

2 missing, 14,996 persons evacuated in 18 Caraga Region villages due to floods

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Two minors are missing while about 14,996 individuals or about 3,049 families mostly from low-lying areas in the provinces of Surigao del Norte including its charter city, Surigao City, Dinagat Islands, Surigao del Sur and Agusan del Sur fled their homes due to flooding since Monday, the Caraga Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council initial official report as of this morning said.

Office of the Civil Defense Regional Director Dr. Blanche Gobenciong advised residents in low-lying areas especially those also living along Agusan River banks to listen to the advise of authorities to immediately leave the area if necessary.

In Barangay San Roque, Surigao City, one-year-and-seven-months old Roan Libres was reported missing while in Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur, a still unidentified seven-year-old boy also went missing after a river in Barangay Hagimit where the missing minor was residing, swelled.

In Butuan City, the City Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council reported at least 30 families in Barangay Golden Ribbon especially those living at the river banks evacuated Tuesday night after Agusan River waters rose to alarm level 2.

At alarm level 2, residents living at the river banks are advised for forced evacuation.

The Butuan City Police Office recorded 11 barangays to have been flooded with 71 families already evacuated to higher grounds.

Environmental groups criticized lack of political will in the relocation of nearly 15,000 individuals residing along huge Agusan River banks including removal/relocation of some 35 wood processing plants in Butuan City, which has no ECC or Environmental Compliance Certificate because the area is included in the Geo-Hazard map meaning it has high risk of flooding.

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Residents including owners of wood processing plants along Agusan River have been advised by concerned government agencies.

But Butuan City Mayor Dr. Ferdinand Amante, Jr. claimed difficulty in relocating the wood processing plants which is the source of livelihood of some 16,000 city residents of Butuan City.

Meanwhile, DPWH Caraga conducted monitoring of the conditions of major roads and bridges in the different areas of the region. Maintenance Point Persons (MPPs) were dispatched in their designated area to provide assistance to travelling public. Disaster Preparedness Team and equipment are on-stand by ready for deployment when necessary.

PDRRMC Agusan del Sur dispatched its Search and Rescue Team (SARAS) to assist in the evacuation in affected municipalities.

PDRRMC Surigao del Sur was convened for an emergency meeting to establish a 24/7 monitoring and updating of information on the effect of LPA in the province as well scheduling of PDRRMC members to man its Operation Center

PDRRMC Surigao del Norte and CDRRMC Surigao convened to preposition their resources and activate response mechanisms. Local DRRM Operation Centers closely monitored the situation and coordinated with concerned agencies for appropriate action.

On the other hand, Department of Education Provincial offices of affected provinces were advised to prepare schools as evacuation centers. (PNA)

source: <http://www.zambotimes.com/archives/40901-2-missing,-14,996-persons-evacuated-in-18-Caraga-Region-villages-due-to-floods.html>