urged the Committee to support the passage of the bill on rainwater harvesting filed by Deputy Speaker Deogracias Victor Savellano.

DENR-Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Acting Director Wilfredo Moncano informed the Committee that they have concluded a meeting initiated by the Build Back Better Taskforce discussing the flood mitigation measures in Cagayan Valley. He then presented the following mitigation programs conducted by DENR: a) Participation in the dredging and mineral assessment of the Cagayan River basin, and b) Identification and delineation of the legal easement of the Cagayan River and tributaries for the planting of bamboo trees. He denied the allegation that illegal mining is one of the major aggravating factors of the Cagayan flooding, citing 4,000 hectares of mining footprint in Cagayan vis-a-vis 3 million hectares of the entire area of the Cagayan river basin, with only one large scale mining company in operation. Thus, contribution of mining operation to flooding is very minimal and insignificant.

Rep. Luisa LlorenCuaresma informed the Body that her district was not spared by Typhoon Ulysses for it left casualties and damaged the livelihood of the people in the area. She said that operation of the FCF Mining Company in Nueva Ecija might have contributed to the calamity. Thus, she is poised to file a house resolution through the Committee on Ecology jointly with the Special Committee on North Luzon Growth Quadrangle for an immediate investigation.

In response to Chair Enverga's request to update the Committee on the activities or plans/programs of the newly created Environmental Laws Enforcement Taskforce of the DENR, DENR Region 2 Director Nilo Tamoria stated that the taskforce was formed in 2019 by DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu to strengthen the enforcement mandate of the DENR pending the approval of a legislative measure institutionalizing the taskforce. Director Tamoria informed the Committee that every region has its own anti-illegal logging taskforce which is under the Bureau of Environment and Enforcement Taskforce. The Bureau is in charge of reviving the Anti-Illegal Logging Taskforce formed under EO 23 of the previous administration. He then urged the Committee to support the passage of House Bill 6973, An Act Creating the Environmental Protection and Enforcement Bureau, filed in Congress by Rep. Loren Legarda. The bill intends to make the programs sustainable through the creation of Environmental Protection and Enforcement Bureau under DENR.

Director Tamoria also reported that according to the updated map from National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA) of 2015, there is an increase of forest cover especially in the Sierra Madre Mountain ranges due to the implementation of EO 23 series of 2011 which declared a moratorium on the cutting and harvesting of timber in the natural and residual forest of the entire country and creating the anti-illegal logging taskforce.

Rep. Luisa LlorenCuaresma manifested her opposition to the construction of the Bambang Bypass Road that has caused massive destruction to a mountain in Nueva Vizcaya. The construction allegedly commenced without complying with the Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) requirement from the DENR. She forewarned the Committee on the danger of the said construction to the people in the area and requested the DENR Secretary to visit the same for an ocular inspection.

Director Tamoria assured Rep. Cuaresma to relay her complaint to the DENR Secretary and expressed his intention to validate the said complaint as part of DENR's mandate.

Hearing the statement of the resource persons from the DENR, Chair Enverga requested Director Moncano and Director Tamoria to submit to the Committee a list of the approved small scale mining operations in Region 2 and the Bureau's initiatives/programs and official report/findings of the newly-created anti-illegal logging taskforce, respectively.

In response to DS Savellano's apprehension on the dredging projects/operations of the government including the disposition of the aggregates or dredged materials, Director Moncano stated that the dredged materials will be disposed of by the private contractors without cost to the government.

DPWH Region 2 Director Loreta Malaluan reported that the provincial government of Cagayan has applied for dredging activities with commercial utilization as provided under DENR Administrative Order (DAO) No. 2020-07 '*Rationalizing Dredging Activities in Heavily-Silted River Channels.*' This administrative order gave the provincial government the exclusive authority to issue permit to extract sand, gravel, and other quarry resources to private companies without cost from the

government. The permit holder is authorized to dispose dredged materials subject to payments of government taxes.

She added that under the said DAO, an inter-agency committee was created and chaired by Gov. Manuel Mamba; Regional Executive Director of the DENR as the Vice-Chair, and the members of the Committee are DPWH, DENR-MGB, and DPWH. Further, Director Malaluan reported that there are 17 private contractor-applicants for the 8 segments of the dredging area, including the navigational channel that will serve as the passage of the dredging vessel. The launching of dredging operation for phase 1 will be on February 3. The dredging operation includes the removal of 19 sand bars in Cagayan River basin that impede the natural flow of water.

DS Savellano requested a copy of all the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) of the dredging operations for him to study the scheme initiated by the DPWH in Cagayan and to replicate the same not only in Abra River in Ilocos but also in the 18 major rivers around the country.

At this juncture, Chair Enverga reminded all resource persons to submit their position papers and presentations to the Committee, especially the presentations of NIA, NEDA, DENR-RBCO, DENR-MGB, and Mr. Jess Las Marias.

Chair Enverga requested the Office of the Governor of Cagayan Province to submit to the Committee the list of applicants of the dredging operations and the corresponding qualifications of the said applicants. He also requested DOST Region 2 to submit to the Committee the budgetary requirement of the LIDAR Technology and the initiatives of the DOST.

Office of Civil Defense (OCD) representative Atty. Tecson John Lim laid down OCD's proposed measures to prevent the occurrence of flooding and similar disaster in the future, as follows:

- Congress to enact a law which will institutionalize and regulate a comprehensive dam safety program in the country.
- Conduct simulation exercises by the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC) which will involve other government agencies.
- Repair and maintain all non-functioning forecasting stations and community-based flood early warning systems.
- Increase capacity of rivers, reforestation, enhance of flood control mechanism, and improvement and development of flood forecasting.
- Regularly update and continuously study the existing protocols.
- Strengthen the disaster preparedness in the local level.
- Prohibit settlement in high-risk areas.
- Review the dam safety management system and rejuvenate its safe operations.
- Create the National Committee on Dam Safety.
- Conduct post disaster risk assessment.
- Converge all agencies and stakeholders on disaster preparedness.

He stressed that Congress must appropriate funds for OCD to attain its institutional capacity. He then informed the Committee that the newly reconstituted National Committee on Dam Safety will act as an oversight body between the PAGASA and different agencies involved in dam operations.

Department of Agriculture (DA) Director Narciso Edillo presented DA's proposed interventions to address problem of flooding and livelihood assistance to the victims:

- Structural Measures which includes construction and rehabilitation of small water impounding project (SWIP);
- Vegetative Measures which includes watershed development and management (SCoPSA); and
- Adaptive Measures which includes Out-scaling and Up-scaling Climate Resilient Agriculture (CRA), through the Adaptation and Mitigation Initiative in Agriculture (AMIA).

On the query of Rep. Ciriaco Gato regarding the status of irrigation system in Batanes where NIA had pledged to conduct an ocular inspection last December 2020 but was deferred due to the pandemic, Chair Enevrge requested Admin. Visaya to prioritize the same.

At this point, the joint Committees created a TWG to be chaired by Rep. Joseph “Jojo” Lara, with Deputy Speaker Aurelio “Dong” Gonzales as Vice-Chair, to further look into the needed interventions to prevent similar disasters from happening again.

In conclusion, the Presiding Chairpersons expressed their gratitude to the members and resource persons and enjoined their participation to the newly created TWG as the Committee intends to finalize the Committee Report with dispatch.

V. ADJOURNMENT/SUSPENSION

On a motion made and duly seconded, the Chairperson suspended the committee hearing at 1:06p.m.

Prepared by:



NOEL F. FABELA
SLSO II

Certified correct:



CONSOLACION P. GALANG
Committee Secretary

Noted by:

REP. WILFRIDO MARK M. ENVERGA
Chairperson
Committee on Agriculture and Food

REP. JOSEPH ‘JOJO’ LARA
Presiding Chairperson
Special Committee on
North Luzon Growth Quadrangle