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MANILA BULLETIN:

DA chief hopeful for rice tariff cut reevaluation

BY CHINO S. LEYCO

Jun 19, 2024 04:27 PM

The Department of Agriculture (DA) said the Cabinet may reevaluate the proposed reduction in import duties on rice following feedback from various stakeholders regarding its potential implications.

In a statement, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said there remains an opportunity for stakeholders to provide input as President Marcos has not yet issued his executive order (EO) on the matter.

To recall, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Board, presided over by the president, approved a significant reduction in rice tariffs from 35 percent to 15 percent.

This measure aims to ease the burden of high rice prices on consumers, especially those from low-income backgrounds, and to address inflation concerns that have hindered the central bank from adjusting interest rates.

Despite the approval from the NEDA Board, Tiu Laurel said that President Marcos has not finalized the EO, allowing stakeholders in the agricultural sector a chance to express their viewpoints.

Acknowledging the industry's concerns, Tiu Laurel cited the importance of conducting periodic evaluations rather than sticking to a fixed reduction plan until 2028.

“In our discussions with industry representatives, the suggestions ranged from reviewing the tariff every six months to one year or even every four months,” Tiu Laurel said.

The DA chief highlighted concerns raised by industry players regarding the likelihood the tariff reduction will not result in significantly lowering rice prices as well as their apprehension that lower prices could adversely affect local farmers since traders could lower buying prices for palay.

Moreover, the reduction in tariff revenues could impede funding allocated for programs aimed at modernizing and mechanizing the rice industry, thereby jeopardizing efforts to enhance its competitiveness.

Industry players have warned that the assumption that rice prices will remain high until 2028 may not hold true if global market dynamics change.

They said global prices of the grain could drop if, for instance, India lifts its export ban on non-basmati rice and production rebounds after El Niño.

Tiu Laurel said a balanced approach that considers both consumer welfare and the viability of local agriculture should be considered by the Cabinet when the tariff reduction issue is discussed.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/6/19/da-chief-hopeful-for-rice-tariff-cut-reevaluation>

MANILA BULLETIN:

'Usapang saging': Romualdez's sought review of Philippine-Japan economic deal bodes well for local bananas

BY ELLSON QUISMORIO

Jun 19, 2024 02:51 PM

AT A GLANCE

- House Speaker Martin Romualdez has called for the resumption of the general review of the Philippines-Japan Economic Agreement (PJEPA) in the hopes of eliminating or reducing tariffs on key Philippine agricultural products, particularly bananas.



(Unsplash)

House Speaker Martin Romualdez has called for the resumption of the general review of the Philippines-Japan Economic Agreement (PJEPA) in the hopes of eliminating or reducing tariffs on key Philippine agricultural products, particularly bananas.

The leader of the 300-plus-strong House of Representatives made the call during a meeting with Japanese lawmakers comprising the Philippines-Japan Parliamentarians' Friendship Society (PJPFSS), led by Chairman Hiroshi Moriyama, a member of the House of Councilors, National Diet, at the Japan's parliamentary building late Tuesday afternoon, June 18.

"I am very confident to be bold now to ask for your support to see if we could have a possible review of the [PJEPA] where we can revisit the issue of elimination or reduction of tariffs, particularly for our agricultural products such as bananas," Romualdez said.

"We believe that a review of the [PJEPA], especially after the recent trilateral agreements, would show support and solidarity. This request aligns with our past efforts and aims to foster a better and more conducive

relationship between our countries," he told PJPFS officials.

The Speaker noted the decline in the Philippines' market share of bananas in Japan, from a robust 90 percent down to 78 percent.

Chairman Moriyama, a former agriculture minister, acknowledged the request to resume the PJEPA review and expressed willingness to consider it.

The Philippines is looking to secure a larger share of Japan's lucrative agriculture market for Filipino farmers and fisherfolk, as Japan is one of the largest importers of agricultural products in the world.

The aim is to expand Philippine export opportunities for various fish and tropical fruits such as pineapples, avocados, mangoes, durian, mangosteen, and okra.

Romualdez cited the importance of Japan as a trade partner, noting that it is not only a top provider of Official Development Assistance (ODA) but also the second-largest trading partner of the Philippines.

However, he pointed out that since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, trade between the two countries has decreased by 12 percent.

"This decline is not necessarily due to specific circumstances but rather the pandemic and current regional conditions," said Romualdez, Leyte's 1st district representative.

Philippine Ambassador to Japan Mylene Garcia-Albano, who was also present during the meeting, shared concerns about the significant drop in banana exports to Japan over the last few years.

"The majority of our banana exports come from our region. We are very concerned with the decline in banana exports to Japan," said Garcia-Albano, a former Davao City lawmaker during the meeting.

"We hope that with the general review of PJEPA, we can address the differences in tariffs imposed on bananas, aiming to level the playing field with other countries like Vietnam, which enjoys a zero percent tariff," she added.

Chairman Moriyama further noted that persevering through this challenge could make Philippine bananas more competitive in the Japanese market.

The issue of improved terms for Philippine agricultural products falls under the purview of the PJEPA, which remains the best bilateral track to pursue mutually beneficial commitments.

Despite both the Philippines and Japan being parties to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, the PJEPA is seen as a more effective platform for addressing this specific trade issue.

Romualdez's call for a swift PJEPA review during his Tokyo visit underscores the ongoing efforts to support the Philippine agricultural industry and promote equitable trade relations with Japan.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/6/19/usapang-saging-romualdez-s-sought-review-of-philippine-japan-economic-deal-bodes-well-for-local-bananas>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Rice eaters

BY JULLIE Y. DAZA

Jun 20, 2024 00:01 AM

MEDIUM RARE



Irreconcilable facts.

We are – were? – an agricultural country. Once upon a time our IRRI (International Rice Research Institute) attracted farmers from all over Asia, including Vietnam, to learn the best techniques in planting, etc.

Today we are the world's leading importer of rice and we're buying rice from Vietnam.

Meanwhile, the average Filipino farmer is a senior citizen, and his children don't want to follow in Tatay's footsteps. They'd rather work abroad. As that elementary-school ditty goes, "Magtanim ay 'di biro" – planting rice is no fun. And as Cook bewails, "Why are farmers in Japan and China rich while our farmers are not?"

A few days ago, the news was that there's an expected surge in rice consumption, "primarily attributed to reduced tariffs." The US Department of Agriculture did not mention population size or growth in the Philippines as having anything to do with the surge.

Don't look at me, I eat less than half a cup of steamed rice at lunch and at dinner, primarily because rice, which is starch, fills me up very easily. And yes, it's true, lots of people put lots of rice on their plates when they dine, buffet style, in restaurants. There was a time when unstarred restaurants proudly declared "unli rice" to attract customers.

Today, as more eaters learn to do with less rice as part of their diet, we await data from the Philippine Statistics Authority on our rice consumption habits. At the same time, our consciences should prick us when we notice how much food is left on plates – 30 to 40 percent, according to waiters I've talked to – as we are reminded how millions of children are not eating well, not eating enough. The image of a mother of 14 children living in Baseco Compound in Tondo comes to mind: What does she feed her kids three times a day? She's 44 but she looks older than her age. I think of her as a miracle worker: providing 14 meals three times a day, 42 meals every 24 hours.

When we were kids, Grandmother Small Feet taught us: “Leave nothing on your plate. Millions are hungry in XX and XXX,” referring to two countries that have since overcome hunger despite their huge populations.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/6/20/rice-eaters>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA chief seeks shorter period for rice tariff cut

[Jasper Emmanuel Arcalas](#) - The Philippine Star

June 20, 2024 | 12:00am



Photos show workers unloading sacks of rice from a truck along Dagupan St. in Manila on February 7, 2024.

STAR / Ernie Penaredondo

MANILA, Philippines — The proposed rice tariffs reduction should be between six months and a year instead of the five-year period being pushed by other Cabinet secretaries, according to Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

Tiu Laurel said he is also supporting the rice industry groups' proposal that the tariff reduction must have a regular review to ensure the efficacy of the measure in taming the retail prices of the staple.

“I think we will take it up in the Cabinet (meeting) with the President,” he told reporters in an interview Tuesday evening.

“(The five-year duration) is too long. It will affect rice farmers,” he added.

However, the agriculture chief said the tariff reduction is necessary as a short-term measure to address high rice prices.

Tiu Laurel said the increase in domestic rice prices was not due to internal factors, but because of external shocks such as the ban imposed by India on its non-Basmati rice exports, putting pressure on the global rice supply.

“Our problem is not limited to us. It is a worldwide issue,” he said.

Agriculture Undersecretary Asis Perez earlier disclosed that the DA proposed to revert the rice tariffs to as much as 50 percent during the deliberations at the Cabinet-level committee on tariff and related matters.

Last week, Tiu Laurel met with agriculture industry leaders to discuss the announcement of Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan regarding the approval of the reduction of rice tariffs by the National Economic and Development Authority.

Under the approval, rice tariffs will be slashed to 15 percent – the lowest in the country’s rice tariff history – beginning this year until 2028 as part of the government’s new comprehensive tariff program.

Since the NEDA board meeting on June 3, President Marcos has yet to issue an executive order (EO) that would formalize the tariff adjustments.

Rice industry groups are racing against time to convince Marcos to reverse his earlier decision to reduce rice tariffs, arguing that it would result in billions of losses for Filipino palay farmers.

Marcos has until July 21 to exercise his power to modify tariff rates through the issuance of an EO.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/06/20/2364060/da-chief-seeks-shorter-period-rice-tariff-cut>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Sale of NFA rice stocks at P29/kilo OK'd

[Jasper Emmanuel Arcalas](#), [Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

June 20, 2024 | 12:00am



National Food Authority rice stocks.

File photo courtesy of NFA

MANILA, Philippines — The National Food Authority Council has approved the recommendation to sell aging but good NFA rice stocks at P29 per kilo through Kadiwa stores, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said yesterday.

Tiu Laurel added that the Bigas 29 low-priced rice program will address the minimum basic needs of individuals below the poverty threshold.

Vulnerable sectors like persons with disabilities, solo parents, senior citizens and indigenous people, who collectively comprise 6.9 million households or over 34 million Filipinos, will benefit from the P29 per kilo of rice, he said.

“Each beneficiary household is entitled to purchase 10 kilos per month, requiring rice supply of 69,000 metric tons every month. A dry run of the cheaper rice program is already underway in select Kadiwa centers, and has been well received by potential beneficiaries,” Tiu Laurel said.

He said the Bigas 29 is part of President Marcos' vision of a food secure Philippines, where basic commodities are affordably priced and easily accessible, especially to poor Filipinos.

According to Tiu Laurel, the implementation of the P29 per kilo rice will cost the government between P1.39 billion and P1.53 billion per month.

To secure rice supply for the initiative, the DA plans to import 363,697 metric tons of rice to augment national buffer stocks, while the NFA will procure 559,535 MT of palay from local farmers

The estimated cost of securing rice buffer stocks to cover 19 days of national consumption is at least P28.39 billion.

The government aims to roll out the Bigas-29 program nationwide in early July, he added.

The proposed import plan is on the table but details have yet to become firm pending the amendments to the Rice Tariffication Law, according to the Department of Agriculture.

Nonetheless, the priority of the government, agriculture spokesman Arnel de Mesa said, is still the procurement of palay from local farmers.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/06/20/2364207/sale-nfa-rice-stocks-p29kilo-okd>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

British Chamber reiterates support for UK pork exports to assist inflation, food security

Philstar.com

June 19, 2024 | 10:19am



Stock image of pork belly

Pixabay/Image by ludiarin from Pixabay

The British Chamber of Commerce Philippines reiterated its support towards boosting British pork exports in the Philippines to continue to assist in managing inflation and ensuring food security against the challenges facing the local agricultural sector, including El Niño and La Niña phenomena and the African Swine Fever (ASF).

Recent developments include the approval of the Comprehensive Tariff Program by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Board, chaired by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to calibrate the tariff rates aimed at ensuring access to basic and essential commodities.

The British Chamber also expressed its support for the extension of lowered tariffs on pork and other agricultural commodities until 2028—to which it supported its extension for two consecutive years.

BCCP Executive Director/Trustee Chris Nelson acknowledged the current ban on live cattle and its by-products from the UK and expressed optimism on the ban being lifted soon, noting the collaborative efforts from the Philippine Department of Agriculture (DA) and UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).



CHRIS NELSON | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BRITISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE PHILIPPINES

OUTSIDE LOOKING IN

“It doesn't affect pork and we anticipate they will continue to grow strongly. Regarding the beef, that is obviously a disappointment. My understanding is it's one isolated case in Scotland, it's a temporary ban. I know that the UK government and DEFRA, our agricultural section, have worked very hard to lift that ban and they will continue to work with the Department of Agriculture. If I look and be much more focused in terms of pork, we anticipate it will continue to grow...

It's already the second largest UK pork export market, the Philippines, after China. We are very pleased that the lowered tariffs have been extended until 2028. The Agricultural Horticultural Development Board will be at WOFEX...And pork exports, along with other factors, will be a help in fighting inflation, because of course that's key in the Philippines, as in other countries. If inflation comes down, then there's an opportunity going forward at some point for Bangko Sentral [ng Pilipinas] to also reduce their overall bench rate.”

The British Chamber also looks forward to the quick passage of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act, which has already been approved by both Houses and is now awaiting signature from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who previously reaffirmed commitment towards enhancing productivity and modernizing the agricultural sector as one of the significant drivers of economic growth.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/biz-memos/2024/06/19/2363979/british-chamber-reiterates-support-uk-pork-exports-assist-inflation-food-security>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA to import more rice as ‘Bigas 29’ starts in July

By: [Jordeene B. Lagare](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:42 AM June 20, 2024



ANTI-INFLATION MOVE Under the program which will start next month, vulnerable sectors can purchase 10 kilos of rice at P29 each monthly from selected Kadiwa stores. —Inquirer file photo

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) intends to import 363,697 metric tons (MT) of rice to support a government program to sell rice that is aging but still of good quality to vulnerable sectors at a subsidized price of P29 starting in July.

The “aging” rice stocks to be sold are those that have been in storage or warehouses for three to six months, but these will undergo laboratory tests to determine whether they are fit for human consumption, the DA said in a statement on Wednesday.

Uncooked rice has a shelf life of up to two years, depending on its processing, and the National Food Administration (NFA) has been selling aging rice stocks for years without an issue although there have also been complaints of poor quality.

In an interview, Agriculture Assistant Secretary and DA spokesperson Arnel de Mesa said the agency could import the rice under the authority of President Marcos, but he did not specify whether the transaction would be done via government-to-government arrangements.

“There are two approaches: first, if certain provisions of the RTL (Rice Tariffication Law) will be amended and second, if an executive order will be issued allowing the DA to do this (import rice) under the Price Act. We’re allowed to do so,” he said.

De Mesa explained that the importation was meant to replenish the country’s buffer stock which was expected to be diminished by the implementation of the NFA’s “Bigas 29” program.

“This program primarily aims to provide rice at an affordable price of P29 per kilo [to] the vulnerable sectors of society,” Agriculture Sec. Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said after the NFA Council, which he chairs, approved the program on Wednesday.

Target beneficiaries

De Mesa earlier said that Bigas 29 was originally meant to be implemented in August. However, it was apparently moved forward because of the government’s campaign against inflation. The program’s targeted beneficiaries are persons with disabilities, solo parents, senior citizens and indigenous people, numbering about 6.9 million households, or over 34 million Filipinos.

Each household will be allowed to purchase 10 kilograms a month in select Kadiwa stores.

“A dry run of the cheaper rice program is already underway in select Kadiwa centers, and has been well-received by potential beneficiaries,” the DA said.

But it conceded that the selling price of P29 would be higher than the previous price of P25 per kg because the government decided to moderate the subsidy cost.

With each beneficiary household entitled to purchase 10 kg monthly, the program would require 69,000 MT every month.

Thus, the DA said it needs to import 363,697 MT of rice to augment national buffer stocks, while the NFA would procure 559,535 MT of palay from local farmers, as required by law.

Social cost

Tiu Laurel said that given the monthly target volume, procurement cost, and selling price, the program would incur a social cost between P1.39 billion and P1.53 billion a month.

Under the law, the President may source rice from abroad at a lower applied tariff rate to address any imminent or forecasted shortage. The importation will be allowed for a limited period or a specified volume.

The RTL only allows private traders and importers to purchase imported rice while the NFA's mandate is limited to maintaining a buffer stock equivalent to at least 19 days of consumption or 330,000 MT.

“The estimated cost of securing rice buffer stocks to cover 19 days of national consumption is at least P28.39 billion,” the DA said.

Currently, the NFA's buying price ranges from P23 to P30 per kg for clean and dry palay and P17 to P23 per kg for fresh and wet varieties.

The agency's effective buying price differs per province and is adjusted and approved weekly based on the prevailing ex-farm prices and other factors.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1953101/da-to-import-more-rice-as-bigas-29-starts-in-july>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA wants periodic review of agri tariffs

By: [Jordeene B. Lagare](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 02:22 AM June 20, 2024

MANILA, Philippines — Amid industry stakeholders' apprehensions about an upcoming executive order, the Department of Agriculture (DA) is proposing a periodic review of tariffs on agricultural products, rather than keeping fixed rates until 2028.

“In our discussions with industry representatives, the suggestions ranged from reviewing the tariff every six months to one year, or even every four months,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said on the sidelines of the World Trade Center Metro Manila’s event in Pasay City.

The DA said industry stakeholders were concerned that the proposed tariff reductions would not lead to a significant decrease in the retail prices of rice, a staple food in the Philippines.

The DA also admitted that the current plan “could adversely affect” the livelihood of local farmers as traders may buy palay at lower prices.

“Moreover, the reduction in tariff revenues could impede funding allocated for programs aimed at modernizing and mechanizing the rice industry, thereby jeopardizing efforts to enhance its competitiveness,” it added.

‘Balanced approach’

Tiu Laurel said the Cabinet must consider a “balanced approach” when dealing with both consumer welfare and the viability of the agriculture sector. Members of the Cabinet have yet to schedule a meeting to discuss a fiat aimed at cutting import duties on rice to 15 percent from the current 35 percent, effective until 2028 or until the end of the Marcos administration’s term.

Early this month, National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) Secretary Arsenio Balisacan announced the approval of the new Comprehensive Tariff Program aimed at keeping food prices low. The plan, which the President has already agreed to as Neda board chief, also covers various agricultural and industrial products.

Balisacan had said the tariff cut on corn, pork, and mechanically deboned meat would “ensure a stable supply of these commodities, help manage inflation, promote policy stability and investment planning and enhance food security.”

Inflation rose to 3.9 percent in May, almost hitting the upper end of the government’s target of 2 percent to 4 percent. While still within expectations, it quickened further from the previous month’s 3.8 percent. Food inflation at the national level, however, slowed down to 6.1 percent, with rice slightly easing to 23 percent during the reference period.

Industry stakeholders had said the assumption that rice prices would remain high until 2028 may not hold true if global market dynamics change.

They said global prices could drop if, for instance, India lifts the ban on exporting non-basmati rice and production rebounds after the El Niño phenomenon.

Based on official monitoring, local regular milled rice is currently being sold for P45 to P52 per kilogram, higher than P34 to P42 per kg in the same period last year. Locally produced well-milled rice costs P48 to P55 per kg, also lower than P38 to P46 per kg previously.

<https://business.inquirer.net/464500/da-wants-periodic-review-of-agri-tariffs>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

BIZ BUZZ: P20/kilo price goal for rice still on

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 02:18 AM June 20, 2024

By now, reality may have finally kicked in knowing that reducing rice prices to P20 per kilogram is as elusive as finding one's soulmate.

But it seems like the Marcos administration is not giving up on that ambitious goal.

“Patuloy naming adhikain ang P20, so dahan-dahan (That remains our aspiration. We will get there slowly),” Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said while recognizing the various challenges of lowering the staple food's retail prices.

But is it possible that this can still happen during President Marcos' term? De Mesa, who is also spokesperson of the Department of Agriculture (DA), said: “Titingnan natin (We'll see).”

Recall that the President made this promise during his campaign in 2022.

Fast forward to June 14, selling prices range from P45 to P52 per kilo for local regular milled rice and P48 to P55 per kilo for local well-milled rice, according to the DA's price monitoring. A year ago, the regular milled price was selling at P34 to P43 per kilo, while well-milled rice was P38 to P46 per kilo.

Imported regular milled rice, which was not yet available last year, is currently sold at P48 to P51 per kilo. Imported well-milled rice today ranges from P52 to P55 per kilo, also higher than last year's prices of P40 to P46 per kilo.

A promise is a promise, but one can also be categorized as a “campaign” promise.

With the cost of farm inputs still high, will the government be able to achieve this goal within four years? Only time will tell. —*Jordeene B. Lagare*

Remolona's signature on banknotes

The banknotes bearing the signature of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Eli Remolona Jr. is now in circulation, keeping the 75-year-old practice alive.

The local currency has borne the signatures of the President of the Republic of the Philippines and the Governor of the Central Bank of the Philippines since 1949, or a few years after the Japanese occupation of the country.

The BSP replaced the Central Bank of the Philippines as the central monetary authority. Republic Act No. 7653, or The New Central Bank Act, as amended, mandates that Philippine banknotes bear the signatures of the president and the BSP governor.

The banknotes with the specimen signatures of President Marcos and the seventh governor of the BSP include the following denominations: 20-, 50-, 100-, 500-, and 1000-Piso.

Remolona was appointed as BSP chief in June last year. —*Ian Nicolas P. Cigaral*

PH in Japanese firm's radar

The Philippines is the next investment destination of Japan-based digital marketing company Ayudante, which will be formally establishing a local unit following its recent acquisition in Singapore.

A source familiar with the matter told Biz Buzz on Wednesday that the Philippine unit will be under Sparkline, the Singapore-based independent digital marketing business and pioneering certified partner and reseller of the Google marketing platform that Ayudante recently acquired.

“The company currently employs a few staff in the Philippines via the Sparkline Singapore entity, i.e. as remote workers. It plans to establish a local office and register the local entity next year,” the source said.

Founded in 2013, Sparkline is one of the first independent analytics businesses in Southeast Asia.

Meanwhile, Ayudante is a digital marketing and digital measurement consulting agency, offering services supporting marketing and analytics backed by the Google Marketing Platform, mobile app analytics and development, custom data management platforms, data analysis, and reporting,

Ayudante is also Google Marketing Platform sales partner and Google Cloud sales partner. —*Alden Monzon INQ*

<https://business.inquirer.net/464504/biz-buzz-p20-kilo-price-goal-for-rice-still-on>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Subsidized-rice program to be enabled by imports

June 19, 2024 | 8:39 pm



BW FILE PHOTO

By **Adrian H. Halili**, *Reporter*

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Wednesday that it plans to import 363,697 metric tons (MT) of rice to facilitate its plan to aid poor consumers by selling grain to them at the subsidized price of P29 per kilogram.

In a statement, the DA said the imports will offset the National Food Authority's (NFA) ageing stock that will be sold off for the program.

The NFA council had approved the sale of ageing rice stocks to those below the poverty threshold.

It added that the NFA will also procure about 559,535 MT of palay (unmilled rice) from domestic farmers, which when milled into rice will be equivalent to the volume of the imports.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said that the program will cost the government between P1.39 billion and P1.53 billion per month, assuming 69,000 MT in monthly sales.

Separately, Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel V. De Mesa said that the planned imports are still subject to approval, adding that one of the legal pathways for obtaining the green light to ship in the rice is via "amendments to the Rice Tariffication Law... and an executive order to do so under the Price Act."

The NFA has said that it procured 3.37 million 50-kilogram bags (168,262 MT) of palay as of June 13, equivalent to four days of consumption when milled into rice. It has exceeded the initial target of 3.36 million bags for the first half.

The NFA said that it will sell the subsidized rice for a limited period through the KADIWA network by early July.

“Although the new NFA selling price is higher than the previous price of P25 per kilo, it is nonetheless a very deep discount to the prevailing market price to ensure that poor Filipinos have access to their main food staple,” the NFA added.

The market price of well-milled rice in Metro Manila was between P52 and P54 per kilo, while regular-milled rice was at P48-P51 per kilo, according to DA price monitors as of June 18.

The NFA said it had raised the selling price for ageing stock from P25 per kilo to reduce the need for government subsidies.

Apart from poor consumers, also eligible for the subsidized rice are persons with disabilities, solo parents, senior citizens, with plans to make indigenous people eligible. The estimated number of availers is about 6.9 million households or over 34 million individuals.

“Each beneficiary household is entitled to purchase 10 kilos per month,” the NFA said.

Asked to comment, Former Agriculture Undersecretary Fermin D. Adriano said that the DA’s planned import volumes are not significant.

“If distribution is targeted properly, given to the poorest of the poor, it will be a good subsidy. But if targeting is flawed, then it will be a waste of precious public funds,” Mr. Adriano said via Viber.

The Philippines has imported 2.17 million MT of rice as of June 6, according to the Bureau of Plant Industry.

Projected imports for the year are 4.6 million MT due to higher consumption and lowered import tariffs, the US Department of Agriculture reported.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort said lower tariffs on rice could lead to the lowering of rice prices.

The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Board has approved a plan to lower tariffs on industrial and farm goods, including the further reduction of rice import tariffs to 15% from 35%, until 2028.

“The sustainable, structural solution is to boost the productivity of the rice industry,” Mr. Ricafort said via Viber.

Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura Executive Director Jayson H. Cainglet said the government should buy the rice from farmers affected by the drop in palay farmgate prices.

“If they subsidize, I hope (they procure from) the farmers who have been hit by the drop in the farmgate price of rice since NEDA’s announcement of the 15% rice tariff,” Mr. Cainglet said via Viber.

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/06/19/603005/subsidized-rice-program-to-be-enabled-by-imports/>

MANILA STANDARD

NFA sells ‘aging but good’ rice at P29 per kilogram



By Othel V. Campos

June 19, 2024, 10:50 pm

The National Food Authority (NFA) is selling aging rice stocks to low-income Filipinos P29 per kilogram (kg).

Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. underscored that the “aging but good” NFA rice stocks will be offered through the KADIWA network for a limited period.

“This program primarily aims to provide rice at an affordable price of P29 per kilo for the vulnerable sectors of society,” he said.

While slightly higher than the previous P25 per kilo price, the discounted rate remains significantly lower than current market prices, he added.

About 6.9 million households or 34 million individuals from the vulnerable sectors, comprised of persons with disabilities, solo parents, and senior citizens, stand to benefit from the initiative. Each beneficiary can purchase up to 10 kilos per month.

The NFA held a pilot run dubbed “Bigas 29” which is in line with the government’s vision of a food-secure Philippines with affordable and accessible basic necessities.

Tiu Laurel reminded the NFA Council that the program’s implementation, given the monthly target volume, procurement cost, and selling price, would incur a social cost between P1.39 billion and P1.53 billion per month.

To secure supply for the cheaper rice program, the DA plans to import 363,697 metric tons (MT) of rice to supplement national buffer stocks and secure 559,535 MT of palay (unhusked rice) directly from Filipino farmers.

The estimated cost of securing rice buffer stocks for approximately 19 days of national consumption is P28.39 billion.

The government targets a nationwide launch of the Bigas-29 program in early July.

<https://manilastandard.net/news/314461733/nfa-sells-aging-but-good-rice-at-p29-per-kilogram.html>

Rice imports higher as of mid-June – DA

By [Janine Alexis Miguel](#)

June 20, 2024

THE country's rice imports reached 2.2 million metric tons (MMT) as of mid-June, up from last year's 1.8 million MT, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said.

The latest volume is about 400,000 MT higher compared to the quantity of rice imported a year earlier, Agriculture Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel de Mesa told reporters on Tuesday.

"There was an increase in importation because, as we recall, in the last quarter of last year, our department met with rice traders. They agreed to increase importation due to the potential worsening effects of El Niño," de Mesa said.

The dry weather is now officially over and the DA official said that the impact of the lack of water and droughts was not that severe, resulting in a volume loss of 100,000 metric tons of rice for the first quarter.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has projected that the Philippines will remain the world's leading rice importer this year, with inbound shipments likely to hit 4.7 million MT.

However, the DA said that imports were unlikely to hit the USDA's projected volume as it was aiming for palay (unmilled rice) production of 20.4 million MT, equivalent to 13.7 million MT of rice, this year.

Data from the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) showed that Vietnam remained the country's top source of the staple during the period, shipping 1.58 million MT of rice or 73 percent of total imports.

Thailand delivered some 339,670 MT of rice, Pakistan followed with 148,618 MT and some 66,120 MT from Myanmar.

The remaining volume came from India, China, Japan, Cambodia, Italy and Spain.

Since the year started, the BPI has released a total of 3,001 sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances to accredited importers.

Last year, inbound shipments of the staple totaled 3.6 million MT, down 5.9 percent from the record high of 3.82 million MT logged in 2022. For this year, the DA projects rice imports to not exceed last year's volume.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/06/20/business/top-business/rice-imports-higher-as-of-mid-june-da/1952305>

El Niño agriculture damage hits P1.7B in Region 7

By [Kaiser Jan Fuentes](#)

June 20, 2024

CEBU CITY — The Department of Agriculture in Central Visayas (DA 7) reported that the recent El Niño phenomenon has left an estimated P1.7 billion in agricultural damages in the region.

Based on the data gathered by MyTV Cebu from Gerry Avila, chief operations of DA 7, the blow highlighted the extensive impact of the climate event on the region's farming sector.

According to the DA's initial assessment, high-value crops, including vegetables, spices and fruits, bore the brunt of the damage, accounting for approximately P1.5 billion in total losses.

Avila said the prolonged effects of the phenomenon has severely affected the growth and yield of these crops, which are crucial for both local consumption and the region's economy.

In addition to high-value crops, rice and corn farmers have also suffered significant setbacks. The damages to rice crops are estimated at P139 million, while corn losses are pegged at P105 million.

These staple crops are essential to the food security of Central Visayas, and their reduced production could lead to higher prices and scarcity in the market.

Livestock has not been spared from the effects of El Niño, with damages amounting to P1.2 million. The scarcity of water and forage has led to the decline in livestock health and productivity, further straining the agricultural sector.

The DA's estimates are based on reports submitted by local government units across the region.

Avila clarified that the data are still initial, which means the figure might increase in the future after further assessment.

He added that while he cannot yet provide the exact figures for the damages in each province, Cebu and Bohol felt the most ill effects of El Niño.

The department is also investigating reports of vegetable shortages, particularly ginger, in markets, including Carbon Public Market in Barangay Ermita in Cebu City.

According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, El Niño leads to elevated sea-surface temperatures, influencing global weather patterns by causing shifts in precipitation, temperature and atmospheric circulation, ultimately resulting in reduced rainfall in certain regions.

Earlier this month, the state weather bureau announced the end of the El Niño phenomenon. However, its effects can still be felt in the western portions of Visayas and Luzon.

DA 7 Officer In Charge Director Cirilo Namoc presented data in a news forum on Tuesday indicating that the total land area of Central Visayas is currently 1,499,940 hectares.

Of this total, 925,051 hectares (ha) are classified as forest, timberland and built-up areas, while the remaining 524,889 ha constitute agricultural land.

Specifically, Negros Oriental holds 228,883 ha; Cebu, 146,056 ha; Bohol, 136,613 ha; and Siquijor 13,337 hectares.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/06/20/regions/el-nio-agriculture-damage-hits-p17b-in-region-7/1952310>

Halt on tariff reduction of imported rice sought

By [Celso Cajucom](#)

June 20, 2024

A GROUP of farmers in Central Luzon appealed to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to halt the proposed reduction of tariff for imported rice that the group said will affect their livelihood.

During discussions held at the Philippine Rice Research Institute in Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, on Tuesday, Gerardo Vilorio Jr., president of farmer cooperatives in Aliaga town, said the tariff reduction on imported rice is a "clear and present danger" to their livelihood.

"We are asking the government for a grace period of at least two cropping seasons," he said.

The forum was initiated by Rowena del Rosario-Sadicon, the lead convenor of the Philippine Rice Industry Stakeholder Movement (Prism).

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan recently announced that the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) board, chaired by the President, approved the tariff cut from 35 percent to 15 percent for 2024 to 2028.

Del Rosario-Sadicon clarified the Prism is not against the proposed amendments to the Rice Tariffication Law but what they need to protect is the whole value chain in the Philippine rice industry and the interests of local farmers.

Orly Manuntag, Prism co-founder, said some of its members have already bought imported rice at a higher price.

"Now, they may be forced to sell them at a lower price in the market," he said.

"We understand what the government is doing, but we are planning to set [up] a dialogue with the President to find a win-win solution."

Elizabeth Vana, president of Nueva Ecija Rice Miller Association, said about 85 to 90 percent of rice buffer stock is still at the warehouses of its members, and they are expecting huge losses.

"The unexpected flood of cheap imported rice is a threat to the whole value chain of the rice industry because this coming September, more clients are expecting to buy cheap imported rice," she said.

"Faith and prayer is the only remedy, hopefully, to change the mind of the President."

The reduction of tariff will lower the price of rice and make it more affordable, Balisacan, also the head of NEDA, said in a statement last week.

"Reducing rice tariffs is expected to bring down rice prices for consumers, while supporting domestic production through tariff cover and increased budgetary support to improve agricultural productivity, especially as global rice prices remain elevated," said Balisacan.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/06/20/regions/halt-on-tariff-reduction-of-imported-rice-sought/1952306>

NFA to sell rice at P29/kg to vulnerable sectors

By Jed Macapagal

June 20, 2024



The NFA will procure 559,535 MT of palay from local farmers, a volume equivalent to the amount of rice to be imported by the government. (Reuters Photo)

The National Food Authority (NFA) Council has approved a proposal to sell aging but good NFA rice buffer stocks at P29 per kg to vulnerable sectors for a limited period through Kadiwa rolling stores.

This developed as the Department of Agriculture (DA) the Philippines plans to import 363,697 metric tons of rice this year to augment its buffer stock.

The NFA said the program called Bigas-29 is set to benefit persons with disabilities, solo parents, senior citizens and later, indigenous people, who collectively comprise 6.9 million households or over 34 million Filipinos.

The program is eyed to be rolled out early next month wherein each beneficiary household is entitled to purchase 10 kg per month, requiring rice supply of 69,000 metric tons (MT) every month.

DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said in a statement the program's implementation, given the monthly target volume, procurement cost and selling price, would cost the government between P1.39 billion and P1.53 billion per month.

The NFA Council has not set a specific volume for the program. The buying price for the old stocks was not immediately known.

To secure rice supply for the initiative, the DA plans to import 363,697 MT of rice to augment national buffer stocks while the NFA will procure 559,535 MT of palay from local farmers, a volume equivalent to the amount of rice to be imported by the government.

The DA said the estimated cost of securing rice buffer stocks to cover 19 days of national consumption is at least P28.39 billion.

It assured aging stocks that will be released under the Bigas-29 program are fit for human consumption as these will undergo laboratory tests.

In a separate message, DA assistant secretary and spokesperson Arnel de Mesa said the planned volume of importation is subject to clearance by the government.

"We can have two approaches here. One, if amendments to the RTL (Rice Tariffication Law) will be allowed and second, if there will be an EO (executive order) allowing the DA to do this under the Price Act, we can also do it," de Mesa said.

In a separate statement, Tiu Laurel said the Cabinet is discussing the provisions of the planned EO cutting import duties on rice after agricultural stakeholders aired their apprehensions over the move.

The National Economic and Development Authority board agreed to reduce rice tariffs to 15 percent from the current 35 percent but the President is yet to issue an EO.

This would provide a window of opportunity for stakeholders in the agricultural sector to voice their concerns.

Tiu Laurel said he acknowledges the industry's apprehensions, emphasizing the need for periodic reviews rather than maintaining a fixed rice tariff reduction until 2028.

"In our discussions with industry representatives, the suggestions ranged from reviewing the tariff every six months to one year, or even every four months," Tiu Laurel said.

Earlier this month, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) revised its forecast for the Philippines' rice imports for 2024 and 2025, upward by 500,000 MT.

The country will thus remain the world's leading rice buyer for these years.

In a report released by the agency this month, the USDA said the country's rice imports for 2024 may hit as much as 4.6 million MT while 2025 rice imports can be as much as 4.7 million MT.

The USDA cites the Philippines' rising consumption with reduced tariffs as the primary reason for the adjusted forecast.

According to data from the Bureau of Plant Industry, 2.17 million MT of imported rice have arrived in the Philippines as of June 6.

Bulk of the imported rice supply came from Vietnam with 1.59 million MT or 73 percent of the total.

The DA earlier said the expected P6 to P7 per kg drop in retail price of imported rice due to **lower tariffs may take effect in August if these imports start arriving by July.**

https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/nfa-to-sell-rice-at-p29-kg-to-vulnerable-sectors/

ABANTE TONITE

Lumang NFA rice ibebenta ng P29 per kilo

June 19, 2024

Magbebenta ang National Food Authority (NFA) ng mga lumang bigas na P29 per kilo sa mga mahihirap.

Sabi ng Department of Agriculture (DA), inaprubahan ng NFA Council ang naturang hakbang kamakailan sa ilalim ng programang tinatawag nitong “Bigas 29”.

Mas mahal ito kaysa sa binenta ng NFA sa mga trader na nasa P25 per kilo lamang at mga mas bago pa kaya sinuspinde ng Ombudsman ang ilang mga tauhan ng ahensiya.

Sa Kadiwa stores lamang mabibili ang P29 per kilo na bigas sa limitadong panahon.

Ayon sa DA, 6.9 milyong pamilya o mahigit 34 milyong Pilipino ang makikinabang sa mura ngunit lumang bigas.

Limitado rin ang dami ng mabibiling murang bigas ng mga mahihirap sa 10 kilo lamang sa isang buwan o dalawa’t kalahating kilo kada linggo.

Ayon kay Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., aabot sa P1.39 bilyon hanggang P1.53 bilyon ang aabonohan ng pamahalaan sa pagbebenta ng murang bigas na tinawag niyang “social cost”.

Samantala, plano ng DA na mag-angkat ng 363,697 toneladang bigas para punan ang buffer stock ng bansa habang bibili naman ang NFA ng 559,535 toneladang palay mula sa mga magsasaka.

Gagastos ang DA ng P28.39 bilyon sa pagbili ng imported rice. Inaasahan ng DA na simulan ang programa sa Hulyo. (Eileen Mencias)

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2024/06/19/lumang-nfa-rice-ibebenta-ng-p29-per-kilo/>

REMATE:

Kamara, BFAR sanib-pwersa sa suporta at proteksyon ng mga mangingisdang Pinoy sa WPS

June 19, 2024 17:46



MANILA, Philippines – Nakikipag-ugnayan na ang House Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources sa Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) upang matiyak na magpapatuloy ang pagbibigay ng suporta at proteksyon sa mga mangingisdang Pilipino sa West Philippine Sea (WPS).

Ito ay matapos ipahayag ni Bicol Saro Partylist Rep. Brian Raymund Yamsuan, chairman ng nasabing komite na 385,000 na mangingisda ang nakadepende sa kanilang pangangisda sa WPS na nangangailangan ng proteksyon dahil sa “acts of intimidation and provocation” ng China.

Pinapurihan din ng kongresista ang Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) at Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) dahil sa patuloy na proteksyon sa mga mangingisda sa WPS sa gitna ng pagbabanta ng China na darakpin ang mga dayuhang papasok sa disputed WPS.

Binanggit din ni Yamsuan ang pinakahuling pahayag ng BFAR na ang “no-trespassing’ rule ng China ay walang epekto sa mga mangingisdang Pinoy dahil angdeklarasyon nito ay hindi naman kinikilala kasabay ang pagtitiyak na ang mga mangingisdang Pilipino ay maaaring mangisda sa sakop ng exclusive economic zone (EEZ) ng Pilipinas.

“As chair of the House aquaculture and fisheries committee, we are closely coordinating with BFAR to find ways to improve the capability of municipal fisherfolk fishing in the West Philippine Sea as well as in protecting them and our marine resources from illegal activities. BFAR itself said that our fisherfolk can continue fishing in the West Philippine Sea. But such pronouncements should be backed by action and concrete support for our fisherfolk.”

Sa pinakahuling briefing ng komite ay iniulat din ng BFAR ang nakatakdang pagbili nitong dalawa pang Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) patrol vessels at isang food boat sa taong kaugnay ng inisyatibong suportahan ang pagsisikap ng pamahalaan na mapangalagaan ang marine resources ng bansa sa WPS.

Ipinahayag pa ng BFAR na may P1.8 bilyon ngayong 2024 ang inilaan para sa WPS-related programs kung saan kabilang dito ang pagpapalakas sa Integrated Marine Environment Monitoring System (IMEMS) upang labanan ang ilegal at ang unreported and unregulated fishing (IUUF), pagpapatupad ng science-based policies ukol sa fisheries conservation sa WPS, gayundin ang pangangalaga sa data assets sa pamamagitan ng pinagbuti na fisheries regulatory and information system.

“We want to find out from BFAR what needs to be done to speed up the procurement so that it can provide the support that our fisherfolk need, especially those dependent on the West Philippine Sea for their livelihood,” ayon kay Yamsuan. ***Meliza Maluntag***

<https://remate.ph/kamara-bfar-sanib-pwersa-sa-suporta-at-proteksyon-ng-mga-mangingisdang-pinoy-sa-wps/>

REMATE:

P1.7B lugi sa sektor ng agrikultura sa C. Visayas bunsod ng El Niño

June 19, 2024 09:19



CEBU CITY, Philippines — Tinatayang nasa P1.7 bilyon ang pagkalugi ng Central Visayas sa sektor ng agrikultura dahil sa epekto ng El Niño phenomenon, ayon sa opisyal ng Department of Agriculture dito (DA-7).

Nasira ng El Niño phenomenon ang mga high value crops, palay at corn crops; at maging ang mga may-ari ng hayop ay hindi nakaligtas sa epekto nito, ani Gerry Avila, DA-7 chief ng Field Operations Division, sa isang panayam.

Ang pinsala ng mga pananim na palay ay umabot sa humigit-kumulang P139 milyon, ang mga pananim ng mais ay humigit-kumulang P105 milyon ang pagkawala, at ang mga alagang hayop ay nasa P1.2 milyon.

Ang mga high value crops ang may pinakamalaking pagkalugi na may P1.5 bilyon.

Nilinaw ni Avila na “initial” lamang ang mga datos na kanyang inilahad dahil nasa proseso pa sila ng pag-validate ng impormasyon mula sa bawat lalawigan sa rehiyon.

Aniya, may “possibility” na bababa ang halaga depende sa resulta dahil may mga lugar na nakaranas ng “50 percent” o “75 percent damage.” Sa kanilang “paunang data,” nagdeklara sila ng “100 porsyento” na pagkawala ng pinsala. *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/p1-7b-lugi-sa-sektor-ng-agrikultura-sa-c-visayas-bunsod-ng-el-nino/>

REMATE:

P29/kg bigas mabibili sa Kadiwa ng mahihirap, seniors, PWDs, solo parents

June 20, 2024 07:12



MANILA, Philippines – Mabibili ang nasa P29 kada kilo ng bigas sa mga Kadiwa store pero ito ay limitado lamang sa ilang sektor tulad ng mga benepisyaryo ng Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), senior citizens, persons with disabilities, at solo parents.

Upang matiyak na ang mga sektor na ito ay uunahin, ang mga mamimili na nais mag-avail ng bigas na ito ay kinakailangang magpakita ng kanilang identification card.

Ayon kay Agriculture assistant secretary at spokesperson Arnel de Mesa, layunin ng proyektong ito na maibsan ang mataas na halaga ng bigas sa pamamagitan ng pakikinabang sa mga target na sektor.

“Ang intention nu’n ay para talaga sa mga targeted beneficiaries natin, mostly ‘yung mga mahihirap at saka mga senior at mga solo parents. That’s about 30% of the total population.”

Tinitingnan ng Department of Agriculture ang posibilidad na palawakin ang proyektong ito upang maabot ang mas maraming mamimili.

Ang Rice Tariffication law (RTL), na nagkabisa noong Marso 5, 2019, ay nagpapahintulot sa walang limitasyong pag-aangkat ng bigas hangga’t ang mga negosyante sa pribadong sektor ay nakakuha ng phytosanitary permit mula sa Bureau of Plant Industry at nagbabayad ng 35% na taripa para sa mga padala mula sa mga kapitbahay sa Southeast Asya.

Nilagdaan bilang batas ni dating Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte, ang batas ay naglalaan ng P10 bilyon para sa Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF), kung saan P5 bilyon ang ilalaan sa farm mechanization at P3 bilyon sa mga punla. Ang pondo ay naglalayon na tiyakin na ang pag-aangkat ng bigas ay hindi lulunurin ang sektor ng agrikultura at maagaw ang mga magsasaka sa kanilang kabuhayan. *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/p29-kg-bigas-mabibili-sa-kadiwa-ng-mahihirap-seniors-pwds-solo-parents/>

ABANTE:

Romualdez hiniritan Japan: Bawasan buwis sa agri ng ‘Pinas

- [Abante News](#)
- [June 19, 2024](#)



Hiniling ni Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez ang pagpapatuloy ng ginagawang review sa Philippines-Japan Economic Agreement (PJEPA) upang mabawasan kung hindi man tuluyang maaalis ang buwis na ipinapataw sa mga produktong agrikultural ng Pilipinas sa pagpasok sa Japan.

Ginawa ni Romualdez ang apela sa kanyang pakikipagpulong sa mga mambabatas ng Japan na kasama sa Philippines-Japan Parliamentarians' Friendship Society (PJPFSS) na ginanap sa parliamentary building sa Tokyo noong Martes.

“We believe that a review of the [PJEPA], especially after the recent trilateral agreements, would show support and solidarity. This request aligns with our past efforts and aims to foster a better and more conducive relationship between our countries,” sabi ni Romualdez.

Ayon kay Romualdez, mula sa 90% ay bumaba sa 78% ang banana market share ng Pilipinas sa Japan.

Nais ng gobyerno na paramihin ang mga produktong agrikultural na na-export nito sa Japan.

Sinabi ni Romualdez na sa pagsisimula ng COVID-19 pandemic ay bumaba rin ang kalakalan sa pagitan ng Pilipinas at Japan ng 12%.

“This decline is not necessarily due to specific circumstances but rather the pandemic and current regional conditions,” sabi ni Romualdez.

Positibo naman ang naging tugon ni PJPF chairperson Hiroshi Moriyama, isang miyembro ng House of Councilors at dating agriculture minister, sa kahilingan ni Romualdez. (Billy Begas)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/06/19/romualdez-hiniritan-japan-bawasan-buwis-sa-agri-ng-pinas/>