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Nograles commends NEA, ECs support on COVID-19 fight

Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles thanked the electric cooperatives (ECs) supervised by the National Electrification Administration (NEA) for offering help in the national government's ongoing COVID-19 vaccination program.

Nograles, Co-chair of the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases, made the statement during the NEA-EC Communicators' Conference held virtually over the weekend (March 6).

"With the support of the 121 electric cooperatives across the country, we will be able to reach even those in remote communities by utilizing your multi-purpose facilities and other resources," Nograles said.

The ECs earlier expressed readiness to assist the national government by offering their facilities, such as multi-purpose halls and gymnasiums, for COVID-19 vaccination rollout in rural communities.

The former Davao City representative also cited the efforts of the electric coops to maintain continuity of reliable electricity services to the countryside, especially to critical infrastructure like hospitals and other healthcare facilities, amid the ongoing pandemic.

Moreover, Nograles commended the NEA, under the leadership of Administrator Edgardo Masongsong, and the ECs for supporting the earlier pronouncement of President Rodrigo Duterte regarding the extension of 'no-disconnection' policy for lifeline consumers.

"The Department of Energy recommended to the President that the no disconnection policy for lifeliners be continued, and the President has readily agreed because electricity is a basic necessity that we all cannot live without," he said.

In an Advisory on February 5, 2021, the DOE directed all distribution utilities, including ECs, to "implement a no disconnection policy due to non-payment of bills falling due by March 2021 for all electricity consumers whose consumption level are within the lifeline rate set by the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) for the DU's franchise area." ###

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