



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT of AGRARIAN REFORM

The Secretary's Message
Flag Raising Ceremony
02 June 2008

A pleasant day to all of you!

This morning, I extend to you my greetings of peace and heartfelt thanks and commendation as we kick-off the various activities in celebration of the 20th Year Anniversary of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. I wish to congratulate all of you for a job very well done of implementing the program for the past twenty years – always giving more meaning to its existence as a 'social justice' vehicle for our littlest farmers. Our significant achievement for the past twenty years can never be questioned even by the 'strongest opponents' of the program and these would not have happened without your selfless commitment and dedication.

Amidst our simple but meaningful celebration' for the next two weeks, I believe everyone of you is aware of the 'biggest challenge' we have to face – the challenge of extending the life of CARP beyond June 30, 2008! In this context, I wish to assure everyone of you that the management is exerting its best efforts in lobbying with every member of both Houses of Congress for the pending bills that would give more life to CARP.

Along this line, I am pleased to inform you that House Bill 4077- An act Sustaining the implementation of CARP, extending for 5 years land acquisition and distribution and providing necessary reforms, is now being considered in the plenary session of the House of Representatives while in the Senate, a consolidated bill is being discussed at the committee level. If approved, the new law would allocate Php100B for another five years, the highlight of which is the increase of the funding support for the program's Support Service Component from 25% to 40%. Other highly important initiatives are the department's participation in the Northern Luzon Rural Congress which is being sponsored by the Northern Luzon Bishops of the CBCP and my scheduled meeting with President Arroyo for the latter's certification as to the urgency of the pending bill.

Let me end this talk by taking my hats off to you – my DAR family and to our farmers who continue to believe and have faith in the program – you are the 'heart and soul' of the program, you are the 'real heroes' of CARP!

MABUHAY ANG CARP! MABUHAY PO KAYONG LAHATI!


NASSER C. PANGANDAMAN