

CONTENTS

DRIVING AGRI INNOVATION WITH NIA'S HISTORIC TURNOVER OF 141 BACKHOE UNITS

NIA SETS GREEN LIGHT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF P2.4-BILLION BAYABAS SRIP IN BULACAN

MOA ON CORPORATATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR BUGKALOTS GETS INKED

LUSOD INIP: A GROUNDBREAKING MOMENT FOR AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

NIA, NWRB, AND DENR-WRMO SIGN MOA ON REPURPOSING NIA'S WATER RIGHTS

PBBM INAUGURATES P1.276-BILLION BALBALUNGAO IRRIGATION PROJECT

FARMERS' WELFARE PRIORITY FOR DA, NIA IN REGION XII CONGRESS

EXPANDING IRRIGATION TO SUPPORT RICE, BANANA, AND PINEAPPLE FARMERS IN TALAKAG, BUKIDNON

AFFORDABLE RICE FROM NEGROS OCCIDENTAL FARMERS AT P25 PER KILO

INTRODUCING ROBERT VICTOR G. SEARES, JR.: THE NEW NIA DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCE SECTOR

MAKING IT A DECEMBER TO REMEMBER WITH NIA SPILLWAY CHRISTMAS TREE

EL NIÑO PREPAREDNESS AND MITIGATION PLANS

KADIWA SA NIA

01

02

03

04

05

06

07

80

09

10

12

13

14

16

18

19

20

22

24

26

BENCHMARKING STUDY AND SHORT COURSE ON DAM DESIGN/SAFETY IN TASMANIA AND AUSTRALIA

ANSWER FOR A PLANNER!

AROUND THE CORNER: NIA REGION IV-A'S NEWSLETTER "LAGASLAS"

NIA PAPARAZZI: THE STREAM OF FASHION INSIDE WORKSPACES

ON THE FIELD: SLOW PROGRESS IS STILL A PROGRESS

EMPOWERING CHANGE: NIANS TAKE A VOW TO END VAW

LIME LIGHT: IBA'T IBANG MUKHA NG PAGBANGON: SOLO PARENT NIANS



ABOUT THE COVER

The cover of NIA Currents 2nd Semester 2023 is the portrait of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., DA Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr., and NIA Administrator Engr. Eduardo Eddie G. Guillen during the turnover ceremony of 141 units of excavator worth P776 million on December 13, 2023 at Subic Bay Freeport One, Olongapo City, Zambales.

The simultaneous distribution of equipment to NIA Field Offices nationwide signifies a quantum leap for the Agency in gearing up to more productive and more efficient operation and maintenance (O&M) activities of irrigation projects all over the country.

SPOTLIGHT

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ditor's Note

On June 2023, the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) celebrated its 60th year of existence in the field of agriculture. The Agency started to exist as a juridical person on June 22, 1963, after President Diosdado Macapagal signed Republic Act (RA) No. 3601, "An Act Granting the National Irrigation Administration". Over the years, the Agency remains steadfast in delivering public service for its farmer-clientele who solely depends for irrigation development in the country.

From its humble beginning of 631 personnel manning the Agency during its early years to a more or less 15,000 personnel at the present time, NIA continues to grow as a family who works together and take refuge with each other at times of adversities. As duties and responsibilities in the government becomes more and more intricate, the NIA Family has grown through the years giving exemplified public service to Filipino farmers.

Coping with science and technology, NIA developed ways and means to innovate its provision for irrigation development. For years now, the Agency had established the construction and utilization of solar-power driven pump irrigation systems, a cost-efficient means to replace expensive diesel pump, thereby reducing expenses and increase the income of the farmers. This innovative technology is also seen to augment the depleting water supply from dams and reservoirs during El Niño Phenomenon. Deem to be utilized in areas where constructions of dam are not feasible, the solar-power driven pump irrigation systems are the Agency's plausible means to lessen farmers' dilemmas on irrigation water.

Indeed, NIA remains to be the government's arm in terms of irrigation development on the agriculture sector. Moreover, through the years of its existence, the Agency's primarily mandate of providing irrigation for palay production had evolved to a more diversified multi-use of irrigation water. With a more diversified utilization of irrigation water, farmer beneficiaries are assured of NIA's commitment of pursuing innovations in the field of agriculture that would uplift their lives and support them with their farming needs.

As the NIA Family works hand-in-hand in the attainment of the Agency's strategic goals and objective, NIA will continue to provide irrigation water to its farmer-clientele. For the attainment of a rice self-sufficient Philippines as envisioned by this Administration, NIA shall serve to be the government's instrument ensuring affordable rice on every plate of each Filipino family.

In the guise of NIA's celebration of its Diamond Jubilee, with a renewed heart to provide unwavering commitment in the agricultural sector, NIA will remain to exists.

Cheers for 60 years of existence... 60 years of providing irrigation water... 60 years of service to the Filipino farmers!



DRIVING AGRI INNOVATION WITH NIAS HISTORIC TURNOVER OF 141 BACKHOE UNITS

In a historic moment, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. led the ceremonial turnover of 141 units of backhoe to NIA Regional and Project Management offices nationwide on December 13, 2023 at Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Olongapo City, Zambales. Accompanying the President were Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr., National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Acting Administrator Engr. Eduardo Eddie G. Guillen, and Deputy Administrator for Administrative and Finance Sector Robert Victor G. Seares, Jr.

With an aggregate cost of P776 million, the said heavy equipment is part of NIA Three-Year Re-Fleeting Program that represents a strategic investment in the future of Philippine agriculture. Delivered by Zoomlion Heavy Industry Science and Technology Co., Ltd., these backhoe units are now being used in maintaining irrigation canals, facilitating efficient water distribution, and contributing to the immediate repair or reconstruction of canals and other irrigation facilities affected by natural disasters.

As an augmentation to the existing fleet of heavy equipment, NIA stands ready to guide the nation towards enhanced self-sufficiency in food production, establishing the groundwork for a thriving and sustainable future for the Filipino people. *m*

PANGU

NIA SETS GREEN LIGHT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF P2.4-BILLION BAYABAS SRIP IN BULACAN

Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. and National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Acting Administrator Engr. Eduardo Eddie G. Guillen led the Groundbreaking Ceremony of the P2.43-billion Bayabas Small Reservoir Irrigation Project (Bayabas SRIP) on December 13, 2023 in the Municipality of Doña Remedios Trinidad, Bulacan.

Funded under the General Appropriations Act (GAA) from 2022 to 2027, Bayabas SRIP is one of the high-impact priority projects under the infrastructure flagship projects in the country which is part of the 'Build Better More' Program of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. through the development of the Bayabas Dam, the project aims to channel the flow of Bayabas River primarily for irrigation purposes, as well as for fish culture and other potential purposes. Bayabas SRIP will help address the domestic water supply concern for Metro Manila.

Once completed, the project will provide timely and reliable irrigation water supply to 150 hectares of new area and will augment the irrigation requirements of 27,828 hectares of existing agricultural land on 17 municipalities in Bulacan and four towns in Pampanga, benefitting 20,000 farmers and their families.

Representatives from different national government agencies, local government officials, Irrigators Association (IA) officers, and farmers were present in the event. #







MOA on Corporate Social Responsibility for Bugkalots gets Inked



On September 27, 2023, National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Acting Administrator Engr. Eduardo Eddie G. Guillen, Bugkalot Ancestral Domain Environmental Management Council (BADEMC) Representative Antonio K. Pasigian, and National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) Chairperson Allen A. Capuyan signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on the Corporate Social Responsibility for the Bugkalot/Ilongot Indigenous Cultural Communities at NIA Matikas Multipurpose Hall, Ground Floor, NIA Central Office.

NCIP Region II Commissioner Simplicia P. Hagada and NIA Senior Deputy Administrator Engr. Robert C. Suguitan witnessed the



MOA Signing. BADEMC Chairperson Daniel Pasigian, Bugkalot leaders and members, NIA OIC-Deputy Administrator for Engineering and Operations Sector Engr. Josephine B. Salazar, Deputy Administrator for Administrative and Finance Sector Robert Victor G. Seares Jr., Public Affairs and Information Staff (PAIS) Department Manager Eden Victoria C. Selva, Legal Services Acting Manager Atty. Rizza A. Ibañez, UPRIIS Acting Department Manager Gertrudes A. Viado, and other NIA key officials and personnel were present in the event. #

Lusod INIP: A Groundbreaking Moment for Agricultural Transformation



Seen to revolutionize agricultural practices in the Province of Quirino, National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Acting Administrator Engr. Eduardo Eddie G. Guillen led the P787.79million Groundbreaking Ceremony of Lusod Integrated National Irrigation Project (Lusod INIP) on November 3, 2023 in Barangay Dipantan, Municipality of Nagtipunan.

Upon completion, Lusod INIP will provide timely and reliable irrigation water supply to 1,046 hectares of agricultural land in the barangays of Dipintin, Diduyon, Buenavista, Lusod, Villahermosa (North and South), Abbag, and Poblacion (North and South), benefitting 685 farmers and their families.

Quirino Provincial Governor Hon. Dakila Carlo E. Cua, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) Chairman Junie E. Cua, and local government officials and representatives were present in the groundbreaking ceremony. NIA Senior Deputy Administrator Engr. Robert G. Suguitan, NIA Region II Manager Engr. Raymundo B. Apil, NIA Quirino Irrigation Management Office Division Manager Engr. Felipa S. Sumer, and Lusod Federation of Irrigators Association President Rogelio B. Duldulao also attended the event.



NIA, NWRB, AND DENR-WRMO SIGN MOA ON REPURPOSING NIA'S WATER RIGHTS



The optimum utilization of irrigation water has now been strengthened as National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Acting Administrator Engr. Eduardo Eddie G. Guillen, Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Water Resource Management Office (DENR-WRMO) Undersecretary Dr. Carlos Primo C. David, and National Water Resources Board (NWRB) Officer-in Charge/Executive Director Atty. Ricky A. Arzadon signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for Repurposing NIA's Water Rights on October 4, 2023 at the Malacañang Palace, San Miguel, Manila.

The MOA signing aims to harness irrigation water, not just for agricultural use but also for power generation, bulk water supply, aquaculture, recreation, and tourism. This will redound to the generation of bigger revenue



for the Agency. Guided by the existing laws on water management and utilization, NIA supports the undertakings of the DENR-WRMO and NWRB to conserve and protect water resources to meet the changing needs of our country and its people. Under the memorandum, the uncompromised and unhampered provision of irrigation requirements to NIA's existing agricultural lands and other irrigable areas programmed for development shall be secured.

Assistant Secretary Jason Alba, Senior Deputy Executive Secretary Atty. Hubert Guevarra, DOF Undersecretary Catherine L. Fong, Chief of Staff of the Office of the Executive Secretary/ Undersecretary Leonardo Roy Cervantes, and NIA Acting Civil Works Design Section Chief Engr. Roald Marck Revellame were present in the event.



PBBM INAUGURATES P1.276-BILLION BALBALUNGAO IRRIGATION PROJECT

Coined by President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. as "transforming the province's lands into thriving hubs of productivity", the President led the inauguration of the P1.276-billion Balbalungao Small Reservoir Irrigation Project (BSRIP) in Barangay San Isidro, Lupao, Nueva Ecija on December 13, 2023.

Led by the National Irrigation Administration – Upper Pampanga River Integrated Irrigation Systems (NIA UPRIIS), the construction of the BSRIP aims to provide adequate irrigation water supply to 967.19 hectares of agricultural land and serve 562 farmers-beneficiaries from the Barangays of Balbalungao, San Isidro, Salvacion, and Mapangpang in the Municipality of Lupao. The project is expected to open up other opportunities for tourism, aquaculture, hydroelectric power development, flood control, and watershed management in Lupao.

In his speech, President Marcos, Jr. said the BSRIP shows the administration's commitment to developing key infrastructure to combat hunger and poverty, promote food security, and country's economic growth. The project is part of the important steps of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and NIA to increase harvests, particularly rice production in the region, which is currently considered the 'Rice Granary of the Philippines'.

Among the attendees of the inauguration were DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr., NIA Administrator Eduardo Eddie Guillen, Nueva Ecija 2nd Congressional District Representative Joseph Gilbert F. Violago, Lupao Mayor Alex Rommel Romano, NIA UPRIIS officials led by Engr. Gertrudes A. Viado, and Irrigators Associations (IAs) that will benefit from the project. #



FARMERS' WELFARE PRIORITY FOR DA, NIA IN REGION XII CONGRESS



ONS

The Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. and National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Acting Administrator Engr. Eduardo Eddie G. Guillen visited the Irrigators Associations (IAs) of NIA Region XII during their Regional IA Congress on November 24, 2023 held in Koronadal City.

The event was attended by 340 Communal and National Irrigation Systems' Presidents of NIA Region XII, along with members of the National Confederation of Irrigators Association (NCIA) led by their President and Apayao Provincial Vice Governor Remy N. Albano.

The IA leaders took this opportunity to convey to the DA and NIA their concerns, suggestions, and requests, in the interest of their associations and farmer-members. Meanwhile, Secretary Tiu Laurel and Administrator Guillen presented the agencies' latest plans and programs aimed at uplifting the welfare of Filipino farmers. "Marami man pong pagsubok ang ating kinahaharap sa kasalukuyan, naniniwala po ako na kayang-kaya natin itong malagpasan. Wala pong mahirap, wala pong imposible, at wala rin pong dahilan upang tayo'y tumigil sa pagtutulungan at pagbabayanihan." said NIA Acting Administrator Guillen to the IAs.

Secretary Tiu Laurel and Administrator Guillen distributed P18 million worth of Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Subsidy to the IAs, urging partner agencies and local government units (LGUs) to unite improving farmers' lives.

"Ang pagpapa-angat ng antas ng pamumuhay ng ating mga Pilipinong magsasaka ay ang ating pangunahing hangad. Tayo pong lahat ay pinagbuklod para kapit-bisig tayong magtulungan para sa sektor ng agrikultura ng ating bansa." Secretary Laurel said in his speech. ==

NEWS SECTION

EXPANDING IRRIGATION TO SUPPORT RICE, BANANA, AND PINEAPPLE FARMERS IN TALAKAG, BUKIDNON

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA), through Bukidnon Irrigation Management Office (IMO), held an Inauguration Ceremony for the completion of the Talakag Irrigation Project in the Province of Bukidnon. NIA Acting Administrator Engr. Eduardo Eddie G. Guillen led the event on September 21, 2023 held in Barangay Cosina, Talakag.

Completed in 2022, the P1.054-billion Talakag Irrigation Project will directly benefit 599 farmerbeneficiaries in Talakag, most of whom arow rice. bananas, and pineapples. The project provides irrigation water supply for about 2,700 hectares across the barangays of Cosina, Cacaon, Dagumbaan, Sto. Niño, Lingi-on, San Antonio, Barangay 5, and San Isidro.





The event marked an important milestone for Talakag towards its agricultural development, helping secure food sufficiency and rural livelihoods in the region. A total of 599 farmers and their families coming from three Irrigators Associations (IA), namely, Cabalangasan IA, Sto. Dacoca IA, and San Isidro Federation of IA will benefit from the completed project.

NEWS SECTION

AFFORDABLE RICE FROM NEGROS OCCIDENTAL FARMERS AT P25 PER KILO

Through the Federation of Irrigators Association of Central Negros-Bago River Irrigation System (FIACN-BRIS) of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Region VI, Negros Occidental farmers sold affordable rice at P25 per kilogram (kg) in partnership with the Provincial Government of Negros Occidental on "Bigas ng Bayan" opening day on October 12, 2023 at Food Terminal Market, North Capitol Road, Bacolod City.

The low-priced rice was made possible by the convergence of the Irrigators Association (IA), Provincial Government, and NIA. The FIACN-BRIS of the Negros-Occidental Irrigation Management Office (IMO), led by Federation President Pedro Limpangog, allotted 10 percent of their total production to the Negrenses at P25 per kg. that can be availed up to 5 kgs. per consumer only. Priority consumers were senior citizens, indigents, and persons with disabilities (PWDs). At least 455 individuals availed of the low-priced rice on its opening day.

Prior to this, the Dagyaw Project of Governor Eugenio Jose Lacson enabled the farmers to produce highyield rice at lower costs. Job Order (JO) workers, who are also Irrigators Association (IA) members, aided in farming activities such as planting crops and running farm equipment and machinery.

With the President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. directives for "cooperation, collaboration, and convergence," NIA Acting Administrator Engr. Eduardo Eddie G. Guillen boosts the Agency's partnerships with different National Government Agencies (NGAs), Local Government Units (LGUs), and the private sector to ensure food security and agricultural productivity despite agricultural challenges and threats such as El Niño. The successful distribution of affordable rice showcases the PBBM Administration's commitment to alleviating hunger and poverty nationwide.

NIA continues its commitment in developing efficient and sustainable irrigation systems to uplift the lives of the Filipino farmers with the aim of propelling wealth creation opportunities in the agricultural sector of the country. ==





ROBERT VICTOR G. SEARES, JR.

DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCE SECTOR

In a part of history, there are moments when individuals step up to shape its future. From a background of service and leadership, Robert Victor G. Seares, Jr. assumed the role of Deputy Administrator at the National Irrigation Administration (NIA). Now, let's dive in and explore his story: from his upbringing to his achievements and the promise he brings to NIA.

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The Ascend

On August 9, 2023, Robert Victor G. Seares, Jr. took the Oath of Office at the Malacañang Palace, San Miguel, Manila, officially assuming the role of Deputy Administrator for Administrative and Finance Sector of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA).

His Roots of Dedication

Seares was raised in a family lineage interlinked with medical professionals and public servants, fostering a deep-rooted commitment to community welfare. Continuing with his educational journey, he graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Science major in Botany at the University of Santo Tomas. He then later pursued Doctor of Medicine at Our Lady of Fatima, further shaping his diverse skill set.

A Legacy Defined

At the age of 40, Seares wrote his name in the books of history by becoming the youngest Administrator of the National Tobacco Administration (NTA), following in the footsteps of his late father, Mr. Robert Lizardo Seares, M.D., who also held the same esteemed position.

His tenure to NTA was a testament to visionary leadership, marked by initiatives that significantly enhanced farmer productivity and income. His achievements include the introduction of pioneering projects like the first solar-powered irrigation system (SPIS) in Cordillera and the Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program.

Seares' journey in governance commenced early as he won as the Municipal Mayor of Dolores, Abra, at the age of 30. His three consecutive terms as Mayor positioned Dolores as a recipient of the DILG Seal of Good Governance, underscoring his commitment to excellence in local governance. While advocating for farmers' welfare, Seares also advocated employee rights, exemplified by pivotal agreements securing benefits for contractual workers.

His achievements, including the Most Outstanding Mayor Award and recognition under the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA), attest to his exceptional performance in the field of public service.

Behind his professional background, Seares is anchored and supported by a loving family. Married to Jennifer Tiu Seares, a distinguished member of the Movie and Television Regulatory Commission Board (MTRCB), they celebrate the blessings in their lives through their four sons, all named "Victor".

A Promise to Progress

His assumption of the Deputy Administrator role at NIA heralds a new chapter of promise and progress. With a remarkable legacy of achievement and excellence, his tenure promises continued excellence and transformative growth in NIA's administration, as well as its irrigation services.

As we conclude our exploration of Robert Victor G. Seares, Jr.'s remarkable journey, we are reminded of the transformative power of dedication and vision. His the role of Deputy Administrator at NIA marks not just a personal achievement, but a promise of progress and prosperity for the communities he serves. With his leadership, NIA enters a new chapter filled with opportunity, guided by a legacy of excellence and a commitment to service. The story of Robert Victor G. Seares, Jr. serves as an inspiration, portraying the impact that one individual can make in shaping the destiny of a nation.

FEATURE SECTION

MAKING IT A DECEMBER TO REMEMBER WITH NIA SPILLWAY CHRISTMAS TREE





Christmas is perhaps the most widely celebrated holiday around the world, with people of all ages and backgrounds coming together in the spirit of joy and giving. Christmas has grown through the years into a cultural and social event with diverse traditions and customs.

In the Philippines, Christmas is more than just one day. It is one of the longest festivals we celebrate as we are the only Asian country with a large Christian population. When the 'ber months arrived, we began to decorate our homes with Christmas ornaments, buy gifts for our loved ones, and even listen to Christmas music. Music and decorations can be heard and seen not only in our home, but also in our offices.

And so, with NIA, aside from Christmas lights and decorations around the compound, one main attraction is the giant Christmas Tree at the Flagpole area. Notable in this year's design is the symbolic Bagong Pilipinas crown that represents the new Administration's brand of governance and leadership. It is composed of three significant parts: the golden sunrays connote aspiration, red stripes for progress, and blue stripes that implies development. The diamond surface indicates the 60 years of transparent service and support of NIA to our Filipino farmers and it signifies resiliency and commitment towards the success of agricultural sector in the country. Lastly, the vibrant spillway indicates an aim for a prosperous and abundant harvest.

The blessing of the Christmas Tree was also performed to spread love, hope, and peace to everyone. Graced by the presence of Top Management, the ceremonial lighting of NIA Spillway Christmas Tree was formally lit up on December 4, 2023. With its twinkling lights and dashing design, this Christmas tree serves as a beacon of hope and joy, bringing warmth and cheer to all who gathered around it.

Prior to the official lighting of the Christmas Tree, the Inter-Office Christmas Carol Competition was held to bring people together and impart the message of peace and love. Everyone was so pumped up as they showcased their singing and dancing skills during the competition.

NIA Spillway Christmas Tree does not only symbolize the Christmas season but also a reminder to us NIAns, the main purpose and objective of the Agency. It is to deliver an efficient, reliable, and sustainable irrigation service to the Filipino farmers.

ATURE SECTION

EL NIÑO PREPAREDNESS AND MITIGATION PLANS

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

LONG-TERM

MEASURES

IMMEDIATE

1. IMPLEMENT WATER MANAGEMENT	 Regulate Dam Water Release Adopt Rotational Water Distribution Adjust Cropping Calendar/Pattern Rationalize Program Area 		
2. ADOPT DIVERSIFIED CROPPING	 Plant non-rice crops in suitable land classes 		
3. REPAIR OF IRRIGATION CANALS	 Plug holes, cracks and leaks in canal embankment 		
4. INSTALL WATER AUGMENTATION PUMPS	 Put up water augmentation pumps where ground water exists 		
5. ADOPT SHORT - GROWING VARIETIES	 Plant short-growing (<120days) rice varieties 		
6. MEND PADDY DIKES	 Heighten, thicken and repair the paddy dikes to reduce leakage 		
7. CARRYOUT CLOUD SEEDING	Commision cloud seeding operations		

LONG-TERM MEASURES

1. Re-use Structures to Collect Drainage Discharge

- 2. Cap/Regulate Water Withdrawals
 - Put a cap to and regulate offtake diversions to trim water wastage
- 3. Ascertain Episode Impact
- Assess streamflow and rainfall reduction by El Niño to improve planning data
- 4. Concrete Line Irrigation Canals
 Concrete Line irrigation canals to reduce conveyance water loss
- 5. Replant Irrigation Watersheds
 - Establish tree plantations to improve stream baseflow

INFORMATION DESSIMENATION



Distribute brochures and other related documents to heighten Stakeholders' Awareness and stakeholders and st

FEATURE SECTION

KADIWA sa NIA

Ang KADIWA ay isang marketing initiative ng Department of Agriculture (DA) na ipinatupad sa pamamagitan ng Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance (AMAS). Ito ay nagbibigay-daan sa mga producer na kumita ng mas malaki mula sa direktang pagbebenta ng kanilang mga produkto. Binabawasan nito ang mga gastos sa marketing kung kaya't nagiging mas abot-kaya ang mga sariwa at de-kalidad na produkto para sa mga mamimili.

Inilunsad ang nasabing programa sa iba't ibang ahensiya ng gobyerno bilang suporta sa agenda ni Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. na gawing mas abot-kaya ang presyo ng pagkain sa lahat ng mamamayang Pilipino. Sinimulan naman ang KADIWA sa NIA noong Nobyembre 9, 2023 sa NIA Central Office. Ito ay alinsunod sa direktiba ni NIA Acting Administrator Engr. Eduardo Eddie G. Guillen na magbigay ng taos-pusong suporta para sa nasabing programa. Ang KADIWA sa NIA ay hindi lamang inilunsad sa NIA Central Office, kundi maging sa NIA Regional Offices sa buong bansa. Samu't saring produkto ng mga Irrigators Association (IA) mula sa iba't ibang rehiyon at lalawigan sa bansa ang mabibili sa murang halaga. Ito ay matagumpay na naisakatuparan sa pamamagitan ng convergence efforts at bayanihan sa pagitan ng DA, NIA, IAs, mga bayaning magsasaka, at iba't ibang partner agri-enterprises.

Ang programang ito ay nagpapatunay na ang NIA kasama ang iba't ibang tanggapan ng pamahalaan ay nakikiisa sa layunin at adhikain ng ating Pangulo na mas maiangat pa ang antas ng pamumuhay ng mga magsasakang Pilipino sa pamamagitan ng mga pamamaraang makapagpapataas ng kanilang ani at kita. ##

FEATURE SECTION















BENCHMARKING STUDY AND SHORT COURSE ON DAM DESIGN/SAFETY IN TASMANIA AND AUSTRALIA

In a move to strengthen the country's water infrastructure, the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) sent a selected group of engineers to Tasmania and Melbourne, Australia, for a specialized Training Program on Dam Design and Safety. Held from November 7-12, 2022, the program aimed to equip NIA personnel with the latest knowledge and best practices in the field.

The program consisted of two key components:

Benchmarking Study: NIA engineers had the opportunity to learn firsthand from Australian dam experts. This involved studying the design, construction, and maintenance procedures employed on Australian dams, renowned for their high safety standards.

Short Course: The engineers participated in a comprehensive short course on dam design and safety principles. This provided them with in-depth theoretical knowledge to complement their practical observations during the benchmarking study.

This initiative highlights NIA's commitment to investing in its workforce. By recognizing the "exemplary performance and vital contribution" of its employees, NIA ensures the continued effectiveness of its dam management and development programs.

Building Partnerships for a Water-Secure Future

The Australia Awards program played an important role in facilitating this training program. Representatives from the Australian Embassy to the Philippines, the Australia Awards and Alumni Engagement Program – Philippines, and the Australia Awards Tertiary Education were present at the closing ceremony of NIA's local training programs, virtually present was Ms. Amanda Ashworth, Business Manager of the Entura Clean Energy and Water Institute.





NIA Acting Administrator Engr. Eduardo Eddie G. Guillen spearheaded the Closing Ceremony of the program on October 4, 2023 at NIA Convention Hall, 5th Floor, DCIEC Building, NIA Central Office. In attendance were NIA Senior Deputy Administrator Engr. Robert C. Suguitan, OIC-Deputy Administrator for Engineering and Operations Sector Engr. Josephine B. Salazar, Deputy Administrator for Administrative and Finance Sector Robert Victor G. Seares, Jr., Central Office Department Managers, and the training participants.



As NIA continues to prioritize capacity-building initiatives, it reaffirms its dedication in ensuring the safety and efficiency of irrigation infrastructure across the Philippines, ultimately contributing to the nation's agricultural development and socioeconomic progress. *m*



TARAN FEATURE SECTION

ANSWER FOR APLANNER!



WHEN DID THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION CENTRAL OFFICE BEGIN TO BUILD A GIANT CHRISTMAS TREE?

Wanna get a 2024 NIA Executive Planner? Just answer it and claim your prize to the Office of the Public Affairs and Information Staff (PAIS). The first five who will get the right answer will get a 2024 Executive Planner. #

FEATURE SECTION



AROUND THE CORNER: NIA Region IV-A's Newsletter

"LAGASLAS"

Lagaslas, the Official Newsletter of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Region IV-A, is a Tagalog word that primarily means "Daloy ng Tubig". It embodies the Agency's strong and unwavering commitment to attaining sustainable irrigation development in the CALABARZON Region.

The newsletter covers news and feature articles sourced from three Irrigation Management Offices (IMOs): Cavite-Batangas IMO, Laguna-Rizal IMO, and Quezon IMO. Aside from the regular activities of the Agency, Lagaslas highlights the achievements of farmers who have benefitted from the irrigation systems, showcasing their success stories and inspiring others to venture into agriculture.

Through Lagaslas, readers are transported into the heart of committed service among the agriculture sector and Filipino farmers. The newsletter does not just report technical updates; it celebrates the collaboration and collective progress that defines CALABARZON.

Like the continuous water flow from the irrigation systems to the paddy fields, so does Lagaslas consistently deliver valuable information to its stakeholders.



THE STREAM OF FASHION INSIDE WORKSPACES

Despite the currents of work and waves of productivity happening inside the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), these show-stoppers break the conventional norms by intertwining both professionalism and style in unison.

In the heart of irrigation, let us watch them turn their workplace into their own runway with a blend of sophistication and elegance. Now, let us step into their domain where fashion meets the world of irrigation.

ALLYZA DE PAZ

Senior Economist B Project Planning Division, Engineering Department

"I choose to dress up as a form of self-expression, channeling positivity into my life. By doing so, I hope to inspire others to embrace comfortable and expressive attire, with a shared sense of empowerment and confidence."





INAH LUZ V. BALURAN

Senior Hydrologist Project Planning Division, Engineering Department

"Gusto ko lang maging maganda lagi!"

MARIA TEODORA S. PAGALILAUAN



Acting Manager, Audit Division Internal Audit Services, Organizational and Management

"I dress to express my personality and to project a credible image in an authentic way. My goal is to embody simplicity and credibility, ensuring that my attire is not only a genuine reflection of who I am but also appropriate for the office environment."

ROY MARION J. REVELLAME Corporate Accounts Analyst

Financial Management Department

"I feel like can be comfortable to finish all of my target deadlines and to inspire those who are around me. To mix and match my clothes. I find comfort in meeting my deadlines, believing that my productivity inspires those around me. I also enjoy the creative process of mixing and matching my clothes, expressing my personal style and adding a touch of uniqueness to my everyday wardrobe."





JUSTIN P. RUGA

Research Analyst A Project Planning Division, Engineering Department

"I dress to impress!"

ANDREA CARLA M. HAWAY

Engineer A Project Planning Division, Engineering Department

> "To appear more professional and foster better connection with workmates."



With their unwavering commitment to each of their roles and positions, these trendsetters showcased their secrets that transcend the mere fabric, sharing more of themselves on how to infuse mundane work attire with a touch of creativeness/sophistication and a blend of professionalism, proving that — style can thrive and flow even in industrious settings. m

FEATURE SECTION

SLOW PROCRESS IS STILL A PROCRESS By: Kristel B. Oliveros, Data Encoder, NIA Cavite-Batangas IMO

Growing crops is about the richness of the soil and water, and the richness of the heart for Francisco O. Riman, also known as "Tatay Fracing".

The 74-year-old Filipino farmer stated it simply, "Farming is one of the most noted sources of living for most Filipinos who are not born with a silver spoon in their mouth. I am proud that I am one of them and it has been and will always be my ultimate source of income."

Tatay Fracing is the son of Mr. Remegio and Macaria Riman and has four siblings. He started farming when he was 17 years old. Riman began farming on a 2.5-hectare of land in Naic, Cavite.

"Nung nagsisimula pa lang akong magsaka, katuwang at kaagapay ko na ang NIA sa aking hanapbuhay", he stated. He started as a tenant, to which he plow's other rice fields. He cultivated variety of crops especially rice crops.

His growth, when it comes to farming, was slow and steady but with the help of the projects of NIA, his farming became less of a hassle.

As years passed by, Tatay Fracing got married to Mrs. Josefina Riman and they were blessed to have 11 children. According to him, the only source of income they have comes from farming. "Lahat ng anak ko ay nakatapos ng pagaral ng dahil sa aking pagsasaka katuwang ang aking asawa", he proudly said.

One of his children is now a policeman, two of them are in the Navy while the others have their own lives.

Farming has been a huge part of his success. "Napakalaking tulong din ng patubig na pinoprovide ng NIA dahil sila ang naging kaagapay ko mula noon hanggang ngayon", he added.







Tatay Fracing is the president of the Sypan Irrigators Association, Inc in Barangay Molino, Naic, Cavite, part of Balayungan River Irrigation System (RIS) since 2012 up to the present. The Sypan Irrigators Association, Inc. was able to acquire different farm machineries and equipment which immensely help him and his members.

At present, as a tenant, he is cultivating a four-hectare farm lot. The landowner gave him portion of the land so that he can have his own lot to plow and able to build his own house.

"Nag-umpisa na akong magpatayo ng sarili naming bahay galing sa lupang ibinigay sa akin", he cried. It is never too late to make dreams come true. Slow progress is still a progress.

Tatay Fracing said that without the help of different people and organization, especially the irrigation from NIA, he admitted he cannot make it. It is one of the hardest things about farming because without water, there is no farmer. With NIA, many farmers survive. "*Two thumbs up to all farmers. Kudos NIA*", Mr. Riman ended. *m* Name:_____ Office/Organization:_____ Address:_____

Please rate this publication based on the following parameters:



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The content is logical and organized.

5 4 3 2 1

The ideas are clearly presented.

5 4 3 2 1

The topics are interesting and relevant.

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The language is appropriate to the target audience.

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The layout is visually pleasing.

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The publication provided additional knowledge and information.

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The Editorial Team encourages readers to circulate articles in this news magazine with proper acknowledgment. Everyone is also invited to contribute articles (with at least four photos/illustrations with credits) and suggest topics, or refer individuals and organizations to be featured. Please email pais@nia. gov.ph or mail to: THE EDITOR, NIA Currents, Public Affairs and Information Staff, NIA Central Office, EDSA, Diliman, 1100 Quezon City.

Letter to the Editor

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Empowering Change: NIANS TAKE A VOW TO END VAW

The Philippines, known for its rich cultural heritage and vibrant society, has also been a battleground for addressing the pervasive issue of Violence Against Women (VAW). Over the years, the nation has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to combating this societal scourge, marked by legislative actions, grassroots initiatives, and annual campaigns aimed at raising awareness and fostering change.

At the forefront of this endeavor stands the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004 (Republic Act No. 9262), a landmark legislation that provides comprehensive legal protection for women and their children against various forms of abuse. Enacted in 2004, this law signaled a milestone in the Philippines' efforts to address VAW, laying down a framework for prosecution, prevention, and support services for victims.

Building upon the foundation laid by RA 9262, the Philippine government, in collaboration with civil society organizations, has embarked on numerous campaigns and initiatives to amplify the message of gender equality and condemn all forms of violence against women. One such initiative is the annual 18-Day Campaign to End VAW, observed from November 25 to December 12, aligning with international campaigns such as the United Nations' 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.

During these 18 days, the nation comes together to raise awareness, foster dialogue, and mobilize communities to take action against VAW. Seminars, workshops, forums, art exhibits, and advocacy campaigns are organized across the country, engaging diverse stakeholders in the fight against gender-based violence. These activities serve as powerful platforms for education, empowerment, and solidarity, reinforcing the message that VAW is unacceptable and must be eradicated. In November 2023, the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Central Office exemplified this spirit of solidarity and commitment by actively participating in the 18-Day Campaign to End VAW. Embracing the campaign's theme of empowerment and hope, NIA employees donned orange shirts a symbolic gesture representing optimism for a future free from violence against women and girls.

Led by the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) and supported by government agencies and the public, the campaign at NIA accentuated the agency's dedication to upholding human rights and fostering a culture of respect and equality. It served as a reminder of the progress made in the fight against VAW and the collective responsibility to sustain this momentum.

As the Philippines progresses towards a society devoid of violence and prejudice, endeavors such as the 18-Day Campaign to End VAW emerge as symbols of optimism and agents of transformation. Through solidarity, vocal advocacy, and tangible efforts, we have the power to uplift women, safeguard their rights, and forge a tomorrow where every person is honored with dignity and fairness.

Let us together move towards a VAW FREE NIA. \mathbf{Q} =

FEATURE SECTION

IBA'T IBANG MUKHA NG PAGBANGON: SOLO PARENT NIANS

Iba't ibang karanasan ang humuhubog sa ating pagkatao at ang iba sa atin ay binibigyan ng pagsubok upang mas malaman natin kung hanggang saan tayo dadalhin ng panahon. Narito ang ilan sa mga kwentong sumasalamin sa sakripisyo't pagbangon sa hamon ng buhay at kung saang aspeto sila natutulungan ng NIA bilang empleyado.



RUCHELLE M. MAAC Project Planning Division, Engineering Department

Ang pinakamahirap na naranasan ko as a solo parent ay noong umalis ako sa amin, kinailangan kong iwanan 'yong dalawang anak ko nang maliliit pa sila para magtrabaho at masuportahan 'yong mga pinansyal na pangangailangan nila. Kahit mag-isa ako, pinili kong bumangon at nagfocus na lamang sa aking trabaho dahil may dalawang anak ako na umaasa sa akin. Aware naman sila sa sitwasyon namin at lagi kong sinasabi na para sa kanila ang lahat ng ginagawa ko at kung bakit ako malayo sa kanila.

Malaking tulong sa akin ang NIA dahil bread and butter ko na ito. Nagtrabaho ako noon sa NIA Quezon IMO sa loob ng tatlong taon, at naging trusted person ako ni 'Boss Boyet' sa Small Reservoir Irrigation Project sa Quezon, hanggang sa kinuha ako sa PMO. Mas pinili ko na rin dito sa Central Office dahil mas naging komportable na ako rito. Gaya nga ng sabi ng dati kong boss na si 'Boss Jo Pac', mas marami kang mararanasan kapag umalis ka sa comfort zone mo. Dito sa CO, mas may chance kang makapunta sa iba't ibang regions at field offices.

Ang payo ko sa ibang solo parents na gaya ko, magfocus na lang siguro sa mga anak dahil tulad ko, hindi ako nakafocus sa parte na nag-iisa ako. Hindi naging mabigat para sa akin dahil tinanggap ko ang sitwasyon at hindi ko na ginawang komplikado ang mga bagay. Naging strong lang talaga ako, at pinili kong maging matatag para sa mga anak ko. At syempre hindi ko nakakalimutan ang panalangin, lagi ko lang sinasabi sa Diyos na gagawin ko ang part ko at ipauubaya ko na sa kanya ang lahat.

CHERWIN D. EVANGELISTA Human Resources Division, Administrative Department

Aside from financial aspect, ang pinaka-struggle ko as a solo parent ay ang oras ko sa anak ko. Since dalawa lang kami rito sa QC, wala kaming malapit na kamag-anak at need ko magtrabaho. Madalas sa gabi na lang kami nagkakasama at nagkakasabay kumain. Hindi ko nababantayan kung sino ang mga nakakasalamuha at nagiging kaibigan niya. Mayroon siyang mga mabubuting kaibigan sa school at mayroon ding hindi maganda ang impluwensya sa kanya pero naagapan ko naman bago pa ito lumala. Isa sa mga pinakamahirap na sitwasyon bilang isang magulang ay ang sisihin mo ang sarili mo kapag napariwara ang anak mo dahil lang sa mag-isa kang nagtataguyod para sa inyong dalawa.

Malaki ang naitutulong ng NIA sa akin lalo sa mga financial needs. Bukod sa sahod, may mga asosasyon kang malalapitan gaya ng NIA COOP, NIAEASP at EWPI, kung saan mas mabilis makakahiram ng pera kapag may emergency at urgent needs na hindi lamang ang mga solo parent na gaya ko ang nakikinabang gayundin ang ibang empleyado ng NIA.

Ang maipapayo ko sa ibang solo parent na gaya ko ay huwag kalimutang magdasal at manalig kay Lord. Lahat ng pagsubok sa buhay ay malalampasan basta kasama mo ang anak mo. Kung sakali mang hahanap ka ng partner, piliin mo 'yong taong tatanggapin ka at ang iyong anak. Huwag mong ipamimigay ang anak mo sa kamaganak o sa ibang tao para lang masunod ang kaligayahan mo. When I learned na marami pala ang inaabandonang mga bata ngayon na napupunta sa orphanage, ang iba naman ay nasa lansangan at pinipilit mamuhay, naisipan kong mag-organize ng isang charity event sa aking kaarawan (February 3, 2024). Ito ay upang magbigay ng pag-asa sa mga neglected and abandoned children dahil naniniwala ako na gaya ng mga anak ng solo parent, may naghihintay pa ring magandang bukas para sa kanila at magiging mabuti silang tao paglaki.







GINALYN A. FERRER Institutional Development Division,

Operations Department

Masasabi kong sobrang hirap maging single mother pero napapalitan din ng saya. Mahirap dahil simula ng maiwan ako mag-isa, ako na lahat ang sumalo at kumayod para sa pangangailangan ng anak ko, hindi lang 'yong pang-araw-araw niyang gastusin pati 'yong mga gamot kapag nagkakasakit siya. Masaya dahil mayroon kang anak na pinanghuhugutan mo ng lakas at katatagan ng loob, nagkaroon ka ng dahilan para magpatuloy sa buhay. Nagpapasalamat ako sa nanay ko noong nabubuhay pa siya dahil sa kanya naiiwan 'yong anak ko noon habang nagtatrabaho ako. Naging magaan ang pagpapalaki ko sa anak ko dahil sa gabay at suporta niya.

Malaki po ang naitutulong ng NIA sa akin lalo na sa pang araw-araw na gastos namin. Nagsimula ako sa pagiging M8 at masaya po ako dahil parte na ako ng ahensiya ngayon. Payo ko naman po sa mga single mom o solo parent, dapat maging matatag ka, lagi mo unahin at isipin 'yong anak mo. Sa mga panahong hindi mo na kaya o sumusuko ka na, magdasal ka lang at isipin mo lagi 'yong dahilan kung bakit ka nagsusumikap, 'yon ang anak mo.

LEILA E. PIONILLA CARP-IC

Maraming challenges kapag naiwan kang mag-isa dahil ikaw ang tatayo bilang nanay at tatay para sa mga anak mo. Noong nandiyan pa ang husband ko, mas malaki ang income niya kaysa sa akin at siya ang gumagastos para sa pag-aaral ng mga bata and 'yong ibang bayarin ako na ang umaako. Tulungan kami -- sumumpa kami sa altar na for better or for worst walang iwanan. Kaya noong bigla siyang Nawala, naging mahirap para sa akin dahil naiwan sa akin ang tatlong anak namin at lahat nag-aaral pa. Sabi ng asawa ko noon, kahit mahirap lang kami, okay lang basta't sama-sama kami. Hangga't kaya naming pagsumikapan, iniiwasan naming manghingi ng tulong sa iba dahil mahirap ding magkaroon ng utang na loob. Pero noong nawala siya, inisip ko na ang kinabukasan ng mga anak ko at tinanggap ko na ang offer ng relatives na tulong lalo na noong hindi pa ako nakakabangon. Until now, mayroon pa rin naman support.

Malaking tulong ang NIA sa buhay naming mag-iina, lalo na ang 7-day Solo Parent Leave. Noon, ang husband ko ang uma-attend sa important activities ng mga anak ko sa school. Ngayong ako na lang mag-isa, nagagamit ko ang leave para doon. Nagpapasalamat din ako sa CARP-IC dahil may mabait akong boss, si Sir Ricardo C. Lopez, IDD Division Manager, at sa mga malalapit kong katrabaho na itinuturing ko na parang kapamilya at napagsasabihan ko ng problema without any judgement.

Ang maipapayo ko sa mga solo parent, magpakatatag lang kayo. Kahit strong ang personality ko, nahirapan din talaga ako. Iniisip ko na lang ang mga anak kong umaasa rin sa akin. Dumating ako sa point na ayaw ko na at sumusuko na ako sa buhay, pero kung iisipin mo lang ang sarili mo ay walang mangyayari. Kawawa ang mga maiiwanan, specifically ang mga anak ko. Hindi maiiwasan na may mga maririnig ka ring negative comments tungkol sa'yo at sa nararamdaman mo. Ang magagawa mo na lang ay magpatuloy at magfocus ka kung paano mo maitataguyod ang mga anak mo. Hindi natin need ang validation ng iba. Tuloy ang buhay.





MARION B. VALEZA Budget Revenue Division, Financial Management Department

Siyempre ang mahirap sa pagiging solo parent ay ang mga pinansiyal na pangangailangan. Noong nawala 'yong asawa ko taong 2018, naiwan sa akin ang apat na anak namin. Dalawa ang nag-aaral at 'yong dalawa, mag-uumpisa pa lang sa kanilang mga trabaho. Bilang padre de pamilya, ako ang bahala at dumidiskarte para sa pang araw-araw na gastusin namin, sa tuition, at baon ng mga pumapasok sa eskwelahan. Mahirap mag-isa. May mga panahon na panghihinaan ka ng loob. May mga panahon na parang napapagod ka na pero dapat labanan mo iyon, maging positive ka sa buhay. Isipin at tingnan mo lang ang mga anak mo.

Napakarami ang naitutulong ng NIA sa akin, lalo sa araw-araw na buhay at gastusin, ito talaga ang bread and butter ko. Halos 20 years na rin ako dito sa ahensiya, anim na taon ako naging COS tapos maglalabing tatlong taon na akong casual employee. Hindi man ganoon kalakihan 'yong sweldong natatanggap buwan-buwan pero maraming asosasyon na maaari mong matakbuhan sa oras ng emergency at urgent na pangangailangan.

Ang mapapayo ko lang sa mga solo parent, dapat matuto ka magplano ng gastusin at magbudget. Mahirap din namang sabihin sa ibang tao iyan dahil may mga biglaang gastusin, lalo kapag nagkakasakit, pero hangga't maaari, dapat marunong kang magtipid. Magpakatatag ka lang para sa mga anak mo. ma

SPOTLGFI































SPOTLIGHT