Philippines invests P190 Mn to modernise fish ports and strengthen coastal economy

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Twin municipal fish ports in Davao del Sur are expected to reduce post-harvest losses, enhance food security and unlock new investment opportunities across the fisheries value chain

The Philippine government is investing nearly P190 million to develop two modern municipal fish ports in Davao del Sur, reinforcing its strategy to modernise fisheries infrastructure, minimise post-harvest losses and strengthen food security while generating new economic opportunities for coastal communities.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr., accompanied by Philippine Fisheries Development Authority (PFDA) Acting General Manager Glen A. Pangapalan, inspected the ongoing construction of the fish ports in Malalag and Sta. Cruz, underscoring the government's commitment to transforming municipal landing sites into integrated fisheries and trading hubs.

The investment forms part of the PFDA's broader infrastructure modernisation agenda aimed at strengthening post-harvest management, improving supply chain efficiency and creating commercially viable ecosystems that support fish trading, value addition and private-sector investment across the fisheries sector.

Describing the projects as strategic investments in national food security, Tiu Laurel said modern fish ports play a critical role in reducing post-harvest losses while improving the movement of seafood from coastal communities to consumer markets, ultimately enhancing incomes for fisherfolk and strengthening the country's food supply.

Pangapalan said the PFDA remains focused on developing world-class fisheries infrastructure capable of improving market access, increasing operational efficiency and stimulating inclusive economic growth throughout coastal regions.

He noted that each new fish port represents a long-term investment in the future of Philippine fisheries by creating an integrated environment where fishers, traders, processors and logistics providers can operate more efficiently while strengthening the entire fisheries value chain. Enhanced post-harvest facilities, he added, will reduce product losses, improve product quality and facilitate more efficient seafood distribution nationwide.

The Malalag Municipal Fish Port, located in Barangay Baybay, completed its first phase at the end of 2024, delivering the municipality's first modern fish landing and trading facility. Construction of the second phase is now underway and is scheduled for completion during the first quarter of 2027. The expansion will include reclamation works, site development, utility infrastructure, a trading hall, warehouse, administration building and additional operational facilities designed to enhance fish handling, storage and distribution capacity.

Meanwhile, the Sta. Cruz Municipal Fish Port in Barangay Bato is expected to become operational in early 2027. The facility will incorporate a market hall, ice storage facilities, food hub, administration building, internal road network and supporting infrastructure that will centralise fish landing, trading and post-harvest operations while improving market connectivity for local fishing communities.

Beyond strengthening food security, the government expects the projects to generate substantial economic spillovers by creating employment during both construction and operations while encouraging fresh investment in cold-chain logistics, seafood processing, storage infrastructure and ancillary marine industries.

The twin projects also reflect a broader evolution in Philippine agricultural policy—from focusing primarily on production growth to strengthening post-harvest infrastructure and supply chain resilience. By improving the efficiency of fish handling and distribution from landing sites to retail markets, the government aims to preserve product quality, reduce food waste, enhance seafood affordability for consumers and improve the long-term economic sustainability of coastal livelihoods.