

8 killed, 13 hurt as landslide buries jeepney in Mt. Province

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LA TRINIDAD, Benguet — Eight passengers of a jeepney were killed while 13 others were injured after a landslide, caused by heavy rains, buried the vehicle that got stalled on a highway in Natonin, Mountain Province Thursday afternoon.

Vicente Tomazar, chief of the Office of Civil Defense for the Cordillera, said the victims were on board the jeepney, with license plate AYC-843, and on their way to Natonin town proper when the accident happened at sitio Manangor, Tonglayan.

Tomazar said jeepney driver, Jose Beguiled Jr., parked the vehicle when they spotted boulders lying on the highway. The rocks had earlier fallen from the adjacent mountain.

As the male passengers were busy clearing the debris from the highway, another landslide struck and buried the victims.

Authorities identified the fatalities as Arnold Atangen, 36; Amy Lumiwes, 28; Lailani Liwanen, 28; Nardo Orobiano, 37; Victoriano Gayuchan, 65; Virgilio Tao-ey, 40; Brando Chumawin, 22; and Bong Baguilat, 36, all residents of Natonin.

The injured, who were rushed to the Natonin Hospital and later transferred to the Bontoc General Hospital, were identified as Placido Chumawin, Cecilio Ewangan, Johnny Mabanag, Rodolfo Liwanen, Ricardo Pilay, Ronel Foy-awan, Camara Dangilan, Alex Poleg, Abner Chumawin, George Sipoten, Bocida Pilay, Ambrocio Simeon and Tony Porag.

Tomazar said continuous rains in the past days have loosened the soil in some parts of the Mountain Province.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau had earlier pinpointed Natonin as a landslide-prone area after a geohazard mapping was conducted in the province.

The bureau had listed various areas in the Cordillera region as geohazard areas, including most of its zigzag roads.