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MANILA BULLETIN:

DA targets to eradicate ASF thru vaccination by year-end

BY JEL SANTOS

Jul 23, 2024 04:46 PM



(MB FILE PHOTO)

With the help of the African Swine Fever (ASF) vaccines, the Department of Agriculture (DA) is eyeing to eradicate the spread of the fatal disease that affects hog industry in the country.

During the post-SONA discussions on Thursday, July 23, Agriculture Secretary Francisco “Kiko” Tiu Laurel said that the agriculture department is targeting to inoculate first the areas that have been identified as red and yellow zones.

“Iyong ASF vaccine which was recently approved na once we have ASF vaccine which has recently approved ay baka ibi-bid out na ng DA ito this August at hopefully by September ma-implement na. Titirahin natin at babakunahan natin iyong mga red areas or red zones and yellow zones and hopefully to eradicate this for the pig growers (The ASF vaccine, which was recently approved, may be put out for bidding by the DA this August, with hopes of

implementation by September. We will target and vaccinate the red areas or red zones and yellow zones, and hopefully, this will lead to eradication for the pig growers),” he said.

“With that, we are hopeful na ma-solve na unti-unti iyong issue sa ASF at hopefully by the end of [the] year, halos wala na sana ito (With that, we are hopeful that the ASF issue will be gradually resolved and, hopefully, by the end of the year, it will be nearly eradicated),” he added.

Areas identified as red zones are high risk or currently experiencing an outbreak of a specific agricultural disease, such as ASF.

Meanwhile, yellow zones are areas considered at moderate risk or are under surveillance for potential outbreaks.

ASF, according to Laurel, is a “big problem” of the pork industry and must be eradicated to improve the country’s agricultural production.

For commercial use

Recently, DA spokesperson, Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa, said ASF vaccines may be available for commercial use this year.

“Kasi kailangan masigurado nang husto ng FDA at BAI (Bureau of Animal Industry) ‘yung efficacy at ‘yung lahat ng test na gagawin nila rito (Because the FDA and BAI need to thoroughly ensure the efficacy and all the tests they will conduct). Target is within the year,” he said.

The BAI has allotted P350 million for the procurement of ASF vaccines, the DA spokesperson stated.

Laurel had earlier announced that the FDA granted approval for government use of the vaccine for six months.

He said the controlled use of the ASF vaccine may be rolled out by September.

The DA chief noted that the ASF from Vietnam “really works.”

“So, that solves our problem,” he went on.

During a town hall meeting in Occidental Mindoro in April, President Marcos said that the ASF vaccines would be obtained from Vietnam.

ASF, a highly contagious and deadly swine disease, has been devastating swine industries around the world since its resurgence in 2018.

In 2019, ASF resurfaced in the Philippines and has since spread across more than 3,800 barangays in 53 provinces by July 2022.

Due to ASF, local pork production in the Philippines fell by almost a fourth from June to October 2021 against the comparative period in 2020.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/7/23/da-targets-to-eradicate-asf-thru-vaccination-by-year-end>

MANILA BULLETIN:

DA chief says tariff cut not spurring rice imports

Tiu Laurel: 4.7-million metric tons importation unlikely

BY CHINO S. LEYCO

Jul 23, 2024 03:08 PM

The Department of Agriculture (DA) stated that President Marcos' move to lower rice import tariffs is not causing an increase in the country's rice imports.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. said that rice importation is demand-driven, emphasizing that the Philippines would not source rice from overseas, even with zero tariffs, if there is a sufficient domestic supply.

“The only reason for an increase in importation is due to demand, not a lowering of tariff,” Tiu Laurel said during the 2024 Post-State of the Nation Address (SONA) Discussions on Tuesday, July 23.

Tiu Laurel's statement follows the adjustment by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), which raised its rice import forecast for the Philippines this year to 4.7 million metric tons (MT) from the previous estimate of 4.6 million.

The USDA attributed the increase in rice imports primarily to the impact of reduced tariffs on the commodity.

Tiu Laurel said that he was surprised to hear that the USDA had raised its forecast as a result of the tariff cuts.

“The first estimate of USDA was four million metric tons; I was actually surprised that it increased to 4.7 million,” he said. “I don't think we will 4.7 million.”

Data from the Bureau of Plant Industry revealed that as of June 6, rice imports totaling 2.17 million metric tons had already been recorded, with the majority (1.59 million metric tons, or 73 percent of the total) originating from Vietnam.

Government projections suggest that the retail price of imported rice is expected to see a decrease of P6 to P7 per kilogram starting in August, following the implementation of reduced tariffs on the staple.

Shipments of rice with reduced tariffs are scheduled to arrive in the country in July.

Forecasts for the retail prices of imported rice are based on estimates provided by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/7/23/da-chief-says-tariff-cut-not-spurring-rice-imports>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Reduced tariffs on rice unlikely to increase importation—DA chief

BY JEL SANTOS

Jul 23, 2024 02:40 PM



DA Secretary Francisco "Kiko" Tiu Laurel Jr. (JEL SANTOS/MB FILE PHOTO)

Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco "Kiko" Tiu Laurel Jr. said that lowering tariffs will not lead to higher rice imports this year, contrary to the US Department of Agriculture's forecast of 4.7 million metric tons for the Philippines.

By enacting Executive Order (EO) 62, President Marcos has lowered rice tariffs from 35 percent to 15 percent.

"Well, iyong unang estimate ng US-DA was four million. I am actually surprised na nag-increase to 4.7. But I don't think that lowering of tariff will really increase importation (Well, the initial estimate of the US-DA was four million. I am actually surprised that it increased to 4.7. But I don't think that lowering the tariff will really increase importation)," he said during the post-SONA discussions on Tuesday, July 23.

Laurel said that the decrease in tariffs has no bearing on the growth in rice imports.

“The only reason mag-i-increase ang importation is because of demand, not because of lowering tariff. If there’s kulang, ang demand, kahit mababa, kahit zero tariff pa iyan, mas kaunti ang importation (The only reason importation will increase is because of demand, not because of lowering the tariff. If there’s a shortage, demand will be low, and even with low or zero tariffs, importation will still be minimal),” he stated.

“So it’s basically demand-driven. So I really don’t think aabot tayo ng 4.7 [million metric tons],” he went on.

The DA anticipates that rice retail prices could fall by P6 to P7 by August due to the influx of rice imports entering the country after the national government cut rice tariffs.

Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa, the spokesperson of the DA, noted that 35,594 metric tons of rice imports had arrived in the country as of July 11.

Farmers' groups had earlier expressed concerns about EO 62, fearing it might lead to an influx of imported rice.

They worry that if prices for rice, hogs, corn, and chicken fall below production costs, local producers may lose motivation to continue their work.

The groups also said that EO 62 will not tackle inflation or reduce rice prices in the market.

However, the DA chief explained that the tariff reduction was essential to counteract high global rice prices and offer consumers temporary relief through lower rice prices.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/7/23/reduced-tariffs-unlikely-to-increase-importation-da-chief>

Dire need for FDI Part 3

BY DR. BERNARDO VILLEGAS

Jul 23, 2024 02:08 PM

The second assertion of the UP Paper reflects how academicians can sometimes be living in an ivory tower. It posits that removing foreign equity restrictions is the least significant variable in increasing foreign investment. Hence, it's nice, but there is no need for it. Just ask the Japanese, Spanish, South Korean, and other foreign investors who have aggressively bid for many of our flagship infrastructure projects. I have asked them, and majority ownership is a condition sine quo. Understandably, they want to control both for funding, management, and technology reasons. I hope all Filipino economists interested in improving our highly inadequate infrastructures will join in appealing to the Supreme Court not to declare the amendment of the Public Service Act (PSA) unconstitutional. That would be a disaster. I agree with the UP economists that opening media, advertising and educational institutions is not urgent today. These are the sectors that are being targeted by current Chacha efforts. That's where I would apply the expression, "It's nice, but there is no need for it for now." What was opened up by Republic Act No. 11659 (amendment of PSA) is of absolute importance to our continuing the Build, Build, Build program. More than enough FDIs in infrastructure, telecommunications, renewable energy, and large-scale agribusiness can come in during the next five to ten years under this law.

There is no quarrel with the advice from the UP economists to concentrate and exert much effort on fixing other issues such as rule of law, corruption, and ease of doing business. We shall address these issues in the latter part of this series of articles. It would be the height of utopian dreaming, however, to expect that the problem of corruption can be solved in the short run. Practical investors know that this is impossible. South Korea, which has more than \$40,000 per capita and is already a First World country, is still ridden with so much corruption in almost every sector of its society, i.e., the police, the military, the big business conglomerates (chaebols), and the three branches of government. They have sent a good number of former Presidents to jail. If I want to fight corruption with all my might, my reasons are not predominantly economic. Corruption has to be eradicated because it is immoral, evil, unjust, and sinful. And, of course, it siphons off people's money to the corrupt persons' pockets, estimated by some as high as P800 billion to P1 trillion yearly. But as long as we persevere in correcting erroneous economic policies (like anti-FDI laws) and strengthening financial institutions (like respecting the independence of the Central Bank), economic progress can be attained as we have done slowly but surely for at least the last thirty years, despite continuing corrupt practices among our incorrigible government officials in connivance with dishonest private individuals.

As the FEF rejoinder points out, common sense dictates that removing the restrictions must come first before fighting corruption and red tape. Foreign investors must be allowed to enter first to benefit from more efficient institutions and processes devoid of bureaucracy and red tape. Fixing a maximum of 40 percent equity is tantamount to not allowing them to enter, especially into the capital-intensive sectors of infrastructures, renewable energy, and agribusiness ventures. As the FEF paper asks rhetorically, "How does one even experience all of the other enabling factors (ease of doing business, good governance, efficient institutions) if one is barred from the get-go?"

In a typical road show organized by the private sector, the various resource speakers are very transparent about the obstacles that foreign direct investors commonly face in the Philippines. We never hide the fact that they may need more than 30 signatures to get a permit to invest in a solar energy project. We warn them that some LGU officials may ask for a bribe in their desired locations. We tell them that in some cities or municipalities, they will encounter very weak internet connections and frequent electricity blackouts (we call them brownouts). At the national level, we admit that on some occasions, the right hand of the government does know what the left hand is doing. For example, in the ongoing efforts to reconsolidate the millions of hectares of farms (especially coconut farms) fragmented into small units through the failed agrarian reform program, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Agrarian Reform, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment and the Department Local Government may be adopting and implementing contradictory policies. For example, at the beginning of the term of former President Duterte, despite the expiry of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law, the left-leaning Secretary of Agrarian Reform was still insisting on splitting up more landed estates that were perfect for the use of large commercial farms that could be planted to cacao, coffee, mangoes, bamboo, and avocado. Or you may have a Secretary of Agriculture recommending the product diversification in commercial farming from bananas and pineapples to other high-value fruit crops being stopped by the Secretary of DENR to convert some of the denuded forests into large-scale farms for coconut, mangoes, bamboo, and other fruit-bearing trees on the ground that only narra, molave, apitong and similar species can be used for reforestation. Fortunately, this is no longer the case under the present very competent and knowledgeable Secretary Yulo Loyzaga of DENR.

Thanks to his decision to appoint himself as Secretary of Agriculture for the first 14 months of his term, President BBM and his very street-smart Secretary of Agriculture, Francis Tiu Laurel, are resolving these conflicting policies. The same can be said about new tax laws like CREATE. Tax incentives given by the Department of Trade and Industry and the various PEZA zones could be easily erased by new tax laws trying to increase government revenues. This is where the nation's CEO, the President, has to step in and do the necessary refereeing.

Despite being transparent about all the obstacles the foreign investors face as they try to navigate the very complex and forbidding investment environment in the Philippines, do we still succeed in getting the more practical and entrepreneurial foreign investors to come in? The answer is Yes. What we do is bring with us in the business delegation conducting the road show top executives of Philippine conglomerates (e.g. the Aboitizes, Consunjis, Megaworld, GT Capital, Metro Pacific, etc.) together with some of their respective foreign partners in projects that have already been implemented. We present these delegation members as evidence that despite all the red tape, corruption, and inconsistencies of policies, these successful business people have still been making profits. The trick is for foreign investors to choose the right minority Filipino partner with the ability and experience to deal with a highly imperfect business environment. After all, business is all about taking risk-taking and converting threats into opportunities. To be continued.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/7/23/dire-need-for-fd-is-part-3>

Post-SONA: Key economic issues not tackled

[BUSINESS SNIPPETS](#) - [Marianne Go](#) - The Philippine Star

July 24, 2024 | 12:00am

President Marcos delivered his third State of the Nation Address, receiving resounding applause toward the end of his speech, particularly on his firm stand on the West Philippine Sea issue and his decision to ban Philippine Offshore Gaming Operations or POGOs.

Unfortunately, while the President started off his speech on a key economic concern of Filipinos, particularly on affordable rice, he eventually glossed over the continuing high cost of the Filipino food staple rice at P45 to P65 per kilo, merely attributing it to market forces and geopolitical factors that include war, supply problems and climate change such as droughts.

The President, however, failed to cite what concrete steps his administration is or has taken to address the problem of the prevailing high cost of rice, particularly on such issues like smuggling and hoarding.

At the post-SONA briefing held yesterday at the Hilton Hotel, Agriculture Secretary Francis Tiu Laurel Jr. assured stakeholders that the Department of Agriculture would go after the rice cartel but failed to elaborate on the government's plans.

It will be recalled that prior to his election, President Marcos had boasted in his 2022 campaign that he would bring down the price of rice to P20 per kilo. After three years in office, that goal has not been attained.

The President, instead, cited the increased local production of palay or unhusked rice which he said increased last year to more than 20 million metric tons since 1987 but is only equivalent to 13 million MT of rice – much lower than the required 16 million MT consumption requirement by the population thus necessitating the importation of the staple.

In The STAR column of veteran journalist Tony Lopez, he had pointed out that the 20 MMT production has been stagnant for four years since 2020 even as the country's population has grown.

Aside from the price of rice, the President in his speech did not fully touch on the other aspects affecting inflation and job generation. He likewise failed to give more

clarity on other important issues such as the country's rising debt and how the government will finance its huge budgetary outlay for this year.

As of end-February this year, according to the Bureau of the Treasury, the national government's total outstanding debt was recorded at P15.18 trillion, primarily due to domestic borrowings.

Domestic debt as of end-February amounted to P10.58 trillion, while foreign debt amounted to P4.6 trillion.

The proposed 2024 budget is a whopping P5.768 trillion and yet it is still unclear how the government intends to finance the huge outlay even as the Marcos administration has created a sovereign wealth fund that should normally come from any government surplus, but instead has been sourced from the existing capital funds of the Development Bank of the Philippines and the Land Bank of the Philippines.

Additionally, the Department of Finance has been eyeing excess funds from government owned and controlled corporations or GOCCs, but only specifically from the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., to fund additional appropriations in the budget.

Finance Secretary Ralph Recto explained that the directive to tap the GOCCs came from Congress and that the Commission of Audit, as well as the Office of Good Governance had cleared the legality of the use of the funds to fund other appropriations.

Secretary Recto also expressed support for President Marcos's decision to ban the operations of POGOs. The Finance chief is committing to assist the displaced Filipino workers with safety nets to ensure that they can have replacement jobs as soon as possible.

According to Secretary Recto, "We have until the end of the year to ensure that all displaced Filipino workers will have new jobs and I think that is more than enough time. The DOF will work closely with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to ensure that the workers' incomes will not be severely disrupted and that we provide them with proper reskilling and upskilling training for new employment."

The President, in his speech, had ordered the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (PAGCOR) to wind down and cease the operations of POGOs by the end of the year.

The President's decision took into consideration the cost-benefit analysis report of the DOF on June 25 which also recommended the prohibition of POGO operations

due to its social costs and reputational risks that far outweigh the economic benefits of keeping them.

Estimates from the DOF showed that the net cost of POGO operations reached around P99.52 billion annually while their estimated total economic benefits only amounted to P166.49 billion per year, significantly lower than the estimated total economic costs of P265.74 billion annually.

The economic benefits took into account government revenues, such as tax revenues from the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) as well as gross gaming revenues from the PAGCOR.

Other estimated direct economic benefits include estimated income from office and residential space rentals, transportation, and the additional demand from the private consumption of employees and entities.

Indirect economic benefits were also taken into consideration that comprise the associated economic activities as well as government revenues earned from POGOs' multiplier effects.

On the other hand, the estimated economic costs of POGOs include the undesired effects of reputational risks which have an impact on foreign direct investments. POGO-related crimes also bring a negative impact in terms of the country's attractiveness as a tourist destination.

Apart from these, POGOs entail social costs that the DOF claims are unquantifiable. This includes the loss of life as well as physical and psychological harm to victims of criminal activities. POGO operations also affect communities by increasing fear and anxiety associated with illegal activities, according to the DOF recommendation.

Additionally, the perception that groups engaged in illegal or criminal activities wield significant economic influence in certain areas erodes institutional integrity.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/07/24/2372405/post-sona-key-economic-issues-not-tackled>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA sticks with farm growth targets

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

July 24, 2024 | 12:00am



A farmer prepares the field for rice planting in Sitio Sinarol, Siniloan, Laguna on January 4, 2024.

STAR / Michael Varcas

Despite extreme weather conditions

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) remains optimistic it will hit its target of expanding local farm and fisheries output by one to two percent this year amid extreme weather conditions.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the expansion in farm areas brought about by new irrigation systems nationwide, both traditional and solar-powered, would contribute to higher agricultural output this year.

Nonetheless, Tiu Laurel noted that hitting their production targets would not be “too easy” given the challenges brought about by climatic conditions at the onset of the year.

He cited the presence of El Niño in the first half as one of the major production challenges this year and the expected La Niña phenomenon this second half.

Farmers and fisherfolk incurred losses amounting to almost P10 billion this year due to hotter and dryer weather conditions brought about by El Niño.

“We are hopeful, barring strong typhoons, we will post higher (agricultural)] production,” Tiu Laurel said during the government’s post-SONA briefing yesterday.

The agriculture chief is also banking on the efficacy of an African swine fever vaccine set to be tested by the government to finally control or put an end to the devastation being caused by the fatal disease on local pig production.

The DA earlier maintained its palay production target of 20.4 million metric tons for the year.

The agriculture and fisheries sector grew by 0.4 percent in 2023, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

The value of local agriculture and fisheries output in the first quarter remained relatively flat as subsectors reeled from the El Niño phenomenon, with poultry being the lone subsector posting higher production.

The PSA said the value of agriculture and fisheries production at constant 2018 prices reached P428.99 billion, about P200 million higher than the P428.79 billion in the same quarter in 2023.

The PSA said the value of production of crops, livestock and fisheries subsectors all contracted, but the poultry subsector registered an increase.

In an earlier interview, Tiu Laurel said he was “cautiously” optimistic that the agriculture and fisheries sector would perform better in the second quarter as a result of the various interventions that the government made against El Niño.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa earlier said the overall performance of the agriculture and fisheries sector would have contracted if the government had not rolled out its mitigating measures against El Niño.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/07/24/2372413/da-sticks-farm-growth-targets>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Q fever might be endemic – DA

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

July 24, 2024 | 12:00am



Photo showing Q fever and a man holding a goat.

CDC via Unsplash; Department of Agriculture / Released

MANILA, Philippines — Q fever may have been in the country even before some imported goats from the United States tested positive for the disease this year, according to the Department of Agriculture.

DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said initial investigation conducted by the government showed the imported Anglo-Nubian goats could have contracted the disease while these were quarantined in the country.

Tiu Laurel said the result of the initial investigation is still being validated by authorities.

He said he sent a team to the US to verify some matters regarding the issue.

Q fever, a zoonotic disease caused by the bacteria *Coxiella burnetii*, affects goats, sheep and cows.

Humans can contract the disease by inhaling dust contaminated by infected animal feces, urine, milk and birth products.

Last month, the DA, through its attached agency Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), confirmed the country's first Q fever cases.

The disease was detected in goats imported from the US as part of the BAI's programs to boost domestic industry output through introduction of better animal breeds.

"It seems the disease did not come from the US. It seems it has been endemic in the country," Tiu Laurel told journalists yesterday.

"Further research into the issue (indicated) only limited areas were affected," he said.

Tiu-Laurel said he had spoken with the USDA about the matter and checked all records, which indicated the goats were disease-free when they arrived in the country early this year.

He said the recent outbreak could be considered as an isolated case, as other areas involved tested negative for the disease.

"It seems the disease has been in the country for quite some time now. There are just sporadic incidences," he said.

As this developed, Tiu Laurel expressed hope that African swine fever would be eradicated by the end of the year with the rollout of the ASF vaccine in the next two months.

He said the DA is planning to bid out the vaccine next month and start the vaccination in September.

Meanwhile, the municipality of Pilar in Abra has banned the entry of swine, pork and pork products to prevent the spread of ASF.

Pilar Mayor Tyrone Christopher Beroña issued the ban on Monday after the neighboring town of Manabo recorded ASF-related hog deaths.

Aside from Pilar, San Quintin town Mayor Jovellen Aznar ordered the local police to set up checkpoints to prevent the entry of swine, pork and pork products. — **Artemio Dumlao, Romina Cabrera**

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/07/24/2372502/q-fever-might-be-endemic-da>

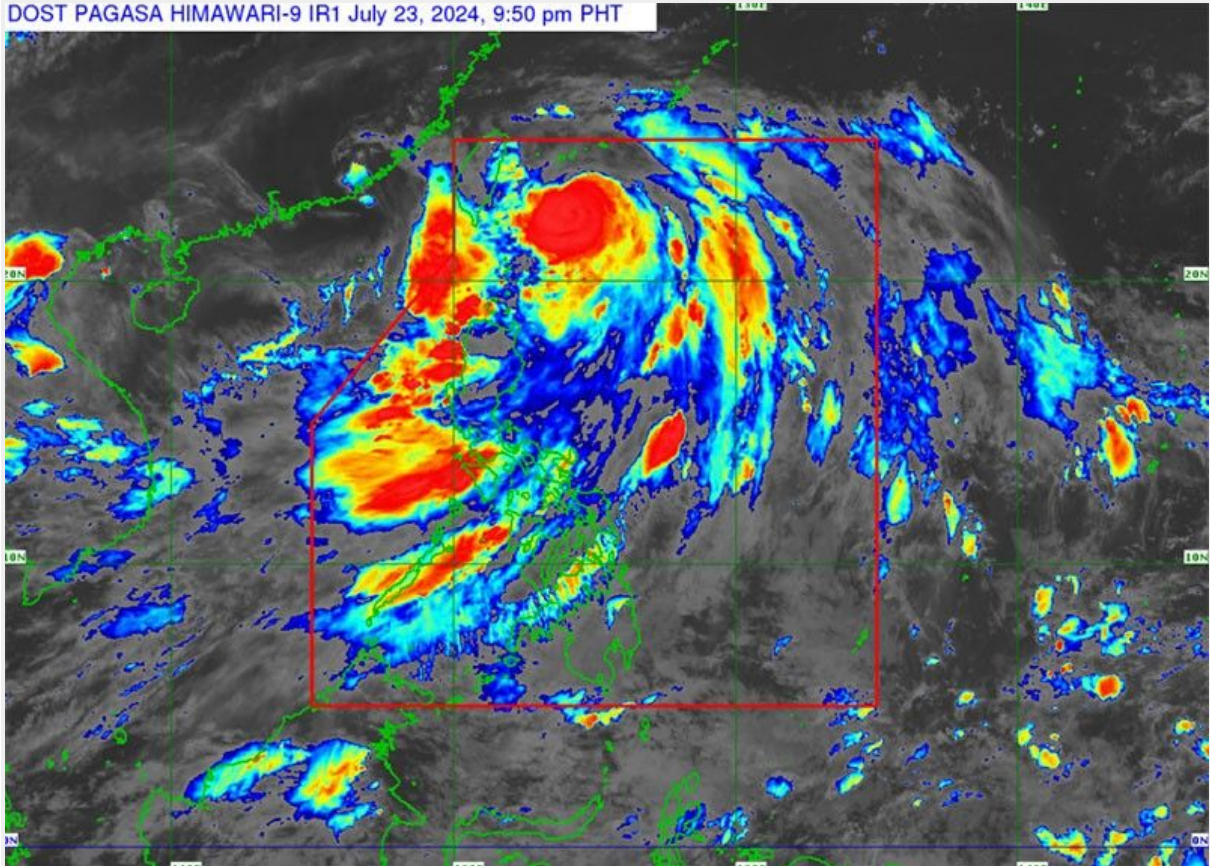
THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

9 dead from monsoon, back-to-back cyclones

[Michael Punongbayan](#) - The Philippine Star

July 24, 2024 | 12:00am

DOST PAGASA HIMAWARI-9 IR1 July 23, 2024, 9:50 pm PHT



Two persons were injured and one reported missing, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

PAGASA

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MANILA, Philippines — Several flights were canceled, classes and office work suspended and flooding caused massive traffic jams yesterday, as the death toll from the heavy rains, floods and landslides in various parts of the country due to Typhoon Carina rose to nine.

Two persons were injured and one reported missing, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

The fatalities include four persons in Zamboanga Peninsula, two in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and one each in Northern Mindanao and the Davao Region.

In Barangay 96, Tondo, Manila, a teenager was found dead after drowning under Infanta Bridge on Monday night.

According to police, 13-year-old Khaydel Buensoleso was swimming in the Infanta River at around 6:20 p.m. when a heavy current swept him away. Personnel from the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) assisted in the search and rescue and later found the victim's body.

Heavy rains and flooding affected 179,744 families or 866,483 people in the same areas and more in Western and Central Visayas, Central Mindanao, the CARAGA Region and the MIMAROPA Region.

Of the number, the NDRRMC said some 7,738 families or 33,645 persons had to be brought to and served inside 56 different evacuation centers.

Estimated damage to agriculture in Western Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao and BARMM has reached more than P8.7 million, while reported damage to infrastructure remains at P700,000, apart from reported damage to houses placed at around P2.5 million.

The NDRRMC said the southwest monsoon has brought moderate to heavy rains over different provinces in the country since July 11, enhanced by Typhoons Butchoy and Carina.

So far, the government, through the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), has provided more than P29 million worth of assistance to displaced and severely affected families.

Work, classes suspended

Malacañang suspended work in government offices and classes in all levels in Metro Manila on Tuesday afternoon due to heavy rains brought by the southwest monsoon and Typhoon Carina.

Memorandum Circular 57, signed by Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin, suspended work in government offices and classes at all levels in the National Capital Region at 2 p.m.

“However, those agencies whose functions involve the delivery of basic and health services, preparedness/response to disasters and calamities and/or the performance of other vital services shall continue with their operations and render the necessary services,” the memo read.

The suspension of work of private companies and offices was left to the discretion of their respective heads, it said.

At the Senate, administrative employees were sent home at 2:30 p.m. yesterday as Senate President Francis Escudero adjourned the Senate session early.

“Upon instruction of the Senate President, Senate secretariat officers and employees who are not assigned specific tasks for the conduct of the plenary session today are allowed to go home at 2:30 p.m.,” Senate Secretary Renato Bantug Jr. said in a one-page memorandum.

Enhanced monsoon

Typhoon Carina continues to enhance the southwest monsoon that is bringing moderate to intense rainfall over parts of the country today.

The Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) raised tropical cyclone wind signal no. 2 over Batanes yesterday afternoon. Carina will also enhance the monsoon and bring rainfall over various localities in the western portion of Luzon until Thursday.

State weather forecasters said 100 to 200 millimeters of rainfall are forecast over Batanes, Babuyan Islands, the northern and eastern portion of Mainland Cagayan and Ilocos Sur.

Meanwhile, 50 to 100 mm of rain are expected over Ilocos Norte, La Union, Abra, Benguet, Apayao, the eastern portion of Isabela and the rest of Cagayan.

Carina was monitored 325 km east of Basco, Batanes as of 3 p.m. with maximum sustained winds of 150 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 185 kph.

Carina is forecast to move generally northwestward and exit the Philippine area of responsibility (PAR) by Thursday morning after making landfall in Taiwan.

It is forecast to reach peak intensity before making landfall, with rapid intensification likely. Rains with gusty winds are expected over Cagayan, Apayao and Ilocos Norte due to Carina.

Monsoon rains are forecast over Metro Manila, Zambales, Bataan, Pampanga, Bulacan, Cavite, Batangas, Rizal, Occidental Mindoro and the rest of Ilocos Region.

The southwest monsoon will also bring occasional rains over Oriental Mindoro, Romblon, Laguna, Aklan, Antique, Northern Palawan including Calamian and Cuyo islands and the rest of Cagayan Valley and Central Luzon.

Scattered rains are forecast over Negros Island Region, Zamboanga Peninsula, Quezon, Northern Samar, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, and the rest of Bicol Region, MIMAROPA and Western Visayas due to the monsoon.

The rest of the country may see isolated rains.

PAGASA warned of possible flooding or landslides due to scattered to widespread rains.

Displaced

In Cagayan, 18 families were evacuated from four barangays in Gonzaga town and one in Peñablanca, due to floods brought by Typhoon Carina.

They were brought to evacuation centers while those in Camansi, Peñablanca town temporarily sheltered with relatives.

Local officials and the Department of Social Welfare and Development provided relief assistance to the affected residents while the Philippine Coast Guard deployed rescue personnel to assist affected residents.

Authorities also reported that several roads and bridges in Gonzaga, Allacapan and Sto. Niño towns were submerged and not passable to all kinds of vehicles.

The Cagayan Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PDRRMO) said different municipal DRRM offices are conducting rescue and monitoring operations in their respective areas of responsibility.

The Cagayan Tourism office has cautioned travelers and tourists to take extra care because Carina has been bringing heavy rains that can cause landslides, flash floods and strong winds.

It also recommended the suspension of tourism activities along the swelling Cagayan River and its tributaries, as it banned leisure activities like swimming, boating, kayaking, river trek and cruising and the operation of floating restaurants.

Red alert

The DSWD Disaster Response Command Center is on red alert status due to inclement weather brought about by Typhoon Carina.

According to DSWD Assistant Secretary and spokesperson Irene Dumlao, relief goods have been prepositioned for easy dispatch to those who will be gravely affected by the typhoon.

“Secretary Rex Gatchalian has ordered the DRCC and the DSWD Field Offices to be on the highest level of readiness as the monsoon intensifies due to Typhoon Carina,” she said. A red alert means that all human and material resources will be made available for duty and deployment.

Reports showed that the Disaster Response Operations Management Information Center has already provided an initial P190,124 worth of humanitarian assistance to the affected localities in Central Luzon, Bicol and Western Visayas.

In Zamboanga Peninsula, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) yesterday said two road sections were closed due to landslide and soil collapse which resulted from heavy rains brought about by the monsoon and Carina.

In an advisory, the DPWH said a landslide occurred at Barangay Malagutay, Zamboanga City prompting authorities to close the road sections of Zamboanga city bypass road to all types of vehicles as of 6 a.m. Tuesday.

A soil collapse occurred in Barangay Inasagan, Zamboanga del Sur, prompting authorities to also close the junction to all vehicles in Aurora-Ozamis city road as of 6 am.

The DPWH said the agency’s district engineering offices’ quick response teams in Zamboanga city and Zamboanga del Sur, respectively, are undertaking clearing operations as of press time.

Water levels rise

Rains enhanced by Typhoon Carina have slightly raised water elevations of Angat, Ipo and Bustos dams, with the latter spilling excess water.

Records from the Bulacan Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Office showed water elevation of Angat Dam as of 8 a.m. yesterday was at 177.48 meters, Ipo Dam at 100.93 meters and Bustos Dam at 17.41 meters.

Bustos Dam reached its spilling level of 17.35 meter and has released excess water through its sluice gates, said Josephine Salazar, National Irrigation Administration regional director of Central Luzon.

As these developed, the 177.48-meter water elevation of Angat Dam slightly rose by 0.53 meter, compared to the previous level of 176.95 meters. This is still 2.52 meters below its minimum operating level of 180 meters and 34.52 meters below its normal high-water level of 212 meter.

Meanwhile, the 100.93-meter water level of Ipo Dam yesterday was 1.08 meters higher compared to its previous day’s elevation of 99.85-meters or 0.07 meter below its spilling level.

Also in Bulacan, several churches and chapels in the town of Hagonoy were inundated yesterday by floodwaters caused by Manila Bay's high tide and heavy rains from Typhoon Carina.

Based on the report of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Malolos-Sandigan, among the churches inundated were the National Shrine of the Santa Ana Parish, Santa Elena Parish and Nuestea Señora del Santisimo Rosario. Several chapels and residential houses were also submerged by floodwater in low-lying areas of Hagonoy. — **Jun Elias, Artemio Dumlao, Ramon Efren Lazaro, Rudy Santos, Helen Flores, Shiela Crisostomo, Jose Rodel Clapano, Mark Ernest Villeza, Evelyn Macairan, Romina Cabrera, Cecille Suerte Felipe**

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/07/24/2372556/9-dead-monsoon-back-back-cyclones>

Sona 2024 fact check

WRITTEN BY: [CRISTINA ELOISA BACLIG](#), [KURT DELA PEÑA](#)

July 23, 2024



PH PRESIDENT FERDINAND MARCOS JR. composite image from Inquirer file photos

MANILA, Philippines—In his third State of the Nation Address (Sona), President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., aside from announcing a [ban on Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators](#) (Pogos), touched on several other topics ranging from agriculture to the upcoming Paris Olympics.

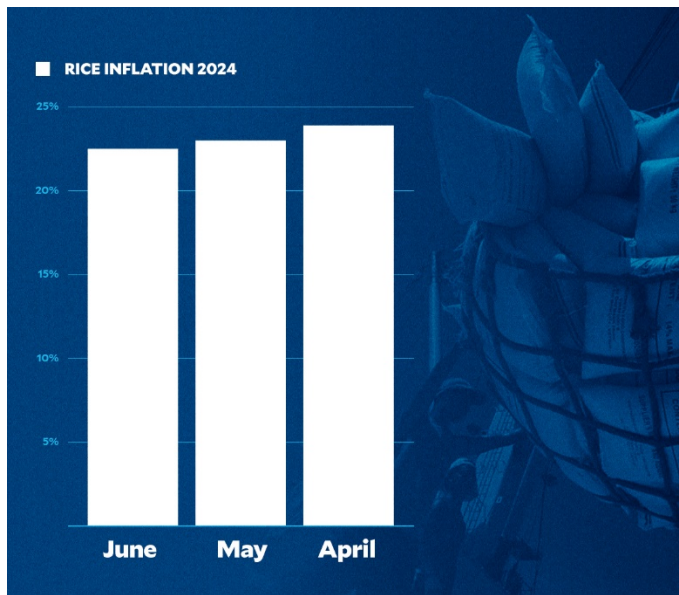
This report by INQFocus fact checks the President’s claims on these topics, as well as his closing remarks, which quoted a prominent English philosopher.

RICE PRICES, INFLATION

What Marcos said: “Totoo, puwersa ng merkado — sa ating bansa at maging sa buong daigdig — ang siyang nagdidikta ng presyo. Bunsod ito, halimbawa, ng giyera, problema sa supply, at puwersa ng kalikasan, tulad ng El Niño na naranasan din sa ibang bansa.”

Rating: INACCURATE

While market forces made prices higher, a local think tank, Ibon Foundation, previously said that the government should be blamed, too, for the high inflation prints, saying that its interventions have not done a lot to address the problem and assist the poorest of the poor.



P48.55 - P50.91

PER KILOGRAM

Average cost of local regular and well-milled rice

P48.85 - P53.00

PER KILOGRAM

Average cost of imported regular and well-milled rice

INQ | SOURCE: INQUIRER.NET ARCHIVES

GRAPHICS by Ed Lustan / INQUIRER.net

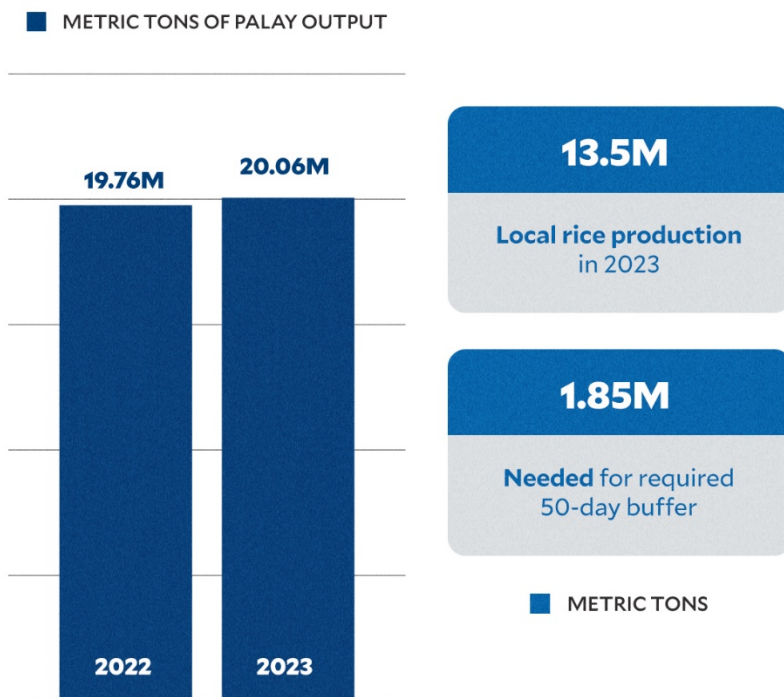
The government, last year, also pointed to “smugglers and hoarders” as the “only reason” for the record-high prices, especially of rice.

SOURCE: Ibon Foundation

What Marcos said: “Sa kabila ng mga hamon na ating kinakaharap, nasaksihan natin ang pinakamataas na ani ng palay sa bansa nitong nakalipas na taon. Pumalo ito sa lagpas dalawampung milyong tonelada — ang pinakamataas na ani mula pa noong 1987!”

Rating: CORRECT

Based on data from PSA and DA, last year’s palay output was 1.5 percent higher than 19.76 million MT in 2022. Rice consumption is already at 13.5 million MT but since a 50-day buffer is required, 1.85 million MT more was needed.



SOURCE: Department of Agriculture. GRAPHICS by Ed Lustan / INQUIRER.net

What Marcos said: “Lokal na produksyon pa rin ang ating mas bibigyan ng halaga.”

Rating: INCOMPLETE (NEEDS CONTEXT)

Marcos issued EO 62 last month, slashing the tariff on imported rice to 15 percent from 35 percent. While this is seen to bring down retail prices of rice, the reduced tariff is expected to hurt local farmers. Based on data from the Bureau of Plant Industry, 2.17 million MT of imported rice have arrived as of June 6.

SOURCES: Malacañang, Bureau of Plant Industry

What Marcos said: Kaya patuloy nating sinusuportahan ang sektor ng agrikultura, upang mapabilis, mapadali, at mapalakas ang produksyon — mula sa pagpunla, pag-ani at paghuli, hanggang sa pagbiyahe at pagbenta — at upang maiwasan din ang pagkasira ng mga produkto.

Rating: INCOMPLETE (NEEDS CONTEXT)

Neda had said that the government is “working diligently” to assist the agriculture sector, pointing out that from 2022 to 2024, DA’s budget increased by 69 percent. Ibon Foundation pointed out, however, that the sector only grew 1.2 percent since 2022, “not even half of the average since 2001.”

GRAPHICS by Ed Lustan / INQUIRER.net

As pointed out by Ibon Foundation, government interventions should be enough to lift farmers, even fisherfolk, from being the poorest sectors of the population at 30 percent and 30.6 percent, respectively.

SOURCES: National Economic Development Authority, Ibon Foundation

What Marcos said: “Nagsilbing kaagapay ng taumbayan ang Kadiwa sa panahon ng mataas ang presyo ng pagkain. Dahil naging epektibo ito, ang mga Kadiwa Centers ay magpapatuloy pa.”

Rating: INCOMPLETE

While Kadiwa Outlets already started selling rice for P29 per kg to the poor, the Federation of Free Farmers had stressed that this would be “hard to sustain” since the government is expected to lose P20 for every kilo of rice that it rolls out to the centers.

What Marcos said: “Matindi ang naging epekto ng dumaang El Niño, lalo na sa mga sakahan. Sa tinamong pinsala mula sa pagkasira ng mga pananim, nagkaroon ng proteksyon ang ating mga magsasaka sa pamamagitan ng ating binigay na crop insurance. Sa nakalipas na dalawang taon, mahigit siyam na [bilyong] pisong halaga ang naging bayad-pinsala sa mga apektadong magsasaka at mangingisda.”

Rating: CORRECT

As the DA stated last month, Marcos visited several regions across the Philippines to hand over the assistance, which included the over P700 million from the program Presidential Assistance to Farmers and Fisherfolks, where beneficiaries received P10,000 each.

SOURCE: Department of Agriculture

What Marcos said: “The recently launched “Walang Gutom 2027” will be fully rolled out from the initial two thousand three hundred households, now all the way to three hundred thousand food-poor households across the country by the end of the year. But the program will go on until we feed the one million most food-poor families by 2027.”

Rating: INCOMPLETE (NEEDS CONTEXT)

While the DSWD said that it already started the validation and registration for the program, which will give the beneficiaries P3,000 worth of “food credits,” every month, a former DSWD chief had pointed out that the government has to work to really address the problem.

GRAPHICS by Ed Lustan / INQUIRER.net

SOURCE: Department of Social Welfare and Development

EMPLOYMENT

What Marcos said: “Our employment rate has increased to 95.9 percent. We also saw a significant increase in high-quality jobs. Underemployment too has decreased from 11.7 percent in May of 2023 to 9.9 percent today. This is our lowest since 2005.

Rating: INCOMPLETE

Ibon Foundation said that jobs are really of lower quality and being reported as “employed” means less and less with regard to livelihood. It said that the “overall problem” is that 32.1 million, or 74 percent of “employment” is “overwhelmingly in poorly-paid no-or-zero-benefit irregular informal work.

GRAPHICS by Ed Lustan / INQUIRER.net

SOURCES: Philippine Statistics Authority, Ibon Foundation

POVERTY

What Marcos said: With the noble aim of breaking the cycle of poverty across the country, the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program has not only consistently accomplished its annual targets- it has also proven its efficacy over the years.

Rating: INCOMPLETE (NEEDS CONTEXT)

While five million households are “active beneficiaries” of 4Ps, there are 19.2 million households without savings as of end 2023. Based on SWS data, 16 million households considered themselves as poor, way higher than 12.9 million households in March.

SOURCES: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Ibon Foundation, Social Weather Stations

WAGES

What Marcos said: With tripartite consensus, minimum wage levels have been increased in various sectors in all regions, including the BARMM, for workers in private establishments. Makapagdudulot ito ng ginhawa sa mahigit apat na milyong mga kababayan natin at kanilang mga pamilya.

Rating: INACCURATE

The P9,606 average minimum wage for a month, based on data from the National Wages and Productivity Commission, is only 69 percent of the P13,797 poverty threshold set by the government in the first six months of 2023. Meanwhile, the P442 average daily minimum wage is only 37 percent of the P1,210 family living wage as of June 2024, Ibon Foundation said.

PWD BENEFITS

What Marcos Jr. said: “Halos dinoble na rin ang diskwento na ibinibigay sa mga PWDs, at sa mga senior citizens na tulad ninyo para sa mga basic necessities at prime commodities.”

Rating: MOSTLY CORRECT (NEEDS CONTEXT)

Last March 21, the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and Department of Energy (DOE) signed a joint administrative order (JAO) implementing a special discount of five percent on the regular retail price of basic necessities and prime commodities (BNPC) without exemption from the value-added tax (VAT) for Filipino senior citizens and persons with disabilities (PWDs).

“The JAO operationalizes the initiative of Congress under House Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez to raise the weekly discount to P125 from P65—or a total of P500 per month. This consists of P260,” said the DA in a statement. “As a result of lifting the value maximum discount, the JAO also raised the total value of goods that could be purchased to P2,500 a week from P1,300 or P10,000 a month from P5,200,” said the DA.

READ MORE: [Weekly senior citizen, PWD weekly discount hike JAO signed](#)

While Marcos Jr. was accurate in implying an increase in the weekly discount for senior citizens and persons with disabilities (PWDs), his use of the term “doble” (double) to describe the discount might be misleading. This is especially so considering that Joint Administrative Order (JAO) No. 24-02 explicitly prohibits “double discounts.”

Section 8, “No Double Discount,” of [JAO No. 24-02](#) states: “In the purchase of BNPC which are on promotional discount, the Senior Citizen or Person With Disability can avail of the establishment’s offered discount or the 5% discount provided herein, whichever is higher and more favorable.”

SOURCES: DTI, DA, [INQUIRER.NET](#) archive

HEALTH

Marcos Jr. also highlighted key accomplishments across various sectors, including notable developments in the health sector with a focus on PhilHealth’s benefit packages.

What Marcos Jr. said: “Sa PhilHealth naman, dinamihan na ang klase ng generic na gamot na kasama sa benepisyo para sa mga outpatient. Mula sa dalawampu’t isang generic na gamot, ay limampu’t tatlo na. May mga bagong gamot para sa altapresyon, at mayroon na rin para sa nerve pain at sa epileptic seizures.”

Rating: CORRECT

According to PhilHealth’s [Circular No. 2023-0029](#), which outlines the implementing guidelines for the outpatient drug benefit package—known as the PhilHealth Guaranteed and Accessible Medications for Outpatient Treatment (GAMOT)—the package now includes an additional 32 commonly prescribed outpatient medications. This expands the initial coverage of 21 medications under the Konsulta program.

SOURCE: PhilHealth

What Marcos Jr. said: “Bilang tugon sa dumaraming insidente at tumataas na presyo ng pagpapagamot, itinaas na ng Philhealth nang mahigit doble ang mga benepisyong para sa mga malulubhang karamdaman, tulad ng acute stroke at pulmonya. Ang limit na ngayon para sa mga kundisyon na ito ay itinaas na hanggang pitumpu’t anim na libong piso at siyamnapung libong piso.”

Rating: MOSTLY CORRECT (NEEDS CONTEXT)

Last October, PhilHealth approved the increased coverage for high-risk pneumonia, ischemic stroke, and hemorrhagic stroke.

While Marcos Jr.’s claim about the increase in benefits is accurate, it lacks specific details regarding the types of conditions covered.

The President’s statement did not specify “high-risk” pneumonia but simply mentioned “pneumonia,” which could potentially mislead individuals into thinking that all types of pneumonia are covered at the new higher rate.

A [circular](#) released by PhilHealth in November last year clarified that the benefit package specifically covers cases of “high-risk pneumonia.”

The state insurer defined high-risk pneumonia as “a subset of pneumonia cases with a higher likelihood of complications, severe illness, potentially adverse outcomes, or pneumonia-related mortality.”

Marcos Jr. mentioned increased coverage benefits for acute stroke up to PHP 76,000. However, PhilHealth [Circular No. 2023-0021](#) details that the reimbursement amounts for ischemic and hemorrhagic strokes differ, with ischemic stroke covered up to PHP 76,000 and hemorrhagic stroke up to PHP 80,000.

PhilHealth explained that ischemic strokes are caused by blood vessel blockages that limit blood supply to the brain, while hemorrhagic strokes result from blood vessel ruptures.

SOURCES PhilHealth, [INQUIRER.NET](#) archives

What Marcos Jr. said: “Upang mapa-igting pa ang paglaban natin sa cancer, tinaasan ng PhilHealth nang mahigit isanlibong porsyento ang benepisyong para sa

pagpapagamot ng breast cancer. Ang dating limit na isandaang libong piso, ngayon ay ginawa na nating 1.4 million pesos.”

Rating: CORRECT (NEEDS CONTEXT)

Earlier this year, PhilHealth president and CEO Emmanuel Ledesma Jr. announced a substantial increase in [coverage for breast cancer](#) under the state insurer’s “Z Benefits” package, raising the amount from P100,000 to P1.4 million— a 1,300 percent increase.

The PhilHealth board approved the increase in February, and it took effect in March in celebration of National Women’s Month. Besides the increased coverage, the benefit package now includes Stages 0 to 4 of breast cancer and has expanded eligibility criteria, allowing more members, including those already undergoing treatment, to avail of the benefits.

However, it should be noted that as of January 2023, only [18 hospitals](#) nationwide had entered into a contract with PhilHealth to provide specialized care under the Z Benefits package for breast cancer. Only two are located in Metro Manila: East Avenue Medical Center in Quezon City and the Philippine General Hospital in Manila.

SOURCES: PhilHealth, [INQUIRER.NET](#) archives

What Marcos Jr. said: “Ang benepisyong naman para sa colon cancer ay pinag-ibayo na rin.”

Rating: INCOMPLETE (NEEDS CONTEXT)

Last year, PhilHealth issued [Circular No. 2023-005](#), titled “Z Benefits Package for Colon and Rectal Cancers (Revision 1).” This new circular replaces the previous [Circular No. 028-2015](#) titled “The Z Benefits for Colon and Rectum Cancer.”

Several changes were made to the policies, procedures, and terminologies in the newer circular. However, both versions detailed mostly the same package rates for the Z benefits for colon cancer:

- **Colon cancer – Stage I to II (low risk): PHP 150,000**
- **Colon cancer – Stage II to III: PHP 300,000**

For rectal cancer, the latest circular has streamlined the package rates and no longer differentiates between the use of a linear accelerator and cobalt as modes of radiotherapy. The package rates for rectal cancer under the latest circular are as follows:

- **Stage I (clinical and pathologic): PHP 150,000**

- **Pre-operative clinical Stage I but with post-operative pathologic Stage II – III: PHP 400,000**
- **Stage II – III: PHP 400,000**

An online news report published on February 14 cited Ledesma, who announced that the Z Benefits package for colon and rectal cancers had been recently enhanced.

The PhilHealth president said the improvement will allow patients with metachronous colorectal tumors to re-avail themselves of the package for both colon and rectal cancer, ensuring they receive continued support and coverage.

SOURCE: PhilHealth

What Marcos Jr. said: “PhilHealth has also released this year its mental health benefit package for all its members.”

Rating: CORRECT

Last year, the PhilHealth Board of Directors approved the development of an outpatient benefits package for mental health, including coverage for general and specialized mental health services.

According to [Circular No. 2023-0018](#), the reimbursement rates for the mental health package per patient in a given fiscal year are as follows:

- **General Mental Health Services: PHP 9,000.00**
- **Specialty Mental Health Services: PHP 16,000.00**

Previously, PhilHealth covered only mental health conditions such as dementia, bipolar disorders, schizophrenia, and anxiety disorders under the Mental and Behavioral Disorders category through inpatient admission case rates, which amounted to PHP 7,800.00.

SOURCE: PhilHealth

What Marcos said: “Sa susunod na taon, ilulunsad naman ng PhilHealth ang benepisyo nito para sa mga batang may kapansanan.”

Rating: INCOMPLETE (NEEDS CONTEXT)

PhilHealth already offers a benefits package for children with disabilities under PhilHealth [Circular No. 2017-0029](#), also known as the “Z Benefit Package for Children with Developmental Disabilities,” published in February 2018.

The package provides benefits ranging from P3,626 to P 5,276.

In his Sona, Marcos Jr. did not specify the details of the upcoming benefits package for children with disabilities, nor did he clarify if it would differ from the existing package.

SOURCES: PhilHealth, [INQUIRER.NET](#) archives

Unmentioned: P89.9 B unused funds

Public health reform advocates and budget watchdogs questioned Circular No. 003-2024 issued by the Department of Finance (DOF), which directs PhilHealth to remit unused government subsidies amounting to P89.9 billion to the national treasury.

The circular, issued in February, was reportedly in compliance with the 2024 budget law directing the DOF to issue guidelines to implement the collection of unprogrammed appropriations sourced from the fund balances of government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs).

Independent health reform advocate Dr. Tony Leachon, former Finance Undersecretary Cielo Magno and Filomeno Sta. Ana III, executive director and cofounder of the local think tank Action for Economic Reforms, warned that the new DOF circular might be a new way for the government to misappropriate funds.

In justifying its action to target PhilHealth's excess funds, the DOF argued that the state health insurer has accumulated substantial fund balances over the past few years.

"The national government is in a better position to effectively utilize the unused subsidies for programs that directly and immediately benefit the Filipino people while advancing the goals of Universal Health Care," it noted.

But Leachon, Magno and Sta. Ana stressed that the circular violated Republic Act No. 11223, or the Universal Health Care Act of 2019.

Unmentioned: Massive data leak

In September 2023, the personal information of PhilHealth members — including names, addresses, dates of birth, gender, phone numbers, and PhilHealth identification numbers — was compromised after the state insurer's website and online application were hacked.

The National Privacy Commission (NPC) and cybersecurity experts have described the PhilHealth data leak as staggering, as initial assessments revealed that over 730 gigabytes of data had been compromised.

Earlier this month, PhilHealth admitted that the over 42 million members whose data were compromised in a hacking incident last year have not yet been notified about the extent of the breach.

INSURGENCY

What Marcos said: "No guerilla fronts remain active across the country today. Only seven weakened groups remain to be dismantled, and they are the subject of focused operations."

Rating: INCOMPLETE (NEEDS CONTEXT)

Back in January, Marcos said, too, that there were no longer active guerrilla fronts, but in May, the NTF-Elcac said that there are still two active fronts to be dismantled this year. Out of the original 89 guerrilla fronts in the Philippines, 22 are still existing.

SOURCE: National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict

ANTI-DRUG CAMPAIGN

What Marcos said: On the fight against dangerous drugs, our bloodless war on dangerous drugs adheres, and will continue to adhere, to the established “8 Es” of an effective anti-illegal drugs strategy. Extermination was never one of them.

Rating: INACCURATE

Based on data from Dahas Project of the University of the Philippines’ Third World Studies Center, there have already been 727 drug-related killings since Marcos took office. At least 359 were recorded in Marcos’ second year alone, with 34.3 percent committed by state agents.

SOURCE: Dahas Project

2024 PARIS OLYMPICS

What Marcos Jr. said: “To the twenty-eight of our finest athletes are competing in Paris now for the glory of the Philippines.”

Rating: INACCURATE

From July 26 to August 11, 22 Filipino athletes will participate in the Olympic Games Paris 2024. This marks a century since the Philippines made its Olympic debut.

READ MORE: [Paris Olympics](#)

SOURCE: olympics.com (official Olympics website), INQUIRER.NET archive

CLOSING REMARKS

What Marcos Jr. said: “So, ladies and gentlemen, let me end by recalling the words of a great man: Let not any one pacify his conscience by the delusion that he can do no harm if he takes no part, and forms no opinion. Bad men need nothing more to compass their ends, than that good men should look on and do nothing.”

“He is not a good man who, without a protest, allows wrong to be committed in his name.”

Rating: CORRECT (NEEDS CONTEXT)

Marcos Jr.’s closing statement included an excerpt from a portion of British philosopher [John Stuart Mill’s inaugural address](#) at the University of St. Andrews in 1867.

Compared to Marcos Jr.'s quoted version—which focused primarily on the danger of inaction by good people and the moral duty to stand against wrongdoing—the full text of Mill's address is more extensive and detailed.

The portion from Mill's original speech discusses the importance of international morality, the need for an informed public opinion, and the vital role of active civic engagement. He emphasized the collective responsibility of individuals to prevent tyranny and uphold justice, highlighting how an informed and engaged populace is essential for a just and noble society.

The passage “Bad men need nothing more to compass their ends, than that good men should look on and do nothing” from Mill's speech is often associated with the popular phrase, “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing,” which is frequently attributed to English political philosopher Edmund Burke.

However, David Bromwich, a Sterling Professor of English at Yale University, has stated that this phrase is misattributed, and there is no evidence that Burke actually said it. Additionally, the Oxford Essential Quotations notes that the exact quote cannot be found in Burke's writings.

SOURCES: Oxford Essential Quotations, Reuters

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1964296/sona-2024-fact-check>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Laguna: PH's largest provincial economy

By: [Lisbet K. Esmael](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:10 AM July 24, 2024



Laguna Gov. Ramil Hernandez has implemented various programs related to agriculture, a pillar of the province's economy.

Only an hour away from the capital region, Laguna, which houses industrial estates and residential developments, has been cementing its status as one of the country's fast-growing economic hubs.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed in April that the economy of Calabarzon—composed of Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Quezon, and Rizal—showed robust growth at P3.10 trillion in 2023, up from a year ago's P2.94 trillion.

Among the country's 82 provinces, Laguna also dominated as the largest provincial economy in 2022, contributing 5 percent to the gross domestic product. This, despite

the lockdowns brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, which shuttered nearly all sectors from 2020 to mid-2022.

Laguna Gov. Ramil Hernandez is optimistic about the prospects of his province maintaining its lead and becoming an economic powerhouse. To sustain the momentum, he said the provincial government of Laguna is bent on advancing key projects anchored on the current administration's eight-point Serbisyong Tama Program: health, social welfare services, education, employment, agriculture and food security, infrastructure, peace and order, and a transformative and professionalized bureaucracy.

“These future plans represent a comprehensive and forward-looking vision for the province, with a focus on infrastructure, health care, tourism, and economic diversification,” Hernandez said.

Investing in people

According to Hernandez, more than half of Laguna's funds every year are earmarked for social services, ranging from “financial, medical and burial to the technical, requests for courtesy calls, and even the mundane.”

In the education sector, the number of Lagunense students receiving financial assistance from the provincial government has ballooned to more than 20,000 in 2023 from 3,000 in 2015.

Free skills training is part of the province's social services.

To trigger economic development at the local level, Laguna has provided livelihood training to over 36,000 individuals, with potential ventures in meat processing, detergent and cleanser making, handicrafts, as well as the production of delicacies and other nonbake food products.

The provincial government has worked closely with other agencies, such as the Department of Labor and Employment, to help jump-start Lagunenses' careers, Hernandez said. “These programs form a comprehensive strategy aimed not only at

addressing immediate economic challenges but at laying the groundwork for sustained community development.”

Boosting agriculture

Mirroring the Marcos administration’s push to modernize and strengthen the agriculture sector, Hernandez said the local government has funds allocated to provide “robust” infrastructure for the sector, including vital post-harvest facilities and irrigation canals.

The governor highlighted his plan to provide efficient transportation for the province’s local farmers through an integrated farm-to-market road network designed to link agricultural areas to markets and ensure the “cost-effective” delivery of agricultural products.

“By investing in rural infrastructure, we aim to ... improve market access and enhance the overall resilience of the agricultural supply chain,” he said.

An agro-industrial park will also be part of the plan, integrating agricultural activities with industrial processes. The hub will encourage activities focused on agribusiness as well as technology transfer and research. However, the governor stressed the need to complement boosted agriculture with practices aimed at environmental protection.

Laguna believes in the power of technology to transform agriculture.

“By promoting techniques that prioritize environmental conservation, soil health and water management, we aim to ensure that our agricultural endeavors not only meet immediate needs but also safeguard the long-term health of our ecosystem,” he said.

Beefing up health care

Continuing its commitment to beef up health care, Hernandez said the provincial government will build a Laguna regional hospital with “advanced” and “comprehensive” medical care.

When the facility becomes operational, he said it should be able to remove barriers to accessing quality health-care services. For now, the local government has launched an outreach program to bring medical assistance to remote barangays across the province.

Through this initiative, residents can have receive check-ups, vaccinations, and medical tests like ECG, Pap smear and laboratory tests. A wellness center focused on women, providing gynecological services, family planning consultations and wellness activities like nutrition and stress management, is also in the works.

Hernandez said they would continue prioritizing “strategic resource allocation, infrastructure development and community engagement” to ensure robust public health and the residents’ overall wellness.

More infrastructure

Hernandez is spearheading more than 1,400 infrastructure projects for the province, from community facilities and hospitals to an extensive network of roads, all designed to bolster Laguna’s economic advancement. Commencing soon is the construction of the Calamba to Bay viaduct, part of the province’s “significant future development,” according to the governor.

Laguna Gov. Ramil Hernandez (second from left) says funds are regularly set aside to provide “robust” infrastructure for the agriculture sector. —PHOTOS FROM THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF LAGUNA

The project aims to decongest traffic and boost connectivity within Laguna. The local government is also stepping up promotions of Laguna as a tourist destination, given the province’s rich cultural heritage and natural beauty.

A comprehensive tourism plan includes the establishment of the Laguna Heritage, Cultural and Trade Center. “By highlighting Laguna’s unique attractions and creating infrastructure to support tourism, we aspire to stimulate economic growth, create job opportunities, and showcase the province’s cultural and natural treasures to a wider audience,” Hernandez said.

Laguna ensures that agriculture projects meet immediate needs and also safeguard the long-term health of the ecosystem.

A number of the country's influential business groups also joined the local government last February in launching a center in Calamba that will promote joint ventures between the public and private sectors.

And to ensure that the provincial government is always in touch with the concerns of its constituents, Hernandez has been implementing a "People's Day" to enhance the people's access to their leaders. This initiative, he said, should pave the way for the creation of "a more inclusive and responsive framework for essential services within our community." INQ

<https://business.inquirer.net/471024/laguna-phs-largest-provincial-economy>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

PH agri sector still on track to hit 2024 growth target

By: [Lisbet K. Esmael](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 02:01 AM July 24, 2024

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. —MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

The government is still optimistic that the agriculture and fisheries sector will hit its growth target of 1 to 2 percent in 2024 despite the El Niño phenomenon wreaking havoc on crops and fishing areas earlier this year.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said, however, that achieving the target growth expansion would be “not too easy” since the sector suffered from the drought caused by El Niño, which ended last month.

“We started with El Niño ng January tapos katatapos lang ng June then we’re coming with La Niña,” he said during a conference on Tuesday, a day after the State of the Nation Address of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

Crop damage

El Niño is a weather phenomenon characterized by below normal rainfall conditions. La Niña, meanwhile, is the opposite.

Aside from widespread power outages hitting thousands of households across the country, the Department of Agriculture (DA) previously reported that agricultural damage due to El Niño reached P6.3 billion as of May.

The rice sector, it said, suffered the most with P3.3 billion worth of damage.

Mimaropa had the highest reported damage at P1.7 billion, followed by Western Visayas with P1.5 billion, and the Cordillera Administrative Region with almost P800 million.

More land

However, Laurel was confident that local farmers could still increase their production with more irrigated land, including 45,000 hectares of new land.

“Of course, El Niño mas mababa ang production nang konti. Sa La Niña as long as walang malaking bagyo, I think mas mataas ang production (Of course, lower production was recorded during El Niño. In La Niña, as long as there are no strong typhoons, I think we will have higher production volume), he added.

Last year, the agriculture sector grew at 1.2 percent, buoyed by higher poultry and livestock production, as well as the increase in fruit and rice harvest.

Rice harvest in 2023 reached 20.06 million metric tons, according to a previous statement from DA. INQ

<https://business.inquirer.net/470909/ph-agri-sector-still-on-track-to-hit-%CA%BC24-growth-target>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Agri growth target doable if no big typhoons

— DA

July 23, 2024 | 9:15 pm



THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said its output growth target for this year is achievable if no major typhoons hit the country in the remainder of the year.

The DA had set a 2024 growth goal of between 1% to 2%, accounting for the effects of the El Niño and La Niña weather events.

“With the La Niña, as long as there are no big typhoons, I think we should be able to increase production,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said in a post-SONA discussion on Tuesday.

In his address to Congress, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. said that the government continues to focus on farm production through the provision of seed, fertilizer, livestock, boats, and technical and financial assistance.

Mr. Laurel said that the agricultural production target was “not easy” to achieve because of the El Niño and the expected La Niña during the latter part of the year.

“We started El Niño last January then it ended in June, and now we’re coming into La Niña,” he added.

The government weather service, known as PAGASA (Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration), estimates a 70% likelihood of La Niña occurring between August and October.

Last month, PAGASA announced the end of El Niño after the conditions in the tropical Pacific returned to El Niño Southern Oscillation neutral levels, meaning neither El Niño nor La Niña currently is in effect.

He added that production could also be bolstered by the increase of irrigated land following the expansion of coverage by the National Irrigation Administration.

Due to the dry spell caused by El Niño, agricultural production during the first quarter was little changed by 0.05%, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

The PSA is set to release its first half and second quarter agricultural output data on Aug. 7.

The DA estimated agricultural damage due to El Niño at P9.89 billion.

Agriculture accounts for about a tenth of Philippine economic output.

Mr. Laurel downplayed the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) rice import estimate of 4.7 million metric tons (MMT), saying he does not expect imports to go that high.

In a recent report, the USDA increased its forecast for Philippine rice imports at 4.7 MMT for the year, upgrading its earlier estimate of 4.6 MMT.

The USDA said that it had hiked its forecast after first-half imports came in higher than expected.

In the first half, rice imports came in at 2.33 MMT, 25.3% higher than the 1.86 MMT recorded a year earlier, according to the Bureau of Plant Industry.

“I don’t think the lowering of tariffs will really increase imports...The only reason it will increase imports is because of demand, not because of lower tariffs,” he added.

Executive Order No. 62, signed by Mr. Marcos, lowered the tariff on imported rice to 15% from 35% until 2028. The order is aimed at reducing prices of the staple to help tame inflation. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/07/23/609883/agri-growth-target-doable-if-no-big-typhoons-da/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

ASF expected to wind down by yearend with vaccine trials set

July 23, 2024 | 9:14 pm



REUTERS

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Tuesday that it expects the African Swine Fever (ASF) to wind down ahead of the launch of vaccine trials.

“The ASF issue could gradually be resolved... by the end of the year,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said in a post-SONA discussion on Tuesday.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., in his State of the Nation Address on Monday, said that the government is ready to roll out vaccines against ASF which has decimated the hog herd.

Twenty municipalities across nine provinces had active cases of ASF as of July 12, according to the Bureau of Animal Industry.

The DA has said that the vaccine approved by the Food and Drug Administration was sourced from Vietnam.

“ASF is really a big problem... and one solution to this is (increased) biosecurity. But biosecurity alone is not enough,” Mr. Laurel added.

Another DA program is known as Integrated National Swine Production Initiatives for Recovery and Expansion (INSPIRE) aimed at repopulating farms in ASF-hit areas.

Under the modified INSPIRE program, repopulation will now focus on the construction of multiplier facilities and the use of artificial insemination.

Mr. Laurel said that the DA is ready to implement the vaccine trial by September.

“Hopefully, by September... we will vaccinate (the) red zones and yellow zones,” he added, referring to the classification system for the most intense outbreaks.

The DA has allocated about P350 million to procure ASF vaccines for a government-led trial.

“After six months of the trials, if everything is okay and there are no problems, then I think it will be released for commercial use,” he said.

Asked to comment, Leonardo Q. Montemayor, chairman of the Federation of Free Farmers, said the government should be cautious in using the Vietnam vaccine.

“Very few (1% or less) Vietnamese farmers reportedly use the vaccine,” Mr. Montemayor said via Messenger chat.

Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura Executive Director Jayson H. Cainglet said that the controlled trials will be fully supervised by the DA, unlike previous vaccine trials.

“We support the earlier announcement of the DA of controlled vaccination trials so there would be strict monitoring of all field trials; unlike the previous trials where the importer had the full control,” he said via Viber.

Mr. Laurel added that the Q fever cases detected recently are limited and easily treatable with available animal medicines.

“Limited areas *lang* (only) at *mukhang madaling gamutin* (it seems to be treatable) with the available medicines we have in the Philippines,” he added.

Last month, the DA confirmed the first cases of Q fever, leading to a cull of infected goats.

The BAI had said it detected Q fever in some goats at a government breeding station in Marinduque and a quarantine facility in Pampanga.

The DA said that the culled goats infected by Q fever, which is caused by the *Coxiella burnetii* bacteria, were imported from the US.

“The findings now, after we talked to the USDA and looked at all the records, it seems that the goats got sick here... but we are still validating,” he said.

Mr. Laurel added that Q fever cases seem to be “isolated” as further tests in another area produced no positive findings.

Q fever is transmissible to humans. Infected people have flu-like symptoms, such as body aches and headaches. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/07/23/609882/asf-expected-to-wind-down-by-year-end-with-vaccine-trials-set/>

Cebu City intensifies measures vs ASF

By Kaiser Jan Fuentes

July 24, 2024

CEBU CITY — The city government of Cebu has intensified its enforcement against the entry of undocumented pork meat in the city following the resurgence of the African swine fever (ASF) virus.

Dr. Alice Utlang, head of the Cebu City Department of Veterinary Medicine and Fisheries (DVVMF), reported the confiscation of more than 84 kilograms of pork meat after traders failed to present meat inspection certificates to authorities last weekend.

The meat originated from Alcantara town in southwest Cebu and has an estimated market value of P11,760. The confiscation is part of the city's ongoing efforts to address the resurgence of the ASF virus in the city.

Recently, seven blood samples from pigs in the mountain barangay of Bonbon have tested positive for ASF, as confirmed by the Department of Agriculture Regional Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory Region 7.

Utlang said that the DVVMF is closely monitoring the movement of meat and meat products in the city to prevent the spread of the virus.

This recent outbreak has prompted city officials to alert all meat traders and farmers about the developments.

In March last year, the ASF virus was first reported in Carcar City, southern Cebu.

However, Utlang later made headlines by revealing that the initial detection actually occurred in Minglanilla town in November 2022, not in Carcar.

In response to the current situation, Utlang has reiterated the need for strict biosecurity measures.

"We are asking swine farmers not to allow anybody to enter their farms, especially outsiders, and to disinfect and follow biosecurity protocols," she said.

ASF, a highly contagious viral disease affecting domestic and wild pigs, poses no threat to human health but has severe economic impacts due to livestock loss and trade restrictions.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/07/24/regions/cebu-city-intensifies-measures-vs-asf/1959422>

P29 a kilo of rice sold in Region 2

By Leander C. Domingo

July 24, 2024

IN a bid to provide the masses with affordable rice, the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 2 (DA-RFO2), farmers cooperatives and associations (FCAs), and the city government of Tuguegarao on Monday launched the P29 per kilo of rice program for the low income sector.

Dr. Ferdinand Cortez of the DA-RFO2 Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section, said Region 2 followed suit after the DA Central Office launched the mass trial on July 5 by selling good quality rice at a low price in 10 locations nationwide.

Cortez said that the yearlong expanded trial for the program is intended to sell good quality rice at P29 a kilo to indigents, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, solo parents and Indigenous Peoples.



CHEAP QUALITY RICE The P29 per kilo of rice is now available in Tuguegarao City through the 'Kadiwa ng Pangulo' program. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"These vulnerable sectors are estimated to total 6.9 million households or around 34 million Filipinos," Cortez said, citing the recent DA records.

During Monday's convocation and celebration of National Nutrition Month in Tuguegarao City, DA-RFO2 Executive Director Rose Mary Aquino said the launching was just the first salvo in the region.

"We are going to replicate it regionwide in Cagayan Valley," Aquino said.

She said the launching, which coincided with the third State of the Nation Address of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., will further "strengthen the government's support not only to local farmers but the consumers who comprise the majority of the population."

"We have farmers' cooperatives and associations and local government units that are working along the value chain which are active partners of our Kadiwa ng Pangulo offering well-milled rice as low as P29 per kilo," Aquino said.

She noted that one of the department's thrusts, under the leadership of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., is the "production of nutritious and affordable food for Filipinos."

Dr. Roberto Claro Busania of the DA-RFO2 technical division for operations and extension said the launching was held in partnership with the City Agriculturist and the Social Welfare and Development offices of Tuguegarao and the Cagayan Seed Producers Multipurpose Cooperative (CSPMPC).

He also said the program is in line with the mandate of the DA on food security.

"Our vision is for everyone to have access to affordable nutritious food including rice at 29 per kilo," he said.



The Department of Agriculture (DA) starts selling rice for P29 per kilo at the Kadiwa center at the Bureau of Plant Industry on July 12, 2024 under the government's Program 29. Each beneficiary is allowed to buy 10 kilos of rice per month. Buyers only need to bring their ID and reusable containers or bags to put the purchased rice. PHOTO BY RENE H. DILAN

Busania also said the city government of Tuguegarao is implementing the program through the Kadiwa ng Pangulo program.

CSPMPC Manager Dumon Maborang said this is one way of giving back to the DA-RFO2 for its continuous assistance to them, adding that it is "our moral responsibility to give back what we have" in partnership with the DA.

"We also believe in our farmers and their role in social development," he added.

Also during the launching, the CSPMPC offered to sell 36,000 kilograms of well-milled rice at P29 per kilo which is equivalent to 100 hectares of their production area.

Dr. Evangeline Calubaquib, city agriculturist, and Melvin Perez, city social welfare development officer, said the city government of Tuguegarao headed by Mayor Maila Ting-Que is supportive of the projects and programs of the DA-RFO2.

Calubaquib noted that the first 100 buyers during the launch were from the vulnerable sectors of the community.

Meanwhile, Cortez said the Masisit Dacal Multipurpose Cooperative and the South West Farmers Cooperative also joined the CSPMPC in selling well-milled rice at P29 per kilo.

He said these FCAs are also beneficiaries of the Farm and Fisheries Consolidation and Clustering Program of the DA in the Cagayan Valley region which comprises the provinces of Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino and the island province of Batanes.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/07/24/regions/p29-a-kilo-of-rice-sold-in-region-2/1959424>

REMATE:

Food security ng Pinas patuloy na sisiguruhin ng gobyerno – PBBM

July 23, 2024 10:24



TINIYAK ni Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. na patuloy na titiyakin ng gobyerno ang food security sa bansa at gawing ‘affordable’ ang pagkain sa publiko.

Sa kanyang ikatlong State of the Nation Address (SONA), sinabi ni Pangulong Marcos na habang umani ang Pilipinas ng mahigit sa 20 milyong tonelada ng palay noong nakaraang taon kapos pa rin para punan ang 16 milyong tonelada ng rice requirement ng bansa.

“Kaya patuloy nating sinusuportahan ang sektor ng agrikultura, upang mapabilis, mapadali, at mapalakas ang produksyon — mula sa pagpunla, pag-ani at paghuli, hanggang sa pagbiyahe at pagbenta — upang maiwasan din ang pagkasira ng mga produkto,” ang sinabi ni Pangulong Marcos.

“Nitong nakalipas na taon, higit isandaang milyong kilo ng mga sari-saring binhi, suwi, at pataba ang ipinamahagi sa mga magsasaka. Namigay rin ang pamahalaan ng mahigit tatlong daang libong inahin upang ito ay maparami,” aniya pa rin.

Pagdating naman sa palaisdaan nagpalabas ang gobyerno ng mahigit sa 500 milyong fingerlings at 3,000 fishing boats.

“It also rehabilitated fish ports to support the industry,” ayon sa Pangulo.

Ipinaabot din ng pamahalaan ang ‘technical and financial assistance’ para tulungan ang mga players sa agriculture sector na marami ang bagong kaalaman sa ‘production and sourcing’ ng capital.

“It is also ready to provide livestock raisers with African Swine Fever vaccine to protect farmers and raisers from future losses,” ang tinuran ni Pangulong Marcos.

“The government is also carrying measures to stabilize prices and boost the country’s food supply. Because of compelling emergency reasons, such as illegal price manipulations by hoarders, the government was constrained to temporarily implement mandated price ceilings on rice,” ang paliwanag ni Pangulong Marcos.

“We also extended the reduced tariff rates to facilitate the importation of rice, corn, and pork until the end of this year. Tinitiyak ko sa ating mga magsasaka at sa buong sektor ng agrikultura na ang mga ito ay pawang pang-gipitang solusyon lamang,” aniya pa rin.

“Also part of government’s thrust to ensure food security is giving land to the landless. In the last two years, more than 130,000 land titles were handed over to agrarian reform beneficiaries,” dagdag na wika nito.

“Tuloy-tuloy din at pinabibilis pa natin ang pagkakahati-hati ng mga collective Certificates of Land Ownership Award o ‘yung CLOA para sa mga indibidwal na benepisyaryo nito,” ang sinabi ni Pangulong Marcos.

Ang Certificates of Condonation ay ipinalabas para sa condonation ng mahigit sa P57 billion debt para sa 600,000 benepisyaryo.

“Bukod pa rito, naresolba rin ang mahigit pitumpung libong mga kaso patungkol sa repormang agraryo. Kasama rito ang mahigit dalawang libong kasong matagal nang nakabinbin bago pa man pumasok ang administrasyon,” ang sinabi ng Punong Ehekutibo.

Ginawa ring modernisado ng pamahalaan ang ‘customs procedures’ at pinaigting ang pagsisikap sa pagpapatupad na nagresulta ng pagsamsam sa mahigit sa P2.7-billion smuggled agri-fisheries products na maaaring pumasok sa merkado at negatibong naka-impluwensiya sa presyo.

“And to discourage rice smuggling, seized staple is given to the poor, ayon sa Pangulo sabay sabing Future seizure will undergo similar procedure,” ang sinabi ni Pangulong Marcos.

“Ganoon din ang sasapitin ng lahat ng mga ipupuslit na mga bigas. Ang ibang mga produkto naman ay ating sisirain o susunugin — bukod pa sa pagkakakulong sa mga mahuhuling mga salarin,” aniya pa rin.

Sa kabilang dako nangako naman si Pangulong Marcos na ipatutupad sa lalong madaling panahon ang pre-border technical verification at cross-border electronic invoicing ng import commodities na makapagbigay ng malakas na signal na ibig ipakahulugan ng pamahalaan ay “serious business.”

At upang manawagan ang ‘unnecessary business costs’, hindi mangongolekta ang local government units (LGUs) ng ‘fees at charges’ mula sa motorists transporting goods at merchandise habang bumabagtas sa national roads, sinabi ng Pangulo na hinikayat nito ang LGUs na umatras mula sa pag komentaryo ng kahalintulad na bayarin para sa paggamit ng lokal na lansangan.

“And because of the success of KADIWA Centers in providing the public with affordable goods, the KADIWA program will continue to be implemented,” ang sinabi ni Pangulong Marcos.

“Katuwang ang mga lokal na pamahalaan, dinadagdagan pa natin ang mga KADIWA sa iba’t ibang panig ng bansa. Higit sa lahat, layunin nating gawing permanente rin at mas madalas pa ang pagdaraos ng mga KADIWA,” pahayag ng Chief Executive. **Kris Jose**

<https://remate.ph/food-security-ng-pinas-patuloy-na-sisiguruhin-ng-gobyerno-pbbm/>

ABANTE:

ASF lilipulin ng DA bago matapos 2024

- [Abante News](#)
- [July 23, 2024](#)



Target ng Department of Agriculture (DA) na malutas ang problema sa African Swine Fever (ASF) na pumapatay sa mga baboy bago matapos ang taon.

Ito ang inihayag ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. sa post-SONA discussion sa Pasay City nitong Martes upang malutas ang malaking problema sa hog industry.

Ayon sa kalihim, sisimulan na nila ang bidding sa susunod na buwan upang mabili na ang bakuna at agad na ilalarga ang pagbabakuna sa mga baboy sa sandaling dumating ito sa buwan ng Setyembre.

Sinabi pa ng kalihim na sa sandaling mayroong nang bakuna sa ASF, ang unang tuturuan ay mga baboy na nasa red zones at yellow zones para maalis na ang sakit ng mga ito.

Sa SONA ng Pangulo nitong Lunes, sinabi nitong handa na ang pamahalaan na ilabas ang bakuna laban sa ASF na magliligtas sa mga hayop upang hindi na malulugi ang mga magsasaka at mga namumuhunan sa hog industry.
(Aileen Taliping)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/07/23/asf-lilipulin-ng-da-bago-matapos-2024/>