

Japan firm lends Cebu 'disaster-useful' tech

By Jessa J. Agua/NSA (The Freeman) | Updated February 11, 2015 - 12:00am

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CEBU, Philippines - In what is considered a first in the country, the town of San Remigio in northern Cebu is using a Japanese emergency telecommunication signal technology.

The Movable and Deployable ICT (information and communications technology) Resource Unit, otherwise known as MDRU, is a joint endeavor of Japan and Philippines.

The two countries are prone to natural calamities as both are located within the Pacific Ring of Fire.

The MDRU enables telecommunication signal and even Internet connection restoration in a particular disaster-stricken area.

The P10.65-million worth unit is lent for free to the northern Cebu town by technology developer Nippon Telegraph and Telephone (NTT) Corporation.

Apart from signal restoration, it also provides data storage tool which is useful in evacuation monitoring and situation analyses.

During yesterday's facility turnover, the unit was tested at a designated evacuation center, the San Remigio National High School, which received signal from the operation center at the municipal hall.

No less than San Remigio town Mayor Mariano Martinez administered the testing, assisted by NTT officials.

Apart from cellphone communication, live video feed was likewise provided for a precise site analysis.

Department of Science and Technology Secretary Mario Montejo said this endeavor

showcases not just the MDRU but the use of ICT in delivering government service.

Montejo added that this is very timely as the country needs new communication platform, especially during disaster.

Cebu Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office chief Baltazar Tribunalo said the technology is very vital in disaster response.

He said the equipment can also be used in other areas in Cebu, especially the geographically isolated Bantayan islands, during calamities.

NTT executive director Dr. Atsushi Takahara said they wished to share the Japanese technology that was developed after the magnitude 9 earthquake hit their country in 2011 so the Philippines may learn from them.

Aside from the DOST, the initiative is also supported by Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Central Visayas Information Sharing Network Foundation, Inc. (CVISNET), and SMART-PLDT communications. — (FREEMAN)