

'Blue baby' Lyka flown to Israel for heart surgery

By Dexter R. Matilla
Contributor

EIGHT-MONTH-OLD LYKA MASGAY OF LA Trinidad, Benguet, was flown to Israel yesterday morning for a heart operation made possible by an Israeli-based, non-profit organization, Save A Child's Heart (SACH).

Lyka was born with a congenital heart disease and most of her early months were spent at the Saint Louis University Hospital of the Sacred Heart in Baguio City. According to Yaniv Revach, the Israel Embassy deputy chief of mission, it was the baby's grandmother, Remedios, a caregiver in Israel, who had approached SACH for help.

Lyka was accompanied by her mother, Agustina, and Italian doctor Eldar Schneider, who will perform the operation at the Wolfson Medical Center in Holon, Israel.

First RP beneficiary

Schneider explained that Lyka, the first Filipino to be sponsored by SACH, was suffering from a transposition of the great arteries with ventricular septal defect and patent foramen ovale.

The two main arteries—the aorta and the pulmonary artery—in Lyka's heart are reversed. This causes her to turn blue as it affects the way blood circulates in her body.

The airfare was paid by Remedios, while the cost of the operation, hospitalization and medicines, as well as the accommodation would be shouldered by SACH.

The Masgay family, however, still has to raise \$10,000 to pay for other expenses that SACH would not be able to cover. Donations may be deposited to the account of Agustina C. Masgay, Account No. 0790303272 at Banco de Oro, Upper Session Road, Luneta Hill, Baguio City.

SACH was born in 1995 through the vision, relentless energy and leadership of the late Dr. Ami Cohen. With its slogan "we can and we should," SACH has repaired the hearts of more than 2,000 children from all over the world.