





## South Cotabato bags 6th place as Most Competitive province

The province of South Cotabato bags 6th place as the over-all Most Competitive province out of the 81 provinces all over the country during the 9th Regional Competitiveness Summit held recently by the Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index spearheaded by the Department of Trade and Industry.

Its component city, the City of Koronadal also ranked 4th place in terms of resiliency category, while the municipality of Polomolok ranked 4th place in term of economic dynamism.

The province's ranking is based on the performances of its local government units.

CMCI is an annual ranking of Philippine cities and municipalities based five competitiveness pillars, these are Economic Dynamism, Government Efficiency, Infrastructure, Resiliency and introducing Innovation.

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Visit South Cotabato, a province with numerous centenarians or people who are one hundred or more years old.



## OUR COVER:

South Cotabato is reaping the fruits of Kabugwason Paglaum Scholarship Program as it continues to serve indigenous people students like John Mark Tuan, Rufino Alam, Benalyn Laura who are now professionals, creating a community of empowered citizens of the province.

# Inspirational Tales of Family and Community



riendly. Amazing. Kind. Cordial. Cohesive. Safe.  
Confident. Prosperous. Happy place.

Beautiful words keep on coming to describe a community. The feeling of neighborhood and the ring of fellowship perhaps emanate from this word. Creating a community is building a secure place. It is more than just a group of people sharing the same culture, beliefs, and heritage; community is family.

I may be sentimental while making this whopper of an issue because a legion of excitement runs through my veins as grand stories about our communities in the province are worth sharing.

The neighborhood story of nsif makers (page 10) of Sitio Amgu-o is making a wave to impress the creative industry. At the beginning of the year, let us look at the captured photos of the Convergence Communities and share your time and blessing to make them strong communities (page 17).

It is our year. Let's claim it as we always do every year. It could be the year your most cherished plans come together. Wherever you are, always remember that you are from the Land of the Dreamweavers, a community of diverse and loving people.

- HYDZ



## SOUTH COTABATO informant

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Government of South Cotabato, the Official  
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EVERY TUESDAY & FRIDAY  
10:00 - 11:00 AM RADYO RAPIDO





Surallah residents receive COVID vaccine during the *Bayanihan, Bakunahan* in South Cotabato.

## 'Bayanihan, Bakunahan' in South Cotabato reaches 62% vaccination rate

by ANNA LIZ V. CABRIDO

**KORONADAL CITY**—Health officials here posted a 62.91 percent vaccination rate during the three-day vaccination drive *Bayanihan Bakunahan*.

Hanna Ebeo, Health Education Promotions Officer, said at least 115,000 people in South Cotabato received the COVID-19 vaccine.

"Tupi got the highest number of vaccination rate with 91.95 percent or 12,523 people received the COVID 19 immunization," Ebeo announced.

South Cotabato aims to immunize 187,000 people of South Cotabato during the three-day vaccination day to increase community herd immunity. However, the province fell short of its target.

"We hope to conduct a similar strategy to encourage people to join the *Bayanihan, Bakunahan*," Ebeo stressed

out.

Ebeo said 112 vaccination sites were open during the vaccination day. In Tboli, because of its rugged terrain, the local government ensured that all barangays were vaccination sites. The strategy worked as the LGU hit 82.92 percent vaccination rate.

While the vaccine gives the people strength and immunity individually, we all seek that same strength and immunity in the rebuilding of our nation, Ebeo emphasized.

"Pag ligtas, ang lakas ng ekonomiya. 'Pag ligtas, ang lakas ng pamilya. 'Pag ligtas, ang lakas ng samahan," she added.

## Culture and Arts unveils Fu Yabing marker

by ANNA LIZ V. CABRIDO

**THE** Provincial Government of South Cotabato unveiled a marker for the late master Dreamweaver Fu Yabing Masalon Dulo.

The marker was put up in front of her weaving center in Sitio Amgu-o, Barangay Landan, Polomolok.

Fu Yabing and her artistry as a Tabih maker was an important contribution to the indigenous fabric of the Philippines.

The construction of the marker was part of the Information, Education Campaign of the Arts and Culture Section about significant cultural icons in the province, according to Arts and Culture Coordinator Indira Cagaanan.

"The purpose of the marker is to increase the awareness of the public about our heritage

treasure in South Cotabato especially to younger generation and the tourists," Cagaanan said.

The marker brings in the cultural significance of the area. It also indicates that such a cultural icon is worth remembering.

Argie Ryan Asaria, Senior Tourism Operations Officer, pointed out that Fu Yabing is in the learning material or module in elementary and high school subjects in South Cotabato as part of SKULTUR or Eskwela, Kultura at Turismo, a project under the Arts, Culture, Tourism and Museum Unit (ACTM) which compiles lesson exemplars based on the cultural icons in South Cotabato.

"Mas malaki ang kita sa turismo kung may magandang istorya," Asaria added.



Community folks of Sitio Amgu-o join the unveiling ceremony of National Treasure Fu Yabing Masalon Dulo's marker. Joining the community is Senior Tourism Operations Officer Argie Ryan Asaria, Arts and Culture Coordinator Indira Cagaanan and Polomolok Tourism Officer Steve Baniñas.

## USAID, Stop TB Partnership chooses South Cotabato as program recipient

by CLARISSE MAE RETIRADO



Gov. Reynaldo S. Tamayo receives communication collaterals from USAID Stop TB Partnership. With Gov. Tamayo are Prov. Health Officer Regelio Aturdo and a representative from USAID.

**THE** United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the StopTB Partnership selected the province of South Cotabato as one of beneficiaries to receive the package of new digital tools for improved TB care under the Introduction New Tools Project (INTP).

Governor Reynaldo Tamayo, Jr expressed his gratitude for this opportunity from the friends of the USA.

"We are provided with a complete set of new innovative tools for the whole

Tuberculosis cascade of care," the governor announced.

The Province of South Cotabato acknowledged the two ultra-portable chest X-ray machines (Fujifilm FDR with CAD/AI), 2 portable rapid diagnostic test machines (TrueNat™), mobile phones as digital adherence tools and 3HR medicines for TB Preventive treatment for 2,502 adults and 706 children.

This set of tools aims to provide efficient delivery of the primary care services across the province.

# South Cotabato receives FOI award

by HYDEE S. TEMPLONUEVO

**THE** Provincial Government of South Cotabato under the administration of Governor Reynaldo S. Tamayo Jr. represented by OIC-Provincial Information Officer Ms. Hydee S. Templonuevo is once again became the recipient of the 2021 Freedom of Information Award given by the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) after having been one of the first local government units to join the electronic Freedom of Information (eFOI) Portal, [www.foi.gov.ph](http://www.foi.gov.ph).

The award is also in recognition of the province's exceptional and significant contribution to the Program's progress and development.

The Plaque of Recognition was awarded by no less than Under Secretary and FOI Program Director Kristian R.

Ablan during the 2021 FOI awards ceremony held tod at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Cebu City.

The annual Freedom of Information (FOI) Award is a national recognition given to individuals, organizations, and agencies that had significant contributions and advancements in the field of access to information to promote a shared legacy of Truth, Trust, and Transparency in the country by the PCOO.

With this, the provincial government of South Cotabato is grateful to the PCOO through the Freedom of Information – Project Management Office (FOI-PMO) for recognizing its efforts in implementing the FOI through the FOI Ordinance.

With the province's innovation through the development of the South Cotabato Integrated Provincial

Online Database (iPOD) and joining the eFOI portal, it

would be easier for the people to avail vital information.



OIC-PIO Ms. Hydee S. Templonuevo receives from USec. Kris Ablan the FOI award during the awards ceremony held in Cebu City.

## South Cotabato, first Mindanao LGU to receive conferment for DRR-climate change plan

by ANNA LIZ V. CABRIDO

**KORONADAL CITY**—The nine-year Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation enhanced Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan of South Cotabato was approved in a virtual conferment, the first local government unit to be approved by the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development.

Governor Reynaldo Tamayo, Jr. laid out the development roadmap of South Cotabato in a virtual presentation to the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD).

"The significant progress made by the province is working toward meaningful climate action," the governor said.

Emmanuel Jumilla, Provincial Planning and Development Officer-charge said, the Research, Planning and Programming Division took three years to finally lay down the plan after a series of community consultations and meetings with local counterparts, non-government organizations and national agencies.

"Local government units



Housing Secretary Eduardo del Rosario shows South Cotabato's Certificate of Conferment for DRRCC enhanced PFP (photo grabbed from HLUD FB page)

are tasked to identify, prioritize, and develop respective climate change programs, projects and activities in our Annual Investment Plans. This is essential in building our resilience to climate change," Jumilla said.

Housing Secretary Eduardo del Rosario congratulated South Cotabato for "pushing for an "ecologically balanced" PDPFP that promotes industrial development without causing

harm to the environment," an online press release appeared in DHSUD official Facebook Page.

The effects of *climate change*, particularly scarce water resources and flooding, are already presenting challenges for South Cotabato's *industrial* development.

Evelyn Fantilanan, Planning Officer III, said South Cotabato will be a caring,

resilient, ecologically-balanced, highly responsive, functionally integrated and equitably growing agro-industrial and tourism hub by 2028.

She said the development priorities of the province is anchored to the Sustainable Integrated Rural-Urban Development (SIRUD) which brings together and allows for a more view of urban and rural development.

Fantilanan pointed out that the province identifies the strategic priorities that is Agriculture, Tourism, and Industrial Development and shall be realized with the adoption of the decentralized concentration which leads to the preferred spatial strategy characterized by the development of Growth Clusters, Tourism Beltways, and the Hierarchy of Urban-Rural Settlements.

"There's a need for LGUs to act now because it is cheaper to spend on disaster preparedness and mitigation than on disaster response and rehabilitation," Fantilanan, who is also an environmental planner, added.



# Construction of Dairy processing center and pre-lactating project starts in South Cotabato

by KREZ KAMES CABAYLO

**KORONADAL CITY**– The Provincial Government of South Cotabato is a partner of the Department of Agriculture in the implementation of the Php47.4 Million Dairy Production, Processing, and Marketing Subproject under the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) co-funded by the World Bank, Government of the Philippines (Department of Agriculture), and Provincial Local of South Cotabato.

Among the project components are the procurement of a refrigerated van, dairy processing equipment, cold storage facilities, and the construction of dairy processing building and pre-lactating facilities (barn/cow shed, milking parlor, calves pen, and quarantine facilities) under the management of the lead proponent group, Unified Engineering Workers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (UEWMPC).

According to Project Development Officer IV Marites Tanseco of PPDO, the pre-lactating facilities in Barangay Maligo in Polomolok to house

*The construction of dairy processing center and pre-lactating project in South Cotabato aims to generate income and to supply dairy milk in the province including the neighboring provinces.*



the 104 heads of dairy cows as well as 87 calves are being constructed as well as the dairy processing building in Barangay Cannery.

*“As of September, ang aton animals from 120 heads may ara kita nga 87 nga bilin bangod may ara sang mortalities. The total milk production sini nga cows 96,978 liters or average of more than 12,000 liters a month from January to August.”* Tanseco said.

She added, that despite the challenges of pandemic they are hopeful to finish the project before the end of the years and it is expected that the operation will begin this early 2022.

*“As of now, the produced are manufactured as flavored milk (pandan, melon, chocolate and strawberry) plain milk and yogurts for disposal to the market and is now on the testing phase for ice cream and butter.”* Tanseco

added.

Furthermore, PDO III Tanseco is grateful for the good Governor Reynaldo S. Tamayo, Jr. for helping them in troubleshooting and easily come up with a good solution to fast track the said project.

This big-ticket project aims to generate additional income for the project beneficiaries and to supply dairy milk in the province as well as the neighboring provinces

## National young farmers challenge fund to welcome South Cotabato participants

by HYDEE S. TEMPLONUEVO

**TWO** young South Cotabato farmers will compete in the

National Young Farmers Challenge Fund: Kabataang



*Caption. DA-RFO 12 RTD for Operations Rizaldy Boloron with the regional winners for the Young Farmers Challenge Fund Kabataang Agribiz during the awarding ceremony held in Koronadal City. Out of the three categories, two winners were from South Cotabato, Mr. Josue Carmen Jr. and Mr. Samuel Carmen for the “Carolina Reapers (World’s Hottest Pepper) Industrial Scale Production; and Ms. Kimberly Bajade for the Swine Production project.*

Agribiz after they emerged as regional winners during the recently concluded awarding ceremony spearheaded by the Department of Agriculture 12 in Koronadal City.

Out of the 14 proponents, these two farmers won out of the three categories which will represent the region in the national awards.

These young farmers are Mr. Josue Carmen, Jr and Mr. Samuel Carmen with their “Carolina Reapers (World’s Hottest Pepper) Industrial Scale Production and Ms. Kimberly Bajade’s Swine Production project.

Completing the list of the top three regional winners are the Alejo sisters, Ms. Sheena Allysa Alejo and Ms. Shihan Marie Cheska Alejo from North

Cotabato with the project entitled “Tablea & Chocolate Processing”.

All of these winners received Php150,000 cash assistance from the DA-12 through the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD).

During the presentation of the national winners in time for the National Young Farmers’ Summit on December 17, 2021, to be held in Metro Manila, at least six winners will receive a Php300,000 cash prize each.

The Young Farmers Challenge Fund: Kabataang Agribiz Competitive Grant Assistance Program is a competitive financial grant assistance program for the youth who will engage in agri-fishery based enterprises.

# ISKULTOUR – Integrating Tourism Education in Basic School Curriculum

by FRUTO C. SUMAGAYSAY JR.

**SOUTH COTABATO'S** rich, unique and diverse culture combined with its tri-people and natural assets makes it as one of the favorite tourist destinations not only in region XII but in the country as well.

With Mt. Matutum welcoming tourists upon their entrance at the industrial town of Polomolok, visitors will soon realize that beyond it lies an experience of a lifetime. The 7-Falls in Lake Sebu, Mt. Melibingoy and Lake Holon of Tboli, nature and farm resorts, flower and fruit gardens, the tribal villages showcasing their traditional weaving and bead-making, and the abundance and wide array of fruits and delicacies, are only among the few that the inquisitive guests could experience.

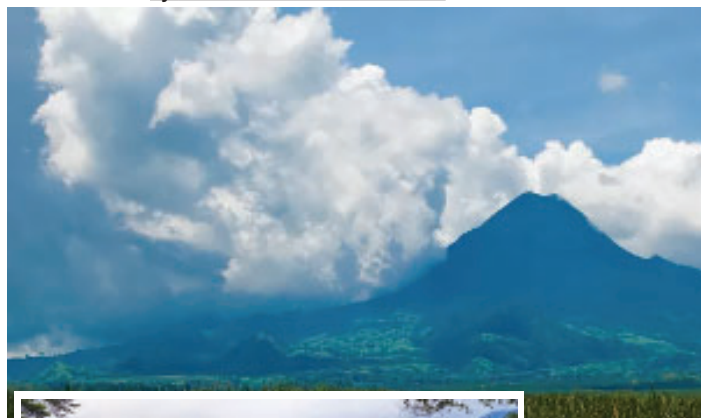
Indeed, South Cotabato is truly blessed with both natural and man-made assets which could be regarded as its cultural and tourism icons worthy to be remembered by the generations to come.

With the goal to promote local tourism by integrating it into basic education, ISKULTOUR was born in the province of South Cotabato spearheaded by the Arts, Culture, Tourism and Museum (ACTM) Unit.

The fusion of two words, ISKUL, which means school and TOUR, from the word tourism, amplify the collaboration of the education sector through the Department of Education (DepED) and the Provincial Tourism Office in promoting local tourism knowledge among school learners.

Ann Liza Mondejar, ACTM Tourism Planning, Research and Product Development Section Chief disclosed that since South Cotabato has already opened its doors to guests and visitors alike, it is already recognizing the significant impact of tourism towards a holistic development of a community. Hence, she added, it has become a challenge for the province's LGU to also imbibe a culture of tourism and place of pride attitude to every South Cotabateno; awareness and appreciation of the natural, cultural, historical and man-made assets that South Cotabato possesses is one of the major key to inculcate the people.

To respond to this, the Provincial Government, according to ACTM, eyed education as one of the channels to improve the attitude of the community towards tourism. Thus, the Provincial Government collaborated with DepED – South Cotabato and Koronadal City Divisions—to come up with a strategy that will answer the concern of the provincial government. Initially, the provincial government considered to conduct a series of Tourism Awareness activities to every school in the province,



Cultural icons of South Cotabato are part of the lessons in elementary and high schools (photo courtesy: Google.com)

but absorption and appreciation for topics presented a probable issue. Consequently, the series of consultation was conducted to create a program primarily to involve the education sector. Hence, the Integration of Tourism Education in Basic School Curriculum or the ISKULTOUR Program was initiated.

The program is designed which will be piloted to the identified Grade 4 to Grade 12 public and private schools of the province before implementing to all schools of South Cotabato.

The schools involved in the pilot program were El Nonok Integrated School – Banga, Marbel Central Elementary School – Koronadal City,

Saravia National High School – Koronadal City, Notre Dame Sienna School of Marbel –

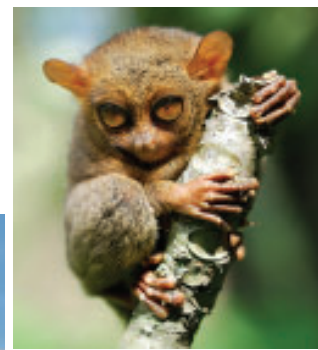
Koronadal City, NDMU – IBED – Koronadal City, Lake Seloton Integrated School – Lake Sebu, San Miguel Elementary School – Norala, San Miguel National High School – Norala, Bonifacio Tagaban Integrated School – Polomolok, L. Escovidal Integrated School – Surallah, Guinsang-an Elementary School – Sto. Nino, Laconon Integrated School – Tboli, Lambayong Elementary School – Tampakan.

The subjects identified for implementation in the ISKULTOUR Program for Elementary and Junior High School are English, Mathematics, Araling Panlipunan, Science, MAPEH, Pilipino and ESP, while all subject except TVL are identified for Senior High School.

Teacher-writers selected by DepED Technical Working Group were GDCE or Graduate Diploma in Cultural Education or GDCE-trained, who formulated lesson plans for different subjects chosen. Data are gathered and provided to these teachers, particularly pictures and descriptions of tourism icons in the lesson plans. Likewise, a familiarization tour to various tourism sites and landmarks of the province was conducted to further supplement the knowledge of the teacher-writers.

At present, the ISKULTOUR Technical Working Group is on the process of conducting a research study on the progress and viability of the program for implementation since it has already completed its 4-year piloting stage.

The result will likewise reflect the learners' awareness of South Cotabato's tourism resources while identifying the difficulties and the possible challenges to face when implementation period comes.



**The Provincial Government of South Cotabato through PSWD officer Haidee Agustin, CAO Earl Madres, Nutrition Officers Angela Frugalidad and Liza Enamno receive HERON and RAISE award in eliminating stunting.**







**T**o live purposeful lives and be steadfast towards God's plan, provide service to the people and be a beam of light to the world. And we also PRAY for the healing of people, specifically, the COVID 19 virus.

That was the family prayers and dreams of Mr. Ross and Mrs. Jenifer Rosal, the newly awarded 2021 Most Outstanding Model Family in the Province of South Cotabato. The family comes from the municipality of Surallah.

The Search for Most Outstanding Family is conducted annually by the Provincial Population Office. The recognition of model families started in 1994, which primarily aims to recognize the exemplary achievements and contributions of the family to their

respective communities.

This year's theme anchored on : "Ang Pamilyang Planado Nananatiling Panatag at Matatag sa Panahon ng Pandemya".

Rosal Family outshined other model families of local government units in the province.

Ross Rosal said, "Kung among puno, siya ring bunga."

How do they survive as a family?

Ross and Jenifer are both residents of Surallah. They fell in love when they were still in school. Both of them studied at Southwestern University, Cebu City. Ross graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree. Jenifer, on the other hand, graduated with a Bachelor

of Science in Pharmacy degree. She passed the Pharmacist Licensure Exam in April 1994. They got married in May 1997 and have two sons, Floyd Ross, 23 years old, and Zildjan, 21 years old, who is a third-year Psychology student of San Pedro, Davao City. The older brother Floyd is in his senior year in Aircraft Maintenance at the Asian International Aeronautics and Technology (AISAT), Davao City. Floyd is a consistent honor awardee.

Ross is a Municipal Councilor of Surallah since 2013. Until today, he is fervently serving the people of the Surallah during his last term in the service. Jenifer has been serving as the Chief Pharmacist in Surallah Community for over 24 years.

According to Ross, they started the day with a prayer. And even they



# The Family Ring

by JEANLY S. PARREÑO



***Kung ano ang puno siya ring bunga,” is common quote for Rosal Family as they are getting stronger everyday because they firmly believed that, “hawak kamay kayo sa lahat ng panahon at gawing sandigan ang Panginoon.***



are old enough, whatever their plans as husband and wife, they always seek guidance from their parents.

Concerning discipline to their sons, they both helped each other, shared parenting responsibilities, and supported each other.

“You cannot have a successful marriage without being a good listener to your husband and children,” Jenifer said.

She stressed out that unconditional love, compassion are keys to a long-lasting relationship. They are keen on providing a stable environment for their children.

She said that another element in their marriage is mutual respect.

“Lack of this creates problems in any relationship,” she said.

The couple finds time to have fun

with their children to build a healthy and happy relationship.

Whenever her husband encountered challenges in his political career, she gave constant encouragement and communicated openly with love and attention.

In these struggling times of the Covid 19 pandemic, the family felt fatigued and stressed out. But they keep praying to GOD for strength and comfort. They always put GOD at the center of their lives.

The couple thanked GOD for His guidance in their 24 years of being married.

The family actively involved in church activities. Ross is popular in different religious sectors in the municipality of Surallah. Until today, he is actively organizing activities and programs that promote unification and fellowship.

Their children, Floyd Ross and Zildjan, are members of the Praise and Worship Team in their church. Since there are no face-to-face classes, the boys are hands-on in their business like the Tires & Auto supply and space rental.

Rosal Family believed that their values as a family come from their parents. Ross's father is a Pastor, businessman, and a former Municipal Vice Mayor of Surallah. Jenifer's parents are engaged in business.

“Kung ano ang puno siya ring bunga,” is common quote for Rosal Family as they are getting stronger everyday because they firmly believed that, “hawak kamay kayo sa lahat ng panahon at gawing sandigan ang Panginoon.”

Ross finally said that family is like branches on a tree. Leaves may grow in different directions, but the roots will stay as one.

When the world is silent, in a comma and selfless because of the pandemic, local artisans in South Cotabato, a first-class province located in south-central Mindanao, is gearing towards revolutionizing the traditional arts of its indigenous communities. The COVID-19 became a rainbow at the end of the tunnel as it unfolds old craft and introduces proudly South Cotabato-made handcrafted products. The Land of the Dreamweavers proves that tnalak or tabih is not only the thing to watch out for in the market because a deep-rooted artisan culture has always thrived on South Cotabato as part of its tourism.

Ansif. Nsif. Amsif. It is pronounced as en-sef.

Even in the Blaan communities in South Cotabato, the traditional embroidery is in many names. But one thing is sure, the ancient craft depicts a beautiful chain that connects the indigenous communities and their nature.

The fascinating feature of the embroidery is made of a single and fine thread offering a flat appearance to the design. Nsif of the Blaan communities is distinct from the Tboli nsif. This embroidery is wildly complex, skilled and delicate, and merely rhythmical to nature. It enhances the familiar imperfectly.







*The Land of the Dreamweavers proves that tnalak or tabih is not only the thing to watch out for in the market because a deep-rooted artisan culture has always thrived on South Cotabato as part of its tourism.*



# What to *Know* about South Cotabato 'nsif'

by ANNA LIZ V. CABRIDO

The folk embroidery pattern is the visual element of emotional expression. It is a perception accumulation in people's daily life. The traditional embroidery in Sitio Amgu-o, a community up in the highland at the foot of Mt. Matutum, is often grotesque and brilliant.

Arthur Gulili, the grandson of National Treasure Yabing Masalon Dulo, describes their pattern as free-flowing but emblematic.

"The beauty of nature, the animals, and the mountain are our inspiration," he said as he pointed at one of the patterns that look like a pine tree.

"Amgu-o," he said as he described the local name of the pine tree.

These patterns and designs are transferred from generation to generation.

An interesting characteristic of embroidery is the basic techniques or stitches on surviving examples of the earliest embroidery chain.

The fabrics and yarns used in traditional embroidery vary through the years. Their canvass, though, is their upper garment.

"Embroidery was a pastime among women in our community," Liza said.

She said that her old folks did embroidery while tending children. Their hands were busy doing a productive thing like nsif.

As years go by, nsif is no longer a pastime, but a thriving livelihood. It brings them food to the table.

Twenty-five residents in Sitio Amguo, Barangay Landan, in the town of Polomolok formed a group to upgrade the canvas of the traditional craft.

Jared Servano, a renowned fashion designer known for using traditional crafts in his design, ensures that the indigenous art and design of the people of Barangay Landan are not disturbed.

"The traditional design breathes a

fresher look by putting it in a newer platform like tote bags and home decorations like throw pillows," Servano said.

In the past, nsif is intricately designed on blouses which make them more expensive and difficult to sell.

Indira Cagaanan, Arts and Culture Coordinator pointed out that, "We wanted these items available to all and more people would know that this is made by our people in South Cotabato.

"This is our way to sustain our indigenous embroidery tradition," she said.

Though the community is away from the city, internet connection made them closer to the possible business niche.

The provincial government's Arts and Culture Section assures that ancient artistry continues to flourish. And that traditional craft remains to sustain the cultural identity of the Land of the Dreamweavers.



*Hindi pwedeng mawala ang programang ito kundi dapat pa nating dagdagan ang mga scholarship na ibinibigay natin sa ating mag-aaral.*

*Dahil naniniwala ako, na ang edukasyon ang magiging pundasyon natin para lalong aangat ang probinsiya ng South Cotabato*



**GOV. REYNALDO S. TAMAYO, JR.**





# The *B*eginning of Reaching your Dream

by KREZ JAMES CABAYLO

**T**he modern age has challenged us to upkeep with education. However, perseverance and dedication afloat us in the passion for higher education, but opportunities and relief from the government beacon too in this journey. In the rapid progress of globalization, the world demands high-skilled graduates. Government comes in like they always do and is more innovative, in place, and relevant in their approach.

One of the pilot programs of the current administration is free education.

On his first day of office, Governor Reynaldo S. Tamayo, Jr. immediately issued a memorandum to all public schools to implement a No Collection Policy. It addresses a burden on parents and students.

The policy includes the hiring of Provincial School Board-paid teachers, school-based security, and utility personnel.

Meanwhile, at the tertiary level, the government desires to lay down wider opportunities for young people. This time, students have access to free education.

The Expanded Program on the Kabugwason Paglaum Scholarship Program-Grant in Aid (KPSP-GIA) was provided with an allocation of Php 23 million this school year. The program focused on the 447 regular college and post-graduate scholars, sixteen (16) law students, and fourteen (14) medicine students.

The program helps students who are not grantees of other government

scholarship programs like the Unified Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education Act or UniFAST and "Tulong Dunong" of the Commission on Higher Education.

An additional Php10,220,400 is provided to the scholar as the program expanded this year. The assistance increases from Php5,000 per grantee to Php10,000 for 326 grants-in-aid.

The Tamayo Foundation also provides scholarships to students enrolled in the South East Asian Institute of Technology, Inc. (SEAIT) to ensure that no students in the province are behind.

Governor Tamayo assures that education in the province is available to everyone to those who want to study and achieve their aspirations in life.





Bilang isa ka pure blooded T'boli, ang Kabugwason isa siya ka programa nga maayo gid ang impact sa kabuhi ko asta subong. Bangod sa kapigaduhon namon ang Kabugwason gid ang nakasuporta sa kinahanglan ko sa eskwelahan. Ilabi na nga isa na ako ka pamilyado nga may duha ka bata nga dungan man kami eskwela sa isa ka institution.

Bangod sa Kabugwason, nangin tulay siya sa propesyon ko kung ano ako subong. Dako gid ang pagpasalamat ko sa provincial government kag sa programa nga kabugwason.



## RUFINO M. ALAM

Teacher-1  
Bakdulong Elementary School  
Lake Sebu East III, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato  
Poblacion, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato





Ang pinakadako nga impact ni Kabugwason sa akon amo ang nakatapos ako sang pag eskwela, nakapangita ako sang ubra kung sa diin nangin edge ini sa akon.

Proud gid ako nga Kabugwason scholar ako kay nangin advantage siguro sa akon para ma hire kung diin man ako gaubra subong.

Sa Provincial Government of South Cotabato, kay indi lang iban nga project ang gintagaan nila sang focus nangin lucky kita kay pati ang education ara sa priority list nila.

Sa present nga administration sa pagpamuno ni Governor Reynaldo S. Tamayo, Jr. madamo gid nga salamat sa pagpadayon sang sini nga programa para sa pareho namon nga mga kubos.



**JAN MARK GIGANTO TUAN**

Marketing Officer  
KCC Mall of Marbel  
Sitio Lipunan, Brgy. Tubi-Ala  
Surallah, South Cotabato

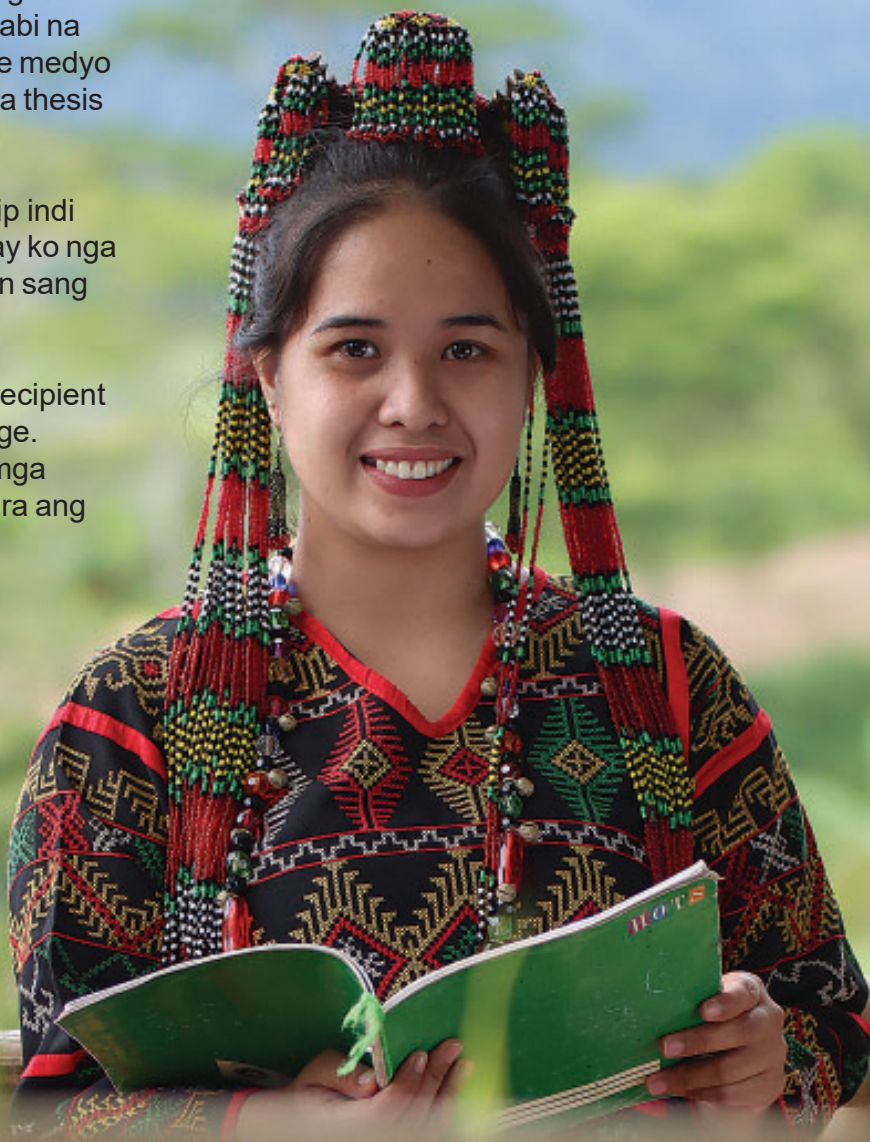


“Dako gid ang akon kalipay nga isa ako sa maswerte nga scholar, ilabi na sang ara ko sa third year college medyo gadako na ang gastos tungod sa thesis kag feasibility study.

Paagi sa sini nga scholarship indi kaayo bug-at sa side sang nanay ko nga nagapa eskwela sa pagpadayon sang ako pagtuon.

Ang pagiging kabugwason recipient ko is an opportunity kag challenge. Opportunity, kay syempre may mga grants nga ginahatag sa imo para ang financial aspect during sa pag eskwela indi kayo mabudlayan, mas dako pa gani kumpara sa ginahatag sang imo parents. Kag challenge kay kinahanglan mo i-prove nga deserving ka sa gihatag nga chance, kay once in a lifetime lang ning opportunity nga gihatag sa akon.

”

**BENALYN LAURA****DAR-Sultan Kudarat  
Lake Sebu, South Cotabato**



# The Convergence Communities

by EFREN M. FRANCISCO



**THE** South Cotabato Convergence Program for Poverty Reduction reaches Sitio Bulol Lahak, Barangay Klubi, Lake Sebu, one of the highest sitios in the province, for site validation.

Provincial Planning and Development Convergence Program Team hiked 7.3 kilometers from Barangay Klubi Proper to Sitio Bulol Lahak, where the elevation is 1,320 meters above sea level.

"The main problem going to the area is the road. It is already open, but the road needs to be graveled. It is muddy during the rainy season and is not accessible even by motorcycles (habal-habal). Electrification and potable water for drinking is another issue. The place also needs a solar dryer and shellers for both corn and rice. The community requested a daycare center," Community Affairs Officer Maria Ana Uy enumerated a long list of vital things that the community

cries out for help.

"We have experienced the burden of the community in going to Poblacion, but we are amazed by their cheerfulness in facing all of these hardships," Uy said.

The most convenient route in transporting their products is via Sitio Disiket, Brgy. Laconon, which is already part of the nearby town of Tboli," Uy stressed out.

Romy Dado, Sitio Leader in Sitio Bulol Lahak, was happy that the convergence team visited his community.

"We are very fortunate that Provincial Government of South Cotabato is here in a place like ours. I hope that help will come soon." – Dado says.

Aside from identifying the needs of the sitio, the team also distributed vegetable seedlings and used clothing. Uy oriented the community and organized the sectors.







**NED, Lake Sebu**-The South Cotabato Convergence Program for Poverty Reduction under the administration of Gov. Reynaldo S. Tamayo Jr. opens another sari-sari store at Sitio Kabatang, Brgy. Ned, Lake Sebu.

In March 2021, the 1st sari-sari store project was opened in Sitio Lamdel of the same barangay.

According to Community Affairs Officer IV Maria Ana Uy, the 1st community sari-sari store in Sitio Lamdel was a success that is why the convergence team decided to expand the project to Sitio Kabatang.

"The team was very happy upon knowing that the project was successful, in a meager capital the Lamdel project tripled its capital funds." – Uy said,

She added the community is now enjoying the presence of the store since they don't have to go anymore to the adjacent sitios to buy their basic home needs.

The concept of Kabatang sari-sari store project is the same as Sitio Lamdel.

The convergence team and former DOH ASec.

Maria Bernardita T. Flores put up a seed capital coming from their personal pocket for the establishment of the store. Once operational and has gained profit, the capital will be returned and other sitios who are interested to put up the same project can also do the same.

Anita Sina, elected president of Kabatang Tribal Women's Sari-Sari Store said in an interview that they are very fortunate that the convergence team has chosen them for the sari-sari store expansion project.

"lingatan at lalo pa po naming palakihin ang sari-sari store na ibinigay ng convergence team sa amin" (We will take good care and make the sari-sari store grow further) - she said,

Aside from the sari-sari store, the team conducted an orientation to Kabatang women's group on how to handle the store. They also distributed used clothing, toys, and vegetable seedlings to the community; and conducted geo-tagging of water sources.

Present during the launching were PPDO's Community Affairs Officer IV Maria Ana Uy, Cris Pingkunn Fuentes, Engr. Montazer Latip, Romel Evangelio, Lebert Ulo (OPAg) and Efren Francisco.







## PHOTO ESSAY

**HALILAN, Lake Sebu**-The Convergence Program for Poverty Reduction under the Provincial Planning and Development Office and Dole Philippines distributed 15 drum canisters to Sitio Mutulob, Brgy. Halilan, Lake Sebu recently.

Community Affairs Officer IV Maria Ana Uy said that aside from rehabilitation of road and electrification, the top priority need of the community folks was safe water.

Dole Philippines donated 21 pieces of drum canisters where 15 were distributed to Sitio Mutulob, Brgy. Halilan, Lake Sebu, and three each for Sitio Kabatang and Sitio Lamdel, Brgy. Ned, Lake Sebu.

"Sitio Mutulob is situated in one of the highest mountain ranges in Lake Sebu and the water source is more than two kilometers away from the main sitio. Its elevation is 751 meters above sea level. This drum canister will help them catch rain water for their sanitary needs," Uy says.

The convergence team observed that rain visits every afternoon in Sitio Mutulob.

One of the identified problems in the community was potable water for drinking.

Leamor Banaga, Dolefil Community Relations Manager, stressed out the partnership between DOLE and the provincial government is to help the less privilege sitios and puroks.

Boyet Basi, Sitio leader of Mutulob, expressed his gratitude to the Convergence Team and Dole Philippines for the drum canisters they received.

"This drum canisters are blessing, though it is just a temporary rain water catchment but it will help a lot," he says.

For more than 50 years, the community longed for safe drinking water.

"I know this is the beginning of the assistance extended to us by the Provincial Government of South Cotabato under the administration of Gov. Reynaldo S. Tamayo Jr.," Basi said.





# The Promi of Rabl

by HYDEE S. TEMPLONUEVO

**T**hese soft and cuddly little creatures are so lovable. What made them so endearing to see are their short but powerful hind legs which they use to walk and sometimes hop, added to that are their cute long ears with short fluffy tails.

These furry mammals come in different colors, light or dark shades of brown, gray, black and white, and sometimes pinkish.

They also have different species or breeds, more than fifty of them, and can grown in different sizes, from small, medium, large and giant ones, and weigh from one to seven kilograms.

Up close, are their two pairs of sharp front teeth, from top to bottom for chewing.

These little herbivores are seen often munching grasses and minding their own thing. They bring happiness to every household because of their quiet and peaceful nature. They don't bark, meow nor squeak.

To make it short, we love rabbits as PETS which made them so unpopular as culinary ingredients and rarely seen on dinner tables.





# Raise Rabbitry

But they give so many promises.

Aside from a good alternative source of meat, they offer many health benefits.

They are good for the Heart.

It is low in fat sodium and, cholesterol but high in protein.

It has vitamins minerals and antioxidant like selenium, phosphorus and potassium and vitamin B3 and B-12.

It is also low in calorie, with only 147 calories per serving fitted for those

who wants to lose weight.

For rabbit raisers, raising rabbits are less expensive and laborious since they only eat little and thrive on greens.

As long as they are given proper care, these huggable beings offer huge opportunities as potential cottage industries in the province.

The provincial government of South Cotabato through its ANGAT (Alalay, Negosyo, Ginhawa at Trabaho) program under the Provincial Anti-Drug Abuse Council (PADAC), marginalized individuals were given a chance to have a sustainable source of livelihood in this time of pandemic.

Earlier, a total of 150 individuals coming from member of the STEP (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting) Advocates on Anti-Illegal Drug Abuse Program for Identified Hotspot Barangays benefitted from this program.

Each of them received Php10,000 capital seed fund to start up their Rabbit Raising project. The amount will be used for the purchase of two pairs of rabbit complete with cage, food dish and water bottle worth Php7,000, while the Php3,000 will be given direct to the beneficiaries for other incidental expenses.

Dexter Parangan, a coop official who supplies rabbits based in Tupi said, rabbit raising has a big potential in the market because of its demand. They need more raisers for them to be able to fulfill orders.

As an alternative source of meat, it is one of the healthiest meat in the world due to its high protein and low fat content. It is organic since rabbits eat grasses and good for those who are health buffs.

Before rabbits are dispersed to their beneficiaries, they were trained how to raise them.

The most important thing to consider according to Parangan is proper feeding which is very easy. Rabbits only eat twice a day, in the early morning and evening.

"Consistency is the key," he said.

Rabbit feeding is 30 percent pellets and 70 percent grass. It also needs clean water and clean grass, air dried.

One can give unlimited dried paragis, napier, synedrella and malunggay leaves as their main source of food which can be found anywhere.

Roselyn Badoy, one of the recipients of the rabbit raising project at San Vicente, Banga, said, she has tried raising chickens but was hit by a newscastle disease or "aratay". She barely gained profit from it and added to this is the high cost of chicken feeds which she can't afford.

She also tried raising hogs but was forced to stop due to the fear of Avian Swine Fever or ASF.

Aside from working as a Barangay Health Worker in their barangay, while her husband works in a nearby animal farm, they have no other source of income.

"Pirte gid akon pasalamat sini nga proyekto, padamuon ko ni." Badoy added.

***The provincial government of South Cotabato through its ANGAT (Alalay, Negosyo, Ginhawa at Trabaho) program under the Provincial Anti-Drug Abuse Council (PADAC), marginalized individuals were given a chance to have a sustainable source of livelihood in this time of pandemic.***



# The Cradle of Centenarians

by ANNA LIZ V. CABRIDO

**A**s soon as restrictions come to a halt because of the pandemic, visit South Cotabato, a province with numerous centenarians or people who are one hundred or more years old.

What must be the secret?

Lush mountains surrounded the valley of South Cotabato, where clear river waters flow down to the streams. Communities are neither complex nor busy. It is a good combination of the present and the past, and great food comes from fertile lands. It doesn't need to work hard to introduce an array of exciting, mentally

healthy experiences.

Meet Tony Moso. He just celebrated his 103rd birthday with his 14 grown-up and professional children and his new wife.

"I wake up at three in the morning and ensure that I am sleeping by eight in the evening," Moso mused.

His whole day is preoccupied with farm works, tending a hectare rolling coffee farm.

"I planted it by myself," he bragged. There are 3,000 hills of coffee on his farm.

## **CENTENARIAN DIET**

He confessed to eating pork, but "no fatty part." He is a voracious vegetable eater. "It is free in the wild. I don't need to spend money; instead, I planted it."

"A dash of *vetsin*!"

It brings out the umami taste.

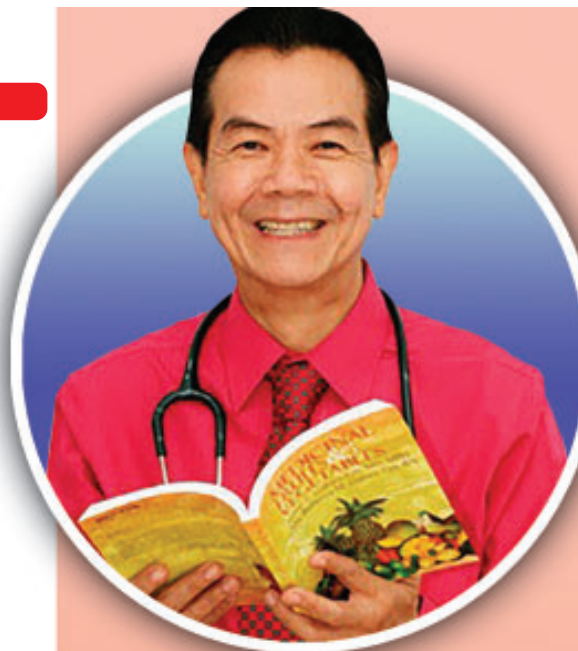
Moso said the mountains are like a large restaurant— nature's fine dining restaurant headed by Dwata's blessing —







*Lush mountains surrounded the valley of South Cotabato, where clear river waters flow down to the streams... it is a good combination of the present and the past, and great food comes from fertile lands. It doesn't need to work hard to introduce an array of exciting, mentally healthy experiences.*



## Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan and the centenarians of South Cotabato

Few years back, former Health Secretary Jaime Galvez Tan visited South Cotabato and was amazed by the healthy lifestyle of the people in South-Central Mindanao. He discovered that the province grows at least 10 types of vegetables, which are great sources of protein, that are not sold in big cities.

He also met 35 centenarians of South Cotabato.

"They have plant-based diet of beans, nuts, lentils, peanuts and related vegetables," Galvez Tan said in an article released by Business Mirror in 2020.

Tan, who is an alternative medicine practitioner, believed that food and lifestyle are key to long life.

boasts the finest (and rarest) food on earth.

"I eat *ubod sang uway, kawat, pako, esgeteng fe-et*," he enumerated an array of indigenous vegetables found in the mountains.

At his age, walking is a pastime. He traverses an hour's walk from his house to Poblacion Polomolok and vice versa.

Fifteen minutes away from Tony Moso is the house of Moso's relative, the 104-year old Juliana Mungca.

Her everyday trip includes an embroidery session and walking to her cousin's house nearby.

Mungca is the first cousin of National Living Treasure Yabing Masalon Dulo, who died at 104.

Like Moso, Mungca is asleep by seven in the morning and rises at five in the morning.

"I don't eat fatty foods. I love vegetables, chicken."

If she feels not good, "drink lukewarm water."

Moso, Mungka and the other centenarians in South Cotabato receive a Centenarian cash gift of P100,000 from the Provincial Government of South Cotabato.



