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MANILA BULLETIN:

Imee prods NEDA to reveal meeting details leading to rice tariff cut

BY DHEL NAZARIO

Jul 5, 2024 04:56 PM

Senator Imee Marcos has called on the National Economic Development Authority to publicize the details of its board meeting that led to the government's controversial decision to cut the tariff on imported rice to 15 percent up to 2028.



Sen. Imee Marcos attends Thursday's hearing of the Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform on July 4, 2024, on the proposed amendments to the Rice Tariffication Law. (Senate PRIB photo),

Marcos was referring to the NEDA board meeting held last June 3, 2024. No other than NEDA Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan announced the reduction tariff on rice from 35 percent to 15 percent and additional government subsidies the following day on June 4.

President Marcos, who chairs the NEDA Board, approved the new Comprehensive Tariff Program for 2024-2028, which extended tariff rates until 2028.

Yet according to her sister, it was established during Thursday's senate hearing into proposed amendments to the Rice Tariffication Law (RA No. 11203) and Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RA No. 8178), that the proposal did not come from agricultural stakeholders, and was never raised during three consultative hearings of the Tariff Commission

in

2023.

“Bigla na lang sumulpot ito sa NEDA Board noong June 3. Hihingin po namin, hangga’t kaya, kung sinu-sino ang nagpunta (NEDA Board meeting) at kung may transcript na ibibigay. Kung kinakailangan, mag-e-executive session para lang malaman natin ang ugat nitong EO 62 (Modifying the Nomenclature and Rates of Import Duty on Various Products) (This suddenly came out on June 3. We will ask, as long as we could the names of those who attended [the NEDA board meeting] and if there will be a transcript given. If needed, there will be an executive session to know the root of this EO 62),” she said.

“Clearly, this was a small meeting. It was just a board meeting, right? So it can hardly be considered a public hearing with stakeholders and others,” she added.

The NEDA Board comprises the President as chairperson, and NEDA Secretary as vice-chairperson, with the following members: the Executive Secretary, Special Assistant to the President for Investment and Economic Affairs, Secretary of Finance, and Secretary of Budget and Management.

The senator noted that in the transcripts of the March, September, and October 2023 consultative meetings and public hearings held by the Tariff Commission, there was no single mention of a 15 percent rice tariff rate taking effect for a period of 4 and a half years.

Commissioner Marissa Paderon explained that proposed changes to the tariff lines “come from the parties” present during the meetings.

“Sa pagbasa ng transcript na yan (In reading that transcript), was there any new tariff rate on rice proposed or discussed? Wala po akong makita. Sa buong transcript, wala umangal, walang nagsabi ibagsak sa kinse porsyento ang taripa. Wala akong nakita sa buong transcript. Binalibaliktad ko. Saan po nanggaling yan? Kung sinasabi ninyo manggagaling yan sa magtataas ng kamay at magsa-suggest ng panibagong taripa? Wala naman sa transcript; saan nanggaling yan? (I can't see that. In the whole transcript, no one protested, no one said to reduce the tariff rate to 15 percent. I can't see it in the whole transcript. I read it page to page. Where did that come from? If you're saying that it came from someone who raised a hand and suggested a new tariff rate? It's not in the transcript; where did it come from?)” Marcos asked the Tariff Commission, as she pointed out the lack of due process in the implementation of the rice tariff cut.

The senator also lamented how farmers groups, federations, and other agricultural stakeholders, and the Senate were left out of the consultative meetings.

Five days after the Malacañang issuance, the Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (Sinag), Federation of Free Farmers Inc. (FFFI), United Broiler Raisers Assn. 1 Inc., Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative (SIDC), and Magsasaka Partylist representative Argel Cabatbat challenged EO No. 62 before the Supreme Court (SC).

Marcos doubted the periodic review of every 4 months of the 15 percent rice tariff under the executive issuance.

“Ang ibig sabihin ng review na napaka-klaro naman sa atin: i-a-assess, i-e-examine at baka—baka palitan, baka hindi, baka palalain. Baka ibagsak pa lalo. Review yun eh. Hanggang doon

lang. Pero hindi tayo sigurado na babaguhin (What review means is very clear: To assess, to examine as it might be changed, or it may not, or it may worsen. Or to drop it significantly. It's a review. It's only up to that. But we're not sure that it must be changed),” she said.

Farmers groups and rice millers present during the senate hearing bared they were not even invited to the 2023 consultative meetings on the tariff lines, the senator noted.

Marcos has consistently voiced her opposition to the 15 percent tariff rate, stating this will not bring down the retail price of rice because exporters of the commodity would just jack up their prices, based on previous experiences.

The senator, who has put agriculture and food security among her legislative priorities, lamented how the latest tariff cut would result in the death of the local rice-producing industry.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/7/5/imee-prods-neda-to-reveal-meeting-details-leading-to-rice-tariff-cut>

Duterte most approved Cabinet secretary before DepEd departure; Abalos, Gatchalian also highly rated — survey

BY ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

Jul 5, 2024 12:19 PM

Cabinet Secretary	Dept.	Awareness (%)						Satisfaction (%)					
		Jan '24	Feb '24	Mar '24	Apr '24	May '24	June '24	Jan '24	Feb '24	Mar '24	Apr '24	May '24	June '24
Sara Duterte	DEPED	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	65%	65%	61%	59%	58%	58%
Benjamin Abalos Jr.	DILG	99%	98%	98%	98%	99%	98%	61%	58%	55%	55%	57%	58%
Rexlon Gatchalian	DSWD	98%	98%	97%	85%	97%	97%	64%	55%	50%	54%	56%	58%
Gilberto Teodoro Jr.	DND	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	59%	52%	47%	49%	50%	53%
Ralph Recto	DOF	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	56%	50%	46%	47%	49%	50%
Teodoro Herbosa	DOH	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%	54%	49%	45%	46%	48%	54%
Bienvenido Laguesma	DOLE	97%	97%	96%	96%	96%	97%	55%	49%	43%	45%	47%	52%
Renato Solidum Jr	DOST	96%	95%	96%	94%	95%	96%	56%	47%	43%	45%	44%	53%
Maria Esperanza Christina Frasco	DOT	96%	96%	96%	95%	96%	96%	55%	48%	42%	45%	46%	52%
Enrique Manalo	DFA	97%	97%	96%	96%	96%	97%	52%	45%	41%	42%	41%	49%
Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga	DENR	96%	95%	96%	95%	96%	96%	53%	46%	40%	42%	42%	49%
Alfredo Pascual	DTI	97%	96%	95%	95%	96%	96%	49%	44%	39%	41%	42%	49%
Hans Leo Cacdac	DMW	93%	93%	94%	93%	93%	94%	49%	44%	39%	42%	41%	52%

Tangere

Vice President and former Education Secretary Sara Duterte, Interior and Local Government Secretary Benjamin Abalos, and Social Welfare Secretary Rex Gatchalian were rated as the most approved Cabinet members in the latest monthly Cabinet Performance Survey conducted by Tangere.

The June 17-22 survey, which gathered responses from 2,400 participants nationwide, showed Vice President Duterte, who was in her final week as DepEd secretary during the survey period, garnering high approval for her tenure at 58 percent.

Abalos and Gatchalian also received commendable ratings, each at 58 percent.

Compared to the previous month, Tangere said 13 out of 26 Cabinet members saw a slight increase in satisfaction ratings.

Housing Secretary Jose Acuzar led with a 3 percent improvement, despite starting from the lowest satisfaction rating in January 2024.

The remaining members either saw decreases in their ratings or maintained consistency compared to May.

Here are the satisfaction ratings for members of Marcos' Cabinet as of the latest Tangere survey: Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa (54 percent), Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro (53 percent), Science and Technology Secretary Renato Solidum (53 percent), Labor Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma (52 percent), Tourism Secretary Christina Frasco (52 percent), Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac (52 percent), Finance Secretary Ralph Recto (50 percent), and Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista (50 percent).

Meanwhile, several members of Marcos' Cabinet received satisfaction ratings below 50 percent: Information and Communications Technology Secretary Ivan John Uy (49 percent), Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo (49 percent), Environment Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga (49 percent), Trade and Industry Secretary Alfredo Pascual (49 percent),

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. (48 percent), Special Assistant to the President Antonio Lagdameo Jr. (48 percent), Public Works and Highways Secretary Manuel Bonoan (47 percent), Budget Secretary Amenah Pangandaman (47 percent), Agrarian Reform Secretary Conrado Estrella III (47 percent), Presidential Communications Office Secretary Cheloy Garafil (47 percent), Housing Secretary Jose Acuzar (46 percent), Justice Secretary Jesus Remulla (45 percent), Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla (45 percent), and Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin (44 percent).

The survey on the “Satisfaction Ratings of the Cabinet of the Marcos Administration” was conducted using a mobile-based respondent application.

It has a +/-2.2 percent margin of error at a 95 percent confidence level and employed a stratified random sampling or quota-based sampling method.

Respondents were proportionally distributed across the Philippines: 12 percent from the National Capital Region, 23 percent from Northern Luzon, 22 percent from Southern Luzon, 20 percent from Visayas, and 23 percent from Mindanao.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/7/5/duterte-most-approved-cabinet-secretary-before-dep-ed-departure-abalos-gatchalian-also-highly-rated-survey>

MANILA BULLETIN:

'Mr. Rice' Romualdez trumpets Marcos admin's rice self-sufficiency goal by 2028

BY ELLSON QUISMORIO

Jul 6, 2024 12:56 PM

AT A GLANCE

- The Marcos administration and the House of Representatives are working toward the lofty goal of rice self-sufficiency by 2028, said House Speaker Martin Romualdez.



House Speaker Martin Romualdez (left), President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. (Speaker's office)

The Marcos administration and the House of Representatives are working toward the lofty goal of rice self-sufficiency by 2028.

Thus, said House Speaker Martin Romualdez, who noted the importance of long-term thinking in the effort to provide food security for Filipinos.

"Food security, is national security. So, talagang mahalaga talaga itong programa na ito. Unang-una, gusto natin ibababa natin ang presyo ng bigas na abo't kaya ng lahat ng Pilipino, kasi ang Presidente ayaw na ayaw niya na may mahirapan o magutom na Pilipino," Romualdez said in a recent interview.

(This program is really important. First of all, we want to lower the price of rice so that it's affordable to all Filipinos, because the President doesn't want Filipinos to go hungry.)

"Pero, hindi lang pwede na ganun ang iniisip, kaya ang long-term plan niya ay bago siya bumaba, we will no longer be dependent on rice imports," he said of President Marcos.

(But we can't limit ourselves to that thinking, that's why his long-term plan before he steps down is that we will no longer be dependent on rice imports.)

Asked if the goal was for the Philippines to no longer import rice by 2028 or the end of President Marcos' term, Romualdez answered: "Yan ang aspiraton (That is the aspiration)."

"So, kailangan talaga rice self-sufficient. So, kailangan mas efficient ang mga palayan natin, kailangan ng patubig at napakaraming patubig pa," said Romualdez, who had earned the moniker "Mr. Rice" for his various rice distribution initiatives.

(So we really need to be rice self-sufficient. So, our farms need to become more efficient, we need irrigation, lots of irrigation.)

"So all-of-government approach, so yung Department of Agriculture (DA), National Irrigation Authority (NIA), NFA (National Food Authority), siyempre yung buong executive, ngayon yung legislative nag sama-sama na," Romualdez added.

(So, this is an all-of-government approach, the DA, NIA, NFA, the entire executive, and now the legislative, they have all joined together.)

The Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD) president cited the importance of Comprehensive Irrigation Systems (CIS) in achieving the goal.

"Magco-construct ang DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways) ng mas maayos na CIS (Comprehensive Irrigation Systems), interconnected ito sa mga impounding para sa tubig, para kapag umulan may flood control na nag-aasikaso, meron ka nang patubig, meron ka pang reservoir, bulk water," he said.

(The DPWH will construct better CIS, which will be interconnected to water impounding facilities. These will take of flood control and provide for irrigation, and there will also be a reservoir, bulk water.)

"Lahat ng ito kinoconverge natin para mas efficient ang paggamit ng pondo. Naging teamwork kasi dati, yung DA may programa, NIA may programa parang hindi nag-uusap. Pero, nag-uusap na tayo. So, we feel that sa puno't dulo nito magkakaroon ng tayong rice self-sufficiency," Romualdez said.

(We will converge all of these so that the use of funds is more efficient. Before there was teamwork, the DA had a program, the NIA had a program but they didn't seem to be coordinating. But, not anymore. So we feel that the end goal of this is to achieve rice self-sufficiency.)

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/7/6/mr-rice-romualdez-trumpets-marcos-admin-s-rice-self-sufficiency-goal-by-2028>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA to start mass trial of ASF vaccine

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

July 6, 2024 | 12:00am



“This (mass trial) is a big development in our campaign (against ASF)... We hope that within this year (the trials will be completed) so that we will no longer have problems with ASF,” DA Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel De Mesa said in a chance interview yesterday.

AFP / File

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture will start the mass trial of the vaccine against African swine fever (ASF), as the DA expects the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to approve its commercial distribution in the country this month.

“This (mass trial) is a big development in our campaign (against ASF)... We hope that within this year (the trials will be completed) so that we will no longer have problems with ASF,” DA Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel De Mesa said in a chance interview yesterday.

De Mesa said the DA will shoulder the expenses for the field trial of the ASF vaccine from Vietnam.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the FDA is set to approve within two weeks the country’s first vaccine against ASF for commercial distribution.

Although ASF is not harmful to humans, it has decimated over three million hogs since the country recorded its first confirmed outbreak in 2019.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) stressed the need for the government to innovate its strategies in combating ASF.

In an opinion piece, FAO Representative in the Philippines Lionel Dabbadie and Agriculture Assistant Secretary Constante Palabrica highlighted the need for risk communication and community engagement or RCCE to curb and control the spread of ASF.??

Dabbadie and Palabrica said the RCCE deviates from the traditional technical strategies used by the government in addressing ASF as it integrates social and behavioral factors in disease management.

They noted that human activities such as farm visits, animal movements and trade significantly influence the transmission of ASF among domestic and wild pigs.??

“The emphasis on RCCE underscores how human behavior is key to controlling ASF spread. This highlights a critical gap in our current response strategies, which effective RCCE strategies can help bridge,” they said in the piece released to the media yesterday.??

“By providing them with the necessary resources, knowledge and support, we enable them to implement effective biosecurity measures that lead to sustainable control and prevention of ASF,” they added.??

The authors cited the efforts of the Philippine government in improving biosecurity in the communities through the involvement of farmers in co-developing biosecurity measures in their respective areas.??

“It highlighted how multilateral knowledge sharing and enhanced coordination among various stakeholders are key for developing comprehensive disease response frameworks that are both effective and adaptable to local contexts,” the authors said. – **Jasper Emmanuel Arcalas**

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/07/06/2368047/da-start-mass-trial-asf-vaccine>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Tomato retail prices reach P200 per kilo

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

July 6, 2024 | 12:00am



Based on monitoring of the DA in Metro Manila markets, the retail price of tomatoes reached between P130 and P200 per kilo.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The retail price of tomatoes further increased by P20 to a high of P200 per kilo despite assurances from the Department of Agriculture (DA) that it will go down in two weeks.

Based on monitoring of the DA in Metro Manila markets, the retail price of tomatoes reached between P130 and P200 per kilo.

It went up by P20 per kilo compared to the previous prevailing prices of P110 to P180 per kilo.

Last week, the retail price of tomatoes ranged between P70 and P140 per kilo.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel de Mesa attributed the spike in retail price of tomatoes to the impact of Typhoon Aghon, which affected the Southern Tagalog region.

De Mesa reiterated his assurance that the retail price of tomatoes is expected to go down within two weeks.

“If there is still movement, it should not be that big,” De Mesa said in a chance interview during the simultaneous launch of the P29-per-kilo rice in additional Kadiwa outlets in Metro Manila and Bulacan.

“We expect the supply to increase with the arrival of harvest,” he added.

De Mesa said the DA will look into the possibility of retailers engaged in overpricing.

In 2023, farmers were compelled to dump their tomatoes due to oversupply and low wholesale price at P8 per kilo.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/07/06/2368115/tomato-retail-prices-reach-p200-kilo>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

ASF vaccine out in two weeks, says DA

By: [Zacarian Sarao](#) - Reporter / [@zacariansINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 08:08 PM July 05, 2024



FILE PHOTO: The African Swine Fever (ASF) vaccine will soon be available for commercial use in the country, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA). PHOTO BY RICHARD MALIHAN / CONTRIBUTOR

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) said the vaccine against African Swine Fever (ASF) will soon be available for commercial use in the country.

The DA said the commercial trial for the vaccines will be approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in two weeks.

“Malapit nang lumabas ‘yung approval sa vaccine for the swine,” Agriculture Sec. Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said in a statement.

(The vaccine for the swine will be approved soon.)

“FDA and the DA are working very closely on this. Ang ganda ng teamwork namin (We have a very good teamwork),” he added.

Once approved, the DA said the commercial distribution of the vaccine will follow.

Laurel said that with the availability of the vaccine, they expect the spread of ASF in the country to finally end.

“The vaccine from Vietnam really works. So, that solves our problem,” he said.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1958305/asf-vaccine-out-in-two-weeks-says-da>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Philippine inflation eases to 3.7% in June

July 5, 2024 | 3:15 pm



People line up to buy rice, priced at P29 per kilo, at a Kadiwa market in San Andres, Manila, July 5. Rice inflation eased to 22.5% in June from 23% a month ago, marking the third straight month of slower rice inflation. Photo by Edd Gumban, The Philippine Star

by **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson**, Reporter

Headline inflation eased to 3.7% in June after four straight months of acceleration due to a slower rise in electricity and transport costs, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) said.

The PSA on Thursday reported that the consumer price index (CPI) rose to 3.7% year on year in June, easing from 3.9% in May and 5.4% in the same month a year ago.

This fell within the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' (BSP) 3.4-4.2% forecast for the month but was below the 3.9% median estimate in a BusinessWorld poll of 14 analysts.

This also marked the seventh straight month that inflation settled within the BSP's 2-4% target band.

The June print was the slowest pace in four months or since the 3.4% clip in February. It also matched the 3.7% print in March.

Core inflation, which excludes volatile prices of food and fuel, was steady at 3.1% in June but slowed from 7.4% a year earlier.

For the first six months of 2024, headline inflation averaged 3.5%, slightly higher than the central bank's 3.3% full-year forecast.

"The latest inflation outturn is consistent with the BSP's latest outlook that inflation will settle within the target range for 2024-2025 with inflation expectations remaining well-anchored," the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said in a statement.

National Statistician Claire Dennis S. Mapa attributed cooling inflation to the slower increase in the housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels index.

The index rose by 0.1%, slower than the 0.9% in the previous month and 5.6% a year ago.

"The main contributor to the easing in the inflation of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels is due to the faster decline in electricity prices, which had -13.6% inflation," Mr. Mapa said in mixed English and Filipino.

Electricity inflation contracted by 13.6% from the 8.5% decline in May and 10.3% increase a year earlier.

In June, residential customers served by Manila Electric Co. saw a P1.9623 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) reduction in their electricity bills.

This after the Energy Regulatory Commission ordered all distribution utilities and electric cooperatives to implement a staggered collection of charges on their purchases from the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market in May.

Mr. Mapa also noted the slower annual growth in the transport index to 3.1% from 3.5% a month ago, mainly due to decelerating gasoline prices.

The PSA also attributed the inflation downtrend to slower annual increments in the alcoholic beverages and tobacco commodity group (3.8% from 4.2% a year ago); clothing and footwear (3.2% from 3.4%); furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance (2.8% from 3.1%) and personal care, and miscellaneous goods and services (3.2% from 3.4%). "When it comes to the main contributors to overall inflation this June, the top commodity group is food and non-alcoholic beverages, which had a 61.9% share," Mr. Mapa said.

The heavily weighted food and non-alcoholic beverages index accelerated to 6.1% in June from 5.8% in May but eased from 6.7% in the same month in 2023.

Food inflation alone quickened to 6.5% in June from 6.1% in the previous month.

Rice inflation eased to 22.5% from 23% a month ago, marking the third straight month of slower rice inflation.

Rice accounted for 45.2% of overall inflation, equivalent to 1.7 percentage points (ppt).

PSA data showed that the average price of a kilo of well-milled rice declined to P55.96 in June from P56.06 in May. On the other hand, prices of regular milled rice rose to P51.07 in June from P51.03 in May and special rice went up to P64.56 in June from P64.41 in the previous month.

Food inflation was also driven by the faster rise in vegetables, tubers, cooking bananas and pulses (7.2% from 2.7%) and meat and other parts of slaughtered land animals (3.1% from 1.6%).

INFLATION FOR BOTTOM 30%
Meanwhile, the inflation rate for the bottom 30% of income households accelerated to 5.5% in June, from 5.3% in May but slower than the 6.1% a year ago.

In the January-June period, the inflation rate for the bottom 30% averaged 4.8%.

In the National Capital Region (NCR), inflation eased to 2.3% in June from 3.1% a month ago.

Inflation in areas outside NCR averaged 4.1%, unchanged from the previous month.

The BSP said that the risks to the inflation outlook have tilted to the downside for this year and 2025 due to the tariff reduction on rice imports.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. last month signed Executive Order No. 62, which slashed tariffs on rice imports to 15% from 35% previously, until 2028.

The measure is expected to bring down retail rice prices by P6 to P7 per kilo, the Agriculture department said earlier.

“The reduction in the price of rice will definitely have an impact on the food inflation and the overall inflation. But we will have to wait,” Mr. Mapa said.

Despite the downtrend in June inflation, Mr. Mapa said it is still not that clear if inflation will continue to decelerate as there are still risks such as higher fuel, electricity and food prices.

“Nonetheless, higher prices of food items other than rice, transport charges, and electricity rates continue to pose upside risks to inflation,” the BSP said.

Mr. Mapa said the impact of the recent wage hike on inflation may be seen in the coming months.

“We’ve seen before the impact of a wage hike on prices of services. We need to study what are the lag effects, but we have seen in the past that there is an impact on selected commodity groups, in particular, personal care and miscellaneous goods and services,” he said.

A P35 minimum wage hike for workers in NCR was approved by the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board (RTWPB) last week, set to take effect on July 17.

National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan said that they will continue to work with relevant agencies to further bring down prices.

“We will continue to work closely with the government, stakeholders, and other priority sectors to implement necessary measures to ensure that the country will have a sufficient and affordable food supply — including rice — for every Filipino,” he said.

PEAK**IN****JULY?**

For the coming months, Metrobank Research and Market Strategy Department said it expects the tariff cuts to “substantially slow” headline inflation.

“We retain our view that monthly year-on-year inflation will likely peak in July and will trend downwards thereafter,” it said in a report. ING Bank N.V. Manila likewise said that reduction in tariffs should help bring down rice prices.

“The reduction in tariffs will also likely help mobilize existing rice stocks and should benefit producers and exporters in Vietnam, where much of the rice imported into the Philippines comes from,” it said in a report.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort said in an email that the latest inflation print could make the case for the BSP to begin policy easing.

He said that easing inflation “could support possible local policy rate cuts as early as the latter part of 2024 especially if the Fed starts cutting rates.” “(The) inflation decline, and the anticipated declines in the months ahead will make it easier for the BSP doves, including Governor Eli M. Remolona, Jr. to argue for rate cuts,” ING said, adding it expects the BSP to cut by 25 bps in the third quarter.

Mr. Remolona earlier said that the Monetary Board can begin easing at its Aug. 15 meeting, which is the only policy meeting scheduled in the third quarter.

The BSP can cut by 25 bps in the third quarter and another 25 bps in the fourth quarter, the BSP chief added.

“We continue to believe that the Board will start to cut rates next month, reducing it by a total of 75 bps before the end of the year,” Pantheon Macroeconomics said in a note.

“In early 2025, we expect 50 bps-worth of additional cuts. Headline inflation now looks secure within the (central) bank’s 2-4% target range for the foreseeable future, barring an unexpected supply shock,” it added.

On the other hand, Metrobank expects the BSP to only begin cutting rates by October.

“Despite the lower inflation path, we continue to believe the BSP will hold off on cutting policy rates until its Oct. 17 meeting with a 25-bp cut, followed by another 25-bp cut on Dec. 19, to support the peso,” it said.

“We acknowledge the risk of earlier policy action in the Aug. 15 meeting should the July inflation print continue to surprise on the downside coupled with clearer dovish signals from the US Federal Reserve on its own easing cycle.”

<https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2024/07/05/606375/philippine-inflation-eases-to-3-7-in-june/>

MANILA STANDARD:

Inflation rate slows to 3.7% in June



By Darwin G. Amojelar

July 6, 2024, 12:40 am

Inflation rate eased slightly in June 2024 to 3.7 percent from 3.9 percent in the previous month, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

The June 2024 inflation of 3.7 percent is within the BSP's forecast range of 3.4 to 4.2 percent.

This brought the year-to-date inflation to clock 3.5 percent, within the government's ceiling of 2 percent to 4 percent.

"The latest inflation outturn is consistent with the BSP's latest outlook that inflation will settle within the target range for 2024-2025 with inflation expectations remaining well-anchored," BSP said.

"The balance of risks to the inflation outlook has shifted to the downside for 2024 and 2025 due largely to the impact of lower import tariffs on rice under Executive Order (EO) 62 (Series of 2024)," BSP said.

Nonetheless, BSP said higher prices of food items other than rice, transport charges, and electricity rates continue to pose upside risks to inflation.

Meanwhile, House ways and means committee chair Joey Salceda said that inflation is “under control”, as he expressed optimism that President Marcos’ measures to reduce imported rice tariffs and boost agricultural production will yield results in the inflation figures for next month.

“As usual, it’s still about rice, but we are looking more at year-on-year effects now, rather than a continuing momentum of price increases. In other words, it’s not getting worse. It was 3.9 percent last month,” Salceda said.

Salceda also expressed hope that the impact of the El Niño phenomenon on fuel, water, and electricity prices will also “dissipate as the rains begin.”

He said he does not foresee any major shake ups in monetary policy, noting that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) would remain “relatively slow” to make any moves on interest rates until the country’s inflation rate is in the 2-3 percent range.

In a separate statement, the National Economic and Development Authority attributed the decline in the June inflation to the lower energy and transportation costs.

A significant factor contributing to this slowdown is the sharper deflation in electricity, which was recorded at -13.7 percent from -8.5 percent

This led to a reduction in the inflation rate of housing and utilities to a mere 0.1 percent in June, down from 0.9 percent in May.

In addition, transport inflation decelerated (3.1 percent from 3.5 percent) primarily due to lower inflation rates in personal transport (3.5 percent from 5.3 percent) and gasoline (2.3 percent from 5.2 percent) This decrease followed the additional rollback in gasoline prices in early June 2024.

“We are committed to maintaining the country’s inflation rate within our target range of 3 to 4 percent,” Arsenio Balisacan, secretary of the National Economic and Development Authority said.

“The easing in our inflation rate in June, mainly due to lower electricity rates, highlights the importance of strengthening our energy sector to sustain our gains,” he added.

On the other hand, food inflation saw an increase to 6.5 percent in June, up from 6.1 percent in the previous month. This was mainly driven by higher prices of vegetables

and meat. Vegetables recorded an inflation rate of 7.2 percent in June, up from 2.7 percent in May, as the onset of the rainy season affected supply.

While rice inflation slightly declined, it remained high at 22.5 percent in June from 23.0 percent in May.

“We will continue to work closely with the government, stakeholders, and other priority sectors to implement necessary measures to ensure that the country will have a sufficient and affordable food supply—including rice—for every Filipino,” the country’s chief economic planner said.

Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto has expressed optimism that the inflation rate will remain within the government’s target band in 2024 after its decline in June.

“We expect inflation to fall within our 2% to 4% target this year especially after the government has taken decisive and data-driven steps to control the rising price of rice. This will help alleviate the burden of high rice prices that disproportionately affect the poor and vulnerable households,” the Finance chief said.

While food inflation slightly increased to 6.5% in June from 6.1% in May, the government expects this to slow down once the rice tariff is lowered to 15% from 35%, as embodied in Executive Order (EO) No. 62. This is expected to pull down rice prices by 10%.

EO 62 also maintained the reduced tariff rates on corn, pork, and mechanically deboned meat under EO Nos. 50 and EO 13, s. 2023 until 2028 to further mitigate food inflation, foster policy stability and investment planning, and enhance food security.

This month, the Department of Agriculture (DA) is set to release the implementing guidelines under Administrative Order (AO) No. 20. This seeks to enhance the country’s agricultural importation policy regime by streamlining administrative processes and removing non-tariff barriers.

The DA also launched its large-scale trial of the Bigas 29 program (P29) in ten Kadiwa sites in Metro Manila and Bulacan, offering rice for PHP 29 per kilo to poor families and other vulnerable groups.

By August, the DA aims to double the total number of Kadiwa sites selling subsidized rice and expand their reach to include locations in Visayas and Mindanao.

<https://manilastandard.net/news/314468227/inflation-rate-slows-to-3-7-in-june.html>

THE MANILA TIMES

[By Janine Alexis Miguel](#)

July 6, 2024

THE Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) is claiming that importers are delaying rice shipments to the Philippines due to issues on the legality of Executive Order (EO) 62.

"Imports were actually arriving in record volumes before EO 62 was signed last June 20," Raul Montemayor, FFF national manager, said on Friday.

Citing data from the Bureau of Customs, the FFF said that rice shipments to the country between January and May 2024 averaged 431,085 metric tons (MT) per month.

Montemayor said that this was higher by 33 percent compared to the volume during the same period in 2023, despite tariffs set at 35 percent and international prices still relatively high.

In June, meanwhile, arrivals dipped to 155,168 MT. The group attributed the decline to importers canceling orders or withholding new purchases in anticipation of the decrease in tariffs to 15 percent.

"Importers are now delaying further shipments due to the uncertainty regarding the legality of EO 62," Montemayor said.

Last June, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) slashed tariffs on imported rice to 15 percent from 35 percent to "drive down" the retail prices in the country.

The FFF also rejected claims that the opposition of farmers to EO 62 would result in a supply shortage.

Last July 4, the FFF, together with other farmers organizations, filed a petition before the Supreme Court seeking a temporary restraining order against the implementation of EO 62.

"We cannot be faulted for questioning an EO that is legally defective and will bring serious harm to farmers. This would not have happened if NEDA followed the law," said Montemayor. The order is set to take effect on July 7 after its publication on June 22.

The FFF added that the tariff cut would seriously harm the country's farmers and questioned its effectiveness in bringing down rice prices.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/07/06/business/top-business/importers-delaying-rice-shipments-fff/1955409>

REMATE:

P10-M cash aid para sa mga magsasaka at mangingisda sa Sulu ipinamahagi

July 5, 2024 18:42



INIABOT ni Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. , araw ng Biyernes ang P10 million sa Provincial Government ng Sulu bilang cash assistance para sa mga magsasaka at mangingisda ng lalawigan na labis na tinamaan ng El Niño.

Ito ang unang pagkakataon na binisita ni Pangulong Marcos ang Sulu bilang Pangulo ng bansa.

Sinasabing 9 na buwan na ang nakalipas nang bisitahin ng Pangulo ang lugar matapos na kapuwa bisitahin nina Special Assistant to the President Secretary Anton Lagdameo Jr. at Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Secretary Rex Gatchalian ang lalawigan para maghatid ng tulong noong Oktubre ng nakaraang taon.

“Nawa’y ang tulong na dala namin ngayon ay magpalakas sa inyong mga kabuhayan at magpatibay pa lalo sa inyo bilang isang lalawigan,” ayon kay Pangulong Marcos sa isinagawang distribusyon ng presidential assistance sa Jolo.

“Hindi namin kayo iiwan sa pagharap sa pagsubok na ito, kaya kami ay [magbabahagi] ng ayuda upang makabangon kayong muli at higit pang mapayabong ang inyong pamumuhay,” dagdag na wika nito.

Makikita naman sa data ng gobyerno na dahil sa dry spell, nasira nito ang mahigit sa P5.3 milyong halaga ng pananim sa lalawigan, dahilan para malugi ang 912 magsasaka.

Nagpaabot naman ang DSWD ng tig-P10,000 sa bawat isa sa 5,000 magsasaka at mangingisda sa pamamagitan ng Ayuda sa Kapos ang Kita Program.

Sa kabilang dako, namahagi naman ang Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) –Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform ng farm machinerias at equipment sa mga magsasaka sa Sulu.

Nagbigay naman ang Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives ng limang kilong bigas sa bawat attendees.

Matatandaang noong nakaraang Abril, 19 na munisipalidad ng lalawigan ang inilagay sa state of calamity (SOC) bilang tugon sa weather phenomenon.

Sa pagpasok ng panahon ng tag-ulan, inaasahan na ang Sulu ay makararanas ng halos normal na 'rainfall levels' mula Hulyo hanggang Oktubre ngayong taon.

Naghanda naman ang DSWD 3,338 family food packs at iba pang non-food items na nagkakahalaga ng P2.55 million sa DSWD-Field Office IX bilang contingency. *Kris Jose*

<https://remate.ph/p10-m-cash-aid-para-sa-mga-magsasaka-at-mangingisda-sa-sulu-ipinamahagi/>

REMATE:

P29 rice program trial ilulunsad ng DA sa 10 lugar sa NCR, Bulacan

July 5, 2024 16:54



MANILA, Philippines – Sinabi ng Department of Agriculture (DA) nitong Huwebes na ilulunsad nito ang malakihang pagsubok para sa P29 Program sa 10 piling lugar sa Metro Manila at Bulacan simula Biyernes.

Ayon sa DA ang P29 Project ay tumutukoy sa subsidized sale ng National Food Authority (NFA) aging stock rice sa PHP29 kada kilo sa vulnerable sector, kabilang ang mga miyembro ng Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), senior citizens, persons with disability (PWD), at solo parents.

“Ang malakihang pagsubok na ito ay naglalayong mangalap ng komprehensibong data sa supply demand at logistik na mahalaga para sa maayos na paglunsad ng programa sa buong bansa,” sabi ni DA Assistant Secretary Genevieve Velicaria-Guevarra sa isang press conference.

Kaugnay nito kasama na sa pinalawak na trial sites ang Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) Dome at National Irrigation Administration (NIA) sa Quezon City; ang Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) sa Malate, Manila; Food Terminal Inc. sa Taguig City; Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PHILFIDA) sa Las Piñas; Bayani Fernando Central Terminal o BFCT at Barangay Fortune sa Marikina; at mga site sa Caloocan, Valenzuela, at San Jose del Monte, Bulacan.

Maaaring ma-access ng mga benepisyaryo sa vulnerable sector ang P29-per-kg. bigas tuwing Biyernes, Sabado, at Linggo mula 8 a.m. hanggang 5 p.m.

Samantala, sinabi ni Guevarra na nagtakda sila ng limitasyon sa pagbili bawat sambahayan, kung isasaalang-alang ang 10,000 metric tons (MT) ng aging stock ng bigas, na maaaring tumagal ng hanggang anim na buwan.

“Itinakda namin ang limitasyon sa 10 kilo bawat buwan bawat sambahayan, at maaari silang bumili sa 5-kilo na mga palugit. Ang malakihang sabay-sabay na pagsubok ay susuportahan ng mga pangunahing opisyal sa 10 Kadiwa sites,” aniya.

Bunsod nito, ang bawat site ay makakatanggap ng 300 sako na alokasyon bawat linggo na nakikinabang sa 1,500 pamilya o katumbas ng humigit-kumulang 60,000 kabahayan kada buwan.

Kaugnay nito upang maiwasan ang labis na pagbili o hindi awtorisadong paggamit ng mga identification card sa mga mahihinang sektor, binanggit ni Guevarra ang pamamahagi ng mga booklet noong Agosto.

Sinabi ni Guevarra na ito ay makatutulong upang maiwasan ang pag-abuso sa programa kasama ng koordinasyon sa Farmers' Cooperative Association at mga local government units (LGU). *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/p29-rice-program-trial-ilulunsad-ng-da-sa-10-lugar-sa-ncr-bulacan/>

REMATE:

ASF vax darating na sa Pinas – DA

July 5, 2024 13:16



MANILA, Philippines – Sinabi ni Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. nitong Huwebes na malapit nang magkaroon ang bansa ng mga bakuna laban sa African swine fever (ASF).

“Malapit nang lumabas ‘yung approval sa vaccine for the swine,” ani Tiu Laurel sa sidelines ng pamamahagi ng presidential assistance para sa mga magsasaka, mangingisda, at mga kaanak nito sa Calabayog City.

Sinabi ni Tiu Laurel na ang mga bakuna ay mula sa Vietnam at “epektibo” laban sa ASF.

Talagang gumagana ang bakuna mula sa Vietnam. So, na-solve niyan yung problema namin,” aniya pa.

Sinabi pa ng agri chief na inaasahan nilang matatanggap ang pag-apruba ng commercial trial nito mula sa Food and Drug Administration (FDA) sa loob ng dalawang linggo, na susundan ng commercial distribution nito.

“(Ang) FDA at ang DA ay nagtatrabaho nang mahigpit dito. Ang ganda ng teamwork namin,” dagdag pa ni Tiu Laurel.

Bukod sa pag-apruba ng mga bakuna sa ASF, binanggit din niya ang pangangailangan para sa mas mahigpit na mga hakbang sa pagkontrol sa hangganan upang maiwasan ang pagpasok at pagkalat ng iba pang mga sakit, tulad ng bird flu at Q fever.

Nauna rito, inihayag ng DA ang target na operasyon ng isa sa limang Cold Examination Facility for Agriculture (CEFA) nito sa Bulacan noong Enero o Pebrero 2025.

Ang CEFA ay isang sanitary phytosanitary inspection facility para sa mga imported na hayop, isda, halaman, at iba pang produktong pang-agrikultura.

Ang iba pang CEFA ay dapat itatag sa Subic, Manila, Davao, at General Santos City, na may badyet na humigit-kumulang P1.2 bilyon. *RNT*

<https://remate.ph/asf-vax-darating-na-sa-pinas-da/>

REMATE:

Inflation rate sa Pinas bumagal sa 3.7% nitong Hunyo

July 5, 2024 10:18



MANILA, Philippines – Bumagal ang antas ng bilis ng pagtaas ng presyo ng mga pangunahing bilihin o inflation rate sa bansa nitong Hunyo.

Sa isang press conference, sinabi ni National Statistician at PSA chief Claire Dennis Mapa na ang inflation — na sumusukat sa rate ng pagtaas ng mga presyo ng mga bilihin at serbisyo — ay bumagal sa 3.7% noong nakaraang buwan, isang bahagyang pagbaba mula sa 3.9% rate noong Mayo.

Ang nasabing development ay nagpahupa sa inflation rate sa apat na buwan nitong sunod-sunod na pagtaas bunga ng mas mabagal na pagtaas ng mga gastos sa utility at transportasyon.

Dinala nito ang year-to-date na inflation print na umabot sa 3.5%, na nasa loob ng pagtataya ng gobyerno na 2% hanggang 4%. **RNT**

<https://remate.ph/inflation-rate-sa-pinas-bumagal-sa-3-7-nitong-hunyo/>

REMATE:

Pambihirang outbreak ng bird flu naitala sa Germany

July 5, 2024 08:50



Germany – Nagulangtang ang nasabing bansa sa isang pambihirang outbreak ng highly pathogenic H7N5 bird flu sa isang sakahan sa kanlurang bahagi ng bansa, malapit sa hangganan ng Netherlands, sinabi ng World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) nitong Huwebes.

Ang outbreak ay pumatay ng 6,000 hayop sa isang 90,879 flock na ibon sa bayan ng Bad Bentheim sa Lower Saxony, sinabi ng WOA na nakabase sa Paris, na binanggit ang isang ulat mula sa mga awtoridad ng Aleman. Natukoy ito noong Hunyo 29 at nakumpirma noong Hulyo 2.

Ang H7N5 strain ay iba mula sa H5N1 na nagpawi ng mga kawan ng ibon at kumalat sa mga populasyon ng mammal at ilang tao sa buong mundo.

Ito ang unang pagsiklab ng H7N5 sa mga pampublikong talaan ng WOAHA sa mga pandaigdigang paglaganap ng sakit sa hayop. **RNT**

<https://remate.ph/pambihirang-outbreak-ng-bird-flu-naitala-sa-germany/>

ABANTE:

P29 bigas kinalat sa Metro Manila, Bulacan Kadiwa center

- Abante News
- July 5, 2024



Sinimulan na ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang “large scale trial” ng Program 29 o P29 para sa pagbebenta ng P29 per kilong bigas sa 10 Kadiwa center sa National Capital Region (NCR) at Bulacan.

Puntirya ng P29 na matulungan ang mas maraming senior citizens, single parents, persons with disabilities (PWD), at mga benepisyaryo ng Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).

Kabilang sa mga Kadiwa center ay matatagpuan sa Bureau of Animal Industry at National Irrigation Administration sa Quezon City; Bureau of plant Industry sa Manila; Food Terminal Incorporated sa Taguig; Philfida Compound sa Las Piñas; Barangay 167 sa Caloocan; Barangay Fortune sa Marikina; Marikina; Disiplina Village sa Valenzuela; at Barangay Minuyan Proper sa San Jose Del Monte sa Bulacan.

Tuwing Biyernes, Sabado at Linggo bukas ang mga Kadiwa center at magtatagal ang operasyon nito hanggang maubos ang stock.

Kahapon lamang inanunsyo ang pagsisimula ng program 29 o ang mas pinalawak na pagbebenta ng P29 per kilong bigas kaya nagpaalala rin si Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. sa mga benepisyaryo na huwag abusuhin ang programa para marami ang makinabang. (Andrea Salve)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/07/05/p29-bigas-kinalat-sa-metro-manila-bulacan-kadiwa-center/>

PEOPLE'S JOURNAL:

Oriental Mindoro, Quezon cooperatives grow stronger with SEARCA

Friday, July 5, 2024 SEARCA



In celebration of the International Day of Cooperatives, the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) spotlights its impactful programs that have empowered calamansi and coconut farmer cooperatives in Oriental Mindoro and Quezon Province, Philippines.

By implementing innovative strategies and promoting sustainable practices introduced by SEARCA, cooperatives in the two provinces have achieved remarkable gains in yield, income, and community well-being.

Revitalizing a local calamansi industry

In Oriental Mindoro, SEARCA's initiatives focused on enhancing the value chain for calamansi farmers. This involved providing advanced training in agricultural techniques, introducing sustainable farming practices, and establishing better market linkages.

SEARCA conducted comprehensive workshops and field demonstrations, teaching the calamansi farmers modern cultivation methods, pest management, and postharvest handling. These sessions were designed to improve yield quality and quantity.

Moreover, calamansi farmers were trained in organic farming methods, soil health management, and water conservation techniques. This not only boosted productivity but also ensured environmental sustainability.

SEARCA also facilitated connections between farmer cooperatives and potential buyers, including supermarkets, food processing companies, and export markets. This helped farmers secure better prices and more stable income streams.

Furthermore, Victoria Kalamansi Farmers Federation President Ruel Sanchez has attested to SEARCA's role in establishing their federation. He said the consolidation of the calamansi farmers enabled them to secure support and funding from Philippine government agencies like the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Trade and Industry.

Dr. Glenn Gregorio, SEARCA Center Director, highlighted the importance of these efforts. He said, "Empowering local farmers through cooperatives is a cornerstone of sustainable agricultural development. By providing the necessary tools and knowledge, we enable farmers to improve their livelihoods and contribute to the broader economic growth."

Developing coconut industry growth areas

In Quezon Province, SEARCA has worked closely with the local government and coconut farmer cooperatives to address the challenges of declining productivity and market instability. Initiatives included the introduction of intercropping systems, capacity-building programs, and the development of the Quezon Coconut Industry Roadmap.

In early 2023, SEARCA introduced intercropping systems where farmers were taught to grow other high-value crops such as cacao and coffee alongside their coconut trees. This practice not only improved soil health but also provided additional sources of income.



From June to December 2023, SEARCA conducted a series of trainings and workshops focused on best agricultural practices, financial management, and cooperative governance. These learning events equipped farmers with needed skills to enhance productivity and manage their resources effectively.

Furthermore, SEARCA helped craft the Quezon Coconut Industry Roadmap (2024-2026), which aims to improve the lives of coconut farmers in the province by expanding production, increasing farm productivity, and empowering farmers' organizations. This will be achieved through training programs, improved farming techniques, and supporting the development of farmer-run businesses in the [coconut industry](#).

During the Farmers' Day hosted by SEARCA last June 27, Jonathan Sibolino, President of the San Antonio Pala Coconut Farmers Agriculture Cooperative in Catanauan, Quezon Province, shared how SEARCA's coconut industry development project influenced the government's direction toward relevant interventions that will benefit coconut farmers in their province.

Celebrating cooperative success

According to Dr. Gregorio, these success stories from Oriental Mindoro and Quezon Province are a testament to the immense potential of cooperatives in agricultural development given their strength in numbers and shared responsibility.

He added that with these initiatives in farming communities, SEARCA not only supports agricultural development but also helps strengthen the social fabric of rural areas, which fosters a sense of community and shared progress.

“As we celebrate this International Day of Cooperatives, **SEARCA** reaffirms its commitment to empowering farmer cooperatives across the Philippines,” Dr. Gregorio said.

“SEARCA will continue to champion initiatives that drive innovation, sustainability, partnership, and prosperity for our farming communities,” the SEARCA Center Director affirmed.

<https://journal.com.ph/oriental-mindoro-quezon-cooperatives-grow-stronger-with-searca/>