

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
News and Information Bureau

PRESS BRIEFING OF MS. DAPHNE OSEÑA-PAEZ
WITH DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DILG)
SECRETARY JUANITO VICTOR “JONVIC” REMULLA
OCTOBER 22, 2024

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Magandang umaga, Malacañang Press Corps, and welcome sa ating press briefing ngayong araw, October 22.

During a sectoral meeting this morning, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. was briefed by the new Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government on the department's plans and programs for the next four years in order to sustain peace and order across the country, uphold governance, good governance and enhance the capacities of local government units.

This morning, we are joined by DILG Secretary Juanito Victor “Jonvic” Remulla to brief us on the President's directives to increase police visibility in local government units in light of the holidays, the Christmas rush and Typhoon Kristine; and most especially, a focus on security for the 2025 elections.

Good morning, Secretary Remulla.

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Good morning. Do I take questions from the press or do I make a statement?

Okay. After conferring with the President, we discussed extensively the hotspots for the 2025 elections – out of 38, 27 are in the BARMM Region. We will have a special meeting for that on November 15 to discuss the contingencies on what must be done to ensure a ‘safe and fair elections’ for everyone there.

Secondly, we discussed the reforms needed in the PNP but that's a four-month process and we will brief you as it goes along.

Third, we discussed also the coming Undas but Undas is not really a big... maybe concern because if you look at the crime statistics of the past five years, hindi naman umaakyat masyado; it's just the travel that is burdensome.

More importantly is the coming Christmas season, pagdating ng November/December nagkaka-uptick ng crimes against persons and property especially sa mga high density areas. So, we instructed the PNP to double their presence especially in the malls, in the public sector transportation and in the LRT and MRT kung saan uso ang dukutan, ang mga snatch-an ng mga bag, iyong mga pickpocket. So, may special efforts kami to put marshals on the trains and to increase police visibility in all the public areas.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Now, the Secretary will take questions from the media starting with Harley Valbuena, DZME.

HARLEY VALBUENA/DZME: Hi. Good morning, Secretary. Sir, in line with Tropical Storm Kristine, Signal No. 2 is already up in Catanduanes and Signal No. 1 is already up in Metro Manila. So, what are the directives of the President and the DILG on the tropical cyclone?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: All units have been mobilized. All local government units have been informed. The final path is not yet determined – there's one path that goes up north, this one path it goes to Central Luzon. So, we will know later tonight on which exact path it will follow. Maraming predictive model siya eh, so as unpredictable as weather goes but the matter where it will pass, all local government units, all civil defense units have been alerted and I think we're prepared.

HARLEY VALBUENA/DZME: Sir, follow up lang po. I believe kapag may Signal No. 1, mayroon pong automatic suspension ng classes. So, ano po iyon suspension ng classes sa Metro Manila?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Ah, Metro Manila... I advised the local government units to suspend classes ready for today and tomorrow. As far as I am concerned, I'm not deputized yet to suspend classes but I gave an advisory to suspend classes already.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Racquel Bayan, Radyo Pilipinas.

RACQUEL BAYAN/RADYO PILIPINAS: Good morning, Secretary. You mentioned kanina po, binanggit ninyo kay Pangulong Marcos iyong reform na ipatutupad ng PNP under your leadership. Ano po iyong mga particular na sinabi ninyo kay Pangulong Marcos kanina and ano po iyong naging reaksiyon ni Pangulo? Thank you.

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Ah, very accepting naman siya. Iyong mga reforms na iyan is recommendatory four months from now. We're working together with the UP College of Public Administration para makakuha ng kumpletong detalye kung paano namin mari-reform lalong-lalo na iyong structure kasi very top-heavy ang PNP ngayon. I think we have 133 generals, parang gusto kong i-whittle down to 25 para mas flat ang organization. We're very top-heavy now. So, those are some of the recommendations that we're gonna make.

RACQUEL BAYAN/RADYO PILIPINAS: How soon can we expect, sir, iyong implementasyon nitong reforms?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: After the... at the start of the second term, of the midterms.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Ivan Mayrina, GMA-7.

IVAN MAYRINA/GMA7: Secretary, napag-usapan ninyo ho ba ng Pangulo kanina iyong tungkol sa abduction ng American vlogger na si Elliot Eastman and did he ask for updates and did he issue orders?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Ah, nabanggit... from the latest information, it doesn't sound like a kidnapping yet kasi wala pang ransom demand in actuality. Parang mayroong local na hidwaan doon sa community, parang hindi pagkakasundo. Anyways, we're treating this as a kidnapping and the police are in hot pursuit of the perpetrators.

IVAN MAYRINA/GMA7: Follow up lang, sir, doon sa nabanggit ninyo. You said top-heavy ang PNP as an organization, there are 138 generals and you want to trim it down to 25?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: That's my plan, yes.

IVAN MAYRINA/GMA7: Ano ho ang mangyayari doon sa—are they going to be demoted or...?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: No, no, no. We will let them retire and then... it's still a plan, it's not—again, that's just one of my recommendations to flatten the organization.

IVAN MAYRINA/GMA7: Is this a priority under your leadership?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Yes, it is.

IVAN MAYRINA/GMA7: Bakit, sir? Ano hong nakita ninyong problema doon sa pagiging top-heavy ng organization?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: There are a lot of generals now without commands. If you look at it, mayroon tayong APC – Area Police Command na wala namang tao sa ilalim nila 'di ba, so marami tayong mga lugar na redundancies na kailangang i-trim down. It's a 32-year old law na kailangang bisitahin ulit, so those are the things that we will examine.

Again, nothing's final. It's recommendatory so wala pang ina-approve.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Alvin Baltazar, first, Radyo Pilipinas.

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Secretary, magandang umaga po. Secretary, balikan ko lang doon sa suspension ng klase. So, mayroon ba tayong directives sa mga LGU kasi lalong-lalo na mukhang papalakas iyong bagyo? Directives sa mga LGU na baka pupuwede maging alert and maraming naghihintay na mga magulang kung papapasukin iyong mga bata eh.

DILG SEC. REMULLA: May advisory na ako kaninang umaga na suspended iyong classes 'no for October 22 and 23. Ang expected ng height ng storm is midday tomorrow. I think from midnight to midday tomorrow so I already advised them to suspend classes and to prepare all units to respond.

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Iyong level ng mga estudyante ng...

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Preschool to college, lahat; pati preschool to college, public and private. Yes.

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Ah, hanggang college na. Thank you, Secretary.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Let's go to Chona Yu, People's Journal.

CHONA YU/PEOPLE'S JOURNAL: Sir, binanggit ninyo rin po ba kay Pangulong Marcos iyong balak na imbestigahan iyong mga high-profile cases na namatay doon sa anti-drug war campaign ni dating Pangulong Duterte?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: That was not discussed and I think that's a matter for the QuadCom to finish; tapusin muna nila at saka namin pag-uusapan iyon.

CHONA YU/PEOPLE'S JOURNAL: Sa PNP, sir, ano pong directive ninyo?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: They're opening it. They're examining it. Pero it doesn't reach to the level of the President yet kasi hindi pa kumpleto iyong revelations ng QuadCom. I think they will wait to have finished before things are opened.

CHONA YU/PEOPLE'S JOURNAL: So, sir, what's the update sa investigation ng PNP?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Again, the QuadCom is not finished 'di ba. Hindi pa tapos eh! So iyong corroborative evidence and corroborative testimonies ay wala po. So, hinihintay nila lahat iyon bago buksan iyong lahat ng cases.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Thank you. Cleizl Pardilla, PTV 4.

CLEIZL PARDILLA/PTV4: Hi, Secretary. Good morning. Eighteen thousand barangays are at risk of landslides and the flood. Ano po iyong nabanggit sa mga LGUs regarding evacuation areas and repositioning of relief goods?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Well, you should be proud of Benhur Abalos who made extensive preparations for this beforehand. All of them have been informed; all of them are aware. And I think you've seen it in the last two years na nabawasan na iyong ang incidences of casualties from landslides, and that goes a long credit to—malaking credit ito kay Secretary Abalos because he really paid attention to that.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Eden Santos, NET 25.

EDEN SANTOS/NET25: Secretary, nabanggit ninyo po iyong pagbaba ng bilang ng mga generals. Hindi po ba tayo nangangamba na baka magdulot ito ng demoralization sa hanay po ng PNP?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Hindi naman. They're all soldiers. Ano naman iyon eh, they follow orders and we'll see. At iyan ay recommendatory and, we'll see kung it will take it's final shift.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Gilbert Perdez, DWIZ.

GILBERT PERDEZ/DWIZ: Magandang umaga po, sir. Iyong tungkol po sa eleksiyon ay nabanggit ninyo ho, at mayroon ho bang partikular na kautusan ang Pangulo sa mga areas na dapat tutukan, iyong mga areas of concern or hotspots na pinatututukan ho sa inyo ng PNP?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Again, 38 hotspots; out of the 38, 27 ang BARMM. We will cover that extensively. Iyong iba namang natitirang hotspots, asaran lang naman iyon eh; hindi pa masyadong... except for, I think, 4th and 3rd District of Leyte where Albuera is, doon medyo nagkakaroon na ng mga casualties. So iyon, we will watch closely kung ano ang nangyayari doon.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay, Tuesday Niu, DZBB. Please pass the mic.

TUESDAY NIU/DZBB: Hi, sir. Clarification lang, sir, para makumpleto natin iyong advisory on suspension of classes for today and tomorrow. Iyong lawak po, saang mga lugar po ito and, is this public and private?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Again, we advised all local government units to suspend classes in the entire Luzon seaboard; buong Luzon iyan. Again, hindi tayo sigurado – public and private – hindi tayo sigurado kung aakyat siya papuntang Quirino, exiting through Batanes. So we don't know

yet the exact path kung dadaan siya ng from Quezon to Aurora to Batanes, or it will go from Quezon straight to the Cordilleras out to ano—so we will know tonight kung ano talaga ang final trajectory ng typhoon.

TUESDAY NIU/DZBB: But buong Luzon na, sir, ang advisory?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Yes, buong Luzon, yes.

TUESDAY NIU/DZBB: Para safe na.

DILG SEC. REMULLA: And that goes also with the cancelling all sea crafts from traversing the Luzon area.

TUESDAY NIU/DZBB: All right. Thank you, sir.

Q: [OFF MIC]

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Iyong ano?

Q: [OFF MIC]

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Yes—okay, I have to make this clear. And DILG has no power to suspend classes, so we recommend to them to suspend classes.

Q: [OFF MIC]

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Yes, recommend the LGUs to suspend classes. Pero marami nang nag-suspend.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Secretary, would you like to also share a little bit of the ideas that you have for streamlining work in local governments?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Well, baka naman makatulong kayo sa mga suggestions ko. Okay, just to give you an example. I was governor for 12 years, and sa 12 years na iyon, minsan ...madalas ang buhay namin, pumipirma kami ng papel ng mga 12 hours a week – pirma lang kami nang pirma. We want to work with COA; we want to work with ULAP; we want to work with various agencies to cut that down from 12 hours a week to one hour a week na lang ang signing ng mga documents ng mga mayors. It takes a lot of time and it takes a lot of mental energy and it wastes a lot of the leaders' time and resources para gawin iyan.

So [unclear] streamlining, digitization effort para maging mas efficient ang trabaho ng local chief executives.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Any further questions? No more? Okay, one more, Gilbert Perdez.

GILBERT PERDEZ/DWIZ: Iyong sa streamlining po, sabi ninyo po bibilisan iyong mga proseso sa mga LGUs. Eh paano natin binabalanse iyon, 'di ba kailangan din natin ng dagdag na personnel? Paano bina-balance ng ano iyon?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: That's what digitization is for, para bawasan ang personnel at saka ang trabaho.

GILBERT PERDEZ/DWIZ: So ibig sabihin po, dadagdagan lang iyong trabaho ng personnel, hindi magdadagdag dito sa—

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Again, that's what digitization is for. If you understand what digitization means, 'di ba, it means more efficient.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. We have Jean Mangaluz – please give the mic.

JEAN MANGALUZ/[INQUIRER.NET](#): Hi, sir. Can we just ask, paano po dumami ng ganoon iyong mga generals na umabot sa point na wala silang command?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Nasa PNP law kasi iyon eh. Kasi they function on Civil Service rules na every three years ang promotion. So kung qualified sila, promoted sila. Promote nang promote, so we want to change a lot of that, to make it five years para mas mabagal ang promotion ng mga—kasi nagiging top-heavy nga eh. If you look at the structure, I think there are 133 eh, if I'm not mistaken, 133 generals, like maraming mga provincial directors, after two years of service, full colonel sila. Hindi pa sila eligible ma-promote, floating sila after two years. So there are things that we have to change para mas ano sila, efficient.

JEAN MANGALUZ/[INQUIRER.NET](#): Hindi naman po na ... iyong case na dumami iyong promotions bigla noong past admin, hindi naman po ganoon?

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Hindi naman, hindi naman. It's the function of the law.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. There are no further questions. Thank you so much, Malacañang Press Corps. And thank you, Secretary Jonvic Remulla, and welcome to your first press corps briefing.

DILG SEC. REMULLA: Thank you very much. Salamat sa inyong lahat.

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