

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Pres. Arroyo orders rehab of schools damaged by typhoon Cosme

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo today led in the assessment of the damage caused by typhoon Cosme and ordered the rehabilitation of some 135 schools in Pangasinan, La Union and Zambales amounting to over P210 million.

The chief executive was joined by Education Secretary Jesli Lapus who earlier briefed her on the extent of damage especially on school buildings.

Sec. Lapus earlier ordered school officials in the typhoon stricken areas to immediately make an assessment on the damage brought by the typhoon. Initial reports showed that Region 3 suffered the brunt of the typhoon with damages reported at P192 million. Hardest hit was the town of St Cruz in Zambales with some P79 million losses. Damages in Region1 were recorded at P116 million with Pangasinan reporting losses at P 59 million.

Lapus said that the DepEd intends to use the funds allotted in its "quick response" budget but this was not enough. He also hoped getting the support of the Local Government Units with their special education fund.

"We need the help of all those who have the means in order for us to at least normalize the situation in the typhoon stricken areas in time for the opening of classes", Lapus appealed.

Meanwhile, the DepEd has started ferrying textbooks in Central Luzon in time for the nationwide opening of classes on Jun 10. To ensure that the textbooks are delivered promptly, Pres. Arroyo has put "do not delay" stickers on trucks carrying the textbooks in Guiguinto, Bulacan.

Sec. Lapus also ordered school heads, especially those in typhoon prone areas, to take all the necessary action in anticipation of the coming typhoon months. PAGASA earlier reported that about two cyclones can be expected to hit the country during the year.

During the interagency conference in preparation for the opening of classes in June, the PAGASA reported that bad weather during the month of June when classes open, is mostly towards Northern Luzon. It was also reported that heavy rains will be expected during the month of July when schools have just opened.

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