

Creation of Cotabato disaster body pushed

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Quezon City 5th District Rep. Alfred Vargas has called on the House of Representatives to expedite the creation of the Department of Disaster Resilience (DDR) following the strong earthquake that rocked Cotabato and other parts of Mindanao on Wednesday.

Vargas, Vice Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations said the Philippines is highly exposed to natural calamities and hazards, thus, there is a need to have an independent department that will oversee the disaster and climate resilience plans of the government.

Vargas, who is among those who filed a bill seeking the creation of the DDR said the department will equip the country with institutional capacity for disaster preparedness and emergency management.

It will also build “the resilience of local communities to disasters, natural or man-made, including climate change impacts,” he said.

The magnitude 6.3 earthquake that rocked Tulunan, Cotabato in Mindanao killed at least five people and left dozens injured, according to reports.

In a statement, Anak Mindanao (AMIN) Rep. Amihilda Sangcopan expressed sympathies to families who lost loved ones in the recent earthquake.

Sangcopan also urged local officials in Mindanao, to bolster their disaster preparedness by holding more information drive to communities and schools in their respective districts.

“The country is susceptible to all sorts of calamities — heavy floods, strong winds, monster typhoons, and strong earthquakes.”

“By intensifying the campaign about disaster preparedness to the public, I believe it will significantly lower the risks brought about by disasters,” she said.

Sangcopan also suggested that fire and earthquake drills should be observed on a regular basis in schools and offices.