

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK**

**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR. AT THE TURNOVER
CEREMONY OF VARIOUS OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT OF
THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION (NIA)**

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Maraming salamat sa ating Kalihim ng Department of Agriculture, Secretary Kiko Laurel sa iyong pagpakilala.

[Please, magsi-upo po tayo.]

Nandito rin po, the House Speaker who was instrumental in making sure that the budget was restored so that we are able to do this at napakahalaga nito. *[applause]* Pasalamat tayo sa ating House Speaker, Speaker Martin Romualdez. Siyempre kailangan natin batiin ang ating NIA Administrator Engineer Eddie Guillen *[applause]*; andito rin po ang ating Pampanga Governor, Governor Delta is also here and together with the Vice Governor, Vice Governor Nanay Baby Pineda *[applause]*; Municipal Mayor of Mexico, Pampanga, Mayor Rodencio Gonzales *[applause]*; and of course, ang talagang pinuntahan natin dito at kayo talaga ang magiging --- aming inaasahan na tutulong at gagamitin lahat itong mga gamit na ito, at gagamitin para mas pagandahin ang ating irigasyon, ang ating patubig sa buong Pilipinas, ang ating mga irrigators' association, at ang ating farmers beneficiaries *[applause]*; my fellow workers in government; and of course, our partners in the private sector; ladies and gentlemen, magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat.

Today, we witness the turnover of the second tranche of the operations and maintenance equipment under the National Irrigation Administration's Three-Year Re-Fleeting Program.

Itong programang ito ay this is a realization of our commitment to the efficient and effective functioning of our irrigation systems.

This goes beyond just the provisions of new [machineries]; it also empowers our NIA regional offices, the irrigators' associations, [and] our farmer beneficiaries to ensure the sustainability of our irrigation systems to avoid losses and to promote more efficient use of water resources that will in turn, produce better and more crops.

Last December 2023, we distributed 141 units of excavators amounting to an estimated 776 million pesos. That was the first tranche [of equipment] turned over to the 17 NIA regional offices.

Now, these equipment are now being used for the rehabilitation, preventive maintenance, and repair of irrigation facilities.

Today, we distribute 148 units of heavy equipment such as excavators, dump trucks, [and] truck-tractors with trailers to the NIA Regional Offices around the country.

By 2025, we will roll out the third tranche of equipment, amounting to around one billion pesos. *[applause]*

This investment in our irrigation infrastructure attests to our unwavering commitment to supporting the backbone of our economy — the agriculture sector.

Through our re-fleeting program, we can instantly repair and build more irrigation facilities that were damaged by natural calamities, [and] stand strong against the challenges of shifting climate change.

It is more important now as many parts of the country are still recovering from the onslaught of Typhoon Carina and Butchoy.

Of course, the provision of these machineries is just one of the NIA's efforts to ensure food security. Its bigger role is in the provision of water for crops through the construction and repair of irrigation facilities.

With these [machineries] and with these equipment to optimize our irrigation systems, the NIA has provided services to more than half of our National Irrigation Systems and Communal Irrigation Systems.

In areas where dam construction is not feasible or where there is a need to pump water to irrigate farmlands, the NIA has provided renewable energy-driven irrigation systems.

We will not stop to find solutions that work for our farmers. We remain steadfast in our efforts to employ sustainable technologies to meet our irrigation needs.

Sa ating mga magsasaka, saksi tayo ngayon sa isang bagong yugto sa pagsulong ng irigasyon at agrikultura sa ilalim ng isang Bagong Pilipinas.

Ating pinapalawig ang mga makabagong pamamaraan sa pagsasaka at sa patubig; pinapalakas ang ugnayan sa pagitan ng ating mga magsasaka at ng pamahalaan; at binibigyan natin ng suporta ang ating mga magsasaka upang makamit ninyo ang inyong mga pangarap at adhikain.

Bilang kapalit, sana po ay patuloy po kayong magpupursigi upang paunlarin ang inyong mga sakahan at nang sa gayon ay magbunga ng masaganang ani ang inyong mga pagsisikap.

*Tunay nga po na basta sama-sama,
[mapagtatagumpayan] natin ang kahit anumang pagsubok. Sa ating pagkakaisa, lalo pa
[nating mapalalakas ang] sektor ng agrikultura para sa kinabukasan ng ating bansa.*

*Nais ko rin na malaman ninyo [na] kailanman, hindi po namin kayo pababayaan.
[applause] Habang pinauunlad at ginagawa nating moderno ang sektor ng agrikultura,
hindi natin [kakalimutan] at iiwanan ang bawat magsasakang Pilipino. [applause]*

*Patuloy po tayong naghahanap ng mga solusyon upang mapabuti ang gawaing
pagsasaka at mapataas ang inyong ani at ang inyong kita.*

*Kaya tayo po ay magtulungan upang makamit ang isang maunlad at masaganang
Bagong Pilipinas.*

Maraming, maraming salamat po! [applause]

Mabuhay ang ating mga magsasaka!

Mabuhay po kayong lahat! Mabuhay ang Bagong Pilipinas! [applause]

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