

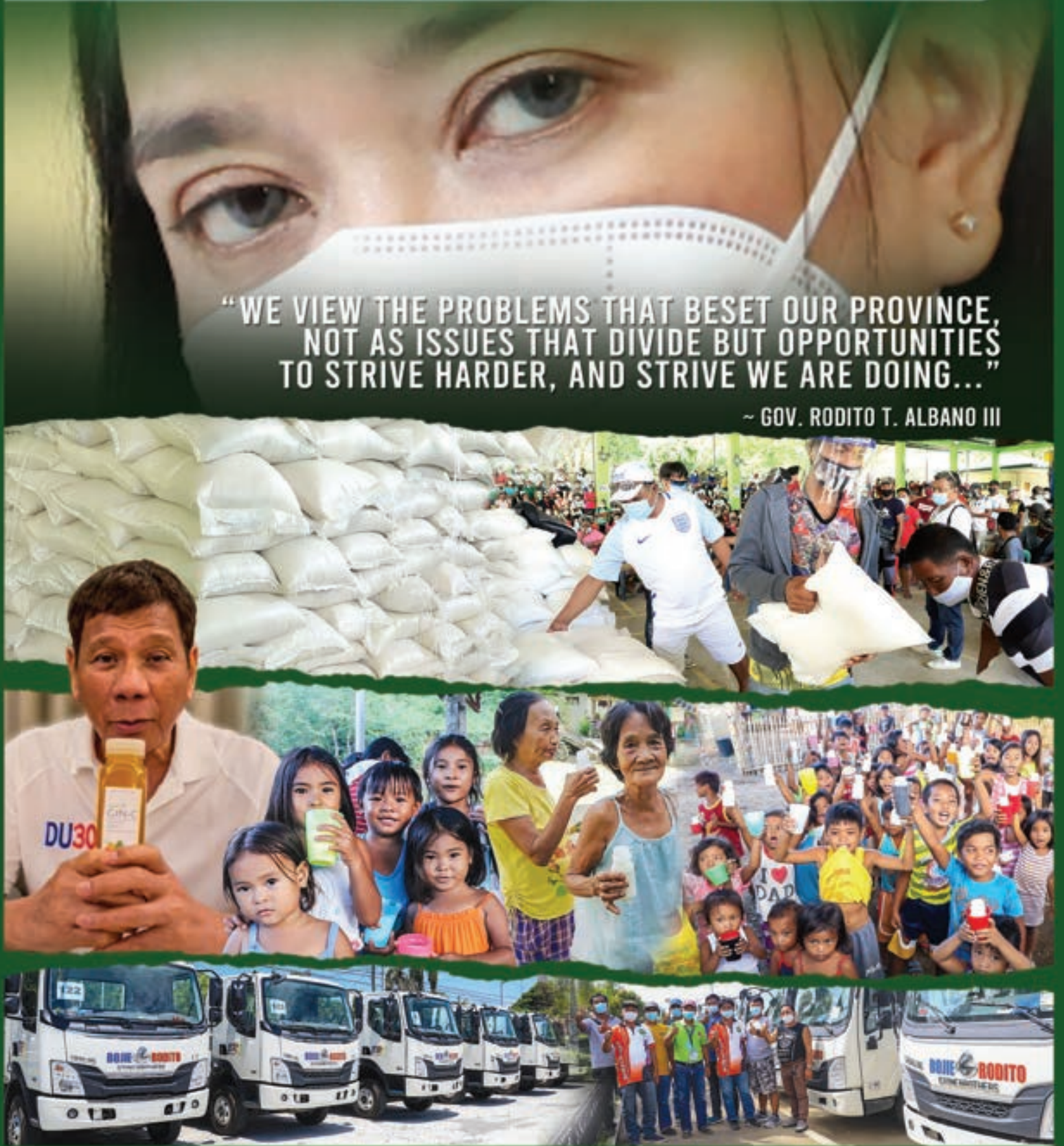


# INFOCUS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF ISABELA

“WE VIEW THE PROBLEMS THAT BESET OUR PROVINCE,  
NOT AS ISSUES THAT DIVIDE BUT OPPORTUNITIES  
TO STRIVE HARDER, AND STRIVE WE ARE DOING...”

~ GOV. RODITO T. ALBANO III



# Sen. Go, CabSecs assure support to Isabela's recovery from Typhoon Ulysses through Task Force Build Back Better



"The spirit of Bayanihan and the resilience of Filipinos will help us build back better. We are more than willing to support you every step of the way. In the midst of tragedy, the biggest strength of mankind lies in our wavering unity, not only to heal and recover as one, but also to build as one and to progress as one."

- Executive Secretary *Salvador Medialdea*



"The Task Force Build Back Better is an initiative in building and creating more disaster resilient communities that will be able to withstand natural and human-induced disasters. It is expected to streamline and expedite post-disaster efforts in a sustained and integrated manner, with a clear unity of command. Mga kababayan ko, huwag po kayong mag-alala. Nandito po ang gobyerno, magseserbisyo po kami sa inyong lahat. At magtulungan lang po tayo. Bukas po ang aming opisina ni Pangulong Duterte sa kung ano pa po ang pwede naming maitulong sa inyong lahat."

- Sen. *Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go*

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and harnessing the power of information  
in pursuit of a stronger citizenry and  
more enduring institutions.”***

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

### *Strong determination towards resilient recovery*

LGUs face the daunting task of taking the lead in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic as they were tasked by Malacañang to implement urgent measures and utilize resources to contain the effects of COVID-19 that continues to bring death, debilitation and wrecking livelihoods.

Gov. Rodito T. Albano III steps up, acts swiftly, effectively, and efficiently, adopting and implementing wide range of strategies, innovative programs and projects to alleviate the fear of Isabeleños while providing stimulus packages to the most affected, triggering economic recovery that builds back better. He established the One Isabela COVID-19 Command Center for COVID-19 case navigation, installed 200 units “Bahay Tibay” as additional isolation facilities to ease the anxieties, fears and worries of Isabeleños. Life-saving drugs and medicines were also made available for COVID-19 patients with severe to critical symptoms and health kits including vitamins were given to boost their immune system.

To augment the vaccination program of the national government and ensure herd immunity in the province, a total of 150,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines was secured by the provincial government and 28 municipalities including the City of Ilagan were assisted in their firm orders of 203,442 vaccine doses.

To keep individuals, businesses and local economies afloat, Gov. Albano implemented rapid economic rescue measures through the Isabela Recovery Initiative to Support Enterprise (I-RISE), providing essential support and protecting livelihoods in the face of abrupt losses of income. Interest-free loans were given to cooperatives and associations and livelihood support packages, cash grants and rice assistance were given also given to tricycle drivers and operators, sari-sari store, canderia and parlor shop owners, ambulant vendors, mag-iitik and magbabalot and other entrepreneurs from the informal sector. This is supplemented by the TUPAD program through the initiative of Labor Secretary Silvestre “Bebot” Bello III that provides emergency employment for displaced workers.

COVID-19 pandemic literally halted commodity movement particularly on rice trading. The Province has proven its readiness to face this adversity with local farmers as partners. Small rice and corn farmers with landholdings of 2 hectares below received price support. Rice and corn supply continued to flourish without disruption. Extensive linkaging with national government agencies have been pursued by Governor Rodito himself so that qualified farmers and farmer-cooperatives and organizations were provided with farm machineries and farm inputs to boost their production.

Even before the Balik Probinsya, Balik Pag-asa (BP2) program was institutionalized, Isabela already started bringing home stranded Isabeleños from Metro Manila and other provinces/cities. To fast-track coordination for their return, the Isabela Action Center in Quezon City was strengthened. With the unconditional acceptance of the LSIs by the Governor, it is no wonder that in the national launching of the BP2 program, Isabela was among only three pilot provinces in the country.

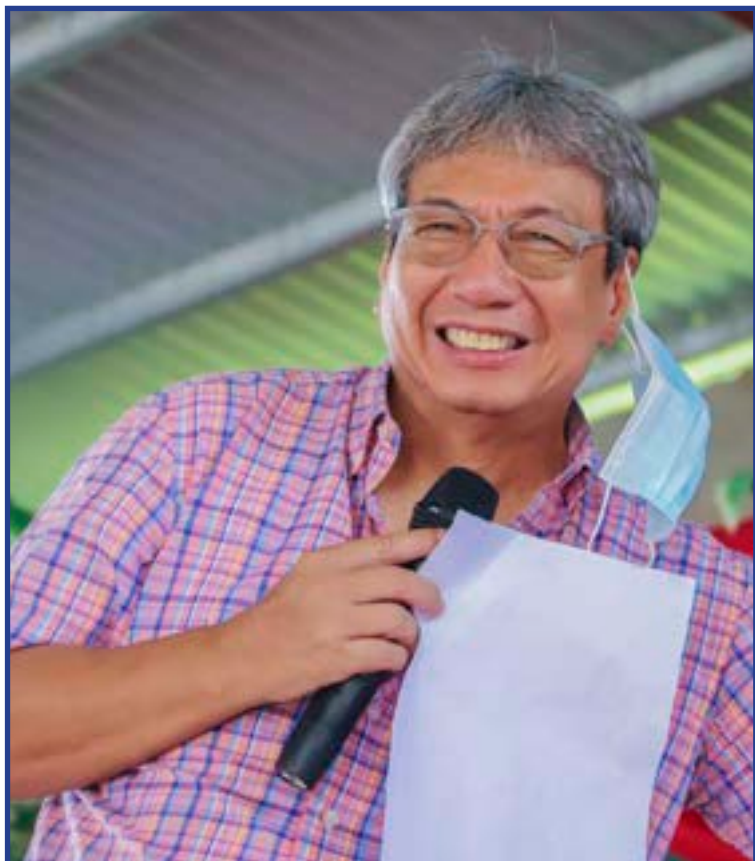
Addressing transport problems in the barangays, hauling trucks were distributed. The trucks will be used to haul produce from farm to market and to transport barangay residents during emergencies and calamities, and providing them a means to improve barangay roads when used to haul gravel and sand, thus paving the way to a successful recovery and long-term resilience in the barangay level. The Governor hopes to provide all 1,081 barangays in the province with a hauling truck.

Isabela continues to blaze the trail in disaster resilience, building safe and climate resilient communities for its constituency. Enhanced inter-agency cooperation between and among the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, the LGUs, PNP, AFP, BFP and other government agencies including the private sector, coupled with the culture of preparedness of the Isabeleños surfaced in the aftermath of Typhoon Ulysses.

COVID-19 health crisis caught all of us off-guard. It taught us to act with dispatch and to provide holistic solutions to varying challenges that are deeply connected, and thus our solutions must be so as well. Our health and wellbeing, economy and society, infrastructure and environment, and leadership and governance - cannot be addressed separately. Solutions don't give way to multiple benefits when they are conceived and implemented in sectorial isolation. Resilient recovery calls us not just to rebuild, but to unite and shape a substantially different reality that is safer, more prosperous, and above all, more resilient, especially for the most vulnerable.

**ATTY. ELIZABETH CUREG-BINAG**  
Editor-in-Chief

# GOOD GOVERNANCE MATTERS



trust to the Rural Health Units (RHUs). “Marami ng taong nagtitiwala sa RHUs kasi parang hospital na. Nama-manage namin sa LGU na mabuhay sila at hindi na sila mapasok para sa seryosong hospital,” Mayor Atayde said.

Gov. Albano noted that positive things still happened even in times of the pandemic. *“Gumanda iyong management sa mga hospital, gumanda ang RHU at naging matibay ang mga MHOs natin. Out of this pandemic, nakakuha tayo ng mga positive things na gumanda iyong response natin,”* the Governor said.

He also said that the Province of Isabela was even the first province in the country to receive the Locally Stranded Individuals and even the Overseas Filipino Workers when the rest of the country wouldn’t allow them to return home to their respective provinces. *“Maayos naman yung pagbibigay natin ng ayuda sa mga tao. Wala naman akong naririnig na pinababayaan ng mga Mayors ang mga tao sa kani-kanilang municipalities. At least iyong confidence ng tao o tiwala ng tao nasa atin,”* he added.

Gov. Albano assured the MHOs and their COVID-19 patients of the manifestation of support of the Provincial Government through the provision of food packs and health kits every after two weeks..

Meanwhile, on July 26, 2021, Gov. Albano issued Executive Order No. 23 series of 2021 in preparation for the possible entry and transmission of COVID-19 Delta Variant in the province. One of the most notable public health interventions under EO 23 is wearing of double face masks. To capacitate medical interventions, government and private hospitals must ensure that there are enough COVID-19 dedicated ward, ICU and TTMF beds, especially in areas experiencing case spikes. The provincial government is also preparing for enough supplies of COVID-19 medicines, oxygen tanks, and critical care equipment in its hospitals and augmentation of human resources.

Gov. Rodito Albano III together with Vice Gov. Faustino Dy III convened an urgent meeting with City/Municipal Mayors, City/Municipal Health Officers, Chiefs of Hospitals and Department Heads of the provincial government at the Provincial Capitol Amphitheater, Alibagu, City of Ilagan, Isabela to assess the COVID-19 situation and vaccination deployment updates in the province.

In his report, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Nelson Paguirigan said that COVID-19 confirmed positive cases slowed down compared to the past few weeks which could be attributed to the escalation of community quarantine status from Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCCQ) to General Community Quarantine (GCQ).

Assistant Provincial Health Officer Dr. Arlene Lazaro announced that the Southern Isabela Medical Center (SIMC) in Santiago City is accepting referrals for COVID-19 severe and critical cases as there are available beds in the said facility.

Meanwhile, Gov. Albano advised the Provincial General Services Office (PGSO) to procure much needed medicines for COVID-19 and further urged local chief executives to do the same and order additional vaccines to assure their constituents of the Local Government Units’ (LGUs) readiness in the fight against COVID-19.

At the LGU level, Luna Mayor Jaime Atayde said that many of his constituents are putting their



# Welcome

*Joint Meeting of the*  
**PROVINCIAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**  
**PROVINCIAL PEACE AND ORDER COUNCIL**  
**ISABELA PROVINCIAL TASK FORCE COVID-19**



June 3, 2020

Faustino N. D.

## “Malalagpasan natin ang anumang sakuna kung tayo’y sama-sama”

*“Dahil sa inyong pakikisama, malalagpasan nating lahat ang anumang sakuna.”* Ito ang binigyang diin ni Gov. Rodito T. Albano III sa kanyang mensahe sa Joint Meeting ng Provincial Development Council, Provincial Peace and Order Council at Isabela Provincial Task Force on COVID-19 na ginanap sa GFNDy Sr. Session Hall, Alibagu, City of Ilagan, Isabela.

Ang naturang pagpupulong ay itinakdang ganapin sana noong ika-19 ng Marso, subalit sa pagdating ng pandemyang COVID-19 kung saan ipinagbabawal ang *face to face gathering*, ito’y naipagpaliban. Ngayong nasa ilalim na ng *“new normal”*, natuloy ang nabanggit na pagpupulong habang mahigpit na ipinatutupad ang social distancing at ang pagsusuot ng face mask.

Lubos ang pasasalamat ni Gov. Albano sa lahat ng mga mayor, pulisya, army, DepEd at mga health workers dahil napanatiling COVID-19 free ang lalawigan ng Isabela simula pa noong Abril 25.

*“Very proud tayo dito sa probinsya na nakontrol natin itong COVID-19 dahil sa mga nagawa nating mga ordinansa, sa mga checkpoints, at yung pagbibigay natin ng mga vitamins,”* pahayag ng gobernador.

Naging pro-active at whollistic approach aniya ang tugon ng pamahalaang panlalawigan at ng mga kapartner nito laban sa COVID-19. *“Ako’y masaya na sa mga nangyayaring ito, nalagpasan*

*natin ang crisis, nakasama natin ang national line agencies, nakasama natin ang military. Tayong lahat ay nagdidiskusyon, may kanya-kanyang rason tayo, but in the end, iisa lang ang direksiyon na tinatahak at ginagawa natin, we work as one”* dagdag ng gobernador.

Ngayong darating na Hulyo 2020 aniya ay mag-iisang taon na siya sa kanyang panunungkulan bilang gobernador ng lalawigan ng Isabela. Marami na aniyang dumaan na mga pagsubok kagaya ng rice tarrification law, ASF at ang COVID-19.

*“Pero inspite of all these things, masaya ako na lalong lumalakas yung ‘bonding’ natin na magkakasama na manilbihan sa lalawigan. Nalampasan natin ang rice tariffication, napalakas natin ang mga farmers at naging masaya sila. Dito naman sa ASF, wala silang masabi at napagtuunan natin ng pansin. Nang dumating ang COVID, tayo ang unang gumawa ng mga paunang hakbang at pamamaraan upang maisaayos natin ang pagpapauwi ng mga stranded nating ka-probinsya at maibalik sila dito sa ating lalawigan,”* pahayag pa ni Gov. Albano.

Gayunman, mahigpit na nagbabala ang gobernador sa lahat na huwag maging kampante. *“Pero hindi pa rin nalulutas itong problemang ito kasi wala pang vaccine o cure na naimbento,”* ayon pa kay Gov. Albano. Umaasa ang gobernador na anumang sakuna sa hinaharap ay *“malalagpasan natin, kayang-kaya natin, basta’t tayo’y sama-sama.”*



# “BAHAY TIBAY” ONLY IN ISABELA

Reports on COVID-19 admission to referral hospitals in Cagayan Valley Medical Center (CVMC) in Tuguegarao City, Cagayan and Southern Isabela Medical Center (SIMC) in Santiago City, Isabela reached full capacity and could no longer accommodate COVID-19 severe or critical patients, while provincially-owned and operated hospitals were running close to full capacity and unable to provide isolation wards because of the surge of cases covering the months of March and April 2021, prompted Gov. Rodito Albano to call for an emergency meeting with mayors and doctors to ease the anxieties, fears and worries of Isabelenos.

*“Sa ngayon, nararamdaman ko na may kaba ang ating mga kababayan dahil sa mga bali-balitan lalo na sa Manila, na ang mga COVID-19 patients ay hindi na makakuha ng kuwarto dahil punuan na sa mga hospitals. Kailangang ma-assure natin sila na may mapagdalhan sa kanila,”* Gov. Albano said in response to hospitals’ bed shortage.

To alleviate the pressure from health capacity system, Gov. Albano established the One Isabela COVID-19 Command Center that answers all calls 24/7 concerning COVID-19 cases navigation and issues and concerns on COVID-19 cases.

On top of that, Gov. Albano ordered two hundred (200) units “Bahay Tibay” pre-fabricated buildings to facilitate augmentation of COVID-19 isolation and temporary treatment facility for patients classified as asymptomatic or with mild to moderate symptoms and are unable to isolate safely at home. The “Bahay Tibay” is the first of its kind isolation unit implemented only in the Province of Isabela as initiated by Gov. Albano to assist hospitals in accommodating the surge of COVID-19 cases.

*“Mostly ang mga patients ay inendorso ng Command Center. Iyong mga patient na about to be confined pero nagpakita ng sintomas ay diyan pansamantalang ini-isolate habang naghihintay ng resulta ng test,”* affirmed Chief Nurse Florentina A. Guillermo of GFNDY Hospital.

The facilities are now located at the pre-fabricated building complex in GFNDY Hospital, provincially-operated and maintained hospitals and different Rural Health Units (RHUs) in the province. Each pre-fab unit designed as isolation recovery house can accommodate three (3) COVID-19 patients and meet the minimum isolation space for hospitals with bed, ventilation system, water system, electricity for medical equipment, and a toilet.

The “Bahay Tibay” is the first of its kind isolation unit implemented only in the Province of Isabela as initiated by Gov. Albano to assist hospitals in accommodating the surge of COVID-19 cases.

Extending isolation spaces outside hospital buildings could act as early measure to prevent possible in-hospital transmission. While the pre-fab buildings are used as isolation centers, stringent guidelines and security protocols are being enforced to ensure the safety of COVID-19 patients and attending frontline healthcare workers.

Meanwhile, in compliance with Memorandum Circular No. 2021-053 dated 21 May 2021 issued by the Department of the Interior and Local Government Unit (DILG) under the Safety Seal Certification Program, which includes the availability of isolation area for identified symptomatic employees, and in preparation of the spike of cases due to the virulent COVID-19 Delta variant, at least seven (7) of the Bahay Tibay will be set-up at the Provincial Capitol Complex. Five (5) units will be set-up at the Provincial Capitol compound, including the Provincial General Services Office (PGSO); one (1) unit each at the Lingap Center and the Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC).

In a nutshell:

## **ISABELA COVID-19 VACCINATION ROLLOUT**

*“Last year, we were taken aback by COVID-19. Today, we move forward and have rolled-out our vaccination program.”*

– GOV. RODITO ALBANO, III

### PGI SECURES DEAL FOR 150,000 DOSES OF ASTRAZENECA VACCINES

Gov. Rodito Albano III on January 11, 2021 concluded an agreement with the National Task Force (NTF), the Department of Health and the British pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca to provide access for 150,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine supply for the province intended for the most vulnerable and high risk sectors. This is in line with the implementation of the Local COVID-19 Vaccination Plan of the Province of Isabela and to augment the efforts of the national government to ensure vaccination of eligible groups.

Moreover, PGI assisted 28 municipalities including the City of Ilagan in their firm orders for 203,442 vaccine doses to ensure that herd immunity will be achieved in the province.

### ISABELA COVID-19 VACCINATION PLAN

To secure the province's rollout in the COVID-19 vaccination program, dubbed as *“Isabela BIDA, Handa sa Bakuna”*, Gov. Rodito designated Assistant Provincial Health Officer Dr. Arlene Lazaro as Chairperson of the Vaccination Program Operation Center. As Isabela's vaccine czar, Dr. Lazaro is in charge of all matters concerning the vaccination process – from preparation to post-vaccine implementation. She presented the Isabela COVID-19 3-Phase Vaccination Plan during the First Quarter Provincial Health Board Meeting on February 24, 2021.

### VACCINATION SITES

National Health Immunization Program Coordinator Chamille Claravall in her presentation during the PDRRC First Quarter Regular Business Meeting on March 3, 2021 identified a total of 100 fixed COVID-19 vaccination sites across the 34 municipalities and 2 cities in the province.

The vaccination sites include the government and private medical centers, community and district hospitals, rural health units, infirmaries, public schools, gymnasiums, barangay halls and community centers. Larger venues with enough space like community centers and schools have been considered as vaccination sites so that social distancing and other minimum health protocols can be observed.

The Isabela Provincial Hospital, district hospitals, rural health units, private and public hospitals like the Southern Isabela Medical Center in Santiago City, San Antonio City of Ilagan Hospital, Camp Melchor F. dela Cruz Station Hospital in Gamu and Isabela Doctors Medical Center in Cauayan City are also tapped as vaccination sites.

### ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST VACCINES AND INOCULATION OF FRONTLINE HEALTH WORKERS

On March 5, 2021, the first COVID-19 vaccines arrived in the region. From 10,640 Sinovac vaccines allocation for Region 2, the Province of Isabela got a share of 1,112 doses.

DOH-Region 2 delivered 56 doses of Sinovac vaccines to San Antonio City of Ilagan Hospital in Ilagan City, Isabela on March 7, 2021 at 3:45 pm, making it the first LGU-operated hospital which received COVID-19 vaccines in the province. Subsequent deliveries followed to tertiary and priority COVID-hospitals in the province.

The COVID-19 vaccine rollout in the province intended for health workers marked another milestone on March 10, 2021 when vaccine czar Dr. Arlene Lazaro got inoculated with her first dose of Sinovac vaccine, followed by 93 frontline health workers 59 years old and below at Cabagan District Hospital. *“When your turn comes, don't hesitate to have yourself vaccinated,”* Dr. Lazaro said.

To boost confidence in COVID-19 vaccines, all other Chief of Hospitals and frontline health workers of the provincially-operated and maintained hospitals received their first dose during the simultaneous two-day vaccination rollout on March 10 – 11, 2021. *“Ito na, nandito na ang bakuna. Magpapabakuna na para malabanan natin ang pandemya,”* Provincial Health Officer Nelson Paguirigan, the first vaccinee at the GFNDy Memorial Hospital urged Isabeleños to get vaccinated.

### THE GOVERNOR GETS FIRST DOSE OF ASTRAZENECA VACCINE

To assure Isabeleños that vaccine is safe and to encourage everyone to get vaccinated, Gov. Rodito got inoculated with his first dose of COVID-19 vaccine on April 6, 2021.

### ARRIVAL OF 25,950 DOSES OF ASTRAZENECA

A total of 2,595 vials or 25,950 doses of AstraZeneca vaccines arrived on May 14, 2021 intended for the remaining Priority Eligible Group A1 – health workers, A2 – senior citizens and A3 – persons with comorbidities.

### MORE VACCINES ARRIVE

On July 24, 2021, a total of 58,550 doses of COVID-19 vaccines arrived at the IPHO consisting of 8,470 vials or 42,360 doses of Janssen vaccines and 16,200 vials of Sinovac.

IPHO also received 2,900 vials of AstraZeneca vaccines, the first tranche of AstraZeneca vaccines procured by the Provincial Government.

### JAB ACCEPTANCE FROM SENIOR CITIZENS

Data from the National Immunization Program – Isabela as of July 29, 2021 revealed a low vaccination rollout of only 38.6% among Priority Group A2 or senior citizen aged 60 years old and above. Hence, they are the priority group to get vaccinated with Janssen's single dose COVID-19 vaccine.

### VACCINES FOR UNIFORMED MEN AND WOMEN

Gov. Rodito recognized the uniformed men and women as essential frontliners in maintaining peace and order in the government's efforts in mitigating the spread of the virus. *“Yung mga pulis inutusan namin ngayon na pumunta sa IPHO na magpabakuna na din kasi kung darating yung mas mapanganib na Delta virus, sila ulit ang magfo-frontline kaya hindi pwede magbantay sila ng checkpoint ng hindi nabakunahan,”* the Gov. said.

On July 28, 2021, PGI shared a total of 1,022 doses of AstraZeneca vaccines to Startroopers and enlisted personnel of 5th Infantry Division, Philippine Army at Camp Melchor dela Cruz, Upi, Gamu, Isabela while men and women of the Isabela Police Provincial Office (IPPO) got their jab at IPHO on the same day.

### WAYS FORWARD

With the new arrival of single-dose Janssen vaccines intended for senior citizens, the Provincial Government hopes that more elderlies will be convinced to get vaccinated to achieve herd immunity in the province.

Every eligible Isabeleños are encouraged to get their free vaccines when it's their turn through their LGUs, while strictly adhering to minimum public health standards.

# ESTABLISHMENT OF ONE ISABELA COMMAND CENTER SEEN AS A SYMBOL OF HOPE AMIDST RESURGENCE OF COVID-19 IN THE PROVINCE



*“Sa ngayon, nararamdaman ko na may kaba ang ating mga kababayan dahil sa mga bali-balita, lalo na sa Manila, na ang mga COVID-19 patients ay hindi na makakuha ng kwarto dahil punuan na sa mga hospitals. So nadadagdagan yung anxiety nila kasi isip nila, walang sapat na gamot, walang magaalaga sa kanila, mapapabayaang lang sila. Nothing is terrible than fear itself,”* Gov. Rodito Albano III said during the emergency meeting with the Mayors, Municipal and City Health Officers, Chiefs of Hospitals and Department Heads of the provincial government.

The Governor said that we can accomplish great things if we look at problems face on rather than being held back by doubt and fear. He clarified that he called for the emergency meeting so that hand in hand with the mayors and the doctors, the anxieties, fears and worries of the Isabeleños will be eased and solutions will be formulated to address these problems for immediate implementation.

*“Yun ang pinakaimportante, kailangan ma-assure natin sila na may mapagdalhan sa kanila,”* as he directed the IPHO and the PGSO to expedite the acquisition of the needed medicines for treatment COVID-19 patients and the Provincial Finance Committee to secure the availability of funds for this purpose. He also pushed for the establishment of a Command Center in the entire province.

The Command Center is a symbol of hope and peace of mind of all Isabeleños. *“Ang Command Center ay magbibigay ng pag-asa na huwag kayong mag-alala diyan, cool ka lang, hanapan ka namin ng kuwarta, may gamot dito kung ano ang kailangan mo. Sa Command Center malalaman kung saang bakanteng hospital ang puwedeng pagdalhan. Dito ibibigay yung report ng lahat ng positive cases sa bawat municipality/city hanggang sa level ng barangay, kung sila ba ay symptomatic o asymptomatic, kung kelangan ba silang ilipat sa mas mataas na antas na hospital, at may nakaantabay din na ambulance na maglilipat sa kanila.”*

*“Kung iyong simbahan takot na ring magpamisa, takot ng lumabas, sino ang maiiwan na kakapitan ng ating mga kababayan kundi tayo na lang. Kung walang peace of mind, talagang aatakehin ka sa puso, kasi hindi mo alam kung*

*ano ang mangyayari. Nandito lang kami para palakasin ang inyong loob, kayong mga MHOs kung ano ang logistics na kailangan nandito kami susuporta. Gawin natin ng paraan at solusyon yan. Ang peace of mind – iyan ang pinakaimportante sa lahat,”* Gov. Albano said.

**ONE ISABELA COVID-19  
COMMAND CENTER**

**HOTLINE NUMBERS:**

**SMART**  
**0968-5339913**

**GLOBE**  
**0916-2812091**

#WeRecoverAsOne  
#WeHealAsOne

Gov. Albano conceptualized and is set to establish a Command Center to cater COVID-19 referrals to isolation centers and hospitals. The Command Center will be the repository of all data concerning COVID-19 with hotline numbers, equipped with 24/7 ambulance. He tasked Provincial Health Officer Nelson Paguirigan, Assistant Provincial Health Officer Arlene Lazaro, Ilagan City Mayor Dr. Jay Diaz and Roxas Mayor Jonathan Jose Calderon to form an Ad Hoc Committee to lay-out plans for the said command center.

# PGI donates over 5,000 educational gadgets for last mile schools in Isabela



School campuses remain closed for the second time due to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, yet millions of Filipino students have started classes again this school year 2021 in various modalities of distance learning.

The COVID-19 pandemic is considered the biggest threat in basic education today, but Gov. Rodito Albano III's donation of educational gadgets, all Isabeleño learners, especially those studying in **"last mile"** schools, were assured of accessible and quality basic education.

Last school year, over 5,000 units of educational tablets was turned-over by Gov. Rodito for the last mile schools in Department of Education - Isabela. The PGI has always supported every learning initiative included in the Division's Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BELCP) by pouring resources in the procurement of printing supplies, deployment of Provincial School Board (PSB) teachers, and purchase of educational tools and equipment which facilitated the smooth transition of SDO-Isabela to the **"new normal"** in basic education.

OIC-Schools Division Superintendent Madelyn L. Macalling expressed her gratitude to Gov. Albano, the PSB and the whole officialdom of the PGI, saying that the solidified partnership of DepEd-Isabela and PGI fueled the operationalization of the BE-LCP **"which ensured continuity of learning amid pandemic."**

PGI is committed to provide accessible, equitable, and quality education for all in support to the

BE-LCP of DepEd-Isabela which ensures that education continues, even in times of health crisis. Part of the Division BE-LCP is the provision of flexible learning options like distance online learning, modular learning, and blended learning so that curriculum implementation may continue - especially in hardly-reached areas and in places where transportation, electricity and internet connectivity are not accessible. It is in this premise that the PGI prioritized the procurement of educational tablets installed with online and offline education learning resources compliant with the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) across learning areas.

In areas where there is stable internet connectivity, these tablets were used for synchronous and asynchronous online distance learning where lessons are delivered thru stream yard, Google classroom, and other education learning platforms.

For areas with unstable internet connectivity, the modules and learning activity sheets were converted into digital format for the offline learning. The audio and video episodes for the select MELCs and the offline educational resources are saved in these educational tablets so that learners can access them anytime - even without internet connection.

The Self-Learning Modules and Learning Activity Sheets designed by DepEd remains to be the primary instructional materials for distance learning, but the educational tablets distributed to **"last mile"** learners supplemented and addressed the dearth of learning resources in basic education.

Gov. Rodito approved the fifty million (P50M) pesos budget for the procurement of tablets installed with educational resources and for the purchase of heavy-duty Risograph and cutting machines to be used in the reproduction of Self-Learning Modules (SLMs) and Learning Activity Sheets (LASS).

Apart from the P50M budget for BE-LCP, the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) also approved the appointment of 150 Provincial School Board (PSB) teachers.

The capacity of schools, learners, and parents along operationalization of multi-modal learning delivery were considered in the identification of priority schools and learners in the provision of 5,000 tablets installed with educational learning resources. DepEd Isabela identified the priority schools as **"Last Mile"** Category.

The PGI, together with the representatives from Provincial School Board (PSB) and Local Government Unit (LGU), ensures the delivery of these digital gadgets to its recipient by personally giving these out among the different district in the Province of Isabela, subject to the national and local IATF protocols.

With DepEd's blended distance learning program, these educational tablets truly benefited the learners of the **"last mile schools"**.

Considering the limited option in implementing the learning delivery modality as reflected in the BE-LCP, learners from the last mile schools are already utilizing technology to maximize their learning and can already access offline and online educational resources.

The provision of tablets also increased the engagement of learners in audio and video episodes produced by the Radyo/TV Eskwela sa Isabela Production Teams as evidenced by the 92 percent engagement of learners for Quarter 3.

With the tablets installed with interactive educational learning resources, Dep-Ed Isabela also noted significant increase in the results of assessment for the 3rd and 4th Quarters.

This intervention truly responded to the needs of last mile schools to maximize the growth and learning experience of their learners amid pandemic, bringing them closer to the achievement of quality education in higher ground and leading them to the realization of competitive 21st century Filipino learner.

**"Tungkulin naming masiguro na ang bawat bata ay matulungan**

**makapag-aral at makapagtapos."**

**- GOV. RODITO T. ALBANO, III**



# PRIORITIZING SUPPORT TO BARANGAYS



Gov. Rodito T. Albano III continues to reach out to the barangays for the improvement of health and economic condition in the countryside amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a meeting with barangay officials in the municipalities of Cabagan, Tumauni, and Delfin Albano. Gov. Albano underscored the need for the improvement of health and sanitation. He said that water system projects will be given much attention. He also said that the provincial government will provide a portable oxygen tank per Barangay Health Center. He also plans to intensify the dairy production in the province, thus the milk produced will be given to the malnourished children and pregnant mothers to boost their immune system.

Gov. Albano stressed that the province of Isabela being in the typhoon belt, disaster mitigating measures must be strengthened. He said that the provincial government will venture into food processing such as the production of Meals, Ready-to-Eat (MREs) which can be distributed during disasters, instead of canned goods.

For economic development, the governor said that at least 10 units of brand new mini dump trucks will be given for each municipality, which will be given to the remote or forest barangays first which they could use to haul farm products for their business enterprises like gravel hauling. For

the next harvest season, Gov. Albano shared that the Nagkaisang Magsasaka ng Isabela Agricultural Cooperative (NMIAC) will sell “*darak*” feeds for hog raisers at half price in which the other half will be shouldered by the provincial government.

Gov. Albano also assured that all those affected by COVID-19 pandemic will be given assistance from the provincial government, including all tricycle drivers, ambulant vendors, small business owners, ice cream and buko vendors, butchers, and workers in parlors and barbershops. A quarterly provision of rice subsidy of 5 kilograms will be given to all barangay tanods across the province.



Governor Rodito Albano III addressing the barangay officials during the distribution of disinfectants to barangays.

# FREE FOOD PACKS, HYGIENE KITS FOR COVID-19 PATIENTS, SENIOR CITIZENS



## *Vitamin-C supplement, alcohol and hand soaps for Isabela Senior Citizen Centers*

The Provincial Government of Isabela aims to focus on health concerns particularly on elderly. Senior Citizens living at home are facing difficulties during this pandemic. Physical distancing and lockdown measures mean that many senior citizens are not able to carry out their regular activities or go out from their home as the virus poses more risks to them.

To provide assistance for these vulnerable groups, the PGI through the Provincial Social Welfare & Development (PSWD) recognize the importance of health of our elderly this pandemic through provision of Vitamin-C supplement, alcohol and hand soaps for sanitation.

All Senior Citizen Centers in every municipality/city of Isabela were provided with these vitamins and hygiene kits to ensure the safety of those senior citizen- officers who manage the SC centers and members who come and go for services.

The PGI through the PSWD constantly reminds the Federation of Senior Citizens Association of the Philippines (FSCAP) President and OSCA Head in every municipality/city to continue observing minimum health standards including hand washing, wearing of face shields and face masks, avoiding crowd places, maintaining physical distancing.

## *Health kits for COVID-19 patients in RHUs*

True to his commitment during the urgent meeting attended by Local Chief Executives and Municipal Health Officers (MHOs) on April 27, 2021 to provide health kits every after two weeks to COVID-19 patients confined in hospitals, isolation and quarantine facilities in different Rural Health Units (RHUs) in the province, Gov. Rodito Albano sent health packs and wishes for their recovery through the RHUs.

The team from the Provincial General Services Office (PGSO) and Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office (PGSO) distributed 26 health packs to Delfin Albano RHU, 48 health packs to Santo Tomas RHU, 152 health packs to Cabagan RHU, 24 health packs to San Pablo RHU, 70 health packs to Santa Maria RHU and 47 health packs to Milagros Albano District Hospital in Cabagan, Isabela.

Each COVID-19 health pack contains 1pc. Safeguard bath soap, 10 capsules of Vitamin C, 7 tablets of Sleepwell, 1 pc. towelette, 1 bottle Alcohol and 5 pcs. face mask.

Meanwhile, the One Isabela COVID-19 Command Center hotlines - 09685339913 (Smart) and 09162812091 (Globe) are now open to answer all calls concerning COVID-19 cases navigation.



The PSWD staff personally delivered vitamins and hygiene kits to all Senior Citizen Centers in the province.

# TYPHOON ULYSSES POST-DISASTER ASSESSMENT AND REHAB



Gov. Rodito T. Albano III presided the Joint Post-Disaster Assessment and Rehabilitation Planning attended by members of the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (PDRRMC), Provincial Development Council (PDC), Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC) and League of Municipalities (LMP-Isabela) held at the Capitol Amphitheater on November 17, 2020 to assess the extent of damage wrought by Typhoon Ulysses and discuss recommendations towards rehabilitation efforts.

The post-disaster assessment was also attended by members of the House of Representatives of Isabela first district, Cong. Antonio “Tonypet” Albano; Isabela second district, Cong. Ed Christopher Go; Isabela sixth district, Cong. Faustino “Inno” Dy V; and LPGMA Party List representative Cong. Allan Ty. PDRRMO Jimmy Rivera presented the summary of the initial damage report as of November 17, 2020.

Rivera reported a grand total of P1,359,173,621.67 damages for agriculture, livestock and infrastructure. District engineers from four (4) engineering districts of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH – Isabela) presented the partial damage report on infrastructure. The District Engineers disclosed that their men are still on the ground to complete their damage reports.

*“Ang trahedyang nangyari ngayon sa pagbaha ay hindi natin akalain. Na-overwhelm tayong lahat.*

*Huwag na tayong magsisihan. Hindi naman natin kasalanan. Siyempre natural disaster ‘yan, pero nabigla tayo sa tama na ganoon kataas na hindi natin inaasahan,” Gov. Rodito said.*

*“Pagde-dredge sa maliliit na sapa, kasi hindi natin kaya ang maglagay ng sabu dam sa malalaking tributaries. ‘Yan ang immediate solution na gagawin natin,” Gov. Rodito recommended as one of the initial rehabilitation efforts to mitigate flooding.*

On disaster response, Gov. Rodito said, *“I-upgrade natin ‘yong mga gamit natin, Bili tayo ng malalaking boats na pagsasakyan ng mga tao. Iyong response natin, babaguhin natin ulit, kailangang mag-reorient, mag-redirect, magpa-seminar ng mga nagrescue. Gandahan natin ang mga equipment. Hindi na puwede ang mga equipment natin ngayon, hindi na kaya,”* the Governor further said.

## GOV. ALBANO PUSHES FOR THE CREATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER

Gov. Rodito Albano III recommended the creation of the Department of Water during the visit of Vice President Leni Robredo at the Provincial Capitol, City of Ilagan, Isabela for her rescue efforts and bringing aid to worst-stricken areas affected by the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

*“Madam Vice President, ito yung recommendation namin na sana magkaroon ng creation of Department of Water and Disaster Resilience Department. Sa Department of Water lang kami concern kasi para lahat ng water agencies magkaisa na saka para magkaroon ng isang datos lang,” Gov. Albano said.*

Gov. Albano recommended the creation of the Department of Water that will oversee the collection of data of water resources and its management so that proper action from the national and local levels will be properly taken as far as flood mitigation and control is concerned. *“Kasi hindi tayo makakapag-program ng ating mga gustong gawin kung walang datos. Kung magkakaiba yung datos, hindi natin mako-collate, hindi natin mapapag-aralan at hindi tayo makakapag-recommend ng proper action kasi walang data,”* the governor said.

Prior to this, some citizens blamed the Magat Dam following the release of floodwaters that caused massive flooding in low-lying areas in Isabela and Cagayan. *“Sinisisi yung dam. Walang kasalanan yung dam kasi kung hindi mag-release yung dam, mamamatay lahat ng tao dito, pag pumutok yung Magat Dam. So kailangan nila talagang mag-release,”* he stressed.



Meanwhile, Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officer (PDRRMO) Jimmy U. Rivera presented Situation Update on the damages caused by Typhoon Ulysses in the province. Rivera said that Isabela reported 3 deaths due to drowning and 2 missing persons. At least 392 barangays were affected from the 14 municipalities/cities of Santo Tomas, City of Ilagan, Cauayan City, Delfin Albano, Echague, Santa Maria, San Isidro, San Pablo, Gamu, Cabatuan, Naguilian, Quirino, and Reina Mercedes.

As to damage report, an estimated cost of P143,981,942.62 in agriculture covering damage in crops such as corn, rice, high value crops, fisheries, livestock and solar irrigation system affecting 36,520 farmers. *“Hindi po exact ito gawa ng hindi pa makalakad ang ating mga Municipal Agriculture Officers gawa ng baha,”* Rivera said.

## MAOS, MAYORS PLEAD FOR AGRI-REHAB

Gov. Rodito Albano III urged the Municipal Agriculture Officers (MAOs) to submit the list of farmers tilling one hectare and below, particularly those who were affected by recent typhoons.

In the Agriculture and Rehabilitation Meeting attended by Municipal Mayors and MAOs on November 23, 2020 at the Provincial Capitol Amphitheater, the governor said that the list will be forwarded to the Department of Agriculture (DA) Region 2 for validation. He said that these farmers

may qualify as beneficiaries from DA’s allocation of one billion (P1B) pesos as rehabilitation aid intended for the Province of Isabela through Agriculture Secretary William Dar.

Moreover, Gov. Rodito requested the Municipal Mayors to draft a Master Plan for relocation of local communities as a long term solution to areas affected by frequent flooding. The governor also assured his support for dredging of small creeks in low-lying municipalities as immediate solution to mitigate flooding.

The MAOs presented the immediate needs in their respective municipalities to the governor. Majority of MAOs requested assorted vegetable seeds, fertilizers, and *“alagaing manok”* as alternate livelihood for affected farmers. Other needs require long-term solutions such as construction of a small water impounding project and post-harvest facilities like circular flatbed dryer.

Divilacan Mayor Venturito Bulan reported that strong typhoons swept fishing boats of at least thirty (30) fishermen; hence his request for fishing boats with engines to bounce back their means of living at coastal Isabela.

Santo Tomas Mayor Antonio Talaue Sr., whose town was severely affected with many of its barangays isolated during the flooding expressed his gratitude to the governor and fellow local chief executives for the outpour of support extended to his flood-stricken constituents. He likewise requested for boats to ferry residents in nine (9) low-lying barangays to equip them from similar occurrences and thanked the Governor for the new dump trucks given by the PGI to all 27 barangays in their municipality.



# First Quarter Joint Meeting of the RDC-ADCOM-RPOC- TF-ELC-COR-2-BP2



**“A very thorough study for Cagayan River  
dredging project is needed”**

**- GOV. ALBANO**

**Gov. Rodito Albano III underscored that the Cagayan River massive dredging project is not hard sell because Cagayan Valley is the food basket of the Philippines. The governor said that it will be a hard sell to ask for funding from the national government and foreign investors if without a proper, thorough and complete study. He said that during the visit of ambassadors from the Netherlands and Germany on the aftermath of typhoon Ulysses last year, they were concerned about the Cagayan Valley and the Cagayan River. He said that the European Union (EU) countries were looking at the potential of lending the region for some loans.**

Gov. Albano stressed that the problem in the Cagayan River siltation should be addressed not only with immediate reactions, but with the conduct of a very thorough study with the help of NEDA and JICA to come up with a good methodology and empirical data that will really solve the region's Cagayan River problem, otherwise, the government may only be throwing good money after bad.

*“When we were there in the site with the four cabinet members looking at the dredging equipment, one backhoe could dredge about 4 cubic centimetres of silted materials. And we only saw two dredging equipment. Siguro yung 20 million pesos, 3 months lang,”* the governor said. *“Kung kaya nating utangan ng 10 to 15 billion dollars like what the South Koreans did doon sa Han River nila, umutang na tayo. Our Cagayan River will stay. Iyan ang magiging legacy nating lahat na ang makikinabang ay ang mga anak at mga apo na natin,”* the governor added.

Nueva Vizcaya Gov. Carlos Padilla said that based on the presentation of Assistant Regional Director Engr. Alexander Nola of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Cagayan River dredging project is still on its short term plan. Gov. Padilla expressed his concern that after the launching last February 2, 2021, the people in the region were given the impression that it was already the start of a massive dredging operation, but based on the statement of ARD Nola, the

only available funds for the dredging is the P20 million pesos from DPWH, and as to the additional funding, it was not categorically answered. *“I hope we are not giving false hopes to our people. We don't want this to fail because this is now the last chance of Region 2, so we would like to appeal before this Body, especially with the presence of Sec. Bello that we bring this to the attention to our national leadership in order that more funding would be released for this project,”* Gov. Padilla said.

Meanwhile, NEDA Regional Director Dionisio Ledres Jr. said that last February 2021, NEDA, JICA and DPWH were able to meet and discuss the interventions needed for the Cagayan River. He said that during the meeting, it was recommended that an update of the 1987 Master Plan be made, but JICA was not keen of doing another master plan because in the past, those proposals were not implemented. He said that NEDA requested JICA to focus on looking at the major proposed infrastructure project in the Master Plan. *“Fortunately, JICA was considerate to look at it, and they are still reviewing it. While waiting for that, Gov. Albano is correct that we need to package the proposals,”* Director Ledres said.

RD Ledres said that back on December last year, RDC2 approved the Flood Control Master Plan with an estimate of P30 billion that can be packaged into major projects. *“We can actually target official development assistance organizations*

and even organize an Investment Forum and present them our proposals”, he said. “We will package these proposals and once ready, we will present this to IMF, World Bank, JICA and EU for proper funding,” he added.

He further recommended that RDC2 will continue with the Task Groups – the structural measures task

group headed by the DPWH and the vegetative measures task group headed by the DENR.

RDC2 approved that the two Task Groups will sit down, plan and package the proposals of priority infrastructure project to address the flooding in the Cagayan River for presentation later this year to potential donors.



## CAGAYAN RIVER BASIN EXECOM DISCUSS ISSUES, PLANS, ACTIVITIES TO ADDRESS THE FLOODING OF THE CAGAYAN RIVER

RDC2 Chair and Isabela Gov. Rodito T. Albano III presided the Cagayan River Basin Management Council (CRBMC) Executive Committee Meeting via Zoom last June 24, 2021. At least 61 Council members comprising of heads of regional line agencies of Region 2, 3 and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), the DENR, DILG, NEDA, DPWH, NIA, DOST, DA, DAR, DSWD, BFAR, NCIP, OCD, PIA, the Provincial and Local Government Units, state universities and colleges and the private sectors, participated in the meeting.

The Cagayan River Basin Management Council was established on March 16, 2016 to act as the implementing body to oversee and orchestrate the implementation of the Integrated Cagayan River Basin Management and Development Master Plan (IRBMDMP).

Gov. Rodito said that few years back, the organization of the CRBMC was just another agenda in the RDC2 meetings, but today, CRBMC has gone a long way in its attempt to finally address the different Cagayan River thematic areas and various issues besetting the Cagayan River Basin. The CRB has six (6) major thematic areas: (1) Water Management, (2) Watershed Management; (3) Disaster Risk Reduction and Management; (4) Wetland Coastal and Freshwater Resources Management; (5) Institutional Management; and (6) Economic Development.

The different line agencies presented the updates on their respective Programs, Projects and Activities (PPAs), all anchored on the sustainable

development, management and conservation of the Cagayan River Basin.


As Co-chair of the CRBMC, Gov. Rodito said that it is undeniable at the same time notable how the different LGUs as well as the numerous national government agencies especially the DENR, the DPWH and all other agencies have come together to sit down, discuss, identify plans, programs and activities to address the mandate of the Council.

*“We have this only one opportunity to finally address this problem and we cannot be complacent. We cannot fail our rural constituency. It is our sworn duty to make this Council work to be successful,”* he said.

Highlighting the virtual event was the adoption of CRBMC Resolution No. 001 series of 2021, *“Restructuring the Thematic Areas of the Cagayan River Basin Management Council to assign the Office of Civil Defense as the Lead Convenor of the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Thematic Area.”*

The Council approved to transfer the chairmanship of the DRRM Thematic Area from DILG to the Office of the Civil Defense (OCD), being the Chairman of the RDRMC.

Recently, the Cagayan River Basin Management Council was awarded with *“Bagani ng Katubigan”* award during the celebration of World Water Day 2021. The award was given to CRBMC as an outstanding river basin organization that recognizes the major role of stakeholders and institutions for effective governance of river basins under the DENR-River Basin Control Office.



**“The province of Isabela, being the second largest producer of rice in the Philippines is continuously pushing the thrust in the promotion of food security and the provision of high income to rice farmers.”**

- Provincial Agriculturist, Marites Frogoso during the PDC-PPOC Joint Meeting

## **NMI: A WAY FORWARD TOWARDS FOOD SECURITY**

*“The province of Isabela, being the second largest producer of rice in the Philippines is continuously pushing the thrust in the promotion of food security and the provision of high income to rice farmers. However, there has been adverse effect in the rice production due to the rice tariffication law. In effect, there was a deluge of cheaper rice, price decrease of the locally produced palay and the lower income of rice farmers.”*

This was disclosed by Provincial Agriculturist Marites Frogoso during the Joint Meeting of the Provincial Development Council, Provincial Peace and Order Council and the Isabela Provincial Task Force on COVID-19 held at the GFNDy Sr. Session Hall, Alibagu, City of Ilagan, Isabela.

Frogoso discussed the measures and interventions undertaken by the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) to cushion the impact of the Rice Tariffication Law. One of the primary interventions is the creation of the Nagkakaisang Magsasaka ng Isabela (NMI) Agricultural Cooperative. She said that the NMI is a super cooperative composed of marginalized farmers tilling two (2) hectares and below in the province with shared capital of P1,000 per member and a membership fee of P200.

To address the primary effect of the rice tariffication law to the marginalized sector, Frogoso said that the NMI is offering premium or additional price of P5.00 per kilo from the prevailing market price at a maximum of 80 bags at 50 kilo per bag. *“Kapag ganito ang sistema, garantisado na po ang income ng mga rice farmers natin na P20,000,”* she said.

Frogoso added that the NMI was able to purchase about eleven (11) million kilograms of palay at more than P200 million from marginalized farmer-members. She said that the Department of Agriculture thru DBP provided the NMI a credit line of P450 million under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) Program. PGI also provided the NMI P400 million worth of loan without interest, as additional working capital.

On the marketing aspect, Frogoso revealed that the NMI has been the primary supplier of the PGI in its Free Rice Subsidy Program to the PGI employees, Barangay Health Workers, Day Care Workers, Social Workers, employees of DOLE, DILG, DepEd, BJMP, PNP, BFP, SOCO, DOJ, ISU, victims of Taal Volcano eruption and Typhoon Tisoy, BRO scholars studying outside the province stranded due to the COVID-19 and households affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Frogoso also said that from the Free Rice Subsidy Program of PGI alone, the NMI has gained more than P100 million worth of sales from December 2019 to May 2020. She also said that with the help of PGI on the marketing aspect, NMI was also able to deliver and transact with other LGUs and private entities from other provinces in Luzon and in Metro Manila.



## PGI strengthens DA's "Plant, Plant, Plant" Program for a food-secured Isabela

Matching the Department of Agriculture's goal to upturn farm productivity and guarantee food sufficiency amidst the threats of COVID-19, the Provincial Government of Isabela through the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist, Provincial Veterinary Office and the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources adapted DA's "*Ahon Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat (ALPAS) Kontra COVID-19 or "Plant, Plant, Plant Program"* for food security front liners and conducted "*Adopt-A-Village/Barangay Program*" held at Brgy. Alibagu, City of Ilagan on May 28-29, 2020 in order to show support to the government's commitment to providing sufficient, available, and within the means food for every Isabeleño.

In his opening remarks, Punong Barangay Ariel B. Tabangcura expressed his gratitude to DA for the distribution of assorted vegetable seeds and seedlings, fruit tree seedlings, and brooder chicks. "*Many Alibagueños will benefit from this program because 70% of the 8,000 residents are farmers and the barangay is currently pushing for agricultural innovations,*" he added.

Meanwhile, Dir. Narciso A. Edillo, DA Director of Region 2 emphasized that out of 5 provinces in the region, Isabela Governor Rodito T. Albano, III, is the first Governor who responded immediately and allocated 10 million pesos worth of fund as the province's counterpart to further strengthen DA's "Plant, Plant, Plant Program" in the province.

Dir. Edillo also encouraged LGUs to help widen Isabela's access to food and stressed in his

message that agriculture is where the province and the country's economy lie so he reiterated PRRD's stance that it's time to get back to the basics and teach younger generations to make good use of their knowledge in agriculture to help increase the country's ample amount of food supply during emergency situations.

**Under the "Plant, Plant Program", other related projects that will be funded include additional palay procurement fund of the National Food Authority, expanded SURE Aid and recovery project, expanded agriculture insurance project; social amelioration for farmers and farm workers, upscaling of KADIWA ni Ani at Kita direct marketing program, integrated livestock and corn resiliency project, expanded small ruminants and poultry project, coconut-based diversification project, fisheries resiliency project, revitalized urban agriculture and gulayan project, corn for food project; and strategic communications project.**

Moreover, Provincial Agriculturist Dr. Marites A. Frogoso said that the province is sharing the same vision that is "to heal and win as one" with its partners towards making the province bountiful amid the risk of the pandemic and thanked all the Provincial Government of Isabela's agricultural programs' co-implementers for helping the province hurdle economic challenges.



**“  
In these extraordinary times  
we need extraordinary will  
and effort to ensure that the  
food needs of our population  
are met now and  
in the future.”**

**SECRETARY WILLIAM D. DAR**  
Department of Agriculture



## **ISABELA HOSTS THE CAGAYAN VALLEY REG'L FOOD SECURITY SUMMIT**

**Ensuring food security remains a challenge as the COVID-19 pandemic rages on. The Department of Agriculture (DA) is doing its best to boost food production amidst the pandemic and firm up its goals in mapping up food security plan, hence, the two-day 2021 Regional Food Security Summit kicked off on March 18, 2021 at the Provincial Capitol Amphitheater, Alibagu, City of Ilagan, Isabela.**

Isabela, the second largest producer of rice in the country is this year's host to the Regional Food Security Summit with the theme *“Food Today and Beyond”*, participated in by key players and stakeholders in agriculture and fisheries sectors.

One of the highlights of the summit was the stakeholders' break-out session that focused discussions on current issues affecting agriculture and fisheries with their assessments, recommendations and mitigation measures and aligned them to DA's 12 key strategies in achieving

*“Masagang Ani, Mataas na Kita”*. This output will be presented to the National Food Security Summit to be held in Manila next month.

With this, Cagayan Valley is the first region in the Philippines to kick off the Food Security Summit and craft Food Security Plan Framework, a blueprint that will pave the way towards important direction and policy guidance in terms of One DA mandates and priorities.

In his message via Webex, Agriculture Secretary William Dar underscored that in order to meet the food supply requirements of the growing population, policy shifts are needed to sustainably support the role of the agricultural sector in the new normal. *“In these extraordinary times, we need extraordinary will and effort to ensure that the food needs of our population are met now and in the future.”* Sec. Dar said.

DA Regional Director Narciso Edillo presented the current status of Cagayan Valley's Agri-industry. He said that while the region was hit by several typhoons and natural calamities which incurred losses, Cagayan Valley's agricultural sector performance sustained first rank as corn producer nationwide for the last 14 years and contributes about 25% to national production, second rank as palay producer in the country from year 2012 up to present, top 1 national contributor to

Philippines rice sufficiency achieving about 1.6 million metric tons palay surplus, annually. He also said that the City of Ilagan, Isabela maintained as the corn capital of the Philippines since August 2015; San Mateo, Isabela as the mungo capital of the Philippines since November 2011; and Enrile, Cagayan as the peanut capital of the Philippines since March 2015.

Meanwhile, Regional Director Milagros Morales of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) outlines strategic initiatives and conservation strategies to boost the fisheries industry in the region. She stressed that if we take care of the municipal waters, we take care of the whole fishing industry.

From a stakeholder's response, Mr. Gilbert Cumila, manager of Nueva Vizcaya Agricultural Terminal (NVAT) noted the low budget of DA and its attached agencies particularly the BFAR. He suggested that farmers and fisherfolks shall rally for an increase of budget of DA in order to achieve its twin-goals of increased productivity and reducing post-harvest losses. Moreover, he also suggested that BFAR may be converted into a full department, considering that the Philippine waters is seven times wider than the total land area and the 5th longest coastline in the world.

## 137,000 ISABELA RICE FARMERS BENEFIT FROM RCEF SEED PROGRAM

**The Rice Competitiveness Enhancement (RCEF) Seed Program benefited approximately 137,000 rice farmers in the Province of Isabela. This was disclosed by RCEF Program Management Office Head Dr. Flordeliza H. Bordey in her video message during the RCEF Partners Appreciation Day and Program Shifting Conference held at the GFNDy Sr. Session Hall, Provincial Capitol, Alibagu, City of Ilagan, Isabela on March 10, 2021.**

Dr. Brodley said that from September 2019 to December 2020, the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) Isabela, in partnership with the Provincial Government of Isabela, thru the RCEF Seed Program were able to distribute approximately 344,000 bags of certified seeds to farmers in the province despite the pandemic restrictions, for three (3) planting seasons. The Seed Program is one of the four components of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) under the Rice Tariffication Law which

aims to help lower costs and increase the yield and income of farmers.

*“Alam po namin na hindi po naging madali ang ating gawain lalo na po nitong 2020 dahil po sa pagsubok na ating kinaharap ang paglaganap ng COVID-19 pandemic. Napakaraming quarantine restrictions po ang ipinatupad ngunit hindi po ito naging hadlang na maipamahagi natin ang libreng binhi sa ating mga magsasaka sapagkat tayo po ay nagtutulongan,”* Dr. Bordey said.

Dr. Bordey discussed further that to enhance efficiency in implementation and maximize impact for a competitive rice industry and rice security for farmers, the Department of Agriculture (DA) is launching the ONE DA Program which integrates all rice programs implemented by the government which combines the National Rice Program and RCEF Seed Program and the province of Isabela will benefit this program.

Dr. Bordey guaranteed the other programs under the RCEF will still continue. *“Makakaasa pa rin po kayo na ang ibang components ng RCEF tulad ng mechanization, credit, at extension ay patuloy na magpapatuloy diyan sa Isabela,”* she said.

Provincial Agriculturist Marites Frogoso expressed her gratitude to RCEF Seed Program. *“Talagang tayo po ay humahabol despite ‘yung pandemic, flooding, natural calamities we have encountered. We are doing our best effort so that we can boost the morale of our rice farmers to go on productively with rice production at kahit bumaba ‘yung presyo ng palay, nandiyan pa din tayo. Hindi pa rin natin sila iniwan,”* she said.

Awarding of the Most Outstanding City/Municipal Agriculturists, Ten Outstanding Agricultural Extension Workers and Plaques of Gratitude to the provincial government and LGUs in the implementation of Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund Seed Program from September 2019 to December 2020 was also conducted.



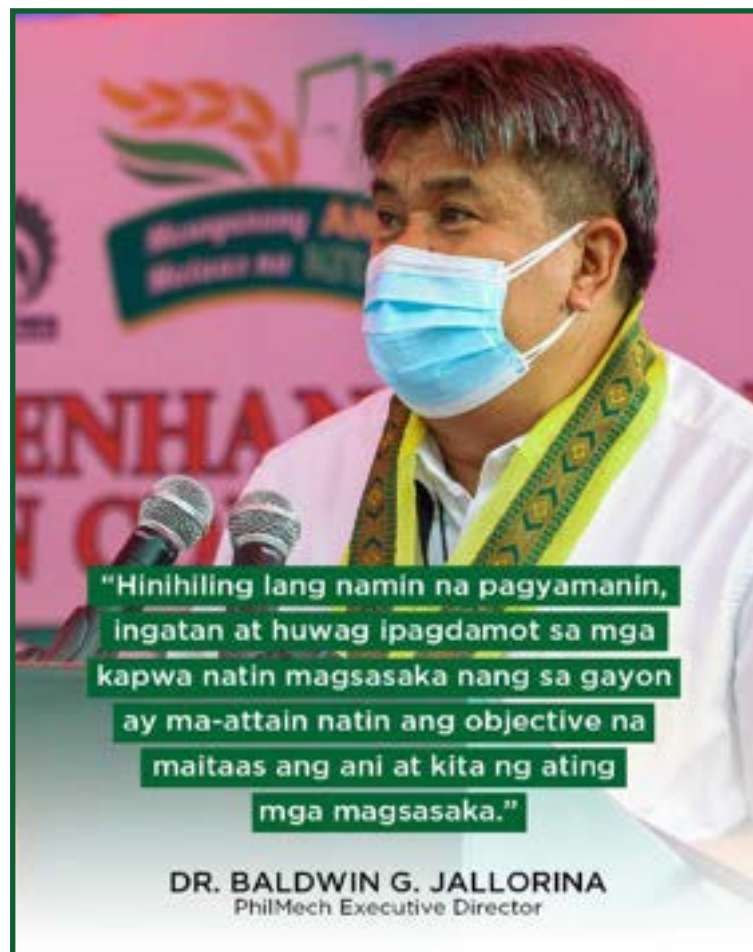
# DA-PhilMech allocates P300M for farm mechanization in Isabela

**The Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PhilMech), turned over farm machineries at the Isabela Sports Complex on November 26, 2020 to 100 farmers' associations and cooperatives of Isabela to reduce production cost, post-harvest losses and improve rice farmers' productivity.**

In his speech, PhilMech Director Baldwin Jallorina explained that the machines were part of the PhilMech's Php5 billion budget per year under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF). *"Ang RCEF ay nakapaloob sa Rice Tarrification Law na ang layunin ay palakasin ang mga magsasakang Pilipino para masundan ang pandaigdigang pansaka na may nakalaang pondo na Php10 billion per year sa anim na taon. Sa mechanization ay naglaan sila ng 50% o Php5 billion per year para pambili ng farm machines na ipamigay sa mga kooperatiba at irrigators associations sa buong bansa,"* he said.

For the province of Isabela, Jallorina said that PhilMech allocated Php300-million plus for 2019 and 2020. *"Sa 2019 budget ay naglaan kami ng Php183 million and another Php180 million para sa 2020 with a total of more than Php300 million,"* Jallorina said. He said that this is the second batch of recipients in the province of Isabela and that the 100 farmers' associations were chosen not only for their good track record but of the unity they have shown and their ability to sustain current resources.

Jallorina said that the mechanization program will boost the morale of the millennials to venture into farming. *"Ma-encourage natin iyong mga millennials, iyong mga anak natin na bumalik o tumulong sa mga trabaho sa bukid. Kasi sa pamamagitan ng*



*mechanization ay gumagaan na ang ating mga trabaho, puwede ka na mag-araro ng naka-sapatos, at sa pagtatanim naman ay hindi na maghapong nakayuko sa pagtatanim,"* he said. Jallorina challenged the farmer-beneficiaries to sustain the utilization that will benefit their members and the society. *"Hinihiling lang namin na pagyamanin, ingatan at huwag ipagdamot sa mga kapwa natin magsasaka nang sa gayon ay ma-attain natin ang objective na maitaas ang ani at kita ng ating mga magsasaka,"* he added.

Meanwhile, DA Regional Director Narciso Edillo lauded the Provincial Government of Isabela for their full support to the agriculture department in times of calamities and disasters. *"Nagpasalamat ako sa Provincial Government sa inyong tulong sa amin sa Department of Agriculture na kapag ganito na may crisis, nakahanda kayo na mag-counterpart lalong-lao na iyong pagbili ng palay sa NFA. "Saludo po ako sa Provincial Government sa pag-allocate ninyong pondo sa pagtulong sa ating mga magsasaka,"* he said.



# GOV. ALBANO OVERWHELMED BY DA'S SUPPORT TO ISABELA FARMERS

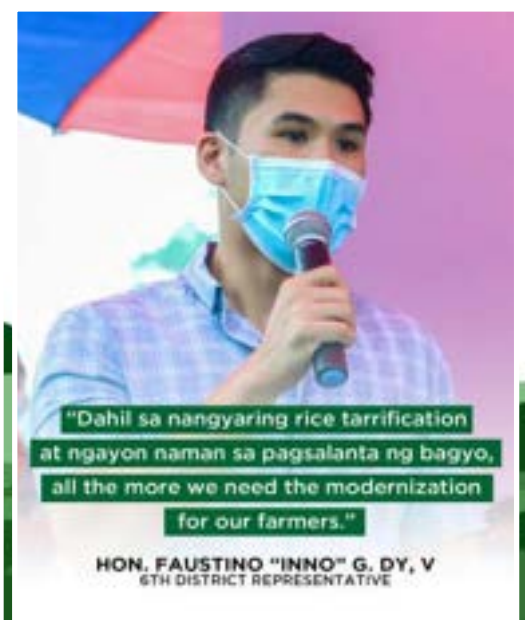
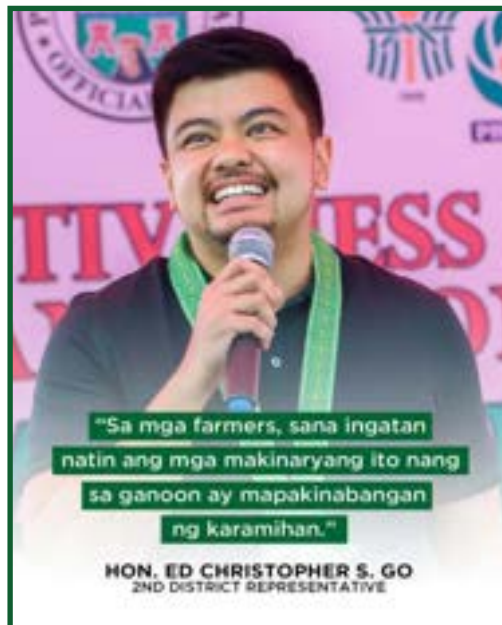
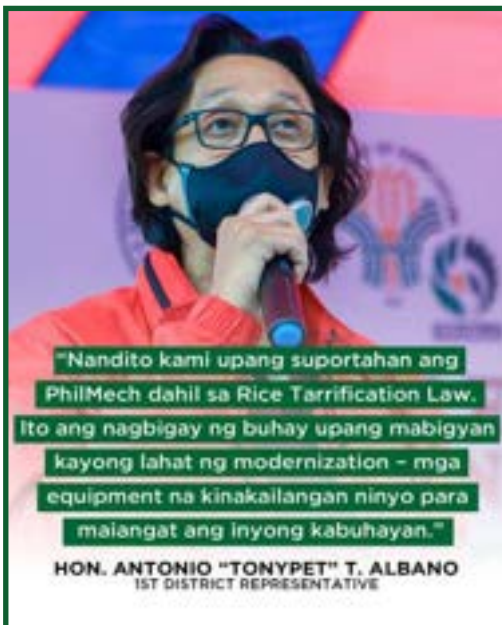
"Mas maraming makinaryang ibibigay ngayon kaysa mga taong tatanggap," Gov. Rodito Albano III quipped as he was impressed by the number of farm machines to be turned-over to farmer associations at the Isabela Sports Complex.

The Governor expressed his gratitude to Agriculture Secretary William Dar, "sa kanyang walang humpay at walang kapagurang pagbibigay sa atin ng mga makinarya," he said. Gov. Rodito said that agriculture modernization is a big help to Isabeleño farmers. "Ito ang panlaban natin sa climate change - ang modernization ng agrikultura. Kung hindi natin ma-modernize itong agrikultura natin, mahuhuli tayong lahat. Kaya nagpapasalamat

ako dito sa modernisasyon ng ating agrikultura, very productive," he added.

Gathering in full force with Vice Governor Faustino Dy III and all the representatives from Isabela's six districts, Gov. Rodito assured that the provincial government will provide counterpart for the maintenance of the machines. "Narito kaming lahat ngayon para ipahiwatig sa lahat ng bibigyan ng makina na tutulong kami sa pag-monitor at kung may sira dito sa mga makina, asahan ninyo na tutulong kami. Imo-monitor natin yan at titingnan na umaandar at napapakinabangan ng kada kooperatiba at magsasaka dito sa lalawigan ng Isabela," the Governor further said.

## ISABELA REPS AT PHILMECH'S DISTRIBUTION OF AGRI-MACHINERIES





## DA R02 awards and turn-over agricultural machineries and post-harvest facilities to farmer organizations in Isabela

Qualified beneficiaries from accredited farmer organizations and cooperatives in the Province of Isabela received agricultural machineries and post-harvest facilities from the Department of Agriculture (DA) Region 2 during the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Signing, Awarding and Turn-over of Agricultural Machineries and Post-Harvest Facilities under the Rice and Corn Programs held at the DA-Isabela Experiment Station (DA-IES), Upi, Gamu, Isabela on July 24, 2020.

The Department of Agriculture targets to boost the country's food sufficiency level amidst the implementation of community quarantines due to COVID-19 pandemic. The Rice and Corn Program is one of the banner programs of DA that focus on the productivity and sufficiency of the rice and corn sector by providing long term and sustainable interventions such as farm mechanization and postharvest development services, irrigation support services, extension, education and training support services, rice research and development and production support services.

Gov. Rodito T. Albano III expressed his gratitude to DA-Region 2 and the national government for the farm equipment and facilities awarded to the Isabeleño farmers. *"Pag may ganito tayong seeder*

*na bago, madaling magsaka at mabilis pa. Ngayon lang sa pamumuno ni President Rodrigo Duterte na lumalabas lahat 'yang mga makinarya. Sana po tuloy-tuloy 'yung programa sa galing ng ating director na si Director Nars Edillo at sa tulong ng ating national government,"* he said. The governor also cited the significance of the role of the farmers in boosting the food security program of the national government. *"Dapat nating maisip na kung wala ang ating mga magsasaka ngayon, wala tayong kakainin at walang mangyayari sa ating bansa,"* he added.

Also present during the turn-over of agricultural machineries and post-harvest facilities to the irrigators associations were Cong. Antonio "Tonypet" Albano of first district, Cong. Sheena Tan of fourth district and LPGMA Partylist representative Allan Ty.

*"Tayo ang isa sa mga nabibigyan ng malaking pondo taon-taon at sa tulong ng ating mga congressmen, siguradong madagdagan ang ating pondo for 2021,"* DA Regional Director Narciso Edillo said.

Director Edillo reminded the recipients to make use of the machineries wisely and make certain that they are handled, managed and maintained well.



## DAR SEC. CASTRICIONES INAUGURATES 2 TULAY NG PANGULO BRIDGES IN ISABELA

**Two bridges under the Tulay ng Pangulo Para sa Kaunlarang Pang-agraryo (TPKP) are now open to benefit farmers, residents and neighboring communities of Barangay Pungpungan in Jones, Isabela and Barangay Bayabo in Delfin Albano, Isabela following their formal turn-over and inauguration on July 01, 2021.**

Gov. Rodito Albano III said that these bridges in Jones and Delfin Albano, each with 28.8 linear meter single-span double-lane is like a link or conduit of President Rodrigo Duterte in reaching out to the people in the countryside. *“Itong Tulay ng Pangulo ay kumbaga Tulay ni President Duterte sa ating mga kababayan at sa mga puso ng ating mga kababayan.”*



Agrarian Reform Secretary John Castriciones led the inauguration of the Pungpungan and Bayabo Bridges. He disclosed that the materials in this project are the same pre-fabricated materials used in the construction of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France. He said that the people of Isabela is close to the heart of the President as an agricultural province and vows to bring more programs and projects to the people of Isabela.

The Tulay ng Pangulo is a project of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) in partnership with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to promote rural development in agrarian reform communities, enhance productivity and income through reduced marketing cost, and alleviate poverty among Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) and agrarian reform areas.



# #SERBISYONG TUPAD



The COVID-19 pandemic is a major economic and labor market shock presenting significant adverse impact in terms of unemployment and underemployment especially for informal workers. The introduction of cash grants and food distribution for vulnerable groups and temporary employment schemes for informal workers is one of the proactive means to ease the impact of the pandemic especially on displaced workers affected by the looming economic slowdown.

The Bayanihan to Heal as One (BAYANIHAN 1) and the Bayanihan to Recover as One (BAYANIHAN2) Acts were both promulgated to establish mechanisms to further reduce the impact on the socio-economic well-being of Filipinos through the provision of assistance and other forms of socio-economic relief. Under the Bayanihan, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) implemented the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD) as a safety net program that provides a package of assistance and other forms of interventions as a means of helping individuals and workers, particularly the distressed, in coping with economic and social disruptions.

As more workers are being displaced due to the pandemic, DOLE-Isabela in partnership with the Provincial Government of Isabela responded through the implementation of TUPAD. Many unemployed workers were provided with emergency means of livelihood which they need most in these trying times. The program provides a source of income to cope up with lost income and help not only their family but also their community in restoring its lost opportunities.



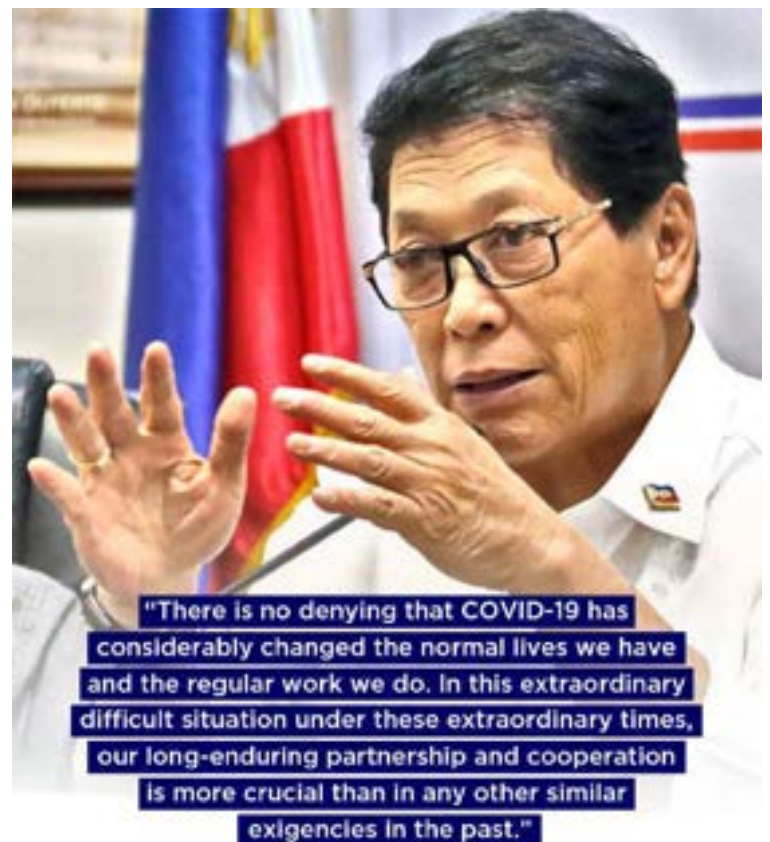
*“Basta may pera ang Kapitolyo at may katulong tayo katulad ng DOLE at DSWD, walang humpay na ibibigay namin sa inyo ang lahat ng tulong at ayuda,”* Gov. Rodito T. Albano III said during the first leg of TUPAD wage payout in Aurora Community Center in Aurora, Isabela on June 17, 2020. In addition, the Governor also distributed vitamin C

supplements and hygiene kits to the TUPAD beneficiaries. He also advised the beneficiaries to adhere the minimum health standards such as frequent hand washing, social distancing, wearing of face masks and face shields at all times, boost their immune system with healthy foods and vitamin C.

Labor Secretary Silvestre “Bebot” Bello III joined the TUPAD wage payout in the cities of Ilagan and Cauayan, municipalities of Ramon and San Manuel, Isabela. During his visit, Sec. Bello distributed additional “Negosyo Package” to eligible beneficiaries as a small business starter kit for displaced workers.

In the Province of Isabela, TUPAD completed its first batch of wage pay-out in all 34 municipalities and 2 cities of the province.

The first leg started in the municipalities of Aurora and Burgos on June 17, 2020. It was subsequently followed by Quirino and Gamu on June 18; Reina Mercedes and Naguilian on June 19; San Mateo and Luna on June 25; Alicia and San Isidro on June 26; Roxas and Mallig on June 27; San Guillermo and Angadanan on July 1; Delfin Albano on July 2; San Pablo and Santa Maria on July 3; San Mariano and Benito Soliven on July 9; Cabatuan and Cordon on July 10; Quezon on July 13; the coastal municipalities of Palanan, Maconacon and Divilacan on July 23; Tumauni on July 30; San Manuel on July 31; San Agustin and Jones on August 7; Ramon on August 8; Cauayan City on August 22; Dinapigue on August 27; City of Ilagan on August 29; Santo Tomas on September 23; Cabagan on October 7 and the final leg was held in the municipality of Echague on November 20, 2020.



Statement of Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III  
on assistance to workers amid COVID-19  
March 17, 2020



# ISABELA AMBULANT VENDORS RECEIVE FUND SUPPORT FOR NEGO-KART PROJECT

Secretary Silvestre “Bebot” Bello III of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) led the Awarding of the Nego-Kart Project to marginalized Isabeleños on January 16, 2021, at the Isabela Sports Complex.

He was joined by Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, Gov. Rodito T. Albano III, Vice Governor Faustino Dy III, LPGMA Partylist representative Allan Ty, DOLE Regional Director Atty. Evelyn Ramos, and mayors of Isabela.

A total of one hundred (100) ambulant vendor-beneficiaries from different municipalities of Isabela each received a vending cart with a start-up capital of twenty thousand (P20,000) pesos that can be utilized for selling street foods like siomai, isaw, fishballs, squidballs, kikiam, and “*kakanin*,” or merienda foods. They will also receive one LPG from Cong. Allan Ty. The beneficiaries were duly profiled by DOLE Field Office to ensure that they meet the qualifications of the project.

Sec. Bello quoted President Rodrigo Duterte in one of his talks with him and Sec. Tugade “*You are in the Cabinet, Art huwag mong pabayaang ang Cagayan. Bebot, sabi niya, huwag mong pabayaang ang Isabela.*”

Sec. Bello encouraged the beneficiaries to manage their livelihood projects well and hopes that it will be transformed into sustainable businesses to improve their quality of life.

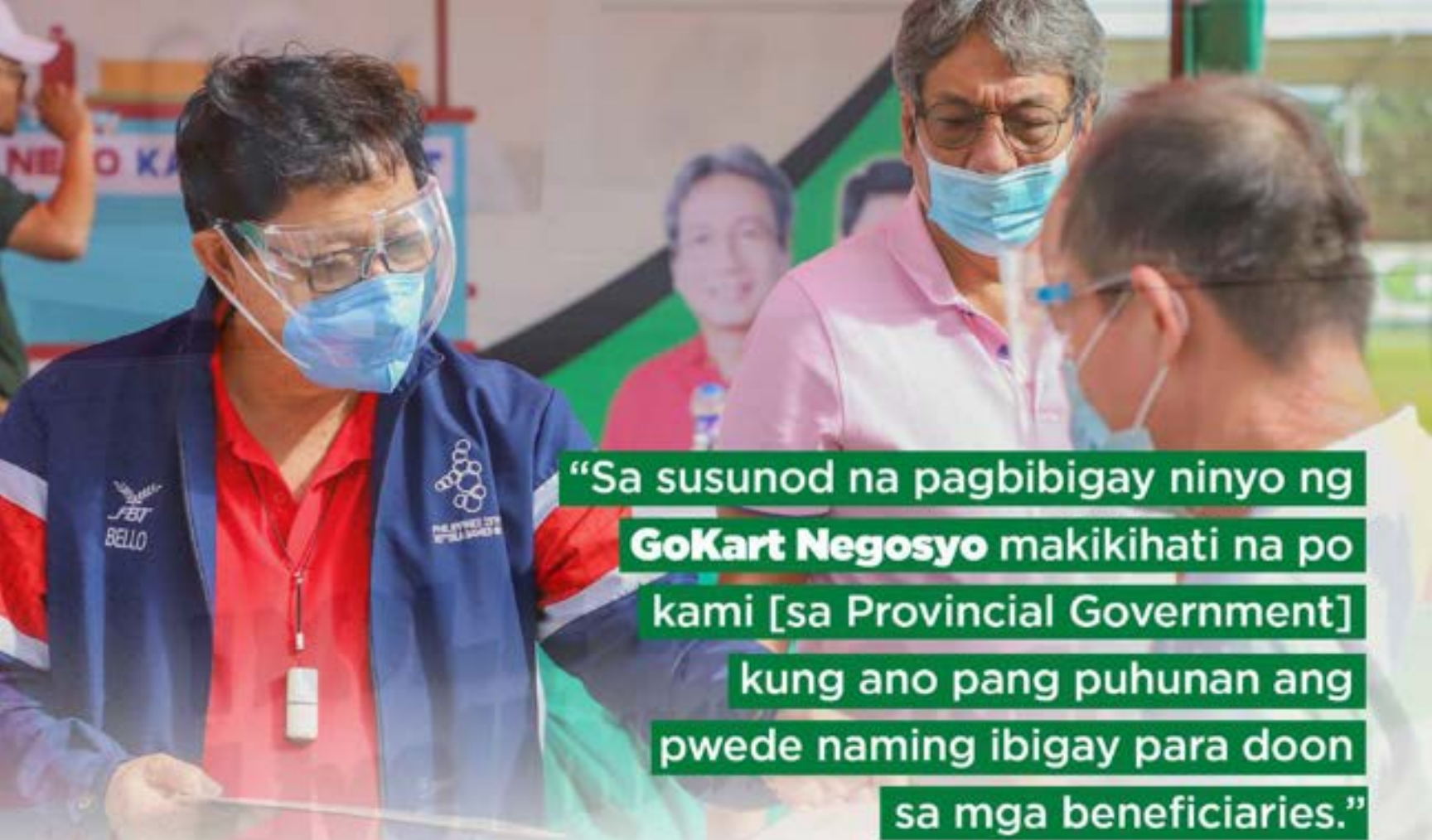
The Nego-Kart, a livelihood assistance sourced from the Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Program, is one of the flagship programs of DOLE that aims to provide decent and sustainable livelihood to benefit and empower marginalized workers.



Sumusunod kami sa utos at pangako ng ating Pangulo na kung saan sinabi niya noong Nobyembre, ikaw Bello, ikaw Tugade, makipagpulong kayo kay Governor Albano, sa local government at gawin ninyo yung nararapat upang ang ekonomiya ng Isabela ay mabuhay at mamulat ulit. Kaya nga ho marami ang pinag-usapan buhat sa dredging ng Cagayan River, sa pagtatanim sa kabundukan na nakakalbo ngayon, at sa pamimigay ng pamumuhay sa mga taga Isabela at Cagayan. Kaya may Nego-Kart, Ito ay sagot para sa pamumuhay ng Isabela.

**HON. ARTHUR P. TUGADE**

Secretary, Department of Transportation  
Awarding of Nego-Kart Project  
January 16, 2021  
Isabela Sports Complex



**“Sa susunod na pagbibigay ninyo ng GoKart Negosyo makikihati na po kami [sa Provincial Government] kung ano pang puhunan ang pwede naming ibigay para doon sa mga beneficiaries.”**

## GOV. ALBANO CO-SHARES WORKING CAPITAL AS NEGO-KART PROJECT ROLLS OUT IN ISABELA

*“Sa susunod na pagbibigay ninyo ng GoKart Negosyo, makikihati na po kami [sa Provincial Government] kung ano pang puhunan ang pwede naming ibigay para doon sa mga beneficiaries,”* Gov. Rodito Albano III said during the warding of Nego-Kart Project initiated by Secretary Silvestre “Bebot” Bello III of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) on January 16, 2021 at the Isabela Sports Complex.

*“Talagang si Manong Bebot, dinadagsa niya ang tulong dito. Kung binabaha kami dito sa Isabela ng tubig, binabaha rin kami sa tulong na pinaaabot ng ating mga Secretary lalung-lalo na si Secretary Bello at Secretary Tugade. Nandiyan po ang mga Mayors na nagpapasalamat po sa pagbibigay ng TUPAD, GIP at saka mga livelihood sa aming mga mamamayan dito,”* he said.

At least 100 Isabeleños from different municipalities received a vending cart with a start-up capital of twenty thousand (P20,000) pesos and LPG tank from Cong. Allan Ty. The Nego-Kart is a DOLE project that assists ambulant vendors in making their existing livelihood undertakings grow into profitable and sustainable business.

Gov. Rodito underscored that a counterpart from the Provincial Government to the start-up capital of ambulant vendor-beneficiaries is a way of expressing gratitude to all the support and assistance extended by the national government, *“para naman po makapantay kami at iyan ang pasasalamat namin po sa inyo dito sa pagtulong ninyo sa aming mga kababayan.”*



Awarding of Nego-Kart project to vendor-beneficiaries at the Isabela Sports Complex.



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# SEC BELLO: THROUGH THE YEARS IN PUBLIC SERVICE

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In response to the directive of President Rodrigo Duterte to put *“life above everything else”* or *“bago ang lahat, buhay muna,”* the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has been implementing various social amelioration programs to help workers recover from vulnerabilities, such as natural calamities and recently, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**For the Province of Isabela alone, DOLE has allocated total funds of P337,426,069.70, of which P85,484,755.00 has already been utilized for 27,871 beneficiaries through the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD), COVID-19 Adjustment Measures Program (CAMP), and various financial, livelihood and emergency employment programs to cushion the impact of the pandemic especially the displaced workers to achieve inclusive recovery where no one is left behind.**

All of these are made possible through the initiative of DOLE Secretary Silvestre H. “Bebot” Bello III, an Isabeleño who continues to break barriers and hopes to inspire others through his work and dedication to public service.

Bello has been the DOLE’s Secretary since June 30, 2016, contributing to the promotion and protection of worker rights and the attainment of

decent employment in Isabela and the Cagayan Valley Region, and the country as a whole, through his leadership in the implementation of DOLE's various programs and services.

In 2020, Bello led the provision of the COVID-19 Adjustment Measures Program (CAMP) assistance for pandemic-affected formal sector workers, the first emergency assistance of its kind created since the implementation of community quarantine in March of last year.



During the massive flooding caused by typhoons in Cagayan and Isabela provinces last year, Bello again stood in the forefront of the provision of assistance to displaced workers, pouring assistance through TUPAD program to more than 20,000 informal sector workers affected by the flooding.



To assist in the peace and development efforts and in keeping with his role as the Cabinet Officer for Regional Development and Security (CORDS), Bello has recently earmarked a total of P50M worth of DOLE livelihood funds that shall be poured to the 100 influenced barangays in Region 2 to contribute to the goal of ending local communist armed conflict.

## A LAWYER AND A PUBLIC SERVANT



A seasoned lawyer, Sec. Bello served the Department of Justice, initially as Undersecretary from 1986 to 1991, and eventually as Justice Secretary until 1992. He was again appointed as Justice Secretary in 1998. Sec. Bello also served as the Solicitor General from 1996 to 1998. Sec. Bello is also a distinguished associate of several law firms.

As a public servant, Sec. Bello has served the government under four administrations in various capacities. He was the Chairman of the GRP Negotiating Panel for Peace Talks (2001 - 2004), served as CEO of the PNOC- Development & Management Corp. (2004 - 2005), CEO of the Philippine Reclamation Authority (2006), Presidential Adviser for New Government Centers (2007 - 2008), and Cabinet Secretary (2008 - 2010), acting as Oversight Officer for Indigenous People and Cabinet Officer for Regional Development for Region II. Sec. Bello also served in the 16th Congress (2013 - 2016) as representative for the 1BAP Party List.

Sec. Bello finished his BA Political Science degree from Manuel L. Quezon University in 1961, and took his Bachelor of Laws in 1970 from the Ateneo de Manila University where he graduated with distinction.

# 1,976 beneficiaries receive CAMP payout in the City of Ilagan

A total of 1,976 beneficiaries which includes Tricycle Operators and Drivers Association (TODA) and displaced workers from private establishments from Ilagan City received their cash payout of P5,000.00 each under the COVID-19 Adjustment Measures Program (CAMP) at the Isabela Sports Complex, Alibagu, City of Ilagan on May 1, 2021 in line with the 119th Labor Day celebration with the theme, *“Mayo Uno sa Bagong Panahon - Manggagawa at Mamamayan Babangon, at Susulong!”*

CAMP is a safety net program which provides financial support to affected workers of private establishments that have adopted flexible work arrangements or temporary closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the program, beneficiaries will claim their cash assistance from any MLhuillier branch using unique Kwarta Padala Tracking Numbers sent to them by DOLE through their registered mobile numbers.

*“Pero dito po sa Isabela namin unang gagawin ang cash payout ng CAMP dahil ito po ay pondo na hiningi ni Governor sa Department of Tourism through our Labor Secretary Silvestre “Bebot” Bello III, kaya payout po ang ginagawa po natin para personal namin kayong makita at madama ninyo ng personal ang aming tulong sa inyo”,* said DOLE - Isabela Field Office OIC Evelyn Yango.

Gov. Rodito Albano III said that the CAMP payout in Isabela is an initiative of Labor Secretary Silvestre “Bebot” Bello III. *“Itong ayudang ito ay galing sa isang lider na ang isip at puso ay nakatuon sa kapakanan ninyo.”*

The governor also expressed gratitude to the Department of Tourism. *“Si Secretary Bernadette Romulo pupunta dito next week, dadalhin natin para i-launch ang CAMP kasi sa kanya galing itong CAMP payout,”* he said. He also assured the tricycle drivers of the continued support of the Provincial Government especially this time of pandemic, *“Huwag kayong mag-alala. Hindi namin kayo pababayaan,”* he added.



Meanwhile, Vice Governor Faustino Dy III lauded the contribution of the tricycle drivers in the progress and development of the City of Ilagan.

*“Ang tanging hiling lamang namin sa inyo na kung mayroon po kayong isasakay na pasahero, siguraduhin ninyong naka face mask at naka face shield,”* Dy said to ensure the safety of all Ilagueños.

DOLE, in partnership with the Department of Health Cagayan Valley - Center of Health Development also facilitated the COVID-19 vaccination of ten (10) individuals from the labor sector.

The CAMP payout was also graced by Congressman Allan Ty of LPGMA Partylist, Sangguniang Panlalawigan Member Emmanuel Delfinito Albano, Mayor Josemarie Diaz and local officials of the City of Ilagan.





**SOCIAL WORK IN TIMES OF PANDEMIC**  
Social worker from PSWDO homevisited the centenarians and personally awarded the cash gift of P100,000.00.

## ISABELA HONORS CENTENARIANS

The Provincial Government of Isabela gives recognition and honor to senior citizens in the province who are 100 years old and above. This breakthrough program of the Provincial Government of Isabela aims to recognize contribution of elderly in the history and development of Isabela and to honor them for reaching the milestone and historic age of hundred years.

Under Republic Act No, 10868 (An Honoring and Granting Additional Benefits to Filipino Centenarians and for other purposes or Centenarian Act 2016), Filipinos who live to 100 years will receive the cash gifts worth P100,000.00 from the National Government. On top of this, Gov. Rodito Albano III added an additional of P100,000.00 upon approval of an increase last November 2020 as part of the Isabela's grateful tribute to its elderly citizens.

For the year 2020, there were twelve (12) Isabeleño-Centenarians from the municipalities of Echague, Aurora, Ramon, Aicia, Dinapigue, Luna, Cabagan and City of Ilagan that were approved as grantees. Seven (7) of them were extended with P10,000 cash gift while five (5) of them has already received P100,000.00.

The cash/check were personally awarded to the Centenarians by Gov. Albano during the I-Rise distribution while other Centenarians were home visited by the Office of the PSWD and Provincial Consultant for Senior Citizens Affairs, Mr. Ruben G. Tumbaga for delivery of cash incentives considering the beneficiaries' health and physical limitation.

In order to avail of this program, relatives must submit documents such as birth certificate, senior citizen ID card issued by the Office of the Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA), Barangay Certificate/ Certificate of Residency, whole body picture and an endorsement from their Local Social Welfare Officer or OSCA Head from their locality.

## PGI STEPS UP COMPLIANCE TO ISO 9001:2015 STANDARD

The 2-day Documentation Coaching to prepare the employees in-charge of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) was held on May 19 -20, 2021 via Zoom. This was initiated by the Provincial Administrator's Office and the Provincial Internal Audit and Control Office (PIACO) and facilitated by Macro Vision Consultancy.

Employees in charge of the ISO in all departments of the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) participated in the documentation and coaching which aimed to upgrade the PGI's Quality Management System to the ISO 9001:2015 Standard and align its processes with RA 11032 or the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018.

PGI merited a seal of approval of ISO 9001:2008 certification on 2017 for being compliant which enables an organization to integrate its own Quality Management System (QMS) with the management system requirements of the provincial government. This means the PGI has demonstrated improved public sector performance and ensures that the provincial frontline services or core processes meet global standards.

PGI now intends to upgrade its system to the latest version of standard - the ISO 9001:2015. Achieving ISO 9001:2015 certification is a validation to the superiority of the administration and support services of an organization.



# OVER 5,000 ISABELEÑOS BENEFIT FROM “SAGIP MATA, SAGIP BUHAY”



**Over 5,000 Isabeleños with poor eyesight are now enjoying the gift of clear eye sight by providing them free prescription eyeglasses and eye care services through the “Sagip Mata, Sagip Buhay” project of Gov. Rodito Albano III.**

During his inaugural address on June 30, 2019, Gov. Rodito laid out his plans and programs for his term. *“The agenda for the next three years will be simple - increase income, generate jobs, provide assistance to the poorest of the poor, and ensure public order.”*

Anchored on his commitment of providing assistance to the poorest of the poor, Gov. Rodito continued his visual health project, *“Sagip Mata, Sagip Buhay”* which he started when he was still Congressman of the First District of Isabela.

In partnership with Southern Isabela Medical Center (SIMC) in Santiago City, Isabeleños with

visual impairment can avail diagnostic and refraction services, prescription glasses, eye operation for cataract, glaucoma and Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD), and medicines – all for FREE! Even transportation is a *“Hatid-Sundo”* to those who have no access to and cannot afford the services, specially the women and the elderly.

Gov. Rodito wishes to reach out visually impaired Isabeleños through the *“Sagip Mata, Sagip Buhay”*.



# HANDOG TULONG REACHES 12 MUNICIPALITIES IN THE PROVINCE



**To ensure that all Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in the Province of Isabela will not be left behind, even amidst COVID-19 pandemic, Gov. Rodito T. Albano III continues to reach out and deliver the much needed help through “Handog Tulong (Door to Door Program) para sa may mga Kapansanan”, even to the most remote barangays.**

Focal person and staff of the Office of the Governor under Handog Tulong were able to locate the beneficiaries from the municipalities of Jones, Tumauni, Alicia, Delfin Albano, City of Ilagan, Naguilian, Quirino, San Mariano, San Mateo, Ramon, Cabagan and Cabatuan, Isabela.

Assistive devices to include adult wheelchairs, pedia wheelchair, single cane, pedia walker and

quadcane were delivered right in front of the doorsteps of the PWD-beneficiaries.

With tears of joy and smiles behind their face masks, the beneficiaries and their families extended their sincere gratitude to Gov. Albano’s big heart, his care and giving priority to the needs of PWDs – that, these assistive devices that they have been waiting for so long has indeed reached to them at last – in special door to door delivery.





## I-RISE towards recovery



In response to Republic Act No. 11469, or the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act, the Provincial Government of Isabela through the Provincial Cooperative Development Office initiated the Isabela Recovery Initiatives to Support Enterprises (I-RISE) aimed to support cooperatives, associations, the informal sectors, transport groups, and the micro and small entrepreneurs who were affected by the community quarantines imposed during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused serious threat to health and safety of every Filipinos that resulted to the declaration of a State of Public Health Emergency throughout the

Philippines and subsequently to the imposition of Enhanced Community Quarantine in the entire Luzon. The effects of the community quarantine are far-reaching halting the means of livelihood of every individual and thus disrupted the local economic activities.

The Provincial Government of Isabela, under the leadership of Honorable Governor Rodito T. Albano III and Vice Governor Faustino G. Dy III, deemed it necessary to provide assistance to the affected sectors in consonance to the policy of the National Government under the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act which provides of an urgent need to, among others, *"undertake a program for recovery and rehabilitation, including social amelioration program and provision of safety nets to all affected sectors"* and *"partner with the private sector and other stakeholders to deliver these measures and programs quickly and efficiently"*.

Finding the urgent need to mitigate the effects of the pandemic to local economy particularly on the temporary suspensions of production activities for both goods and services, the PGI, through the Provincial Cooperatives Development Office initiated the Isabela Recovery Initiatives to Support Enterprises with an overall objectives of identifying and assisting the adversely affected sectors by the enforcement of community quarantines as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To support the program, Governor Albano authorized by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of the province of Isabela through a Resolution No. 2020-18-1, entitles into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Trade and Industry-Region 2, LPG Marketers Association (LPGMA) Party-List and small Business Corporation-North Luzon Group for the convenience of the partners' respective social

amelioration programs and thus made part of the I-RISE program.

Under the I-RISE program, the PGI, through the PCDO offered an interest-free lending program for cooperatives and association to provide additional capital to recover from the effects of the pandemic. Meanwhile, the informal sectors and the members of the transport groups received cash and rice assistance to augment their livelihood activities during the pandemic.

The distribution of assistance kicked off last October 30, 2020 at the coastal town of Dinapigue and has already reached 14 municipalities with 9,723 individual beneficiaries and 14 cooperatives and associations.





## Championing cooperativism in the countryside

It all started with her goal to help, to serve and to achieve a holistic development of people in the barangays and municipalities of Isabela by unifying cooperative services. This goal was planted like a seed by Lilia "Jing" Castillo, has grown into full bloom and was recognized by the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), the agency in charge of promoting the viability and growth of cooperatives as instruments of equity, social justice and economic development.

Through Castillo's efforts and hardwork as head of the Provincial Cooperative Development Office (PCDO), the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) received numerous national and local recognitions in the field of Cooperative Development. Under Castillo's watch, Isabela was adjudged as the Best PCDO in the Philippines in 2012 and 2017.

As a public servant, Castillo started her career in the Office of the Governor in 1991. She was eventually transferred to the PCDO in 1993. On September 9, 2014, she was appointed as the Provincial Cooperative Development Officer, now known as Provincial Cooperative, Livelihood and Enterprise Development Officer, and served as such until her demise on May 14, 2021.

Castillo helped establish the Nagkakaisang Magsasaka ng Isabela - Agricultural Cooperative (NMI-AC), a super cooperative to cushion the impact of the Rice Tarrification Law to small rice farmers and assure them that there is a system to mitigate its effects. Castillo was instrumental to the enrollment of 8,500 initial members composed of marginalized farmers with less than 2 hectares of rice landholding. A total of 200 marginalized farmers from each of the 32 municipalities were enrolled as

members of the Super Coop who underwent massive cooperative membership orientation and training through PCDO.

With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic which literally halted commodity movement, the Province of Isabela particularly the NMI-AC played a major role in making available to LGUs especially non-rice producing areas a reasonably priced rice distribution to their respective constituents during the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) period.

PGI takes pride and gratitude for Castillo's service and contributions and will always be remembered as hardworking, energetic and dedicated public servant who touched the lives of many Isabeleños.

### The birth of I-RISE

Gov. Rodito Albano III remembered Lilia Castillo, which he fondly called "Lily", to a smiling lady who gave the name of Isabela Recovery Initiatives to Support Enterprises or I-RISE program to cushion the impact of COVID-19 pandemic and assist most affected sectors whose livelihood were forced to lay-low or ceased to operate including business establishments, cooperatives, associations, enterprises and transport groups.

PGI forged the partnership between the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Party-list LPG Marketers Association (LPGMA) through I-RISE which grants interest-free loan assistance, livelihood kits and cash grants to qualified beneficiaries.

PGI released a grand total of P64,015,000.00 to 25,949 Isabeleños of the province's 34 municipalities and 2 cities since the

implementation of I-RISE which started on October 30, 2020 until the first batch ended on March 9, 2021.

I-RISE offered an interest-free lending program for cooperatives and associations to provide additional capital. Three associations with 2,476 members received P1,800,000.00 interest-free loans, while a total of P10,200,000.00 was released to 13 cooperatives with 3,859 members.

A total of 9,721 from Micro-Small Enterprises (MSEs) received rice and a total of P29,280,000.00, while 9,893 tricycle operators and drivers received rice and P24,735,000.00 pesos cash assistance to augment their livelihood activities.

LPGMA Partylist representative Allan Ty awarded two LPG tanks each of the 726 beneficiaries who are sari-sari and cendereria store owners, while DTI-Isabela initiated the Livelihood Seeding Program - Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay (LSP-NSB) to over 500 micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) beneficiaries across the province, granting a total of P4,200,000.00 worth of livelihood kits.

The I-RISE program geared towards financial and economic recovery of the cooperatives, associations and micro-small entrepreneurs in Isabela rose like a silver lining in the skies amidst the pandemic, with Lilia Castillo at the helm.



# PRES. DUTERTE PROMOTES GIN-C JUICE DRINK OF JONES, ISABELA

No less than President Rodrigo Roa Duterte endorsed Gin-C products of Jones, Isabela, promoting its efficacy as a healthy juice drink while encouraging people to patronize the product to help local producers, in a video posted by Provincial Administrator Atty. Noel Manuel Lopez.

## Health benefits



Gin-C, an organic, natural source immune booster juice drink pack from turmeric, ginger and calamansi reached Pres. Duterte through Gov. Rodito Albano III. The President said that he immediately felt the health benefits of Gin-C even on his first try. *“Bumili na kayo at subukan ninyong inumin. Nakita ko na talagang may pakinabang ako dito sa Gin-C. Feel ko na agad iyong effect sa katawan ko,”* the President said.

According to National Nutrition Council, citrus fruits like calamansi are rich in Vitamin C. Calamansi helps strengthen immune system. Since Calamansi is rich in vitamin C, it will help protect the body from infections. Calamansi is also good for colds, flu, and fever.

## Support Local

Pres. Duterte encouraged the Filipino people to support local products. *“I’m holding right now Gin-C, a product from a cottage industry in Jones, Isabela. Bilhin ninyo dahil mapakinabangan sa katawan ninyo. Makatulong pa kayo sa mga tao doon,”* he said.

Cong. Antonio “Tonypet” Albano said it is now time to promote home-grown products from Isabela. *“Many talented entrepreneurs can create products that are good, and Gin-C is one of them. Even the President is a believer as its endorser,”* the congressman said.

## Instant endorsers and loyal patrons

Gin-C became popular following endorsement by Pres. Duterte and reached Metro Manila and nearby provinces. Gin-C even reached abroad, as far as Las Vegas, Nevada and New York City in the United States.

*“This is good stuff, Used to take turmeric, and I didn’t like it. But this one is really good stuff,”* former Senator Joseph Victor “JV” Ejercito Estrada testified.

It gained a nod of Pasig City Mayor Vico Sotto, Quirino Province Gov. Dakila Carlo “Dax” Cua and CHED-CAR Regional Director Dr. Demetrio Anduyan.



In the province of Isabela, the loyal patrons of Gin-C include Cong. Albano, LPGMA Partylist Cong. Allan Ty, Provincial Board Members Hon. Abegail Sable and Hon. Clifford Rasgado, both from Isabela fourth district, the Isabela Highway Patrol Group (HPG) and Providers Multi-Purpose Cooperative of Naguilian, Isabela, among others. Gin-C is also being offered as beverage during various programs at the Provincial Capitol.

## Started as an appreciation to frontliners

A group of individuals in Jones, Isabela distributed calamansi juice drinks as a simple appreciation to frontliners during the height of COVID-19 pandemic quarantine restrictions. Later, the group introduced Gin-C to Gov. Albano who immediately ordered more than a thousand boxes. To maximize their production, Jones Mayor Leticia Sebastian, LPGMA Partylist Cong. Ty and Gov. Albano helped the group establish a cooperative, now called Jones Producers Cooperative (JPC).



On December 2020, JPC became an agricultural cooperative committed to improve the quality of life of its members by producing safe, healthy and quality food and beverages, maximizing value for all the members, stakeholders and customers.

## DTI-RO2 offers technical assistance to JPC

Business Development Division Chief Lenore Lee Lopez together with Senior Trade and Industry Development Specialist Maria Corazon Mamuri of Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Region 02 conducted a Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Visit to Jones Providers Cooperative on June 11, 2021. They were accompanied by Negosyo Center Jones Junior Business Counselor Ms. Rosaimay Manuel.

DV Chief Lopez in her conversation with JPC Manager Fatima Agpaoa offered to assist the cooperative through Negosyo Center Jones in protecting their brand name and securing permits to their products. The DTI, along with LGU Jones vowed to continue assisting budding entrepreneurs like JPC in visualizing and expanding their business.

## Latest Products

Inspired by the people’s acceptance of Gin-C, JPC now boasts their new products. They are now keen of introducing PINE-C, a fiber-rich and Vitamin C -packed refreshment with fruit bits made from freshly-squeezed pineapple and calamansi.

JPC also has an array of mango products like Man-Go Juice and Pickled Mango. Mango is low in calories, yet high in nutrients - particularly Vitamin C, which aids immunity, iron absorption, growth and repair. Mango contains magnesium, potassium and the antioxidants mangiferin which support healthy heart function.

JPC’s latest product is MANGANEN! - a tuyo in oil with spicy flavor, advertized in Ilocano, *“Naimas nga pangapudot ti pamigat tayo”*.

## **GIN-C BOOST IMMUNITY PRODUCTS FROM JPC**

For orders, please text/call: 09569813595

Available for PICK-UP ONLY  
Visit us at JONES RURAL SCHOOL  
SOTA Bldg., Jones, Isabela

# Itik raisers, balut vendors receive financial assistance from PGI to boost livelihood



The Provincial Government of Isabela continues to boost the livelihood of the Isabeleños from the rural populations whose agriculture-based income are highly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

*"This pandemic is a golden opportunity to roll-out programs and reach out to Isabeleños in need, especially the most vulnerable,"* Gov. Rodito said.

*"Kung magkakaroon tayo ng mga pandemya, nangangailangan ako ng mga balut at bibili ako, kayo na ang tatawagin ko para kayo na ang mag-supply. Ibenta niyo sa akin ng kahit mas mahal para kumita kayo,"* he said during the distribution of financial assistance to itik raisers and balut vendors on January 13, 2020, at the Balay Guest House, Provincial Capitol compound.

Two itik raisers from San Mateo, Isabela, received one hundred thousand (P100,000) pesos, and thirty thousand (P30,000) pesos respectively. Another itik raiser from Ramon, Isabela received eighty thousand (P80,000) pesos. With this amount, they will be able to purchase an incubator to boost their itik production.

Nine (9) balut vendors and seven (7) itik raisers also received financial assistance to bounce back

and pump prime their small business enterprise. Gov. Rodito advised the beneficiaries to use their financial assistance well and to be profitable.

*"Ang gusto ko lang sa inyong lahat ay kailangang alagaan ninyo ang mga puhunan ninyo. Kung magkakaproblema kayo sa pagpapaaral sa mga anak ninyo, pumunta kayo sa akin. Huwag ninyong gamitin yang puhunan sa ibang bagay para tuloy-tuloy ang inyong negosyo,"* he said.

The duck egg trade employs hundreds of people in the province of Isabela and have become an inexpensive way to provide protein and calcium for many Filipinos.

It can be recalled that Gov. Rodito bought the locally-produced balut and itlog pugo (quail eggs) from farmers who were facing challenges accessing markets to sell their products during the Luzon-wide Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) early last year.

In turn, these were distributed to medical frontliners in government hospitals, municipal and barangay health workers, including police officers manning border checkpoints to boost their immune system in the continuing fight against the pandemic.

# MILK DISTRIBUTION KICKS OFF FOR HEALTHIER ISABELEÑOS

True to his commitment of preparing the youth for a brighter future, Gov. Rodito T. Albano III started the milk distribution program to the 17 barangays of San Pablo, Isabela. Mothers and children received bottles of milk and quail eggs to help them sustain a healthy body. Identified recipients for the program were pregnant women, lactating mothers and undernourished children who received milk twice a week.

The undertaking is a part of the BRO-LUSOG campaign of the provincial government through its feeding program. Aimed at battling malnutrition among the young ones and give supplemental feeding to address their nutritional needs, the milk distribution started on June 25, 2020 at San Pablo, Isabela wherein about one thousand (1,000) liters was consumed every week.

Amidst the spread of COVID-19 in the country the milk distribution is truly timely as it addresses the nutrition needs of children and assist them develop a healthy body and strengthen their immune system in fighting the dreaded disease.

The program had a good start and is headed to be implemented in the entire province in the days to come. Dairy enterprises had already been identified in different towns of Isabela to aid in the continuous implementation of the program while some dairy enterprises had already been launched to supply the needed milk products for the Isabeleños.



## GOV. RODITO AND VG BOJIE INAUGURATES ISABELA DAIRY ENTERPRISE

To address the need for proper nutrition among young Isabeleños and lactating mothers, Gov. Rodito Albano III and Vice Gov. Bojie Dy III together with Dir. Narciso A. Edillo of Department of Agriculture spearheaded the inauguration and launching of Isabela Dairy Enterprise at Maligaya, Mallig, Isabela on June 27, 2020.

The dairy enterprise aims to supply the milk needs of pregnant women, lactating mothers and undernourished kids to attain optimum health needs. It also targets to be known not just in the province but in the region and in the entire country as a whole.

Gov. Rodito stressed that one of the thrusts of his government is on food security for Isabela and mentioned that this is just the first of the dairy enterprises to be established and will be followed by other milk processing enterprises in the different towns of the province in the coming days. He urged for the cooperation of the Isabeleños, officials and partners for proper management of the program to achieve the desired goals.



# ISABELA PVO ASF CONTROL PROGRAM

The spread of "African Swine Fever" in some parts of the country has affected the livelihood of the livestock industry. Its spread has truly affected the entire country from regions to provinces including our beloved Isabela.



In its recurrence, the Provincial Government of Isabela through the Provincial Veterinary Office (PVO) continued its full effort to prevent the spread of the African Swine Fever (ASF) in areas affected within the province. The Provincial Government undertook immediate step to control and ensure the safety of the Swine Industry in the Province. Governor Rodito T. Albano III, issued an Executive Order creating a Task Force responsible in monitoring the entry of livestock animals and meat products in Isabela, to prevent and control "African Swine Fever" and other diseases affecting the Livestock Industry.

Aside from the checkpoint monitoring, culling was also enforced at selected areas to stop the immediate spread of ASF within the locality. Areas infected by ASF were strictly monitored and identified pigs were immediately culled for disease prevention. On the brighter side, the Provincial Government of Isabela offered an amount for each pig culled to assist the affected backyard hog raisers. A total 319 Barangays were affected in 29 Municipalities of the province with 33,708 pigs culled from 4,857 livestock farmers. The culling of pigs started last July 25, 2020 at San Juan, Quezon that continued up to December 30, 2020 at San Mariano.

True to its commitment in assisting the Isabeleños, Governor Rodito personally distributed Financial Assistance to the affected backyard hog raisers in identified municipalities in the province. The distribution program started last June 2, 2020 at Cordon and San Isidro that continued upto June 11, 2020 at Roxas. The working governor

also presented a part of his development plans in the rural areas where roads will be fixed to help farmers bring their produce and products to the urban areas and water system for the barangays to allow free flow of water supply. He also encouraged the hog raisers to practice organic farming and livestock raising, and announced that the provincial government will find ways to continuously assist them in their needs.



Blowtorching of infested areas by the Provincial Veterinary Office on September 17, 2020.

In its ASF Control Program the PVO continued to disperse teams in different municipalities to implement disinfection of piggeries and pig pens including blowtorching to intensify the disinfection, disinfectants are also continuously distributed to ensure the death of the virus in the infested areas. Truly, the PGI through the actions of the PVO will continue to deliver its services to the Isabeleños and make sure that the ASF scare in the province will be controlled and solved in the days to come.



**"The DBP Swine R3 Credit Program is the latest comprehensive line-up of boosters that will develop and implement all our desired initiatives. Please join us as we lay the groundwork towards a more food-secured Philippines."**

**MR. EMMANUEL G. HERBOSA**  
President, Development Bank of the Philippines

## DBP, DA ties up to revive hog industry

The Development Bank of the Philippines' (DBP) newest loan facility - the Swine R3 Credit Program is a much needed boost towards repopulation, rehabilitation and recovery of the local swine industry to ensure the continuous supply and availability of swine and pork products and to stabilize pork prices in the country.

DBP President and CEO Emmanuel Herbosa said that with this new program, the DBP offers a solution of a tangible funding support so that the hog industry can increase its production level. *"Under the Swine R3 Credit Program, DBP will provide funding assistance to eligible public and private institutions to establish bio-secured swine farm products. With concerted efforts, we will be able to grow a local swine industry so that we can better meet consumer demand and we can achieve more stable pork prices in the Philippine market,"* Herbosa said.

Herbosa shared the good news that to complement the Swine R3 Credit Program, the DBP minted new partnership with Charoen Pokphand Foods (CPF) Philippines represented by Mr. Nattakorn Sujipittham. *"We are collaborating with CPF to ensure the viability of implementing bio-security measures to further assist eligible swine investor-partners,"* he said.

*"For the commercial hog raisers, our potential swine project investors and our hardworking Municipal Mayors, the Swine R3 Credit Program can assist both the public and private sectors. For the public sector,*

*DBP can provide the financing for the establishment of consolidated swine facilities so that the LGUs can consolidate the backyard hog raisers in their municipalities and provinces,"* he announced.

The Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC) through its Swine R3 Credit Program has allotted an initial funding of five hundred million (P500 M) pesos for the swine farm projects of small enterprises, including start-up commercial hog raisers. DBP has allotted about 12 Billion pesos for commercial hog raisers.

He said that these lending programs are bonded to intensify support to the agriculture industry, reflective of DBP's alliance to the Department of Agriculture to promote agri-business for countryside development. *"DBP will continue to finance to support projects engaged in the production, harvesting, processing and marketing of crops, poultry, livestock and fishery. We will continue to finance the whole value chain from production to post harvest processing and marketing,"* he declared.

Herbosa also urged everyone to partner with DA and DBP because at this point in the nation's history, productive collaboration and developmental partnership with the private sector and with right-minded stakeholders is crucial. *"The DBP Swine R3 Credit Program is the latest comprehensive line-up of boosters that will develop and implement all our desired initiatives. Please join us as we lay the groundwork towards a more food-secured Philippines,"* he concluded.

# SEC. DAR LAUNCHES SWINE R3 CREDIT PROGRAM IN ISABELA

*“Maraming salamat Governor for really opening up Isabela na pinakaunang probinsya under the Swine R3 Program, and we know that with your support ay magiging successful ulit tayo,”* Agriculture Secretary William Dar said during the launching of the Swine Repopulation, Rehabilitation and Recovery (Swine R-3) Credit Program held at the Provincial Capitol Amphitheater, City of Ilagan, Isabela on June 10, 2021.

*“Ang entire hog raisers ng Isabela ay nabuhayang muli at nagiginhawaan sa inyong pagdating, Secretary. Nagkakaroon ng pag-asa lalong-lalo na at isinama mo ang kabalikat na DBP,”* Gov. Rodito Albano III said.

The Swine R3 Credit Program is a credit window to support the government’s efforts in the repopulation, rehabilitation and recovery of the local swine industry to eligible public and private institutions through financing of bio-secured farm projects.

Sec. Dar said that under the program, the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP), shall serve as a sole Partner Lending Conduit (PLC) of the Agricultural Credit Policy Council (DA-ACPC) with an initial credit fund allocation of five hundred million (P500M) pesos. *“As the LPC, the DBP will identify qualified borrowers, evaluate and approve loan applications, release loan proceeds and collect loan repayments,”* he said.

The DBP will finance bio-secured grow-out projects of small business enterprises including start-up commercial hog raisers with loanable amount of five million (P5 M) pesos up to fifteen million (P15 M) pesos with zero interest, payable up to eight years with a grace period of up to two years.

Sec. Dar also announced that the first trials with an African Swine Fever (ASF) vaccine are being conducted in 10 commercial swine companies in the Philippines. He said that while the country is elevating everything towards bio-security, the most important intervention to enhance recovery of the hog industry is the vaccination against ASF. He said that last April 2021 he made collaboration



with US-DA and with the private company from the United States.

*“We have 70 days to see the initial results. That’s ongoing and that’s the kind of testing we are doing. If there’s an indication that during the process in the next three months ay tumataas yung anti-bodies ng baboy, that’s an indication that it will work. Then the second stage will be to apply and use these vaccines in areas na may ASF para matingnan natin kung during the actual happening na kung mayroon ng ASF ay kaya namang i-control,”* he added.

Meanwhile, DA Undersecretary William Medrano presented the Integrated National Swine Production Initiatives for Recovery and Expansion (INSPIRE), a repopulation and recovery plan for the swine industry to ensure availability, accessibility, and affordability of pork and pork products.

Mr. Allen Ducusin of DA-ACPC discussed the Agri-Negosyo Loan Program (ANYO Swine R3), a credit facility for backyard and semi-commercial hog raisers that supports the Swine R-3 program through financing the establishment of bio-secure swine facilities.

The roll-out launch was attended onsite by LPGMA Partylist representative Cong. Allan Ty, City/Municipal Mayors of the province, DBP President and CEO Emmanuel Herbosa, Careon Pokphand Foods AVP Nattakorn Sujipittham, DA Regional Director Narciso Edillo and other officials and staff of national agencies, LGUs and private sector who joined via Zoom.

# The Province of Isabela takes center stage at 10th WB-ISM

The Province of Isabela took center stage during the 10th World Bank Implementation Support Mission (WB-ISM) to the Department of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) digital conference held simultaneously to various regions in the country via Cisco Webex platform on June 18, 2020 with 126 online participants.

Due to the threat of COVID-19 pandemic, DA-PRDP officials together with World Bank Task Team Leader Mr. Eli Weiss conducted the first virtual site visit of subprojects in various regions of the country instead of inspecting them physically. The WB-ISM series will run from June 15 to July 3, 2020 to gauge the project accomplishment of each region and to present some of the notable DA-PRDP subprojects in the country.

and fattening enterprise of Caridad Hog Raisers Association of Cadiz City, Negros Occidental for Visayas Cluster; the cardava banana enterprise of Cabinuangan Small Coconut Farmers Cooperative in Davao City for Davao Region Cluster; and the proponent group of the PRDP-funded dairy carabao enterprise of San Agustin Dairy Cooperative (SADACO) of Masaya Centro, San Agustin, Isabela for North Luzon Cluster featuring its superior buffalo milk.

World Bank Task Team Leader Mr. Eli Weiss extended his utmost appreciation to Governor Rodito T. Albano III and the DA-PRDP team of Region 2 for their collaborative efforts in extending tremendous support to farmers, specifically the SADACO of San Agustin, Isabela amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gov. Rodito expressed gratitude to Mr. Weiss for inviting the province of Isabela to the 10th WB-ISM that paved the way to pivotal programs similarly to partner agencies for their relentless support during project implementation as the governor looked forward to further enhance the relationship of the province with the World Bank.

Mr. Weiss asked questions to evaluate SADACO's dairy processing mission objective, mainstreaming improvements and innovations. He tackled implementation and technical issues like how farmers increase their productivity while putting emphasis on the Cooperative's initiatives and coping mechanisms - whether it is profitable, break-even or making losses, especially this time of pandemic.

Gov. Albano underscored that if SADACO will be on the losing end, the Provincial Government will intervene and create a market for them. *"We have a feeding program for students, pregnant women and malnourished children. We will be buying and distributing this milk so it won't be break-even, but at a cost on which SADACO makes money."* The COVID-19



The activity includes a virtual presentation of subprojects from each cluster followed by an open forum. Four (4) subprojects were showcased via virtual Audio Video Presentation (AVP) to include PRDP-funded sweet mango enterprise of Puerto Princesa City, Palawan; the swine breeding

pandemic is a challenge for SADACO, but it also served as an opportunity to expand its market. When the Provincial Government partnered with them in distributing dairy-based products to frontliners of Cagayan Valley Medical Center, Provincial Hospital in Ilagan, different district and community hospitals in Cauayan, Cabagan, Echague, Roxas and San Mariano, Southern Isabela Medical Center in Santiago City, including different Rural Health Units in Isabela during the Enhanced Community Quarantine. Also included are IATF personnel manning checkpoints as well as OFWs in the quarantine facilities in Amelita Resort in Cordon, ISU Echague Hostel, and staff housing. Dairy-based products as supplement food drinks to COVID-19 frontlines also intends to help SADACO market their processed milk and to give dairy farmers income during the quarantine period. Regular outlets of the cooperative are schools.

and Development Officer Atty. Eduardo Cabantac, Provincial Treasurer Ma. Theresa Araneta-Flores, Provincial Budget Officer Elsa Pastrana, Provincial Accountant Antonieta Bulan, and Provincial Agriculturist Marites Frogoso, with the support of DA-RFO2.



The Philippine Rural Development Program is a six-year national project under the Department of Agriculture that aims to establish a modern, value-chain oriented and climate-resilient agriculture, jointly funded by the World Bank, the National Government and the participating Local Government Units (LGUs).



Governor Rodito Albano with the key representatives from the World Bank and the Department of Agriculture during the 10th WB-ISM virtual kick-off.

**As we find our footing in the new normal, the DA-PRDP team will continue to acquire innovative ways in delivering outputs and resolving drawbacks in close coordination with the local government units, proponent groups and other partner agencies amidst COVID-19 pandemic.**



Other chatbox questions relative to SADACO's efficiency, transparency and accountability were all answered by SADACO team who joined the online discussion at the Provincial Project Management and Implementing Unit (PPMIU), Capitol Building; the Province of Isabela Team at Balai, Capitol Compound led by Gov. Albano, Provincial Planning





# ISABELA OPENS ITS OWN HEMODIALYSIS CENTER

Gov. Rodito Albano III and Rev. Fr. John Couvrer led the blessing and inauguration of the Gov. Faustino N. Dy, Sr. Memorial Hospital-Hemodialysis Center on September 30, 2020 at Calamagui 2nd, City of Ilagan, Isabela together with Isabela Provincial Health Officer and GFNDY Hospital Chief Dr. Nelson Paguirigan.

The GFNDY Hemodialysis Center is first of the 4 Dialysis Centers to be opened in the province to cater the growing need of the Isabeleños for the said treatment. The center has already 10 full operational Dialysis Machines ready for occupancy and service. The center can house 39 dialysis machines in full operation. Manned by newly-hired hemodialysis nurses headed by Dr. Imelda Amoroso-Nephrologist, the center has completed the DOH certification requirements.

Governor Rodito also expressed his gratitude to the people who have assisted in the realization of the hemodialysis center and to Cagayan Valley Medical Center Chief Dr. Glenn Matthew Baggao for the free medical assistance to the Isabeleños going to CVMC and for the Doctors and Specialists deployed in Isabela Hospitals. He also announced

the upcoming opening of 3 more Dialysis Centers, in Cabagan, Echague and Cauayan City to complete the dialysis center program of the province. He commended the doctors and nurses who prepared the center and expressed his appreciation to the Crucified Christ wounded with blood displayed at the entrance of the dialysis center that is very significant for Christ's blood cleanses the soul while the center cleanses the blood. He ended his message by asking the center's staff and workforce to maintain the cleanliness and orderliness of the facility.

Dr. Glenn Matthew Baggao Chief Cagayan Valley Medical Center also graced the activity as partner of the GFNDY in the delivery of quality healthcare service, in his message he informed the governor and the people of the Specialists deployed by CVMC to Isabela Hospitals to extend services and assistance to the medical needs of the Isabeleños and promised to continue helping the IPHO.

Dr. Emmanuel Salamanca OIC Chief of SIMC was also present and expressed his joy for the facility and said, *"malaking tulong ito sa mga pasyenteng Isabeleño."*

# SUPPLEMENTAL VACCINATION FOR POLIO, MEASLES ROLLS OUT IN ISABELA

"Ang tanging paraan upang maiwasan ang mga ito ay ang ligtas, epektibo at libreng bakuna. Layunin natin na walang bata ang magdusa o mamatay nang dahil sa tigdas, rubella at polio sa pamamagitan ng dagdag-bakuna."

GOVERNOR RODITO T. ALBANO, III



**Gov. Rodito T. Albano III pushed for better health for all Isabeleños and urged full participation of local chief executives including barangay officials in encouraging their constituents with children under five (5) years old to have them immunized and avail of the safe, effective and free measles-rubella and polio supplemental vaccine of the Department of Health (DOH).**

Measles or *"tigdas"* is a dangerous and fatal disease. In the Philippines, children under age of five (5) are very susceptible to measles, while polio is potentially debilitating disease that causes fever and muscle weakness and can eventually lead to a lifelong paralysis. There is no specific treatment for these illnesses.

*"Ang tanging paraan upang maiwasan ang mga ito ay ang ligtas, epektibo at libreng bakuna. Layunin natin na walang bata ang magdusa o mamatay nang dahil sa tigdas, rubella at polio sa pamamagitan ng dagdag-bakuna,"* Gov. Rodito said.

The DOH, supported by the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in coordination with Local Government Units (LGUs) is currently conducting a one-month nationwide Measles, Rubella and Oral

Polio Vaccine Supplemental Immunization Activity (MR-OPV-SIA) from October 26 to November 25, 2020.

Provincial Health Officer Dr. Nelson Paguirigan monitored the supplemental vaccination activity conducted at Brgy. District 2 in Gamu, Isabela by the vaccination team from Rural Health Unit (RHU) and Integrated Provincial Health Office (IPHO). The monitoring team was led by Dr. Imelda Guillermo, Ms. Patria Bagaoisan and National Immunization Program (NIP) Coordinator Chamille Jayne Claravall of IPHO.

Claravall said that the province kicked-off the immunization program on October 26, 2020. *"We already monitored the successful conduct of supplemental vaccination in the municipalities of San Pablo, Cabagan, San Mariano, Benito Soliven, Delfin Albano, Santo Tomas, Echague, San Isidro, Roxas, San Manuel, Luna, Quirino, Burgos, and now in Gamu and Naguilan,"* she said.

*"Children 9 to 59 months old will be given Measles-Rubella vaccine while 0-59 months old will be provided with oral Polio vaccine,"* Claravall added. Claravall assured that health care workers have been trained on prevention and control against COVID-19 like wearing of face mask and face shield, regular disinfection and observance of safe physical distancing to protect themselves, the children and their parents. Parents and children will also pass through a mandatory triaging and screening before they will be vaccinated.



# 62ND MALASAKIT CENTER OPENS IN ISABELA



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Sen. Bong Go together with Presidential Assistant for the Visayas Sec. Michael Lloyd Dino, Gov. Rodito Albano, Vice Gov. Bojie Dy, Cong. Tonyet Albano and Cong. Michael Dy during the Unveiling of the Marker of the first-ever Malasakit Center in the province located at the GFNDy Sr. Memorial Hospital, Calamagui 2nd, City of Ilagan, Isabela.

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**“Para sa amin, ang pagseserbisyo sa inyo ay serbisyo sa Diyos” said Sen. Christopher Lawrence “Bong” Go during his message at the opening of the 1st Isabela Malasakit Center located at the GFNDy Sr. Memorial Hospital in Calamagui 2nd, City of Ilagan, Isabela, making it the 62nd Malasakit Center in the country.**

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The Malasakit Center is a one-stop shop where indigent patients can efficiently access financial and medical assistance from agencies such as PhilHealth, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, the Department of Health and the Department of Social Welfare and Development Office.

*“Hindi na ninyo kailangang pumila sa iba’t ibang opisina. Palalagyan din natin ito ng express lane para sa senior citizens at persons with disabilities,” Go assured.*

Since the Malasakit Center targets “zero balance” billing he shared that the Provincial Government also allocated funds to the center as additional assistance just in case the four agencies are unable to pay for the entire bill of a patient. *“Pera niyo po ito, ibinabalik lang namin,”* he added.

The Center covers patient amenities and expenditures, such as laboratory tests, medications, operations and surgical procedures but excluding professional fees and private room accommodation. Senator Go also said that the tedious process for availment of financial medical assistance is a thing of the past because unlike before the process has also been simplified through a Malasakit unified form, which means there is only one form to fill-up for Filipinos requesting assistance.



# FIRST PRC MOLECULAR LAB IN REGION 2 NOW OPEN

The first Philippine Red Cross (PRC) Molecular Laboratory in Region 2 to expand the testing capacity of COVID-19 is now open in the City of Ilagan, Isabela. Located at the Isabela Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Complex, the PRC Molecular Laboratory was blessed and inaugurated on November 19, 2020, led by Senator Richard Gordon, Chair and Executive Officer of the PRC with Gov. Rodito Albano III, Vice Gov. Faustino Dy III, Cong. Antonio “Tonypet” Albano, LPGMA partylist representative Allan Ty and local officials of Isabela.

The inauguration was also witnessed by Iloilo City lone district representative, Congresswoman Julianne “Jam-Jam” Baronda, Mr. Robert Kaufman of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and Miss Universe Philippines 2020 Rabiya Mateo. Cong. Antonio “Tonypet” Albano and PRC Isabela Chapter Chairman said that the Molecular Laboratory, equipped with two (2) PCR machines and one (1) RNA extractor can process up to 2,000 tests a day in the fight against COVID-19. *“You can get the swabbing in other areas and they can be brought here. Puwede kayong mag-swab sa Abra, sa Quirino at dalhin dito and it can be finished within 24 hours,”* Sen. Gordon said.

He also said that the PRC will set-up a warehouse facility with payloader and other equipment to service Region 2. *“Matagal ko ng minimithi ito at palakpakan ninyo ang inyong mga leaders*

*at naitabi nila itong lugar na ito para maitayo natin kaagad,”* Senator Gordon said. The senator lauded the leadership of Gov. Rodito Albano III and Vice Governor Faustino Dy III. *“I’m very proud of them because they create unity in our community. The Dys and Albanos are models of unity, solidarity and teamwork,”* he added.

Meanwhile, Miss Universe Philippines 2020 Rabiya Mateo said that the year 2020 has been a very challenging year for everyone especially in Isabela because amidst the fight against COVID-19, the province was hit by Typhoon Ulysses. Rabiya donated one hundred thousand (P100,000.00) pesos cash to the Provincial Government of Isabela for the typhoon victims.

*“I’m very much honored to see people working together, people who are willing to give time and effort just to have this fight against COVID-19 virus. And one visible and tangible program that we have is this Philippine Red Cross Molecular Laboratory which is the backbone in order for us to fight the COVID-19 pandemic,”* Miss Mateo said.

Gov. Rodito Albano III expressed his gratitude to Senator Gordon and Miss Universe Philippines 2020 Rabiya Mateo. *“Sa ngalan po ng Isabela, Ninong Dick, Miss Universe hayaan ninyo kaming magpasalamat. Inspiradong-inspirado po kami sa inyo at makakaasa kayo na ang Isabela ay babangon. Babangon po kami,”* the governor said.

# PSA-Isabela sets up 3 nat'l ID registration kiosks at the prov'l capitol

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA-Isabela) brings the Philippine Identification System (PhilSys) institutional registration closer to the employees of the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI).

PSA-Isabela had set up three (3) registration kiosks at the Provincial Capitol Amphitheater that could accommodate at least 45 registrants a day from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. PGI employs 1,343 permanent employees including health workers and administrative personnel in provincially-maintained hospitals and 1,811 hired contractuels or job order workers.

With strict observance of social distancing and “no face mask, no entry” policy to mitigate spread of COVID-19, the registration started on July 5, 2021 which lasted for several days. The process involved validating supporting documents and capturing biometric information such as fingerprints, iris scan and front-facing photograph.



## Components of PhilSys

### PhilSys number or PSN

The registrant's unique and permanent identification number. The PSN contains highly sensitive data and should remain confidential.

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### PhilID

A non-transferable card, which contains demographic and biometric information



### PhilSys registry

Contains all registered records encoded in the system



Early May this year, PhilSys inked a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Local Government Units (LGUs) and shopping malls in the province, thereby ramping up its registration at SM Mall Cauayan City, L2 Cinema Lobby, accommodating 18 to 65 years old with strict implementation of safety protocols from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Saturday. The registration also kicked off at Robinsons Place Mall in Santiago City, Northstar Mall in the City of Ilagan, followed by malls in Tumauni and Cabagan, and later at different LGUs across the province.

Statistical Specialist Cristilou Geronimo of PSA-Isabela said during the orientation that the PSA is mandated as the implementing agency pursuant to Republic Act No. 11055, otherwise known as the “Philippine Identification System Act” to establish a single national identification system for all citizens in the Republic of the Philippines.

Geronimo underscored the importance of PhilSys as a valid proof of identity. She said that with PhilSys, transactions in both public and private will be made simple, safe and efficient through a singular identification that will provide access to financial, social protection, health, education and other government services.

After the registration at the kiosk, the PSA handed out to each registrant an electronically generated copy of PhilSys Transaction Slip with QR code that will be presented when claiming the PhilID card. The issuance of the PhilSys number (PSN) and the PhilID is the final step of the PhilSys registration. The PSN is a randomly generated number, and will serve as a permanent identification number for every registrant used for digital transactions. PSA partnered with PHLPost for the delivery of the PSN and the PhilID to successful registrants.

# 5 RRs with high-powered firearms surrenders to Gov. Rodito



*ninyo. Hindi namin kayo pababayaan. Ipapakita namin sa inyo na sinsero kami. At ang pagtulong namin ay hindi lamang pansamantala,”* Gov. Rodito assured former rebels while urging others still out in the underground movement to return to the mainstream society and start life anew.

DILG Provincial Director Corazon Toribio said that every rebel returnee-recipient will soon receive financial aid that covers P15,000.00 immediate cash assistance and another P50,000.00 for livelihood assistance. She also said that RRs will also receive firearms remuneration for every surrendered firearms.

The Provincial Government Isabela (PGI) recently assisted seven (7) RRs in Jones, Isabela to become recipients for 1.5 hectares of farmlands each through the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR). Another group of five (5) RRs in Quirino, Isabela also become recipients to the 9-hectares of farmland under the National Greening Program of the DENR. The PGI, through the Provincial Social Welfare Development Office also assisted seven (7) RRs to avail financial assistance of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

Colonel Remigio Dulatre, Assistant Chief of Staff for Civil Military Operations, G7, 5th Infantry Division, said that they are aware of the consequences upon surrender of these former rebels. *“We will give them enough protection and security. Ang ating foresight ay tuloy-tuloy ang ating suporta sa kanila para hindi na yan babalik,”* he said.



Five (5) former members of the CPP-NPA-NDF together with four (4) high powered firearms, one (1) low powered firearm, twenty-eight (28) Improvised Explosive Devices and 205 rifle grenades surrendered earlier today, July 7, 2021 at Balai, Provincial Capitol, City of Ilagan, Isabela to Gov. Rodito Albano III being the Chairman of the Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC), Provincial Task Force to End Local Armed Conflict (PTF-ELCAC), and Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP).

Brigade CMO Officer Capt Joter Lobo of 502nd IB, presented the surrenderees to Gov. Rodito and said that the surrender of these former rebels is the result of their continuous peace and development operations in the Province of Isabela. *“By highlighting the surrender of these former rebels, we would be able to increase awareness of the effectiveness of the PPOC, PTF-ELCAC and E-CLIP programs and likewise encourage more surrenderees among the remaining rebels in the province,”* he said.

Gov. Rodito welcomed the former rebels and thanked them for putting their trust in the government. *“Ako’y nagagalak na ang ating mga kapatid ay nanunumbalik sa ating pamahalaan, patunay na nagtitiwala sila sa pamumuno ni Pres. Rodrigo Duterte sa kanyang pamamalakad sa ating pamahalaan para mabigyan sila ng pag-asa para sa kanilang pamilya at sa kanilang kinabukasan,”* the Governor said.

*“Ang ating pagtulong ay kabuoan. Hindi lang yung basta bigyan kayo ng pera ay bahala na kayo. Kargo na namin kayo at responsibilidad na namin ang buhay*

Forging partnership through the years...



# VICE GOV. "BOJIE" DY III

*Kaisa ni "Kuya Gov" laban sa pandemya*

If there's anything he inherited from his father, the late Gov. Faustino N. Dy Sr., it is the will to tirelessly do the work of public service, with his enduring commitment, that in Isabela, "We endeavor to serve, not to be served."

For Vice Gov. Faustino "Bojie" Dy III, it is the noble duty of a public servant to serve the Isabela constituency that fueled him to continue serving and uphold good governance with the highest degree of integrity, honesty, transparency and accountability.

As the presiding officer of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Isabela, Vice Gov. Dy is in a unique position to align and complement the Provincial Legislative Agenda to the executive's initiatives in fulfilling its mandates and functions. The Sangguniang Panlalawigan has, and always will, remain devoted in pursuing and attaining the goals of the 2020 to 2022 Executive-Legislative Agenda of the province, and together make crucial developments possible on health, education, economic, environmental, institutional and social development.

#### TOWARDS DISASTER-RESILIENT ISABELA

When he was governor of the province, unpretentious Vice Gov. Dy was immediately faced with super typhoon Juan on October 18, 2010. He always said he never forget that day, that is why the provincial government heightened its disaster preparedness and resiliency and became all the more ready for typhoons. Hence, on the onslaught of the November 2020 Typhoon Ulysses, Vice Gov. Dy side by side with Gov. Rodito Albano III conducted an inspection of Cansan-Bagutari Bridge in Cabagan, Isabela.

For guidance and further action of Gov. Albano, the Provincial Board passed Resolution No. 2020-40-1 series of 2020, declaring the entire province of Isabela under a State of Calamity on November 12, 2020 due to the cumulative effects of Typhoons Rolly, Siony, and Ulysses, and torrential rains from November 1 - 12, 2020. The declaration afforded the Provincial Government and Local Government Units (LGUs) within its jurisdiction the opportunity to utilize all appropriate funds to further strengthen their response and relief efforts to affected people in their respective territories.

#### CHAMPIONING EDUCATION THROUGH BRO-ED

"Ang paniniwala kasi namin ni Kuya Gov na sa pamamagitan ng mataas na edukasyon ay makakarating ang ating mga kabataan sa mas magandang kinabukasan at maiangat nila ang antas ng kabuhayan ng kanilang pamilya at kanilang mga sarili," Vice Gov. Dy declared.

Now, on its 11th year since its establishment in 2010, the PGI continues to grant scholarship to college students through the BRO-Education Program.

"Tayo po sa Isabela ang naging inspirasyon para maging batas ang libreng tuition fee at miscellaneous fees sa lahat ng state colleges and universities sa buong bansa sapagkat nakita nila noong nag-uumpisa ang BRO Program noong 2010, ang bilang ng estudyante ng Isabela State University ay halos 20,000 lamang samantalang 15,000 scholars sa ating probinsya. Kaya ngayon, pinakikinabangan na ng Kabataang Pilipino ang libreng tuition at miscellaneous fees sa lahat ng state colleges and universities," Dy said.

Vice Gov. Dy also lauded the diligence and dedicated service among Isabeleño teachers. "Bagong paghamon ang ating kinakaharap ngayon - pandemya na patuloy na lumalakas, subalit dahil sa kagustuhan natin na mabigyan ng tamang direksiyon ang kinabukasan ng ating mga Kabataang Isabeleño, nandiyan kayong mga guro namin na hindi matatawaran ang kasipagan at pagtitiyaga upang matiyak na mabigyan sila ng de-kalidad na edukasyon," he said. He assured the academic sector of the continued support and assistance of the PGI and the Sangguniang Panlalawigan to ensure meaningful implementation of the learning continuity plan and alternative learning initiatives amidst the pandemic.

#### DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS IN BATTLING SURGE OF CHALLENGES

Vice Gov. Dy commended Labor Secretary Silvestre "Bebot" Bello and President Rodrigo Duterte for the delivery of programs in

assisting the people through DOLE's TUPAD program. "Ang tanging layunin nitong tulong ng national government katuwang ang PGI ay upang ang bawat mamamayan natin dito sa Isabela ay sabay-sabay na makabangon at makaahon. Tayo ay laging umiikot para tugunan ang hamon ng pandemya at maipaabot at maiparamdam sa ating mga kababayan na ang PGI ay laging nandiyan, maaasahan at masasandalan ngayong pandemya. Ang pakiusap lamang po namin na sana itong kaunting ayuda ay matiyak na makatulong at makaangat sa inyong pamumuhay," he said.

#### STRENGTHENING CAMPAIGN ON MPH5

Wherever he goes, Vice Gov. Dy makes it sure to deliver prompt messages to the public in order to slow the spread of COVID-19 by strictly adhering to Minimum Public Health Standards (MPHS).

"Napakahalaga ng kaligtasan natin kaya magpasalamat po tayo sa Poong Maykapal sapagkat nakaraos po tayo sa mga pagsubok ng pandemya. Pero hindi po tayo doon tumitigil. Ngayong may bagong variant, mas paigtigin natin ang ating pag-iingat at tiyakin na maging ligtas ang ating mga sarili at kapwa-Isabeleño. Kaya please lamang po ay sumunod tayo sa mga protocols. Kapag kayo ay ligtas, ang katabi ninyo, ang kasama ninyo sa bahay, mga kapitbahay at kabarangayan ninyo ay maging ligtas din," he said.

#### RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES TO CURB SURGES OF COVID-19: TALIPAPA SA BARANGAY

Resolution No. 2020-36-2 series of 2020, a Resolution encouraging City and Municipal Mayors in the province to establish a "Talipapa" in each barangay or cluster of barangays within their respective jurisdictions to serve as a market accessibility strategy for people affected by restrictions on transportation and to minimize the occurrence of mass convergence of people in public markets during COVID-19 pandemic.



## NO STOPPING THE SANGGUNIAN THIS PANDEMIC: *Authoring the Path Towards a Strong Economic Rebound*

The Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) stepped up to the challenge posed by the highly infectious and fast-spreading COVID-19. Despite this pandemic, the SP grew more active in fulfilling its duty to pass legislative measures that protects and benefits Isabeleños.

Vice Governor Dy's introduction of video conferencing applications as an acceptable means of attendance and participation to SP meetings, sessions, and hearings in 2019 was instrumental to the SP's swift adaptation to the social and mobility restrictions imposed by community quarantines. Through virtual sessions, the SP was able to promptly deliberate proposed measures and timely pass relevant, strategic, and crucial local laws that strengthen the Province's capacity to address COVID-19 and lay the foundations for its strong economic rebound.

In lighting the path towards the Province's recovery, Vice Governor Dy identified three key areas that needs to be immediately addressed: Vaccine Hesitance; Growing Unemployment, and; Low Business Confidence Rates. The SP

hopes to resolve these three issues through its passage of Resolution No. 2021-28-02, Ordinance No. 2020-34-02, and Ordinance No. 2021-07-01.

Resolution No. 2021-28-02, authored and sponsored by Vice Governor Dy, established COVID-19 vaccines as important tools for recovery as a policy in the Province's fight against the pandemic. This Resolution urged qualified Isabeleños to undergo COVID-19 vaccination and to continuously follow health protocols. It also told Isabeleños to not be concerned with the efficacy and the rumored side effects of COVID-19 vaccines as such have undergone numerous and extensive clinical trials by credible departments.

On the other hand, Ordinance No. 2020-34-02 created the Provincial Public Employment Service Office (PPESO) while Ordinance No. 2021-07-01 expanded the responsibilities of the Provincial Cooperative Development Office which is now called the Provincial Cooperative, Livelihood, and Enterprise Development Office (PCLEDO). The two Ordinances aim to facilitate the Province's

economic recovery through job creation while simultaneously enhancing the job competitiveness of Isabeleños.

The creation of the PCLEDO is expected to spur business creation and job generation through the institutionalization of government assistance to those that aspire to put up an MSME and a Cooperative in the Province and to existing MSMEs and Cooperatives. Meanwhile, the PPESO will improve the employment value of Isabeleño job seekers while assisting local businesses in their search for individuals that suit their corporate needs. This synergizes and facilitates both the job searching and job hiring process in the Province.

Aside from these three Ordinances that aim to improve employment rates and business confidence in the Province, Vice Governor Dy, together with the SP Members, are working with several government departments and other concerned sectors in the formulation of measures that will aid and protect Isabeleños from COVID-19 and ensure the Province's quick return to its pre-pandemic growth rates.

### **SP TACKLES FREQUENT POWER OUTAGE AND HIGH ELECTRICITY PRICES IN ISABELA**

Responding to the calls and outcry of many Isabeleños, the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) held Legislative Investigations to determine the reasons behind the frequent power outage and high electricity prices in the Province. For such reason, the SP summoned the officials of ISELCO I and ISELCO II and invited several of their consumer-members.

During the course of the SP's Investigation, both ISELCOs admitted that the power outages and high electricity rates were caused by low electricity supply and the abrupt shutdown of their electricity suppliers San Miguel Energy Corporation (SMEC) and Anda Power Corporation (APC).

Consequently, as claimed by both ISELCOs, they were forced to buy from Wholesale Electricity Spot Market which has higher rates compared to SMEC and APC.

In addition to this, it was also revealed that the over collections of both ISELCOs from previous years that were ordered by the Electric Regulation Commission (ERC) to be refunded to their consumer-members were not reflected in the Electricity Bills.

Dissatisfied with the excuse of both ISELCOs, the SP issued Resolution No. 2021-27-02 requesting the ERC to allow both ISELCOs to reflect in their electric bills the refund rates of their consumer-members. Also, the SP urged ISELCO officials to help ease the financial difficulties being experienced by their consumer-members considering the lingering effects of the ongoing pandemic which was exacerbated by the sudden rise in electricity prices.

While the SP Investigation is still ongoing as of this date, it has already managed ISELCO I

to waive their Service Fees for the months of July, August, and September 2021 and ISELCO II to stop their collection of Surcharges starting July 2021.

While waiting for the ERC's response to Resolution No. 2021-27-02, the SP has required ISELCO II, thru Resolution, to amend their Power Supply Contracts with SMEC and APC to increase their contract capacity and include a power replacement clause to prevent sudden spikes in electricity prices in times of supply insufficiency. At present, the SP is anticipating a response to the Resolution No. 2021-27-03 urging National Electrification Administration (NEA) to conduct an immediate financial and legal audit on the transactions of both ISELCOs from 2016 up to the present. The SP also reminded ISELCO officials to always be mindful of the conditions of their consumer-members.

# ISABELA, ONE OF THE 5 PILOT PROVINCES OF THE BP2 PROGRAM WELCOMES HOME 9 FAMILIES TO START LIFE ANEW

The province of Isabela is one of the five pilot provinces for the Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa (BP2) program, the other provinces being Lanao del Norte, Camarines Sur, Leyte and Zamboanga del Norte. Under the BP2 program, two batches of beneficiaries consisting of 9 families or a total of 24 individuals were received in the province. The first batch arrived on March 26 and April 7, 2021 at Capirpiriwan, Cordon and Roxas, Isabela respectively, while the second batch on July 9, 2021 were received at PSWDO Building, Alibagu, City of Ilagan, Isabela.



Despite minor transportation delays, the second batch of the “Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-asa” (BP2) program beneficiaries safely arrived at the drop-off point at the PSWDO Building, IDRRM Complex, Alibagu, City of Ilagan, Isabela on July 9, 2021. They are those living at the National Capital Region (NCR) who are either affected by the pandemic, displaced workers, or living in dangerous areas who wished to go home to the provinces voluntarily.

BP2-Isabela Focal Person and PPDO Atty. Eduardo Cabantac led the BP2 Isabela Provincial Task Group as they welcomed the beneficiaries. He was joined by DILG Provincial Director Corazon Toribio, SDS Madelyn Macalling of DepEd-Isabela as well regional counterparts to include NHA, DA, DSWD and DOH and some department heads from the provincial government.

“Kung ano ang excitement ninyo na umuwi dito ay ganoon din po ang excitement namin na kayo ay tanggapin at makapiling dito sa Isabela kung saan maraming oportunidad na naghihintay sa inyo na makapamuhay ng mapayapa, matiwasay at ligtas,” said PIO Atty. Elizabeth Binag as she welcomed the BP2 beneficiaries underscoring that even before the BP2 program was institutionalized by the national government, Gov. Rodito Albano III already manifested to Pres. Rodrigo Duterte that all Isabelenos trapped in a lockdown in Metro Manila due to COVID-19 pandemic are all welcome, should they wish to return home in Isabela.

Three (3) principal beneficiaries and six (6) family members for a total of nine (9) individuals returned home, rebuild their lives and stay in the Province of Isabela for good. They were fetched by the receiving Local Government Units (LGUs) of San Mariano, Tumauni and City of Ilagan.

Prior to their dispatch, the beneficiaries were on a 14-day home quarantine in Manila. At the drop-off point, health assessment was conducted to ensure their health condition. Their qualification documents to include the RT-PCR negative results were also presented and verified. Upon arrival to their respective barangays, the beneficiaries will be subjected to protocols to ensure that all health and safety protocols are followed.



Under the program, recipients receive government aid such as free transportation, food, cash, livelihood assistance, educational assistance, and other personal needs as part of the Transitory Family Support Package.

The Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) handed out immediate cash assistance of P5,000.00 each to the principal beneficiaries and P1,000.00 each for family members, plus a sack of rice, grocery and health packs. They also received vegetable seeds and seedlings from DA-Region 2, food packs and hygiene kits from DSWD Region 2, health supplements from DOH-Region 2 and school bags for children from DepEd-Isabela. This is the second batch of the BP2 program beneficiaries for the Province of Isabela.



The first dispatch composed of five (5) principal beneficiaries for a total of fifteen (15) individuals were dropped and fetched by receiving LGUs at Capirpiriwan, Cordon on March 26, 2021 and in Roxas, Isabela on April 7, 2021.

To avail of the program, information can be found at the balikprobinsya.ph website. Required documents are valid identification cards and birth certificates of minor children.

# GOV. ALBANO DECLARES THE PROVINCE OF ISABELA UNDER STATE OF CALAMITY DUE TO TYPHOON ULYSSES

Gov. Rodito Albano III declared the Province of Isabela under State of Calamity through a Resolution approved and adopted by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan on its Special Session held at the Provincial Capitol on November 12, 2020 due to the cumulative effects and torrential rains wrought by Typhoons Rolly, Siony and Ulysses and torrential rains.

The Isabela Provincial Board, in its Resolution No. 2020-40-1 series of 2020, sponsored by Committee on Disaster Preparedness Chairperson Alfred Alili stated that the *“province is experiencing widespread devastation due to the occurrence of torrential rains and the successive entry of Typhoons Rolly, Siony and Ulysses and within the twelve-day period, particularly Typhoon Rolly on November 1, Typhoon Siony on November 6, and Typhoon Ulysses on November 12.”*

The heavy rainfall caused rapid and extensive flooding in various areas in the province. Resultantly, countless homes, crops and farmlands were submerged; roads and bridges became impassable, while numerous established closed operations and many Isabeleños were evacuated.

The declaration allowed the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) and Local Government Units (LGUs) within its jurisdiction the opportunity to utilize all appropriate funds to further strengthen their response and relief efforts to affected people and the province’s agriculture and economy.

Provincial Agriculturist Marites Frogoso reported summary of damages to rice, corn, fisheries during the Agriculture and Rehabilitation Meeting on November 23, 2020. Frogoso said that typhoons Pepito, Rolly and Ulysses wiped out 153,571.91 metric tons of palay across 73,151.79 hectares of rice farms affecting 60,577 farmers in 32 municipalities/cities with a total value of loss at P1,916,938,976.23.

The province also sustained damage to corn to as much as 1,434,20 hectares, with volume production loss of 11,706.48 metric tons affecting 4,652 farmers in 28 municipalities/cities with a total value of loss at P212,823,508.06. The typhoons also damaged 190.39 hectares in fisheries, affecting 961 fishpond/fish cage and boat operators in 26 municipalities with a total value loss of P61,639,387.50. Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officer Jimmy Rivera reported three (3) deaths due to drowning and two (2) persons missing.

In his message of thanks, Gov. Rodito expressed gratitude for all the overwhelming support to all those who extended assistance during the massive flooding in the province.

Meanwhile, in a post disaster assessment on the ill effects and magnitude of damage brought about by Typhoon Ulysses, it was noted that several low-lying barangays and municipalities in the province had been isolated and could not be reached immediately due to the high water level and strong currents. Rescue and relief operations had been promptly undertaken by the PDRMO using existing rescue equipment consisting of rescue boats up to 40 horsepower.

Given the immense flooding and the condition of the rising waters, *“We will be re-directing our resources for disaster preparedness – we will upgrade our equipment for disaster response, yung mga boats natin na hanggang 40 horsepower lang, hindi na sufficient dahil sa lubhang mataas ang tubig,”* Gov. Rodito declared.



To date, the PGI acquired a new 27 footer ALS Fiberglass Enduro Boat as an initial step to upgrade the rescue equipment of the province.



**“Disaster preparedness has always been a way of life in the province kaya madali kaming nakakabangon, but I have never seen such kindness of people as much as I have seen today.”**

**ATTY. NOEL MANUEL R. LOPEZ, PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATOR**  
In his welcome message to PDRRC Pangasinan during the Ulysses post-typhoon briefing

# TEAM ISABELA WELCOMES PANGASINAN PDRRC

**“We will remember this day as the day when a fellow province from the North came to assist us,” said Atty. Noel Manuel R. Lopez, Provincial Administrator as he expressed gratitude to the delegation from Pangasinan province in a post-typhoon briefing with its Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council held at the GFNDy Sr. Session Hall, Provincial Capitol, Alibagu, City of Ilagan, Isabela on November 25, 2020.**

Hand-in-hand with PDRRCMO Jimmy U. Rivera, PA Lopez laid out the best practices of Isabela in terms of disaster preparedness and management over the years ever since it has been adjudged as the Best PDRRC in the Philippines.

*“Disaster preparedness has always been a way of life in the province kaya madali kaming nakakabangon,”* he emphasized.

*“No amount of money can equal the experience that you will see when you go to a province that is devastated by a disaster,”* Lopez said as he remembers leading the Team Isabela Relief Mission in the typhoon-stricken province of Leyte in 2013 where they conducted medical, rescue and relief operations for five days.

Speaking from experience PA Lopez affirmed that he has never seen a flooding as massive as the flooding caused by Typhoon Ulysses, *“But I have never seen such kindness of people as much as I have seen today,”* he added. Atty. Lopez welcomed the PDRRC of Pangasinan in behalf of Governor Rodito Albano, III.

# Ang aming Taos-Pusong Pasasalamat!



“

*Kami po ay taos-pusong nagpapasalamat sa lahat ng nagpaabot ng kanilang tulong sa mga nasalanta ng matinding pagbaha dulot ng bagyong Ulysses dito sa aming lalawigan sa Isabela.*

*Napakalaki ng pinsalang iniwan ng kalamidad na ito subalit mapalad pa rin kami dahil napakarami ng mga may mabubuting kalooban na nagkusang dumamay at nagmalasakit sa amin. Dahil sa inyong agarang pagtugon at bukal sa kalooban na pagtulong, ipinadama ninyo sa amin na hindi kami nag-iisa, damang dama namin ang inyong pagmamahal.*

*Maraming maraming Salamat po sa inyong lahat at pagpalain nawa kayo ng Diyos!*

**- Governor Rodito T. Albano III**



IT IS WHEN YOU ARE DOWN  
THAT YOUR TRUE FRIENDS COME  
AND YOU DID COME TO OUR SUCCOR.  
**MABBALO!**



# ISABELA BIDA SA BAKUNA!

MARDITO NA ANG  
**RESBAKUN**  
KASANGGA NG BIDA

