

CLIPPINGS FOR TODAY SEPTEMBER 11, 2024

A. MANILA BULLETIN:

Office of the President regains control over NIA

Delayed fisheries project raises red flag for World Bank

Strategic directions for Philippine Agriculture Part 2

B. THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Marcos orders NIA reorganization, return to OP

C. PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Redemption for Bureau of Customs

Nat'l Irrigation Administration now under Office of the President

DA expecting 440,000 ASF vaccines to arrive in Oct

Positive outlook for Philippine Palm Oil Industry at National Congress

NIA again under OP's supervision

D. BUSINESS WORLD:

Egg industry dev't program to feature storage projects

Clinical trials ongoing for ASF, bird flu vaccines

Farm damage from Enteng hits P2.2 billion

E. REMATE:

Kontrol sa NIA inilagay ni PBBM sa ilalim ng kanyang opisina

DA-BAI kinalampag sa FDA-approved ASF vaccine: '472 barangay apektado na'

Amyenda sa Agri Tariffication Act, aprubado sa Senado: 'P30B inilaan sa RCEF'

F. MANILA STANDARD:

Village folk show Cavite seafoods safe to eat

G. THE MANILA TIMES:

Marcos transfers NIA control to OP

H. MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT:

NIA reassigned to OP

I. BUSINESS MIRROR:

Marcos transfers NIA to Office of the President

FAO report highlights PHL banana export success and domestic production challenges

MANILA BULLETIN:

Office of the President regains control over NIA

BY [BETHEENA UNITE](#)

Sep 10, 2024 02:06 PM

President Marcos has transferred back the supervision of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) from the Department of Agriculture (DA) to the Office of the President (OP).



Upper Chico River Irrigation System in Tabuk City, Kalinga (File Photo courtesy of NIA)

Through Executive Order No. 69, Marcos moved NIA anew to his office and ordered its reorganization.

The NIA Board was reorganized and shall now be composed of a representative from the OP, NIA administrator, secretaries of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), DA, National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and a representative from the private sector who will be appointed by the President.

According to Marcos, it is imperative to streamline the functional relationships of agencies with complementary mandates in order to promote coordination, efficiency, and coherence.

"[I]rrigation management and development is vital towards achieving food security and ensuring infrastructure development in the country, which are among the Administration's priority initiatives," Marcos said in the EO.

"[I]t is imperative to streamline and rationalize the functional relationships of agencies with complementary mandates in order to promote coordination, efficiency, and coherence within the bureaucracy," the President added.

NIA, a government-owned or -controlled corporation (GOCC), was attached to the Office of the President "to investigate, study, improve and administer all national irrigation systems in the Philippines."

In 2022, EO No. 168 transferred the attachment of the NIA from OP to the DA, and directed the Governance Commission for GOCCs to study the reorganization of the NIA Board of Directors.

https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/10/office-of-the-president-regains-control-over-nia#google_vignette

MANILA BULLETIN:

Delayed fisheries project raises red flag for World Bank

BY [BEN ARNOLD DE VERA](#)

Sep 10, 2024 01:42 PM

The World Bank has flagged the delay in implementing the over one-year-old Philippine fisheries and coastal resiliency project (FishCoRe), for which the Marcos administration had borrowed \$176 million (over P9.9 billion).

"Despite the progress made, the project is still falling behind the overall implementation schedule," the Washington-based multilateral lender said in a Sept. 7 implementation status and results report.

The loan for this fisheries project was approved by the World Bank board in May of last year. The Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) is implementing the project from August 2023 to December 2029.

To date, \$29.7 million (nearly P1.7 billion), or 16.9 percent of the loan amount, has been disbursed.

The World Bank downgraded the project's overall implementation progress to "moderately satisfactory" from "satisfactory" previously.

Despite the lag in implementation, the World Bank said progress towards achieving its project development objective remained "satisfactory" to date. The overall risk rating was also maintained at "moderate."

The project's development objectives included managing the targeted fisheries resources while enhancing the value of fisheries production to coastal communities in the selected fisheries management areas (FMAs), the World Bank noted.

This project was expected to benefit 1.15 million fisherfolk, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and coastal community residents, the lender said last year.

During the first year of project implementation, the World Bank said key progresses were achieved, including: adoption of framework plans for FMAs 6 and 9; drafting of fishery management as well as national aquaculture development and management plans; updating of the fishery information management system (FIMS); as well as development and integration into FIMS of the aquaculture in fisheries geospatial information system, among others.

FMAs 6 and 9, which are the focus of this project, are located on the northwest Luzon coast and in the archipelagic waters between the Visayas and Mindanao, respectively.

Moving forward, the World Bank said it will "provide close support and training on fiduciary and ESF [environmental and social framework] requirements" while "(continuing) to leverage funding

to provide technical assistance, especially on TOR [terms of reference] and specification development."

This loan was among the six totaling \$2.3 billion that the Philippines borrowed from the World Bank during fiscal year 2023 covering July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

These six new loans obtained by the Marcos administration will be repaid during a period ranging between 2028 and 2052.

The Philippines was the World Bank's fifth-biggest borrower during the lender's 2023 fiscal year, which coincided with President Marcos' first full year in office.

The World Bank is currently crafting its lending plan for the Philippines for the years 2025 to 2028, during which the country will likely climb to upper middle-income status and gradually stop enjoying cheap loans extended by multilateral and bilateral lenders.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/10/delayed-fisheries-project-raises-red-flags-for-world-bank>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Strategic directions for Philippine agriculture

Part 2

BY [DR. BERNARDO VILLEGAS](#)

Sep 10, 2024 08:16 AM

The coconut sector should be the vanguard in the ambitious plan of the present Administration to improve the production and productivity of the entire agriculture sector. As reported by Julie Aurelio in a leading daily, while Indonesia is now the top producer of coconuts, producing an average of 17.06 million metric tons (MT) of coconuts from 2017 to 2022, the Philippines is still the top exporter in the world of this tree crop, accounting for \$3.2 billion, or 43 percent of the country's total agricultural exports in 2022. The Philippines has a total area of 3.6 million hectares planted to coconut trees, which is about 27 percent of total agricultural land. It is only logical that it should be in this large sector that we apply the four-fold strategies that can significantly lift the productivity of the primary sector. These four are farm consolidation, product diversification, digitalization, and industrialization.

It is a good sign that President BBM ordered the PCA to work with the Cooperative Development Authority to consolidate farmers' groups and associations to enable them to implement the massive planting and replanting program. A massive tree planting program needs economies of scale in both the implementation and the more important phase of maintenance and care of the seedlings. We should make the small coconut farmers working individually obsolete as soon as possible. There should be no "small coconut farmer" if we want significant improvements in productivity in this sector in the same way that we made the backyard banana or pineapple farmer relatively insignificant with the onset of the Del Montes and the Doles that made the Philippines a major force in the world in the export of these two products. We should benefit from economies of scale in cultivating the 3.6 million coconut farms by attaining sizes as large as 20,000 hectares per coconut commercial farm (in Malaysia, there are palm plantations that can average 100,000 hectares per plantation). This consolidation can be done, as already accomplished by such model coconut enterprises as Axelum in Misamis Oriental or Lionheart Farm in Palawan, through the forming of cooperatives (as President BBM proposed); or by resorting to the very successful nucleus estate model perfected in Malaysia in the palm oil industry in which the farmers can directly lease their farm holdings to a large commercial enterprise; or to work with the DENR to transform denuded forests or grasslands into coconut plantations.

Actually, some part of the 3.6 million hectares presently planted to coconuts can be shifted to other tree crops amenable to large-scale commercial farming like cacao, coffee, mangoes, durian, avocado and bamboos. We should remember that before the Second World War, we were among the largest exporters of coffee and cacao beans, especially from my home province, Batangas. I still remember how my mother used to sell "tablea" which she used to produce at home, starting with the beans, grounding them, all the way to the finished tablet. Unfortunately, because of the backyard approach to growing cacao, the small farmers were helpless in fighting the disease that wiped out both the cacao and coffee industries. It would have been different if these two products were grown in tandem with the equivalents of Del Monte and Dole in the pineapple and banana

sectors. The big businesses would have had the financial and technical wherewithal to fight the rust. That is why farm consolidation and product diversification should go together. Those Philippine conglomerates that are beginning to invest in large-scale agribusiness ventures like First Metro Pacific, DMCI, and Benguet Corporation, among others, are cognizant of the fact that there will be a surge in demand for high-value fruit products as more and more of the countries in the Indo-Pacific region transition to high-middle income and high-income economies. The composition of their consumer food basket will contain less carbohydrates and basic food products and more and more high-value fruits like mangoes, durian, and avocado, following the trajectory of bananas and pineapples in the last century. The Chinese, for example, have fallen in love with avocados. It is time we grow this fruit (and vegetable for some consumers), not in a backyard fashion, but in large commercial farms.

I am glad that there is already talk of product diversification that can accompany farm consolidation with the announcement by the Department of Agriculture that it would implement intercropping of coffee, cacao, and bananas while the coconut farmers are waiting for their coconut seedlings to grow and to bear fruit. This can also be applied to land planted in palays that may actually be marginal for rice because they are in mountainous areas or where water is scarce. These marginal lands for palay may be more suited to some of the tree crops mentioned above. This would be part of the product diversification strategy that can lead to larger exports since there are very high demands in China, Japan, and South Korea, not only for bananas and pineapples but also for fresh coconut juice, mangoes, avocado, durian, etc. It is product diversification that has enabled Thailand and Vietnam to reach export volumes of agribusiness products five times ours.

It is also in the larger commercial plantations in which agrarian farmer-beneficiaries can have double income from leasing their farms to the large agribusiness ventures and thus earn rental and at the same time have some members of their household receiving wages as workers in some phase or another of the coconut enterprise at the farming, logistics or manufacturing stages as are already a reality in Axelum and Lionheart Farm. Actually, to Chris Po, the CEO of Century Pacific, these are no longer theoretical possibilities but are already sources of profits because his company is already exporting the finished products of coconut water and other high-value manufactured coconut products from these large coconut enterprises.

Century Pacific typifies another strategic direction that has to be taken in our attaining food security: the industrialization of agriculture which means processing the raw materials we produce into finished products. The origin of Century Pacific was Century Can which processes the tuna caught in our seas into canned tuna. As much as possible, we should not export the raw materials from agriculture or aquaculture. We should add higher value to them by processing them into finished consumer products. For example, the move of the Lorenzo family to plant thousands of hectares of bamboo is geared towards processing bamboo into construction materials that can match the strength of steel as a building material. Once we can produce cacao beans large scale, we should no longer be limited to the likes of the Malagos, Auro, Hanan or Dalareich brands of chocolate candies in Davao and Bohol, which are still artisan products, but should aspire to mass manufacture high-quality chocolate candies that can compete with the Hersheys, Nestles and Cadburys of the world. Another example of industrializing agriculture is the coco chemical plant of D&L Industries in Tanauan, Batangas which processes coconut oil into finished pharmaceutical, cosmetic, or food products. It is no coincidence that more than 30 percent of Philippine manufacturing is accounted for by processed food and beverage products. With the rapidly

expanding domestic consumer market and the trend towards fruits and vegetable products as healthy sources of nutrition in developed countries, we can aspire to export more manufactured food and beverage products in the future. I am glad that there are forward people looking CEOs like Chris Po of Century Pacific who are ahead of the curve in this regard. It is also worth noting the strategic move of the First Metro Pacific group to purchase Carmen's Best from the Magsaysays and to valiantly enter the dairy industry in order to produce the fresh milk raw materials that they will process into ice cream. On the lighter side, Jovy Hernandez, CEO of Metro Pacific Agribusiness Venture, can count on the prayers of Pope Francis who seemed to have relished the salted caramel flavor of Carmen's Best when His Holiness visited us in 2013 at the height of Typhoon Yolanda. To be continued.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/10/strategic-directions-for-philippine-agriculture-part-2>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Marcos orders NIA reorganization, return to OP

[Helen Flores](#) - The Philippine Star

September 11, 2024 | 12:00am



President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on August 12, 2024.

STAR / Ryan Baldemor

MANILA, Philippines — President Marcos has placed the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) back in the Office of the President (OP) for closer management to boost agricultural production and ensure food security.

Executive Order 69, signed on Sept. 5 by Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin, transferred the NIA from the Department of Agriculture (DA) to the OP.

“It is imperative to streamline and rationalize the functional relationships of agencies with complementary mandates to promote coordination, efficiency and coherence within the bureaucracy,” the EO read.

EO 168, issued in April 2022, transferred NIA to the DA from the OP.

Meanwhile, Malacañang yesterday published Administrative Order 25, which added the DA and the Department of Education to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Board, chaired by Marcos.

The two agencies' inclusion as NEDA Board members "shall further integrate agriculture and education into broader socioeconomic policies, plans and programs," AO 25, signed on Sept. 5 by Bersamin, stated.

Meanwhile, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said EO 69 would be "game-changing" for the agriculture sector.

Transferring the NIA to OP, he said, would address the need for substantial funding to irrigate about 1.2 million hectares of land.

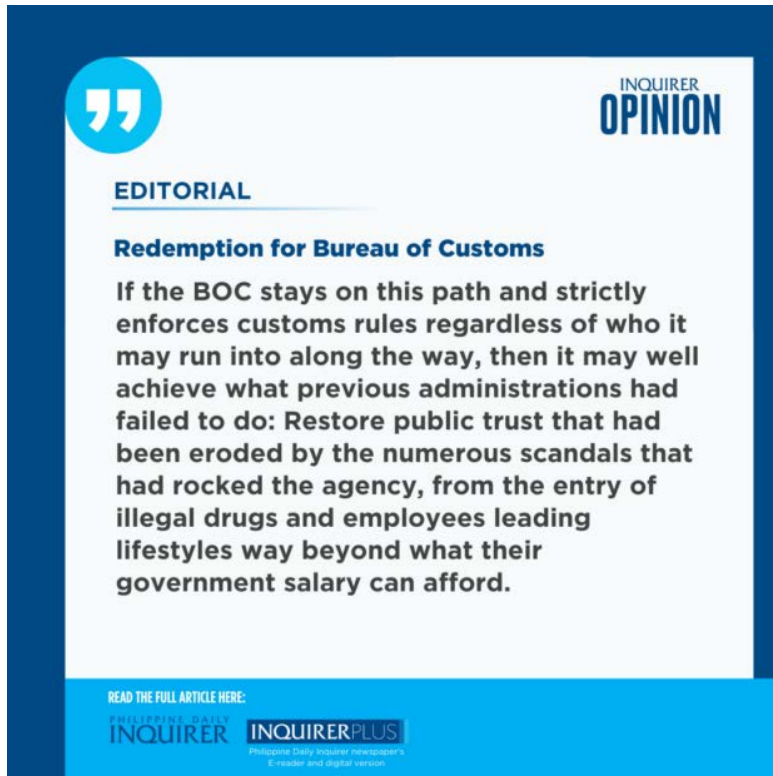
The DA's proposed 2025 budget amounted to P512 billion, but it was reduced to P200.2 billion by the Department of Budget and Management upon submission to Congress. — **Brix Lelis**

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/09/11/2384407/marcos-orders-nia-reorganization-return-op>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Redemption for Bureau of Customs

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 04:35 AM September 11, 2024



The graphic is a blue-bordered box with a white background. In the top left corner, there is a blue circle containing a white quotation mark icon. In the top right corner, the text 'INQUIRER OPINION' is displayed in blue, with 'INQUIRER' in a smaller font above 'OPINION'. Below this, the word 'EDITORIAL' is written in blue and underlined. The main title, 'Redemption for Bureau of Customs', is in bold black text. The body text, also in bold black, reads: 'If the BOC stays on this path and strictly enforces customs rules regardless of who it may run into along the way, then it may well achieve what previous administrations had failed to do: Restore public trust that had been eroded by the numerous scandals that had rocked the agency, from the entry of illegal drugs and employees leading lifestyles way beyond what their government salary can afford.' At the bottom left, it says 'READ THE FULL ARTICLE HERE:' followed by the 'PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER' logo and the 'INQUIRERPLUS' logo, which includes the text 'Philippine Daily Inquirer newspaper's E-reader and digital version'.

The Bureau of Customs (BOC) has been on a veritable winning streak of late, scoring major seizures of smuggled agricultural products and counterfeit items, fanning hopes that there is hope for the government agency that has become synonymous with widespread corruption.

Late last week, the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service-Manila International Container Port raided a warehouse in Binondo and seized some P4.8 billion worth of smuggled vapes and counterfeit products of such brands as Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Dior, Adidas, and Nike, as well as cosmetics and general merchandise such as school supplies bearing the popular Hello Kitty, Spider-Man, and Disney characters.

It was one of the biggest hauls this year for the BOC, which has a target to collect at least P939.69 billion revenue for 2024.

“As these groups and individuals become more brazen in their attempts to circumvent our laws, the more that our BOC personnel—from top to bottom—will find and prosecute them,” vowed BOC Commissioner Bienvenido Rubio.

Close collaboration

The BOC must do no less as smuggling causes extensive damage not just to the macroeconomy in terms of lost government revenues that would have gone to social development programs but also to consumers who may be buying toxic or unsafe materials as well as microentrepreneurs.

These range from the factory workers in garment companies that had been forced to close because they can no longer compete with artificially cheap imports to the farmers who are no longer willing to plant key crops because selling prices have been dragged down by smuggled items, ultimately rendering them uncompetitive.

It is thus encouraging that the BOC has been working closely together with the Department of Agriculture (DA) to clamp down particularly on the smuggling of agricultural products given the impact on farmers and fisherfolk.

That close collaboration has had some success, such as the seizure of P100 million worth of illegally imported agricultural products from an unregistered cold-storage warehouse in Kawit, Cavite, in June.

Four convictions

It also led to the interception in August at the Manila International Container Port of some 3,200 cartons of fresh oranges from Thailand worth P8.42 million that did not have the necessary clearance from the DA’s Bureau of Plant Industry and, after inspection, were deemed unsafe for human consumption.

These cases drive home the importance of heightened monitoring of the country's borders by the two agencies to ensure that unlawfully imported products that can harm the economy as well as consumers will not end up in the local markets.

In the first six months of 2024, the BOC reported that it conducted 257 seizure operations that secured P54.740 billion worth of smuggled goods.

Also, its legal department filed 24 criminal cases against those involved in smuggling operations in the first half. And more importantly, it was able to secure four convictions against those found violating the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act and other related customs laws.

These add to its accomplishments in 2023, when it revoked the accreditation of 118 importers and 46 customs brokers and filed 90 criminal cases before the Department of Justice against unscrupulous traders.

Numerous scandals

Heightened surveillance, active monitoring, plus strict adherence to collection guidelines that led to seizures of agricultural and nonagricultural products likewise helped the BOC exceed its revenue collection target for January to August, and putting the country on track to even exceeding the target this year by some P30 billion.

As of the end of August, the BOC collected a total of P614.781 billion, surpassing the target for the period of P609.592 billion by 0.9 percent, or P5.189 billion. This also beat the collection last year of P581.491 billion by 5.7 percent or P33.290 billion.

Clearly, BOC's strategies in valuing goods, and making the proper duty assessments to minimize underdeclaration, misclassification, and enhanced efficiency, transparency, and overall fiscal management have been paying off, helping make the case for their increased budget for 2025.

It has proposed a budget of P5.66 billion, which the Department of Finance said was a “meager amount” compared to its target collection next year of P1.06 trillion, while reinforcing its role as “a guardian of the nation’s economic interests.”

Given what it has so far accomplished under the term of President Marcos, there is a good chance that the BOC will be able to secure its budget.

But more than that, if it stays on this path and strictly enforces customs rules regardless of who it may run into along the way, then it may well achieve what previous administrations had failed to do: Restore public trust that had been eroded by the numerous scandals that had rocked the agency, from the entry of illegal drugs and employees leading lifestyles way beyond what their government salary can afford.

Indeed, there may be redemption yet for the much-maligned BOC.

[https://opinion.inquirer.net/176736/redemption-for-bureau-of-customs?utm_source=\(direct\)&utm_medium=gallery](https://opinion.inquirer.net/176736/redemption-for-bureau-of-customs?utm_source=(direct)&utm_medium=gallery)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Nat'l Irrigation Administration now under Office of the President

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

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 11:50 AM September 10, 2024



MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand “Bongbong” R. Marcos Jr. ordered the transfer of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) to the Office of the President (OP) as an attached agency.

Under Executive Order No. 69, signed by Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin on Sept. 5, the NIA was brought back as an attached agency of the OP.

“Irrigation management and development [are] vital towards achieving food security and ensuring infrastructure development in the country, which are among the Administration’s priority initiatives,” the EO read.

“It is imperative to streamline and rationalize the functional relationships of agencies with complementary mandates in order to promote coordination, efficiency, and coherence within the bureaucracy,” it added.

“The NIA is hereby attached to the OP for policy and program coordination,” the order further read.

Meanwhile, Marcos also ordered the reorganization of the NIA Board, which will now be composed of the following:

- **Representative from the Office of the President**

- **Administrator, NIA**
- **Secretary, Department of Public Works and Highways**
- **Secretary, Department of Agriculture**
- **Secretary, National Economic and Development Authority**
- **Representative from the private sector to be appointed by the President.**

Before the order, the NIA was an [attached agency of the Department of Agriculture](#) under EO No. 168 (S. 2022).

With EO No. 69, EO No. 168, and “all other issuances, orders, rules, and regulations, or parts thereof that are inconsistent with this Order are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.”

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1981744/fwd-marcos-transfers-nia-to-op>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA expecting 440,000 ASF vaccines to arrive in Oct

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 02:12 PM September 10, 2024



PHOTO FROM AFP/INQUIRER FILES

The remainder of the 600,000 doses of African swine fever (ASF) vaccines purchased from Vietnam is expected to be delivered within October, according to an official of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

So far, the country has received an initial 10,000 doses of live vaccines purchased via emergency procurement. These were administered to select hogs in Lobo town in Batangas province, the ground zero of ASF resurgence, last Aug. 30.

Another 150,000 doses also arrived in the country recently, said Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel De Mesa, who is also the DA's spokesperson.

“We expect [the additional 440,000] doses to be released within October to continue our vaccination efforts under the monitored release of the Food and Drug Administration,” he said in a radio interview with dzRH over the weekend.

“Upon securing the necessary approval, we can expect the commercial release of vaccines from AVAC Vietnam so that these can be easily accessed by our commercial, semi-commercial and small-hold farmers,” he said in Filipino.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Constante Palabrica had said inoculated pigs in Lobo were being monitored to observe their conditions.

He said blood samples would be drawn from the hogs on the 14th day after vaccination to analyze whether they have produced antibodies to fight the virus.

Other manufacturers from the United States, South Korea, Vietnam and Thailand were seeking approvals to supply vaccines.

Losses at P100B

The DA carried out the controlled vaccine administration five years after recording the country’s first ASF outbreak, which resulted in the death of millions of hogs and losses in the billions of pesos.

The estimated industry-wide losses due to ASF were at least P100 billion. Meanwhile, the country’s total swine inventory dipped by 2.1 percent to 9.86 million heads as of September last year, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority.

ASF is a severe viral disease affecting domestic and wild pigs, according to the World Organization for Animal Health.

This highly contagious hemorrhagic viral disease does not pose a risk to human health, but it can destroy livestock production, leading to economic losses.

Apart from vaccinations, the DA is also putting up checkpoints in the northern and southern parts of the National Capital Region to minimize the spread of ASF. It has also approved higher indemnification for growers regardless of hog size.

Based on the Bureau of Plant Industry’s tally, there are active ASF cases in 15 regions, 32 provinces and 115 municipalities as of Aug. 21. **INQ**

<https://business.inquirer.net/479355/da-expecting-440000-asf-vaccines-to-arrive-in-oct>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Positive outlook for Philippine Palm Oil Industry at National Congress

[INQUIRER.net BrandRoom](#) / 11:44 AM September 10, 2024

The recently concluded National Palm Oil Congress in Davao City highlighted an optimistic future for the Philippine palm oil industry. Ares Merchants Philippines Inc. (AMPI), a leading supplier of vegetable oils in the country, observed significant improvements in local palm oil production and anticipated further growth.

AMPI Managing Director Jose Leonardo Tanada noted, “Strong global demand for our locally produced coconut oil in the EU has created a gap in the local vegetable oil market. Palm Olein is the most economical substitute.” He also expressed optimism about the industry’s expansion, citing an annual increase of 2,500-5,000 hectares in oil palm cultivation. “This growth will help address the underutilized capacity of our oil palm manufacturers,” Tanada added.



From right: Jerry Taray, CEO of Kilambay Plantation Corp.; Erwin Garcia, President of AC Garcia Palm Oil Corp.; Dr. Dexter Buted, PCA Administrator; Gov. Emmylou Mendoza of North Cotabato Province; Harry Brock, CEO of Univanich Carmen; Yap Yau Kang, AC Garcia Consultant; Ryan Talino, Univanich Partner; Jose Leonardo Tanada, Managing Director of Ares Merchants Philippines, Inc.; and Dante Abad, AVP of Landbank, at the 13th National Palm Oil Congress held in Davao City on August 14-15, 2024.

According to the Department of Agriculture’s (DA) Philippine Palm Oil Industry Roadmap 2024-2033, production is on the rise. The area planted with palm oil has grown from around 53,000 hectares in 2022 to approximately 63,000 hectares in 2023,

as reported by the Philippine Statistics Authority. Region XII leads in production with 33% of the total area, followed by the Caraga Region with 27%.

Tanada emphasized the need for ongoing government support to sustain industry growth until farmers can achieve profitability. “Under optimal conditions, oil palm plantations start producing fruit after 3-4 years and continue for 25 years. The PCA and private entities should provide financial support during this gestation period,” he explained.

Tanada also highlighted the importance of balancing domestic production with palm oil imports. Despite increased local production, the Philippines remains a significant importer relative to its output. “Encouraging local production creates jobs for Filipinos, but imports are crucial to prevent hoarding and mitigate potential inflationary issues for the country,” Tanada said.

Industry experts have identified about one million hectares available for oil palm cultivation, with 98% located in Mindanao. Caraga alone holds approximately 40% of the total prospective area for palm oil production. The Philippines currently faces a surplus in milling capacity, with current production at only around 180 metric tons per hour compared to the total capacity of 275 metric tons per hour. Industry stakeholders hope that the growing production of oil palm fruits will soon be able to support and fully utilize these facilities.

ADVT.

This article is brought to you by GreatBuzz General Services Ltd Co.

<https://globalnation.inquirer.net/248662/positive-outlook-for-philippine-palm-oil-industry-at-national-congress>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

NIA again under OP's supervision

By: [Julie M. Aurelio](#) - Reporter / [@JMAurelioINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:00 AM September 11, 2024

MANILA, Philippines — President Marcos has reverted supervision of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) to the Office of the President (OP) to better improve food security and infrastructure development. NIA again under OP's supervision

In Executive Order No. 69 dated Sept. 5, the President also reorganized the board of directors of the agency, which used to be under the Department of Agriculture (DA).

“Irrigation management and development is vital toward achieving food security and ensuring infrastructure development in the country, which are among the administration’s priority measures,” Marcos said.

He added: “It is imperative to streamline and rationalize the functional relationships of agencies with complementary mandates in order to promote coordination, efficiency and coherence within the bureaucracy.” Created in 1963 through Republic Act No. 3601, NIA was originally a government-owned and -controlled corporation attached to OP to investigate, study, improve and administrate all national irrigation systems.

In 2022, then President Rodrigo Duterte issued EO 168, which transferred NIA supervision to DA.

EO 69 also reorganized the NIA’s board of directors to include representatives from OP and the private sector, the NIA administrator and secretaries of the Department of Public Works and Highways, DA and National Economic and Development Authority.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1982039/nia-again-under-ops-supervision>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Egg industry dev't program to feature storage projects

September 10, 2024 | 8:35 pm



THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said it will pursue storage, processing, marketing, and waste management projects for the egg industry.

“The Egg Industry Development Project (EIDP) is aimed at sustaining the growth of the egg industry by providing support for modernization; overcoming challenges in the egg sector; and ensuring biosecurity and availability of healthy eggs,” the DA said in a memorandum circular.

The DA said eligible beneficiaries for cold and dry egg warehouses are Farmer’ Cooperatives and Associations (FCAs) located in major producing regions with experience in executing such projects. Funding of P50 million may be granted.

Eligible FCAs seeking to establish an egg processing facility may be allocated between P5 million and P50 million.

FCAs and local government units (LGUs) in major producing regions may also be granted up to P30 million in market support for small-scale egg producers. The uses for such funds include delivery vehicles and other logistics items.

Eligible FCAs are those that can assist poultry farmers in waste management and are endorsed by LGUs.

The projects will be overseen by the Livestock Locally Funded Project Steering Committee and supported by DA livestock agencies and regional field offices.

The program's technical working group will review and evaluate proposals for facilities.

“To ensure sustainability, DA shall lead the promotion of the egg products and crafting of an inter-agency agreement with the various government agencies, LGUs and relevant stakeholders to utilize eggs in feeding programs and calamity programs,” the DA said.

It added that program participants will have access to the KADIWA store network. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/10/620597/egg-industry-devt-program-to-feature-storage-projects/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Clinical trials ongoing for ASF, bird flu vaccines

September 9, 2024 | 8:01 pm



PEXELS-BARBARA BARBOSA

THE Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said four African Swine Fever (ASF) and three avian influenza vaccine manufacturers have submitted their products for trials.

“They have not yet submitted their application to us... they have been undergoing clinical trials,” FDA Director General Samuel A. Zacate said in Senate hearing on Monday.

The vaccine manufacturers undergoing trials are from Thailand, the US, and Vietnam, according to Agriculture Assistant Secretary for Poultry and Swine Constance J. Palabrica.

The FDA has so far only approved the AVAC ASF vaccine from Vietnam for a limited government-controlled rollout. It had issued a Certificate of Product Registration, valid for two years and subject to monitoring and annual evaluations.

“The applicant has undergone trial for almost a year... (Certificate of Product Registration) imposes a condition on the market authorization holder to be complied every year. This is an additional layer of protection for our hog farmers,” Mr. Zacate added.

Additionally, the Department of Agriculture (DA) cleared the commercial use of the avian flu vaccine, with priority given to commercial farms. There is no approved bird flu vaccine in the country.

The DA allocated P350 million mostly to procure 600,000 doses for the hog farmers initially targeted. The rollout started on Aug. 30 in Lobo, Batangas.

“The first wave, which is 10,000 doses, was issued... was from emergency procurement. We would like to reduce the infection pressure on Batangas,” Mr. Palabrica added.

He said the initial doses will run out by the end of September, and will be followed by another 150,000 doses.

Separately, Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said that the DA is seeking to expand its controlled ASF vaccine rollout to other parts of Luzon, as well as red zones in the Visayas and Mindanao.

“We will cast a wider net to include La Union, Quezon, Mindoro, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, and Cebu in the BAI’s controlled testing of the initial 150,000 doses of ASF vaccines we have imported from Vietnam,” Mr. Laurel said in a statement.

He added that commercial pig farms located in active infection zones will also receive the ASF vaccines.

“Our goal is to ensure a steady supply of pork in the market and stabilize prices,” he said.

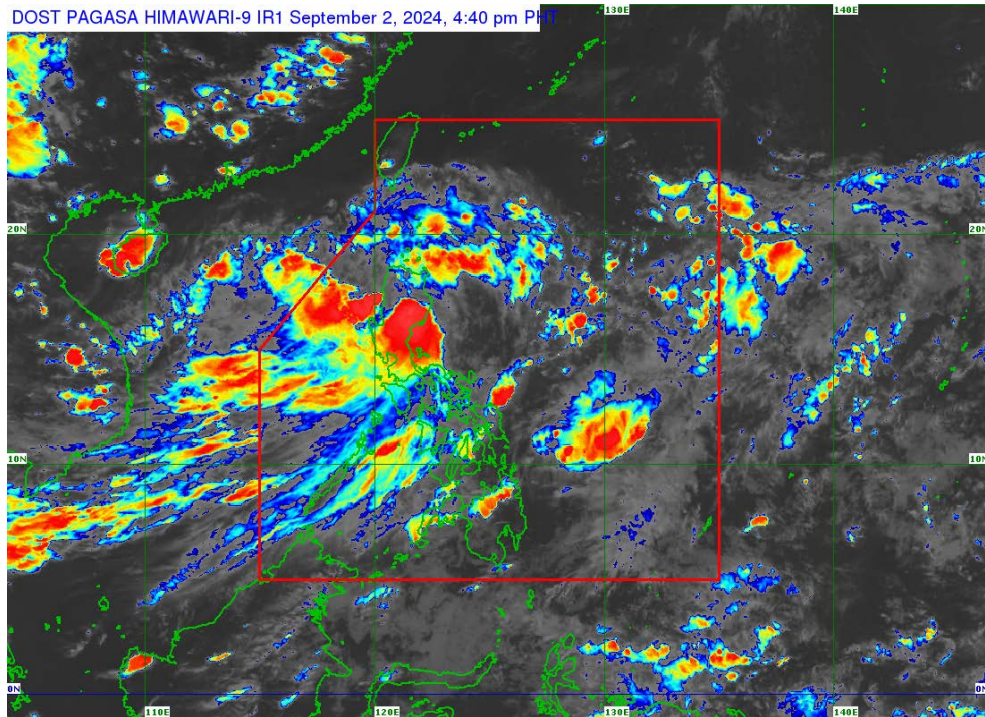
As of Sept. 6, there were 109 municipalities in 31 provinces that had active cases of ASF, according to the BAI. ASF was first detected in the Philippines in 2019. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/09/620263/clinical-trials-ongoing-for-asf-bird-flu-vaccines/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Farm damage from Enteng hits P2.2 billion

September 9, 2024 | 8:01 pm



PAGASA.DOST.GOV.PH

AGRICULTURAL DAMAGE caused by Severe Tropical Storm Enteng (international name: Yagi) was estimated at P2.2 billion, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said.

In a bulletin posted on Monday, the DA said some 59,669 farmers and fisherfolk were affected by the storm.

Crop losses totaled 51,728 metric tons (MT) across 37,471 hectares of farmland.

More than half of damage was to the rice crop, which accounted for 48.9% of the total.

Rice losses amounted to 48,646 MT, valued at P1.11 billion, with the damage spanning 34,935 hectares.

Most of the damaged rice was in the reproductive and maturing stages, the DA said.

The most affected provinces were Camarines Sur, Pampanga, Bulacan, Camarines Norte, and Nueva Ecija.

Damage to irrigation facilities was tallied at P1.08 billion, or 47.9% of the overall damage.

“Most of the damaged irrigation facilities are National Irrigation Systems or Communal Irrigation Systems,” it said.

The DA valued corn losses at P46.22 million, with volume estimated at 2,434 MT.

Damage to high-value crops was P26.6 million, including lowland vegetables and bananas.

It added that damage to cassava crops was P1.98 million with volume lost at 101 MT. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/09/620261/farm-damage-from-enteng-hits-p2-2-billion/>

REMATE:

Kontrol sa NIA inilagay ni PBBM sa ilalim ng kanyang opisina

September 10, 2024 18:33



NAGPALABAS si Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. ng executive order (EO) na magbabalik sa superbisyon o pangangagsiwa ng National Irrigation Administration's (NIA) sa Office of the President (OP) mula sa Department of Agriculture (DA) at muling ayusin ang korporasyon ng Board of Directors nito.

Sa ilalim ng EO 69, tinintahan ni Pangulong Marcos nito lamang Setyembre 5 at isinapubliko araw ng Martes ang NIA's attachment ay ibinaba sa OP "for policy and program coordination."

Matatandaang ang EO 168 ay ipinalabas noong 2022, inilagay ang NIA sa ilalim ng superbisyon ng DA.

“Irrigation management and development is vital towards achieving food security and ensuring infrastructure development in the country, which are among the Administration’s priority initiatives,” ayon sa EO 69.

“It is imperative to streamline and rationalize the functional relationships of agencies with complementary mandates, in order to promote coordination, efficiency, and coherence within the bureaucracy,” ayon pa rin sa EO.

Aayusin din ng EO 69, ang NIA Board ngayon ay bubuuin ng kinatawan mula sa OP; NIA administrator; mga Kalihim ng DA, Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), at National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA); at kinatawan ng pribadong sektor na itinalaga ni Pangulong Marcos.

Nakasaad sa bagong EO, ang eleksyon, appointment, o designation ng chairperson, vice chairperson, at iba pang opisyal ng Board of Directors ay dapat ba alinsunod sa Republic Act (RA) 10149 o ng Governance Commission for Government-Owned or -Controlled Corporations (GOCC) Governance Act of 2011.

Bago pa ipalabas ang EO 69, ang DA secretary ang tatayong chairman ng NIA Board of Directors, habang ang NIA administrator naman ang magsisilbi bilang vice chairperson.

Kabilang din bilang ibang miyembro ay ang DPWH, NEDA, National Power Corp. (Napocor), at kinatawan ng pribadong sektor kinatawan ng rice at corn industry.

Sa pamamagitan ng bagong EO alisin nito ang Napocor bilang board member.

Ang EO 69 ay kaagad na magiging epektibo. *Kris Jose*

<https://remate.ph/kontrol-sa-nia-inilagay-ni-pbbm-sa-ilalim-ng-kanyang-opisina/>

REMATE:

DA-BAI kinalampag sa FDA-approved ASF vaccine: ‘472 barangay apektado na’

September 10, 2024 18:21



Matinding kinalampag ng dalawang mambabatas ang Department of Agriculture – Bureau of Animal Industry (DA-BAI) sa pagkakaroon ng aprubadong bakuna ng Food and Drug Administration (FDA) upang sugpuin ang kumakalat na African Swine Fever (ASF) outbreak.

Sa ginanap na pagdinig ng Senate committee on agriculture and food security, nagpahayag ng pagkadismaya sina Senador Cynthia Villar at Majority Leader Francis Tolentino sa mabagal, mahina at kapos na scientific response DA-BAI laban sa ASF na nananalasa sa swine industry.

Nagsagawa ng imbestigasyon ang komite base sa Senate Resolution No. 565 na inihain ni Tolentino bunsod ng pagkakalat ng ASF sa mahigit 472 barangay sa buong kapuluan.

“The public hearing brought together key stakeholders from the agriculture sector—government agencies, mayors of affected municipalities, private sector, and affected farmers—to discuss urgent measures aimed at halting the spread of the disease,” ani Villar.

Binigyan diin ni Villar ang matinding pangangailangan sa bakuna bilang long-term solution sa epekto ng ASF.

“The ASF, a highly contagious and fatal viral disease affecting domestic hogs, was first confirmed in the Philippines in 2019. Five (5) years have passed and it continuously plagues the swine industry, causing severe losses in hog populations,” sabi pa ni Villar.” chairperson ng Senate committee on Agriculture and Food.

“The ASF outbreak in Lobo, Batangas was first reported on July 16, 2024. In August 2024, Lobo, Batangas, was placed under a state of calamity due to ASF, hitting 108 out of 606 barangays, resulting in hog mortality of more than 15,000 hogs,” dagdag pa ng senador.

Base sa BAI-National ASF Prevention and Control Program, ngayong September 2024, may 472 barangays sa 14 rehiyon ang ikikonsiderang red zone” dahil sa pinakamataas na bilang ng apektadong barangay.

Ang mgs ito ay ang North Cotabato na may 108 kaso, Batangas- 96, at Quezon -91.

“The spread of ASF could have been mitigated if the country had implemented a first border control system. Additionally, it was highlighted that the availability of FDA-approved vaccines for hogs could have played a crucial role in preventing the outbreak,” paliwanag ni Villar.

Inihayag ng FDA na kailangang sumailalim ang bakuna sa clinical testing para magkaroon ng Certificate of Product Registration (CPR).

Nararapat din aniyang sumailalim ito sa clinical testing para tiyakin ang kaligtasan at pagiging epekribo ng bakuna.

Sinabi ni Dr. Samuel Zacate, Director General ng FDA, na sa ngayon, may apat na bakuna para sa ASF ang sumasailalim sa local clinical trials.

Binanggit ni Villar sa BAI na nagkaroon ng pagdinig sa ASF noong October 25, 2023 kung saan iginiit ang kahalagahan ng clinical trial sa ASF vaccine.

Inatasan din niya ang DA na magsumite sa katapusan ng Oktubre ng resulta ng kanilang government-controlled field testing sa Batangas na magtatapos sa September. Ernie Reyes

<https://remate.ph/da-bai-kinalampag-sa-fda-approved-asf-vaccine-472-barangay-apektado-na/>

REMATE:

Amyenda sa Agri Tariffication Act, aprubado sa Senado: ‘P30B inilaan sa RCEF’

September 10, 2024 14:47



Inaprubahan ng Senado sa ikatlo ang huling pagbasa nitong Lunes ang panukalang batas upang aamendahan ang Republic Act 8178 o ang Agricultural Tariffication Act na pangunahing inawtor ni Senador Cynthia Villar.

Sa botong 23-0-0 votes, layunin ng Senate Bill 2779 na aamendahan ang Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) sa pagpapalawig nito hanggang 2031 at itaas ang taunang badyet mula sa dating P10 bilyon tungo sa P30 bilyon kada taon.

“The P30 billion will be used to fund farm machinery and equipment; propagation, distribution and promotion of high quality inbred rice seed; financial assistance to farmers and their training; and irrigation and composting facilities projects,” ayon kay Villar, sponsor ng panukala.

Ikinatuwa naman ni Villar ang mabilisang pagkilos ng Mataas na Kapulungan dahil palalawakin ng panukala ang sakop at benepisyong makukuha ng magsasaka kada taon.

“I am very happy for the passing of the extension of the RTL in the Senate, which will provide for expanded scope and benefits for our rice farmers in the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) and will allow more farmers cooperatives and associations to be served for them to be able to provide affordable rice to our consumers in the next six years,” ayon kay Villar.

Sa kanyang interpelasyon, sinabi ni Senador Risa Hontiveros na kapag itinaas sa halagang P30 bilyon ang pondo, magsisilbi itong “necessary antidote” kapag ibinaba ang taripa sa inaangkat na bigas.

Ibinaba ng Executive Order No. 62 ang tariff rate na ipinapatong sa pag-aangkat ng bigas mula sa dating 35% tungo sa 15% hanggang 2028.

Nakatakda din sa panukala na inatasan ang Congressional Oversight Committee on Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization (COCAFAM) na magsagawa ng periodic review sa RCEF.

Inatasan din ng batas ang Philippine Institute for Development na magsagawa ng independent mid-term at end-term evaluation sa panukala upang tasahin ang pagiging epektibo nito at magsumite ng resulta sa COCAFAM.

Nakalagay din sa batas ang probisyon na inatasan ang Department of Agriculture (DA) Bureau of Plant Industry na magsagawa ng regular inspections at mangolekta ng dato sa lahat ng grain warehouses.

Binigyan ng kapangyarihan ng batas ang DA secretary na magdeklara ng isang food security emergency sanhi ng kakapusan ng suplay ng bigas o di maipaliwanag na pagtaas ng halaga ng butil.

May kapangyarihan din ang Pangulo na ihinto o ipagbawal ang importasyon o itakda ang dami ng aangat kapag mas marami ang suplay sa inangat at inani na bigas na itinitinda sa pamilihan sa loob ng espisipikong panahon at dami.

Inatasan din ng batas ang National Food Authority na i-dispose ang lumang buffer stock isang buwan bago mapaso ang butil. *Ernie Reyes*

<https://remate.ph/amyenda-sa-agri-tariffication-act-aprubado-sa-senado-p30b-inilaan-sa-rcef/>

MANILA STANDARD

Village folk show Cavite seafoods safe to eat



BOODLE FIGHT. Shoreline residents of Rosario, Cavite led by Vice Mayor Bamm Gonzales engage in a boodle fight over seafood delicacies to prove to all and sundry that marine lives caught in their sea waters are free from oil slick contamination and therefore, safe to eat. Dennis Abrina

By Dennis Abrina

September 10, 2024, 10:30 pm

ROSARIO, Cavite—To prove that seafoods from Cavite's coastal waters are safe to eat, a boodle fight was held Tuesday at a fishport here locally called Pandawan in Barangay Kanluran, with the participation of various fishermen's associations, an organization of fish traders, barangay leaders, and local government officials.

It may be recalled that recently the towns and cities along the bay area of the province including Rosario was affected by the oil spill from the sunken MT Terra Nova last July 24, followed by the collision of two barges at the port at the height of typhoon Enteng.

Rosario Vice-Mayor Bamm Gonzales led the boodle fight to manifest support for his constituents and prove that seafoods from Rosario are safe to eat.

The exercise was meant is to strengthen interactive economic relations among the local residents. Seafood dishes were served including fried tilapia, tuna belly, pickled tulingan, shrimps, crabs, mussels, and various varieties of fish cooked differently.

Miguel Concha, chairman of the Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council, also shared their organization's assurance that seafood products in the locality are safe.

Rosario Fishport is known as the largest fish trading center in the province, famous for its smoked sardines or "Tinapang Salinas."

<https://www.manilastandard.net/news/314495790/village-folk-show-cavite-seafoods-safe-to-eat.html>

Marcos transfers NIA control to OP

By Kristina Maralit

September 11, 2024

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. issued an executive order transferring to the Office of the President (OP) the control of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) from the Department of Agriculture (DA), Malacañang said on Tuesday. Signed by Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin on behalf of the President last September 5, Executive Order (EO) 69 reverts NIA as an attached agency of the OP.

"Irrigation management and development [are] vital towards achieving food security and ensuring infrastructure development in the country, which are among the Administration's priority initiatives," part of the circular reads.

"It is imperative to streamline and rationalize the functional relationships of agencies with complementary mandates in order to promote coordination, efficiency, and coherence within the bureaucracy. The NIA is hereby attached to the OP for policy and program coordination," it added. EO 69 likewise orders the reorganization of the NIA Board, which will now be composed of the following: Representative from the Office of the President; Administrator, NIA; Secretary, Department of Public Works and Highways; Secretary, Department of Agriculture; Secretary, National Economic and Development Authority; and Representative from the private sector to be appointed by the President.

The order shall take effect immediately.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/09/11/news/national/marcos-transfers-nia-control-to-op/1970514>

NIA reassigned to OP

By **Jocelyn Montemayor**

September 11, 2024

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has returned the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) to the Office of the President to strengthen the food security program and infrastructure development in the country.

Through Executive Order (EO) 69 that was signed on September 5, Marcos also reorganized the NIA board of directors which is composed of a representative from the Office of the President (OP), the NIA administrator and the secretaries of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Agriculture (DA) and National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA).

A representative from the private sector to be appointed by the President would also be included in the board.

EO 69 said the election, appointment or designation of the chairperson, vice chairperson and other officers of the board shall be in accordance with Republic Act (RA) 10149, the GOCC Governance Act of 2011.

In reverting NIA back to the OP, Marcos said “irrigation management and development is vital towards achieving food security and ensuring infrastructure development in the country, which are among the Administration’s priority initiatives.”

It is imperative to streamline and rationalize the functional relationships of agencies with complementary mandates to promote coordination, efficiency and coherence within the bureaucracy, he added.

NIA is a government-owned or -controlled corporation that was created through RA 3601 in 1963 to investigate, study, improve and administer all national irrigation systems in the Philippines.

In 1992, through Administrative Order (AO) No. 17, NIA was transferred to DA, then reverted back to OP in 2014 through EO 165.

NIA was again placed under DA in 2022 through EO 168.

The issuance of EO 69 repeals EO 168.

DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said this is a “strategic move” in realizing the vision for a modern and more productive farm sector.

Tiu Laurel said NIA’s transfer to the OP will address the urgent need for substantial funding to irrigate approximately 1.2 million hectares of land. The initiative is expected to significantly enhance food production, particularly rice, thereby bolstering the country’s food security and reducing dependence on imports.

“Under normal circumstances, NIA should be under the DA. However, given the urgent need to irrigate over a million hectares of land to boost agricultural productivity, especially for rice, President Marcos made a strategic—possibly a game-changing—move that would ensure that NIA receives the substantial funding necessary to fulfill this crucial mandate swiftly,” Secretary Tiu Laurel said.

The DA has proposed a budget of P512 billion for 2025, which includes higher budget to bankroll more irrigation projects. However, the proposal approved by the Department of Budget and Management and submitted to Congress was for a reduced amount of P200.2 billion. By transferring NIA to the OP, the government aims to mobilize additional funds to accelerate irrigation projects and improve agricultural outcomes.

Meanwhile, the President, through AO 25 that was also signed on September 5, also formally approved the reorganization of the NEDA Board which now includes the secretaries of the DA and Department of Education (DepEd).

The NEDA Board shall now be composed of the President as chairperson, NEDA secretary as vice chairperson, and the Executive Secretary and Special Assistant to the President for Investment and Economic Affairs as members.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/nia-reassigned-to-op/

Marcos transfers NIA to Office of the President

Ada Pelonia

September 10, 2024



PRESIDENT Marcos transferred the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) from the Department of Agriculture (DA) to the Office of the President.

Executive Order 69 that mandated the transfer explained that there is a need to “streamline and rationalize the functional relationships of agencies with complementary mandates” to promote coordination, efficiency, and coherence within the bureaucracy.

The NIA would be attached to the OP for policy and program coordination. The NIA Board would also be reorganized under the order.

EO 69 said that the NIA Board would now be composed of the following: a representative of the OP; NIA Administrator, Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary; Agriculture Secretary; National Economic and Development (Neda) Secretary, and a representative from the private sector to be appointed by the President.

“Irrigation management and development is vital towards achieving food security and ensuring infrastructure development in the country, which are among the administration’s priority initiatives,” the order read.

In 2022, EO 168 transferred the NIA from the OP to the DA, directing the governance Commission for GOCCs to study the reorganization of the NIA Board of Directors.

Dam projects

IN March, NIA said four new high dams are set to be built until 2028 to help secure the country’s water needs and address flood control needs. (See: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/03/28/government-to-build-4-new-high-water-dams-nia/>)

NIA Administrator Eddie G. Guillen said the dams will be built in the Tumauni River, Panay River Basin, Ilocos Sur, and in Mindanao in line with the instruction of the President.

“Because as he said, if you have a high dam, you have irrigation, flood control, power generation, domestic water and aquaculture. So what more can you ask for? You will get many returns if it is a high dam! So this is the focus of the President,” Guillen said.

Based on NIA standards, he said high dams have a height of 100 meters.

Guillen noted that at least 20 high and medium-sized dams are expected to be completed by 2028. Ten of these will start construction this year.

Among those pending completion are dams that have been subjected to a catch-up plan through their design and build manual. These dams, the NIA official said, are scheduled to be finished this year.

“Our design and build manual shortened the implementation of the dam from conception to actual construction by three years,” Guillen said.

Aside from building new dams, he said the government is also targeting to rehabilitate major dams such as Magat and Pantabangan, which have existed for half a century.

Image credits: Screenshot from RTVM

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/10/marcos-transfers-nia-to-office-of-the-president/>

FAO report highlights PHL banana export success and domestic production challenges

BusinessMirror Editorial
September 11, 2024

According to a report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Cavendish bananas produced by the Philippines remain the preferred choice among its Asian neighbors. In its “Banana Market Review 2023,” FAO said the Philippines supplied some 60 percent of Asia’s requirement for Cavendish bananas (See, “FAO: Disease, logistics issues cut PHL banana exports,” BusinessMirror, July 29, 2024). The country remains as one of the world’s largest exporters of the yellow fruit, despite losing its number two rank to Guatemala last year.

Bananas remained in high demand due to their affordability. The UN agency noted that global exports of bananas, excluding plantain, grew by 0.3 percent year-on-year to 19.3 million metric tons (MMT) in 2023, a positive performance compared with the 6 percent year-on-year decline in 2022. The world will continue consuming the fruit in huge quantities in the coming years, with the global banana industry expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate of 4.5 percent between 2022 and 2027, according to market intelligence firm Mordor Intelligence.

Although this forecast is favorable for the Philippine banana industry, the country may not be able to capitalize on export market opportunities unless it resolves the challenges faced by local producers. Efforts of the government to open up new markets are encouraging and the increase in the banana purchases of nontraditional buyers last year give exporters the hope that they will continue to earn more from the yellow fruit. However, a detail in the report released by FAO is worrisome and should be given due attention by policymakers.

The FAO report noted that “higher growth in quantities was hindered by a reduced availability of export supplies from key producing countries, especially from Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and, during the first nine months of the year, also the Philippines.” China, the European Union, Japan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, which account for around 50 percent of global imports,

received fewer supplies last year. More customers wanted to buy Philippine bananas in 2023, but there were fewer fruits available.

Citing official government data, FAO said that Philippine banana exports rose by 3.4 percent year-on-year to 2.3 MMT. The volume of shipments would have been higher had it not been for Fusarium wilt Tropical Race 4 (TR4), which affected as much as 18,000 hectares of plantations last year. The affected areas represent around 20 percent of the estimated 86,000 hectares of farms planted with Cavendish for export.

The race to reduce tariffs in major importing countries like South Korea should be complemented by the rollout of initiatives that aim to make banana production more efficient and cost-effective. The Department of Agriculture crafted a roadmap for the banana industry during the term of former President Duterte. Policymakers should reassess this matter and carefully identify which interventions they should actively pursue to assist the industry, especially small-scale growers, in combating pests and diseases and lowering production costs.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/11/fao-report-highlights-phl-banana-export-success-and-domestic-production-challenges/>