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MANILA BULLETIN:

It's no longer rice: Salceda blames new crop for July inflation rate hike

BY ELLSON QUISMORIO

Aug 6, 2024 10:49 AM

AT A GLANCE

- Albay 2nd district Rep Joey Salceda has always blamed rice prices for past instances of quickened inflation; that's not the case anymore.



(Unsplash)

Albay 2nd district Rep Joey Salceda has always blamed rice prices for past instances of quickened inflation; that's not the case anymore.

"It's no longer rice, rice, rice. It's corn," the economist-solon said in a statement Tuesday, Aug. 6 as he reacted to July's inflation rate of 4.4 percent. This is a significant jump from the 3.7 percent rate recorded in June.

"There is an emerging food issue to deal with: Corn. There is momentum in the corn price...At 5.8 percent month-on-month inflation, corn prices are a cause for attention," Salceda said.

"[Department of Agriculture] Secretary [Francisco] Tiu-Laurel already mentioned that the DA is monitoring the situation as early as April, and I believe efforts are underway to address the issue," said the chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means.

As for rice price woes, Salceda said they've "mostly abated".

"While rice prices remain elevated year-on-year, month-on-month, prices are actually declining slightly. I expect this trend to continue as more stocks arrive from India and Vietnam," he said.

Salceda says the high price of local corn has a wider implication on the poultry sector.

"The problem with corn is that while global trading prices are generally lower year-on-year, our domestic livestock, poultry, and dairy sector cannot rely on imported corn. Imported corn significantly diminishes in nutritive quality when shipped. Of course, price pressures could ease with upholding the minimum access volume system for corn, but that's no structural solution," he noted.

"As a result, I've been seeing some increase in the price of poultry, but based on our monitoring of the situation, the price situation in that sector should ease by the time the August report is released – prices are down in August by as much as 12% from their July peak," Salceda explained.

"Other than corn, the only other real issue is with electricity prices--but that's a seasonal matter that I expect to moderate by the next few months," he further said.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/8/6/it-s-no-longer-rice-salceda-blames-new-crop-for-inflation-rate-hike>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Marcos cites closer ties with Sweden, Papua New Guinea

BY BETHEENA UNITE

Aug 6, 2024 05:00 PM

President Marcos thanked outgoing ambassadors of Sweden and Papua New Guinea for bringing the relationship between the Philippines and their countries closer.



President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. bids farewell to Swedish Ambassador Annika Thunborg during a Palace call on August 6, 2024. (Photo courtesy of Malacañang)

During the farewell call of Swedish Ambassador Annika Thunborg, Marcos also expressed gratitude to Sweden for showing its support to the Philippines on the challenges it is facing.

“Thank you very much for all that you have done — bringing our two countries closer together,” Marcos told Thunborg during the farewell call on Tuesday, August 6,

“I have to once again express our gratitude for the support that you’ve shown to the Philippines in terms of the problems, challenges that we are facing here,” Marcos added.

The President further said that it is very important to the Philippines " the alliance, the coalition we are trying to form with our friends around the world."

Thunborg stressed the importance of forging partnerships with like-minded countries amid regional and global situations.

"It is extremely important in the world that we lived today to forge strong partnerships with like-minded partners," Thunborg said, adding that the two countries' partnership grew especially in the last two years.

She also recognized the Philippines for upholding the international rule of law and the international rules-based system.

"We stand firmly behind that both of our countries are latched to the international rule of law and the international rules-based system, and we are very grateful for the support that the Philippines has shown Ukraine in the situation that we see today," Thunborg said.

In a separate farewell call, Marcos also expressed his gratitude to Papua New Guinea Ambassador Betty Palaso for her work in strengthening the bilateral relations of the Philippines and Papua New Guinea.

President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. bids farewell to Papua New Guinea Ambassador Betty Palaso during a Palace call on August 6, 2024. (Photo courtesy of Malacañang)

"This is one of those duties that are bittersweet because we say goodbye to friends. You have stayed in the Philippines in relatively long [period] ambassador, five years," Marcos told Palaso during the Palace call.

The President said he expects Palaso's successor to continue working on various areas of cooperation, particularly on trade, agriculture, and fisheries.

Palaso presented her Letter of Credence on March 19, 2019, as Papua New Guinea's ambassador to Manila. Prior to her appointment, Palaso served as Commissioner General of the PNG Internal Revenue Commission from 2007 to 2018.

Thunborg, on the other hand, presented her Letter of Credence as Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to the Philippines in October 2021. Prior to her appointment, Thunborg was previously assigned to Mexico and the Swedish Permanent Mission of Sweden to the International Organizations in Geneva.

Diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Sweden were established on January 17, 1947.

In 1975, the Philippines was among the first countries to establish formal diplomatic relations with Papua New Guinea, which was declared and recognized as a sovereign nation on September 16, 1975, after 70 years of Australian administration.

The two nations will mark next year the 50th anniversary of bilateral relations.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/8/6/marcos-cites-closer-ties-with-sweden-papua-new-guinea>

MANILA BULLETIN:

2024 Agri-Agua Pitch Fest set in Clark Freeport Zone on August 16

BY JUNEP OCAMPO & MANILA BULLETIN AGRICULTURE

Aug 6, 2024 11:20 AM



The Royce Hotel at the Clark Freeport Zone in Pampanga will host this year's Agri-Agua Innovation Pitch Fest, an event that will showcase groundbreaking ideas in agriculture, aquatic, and the natural resources sector.

Organized by the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (DOST-PCAARRD), in collaboration with the Pampanga State Agricultural University, this year's pitch fest promises to be a showcase of cutting-edge solutions under the theme "Transforming Ideas Into Business Realities with Science and Technology."

This highly anticipated event will spotlight the newest technologies and solutions pioneered by innovators in the agriculture, aquatic, and natural resources sectors. It serves as an essential platform for technology providers, investors, and other stakeholders to forge partnerships and collaborations, driving the growth and scalability of emerging ventures.

The event is a key initiative under the Regional Agri-Agua Innovation System Enhancement Program, bringing together 94 State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and Research and Development Institutions (RDIs) from across the country's 15 regions.

According to the DOST-PCAARD, the Agri-Agua Innovation Pitch Fest is not just about showcasing inventions. It is also a celebration of the ingenuity and dedication of Filipino researchers and innovators who are transforming the landscape of Philippine agriculture and aquaculture.

“The event will provide a unique opportunity for these innovators to present their work to a broad audience, including potential investors who can help bring these innovations to market,” the DOST-PCAARD said.

Reflecting on the success of the inaugural pitch fest held in 2022 in Alabang, Muntinlupa City, the event highlighted several standout innovations.

Notable winners included Professor Ryan Abenoja from the University of Southeastern Philippines, who introduced the Mechanical Coconut Climber, an innovation addressing the labor-intensive nature of coconut harvesting. Lei Frances Ribac from the Mariano Marcos State University impressed with her creation, Furikake with Black Garlic, a unique product combining traditional Japanese seasoning with a Filipino twist. Additionally, Dr. Cesar Almonicar from Emilio Espinosa Memorial State College of Agriculture and Technology showcased the PAKASER Mechanical Fish Splitter, a device aimed at enhancing fish processing efficiency.

As the 2024 edition approaches, anticipation is building for the new wave of innovations that will be unveiled. The event organizers encourage investors and industry leaders to attend and explore potential investment opportunities that can drive the future of the Philippines' agriculture and aquatic sectors.

For inquiries and further details, interested parties can contact the organizers via email at ttpd@pcaarrd.dost.gov.ph.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/8/6/2024-agri-agua-pitch-fest-set-in-clark-freeport-zone-on-august-16>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA to recalibrate Masagana rice program

[Romina Cabrera](#) - The Philippine Star

August 7, 2024 | 12:00am



Despite scorching heat, farmers are busy putting their harvested rice inside the sacks in Calatagan, Batangas on March 30, 2024.

STAR / Jesse Bustos

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture is set on recalibrating the Masagana Rice Industry Development Program to increase rice production and meet self-sufficiency goals.

With better input and technology, rice yield could reach 7.5 metric tons per hectare in targeted program areas, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said.

The projected rice yield, equivalent to 150 bags weighing 50 kilos each, is nearly double the current national yield of just 84 sacks per hectare.

“We’re recalibrating the program to identify areas for enhancement, including the distribution of improved seeds, expansion of irrigation systems and adjustments to rice cropping schedules,” Tiu Laurel said.

The rice program is patterned after the late president Ferdinand Marcos’ Masagana 99 program, which aimed to improve the production of rice seeds, optimize the utilization of fertilizers and develop an efficient and cost-effective logistics network.

In 2023, the Philippines recorded its highest yield of 20.6 million metric tons (MMT) of palay across 4.82 million hectares of rice fields.

The Masagana program aims to increase palay production beyond 25 MMT. — **Brix Lelis**

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/08/07/2376031/da-recalibrate-masagana-rice-program>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

BSP launches cyber resilience program

[Keisha Ta-Asan](#) - The Philippine Star

August 7, 2024 | 12:00am



The BSP also launched new online training platforms to strengthen consumer protection and widen the reach of financial education (fin-ed).

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) has launched the financial services cyber resilience plan (FSCRП) to continually enhance the industry’s cybersecurity capabilities, pursue reforms to address threats and preserve public trust in the digital financial system.

The BSP also launched new online training platforms to strengthen consumer protection and widen the reach of financial education (fin-ed).

During the launch of the FSCRП 2024 to 2029 yesterday, BSP Governor Eli Remolona Jr. said the framework supports the central bank’s mission to fortify the security posture of the financial system.

“In an era where digital transformation is reshaping the financial landscape, robust cybersecurity measures have never been more critical,” Remolona said.

“The FSCRCP is our proactive response to the growing complexities of cyber threats. It embodies our commitment to safeguarding the integrity and stability of the financial system and the trust in the system.”

In collaboration with key stakeholders, the FSCRCP outlines four high-level goals and strategic initiatives to tackle emerging threats and manage systemic cyber risks.

The framework highlights industry wide measures to boost coordinated incident response mechanisms, encourage active information sharing, strengthen cybersecurity culture and awareness as well as promote best practices across various cybersecurity domains.

The FSCRCP will apply to all BSP-supervised financial institutions (BSFIs), key financial market infrastructures within the BSP’s supervisory authority, cybersecurity organizations and private sector participants that provide IT and information security services to financial institutions..

“To ensure smooth plan implementation, the FSCRCP shall be assessed, at least quarterly, to adjust priority actions vis-à-vis developments in the cyberthreat landscape,” the central bank said.

“Metrics shall also be developed to determine the level of achievement of each key goal as well as evaluate the industry’s overall cyber resilience posture,” it added.

Meanwhile, the central bank also launched the BSP E-Learning Academy (BELA), an online platform that provides e-learning courses on personal finance, economics and central banking.

The BSP said BELA complements the central bank’s existing fin-ed programs that are delivered face-to-face and through other modalities.

A select group of stakeholders is currently testing the BELA platform, which is expected to be fully available to the public by the second quarter of 2025.

The BSP also launched the first batch of the BSP-BDO Foundation (BDOF) fin-ed e-learning modules, which cover financial planning, budgeting and saving as well as debt management. The modules can be accessed through BELA and will soon be available on the e-learning platforms of the BSP’s institutional fin-ed partners.

The BSP-BDOF is developing six additional courses, which will include topics like the basics of investing, fraud and scams, financial consumer protection, digital

financial literacy, Personal Equity Retirement Account and relevant economic indicators.

The BSP also signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Department of Social Welfare and Development and BDOF, formalizing their cooperation in designing and implementing a fin-ed program for DSWD employees and social welfare officers of local government units. This will be part of the DSWD Academy's regular training program.

“Our initiatives are designed to help people safeguard credit cardholders from potential pitfalls, transform over 37,000 DSWD employees and 3,600 local social welfare officers into champions of financial literacy and capacitate over 10.8 million Filipino farmers and fisherfolk through innovative educational tools,” BSP Deputy Governor Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said.

Further, the BSP signed a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Agriculture and BDOF to consolidate fin-ed programs they developed for farmers and fisherfolk.

The BSP and the Credit Card Association of the Philippines (CCAP) also signed a MOA to craft a credit card e-learning course and provide stakeholders with learning resources. The course will be accessible through BELA.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/08/07/2375897/bsp-launches-cyber-resilience-program>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Inflation quickens to 4.4% in July

[Louella Desiderio](#) - The Philippine Star

August 7, 2024 | 12:00am



A vendor arranges tomatoes for sale at a public market in Manila on July 4, 2024.

STAR / Ryan Baldemor

Highest since October 2023

MANILA, Philippines — Inflation in July accelerated to 4.4 percent, its highest level this year, from 3.7 percent in June, due mainly to faster increases in utility and food costs, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

The July headline inflation, or rate of increase in average prices of goods and services typically being bought by consumers, was the fastest since the 4.9 percent recorded in October last year, but lower than the 4.7 percent in July last year.

While the latest inflation print is within the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' four to 4.8 percent forecast for the month, it breached the government's two to four percent target for the year.

National Statistician Dennis Mapa said in a press conference yesterday that the uptrend in overall inflation was due to the higher growth posted by the housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels commodity group at 2.3 percent in July from 0.1 percent in June.

Also cited as a major driver of the acceleration was the food and non-alcoholic beverages commodity group, which rose to 6.4 percent in July from 6.1 percent in June.

Food inflation picked up to 6.7 percent in July from 6.5 percent in June. This was due mainly to the faster uptick in meat and other parts of slaughtered land animals at 4.8 percent from the previous month's 3.1 percent, and in fruits and nuts to 8.4 percent from 5.6 percent in the prior month.

Rice inflation slowed to 20.9 percent in July from June's 22.5 percent.

Mapa said average rice prices declined in July from the previous month, although the reductions were not that substantial.

He said the average price of regular milled rice decreased to P50.90 per kilogram in July from P51.10 per kg in June.

The average price of well-milled rice also went down to P55.85 per kg in July from P55.96 per kg in June.

As for special rice, the average price declined to P64.42 per kg in July from the previous month's P64.56 per kg.

Mapa said it is possible for rice inflation to ease and be slower than 20 percent in August, citing the impact of the lowered tariffs on imports of the staple and last year's high base.

"Definitely, there will be adjustments in terms of rice inflation simply because in August 2023, the base was high," he said.

Rice inflation rose to 8.7 percent in August last from 4.2 percent in July 2023.

Core inflation, which excludes volatile food and energy items, slowed down to 2.9 percent in July from the previous month's 3.1 percent.

Headline Inflation, All items (2018=100)



Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, Retail Price Survey of Commodities for the Generation of Consumer Price Index

For the January to July period, inflation averaged 3.7 percent.

Moody's Analytics economist Sarah Tan said in an email that July inflation is seen as the peak, with inflation expected to ease in the coming months.

"Much of the moderation will come from the food category, which accounts for the largest share in the CPI (consumer price index) basket," she said, noting that the impact from Super Typhoon Carina could show up in the inflation prints in the coming months after the 60-day price freeze on basic necessities imposed last July 24 ends.

She said lower import tariffs on rice would also help cushion the pain from the typhoon.

The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) said the government is implementing crucial interventions to support the most vulnerable sectors and ensure food security.

"The government is relentlessly working to address our nation's most pressing concern of ensuring food security for every Filipino amid the faster rise in prices in July and the expected typhoons and rains due to the onset of La Niña this August," NEDA Secretary Arsenio Balisacan said.

Among the measures being undertaken is to assist farmers dealing with higher fuel prices, through around P510 million worth of subsidies to be provided by the

Department of Agriculture to around 160,000 farmers between August and September.

The Department of Finance (DOF) maintained that the inflation uptick last month is temporary and is expected to ease anew as the impact of the rice tariff cut becomes more pronounced.

Finance Secretary Ralph Recto said the headline rate is likely a one-time uptick due to high base effects, particularly in the price of rice.

Despite the uptick, Recto said inflation will temper and fall within target for the rest of the year as government interventions take full effect.

“The impact of government interventions, particularly the reduced rice tariffs, will be more pronounced starting this August,” Recto said.

“Although, we might see slight increases in vegetable prices due to damages brought by typhoon Carina in the agriculture sector,” he said.

Data showed that local retail prices of rice only gradually decreased in July as traders are still unloading their inventories, which were initially purchased at high prices prior to the implementation of Executive Order 62.

EO 62 slashed rice tariff to 15 percent from 35 percent in a bid to tame inflation.

“Decline in retail prices of rice will become more apparent in the coming months as the volume of rice imports at lower tariff is anticipated to increase and augment local supply,” Recto said.

Apart from rice, the DOF is also expecting that the ban on Philippine offshore gaming operators will lower the demand for housing rentals and office spaces, thereby helping temper rental prices. — **Louise Maureen Simeon**

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/08/07/2375916/inflation-quicken-44-july>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage measure now up for Marcos' signature

[Jean Mangaluz](#) - Philstar.com

August 6, 2024 | 5:52pm



Photo from the Bureau of Customs shows the rice confiscated by the BOC during a raid on a warehouse in Las Piñas on September 14, 2023

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate on Tuesday ratified the bicameral report on the proposed Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act, and the measure now only awaits the signature of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

The bill is one of Marcos' priority legislations, but conflicting provisions had to be reconciled in the bills' versions in the House of Representatives and the Senate. The Senate had already ratified the bicameral report on the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act back in May, but a new amendment was added, according to Sen. Cynthia Villar.

During a Senate Session on Tuesday, Villar said that the Bicameral Conference's discussion of the House and the Senate's version of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act (Senate Bill 2432 and House Bills 3917, 9284) was successful.

“In Section 18 of the consolidated bill, we included the Department of Finance in the composition of the Anti-Agriculture Economic Sabotage Enforcement group,” she said.

The senator said this should not be interpreted as the DOF being allowed to distribute tasks to agencies under it, particularly the Bureau of Customs.

The veteran senator said that the Bureau of Customs' problematic structure is why the original law had to be amended, saying that there was a connivance between the bureau's employees and smugglers in the past.

“The problematic system within the Bureau of Customs is one of the reasons RA (Republic Act) 10845 or the original Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage failed to the effective implementation,” Villar said.

“I so move, Mr. President, of the ratification of the result of the Bicameral Conference in the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act,” she added.

Senate President Francis Escudero, hearing no objections, approved the ratification.

“I hope the president will sign the bill as early as possible,” Villar said.

One of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act's salient features is stiffer penalties for agricultural smuggling, long thought to be the drivers of high food prices in the country. It also adds other punishable crimes such as hoarding, profiteering, and carteling products.

If signed by the president, it would repeal RA 10845 or the original Anti-Agricultural Smuggling Act of 2016.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/08/06/2375888/anti-agricultural-economic-sabotage-measure-now-marcos-signature>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Gov't to implement stronger measures to ensure food security

Philippine News Agency / 01:53 PM August 06, 2024



| PHOTO: Official website of NEDA / sdg.neda.gov.ph

MANILA – The National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) on Tuesday assured that the government is implementing crucial interventions to support the most vulnerable sectors and ensure food security amid La Niña and the higher inflation recorded in July.

“The government is relentlessly working to address our nation’s most pressing concern of ensuring food security for every Filipino amid the faster rise in prices in July and the expected typhoons and rains due to the onset of La Niña this August,” Neda Secretary Arsenio Balisacan said in a statement.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported that headline inflation settled at 4.4 percent in July, higher than the 3.7 percent in June this year.

The increase was primarily driven by higher inflation in food and non-food items, with notable upticks in housing prices, utilities, fuel, meat, corn, and fruits.

In a briefing, National Statistician Dennis Mapa said that food inflation went up to 6.7 percent from 6.5 percent in June.

Mapa said the increase was attributed to higher inflation rates for meat (4.8 percent from 3.1 percent), corn (17.5 percent from 13.1 percent), fruits (8.4 percent from 5.6 percent), eggs and other dairy products (1.8 percent from 1.3 percent), and ready-made food products (6.0 percent from 5.9 percent).

According to Mapa, the recent weather disasters affected agricultural commodities and contributed to the higher prices of vegetables.

“So pwede na nagstart na yung impact. But expectation is that normally sa ating historical data, pagkatapos ng typhoon, tumataas price ng vegetable, yun yung isa. Dun tayo may expectation na pwede tumaas itong August 2024. (So it’s possible that the impact already started. But the expectation is that normally in our historical data, after a typhoon, prices of vegetable go up. Our expectation is [prices] may also increase this month),” said Mapa.

Rice inflation, however, went down to 20.9 percent from 22.5 percent.

Mapa said rice inflation may fall below 20 percent this month, due to base effects and the impact of the rice tariff reduction.

For non-food items, transportation inflation rose to 3.6 percent from 3.1 percent in June, which Neda said was driven by the increase in global petroleum prices due to the unexpected large withdrawals of United States gasoline stocks, optimistic fuel demand forecasts, and the ongoing geopolitical tension in the Middle East.

Housing and utilities inflation meanwhile also went up to 2.3 percent from 0.1 percent, while electricity (-5.4 percent from -13.7 percent) recorded a slower deflation.

This change is attributed to the rise in international contract prices of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and the increase of Meralco rates in July.

The Wholesale Electricity Spot Market charges normalized after the Energy Regulatory Commission ordered a staggered collection of May generation costs.

Gov't interventions

NEDA said that while rice prices already started to ease, the Department of Agriculture launched the Rice-for-All Program to ease the burden of elevated rice prices.

Under the program, rice will be sold at P45 per kilo at selected Kadiwa centers, with prices adjusted according to the fluctuations in rice prices.

In preparation for La Niña, DA also assured the availability of the quick response fund, assistance, credit, and seed buffer stock. The agency has also expedited the declogging of farm drainage systems and the construction of water-impounding projects and post-harvest facilities.

To assist farmers in dealing with higher fuel prices, DA will provide around P510 million in fuel subsidies to crop, livestock, and poultry farmers. It is anticipated that around 160,000 farmers will benefit from over P3,000 in fuel assistance between August and September this year.

“Between 2023 and 2021, about 2.5 million Filipinos were lifted out of poverty, bringing our country’s poverty incidence down to 15.5 percent from 18.1 percent. Our goal now is to sustain this momentum by addressing the constraints to food security and economic development more broadly,” Balisacan said.

“We emphasize that the country’s economic gains are intended to benefit all Filipinos. The government’s economic policies aim to alleviate poverty by ensuring that all Filipinos can afford their basic needs and achieve a decent standard of living toward a matatag, maginhawa, at panatag na buhay para sa lahat (stable, prosperous, and peaceful life for everyone,” he added.

Medium-term inflation path

In a separate statement, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said the latest inflation data is consistent with its assessment that inflation will temporarily breach the government’s target in July due to higher electricity rates and positive base effects.

The BSP however noted that inflation will likely follow a general downtrend beginning in August 2024.

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

The BSP however said higher prices of food items other than rice, as well as higher transport and electricity charges continue to pose upside risks to inflation.

“The Monetary Board will consider the latest inflation outturn as well as the Q2 (second quarter) 2024 national accounts in its assessment of the inflation outlook and the balance of risks in the August 2024 monetary policy meeting,” said the BSP.

“Moving forward, the BSP will ensure that monetary policy settings remain in line with its primary mandate to safeguard price stability conducive to sustainable economic growth,” it added.

<https://business.inquirer.net/473309/govt-to-implement-stronger-measures-to-ensure-food-security>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Salceda says inflation spike shows looming problem with corn

By: [Gabriel Pabico Lalu](#) - Reporter / [@GabrielLaluINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 11:36 AM August 06, 2024



MANILA, Philippines — The higher headline inflation rate experienced this July 2024 revealed an emerging issue with corn prices, economist and Albay 2nd District Rep. Joey Salceda said on Tuesday.

Salceda in a statement said that the country’s problem with inflation no longer stems from rice, especially as rice prices have declined slightly — although it is still higher compared to a year-on-year basis.

But with corn, the lawmaker said that prices are gathering momentum — noting that even the Department of Agriculture (DA) has admitted monitoring it as early as April.

“It’s no longer rice, rice, rice. It’s corn. The problem with rice has mostly abated. While rice prices remain elevated year-on-year, month-on-month, prices are actually

declining slightly. I expect this trend to continue as more stocks arrive from India and Vietnam,” Salceda said.

“There is an emerging food issue to deal with: Corn. There is momentum in the corn price. Secretary (Francisco) Tiu Laurel already mentioned that the DA is monitoring the situation as early as April, and I believe efforts are underway to address the issue. At 5.8 percent month-on-month inflation, corn prices are a cause for attention,” he added.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported on Tuesday that headline inflation in July was at 4.4 percent, which was the highest in nine months, and was driven by higher prices in the industries of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, transport items, and food and non-alcoholic beverages.

Previously, the inflation rate in June was 3.7 percent. It was, however, lower than the 4.7 percent in July 2023.

Corn remains a very important product as aside from being consumed by human beings, it is a staple animal feed for poultry, hogs, and cattle.

According to Salceda, corn prices are actually lower worldwide, but the local industries that need the product — farming, poultry, and dairy sectors — do not rely on imported corn because its quality decreases during importation.

“The problem with corn is that while global trading prices are generally lower year-on-year, our domestic livestock, poultry, and dairy sector cannot rely on imported corn. Imported corn significantly diminishes in nutritive quality when shipped. Of course, prices pressures could ease with upholding the minimum access volume system for corn, but that’s no structural solution,” he said.

“As a result, I’ve been seeing some increase in the price of poultry, but based on our monitoring of the situation, the price situation in that sector should ease by the time the August report is released – prices are down in August by as much as 12% from their July peak,” he added.

Salceda said he will talk with Laurel on the matter.

“I will be having a series of conversations with Secretary Tiu Laurel on the corn and the broader livestock situation around the third week of August. We will be discussing the Livestock, Poultry, Dairy, and Corn Development Acts, which I principally authored in the House,” he said.

“Other than corn, the only other real issue is with electricity prices – but that’s a seasonal matter that I expect to moderate by the next few months. No appetite in the BSP for policy rate adjustments just yet. But because most of our inflation woes are now single-issue matters, there is some cause for cautious optimism,” he added.

Salceda several times in the past reminded the government that the key to battling inflation is managing [rice prices](#). Last April, when headline inflation rates for March 2024 went up to 3.7 percent, Salceda said inflation could have been lower at 3.1 percent if rice prices were arrested.

According to the lawmaker, 57 percent of the inflation recorded in March 2024 came from higher food prices.

<https://business.inquirer.net/473296/salceda-says-inflation-spike-shows-looming-problem-with-corn>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

FPI asks gov't agencies to enforce Marcos' order to end smuggling

02:51 PM August 06, 2024



Jesus Lim Arranza, FPI chairman

The Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI) asked various government agencies to implement President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s order to end smuggling and other forms of illicit trade, which cost the economy more than P2 trillion a year.

“When industry and government work together, we can achieve remarkable results. Let us continue to build on this momentum. Let us advocate for stronger policies, support the modernization of our customs systems, and promote transparency and accountability at all levels,” FPI president Jesus Montemayor said at the first National Anti-Illicit Trade Summit on July 25, 2024.

The FPI said more than P2 trillion worth of goods, including counterfeit products, general merchandise, agricultural items, cigarettes, and other tobacco products, are smuggled into the Philippines annually.

Montemayor said that apart from economic losses, smuggling also erodes public trust in government, compromises product quality and safety, and stifles legitimate businesses.

A study commissioned by the FPI found that “we are losing P250 billion of value-added tax to smuggling.” FPI chairman Jesus Lim Arranza said that as VAT represents 12 percent of the value of imported goods, about P2.3 trillion worth of smuggled products are unfairly competing with locally made products.

“The goods that came into the Philippines without paying the usual duties and taxes would be valued at about P2.3 trillion. And how much are we losing? It has ripple effects. It is smuggling with ripple effects in the economy. As the saying goes, there can be no government without money,” Arranza said.

Assistant Secretary Carlos C. Carag of the Department of Agriculture Inspectorate and Enforcement Office affirmed that smuggling harms the agriculture and fisheries sector.

“Agricultural smuggling poses a significant threat to the livelihood of our farmers and fishery folk, and a major risk for the consumer’s health and safety. Smuggled food products bypass quality control and inspection, payment of taxes, and discourage local food production. It is an unfair trade practice and should be considered economic sabotage,” Carag said.

Paul Oliver Pacunayen, acting chief of the Intellectual Property Rights Division of the Bureau of Customs, said the five most commonly smuggled products are cigarettes, illegal drugs, counterfeit goods, agricultural products, and general merchandise.

Pacunayen said this was based on the number of warehouses raided by customs agents in the first half of 2024. The bureau confiscated billions of pesos worth of illicit cigarettes and vapes this year, explaining the drop in tobacco excise tax collection.

About 20 percent of cigarettes sold in the Philippines are illegal, with tobacco excise tax collection falling P41 billion in the past two years due to smuggling. This deprives the government of funds for health programs and local development projects, according to the FPI.

Bienvenido-Oplas Jr., president of Bienvenido S. Oplas, Jr. Research Consultancy Services and Minimal Government Thinkers, said in his regular newspaper column that cigarette smuggling intensified when the tobacco excise tax exceeded P50 per pack in 2021.

“Then things literally went south. At a tobacco tax rate of P55 per pack in 2022, tax revenue was P160.3 billion, or a P16.2 billion decline from 2021; at P60 per pack in 2023, it was just P134.9 billion, or a P25.4 billion decline from 2022 and a P41.6 billion decline from 2021,” Oplas said.

About 50 percent of tobacco tax collections fund the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. and Health Facilities Enhancement Programs. About 5 percent, or P4 billion, goes to local government units (LGUs) producing burley and native tobacco, and 15 percent, or P17 billion, is allotted to LGUs producing Virginia tobacco.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1969940/fpi-asks-govt-agencies-to-enforce-marcos-order-to-end-smuggling>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Farmers innovate to save Iraq's rice production

Agence France-Presse / 02:38 PM August 06, 2024



A man displays different varieties of rice at a plantation in Mishkhab in Iraq's Najaf province on July 8, 2024, as four consecutive years of drought and declining rainfall have strangled rice production in the country. Iraq, still recovering from years of war and chaos, is one of the five countries most impacted by some effects of climate change, according to the United Nations with Iraqi farmers defying a relentless drought by using tougher seeds and water-saving irrigation techniques, as well as receiving support from the agriculture ministry whose experts have been developing innovative methods to save the country's rice production. (Photo by Qassem al-KAABI / AFP)

Najaf, Iraq — After seeing his once-lush rice field shrink in recent years due to relentless drought, Iraqi farmer Muntazer al-Joufi fought back using tougher seeds and water-saving irrigation techniques.

“It’s the first time we’re using modern techniques that consume less water” to cultivate rice, Joufi, 40, said as he surveyed his land in the central province of Najaf.

“There is a huge difference” compared to flooding the field, Joufi added, referring to a traditional method by which the land must stay submerged all summer.

But four consecutive years of drought and declining rainfall have strangled rice production in Iraq, which is still recovering from years of war and chaos, and where rice and bread are a staple of the diet.

The United Nations says Iraq is one of the world’s five most climate-vulnerable nations.

Joufi is among farmers receiving support from the agriculture ministry, whose experts have been developing innovative methods to save Iraq’s rice production.

Their work involves pairing resilient rice seeds with modern irrigation systems to replace the flooding method in a country hit by water scarcity, heatwaves and dwindling rivers.

Under Iraq’s scorching sun, with temperature soaring towards 50 degrees Celsius (122 Fahrenheit), Joufi trudged across the muddy field, pausing to tend malfunctioning sprinklers spread out on his one hectare (2.5 acres) of land.

Iraq’s rice crop usually requires between 10 and 12 billion cubic metres of water during the five-month growing period.

However, experts say new methods using sprinklers and drip irrigation use 70 percent less water than the traditional flooding practice, when workers had to ensure fields were totally covered with water.

Now, Joufi said, it takes just “one person to turn on the sprinklers... and water reaches every patch of the land”.

New seeds

Agriculture ministry experts say that during the years of drought, the area planted with rice has shrunk from more than 30,000 hectares to just 5,000.

“Because of the drought and water scarcity, we must use modern irrigation techniques and new seeds,” said Abdel Kazem Jawad Moussa, who leads a team of such experts.

They have been experimenting with different types of sprinklers, drip irrigation, and five different kinds of seeds that withstand drought and consume less water in the hope of finding the best combination.

“We want to learn which seed genotypes respond well” to irrigation using sprinklers instead of flooding, Moussa said.

Last year, Al-Ghari — a genotype derived from Iraq’s prized amber rice — and South Asian jasmine seeds yielded good results when cultivated with small sprinklers, so experts offered the combination to farmers like Joufi, hoping for the best.

“At the end of the season, we will come up with recommendations,” Moussa said, adding that he also hoped to introduce three new types of seeds next year with a shorter planting season.

In addition to drought, the authorities blame upstream dams built by Iraq’s powerful neighbors Iran and Turkey for dramatically lowering water levels in the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which have irrigated Iraq for millennia.



A farmer adjusts an irrigation sprinkler in a rice field in Mishkhab in Iraq's Najaf province on July 8, 2024, as four consecutive years of drought and declining rainfall have strangled rice production in the country. Iraq, still recovering from years of war and chaos, is one of the five countries most impacted by some effects of climate change, according to the United Nations with Iraqi farmers defying a relentless drought by using tougher seeds and water-saving irrigation techniques, as well as receiving support from the agriculture ministry whose experts have been developing innovative methods to save the country's rice production. (Photo by Qassem al-KAABI / AFP)

'The last good year'

Water scarcity has forced many farmers to abandon their plots, and authorities have drastically reduced farm activity to ensure sufficient drinking water for Iraq's 43 million people.

In 2022, authorities limited the rice crop areas to 1,000 hectares in Najaf and the southern province of Diwaniyah, the heartlands of planting amber rice.

Recently, farmers in Diwaniyah protested, urging the government to allow them to farm their lands after a two-year halt.

But despite bountiful rains this winter that helped ease water shortages, authorities have only permitted them to cultivate rice on 30 percent of their lands.

“The last good year was 2020,” said farmer Fayeze al-Yassiri in his field in Diwaniyah where he hopes to forge on growing amber and jasmine rice.

Iraq is the second-largest oil producer in the OPEC cartel, but despite having immense oil and gas reserves, it remains dependent on imports to meet its energy needs and faces chronic power outages.

Yassiri urged the authorities to help, specifically by providing farmers with electricity and pesticides.

His cousin Bassem Yassiri was less hopeful. “Water shortages have ended agriculture in this region,” he said.

<https://business.inquirer.net/473328/farmers-innovate-to-save-iraqs-rice-production>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Agri damage due to recent typhoons, habagat reaches over P2.7B

By: [Faith Argosino](#) - Reporter / [@FArgosinoINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 11:46 PM August 06, 2024



Inquirer files

MANILA, Philippines — The damage brought by the southwest monsoon or habagat and recent typhoons to the country's agriculture sector has reached over P2.7 billion, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

In its latest situational report issued on Tuesday, NDRRMC said the combined effects of habagat, typhoon Carina, and tropical depression Butchoy have so far affected 57,388 farmers or fisherfolk nationwide.

It added that the damage covers about 52,221 hectares of rice, corn, and high-value crops.

In a separate statement, the Department of Agriculture said it will provide the following assistance to affected farmers and fisherfolk:

- **64,404 bags of rice and 45,307 bags of corn seeds worth P301.72 million;**

- **1,300 kgs, 63,124 packs, and 370 cans of vegetable seeds worth P17.63 million;**
- **P6.31 million worth of biocontrol measures;**
- **Fingerlings, fishing gear, and paraphernalia from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources;**
- **Survival and Recovery Loan Program from the Agricultural Credit Policy Council with a loanable amount of up to P25,000 payable in three years at zero interest;**
- **Quick Response Fund for the rehabilitation of affected areas; and**
- **Available funds from the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation to indemnify affected farmers.**

Meanwhile, NDRRMC said that the number of people affected by the recent weather disturbances is now at 6,343,626.

It added that the death toll remained at 48—14 were confirmed dead, while the 34 others are still up for validation.

To aid affected residents and farmers, NDRRMC said the government had already given out P507,190,188 worth of assistance.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1970155/agri-damage-due-to-recent-typhoons-habagat-reaches-over-p2-7b>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Veterinary drugs under FDA, not BAI

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 05:05 AM August 07, 2024



Photo: Food and Drug Administration (FDA) official Facebook page

MANILA, Philippines — The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is in charge of regulating veterinary drug products, veterinary biological products and establishments, not the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI).

FDA director general Dr. Samuel Zacate made the clarification on Aug. 5, saying that finished products for therapeutic purposes for animals, including veterinary drugs, medicated feed products and antimicrobials, shall be regulated by the agency, which is under the Department of Health.

On the other hand, the BAI, which is under the Department of Agriculture, will be in charge of the issuance of authorization for feed ingredients, feed additives, or feed raw materials meant for manufacturing or producing animal feeds, except for veterinary drugs or ingredients with therapeutic, antimicrobial or medicated properties.

“While the FDA is still developing the guidelines for veterinary drugs, [it] shall use the guidance document on the classification of veterinary drugs and feeds set forth by Health Canada,” the FDA said in an advisory. —*Dexter Cabalza*

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1970115/veterinary-drugs-under-fda-not-bai>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Senate ratifies report on proposed Anti-Agri Economic Sabotage Act

By: [Charie Abarca](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 02:00 AM August 07, 2024



Senate committee on agriculture and food chair Cynthia Villar —Senate PRIB

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate ratified on Tuesday the bicameral conference committee report on the proposed Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act.

Sen. Cynthia Villar, head of the chamber’s panel on agriculture, bore the highlights of the conference committee report on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 2432 and House Bill numbers 3917 and 9284 during the chamber’s plenary session.

“The bicameral conference agreed to adopt the reconsidered bill as the working draft of the discussion. The changes on the working draft which we stated in the joint explanatory statement are reflected on the content of the bicameral consolidated bill,” said Villar.

“Let me also put on record, as the chair of the Senate bicam panel, that in Section 18 of the consolidated bill we included the Department of Finance in the composition of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage enforcement group,” she added.

After the ratification of the report, Villar thanked all members of the Senate for helping her “be able to tackle this bill.” She said she’s hoping that President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. signs the bill as early as possible.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1970182/senate-ratifies-report-on-proposed-anti-agri-economic-sabotage-act>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Palay yield target set at 7.5 metric tons per hectare

August 6, 2024 | 8:28 pm



A farmer threshes newly harvested palay grains at a ricefield in Mogpog, Marinduque in central Philippines, March 22, 2016. — REUTERS

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said it set the yield target at 7.5 metric tons (MT) of palay per hectare for the Masagana Rice Industry Development Program (MRIDP).

“We’re recalibrating the program to identify areas for enhancement, including the distribution of improved seed, expansion of irrigation systems, and adjustments to rice cropping schedules,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said in a statement on Tuesday.

The current national average yield is 4.17 MT per hectare, equivalent to 84 50-kilogram bags of palay, or unmilled rice.

The average yield of palay in irrigated areas is 4.51 MT. In non-irrigated areas it averages 3.34 MT.

“As we move forward, our aim is not just to increase productivity but also to ensure sustainability and resilience in our agricultural sector,” Mr. Laurel added.

The upgraded target could translate to annual rice production of more than 25 million MT, even if the target yield is achieved only in the 3.39 million hectares of irrigated farmland.

The DA has said it expects palay production this year of 20.44 million MT, up from 20.05 million MT in 2023.

In the first half, palay production declined 5% year on year to 8.53 million MT, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority.

“We must adopt a more scientific approach to farming to boost output and manage costs effectively,” Mr. Laurel added.

The MRIDP aims to stabilize the rice supply at between 24.99 million MT and 26.86 million MT a year, in the process lowering growth in rice prices to less than 1% annually.

It also seeks to increase farmer incomes by 54% and ensure adequate reserves held by the National Food Authority.

“With increased production, farmers will enjoy gains from their labor while consumers should enjoy lower food prices,” Mr. Laurel said. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/08/06/612548/palay-yield-target-set-at-7-5-metric-tons-per-hectare/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

PHL urged to boost long-term El Niño readiness — UN agency

August 6, 2024 | 8:27 pm



RENZO D SOUZA—UNSPLASH

By **John Victor D. Ordoñez**, *Reporter*

THE PHILIPPINES needs to work on long-term preparations and inter-agency communication to mitigate the impact of drought and dry spells during El Niño episodes, according to the United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Philippines.

At a Senate hearing of the environment, natural resources, and climate change committee, UN OCHA Philippines Head Manja Vidic described El Niño as a slow-onset disaster requiring a different approach to preparations compared to typhoons.

“El Niño becomes a crisis because we wait too long, but we have enough time and months to prepare for this compared to typhoons,” she said.

“It’s probably a governance issue rather than something that is purely a natural disaster issue.”

She said her office has noted some sound practices in response to El Niño, singling out the information caravans organized by Bicol local governments.

“The LGUs did go ahead and communicated with the tools it had in place and engaged with the local population,” Ms. Vidic said.

Farm damage caused by El Niño was reckoned at P15.3 billion, with 333,195 farmers and fisherfolk affected by droughts and dry spells, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

In its final farm damage bulletin connected to El Niño, the DA said crop losses amounted to 784,344 metric tons, spanning farmland of 270,855 hectares.

About 184,182 hectares of crops were deemed recoverable, it added.

Palawan, Iloilo, Camarines Sur and Occidental Mindoro were most affected by these dry spells and drought, the DA said.

In June the government weather service, known as PAGASA (Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration), announced the end of El Niño after conditions in the tropical Pacific returned to El Niño Southern Oscillation neutral levels, meaning neither El Niño nor La Niña was in effect.

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/08/06/612546/phl-urged-to-boost-long-term-el-nino-readiness-un-agency/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Senate ratifies bicam report of farm smuggling measure

August 6, 2024 | 8:27 pm



BUREAU OF CUSTOMS

THE SENATE approved and ratified on Tuesday the bicameral conference committee report on an amendment stiffening the penalties on smugglers and hoarders of agricultural products.

At a plenary session, Senator Cynthia A. Villar, who filed the Senate version of the bill, said the harmonization of Senate Bill No. 2432 and House Bill No. 9284 resulted in the inclusion of the Department of Finance in the Anti-Agriculture Economic Sabotage Enforcement Group, to be implemented when the measure becomes law.

“The reason for this is to prevent connivance between smugglers and employers of the Bureau of Customs,” she said.

“The problematic system within the Bureau of Customs is one of the reasons why RA 10845 or the original Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Law... proved to be inadequate.”

The Senate approved the measure on final reading on Dec. 11, while the House of Representatives passed its counterpart bill on Sept. 27.

The bill will lower the threshold on instances of smuggled agriculture and fishery products to P1 million from P10 million for the violation to be classified as an act of economic sabotage.

Violators could face life imprisonment and a fine of thrice the value of agricultural and fishery products smuggled.

The government has been foregoing at least P200 billion in revenue each year to smuggling, Ms. Villar has said, citing government estimates.

Later Tuesday, the House of Representatives also ratified the bicameral conference committee report by voice vote. — **John Victor D. Ordoñez**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/08/06/612545/senate-ratifies-bicam-report-of-farm-smuggling-measure/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Livestock dev't bill hurdles Senate on second reading

August 6, 2024 | 8:27 pm



REUTERS

THE SENATE approved on second reading on Tuesday a bill seeking to develop a modernization plan for the livestock, poultry and dairy industries.

Senate Bill No. 2558, filed by Senator Cynthia A. Villar, calls for a livestock, poultry, and dairy competitiveness fund to be set up with funding from import tariffs of P7.8 billion a year for the next 10 years.

It also calls for the establishment of the Office of the Undersecretary of the National Livestock, Poultry, Dairy, and other Animals Program to oversee policy geared at boosting production in these industries.

“For the longest time, the Livestock, Poultry and Dairy sector has been left to be run by the private sector. With this Act, the government will actively support and participate in the development of the sector,” Ms. Villar said in May.

Farm output growth was little changed in the first quarter at 0.05%, amid a prolonged dry spell brought on by El Niño.

Poultry production grew 5.9% year on year during the period, slowing from 7.8% in the fourth quarter of 2023. — **John Victor D. Ordoñez**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/08/06/612544/livestock-devt-bill-hurdles-senate-on-second-reading/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Composting program eyed to cut fertilizer dependence

August 6, 2024 | 8:25 pm



JICA PHOTO

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) is planning to establish composting facilities, with the aim of reducing farmer dependence on expensive fertilizer.

“This is one method to minimize groundwater pollution and restore soil fertility, thereby reducing the vulnerability of marginal farmers to the high cost of chemical fertilizers,” the DA said in Memorandum Circular No. 31.

“With regular applications, farms and households would be less dependent on chemical fertilizers and pesticides, significantly decreasing production costs and increasing returns on investment,” the department said.

The project will be implemented via the Bureau of Soils and Water Management and DA Regional Field Offices.

The DA said composting packages include one rotary composter and a biomass shredder with a maximum capacity of one ton per load.

“The machine has a larger capacity to produce a mass volume of compost fertilizer, making it ideal for larger scale composting needs and promoting more sustainable production practices,” the DA said.

Recipients of the technology are those participating in the National Rice Program, National Corn Program, National Organic Agriculture Program, and High-Value Crops Development Program.

Recipients can be local government units, registered civil service organizations, state universities and colleges, learning sites and farm schools, and DA research stations or bureaus and agencies.

Qualified recipients are required to file regular production reports. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/08/06/612540/composting-program-eyed-to-cut-fertilizer-dependence/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

NG to gain ₱54B from rice tariffs in H1, says DOF chief

- **Reine Juvierre S. Alberto**
- **August 6, 2024**
- **2 minute read**



THE national government stands to gain P53.9 billion in the second half of 2024 to 2026 despite the reduction of rice tariff rates, according to the Department of Finance.

Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto said at the budget hearing on the proposed 2025 national budget on Monday that the government will still collect P8.1 billion from July to December 2025 from rice tariffs.

To recall, the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) Board led by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., approved the tariff reduction for rice to 15 percent from 35 percent as part of the Comprehensive Target Program (CTP) for 2024 until 2028.

This would bring down rice prices by P6.00 to P7.00, to slash the price of rice per kilo to P29 at least for the poor.

Broken down, the government will generate P20.3 billion in 2025 and P25.5 billion in 2026 from the collection of rice tariffs.

However, the state will lose a total of P49.9 billion in foregone revenues due to the reduction of rice tariffs.

If the EO were not implemented, a total of P103.7 billion could have been collected from rice tariffs.

This, after the DOF was asked by House Assistant Minority Leader Arlene Brosas on the expected revenues from rice tariffs, and if the Filipino farmers have already received their cash allowances from rice tariff collections.

Budget Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman said 100 percent of the excess cash assistance from 2022 allotted to farmers, amounting to P12.795 billion, has already been disbursed.

About P12.090 billion went to the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund's (RCEF) Rice Farmers Financial Assistance (RFFA) program while P704.009 million was used for the implementation of the Palayamanan Plus or the crop diversification program.

For 2023, Recto said P29.9 billion in rice tariffs was collected in 2023, of which the mandatory P10 billion went to the RFFA program, leaving an excess of P19.9 billion.

Under Republic Act 11598 or the Cash Assistance to Filipino Farmers Act of 2021, rice tariff collections in excess of P10 billion would go to the RFFA program.

Rice farmers tilling two hectares and below will receive P5,000.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/08/06/ng-to-gain-p54b-from-rice-tariffs-in-h1-says-dof-chief/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Inflation surge in July due to power adjustment, higher cost of meat—PSA

- Cai U. Ordinario
- August 6, 2024
- 2 minute read



The adjustment in electricity rates as well as higher meat prices led to faster inflation in July, according to the latest data released by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

PSA data showed inflation reached 4.4 percent in July 2024. This is faster than the 3.7 percent posted in June but slower than the 4.7 percent in July 2023.

The latest inflation print breached the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) 3 to 4 percent inflation target for the year.

However, it was within the inflation expectations of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) which is between 4 and 4.8 percent.

Meanwhile, PSA data showed inflation of housing, water, electricity gas and other fuels accounted for 70.4 percent of the increase in July inflation.

Inflation for these commodities increased to 2.3 percent in July 2024 from 0.1 percent in June 2024.

Food and non-alcoholic beverages accounted for 17 percent of the increase in July inflation. The data showed inflation increased to 6.4 percent in July 2024 from 6.1 percent in June 2024.

Another top contributor to inflation is transport which accounted for 6.8 percent of the increase in July inflation.

Data showed transport inflation increased to 3.6 percent in July 2024 from 3.1 percent in June 2024.

Meanwhile, the inflation rate in Metro Manila or the National Capital Region (NCR) moved at a faster rate of 3.7 percent in July 2024 from 2.3 percent in the previous month. In July 2023, inflation rate in the area was recorded at 5.6 percent.

PSA said the main driver of the increase of inflation rate in the area was the higher annual increment in the index of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels at 3.3 percent during the month from an annual decline of 1.7 percent in June 2024.

The overall inflation in Areas Outside NCR (AONCR) increased to 4.6 percent in July 2024 from 4.1 percent in June 2024. In July 2023, inflation in the area was recorded at 4.4 percent.

The faster increase in commodity prices in AONCR was driven by higher housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels prices leading to faster inflation at 1.9 percent in July 2024 from 0.7 percent in June 2024.

Also contributing to the uptrend of inflation in the area was the faster annual increase in the food and non-alcoholic beverages index at 6.6 percent during the month from 6.3 percent in June 2024.

Core inflation, which excludes selected food and energy items, slowed down to 2.9 percent in July 2024 from 3.1 percent in the previous month. In July 2023, core inflation was higher at 6.7 percent.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/08/06/inflation-surge-in-july-due-to-power-adjustment-higher-cost-of-meat-psa/>

DA recalibrates Masagana

By

Jed Macapagal

-

August 7, 2024



The average per hectare yield of palay in irrigated areas is 4.51 MT and for non-irrigated areas, 3.34 MT. (DA Photo)

The Department of Agriculture (DA) is recalibrating the Masagana Rice Industry Development Program to identify areas for enhancement, such as better distribution of improved seeds, expansion of irrigation systems and adjustments to rice cropping schedules.

The program, which was started by the previous DA secretary, aims to meet self-sufficiency goals, increase farmers' incomes, lower consumer prices and potentially restore the country's status as an exporter of rice.

The program covers the production of better rice seeds, optimization of the utilization of fertilizers and development of a logistics network to bring harvests to market and inputs to farms more efficiently and cost-effectively.

DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. expressed optimism that given the right inputs and technologies, rice yield could be increased to 7.5 metric tons (MT) per hectare equivalent to 150 pieces of 50 kg bags in targeted program areas or even higher in the ideal ecosystem.

If successful, the program could propel annual palay production beyond 25 million MT from only 3.39 million hectares of irrigated farmlands, the DA said.

The agency said current national averages indicate yields of approximately 84 sacks per hectare even if the Philippines last year harvested a record-breaking 20.06 million MT of palay across 4.82 million hectares of rice fields.

The DA added the average per hectare yield of palay in irrigated areas is 4.51 MT and for non-irrigated areas, 3.34 MT. This puts the national average at 4.17 MT.

The agency said the average palay yield per hectare was 3.89 MT in 2013 and improved to 3.97 MT in 2018, the year before the Rice Tariffication Law was enacted.

“After decades of neglect, we must adopt a more scientific approach to farming to boost output and manage costs effectively,” said Tiu Laurel.

Tiu Laurel also highlighted the need for sustained investments, strategic planning and technological advancements to achieve the goal of improved local rice production.

“As we move forward, our aim is not just to increase productivity but also to ensure sustainability and resilience (of) our agricultural sector... With increased production, farmers will enjoy gains from their labor while consumers should enjoy lower food prices,” Tiu Laurel said.

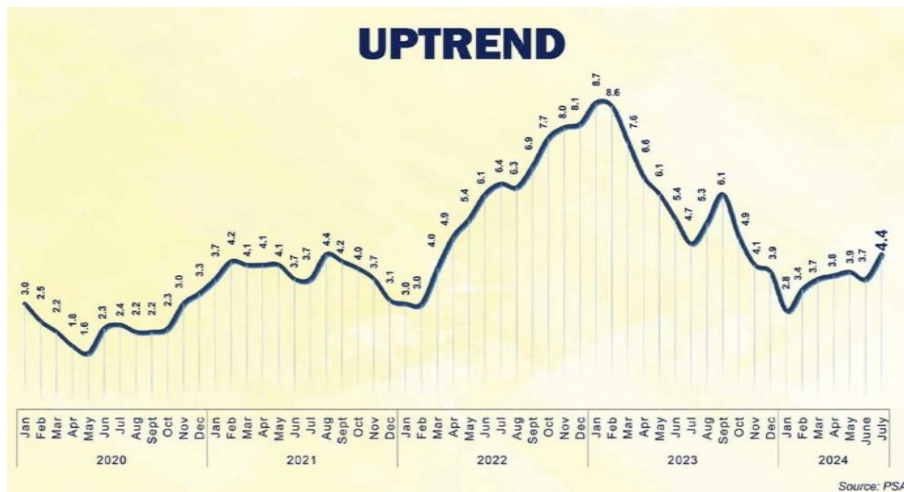
https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/da-recalibrates-masagana/

PRICES OF FOOD, UTILITIES STILL HIGHER: Inflation surges back to 4%

By

Jimmy Calapati

August 7, 2024



Higher prices of food, transport and utilities pushed inflation higher to 4.4 percent in July from the previous month's 3.7 percent, the Philippine Statistics Authority yesterday said.

This brings the national average inflation to 3.7 percent, at the higher end of the government's target range of between 2 and 4 percent.

Claire Dennis Mapa, national statistician and civil registrar general, said the uptrend was primarily influenced by the higher year-on-year increase in the index of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels.

“The faster annual growth rate of the heavily-weighted food and non-alcoholic beverages index at 6.4 percent also contributed to the uptrend of the overall inflation. Higher inflation rates during the month were also noted in the indices of transport at 3.6 percent and education services at 5.8 percent,” Mapa said.

In contrast, the following commodity groups registered lower inflation rates during the month: alcoholic beverages and tobacco; clothing and footwear; health; recreation, sport and culture; and restaurants and accommodation services.

Core inflation, which excludes selected food and energy items, slowed down to 2.9 percent from 3.1 percent in the previous month. In July 2023, core inflation was higher at 6.7 percent.

Mapa said food inflation at the national level rose to 6.7 percent from 6.5 percent in June.

“The acceleration of food inflation was mainly brought about by the year-on-year increase in meat and other parts of slaughtered land animals index. The index of fruits and nuts also contributed to the uptrend. However, slower annual decline was noted in the indices of fish and other seafood and oils and fats,” Mapa said.

Food inflation shared 54.3 percent or 2.4 percentage points to the overall inflation in July.

Inflation rate in the National Capital Region (NCR) also moved at a faster rate of 3.7 percent. Areas outside NCR also showed an uptrend of 4.6 percent.

Thirteen regions outside NCR exhibited higher inflation rates. Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao registered the highest inflation rate of 5.7 percent while Region I (Ilocos Region) remained as the region with lowest inflation rate for the seventh consecutive month.

Only temporary

“The latest inflation outturn is consistent with the BSP’s (Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas) latest assessment that inflation will temporarily settle above the target range in July 2024 due mainly to higher electricity rates and positive base effects but will likely follow a general downtrend beginning in August 2024,” said Eli Remolona Jr., BSP governor, adding that the July reading is within the BSP’s forecast range for the month of between 4 to 4.8 percent.

“The balance of risks to the inflation outlook has shifted to the downside for 2024 and 2025 due largely to the impact of the lower import tariff on rice under Executive Order (EO) 62 (Series of 2024). Nonetheless, higher prices of food items other than rice, as well as higher transport and electricity charges continue to pose upside risks to inflation,” Remolona said.

He said the Monetary Board will consider the latest inflation outturn as well as the second quarter 2024 national accounts in its assessment of the inflation outlook and the balance of risks in the August 2024 monetary policy meeting.

“The BSP will ensure that monetary policy settings remain in line with its primary mandate to safeguard price stability conducive to sustainable economic growth,” the BSP chief added.

Finance Secretary Ralph Recto, meanwhile, has assured the public the inflation rate in July is likely a one-time uptick due to high base effects and is expected to temper and fall within target for the rest of the year as government interventions take full effect.

“Inflation rate is expected to stabilize and fall within target for the rest of the year as the impact of government interventions, particularly the reduced rice tariffs, will be more pronounced starting this August. Although, we might see slight increases in vegetable prices due to damages brought by Typhoon Carina in the agriculture sector,” Recto said.

Recto further assured the public the decline in retail prices of rice will become more apparent in the coming months as the volume of rice imports at lower tariff is anticipated to increase and augment local supply.

Arsenio Balisacan, National Economic and Development Authority secretary, also assured the public government is implementing crucial interventions to support the most vulnerable sectors and ensure food security amid the ongoing La Niña phenomenon and the higher inflation.

“The government is relentlessly working to address our nation’s most pressing concern of ensuring food security for every Filipino amid the faster rise in prices in July and the expected typhoons and rains due to the onset of La Niña this August,” Balisacan said.

He added the weather phenomenon is expected to persist until the first quarter of 2025.

He said in preparation for La Niña, the Department of Agriculture (DA) has assured the availability of the quick response fund, assistance, credit and the seed buffer stock.

The agency has also expedited the declogging of farm drainage systems and constructing water-impounding projects and post-harvest facilities.

To assist farmers in dealing with higher fuel prices, DA will provide around P510 million in fuel subsidies to crop, livestock and poultry farmers. It is anticipated that around 160,000 farmers will benefit from over P3,000 in fuel assistance between August and September 2024.

“Between 2023 and 2021, about 2.5 million Filipinos were lifted out of poverty, bringing our country’s poverty incidence down to 15.5 percent from 18.1 percent. Our goal now is to sustain this momentum by addressing the constraints to food security and economic development more broadly,” Balisacan said.

Rate cut unlikely

“Faster inflation reduces rhetoric possibility of a 0.25 local policy rate cut, as signaled by local monetary officials lately. But local policy rate cuts remain possible in the coming months, especially if inflation would stay well within the 2 percent-4 percent inflation target,” said Michael Ricafort, chief economist for Treasury Group of Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.

Bank of the Philippine Islands said the probability of a rate cut from the BSP in August has declined now that headline inflation is once again above its target.

“The BSP’s decision on August 15 will also depend on the upcoming GDP data, which could either prompt a delay in rate cuts if GDP exceeds expectations or justify an immediate rate cut if the data significantly misses the forecasts. The BSP will likely prioritize domestic data in its policy decision on August 15, but it may also consider global developments. Any signals from the Federal Reserve suggesting a substantial rate cut in September could increase the chances of a rate cut from the BSP in the next policy meeting,” BPI said.

“Nevertheless, we maintain our view that rate cuts are on the horizon given the favorable outlook for inflation. The recent drop in core inflation to 2.9 percent supports the argument for a potential rate cut in the coming months,” BPI added.

Miguel Chanco, chief Emerging Asia economist of Pantheon Macroeconomics, said the July breach of the BSP's target range likely means that an August rate cut is now off the table.

“We still think that 75bp-worth of cuts is doable by year-end, especially if we're right about the Fed's potentially much larger cuts in the fourth quarter, following an initial 25bp cut in September. Accordingly, our revised base case for the BSP is a 25bp cut in October, followed by a 50bp in December. To be sure, if we're right about a likely huge miss in Thursday's Q2 GDP report, then an August cut could come swiftly back into the discussion,” Chanco said.

As inflation outlook shifted to downside, the Monetary Board during its last meeting in June decided to maintain the key rates of the BSP and hinted a “somewhat more likely” rate cut when it next meets this month.

BSP's Target Reverse Repurchase (RRP) Rate remains at 6.50 percent. The interest rates on the overnight deposit and lending facilities will also remain at 6 percent and 7 percent, respectively.

“(We're) somewhat more dovish than before,” Remolona said after the meeting. He hinted at a possible total cut of 50 basis points for this year — 25 basis points each for the third and fourth quarter.

June's action was the sixth consecutive time that the Monetary Board decided to keep steady the key rates after the 0.25 off-cycle rate hike last Oct. 27, 2023.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/prices-of-food-utilities-still-higher-inflation-surges-back-to-4/

THE MANILA TIMES:

Inflation tops target, hits 9-mo high of 4.4%

[By Niña Myka Pauline Arceo](#)

August 7, 2024

(UPDATES) INFLATION hit a nine-month high in July, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported on Tuesday, breaching the 2.0- to 4.0-percent target as utility, housing, fuel and food prices rose.

At 4.4 percent, consumer price growth was the highest since October 2023's 4.9 percent. It accelerated from 3.7 percent in June but was slower than the year-earlier 4.7 percent.

It hit the midpoint of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' (BSP) 4.0-percent to 4.8-percent estimate for the month, but exceeded the market consensus of 4.1 percent.

Core inflation, which excludes volatile food and energy items, slowed to 2.9 percent from 3.1 percent in June and 6.7 percent a year earlier.

Year to date, headline and core inflation averaged 3.7 percent and 3.3 percent, respectively.

The BSP, which last week said that a July breach was likely given higher electricity, food and fuel prices, reiterated that the rate was still expected to go down and return to target.

Risks to the outlook have shifted to the downside, it added, particularly since the government slashed the tariff on rice imports to 15 percent from 35 percent up to 2028.

Rising transport and electricity prices, however, continue to pose upside risks.

"The Monetary Board will consider the latest inflation outturn as well as the Q2 2024 (second quarter of 2024) national accounts in its

assessment of the inflation outlook and the balance of risks in the August 2024 monetary policy meeting," the central bank said.

"Moving forward, the BSP will ensure that monetary policy settings remain in line with its primary mandate to safeguard price stability conducive to sustainable economic growth."

Monetary authorities are scheduled to meet on August 15 to decide whether or not to start cutting key interest rates. In addition to the July inflation data, they will also consider second-quarter growth results the PSA will release on Thursday.

Peak likely hit

Inflation has likely peaked for the year, National Statistician Undersecretary Claire Dennis Mapa said, but risks remain as other commodity prices could still increase.

The PSA, in a statement, said the overall rise in inflation was "primarily influenced by the higher year-on-year increase in the index of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels at 2.3 percent during the month from 0.1 percent in June 2024."

The food and nonalcoholic beverages index also contributed to higher inflation, rising to 6.4 percent from 6.1 percent.

ADVERTISEMENT

Food and alcoholic beverages still accounted for over half — a 55.5-percent share or 2.4 percentage points — of overall inflation. Food inflation, in particular, rose to 6.7 percent from 6.5 percent in June.

"The acceleration of food inflation in July 2024 was mainly brought about by the year-on-year increase in meat and other parts of slaughtered land animals index at 4.8 percent in July 2024 from 3.1 percent in the previous month," the PSA said.

"The index of fruits and nuts also contributed to the uptrend with an inflation rate of 8.4 percent during the month from 5.6 percent in June 2024," it added.

Rice inflation — which drove consumer price growth higher earlier in the year — declined to 20.9 percent from 22.5 percent in June.

Mapa said rice inflation was likely to decline further in the coming months, especially in August, due to base effects.

Food security push

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan said the government was committed to keeping inflation within 2.0 to 4.0 percent following the July breach.

"The government is relentlessly working to address our nation's most pressing concern of ensuring food security for every Filipino amid the faster rise in prices in July and the expected typhoons and rains due to the onset of La Niña this August," he said in a separate statement.

"Our goal now is to sustain this momentum by addressing the constraints to food security and economic development more broadly."

Balisacan said the government had already prepared for La Niña via initiatives such as a quick response fund, credit facilities and seed stocks. The Department of Agriculture (DA) was said to be expediting the declogging of farm drainage systems and building water-impounding and postharvest facilities.

"To assist farmers in dealing with higher fuel prices, DA will provide around P510 million in fuel subsidies to crop, livestock and poultry farmers," Balisacan said.

"It is anticipated that around 160,000 farmers will benefit from over P3,000 in fuel assistance between August and September 2024," he added.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/07/business/top-business/inflation-tops-target-hits-9-mo-high-of-44/1962152>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Rice program revamp set by Agri department

[By Janine Alexis Miguel](#)

August 7, 2024

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) on Tuesday announced a plan to overhaul its Masagana Rice Industry Development Program (MRIDP) to further increase rice production.

Among the goals are to improve seed quality and logistics to streamline farm inputs.

"We're recalibrating the program to identify areas for enhancement, including the distribution of improved seeds, expansion of irrigation systems and adjustments to rice cropping schedules," said Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

The country's average rice production in irrigated areas is currently at 4.51 metric tons (MT) per hectare, while nonirrigated areas yield 3.34 MT. Total national average is 4.17 MT per hectare.

Tiu Laurel said the DA aims to boost production to 7.5 MT per hectare, or 150 sacks (50 kg/bag) from the current 84 sacks per hectare.

In 2023, the Philippines achieved a record-breaking rice harvest of 20.06 million MT across 4.82 million hectares of crop area.

If the new target is met in 3.39 million hectares of irrigated areas, the DA said annual production could surpass 25 million MT.

Prior to the passage of the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL) in 2019, the average palay (unmilled rice) yield per hectare stood at 3.97 MT in 2018 and 3.89 MT in 2013.

The RTL sets aside P10 billion annually in import duties to fund modernization of rice farming and boost productivity.

The agriculture chief also stressed the need to address a key challenge in the farming sector. "After decades of neglect, we must adopt a more scientific approach to farming to boost output and manage costs effectively," Tiu Laurel said, adding that increasing productivity would not only benefit farmers but also help reduce food prices for consumers.

The MRIDP, which President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. approved in 2023, is based on four strategies: 1) increasing rice productivity by optimizing yields through climate-change adaptation measures; 2) more efficient operations through farm clustering and consolidation; 3) digital transformation for rice agriculture; and 4) reorienting the rice program toward a comprehensive agricultural production, agribusiness and agritourism.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/07/business/top-business/rice-program-revamp-set-by-agri-department/1962361>

THE MANILA TIMES:

31K fishermen to be compensated



By Dennis Abrina

August 7, 2024

TRECE MARTIRES CITY, Cavite — The provincial government of Cavite and the MT Terra Nova are likely to arrive at a decision with regard to the compensation of 31,000 fisherfolk in Cavite who are affected by the oil spill.

Gov. Juanito Victor "Jonvic" Remulla Jr. met with lawyers and representatives of MT Terranova, and according to him, the latter has agreed to compensate 31,000 fisherfolk but will have to wait for the full details of the insurance claims.

The meeting stemmed from the Inter Agency Meeting at the Department of Justice (DoJ) in Taft Avenue, Manila on Monday, for the established fact-finding committee, which will investigate whether the management of MT Terranova has criminal liabilities.



OIL SPILL TALK Cavite Gov. Juanito Victor 'Jonvic' Remulla Jr. speaks before individuals affected by oil spill in Noveleta, Cavite, on Aug. 3, 2024, in Sito Long Beach, Barangay San Rafael here. PHOTO BY DENNIS ABRINA

According to DoJ Assistant Secretary Mico Clavano, representatives of the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund were included in the meeting.

Clavano though admitted that there is indeed a greater task ahead before the compensation could finally be realized.

It is estimated that it would take almost three months before the distribution of cash assistance could begin due to the data validation that will be carried out.

It appears that the money the company has to shell out daily could amount to P9 million to P12 million, and it would start from the declaration of state of calamity in the province until the water is cleared of oil spill.

The governor said that there was no discussion or settlement between them, and that the problem of the affected residents will not end with the insurance claim, and that if criminal negligence is found it will still be the responsibility of MT Terranova.

He said they are still waiting for the BFAR's notification on the tests carried out to see if the seaweed is safe to eat and this also means that ban on mussels and oysters remains.

One of the problems that Remulla sees is the confidence level of the people in the sea who may not immediately consume sea food even though it has been cleared by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic resources (BFAR).

A similar oil spill happened in Mindoro where it took almost three months before the people's confidence was restored.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/07/regions/31k-fishermen-to-be-compensated/1962320>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Corn prices cause for concern – Salceda



[By Reina C. Tolentino](#)

August 7, 2024

CORN prices were a cause for attention following the Philippine Statistics Authority's inflation report for July 2024, Albay 2nd District Rep. Joey Salceda said Tuesday.

In a statement, Salceda said there was momentum in the price of corn.

"[Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.] already mentioned that the DA is monitoring the situation as early as April, and I believe efforts are underway to address the issue. At 5.8 percent month-on-month inflation, corn prices are a cause for attention," said Salceda, also an economist.

He said that the problem with rice had "mostly abated."

"While rice prices remain elevated year-on-year, month-on-month, prices are actually declining slightly. I expect this trend to continue as more stocks arrive from India and Vietnam," he said.

"The problem with corn is that while global trading prices are generally lower year-on-year, our domestic livestock, poultry, and dairy sector cannot rely on imported corn. Imported corn significantly diminishes in nutritive quality when shipped. Of course,

price pressures could ease with upholding the minimum access volume system for corn, but that's no structural solution," he said.

Salceda said that he saw some increase in the prices of poultry.

However, he said, "Based on our monitoring of the situation, the price situation in that sector should ease by the time the August report is released — prices are down in August by as much as 12 percent from their July peak."

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/07/news/national/corn-prices-cause-for-concern-salceda/1962345>

MANILA STANDARD:

21 Cavite, Bataan areas under state of calamity

News



REINFORCEMENT. Eight U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) personnel arrived yesterday at the Incident Command Post in Lamao Port, Limay, Bataan to provide technical assistance to the Incident Management Team handling the ongoing recovery operations following three maritime incidents involving MTKR Terra Nova, MTKR Jason Bradley, and MV Mirola 1 in Manila Bay.



By Rex Espiritu & Dennis Abrina

August 7, 2024, 12:55 am

US Coast Guard, NOAA teams assist in oil recovery

At least 21 areas in the provinces of Bataan and Cavite have declared a state of calamity due to the impact of the oil spill caused by the sinking of the M/T Terranova, the Office of Civil Defense said Tuesday.

In its situation report, the OCD said the figure includes Bataan's 11 towns and capital city Balanga as well as Cavite's seven towns and two cities — Kawit, Noveleta, Rosario, Tanza, Naic, Maragondon, Ternate, Cavite City and Bacoor City.

Bataan Gov. Joet Garcia on Monday signed the resolution declaring a province-wide state of calamity, noting that the oil spills have affected 17,000 fishermen in the province.

MT Terra Nova, which was carrying 1.4 million liters of industrial fuel, capsized off Limay, Bataan on July 25.

Two days later, MTKR Jason Bradley, which was carrying about 5,500 liters of diesel, sank in the waters off Mariveles town in Bataan. A third vessel, MV Mirola 1, ran aground near the shore of Mariveles.

Garcia said some 10,174 families in Limay and 4,822 families in Mariveles were affected.

Earlier reports also placed the estimated cost of damage in Cavite at P1 billion, with the province declaring a no-catch zone for fish and shellfish that has affected at least 31,000 fisherfolk.

Eight personnel from the United States Coast Guard (USCG) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) arrived in Bataan on Tuesday to assist in oil spill recovery efforts.

The teams will assist in recovery operations on the three maritime incidents.

Last week, the Philippine Coast Guard reported that oil recovery has begun for MTKR Jason Bradley and MV Mirola 1 with the deployment of oil spill booms and the use of water cannons to help disperse spilled oil.

On the other hand, MT Terra Nova has been secured with capping bags on all of its valves and high-level alarm pipes, in addition to two layers of oil spill booms placed around the sunken vessel.

Cavite Gov. Jonvic Remulla Jr. met with lawyers and representatives of MT Terra Nova on Monday for the established fact-finding committee, which will investigate whether the management of the sunken tanker has criminal liabilities.

Justice Assistant Secretary Jose Dominic Clavano IV said the meeting was also attended by representatives of the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund (IOPC)

Editor's Note: This is an updated article. Originally posted with the headline State of calamity declared in more areas following Bataan oil spill

https://manilastandard.net/news/314480972/21-cavite-bataan-areas-under-state-of-calamity.html#google_vignette

REMATE:

10 barangay sa La Union sapul ng ASF

August 6, 2024 18:40



MALASIQUI, Pangasinan – Sampung barangay sa dalawang bayan at isang lungsod sa lalawigan ng La Union ang nakapagtala ng positibong kaso ng African swine fever (ASF) nitong Lunes, ayon sa Department of Agriculture (DA) Ilocos Region.

Sinabi ni Dr. Alfiero Banaag, DA-Ilocos regulatory division chief at ASF focal person, sa isang panayam sa telepono na pito sa mga barangay ay nasa Balaoan, dalawa ay nasa Luna at isa sa San Fernando City.

Sinabi ni Banaag na 329 na ulo ng baboy mula sa Balaoan ang na-culled kasama ang 56 mula sa Luna, at 30 mula sa San Fernando City.

Ang mga apektadong lugar ay nagpatupad ng pansamantalang kabuuang pagbabawal ng mga buhay na baboy o baboy papunta o mula sa kanilang mga nasasakupan sa loob ng 30 araw.

Sinabi ni Banaag na ang 72 apektadong backyard hog raisers mula sa Balaoan, pito mula sa Luna, at isa mula sa San Fernando ay babayaran ng PHP5,000 kada ulo ng mga na-culled na baboy sa loob ng maximum na 20 ulo bawat raiser.

Dagdag pa ni Banaag na nananatiling sapat ang supply ng baboy sa rehiyon ngunit inamin na ang mga kaso ay maaaring bahagyang makaapekto sa mga presyo. *RNT*

<https://remate.ph/10-barangay-sa-la-union-sapul-ng-asf/>

REMATE:

Dobleng state of calamity idineklara sa Bataan

August 6, 2024 16:32



BATAAN – Muling idineklara ang state of calamity sa Bataan dahil sa banta ng oil spill matapos ang sunud-sunod na insidente ng maritime sa lugar.

Nilagdaan ni Bataan Governor Joet Garcia nitong Lunes ang Sangguniang Panlalawigan Resolution No. 328, series of 2024 dahil naapektuhan ng oil spill ang 17,000 mangingisda sa lalawigan.

Sa pagbanggit sa ulat ng Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office, sinabi ni Garcia na 10,174 pamilya sa Limay at 4,822 sa Mariveles ang apektado rin.

Dagdag pa niya, ang deklarasyon ng state of calamity sa lalawigan ay mangangahulugan ng karagdagang pondo

para mapigil ang epekto ng mga oil spill at mabigyan ng tulong ang mga apektadong residente.

Ang MKTR Terranova, na may dalang 1.4 milyong litro ng pang-industriyang langis.

Makalipas ang isang araw, lumubog ang MTKR Jason Bradley na may 5,500 diesel sa katubigan ng Barangay Cabcaben, Mariveles, Bataan.

Samantala, sumadsad ang MV Mirola 1 noong Hulyo 31 sa katubigan ng Sitio Quiapo, Barangay Biaan, Mariveles, Bataan.

Isinailalim kamakailan sa state of calamity ang lalawigan ng Bataan matapos ang pananalasa ng habagat na pinalakas ng tropical cyclone Carina. **RNT**

<https://remate.ph/dobleng-state-of-calamity-idineklara-sa-bataan/>

REMATE:

Walang taas-presyo sa baboy sa ASF sa Batangas – DA

August 6, 2024 15:45



MANILA, Philippines – TINYAK ng Department of Agriculture (DA) na walang inaasahang pagtaas ng presyo ng baboy sa kabila ng muling pagbangon ng mga kaso ng African swine fever (ASF) sa Batangas.

Ginawa ng DA ang pahayag matapos mag-ulat ang Batangas Provincial Veterinary Office ng mga kaso ng ASF sa Lobo, Lian, Rosario, Calatagan, at Lipa City.

Sa isang panayam, sinabi ni DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa na hindi dapat tumaas ang presyo ng mga retail dahil pangunahing kinukuha ang supply ng baboy sa Central Luzon.

“Hindi naman (tataas) kasi iyong Central Luzon naman is okay naman,” sabi ng opisyal.

Noong Agosto 2, ang presyo ng baboy sa Metro Manila ay mula P285 kada kilo hanggang P380/kg. ng pork ham (kasim); at P320/kg hanggang PHP400/kg para sa pork liempo.

Sa Calabarzon, sinabi ni de Mesa na ang muling pagkabuhay sa Batangas ay maaari lamang magdulot ng kaunting epekto sa suplay kung isasaalang-alang ang mas mataas na produksyon ng baboy sa Rizal.

Kaugnay nito sinabi ni De Mesa na ang tag-ulan ay nag-ambag sa mga ulat ng mga kaso ng ASF kasabay ng patuloy na paggalaw ng mga manlalakbay.

“Ang tubig ay pangunahing vector ng (ng) virus. So kapag may mga baha, mas mabilis kumalat ang virus, lalo na iyong (Water is the primary vector of virus. So, when there’s flood, virus spreads faster, especially the) ASF. Ito ay napatunayan nang maraming beses,” sabi niya.

Bukod sa mas mahigpit na biosecurity measures sa probinsya, binigyang-diin ni de Mesa ang pangangailangan ng mga bakuna para labanan ang ASF.

Nauna rito, kinumpirma ng DA ang plano nitong ilunsad ang mga bakuna na kontrolado ng gobyerno gamit ang mga AVAC live na bakuna mula sa Vietnam sa ikatlong quarter ng taon., kasunod ng pagpapalabas ng Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ng certificate of product registration (CPR). (*Santi Celario*)

<https://remate.ph/walang-taas-presyo-sa-baboy-sa-asf-sa-batangas-da/>