



PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL
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**3-PRONGED ACTION PLAN ON NFA
RICE DISTRIBUTION SCHEME IS NOW WELL IN PLACE
– President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo**

BASILISA, Dinagat Island, Philippines – President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said here today that the government's three-pronged action plan in the sale and distribution of rice is now well in place to ensure the right price of the commodity and to protect the people from rice hoarders and manipulators.

The President bared this today in her impromptu speech at the inaugural rites of the newly-constructed Tag-iho Bridge in Barangay Sto. Nino this town.

The President told the crowd of 3,000 residents, who gathered at the Tag-iho Bridge under the heat of the sun, that the prices of rice and crude oil are among the big headaches, not only in the Philippines, but in the whole world.

She said the moment the rice supplies hit the markets the government act immediately to implement its three action plan to make sure that its price is right or within the ceiling set by the government.

The President said the first action plan is to secure the rice supply by putting up more outlets of Bigasan ng Bayan and mobile retail stores of the National Food Authority (NFA). In addition, she said the government is now making sure that the cheaper NFA rice is distributed directly to the doorsteps of the poor households through the cooperation and assistance of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local government units, civil society and churches by supervising the distribution of NFA rice.

She said through this distribution network, the subsidized rice of the NFA are assured to reach the table of the poorest of the poor. She said the third action plan is to run after rice profiteers and hoarders. "We have to protect you (Filipino consumers) from price manipulators, " the President added. As she continued to move around, the President inspected the ongoing rice retailing activities of San Vicente Ferrer Parish Church at the basketball court of Barangay Sto. Nino. According to Rev. Fr. Charles Gingco, his parish started its bigasan ng parokya program after the President called all the churches to get involved in the distribution of cheaper NFA rice.