## **CLIPPINGS FOR TODAY JUNE 13, 2024**

## A. MANILA BULLETIN:

AFP braces for China's trespass rule taking effect on June 15

### **B. THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

DA sends teams to 8 countries exporting meat

DA: Sugar price drops by P8/kilo

DA bans poultry products from Michigan

DA-Cordillera gears up for La Niña impact

Papal nuncio calls for respect for international rules

## C. PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA imposes ban on birds, poultry products coming from Michigan state

DA bans poultry imports from Michigan

## **D. BUSINESS WORLD:**

Eight countries seek clearance to export meat to Philippines

## E. MANILA STANDARD:

Lawmaker urges gov't to increase farmers' subsidy

DA forms TWG to streamline agri importation

## F. THE MANILA TIMES:

Marcos inaugurates solar-powered irrigation system

Cargill reaffirms \$2.6-B investment in PH

Agri-based radio program kicks off in Region 2

Tiu Laurel forms group to facilitate agri imports

Students develop honey production machine

## **G. BUSINESS MIRROR:**

Despite El Niño damage, La Niña risk, PHL can hit high growth goals in 2025-PBBM Vietnam, Thailand rice prices higher in January to May-FAO

## H. PILIPINO STAR NGAYON:

ACT Agri-Kaagapay, nakiisa sa parada ng Kalayaan 2024

Bird import mula Michigan, ban muna - DA

## I. REMATE:

Poultry imports galing Michigan ipinagbawal ng DA

Farmers group sa rice tariff cuts: NEDA 'di nakipag-ugnayan sa amin

### **MANILA BULLETIN:**

## AFP braces for China's trespass rule taking effect on June 15

## BY MARTIN SADONGDONG

Jun 12, 2024 04:30 PM



Fishermen cast their net as a floating marker serving as a barrier is installed by Chinese vessels at Bajo de Masinloc on Sept. 20, 2023. (Photo by PCG)

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has taken initiatives to prevent China's maritime forces from arresting Filipinos who will access certain areas in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) as a new "trespass" rule by the Asian superpower is set to be implemented this week.

China has empowered its coast guard to arrest foreign nationals who are deemed "trespassers" in areas under its jurisdiction from 30 to 60 days, even without a trial, through the implementation of a new order which is set to take effect on Saturday, June 15.

"We have increased our patrols, we are involving our partners and allies. We are not the only one concerned, even other countries are concerned about that," said Commodore Roy Vincent Trinidad, Philippine Navy spokesperson for West Philippine Sea.

He said the AFP has coordinated with relevant agencies such as the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) to ensure that Filipino

fishermen can still cast their nets in the West Philippine Sea despite China's new order, and no Filipino will be detained by China for such regulation.

"Nothing will happen. The actions right now of the Philippine Navy, the Armed Forces, the Coast Guard, BFAR and all other maritime players of the Philippine government are [aimed at] preventing such a situation," the PN spokesperson noted.

China is claiming almost the entire South China Sea, including portions within the 200-nautical mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Philippines.

Aside from China and the Philippines, several nations have overlapping territorial claims in the disputed waters such as Taiwan, Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam.

"There are actions and messages being sent out for all players in the maritime domain to observe the rules-based international order," Trinidad stated.

The order was introduced by China after civil-society group "Atin Ito" Coalition, which advocates for the establishment of civilian presence in the West Philippine Sea, conducted a 100-boat convoy in Bajo de Masinloc (Scarborough or Panatag Shoal) last month.

The national government earlier criticized China's new trespass rule, saying that it violates the rights of other claimant-countries in the South China Sea, as well as the international law, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and the United Nations (UN) charter.

 $\underline{https://mb.com.ph/2024/6/12/afp-braces-for-china-s-trespass-rule-taking-effect-on-june-\underline{15}$ 

### THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

## DA sends teams to 8 countries exporting meat

Jasper Emmanuel Arcalas - The Philippine Star

June 13, 2024 | 12:00am



A vendor arranges meat up for sale at Paco Public Market in Manila on February 1, 2024.

STAR / Edd Gumban

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) is sending eight teams to various meat-exporting countries to determine if their products are safe for human consumption and do not pose a threat to domestic livestock and poultry population.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel formed eight inspection missions for accreditation of foreign meat establishments (FMEs) in Argentina, Denmark, India, Russia, Spain, Sweden, the United States and Uruguay.

Under existing rules and regulations, FMEs must be accredited by the DA before they can ship meat and meat products to the country. FME accreditations are

regularly reviewed to ensure that they comply with international and domestic food safety laws and standards.

The mission will entail on-site inspection and validation of documents of the FMEs, according to the DA. The inspection teams are composed of technical experts on border control and animal health from the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), an attached agency of the DA.

The inspection teams were given a month after the completion of their missions to submit their report to the DA Accreditation Review Body (ARB) for the evaluation of the accreditation of the FMEs.

Based on the latest rules by the DA, the funding for the on-site inspection missions will be shouldered by both the DA and the foreign country.

The US and Spain are two of the largest meat exporters to the Philippines after Brazil. The US shipped over 220,000 metric tons of meat products to the Philippines last year while Spain exported over 144,000 MT, based on BAI data.

Argentina, Denmark, India and Sweden are already accredited exporters of various meat products to the Philippines.

There are no currently accredited FMEs from Russia and Uruguay, according to government documents.

 $\underline{https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/06/13/2362371/da-sends-teams-8-countries-exporting-meat}$ 

#### THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

## DA: Sugar price drops by P8/kilo

**Bella Cariaso** - The Philippine Star

June 13, 2024 | 12:00am



Based on the DA's monitoring of Metro Manila markets, sugar prices ranged between P74 and P92 per kilo compared to P74 and P100 on June 6.

Edd Gumban, File

MANILA, Philippines — The retail price of refined sugar has dropped by P8 to P92 per kilo from P100 per kilo, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Based on the DA's monitoring of Metro Manila markets, sugar prices ranged between P74 and P92 per kilo compared to P74 and P100 on June 6.

Washed sugar ranged between P64 and P90 per kilo and brown sugar between P62 and P90.

White sweeteners' retail price went down to P90 per kilo on June 10.

Sugar farmers have backed the Philippine Sugar Millers Association (PSMA)'s position that there is no need to import sugar.

The Philippines has enough inventory of local sweeteners to last beyond the crop year's end, it noted.

The combined sugar volume produced by mills that are PSMA members reached over 65 percent, according to Sugar Council spokesman Rafael Coscolluela.

The Sugar Council is a coalition of three sugarcane producer federations: the Confederation of Sugar Producers Associations, the National Federation of Sugarcane Planters and the Panay Federation of Sugarcane Farmers.

The council accounts for 67 percent of the country's sugar production.

More raw sugar and refined sugar have been produced than the previous year, Coscolluela said.

Inventory levels have risen, with raw sugar up by 26 percent and refined sugar up by 35 percent, he added.

The inventory covered over 135,000 tons or 2.7 million bags of imported refined sugar brought in last year that have not even been withdrawn or used, he said.

"The Sugar Council found equally disturbing the allegation that withdrawals for imported refined sugar shot up by 16 percent while withdrawals for locally refined sugar plummeted by over seven percent," Coscolluela said.

Demand for raw sugar dropped by over four percent as a result, much to the disadvantage of local farmers, he noted.

https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/06/13/2362372/da-sugar-price-drops-p8kilo

#### THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

## DA bans poultry products from Michigan

**Bella Cariaso** - The Philippine Star

June 13, 2024 | 12:00am



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. issued Memorandum Order 24 due to an outbreak of the highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 virus in Michigan in the US.

Philstar.com / Jovannie Lambayan

MANILA, Philippines — Importation of poultry products from Michigan has been temporarily banned amid the outbreak of bird flu.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. issued Memorandum Order 24 due to an outbreak of the highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 virus in Michigan in the US.

Domestic and wild birds and their products, including poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen are covered by the ban.

Bird flu viruses do not normally infect humans but sporadic human infections with avian influenza viruses have occurred, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Meanwhile, the Philippine government should consider increasing the trigger price of its price-based special safeguard (SSG) duties on imported chicken to curb imports and protect local producers, according to non-profit Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM).

The SSG provides immediate and temporary protection to local producers against import surges or cheap importation of competing products, the PRRM said.

A price-based SSG is a trade remedy that allows the country to impose an additional duty on an imported product whose price falls below the established trigger price.

The present trigger prices for price-based SSG-eligible products were computed based on the weighted average of their import prices from 1986 to 1988, as per the World Trade Organization Agreement on Agriculture (WTO-AoA).

Imported chicken's current trigger price, including whole chicken and cuts, is P93.96 per kilo.

"Strengthening and increasing safeguard duties imposed on chicken give immediate temporary relief to the local broiler sector, without adversely affecting chicken retail price," PRRM president Edicio dela Torre said yesterday.

The trigger price and its implementation should be reviewed every six months "when excess supply is expected to go above 60 days in inventory based on Department of Agriculture forecasts," Dela Torre proposed.

At present, the government's hands are tied to WTO-AoA's existing rules. – **Jasper Emmanuel Arcalas** 

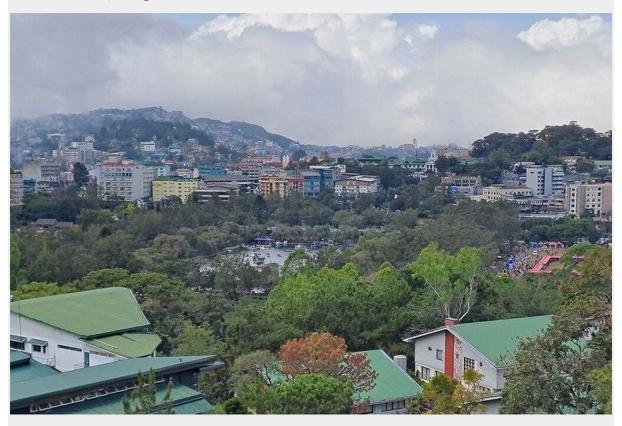
 $\frac{https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/06/13/2362424/da-bans-poultry-products-michigan}{}$ 

#### THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

## DA-Cordillera gears up for La Niña impact

Artemio Dumlao - Philstar.com

June 12, 2024 | 5:34pm



This February 2023 photo shows the skyline of Baguio City overlooking Burnham Park.

LMP 2001 / Wikimedia

BAGUIO CITY, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) in the Cordillera region has started an information campaign to prepare for the potential impact of La Niña.

Danilo Daguio, DA-Cordillera Regional Technical Director for Operations, announced the reactivation of their disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) operations center.

The move follows a warning from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) indicating a 69% likelihood of La Niña affecting the highland region from July to September this year.

Daguio explained that the center will monitor the situation of standing crops in the region.

"What we will be focusing on this La Niña are the areas are those in the low-lying production areas that are prone to flooding or those normally located in river dams and creeks, aside from those areas prone to landslides," he said.

The DRRM Operations Center is currently overseeing production areas in Benguet, Mountain Province, and parts of Ifugao, aside from updating the standing crops every two weeks to determine the stage of plant growth in the different production areas in the region.

The data gathered will help estimate potential damage values in case of a calamity.

According to Daguio, they are preparing the information and education campaign materials about La Niña, which will be disseminated through multimedia platforms.

Visits to vulnerable areas are being scheduled to meet with farmers and local government partners, providing guidance on necessary actions.

Daguio also said that coordinations are being conducted with the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. for a possible insurance mechanism of affected crops during calamities to replace incurred expenses in farmers' production activities.

As part of its yearly preparations for calamities and disasters, seed reserves are being prepared when there is an impending calamity.

Rice, corn and vegetable seeds are readily available, particularly during times of calamities that will be distributed to affected farmers for them to replace their plants affected by a calamity.

"Farm inputs like fertilizers, bio-fertilizers and post-harvest facilities wherein those established by DA in the past are being monitored to make sure that these facilities are operational such as green houses and dryers," Daguio said.

https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/06/12/2362343/da-cordillera-gears-la-nia-impact

#### THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

## Papal nuncio calls for respect for international rules

**Alexis Romero** - The Philippine Star

June 13, 2024 | 12:00am



President Marcos and Papal Nuncio Charles Brown toast during the vin d'honneur or formal reception for diplomats at Malacañang yesterday.

Ryan Baldemor

MANILA, Philippines — In the presence of China's envoy, President Marcos and Papal Nuncio Archbishop Charles Brown yesterday highlighted the importance of respect for international law, with Marcos citing the Filipinos' "sacrosanct" mandate to defend the country from "those who will try to cross the red lines."

Brown, dean of the diplomatic corps, said the world was experiencing "dangerous polarization" when former president Diosdado Macapagal proposed to change the date of the Philippines' Independence Day.

He lamented that the present geopolitical situation is not so different.

"The end of history did not arrive in the 1990s. History has continued. Polarization and violent conflicts resulting from it are a reality at this moment," the papal nuncio said at the Independence Day vin d'honneur or formal reception for diplomats

Marcos, in his remarks during the toast, said the Philippines pursues an independent foreign policy through international engagements that seek to boost existing alliances and build new partnerships with like-minded states.

"Our foreign policy is grounded on the continuing promotion and work for peace, and the continuing promotion and work for our national interest," Marcos told members of the diplomatic community at Malacañang.

"On the global stage, we have taken positions in support of the rule of law and of the rules-based international order, grounded on the principles laid out in the UN Charter and multilateral conventions," he said.

Marcos said the Philippines would promote diplomacy and dialogue, and strive to enhance engagements with bilateral, regional and multilateral partners, "especially in areas where cooperation has not yet reached its full potential."

While emphasizing the need for stronger alliances, Marcos said the Philippines continues to fight for its independence and defend everything that it rightfully owns.

"On many occasions, great trials have all the more strengthened our resolve and unified our people because as I have said, 'Filipinos do not yield,'" the President said.

"The struggle for Philippine independence continues to reverberate to this day, not against colonial oppression, but against modern-day challenges."

Marcos said Filipinos draw inspiration from the valor, resilience and untiring spirit of their forefathers as they tackle "new challenges" confronting the country.

"Today's reception is more than just a commemoration of the birth of the Philippine Republic – the first in Asia – but a strong affirmation of our century-old nationhood, and of our collective duty as Filipinos to safeguard what our forefathers have fought and died for, so we may carry on our sacrosanct mandate to protect our country and to defend everything that is (rightfully) ours from those who will try to cross (the red lines)," he said.

"We must dig deep into our valiant past, draw strength from the heroism of our forefathers and let this heritage of selflessness propel us forward into the future," he added.

Brown suggested the holding of dialogues to make the world prosperous and safe for children, citing the peace process in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

"(Patience), serious dialogue, together with a respect for international law and a respect for legitimate diversity. Engaging with others, and particularly those with whom we profoundly disagree, is the surest way of avoiding the catastrophe of escalation," the prelate said.

Marcos and Brown made the remarks before several envoys, including Chinese Ambassador Huang Xilian, whose country has drawn widespread flak over its aggressive actions in the West Philippine Sea, the part of the South China Sea within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone and continental shelf.

In the same speech, Marcos touted the gains of the economy and the government's handling of inflation.

"Despite woes brought by global inflation, the Philippines has still managed to curb inflation to a reasonable, almost manageable level," Marcos said.

"It remains unfortunately our greatest problem and this inflation is brought by forces that we cannot control," he said.

Marcos noted that the country's inflation is at 3.5 percent, still within the government's target band of two to four percent.

He cited the Philippines' favorable credit rating, which leads to more accessible financing for the government's programs.

"I (am) also happy to note that the Philippines continues to enjoy a good... credit rating as an investment destination. We are credited with a stable outlook, which signals (growth momentum) in the medium term," he said.

## Philippine flag raised in West Philippine Sea

Meanwhile, with 12 Chinese vessels hovering nearby, the BRP Teresa Magbanua of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) has raised the country's flag while patrolling in Escoda (Sabina) Shoal in the WPS, to mark the 126th Philippine Independence Day.

Like in previous Independence Day celebrations, the PCG raised the flag in all its districts, stations and vessels.

But what could be the most heartfelt and memorable was the flag-raising ceremony onboard the Magbanua yesterday.

"While our personnel onboard the BRP Teresa Magbanua were having their flagraising ceremony at 8 a.m. of June 12, there were Chinese ships nearby," PCG spokesman Armand Balilo said.

Citing reports, Balilo said there were eight and four Chinese ships in and out of Escoda Shoal, respectively, belonging to the China Coast Guard (CCG) and maritime militia.

## **Bullying**

Fishers' group New Masinloc Fishermen Association (NMFA) said the bullying by the CCG has intensified after China banned fishing activities in areas in the WPS that include the Philippines territory.

NMFA president Leonardo Cuaresma said that Pinoy fishermen are driven away by the CCG and were not allowed near the lagoon in Panatag Shoal.

The Philippines has protested the unilateral ban issued by Beijing, which will start on June 15.

Cuaresma said the number of Chinese ships in Panatag has increased.

"Since the start of the campaign of the government to fight for our sovereignty, even personnel of Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine Navy and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) are being harassed by the Chinese Coast Guard," he said, adding the CCG even pointed guns at some Filipino fishermen.

Cuaresma advised fishermen to sail by groups so they could defend themselves in case the CCG would harass them.

## Navy patrols to intensify

Meanwhile, amid reports of military drills conducted by China in the Philippines EEZ, local maritime agencies have intensified their presence in the area, according to Commodore Roy Vincent Trinidad, Navy spokesman for the WPS.

Trinidad said aside from the Navy, the PCG and BFAR intensified their patrols even before the Chinese conducted military drills on June 2.

"The Philippine Navy had an internal adjustment to allow us to project more ships in our EEZ. It will allow us more patrols and regulation," Trinidad said in an interview with "Storycon" on One News.

He said the military drills conducted by China in the Philippines' EEZ were illegal, noting that freedom of navigation only allows foreign ships to travel from one point to another.

In the case of China's activities, he said they monitored deployment of hovercrafts, launching of helicopters and ship maneuvers.

The drills happened near Escoda Shoal, which is located between Palawan and Ayungin (Second Thomas) shoal, where the grounded BRP Sierra Madre is located.

Trinidad said China made a broadcast in the early morning of June 2 to warn ships in the area that an exercise would be conducted later that day.

## Fight for Philippine territory

Fighting for the country's territory in the WPS is a gift for the next Filipino generation, according to the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency.

NICA chief Ricardo de Leon said the agency, which operates abroad and in all 17 regions in the country, has always been on watch to ensure that policymakers are properly guided and advised.

"The policy of the President is to talk. We have to be rules-based, follow the international law. We have legitimate claims over the West Philippine Sea. The Bajo de Masinloc (Panatag Shoal) is our traditional fishing ground, which is in our exclusive economic zone (EEZ)," De Leon said at the Kapihan sa Manila Bay forum.

He said the Philippines' dispute with China is a regional issue that would affect neighboring nations.

He allayed fears of any armed conflict with China over the maritime dispute, saying the President is an advocate of peace.

## **US** commitment

?The United States remains unwavering in its defense commitments to the Philippines amid rising maritime aggression, according to State Secretary Antony Blinken.

In a statement marking the Philippines' Independence Day, Blinken reaffirmed the longstanding US-Philippines alliance and celebrated the vibrant ties, rooted in the two nations' long and interwoven history and shared sacrifice.

"As we work together to uphold international law in the South China Sea, the United States remains unwavering in our commitment to the defense of the Philippines under the Mutual Defense Treaty," Blinken said.

"More broadly, we remain committed to working alongside the Philippines, as friends, partners and allies, as we strive for a safer, more prosperous world," he said.

The US diplomat said his country is proud of its work with the Philippines to realize the shared ideals as democracies, uphold international law, pursue inclusive and sustainable economic growth and promote human rights. – Evelyn Macairan, Bella Cariaso, Jose Rodel Clapano, Pia Lee-Brago

 $\underline{https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/06/13/2362443/papal-nuncio-calls-respect-international-rules}$ 

## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

## DA imposes ban on birds, poultry products coming from Michigan state

By: Adrian Parungao - @inquirerdotnet

**INQUIRER.net** / 05:04 PM June 12, 2024



INQUIRER FILE PHOTO

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) temporarily banned the importation of wild and domesticated birds as well as poultry from Michigan, United States of America, due to bird flu, the department said on Wednesday.

According to a DA memorandum signed on June 7, the importation of poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs, and semen was temporarily suspended.

The DA said that the order was aimed to protect local poultry supply from the outbreak of H591 flu happening in Michigan.

"Subsequently, US authorities observed the rapid spread of the virus, prompting the broadening of trade restrictions to safeguard the local poultry population," the DA said. Meanwhile, the DA said that noncompliant products will be confiscated, destroyed, returned to their country, or redirected to a third country.

 $\underline{https://global nation.inquirer.net/239338/da-imposes-ban-on-birds-poultry-products-coming-from-michigan-state}$ 

## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

## DA bans poultry imports from Michigan

By: Jordeene B. Lagare - @inquirerdotnet

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 09:05 AM June 12, 2024

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture temporarily banned the entry of poultry products from Michigan, United States following reports of bird flu outbreaks in the said state.

The DA imposed the temporary importation ban through Memorandum Order No. 24 to protect consumers and the local poultry industry.

It covers domestic and wild birds and their products, including poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs, and semen from Michigan.

The rapid spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) subtype H5N1 in the US "in a short period of time since its first laboratory detection necessitates a wider coverage of trade restriction to prevent the entry of HPAI virus and protect the health of the local poultry population," the memo read.

With this order, the agency immediately suspended the processing, evaluation, and issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary import clearance for these commodities.

All shipments from the area covered by the ban that are in transit, loaded, or accepted unto port before the official communication of the DA order to American authorities will be allowed entry, provided that the products were slaughtered or produced 14 days before the first outbreak.

The DA issued the directive as US authorities informed the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) and posted on its official website, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspect Service, that there was an avian influenza outbreak affecting domestic birds.

## State-wide ban

Given the geographical land mass of the US, Philippine and American veterinary authorities agreed in 2016 that a state-wide ban could only be imposed if there are three or more counties affected with avian influenza in one state.

Before the promulgation of MO No. 24, the DA lifted the temporary ban on importing poultry products from Ohio as the threat of bird flu infections is no longer imminent.

American authorities reported to the WOAH that cases of bird flu have "ended with resolved status" and no additional outbreaks have been reported after April 2.

The US is one of the country's major sources of meat imports, along with Brazil and Spain.

Meat imports from the US hit 61.13 million kilograms as of the end of April, mostly pork and chicken, according to data from the Bureau of Animal Industry.

This accounted for 15.4 percent of the 396.38 million kg of imported meat that entered the country during the period.

https://business.inquirer.net/463402/da-bans-poultry-imports-from-michigan

### **BUSINESS WORLD:**

# Eight countries seek clearance to export meat to Philippines

June 12, 2024 | 7:39 pm



#### REUTERS

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said eight countries are seeking approval to export meat to the Philippines.

In a special order, the DA said that it will send inspectors to accredit meat production facilities in the eight countries — Uruguay, India, Argentina, Russia, Denmark, Spain, Sweden, and the US.

Under Administrative Order No. 16 of 2006, prospective exporters are required to apply for accreditation to ship animals, meat, and meat products to the Philippines.

The inspection missions will include technical experts on border control and animal health, and representatives from the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI).

It added that inspectors are to prepare an import risk analysis report within 30 days after conducting on-site inspections and document validation.

"To ensure the health and safety of the consuming public and the domestic livestock and poultry industry, the DA implements a comprehensive set of rules, regulations and procedures guided by appropriate issuances governing pre-border measures," it added.

The DA said accreditation requires on-site assessment of the veterinary services, animal health, and food safety controls of the exporting country.

Meat shipments to the Philippines rose 11.3% to 397 million kilograms during the four months to April. This was led by pork, chicken, and beef, the BAI reported. — **Adrian H. Halili** 

https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/06/12/601439/eight-countries-seek-clearance-to-export-meat-to-philippines/

#### MANILA STANDARD

# Lawmaker urges gov't to increase farmers' subsidy

By Maricel Cruz June 12, 2024, 11:10 pm

Deputy Minority Leader and Basilan Rep. Mujiv Hataman has called on the government to increase the financial subsidy to the country's three million farmers with the planned reduction of the tariff on rice from 35 percent to 15 percent to bring down the price of rice to P29 a kilo.

Hataman, a former governor of the now-defunct ARMM, said that his office is set to file a bill proposing an enhanced protection and more subsidies for Filipino farmers.

He noted that with farmgate prices of palay averaging at P25.21 in February of this year, Filipino rice farmers cannot stand against the price of imported rice in the market once the tariff reduction takes place.

"With this, I call on the government to increase financial subsidies to our rice farmers. ..We are an agricultural country with a slowly dwindling farmer population. We cannot just rely on rice imports," he added.

He also said NFA should only buy from local farmers in the event that it re-acquires its mandate to offer cheaper rice when amendments to the Rice Tariffication Law are enacted into law.

The Basilan lawmaker asked the administration of President Bongbong Marcos to include more farmers in its financial assistance programs such as those under the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), like the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS) and the Ayuda para sa Kapos ang Kita Program (AKAP).

Hataman said the DA has a list of qualified farmers for government subsidies that it can use to target deserving beneficiaries in other social welfare programs of the government.

 $\underline{https://manilastandard.net/news/national/314458808/lawmaker-urges-govt-to-increase-\underline{farmers-subsidy.html}}$ 

### **MANILA STANDARD**

## DA forms TWG to streamline agri importation



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr.

By Othel V. Campos

June 12, 2024, 7:55 pm

The Department of Agriculture (DA) established a technical working group (TWG) to streamline administrative procedures and regulations for agricultural imports.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. said the initiative aims to reduce non-tariff barriers and make it easier for importers to bring in imports.

The TWG will explore ways to simplify or exempt licensed importers from submitting registration requirements when obtaining import licenses.

The TWG, in collaboration with the National Economic and Development Authority, will explore options to allow importation of certain agricultural products exceeding the Minimum Access Volume (MAV) quotas.

The group will work towards reducing or eliminating administrative fees associated with such imports, streamline the process and requirements for obtaining sanitary and

phytosanitary permits, and explore ways to enhance logistics, transportation, distribution and storage systems for imported agricultural products.

Special Order No. 768 mandates DA agencies to publish the streamlined procedures, requirements, and policies in the Official Gazette or a national newspaper to ensure transparency.

The DA aims to create a more efficient and less restrictive environment for agricultural imports, benefiting both importers and consumers.

 $\underline{https://manilastandard.net/business/314458673/da-forms-twg-to-streamline-agriimportation.html}\\$ 

# Marcos inaugurates solar-powered irrigation system

By Kristina Maralit June 13, 2024

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. inaugurated on June 10 the Cabaruan Solar-Powered Pump Irrigation Project (SPIP) in Quirino, Isabela, an initiative he tagged as a "game changer" that could help address rising energy costs and provide more water supply to farmlands.

The Cabaruan SPIP is the biggest solar-powered pump irrigation project in the Philippines and is expected to irrigate 350 hectares of rice fields, benefiting almost 237 farmers.

In his speech, Marcos said the SPIP is only one of the many projects his administration has in place aimed at further developing the agriculture sector in the Philippines.

"If before we used machines run by oil to make water flow from the irrigation canal to the land you till, now we will use the power of the sun. It's free power from the sun, reason we can provide free water for irrigation," the President said in Filipino.

He further said that apart from the little to no cost of energy, farmers would have more areas to plant rice and other grains as the solar panels are directly placed above the irrigation canals.

The Chief Executive reiterated anew that agriculture is one of his administration's top priorities and that he would ensure that the country will be self-sufficient in terms of agricultural products and to avoid a similar incident where the country was confronted by various challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We really should develop the agriculture sector, and we all know that the most important aspect is to increase the yield of our farmers and that will happen with efficient irrigation," he said.

The SPIP allows farmer-beneficiaries to decrease their electricity or fuel expenses by minimizing the use of electric or fuel-powered pumps and increase agricultural production with the ample supply of water coming from it.

The Cabaruan SPIP is a project of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) under the Mangat River Integrated Irrigation System. It was constructed from July 6, 2023 to February 2024 with a total project cost of P65.77 million.

It is the first SPIP in the country to be constructed over an irrigation canal, which relieved farmers from donating a portion of their property. It is also the biggest SPIP nationwide in terms of the number of solar panels, at 1,056.

The system can produce 739,200 watts of power for its two submersible pumps, with each pump capable of discharging 12,800 gallons per minute.

This is in addition to NIA's mass acceptance of 15 solar-powered pump irrigation projects and two small irrigation projects in the region.

Those projects could irrigate 251 hectares of farmlands and could benefit 867 farmers, said the President, adding these are part of 62 solar-powered pump irrigation projects put up in the Cagayan Valley region.

The President said 152 solar-powered pump irrigation projects are also being constructed, with 118 projects to be put up by the government. So far, 82 solar-powered pump irrigation projects were completed last year, he said, vowing to increase that number in the coming years.

 $\underline{https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/06/13/business/agribusiness/marcos-inaugurates-solar-powered-irrigation-system/1951209}$ 

### THE MANILA TIMES

## Cargill reaffirms \$2.6-B investment in PH

By The Manila Times June 13, 2024

THE Philippine unit of Cargill recently marked its 75th year of operating in the country and reaffirmed its commitment to investing around \$2.6 billion in projects to enhance the livelihood of Filipino farmers.

As part of its 75th year celebration, Cargill Philippines launched a tree-planting initiative, engaging all business units nationwide from October 2023 to February 2024. Partnering with local government units, communities and nongovernmental organizations, Cargill Philippines planted a total of 7,500 trees, emphasizing the 75 years the company has been operating in the Philippines.

"We have reaffirmed our commitment to our customers, employees and communities through a yearlong celebration of gratitude and growth. From cultivating strong partnerships with industry leaders to fostering a vibrant workplace culture and giving back to nature, every step we have taken has been a testament to our unwavering dedication to making a positive impact," said Mija Darlene Cachapero, country president of Cargill Philippines.

With safety as a top priority, Cargill Philippines has achieved an impressive 32 million safe man-hours, maintaining a clean record of zero incidents and fatalities. "Our commitment has always been to nourish the world in a safe, responsible way. This starts with putting our people first at the heart of our operations," Cachapero said, emphasizing Cargill's people-centered approach.

Also, through the diversification of its product portfolio, creation of over 2,000 jobs and support for local farmers, Cargill Philippines has played a vital role in shaping the country's agricultural industry.

"As we close this chapter, we carry with us our commitment and purpose of nourishing the Philippines in a safe, responsible and sustainable way for another 75 years to come," Cachapero said.

https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/06/13/business/agribusiness/cargill-reaffirms-26-b-investment-in-ph/1951208

# Agri-based radio program kicks off in Region 2

By Leander C. Domingo June 13, 2024

THE "Usapang Agrikultura" radio program in Region 2 (Cagayan Valley) kicked off on June 10, aimed at enhancing public understanding and engagement with the programs and projects of the Department of Agriculture (DA) at the grassroots level.

Ferdinand Cortez of the DA Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section said the radio program was organized by the Presidential Communications Office, through the Philippine Information Agency and the DA Regional Field Office 2 (DA-RFO2) through DZDA 105.3 FM.

He said the program jumpstarted with anchors Ding Fugaban and Vivian de Guzman with DA-RFO2 Regional Technical Director Kay Olivas, who gave relevant discussions.

De Guzman explained that the new program that is cross-posted in different government portals will be aired from 5 a.m. to 6 a.m. daily with DZDA as the venue on Mondays and at Radyo Filipinas on Tuesdays to Fridays.

Also aiming to amplify the policies, activities and achievements of each featured department, Olivas said the radio program is consistent with the mandate of the administration's Bagong Pilipinas governance and leadership agenda.

She said the President's directive concerning activities and operations of the DA will be shared, highlighting the agency's progress, small wins and milestones achievements.

"This maiden broadcast headlines the visit of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. here in Region 2," Olivas said.

Marcos was in the Cagayan Valley region as guest of honor in the inauguration ceremonies of the Solar Powered Pump Irrigation Project in Barangay Cabaruan, Quirino town in Isabela province and spearheaded the distribution of assistance to El Niño-affected farmers in the Community Center in Ilagan. Leander C. Domingo

https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/06/13/business/agribusiness/agri-based-radio-program-kicks-off-in-region-2/1951207

### THE MANILA TIMES

## Tiu Laurel forms group to facilitate agri imports

By Janine Alexis Miguel June 13, 2024

AGRICULTURE Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has created a technical working group (TWG) to revamp administrative processes and policies concerning agricultural imports.

Under Special Order (SO) 768, Tiu Laurel directed Undersecretary Asis Perez to lead the TWG, which will collaborate with the National Economic and Development Authority's Committee on Tariff and Related Matters to potentially expand import quotas for agricultural goods beyond the minimum access volume (MAV) and consider lowering or eliminating administrative fees for these imports.

According to the Department of Agriculture (DA), the working group will "make it easier for importers to secure licenses or exempt licensed importers from submission of registration requirements."

The TWG also aims to streamline the issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary permits essential for importing agricultural products. Additionally, it is tasked to come up with plans to enhance logistics, transportation, distribution and storage of imported goods.

SO 768 also mandates the publication of streamlined guidelines by relevant agencies in the Official Gazette or a national newspaper to ensure transparency and accessibility.

Furthermore, the agriculture chief directed the creation of a secretariat led by lawyer Jomila May Fugaban to oversee the TWG's operations and provide regular updates to his office.

The creation of the TWG aligns with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s directive to simplify administrative procedures for importing agricultural products and remove non-tariff barriers to lower prices of farm goods in the country.

Administrative Order 20, signed by Marcos, states that administrative constraints and non-tariff barriers persist, leading to increased domestic prices of imported agricultural commodities.

In line with this, the DA, Department of Trade and Industry, and Department of Finance were tasked to streamline procedures and requirements in the licensing of importers, minimize the processing time of applications for importation, and exempt licensed traders from submission of registration requirements.

This strategic initiative underscores the government's commitment to fostering a conducive environment for agricultural trade, with a focus on efficiency, transparency and accessibility in import procedures, the DA said.

https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/06/13/business/top-business/tiu-laurel-forms-group-to-facilitate-agri-imports/1951238

### THE MANILA TIMES

## Students develop honey production machine

By Leander C. Domingo June 13, 2024

ENGINEERING students of the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University-Mid La Union Campus (DMMMSU-MLUC) have developed a prototype machine that quickly separates honey from beeswax capping, which can boost the production of honey in the country.

According to the National Apiculture Research Training and Development Institute (Nartdi) based at the DMMMSU-MLUC, mechanical engineering students have tested the Beeswax Capping Spinner prototype to determine the optimum capacity and efficiency of the machine based on the three-pulley ratio.

The engineering students involved are Hadrian Flores, Franco Luis Asis, Kehn Warren Bucsit, Carmela Cabading and Dominic Sobremonte. They reported good results from the testing of the Beeswax Capping Spinner prototype.



Students from the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University-Mid La Union Campus test the Beeswax Capping Spinner prototype that can improve the way honey is processed by beekeepers. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rowel Munar, Nartdi division chief for planning and development, assisted and served as the engineering students' external evaluator during the performance test of the prototype machine at Nartdi on May 28 and 31.

"This time-saving machine can increase productivity and efficiency in honey production. It can also enhance the profitability of beekeeping operations with the help of the developed machines," Munar said.

Maricon Viduya, DMMMSU strategic communications director, said that with Nartdi, the students conducted beekeeping research for their thesis, focusing on processing machines, as a requirement in their curriculum.

Meanwhile, the Mababbalin Farmers Association Inc. (MFAI) celebrated on May 22 its inaugural honey harvest at Bila, Bunot, Paracelis in Mountain Province.

Members of the MFAI said they attributed their success to the assistance extended by DMMMSU-Nartdi that provided them with basic beekeeping training on July 25-27, 2023.

Viduya said that as a result of the training, members of MFAI initiated their beekeeping operations with two honeybee colonies.

"Their interest and commitment to this new venture quickly bore fruit as they expanded their colonies from two to four within a short period," she said.

In Paracelis, MFAI was the first farmers' association in the municipality to venture into bee farming.

Paracelis Mayor Marcos Ayangwa expressed his support and pride for the association's accomplishments and pledged technical and financial support for the MFAI's beekeeping project.

"Beekeeping contributes to the local ecosystem by promoting pollination and biodiversity," Ayangwa said.

During the inaugural honey harvest, Nartdi Executive Director Joseph Panas, through Precious Angela Alcantara, Nardti officer in charge division chief of general administrative and support services, congratulated MFAI for its initial success.

Panas commended MFAI President Grace Bongorngor for her vision and dedication to providing a sustainable livelihood source for her association's members through beekeeping.

"Their success demonstrates the remarkable outcomes that can be achieved through education, support and community commitment. I am also grateful for the unwavering support of Paracelis local

government unit in promoting the livelihood of their farmers," he said.

 $\underline{https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/06/13/business/agribusiness/students-develop-honey-production-machine/1951210}$ 

### **BUSINESS MIRROR**

# Despite El Niño damage, La Niña risk, PHL can hit high growth goals in 2025–PBBM

Samuel Medenilla

June 13, 2024

DESPITE the devastating damage to agriculture caused by El Niño and the upcoming rainy season, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. said the country's economy is still poised to achieve a high growth next year.

"We have now recently been forecast to have a—one of the highest growth rates for the next year and I think that this bodes well for the transformation of our economy, especially as we are trying to recover from the effects of our very bad drought and trying to prepare for what is coming with the rainy season," Marcos said in his speech during the traditional Vin D' Honeur reception in Malacañang last Wednesday, the chief executive.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) reported during the weekend that the agricultural damage from El Niño has soared to P9.89 billion.

Under its revised targets, the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) projected that the country's economy growth will be 6.5 percent to 7.5 percent in 2025.

Marcos attributed the optimistic projection to the government's successful efforts to curb the country's inflation rate, which still remains within the 2 percent to 4 percent inflation rate target this year.

Last week, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) said the country's inflation rate accelerated to 3.9 percent in May.

"I think that we have done a good job and with this [bringing down inflation]....It is a very large improvement from what we were under — the situation that we were under maybe a year ago," the President said.

He said even credit rating agencies like Fitch gave the country a stable outlook.

"We are credited with a stable outlook, which signals [growth momentum] in the medium term," Marcos said. "It translates to more accessible financing for our government and for our programs," he added.

Marcos said the government will continue to push for the improvement of the country's status in all major international debt rating agencies.

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/06/13/despite-el-nino-damage-la-nina-risk-phl-can-hit-high-growth-goals-in-25-pbbm/

### **BUSINESS MIRROR**

## Vietnam, Thailand rice prices higher in January to May–FAO

BusinessMirror

June 13, 2024

Average prices of Vietnamese and Thai rice went up in the January-to-May period, according to the latest data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Figures from the UN agency indicated that Vietnamese 25 percent brokens, the variant usually imported by the Philippines, surged by more than 28 percent during the 5-month period. As of last month, its average price was at \$560.20 per metric ton (MT), more than \$100 higher than last year's \$436.40 per MT.

Vietnam's 5 percent brokens, another variety that the Philippines buys from its Southeast Asian neighbor, was more expensive by more than \$100 per MT this year. In January to May, it averaged \$588.60 per MT, compared to the \$456.10 per MT recorded in 2023.

Thailand's quotation for its 25 percent brokens was slightly higher than that of Vietnam at \$592.80 per MT. The average price of the variety during the 5-month period was higher than last year's \$488.30 per MT.

"The FAO All Rice Price Index (FARPI) averaged 137.3 points in May 2024, up 1.3 percent from April and 7.5 percent above its year-earlier level," the UN agency said.

"Indica quotations drove the May increase of the FARPI, rising by 1.5 percent month-on-month. Glutinous quotations also strengthened by 2.2 percent during May, following an uptick in Thailand, where easing harvest pressure lent support to domestic prices."

FAO said export quotations of Indica were mixed in the major Asian origins last month. Prices of whole-grain rice rebounded by 4 percent to 6 percent in Thailand and by around 2 percent in Pakistan.

"Sentiment in both origins turned bullish in the first half of the month, following an announcement of an import tender by Indonesia's Bulog and, in the case of Thailand, sales of Brazilian buyers and a recovery in the value of the baht against the US dollar."

FAO also reported that its cereal price index was up by 7.2 points to 118.7 points in May on a month-on-month basis. Global export prices of all major cereals rose month-on-month, which wheat prices increasing the most.

"The sharp monthly rise was largely due to growing concerns about unfavorable crop conditions for the 2024 harvests, possibly constraining yields in some main producing areas of several major exporting countries, including in parts of Europe, Northern America and the Black Sea region," it said.

"Additionally, damage to the Black Sea shipping infrastructure exacerbated the upward pressure on prices. Maize export prices also increased in May, reflecting production concerns in both Argentina (due to crop damage from the spread of Spiroplasma disease) and Brazil (due to unfavorable weather), along with limited farmer selling activity in Ukraine amidst seasonally tightening supplies and a strong global demand."

FAO's food price index stood at 120.4 points in May 2024, up 1.1 points (0.9 percent) from its revised April level, as increases in the price indices for cereals and dairy products slightly more than offset decreases in those for sugar and vegetable oils, while the meat price index was almost unchanged.

Although it registered a third consecutive monthly uptick in May, the food price index remained down 3.4 percent from its corresponding value one year ago and 24.9 percent below the peak of 160.2 points reached in March 2022.

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/06/13/vietnam-thailand-rice-prices-higher-in-january-to-may-fao/

## ACT Agri-Kaagapay, nakiisa sa parada ng Kalayaan 2024

## Mer Layson

June 13, 2024 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Nakiisa ang Act Agri-Kaagapay Organization, isang non-government organization na nagsusulong ng kapakanan ng maliliit na magsasaka, mangingisda, at Indigenous peoples (IPs), sa idinaos na "Parada ng Kalayaan 2024" sa Luneta Grandstand, bilang bahagi ng pagdiriwang ng 126th anibersaryo ng proklamasyon ng Araw ng Kalayaan kahapon.

Ang Act-Agri Kaagapay ay may kabuuang 800,000 miyembro sa buong bansa ay sumusuporta sa iba't ibang agricultural programs ni Pang. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., upang palakasin ang agricultural production sa pamamagitan ng organikong pagsasaka, modernong mga kagamitan sa pagsasaka at mas mababang presyo ng lahat ng agricultural products.

Mismong si Act Agri-Kaagapay founder at president Virginia Ledesma Rodriguez, ang nanguna sa makulay na parada sa Luneta.

Si Rodriguez ay walang sawang bumibisita sa malalayong lalawigan at mga komunidad upang tumulong na mapataas ang kita ng maliliit na magsasaka at mabigyan ng pagkakakitaan ang mga kababaihan, sa pamamagitan nang paglikha ng mga programang pangkabuhayan, gaya ng "Gunting at Suklay" at produksiyon ng organikong pataba.

Si Rodriguez ay isang civic leader na nagsusulong ng konstruksiyon ng mas maraming farm to market road para sa mas madali at direktang maipagbili ng mga magsasaka ang kanilang mga produkto sa mga mamamayan.

https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2024/06/13/2362409/act-agri-kaagapay-nakiisa-sa-parada-ng-kalayaan-2024

### PILPINO STAR NGAYON

## Bird import mula Michigan, ban muna - DA

## Angie dela Cruz

June 13, 2024 | 12:00am



Ito ayon sa DA ay dahil positbo sa H5N1 subtype ng Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza ang naturang mga hayop.

MANILA, Philippines — Pansamantalang ipinagbabawal ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang importasyon ng mga ibon at poultry products mula sa Michigan, USA.

Ito ayon sa DA ay dahil positbo sa H5N1 subtype ng Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza ang naturang mga hayop.

Sa ipinalabas na Memorandum Order 24 na pinirmahan ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr., agad nitong sinuspinde ang importasyon ng domestic at wild birds gayundin ng mga produktong mula dito tulad ng poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs, at semen mula sa Michigan.

Ipinaitigil din ng DA ang pagpapalabas ng bagong sanitary at phytosanitary permits ng Bureau of Animal Industry para sa animal at product imports mula sa naturang bansa.

Ang desisyon ng DA sa pagbabawal na maipasok sa Pilipinas ang naturang produkto mula sa Michigan ay upang maingatan ang local poultry products ng bansa.

 $\underline{https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/metro/2024/06/13/2362431/bird-import-mula-michigan-ban-muna-da}$ 

### **REMATE:**

## Poultry imports galing Michigan ipinagbawal ng DA

June 12, 2024 16:28



MANILA, Philippines- Pansamantalang ipinagbawal ng Department of Agriculture ang pagpapasok ng poultry products mula sa Michigan, United States kasunod ng ulat ng bird flu outbreaks sa nasabing lugar.

Ipinatupad ng DA ang temporary importation ban sa pamamagitan ng Memorandum Order No. 24 upang protektahan ang consumers at ang local poultry industry.

Saklaw nito ang domestic at wild birds at mga produkto ng mga ito, kabilang ang poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs, at semen galing Michigan.

Ang mabilis na pagkalat ng highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) subtype H5N1 sa US "in a short period of time since its

first laboratory detection necessitates a wider coverage of trade restriction to prevent the entry of HPAI virus and protect the health of the local poultry population," saad sa memo.

Sa kautusang ito, agad na sinuspinde ng ahensya ang pagproseso, ebalwasyon, at pag-isyu ng sanitary at phytosanitary import clearance para sa mga nasabing commodity.

Inilabas ng DA ang direktiba kasunod ng pagbibigay-alam ng US authorities sa World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) at post nito sa official website, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspect Service, na mayroong avian influenza outbreak na nakaaapekto sa domestic birds.

Bago ang pagpapairal ng MO No. 24, tinanggal ng DA ang temporary ban sa pag-aangkat ng poultry products mula sa Ohio.

Isa ang US sa major sources ng bansa ng meat imports, kasama ang Brazil at Spain. RNT/SA

https://remate.ph/poultry-imports-galing-michigan-ipinagbawal-ng-da/

### **REMATE:**

## Farmers group sa rice tariff cuts: NEDA 'di nakipag-ugnayan sa amin

June 12, 2024 13:13



MANILA, Philippines – Hindi nakipag-ugnayan ang National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) sa farmers group kaugnay sa paglikha ng Rice Tariffication Act, ito ang inihayag ni Federation of Free Farmers chairman Leonardo Montemayor nitong Martes, Hunyo 11.

Sa Senate Committee hearing on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform, sinabi ni Montemayor na hindi sila sang-ayon sa pagpapalawig ng Executive Order No. 10 dahil "it did not work in the past."

Anila, nabigla sila sa paglalabas ngEO 50 hanggang 2028, dahil naniniwala umano silang ito ay temporary measure lamang na ipatutupad hanggang sa katapusan ng 2024.

"That EO was only supposed to be a stopgap or temporary measure. Bakit [extended] all the way to 2028? Ginawang permanent na ata ito nang wala pong konsultasyon. Wala pong konsultasyong ginanap, wala naman pong tariff commission hearings," ani Montemayor.

Pagpapatuloy pa, sinabi niya na ang desisyon ang dahilan kung bakit itinutulak nila ang pagbibitiw ni NEDA Secretary Arsenio Balicasan.

"According to Secretary Balisacan, dumaan po sa proseso. Wala naman pong nangyaring ganon. That's why we were calling for his resignation," dagdag niya.

"We're worried because right now, the prices of imported rice mahal pa rin po tapos yung piso natin humihina... Totoo na bababa [ang presyo ng bigas] ng siyete pero doon po sa landed cost, pero po pagdating sa retail di po yan mangyayari," pagpapatuloy pa ni Montemayor.

"Our own analysis, and even the DA, based again on PSA data, we have 60 to 66 days' supply. We are safe in terms of supply at least in 2024. Iba ang sabi ng PSA... That is another area na dapat siguro magkaroon ng tamang koordinasyon para yung data po tama [PSA data says differently... That is another area that we may have to ensure proper coordination so that the data is correct]."

Tugon naman ni NEDA Director Frances Fatima Cabana, batid nila ang mga pangamba ng mga grupo ng mga magsasaka at ipinadala na ito sa kinauukulan.

Bago rito ay sinabi na ni NEDA chief Balicasan na ang panawagan na putulin ang rice tariffs ay "not made lightly."

"The goal of the NEDA Board in reducing the tariff rate of rice is to ensure that Filipinos have access to nutritious and affordable food, particularly rice, while managing inflation and sustaining our economic growth momentum... We are investing in infrastructure, promoting the adoption of modern technologies, improving market and financial access for local producers, and building resilience to climate change," saad sa pahayag ni Balisacan.

Sa kaparehong pagpupulong, sinabi rin ng Philippine Statistics Authority na ang lahat ng mga komento sa kanilang datos ay ipadadala sa mga concerned agency. *RNT/JGC* 

https://remate.ph/farmers-group-sa-rice-tariff-cuts-neda-di-nakipag-ugnayan-sa-amin/