

Pacquiao offers bout to typhoon victims

MANNY Pacquiao just can't help but suffer from inside as Filipinos continue to reel from the harsh effects of the calamities brought about by tropical storm "Ondoy" and Typhoon "Pepeng."

Pacquiao is training in Baguio City, a mountainous area hit hard by last week's typhoon, which has caused the death to hundreds of people due to landslides and flash flooding.

As he prepares for his Nov. 14 fight with Miguel Cotto, Pacquiao keeps himself glued on what's happening around the country, and said he's dedicating his next fight to the countless victims.

"Sa labang ito, kayong lahat ang aking inspirasyon

(For this fight, you will be my inspiration)," Pacquiao who composed a short prayer which he texted to friends the other day.

"Let us continue to pray for each and everyone," he said.

The world's greatest fighter today expressed confidence that the people, despite all their personal sufferings, will get back on their feet, pick up the pieces and move on.

"Alam kong walang bagyo o kalaban ang makakapagpatumba sa magiting na Pilipino (No storm is strong enough to bring us Filipinos down)," he reported from Baguio City yesterday.

"At asahan ninyo, palagi ako sa inyong mga tabi upang maibigay ko ang kahit na mali-

it na tulong na nagmumula sa aking puso (And count on it, I will always be by your side, and help in my own little way)," he added.

Last week, Pacquiao broke camp to help the victims of tropical storm "Ondoy" in Metro Manila. He braved the stormy weather, taking a five-hour drive from Baguio to Manila to personally help distribute relief goods to victims.

"Huwag ninyo sayangin ang pagkakataon na tumulong kung kaya ninyo (Don't waste the opportunity to help when you can). At patuloy kayong magdasal, kahit walang tayong problemang hinaharap (And continue to pray even when there's no problem to face)," he said. (Philstar.com)

'Blog Action Day'...

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Cruz said that pushing discussions on climate change was easier in first-world countries but in developing nations like the Philippines where livelihood and human rights have been the big issues, climate change has been pushed to the backseat.

He said he hoped that on October 15, discussions on climate change would serve as crash course and an eye-opener to how this has affected everyone in the world.

"Right now, we have a government not implementing policies that are friendly to the environment. In addition, we have a weather bureau that is understaffed and underfunded to get modern warning systems to plan ahead of

disasters," said Cruz.

Cruz said Bloggers Kapihan would involve senators and legislators, who have accounts in social networking sites such as Kabataan Representative Raymond Palatino, by inviting them to join the discussion.

Blog Action Day was a brainchild of web startup Envato chief executive Collin Ta'eed, and his relatives Fuad Ta'eed,

and Cyan Ta'eed in 2007, according to its website.

Last year, 12,000 bloggers joined the event and they managed to reach 14 million readers.

For this year, about 5,514 sites and 10,629,984 readers have signed up for the October 15 event. The list is available at <http://www.blogactionday.org/en/blogs>. ■

RP economy to grow despite storms' onslaught - officials

PHILIPPINE economic managers said they are confident that the economic growth for this year will hit the targeted 0.8 to 1.8 percent despite massive damages wrought by two strong storms in the past two weeks, as overseas Filipino workers are expected to wire back more money in time of crisis.

In a press briefing held last Oct. 13, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the steady inflow of remittances from OFWs will offset the damages brought by back-to-back storms, estimated to be worth P16 billion (about \$344 million). This figure includes roads, bridges, irrigation facilities and farmlands.

Since Sept. 26, tropical storms "Ondoy" and "Pepeng" struck the northern Philippines one after another, causing widespread flooding that submerged low-lying towns and villages up to now. More than 650 people were killed and around 6 million people were affected.

National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) policy planning director Dennis Arroyo, for his part, said that in light of the recent calamities, OFWs might send more money back home to help their families who lost their homes and properties.

Teves said remittances for

this year may grow by 4 percent, revising their earlier forecast of

a flat growth, compared to the 0.3 to 0.4 percentage points re-

duction in GDP growth due to storm damages. (Philstar.com)



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