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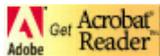
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FEBRUARY 22, 2012

PRESS RELEASE

Japanese philanthropist builds more schools in "Death March" route

The Department of Education accepted yesterday the turn-over of school buildings complete with school equipment donated by a Japanese philanthropist who wants to build additional school buildings along the route of the infamous death march.

Education Secretary Armin Luistro said the donation is a concrete manifestation of healing from the ghastly memories of the past and of looking forward to a future with hope and positivism. "We thankfully accept this donation from R.K Shimizu (Nagasaki) Foundation, Inc. through its president Mr. Katsutoshi Shimizu whose mission is to help build dreams and bridge societies. We hope many will follow suit." Luistro added.

The recipients of the donations were Bantan Elementary School in Orion, Bataan and Angelina Jimenez Elementary School in Capas, Tarlac. Both schools received a 2- classroom school building with toilet, a Japanese garden, 2 sets of computer units, 2 sets of LCD TV units, school uniform and classroom equipment including tables, chairs and chalkboards.

The donation program is lodged under DepEd's Adopt-A-School program which invites the private sector to donate to public schools and help raise the quality of education.

Shimizu believes that the best way to pay back the government for more than 40 years of successfully doing business in the Philippines is to build classrooms and provide Filipino school children with a comfortable learning environment.

To date, the foundation has adopted and donated school buildings and the same set of school furniture to one school in Talisay and two schools in Calatagan, Batangas.

"The chairs and tables -- donated by the Prefecture of Nagasaki where Shimizu hails -- are designed not only to carry 5 times the weight of an adult person but also to protect school children in times of emergency," said Luistro.

Shimizu, now 74, first visited the Philippines in 1969 and has since made good business in bringing to the Philippines used assorted ships/parts and Japanese technology. Having been in and out of the country more than 500 times, Shimizu considers the Philippines his second home.

To prove his commitment to help Philippine education Shimizu said he created the Shimizu foundation and ordered this son to continue his legacy even if he is gone.

Shimizu said he wants to become a private ambassador of friendship between Japan and the Philippines. "To become a beautiful rainbow where one end is in Japan and the other end is in the Philippines," he quipped.

END