

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
NEWS AND INFORMATION BUREAU**

**CABINET REPORT SA TELERADYO – THE NEW NORMAL
HOSTED BY PCOO SECRETARY MARTIN ANDANAR
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SEC. ANDANAR: Pilipinas, limang buwan na mula noong magdeklara si Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte ng isang state of national health emergency at bagaman nananatili pa rin ang pandemya, mapalad ang nakararaming rehiyon sa Pilipinas na sila ay nasa ilalim ng Modified General Community Quarantine – mas bukas na ang kanilang mga lokal na ekonomiya at sila ay mas maaari nang magplano at gumalaw tungo sa economic recovery mula sa epekto ng kinailangang paghigpit sa ating mga galaw sa ilalim ng quarantine.

One of the underlying principles of governance under President Duterte has been a whole-of-nation approach. Walang lugar sa ating kapuluan ang dapat naiiwan at dahil dito, kaming mga Cabinet Secretary ay in-assign ng kaniya-kaniyang rehiyon bilang Cabinet Officer for Regional Development and Security o CORDS upang siguraduhin na ang bawat rehiyon ay natututukan at ang kanilang mga pangangailangan at mga plano ay nabibigyan nang nararapat na pansin.

Sa akin naka-assign ang Region X, isang rehiyon na malapit sa akin dahil tumira ako doon, may mga kamag-anak ako doon at nakapag-aral ako doon. Ngayong linggo, ibabahagi ko ang update mula sa Region X, Northern Mindanao tungo sa pagbangon natin patungo sa economic recovery at kausapin din natin si Cebu Archbishop Jose Palma tungkol sa palapit na 500th year of Christianity dito sa Pilipinas. Lahat ito sa pagbabalik ng Cabinet Report.

Without a doubt, tourism plays a key role in the economic recovery of Northern Mindanao and also without a doubt we know that tourism has been devastated by the pandemic. How does tourism in Region X bounce back? Here is my conversation over the CORDS X Podcast with DOT-X Regional Director May Salvaña-Unchuan.

Now, para sa wala nakahibalo unsa man ang mga gianhi sa mga turista sa Region X? *[Now, para sa mga hindi nakakaalam kung ano ang dinadayo ng mga turista sa Region X?]* I know that DOT has been focusing on 7 areas of tourism – ng faith tourism, dive tourism, river cruise tourism, hot air balloon tourism, mountain tourism, culinary and food tourism and festival tourism. Please give us examples for each of these 7 types of tourism that our region is focusing on and where they are located? RD May, og palihog pud og hatag sa amo og update kong unsa ani nila ang open na sa publiko kay under man ta sa MGCQ og naa na pud ta sa moving forward mode? *[RD May, pakiusap na bigyan mo kami ng update kung alin sa mga ito ang open na sa publiko dahil nasa ilalim tayo ng MGCQ at nasa moving forward mode na tayo?]*

RD SALVAÑA-UNCHUAN: Yes, of course. You know pre-COVID, daghan kaayo ta og plano, Sec. [*You know pre-COVID, marami tayong plano, sec.*] As a matter of fact, we were taking off already ‘no, on our special tourism projects.

So you mentioned our main focus ‘no supposedly for this year. Now hot air balloon tourism, we have started to launch Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon as our hot air balloon festival site ‘no. As a matter of fact we were already ready, we have setup the Banog-Banog Festival which is their signature festival for Manolo Fortich dedicated to the Philippine Eagle because they called it ‘Banog-Banog’ the native term for eagle because they have been declared as the first municipality to protect the eagle as an eagle sanctuary.

So kanang Banog-Banog, since ‘di ba eagle means ‘flight’ so they decided to feature aerial display. So one of the things that they did was to take a look at the possibility of hot air balloon tourism and for two years we have been trying to fly. We have flown two balloons there and we’ve brought the technicians there and they said that that is a very ideal site for hot air balloon tourism. So supposedly on May 1, dapat naa ta’y [*mayroon tayong*] hot air balloon tourism na festival sa Banog-Banog, 5 ka balloon atong i-fly from the different parts of the countryside ‘no and specifically kaning sa Lubao nga pilots that have come [*5 balloons ang ating i-fly from the different parts of the countryside ‘no and specifically itong sa Lubao na pilots that have come.*] There were foreign pilots also that were coming. So wala mana nadayon [*So, hindi naman iyan natuloy*] but of course we’re still looking forward to next year ‘no, so we’re preparing for that.

Ang atong river cruise tourism mao to ang akong gina invite ta ka pirmi ‘no, [*Ang ating river cruise tourism, iyon iyong ini-invite kita lagi*] is in Sapang Dalaga in Misamis Occidental. We have developed a community there that have developed the tourism circuit ‘no. Naa man gud ta’y [*Mayroon kasi tayong*] beautiful Dioyo River exiting in Murcielagos Bay and then naa pod ta’y site didto, katong Caluya Shrine nga naa ay statue sa Christ the Redeemer overlooking the bay [*mayroon din tayong site doon, iyong Caluya Shrine na mayroong statue ng Christ the Redeemer overlooking the bay*]. So we have developed that two-hour river cruise with the different stops and ang ating last two stops is the dinner or lunch in the floating restaurants and then a visit to the shrine so gwapo kaayo na siya [*so maganda talaga siya*]. As a matter of fact, the last guest we had before the pandemic was Ambassador and the Consuls of Russia ‘no and they were very impressed because it was a beautiful site, beautiful river cruise and they said that it had really much potential and we’ve been getting lot of tourists there ‘no.

Sa ato namang faith tourism daghang kaayo site ‘no [*Sa ating faith tourism, marami tayong sites*], not only for Catholics, but we also our Muslim faith tourism. We’re developing our Muslim faith tourism in line with our halal tourism ‘no.

So for the Catholic sites, we have the Divine Mercy Shrine in El Salvador, Misamis Oriental. We have the—of course the Caluya Shrine also, faith tourism destination Misamis Occidental. We also have the heritage churches in Jasaan. We also the shrine in Binuangan, Our Lady of Lourdes. We also have the pilgrimage site, the volcano walkway in Camiguin, so daghan kaayo

ta [*so marami tayong (sites)*]. We've been talking to the archdiocese and they will be developing our local pilgrimage tours, of course in Bukidnon also the Monastery of the Transfiguration. So daghang kaayo ta [*so marami tayo*] for faith.

For farm, we just actually visited CMU, I'm in Maramag right now, that's one of our farm tourism destinations ni Maramag. We do have a coffee tour complete with a plantation tour, a coffee lab where we grade the coffee and also they have a coffee shop. We have Binahon Agro-Forestry farm in Lantapan, Bukidnon, one of our top tourism destinations for organic farming. We also have in different areas in the provinces, they have their own farm tourism 'no.

And then for our mountain tourism, actually our region is blessed to be the most—we have the most number of ASEAN heritage parks which is Mount Malindang Range, we have the Mount Kitanglad in Bukidnon. Mount Malindang is in Misamis Occidental and we also have the Mount Kitanglad of course in Bukidnon in—well spanning Malaybalay and several municipalities 'no. And these three ASEAN heritage sites are also in line to be UNESCO heritage sites as well, so very exciting. And then we have the other mountains that—and like iyong Panimahawa Ridge, naa po'y [*mayroon ding*] Mt. Kalatungan. Daghan kaayo gyud ta [*Marami talaga tayo (sites)*]. We're very blessed with very nice mountains 'no.

Ang dive tourism natin, of course Camiguin is our number one dive tourism site and Misamis Oriental also and we're also developing in Misamis Occidental. But Camiguin has been recognized as one of the most beautiful dive spots in the Philippines and we also had launched the Camiguin Dive Festival which was participated in, last year by over 500—with 500 entries. And then this year, sa June sana noon to October, Sec., mayroon sana tayong second Camiguin Dive Festival pero nagkaroon na ng COVID, so we postponed it to next year 'no. So kana, daghan kaayo [*So, iyan marami talaga*].

For culinary also, of course we have a lot of heritage cuisine in our region 'no, so we've been promoting per province what they have to offer. We're doing the food crawls and we also have Kumbira which is held in Cagayan De Oro every festival, that is the longest running culinary festival in the Philippines. They're going on supposedly their 28th year this year 'no, so daghang kaayo ta og offerings pa, Sec. [*so marami pa tayong offerings pa, Sec.*]

Sa sports tourism mayroon bike tourism, motorbike tourism and there's of course iyong we have our white-water rafting and the others. So iyan Sec., marami tayong ginawa but unfortunately we had to take a break from COVID and now the Department of Tourism is doing the product development and our travel bubbles 'no as advised by Secretary Berna, we are enhancing our tourism sites, we're cleaning them and of course we are preparing for the new normal protocols for safety 'no.

But we're very excited, because with the help also of PIA, of course of your office and you know, our own media team, we have been showing videos of how our tourism establishments have prepared for the new normal. And I think it's building the confidence of our tourists to

make their plans and travel again. So iyan Sec., still even with the pandemic we've been busy trying to show our beautiful sites and campaigning for our travel tomorrow. You know, let's travel when it's safe already.

SEC. ANDANAR: You know Mae, angayan gyud ka sa trabaho nga ing-ani [*You know Mae, bagay ka talaga sa trabahong ganito*] because, you know, the way you sound, it's so inviting and, you know, I just want to go back to our region from my lockdown here in Manila. But anyway, I'm just saying that because I love listening to you how you describe the beautiful places diha sa atoa sa Northern Mindanao. [*But anyway, I'm just saying that because I love listening to you how you describe the beautiful places diyan sa atin sa Northern Mindanao*]

Now, kinahanglan gyud nga kumpiyansa na ang mga tawo nga in place ang mga minimum health protocols sa mga tourism establishments nato. I understand that you have started travelling around the region, asa na man ka naka adto og unsa man ang naobserbahan nimo didto? [*Now, kailangan talaga ang tiwala ng mga tao na in place ang mga minimum health protocols sa mga tourism establishments natin. I understand that you have started travelling around the region, saan ka na nakarating at ano naman ang naobserbahan mo doon?*]

REGIONAL DIRECTOR UNCHUAN: Well, actually, in Cagayan de Oro 'no ... actually sa tibuok region, ang mga LGUs pod, hugot gipatuman ang minimum health standards 'no [*Well, actually, in Cagayan de Oro 'no ... actually sa buong region, ang mga LGUs din, mahigopit na pinapatupad ang minimum health standards 'no*]. And us, being a member of the IATF and a member of the joint task force for checking on the minimum health standards for our tourism-related establishments. We have really reminded people not only—nga mo ingon ta nga dili man ni sad lang para sa mga turista nga mo bisita 'no, it's really for your staff and for yourself na dapat mahimo tang safe and we have to listen to the government with regards to the minimum health protocol kay para man pod ni sa ato. [*We have really reminded people not only—na sabihin natin na hindi naman ito para lang sa mga turista na dumadayo 'no, it's really for your staff and for yourself na dapat mahimo tang safe and we have to listen to the government with regards to the minimum health protocol dahil para din ito sa atin*].

And I think nakasabot na man pod sila tanan [*And I think, naintindihan din nila*]. And in order for us to rise up, we need to comply with the minimum health standards so that everybody will be safe. But ang pinakadako gyud nga problema, Sec., is really the confidence of people because, you know, dili man gyud nato na mawala na mahadlok pa man mo travel ang mga tao. But by showing them that all of these establishments have been complying with the new normal, nakita man pod nila nga ngano, unsay cause gyud ani. [*But ang pinakamalaki talagang problema, Sec., is really the confidence of the people, because, you know, hindi natin maalis na matakot na magtravel ang mga tao. But by showing them that all of these establishments have been complying with the new normal, nakitanaman nila kung bakit, ano talaga ang cause nito.*]

Nakita og nakasabot man pod ang general public, nakita na nila hinay-hinay nga, 'Okay, maybe we can venture out in the places where people are really implementing these in the establishments.' So, mao lang gyud na, hinay-hinay lang gyud ta [*Nakita at nakakaintindi din naman ang general public, nakita na nila na dahan-dahan na, 'Okay, maybe we can venture out in the*

places where people are really implementing these in the establishments.’ So, iyan lang talaga, na dahan-dahan lang talaga tayo.

But the most effective way is really to show, and even kaming mga officials, we’re slowly showing them that okay to travel if you, of course, take care of yourself first ‘no and also exercise the precautions. And then when they see that the establishments are also conforming, then I think later on when the restrictions are lifted, people will actually venture out. And as a matter of fact, some of our establishments have been receiving increase for bookings already because we have been showing them by video and Facebook and social media that they are prepared to receive guests already and conform with the minimum health standards and the safety of course.

SEC. ANDANAR: Makakausap din natin ang Northern Mindanao Regional Development Council Chair sa Misamis Occidental, Governor Philip Tan ukol sa mga highlights ng kaniyang state of the region address.

GOVERNOR TAN: Maayong gabii, Secretary. Nice to be able to talk to you again. And we are so happy to have you as our CORDS Secretary, a Cabinet Officer for Regional Development and Security. Daghan kaayo mi og mga problema diri nga nasolbad tungod nimo napaabot kang Presidente. Thank you kaayo, Secretary. [*Napakadami naming mga problema na nalutas dahil sa iyo, naparating mo kay Presidente. Maraming salamat Secretary.*]

SEC. ANDANAR: Thank you, sir. Trabaho lang nato na, sir [*Trabaho lang natin iyan, sir*]. Governor, earlier this month, you gave your state of the region address, and we won’t have time to discuss everything. So instead, let’s break down the majority of its components based on the accomplishments in 2019 and where we are headed as we pursue economic recovery amidst pandemic. Now, the question is – mag-umpisa tayo sa pag focus sa agriculture: Maayo ang performance sa Northern Mindanao last year? [*Maganda ang performance ng Northern Mindanao last year*]. Tell us about agriculture, the output in 2019? And, Gov., unsa man ang mga plano aron mapadayon nato sa atong productivity diri sa Region X, labi na karon nga gapaningkamot intawon ta sa atong food security? [*And Gov, ano ang plano upang maipatuloy natin ang ating productivity dito sa Region X, lalo na ngayong nagsisikap tayo sa ating food security?*]

GOVERNOR TAN: Well, Secretary, we are so happy to inform you as our CORDS Secretary that Region X is ahead of the rest of the regions in the country. We are actually the fast ... one of the fastest growing economies of Mindanao. And of course, we are number one in pineapple of course, and cattle. And we are number two for many crops such as sugarcane, banana, coconut, corn, tomato, papaya and cassava. We are number three for chicken production and swine. And number four for goat, and number five for rubber.

And we are also happy to tell you that we are 83% rice-sufficient. And for corn, we have excess ‘no, 114% corn-sufficiency—hundred forty-one percent for corn. And we are happy to inform you that our Department of Agriculture in Region X has been supporting a lot of our farmers

and our processors in the agriculture industry. This year, in fact, our agriculture department has given seeds to rice and corn production, and fertilizers also, Secretary.

SEC. ANDANAR: Okay. Governor, let us now zoom out to the rest of the regional economy. Of course, apektado talaga lahat sa COVID-19. But tell us about 2019 and what our initiatives are moving forward as a region, Governor, lalo na ngayong 2020 at 2021?

GOVERNOR TAN: Well, Secretary, we are so lucky, suwerte ta kaayo nga ang atong mga regional directors, ang ating mga local government officials, most especially our committee chairman in the different committees in the regional development are very participative in coming up with new projects and programs that are focused on recovery and rehabilitation next year. So marami tayong innovation, Secretary, and they are very long and napakadaming mga bawat sektor sa social, infra, economic and macro kung saan, Region X will not be left behind when COVID-19 will be gone and we'll start with a new normal.

SEC. ANDANAR: Of course, we are talking about regional development ngayon, Gov. Pero siguro bisan og diutay lang [*Pero, siguro kahit kaunti lang*], if we can talk about a public safety. I know that this belongs to Mayor Oca, if I'm not mistaken. Pero can you tell us about public safety sa buong region, Gov.?

GOVERNOR TAN: Well, nag-improve din tayo, from 28.56% per 100,000 population crime rate. Ning baba ta last year to 27.18% in 2019. And of course, Region X has been often visited by disasters. Last year, Secretary, we have around 142,892 affected families. And of course, we plan ahead next year na we will institutionalize the establishment of disaster risk reduction and management offices. We will strengthen our capacities to respond to emergencies.

In fact, my province, Misamis Occidental, will take the lead in organizing our province to be able to respond right away for any calamity, Secretary.

SEC. ANDANAR: Governor, diri sa Northern Mindanao mayroon tayong innovative platform for programs, projects and activities o PPA location assessment, monitoring investment programming and budgeting for development planning in governance or IPALAMDAG. Sir, lamdag mi Gov, kong unsa ni og unsa ang significance ani sa ato diri sa Region X? [*Sir, ipaliwanag mo sa amin kung ano ito at ano ang significance nito sa atin dittao sa Region X?*]

GOVERNOR TAN: Yes, this is a very unique innovation made by NEDA X. IPALANDAG is a Visayan term, meaning, "To enlighten". This is a very good program developed by NEDA, it enables our regional line agencies to manage a project, to monitor a project and to evaluate progress of our projects at the regional level.

It is a program or a platform na magiging madali sa ating mga government officials to make a decision. It's just simply putting-in all the projects and programs of government all over Region X. And in the map of Region X, and we can tell kung saan man ang barangay na, na left behind. We will be able to tell: Asa ba ang atong health centers nabotang? [*Saan ba naroon ang*

health centers?'] And we will be able to tell: Asa man ang atong eskuwelahan nabatang? [*Saan ba naroon ang ating paaralan?*']

And through the map, atong makita nga asang lugar nga wala kaayo'y infrastructure that will cater to the basic services or needs of our people. So through this, ating makita na sa kabundukan, Secretary, walang eskuwelahan, walang mga health centers, walang mga offices ng gobyerno kung saan malapit ang serbisyo sa mga tao sa kabundukan. And we can identify and focus barangays and prioritize community needs, makita agad natin and it's really helpful na nakumbinsi natin ang national government that we really need these programs and projects to serve our people who are left behind.

SEC. ANDANAR: Gov. Tan, let's now move to peace-building particularly on the role of the Regional Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict or ELCAC and the program of Convergence Areas for Peace Development or CAPDev. Can you give us just, you know, just a little briefer on this, Gov.? Kumusta na ang atong mga lakang diha [*Kumusta na ang ating mga plano diyan?*']?

GOV. TAN: Well, nagpasalamat kaayo ako ka nimo [*nagpasalamat talaga ako sa iyo*] Secretary, you are very active in our ELCAC. In fact for several meetings, you've been spearheading our meetings and through you, we were able to solve some of our problems and you are able to bring this to the national level 'no.

And to respond to the call of the President for a lasting peace, we have refocused and reframed our strategies to achieving peace through looking at what we can do to their social, economic and historical problems and also the lack of inclusivity and access to opportunities 'no.

Through consultation, we have conceived many, many PPAs [*plans, programs and actions*]. Ang nakatabang ani Secretary, kato gyud nga IPALAMDAG, nakita nato nga mao diay dunay ka-gubot [*iyon talagang IPALAMDAG, nakia natin kung bakit may kaguluhan or mga restless sa ating mga community and peace and order problems because we were able to see the—ang kulang nila na services* 'no. And of course we were able to conceive 2,038 PPAs or amounting to 17.33 billion for Region X. And through the IPALAMDAG system, atong nakumbinsi ang national government [*ating nakumbinsi ang national government*] and so that we have 676 implemented PPAs amounting to 15.46 billion in 2019, the bulk of which is infrastructure 'no. So salamat kay Secretary imong napaabot sa atong national government and because of that Region X is ahead in this peace-keeping efforts [*So, maraming salamat Secretary, iyong naipaabot sa ating national government and because of that Region X is ahead in this peace-keeping efforts*].

SEC. ANDANAR: We also spoke with the private sector represented by Cagayan De Oro Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Robert Pizarro to get his thoughts on moving forward. What do you think will be the factors most crucial to economic recovery in Region X?

CDO CCI PRES. PIZARRO: Well ang malaking ano talaga diyan will be the government intervention 'no. First for me is the Build, Build, Build Program should be not only continue but to be enhanced. Meaning, iyong mga pondo natin na mas malaki sa NCR o Luzon should be moved more to the regional areas. 'Di ba isa pa nga iyan, iyong Balik Probinsya, gusto nating i-de-clog ang NCR. But one way to do it is to have an invitation, more inviting areas in the region with proper connectivity, good infrastructure kasi maganda ngayon excess ang Region X siguro buong Mindanao ng power. Ang Region X din, we have very good land, good skilled labor and the weather is... well, alam ninyo naman Mindanao weather, mas friendly kaysa sa Luzon 'no.

So that and in order for other—you know what's happening in China now 'no, maraming umaalis na businesses, even big American companies, European, Japanese companies pero hindi sila masyado lumilipat sa atin eh. The incentives of other countries especially Vietnam, maybe Thailand, even Cambodia and also Myanmar, especially Japan 'no, ang gaganda ng incentives nila in order for them to transfer. Even—well Vietnam I think and Indonesia are giving properties left and right, some are not—well for free. So kulang tayo—kailangan natin i-enhance iyong ating incentives natin dito para maka-attract naman tayo.

I know we got some 'no pero parang kulang pa rin. And that is very good for the Balik Probinsya project. And that project I believe would really fly but we need a nucleus intervention both by the government and the private sector to put up these nucleus businesses to attract this Balik Probinsya not only to live here but to have a good job in the region.

SEC. ANDANAR: Kumusta po ang paghahanda naman ng mga negosyo dito sa Northern Mindanao para sa parating na new normal?

CDO CCI PRES. PIZARRO: We really have to follow the proper protocol 'no. Maingat na maingat tayo, sinusunod natin iyong tamang protocol 'no. Again shifting, shifting to the new type of business like going digital, matuto sila to use it properly like in the—kami sa real estate 'no, we are maximizing the technology, lahat marketing – from the paper works to the payment. Of course looking at the projects, lahat iyan video na 'no. Then the consumer products, magmo-modify din sila, mga nasa food business, restaurants... iyan service iyan ano, service sector. Tinamaan sila nang husto.

So what's happening now—so iyong mga delivery, pick-up, they enhanced it 'no, they improved not only on the health safety of their clients but also on the new way of selling like deliveries, mga Food Panda o stuff like that, Sec.

SEC. ANDANAR: Robert, one of the things you are keenly eyeing for the region is the integrated steel mill. Tell us more about this and why you think it will have a significant impact on Region X. But before you answer that question, you wanted to ask for an update on this. Yeah, we spoke with PHIVIDEA Industrial Administration Head Franklin Quijano and this is what he said:

PHIVIDEDEC HEAD MR. QUIJANO: For more than two years, we've been trying to attract foreign investors and local partners to locate the PHIVIDEDEC Industrial Authority to put up an integrated steel mill. This actually started when the President in a statement, in Cebuano said, "Luto-a pod ninyo ang inyuhang yuta sa di pa ibaligya sa laing nasod," which in English is: "Please process your mined materials before selling to other countries." So we had several investors coming from several companies until finally it came to proposal stages when the board decided that this is going to be [unclear].

The next stage now is to sit down, define the terms and conditions, sign the agreement and hopefully go into the groundbreaking. We look forward to this year and early next year to be the action activities now.

SEC. ANDANAR: Robert, can you tell us more about the project?

CDO CCI PRES. PIZARRO: Yes. Well first of all, I believe the first integrated steel in the Philippines would be truly a game changer 'no hindi lang dito sa region, hindi lang dito sa island ng Mindanao pero sa buong Pilipinas. Kasi alam ninyo naman ang integrated from ore to finished product. So with an integrated steel like what we've seen, we went around China, visited several integrated steel, very good in environmental practice. A lot of upstream/downstream followed.

The integrated steel alone ano would hire for this kind of size about 6 million tons a year, they would hire permanent about 8 to 10 thousand employees and for the upstream/downstream it would increase from 50/60 depending on the movement of industries coming in; 50 to 60 up to a 100 thousand workers.

And projection of, I think DTI or NEDA, for the economic effect in the whole island would be about close to 492 billion a year, kasama na diyan iyong upstream, downstream. Ano ba iyong mga downstream and upstream? Well, karamihan ng mga downstream, actually mayroon ng nag-inquire about ship building, with the incoming of the steel mill, cement plant, glass - salamin, glass plant, of course nandodoon din iyong mga appliances, may aviation, car manufacturing, weaponry.

In fact iyong nakita namin na one big plant together with administrator Franklin in China, was this plant, nakadikit sa kanuya, ang Toyota Manufacturer ng mga transmission, so from ore to the hot roll, tapos ginagawa na nila parts ng kotse in one compound. And mostly mga planta nila doon, well, it's bigger, it's really a city nandodoon na lahat ng mga institutions, schools, mga colleges, mga simbahan, of course the residential, commercial, hospitals, you are building new cities here.

And we are fortunate, ang region natin na ito, we have very good land available. In fact, last Monday, we had a zoom meeting with the good Governor Bobby and we informed about the development of this project. It will, hopefully, we are looking at this first part of September

to complete the documents and break ground and I informed him, maybe they should study the master plan of the whole province, the connectivity. Kasi marami ang mag i-intertwine diyan na businesses like hat I mentioned while ago. Isipin natin 492 billion a year na iikot diyan lang sa area na iyan. So we need to open up new industrial estates. Mayroon ka diyan heavy industries; but we have areas for agriculture, processing, we have very good land fertile land for planting. So, I think those are the great effects.

And for the Balik Probinsiya, iyong binanggit ko kanina economic stimulus na in fact, I emailed Senator Bong Go that he has a very good concept of Balik Probinsiya. But I think it will be cheaper for the government and it will be more successful if we have this economic stimulus. So this is one big economic stimulus.

SEC. ANDANAR: Sa ating pagbabalik, mapapanuod natin ang panayam natin sa Network Briefing News kay Cebu Archbishop Jose Palma tungkol sa kanilang pinaghahandaang paggunita ng 500 year of Christianity.

Next year 2021, the Philippines will host the National Quincentennial Commemorations, where we will recall our role in the circumnavigation of the world as well as the victory and the humanity that have helped shape our national identity. Kasabay nito gugunitain din natin sa 2021 ang pagdating ng Kristiyanismo sa bansa. Isa ring mahalagang bahagi ito ng ating kasaysayan dahil 90% ng Pilipino ay nagpapakilalang Kristiyano.

Noong Abril nakausap natin ang National Quincentennial Committee na siyang ahensiya ng pamahalaan na inatasang manguna sa paghahanda sa okasyong ito. Ngayong araw na ito panauhin po natin si Archbishop ng Archdiocese of Cebu. Siya po ang namumuno naman sa paggunita ng napakahalagang okasyong ito. Magandang umaga po sa inyo, Archbishop Palma.

ARCHBISHOP PALMA: Magandang umaga po, Secretary Martin Andanar and para sa akin, isa pong karangalan to be a guest in this program.

SEC. ANDANAR: Puwede rin po naman, co-host po tayo. Archbishop 2021 marks 500 years of Christianity in the Philippines, what exactly happened in Cebu 500 years ago and when and where exactly did this event take place?

ARCHBISHOP PALMA: From the prospective of Catholic Church, we commemorate two important events: One is the celebration of the first mass that happened on March 31, 1521 and to us this was done in Limasawa; and the other is the celebration of the first baptism, which was done in Cebu on April 14, 1521. And during the celebration of baptism, the giving of the image of the Senior Sto. Niño to Princess Juana. So, for us, this two important events defined our being what we call the cradle of Christian civilization, of course in Cebu, and the celebration of the first mass in what is known also [unclear] of Cebu, which is in Limasawa.

SEC. ANDANAR: Archbishop like many other plans, I am sure, the original schedule of activities, related to the celebration of 500 years of Christianity had to be adjusted. Now, what are the major changes and plans now for the celebration of this very significant milestone and how can people across the archipelago participate?

ARCHBISHOP PALMA: We all are shocked of course by COVID-19. And to us, what would have been the culminating activities in April and of course before that of course in March of next year, would now be more of the launching of a yearlong celebration which would start this time in April of 2021 and would culminate in April of 2022. So, in terms of date, we moved the celebration like one year, we pushed it to the next year.

In general, we would be still celebrating in the context of the theme gifted to give. We look back and we would like to be grateful for the gift and celebrate it joyfully and fruitfully. And in the process asked ourselves, how can we share the gift that we have received – and the root of it is, for us the gift of faith – how can we share that gift of faith? And all through out the year, but even starting today in a lesser degree, like how we would like to bring the devotion of Senior Sto. Niño even to other dioceses. And likewise the Magellan's cross 'no. The visit of the image of Senior Sto. Niño in Magellan's cross. And then, for one year, there would be like formation programs, celebration and, of course, we think of the legacy. There would be parish celebration, diocesan celebrations and jubilee celebrations.

But the two key or important events that would happen during the culminating activities would be the mission congress. Why mission? Because when we think of nine-year preparation which started in 93, every year there is a caucus. But as a culminating event, the caucus is a mission, meaning, we believed, we are sent, sent to share. We should go out from ourselves to other people to share that faith. When we go out to other countries, we call that *missio ad gentes*.

But now we also begin to emphasize, I mean, we are trying to emphasize that it's not only going to other countries, the Pope says, we also go to the peripheries. Meaning usually, many associations are kind of concentrated among themselves, we go out to the peripheries to the less fortunate, to the poor, to those who maybe on church, even in our own country. And I think that is a very important aspect of mission that we call. Along the way, we would like people to come and again experience the joy of honoring the oldest image in the Philippines – Senior Sto. Niño. And why in our country, this is the most celebrated fiesta, the third Sunday of January.

So, people would come for that, but the mission congress would be held towards the end on April 18 to 22. We will also recall the 5th centenary of the first baptism that day and 18 and 14 and then culminate with the mission sending.

All along the year, we will invite people to come and also witness what we have prepared in terms of the [unclear] Triduum pilgrimages and what it means to be in the cradle of Christian

civilization with our cultural heritage churches in Cebu and of course with our various presentation throughout the year.

It maybe simpler this time because of COVID, but I repeat, we focus on what we can do more especially for the less fortunate especially those who are poor be on church. And this we do not only we Catholics but in collaboration with even the other religions that we, of course, invited to join with us and, of course, with the religious communities that are very much part of our history.

SEC. ANDANAR: Archbishop, so much has changed in 500 years. From a missionary station, the Philippines is now at the forefront of sending missionaries to the rest of the world and of fostering the faith in many parts of the world, including the many countries where there are overseas Filipinos. Your thoughts on this, Archbishop?

ARCHBISHOP PALMA: When we think of that, we can only thank the Lord, perhaps it's part of the design that many of us would go out of country for one reason or another. But what seems for many, you know, a challenge economically has also become an opportunity to be able to share our faith. In the five continents that, you know, we might have visited, we see people, Filipinos in particular, being leaders especially in terms of renewal in faith. Now, I can only thank the Lord that of so many countries, while of course Brazil is number one in numbers of Catholics and number two is Mexico, Philippines is number 3 which is of course an honor.

Now, we also thank God that many times we will meet people, "Brother Bishops," they will say, "oh thank you because your people are the leaders, your people are the frontliners, if we may call them you know, in our renewal and revival in faith." And to us, this is a privilege. Wherever there are Filipinos, there will be the novena of Senior Sto. Niño, there will be more joyful celebrations, there will be novena for Perpetual Help, there will be rosaries and many activities that make people realize, yes, faith has significance in their lives. And of course, the Filipinos are usually the leaders in many of these communities.

And not only that, even in terms of church services, we might say in the church hierarchy, when we think of the likes of Cardinal Chito Tagle, you know, as the Prefect of the missionary work we might say—years ago, you know, we have Filipinos superior general, Cardinal Tagle, of course, Tony Pernia. I was thinking of superior general of the SVD and thinking of now the general of the Dominicans 'no. Filipinos who had thousands of priests all over the country, they are great leaders likewise superior generals and sisters. To me, these are signs that we have matured in the faith. And both our leaders and our people are now in the forefront of sharing the faith, of leading people to renewal.

SEC. ANDANAR: Lastly, Archbishop. I am pretty sure you've been getting asked this a lot lately. But from your perspective as an Archbishop, what is the message of this pandemic?

ARCHBISHOP PALMA: I share with many of, of course, of our brothers and sisters the thought that up to this time 'no, COVID-19 is a mystery. And yet, in the face of this mystery—

to us in Cebu we usually use three words ‘no – ‘Ampo, Amping, Ambit,’ meaning, Ampo. In the face of this mystery, we urge, we encourage people to pray. We pray to God that in His wisdom – we call God whatever name we call Him – but in His wisdom, we may be able to find COVID to be able to combat this pandemic. Hopefully, we say, in His time, we will have that.

But we also pray that, you know, government leaders, we see scientists and people who are tasked to find a way to curb, to stem the spread and to cure those who are infected may have all of these gifts that soon this pandemic will be over. We realize, of course, that it’s a pandemic as a disease but also it has its effects on the economic, social, cultural life to our people. So to us, and of course I speak as a bishop, the importance of prayer which I believe a lot of people also agree in. We are happy with—I mean, we are hopeful with what we had been doing initiated by Manila, the Wednesday prayer for healing ... those things, okay.

Second, we say “Amping” which is a way of saying, we take utmost serious care, you know, to collaborate with each other, that we are all responsible to stop the spread of the disease and to be able to help cure those who are affected. Amping is of course to take care. And we know, I’m assuring of course our government officials, rest assured, from the perspective of the Church, we are following the Pope’s advice to follow those in authority in their executive orders and if there are instructions in how to be able to stop or to curb, you know, the spread of the disease. We follow the instructions.

And third we say, “Ambit” which is a way of saying, we should share. Share what we have especially because we know that many [unclear] share food, share ways of consoling those who are sad, share ways of inspiring people, educating people and the importance of, of course, the ways [unclear] and washing of hands, distancing and all of these things, you know, share hope to people.

I’d like to quote what our Holy Father said before that, yes, in the face of this pandemic, we should not lose hope because we say this pandemic will end but the guidance of the Lord, the love of God will not end. And he said something beautiful, he said, “May we find within us the necessary antibodies of justice, of charity and solidarity.” And he continues, “We must not be afraid to live the alternative civilization of love.”

So we try to believe—this is a time when we should not, you know, like put down each other but help support each other in the spirit of love and collaboration that we may overcome ... we use the word that we may survive and eventually be able to revive after COVID.

SEC. ANDANAR: Maraming salamat po sa inyong panahon, Archbishop Palma.

ARCHBISHOP PALMA: Secretary, thanks for the opportunity – welcome and thanks for the opportunity po, Secretary. More power po.

SEC. ANDANAR: Hopefully, sir, magkita po tayo diyan sa Cebu one of these days.

ARCHBISHOP PALMA: Any time po you come, please pass by 'no for a cup of coffee. Yes po, Secretary—

SEC. ANDANAR: Yes, I will take you up on that, Archbishop. Mabuhay po kayo.

ARCHBISHOP PALMA: Okay. God bless po.

SEC. ANDANAR: Pilipinas, ang pandemyang dinaranas natin ngayon ay patunay ng pangangailangan ng whole of nation approach dahil nga naman iba-iba minsan ang sitwasyon sa bawat rehiyon, tulad na lang ng Northern Mindanao o Region X. Habang ang NCR at ilang bahagi ng CALABARZON ay kasalukuyang nasa ilalim ng MECQ, sila naman ay MGCQ na. At ang suportang kailangan nila ay iba sa suportang kailangan ng nasa Metro Manila. At dito mahalaga na natututukan ang bawat rehiyon ng kaniya-kaniyang Cabinet Officer for Regional Development and Security. Dahil sa ilalim ng the whole of nation approach ng Pangulong Duterte, walang lugar sa ating kapuluan ang dapat maiwan.

Bilang pangwakas, alalahanin po natin ang mga salita ni Cebu Archbishop Jose Palma: Ampo, Amping, Ambit. Ampo – pray, magdasal; Ampit – take care, mag-ingat at sundin ang mga payo tungkol sa pag-iwas sa pagkalat ng coronavirus; at Ambit – share, magtulungan po tayo lalo na sa mga mas nangangailangan. Let us share our resources, let us share our time dahil lahat tayo, ang buong bansa, ang buong mundo, lahat tayo ay apektado ng pandemyang ito. Ampo, amping, ambit.

Para sa CORDS X podcast at sa Network Briefing News, ako si Communications Secretary Martin Andanar. Inyong natunghayan ang Cabinet Report.

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Source: PCOO-NIB (News and Information Bureau-Data Processing Center)