

# 3 towns isolated: 2 kids buried in Kalinga landslides

- Artemio Dumlao -

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BAGUIO CITY — Landslides triggered by continuous rains brought by tropical storm "Inday" buried two children in Kalinga province Monday night.

Vicente Tomazar of the Office of Civil Defense-Cordillera said the heavy rains loosened the soil at around 10 p.m. on Monday along the upper slope of the road along sitio Balani, Barangay Locig, Tabuk, Kalinga's capital town.

The landslides also isolated three Kalinga towns — Pasil, Lubuagan and Balbalan.

Tomazar named the fatalities as Allen Mark Carpio, 5; and Claudine Carpio, 11. Meanwhile, those injured — Roderick Carpio, 15; their mother Aida, 39; and father Salvador, 41 — were brought to the hospital.

At least 17 houses were totally damaged including a Catholic church and an elementary school, said Tomazar. At least 17 families were also rendered homeless.

People living in the isolated towns have to walk for at least two hours to reach the capital town of Tabuk.

Government and private workers including Tabuk residents are helping in the airport to clear the debris, said Tomazar.

## **Geohazard zones**

There are at least 40 government-identified geologically hazardous areas in the Cordillera, including Kalinga and Baguio City.

These are: City Camp, Rock Quarry and Crystal Cave, where ground sinking was reported earlier; Kilometer 3 in San Luis Village, where there was slope failure; La Trinidad Valley, where flooding and ground settlement liquefaction is possible; Balacbac, Kapangan towns in Benguet, where the ground is unstable; Colalo in Mankayan town, also in Benguet, where landslides are common; Let-angan and Aurora st., Poblacion, also in Mankayan town, Benguet, which were reported to have "active ground subsidence"; and Sapid and Pacda, again in Mankayan, Benguet, where "pipe-outs" were reported.

Ground subsidence was also observed in Padcal, Tuba, where the Philex Mining Corp. operates.

Landslide-prone sites include portions of Mankayan, from Abatan to Buguias, enroute to

Natubleng town and to Kabayan; Daclan going to Bokod toward Nueva Vizcaya; portions of the road going to the Ambuklao Dam; parts of the Halsema Highway traversing the towns of Buguias, Atok, Tublay and La Trinidad; the areas leading to Itogon town; and the Naguilian and Kennon Roads.

Government engineer Felizardo Gacad Jr. of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the DENR also noted that all major road networks in the Cordillera are landslide-prone.

In 2001, continuous rains brought by Typhoon "Feria" triggered landslides in these areas, claiming the lives of at least four dozen people.

Landslides are also possible in Tangadan, San Quintin, Abra; Taga, Pinukpuk, Kalinga; and Tuyangan, Cabugao, Apayao; and flooding in Lamut, Ifugao; Lagangilang, Abra; Samoki, Bontoc, Mt. Province; Capagaypayan, Luyon, Luna and in Imelda, Alem and San Antonio in Pudtol, Apayao.

Ground subsidence and unstable ground hazards have also been reported in Pantikian, Balbalan, Kalinga and Butac, Natonin, Poblacion and Angkileng in Sagada, Mt. Province.

More than half of the Cordillera region, the MGB said, is classified as very steep and prone to landslides and other ground movements.

Baguio is considered by government geologists as the riskiest city in the country, thus affirming an earlier finding by the World Bank showing the city as one of the seven riskiest in the world.

One third of the city is landslide-prone, MGB Cordillera region chief Engineer Neoman dela Cruz claimed.

"Sixty to 70 percent of the city is landslide-prone," Dela Cruz added.

At the height of Typhoon "Florita" two weeks ago, almost 50 landslides were documented by the City Disaster Coordinating Council here.

MGB supervising geologist Elias Nacario said though that landslides in the city are mainly triggered by heavier precipitation compared to lowland areas. The city has heavier and longer rains during the wet season.

Although Baguio sits on six crisscrossing fault lines, Nacario added that these are not active faults and "are only absorbers when earthquakes occur."