



# Eastern Visayas posts record-high COVID cases

By MIRIAM DESACADA

**PALO, Leyte** – Eastern Visayas yesterday recorded the highest number of COVID-19 cases in a single day since the pandemic started last year.

Of the 1,749 samples tested, 712 were positive.

Of the positive cases, 711 were tested in two COVID laboratories in the region – Department of Health-Eastern Visayas Center for Health and Development (DOH-EVCHD) and Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center (EVRMC).

The other was tested at the Philippine Red Cross-Cebu Molecular Laboratory in Cebu City.

The new cases were recorded in the cities of Ormoc with 18 and Tacloban with 106 as well as in the provinces of Leyte with 222; Southern Leyte, 128; Northern Samar, 69; Eastern Samar, 33; Samar, 63, and Biliran, 73.

As of 9 a.m. yesterday, the region's total number of cases stood at 27,125, with total recoveries at 23,609 and deaths at 365.

The latest infections brought the total active cases to 3,151 or at 11.62 percent.

A week earlier, the DOH-EVCHD reported a surge of cases in the region, with record-breaking numbers of reported daily cases in the past two weeks.

The current wave of cases in the region is attributed to super spreader events such as birthday parties, reunions and other gatherings that drew a large number of people.

The DOH-EVCHD has been consistent in reminding the public to avoid mass gatherings as these cause virus transmission.

Records show the death rate for this year is higher than last year's.

Of the 363 reported deaths, 209 or 57.58 percent were recorded this year.

The region identified 282 hotspot barangays or those that had three or more cases in the last two weeks.

The spike in the infections affected the status of hospitals in the region.

As of June 18, the Eastern Visayas One Hospital Command Center reported 76 pending transactions.

This shows that hospitals have reached the critical level, especially the EVRMC, a major COVID referral hospital in the region.

In response to the surge, the regional task force against COVID-19 deployed members of the Medical Reserve Force in different hospitals to assist local health workers.

The DOH-EVCHD and the regional task force recommended to the government to raise the region's quarantine status from modified general community quarantine to GCQ.

The regional task force urged local government units to mobilize and strengthen their vaccination drives as well as the implementation of health protocols to curb the infections.

## 5 WV cops infected

Meanwhile, in Western Visayas, the Philippine National Police (PNP) reported that five more police personnel in the region tested positive for COVID.

The figure brought to 144 the number of active cases involving police personnel and PNP civilian employees assigned in Western Visayas.

Of the five cases, two belonged to the Negros Occidental police, bringing the cases in the NOP to 21.

– With Gilbert Bayoran