

Philippines National Food Hub to stimulate food and agro-industrial corridor

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The PHP8.5-billion National Food Hub at the Clark Airport Complex is expected to stimulate the food and agro-industrial corridor in the northern part of Luzon, Alfredo Pascual, Secretary, of the Philippines Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) said.

Pascual and Clark International Airport Corp. (CIAC) president and chief executive officer Arrey Perez signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in Makati City for the development of the 60-hectare National Food Hub, which is part of DTI's three-year Food Logistics Action Agenda.

According to the Philippines news agency, the hub is the country's premium wholesale market and distribution hub for high-value and top-quality food products. Its services include food processing, warehousing, trading, market services, international shipping, and research and quality control.

Early this month, the DTI signed an MOU with the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) for the Integrated Rice Supply Chain Development Program.

The DTI and other private sector partners have also set up the Nueva Vizcaya Agricultural Terminal (NVAT) in Cagayan Valley.

Pascual said the mega food centre, with its proximity to the Subic Port, can also boost the halal food industry since industry players can use the food hub's services for exporting their products.

The National Food Hub is among CIAC's seven flagship projects, including the Clark Entertainment and Events Centre, Urban Renewal and Heritage Conservation Program, Clark Direct Access Link, Entertainment and Events Centre Connector Road,

the new CIAC Headquarters, and logistics hub.

Perez said CIAC is eyeing the food hub as a public-private partnership (PPP) project.

A feasibility study for the food hub is already being done by the PPP Centre and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and results are expected to come out by the third quarter of the year. The bidding process will soon follow.

Perez said the first phase of the food hub project is expected to be delivered before the end of the Marcos administration.