As part of this year’s 122nd Philippine Independence Day celebration, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) Regional Office II and Provincial Offices of Batanes, Cagayan, Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino joined the simultaneous “Pagpupugay sa Watawat” or Salute to a Clean Flag during the Flag Raising Ceremony on 08 June 2020.

The salute aims to promote renewed reverence and love for the Philippine Flag which is the country’s most valued symbol and to show unity and solidarity amid the worldwide crisis. This year’s Independence Day celebration is "Kalayaan 2020: Matatag na Bansa, Mamamayang Malaya".
On 04 May 2020, Philippine Statistics Authority - Regional Statistical Service Office II (PSA-RSSO II) reopens its frontline services for the processing of Civil Registry documents after 48 days of Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ).

In compliance to the advisory signed by the National Statistician and Civil Registrar General Claire Dennis S. Mapa and subject to the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) rules, the office adopted the "new normal" measures of delivering services to clients to ensure public safety. Corollary, and to adhere in physical distancing measure, only ten clients can enter the office at a time. A makeshift plastic barrier was also installed to minimize potential health hazards for applicants as well as the office personnel. The agency also employed “no mask, no entry policy” and “temperature check” before entering the receiving area of the office.

PSA-RSSO II Regional Crisis Management Committee (CMC) Created

COVID-19 outbreak has made a huge impact on the economy of our country. On 29 April 2020, PSA-RSSO II conducted a virtual meeting on 29 April 2020 for the creation of the Regional Crisis Management Committee (CMC) composed of:

- **Chairperson**: Marilyn T. Estrada
- **Vice-Chairperson**: Milagros C. Adduru
- **Alternate Vice-Chairperson**: Girme M. Bayucan
- **Members**:
  - Batanes: Ramil G. Abad, Jesusa V. Noblejas
  - Cagayan: Elena U. Rivera, Cristeta M. Retoma
  - Isabela: Julius M. Emperador, Thelma G. Castillo
  - Nueva Vizcaya: Cholly L. Bayon, Norman T. Salvador
  - Quirino: Cherry Grace C. Agustin, Karen T. Fernandez
  - USE Representative: Reyma C. Tabalno, Juby C. Bacuyag
  - Secretariat: Ma. Juvy S. Agbayani, Violeta D. Bosi

The committee aims to assist and guide PSA officials and employees on actions to take depending on the situation in the locality.

Key considerations were submitted by the committee to ensure readiness and safety of the Skeletal Force and Frontliners of the office, to wit:

1. Work scheme;
2. Secured yet well-ventilated isolation room;
3. Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and safety supplies (face mask / shield, alcohol / sanitizer and hand soap);
4. Disinfection of work places;
5. Work arrangements of personnel living from far places (other towns);
6. Data request procedure;
7. Handling parcels; and
8. Other actions taken to ensure team safety from COVID-19.
PSA-RSSO II welcomed new appointees and congratulated newly promoted personnel in the oath taking ceremony held on 03 June 2020 at the PSA-RSSO II Regional Office, City Hall Building Annex, Enrile Boulevard, Carig Sur, Tuguegarao City, Cagayan.

Milagros C. Adduru, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) congratulated the newly appointed and newly promoted personnel. She related that the oath taking activity was not just a mere ceremony but a promise to faithfully fulfill the duties and obligations vested to them.

RD Marilyn T. Estrada, in her inspirational speech reminded the newly hired and promoted personnel to take care of the trust, accountability and responsibility given to them, “you have to abide with the Civil Service Rules and other regulating agencies governing employment, improve yourself in terms of embracing digital transformation and most of all stay humble and committed to your work”, RD Estrada said.

She further stated to love every workload given to them, “if you love your work, you will not fail. Take it seriously”, RD Estrada added.

Ms. Raziel T. Pagunuran gave a heartfelt message of thanks to the management of PSA-RSSO II, “for almost 9 years of service in PSA I am grateful for that the office continues to trust me with my work and helped me grow throughout these years”, Ms. Pagunuran said. She also related her humble beginnings with PSA until she reached her new position.

Meanwhile, in his closing remarks, Engr. Girme M. Bayucan, Chief of the Statistical Operations and Coordinating Division (SOCD) congratulated the newly hired and promoted employees and told them that their promotions and appointments is a blessing that should inspire them to do their functions effectively and efficiently. He further stressed that being an employee, they have to balance between their job and their family obligations without sacrificing any of them.

The oath-taking ceremonies were also attended and witnessed by Engr. Elena U. Rivera and Mr. Ramil G. Abad, Chief Statistical Specialist (CSS) of PSA-Cagayan and PSA-Batanes respectively.

Newly appointed and promoted personnel

Newly Hired
- Regional Office II
  Vivian T. Balubal - Administrative Assistant III (AA III)
  Gershan V. Gato, Jr. - Administrative Officer I (AO I)

- PSA Batanes
  Raziel T. Pagunuran - Administrative Officer III (AO III)
  Sheryll Elaine S. Rigua - Statistical Specialist II (SS II)

Promoted
- Regional Office II
  Ma. Visitacion Tuliao - Statistical Analyst (SA)

- PSA Cagayan
  Catherine S. Pauig - Registration Officer I (RO I)
First Online Meeting of the Provincial Statistics Committee (PSC) of Cagayan: A Success

Representatives from the 22 regular member agencies and additional three representatives from the on-call members.

Engr. Elena U. Rivera presided the said meeting in lieu of Ms. Elisa G. Umoso, PSC Chairperson, and Head of PPDO Cagayan, who attended an equally important activity. CSS Rivera took off the meeting with a cheerful smile as she thanked everyone for sharing their time in the said activity.

She further expressed her amazement with the number of partakers of the meeting compared to previously conducted meetings. Also, Engr. Rivera jokingly said that the committee should embrace the online meeting as part of the new normal and innovation as well.

Among the agenda discussed during the session were as follows:

1. Review of the minutes of the first quarter regular business meeting;
2. Establishment of the Provincial Statistics Center;
3. Updates on Covid-19;
4. Updates on Philippine National ID System (PhilSys); and

The committee planned to conduct the next meeting on August.

The second quarter regular business meeting of the Provincial Statistics Committee (PSC) of Cagayan pushed through on 23 June 2020 amidst the pandemic caused by the coronavirus 19 (CoVid-19).

The meeting was conducted via Zoom, the first online meeting of PSC Cagayan. It was spearheaded by PSA Cagayan thru Engr. Elena U. Rivera, the PSC Vice Chairperson and PSA Cagayan Chief Statistical Specialist (CSS).

Mr. Mar L. De La Cruz, Project Development Officer III of the Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) of Cagayan acknowledged the 18 representatives from the 22 regular member agencies and additional three representatives from the on-call members.

The April 2020 Labor Force Survey (LFS) registered the highest unemployment rate across all regions in the country.

Cagayan Valley was not spared from the effect of restricted movement during ECQ with its reported spiked in the latest unemployment rate at 15.6 percent, four times higher than the reported unemployment rate in January 2020 at only 4.0 percent and more than five times higher than the reported rate a year ago at only 3.1 percent.

The number of unemployed persons in the region soar to unprecedented high which was estimated at 228 thousand in the latest LFS. The latest count is more than two folds higher than the highest record in a year at 65 thousand unemployed persons registered in July 2019 or an equivalent percentage increase of 250.8 percent. More so, the latest count of unemployed persons in the region is almost four folds higher than the reported unemployed person in April 2019 estimated at only 46 thousand or about 395.7 percent increase in the latest survey versus the count a year ago.

Employment rate in the region plunged into an all-time low which was estimated at 84.7 percent in April 2020. The latest estimate showed an 11.8 percent decrease from the last quarter’s employment rate of 96.0 percent and about 12.6 percent from the reported employment rate in April 2019 estimated at 96.9 percent. As shown, employment rate in the region remain almost stable for the past four quarters beginning April 2019 and the latest estimate with about more than ten percentage points decrease is novel situation not only during the past year but for the past ten years as well.
In April 2020, Cagayan Valley’s inflation rate moved at a slower pace of 2.5 percent. Its annual rate in March 2020 was 2.8 percent and in April 2019, 3.3 percent.

Following the behaviour of the region, all provinces also exhibited slower annual gains except for the province of Quirino with an increase in the reported inflation rate at 1.8 percent. Batanes which posted the highest inflation in April 2019 at 6.0 percent abruptly decreased to as much as -0.6 percent in April 2020.

The decrease in the inflation can be noted to the slower annual rates of the following commodities:

- Clothing and footwear, 3.3 percent;
- Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, 1.3 percent;
- Transport, -6.8 percent;
- Recreation and culture, 2.7 percent; and
- Restaurant and miscellaneous goods and services, 4.1 percent.

The indices of the rest of the commodity groups such as furnishing, household equipment and routine maintenance of the house, health, communication, education retained their previous month’s annual growth rates.

On the other hand, higher mark-ups were observed in the indices of alcoholic beverages and tobacco at 14.7 percent; housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels at 1.3 percent; furnishings, household equipment and routine maintenance of the house at 3.4 percent; health at 3.7 percent; and, recreation and culture at 2.8 percent. The rest of the commodity groups retained their April 2020 annual growth rates.

All the provinces showed lower annual growths following the trend of the region. The lowest inflation was seen in Batanes at -1.4 percent while the highest is Nueva Vizcaya at 3.0 percent.

The slowdown was attributed to the annual drop recorded in the following commodities:

- Food and Non-alcoholic beverages, 1.7 percent;
- Clothing and footwear, 3.2 percent;
- Transport, -8.0 percent; and
- Restaurant and miscellaneous goods and services, 3.3 percent.

On the other hand, higher annual mark-ups were observed in the indices of alcoholic beverages and tobacco at 14.7 percent; housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels at 1.3 percent; furnishings, household equipment and routine maintenance of the house at 3.4 percent; health at 3.7 percent; and, recreation and culture at 2.8 percent. The rest of the commodity groups retained their April 2020 annual growth rates.
Civil Registration System Issuances at Tuguegarao City, Cagayan Outlet (April - June 2019 - 2020)

A remarkable decline in the number of Civil Registry Documents issued in April to June 2020 as an impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the volume of transactions during the months of May and June 2020 increased as quarantine restrictions eased due to the change in status of the region from lifting of Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) to General Community Quarantine (GCQ).

- Birth issuances during the second quarter of 2020 declined by 80.2 percent as compared to the previous year of the same quarter.

- Decrease in the number of death certificate issued by the outlet by 67.1 percent during the second quarter of 2020.

- A total of 3,798 requests were received by the outlet during the quarter, a decline of 75.0 percent.
Civil Registration System Issuances ... from page 7

- Number of approved CRASM during the period declined by 74.7 percent compared to the same period of 2019 with 91 applications. The month of May posted the highest number of processed CRASM during the quarter.

CENOMAR

- 4,025 applications for CRASM were processed and issued from April to June 2020, a drastic reduction of 71.9 percent over the same period of last year.

- The month of June posted the highest processed CENOMAR at 2,679 applications.
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