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Headline: Protesters at DA call for action on climate change, food security

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Around 1,200 protesters marched and gathered in front of the Department of Agriculture (DA) Office in Quezon City to urge President Ferdinand “Bong Bong” Marcos Jr. to address issues concerning climate change and food security. (Photo courtesy of Asian Peoples Movement on Debt and Development)

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MANILA, Philippines — A group of climate and environmental activists, on Thursday, marched and gathered in front of the Department of Agriculture (DA) Office in Quezon City to urge President Ferdinand “Bong Bong” Marcos Jr. to address issues concerning climate change and food security.

The protest was also in celebration of the Asia Day of Action on Food and Climate, which coincided with World Food Day (WFD) and the World Food Forum.

According to the Asian Peoples Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD), there were approximately 1,200 protesters, including women, farmers, and agricultural workers, who marched starting from the National Housing Authority.

Other participants were: Philippine Movement for Climate Justice, Sanlakas, Oriang, Aniban ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura, Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino, Kilusan para sa Kabuhayan, Kalusugan, Kalikasan, at Katiyakan sa Paninirahan (K4K), Zone One Tondo Organization, Kongreso ng Pagkakaisa ng Maralitang Lungsod, Samahan ng Progresibong Kabataan, Partido Lakas ng Masa, and Metro Manila Vendors Alliance.

Protesters wore salakots and held banners and placards demanding protection against the food and climate crises.

An effigy that depicted Marcos as an “impostor scarecrow that pretends to help resolve the country’s food crisis but instead worsens it” was also paraded during the event, as posted by APMDD on the social media platform ‘X.’

“We demand sustainable food systems that prioritize domestic food needs and ensure adequate and nutritious food for all,” APMDD coordinator Lidy Nacpil said in a statement.

Agricultural losses caused by climate change are also the key driver of food insecurity in the Philippines, APMDD pointed out.

It also highlighted that the participating groups are calling for the cessation of corporate monopolization, agricultural liberalization, and industrial food production, as these are the “systemic roots” behind climate and food problems.

Moreover, K4K and the Metro Manila Vendors Association urged for the abolishment of the use of pesticides and herbicides, the democratization of land, seed, and technological ownership, and granting smallholder food producers the right to hold leadership in decision-making affairs in national and local agriculture.

A report by WFD said that the country has the highest food insecurity in Southeast Asia, thus affecting 50.9 million Filipinos, or nearly half of the national population.

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