

NREP-Noy: Increase RE use wont jack up power rates

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P-Noy: Increase RE use won't jack up power rates

by Amy R. Remo

THE AQUINO administration has vowed to ensure that a three-fold increase in the use of renewable energy resources will not jack up electricity rates unnecessarily in the next two decades.

In his keynote speech during the launch of the National Renewable Energy Program (NREP) yesterday, President Benigno S. Aquino III said the government, by way of policies and guidelines, would "ensure a level playing field, transparency, and fair electricity pricing."

According to Mr. Aquino, the current administration will vigorously support initiatives for the development of the local clean energy sector as this was one of the immediate priorities of the government. Among these initiatives was the

Level playing field, transparency, fair pricing ensured

launch of the NREP, which will serve as a roadmap, outlining national RE targets and establish a framework for existing and planned policies.

He also said the government would keep a "watchful eye" in ensuring that the implementation of this green energy roadmap would be advantageous to all stakeholders, particularly power consumers.

The launch of the NREP, according to Energy Secretary Jose Rene D. Almendras, marked a milestone in Philippine renewable energy development "for we are launching not just a program, but a plan to ramp up efforts toward the full development and use of the country's re-

newable energy resources."

Under the NREP the Philippines will target to increase RE-based power capacity by as much as 15,200 megawatts by 2030 to over 20,600 MW in installed capacity, Almendras said in his speech yesterday.

This target will allow the country to have a power mix, in which RE resources will account for more than 50 percent. As of end 2010, total RE generation stood at 26.3 percent, he added.

The goals set under the NREP can be achieved, the energy chief noted, given that the country has abundant renewable energy sources, with various estimates ranging from 200,000

MW to as high as 276,000 MW in potential capacity. These resources included biomass, geothermal, solar, hydro, ocean and wind.

"We have set measurable milestones in pursuit of our NREP and as we strive to reach our target, we hope to deliver these milestones towards building further momentum in our drive to fully develop the country's available resources," Almendras explained.

"NREP is a plan and like all plans, it is not cast in stones. It must be constantly reviewed and updated to be able to adjust as new technologies develop. As a living document, the NREP will be regularly reviewed and updated, guided by

our primary goal of providing clean and affordable energy sources to future generations of Filipinos," he added.

Almendras noted that the Philippine government would now on a "catch up mode" on renewable energy as it has lagged in implementing the mechanisms that should have been in place after the law was signed in 2008.