

DAR, JICA grant P334-M rural projects to Mindanao IPs, farmers

MANILA — To boost economic opportunities for agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARB) in Mindanao, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), in partnership with the Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA), turned over various infrastructure and crop and food production projects in support of the country’s rural development program.

The PHP334-million worth of support services includes solar dryers, farm-to-market roads, bridges, communal irrigations, potable water systems, and production of rubber, coffee, abaca, pili, rice, and corn projects.

These were constructed and implemented in the provinces of Lanao del Norte, Bukidnon, Davao del Sur, Compostela Valley, South, and North Cotabato.

DAR Secretary John Castriciones, who led the

ceremonial turnover, said he expected a big economic turnaround for farm communities in Mindanao now that these infrastructure projects are completed and the food and crop production are on-going.

“These projects are significant in achieving progress in rural communities. These were implemented not only to make life easier for our farmers but also to sustain the development of their communities,” Castriciones said.

“Projects such as these were provided because it is what the farming communities really need to spur rural development, and it is the reason why DAR is here for them,” he added.

The DAR chief said that among those who will benefit from the infrastructure projects are the IPs, specifically, the Blaans, Mansakas, and

Mandayas, who were given land titles under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

These IPs reside in settlements established by the government in the municipalities of Matanao and Magsaysay in Davao del Sur (for the Blaans) and in Maragusan and New Bataan in Compostela Valley (for the Mansakas and Mandayas).

DAR Undersecretary for Foreign-Assisted Projects Bernie Cruz said the projects implemented under the Mindanao Sustainable Agrarian and Agriculture Development (MinSAAD) Project aims to increase productivity and income of farmers through provision of agricultural infrastructure and enhance their knowledge and skills in farming and business through capacity building activities.

“Our intervention is to help farmers develop technologies to increase pro-

duction and income. We truly believe that the best incentive for our farmers to plant and for their agri-business to flourish, is to support them through the provision of infrastructures like these,” Cruz said.

He added that more than 6,000 ARBs, non-ARBs, and IPs will soon start reaping the benefits of these projects from MinSAAD.

“Infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and irrigation facilities are vital components in the Department’s drive to spur rural development in farm communities. These rural infrastructures would greatly help farmers and IPs increase their productivity and income,” Cruz said.

MinSAAD, a PHP4.4-billion project between JICA and the Philippine government, started in 2012 and has since been assisting 110,000 ARBs in Mindanao in DAR’s 12 settlements in 27 municipalities. (PR)

PH passport is 80th most powerful in the world

MANILA -- Philippine passport holders can now travel to 64 destinations with visa-free access -- putting the country on the 80th spot in the global ranking.

Of this number, 34 countries allow Filipinos to enter visa-free while 30 others require visa-on-arrival (Sri Lanka on electronic Travel Authorization).

An exclusive data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA) quoted the 2019 Henley Passport Index showing the country’s rating at 75th in 2018.

Japan and Singapore lead the ranking with visa-free access to 189 destina-

tions while Afghanistan is lowest at 109th with 25 visa-free destinations.

Though pushed backward, the data also stated an economic boost among Asia Pacific nations.

“In Asia Pacific, international migration and mobility have become increasingly more complex, dynamic, and diverse, shaping the overall social, economic, and demographic conditions in the region,” it said.

The Henley Passport Index in the third quarter of 2019 reported that the United Nations estimate in 2017 showed that there were 80 million international mi-

grants in the countries and areas comprising Asia Pacific.

International migration has not only helped stabilize economic growth in Asia Pacific but also enabled many labor-sending countries to sustain strong economic growth, even in times of crisis.

International migration has strengthened labor market mobility, remittances, and trade across Asia Pacific.

“For example, the Philippines has obtained USD33 billion in remittances from migrants, while other countries in the region—

including China (USD64 billion), Pakistan (USD20 billion), and India (USD69 billion)— have likewise received remittances that have been vital to their economies,” the study added.

Recently, Taiwan extended its visa-free privilege for Filipinos for another year, the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (Teco) announced Tuesday.

First implemented in 2017, it conveyed an increase in the number of Filipinos visiting Taiwan. In 2018, 419,000 Filipinos visited the country-- around 44% higher compared to 2017.

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PATAS AT MAKATARUNGANG PAHAYAGAN

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Prayer for Healing

JESUS, may Your pure and healthy blood circulate in my ailing organism, and may Your pure and healthy body transform my weak body, and may a healthy and vigorous life throb within me, if it is truly Your holy will. Amen.

O BLOOD AND WATER WHICH FLOWED OUT FROM THE HEART OF JESUS AS A FOUNTAIN OF MERCY FOR US, I TRUST IN YOU!



Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, Have Mercy on us and on the whole world. Amen.

3 O’CLOCK PRAYER

“You died Jesus, but the source of life flowed out for souls and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fountain of Life immeasurable Divine Mercy, cover the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us.”

“O Blood and Water which flowed out from the heart of Jesus as a Fountain of Mercy for us, I trust in you!”

“Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One have mercy on us and on the whole world.” (3x) Amen.

Jesus, King of Mercy, I trust in you!

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