



# CURRENTS

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## NIA PARTNERS WITH DBM TO FAST-TRACK PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

■ Lioneil G. dela Cruz, PAIS-CO

In line with the agency's goal to fast track project implementation, NIA's top and middle management from the central and field offices met with officials of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) on January 12, 2015 at the IEC Convention Hall, NIA Compound, Quezon City. The conference was initiated to discuss strategies on how to increase NIA's accomplishment by boosting its project implementation for 2015.

Through this very important conference, regional irrigation and project managers were able to present their respective office's 2014 accomplishment and the problems they encountered, if any. According to Mr. Larry Drapete, Director of DBM's Bureau F, the presentation is essential to assess the previous year's

performance and to prepare for 2015 project implementation by preventing same issues to happen and sustain good practices.

The participants also presented the status so far of their 2015 implementation of projects. This information, according to the DBM officials, is also important to gauge how much funds to "realistically" release for NIA to be able to maximize the agency's budget towards high accomplishments.

The participants were also encouraged to raise their questions to DBM so that issues can be resolved this early thus avoid consequences throughout the year. Some issues raised to name a few are programs of works, right of way issues, issues with contractors and politicians, and allotments/obligations.

At the end of the day, the body through DBM's initiative and insights tried to collectively resolve the "problems" raised. DBM also requested the NIA managers to submit important documents to them in line with facilitating the early release of funds to boost NIA's project implementation in 2015.

Also present to represent DBM aside from Mr. Drapete is Bureau F Assistant Chief Gina Brillantes. On the other side, NIA's top management was represented by Senior Deputy Administrator Felix Razo and Deputy Administrator for Administrative and Finance Estrella Icasiano. The NIA was previously under Bureau E when it was still a DA-attached agency. After it was transferred under the OPAFSAM, the agency was transferred to the Bureau F of DBM.

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## EDITORIAL

# CALL FOR NIA CHARTER AMENDMENT

NIA is in its 52nd year of existence as the government agency primarily tasked to develop irrigation systems in the country. It was created by virtue of RA 3601 in 1963. The NIA Charter was amended by PD 552 in 1972 and PD 1702 in 1974 broadening its powers and increasing its capitalization.

After more than 50 years, a challenge is posed to revisit and amend the NIA Charter to be more responsive with the changing times, especially due to the fact that today, NIA is in the forefront in attaining the government's goal of food security.

As a government-owned-and-controlled corporation, the agency has to maintain its viability as a corporate body. Aware of the financial standing as a corporation and the current status of project implementation, the present leadership painstakingly

initiated reforms to put the house in order, so to speak.

As talks regarding the amendment of the NIA Charter through Congress surface, position papers and likewise actions from all quarters were collected. A task force was formed to evaluate the various proposals for charter change.

It has been more than four decades since changes have been made. With technological advancements, higher overhead costs, and more sources to be discovered and developed, challenges are enormous that present mandates may not be able to handle.

*"Change is the only constant thing in life"* as the old saying goes, thus it is imperative to review the needs of the Agency for us to be relevant and act appropriately as it is the only option open for us.

Provisions in the NIA Charter have been acknowledged to require changes thus would allow us to find alternative ways to achieve our goals at a more productive and faster rate.

As we consider thoroughly the proposed draft amendments, the present leadership is resolute in improving NIA's performance on project implementation, operational efficiency, financial management, and leadership sustainability.

Today is the time to push for the Charter change not only to restore NIA's position as "the best Irrigation Agency in the whole of Asia and in any developing country in the world", (Amnon Golan, World Bank) but to continue the irrigation development for the empowerment of farmers – our main stakeholder.

■ Pops Marie A. Santos-Dadea, PAIS-C.O.

## Managers' Conference

National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Chief, Dr. Florencio F. Padernal once again called for a meeting to all regional irrigation managers and project managers as the Agency welcomes the New Year with renewed vigor, hope, and optimism.

Also attended by Senior Deputy Administrator Felix M. Razo, Deputy Administrator Estrella E. Icasiano, and some department managers the meeting was held on January 9, 2015

at the Administrator's Conference Room.

The main agenda of the meeting is to issue and inform the managers of new instructions and directives for NIA to achieve its goals and exceed expectations what with the seemingly positive attitude of our President towards the Agency.

Dr. Padernal called to order the meeting at exactly 1PM which also consists of

NIA's preparation for 2016 program, data needed for the GCG report, inventory and valuation of NIA assets, requirements for the Young Professional's Program and to the Executive Course on Project and Construction Management candidates, and most importantly the preparation for the Ten-Year Master Plan.

The meeting which lasted for more than four hours ended on a positive note with all the managers' assurance to be one with the Administrator in achieving goals, doing good, and staying positive. #

## Complying with Governance Commission for GOCCs (GCG) Requirements

■ Rocielle Harlette E. Navarro, OSDA

**2014 Performance Scorecard.** NIA submitted to GCG on October 22, 2014 a request for the revision of its agreed target performance reflected in the NIA balanced scorecard in CY 2014.

Four (4) items were requested for revision: Two (2) under MFO 1-Project Implementation (Area Generated and Area Restored) and two (2) under MFO-Finance (Revenues from regular sources and from the establishment of mini-hydropower).

### Reasons/justifications are as follows:

#### 1. Late release of funds

- a. Total Allocation of Project Funds is Php 21.11B*
- b. First Release – Php 10Billion (SAROs received on February 4, 2014)*
- c. Second and last release – Php 11Billion (SAROs received on July 4, 2014)*

#### 2. Other reasons

- a. Balog-Balog Multipurpose Project review by a third party*
- b. External intervention*
- c. Absence of Regional Development Council endorsement for Quipot*

- 3. Right of way problem (i.e. Lasang RIS) – ongoing expropriation case
- 4. Construction in conflict with cropping schedule/ farming activities
- 5. Calamities
- 6. Subsidy income excluded from the operating income
- 7. ISF Collectible reduction brought about by reduced planted areas due to calamities i.e. Mario, Luis, Yolanda
- 8. MRIIS and UPRIS reduced power collectibles
- 9. Ongoing revision of the policy guidelines on the procurement of mini-hydropower contracts

The NIA Scorecard covering January to December 2014 based on its revised target is 90.25% passing the established GCG standard for eligibility of Performance Based Bonus (PBB).

The year 2014 had seen improvements in Project Implementation adopting stricter measures against erring contractors whose contracts incurred negative slippages. Their unfinished contracts were either suspended or terminated. Organizational reforms were also done with the reassignment of personnel both at the central and field offices to improve efficiency and work productivity. The Strategic Performance Management System was also laid down in the agency.

Administrator Padernal further encouraged IA participation with periodic consultation and dialogue. This also includes the appointment of Silvestre Bonto, the National Confederation of IA (NCIA) President, as member of the Board of Directors of NIA representing the rice and corn sector.

One noted accomplishment is the construction and operation of the JICA-grant mini hydropower plant in MRIIS District II. Climate change adaptation projects, such as the PASA SRIP in Ilagan, Isabela were also pursued starting year 2014.

The agency is now preparing for the prompt submission of the different requirements by GCG for the agency's eligibility of the 2014 PBB.

PAN 2015. The Office of the Senior Deputy Administrator, headed by Engineer Felix M. Razo and the NIA TWG for GCG concerns chaired by PAIS Manager Pilipina P. Bermudez together with the GCG TWG for NIA have deliberated several times to formulate and finalize the NIA Strategy Map and Performance Scorecard for CY 2015.

NIA and GCG have agreed that the Renegotiation of the 2014 targets and PAN 2015 will be finished and signed by both parties in the month of March, 2015.

# Admin. and Finance Managers' Conference held



■ Pops Marie A. Santos-Dadea, PAIS-C.O.

## Promotions, Reassignments, and other assignments

The Year of the Sheep proved to be a year for new beginnings and new challenges, more so to the people who will be handling higher positions and new tasks at the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) circle:

NAME	DESIGNATION	NEW DESIGNATION/ ASSIGNMENT
Engr. Erdolfo B. Domingo	Acting Deputy Administrator for Engineering and Operations	Deputy Administrator for Engineering and Operations
Engr. Lydia S. Esguerra	Division Manager A, Construction Management Division	Acting Manager, Engineering Department
Atty. Ailyne C. Agtuca-Selda	Attorney V, Legal Services	Acting Manager, Administrative Department
Engr. Delsy J. Revellame	Division Manager, Engineering Division, CARP-IC	Acting Project Manager, CARP-IC
Engr. Wilfredo C. Gloria	Division Manager A, Engineering and Operations Division, MRIIS	Acting Department Manager, MRIIS
Engr. Teodoro D. Paragas	Principal Engineer C, NIA-Region 1	Acting Division Manager, Pangasinan IMO, Region 1
Engr. Gaudencio M. de Vera	Sr. Engineer A, La Union IMO, Region 1	Acting Division Manager, La Union IMO, Region 1
Engr. Federico M. Madrones	Sr. Engineer A/Assistant Operations & Maintenance Head, Libungan RIS, Cotabato IMO, Region 12	Acting Chief of Office, Libungan RIS, Cotabato IMO, Region 12
Ms. Angelica H. Castillo	Chief Internal Control Officer, Financial & Operations Audit Division, Internal Audit Services	Acting Division Manager, Financial & Operations Audit Division, Internal Audit Services

Also, NIA created a Technical Working Group (TWG) who will be handling the conversion of Communal Irrigation Systems (CIS) to National Irrigation Systems (NIS). The task incorporates drafting the policy on the conversion of CIS to NIS which include among others the procedures in conversion, criteria in the selection of candidate Irrigators Associations, and checklist of documents needed to support the request for conversion. The TWG composes of:

Twenty eight managers of the Administrative and Finance Sector, Central and Regional Offices gathered in Estancia Resort Hotel in Tagaytay City for a three-day conference on 21-23 January 2015.

It was a timely activity as NIAs welcome CY 2015 as it enabled the participants to meet the new Deputy Administrator for Administrative and Finance Sector and raise/discuss their issues and concerns early on for proper address.

Topics included among others, National Water Resources Board billings on water permits, COA audit findings as of 31 December 2013 and actions taken on them, HR reports, Property and Procurement matters, 2015 budget and Administrative & Finance reportorial requirements by Department of Budget and Management and Governance Commission for Government-Owned-and-Controlled-Corporation. Best practices of participants were shared on their common concerns.

The event was a fruitful one because sound advice/appropriate action and/or resolution on issues were provided.

The meeting also gave Deputy Admin. Estrella E. Icasiano the opportunity to introduce to the group the incoming Manager of the Administrative Department, Atty. Ailyn C. Agtuca-Selda vice Ms. Violeta C. Esguerra who retired compulsorily from government service on 25 January 2015.

## **Chairman**

**Florentino R. David**  
*Manager*  
Operations Department

## **Vice-Chairman**

**Augustrese S. Torres**  
*Manager*  
Systems Management Division

## **Members**

**Bayani P. Ofrecio**  
*Manager*  
Institutional Development Division

**Rebecca C. Malazarte**  
*Manager*  
Financial Management  
Department

## **Members**

**Atty. Pepito L. Padilla**  
Legal Services

**Leslie C. Dizon**  
Principal Engineer A  
Systems Management Division

## IDD spearheads 2014 IDP Year-End Review and CY 2015 Planning Workshop

■ Heartie E. Navarro, CDO IV, IDD

The Institutional Development Division (IDD) led a week-long activity for the 2014 Year-End Review and CY 2015 Planning Workshop for Institutional Development Program (IDP) last February 1-7, 2015 at Fersal Hotel, Puerto Princesa, Palawan in NIA Region 4-B.

Comprised of 49 participants, the assembly was a fusion of Institutional Development Section IDS Chiefs of Regional and Project Irrigation Offices, NIA Central staff and selected Management Information Division personnel. The objectives of the workshop are: assess the accomplishments of CY 2014 Program of Work (POW) per Regional Irrigation Office and Special Project, discuss and recommend actions on major issues in IDP implementation; review and 'firm-up' the IMT Road Map and IMT Targets; present the instruments for the IA Functionality Survey and Farmers'/Clients' Satisfaction Survey; present suggested action to issues, concerns and problems raised by IA Presidents in IMT Consultation Meetings; prepare the detailed CY 2015 Regional



and Project IDP POW; and finalize the Database Management System for Irrigators Association (DBMS-IA).

Divided into two major sessions, the workshop proceeded with Session 1, covering February 2-4, for Regional Irrigation Offices and Integrated Irrigation System and Session 2, for Special Projects, which was set on February 5 and 6.

NIA top management officials graced the event. Senior Deputy Administrator Felix M. Razo presented the Strategy Map of NIA while Operations Department Manager Florentino R. David discussed the Operations Department's priority directions and activities. Sound recommendations by these officials were given as response to the concerns raised by Irrigators Associations Presidents to the Administrator during the previously held



Senior Deputy Administrator Felix M. Razo presents NIA Strategy Map

IMT Consultation meetings. IDP's Program of Work for the current year was also finalized. The comments, suggestions and issues regarding DBMS-IA were integrated in its final version. The workshop was highlighted with the report of IDD Manager Bayani P. Ofrecio that overall IMT accomplishment has already reached 91.73% as of end of December 2014.

The workshop also served as a venue for IDS Chiefs to share first-hand experiences of the past and current status of IDP in their respective regions/areas and an opportunity for the IDD staff from Central Office to catch-up with long-time acquaintances from the field.



Engr. Bayani P. Ofrecio (4th from right) joins the IDS Chiefs from field offices during the week-long activity with his staff.

# PHOTO NEWS



NIA Administrator Padernal leads the inspection of Bacnotan Communal Irrigation Project in Bacnotan, La Union.

Dr. Padernal visits Bacnotan Communal Irrigation Project in La Union to personally inspect the on-going construction of the project that will irrigate, upon completion, 414 hectares (during wet season) of farmlands with 497 farmer-beneficiaries. With him are (L-R) Engr. John N. Celeste (NIA Region 1 Manager), Engr. Gaudencio M. de Vera (LUIMO Chief), and Engr. Frida L. Nitoy (NIA-1 EOD Manager).



Oathtaking and induction of the new set of elected Board of Directors and Officers of the Philippine Institute of Civil Engineers (PICE) NIA Sub-Chapter for CY 2015. They were inducted by NIA Administrator Dr. Florencio F. Padernal on February 2, 2015 at the NIA Administrator's Conference Room.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS ARE THE FOLLOWING:**

**ELISA C. RAGUDO** - President; **FIDEL P. MARTINEZ** - First Vice President; **MARIA FILIPINAS FN VERZOSA** - Second Vice-President; **CHRISTIAN JUNE C. MAQUILING** - Secretary; **ROWENA E. LUZ** - Treasurer; **TITO E. CUERDO** - Business Manager; **SUSSIE T. TANIEGRA** - PRO; **LOUIE V. MENDOZA** - Auditor; **GERTRUDES A. VIADO** - Assistant Secretary; and **MAINNE RUSSEL L. FERMA** - Assistant Treasurer.

**DIRECTORS:**

BELLA INTANO- FAJARDA, MILAGROS C. NOPRE, JOSIAS R. PACOLOR, ARIEL S. NAJERA, ROBERTINO LAPEÑA



NIA Sr. Deputy Administrator Felix M. Razo gave a short message for the participants of CARP-IC CY 2015 National Assessment and Planning Workshop for its implemented projects (ARF, ARISP III, & MinSAAD) and Formulation of CARP-IC Medium Term Irrigation Development Plan (CY 2016-CY2020) last January 28-31, 2015. He informed the group that NIA has a new program called "Culture Change" as well as the agency's new strategic plan.

Regional and Provincial CARP Coordinators participated during the CY 2015 National Assessment and Planning Workshop and Formulation of CARP-IC Medium Term Irrigation Development Plan (2016-2020) January 28-31, 2015 at Calapan, Mindoro.



Administrator Padernal in his visit to Davao Region gathered the heirs of De Juan family for the MOA signing addressing the Right Of Way problem at Lasang RIS, Carmen, Davao del Norte.



NIA Administrator Florencio F. Padernal (3rd from L, seated) and SNAP President and CEO Emmanuel Rubio (2nd from L, seated) leads the signing of the MOU for the proposed 24MW Baligatan Cascade Hydroelectric Project on February 6, 2015 at the NIA Central Office in Quezon City. With them are: (seated L-R) SNAP Vice President Eleanor Peña-Blomdahl and Atty. Genever Dionio. Standing at the back are (from L-R) Atty. Mike Hosillos, Atty. Ani Macias, Ms. Pilipina P. Bermudez, Engr. Andy Ana, and Mr. Daniel Simmonds.



Administrator Padernal with Kalinga Governor Jocel Ba-ac and NIA-CAR Manager John L. Socalo



The ongoing repair works at the Upper Chico River Irrigation System (UCRIS) Diversion Dam in Tabuk City, Kalinga.



RIM Alejandro Alberca, EOD Manager Bugacia & Staff of NIA Region XI witness the preparatory activity for the MOA signing between NIA represented by Administrator Padernal with the heirs of De Juan Family.

The Rehabilitation of the UCRIS was funded by the World Bank's Participatory Irrigation Development Project. The project involves repair of the damaged and deteriorating irrigation facilities of the system including those in Chico River main diversion dam and Talaca Catch Dam, improvement of canal structures, drainage facilities, and canal service roads and project facilities.

Engr. Erdolfo B. Domingo takes oath before Presidential Assistant on Food Security and Agricultural Modernization (PAFSAM) Secretary Francis N. Pangilinan as NIA's Deputy Administrator for Engineering and Operations on January 28, 2015 at the OPAFSAM headquarters in Makati. With them are NIA Administrator Florencio F. Padernal and EBD's family.



BICOLANO NIA BOARD MEMBER Mr. Silvestre "Ka Silver" Bonto, Sr., (right) takes his oath of office as member of the NIA Board of Directors before Sec. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan, the presidential assistant for Food Security and Agricultural Modernization on Feb. 25, 2015 at the NIA Board Room in Quezon City. His appointment as member of the NIA Board representing the rice and corn sector was signed by President Benigno S. Aquino III on Jan. 22, 2015. Bonto is the president of the National Confederation of Irrigators Association (NCIA). He is a farmer from Quipayo, Calabanga, Camarines Sur.





# DR. PADERNAL LEADS CEREMONIAL TOAST



“...a loyalty toast to NIA as an Institution,  
A loyalty toast to top management:  
for greater accomplishments physically and  
financially, for abundance of agricultural out-  
puts, for more effective camaraderie among  
employees, for a stronger NIA Team --  
Good luck for the new year to all of us.”



These are the words of Dr. Padernal as he leads the ceremonial toast with all employees and officials on January 5, the first working day of 2015, during the flag raising ceremony.

The reforms initiated and policies implemented by the present leadership served as the catalyst to hurdle the challenges of 2014. To usher in the new year with enthusiasm and vigor, the toast was organized and simultaneously held in regional/ operations/ project offices nationwide. What an exciting way to welcome the new year, a first in the NIA history!

Wikipedia defines toast as a ritual in which a drink is taken as an expression of honor or goodwill. Toasts are generally offered at times of celebration or commemoration, including certain holidays, such as New Year's Eve. - Irp

# NIA PURSUES IRRIGATION PROJECT IN QUEZON, BATANGAS

■ Lioneil G. dela Cruz, PAIS-CO

NIA Quezon City – The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) entered and signed into a contract amounting to Php 119,452,990.53 on Tuesday, January 27, with New Kanlaon Construction, Inc. for the one-year construction of the Quipot Main Canal and its appurtenant structures. The Quipot Main Canal is one of the essential major components

of the Quipot River Irrigation Project (QRIP).

This contract entered into by the agency is part of the continuing efforts to finally complete QRIP in line with its goal to contribute in increasing the country's agricultural productivity through irrigation.

Leading the contract signing, which was done during the Pre-Construction meeting for the project, is Administrator Florencio F. Padernal. It is part of Padernal's efforts to ensure fast implementation of irrigation projects in the country.

Representing New Kanlaon Construction, Inc. are its President and CEO Antonio S. Evangelista and Vice President for Property Division Ma. Cristina E. Chung.

Also present during the contract signing and representing NIA were NIA Senior Deputy Administrator and BAC Chairman Felix M. Razo, NIA Region 4A Manager William P. Ragodon, Legal Services Department Manager and concurrent Board Secretary Atty. Genever M. Dionio, Financial Management Department Manager Rebecca C. Malazarte, Acting Engineering Department Manager Engr. Lydia Esguerra, Quezon Irrigation Management Office Chief Engr. Romeo M. Lopez, and Engr. Felipa Mascariñas of Design and Specifications Division.



QRIP, which started in 2012, aims to provide irrigation water, provide local employment, and increase agricultural productivity in the municipalities of Tiaong, Sariaya, and Candelaria in Quezon and San Juan in Batangas. Upon completion, it is expected to irrigate 3,500 hectares of farmland benefitting around 2,073 farmers.





The Bacnor IA with Ms. Heartie Navarro, Head of Evaluation Team, during the validation of documents for the Agri-Pinoy Rice Achievers Award last December 16, 2014



The Bacnor IA together with the evaluation team from NIA-Central Office, MARIIS Division III Manager Engr. William B. Oppuer (4th from left) and its support linkages from DA, PCIC, DOST and IGLO.

When North Diversion Canal 5 (NDC 5) Council of Irrigators Association of Division III was chosen as the pilot area for Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT) in the entire Philippines, one of the Irrigators Association that is included in the organization of NDC 5 CIA is BACNOR IA. Since it was included in the association of NDC 5, the organization of BACNOR IA became possible on September 02, 1982 with five (5) turnout service areas and was registered the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) with SEC # 110053 on February 10, 1983.

The name Bacnor was named after its Barangay Bacnor with an acronym of Building an Accountable, Cooperative, Nurturing, Outstanding, and Responsible Irrigators Association which generally signifies agricultural development of the members and of the association.

### Days of Hardship...

Farmers rely on the subsistence of agriculture to feed their families. Considering the agricultural risks against weather, pest infestations, and worst is the loss of harvest due to unexpected occurrences of calamities, they have become deeply indebted. **"Ang pagsasaka ay isang**

**pakikipagsapalaran dahil may mga sakuna na dumadating tulad ng bagyo at Tungro. Kapag may kalamidad at naapektuhan ang pananim at kapag tinamaan ng Tungro talagang apektado ang kabuhayan namin"** Mang Rolando Dallego, Bacnor IA President., said.

He seemed in a trance while solemnly reminiscing their way of living back then...

Ploughing the rice fields are the constant in the life of farmers. They treat their farm land as their second home. But despite the agility in farming, lifestyle of farmers back then is hardly developed.

With just 53 farmer-members to manage the water delivery and distribution within the area of Bacnor, advancement of farming seems far-fetch.

Even if Bacnor IA was not considered an isolated barangay, electricity was inaccessible to some and income was not sufficient. **"Gasera"** (gas lamp) served as their improvised light in the evening and conversation was their entertainment. Approaching typhoons worried them because their nipa hut might be blown away. At dawn farmers were already up preparing themselves to walk for about

two kilometers from their home to the rice fields because vehicles were not in trend. Even housewives found it difficult to go to the market and so was the marketing of their produce.

Anxiety prevailed among members because yields were not increasing due to absence of farming innovations. Lack of agricultural trainings and seminars was the reason economic means were not uplifted as well as the farmers' self-esteem. Income was just enough for the expenses of rice fields for the next cropping season. Education of their children was unattainable due to inadequate income; as a result, children had to stop and work to help their parents financially. Farmers provide food for the country but the irony of it is even farmers cannot provide enough food for their families.

They have undergone such adversity just to make a living. **"Kabanbanwagak idi, ngem nariknak nga talaga narigat ti mangmintinar ti panagtalon. Kurang ngamin ti partisipasyon iti tunggal maysa ken maysa awan pay iti teknolohiya nga mausar idi isunga nabayag ti panagtalon."** (I am in the threshold of my life back then but I felt the hitches in the operation of farming. *Participation is not enough and the absence of farming technologies is also a factor why farming takes too long*).

### IA SUCCESS STORIES

# THE BACNOR IA: *A Milestone to Success*

■ Cherryfie A. Villeza, Clerk Processor B, MARIIS Division III



RICE HARVESTER



TWO UNITS HAND TRACTOR

FLAT BED DRYER



MULTI PURPOSE DRYING PAVEMENT

*But with all the sacrifices and problems encountered by the farmers before, this serves as the guidelines and starting points of the farmers today and...*

### **Now reaping the fruits of their labour...**

Convening the members for a meeting was hardly attainable. Participation of farmers in farming activities was not observed. General policies on administrative, operations and maintenance were not properly addressed. Is there still hope for the association to become viable and sustainable association? One can say "perhaps" but someone stood in the midst of storm and never succumbed to the challenges..

*"Ni Mang Florante Bitao ti talaga nga nagpapintas ti asosasyon kas isuna ti im-muna nga presidente. Talaga nga ingkagumaan na amin nga kabaelan na tapnu sumurot dagiti miyembro nga agdalos ti kanal, umatendar iti miting, ken makipagmay-maysa iti gandat ti asosasyon. Manipud idi, ummurnos ken summayaat ti estado ti mannalon".* (As the first President of Bacnor IA, Mang Florante Bitao did his best for the betterment of the association. He encouraged the farmers to attend meetings and to participate canal clearings. Since then farmers were organized and improved), said by Mang Rolando.

As years passed by, members realized the importance of a dynamic association. Folks have been participative with all the activities undertaken by the association and programs facilitated by the barangay. Rice production increased which gives considerable income to the farmers. Generating income of the farmer-members

and of the housewives improved through livelihood programs. Indeed, changes in farming are inevitable, but the huge impact on the farmers is remarkable due to apt transformation.

*"Noon, bago sumikat ang araw, gumigising na ako para bisitahin ang aking bukid, kasama ko ang aking kalabaw. Ngayon, dahil may handtractor na mas napapabilis na ang pagbungkal ng lupa at dahil sa reaper, ang mga nakatayong palay mamaya lang eh nakasako na",* Mang Rolando reminisced.

And now they are bound to reap the fruits of their labor...

Division III has only one best option to represent the Division for the Pre-evaluation of Agri Pinoy Rice Achievers Award conducted by Head Office none other than the Bacnor IA. What are the qualities of the association that outshines the others? Simply, Bacnor IA knows hardship, fortitude, and cooperation. These traits guided the association to unlock the doors towards...

### **The Pedestal to Success**

At first, Mang Rolando was hesitant to vie but through the outpouring support of his members and officers, their confidence was gradually established. *"Idi naamwak nga sikami ti napili ti Division III nga representative iti Pre-evaluation para ti Agri Pinoy Rice Achievers Award ket nagdismudo nak. Syempre ti kapanunotak ket kaya mi ngata?. Ngem agyaman nak kadagti opisyaes ti NIA Division III ken ti NDC 5 CIA ta nagtalek da kanya mi ken haan da kami met binay-bay-an. Talaga nga narikna mi ti panagpateg da kanya mi kas maysa nga Irrigators Association"*

shared by Mang Rolando (When they informed me that Division III chose us as representative of the Division for the Pre-evaluation of Agri Pinoy Rice Achievers Award, I am hesitant. What my mind tells me at that time is "can we do it?" but I'm still thankful to NIA Division III and to NDC 5 CIA for their trust and for being there all throughout. We really felt our essence as Irrigators Association).

All the efforts and hard work exerted by the members are worthy for they were adjudged as one of the winners of Agri-Pinoy Rice Achievers Award 2014. Their familiarity regarding the operations and maintenance of irrigation, awareness of the policies, active participation on the programs and activities launched by the Division and other complementing agencies are the factors that made them as "Agri-Pinoy Rice Achievers for 2014".

*"Nu dati ket bassit laeng ti namnamak nga kabaelan mi ti lumaban, ittan ket napigsan ti pakinakem mi ta maminsan lang atoy nga mapasamak iti asosyaon mi isunga aramiden mi amin tapnu agballigi iti asosyon mi nga Mannalon"* (If before I'm despondent about the competition, now it's different, we have gained confidence already. The opportunity will only knock our door once so we better make the most out of it for the prosperity of our association).

Journey of such growth isn't easy, sometimes it is winding but rewarding, like the voyage of Bacnor IA as a neophyte and now as a competitive association. It still has a long way to go but with the unwavering support and immeasurable trust among the farmer-members, no doubt Bacnor IA will and still is the farmers' pillar to success!



## *Limelight* *NIA in my eyes*

■ Pacifico J. Alfaro, Jr., Sr. IDO, Bohol-Cebu IMO

The sun was at its peak when the motorcycle stopped. The lone rider in faded jeans, *maong* jacket and gold-framed RayBan sunglasses looked around wearily, trying to figure out if he had accurately followed the directions given to him by the woman at the old house. He shaded his eyes with his cap and tried to think. "One-half kilometer up the road, you will find him. And when you do, will you please tell him that lunch is waiting for him?" the woman had said. The rider continued looking around. The place is typical of the rustic countryside - rolling terrain, a stream over here, trees over there, and corn fields everywhere. Over the horizon, the hills of Baang looked majestic with laces of thin, white clouds surrounding it. He stared at a clump of coconut trees. No one is there. With the scorching heat of the sun pounding the earth, no sign of life stirred anywhere.

The rider, Leto Quitoles, was about to leave when a movement under a bush caught his attention. A burly man in his early twenties emerged, naked except for rags that disguised as pants. The man carried a mallet on his left hand and a huge boulder on his shoulder. "Excuse me, are you Mr. Pacifico J. Alfaro, Jr.?" Quitoles asked. The man stared at him for a few seconds, wide-eyed and unsure. Suddenly, his sun-beaten face lit up and broke into a smile.

This was what exactly happened on that fateful day of April 5, 1989. I was the man with a mallet and clad only in pants. As a result of my job application at the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), the NIA Bohol Provincial Irrigation Office, Leto had on that day personally delivered a letter inviting me to visit NIA Tagbilaran to undergo a set of written examination and panel interview. Already a family man at an early age, the encounter marked a turning point of my life.

Born to poor parents, my father being a road maintenance man while my mother tried to supplement my father's small income by corn farming, I literally labored my way through elementary and high school. I helped my mother in the farm before and after school hours. For five or ten centavos a day, I worked in our neighbours' farms on weekends and holidays. Had it not been because of the academic scholarship I received as a result of passing the Xavier University (Ateneo de Cagayan) academic scholarship examination, I couldn't have gone to college and I wouldn't be where I am today.

Yes, I already had a family of my own during college. To dwell on my motives at that time is not the subject of this story, but the fact that I have several mouths to feed even before I had the capacity to do so is worth mentioning here because it provided me the biggest single motivation and the fundamental driving force of my existence -- that one has to fight against all odds, to shed blood, sweat and tears, and even give up his own life, so that his loved ones will earn the right to live.

Because of the lack of job opportunities in Tagbilaran City, I went straight after graduation from college to breaking up boulders into one-inch pieces of stones for sale as aggregate to local construction companies.

My earnings were barely enough to provide food for my young brood of four. For three long years, this was my life, before Leto Quitoles arrived that day to deliver the letter that changed my life.

Aside from God, NIA has been my saviour, my rescuer, my mentor, my parent and my friend. The agency saved me from a lifetime of hard manual labour. It rescued me from the perpetual bondage to poverty by providing me the means to buy the necessities of life. It taught me

to be humble and always be of service to others. It sheltered me in its folds during my difficult times, but also reprimanded me when I did something wrong. And, above all, as a friend always does, it rejoiced at my accomplishments and triumphs, cried with me when I failed, hugged me when I'm sad, and laughed with me when I'm happy. For me, NIA has been and will always be more than a virtual, hypothetical entity; it is for me a throbbing, breathing, vital being.

My experiences with NIA and my co-workers were varied -- some were happy, some were sad -- but all were memorable. I can still remember the time, way back in 1990, when my colleagues not only supported me financially in my plans to marry my long-time live-in partner with whom I had 2 daughters already but also acted as wedding planners, sponsors, cooks, waiters, and drivers during the wedding.

In the subsequent break-up of said marriage in 1997, they were also the ones backing me up, inspiring me and giving me the courage to move on with my life. There were also times of celebrations, of clinking glasses, of bereavement, of pain. These experiences did not, in any way, diminish even an iota of the stature of NIA in my mind. Instead, it only helped prop up NIA's image in my imagination to a whole new level.

"Yes, I am," I said to Leto Quitoles on that fateful day when we first met, still smiling despite the heat of the sun. He then handed me the most awe-inspiring, most important, most life-changing letter I have ever received in my life.

Light-hearted and full of hope for the future, I went home that day to a tasty, hot lunch only a mother could prepare for her beloved son.

**“ Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life. ”**

**- Confucius**

They say if you love what you are doing, you won't feel tired; you'll be efficient, and productive, and fulfilled... successful... etc. etc.

But, do you really need to love your job? After all, work is work. It won't love you back. In fact, most people in the country end up being in a job they don't really like. *“Ang importante, sumusweldo ka...”*

### **1. Love your job because...**

Aside from the fact that your job gives you the money that you need, you spend 8 hours or more at work. You actually devote more of your time at work than with your family. If you don't love what you do, you'll feel upset, tired, and stressed. That's not healthy! You'll be filled with negative vibes and soon you'll look older than your age.

Imagine going to work and you literally count the hours before break time, and leaving the office. If you love what you do, you enjoy it! *Mas mabilis ang oras.* Even if you have done many things within the day, it's ok. You feel accomplished!

### **2. Love your job because it feels good...**

You won't be good at something if you are not passionate about it. Love what you do and put your best effort in your task. Finish it and be proud. Imagine the feeling of accomplishing something on time and is worth presenting. *Ang sarap 'di ba?* Soon enough you'll reap the fruits of your hard work. A promotion may be?

# Love your JOB

■ Aize C. Toribio, PAIS-C.O.

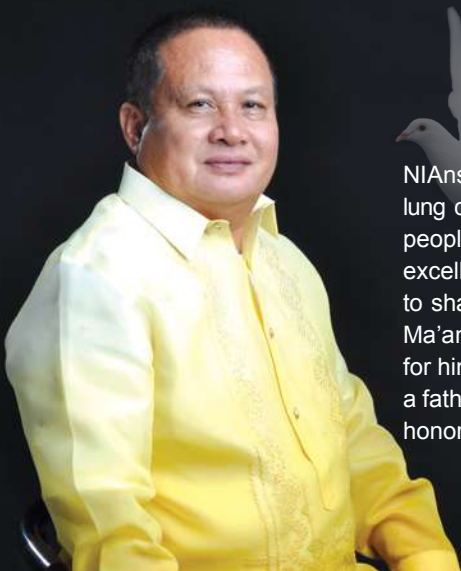
### **3. Love your job because somebody needs you...**

In our case, being employees of the National Irrigation Administration, our primary stakeholders are the farmers. Love your job because the farmers need you. No matter what position you hold in the agency, you are still a part of it. Love your job not just for yourself, but also for others. Just like how the farmers work not just to feed their families, but also to feed all of us.#

### **Enjoy your job... Enjoy your life.**

So, what to do when you do not love your job or you simply fell out of love?

If you cannot handle it anymore and you have other options, go fall in love with another job. Sometimes, you just have to let go and move on. Or you just have to be positive, think of the reasons why you are working in the first place. Think about your family, and yourself. Think about your stakeholders too.



## **ENGR. DEXTER G. PATROCINIO**

*1954 - 2015*

NIAans were shocked to learn the demise of Engr. Dexter G. Patrocinio as he succumbed to lung cancer that early morning of January 6, 2015. So many fond memories of him remained to people whom he led and worked with. Though a recipient of various awards, proof of his work excellence and achievements, Sir Dexter remained modest, accommodating, and always willing to share wisdom and insights to whoever asked of him. In trying times and with loving wife, Ma'am Erica, he kept his dignity and hoped that all things shall come to pass. It is appointed for him to meet his Creator. Nevertheless, his brief stay left an indelible mark in our hearts, as a father, a brother, a co-worker, a friend, a person. His gentle and loving spirit lives on as he is honored in our memories. Sir Dex, farewell...- lrp

## Eat fish and stay healthy.

### TWO KINDS OF FISH

#### Oily.

- Salmon, sardines, trout, mackerel, herring, eel, fresh tuna, anchovies, swordfish.

- Contain heart-protecting omega-3 fatty acids; more likely to contain pollutants

#### Non-oily, or white

- Cod, haddock, whiting, flounder and other flatfish, catfish, red snapper, sea bass, canned tuna.

- Same calorie and protein content as oily fish fewer omega-3's.

Source: U.K Food Standards

Source: Tacio, Henrylito D.

Health & Fitness, March 5, 2015



## Love your heart

So you can Love Out Loud!

You can make your Valentine's Day celebration during weekends or every so often. And because February is love month, let me share to you these ideas on how to make your day a Valentine's Day to those we love especially with our kids.

#### Eat with Love.

Make a dinner together using only foods that are red in color. Don't forget to include kid-friendly foods like red velvet cupcakes.

#### Family movie date night.

After enjoying your special family dinner, why not end your night with a family movie? Consider a movie that is child friendly.

#### Sharing your Love.

Show your kids what love is truly all about by sharing it and volunteering together at a local food shelf, dog shelter or nursing home. The nursing home residents will love seeing the bright, happy young faces.

#### Secret "exchange gift of Love".

Try a secret exchange gift of love with small handmade gifts and candy. Ask each family member to pick a name (*bunutan*). The gifts must all be 'Love-themed'. This will give you and your kids an opportunity to be crafty and creative.

Think outside of the box to come up with the perfect gift for your love ones. (Like baking heart-shaped cookies, red and pink hand-made bracelets, V-day photo frames, etc.). Every member of the family will love having their very own special love gift

#### Sweet love treats scavenger hunt.

A fun way to celebrate Love's Day with the kids is through a scavenger hunt. Provide them with a map or leave clues around the house that lead to yummy love treats and cards. If you have more than one child, try giving your kids different maps for different surprises to keep it interesting, competitive and fun.

#### Tree of Love.

Trees aren't just for Christmas alone. Pick up an artificial tree, spray it pink or white and decorate it as a family "Love" tree with handmade decorations in pink and red paper hearts, pink lights and family photos. Creating the "ornaments" of love will ensure an afternoon of fun!

Valentine's Day is a special time to teach kids important lessons about loving and serving others. Modelling love through shared activities has a profound impact on kids. - (Excerpts from: Jennifer Chung/ Kinsights.com) / Maria Luisa Frias, PAIS-CO

So, Love Out Loud everyone!

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