

Headline: E. Samar gov wants LGUs to access funds for climate change

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TACLOBAN CITY – Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone has asked President Marcos to help local governments have access to money under the People's Survival Fund (PSF) to help them address climate change concerns.

Evardone made his appeal during a gathering attended by governors and mayors from Eastern Visayas during the "Handa Pilipinas" Visayas Leg held at the Summit Hotel in Tacloban on Nov. 8, when the country marked the 10th anniversary of Supertyphoon Yolanda (international name: Haiyan).

"I appealed to President Marcos, in the presence of Speaker Martin Romualdez and Special Assistant to the President Anton Lagdameo, to help local governments units (LGUs) access the multibillion-peso People's Survival Fund for disaster preparedness, mitigation and rehabilitation," the governor said in an interview.

Evardone said the PSF under Republic Act 10174, was institutionalized in 2012 to include a long-term finance stream that would enable the government to allow local governments to effectively address climate change problems.

It also grants local governments access to funds to augment their resources for implementing climate change-related projects.

Evardone also asked the President to "relax" the stringent requirements so local governments could gain access to the fund.

"I explained to the President that there is a need to relax the requirements so LGUs can readily access the fund and the President vowed to look into why the LGUs can't access that fund," the governor said.

"(And) since it speaks of people's survival, access to that fund to help communities in disaster-prone areas should be easy," he added.

For local governments to gain access to the fund, estimated to be at P1 billion per year, the requesting city or province must submit a letter of intent, accomplished project proposal template, climate risk and vulnerability assessments, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction-enhanced comprehensive land use or development plans, and local climate change action plan, among others.

Evardone said they have complied with the requirements and submitted them to the Climate Change Commission early this year but had not received any response.

“Our province was able to comply with all the requirements last April but unfortunately (there has been) no word from the Climate Change Commission,” he said.

President Marcos said in his speech that the Handa Pilipinas Visayas Leg was launched to showcase the different disaster risk reduction and management initiatives of the government.

“The government remains committed to advancing our country’s disaster resilience, and of course, we must recognize the role of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) in this undertaking,” he said.

Marcos said the DOST has been instrumental in developing cutting-edge technologies for disaster risk prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

“I am confident that the technologies featured in this event such as the mobile command post, the triaging trailer tent, the collapsible toilet bowl, upgraded emergency disinfection system, fire blanket, unsinkable porta boat and water ambulance, among others, will be of great help during relief and rescue operations,” he said.

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