

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DepEd Bicol rehab nears completion

The Department of Education reports a 98 percent actual physical accomplishment in the construction and repair of school buildings under the Bicol Calamity Assistance and Rehabilitation Efforts (BCARE).

“We have informed President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo that of all government agencies in Bicol, DepEd is the first among BCARE agencies to complete its rehabilitation targets,” said BCARE Commission Executive Director Dr Anthony Golez during the last inter-agency coordinating meeting last January 17 at Camp Aguinaldo.

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 Physical Facilities and Schools Engineering Division (PFSED) showed that as of January 7, 2008, classroom construction and repair are proceeding at a steady pace with all provinces reaching almost 100-percent completion in the repair and construction of new school buildings.

DepEd is still short of full accomplishment. Specifically, in the case of Maipon Elementary School whose buildings were completely covered by mud, the entire school needs to be relocated to another site. A few other schools are yet to complete construction due to its isolated locations that limit delivery of construction materials. These schools are either located on separate islands or in remote areas not easily accessible to vehicular traffic.

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. The effort of the United States to rebuild and strengthen allied countries in Europe after World War II was called the Marshall Plan, named after then Secretary of State George Marshall.

DepEd also constructed 15 typhoon-resistant school buildings in Camarines Sur, Legaspi City, and Albay. Six more buildings of this type are being put up around Bicol with funding from the United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF). Another six will be constructed in Region 4-B MIMAROPA also through UNICEF.

This new type of school building doubles as academic classroom and evacuation center. It is made of concrete and steel and elevated one meter above the ground.

END

PRESS RELEASE