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Cusi pushes energy resiliency policy

By DANESSA RIVERA

Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi said the implementation of an energy resiliency policy is critical in securing power supply, particularly in Albay province which was directly affected by Mayon Volcano's eruption.

In a coordination meeting in Albay held over the weekend, the energy chief emphasized the significance of implementing the recently issued energy resiliency policy in which energy stakeholders are tasked to submit their compliance plan reflecting the energy resiliency measures they opt to undertake.

"Your experience in resiliency must be seen in this current situation with Mayon (Volcano)," Cusi said.

The DOE has issued a circular adopting energy resiliency in the planning and programming of the energy sector to mitigate potential impacts of disasters.

A Resiliency Compliance Plan (RCP) will be implemented to contain minimum adaptation measures, including both structural and non-structural measure options, to gauge infrastructure and human resource preparedness during and in the aftermath of disruptive events.

All industry players are required to submit their respective RCPs within six months, which shall be reviewed every three years. They should also include a budgetary requirement of the implementation of the RCP.

The circular also creates the Task Force on Energy Resiliency to oversee the implementation of the policy.

The coordination meeting was attended by the members of the generation, transmission and distribution sectors, officials of the local government units of Albay headed by Gov. Al Francis Bichara, Rep. Christopher Co and Rodel Batocabe from Ako Bicol party-list.

The generation sector – represented by AP Renewables Inc., Philippine Geothermal Production Co. Inc. and Energy Development Corp. (EDC)— said their geothermal plants remain the same and that they are already implementing their resiliency plans that include the protection of their employees.

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AP Renewables and Philippine Geothermal Production Co. own and operate Tiwi geothermal plant while EDC runs the BacMan geothermal plants in Albay.

The National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP), representing the transmission sector, said its facilities are normal operations.

The NGCP is particularly looking into the protection of its transmission facilities that connects Luzon and the Visayas. It also conducted preventive maintenance procedures that included the cleaning up of the lines in a manner that did not result in any power interruption.

For the distribution sector, the National Electrification Administration and Albay Electric Cooperative Inc., with its concessionaire, Albay Power and Energy Corp., said the distribution services are generally under normal conditions with the exception of a few barangays in the danger zone.

They also stated that they are closely coordinating with the NGCP in the distribution operations.

Additionally, due to ash fall, Co raised the need to address the distribution poles that obstruct the road expansion and rehabilitation projects of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

Cusi said there is a joint issuance signed by the DOE and DPWH, addressing the funding issue where the infrastructure project covers the transfer of the distribution poles and preventing another "pass on" item to consumers.

Meanwhile, the DOE has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Girl Scouts of the Philippines (GSP) to formalize an educational partnership on energy conservation as part of its E-Power Mo EnerKids Program.

Under the partnership, the DOE will conduct lectures on basic electricity concepts and energy consumption of various appliances to batches of Girl Scouts nationwide. DOE's E-Power Mo Lecturers will also conduct hands-on experiments for Girl Scouts in the provinces.

The DOE-GSP MOU intends also to encourage girl scouts to pursue energy-related careers by stimulating their interests and passion despite the challenges in gender stereotyping.