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COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Appropriations	HB 8063	Speaker Velasco	Extending the availability of appropriations under RA 11494, otherwise known as the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act	<p>The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair Rep. David "Jay-Jay" Suarez (2nd District, Quezon), approved HB 8063 with amendments. The corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.</p> <p>Rep. Suarez said that earlier today, the Committee received a letter from the Office of the President certifying as urgent HB 8063, authored by Speaker Lord Allan Jay Velasco (Marinduque). Given the urgency of the matter, Rep. Suarez said that the Committee immediately conducted a meeting on the proposed law.</p> <p>One of the amendments agreed upon by the Committee was to delete Section 1 of the bill which shall be replaced by a new provision to read as: "The availability of the appropriations under RA 11494, otherwise known as the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act is extended until June 30, 2021, provided that the availability of the appropriations in RA 11465 or the General Appropriations Act of 2020 that were reprogrammed, reallocated or realigned from declared savings and utilized for programs and projects for COVID-19 interventions, including the automatic appropriations of new programs, projects and activities pursuant to Section 4, (rr) of Bayanihan to Recover as One Act, are also extended for the same period. Provided further that the use of such appropriations shall continue to be governed by the provisions of Section 4 of the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act. Provided, finally, that authority to reprogram, reallocate, realign from savings or other items in the FY 2020 GAA, and under Section 4 (r) of the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act can be exercised until December 19, 2020."</p> <p>The Committee also added new sections pertaining to the extension for obligations and disbursements of allotments; validity of allotments; applicability to local government units and government financial institutions; allotment releases for standby funds; and extension of the availability of unreleased appropriations authorized under RA 11494.</p>
Population and Family Relations	Substitute Bill to HBs 3254, 4530, 5376, 5847, 7139 & 7779	Rep. Silverio, Deputy Speaker Santos-Recto, Reps. Garcia (J.E.), Nieto,	Providing for the permanent validity of the certificates of live birth, death, and marriage issued, signed, certified, and authenticated by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), Local Civil Registry	The Committee, chaired by Guimaras Rep. Ma. Lucille Nava, M.D., approved the Substitute Bill to the six bills. The corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.

Continuation... Population and Family Relations		Vargas, and Nava	Offices (LCROs), and National Statistics Office (NSO)	<p>The Secretariat was directed to transmit the Substitute Bill to the Committee on Appropriations for consideration of the bill's funding provision.</p> <p>The proposed law seeks to put a stop to the existing practice of some government agencies which require an individual to submit the most recent copy of birth, marriage or death certificates or those not older than six months from the date of issuance by the PSA. This requirement is burdensome on the part of the citizenry as it entails unnecessary and recurring expenses and longer processing time for their applications for passports, licenses, employment, and social security benefits, among others.</p>
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AGENCY BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
East ASEAN Growth Area (Special Committee)	<p>Briefing by the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans and programs to mitigate the impact of the health pandemic • BIMP-EAGA 2020-2025 Vision (BEV 2025) 	<p>The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair, Rep. Shirlyn Bañas-Nogralles (1st District, South Cotabato), listened to the presentation of MinDA on its plans and programs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and on the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines (BIMP) East ASEAN Growth Area (EAGA) 2020-2025 Vision.</p> <p>MinDA Deputy Executive Director Romeo Montenegro presented the following key programs of MinDA to mitigate the effects of the pandemic and to adapt to the new normal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tienda Program –This involves the rolling out of temporary retail outlets for fresh and dry goods from Mindanao (Total sales of P2.76 million in Manila and P1.27 million in Baguio were generated by the program in October and November, respectively); • Organic Rice Certification and Marketing Project – This aims to sustain the market through the development of high-value organic rice by imposing stringent documentation requirements for a third-party organic certification; • Vegetable Derby and Festival – This showcases the best vegetable farming technologies, practices and innovations including the planting of quality seeds and adoption of post-harvest techniques. It aims to ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of vegetables by boosting productivity; and • Installation of automated teller machines (ATMs) in Lanao del Sur towns – This is undertaken in partnership with the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP). ATMs are installed in “unbanked” towns of Malabang and Balabagan in Lanao del Sur to spur economic activities in the area. <p>Montenegro presented the BEV 2025, which was prepared with the support of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The BEV 2025 provides a way forward for members to continue narrowing development gaps, promote stronger connectivity, and sustainably manage natural resources. He said the priority infrastructure projects under BEV 2025 are the following: roads, railways and bridges; airports and seaports; information and communications technology infrastructures; power and energy infrastructures; and other infrastructures to facilitate and promote trade and urban development.</p>

<p>Continuation... East ASEAN Growth Area (Special Committee)</p>		<p>Rep. Gil "Kabarangay Jr." Acosta (3rd District, Palawan) lauded the comprehensive report of MinDA. He said that one of his priority economic thrusts is the connectivity of Palawan to the EAGA. However, this is hindered by the lack of telecommunications infrastructure in the area.</p> <p>MinDA Chair Emmanuel Piñol suggested that the Committee come up with a House Resolution calling for the construction of cell sites in the southern part of Palawan by telecommunications companies such as Globe Telecom, Inc. and Smart Communications, Inc.</p> <p>The Committee agreed with the recommendation of Piñol to draft a House Resolution on the matter.</p> <p>Replying to Rep. Bañas-Nogralas' query on the status of the halal industry in Mindanao, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Undersecretary Abdulgani Macatoman said that the DTI has been accrediting establishments that sell halal products in Mindanao. He added that Mindanao is continuously exporting halal products to the Middle East, which is the largest importer of halal products.</p> <p>Halal refers to what is permissible or lawful in traditional Islamic law. It is frequently applied to permissible food and drinks, thus a halal certified product means that it complies with Islamic dietary laws and standards (Source: Department of Agriculture website).</p>
<p>Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Special Committee)</p>	<p>Briefing on the status of implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) particularly on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third-Party Monitoring Team (TPMT) Review/Assessment of the Transition Period 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Esmael Mangudadatu (2nd District, Maguindanao), listened to the assessment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) transition period and the report of the concerned agencies on the socio-economic component of the CAB.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Mangudadatu said that today's meeting is part of a series of briefings aimed at giving the Committee Members better appreciation of the efforts being undertaken by concerned agencies towards the full realization of the CAB. He also manifested his support to extend the timeline of the BARMM transition period for another three years from June 2022 to 2025, to which President Rodrigo Duterte himself agrees. He explained that the three-year period initially allotted for the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) to establish the necessary mechanisms towards the transition to the new Bangsamoro government proved to be inadequate. The situation was further affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, where the community quarantines restricted people's mobility, Rep. Mangudadatu added.</p> <p>Rep. Mangudadatu also said that he filed HB 8117 which aims to reschedule the regional elections in the BARMM to 2025.</p> <p>TPMT Chair Heino Marius said that the TPMT sees an overall positive achievement with regard to the Political Track of the CAB's roadmap: the peace process in Mindanao is fundamentally on track; the BARMM was established as an autonomous political entity; and the foundations for meaningful self-governance of the Bangsamoro under a parliamentary form of government have been put in place. He added that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bangsamoro Administrative Code was adopted and other priority Codes are in various stages of preparations.</p> <p>Among the outstanding issues that should be resolved urgently are the formal inclusion of Cotabato City in the BARMM and the automatic and direct transfer of block grant allocation to the Bangsamoro government as provided for under the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL).</p> <p>Under the BOL, the National Government shall provide an annual block grant to the Bangsamoro Government which shall be equivalent</p>

<p>Continuation... Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Special Committee)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socioeconomic component of the Normalization Track 	<p>to five percent of the net national internal revenue tax collections of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and the net collections of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) from the third fiscal year immediately preceding the current fiscal year.</p> <p>On the Normalization Track, Marius reported that 12,000 members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) have already been decommissioned. However, the decommissioning of the third batch of MILF combatants, which was originally scheduled this year, will be delayed because of budgetary constraints and restrictions attributed to the pandemic.</p> <p>With regard to the defense and security matters in the BARMM, Marius said that further discussions between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the MILF may be required to reconcile disagreements on the matter.</p> <p>Commenting on the proposed extension of the transition period, Marius said that it is up to the two parties to decide. Nevertheless, he said that the remaining challenges to the realization of the CAB tend to show that the time allocated for the transition period is very tight, and the COVID-19 pandemic has considerably complicated the picture.</p> <p>Marius said that the TPMT already issued six public reports as a result of its regular monitoring of the implementation of the peace agreements. The TPMT is the third-party observer in the Mindanao peace process which reviews, assesses, evaluates, and monitors the implementation of all GPH-MILF signed agreements, primarily the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (FAB) and its Annexes.</p> <p>Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) Director Cesar de Mesa explained that the CAB is the road map for the peace efforts in Mindanao. The CAB, signed last 2014, has two tracks: Political Track and Normalization Track. The Normalization Track involves the decommissioning of the MILF combatants and putting their weapons beyond use, as well as the transformation of six MILF camps into peaceful and resilient communities. This track will be implemented through four components: security program, socio-economic development program, confidence building measures, and transitional justice and reconciliation.</p> <p>De Mesa said that the Joint Task Forces on Camps Transformation (JTFCT) is currently working with the MILF leaders for the crafting of Camps Transformation Plans (CTPs) with the goal of converting the camps into productive, peaceful, civilian, and sustainable communities.</p> <p>The OPAPP signed memoranda of agreements (MOAs) with the following agencies to implement various socio-economic projects under the Normalization Track:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) – implementation of a technical skills education program to help decommissioned combatants reintegrate in the community and be productive civilians (MOA signed last October 30); • Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) – grant of P100 million worth of livelihood and employment assistance for the decommissioned combatants and their families (MOA signed in October 2019); • National Irrigation Administration (NIA) – construction and rehabilitation of irrigation facilities that will benefit the decommissioned combatants (MOA signed last September 11); and • Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) – implementation of the Peaceful Return and Aggressive Inclusion Social
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<p>Continuation... Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Special Committee)</p>		<p>Entrepreneurship (PRAISE) Program, with a funding of P70 million, to provide livelihood and entrepreneurial projects to the decommissioned combatants.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Assistant Secretary Rodolfo Encabo conveyed to the Committee that the DSWD has already released financial assistance to the decommissioned MILF combatants. He said that at least P1.2-billion has been allocated to the DSWD, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples NCIP), and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) to implement various socio-economic interventions in beneficiary communities.</p> <p>Department of Health (DOH) Undersecretary Abdullah Dumama Jr. reported that the budget allocated for 27 rural health units (RHUs) in the BARMM has already been released. He said that there are already 15 scholars who will man the RHU facilities in South Cotabato.</p> <p>Department of National Defense (DND) Director Peter Galvez said that the Joint Peace and Security Teams (JPST) composed of members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the Philippine National Police (PNP), and the MILF's Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF), is tasked to ensure peace and security in areas where the normalization process is being implemented. Galvez said that the redeployment of the AFP would depend on the security situation on the ground. Under the CAB's annex on Normalization, "the government shall redeploy the AFP units and troops from and with the Bangsamoro, consistent with a normal and peaceful life and the progress in the other aspects of normalization."</p> <p>Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1st District, Lanao del Norte) advised the concerned agencies, particularly the OPAPP, to provide a comprehensive report on what comprises the socioeconomic package for the decommissioned combatants to determine if government commitments are being fulfilled. OPAPP Undersecretary David Diciano promised to submit such report.</p> <p>Minority Leader Joseph Stephen Paduano (Party-List, ABANG LINGKOD) stressed that all community-based projects and assistance to uplift the economic condition of communities under the leadership of a revolutionary organization should be a separate commitment of the government from the assistance promised to each of the decommissioned combatants. Reps. Mangudadatu and Dimaporo supported his statement.</p> <p>Asked to comment on the matter, BARMM Minister Mohagner Iqbal, who is also the chair of the MILF Peace Implementing Panel, said that the MILF is requesting the GPH to have a mutual accounting of funds and type of assistance that will be provided to the decommissioned MILF combatants to determine what constitutes the P1 million worth of assistance (monetary and non-monetary) promised by the government to each decommissioned combatant.</p>
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