

MEDCAP in Barangay Mahayag, Sta. Margarita, Western Samar

Location: Barangay Mahayag, Sta. Margarita Western Samar

Date: 30 September 2015

MEDCAP TEAM:

LGU of Sta. Margarita led by Mayor Gemma Zosa

PNP of Sta. Margarita

871B, 8ID, PA led by LTC George Domingo

Medical Corps of 8ID led by CPT Kennedy Alaurin, MD

Dental Service Team of 8ID led by COL Luther Punzalan, DD

ACIM Asia led by Elaine with Fr. Alexander Hora

Total number of patients served: 79

Total number of rosaries given: **64**

Total number of scapulars imposed: **88**

Total number of rosary guides given: **41**

A request for MEDCAP was made by LTC Rodrigo Ilustrisimo the former Battalion Commander of 8CMOBn, 8ID, PA who was recently promoted as the new G7 of 8ID. The request was for an upstream barangay of Sta. Margarita, Western Samar.

The ACIM-ASIA staff was fetch from Tacloban City on the night of 29 September and we stayed in Iz Hotel in Calbayog City, it's a city roughly around 30 minutes ride from the town of Sta. Margarita. Sta. Margarita is a 4th class municipality and they don't have lodging houses or hotel for visitors in their town, they have to send them to Calbayog.

We arrived in Calbayog City past 11pm and had to wake up at 3 AM since the call time for the MEDCAP was at 3:30 AM. We were fetch by one of the DSWD staff in the morning and after having some hot soap at exactly 4:30 AM the whole team started the journey to Brgy. Mahayag, Sta. Margarita. We used the military trucks (KMs and 6x6) and 2 SUVs.



The muddy and single lane road going to Brgy. Mahayag. We had to traverse it for an hour and forty-five minutes.



The Phil. National Police keeping safe the medicines from ACIM-ASIA.



The 87th Infantry Battalion from 8th Infantry Division of the Phil. Army provided the security by securing the place days before the actual MEDCAP day.



Mayor Gemma Zosa with Fr. Alexander Hora was waiting for the rest of the MEDCAP team to arrive at barangay Cinco.



Fr. Hora offered prayers before we embark to the last leg of our journey to barangay Mahayag



Fr. Hora talking with the dentist from 8ID Dental Service Commanding Officer Col. Luther Punzalan, DD.



Fr. Hora was introduced to CPT Kennedy Alaurin, MD a military doctor from 8ID, PA based in Camp Lukban, Catbalogan City, Samar.

To reach the mission area we had to travel about an hour and 45 minutes by car and then another one and half hour walk passing through streams and climbing mountains. The road was muddy and slippery since it rained the day before the mission.



Leaving Barangay Cinco and on to barangay Mahayag.



One of the streams we had to pass going to barangay Mahayag.



The only means of transporting goods to barangay Mahayag.



With the personal body guard of the 87th IB Battalion Commander.



After the streams we were now climbing mountains. With Ronielyn Lagdamen, one of the ACIM-Asia staff from Tacloban City.



Fr. Hora assisted by the staff from LGU trekking down.



The path going down was muddy and slippery since it rained the day before the mission and the soil is mostly made up of clay so we had to be careful in either going up or down.



Almost near barangay Mahayag. The pathway was near the very side of the mountain so we have to be careful in threading the slippery ground.



Finally we were able to see the gate of barangay Mahayag.



A posed with 87th IB Battalion Commander LTC George Domingo before we enter the gate of the barangay.

After and an hour and half walk traversing through streams and climbing up and going down on mountains the team finally made it to barangay Mahayag but it seems that all of us were exhausted so we had to take a rest before we started the program.



Upon entering the barangay, we saw this man manually pounding “sticky” rice. This is the old way of removing the shells of the rice.



Fr. Hora still smiling after an hour and half walked was taking a much needed rest after arriving in barangay Mahayag.

When talking to the people of the barangay we learned that they don't have electricity, drinking water is taken from a nearby stream and there were no rest rooms in any of the houses of the barangay, this becomes a big concern for the mayor since this means that the people living in this barangay has poor sanitation. Also, the women in the barangay are living together without the blessing of marriage civil or church in a very young age of 14 with their parent's approval.



The people from the barangay carrying gallon of water.



The barangay chapel where the medical mission took place.

Before the medical mission started the barangay captain and the mayor gave inspirational talks. The mayor even asked where the men were since it could be observed that majority of the people are old men, women and children.



The pharmacy with Ronielyn from ACIM-Asia.



Father Hora led the opening prayer of the short program before the actual medical mission will take place.



Mayor Gemma Zosa of Sta. Margarita, Samar giving some talks and encouraging people to take advantage of the medical mission being offered.



Getting their BPs first and patient profiling by the medical corps team.



The people of the barangay waiting for turn for check-up.



The first patient of doctor Alaurin for the day.



These children are waiting patiently for their medicines while it was being prepared.

While the medical mission is on-going Fr. Alexander Hora also started his catechism with the people of the barangay.



Father Hora giving catechism to the people of barangay Mahayag.



The people were captured on what Fr. Hora was telling them.



Rosaries and scapulars are being prepared and explained to the people who will received them.



Scapular were imposed and they were also given the rosaries.

The MEDCAP ended around noon since there were only few people in the barangay. Although there was a dentist on standby no one came for dental extraction their reason was most of them does heavy work and they cannot afford to rest for 3 days and other are just afraid to do it.

Father Hora was supposed to have a mass in the area but due to the rain that was pouring during lunch time and seeing that if the rain will be non-stop then we will have problems going back, he decided that it would be better than we should start our descend back to barangay Cinco.

We had lunch after the medical mission and just after 1PM we started our journey back to barangay Cinco.

Reason for the request of MEDCAP in Barangay Mahayag, Sta. Margarita, Samar:

Former 8CMOBn, 8ID, PA LTC Rodrigo Ilustrismo made the request to have a MEDCAP in one of the upstream barangay of Sta. Margarita, Samar. He said that the people needs helps specially in the spiritual / religious aspect. It also happened that one of the SPPX priest decided to join the MEDCAP for the sole purpose of giving recollection or talk to the military but due to the sudden changed in command when LTC Ilustrismo was promoted as G7 staff of the 8th Infantry Division the recollection with the military was cancelled but Fr. Alexander Hora who visited us still join the MEDCAP in Sta. Margarita.

The reason for the MEDCAP was to visit the people of the barangay, give them free medical assistance and to catechize them because it seems that majority of the people living in the said barangay were member and actively practicing a cult known as Rizalista. The members believes in using amulets to give them physical power as well as physical protection saying that they will not be touched by any bullets or anything that can harm them physically. They also practice Faith Healing and it was said that people who went to that barangay for faith healing can only go home when they bring another person that will replace them in staying in the barangay.

Two weeks earlier before the MEDCAP, last 15 September 2015 in Calbayog City, less than an hour ride from the proper town of Sta. Margarita, a family was massacre killing 5 people including two children and two survivors. It was said that it was a politically motivated case but the killers where from Brgy Mahayag who practices Rizalista.

The mayor and her husband retired Col. Zosa was very happy since a priest was able to join the MEDCAP was able to do catechism especially to the people of barangay Mahayag where the practice of the cult Rizalista is mostly active.