



# Linkage

A Publication of the Regional Development Council 02

March 2015

*Boasting  
Regional Progress  
through*



## SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION



## EDITORIAL TEAM

**Consultants**  
RD MARYANNE ER. DARAUAY  
RD PURITA S. LICAS

**Editor-in-Chief**  
ANGELO C. SANTOS

**Managing Editor**  
ANNE Y. LASAM

**Article Writers and Lay-out Artists**  
DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH DIVISION

**Contributors**  
RDC2 Members

News and feature articles are welcome and may be submitted to the RDC2 Secretariat c/o NEDA RO2. However, the RDC2 reserves the right to choose and edit articles for publication. Comments and suggestions are also accepted.

The RDC Linkage is published quarterly by the Regional Development Council 2.

Visit our website: [www.rdc2.gov.ph](http://www.rdc2.gov.ph)

## ABOUT THE COVER

This quarter's issue highlights how modern technologies and ways of doing things can aid the Regional Development Council 2 in boosting regional progress and steering the region towards its desired goals. The RDC 2 recognizes that science, technology, and innovation all help improve the region's productivity.



Phone: (078) 304-9300  
Fax: (078) 304-1243  
E-mail: [neda\\_ro2@yahoo.com](mailto:neda_ro2@yahoo.com)



# Linkage

March 2015 Issue

## What's inside this issue:

### RDC CORNER

EDC welcomes new member, proposes investment website | 4

RDC 2 resolves issue of labor displacement due to DA's Farm Mech Program | 4

RDC 2 encourages more non-teaching personnel in the SUCs | 5

CODAC pushes budgeting framework, gets nod of RDC 2 | 5

Making Region 2 technology self-reliant | 6

Approved RDC 2 Resolutions | 8

RDC 2 endorses irrigation project to the ICC | 9

RDC 2, CODAC help mitigate effects of CO<sub>2</sub> emission | 10

RDC 2 endorses proposal to increase travel allowance of gov't personnel | 11

New school buildings & classrooms ready for K to 12 program | 16

### AROUND THE REGION

2015 Bambanti showcases local products | 12

Isinai tribe eyes loom weaving machine | 12

Ivatan farmers train on agri-tech, livelihood production | 12

MSMEs to benefit from DOST's P4M SETUP projects | 13

Tuguegarao City enacts investment & incentives code | 13

### AGENCY WATCH

P2.2M FMR project to ease transpo in Buguey ARC | 14

DILG launches Robredo project, initiates agreement | 14

2015 is Visit the Philippines Year! | 15

### FEATURE

How the economy fared in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter | 3

Inside the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2015 RPMES Report | 11

### PHOTO NEWS

Recognizing Region 2's development achievers | 8

The RDC 2 and the LGUs: A Winning Tandem | 9

What's new at the RGC? | 11

COVER PHOTO CREDITS: <http://www.psdgraphics.com>;  
<http://static.cloudpro.co.uk>; <http://e-extension.gov.ph>



# HOW THE ECONOMY FARED IN THE 1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER



The region's economy for the first quarter of CY 2015 was on the upbeat as manifested by the general improvement in the Agriculture sector coupled with the vibrant performance of the Industry and Services sectors.

The crops subsector under agriculture posted better production performance than it did during the start of CY 2014. The region's prime commodities — palay and corn — had outputs surpassing their CY 2014 levels by 6.06% and 10.41%, respectively.

The aggregate production of other crops was 5.89% higher than last year's. These increments were ascribed to the gains in yield brought about by the use of high-yielding variety seeds, favorable weather conditions, and sustained government interventions.

However, fishery production continued its downtrend during the quarter, which is attributed to the lesser fishing activities done for the period.

For the Industry and Services sectors, key indicators recorded continuous expansion and growth. Investment inflow through the Cagayan Special Economic Zone and Free Port and the Business Name Registration of the DTI were on the uptrend.

Sustained improvements were also observed in the tourism sector as volume of arrivals increased by 16.31%. Growth in construction continued as manifested by the increase in new private construction projects.

Other indicators such as loan availments, motor vehicle registration and mineral production likewise showed improvement during the period.

Based on the inflation rate registered for the period, prices of basic goods and services eased at 2.1% attributed to the slowdown in the price increase of food commodities especially rice. Majority of the non-food commodity groups also posted slower inflation rates.

The region's employment situation was positive during the first quarter. Employment rate surged to 97.4% in January 2015, which was 1.2 percentage points higher than the 96.2% employment in January 2014.

Underemployment, however, remained a challenge as more employed persons have signified their desire of wanting more work hours during the period.

In terms of underemployment rate, it increased to 12.9% from last year's rate of 10.1%

**Region 2's output of 647,864.90 metric tons (MT) of PALAY made up 14.83% of the national production. Farmers enjoyed an average increase of 10 sacks per hectare with their yields increased to 4.37 MT/ha.**

**Still the nation's top producer of CORN, Region 2's output of 728,894.73 MT made up about 1/3rd of the national production of 2.37 million MT as a result of an increased yield of 4.52 MT/ha.**

## MACROECONOMY

- ◆ Higher inflation rate at 2.1%
- ◆ Unemployment rate down to 2.6%
- ◆ Underemployment rate up to 12.9%

## AGRICULTURE AND FISHERY SECTORS

- ◆ Palay production up by 6.08%
- ◆ Corn production up by 10.41%
- ◆ Fruit production up by 19.61%
- ◆ Vegetable and root crop production up by 8.32%
- ◆ Non-food and industrial commercial crops production up by 2.91%
- ◆ Fishery production down by 9.04%
- ◆ Farm gate prices:
  - Palay - decreased to P17.26/kg
  - White Corn - increased to P11.22/kg
  - Yellow Corn - increased to P12.90/kg

## INDUSTRY AND SERVICES SECTOR

- ◆ CSEZFP new investments at P430 M
- ◆ BNR investments up by 44.54%
- ◆ Tourist arrivals up by 16.31%
- ◆ Construction projects up by 30.44%
- ◆ Metallic and non-metallic mineral production up by 24.24%

*Figures are based on year-on-year comparison between the first quarters of 2014 and 2015.*

**D**uring its 1<sup>st</sup> quarter meeting held on February 18, 2015, the RDC Economic Development Committee (EDC) led by its Chair, Nueva Vizcaya Governor Ruth R. Padilla, confirmed the inclusion of the Region 2 Tourism Council as the newest member of the EDC.

Represented by its President, Cecilia Lamadrid-Dy, the Region 2 Tourism Council is an association of private resort and hotel owners that complements the advocacy of the Department of Tourism in developing the tourism sector.

Recognizing the integral role of the private sector in tourism development, the members unanimously agreed to approve the membership of the Council in the EDC.

## EDC welcomes new member, proposes investment website

The Committee likewise discussed the proposal to establish a Region 2 investments website. This project proposal is designed to put together available and reliable basic data on investments in the region in one website.

It aims to provide prospective investors an avenue to obtain comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date information on investments anytime and anywhere.

The EDC has approved the proposal as they consider it as a potent source of information that will help the RDC2 market the region's investment potentials not only nationally but also globally.

Another agenda item that was tackled was the conduct of the Region 2 Coconut Industry Value Chain Analysis (VCA) Workshop which was spearheaded by the Department of Trade and Industry. Previously, the EDC has chosen coconut as the prime commodity to be developed into a Convergence Project owing to its huge potentials and opportunities. As such, the VCA Workshop was conducted to primarily provide a baseline for the formulation of the Coconut Industry Cluster Plan this year. | **JEZREEL M. PATTAGUAN, NEDA**

## RDC2 resolves issue of labor displacement due to DA's Farm Mech Program

**T**he RDC2 successfully reached an agreement on the issue of labor displacement owing to the Farm Mechanization Program of the Department of Agriculture (DA) during a dialogue held on March 10, 2015 at the NEDA-RDC2 Building. The issue was raised by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industries (PCCI) Region 2.

The dialogue was presided by RDC 2 Acting Chair and NEDA Regional Director Mary Anne ER. Darauay and was participated in by the DA-Regional Field Office 2 team led by Regional Executive Director Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr. and the PCCI team led by Regional Governor Charles T. Lim.

The RDC 2 private sector representatives (PSRs) for Agriculture Engr. Romeo S. Vasquez and Mr. Elpidio T. Tortoza, who are advocates of farm mechanization in the region, were also present to share their testimonies on farm mechanization.

Engr. Generoso Oli, DA Postharvest focal person, presented DA's Farm Mechanization Program and showed the actual distribution of farm machineries and postharvest facilities from CY 2011-2013 in the region, including the approved plan for CY 2015.

PCCI Regional Governor Lim confirmed their support to modern farm mechanization provided that the government through DA-RFO 2 ensure a complete cycle of farm mechanization systems and strengthen its program on farm service providers by involving displaced farm laborers/workers.

Finally, the parties agreed on the reprogramming of the DA-RFO 2 funds allocated for the farm machineries under its Rice and Corn Programs to cater to more farm service providers so as to mitigate the effect of the displacement of farm laborers in the region. | **RIZZA T. ANDRES, NEDA**





After successfully endorsing the addition of plantilla positions for teaching personnel in the State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in Region 2 in 2014, the RDC2 has endorsed this time the addition of non-teaching personnel in the region's 5 SUCs.

In his report during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter meeting of the RDC2 on March 26, 2015, Mr. Oscar B. Abadu, Jr., the Vice Chair of the RDC2-Social Development Committee, said that a total of 1,433 positions for non-teaching personnel needs to be created to complement the staffing pattern in the SUCs.

## RDC 2 encourages more non-teaching personnel in the SUCs

This was the result of the study conducted by the 5 SUCs which also found that the current non-teaching personnel to student ratio in the region stands at 1:124 – extremely higher than those found in any other university across the globe.

This will, however, be improved to 1:40 when the proposed positions for non-teaching personnel will be created – a drastic decrease and a welcome improvement indeed.

At the time the study was conducted, a total of 687 non-teaching plantilla positions were existing across the 5 SUCs, serving 84,302 students and 3,589 faculty members (with a ratio of 1:5) for SY 2013-2014.

“The proposal to create additional non-teaching plantilla positions would surely help the SUCs address the changes in various international standards geared towards global competitiveness,” Mr. Abadu said.

The study further posited that the SUCs must create positions for presidents, vice presidents, executive officers, and other career positions to manage the administrative activities of the SUCs. This will ultimately let the SUCs veer away from the current practice of designating faculty members to the said career positions and to enable the faculty to focus on their teaching functions.

With a budgetary requirement of about P436 Million, the proposal seeks the addition of 115 non-teaching plantilla positions at Batanes State College, 101 at Quirino State University, 163 at Nueva Vizcaya State University, 483 at Cagayan State University, and the biggest share of 571 at Isabela State University.

The RDC2 agreed with the favorable outcomes of adding more non-faculty staff (which includes administrative personnel, guidance counselors, librarians, food service staff, and transportation workers) in the SUCs, hence, endorsed the proposal. | ANNE Y. LASAM, NEDA

## CODAC pushes budgeting framework, gets nod of RDC 2

After deferring the endorsement of the proposed institutionalization of the Regional Development Budgeting Process Framework (RDBPF) last year, the RDC2 has finally approved to endorse the said proposal during its 1<sup>st</sup> quarter regular business meeting held on March 26, 2015.

This was after the Committee on Development Administration & Communication (CODAC) re-endorsed the RDBPF to the Council after addressing the issues raised by the RDC2 members.

In its regular committee meeting held on February 24, 2015, the CODAC rediscussed the merits of the RDBPF proposal, particularly on its effectiveness in addressing the observed disparity in the allocation of national budgets among regions and in strengthening the influence of RDCs on the review and approval of agency budgets.

The RDBPF is an alternative fiscal reform intended to bridge the gaps in regional budget allocation through the RDCs. It is an attempt to overcome the downside of decentralized budgeting by bridging centrally-determined programs

and projects of NGAs and the locally-determined budget system of the LGUs.

As a practice, the Agency Central Offices (ACOs) determine the budgets of their regional offices through the application of internal budget ceilings.

This existing budget allocation process has remained unresponsive to regional requirements. Moreover, it limits the role of the RDCs in ensuring that the priority development plans and investment programs of the region are funded.

To illustrate this point, the RDC XI (Davao Region) conducted a study which showed that ACOs retain 53% of the total agency budget while the remaining 47% is divided among its 17 regional offices. Thus, RDCXI passed a resolution proposing for the institutionalization of the RDBPF and enjoined other RDCs to support the same.

Recognizing that this will provide a greater role to the RDCs in the budgeting process, the RDC2 strongly expressed their support by endorsing the proposal. | JEZREEL M. PATTAGUAN & LILIAN D. MARASIGAN, NEDA

## DOST Secretary graces RDC 2 meeting

“My impression is that Region 2 is teeming with synergy and teamwork, despite all the natural and man-made challenges [it] has to overcome.”

These were the words uttered by Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Secretary Mario G. Montejo as he graced the 106<sup>th</sup> regular business meeting of the RDC2 in Santiago City on March 26, 2015.

In town for the DOST Science and Technology Week celebration, Secretary Montejo gave the RDC2 members a brief presentation on technology self-reliance and how this concept can help the region move several steps forward towards greater development.

“Science, technology, and innovation have increasingly become key drivers of growth and progress,” Sec. Montejo said. “Most governments worldwide harness science and technology to address their country’s pressing problems.”

He stressed that in the Philippines, the synergy of these three concepts can help the government address the need to make economic growth

inclusive, as is the goal of the present administration.

The RDC2, therefore, has a bigger role to play as it upholds its commitment to be the primary driver of the region’s journey in achieving this national goal.

### *Change in Filipino mindset*

However, Secretary Montejo, who is a mechanical engineer by profession and an innovator, stressed that being technology self-reliant requires a change in the Filipino mindset. He added that local knowledge and technologies can prove to be better and far more superior than those from abroad.



refocusing limited S&T resources to provide solutions to local problems such as reducing disaster risks, strengthening the delivery of social and public services, and

## Making Region 2 Technology Self-reliant

“Increasing reliance on home-grown technologies to address a country’s problems and needs has become the bedrock of development strategies of many recently successful countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Israel,” he said.

The Secretary further said that the DOST now spearheads the implementation of a Harmonized S&T Agenda that is anchored on the principle of achieving “Technology Self-Reliance.”

This agenda, he said, highlights how the country can solve its pressing problems through the use of science, technology, and innovation. This can be achieved by building local know-how, setting up world-class facilities, and

diffusing economic opportunities for every person.

### *Self-reliance in technology*

Sec. Montejo further illustrated how the Department promotes self-reliance in technology, particularly in designing projects that aim to reduce disaster risks in the country.

“We have Project NOAH, or the Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards, and the DREAM Program, or the Disaster Risk Exposure Assessment for Mitigation program. Through these programs, we now have an effective flood early warning system for communities along 18 major river systems in the Philippines in just two years.”





The Secretary then cited how technology self-reliance works, this time in the wood industry, which is a critical sector in the region. “The application of knowledge and technologies on the wood product as it undergoes processing from raw lumber to furniture certainly increases the economic value of wood coming from the ordinary tree farmer. This indeed creates income and wealth right here in Cagayan Valley.”

“We have the locally-developed furnace-type lumber kiln dryer technology which translates to around 50% increase in lumber value by reducing the number of wood rejects by 90% and increasing the durability of the wooden materials.”

The same can be applied on rice production process, whereby the use of technologies (i.e. transplanter, combine and hand tractor, far infra red dryer among others) in every step of the production process tacks some value-added to the product.

### ***Projects in Region 2***

In Region 2, the Secretary said that the DOST has partnered with the Cagayan State University Carig campus to put up the Food Innovation Center which showcases locally-developed food processing technologies such as vacuum fryer, water retort, spray dryer, and vacuum packing, among others.

“The Center is now collaborating with local entrepreneurs for business venture expansion and for the commercialization of 28 priority food products. It has also released the design and packaging materials to 56 food processors under the SETUP program of the DOST,” he averred.

Secretary Montejó cited that the SETUP program, or the Small

Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program, has already assisted 249 MSMEs in Region 2 from 2002 to 2014. This has generated jobs for 10,704 workers in the region.

***In Region 2  
alone, we have  
already deployed  
and installed 58  
Automatic Rain  
Gauges, 8 Water  
Level Monitoring  
Stations, and 20  
Tandem sensors.”***

- Secretary Montejó

“Initial learnings have shown that some raw materials which have been unpopular but bountiful in the region are now being produced into new products such as juice powder and seasonings. This indicates the region’s untapped potentials

for income opportunities,” he averred.

Secretary Montejó added that in the DOST’s free public WiFi Program, Tuguegarao City will be established as a Point of Presence (POP) to host 63 Municipal Points of Presence covering 2,377 beneficiaries such as barangays, schools, universities, airports, seaports, among others.

The Secretary reminded the RDC 2 members about President Aquino’s statement that “Innovation is the engine of any modern economy.” He also encouraged them to innovate, dream bigger, do better, and always challenge themselves to reach further.

“We all know that the challenge is daunting, but if we all strive, then, as the President said, it will only be a matter of time until the Philippines gets there,” he ended.

| ANNE Y. LASAM, NEDA



**LGUs GET HAZARD MAPS.** Santiago City Mayor Joseph S. Tan (2<sup>nd</sup> from L) received a landslide hazard map from (L to R) RDC2 Acting Chair and NEDA Regional Director MaryAnne ER. Darauay, DOST Secretary Mario G. Montejó, and DOST Regional Director Urdujah A. Tejada. Other LGUs that received hazard maps for various calamities were Quirino (for landslides), Cagayan (for 100-year flood), and the Municipality of Aparri, Cagayan (for storm surges). Cauayan City and the Provincial Government of Nueva Vizcaya received hazard maps in CD format. The hazard maps were the initial products of the Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) Mapping, a major component of the DOST’s Project NOAH-DREAM. | FLORENDO T. IRIGAYEN, NEDA

# PHOTO NEWS

Recognizing Region 2's development achievers



Nueva Vizcaya State University (NVSU) President Dr. Florentina S. Dumlao (4<sup>th</sup> from L) was recognized during the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter meeting of the RDC 2 for her significant contributions in improving the state of higher education in the region. She was acknowledged for her expertise and dynamic leadership in steering the Task Force on the Cagayan Valley Regional University System (CVRUS) Pre-amalgamation and in conducting the studies on the creation of additional plantilla positions for teaching and non-teaching personnel in all the five state universities and colleges (SUCs) in Region 2. Awarding the Certificate of Recognition to President Dumlao were (from L to R) Cauayan City Mayor Bernard Faustino M. Dy, Santiago City Mayor Joseph S. Tan, DOST Secretary Mario G. Montejo, and RDC 2 Acting Chair and NEDA Regional Director MaryAnne ER. Darauay.



The RDC 2 also recognized the region's outstanding volunteers who bagged awards during last year's Search for Outstanding Volunteers (SOV). ABOVE PHOTO: The Kapisanan ng mga May Kapansanan ng Nueva Vizcaya, Inc. (KMKNVI) was one of the eight national awardees. Winning in the Non-Profit Organization Category, the KMKNVI operates the Kainan sa Park located at the Provincial Capitol. RIGHT PHOTO: Ms. Elgin C.



Rafanan, a local advocate for the health and welfare of women and children in San Mateo, Isabela, was recognized as the regional winner under the Individual (Adult) Category.

## Approved RDC 2 Resolutions

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, 2015

- Supporting and endorsing the proposed Chico River Pump Irrigation Project for funding under the General Appropriations Act
- Endorsing the proposal to increase the daily travel allowance of government personnel from Eight Hundred (P800.00) to One Thousand Five Hundred (P1,500.00) for travels within and outside the Region
- Supporting the proposed institutionalization of the Regional Development Budgeting Process Framework
- Enjoining the Municipality/Local Government Units to establish an Information Office or designate an Information Officer
- Supporting the DPWH RO2 proposal for the installation of lamp posts at the Cagayan Valley Regional Government Center to be Funded by the Motor Vehicle Users' Charge (MVUC) Road Board
- Approving the request of the NLRC, PIA, and PHIC for a two-year extension of the MOA prescribing among others the period within which to introduce land improvements and to construct its office building in the Regional Government Center
- Approving the adoption of the theme, "Cagayan Valley Region Towards 2015 ASEAN Integration: Shaping a Global Spectrum of Opportunities in Agriculture, Industry, and Tourism" for the 2015 RDC2 Week Celebration
- Endorsing the creation of additional plantilla positions for non-teaching personnel of State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in Region 2
- Supporting and endorsing the proposal requesting the Climate Change Commission (CCC) to formulate guidelines that will require existing coal-fired power plant companies to annually grow a specific number of trees or reforest a specific number of hectares proportional to their installed capacity including sanctions for non-compliance
- Adopting the Work and Financial Plan of the Regional Development Council 2 for CY 2015



## RDC 2 ENDORSES IRRIGATION PROJECT TO THE ICC

The RDC2 has finally given the go-signal for the proposed Chico River Pump Irrigation Project (CRPIP) to be endorsed to the Investment Coordination Committee (ICC) which is tasked to evaluate major national development projects that cost more than P1 Billion.

The approval was granted during the Council's 106<sup>th</sup> Regular Business Meeting held on March 26, 2015 in Santiago City. With this endorsement, RDC 2 Secretary and newly-installed NEDA Assistant Regional Director Victor B. Ubaldo will present the CRPIP proposal to the ICC, one of the six Cabinet-level inter-agency committees of the NEDA Board.

The NEDA Board is chaired by none other than President Benigno Aquino III and co-chaired by NEDA Director-General, Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan. The ICC, on the other hand, is chaired by the Secretary of Finance and co-chaired

as well by Secretary Balisacan, with members that include the Executive Secretary, the Governor of the Central Bank of the Philippines, and the Secretaries of Agriculture, Trade and Industry, and Budget and Management.

### *Higher yields, higher incomes*

The CRPIP involves the installation of electric pumps and the construction of pump house and sump at the Chico River, as well as canals, on-farm facilities, road network, and flood control protection facilities, among others. A major tributary of the Cagayan River, the Chico River system encompasses parts of the Cordillera and Cagayan Valley regions.

During the RDC meeting, Engr. Avelino C. Tuazon of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Regional Office 2 said that the CRPIP, which will be implemented by the NIA's Irrigation Management Office, has a total estimated cost of

P2.696 Billion to be funded under the General Appropriations Act Fund.

"Once completed, the project will irrigate around 8,700 hectares across 20 barangays in Cagayan (18 in Tuao and two in Piat) and one barangay in Pinukpuk, Kalinga," Engr. Tuazon reported.

"It will also benefit about 4,350 farmers, increasing their net crop income per hectare per year from P31,270 to P49,835," he added.

With its five-year duration, the CRPIP will be able to provide employment opportunities to 9,115 workers during the construction period and 8,700 jobs when operational at one job equivalent to new area generated/restored.

The implementation of the CRPIP is also envisioned to enable the region to retain or even surpass its standing of being the second top producer of rice in the country. ■



### **THE RDC 2 & THE LGUs: A WINNING TANDEM.**

During the RDC 2's 106<sup>th</sup> Regular Business Meeting held on May 26, 2015 at the Zen Hotel in Santiago City, Isabela, Acting Chair and NEDA Regional Director MaryAnne ER. Darauay (*left*) acknowledged the unwavering support of the LGUs for being the Council's steadfast development partners. On behalf of the RDC 2, Dir. Darauay expressed gratitude in particular to Santiago City Mayor Joseph S. Tan (*right*) who graciously hosted the meeting. In his message during the meeting, Mayor Tan emphasized Region 2's potential of having more and broader opportunities in investments, given its rich natural and man-made resources.

In its desire to help reduce the adverse effects of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions into the atmosphere, the RDC2 approved and endorsed the proposal requesting the Climate Change Commission to formulate guidelines that will require coal-fired power plant companies to annually propagate a specific number of trees or plant/reforest a specific number of hectares proportional to their installed capacity.

The proposal emanated from the RDC VI in Western Visayas where one coal-fired power plant is currently operating in Iloilo City. Eleven more power plants are operating in the country: seven in Luzon, two more in the Visayas, and two in Mindanao.

In his presentation during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter meeting of the RDC2 in March, Cauayan City Mayor Bernard Faustino M. Dy, Chair of the Committee on Development Administration and Communication (CODAC) said that “while there is no coal-fired power

## RDC2, CODAC help mitigate effects of CO<sub>2</sub> emission

plant established yet in Region 2, we are not spared from the adverse effects of climate change and global warming, which is caused by emissions of huge amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>.”

In fact, researches found that a 100-megawatt (MW) coal-fired power plant emits about 1 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.

Despite this disadvantage, however, the fact that these power plants are vital infrastructures that support the country's rapidly growing economy cannot be disputed as these facilities provide reliable and affordable electricity.

What then can be done to at least mitigate the negative effects of these power plants?

Mayor Dy emphasized that 50 million trees have to be planted annually to

sequester 1 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. He added that there is really a need for a concrete policy to require the power plants to plant trees, given that there is no existing law or guideline requiring them to do so.

“Reforestation is not imposed upon power plants as it is more of a voluntary effort,” the CODAC Chair said.

He further cited the result of the 2014 Maplecroft's Climate Change Vulnerability Index which ranked the Philippines 9<sup>th</sup> among 193 countries as most vulnerable to climate change.

The RDC2 acknowledged the urgency of implementing this initiative, hence, it unanimously approved to support this proposal endorsed by the CODAC. |

ANNE Y. LASAM & JEZREEL M. PATTAGUAN, NEDA

## RDC2 endorses proposal to increase travel allowance of gov't personnel

From P800 to P1,500 – this was the proposed increase in the travel allowance of government personnel on official travel within or outside the region.

During its 106<sup>th</sup> regular business meeting held in March, the RDC2 endorsed this positive development, seeing the need to attune the current travel allowance with the increasing rates for accommodation and meals.

Currently, the 800-peso travel allowance is spread out as follows: P400 for hotel/lodging, P240 for meals, and P160 for incidental expenses. This has been the

adopted amount since 2004 and no adjustments have been made despite the continuing increase in the cost of goods and services.

During the meeting, CODAC Chair and Cauayan City Mayor Bernard Faustino M. Dy presented the proposed increase which was borne out of a similar proposal endorsed by the RDC VI (Western Visayas).

“The RDC VI passed a resolution proposing for an increase in the daily travel allowance from P800 to P1,500 for travels within the region and P3,500 for travels outside the region,” he reported.

“However, we found their rate of P3,500 as too high,” Mayor Dy said. He added that this expense will need a significant budgetary requirement and will cause a strain to any government office's allotment for MOOE.”

The CODAC proposed to adopt the rate of P1,500 for travels both within and outside Region 2 allotted as follows: P1,000 for accommodation, P300 for meals, and P200 for incidental expenses for every day of the official travel.

According to Mayor Dy, this is actually the same rate that employees of the Commission on Audit enjoy as stipulated in COA Resolution No. 2013-030 which took effect in January 2014. | ANNE Y. LASAM & LILIAN D. MARASIGAN, NEDA



For January to March 2015, the status of implementation of a total of 26 development programs and projects are reported in the Regional Project Monitoring and Evaluation System (RPMES) Report, a quarterly report produced by the Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPMC) of the RDC2.

The RPMES Report states that four of the 26 projects were completed as of this quarter: (1) the CY 2011-2012 Farm-to-Market Road Development Program which produced 153 FMRs that are now operational across the province, benefiting about 13,000 farmers; (2) the CY 2013 Basic Education Facilities Project, which benefits 2,925 elementary and high school students through the construction of 65 classrooms in 45 school buildings; (3) the construction of the new alignment of the Dalton Pass Road that helps boost trade and industry investments in the region; and (4) the construction of the 1000-meter breakwater structure in Port Irene, Sta. Ana, Cagayan.

## INSIDE THE 1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER 2015 RPMES REPORT

Meanwhile, on track of their scheduled implementation are five anti-poverty and livelihood programs, namely the Supplementary Feeding Program, the Sustainable Livelihood Program, the Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Program, the Social Pension Program for Indigent Senior Citizens, and the 4Ps program which has already benefited 103,327 household beneficiaries to date.

Also reported on track are the National Greening Program and the Patent Processing and Issuance Program of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The Philippine Rural Development Project, the Support to the Bottom-up Budgeting Process, and the Sagana at Ligtas na Tubig sa Lahat (SALINTUBIG) Program are also following their implementation schedules.

The 1<sup>st</sup> quarter RPMES Report also contains the status of ongoing projects in four of five Region 2 provinces.

Batanes is busy with the improvement and construction of various health facilities at the Batanes General Hospital and the installation of underground cables for the electric cooperative.

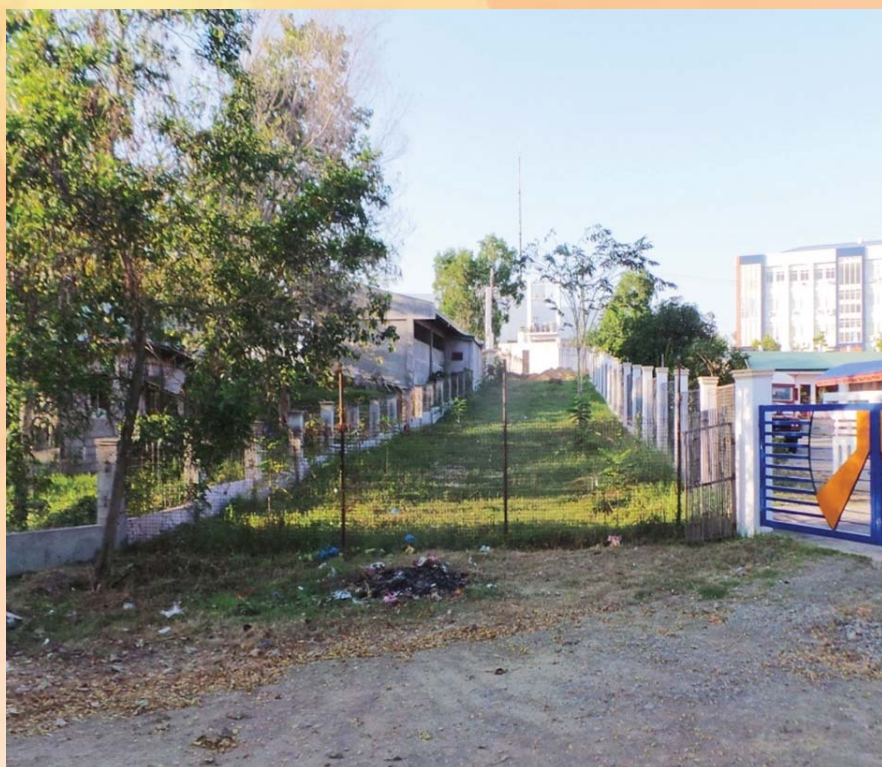
Meanwhile, the Provincial Government Employees Housing Program is still ongoing in Tuguegarao City and Peñablanca in Cagayan while the BRO Program and *Libreng Gamot at Panggamot* program are still being implemented in Isabela.

In Nueva Vizcaya, 35 major infrastructure projects are ongoing, mostly concreting and improvement of provincial roads, bridges, and flood control structures, among others. ■

## WHAT'S NEW AT THE RGC?

As part of the strategies for the urban greening of the Regional Government Center at the heart of the region's capital of Tuguegarao City, tree lanes are established in some of the smaller roads in between the lots of the government offices.

Like this tree lane (right), some of the tree lanes at the RGC have already been cleared by the Department of Public Works and Highways and have been planted with fire trees. Clearing operations for the rest of the tree lanes are ongoing. These tree lanes will serve as walkways for pedestrians only and not as parking spaces. ■



## 2015 Bambanti showcases local products



Agricultural products from the various municipalities and cities in this province remained as top drawers during the annual Bambanti Festival held on January 26-31, 2015.

Governor Faustino G. Dy III said some of these products have graced international and local markets because of their quality and packaging (such as bananas, munggo, cacao, corn, rice, duck eggs, and naturally processed agri-products such as bugnay wine and coco-jam).

Utility products such as colorful Sabutan hats, fans, and house decors made from bamboos likewise took centerstage.

This year's festival theme, "Ginintuang Isabela (Golden Isabela)" hopes to promote local tourism, investment, and environmental projects and the marketing and promotion of Isabela as a major agricultural hub.

Governor Dy said the theme also aims to depict the surging economic growth anchored on agriculture and its allied industries, its continuing socio-cultural development of the community, the overwhelming victory of the farmers in harnessing the potential of vast farmlands which altogether make Isabela the Agricultural Capital of the country.

Bambanti is the Ilocano term for scarecrow which is usually found in rice fields to shoo birds that might disrupt the normal growth of the crops.

The Bambanti images such as the giant Carabao scarecrow of San Agustin town and giant munggo of San Mateo were all displayed beside or in front of the booths at the capitol compound.

"The Bambanti images from each booth change each year with the LGUs conceptualizing designs to make it fit for the event and theme," local officials said.  
| MERLITO G. EDALE, JR., PIA

## Ivatan farmers train on agri-tech, livelihood production



The Department of Agriculture-Batanes Experiment Station recently conducted a series of training sessions for Ivatan farmers on various agricultural technologies and livelihood production in a bid to increase their yield and income.

Nathan Alcantara, information officer, said the training sessions focused on strategies on wet rice farming, irrigated rice technology, cattle production, mushroom tissue culture, and spawn production.

"This is in response to our thrust of boosting the agricultural industry in

the province, especially in the island parts which have potential for agriculture," Alcantara said,

He added that the DA, through its various programs, aim to boost the competitiveness of rice farmers in the province and raise their yields per hectare.

"The farmer-participants were also trained on Effective Microorganism Activated Solution (EMAS) for molasses mixing to be incorporated with rice bran for feeds and fertilizer production," Alcantara further said.

With the transferred skills to farmers, he is hopeful that the agricultural demands in the province will be met and its economic stability will be achieved.  
| NECITAS G. ALCONIS., PIA

## Isinai tribe eyes loom weaving machine



Governor Ruth R. Padilla recently promised to give a loom weaving machine for the Isinai tribe in the province to boost their cultural and traditional practices.

She made the promise during the opening of a cultural exhibit at the Provincial Museum which showcased the traditional blanket of the Isinai tribe called "Ues Pinutuan".

The Ues Pinutuan is one of the treasured carriers of Isinai identity and history. It is produced through the intricate process of Ikat technique, indigo dyeing, and backstrap weaving.

In order to empower the members of the Isinai tribe as local entrepreneurs, Governor Padilla also vowed to provide training for loom weavers.

"In this way, we can further promote the traditional costumes for the tribe. This will further help in the promotion and development of the Isinai culture and tradition among the youth," she said.

During the opening of the exhibit, Dr. Analyn Salvador-Amores, an anthropologist from the University of the Philippines in Baguio City said the Ues Pinutuan serves as the pride of Isinai tribe and is one of the remaining pieces of material culture left as evidence of their ethnic identity.

She said the blanket was also used as a shawl or blanket for the dead of the most affluent members of the Ifugao, Ibaloi and Kankanaey communities.

Amores also said she will attempt to translate Spanish Isinai dictionaries in the Filipino dialect to enable people to have a better understanding about the Isinai tradition and culture.  
| BENJAMIN MOSES M. EBREO, PIA



## MSMEs to benefit from DOST's P4M SETUP projects



At least 10 Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) from the six towns of Quirino are set to benefit from the P4 Million worth of projects of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) under the Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP) for 2015.

Of these MSMEs, five are engaged in the wood and furniture business and one in the fabrication and steel business. Four other enterprises have food-related businesses.

The biggest chunk amounting to P1,196,000.00 will be awarded to Sagittarius Sash Factory and Lumber in Lusod, Maddela. Its owner, Ms. Emitina B. Bautista, said that the grant will be used to purchase heavy-duty equipment for the fabrication of quality furniture. Both parties have already signed the Memorandum of Agreement and the amount will be released soon.

A total of P933,000.00 will also be awarded to RnB Furniture in the Municipality of Diffun, owned by

Benelyn A. Closa, for the upgrading of its furniture equipment.

The three other SETUP beneficiaries involved in the wood and furniture business include the shops owned by (1) Mr. Robert Joaquin of Aglipay who will get P200,000.00; (2) Teresita Lindawan of RI-ED-MA's Antique and Driftwood Crafts in Cabarroguis who will receive P200,000.00 for the purchase of equipment for antique-like and drift wood products; and (3) Edward M. Salvador of JW Wood Industry in Nagtipunan who will get P440,000.00.

Meanwhile, two meatshops, one bakery, and one restaurant will also be beneficiaries of the SETUP. Arnel Meatshop, owned by Aranillo A. Sobrepena, will get P300,000.00 while Rosete's Meatshop, owned by Pio G. Rosete, will receive P115,000.00. Both shops are located in Diffun.

The Banga-Banga Lomihan and Snack House which is owned by Rhian C. Agtang of Cabarroguis will be granted P289,900.00 for his noodle and pancit business. Also, Dhecy G. Cantuangco who owns a breadhouse business in Nagtipunan will receive P195,500.00.

Completing the list is the Fabrication and Steel business in Saguday owned by Eugie L. Viernes who will get the amount of P432,000.00 from the SETUP.

The SETUP, a flagship program of DOST, provides assistance to MSMEs through the provision of appropriate technology interventions to upgrade their processes, leading to improved quality and increased productivity.

Any MSMEs engaged in agriculture and horticulture, food processing, furniture making, information communication and technology/electronics, marine and aquatic resources, metals and engineering, pharmaceutical/health products manufacturing, and even the production of gifts, toys and decors may qualify for the said assistance. | **THELMA C. BICARME, PIA**

## Tuguegarao City enacts investment & incentives code



To accelerate domestic and inclusive growth, policy makers here have just enacted an investment and incentives code to attract local and foreign investors, generate more employment and income opportunities, and raise the standard of living of Tuguegaraoenos.

Through an ordinance passed by the 6<sup>th</sup> City Council, the newly promulgated policy encourages bio-diversity friendly investment projects that would provide employment opportunities to local residents and encourage the use of indigenous raw materials.

Councilor Rosauo Resuello said the code will attract investments in various areas

such as infrastructure, light manufacturing, tourism, alternative energy production, agri-business, creative and knowledge-

based industry, and waste management projects.

"This also aims to promote local products and encourage local entrepreneurship as well as the active participation and collaboration of the private sector and non-government organizations in economic development," Resuello explained.

He further stated that the code also ensures the provision of opportunities for vulnerable sectors which include the women, children, and differently-abled persons, and further contribute to the attainment of an improved quality of life

through corporate social responsibility programs.

The council also incorporated in the Code the creation of the 'Tuguegarao City Investment and Incentives Code Board' which is chaired by the city mayor and co-chaired by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry local chapter president, with members that include a mix of government and private sector representatives.

To effectively implement the newly-enacted code, Tuguegarao City legislators likewise have set into law the creation of the city's Investment Promotion Center. The Center will serve as the investor assistance and servicing center of Tuguegarao City which will offer one-stop documentation services, investment counseling, and business matching. | **OLIVER T. BACCAY, PIA**

PHOTO CREDIT: DAR

## P2.2M FMR project to ease transpo in Buguey ARC

**A**grarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) and residents of Barangay Villa Cielo in Buguey, Cagayan are now bound for a smooth ride as they transport their produce from their farms to the market.

The construction of the Villa Cielo Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) Phase 1 was finally completed to service the Sta. Isabel Agrarian Reform Community (ARC) in Buguey.

The FMR, consisting of 45 linear meters Concrete Paved Drift and 53.61 linear meters Portland Cement Concrete Pavement (PCCP), is expected to service 124 ARBs as well as other residents of the community and neighboring barangays of the ARC.

This subproject was implemented under the Department of Agrarian Reform – Agrarian Reform Infrastructure Support Project Phase III (DAR-ARISP III) funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency with a total project cost of P2,250,876.00 implemented by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

In a joint actual field inspection, assessment and validation conducted by the DAR Provincial

and Regional Inspectorate Teams at the end of CY 2014, the project was already 100% completed in accordance with the approved Plans, Detailed Design and Specifications of the Contract.

“The project has been accepted by the local executives of the municipality. It is already servicing the target beneficiaries and all other residents in the ARC,” Engr. Andres F. Cafugauan, ARISP III Regional Infrastructure Engineer, said.

He added that the formal turn-over will be undertaken this 2015.

Meanwhile, the construction of Phase II of the said project which entails the construction of 45 meters Paved Drift Apron is in smooth progress.

The Apron structure on the downstream side of the FMR was designed to protect the Paved Drift and Cut-off wall from eventual damage.

The said project has a total cost of Php334,319.00 of which Php291,335.00 is charged against loan proceeds while Php42,984.00 is the counterpart of DAR. | **MICHAEL ANGELO L. BENIGNO, DAR**

## DILG launches Robredo project, initiates agreement

**T**he Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) in the region has launched the Ugnayan ng Barangay at Simbahan (UBAS) Project to ensure transparency and accountability in government projects.

An innovative project of then DILG Secretary Jesse R. Robredo, it has been described as one of his legacies during his short stint with the department.

During the regional launching held in Tuguegarao City, Cagayan, presidents of different Liga ng mga Barangay (LnB) and leaders of the Catholic Church entered into a memorandum of agreement for their responsibilities.

DILG OIC-Regional Director Marlo L. Iringan said UBAS projects will be implemented with the barangay leaders as they know their barangays more than anybody else.

The director also acknowledged the role of the barangays in ensuring that good governance is practiced and institutionalized in their communities as well as the role of the church in bringing people out of poverty.

The parties agreed, among others, to participate and monitor the proper implementation of projects under the Bottom-Up Budgeting (BUB), create an enabling environment for meaningful people's participation in DILG projects, and initiate and implement programs and activities to curb corruption and promote transparent, honest and effective governance in the LGUs. | **GENE V. BAQUIRAN, PIA**



## 2015 is *Visit the Philippines* Year!

**M**ARK YOUR CALENDARS! The Department of Tourism (DOT) promises bigger, bolder, and exceptionally 'more fun' experiences when you tour around the Philippines this year.

The year-long tourism campaign highlights a series of international events which will be hosted by the country for 2015. What better way to start this than with the arrival of no less than Pope Francis himself in January for his Apostolic tour.

Tourism Undersecretary Benito Bengzon, Jr. said the event drew hundreds of Catholics from the country and from other neighboring Asian countries.

Another major event to watch out for is the Asia Pacific Cooperation Summit in December, which will bring in at least 3,000 delegates from 20 countries.

Bengzon says DOT will take advantage of APEC's international media coverage to showcase the **country as a world-class tourist destination.** The World Trade Center Association will also hold a similar meeting on its 46<sup>th</sup> general assembly in Manila in April.

### ***Fun factor***

DOT has actually raised the level of the "It's More Fun in the Philippines" campaign a notch

**higher starting in the first quarter as it rolled out the red carpet for international acts like One Direction, Bastille, The Vamps, and the cast of the Broadway rendition of Beauty and the Beast, among others. Justin Timberlake is also expected to stage a concert within the year.**

**For the art aficionados, the Philippines served as the venue for the Photoworld Asia 2015, Philippine International Furniture Show 2015, Fringe Manila Arts Festival, Malasimbo Music and Arts Festival in Puerto Galera, Philippine International Jazz and Arts Festival, and the Lifedance Sinulog 2015 in Cebu, also from January to March.**

*Visit Philippines Year* also has something for the foodies with the Madrid Fusion Manila, where 400 participating international chefs will meet to cook up a mix of well-loved Spanish and Filipino cuisines. The country will also host the ASEAN Food Conference (June) and the International Food Expo 2015.

### ***What to look forward to***

Culture vultures will have their hands full with the celebration of the annual Aliwan Festival in Manila, which will bring together all the country's fiestas in one venue, the 70<sup>th</sup> year of the

Philippine-American Friendship Day (July 4), and the Andrea O. Veneracion International Choral Festival (July).

Sports junkies will enjoy the 9<sup>th</sup> Boracay International Dragon Boat Festival, Lanuza Surfing Festival in Surigao del Sur (November), the 6<sup>th</sup> International Martial Arts and Games (August), the 8<sup>th</sup> International Martial Arts Competition, and major triathlon events in Cebu, Albay, and Bohol.

### ***Promote, promote***

"Our promise [to tourists] for 2015 is the Philippines will remain very competitive as we continue to try to be the head of the pack," Bengzon says, referring to how other ASEAN countries are now taking notice of the country's booming tourism industry.

Bengzon urged Filipinos to continue helping to promote the country in their own small way.

As for local and foreign tourists who are already eyeing the Philippines for their vacations this year, DOT has only one advice: Start marking your calendars!

And for our tourism stakeholders and LGUs, you may register your events in the *Visit Philippines Year* 2015 website: [www.visitph2015.com](http://www.visitph2015.com). | **DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM**



**F**or their monitoring visit for this quarter, the Project Monitoring Team of the Regional Project Monitoring Committee (RPMC-PMT) focused on projects that aim to address the needs of the K to 12 program.

During their two-day field monitoring visit on March 19 and 20, 2015, the PMT checked on the status of some projects under the Public-Private Partnership School Infrastructure Project (PSIP II) and Basic Education Facilities (BEF) Project, which are mostly construction of new school buildings and classrooms.

The PMT, composed of staff from the National Economic and Development Authority, the Philippine Information Agency, the Department of Budget and Management, the Department of the Interior and Local Government, and the Department of Education visited five schools under the PSIP

II, which involves the design, financing, and construction of classrooms including furniture and fixtures in selected sites nationwide.

## New school buildings & classrooms ready for K to 12 program

The team found out that seven new classrooms are now being used in these schools: Nagatutuan Elementary School (ES) and Don Mariano Marcos National High School (NHS) in Gattaran, Gadu NHS in Solana, and Cabbo NHS in Peñablanca. However, one classroom at the Peñablanca NHS is only 60% completed but is expected to be operational next quarter.

The RPMC-PMT also visited eight BEF projects and found that 17 new classrooms are already 100% completed in seven schools, namely the Aparri School of Arts & Trade, Camalaniugan NHS, Calaoagan Dakkel NHS, Peñablanca NHS, Cabbo NHS, Maddarulg ES, and Cagayan NHS.

On the other hand, the two-storey 10-classroom building at the Aparri East Central School is still under construction and is behind schedule due to intermittent weather condition as well as

delays in the fabrication of roofing materials.

According to the teachers and school administrators, the construction of additional school buildings and classrooms through the PSIP II and BEF has eased classroom shortages and provided additional facilities. Accordingly, DepEd's 1:45 standard classroom-student ratio has been achieved in most schools visited. | **ERIC M. CABUTAJE, NEDA**



PIA Regional Director Purita S. Licas (*center, top photo*) led the RPMC-PMT during its field monitoring visit at the Aparri School of Arts and Trade and Camalaniugan National High School (*bottom photo*) both in Cagayan Province.

