

# 'Let's regain RP's grandeur via modern agri sector'

With the immense challenge of managing the country's agriculture and fishery sector put on his shoulders by President Benigno Aquino III, Agriculture Secretary-designate Proceso J. Alcala stressed the need for strong cooperation among DA family officials and staff to regain the country's grandeur through agricultural modernization.

*"Alam ko pong napakalaking numero ng ating mga mamamayan ang umaasa sa agrikultura. At alam ko kayo po ay mas maalam sa akin, ang mas nakakaalam ng mga detalye, kaya pagsama-samahin natin ito para sa lalong madaling panahon ay maisakatuparan natin ang pinapangarap ng ating Pangulo at ng buong bansa na ibalik natin ang ating bansa sa kagalingan sa pamamagitan ng*

*agrikultura,"* said the new DA chief, who served as a two-term Representative of the 2nd District of Quezon, during the turnover of DA leadership, July 5, 2010, in Quezon City.

He said food security will still be the number one priority of the Aquino administration through broad-based agricultural growth and sustained development that would pave the way to increased rural incomes, reduced incidence of poverty, and affordable food prices to benefit every Filipino, especially the poorest sector.

A civil engineer by profession, Sec. Alcala vowed to be more responsive and sensitive to the needs of the agriculture stakeholders, by mingling directly with farmers and fishers to listen and feel their respective concerns.

His first marching order to all DA family officials and staff is for everyone to work conscientiously to give back to the Filipino people the trust they bestowed on President 'Noynoy' Aquino as well as the other leaders of the country.

He said he will prioritize 'fine-tuning' the Department so it could truly uplift the rural sector from poverty through sustained agriculture development and modernization.

Wiping off retrenchment or displacement, he comforted the DA employees, by saying: *"Kung san po kayo nababagay, doon ko po kayo dadalhin."*

However, he warned DA officials and staff not to submit to him incorrect reports and erroneous data, as he personally knows

*(Pls turn to p4)*



*Newly-installed Agriculture Sec. Proceso J. Alcala (left) receives the DA flag from his predecessor Bernie G. Fondevilla, during simple turnover ceremony at DA central office, in Quezon City.*



*President Benigno 'Noynoy' Aquino III swears into office Agriculture Secretary Proceso J. Alcala in Malacañan Palace, July 1, 2010. Proudly joining him in said historic moment are family members (from left): son-in-law Joseph Lucentales with grandson Jeff, youngest daughter Ivy Alcala, eldest daughter Ingrid Alcala-Lucentales, wife Corazon Alcala with grandson Josh, daughter-in-law Mimilanie with grandson Theoden, and only son and Congressman-elect Irvin Alcala with grandson Thor.*

### Pres. 'Noynoy' Aquino:

*'Inaatasan natin ang papasok na Kalihim Alcala na magtayo ng mga trading centers kung saan direktso na ang magsasaka sa mamimili - lalaktawan na natin ang gitna, kasama na ang kotong cop. Sa ganitong paraan, ang dating napupunta sa gitna ay maari nang paghatian ng magsasaka at mamimili.'*

## 'Simple, transparent, hands-on'

Ito ang mga katangian ng ating bagong-upong Kalihim ng Kagawaran ng Pagsasaka, Proceso 'Procy' J. Alcala, na nagbibigay-diin at tingkad sa magiging direksyon ng ahensiya sa ilalim ng administrasyong Aquino.

Mula sa mga dating pinuno na galing sa pamilya ng negosyante at madalas na nakikitang naka-amerikana, ngayon simpleng manamit at malumanay sa kanyang pananalita ang itinalagang DA Secretary.

Hindi itinatatwa ni Sec. Alcala ang kanyang pagiging probinsyano.

Suot ang payak na polo shirt at dilaw na relas, humarap si Kalihim Procy sa mga kawani ng Kagawaran noong Hulyo 5, dala ang mensahe na gawing "transparent" at mas lalo pang isali ang magsasaka at mangingisda sa mga gawain ng Kagawaran, upang lalong mapabilis ang paglago ng ani at kita sa agrikultura.

**"Samantalain natin ang pagtitiwala ng ating mga kababayan sa ating mahal na Pangulo."**

Ibig niyang sabihin, gamitin ang pagkakataong ito, kung saan napakalaki ng tiwala at suportang tinatamasa ni Pangulong 'Noynoy,' upang magpatupad ng mga kinakailangang pagbabago sa mga programa at patakaran sa sektor ng sakahan at pangisdaan.

Ngunit sa likod ng pagiging simple at mapagbiro, seryoso si Sec. Procy sa kanyang bagong katungkulan.

Sa kasalukuyan, ang pinakamalaking layunin niya ay ang pagkamit ng sapat na produksyon ng palay at suplay ng bigas sa bansa sa taong 2013.

Aniya, makakamit ang target na ito kung mapapalawig ang taniman ng palay, o expansion ng rainfed areas, uplands at marshlands.

Pag-iigihin din ang pagkukumpuni ng mga irigasyon, pagbibigay ng makabagong binhi (certified at hybrid rice seeds) kabilang na ang mga fancy varieties, pagsasa-ayos at pagtatayo ng kaukulang imprastruktura at pagbibigay ng ayuda sa mga magsasaka at mangingisda.

Mga bundok itong masasabi na kailangang akyatin at lagpasan ni Sec. Procy.

Pero mukhang nakahanap na ng katapat ang mga suliraning ito.

Tulad ng paalala niya sa ating mga kawani: "Ako po ay sanay sa field. Huwag po sanang magsa-submit ng mga report na walang katotohanan, sapagkat personally po umaahon po ang inyong lingkod kahit sa bundok."

Mataas ang inaasahan sa bagong administrasyon.

Nawa'y pagtulungan ng bawat isa – ang mga bumubuo sa Kagawaran, kasama ang iba pang mga katuwang para sa kaunlaran – ang katuparan ng panata ng pagbabago at aksyon para sa taumbayan, lalo na sa mga magsasaka at mangingisda.

Sabi nga ni 'P-Noy': "Kayo ang aking boss."

## 'Ipadama ang pagbabago sa buhay ng mga magsasaka, mangingisda'

(Sec Procy Alcala, Acceptance Speech, July 5, 2010)

Magandang umaga po.

Ako po ay umaasa na kaya po ako pinagkatiwalaan ng ating Pangulong Benigno Noynoy Aquino na mamahala sa isang napakalaking ahensiya ay sa kadahilanang nakita po niya sa inyong abang lingkod na nasa puso po natin na makakatulong tayo sa kasalukuyang administrasyon para maramdaman ang pagbabago sa buhay ng ating mga mangingsda at magsasaka.

Hindi nga po naming kaya itong gawin kung kami lamang ang gagawa ngunit ang departamento po ay malaki ang maitutulong kapag ang bawat isa ay magbibigay ng tamang koopersayon.

Ako po ay taong hindi mapagpaniwala sa sabi-sabi. Kaya yun pong mga ilang tao na may sinasabi sa akin na ganito po ng nakaraan, wag na po kayo mag-aksaya ng ganung salita.

I'm looking forward sa maganda po nating pagsasamahan, sa mas mabilis po nating pagkilos para mabilis din po nating masuklian ang pagtitiwala ng ating mga kababayan sa ating mahal na Pangulo. Palagay po ng inyong abang lingkod, ito po muna yung mga mensahe na kailangan

makarating sa bawat empleyado ng ating departamento.

Sana po ay magkaunawaan po tayo na hindi po ako nandito na parang berdugo, tagpas dito tagpas dun. Ang akin pong gagawin kung san po kayo nababagay, dun po natin kayo dadalihin, kaya lamang po ako ay nagbibigay din ng warning, ako po ay datihan nang trabahador.

Ako po ay sanay sa field wag po sanang magsasubmit ng mga report na walang katotohanan, sapagkat personally po umaahon po ang inyong abang lingkod kahit sa bundok. Sana po ito po ang ating pagsama-samahin at alam ko pong napakalaki pong numero ng ating mamamayan ang umaasa sa agrikultura. Alam na alam po niyo yan.

At alam ko din po na kayo po ay mas maalam sa akin. Kayo po ang mas nakakaalam ng mga detalye kaya pagsama-samahin natin ito para sa ganun sa lalong madaling panahon, maisakatuparan po natin ang pinapangarap po ng ating Pangulo at ng buong bansa na ibalik po natin ang ating bansa sa kagalingan sa pamamagitan po ng agrilkutura.

Sa inyo pong lahat, maraming maraming salamat po.



**Dialogue with Sugar Industry Stakeholders.** Agriculture Secretary Proceso J. Alcala (above, center) stresses a point during a consultation with sugar industry stakeholders (below) — small and big sugarcane farmers, sugar millers, traders, and bioethanol producers — July 8, 2010 at the Department of Agriculture central office in Quezon City, where they discussed major concerns and issues. Flanking him are DA's Sugar Regulatory Administrator Bernardo Trebol (left) and DA Undersecretary Segfredo Serrano.

### AggieTrends

is published monthly by the Department of Agriculture Information Service, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City. Tel. nos. 9288741 loc 2148, 2150, 2155, 2156 or 2184; 9204080 or tel/fax 9280588. This issue is available in PDF file. For copies, please send requests via email: da\_afis@yahoo.com.

Editor-In-Chief : **Noel O. Reyes**

Associate Editors: **Karenina Salazar & Cheryl C. Suarez**

Writers: **Adora D. Rodriguez, Jo Anne Grace B. Pera, Arlhene S. Carro, Mc. Bien Saint Garcia, Catherine Nanta**

Contributors: **DA-RFU Info Officers, Public Info Officers and Staff of DA Bureaus, Attached Agencies & Corporations, Foreign-Assisted Projects**

Photographers: **Jose Lucas, Alan Jay Jacalan, Alarico Nuestro, & Kathrino Ressorcion**

Lay-out Artist: **Bethzaida Bustamante**

Printing & Circulation: **Teresita Abejar & PCES Staff**

# Sec. Procy's 1st day @ DA



## *'Let's regain ... (from p1)*

the agricultural landscape, and feels the pulse and concerns of farmers, fishers and ruralfolk.

The simple turn-over ceremony formed part of the regular Monday flag ceremony at the DA central office, but this time it was attended by almost all DA regional directors, and head of bureaus and attached agencies and corporations.

He was formally introduced to them during his first 'command conference' or the DA national management committee (ManCom), at the adjacent DA-BSWM convention hall, where each of the DA regional directors briefed him on their respective accomplishments and major concerns.

Before the ManCom meeting, Sec. Alcala also held his first 'press con' or media briefing, sharing his initial thoughts or agenda on major agriculture concerns such as aiming for rice self-sufficiency by 2013.

Below are some of the highlights during the presscon:

- On attaining rice self-sufficiency by 2013 - he said within the next three years, the DA will continuously deliver appropriate technical, infrastructure, marketing, credit and policy support, in a sustained and timely manner;

use of hybrid and inbred varieties will be pushed, as well as the clustering of rice program areas, involving farmers' cooperatives and irrigators' associations; new rice areas will be explored to include idle farmlands, uplands and large tracts of marshlands, particularly in Mindanao; farmers in these areas will be given technical training, appropriate upland, saline-tolerant or flood-tolerant rice seed varieties, including fancy varieties, if applicable; rice seed producers will be provided with needed support;

- On palay procurement by the National Food Authority - he asked the agency to submit to him an inventory that will serve as a take-off point to review said particular intervention;

- On palay prices - he said farmers should be paid fairly for their hard work so they will be persuaded to continue to plant and expand rice production; and vital postharvest facilities such as dryers and buying stations should be established in strategic areas nationwide;

- On NFA restructuring - a "massive overhaul of policies" to make the agency more financially stable and responsive to



**'Countryside Development Czars.'** Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala (center) joins hand with Agrarian Reform Secretary Virgilio delos Reyes (left) and Environment Secretary Ramon Paje as they commit to synchronize and further strengthen their respective agencies' efforts under the National Convergence Initiative (NCI) to provide continued support, faster and more effective services for the benefit of small farmers, fisherfolk, agrarian reform beneficiaries, uplanders and indigenous peoples, and other ruralfolk. Under their watch, NCI will activate the Local Convergence Initiative working groups that will focus on developing "ridge-to-reef" local agribusiness zones.

farmers' and people's needs will be pursued;

- On sugar imports - he will discuss the proposal with industry stakeholders and the solutions thereto, before deciding whether to push through with it;
- On tight sugar supply - this was caused by lower-than-expected sugarcane production for the current crop year 2009-2010 due to the adverse effects of the just-concluded El Niño phenomenon;

- On 'dole-outs' - he said the DA will veer away from providing them;
- The DA will establish a contact and feedback mechanism, wherein the general public and mediapersons could relay their questions and concerns on major issues and DA policies/programs;

- All appointments within DA, bureaus and attached agencies, are being reviewed;

- On land conversion and land utilization, the DA will establish a computerized land use map as tool to aid Filipino and foreign investors make informed decisions in identifying available and idle land resources for agriculture and fishery production, food processing and other agribusiness enterprises, as well as agri-tourism ventures;

- The DA will support and pursue

the creation of agro-industrial estates that will create rural jobs and provide income opportunities to host communities. Revenues generated by said estates should be used by LGUs to preferably to finance the agricultural development and modernization projects;

- On extension and education of farmers and fishers - the Local Government Code should be reviewed, as some LGUs have differing priorities, and agricultural development and modernization is not always on top of their agenda. In fact, he said his son, Rep. Irvin Alcala (2nd District, Quezon) will file a bill this 15th Congress that aims to bring back extension workers under the care of the DA;

- The DA will continue to fund the construction of farm-to-market roads (FMRs), but will establish a system to check the efficient use of funds and other resources;

- On biofuels program, the DA will pursue a 'balancing act' between food and biofuel production using crops such as corn, sugarcane, coconut, sweet sorghum and other biofuel feedstocks; and

- While he promotes organic agriculture, traditional farming and organic farming will receive equal support in terms of funding and promotion.



**Secretary Alcala receives promotional materials from former DA chief William Dar, who is currently director-general of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), at a courtesy call. Dar congratulated Sec. Alcala and offered support to pursue the agricultural thrusts and program under President 'Noy' Aquino's administration. In particular, he cited possible cooperation between the DA and ICRISAT to further develop and make productive rainfed and upland areas where most of the poorest Filipino families reside. Joining them are (from right): DA Chief of Staff Claron Alcantara, Ass't. Sec. Dennis Araullo and Dir. Vince Tejada of the DA-Bureau of Soils and Water Management.**