

Probe on substandard steel products up

LAWMAKERS on Monday demanded a congressional inquiry into the alleged smuggling and proliferation of substandard steel products in the Philippines that could have compromised the structural soundness of some infrastructure in the country in the last 10 to 12 years.

Reps. Isidro Ungab of Davao City, Robert Ace Barbers of Surigao del Norte, **Precious Hipolito Castelo** of Quezon City, and Eric Go Yap of ACT-CIS party-list group made the urging following deaths and destruction caused by the series of earthquakes that hit Mindanao last week.

Agusan del Norte Rep. Lawrence Lemuel Fortun filed House Resolution (HR) 379 urging the House of Representatives' Trade and Industry to conduct a congressional probe on the alleged substandard steel products that have proliferated in the market.

"This seeming grand deception may have led to the rise in the past 10 to 12 years of structurally-compromised infrastructures that may not be able to withstand high intensity quakes, thus endangering the lives of millions of Filipinos," Fortun said.

Fortun said Congress wants Congress to look into the alleged collusion between large steelmakers and officials of the Department of Trade and Industry and the Bureau of Customs behind smuggling of substandard steel products. **Maricel V. Cruz**