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Solar firm gives back to Ilocos Norte host communities

By Leilanie Adriano

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Solar farm in Currimao, Ilocos Norte (*PNA file photo*)

LAOAG CITY—Local residents in the province of Ilocos Norte continue to benefit from the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects of renewable energy firms here as another financial assistance worth PHP353,000 has been turned over to the provincial government.

Leah Blas, the newly-installed provincial budget officer, said on Tuesday the move meant to assist the province in providing various social services to the people who need it most.

Blas said the financial assistance has been proposed to be used to boost the continuing supplementary feeding program for malnourished children of Ilocos Norte.

"Based on the project statement, we have recommended to the governor that the donated amount will be utilized for supplementary feeding," she said in a phone interview.

To facilitate the deed of donation from renewable energy firm Nuevo Solar Energy Corp. (NSEC), a resolution authorizing Ilocos Norte Governor Matthew Joseph Manotoc has been passed at the Sangguniang Panlalawigan on May 15.

NSEC, a joint venture between Manila Electric Co. subsidiary MGen Renewable Energy Inc. (MGreen) and Singapore-based Vena Energy officially inaugurated the 83.3-megawatt (MW) Currimao-2 solar project last March 30 in Barangay Paguludan-Salindeg, Currimao, Ilocos Norte. The area covers around 24 hectares of forestland.

Even before the start of solar project 2, the Currimao-based solar company has also donated some PHP300,000 in support of the young math wizards at the Sarrat National High School who joined an international competition participated by around 14 countries in Thailand. The amount was used to cover the airfare, accommodations, and other expenditures of the delegates.

"We are very grateful for all the support we are getting from various education stakeholders," said Michael Malvar, one of the coaches of the students in an earlier interview.

In 2014, the Ilocos Norte board passed a CSR ordinance requiring all business investors in the province to submit their proposed CSR projects prior to the passage of a resolution of endorsement and support by the board.

Among the biggest donors of CSR projects in the province include renewable energy firms with billions of investments both in solar and wind farm installations located in the towns of Pagudpud, Bangui, Burgos and Currimao. **(PNA)**

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