

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 13, 2007

DepEd Updates Bicol Rehab Report

The Bicol Calamity Assistance and Rehabilitation Efforts (BCARE) initiated by the Department of Education has reported a 92 percent actual physical accomplishment in the construction and repair of school buildings damaged by super typhoons Milenyo and Reming in 2006.

BCARE has identified 2,220 school sites where some 771 new classrooms are up for construction and 7,142 are for repairs.

Figures from DepEd's Region V office showed that as of November 30, 2007 classroom construction and repair are proceeding at a steady pace with Catanduanes, Tabaco City, Naga City and Sorsogon City showing a 100-percent completion in the repair and construction of new school buildings.

In the province of Albay, outside of Tabaco City, project completion rate is at 94%. In Camarines Sur city divisions except for Naga City, DepEd reports accomplishment rate of 89 percent. Camarines Norte's rehabilitation project is 92 % complete while Masbate posted a 98% completion. Sorsogon, except for Sorsogon City, managed an 87 % accomplishment.

"Of the 14 congressional districts in Region V, only 4 reported less than 90 % physical accomplishments although we are given assurance that all on-going works should be completed before year-end," Education Secretary Jesli A. Lapus said.

Under BCARE, DepEd has earmarked some P1.2 billion for the construction of new classrooms and repair of damaged ones in Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte, Catanduanes, Masbate and Sorsogon.

BCARE is similar to a mini-Marshall plan specifically put up to rehabilitate Bicol after suffering the brunt of the succession of super typhoons in 2006.

"Some schoolbuildings -- designed to withstand earthquake and typhoons -- can also be used as evacuation centers in times of calamity," Lapus added.

Aside from a hazard-resistant building constructed in Legazpi City, another 15 all-concrete school buildings are currently under construction in the Bicol region. Lapus said the United Nations Children Emergency Fund funded 12 more similar buildings in Bicol.

END

PRESS RELEASE