



# INFOCUS

IN-DEPTH NEWS, FACTUAL AND RIGHT ON TARGET

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF ISABELA

PBBM inaugurates Cabaruan Solar-powered Pump Irrigation Project in Isabela



## ROAD TO AGRI-INNOVATION



WELCOME  
HIS EXCELLENCY  
**FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.**  
President of the Republic of the Philippines

ING OF THE CONNECTION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE NGCP AND  
SACIO ENERGY RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (SIE)  
FOR THE ISABELA GROUND MOUNTED SOLAR PROJECT

FAUSTO N. DALL, PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR  
ILAGAN CITY, ISABELA



DISTRIBUTION OF PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANCE  
TO FARMERS, FISHERFOLK, AND FAMILIES

ILAGAN CITY COMMUNITY CENTER, ILAGAN CITY, ISABELA  
10 JUN 2024



Two men in white shirts are speaking into microphones at a podium.

Isabela Rice  
PRODUKTO NG  
MAGSASAKANG ISABELA  
ISABELA RICE



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IN-DEPTH NEWS, FACTUAL AND RIGHT ON TARGET

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and harnessing the power of information  
in pursuit of a stronger citizenry and  
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### EDITOR'S NOTE

#### *Road to Agri-innovation*

Agriculture remains the cornerstone of Isabela's economy and culture, focusing on sustainable and environmentally friendly practices to ensure food security, enhance livelihoods, and foster a prosperous future for all Isabeleños.

Driven to new heights through adoption of progressive policies and advanced technologies, Isabela's agriculture is poised to achieve remarkable productivity. By integrating modern science and innovative practices, the province transcends traditional farming methods, ensuring resilience and adaptability.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s inauguration of the Cabaruan Solar-powered Pump Irrigation Project in Quirino, Isabela and the groundbreaking 440-MWp solar project in the City of Ilagan are significant milestones toward sustainable agriculture and energy efficiency.

Governor Rodito's trips with PBMM and DA officials to Germany and Czech Republic, as well as his participation in AGRITECHNICA in Bangkok, Thailand, highlight Isabela's proactive stance in adopting global agricultural best practices and technologies.

Collaboration with international partners, such as Taiwan and IRRI, exemplifies Isabela's commitment to enhancing rice production through technological advancements and sustainable practices, bolstering productivity and sustainability for local farmers.

PhilMech's investment in farm machinery and the Department of Agriculture's infrastructure projects for farmers' cooperatives and associations will further enhance Isabela's agricultural productivity and resilience, promoting growth and economic stability.

Programs like I-RISE and the national recognition in the Walang Gutom Awards for the Isabela Rice Assistance Program (I-RICE AP) underscore the province's holistic approach to supporting farmers, ensuring food security, and addressing involuntary hunger and malnutrition among vulnerable sectors in the province.

#### **Beyond Agriculture: Ensuring Free, High-quality Healthcare for All**

Isabela's advancement extends to healthcare services with the opening of hemodialysis centers at Milagros Albano District Hospital in Cabagan, Manuel A. Roxas District Hospital in Roxas, and Cauayan District Hospital in Cauayan City, each with 10 dialysis units. Additionally, the refurbishment of MADH with its enhanced facilities contributes to high-quality healthcare.

The "Lab for All" caravan, launched by the Office of First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos in collaboration with the Provincial Government of Isabela, brought medical services closer to the people by providing free medical consultations and medicines, successfully serving 22,805 Isabeleños.

As Isabela advances, the legacy of compassionate leadership shines through Governor Rodito and Vice Governor Bojie. Their accomplishments signal an era of growth and prosperity, leaving a lasting impact on governance and solidifying Isabela's reputation as a model of progress and community welfare.

**ATTY. ELIZABETH P. CUREG-BINAG**  
Editor-In-Chief

# PBBM inaugurates Philippines' biggest solar irrigation project

**His Excellency President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. inaugurated the Cabaruan Solar-powered Pump Irrigation Project on June 10, 2024 in the municipality of Quirino in Isabela.**

This project, worth P65.77 million, is the Philippine government's biggest solar pump irrigation to address the rising challenges of energy costs.

President Marcos Jr. said that the inauguration of the project in Isabela is the next phase in the province's progress.

**"Ang pormal na pagpapasinaya ng Cabaruan Solar-powered Pump Irrigation Project na ito ang kasunod na yugto sa istorya ng progreso ng Isabela. At hindi lamang ng Isabela, kung hindi sa buong Amianan,"** he said.

He explained that instead of using oil-powered machines to transport water from irrigation canals to fields, the farmers can now utilize electricity generated from sunlight.

**"Kung dati-rati ay gumagamit tayo ng mga makinang pinatatakbo ng langis upang dumaloy ang tubig mula sa irrigation canal patungo sa inyong mga taniman, ngayon**

**ay pinagagana na natin ito gamit ang kuryente galing sa sikat ng araw. Libre na kuryente na galing sa araw kaya't maaari nating ibigay ang libre na patubig,"** he said.

Meanwhile, Governor Rodito T. Albano III thanked the President for the project, highlighting its benefits to farmers who previously struggled with the costs of maintaining diesel-powered irrigation pumps.

## Sustainable irrigation

Initiated by the National Irrigation Authority-Magat River Integrated Irrigation System (NIA-MARIIS), the project aims to maximize water resource utilization while offering sustainable and cost-efficient irrigation services to the Isabeleño farmers.

It aims to reduce production costs for 237 Isabeleño farmers who have long relied on gasoline or diesel engine water pumps.

The project, constructed from July 2023 to February 2024, comprises a pumping station equipped with 1,056 solar panels, generating a total output of 739,200 watts.

The station also includes two submersible pumps, each with a discharge capacity of 12,800 gallons per minute (GPM), providing

irrigation water to 350 hectares of agricultural land.

NIA also turned over 17 solar-powered pump irrigation projects completed from CY 2023 to date to beneficiaries from Isabela, Cagayan, and Quirino. These projects can irrigate 251 hectares of farmland, benefiting 867 farmers.

## Modernizing Magat Dam

President Marcos called on the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) to modernize and rehabilitate the Magat Dam, which was built during the tenure of his father, the late President Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr.

**"Nag-uusap nga kami ni Administrator Guillen. 'Ika namin, balikan natin, tingnan natin ullit 'yung Magat Dam at tingnan natin kung pupuwede pa. Mukhang mayroon pang kailangan. Mayroon sigurong rehabilitation na kailangan. Pagandahin natin,"** he said.

**"Lagyan din natin ng ganitong solar kung babagay siya para naman i-modernize natin lahat ng ating facilities,"** he added.

Constructed in 1975, the Magat Dam is a major source of irrigation for 85,000 hectares of farmland in the Cagayan Valley region.



# 440 MWp Isabela Ground Mounted Solar Power Project



FOR A CLEAN AND ENERGY-SECURE FUTURE

## PBBM witnesses signing of connection agreement for Isabela's 440-MWp solar project

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. witnessed the signing of the connection agreement for the 440-megawatt peak (MWp) Isabela Solar Project on June 10, 2024 at the Isabela Provincial Capitol in the City of Ilagan.

The partnership between the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) and the San Ignacio Energy Resources Development Corporation (SIERDC) for the solar project aims to boost the government's efforts in promoting renewable energy sources in the country.

The SIERDC, a joint venture between TotalEnergies and the Filipino renewable energy developer Nextnorth Holdings Corporation, is the project implementer.

President Marcos Jr. said that the collaboration is crucial for achieving the country's renewable energy goals and ensuring a stable power supply for all Filipinos.

"This collaboration that we have formalized today is key to achieving our renewable energy goals and to ensure a stable power supply for all Filipinos, not just for today but for the future. Having more initiatives like this project will be a catalyst for our country's positive transformation," he said.

President Marcos expressed appreciation to the Provincial Government of Isabela, NGCP, and SIERDC for their dedication and hard work on the groundbreaking project.

He also thanked the French government and TotalEnergies for their invaluable contribution, stressing that their commitment to renewable energy development in the Philippines shows the importance of international cooperation in tackling global challenges.

With an investment of P18 billion, the project is poised to generate approximately 440 gigawatt-hours of clean energy annually using over 700,000 solar panels. This capacity is sufficient to power 500,000 households.

The project is also expected to provide employment opportunities for over 4,000 Filipinos during its construction phase.

The project is located at a 392-hectare industrial land in Barangays Cabannungan 2nd, Arusip, Bagong Silang, and Pilar in the City of Ilagan, Isabela.

The construction is set to begin in the fourth quarter of 2024 and is expected to be ready for commercial operations by the second quarter of 2026.

President Marcos also urged the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) to collaborate further with the government to secure the country's energy infrastructure.

Project site of the 440 MWp solar project located in Barangays Cabannungan 2nd, Arusip, Bagong Silang, and Pilar in the City of Ilagan, Isabela.



# **PBBM** DISTRIBUTES FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS, FISHERS, FAMILIES IN REGION 2

President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. led the distribution of close to P200 million worth of financial assistance to Cagayan Valley farmers, fisherfolk, and their families on June 10, 2024 at the City of Ilagan Community Center in Isabela.

President Marcos emphasized that the distribution is part of his administration's efforts to alleviate the hardships caused by the El Niño phenomenon on affected individuals.

**“Sa araw naman na ito, maghahandog kami ng karagdagang tulong sa ating mga magsasaka, mangingisda, at sa kanilang mga pamilya na kasama natin dito ngayon. Nilalayon naming maibsan ang hirap na inyong nararanasan dahil sa El Niño nang sa gayon ay makabangon [kayong] muli at maibalik ang kasaganahan ng inyong kabuhayan,”** he said.

The President handed over P10 million to Batanes Gov. Marilou Cayco; P50 million each to Isabela Gov. Rodito Albano III, Cagayan Gov. Manuel Mamba, and Nueva Vizcaya Gov. Jose Gambito; and P30.92 million to Quirino Gov. Dakila Cua for the beneficiaries of their respective provinces.

He assured that the government agencies and local government units would work closely together to uplift the lives of the farmers and fisherfolk.

**“Makakaasa kayo na patuloy na magtutulongan ang mga ahensya ng pamahalaan at lalong-lalo na ang local government [units] dahil po lahat po ito hindi po namin magagawa kung hindi**

**maganda ang ugnayan ng national government at local government units,”** he said.

**“Patuloy ang aming paghahatid ng nag-uumpaw na suporta [at] tulong upang madoble ang inyong ani at bumaba ang presyo ng mga bilihin. Isa na sa [mga] inisyatibong ito ay ang Philippine Rural Development Project at National Rice Program,”** he added.

Marcos also vowed that his administration would focus on ways to increase the income of farmers and improve food production. This includes the establishment of new irrigation facilities, improvement of agricultural logistics and supply chains, post-harvest facilities, and building better farm-to-market roads.

The President said modern methods in agriculture will also be provided through training, using science-based and climate-resilient farming technologies.

## **Other forms of assistance distributed**

The Department of Agriculture (DA) distributed 315 pump and engine sets and 1,000 bags of hybrid and inbred palay and corn seeds. Additionally, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) provided 19 non-motorized boats and 18 units of fishing gear/gillnets.

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) delivered financial assistance worth P5.98 million to 311 beneficiaries of the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD) program.

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) supplied 25 toolkits to beneficiaries of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF).

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) provided P10,000 in financial aid to 5,000 targeted beneficiaries in Isabela through the “DSWD-Ayuda sa Kapos ang Kita Program,” which aims to protect minimum wage earners from the effects of inflation.

The President said the Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization also provided agricultural equipment such as tractors, disc plows, levee makers, transplanters, reapers, harvesters, threshers, dryers, and rice mills.

## **Farm losses from El Niño climb to P9.89B**

The agriculture sector has been reeling from the extreme heat and lack of rain caused by the El Niño weather phenomenon, with losses rising to P9.89 billion as of June 6, up from the P9.5 billion in damage reported on May 16, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

The DA stated that the dry spell has affected the livelihood of 183,455 farmers and fisherfolk in 13 regions, including the Cagayan Valley.

Rice accounted for P4.75 billion, or 48.03 percent, of the agricultural losses, followed by corn with P3.37 billion, or 34.04 percent, of the total damage.

# Marcos eyes building more dams by 2028, including Tumauni reservoir in Isabela



President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. is eyeing the construction of more high and multipurpose dams in the country by 2028, including the Tumauni River Multipurpose Project (TRMP) in the Province of Isabela, according to the National Irrigation Administration (NIA).

NIA Administrator Eduardo Guillen said that President Marcos expects to complete three to five large dams before the end of his term, including the expansion of the Tumauni Irrigation System (TIS) through the TRMP, the Panay River Basin in Panay Island, and several others in the Ilocos Region.

He added that the construction of 10 medium dams was expected to reach completion by either the end of 2024 or early 2025.

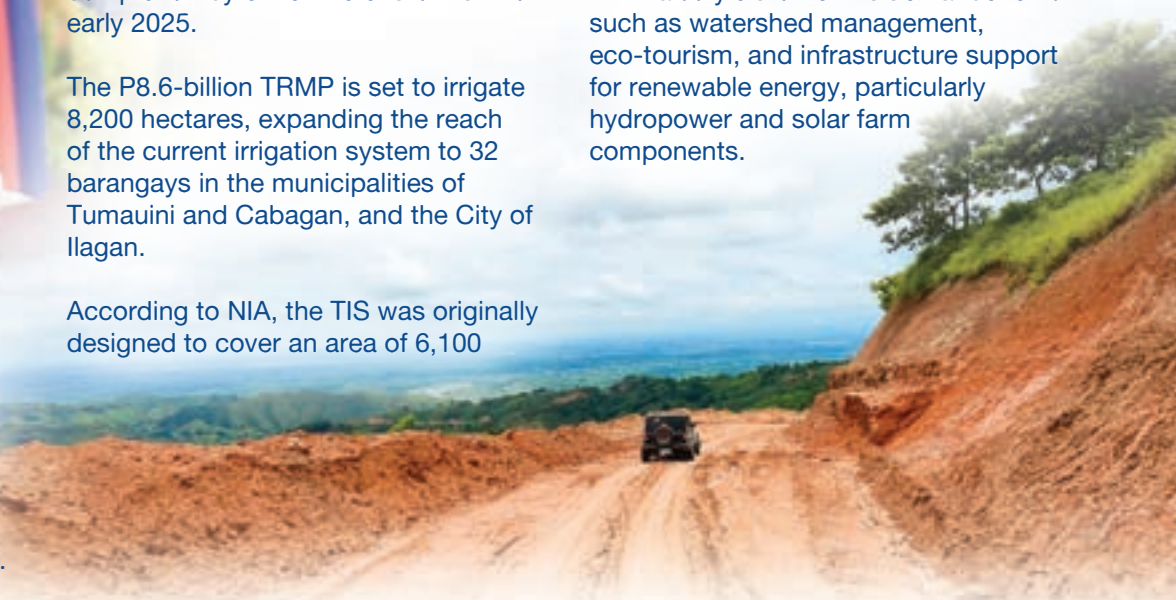
The P8.6-billion TRMP is set to irrigate 8,200 hectares, expanding the reach of the current irrigation system to 32 barangays in the municipalities of Tumauni and Cabagan, and the City of Ilagan.

According to NIA, the TIS was originally designed to cover an area of 6,100

hectares, but due to insufficient water-river runoff, especially during the summer, only around 3,000 hectares are currently being irrigated.

The project encompasses the construction of a high dam, afterbay dam, and long siphon, as well as improving and expanding irrigation facilities.

It will also yield other incidental benefits such as watershed management, eco-tourism, and infrastructure support for renewable energy, particularly hydropower and solar farm components.



## THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE Isabela to pilot B-SPARED Project addressing impending drought

In a decisive move to combat the threat of impending drought in the Philippines, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) partnered with the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to pilot the Building on Social Protection for Anticipatory Action and Response in Emergencies and Disasters (B-SPARED) Project in the province of Isabela.

The primary aim of the collaboration was to gather insights that would shape the integration of "drought anticipatory action" into the B-SPARED project.

It also helps break the cycle of poverty among vulnerable groups due to recurring natural hazards.

### Why Isabela?

Isabela was selected for the pilot project due to its leading role in innovative disaster management and adaptive shock-responsive

social protection strategies.

The project will seek to understand the local situation and assess the potential impact of the drought on the province.

It aims to prepare Isabela for impending drought through robust social protection measures to reduce vulnerabilities and enhance the resilience of the affected population.

It will also equip Isabeleño farmers and other vulnerable groups with the tools and knowledge to mitigate the adverse effects of drought on their livelihoods.

Key stakeholders who participated in the scoping mission included Social Services Committee Chair Margarete U. Chin of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, Provincial Agriculturist Marites E. Frogoso, Provincial Veterinarian Dr. Belina N. Barboza, Environment and Natural Resources Officer Geronimo Cabaccan Jr., Provincial

Information Officer Atty. Elizabeth Binag and Assistant Provincial Social Welfare and Development Officer Gina G. Rivero.

This collaboration represents a significant step forward in addressing the challenges posed by climate change and ensuring strong social protection for the future.





# WORKING VISIT TO BERLIN, GERMANY AND STATE VISIT TO CZECH REPUBLIC

PRESIDENT  
**FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.**  
MARCH 11 - 16, 2024

## Gov. Albano joins PBBM in Germany, Czech Republic for agriculture, dairy technology exploration

**Governor Rodito T. Albano III joined President Ferdinand “Bongbong” R. Marcos Jr. during his back-to-back visits to Germany and the Czech Republic on March 11-16, 2024.**

In his departure speech on March 11, President Marcos said he was optimistic that new opportunities would be explored between the countries.

**"Building upon the visit of Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala in April 2023 and German Federal Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock in January this year, my visit marks a pivotal moment**

**in our efforts to continuously deepen bilateral relations and explore avenues for enhanced cooperation with Germany and the Czech Republic, and the world,"** Marcos said.

He said he would also focus on expanding economic cooperation to open up more avenues for mutually beneficial trade and investment opportunities.

**"We wish to tap Germany's expertise in renewable energy to assist us in our energy transition efforts, as well as in manufacturing, healthcare, agriculture, aerospace, innovation and startups, IT-BPM, and minerals processing,"** Marcos said.

### First Stop: Germany

**D**uring the meeting with the Filipino community in Berlin, Germany on March 12, Pres. Marcos said that Gov. Albano and Tarlac Governor Susan Yap joined to look for opportunities they could bring to their provinces.

**"Lahat ng ating mga kasamahan sa pamahalaan, lahat ng distinguished guests, mayroon tayong dalawang governor dito. We have Governor Rodito Albano of Isabela [and] we have Governor Susan Yap of Tarlac. Pumunta sila rito para makita [kung] ano pa 'yung**

**mga pagkakataon na maaring dalhin [nila] sa kanilang mga probinsiya,"** he said.

Governor Albano, along with Department of Agriculture Secretary Francisco "Kiko" P. Tiu Laurel Jr. and Aurora, Isabela Mayor Joseph Christian "Niño" Uy,



visited Löwendorfer Geflügelhof in Nuthe-Urstromtal, Germany.

They learned about their diverse range of products, including eggs from various farming types, specialty items like colored eggs, and egg products for restaurants, bakeries, and other large consumers.

Gov. Albano also attended the German-Philippine Business Forum, holding private discussions with local businessmen to encourage more investments in the tourism and renewable energy sectors.

## Second Stop: Czech Republic

Gov. Albano joined Sec. Laurel in the Czech Republic to explore their dairy industry, water and irrigation management, livestock production, and an agricultural online platform offering technology, machinery, and direct communication with producers.

Sec. Tiu Laurel said the DA hopes to learn from the Czech Republic's experiences in becoming one of the top dairy-producing countries

in Europe and one of the major suppliers of beef and to purchase bull sperm for artificial insemination to improve the quality of the local herd.

The agriculture chief also looked forward to expanding the market for Philippine agricultural products within the European Union.

Meanwhile, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. reported a productive three-day state visit to the Czech Republic, during which he met all four top-ranking government officials of the republic and forged significant memoranda of understanding (MOUs).

**“So, I’m very happy to say that the little time I’ve spent here in Prague has been quite productive. And of course, it is really a real pleasure to be in this city. It’s such a beautiful city. I think you’ve seen it; it’s like walking around a fairytale town,”** President Marcos said.

President Marcos and President Pavel witnessed the signing of the Joint Communique to establish a labor consultation mechanism between the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) and the Czech

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

After the successful visits, President Marcos said the overseas trips allowed him to discuss with German and Czech leaders ways of boosting bilateral cooperation in various fields as well as engage with investors eager to expand their ventures to the Philippines.

**“Overall, I am confident that these visits to Germany and the Czech Republic have strengthened our bonds with these two countries in Central (and Western) Europe and created opportunities for cooperation and prosperity,”** he said.

Governor Albano's participation in President Marcos Jr.'s visits to Germany and the Czech Republic underscores a strong commitment to advancing Isabela's agricultural sector and dairy industry by exploring the potential of implementing advanced technologies and best practices from these countries.

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## Albano-led Isabela delegation joins agri-innovation exhibit in Thailand

Delegates from the province of Isabela, led by Governor Rodito T. Albano III, participated in AGRITECHNICA ASIA 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand, a prestigious exhibition showcasing agricultural machinery tailored to the Southeast Asian market.

Deutsche Landwirtschafts-Gesellschaft (DLG), a distinguished network that fosters innovation in agriculture, agribusiness, and food industries, hosted the event from May 22 to 24, 2024 at the Bangkok International Trade and Exhibition Centre (BITEC).

The event featured cutting-edge solutions and facilitated discussions on addressing contemporary agricultural challenges.

As the head of the delegation, Gov. Albano was committed to harnessing state-of-the-art agricultural technology and forging international partnerships to

strengthen the province's agricultural sector.

### Day 1

Isabela, known for its agricultural prowess in the Philippines, seized valuable opportunities at the exhibition.

One notable participation was during the roundtable discussion on "Strategic Dialogue: Advancing Agritech and Localization Prospects in Philippine Agriculture," led by PhilMech's Dr. Dionisio Alwindia and





supported by Germany's Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

This discussion facilitated valuable insights into the state of agri-tech in the Philippines, paving the way for knowledge exchange.

Gov. Albano and his team did a customized tour of selected exhibitors at the agricultural innovation exhibition.

They explored booths featuring farm machinery specifically designed for rice, corn, and sugarcane production, acquiring valuable insights into the latest technological advancements and innovations in agriculture.

Among the exhibitors visited were KUHN, an agricultural machinery manufacturer; GÖWEIL Maschinenbau GmbH; FiMAKS Agricultural Machinery; Badilli Makine Ve Tarim A.S.; CNH Industrial Services; and CLAAS.

Each visit provided the delegation with firsthand exposure to advanced equipment and technologies designed to enhance various aspects of

agricultural production.

### Day 2

On Day 2, the delegation attended key sessions addressing various agricultural issues and innovations.

These sessions included discussions on the issue of agricultural burning in Thailand, hosted by Friends of Thai Agriculture-International Agricultural Counsellors.

Another session focused on creating high-performance greenhouse films to enhance farmers' productivity, presented by Vis & Son and Exxon.

The delegates also gained knowledge on Thailand's agricultural strategy through a session organized by the German-Thai Agricultural Cooperation Project (GETHAC).

They also learned the significance of Durian, hailed as the king of fruits, in a session conducted by the DLG Competence Center in collaboration with Rambhai Rajabhat University and the University of Hamburg.

### Day 3

On Day 3, the delegates attended several informative sessions aimed at enhancing their knowledge of sustainable agricultural practices and innovative technologies.

One session, organized by the Asian Food and Feed Insect Association (AFFIA), focused on using black soldier fly frass to combat phytopathogenic fungi, promoting horticultural and floricultural resilience in Asia's sustainable agriculture and food security.

Meanwhile, a session conducted by the DLG Competence Center in collaboration with Rambhai Rajabhat University and the University of Hamburg presented the results of a scientific project in determining the degree of ripeness of mangoes.

Meanwhile, the DLG appreciated Governor Albano and the Isabela delegation's participation and contribution to AGRITECHNICA ASIA 2024.



**ENABLING COMMUNITIES,  
EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES**

## **DA, PGI awards PRDP subprojects to Isabela farmers' co-ops, associations**

**The Regional Project Coordination Office 02 of the Department of Agriculture Philippine Rural Development Project and the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) awarded 12 infrastructure and enterprise subprojects to various Isabela farmers' cooperatives and associations (FCAs), amounting to P133.7 million.**

The activity took place during the inauguration of the Pineapple Production and Marketing Enterprise under AF2, worth P31.8 million, given to the Cavitenno Isabelino Agriculture MPC in Magleticia, Echague, Isabela on May 28, 2024.

The Investment for Rural Enterprise for Agriculture and Fisheries Productivity (I-REAP) component of PRDP benefited San Agustin Dairy Cooperative (SADACO), Mallig Dairy Multi-purpose Cooperative (MADAMCO), San Mateo Multi-purpose Cooperative (SMMPC), Cabatuan Savings and Development Cooperative (CASADECO), Ramcor Farmers Multi-purpose Cooperative (RAMFARMCO), and Wigan Settlers Multi-purpose Cooperative (WSMPC).

Meanwhile, the beneficiaries of the Intensified Building Up of Infrastructure and Logistics for Development (I-BUILD) component were Isabela Seed Growers Multi-purpose Cooperative (ISGMPC), Payoga-Kapatagan Multi-purpose Cooperative, LGU Echague, LGU Roxas, and LGU Mallig.

The I-BUILD component also handed over the packaging facility funded under the civil works component of the pineapple enterprise, worth P10 million.

The pineapple subproject aims to upscale the cooperative's existing business in the production, consolidation, and marketing of pineapples.

The farmers' cooperatives and associations (FCAs) and LGU recipients thanked the Department of Agriculture Philippine Rural Development Project and the PGI.

Mr. Marcelo Mamaclay, chairman of the Cavitenno Isabelino Agriculture MPC, expressed his gratitude for the continued support that will uplift the lives of not only the co-op members but also the whole of Echague.

Mr. Hazel Agustin, manager of SADACO, shared their journey, stating that before PRDP, they were only producing 100 liters of carabao's milk with walk-in

buyers as their market. At present, they are producing 280-300 liters of carabao milk per day, supplying the Department of Education within Isabela and Cagayan provinces.

Manager Bernard Batori of the Isabela Seed Growers Cooperative, an I-BUILD recipient, shared that they are now using their warehouse and can save on rental expenses.

The Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) is a six-year national project under the Department of Agriculture (DA) that aims to establish a modern, value chain-oriented, and climate-resilient agriculture and fisheries sector.

In partnership with local government units (LGUs) and the private sector, the project provides key infrastructure, facilities, technology, and information to raise incomes, productivity, and competitiveness in targeted areas.



#### Individual Category Awardees:

**GENER C. MARIANO:** Outstanding Integrated Rice Farmer  
**BABILYN G. PAGARIGAN:** Outstanding Corn Farmer  
**EUSEBIO B. CORPUZ:** Outstanding HVCC Farmer (Vegetable)  
**DARIUS R. ABAD:** Outstanding HVCC Farmer (Trees)  
**ARNULFO B. CEZAR:** Outstanding Large Animal Raiser  
**MERCY A. BIALA:** Outstanding Small Animal Raiser  
**MARLONZO F. SANTIAGO:** Outstanding Fisherfolk (Fish Capture)  
**FENNY C. RAMOCAL:** Outstanding Fisherfolk, Fish Culture (Hatchery)  
**MEDITA O. NAVARRO:** Outstanding Fisherfolk, Fish Culture (Grow-Out)  
**JOSE MORANTE:** Outstanding Agri-Entrepreneur  
**JOHN DAVID A. BATOON:** Outstanding Young Farmer (4H)  
**CIPRIANO M. TICMAN JR.:** Outstanding Agricultural Researcher  
**MARYJANE B. IBARRA:** Outstanding Agricultural Scientist  
**THERESA V. MANGANAAN:** Outstanding Rural Woman

#### Special Citation:

**JEOREL JORDZ P. SAGUIBO:** Regional Winner, Young Farmer Challenge Kabataang Agribiz 2023

#### Group Category Awardees:

**DOMINGO P. ESTEFANIO & FAMILY:** Outstanding Farm Family  
**4H CLUB DINGADING:** Outstanding Young Farmer Organization (4H Club)  
**MARASAT PEQUEÑO:** Outstanding Rural Improvement Club  
**MAFC SAN GUILLERMO:** Outstanding MAFC  
**SADIRI-IA MPC:** Outstanding Small Farmer Organization (Cooperative)  
**BFT SAN JOSE:** Outstanding Barangay Food Terminal

## Vice Gov. Dy lauds efforts of Isabela farmers, fishers in ensuring food security

Vice Governor Faustino “Bojie” G. Dy III praised the resilience and contributions of Isabela farmers and fishers during the Gawad Saka 2024 Awarding Ceremony held on May 28, 2024 at the GFNDy Sr. Session Hall, Isabela Provincial Capitol.

“Sa araw na ito, atin pong kinikilala at pinaparangalan ang mga natatanging kampeon sa agrikultura. Ito ay munting paraan upang ipakita natin ang ating pasasalamat at pagtanaw ng utang na loob sa kanilang walang humpay na pagsisikap at kontribusyon,” he said.

He highlighted the extraordinary efforts of Isabela farmers and fishers in ensuring food security, especially in overcoming challenges like the recent El Niño phenomenon, which caused damage to the province’s agricultural sector.

“Sila ay nagpakita ng katatagan at kasipagan upang malampasan ang pagsubok na ito. Ang kanilang kwento ng katatagan ay patunay sa ‘di matatawarang lakas ng loob at determinasyon ng atin

pong mga kababayang magbubukid at mangingisda,” he added.

Moreover, he affirmed his and Governor Rodito T. Albano III’s continuous support for the farmers and fishers, vowing to help them in any way they could.

“Kami po ni Gov. Rodito Albano, aking mga kasamahan sa Sangguniang Panlalawigan at ng buong Pamahalaang Panlalawigan ng Isabela ay handang tumulong sa anumang paraan upang mapagaan ang kanilang kalagayan at maitaguyod ang kabuhayan ng atin pong mga magsasakang Isabeleño,” he underscored.

This year’s Gawad Saka awardees include 15 individuals and six groups/associations.



# SEASONAL FARM WORKERS BACK IN BLOOM IN SOUTH KOREA



## Isabela's commitment to agricultural advancement continues with the ongoing Farmer Internship Program in South Korea.

Launched as a collaboration between the provincial government and South Korean counties, the program aims to elevate the skills of Isabeleño farmers through exposure to advanced agricultural technologies and practices, while providing additional income for their families.

Since its inception in April 2022, the program has witnessed significant growth.

The initial batch of 92 farmers completed their internships by November 2022, garnering strong recommendations for the program's continuation.

This success laid the groundwork for the program's expansion in 2024.

This year's dispatches have been notable for their size and impact. On April 12, 2024, seven re-entry interns returned to South Korea, ready to build on their previous experiences.

They were soon joined by 18 new interns on April 19, followed by a mixed group of 12 re-entry and new interns on April 29.

The momentum continued in May, with 44 new interns starting on May 3, an additional 20 on May 20, and a final group of two on June 6, bringing the total number of participants to 103 for the year 2024.

**Governor Albano's words always resonate deeply with the farmer-interns, inspiring them**

**to maximize this opportunity for personal and professional growth.**

Despite the challenges of being away from their families, the program has proven to be deeply enriching for the participants.

**The resurgence of the Farmer Internship Program in 2024 symbolizes Isabela's renewed commitment to agricultural development and economic growth. It equips farmers with advanced techniques and fosters a culture of innovation and excellence.**

As the farmer-interns return home, they bring back valuable knowledge and skills, poised to drive progress in the local agricultural sector.

# PGI OFFICIALS MONITOR ISABELA FARMERS IN SOUTH KOREA



"We are pleased to see their positive adaptation and the benefits they are receiving from the program. Our primary goal is to ensure their well-being and facilitate a productive working environment. The insights gathered will be instrumental in refining the program and providing enhanced support to our farmers," she said.

"The official visit serves as a means of closely monitoring and addressing the concerns of deployed farmers. It aligns with the Department of Migrant Workers' (DMW) efforts to oversee them, aiming to minimize, if not prevent, instances of farmers absconding and violating their contracts by seeking jobs outside of the farms," she added.

The Farmer Internship Program aims to enhance the skills and knowledge of Isabeleño farmers by exposing them to advanced farming practices in South Korea.

The initiative is part of PGI's broader effort to promote agricultural development and self-sufficiency in Isabela.

A delegation from the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) recently visited the over 100 deployed Isabeleño farmers to Jinan County, South Korea who are participating in the Farmer Internship Program.

She emphasized that the insights gained from this visit will enhance the program and better support Isabeleño farmers.

The purpose of the visit was to monitor and assess their current living conditions, ensuring that the farmers have a decent working environment and living conditions after work, have access to medical care, and receive their wages regularly.

The delegation included Provincial Information Officer Atty. Elizabeth C. Binag, Provincial Treasurer Maria Theresa A. Flores, and Provincial Legal Officer Atty. John Ryan P. Torio.

During their visit, the delegation conducted site inspections, engaged in discussions with the farmers, and cooperated with local officials in Jinan County to gather comprehensive feedback on the program's implementation.

Atty. Binag reported that the farmers are in good condition, provided with decent living quarters, and given sufficient rest periods between working hours. She also disclosed that Jinan County officials are actively monitoring them and addressing any issues raised promptly.





# PGI welcomes Taiwan Ambassador

**The Provincial Government of Isabela extended a warm welcome to His Excellency Wallace Minn Gan Chow, head of the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in the Philippines, during his visit to the province of Isabela on February 19, 2024.**

The Taiwanese delegation, led by Ambassador Chow, included his spouse, Mme. Tai Tayi Shan-Chow, First Secretary of TECO Ms. Irene Yao Ling Wang, and Mr. Yuan-Ching Peng from the Taiwan Technical Mission (TTM).

Ambassador Wallace underscored the purpose of his visit.

**“The purpose of my visit is to explore collaboration in agriculture, trade, investment, and tourism,”** he said.

Ambassador Chow expressed his gratitude to Manila Economic and Cultural Office (MECO) Chairman Silvestre “Bebot” Bello III for recommending Isabela as the destination for his first official provincial visit.

He shared insights into Taiwan’s recent agricultural initiatives, referencing the unveiling of the Taiwan Technical Mission (TTM) in Tarlac.

Meanwhile, Mr. Yuan-Ching Peng of Taiwan Tech Mission (TTM) introduced

the Tarlac demo farm as a flagship initiative known as “Smart Farming.”

The demonstration farm aims to enhance production and increase the income of Filipino farmer groups.

Mr. Peng also extended an invitation to the provincial government and its farmers to visit the Tarlac demo farm.

## **Albano, Chow lead rice distribution in City of Ilagan**

Governor Rodito T. Albano III and Ambassador Chow led the distribution of sacks of rice to 2,386 TODA members, 545 fishers and 500 persons with disabilities (PDWs) at the Queen Isabela Park in the City of Ilagan.

Gov. Albano introduced Ambassador Chow to the Isabeleños and thanked him for donating 402,000 kilograms of rice to the province.

**“Thanks to you [Ambassador Chow] for giving us rice. We are happy that you’re here,”** he said.

Ambassador Chow said that the Taiwanese government is aware of the disasters the province faced, prompting them to donate 1,000 tons of rice to the Philippines, 400 tons of which were given to Isabela.

**“Taiwan and the Philippines are the closest neighbors and we are also best partners. Our people are brothers and sisters. Whoever is in need, the other side will help. We know that you have experienced disasters, so our government recently donated 1,000 tons of rice to the government of the Philippines, and we are going to send another 1,000 tons later,”** he said.



# TAIWAN TECH MISSION, IRRI VISIT ISABELA FOR RICE-RELATED INSPECTION TRIP

The delegation of the Taiwan Technical Mission (TTM) in the Philippines, under the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO), and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) visited the province of Isabela on May 20-21, 2024 for a rice-related inspection trip.

According to team leader Dominick T.C. Lee, his team aims to launch a project **“that can be appropriately designed and implemented, allowing Taiwanese technical personnel to provide direct technical consultation and assistance”** to the province.

He said that the rice collaboration project will help enhance rice production in Isabela.

Along with him were Dr. Li Chang-Pei, a researcher at the Taiwan Agricultural Research Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture in Taiwan; Dr. Madonna Carbon Casimero and Dr. Mary Jean Calipayan Du, researchers at IRRI; Ms. Sophia Jan, leader of the Asia and Africa Group at the International Cooperation and Development Fund (Taiwan ICDF); and Ms. Allison Hsu, senior manager at Taiwan ICDF.

## Agricultural symposium

The visit was attended by department heads of the Provincial Government of Isabela, Department of Agriculture-Regional



Field Office 02, PhilRice, rice-producing cooperatives, and rice postharvest processing manufacturers, among others.

The symposium focused on the identified constraints in rice farming production in the province, particularly on the value chain, and how these problems affect overall production.

Issues discussed included the provision of hybrid and inbred seeds by national agencies, partner private companies, and cooperatives in the province, as well as pests and diseases, water management and the lack of irrigation facilities.

## Field visit



The delegation also visited cooperatives, including the Nagkaisang Magsasaka ng Isabela Agriculture Cooperative (NMIAC) and the Isabela Seed Growers Multi-purpose Cooperative (ISG MPC), to obtain firsthand information on the challenges and issues faced by rice farmers and cooperatives.

The visiting observers highlighted the need for further sustainability measures, such as exploring new business opportunities to diversify its market base beyond relying solely on the provincial government as its primary market.



Afterward, the delegation met with ISG MPC, the largest seed growers' group in Region 2, to discuss potential solutions for climate instability, including the introduction of a new variety resistant to adverse weather conditions.

The cooperative affirmed its readiness to engage in initiatives aimed at introducing seed varieties capable of adapting to climate change, thus opening up new opportunities for agricultural resilience.

The team also expressed their admiration for



the various forms of assistance provided by the provincial government, such as its palay price support and the awarding of hauling trucks to every barangay to address pressing issues like price fluctuations and the high cost of transporting produce from the farm to the buying stations.

The provincial government also presented its other programs to the delegation, such as the I-RISE Program, Palay Procurement Program, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Provincial Rice Technology Forum (PRTF), and Technology Demonstration, among others.

# Solar-Powered Irrigation Systems Boost Agricultural Productivity in Isabela

**Agricultural landscape in the province is witnessing a remarkable transformation with the introduction of solar-powered irrigation systems (SPIS) across 20 barangays in the province.**

This initiative, designed to support local vegetable growers, associations, and cooperatives, is heralding a new period of sustainable and cost-effective irrigation solutions, ultimately bolstering agricultural productivity across the province.

The adoption of solar-powered irrigation brings multitude of benefits to vegetable growers in Isabela. Not only does SPIS provide a sustainable and cost-effective alternative to traditional methods, but it also significantly reduces reliance on fossil fuels, contributing to environmental preservation.

As of April 2024, several barangays have successfully operationalized their SPIS.

In Brgy. Banquero in Reina Mercedes, the Riverside Vegetable Grower Association has a fully functional system in place, with distribution pipes delivered

and utilization already underway.

Similarly, in Brgy. Macalaoat in Cabatuan, the members of the Sitio Malasin Association of Tobacco Farmers are reaping the benefits of their operational SPIS.

In Brgy. Naganacan in Santa Maria, the Naganacan Sweet Potato Growers Association continues to utilize its system while awaiting the delivery of distribution pipes.

Brgy. Minanga in San Mariano boasts successful SPIS utilization by the V8 Multi-Purpose Association, while in Brgy. Dallao in Cordon, the Dallao Farmers Association is operating its system effectively, though awaiting distribution pipes.


Furthermore, Brgy. Bungad and Brgy. Ballacayu in San Pablo have successfully

installed SPIS and are in the process of organizing associations for efficient management.

While many systems are operational, ongoing efforts are essential to address challenges and optimize functionality, ultimately ensuring enhanced agricultural productivity and the well-being of farming communities.

By harnessing renewable energy sources, farmers can enjoy consistent access to water, vital for optimizing crop yields and ensuring farm resilience, especially in areas susceptible to erratic weather patterns.

This transition to solar-powered irrigation not only brings agricultural sustainability but also empowers local growers with the tools needed to thrive in an ever-evolving farming landscape.



**The adoption of solar-powered irrigation brings multitude of benefits to vegetable growers in Isabela. Not only does SPIS provide a sustainable and cost-effective alternative to traditional methods, but it also significantly reduces reliance on fossil fuels, contributing to environmental preservation.**

# CELEBRATING AGRICULTURAL ADVANCEMENTS

## PGI holds Isabela corn, bio-fertilizer derby; 45 Isabeleño farmers graduate from 16-week field school

The Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI), in collaboration with the City Government of Ilagan, conducted the Isabela Corn and Bio-Fertilizer Derby (ICBD) and the graduation ceremony for the 45 Isabeleño participants of the Farmers' Field School (FFS) for the Dry Season 2023-2024.

### Corn war? Bio-fertilizer war?

The purpose of conducting the derby was twofold: to delve deeper into the promising corn varieties readily available in the market and to explore the corresponding technologies utilized by seed companies, as well as to assess the efficacy of various bio-fertilizers in enhancing crop yield and soil health.

Mr. Neptali S. Dando, the provincial corn coordinator, presented the derby results of the top five varieties with the highest yield.

Healer 102G topped the Balanced Fertilization Strategy (BFS) with an attained yield of 7,873.20 kg/ha, followed by Super 999 with 7,812.18 kg/ha, P-3585YHR with 7,624.02 kg/ha, NK-

6130 with 7,180.47 kg/ha, and DK-8282S with 7,119.53 kg/ha.

These results were based on the crop-cut activity, where Healer 102G achieved a yield of 8,963.14 kg/ha under the Company Technology Protocol. NK-6130 ranked second with 8,609.55 kg/ha, followed by P-3585 with 8,128.73 kg/ha, Super 999 with 7,502.86 kg/ha, and DK-8282S with 7,170.09 kg/ha.

Meanwhile, the top five bio-fertilizers used were Consort with an attained yield of 9,732.64 kg/ha, Wonder and Super Grow with 9,454.27 kg/ha, Bio-N with 8,553.63 kg/ha, Stoller with 8,256.92 kg/ha, and Neb Plus with 8,185.53 kg/ha.

The results revealed the top-performing corn varieties and provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of different bio-fertilizers in optimizing agricultural productivity.

Engr. William V. Contillo of DA-CVRC congratulated the stakeholders on the success of the program. He said that

despite the extreme weather conditions brought by El Niño, they managed to achieve a high yield.

### Graduates at last

Forty-five (45) Isabeleño farmers graduated from a 16-week field school where they learned about the latest corn farming technology and gained knowledge of pests in the field.

The field school included observing factors affecting corn, such as soil condition and infestation, as well as practicing proper control methods for a successful harvest.

According to Provincial Agriculturist Frogoso, the Farmers' Field School is crucial as it educates farmers to enhance their farming practices.

The activity was attended by over 300 farmers, representatives from different local government units, as well as city and municipal agriculture officers in the province, among others.



**THE FARMERS' FIELD SCHOOL IS CRUCIAL AS IT EDUCATES FARMERS TO ENHANCE THEIR FARMING PRACTICES.**

# PARA SA BAGONG PILIPINAS

## LAB F♥R ALL

**First Lady Louise "Liza" Araneta-Marcos led the LAB for All Caravan on March 19, 2024 at the City of Ilagan Community Center in the province of Isabela, where government services were brought closer to the people.**

The event offered free healthcare services such as physical and medical examinations, consultations, basic laboratory tests including blood chemistry and hematology, ECG and digital X-ray, and free medicines, promoting inclusive access to quality healthcare for the Isabeleños, especially the marginalized sector.

The First Lady, who was introduced by Governor Rodito T. Albano III, conveyed

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" R. Marcos Jr.'s warm regards to the Isabeleños.

**"My husband, President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos, asked me to convey his warm regards to his fellow Ilocanos here in Isabela. Pinapaabot po ng asawa ko ang kanyang taos-pusong pasasalamat sa inyong lahat,"** she said.

She also thanked government agencies, private sectors, and volunteers for providing services during the series of LAB for All pre-event in Echague, Mallig, Cauayan City, and Cabagan from March 14 to 17, which benefitted 16,623 Isabeleños.



## Commitment to recovery

Meanwhile, Vice Governor Faustino “Bojie” G. Dy III said that the provincial government is working hard to meet the needs of less fortunate Isabeleños who are still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

**“Dito po sa ating lalawigan ng Isabela, napakahalaga ang kapakanan ng bawat mamamayan. Pinagsisikapan po ng ating provincial government sa pamumuno ni Gov. Rodito T. Albano III na sabay-sabay makabangon, lalo na dahil sa epekto ng COVID-19 sa atin pong lalawigan,”** he said.

He also thanked President Marcos Jr., First Lady Liza, and the participating government agencies for rolling out LAB for All in Isabela.

**"Sa ngalan po ng humigit-kumulang na isang milyon at anim na raang libo na mga Isabeleño dito po sa aming**

**lalawigan, mabuhay po kayong lahat at kami po ay nagpapasalamat sa patuloy po ninyong pagmamalasakit sa mga kababayan namin,"** he said.

## Beyond provision of medical services

The First Lady emphasized that the LAB for ALL program in the province goes beyond providing free medical services.

**“Ang LAB for All program ay hindi lang tungkol sa pagbibigay ng mga serbisyong medikal. It is also about bringing various government services from the different agencies like CHED, DA, DILG, DMW, DOH, DSWD, FDA, PAO, PCSO, PhilHealth, and TESDA. They want to bring services closer to**

**our kababayans here in Isabela,”** she said.

The Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) also made significant contributions to the program by distributing more than 200 wheelchairs, walkers, canes, and crutches to the Isabeleños.

The event was supported by various medical teams from Cagayan Valley CHD, Integrated Provincial Health Office, Southern Isabela Medical Center, Integrated Philippine Association of Optometrists, OneTop Medical Systems Resources, Bureau of Jail Management & Penology, AMHOP Isabela Chapter, city and municipal health offices, Philippine National Police, among others.



# 3 MORE PGI HEMODIALYSIS CENTERS NOW FULLY OPERATIONAL



CAUAYAN DISTRICT HOSPITAL-CAUAYAN CITY (10 DIALYSIS MACHINES)

MANUEL A. ROXAS DISTRICT HOSPITAL- ROXAS (10 DIALYSIS MACHINES)

MILAGROS B. ALBANO DISTRICT HOSPITAL-CABAGAN (10 DIALYSIS MACHINES)

In a groundbreaking development for healthcare in Isabela, three new hemodialysis centers are now fully operational, in addition to the existing center at Gov. Faustino N. Dy Sr. Memorial Hospital in Calamagui 2nd, City of Ilagan, Isabela, which has 21 dialysis machines.

This expansion significantly enhances access to crucial medical services for the province's residents, particularly those suffering from chronic kidney failure.

## Cauayan District Hospital Hemodialysis Center

The Hemodialysis Center at Cauayan District Hospital (CDH) commenced full-scale operations in January 2024.

The center addresses the surging demand for dialysis services in the 6th District and nearby districts.

Licensed by the Department of Health and accredited by PhilHealth, the hemodialysis center adheres strictly to the No-Balance Billing Policy.

Dr. Rhoda Jacqueline P. Gaffud, CDH chief of hospital, said that the hospital provides medical assistance to patients

not covered by PhilHealth through the government's medical assistance program.

**"Kung mayroong karagdagang bayarin ang pasyente na hindi sakop ng PhilHealth, ipinapasok natin ito sa medical assistance program ng ating pamahalaan,"** she said.

The facility is equipped with 10 state-of-the-art dialysis machines and



operated by a dedicated team including a nephrologist trained at the National Kidney Institute, a physician on duty, 10 skilled nurses, and proficient hemodialysis technicians.

The center operates six days a week, from Monday to Saturday, prioritizing patient safety through meticulous screenings before each dialysis session.

Additionally, CDH has updated medical equipment such as X-ray machines, ultrasound machines, operating room tools, and laboratory equipment, courtesy of the PGI.

## Milagros Albano District Hospital Hemodialysis Center

The Milagros Albano District Hospital (MADH) Hemodialysis Center commenced operations on February 5, 2024.

The center now provides comprehensive services to address the healthcare needs

of indigent patients from District 1 and nearby districts.

The Hemodialysis Center currently houses 10 dialysis machines, with plans to add 10 more.

Operating eight hours a day, the center aims to serve up to 20 patients daily, with over 50 patients already registered.

The center is staffed with a nephrologist, a trained physician, 11 dialysis-trained nurses, two technicians, and two helpers. The staff is adept at handling emergencies and ensuring patient comfort.

According to Dr. Edencita R. Paguirigan, MADH chief of hospital, the center already has an internal arrangement with the Gov. Faustino N. Dy Sr. Memorial Hospital for emergency transfers.

Dr. Paguirigan pledged to the Isabelleños on behalf of Gov. Albano and Vice Gov. Dy that the hospital will keep enhancing its services to accommodate more patients.

**“Our hemodialysis unit will continue to improve and accommodate more patients. Rest assured that we are always ready to help and care for you,”** she said.

## Manuel A. Roxas District Hospital Hemodialysis Center

The hemodialysis center at Manuel A. Roxas District Hospital with 10 hemodialysis machines opened on July 15, 2024 after receiving a license to operate from the Department of Health (DOH), according to Chief of Hospital Dr. Imelda Guillermo.

This marks a significant advancement in the hospital's capacity to provide essential healthcare services to patients with chronic kidney disease in Roxas and nearby municipalities.

Meanwhile, the Echague District Hospital is currently in the process of obtaining its license to operate a hemodialysis center.

## 'SA ISABELA, WALANG MALARIA!'

# DOH DECLARES ISABELA MALARIA-FREE

The Department of Health (DOH) officially declared the province of Isabela free of malaria on May 13, 2024 during the Monday convocation at the Isabela Provincial Capitol.

The province received a P1-million cash incentive from DOH to sustain its malaria-free status.

DOH Undersecretary Dr. Glenn Matthew G. Baggao commended the efforts of the Provincial Government of Isabela and its component local government units for their efforts in combatting malaria.

**“The Department of Health joins every Isabelleño on this occasion. We commend the efforts of the local government units, headed by Governor Rodito T. Albano and the municipal mayors of our beloved province, in ensuring that the country’s vision of a malaria-free by 2030 is within reach,”** he said.

Board Member Emmanuel Joselito B. Añes and Provincial Administrator Atty. Noel Manuel R. Lopez, on behalf of Governor Rodito T. Albano III and Vice

Governor Faustino “Bojie” G. Dy III, thanked the DOH for their interventions in helping Isabela attain its malaria-free status.

### No new endemic case

According to Cagayan Valley Center for Health Development (CVCHD) Regional Director Dr. Razel Nikka M. Hao, the last malaria indigenous case was reported in San Mariano in November 2014, and the province has not reported any new indigenous cases since then.

She said that the province has met the minimum requirement of 10 years without an indigenous case to be declared a malaria-free province.

The PGI conferred certificates of recognition to DOH Usec. Baggao, CVCHD Regional Director Dr. Razel Nikka M. Hao, DOH Division Chief Dr. Raffy A. Deray, DOH Medical Officer Dr. Kim Patrick S. Tejano, CVCHD’s Medical Officer Dr. Janet M. Ibay, and CVCHD’s Entomologist Mr. Regie A. Baga for their contributions in the province’s fight against malaria and other diseases.



# Refurbished Milagros District Hospital Rebirths Healthcare in District 1



MILAGROS ALBANO DISTRICT HOSPITAL

**The Milagros Albano District Hospital (MADH) in Cabagan, Isabela has recently undergone significant renovations. These improvements aim to enhance the hospital's facilities, ensuring better healthcare services for the residents of District 1 in Isabela.**

Among the key areas improved is the emergency room which has been upgraded for quicker and more efficient patient admission. Inside the ER, the trauma and isolation rooms have been upgraded and modernized to handle various medical emergencies smoothly. The addition of a new security guard station enhances security measures, ensuring the safety of both patients and staff.

The hospital also features redesigned nurses' stations, which significantly improve workflow and patient monitoring. These upgrades enhance the efficiency and responsiveness of the medical staff, ensuring that all patients, especially those who are critically ill, receive the best possible care and attention.

The pediatric ward, obstetrics and gynecology ward, medical ward, and surgical ward have been transformed into dedicated and comfortable spaces. These thoughtfully designed areas provide a supportive and reassuring environment for patients and their families throughout their hospital stay.

Significant upgrades have also been made to the hospital's surgical and maternity areas.

The minor operating room (OR) features new surgical equipment for a broader range of procedures. The labor and delivery rooms have also been modernized to offer expectant mothers a comfortable and supportive environment. Additionally, the sterilization room has been upgraded to meet hygiene standards which are crucial for preventing infections.

The comfort rooms throughout the hospital have also seen substantial improvements. Modern fixtures, enhanced cleanliness, and accessibility features ensure that patients and visitors have a comfortable and dignified experience. These upgraded facilities contribute significantly to the overall positive environment of the hospital.

Support and auxiliary facilities have not been overlooked in the renovation efforts. The doctors' quarters and temporary students' area now offer improved accommodations

for medical staff and trainees, providing a conducive environment for rest and study. A new chapel offers a serene space for patients and their families to find spiritual support during their hospital stay.

Renovations to the hallways and pay rooms have greatly enhanced the overall patient experience. The redesigned spaces are brighter, more welcoming, and easier to navigate, making patients and visitors feel more at ease during their stay.

The improved dental room, offering comprehensive oral health services to patients ensures that quality dental care is readily accessible alongside other medical treatments to enhance the hospital's capability to address diverse healthcare needs in the district.

The refurbished hospital has brought a renewed sense of hope and relief to the Isabeleños in District 1. Unlike before, patients and visitors now feel a sense of lightness and reassurance upon entering the hospital.

The bright, clean, spacious, and welcoming environment, combined with the improved

facilities, creates a positive atmosphere not only for the patients but also for the hospital workforce, contributing to the overall well-being and comfort of those seeking medical care.

**“Sobra y aya ku anna nakaddag nga ta takkasta ngana y Milagros Albano District Hospital. Ta pattalluk ku pa lamang eh gitta ngana mammapy. Marerenu ta paningang y unag anna levu na,”** an Ibanag patient said.

**[I am very happy and surprised because Milagros Albano District Hospital is now beautiful. Just upon entering, I already feel like I'm healing. The inside and its surroundings look clean.]**

These comprehensive renovations are part of the Provincial Government of Isabela's ongoing efforts to improve healthcare services for residents. The hospital is now better equipped to serve the community's medical needs with its enhanced facilities, reflecting a commitment to delivering high-quality and free healthcare for all.

The transformation of Milagros Albano District Hospital is glaring proof of Gov. Rodito Albano III's dedication to public health and the well-being of Isabeleños.





# I-RISE PROGRAM: PGI'S BOTTOM-UP APPROACH TO EMPOWERING COOPERATIVES, ASSOCIATIONS

The Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) intensified its commitment to empowering small and marginalized farmers by restructuring the Isabela Recovery Initiatives to Support Enterprises (I-RISE) Program, from providing interest-free loans to extending marketing assistance to cooperatives and associations representing marginalized farmers.

The restructured I-RISE Program's approach is to revitalize the production capacity of cooperatives and associations recovering from the slowing down of production growth due to a lack of market and poor product promotion.

Through the I-RISE Program, the PGI serves as a ready market for cooperatives and associations, motivating them to increase their production of goods and commodities. The provincial government strategically responds to the national government's call to alleviate poverty through a collective effort from the ground up.

In the Cagayan Valley Region, cooperatives generate 24.8 billion business volumes from their 8,701 employments and almost a million memberships.

The province of Isabela is proud to be the home to nearly half of the operating cooperatives in Region 02, with 46% of the 1,493 cooperatives coming from it.

## Ready market for cooperatives, associations

In the monitoring activities conducted by the provincial government, it was observed that cooperatives and associations need to be supported in marketing their produce.

Building from the successes of the previous implementations of the I-RISE Program, this year's restructured program adapted to the challenge of poor production capacity of cooperatives and associations by purchasing their produce at a price higher than the prevailing market price.

The goal is simple: by creating a ready market, the provincial government inspires local producers to produce more and thus creates additional employment opportunities in the community.

The PGI believes that a competitive cooperative and association would benefit the welfare of its members and the community.

In its pilot implementation in 2023, 14 cooperatives and seven associations benefited from the restructured I-RISE Program.

The provincial government utilized a total amount of 23,483,475.00 in purchasing their produce, which includes local priority commodities such as calamansi juice from the calamansi-rich municipalities of Aurora and Jones, Mungbean noodles from Cabatuan, and processed fish products from the coastal town of Maconacon.

The I-RISE Program also empowers marginalized communities in the province by supporting youth and indigenous craftspeople.

The PGI purchases handicrafts made from materials like bamboo, sabutan grass, and rattan from the young people of Quirino, Palanan and Divilacan. This directly boosts these youth and indigenous artisans by creating a market for their skills and

traditional wares.

The PGI also strengthened rural agriculture by purchasing rice from small farmers not reached by the larger Nagkaisang Magsasaka Ng Isabela Agriculture Cooperative, where the PGI's rice requirements are purchased.

The restructured I-RISE Program has proven to be a pivotal initiative in revitalizing Isabela's agricultural sector by addressing critical market access issues for small and marginalized farmers. This strategic intervention promotes sustainable development, preserves traditional crafts, and strengthens local food systems.

As the I-RISE Program continues to evolve, its commitment to reducing poverty in Isabela remains steadfast, demonstrating a model of community-driven economic empowerment that can inspire similar initiatives nationwide.





# ONE OF THE BEST

## Isabela among 17 nat'l finalists in Walang Gutom Awards

**The Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) was recognized as a national finalist in the Walang Gutom Awards for its Isabela Rice Assistance Program (I-RICE AP) entry.**

The Galing Pook Foundation and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) confirmed that out of 101 local government units that submitted entries for the award, only 17, including Isabela, made it to the finals.

The other two qualified provinces were Biliran and Quirino. Other finalists included six cities, six municipalities, and two barangays, including Brgy. Naggasican in Santiago City, Isabela.

The province will receive P1 million from DSWD's Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) to support the development of I-RICE AP.

Components of the I-RICE AP, the brainchild of Gov. Rodito T. Albano III, include the establishment of the Nagkaisang Magsasaka ng Isabela Agriculture Cooperative (NMIAC), the purchase of palay from farmers at a premium price, the Isabela Recovery Initiatives to Support Enterprises (I-RISE), the distribution of hauling trucks to every barangay, and the establishment of dairy cooperatives and the Isabela Rice Processing Center (IRPC).

### Final presentation

The delegation from the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI), led by Provincial Administrator Atty. Noel Manuel R. Lopez, made a final presentation before the national screening committee members on June 25 at the DSWD-Central Office, Batasan Pambansa Complex, Quezon City.

After the presentation, DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian conferred a certificate of recognition

to PGI for being one of the 17 national finalists with its I-RICE AP entry.

Isabela was adjudged among the top 17 national finalists out of 101 entries following the successful presentation by Atty. Lopez on April 25 before Dr. Edna Co, a professorial lecturer in public administration at the University of the Philippines.

### PBBM with country's top anti-hunger champions

President Marcos acknowledged the 101 LGUs from barangays to municipalities, cities, and provinces that submitted applications and actively participated in this year's pilot program implementation.

He also congratulated the 17 finalists during the conferment of awards to the top 10 entries held at Rizal Ceremonial Hall, Malacañang, on June 26, 2024.

**"You are already 'Walang Gutom' champions in the hearts and minds of our people, and I hope that you will continue to sustain or even improve upon your noteworthy programs,"** he said.

Moreover, he called upon all government officials, private sector partners, non-profit organizations (NGOs), and citizens to unite to advocate for and achieve food security.

**"Wala nang gutom – wala nang gutom na Pilipino, and that is my dream – no hungry Filipino,"** President Marcos Jr. ended in his speech.

The Walang Gutom Awards aims to acknowledge and highlight the accomplishments of local government units, promoting their success stories in combating involuntary hunger and malnutrition.



**"Seminars like this play a crucial role in fostering a culture of accountability and responsibility of public officials and employees in the province."**



## BUILDING A TRUSTWORTHY WORKFORCE

# PGI holds 2-day values dev't seminar

To develop a more reliable and competent workforce, the Provincial Government of Isabela, in partnership with the Civil Service Commission, held a two-day values development seminar for its finance offices at the Isabela Provincial Capitol on May 16-17.

Provincial Administrator Atty. Noel Manuel R. Lopez said that the provincial government has been conducting this kind of program since 2016.

**"We started this kind of program way back in 2016 and 2017—a series of seminars for value orientation. I know that when you left your respective offices, it was really a sacrifice. This**

**is a sacrifice for you but will be very helpful to all of you,"** he said.

He also underscored that the provincial government has always envisioned that employees should be armed with the tools to be productive.

**"The provincial government, particularly the HRMO and the Admin Office, has always envisioned that employees would only be productive if they have the tools to be productive, and their values are those of the values of the governor,"** he said.

Meanwhile, Janette A. Castillejo, Provincial Human Resource Management Officer, emphasized the importance of conducting the seminar.

**Seminars like this play a crucial role in fostering a culture of accountability and responsibility of public officials and employees in the province,"** she said.

Among the topics presented were the Norms and Conduct of Public Officials and Employees by CSC Acting Director Valnizan HC. Calubaquib and the Four Core Values of Public Servants by Provincial Administrator Atty. Noel Manuel R. Lopez.

Pursuant to Republic Act 6713, known as the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, public servants must have a deep appreciation of core values as they perform their duties. This is necessary to facilitate the holistic development of employees as dedicated and responsible citizens.





# 2024 Women's Month Celebration

**"LIPUNANG PATAS SA BAGONG PILIPINAS: Kakayahan ng Kababaihan, Patutunayan!"**

## 1<sup>ST</sup> ISABELA

# GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

GFNDy Hall, Provincial Capitol Compound, Alibagu, City of Ilagan, Isabela  
March 18, 2024



## 'LIPUNANG PATAS SA BAGONG PILIPINAS'

# 1ST ISABELA GAD SUMMIT LAUNCHED

The Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI), together with its component LGUs, the Isabela State University (ISU), Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Regional GAD Research Learning Center, Regional GAD Committee Region 2, PIGLAI-KALIPI and MRSP Isabela Chapter, launched the first-ever Isabela Gender and Development Summit on March 18-19, 2024.

The activity, aimed to address various issues on gender equality and development, is in line with the 2024 National Women's Month Celebration, with the subtheme **"Lipunang Patas sa Bagong Pilipinas; Kakayahan ng Kababaihan, Patutunayan."**

Provincial Administrator Atty. Noel Manuel R. Lopez encouraged the participants from the different sectors to help the provincial government in championing women's rights and representation in the province.

**"More than any other period in Philippine history, this is the time**

**that we need to hear the voices of the women sector. More than any other province, we should be ready to defend women's rights and women's representation,"** he said.

Meanwhile, ISU President Dr. Ricmar P. Aquino encouraged the participants to embrace equity and compassion.

**"Let us embrace the value of equity to ignite change [and] to cultivate a generation committed to building bridges instead of walls. Together, let us envision a future where violence is replaced with compassion,"** he said.

Provincial Social Welfare and Development Officer Lucila M. Ambatali discussed the face and facets of Isabela in Gender and Development Mainstreaming, while Women Sector

Representative Hon. Lourdes S. Panganiban presented the initiatives of the provincial government in closing the gender gap.

Among the topics tackled by the keynote speakers during the summit were **"The Bits and Pieces of Gender Mainstreaming," "Technology and Education: Harnessing the Power of Innovation for Gender Equality and Violence Prevention,"** and **"Bystander Intervention, Challenging Sexist Attitudes, Raising Violence-free Families."**

**CONGRATULATIONS, PROVINCE OF ISABELA!**  
**2023 SEAL OF GOOD FINANCIAL HOUSEKEEPING PASSERS**



**PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF ISABELA**

**CAUAYAN CITY    CITY OF ILAGAN**

<b>ALICIA</b>	<b>ECHAGUE</b>	<b>REINA MERCEDES</b>
<b>ANGADANAN</b>	<b>GAMU</b>	<b>ROXAS</b>
<b>AURORA</b>	<b>JONES</b>	<b>SAN AGUSTIN</b>
<b>BENITO SOLIVEN</b>	<b>LUNA</b>	<b>SAN GUILLERMO</b>
<b>BURGOS</b>	<b>MACONACON</b>	<b>SAN ISIDRO</b>
<b>CABAGAN</b>	<b>MALLIG</b>	<b>SAN MANUEL</b>
<b>CABATUAN</b>	<b>NAGUILIAN</b>	<b>SAN MARIANO</b>
<b>CORDON</b>	<b>PALANAN</b>	<b>SAN MATEO</b>
<b>DELFIN ALBANO</b>	<b>QUEZON</b>	<b>SANTA MARIA</b>
<b>DINAPIGUE</b>	<b>QUIRINO</b>	<b>SANTO TOMAS</b>
<b>DIVILACAN</b>	<b>RAMON</b>	<b>TUMAUNI</b>

The Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI), along with its two component cities and 33 municipalities, passed the CY 2023 Good Financial Housekeeping (GFH) Audit conducted by the Bureau of Local Government Supervision (BLGS) of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

The GFH is a recognition given to local government units for their good performance in upholding the practices of fiscal discipline and sustainability, transparency, and accountability in the use of public funds.

According to the DILG, the 2023 GFH criteria are as follows: the most recent Commission on Audit (COA) audit opinion, either unqualified or qualified for 2021 or 2022, based on the annual audit report posted on the COA website; and compliance with the DILG's full disclosure policy requirements.

## **Ilocos Sur Provincial Accounting Office conducts benchmarking visit to Isabela**

A delegation from the Provincial Accounting Office of Ilocos Sur, headed by Ms. Leilani C. Arce, visited the Accounting Office of the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) on April 12 for a benchmarking activity aimed at enhancing its organizational structure and labor requirements.

The Ilocos Sur team is currently in the process of drafting a position paper to support the expansion of their office. This initiative reflects their commitment to adopting effective strategies and best practices observed in other successful provincial accounting offices.

During their visit, the delegation paid a courtesy call to Provincial Administrator Atty. Noel Manuel R. Lopez, seeking insights into the best practices and successful governance strategies implemented under

the leadership of Governor Rodito T. Albano III and Vice Governor Faustino "Bojie" G. Dy III.

Apart from the Accounting Office, the delegation toured several key offices within the provincial government. These included the Provincial Governor's Office (PGO), the Provincial Internal Audit and Control Office (PIACO), and the Provincial Information Office (PIO).

Each visit provided valuable insights into the operational efficiencies and administrative protocols that contribute to the overall effectiveness of PGI.

The benchmarking activity is expected to yield significant improvements in the organizational and operational capabilities of the Provincial Accounting Office of Ilocos Sur.



# PGI, stakeholders team up to develop Isabela's energy code, efficiency plan

The members of the Technical Working Group for the formulation and development of provincial energy policies, plans, and programs, along with international and national stakeholders, convened at the Piazza Zicarelli in Gamu, Isabela on March 12-14 for a three-day orientation and workshop on the formulation of the Local Energy Code (LEC) and Local Energy Efficiency and Conservation Plan (LEECP).

The training workshop is a collaborative effort of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Energy (DOE) of the Philippines, the Philippines League of Local Environment and Natural Resources Offices-Energy Security Philippines (PLENRO-ESP), and the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI).

The stakeholders aimed to assist the provincial government in mobilizing investments and deploying modern energy technology to enhance energy security in the province.

Mr. Danilo Villas, USAID-ESP project manager, elaborated on the significance of the LEC and the foundational legislative frameworks, such as the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act (RA 11285) and the Energy Virtual One-Stop Shop (EVOSS) Act (RA 11234), in advancing energy efficiency and conservation efforts.

Meanwhile, Atty. Joel Villalon, policy and legal specialist, presented the Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) 2020-01, which delineates the guidelines for Local Government Units (LGUs) in implementing energy projects.

## Local Energy Code

The LEC serves as a localized legislation establishing a legal framework for the institutionalization and execution of energy development and utilization policies.

The fundamental components of the LEC encompass the following sections: promotion of power development, development and adoption of energy efficiency and conservation policies, creation of an energy sector committee and an energy efficiency and conservation office, energy permits and regulatory forms, transport modernization, private sector participation, environmental management, resiliency, and education and information dissemination.

## Local Energy Efficiency and Conservation Plan

The TWG members also crafted the scope of the LECEP, establishing the organizational

structure of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation (EEC) Management Board, defining the LECEP vision and mission, conducting SWOT and gap analyses, identifying internal and external stakeholders, and constructing a power-interest matrix.

They also devised planning and implementation strategies, which encompassed soft projects aimed at effectively communicating the objectives of the LECEP to relevant organizations.

The overarching goal of the orientation-workshop was to implement local government units' mandates under Republic Act No. 11285, otherwise known as the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act of 2019.



## MANAGING BENEFITS FROM POWER CORP.

### PGI, energy generation company ink MOA for trust accounts creation

The San Miguel Global Power Battery Energy Storage System Inc. (SMGP BESS Inc.) entered into a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) for the establishment and administration of trust accounts to manage the financial benefits generated from the commercial operations of the energy corporation's plant facility located in Gamu, Isabela.

The signing on Feb. 27, 2024, at the Isabela Provincial Capitol is in accordance with the DOE's Department Circular No. DC2018-08-0021, which mandates the Department of Energy (DOE) to devise ways and means of giving direct benefits to the province, city, or municipality, especially the community and people affected, and equitable and preferential benefits to the region that hosts the energy resource and/or the energy-generating facility.

The event was attended by key representatives from both SMGP BESS Inc. and the provincial government, including Provincial Treasurer Maria Theresa Araneta-Flores, Atty. Jean Ben Singson from the

Provincial Legal Office, and Atty. Analou Villeza from the Provincial Governor's Office.

San Miguel Global Power is one of the biggest operators of battery energy storage technology in Asia in terms of total installed capacity. With the commercial operations of approximately 1,000 MW of BESS facilities

across 32 locations in the Philippines, the corporation is now ushering in a new period for the Philippine energy industry through significant improvements in grid reliability and the integration of more renewable power sources into the country's diverse energy mix.





ISABELEÑO PRIDE

## DR. BAGGAO APPOINTED AS NEW DOH UNDERSECRETARY

Dr. Glenn Mathew Baggao, who hails from the City of Ilagan, was appointed by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. as the new Department of Health Undersecretary for the agency's Public Health Services Cluster (PHSC).

Usec. Baggao previously held the position of Medical Center Chief at Cagayan Valley Medical Center for six years and served as Chief of Hospital at medical facilities in Isabela and the Cordillera Administrative Region.

Among Baggao's notable accomplishments at CVMC is his 10-year hospital development

plan, which includes state-of-the-art buildings, facilities, and medical equipment at CVMC to provide better services to the public.

Under his leadership, CVMC also opened specialty centers, including the Cardiovascular Unit, Acute Stroke Unit, Cancer Center, Pulmonary Unit, and Molecular Laboratory, among others.

Patients' access to emergency room and outpatient department services was also streamlined and made more efficient during his

tenure at CVMC.

Furthermore, he was instrumental in strengthening interhospital collaboration in Cagayan Valley through an agreement between the Philippine College of Physicians - Upper Northeastern Luzon Chapter and regional medical centers and hospitals.

This collaboration saved many lives during the COVID-19 pandemic and prepared the region for future national health emergencies.

LANDSLIDE WIN

## HON. JESSICA DY FROM SAN FABIAN, ECHAGUE IS NEW LNB NAT'L PRESIDENT

In a landslide victory, the Philippines welcomes a new era of leadership with the proclamation of Hon. Maria Katrina Jessica G. Dy as the new President of the Liga ng mga Barangay (LnB).

Hon. Dy, who secured 107 votes (96.40%) in the national election held in Manila, is the second Isabeleño to serve as the LnB national President. She is the incumbent Barangay Chairperson of Brgy. San Fabian in Echague and LnB-Isabela Chapter President. She also serves as an ex-officio member of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan.

She said that the goal of the LnB is to empower the organization and connect with the 42,000 barangays across the entire country.

"We are trying to empower the liga and connect sa 42,000 barangays sa buong Pilipinas. Ang plano namin ay maging tulay ng lahat ng mga proyekto ng national at local government at iba't ibang ahensiya ng gobyerno," she said.

She also thanked the people who supported and prayed for her before the election, dedicating her win to the province of Isabela.

"Gusto ko pong magpasalamat sa lahat ng sumuporta sa akin, lalo sa mga nagdasal para sa eleksiyon. Nakatataba ng puso. Ang victory na ito ay not just for me, but for the whole province of Isabela," she said.

One of Hon. Dy's advocacies as the new LnB President is the protection of women and children in every barangay, citing the Echague Mengal Women Organization, which she founded.

"One of the main things that I want to implement sa mga barangay ay yung advocacy natin for women and children's protection. 'Yan po ang ilang taon ko nang pinaglalaman. Mahigit 12,000 na ang active women members ng organization at meron po tayong women center that provides free services for abused women and children. It caters to the whole Region 2," she said.





## OVP recognizes PGI as partner in nation-building at 2024 Pasidungog Awards

The Office of the Vice President (OVP) honored the Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI) at the 2024 Pasidungog Awards as its partner in nation-building held at Radisson Blu Hotel in Cebu City on June 29, 2024.

Vice President Sara Z. Duterte personally presented a plaque to Governor Rodito T. Albano III, acknowledging his leadership in social services programs and projects that supported the OVP's initiatives.

At the OVP-Cagayan Valley Satellite Office, awardees in medical assistance included Cauayan Family Hospital, Physical Therapy & Sensory Integration Center, Boulevard Pharma and Medical Supplies Distribution, and RC2 Trading, among others.

The OVP also recognized the PGI's Provincial Information Office, Provincial General Services Office, Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office, and Office of the Provincial Agriculturist for their significant contributions to institutional support and special project collaborations.

**"The Office of the Vice President would not have accomplished even half of what we have achieved without your trust in the integrity of the OVP. Your dedication to public service and your commitment to uplifting the lives of the Filipino people are invaluable,"** Duterte stated.

Rooted in the Visayan term **"pasidungog,"** meaning **"to give honor,"** the award celebrated the synergy between government agencies and the private sector in collaborating with the OVP for nation-building.

## Isabela hosts 16th PAGSO Nat'l Convention

The province of Isabela hosted the 2024 Philippine Association of General Services Officers, Inc. (PAGSO) National Convention at the Isabela Convention (ICON) Center, Cauayan City, Isabela on June 19-22.

GSOs nationwide through discussions and exchanging of ideas and best practices among GSOs across the Philippines.

new ideas on how to deliver effective and efficient services.

The conference gathers general services officers nationwide for panel discussions, workshops, and networking opportunities.

According to Sawit, the convention significantly benefitted GSOs by providing

Vice Governor Faustino "Bojie" G. Dy III welcomed the delegates from all over the country and congratulated the PAGSO for the successful kick-off of the four-day convention.

Mr. Rodrigo "Bobot" T. Sawit, the Provincial Government of Isabela's GSO and National President of PAGSO, said that the gathering aimed to strengthen the camaraderie among





# PROVINCIAL Youth Summit



The Provincial Government of Isabela (PGI), through the Provincial Youth Development Office (PYDO), held its 6th Provincial Youth Summit on Jan. 11-12, 2024 at the Hotel Mills and Rain, City of Ilagan, Isabela.

Participated by Sangguniang Kabataan Federation Presidents and youth organizations, the two-day annual gathering aims to strengthen the foundation of youth participation in local governance.

Provincial Administrator Atty. Noel Manuel R. Lopez shared valuable stories he has gained over the years that would guide the youth leaders on their journey toward becoming future leaders of the province.

He encouraged them to seize every opportunity that arises during their leadership journey.

**“There will be a lot of opportunities that you’re going to face. Every opportunity should be met with the challenge of trying. There should never be an instance that you let go and you let pass an opportunity. Try always. You always have to try because it is only in trying that you will understand what is defeat and what is success,”** he said.

## SK-PYDC Election

The SK Federation Presidents and representatives from various youth organizations in the province elected the 19 new committee representatives of the Council NAGKAISA-Provincial Youth Development Council.

The committees or centers of participation include health, education, economic empowerment, active citizenship, governance, social inclusion and equity,

peacebuilding and security, environment, agriculture, and global mobility.

## ‘Fruitful discussions’

To equip the newly elected committee representatives with knowledge before undertaking their duties and responsibilities, three modules with different sessions were conducted. These modules also served as a refresher course for the SK Federation Presidents who had already completed the SK mandatory training.

On the first day, Ms. Rhonalyn P. Maquinad-Casilla from the DILG-Isabela made an in-depth discussion about decentralization and local governance, underscoring that the elected youth officials must consider the voices of their constituents.

Meanwhile, PYDO Officer-in-Charge Mr. Rey Mel C. Resposo also delved deep into the SK History and Salient Features of RA 10742 and RA 11768.

On the second day, Mr. John Michael L. Babas, Board Secretary to Sangguniang

Panlalawigan, lectured on meeting proceedings and how to craft resolutions.

Atty. Karla Louise D. Agbayani from the Provincial Legal Office and LGU Quirino Municipal Accountant Ms. Melita B. Paraguison interactively discussed Robert’s Rules of Order & Resolution Writing, and Planning & Budgeting, respectively.

Additionally, Local Youth Development Officer Atty. Christian F. Gonzales from LGU Cauayan City provided a clear explanation of his topic on the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards.

## SKPF-PYDC Joint Inaugural Meeting

The SKFP and the newly elected Council NAGKAISA-PYDC members also held their joint inaugural meeting at the summit. It was presided over by SK Panlalawigan Pederasyon President Hon. Catherine Joy L. Legaspi.

The youth leaders also discussed the Council NAGKAISA-PYDC Handbook and Operations Manual.



# Healthcare Access Enhanced in Isabela with New Mobile Primary Care Facility

In line with the Bagong Pilipinas vision of the Marcos administration, the Department of Health (DOH) has strengthened healthcare services in Isabela by donating a state-of-the-art mobile primary care facility worth P10,000,000.

The DOH selected Isabela as one of 33 recipients, ensuring equitable and efficient healthcare for Isabeleños.

The new mobile clinic, converted from a Toyota Coaster van, is equipped with cutting-edge medical tools such as X-ray machine, laboratory instruments including an ECG, urine analyzer, white blood cell analyzer, hemoglobin analyzer, fluorescence immunoassay analyzer, and ultrasound machine.

First Lady Marie Louise “Liza” Araneta Marcos and DOH Secretary Teodoro J. Herbosa formally turned over the mobile primary care facility, which was received by Vice Governor Faustino Bojie G. Dy III, Provincial Administrator Atty. Noel Manuel R. Lopez, GFNDy Hospital Chief Dr. Arlene M. Lazaro, PGSO

Rodrigo T. Sawit and PIACO Marilyn G. Lopez in Clark, Pampanga on July 10, 2024.

The donation was realized through the initiative of Dr. Glenn Matthew G. Baggao, Undersecretary for Public Health Services.

The mobile clinic is tailored to meet the healthcare needs of remote and underserved communities.

Its introduction is set to improve significantly the healthcare access in Isabela, particularly in remote areas where access to medical facilities is challenging.





**“Ang LAB for All program ay hindi lang tungkol sa pagbibigay ng mga serbisyong medikal. It is also about bringing various government services from the different agencies like CHED, DA, DILG, DMW, DOH, DSWD, FDA, PAO, PCSO, PhilHealth, and TESDA. They want to bring services closer to our kababayans here in Isabela.”**



First Lady Liza Marcos turned over the mobile primary care facility to the Provincial Government of Isabela in Clark, Pampanga on July 10, 2024.