



NEA, ECs hit another milestone in rural electrification drive



The Site of the 13 Millionth Consumer Connection: Sitio Kitbog, Barangay Poblacion, Malungon, Sarangani Province

The National Electrification Administration (NEA) has reached yet another significant milestone in its rural electrification drive.

The Agency, in partnership with all the electric cooperatives (ECs), has achieved the 13 millionth consumer connection based on the April data submitted to the Information Technology and Communication Services Department (ITCSD).

Administrator Edgardo Masongsong said this milestone is a concrete manifestation of the strong commitment of the agency and the 121 ECs to spur social and economic development in the countryside through electrification.

"Our relentless efforts with respect to providing electricity to rural and remote areas of the country and usher in a bright future for our fellow Filipinos have borne fruit. This is another milestone in the golden year of the Rural Electrification Program," Masongsong said.

Data showed that based on 2015 census, the percentage of energization rose from 80 percent in June 2016 to 91 percent in April 2019. This means an average of 275,238 new connections or an increase of 2 percent per semester were registered.

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NEA receives highest audit rating from COA anew

The Commission on Audit (COA) has declared the National Electrification Administration (NEA) as compliant with government transparency standards in its operations and financial management.

According to the COA Independent Auditor's Report (IAR), the NEA received an Unmodified Opinion on the fairness of presentation of its financial statements as of December 31, 2018.

This means that the NEA's financial performance and its cash flows for 2018 adhere to generally accepted auditing principles. An "Unmodified

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NEA seeks changes to EC operational performance assessment rules

The National Electrification Administration (NEA) is proposing some changes to improve its existing guidelines in determining the overall operational performance assessment of electric cooperatives (ECs) nationwide.

The proposed amendments include the EC energization level among the key parameters, said Director Ana Rosa Papa, head of the NEA Office for Performance Assessment and Special Studies (OPASS).

Energization level is measured by the number of consumer connections a power co-op achieves under a given timeline based on the official reports and/or documents it submitted through the NEA Business Intelligence Technology (NEA-BIT) web portal.

At present, the NEA evaluates and determines the overall performance of ECs annually using the two criteria: Key Performance Standards (KPS), which account for 80 percent; and EC Classification, 20 percent.

According to Dir. Papa, these criteria are designed to measure the ECs' financial, institutional and technical performance, as well as "to promote accountability and responsibility in their compliances and fiduciary obligations."

Comments from the various stakeholders on the proposed changes to said guidelines were sought for consolidation before submission to the NEA Board of Administrators for approval.

Once approved and published in a newspaper of general circulation, the NEA will implement the revised policy guidelines beginning 2020. This will also serve as basis for crafting the performance incentive mechanisms for the ECs.

Power co-ops sales increase 7 percent in 2018

Electric cooperatives (ECs) across the country have reported an increase of 7 percent energy sales in 2018.

The National Electrification Administration (NEA) said electricity sales of the ECs reached 21,421,471 megawatt hours (MWh) in 2018, compared with 19,950,097 MWh in 2017.

According to the Director Roderick Padua of Information Technology and Communication Services Department (ITCSD), this was due to the 8-percent increase in consumption in Luzon and Visayas, and 6 percent in Mindanao,

This followed an increase in operating revenues of the ECs in 2018 by PhP32.518 billion or 18 percent to PhP211.404 billion from the 2017 revenue of PhP178.886 billion.

Data showed Visayas registered an average increase of 22 percent in revenues, followed by Luzon and Mindanao at 17 percent.

The top five ECs with the highest operating revenues were the Central Negros Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CENECO), South Cotabato II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SOCOTECO II), Batangas II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (BATELEC II), Zamboanga City Electric

The mandatory assessment on the performance of non-profit distribution utilities in the country started way back in 1982 to keep track of the viability of their operations economically and financially. Since then, the rules and guidelines have evolved and changed significantly.

From 1982 to 1993, the state-run agency based the parameters on what was stipulated under Presidential Decree No. 269, otherwise known as the "National Electrification Administration Decree," in which power distribution utilities were categorized into four letter grades—A to D.

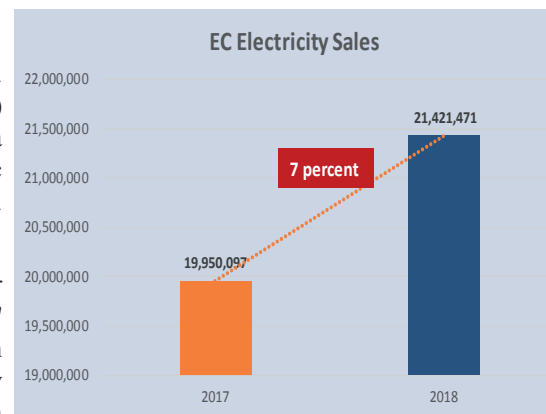
These categories expanded to six (A+, A, B, C, D and E) from 1994 to 2011 or up until Republic Act (RA) No. 9136 otherwise known as the "Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) of 2001" was enacted.

In 2012, the NEA introduced its KPS, which covered financial, institutional, technical and reportorial compliances of the ECs as part of the overall evaluation of their operational performance.

NEA then revised its rules and guidelines from 2013 to 2017 based on the provision of RA 10531 or the NEA Reform Act of 2013, wherein the agency must develop financial and operational parameters to serve as basis for its intervention.

This includes the EC Classification, which covered seven financially-driven standards and parameters including power accounts payable to the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP).

The ECs, under the current policy guidelines, are rated from AAA as the highest to D as the lowest. ###



Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMCELCO) and Peninsula Electric Cooperative, Inc. (PENELCO).

On the other hand, the ECs' overall system loss declined by 0.27 percent from 11.11 percent in 2017 to 10.84 percent in 2018. This translated into savings of 2,611 GWh or PhP25.8 billion.

"While reductions were registered for Luzon at 0.50 percent and Visayas at 0.22 percent, Mindanao registered an increase of 0.14 percent," Padua said in his report.

Single-digit system loss was registered in Cordillera Administrative Region, Regions III, VI, VII, VIII, X, XII and CARAGA. ###

Power Task Force organized for May 13 elections



To ensure an uninterrupted electricity service during the May 13 national and local elections, the National Electrification Administration (NEA), organized a task force called *NEA Power Task Force Election 2019*, through Office Order No. 2019-033 issued by Administrator Edgardo Masongsong on January 28, 2019.

Administrator Masongsong created the task force in compliance to the Commission on Elections (Comelec) Resolution No.10471 deputizing, among others, the NEA in connection with the conduct of the May 13 midterm elections. This initiative was in partnership cooperation with the 121 electric cooperatives (ECs) nationwide.

As provided in the said resolution, NEA is commissioned to “provide and maintain stable and continuous nationwide electric power requirements from the start of voting, until the termination or conclusion of the canvassing of votes and the proclamation of the winning candidates.”

The Task Force started its 24-hour monitoring on May 11.

The task force was composed of the Engineering, Disaster Risk Reduction Management, Information Technology and Communication Services, Human Resources and Administration Departments and, Corporate Communications and Social Marketing Office.

Deputy Administrator for Technical Services Engr. Artis Nikki Tortola, Oversight of the Task Force, said that the Agency made early coordinative activities with all the ECs and advised them to conduct preventive maintenance of their facilities from March to April.

To test the preparedness and efficiency of the ECs, the NEA Power Task Force conducted a three-day dry run from May 7 to 9.

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NEA, ECs hit another ... from page 1

In August, the NEA will mark its 50th founding anniversary anchored on the theme "NEA@50: One with ECs and MCOs for Sustainable Rural Development."

A series of month-long activities was scheduled to be held to showcase the significant milestones of the NEA and ECs in its continuing efforts to uplift the lives of the Filipinos

in the countryside through rural electrification.

Activities lined up for this year's celebration include a three-day convention to be held at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City from August 6 to 8 to be participated in by key officials from the government, electrification sector, and member-consumer-owners (MCOs). ###

Electric co-ops embark on infrastructure improvement

To help ensure better operational efficiencies and continuous delivery of electric services to their consumers, Electric Cooperatives (ECs) embarked on construction and improvement of infrastructures.

In the first quarter of 2018, at least 13 ECs availed of loans amounting to Php250 million from NEA to bankroll their several capital expenditure (capEx) projects such as construction of sub-transmission and distribution lines, installation of substations, rehabilitation and upgrading of secondary lines, replacement of dilapidated poles, and purchase of other equipment and materials.

"For years, the NEA has been providing loan windows to support our electric cooperatives' funding requirements in the implementation of their various electrification projects. We hope that these loans will help our ECs further boost their bid to become operationally viable and sustainable," NEA Administrator Edgardo Masongsong said.

Loan availment by the ECs is included in the Fast-Track Lane being implemented by the NEA. The processing time is 24 working days for regular loans, and 13 days for short-term loans. ###

NEA receives highest ... from page 1

Opinion" is considered the highest audit rating COA gives to government agencies.

"In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the NEA as of December 31, 2018, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Philippine Public Sector Accounting Standards," the IAR stated.

The IAR covered NEA's financial statements for 2018, which comprise the financial position, financial performance, statement of changes in net assets/equity, cash flows, and comparison of budget and actual amounts for the year then ended.

"Receiving another unmodified opinion from COA validates NEA's commitment to ensure transparency and accountability in all our transactions and dealings, and that the taxpayers' money is spent for its intended purposes," NEA Administrator Edgardo Masongsong said.

For 2018, the NEA registered a total assets of Php20.489 billion, and total liabilities and equity of Php20.489 billion. The agency has received unmodified/unqualified audit opinion from state auditors for 12 consecutive years. ###

Roundtable Assessment for NEA-Designated PSs and AGMs and Assists Conducted



On March 16, 2019, NEA, through the Management Consultancy Services Office (MCSO) conducted a Roundtable Assessment and Dialogue with the NEA-designated Project Supervisors and Acting General Managers and Assists.

The activity aimed to review the performance of PS/AGMs and Assists through their respective Scorecard Accomplishments and Action Plans; evaluate the effectivity of field assignments based on the improvement of EC operational and financial performance and compliances to NEA standards and parameters; discuss the urgent issues/concerns affecting the EC and performance of PS/AGMs and Assists in respective field assignments; set directions and raise the bar of individual performance as PS/AGMs and Assists; and, provide guidance and assistance in resolving problems and identifying strategies for the improvement of the operational efficiency, financial viability and assurance of power reliability of the ECs for member-consumer-owners' satisfaction.

Administrator Masongsong reminded the participants that the primary responsibility of a Project Supervisor (PS) and/or Acting General Manager (AGM) is to ensure the system efficiency and power reliability in his assigned coop. Also, the Administrator challenged them to address the low level of electrification to attain rural development.

During the activity, each PS/AGM discussed their past experiences, learnings/best practices on their previous assignments (different coops); status of EC Operation (current assignment) including the details of 2018 accomplishments; constraints and challenges in the EC's operation and, programs/projects/activities for year 2019.###

NEA, JICA turn over boom trucks to Bangsamoro ECs



On April 10, 2019, a total of 16 brand new units of boom trucks intended to improve the stability of power supply in the Bangsamoro region were turned over by the National Electrification Administration (NEA) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to six electric cooperatives (ECs). Recipients include Basilan Electric Cooperative, Inc. (BASELCO), Lanao del Sur Electric Cooperative, Inc. (LASURECO), Maguindanao Electric Cooperative, Inc. (MAGELCO), Siasi Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SIASELCO), Sulu Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SULECO), and Tawi-Tawi Electric Cooperative, Inc. (TAWELCO)..

The boom trucks were part of the 771-million yen grant as an aid provided by the Japanese government through JICA to the Philippine government for the "Project for Improvement of Equipment for Power Distribution in Bangsamoro Area," which was signed on March 30, 2017.

The recipient-ECs were chosen as project beneficiaries due to their low electrification connection, high power distribution loss, frequent outages, old and dilapidated equipment and materials, which have affected their operational efficiencies and delivery of services to the consumers.

Speaking on behalf of NEA Administrator Edgardo Masongsong, Deputy Administrator for Technical Services Artis Nikki Tortola said the new equipment will allow the Bangsamoro power co-ops to respond effectively and efficiently to the needs of their respective communities. He also expressed appreciation to the Japanese government and JICA for their generosity and continued support towards lasting peace and development in the Bangsamoro region.

"We hope the six ECs will value and maximize the utilization (of the boom trucks)."

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Power Task Force organized ... from page 3

Power situation in areas within the franchise of the ECs before, during and after was generally normal. Based on the monitoring report of the Task Force, several areas in the country experienced minor power interruptions but were immediately addressed by the ECs concerned.

The power outages were due to different factors, such as busted fuse, tripping of power transformer, transient fault, damaged poles and insulators, and fallen trees, among others.

Despite these incidents of brownouts, however, the NEA through PTFE team leader Ferdinand Villareal said the ECs efficiently addressed these incidents.

"The interruptions we had are very minimal, considering that 97 percent of votes have already been canvassed," said Engr. Villareal, who is also the chief of the NEA Engineering Department, in an interview.###

Activities for the Golden Anniversary geared toward unity

Carrying the theme “NEA@50: One with ECs and MCOs for Sustainable Rural Development,” the Golden Anniversary celebration highlights the solid partnership of NEA and the Electric Cooperatives in the past five decades.

Preparations for a series of activities and initiatives were undertaken to commemorate the significant event.

NEA Boot Camp



To foster camaraderie and enhance teamwork and professional relationships, NEA held the 2019

Boot Camp on April 12-13, 2019 at Boso-Boso Highland Resort and Hotel at Sitio Cabading, Barangay San Jose, Antipolo City, Rizal. Some 260 officials and employees participated in the said activity.

Different teambuilding activities which include Tower Building, Friendship Bond, Marble Connections, Team Walk, Brain Twisting, and Ropes and Obstacle Course were facilitated by the League of Leadership Training and Adventures, Inc.

Solidarity Run

On May 1, 2019, a nationwide NEA-EC-MCO Solidarity Run dubbed as “Run for Light” was held.

This was a run for cause simultaneously held in different Electric Cooperatives (ECs) nationwide with One EC Network Foundation as one of its beneficiaries.

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NEA promotes health and wellness

Mandatory Drug Test

To ensure a drug-free work environment, a total of 306 NEA officials and employees led by Administrator Edgardo R. Masongsong, underwent the mandatory drug testing. This was the second year of implementation by NEA to comply with the directive of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) under Memorandum Circular No. 13, s.2017.

NEA tapped the services of CREM Drug Test Laboratory, a duly authorized health agency and accredited by the Department of Health (DOH) to administer said procedure.



Vaccine Administration



Yearly, NEA, through the Human Resource and Administration Department, assisted employees for their health requirements through procurement of affordable and safe vaccines and administration of the same to the employees.

On June 8, 2019, a total of 132 employees and their dependents underwent flu, pneumococcal and cervical vaccination.###

NEA honors retirees



In the second quarter of 2018, another batch of retirees were given tribute for their substantial contributions in the Rural Electrification Program (REP).

This initiative is part of **NEA's Salamat NEAn, Mabuhay Ka!** Program which honors officials and employees who are separated from the government service, either on optional or mandatory retirement.

For the period, a total of six NEA officials and employees were recognized in a simple ceremony during the regular Monday HESA assemblies.

They were Felipe B. Radin of MCSO, Lucilyn S. Cardano of AMGD, Nixon R. Bautista and Herconida T. Lazaro of ECAD, Rhodora C. Delos Reyes and Renato L. Subijano of ITCSD.

Honorees were given a plaque of appreciation/recognition. Copies of their 201 files were also given to them as simple mementos for their service from the government. ###

NEWS AROUND THE ECS

TIELCO opened competitive bidding for Carabao Island's new power provider

In compliance with the Energy department's new policy, the Tablas Island Electric Cooperative, Inc. (TIELCO) opened the competitive bidding for the supply of electricity to Carabao Island, one of Romblon province's emerging tourist destinations.

The opening of bids for the competitive selection process (CSP) for new power provider for the Municipality of San Jose on Carabao Island was conducted on May 30 at the TIELCO headquarters in Odiongan, Romblon.

According to Dennis Alag, chairman of TIELCO Special Bids and Awards Committee, five out of six eligible bidders confirmed their participation for the procurement of new power supply for Carabao Island.

The National Electrification Administration (NEA), through its Regulatory Affairs Office (RAO), closely monitored the conduct of said CSP. TIELCO was required to submit pertinent documents to RAO.

TIELCO halted the CSP for San Jose last year following the directive of the Department of Energy (DOE) in its letter dated June 4, 2018 to reconduct the CSP in accordance with

the provisions of Department Circular No. DC2018-02-0003 titled, "Adopting and Prescribing the Policy for the Competitive Selection Process in the Procurement by the Distribution Utilities of Power Supply Agreement for the Captive Market." The DOE circular took effect on February 10, 2018.

TIELCO is the distributor of electricity in the Municipalities of Odiongan, Ferrol, Looc, Sta. Fe, Alcantara, San Agustin, Calatrava, San Andres, and Sta. Maria, all on Tablas Island, and San Jose on Carabao Island.

In 2013, TIELCO entered into a 15-year power supply agreement (PSA) with Sunwest Water and Electric Company (SUWECO) for the energy requirements of Tablas Island.

In 2015, SUWECO inaugurated the 8.8MW diesel power plant, located at Barangay Batiano in the Municipality of Odiongan, to address the frequent brownouts and power shortage on the island.

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Proposals made to resolve Masbate power woes

In the effort to improve the operation of electric cooperatives, the National Electrification Administration (NEA), in coordination with the Department of Energy (DOE), conducted performance assessment and audit on the Masbate Electric Cooperative, Inc. (MASELCO) to find appropriate solutions to address its current problems.

On April 10, DOE issued Department Order No. DO2019-04-0011, which created a task force with the NEA as member to assess MASELCO and "ensure the quality, reliability, security and affordability of electric power supply within its franchise area in line with the total electrification program" of the government.

DOE specifically wanted to evaluate the services of MASELCO in terms of its distribution system, power supply contracts, power supply planning and dispatch, operational matters as well as its utilization of the power generation and transmission facilities in the province of Masbate.

As an initial step, the NEA, through the Management and Consultancy Services Office (MCSO), conducted a coordination meeting with DMCI Masbate Power Corp. (DMPC) and MASELCO representatives on April 30.

Discussed were the construction of coal thermal power plant, the installation of 5MVA power substations for Cataingan and Uson, and the uprating of NPC 10MVA power transformer to 30MVA in Mobo.

Prior to that, an audit team composed of technical personnel from both the DOE and NEA was sent to Masbate in 2018 to examine the overall power situation in the province through coordination among MASELCO, NPC and DMPC.

The initial after mission report of the NEA yielded recommendations, such as the establishment of substations in strategic locations to reduce system loss, improve power

quality and reliability; review of power supply agreement; and harmonization of projects, among others.

NEA noted that MASELCO has limited control and monitoring over its own facilities because the existing substations in Masbate were owned and operated by NPC (its transmission line provider) and DMPC (its lone power supplier).

The NEA also recommended that the co-op start the process early for the application of its capital expenditure plan to the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), citing its importance "to address operational concerns" and "to sustain the gains of its improving operations." ###

Activities for the Golden ... from page 5

NEA likewise participated in this undertaking wherein some 50 officials and employees joined in the



Run as facilitated by the Peninsula Electric Cooperative, Inc. (PENELCO) in Balanga City, Bataan.

IN FOCUS : NEA to Zamboanga City electric co-op: consider all options for power supply woes

To ensure that electricity supply is continuously enjoyed by the consumers in its coverage area, the National Electrification Administration (NEA) directed the Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMCELCO) to explore all possibilities to address its power supply problem caused by a dispute with one of its suppliers.

Administrator Edgardo Masongsong said that ZAMCELCO must urgently act to adopt a necessary measure other than installing modular generator sets to provide continuous and stable power supply to its consumers, especially during the May 13 mid-term elections.

As an initial step, NEA issued a memorandum ordering ZAMCELCO to explore all possibilities including the procurement of emergency power supply from other existing power generating companies as the dispute between ZAMCELCO and WMPC (Western Mindanao Power Corporation) could not be resolved immediately.

As a background, the Western Mindanao Power Corporation (WMPC) suspended its supply of energy to ZAMCELCO due to an alleged unsettled outstanding power accounts amounting to PhP429 million, of which PhP348 is past due as of February 6, 2019. This resulted to supply deficit of 27 megawatts (MW), causing service interruptions to consumers.

Due to deficiency, ZAMCELCO has implemented rotational power interruptions (two to three-hour duration per feeder) in its entire coverage area.

As stopgap measure pending the resolution of its dispute with WMPC, ZAMCELCO rented 10 MW modular gensets that were installed in Ayala, Zamboanga City in addition to the coop-owned existing 12 MW modular diesel gensets. The power co-op also planned to install additional four units of diesel gensets with capacity of 2MW each in April.

Based on a report submitted to the NEA, WMPC had issued letters dated January 18 and 29, 2019 to ZAMCELCO urging the latter to pay its outstanding power accounts, and a notice of temporary suspension of power supply dated February 1, 2019 if no payment is made.

In response, ZAMCELCO claimed WMPC "overbilled" the power co-op from November 2015 to December 2018 based on the audit conducted. On February 4, WMPC, however, stopped supplying power to ZAMCELCO due to non-payment of power bills.

Show cause order

On February 18, the NEA issued a Show Cause Order against ZAMCELCO over the occurrence of interruptions within its franchise area. NEA directed the co-op to immediately address the problem, which has caused disruption in businesses and burden on consumers.

In a response to the agency's show cause order, ZAMCELCO explained in a letter dated February 22, 2019 that it has already taken active steps to address the power supply problem through the use of diesel-powered generators.

The co-op also assured that it explored all avenues to amicably resolve its pending dispute with WMPC and took the

"necessary steps to mitigate or avoid inconveniences and power interruptions" to its consumers.

Thereafter, NEA formed an executive committee composed of the agency, the Task Force Duterte Zamboanga City Power, and the ZAMCELCO management, whose main task is to resolve the power supply issue.

Meanwhile, ZAMCELCO, Crown Investments Holdings, Inc. and DESCO, Inc., and WMPC met, together with the NEA, on April 3, to resolve the dispute.

'Overbilling'

On April 5, ZAMCELCO filed an omnibus motion before the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), seeking the grant of withdrawal of the power co-op from the Power Sales Agreement (PSA), and directing the WMPC to refund the overbilled power accounts to ZAMCELCO.

In its motion, ZAMCELCO claimed that based on its audit, WMPC overbilled the co-op for the amount of power supplied from November 26, 2015 to December 25, 2018 in the amount of PhP354.214 million, thus the suspension of power supply to ZAMCELCO was "premature and without basis."

"ZAMCELCO informed WMPC that there is an ongoing audit and that WMPC shall be paid all amounts it is entitled to upon completion of the same. As the continued supply of electricity to Zamboanga is a matter of public interest, this alone should have prevented WMPC from suspending ZAMCELCO's power supply," the co-op stated.

ZAMCELCO also said records show that it was WMPC that has an outstanding obligation to the co-op in the amount of PhP354.214 million representing overpayments made for billing periods from November 26, 2015 to December 25, 2018.

"As ZAMCELCO does not have any outstanding obligation to WMPC because of legal compensation, there is no basis for the suspension of ZAMCELCO's power supply," it added.

It also claimed that its PSA with WMPC is not yet fully effective.

"In view of the fact that the PSA has not attained effectivity, and in light of the overbilling and unjustified severance of power supply by WMPC, ZAMCELCO was constrained to formally withdraw from the PSA and demand reimbursement for overpayments," the motion stated.

On March 12, ZAMCELCO served a Final Demand for Refund with notice of dispute regarding the overbilling and notice that ZAMCELCO will cease to have any further obligations and responsibilities with WMPC.

"In the said Final Demand, and after re-computation of ZAMCELCO, it was determined that the overpayment of ZAMCELCO actually amounted to PhP441,152,972.16. Thus, the said amount was demanded by ZAMCELCO," the motion stated. ###

NEA extends power to remote communities using microgrids

To help rev up the government's electrification program, the National Electrification Administration (NEA) has been exploring strategies to extend electricity access to rural and remote communities, including the installation of micro-grid systems.

"In the advent of challenging policy environment in the energy sector, the NEA wants to ensure that our electric cooperatives (ECs) are given enough resources and capacity to provide for the energy needs of communities in their franchise areas. This is part of the evolution of the assistance extended by the agency to ECs and remote rural communities," said NEA Administrator Edgardo Masongsong.

The NEA chief cited in particular the recent inauguration and turnover of the Malalison Island Solar Photovoltaic Hybrid Pilot Project to the Antique Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ANTECO).

The solar pilot project was a private sector joint venture between ANTECO and One Renewable Energy Enterprise, Inc. (OREEI) supported by technical assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

"Through our partners in the industry and the assistance given by both private and foreign governments, we, too, have the capacity to empower our electric cooperatives in the field of new technologies and renewable energy sources," Masongsong said.

Under the project, the existing diesel power plant on Malalison Island is augmented by a 50-kilowatt (kW) solar photovoltaic (PV) system with a storage capacity of 273-kilowatt hour and supported by a 54 kW diesel generator.

The new mini-grid system provides round-the-clock electricity to 200 member-consumer-owners (MCOs) of ANTECO on the island, which is located in the Municipality of Culasi in Antique.

The island previously only had access to electricity through

NEA, JICA turn over... from page 4

He also admitted that the process of realizing the project was no easy feat as there were several issues, particularly on the delivery of the equipment, faced by the NEA that affected the project schedule.

"The process has made it harder for the Agency but we worked around the rules and regulations to ensure that the project is realized," the NEA official said.

Under the Project, the ECs also received other power distribution equipment and materials, such as transformers, utility poles, and electric wires. The Japanese firm Nishizawa Limited was tapped to undertake the procurement of said equipment and materials.

JICA consultant and project manager Noriyoshi Kondo from Oriental Consultants Global said, *"I sincerely hope that the provided boom trucks will be utilized properly for such a rehabilitation work, and this Japanese support will continue to the development, improvement, peacebuilding of the Bangsamoro."*

Together with JICA, the NEA led the symbolic ribbon cutting and turnover of the keys to six recipient ECs in a simple ceremony held at the headquarters of the Batangas I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (BATELEC I) in Calaca, Batangas. ###

diesel-fueled generators with a limited service of four hours daily.

The total cost of the project was \$500,548, of which ADB provided two \$100,000 grants for the solar power system and prepaid metering, respectively. ANTECO and OREEI provided the remaining funding for the solar generation.

NEA also recently led the ceremonial switch-on of a new micro-grid system of the Biliran Electric Cooperative, Inc. (BILECO) on Higtangan Island, donated by the South Korean government and Korean firm ELT Co. Ltd.

The system, consisted of 10 kW solar PV, 50 kW power control system, 50 kW diesel generator, and 20 kWh plus 16 kWh extra energy battery system, would benefit over 400 MCOs of BILECO on the island.

In the past budget hearings, Administrator Masongsong admitted that the Agency would reach more unelectrified far-flung and remote communities if more government funding could be secured.

The state agency received PhP1.817 billion in 2017 and another PhP1.817 billion in 2018 from the national government to bankroll the sitio electrification program (SEP).

Electrifying a sitio costs at least PhP1.4 million on the average.

Thus far, Masongsong said the Agency has managed to achieve a lot despite the struggles in the implementation of the rural electrification program and limited resources at its disposal.###

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