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MANILA BULLETIN:

SEC explores revival of futures market

BY JAMES A. LOYOLA

Sep 30, 2024 05:19 PM

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is exploring the revival of a futures market in the Philippines decades after a commodity and currency futures bourse was shut down due to irregularities.

In a statement, the SEC said it is looking to develop a futures market to expand options for investors and further deepen the capital market.

In preparation for the possible establishment of a domestic derivatives market, the SEC conducted a Derivative Market Oversight and Regulatory Scheme Training with the United States Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), last August 12 to 16.

The CFTC, represented by Deputy Director Kevin C. Piccoli during the workshop, is an American independent federal agency that regulates the derivatives markets, with a robust international technical assistance program that aims to guide countries in the development of a commodities market within their jurisdictions.

“The Derivative Market Oversight and Regulatory Scheme [...] complements our ongoing efforts to develop regulatory frameworks for commodity futures and an electricity derivatives market, in pursuit of our mandate to deepen capital markets,” SEC Commissioner McJill Bryant T. Fernandez said.

The program tackled fundamental aspects of derivatives such as legal frameworks and regulatory elements, investor protection and regulation, and contract design and transaction clearing mechanisms.

It aimed to initiate discussions and address concerns among focal SEC personnel and key industry and government stakeholders on the formulation of a derivatives market in the Philippines.

The week-long training included participants from the SEC, as well as representatives from government agencies and the private sector, namely The Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc., Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Department of Agriculture, Department of Energy, Independent Electricity Market Operator of the Philippines, Inc., Philippine Dealing & Exchange Corp., University of the Philippines Law Center - Institute of Government and Law Reform, and Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation.

“Developments in the derivatives market as a whole have contributed to more complete financial markets, improved market liquidity, and increased the capacity of the financial system to price and bear risk effectively—ultimately, ushering in stronger economic growth over time,” Commissioner Fernandez said.

In the same week, the SEC held extensive strategic discussions with key representatives of the ADB on possible areas of collaboration and support in pursuit of capital market development and reforms for the coming years.

“We thank our partners from the ADB and CFTC for joining our efforts to boost the Philippine capital market,” SEC Chairperson Emilio B. Aquino said.

He added that, “The SEC remains committed to finding new and innovative solutions to further develop the capital market in order to provide businesses more accessible funding for their growth, as well as more investment options that cater to the different risk profiles of the investing public.”

The SEC also continues its active participation in the ASEAN Capital Market Forum (ACMF) and collaborative regional activities and projects on sustainable finance and capital market development.

https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/30/sec-explores-revival-of-futures-market#google_vignette

MANILA BULLETIN:

DA enforces ban on bird, poultry imports from France amid avian influenza outbreak

BY JEL SANTOS

Sep 30, 2024 05:12 PM



(MB FILE PHOTO)

Following an outbreak of avian influenza (AI) in France, the Department of Agriculture (DA) has implemented a temporary ban on the importation of domestic and wild birds, as well as poultry products, from the European country.

On Sept. 27, DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. issued Memorandum Order 40, enforcing the ban, which includes live poultry, day-old chicks, poultry products, by-products, and semen.

The decision follows France's report to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) of a High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza outbreak in Saint-Malo, Ile-et-Vilaine, Bretagne, on Aug. 7, 2024. Laboratory tests confirmed the bird flu virus, the DA said.

“We are imposing the ban as a preemptive measure to stop the entry of infected birds and their by-products into the country. This step will prevent the spread of the virus that could have a devastating impact on the local poultry industry,” Laurel said in a statement.

In line with the order, the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) has also suspended the issuance of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Import Clearances for all poultry shipments from France.

The DA noted that only birds slaughtered or products processed before July 25, 2024, will be allowed entry into the Philippines.

As such, the agency said veterinary quarantine offices have been directed to confiscate any shipments of wild and domestic birds, eggs, poultry products, and by-products unless they are heat-treated.

The ban will remain in effect until lifted by the DA, said Laurel.

From January to August 2024, the Philippines imported 150,752 kilograms of poultry products from France, data from DA showed.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/30/da-enforces-ban-on-poultry-imports-from-france>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Binangonan, Rizal bags pro-environment award

BY NEL ANDRADE

Sep 30, 2024 08:47 AM

For its pro-environment advocacies and for implementing proper waste management in its communities, the town of Binangonan in Rizal province bagged the top environment award for the most number of compliant villages in District 1 of the province.



During the recent 11th anniversary of the Ynares Eco System to Green (YES) program of the Rizal provincial government, Binangonan municipal government was adjudged as the Top YES Performer –YES Champion for District 1 in the province.



The office of Binangonan municipal administrator Russel Ynares said the Rizal provincial government has recognized the pro-environment practices of the communities, leading to the awards such as Compliant Community Garden in Rizal Province and Functional Materials Recovery Facility.

For the community gardens or urban gardens, all the 40 barangays (villages) in the town, aside from the vegetable gardens that are being managed by the local government, have established the greening projects in its respective communities.



(Photo from Binangonan municipal government's Facebook page)

Residents, including members of the Barkadahan ng mga Kababaihan ng Binangonan (BKB) are the ones taking care of the vegetable garden including in the harvesting and sharing of the produce.

During a visit by this reporter at the urban garden of the municipal government in Barangay Lunsad on Sunday, it was learned that since the early 2024, the gardens have produced several kilos of vegetables such as lettuce, legumes, eggplant, green pepper, herbs, and fruits which were grown by volunteers who are residents themselves.



(Photos by Nel Andrade/Manila Bulletin)

The seedlings and saplings were either given by the municipal government's agriculture office or the Department of Agriculture.



(Photo by Nel Andrade)

Most of the urban gardens are situated inside the MRF compound of the respective barangay where the recycling, reducing, and re-using of waste materials are strictly practiced.

In the MRF, recyclables that are non-biodegradable such as plastic bottles and plastic products are segregated from biodegradable wastes.



(Photo from Binangonan municipal government's FB page)

At present, plastic bottles of soft drinks are collected and processed by BKB members to become part of the giant recycled Christmas tree which will be the entry of the municipal government in the provincial government's annual contest during the Christmas Season.

Mayor Cesar Ynares led local officials in receiving the award during the 11th YES anniversary awarding ceremony in Antipolo City on Sept. 26.

https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/30/binangonan-rizal-bags-pro-environment-award#google_vignette

MANILA BULLETIN:

Magsasaka Party-list's Cabatbat leads formation of pro-agriculture alliance

BY ELLSON QUISMORIO

Sep 30, 2024 08:57 PM

AT A GLANCE

- Lawyer Argel Cabatbat recently led the formation of an alliance among the country's agricultural groups, with his Magsasaka Party-list (MPL) at its helm.



The Magsasaka Para sa Lahat National Consultation Conference held last Sept. 27 to 29 in Quezon City (Magsasaka Party-list)

Lawyer Argel Cabatbat recently led the formation of an alliance among the country's agricultural groups, with his Magsasaka Party-list (MPL) at its helm.

The alliance vowed during a recent conference to pour their efforts into uplifting the live of Filipino farmers and fisherfolks.

Aside from MPL, signatories of the alliance include the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF), National Federation of Small Water Irrigation Systems Associations (SWISAs), Philippine Tobacco Growers Association (PTGA), National Federation of Tobacco Agricultural Cooperatives (NAFTAC), Kalipunan ng Maliliit na Magniniyog

saPilipinas (KAMMPIL), Aniban ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (AMA), and various regional, provincial, and local organizations and cooperatives.

"Together, we will strive to uplift each other and to ensure that every voice in our agricultural community and marginalized sectors is heard and valued," read the unity statement prepared by the groups.

Joining Cabatbat in spearheading the Magsasaka Para sa Lahat National Consultation Conference held last Sept. 27 to 29 in Quezon City were FFF head Leonie Montemayor, SWISAs head Joel Pangalilingan, AMA leader Ronaldo Doganasol and KAMMPIL leader Reynaldo Monteverde.

The groups expressed a common interest and a shared vision to create a prosperous and self-sufficient Philippines, such that every Filipino has access to safe, affordable, and nutritious food.

"Our Alliance is here to support--not as leaders but as true partners standing with you every step of the way. Your challenges are our shared concern, and your successes are victories for every Filipino who dreams of a better, fairer, and more prosperous future," the statement further read.

These groups discussed the challenges being faced by farmers. These include the ongoing struggle to secure land rights and to deal with low commodity prices, further depressed by the unabated influx of imported agricultural products.

Furthermore, the groups said, municipal fisherfolks deal with dwindling fish stocks as well as the encroachment of commercial fishing into their traditional fishing grounds. At the same time, imported fish flood the market, making it difficult for local fishers to compete.

On the other hand, the poultry, hog and other livestock raisers grapple with rising production costs, diseases like the African swine fever (ASF), and the instability caused by imported meats.

"These challenges, fueled by unfair trade policies and importation practices, threaten not only the survival of our agricultural sectors but also our nation's food security and self-sufficiency," the statement added.

The alliance vowed to support the agricultural sector to ensure that their needs would be met and their concerns heard.

"We will ensure that the needs and rights of those who feed our nation--from rice fields to fishery areas, from poultry farms to piggeries--are finally given the attention they deserve," it said.

https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/30/ex-solon-cabatbat-leads-pro-agriculture-alliance#google_vignette

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Fishers feel impact of West Philippine Sea tensions

[Jasper Arcalas](#) - The Philippine Star

October 1, 2024 | 12:00am



Members of the Chinese Coast Guard (CGG) were seen roving around the Rozul Reef in Palawan as they patrol the area on April 21, 2024

STAR / Ryan Baldemor

MANILA, Philippines — Filipino fishermen are feeling the impact of the growing geopolitical tension in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) as their catch in the country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) continues to drop, as reflected in official statistics.

The country's fish catch in the WPS in the first half of the year fell by 6.78 percent to 101,039.54 metric tons from 108,392.48 MT in the same period last year, based on Philippine Statistics Authority data.

The country saw fish production in both the first and second quarter declining, with the first three months posting a steeper drop in output.

First quarter fish catch in the WPS fell by 11.62 percent year-on-year to 47,880.6 MT from 54,178.64 MT recorded in the same period last year.

Second quarter fish production dipped to 53,158.94 MT from 54,213.84 MT.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), in an email to The STAR, cited concerns over territorial issues as well as rising cost of fuel as major reasons for lower fisheries output.

Furthermore, the ill effects of climate change – high temperature caused by El Niño and gale warnings from January to February due to southwest monsoon – have also significantly slashed fish catch.

The BFAR said its findings were based on reports from its offices in Regions 1, 3 and 4-B.

The government estimates the country's fish catch from the WPS by calculating the commercial and marine municipal fisheries production of provinces near the EEZ.

These provinces are Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Pangasinan, Bataan, Zambales, Occidental Mindoro and Palawan.

Philippine Chamber of Agriculture and Food Inc. president Danilo Fausto said the decline in fish catch in the WPS is not surprising, given the increasing number of Chinese vessels in the area.

“With more than 500 fishing vessels, mostly from China, what do you expect? It is overfishing,” said Fausto, noting that the share of WPS in the country's total fish food supply has dropped to five percent from seven percent.

“Ever since our corals were destroyed, our fish catch has dropped further,” he added.

Between 2022 and 2023 alone, BFAR recorded the presence of 305 vessels within the country's EEZ in the WPS.

Of the total figure, about 266 were identified as fishing boats while the rest were military vessels.

BFAR also said that during the period, 144 of the monitored fishing vessels came from China and 71 from Vietnam. There were 49 Philippine fishing vessels monitored and documented in the WPS that came from Regions 1, 3, 4B, 12 and the National Capital Region.

In July, fishers' group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas disclosed that fisherfolk near Panatag Shoal lost about 60 percent of their income after China unilaterally imposed a four-month fishing ban in the South China Sea.

A recent report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies showed that at least 21,000 acres of coral reefs have been destroyed, mostly by China, in the South China Sea.

The immediate impact of the loss of coral reefs is the decline in fish production, according to experts.

Last year, the country's fish catch in the WPS rose to a four-year high of 201,894.49 MT, almost 15 percent more than the 175,784.73 MT recorded in 2022.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/10/01/2389231/fishers-feel-impact-west-philippine-sea-tensions>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Shellfish ban up in 10 Visayas and Mindanao areas

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

October 1, 2024 | 12:00am



The BFAR said a shellfish ban has been imposed on Carigara Bay in Leyte; Matarinao Bay in Eastern Samar, and Cambatutay, Maqueda and Irong-Irong bays as well as Daram and Zumarraga islands in Samar.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — Ten bodies of water in the Visayas and Mindanao remain affected by the paralytic shellfish poison or red tide toxin, according to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

The BFAR said a shellfish ban has been imposed on Carigara Bay in Leyte; Matarinao Bay in Eastern Samar, and Cambatutay, Maqueda and Irong-Irong bays as well as Daram and Zumarraga islands in Samar.

A similar ban was implemented by concerned local government units in Lianga Bay in Surigao del Sur, Dumanquillas Bay in Zamboanga del Sur and Tungawan in Zamboanga Sibugay.

Shellfish samples collected from these areas exceeded the regulatory limit for paralytic shellfish poison.

All types of shellfish including acetes sp or alamang harvested from these areas are not safe for human consumption, the BFAR said.

Fish, squid, shrimps and crabs are safe for human consumption provided these are fresh, washed thoroughly and their internal organs such as gills and intestines removed before cooking.

Authorities said the occurrence of the red tide toxin is a natural phenomenon.

Consumption of shellfish affected by the red tide toxin causes numbness, drowsiness and respiratory paralysis.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/10/01/2389165/shellfish-ban-10-visayas-and-mindanao-areas>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Global rice prices to ease as India lifts export ban

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

October 1, 2024 | 12:00am



Workers unload sacks of rice from various provinces on September 9, 2024.

STAR / Ryan Baldemor

MANILA, Philippines — Government officials and industry stakeholders are hopeful prices of rice in the world market would begin to soften after India lifted its export ban on non-Basmati rice, leading to more favorable rice import prices for the Philippines.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said he “hopes” the lifting of the India export ban would “signal” the lowering of rice prices in the global market.

Department of Agriculture spokesperson and assistant secretary Arnel de Mesa said the return of Indian non-Basmati white rice to the world market would boost available grains for trade globally.

The additional stocks, De Mesa pointed out, could ease the supply pressure in the world market and “create an impact” toward lowering world prices of rice.

Last weekend, India lifted its export ban on non-Basmati rice to prevent oversupply as the country’s grain stocks surged recently.

The export ban has been in place since July 2023 as India sought to protect its domestic consumers by shoring up rice stocks to ensure stable retail prices amid concerns in local production and uncertainties in global market and supplies.

However, India established a minimum export price (MEP) of \$490 per metric ton for all non-Basmati rice that would be shipped out from India.

The set MEP is significantly lower by as much as \$100 compared to the prevailing export rice prices from Vietnam and Thailand, according to DA officials and industry stakeholders.

“India could resume supplying African and Middle Eastern countries who temporarily shifted to Asian suppliers when the ban was still in place,” said Raul Montemayor of the Federation of Free Farmers.

“Lower demand could force Asian exporters like Thailand and Vietnam to lower their prices to maintain their market share, and this could mean lower import prices overall for Filipino importers,” he added.

Montemayor, however, cautioned that there is no guarantee that the decline in world rice prices would translate into lower retail prices being offered by local traders and importers.

More so, he noted that domestic rice traders have not “patronized” Indian rice despite their lower prices due to various reasons such as quality and reliability.

“Whether these lower import prices will translate to lower retail prices for consumers is another question,” he said.

But for Philippine Chamber of Agriculture and Food Inc. president Danilo Fausto, the lower prevailing export price coupled by the reduced tariff rate would entice traders and importers to bring in more rice stocks from India.

Fausto estimated that the landed cost of rice from India would be between P32 and P33, which would fetch a wholesale price of about P40 and may retail between P42 and P45 per kilo.

“Because of this lifting and the price set by India, other countries like Vietnam would be obliged to lower their prices to be able to compete,” Fausto said.

Fausto said farm gate prices of palay would not be impacted by the return of Indian rice stocks in the world market since the landed cost of these supplies are almost at par with prevailing palay prices.

“While the price of imported rice has decreased, I do not see much effect on our local palay farm gate prices since this will just be almost equal to the price of local rice when you convert palay to rice from its current buying price of traders,” he said.

“The margins of rice traders will be forced to tighten, offering a lower retail price for our rice (therefore) favoring our consumers,” he added.

The prevailing retail price of well-milled imported rice in Metro Manila markets range from P45 to P55 per kilo while regular-milled imported stocks cost between P45 and P48 per kilo, according to the DA.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/10/01/2389148/global-rice-prices-ease-india-lifts-export-ban>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA bans poultry products from France

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

Inquirer Business / 09:53 AM September 30, 2024



The Department of Agriculture (DA) temporarily bans the entry of poultry imports from France due to a bird flu outbreak at the European country. Effective immediately, Memorandum Order No. 40 dated September 27, 2024, seeks to protect the local poultry population and Filipino consumers from the effects of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). INQUIRER.net stock images

A bird flu outbreak in France prompted the Department of Agriculture (DA) to temporarily ban the entry of poultry imports from the European country.

Effective immediately, Memorandum Order No. 40 seeks to protect the local poultry population and Filipino consumers from the effects of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI).

The moratorium is applied to domestic and wild birds and their products, including poultry meat, day-old chicks, and eggs and semen of poultry originating from France.

Per the memo dated Sept. 27, the agency immediately suspended the processing, evaluation and issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary import clearance for the above-mentioned commodities.

The DA will stop and confiscate all poultry shipments, except heat-treated products, at all major ports of entry.

The ban excludes shipments from France that are already in transit, loaded or accepted in ports before the official communication of the order, provided that the poultry products were slaughtered or produced on or before July 25.

French authorities had informed the World Organization for Animal Health of an outbreak of H5 (N untyped) HPAI in Malo, Ille-et-Vilaine, Bretagne affecting domestic birds.

France is one of the country's imported meat suppliers, delivering 20.91 million kilograms of meat products as of June, according to the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI). The majority of its shipments were pork.

The volume is equivalent to 3.23 percent of the 647.75 million kg of imported meat purchased by the country in the January to June period.

<https://business.inquirer.net/482907/da-bans-poultry-products-from-france>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Lower rice prices seen as India lifts export ban

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 02:06 AM October 01, 2024

The Department of Agriculture (DA) said the lifting of India's rice export ban could help stabilize the global supply of the staple and reduce prices here and abroad.

In a government order issued over the weekend, India announced the lifting of the moratorium on exporting nonbasmati white rice (semi-milled or wholly milled rice, whether or not polished or glazed).

However, it imposed a minimum export price of \$490 per ton "with immediate effect and until further orders," the Sept. 28 notice from India's Directorate General of Foreign Trade stated.

"We hope that [the] world price of rice will go down a bit," Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said on Monday.

Separately, Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said that removing such a restriction would alleviate the pressure on global prices since more rice volumes would now be traded internationally.

Since the restriction has been eased, more volumes of rice can be sold to the global market," De Mesa said in an interview.

"The important thing here is it will improve the global trading of rice, which will have an impact on the overall price of rice around the world (translated from Filipino)," he said.

De Mesa, also the DA's spokesperson, noted that India's decision is crucial since the South Asian country accounts for 40 percent of tradable rice in the international market.

The Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) said India's move to allow the exporting of nonbasmati white rice may temper retail prices even if the Philippines imports a small volume of rice from this nation, noting it could boost global supply.

In a message, FFF national manager Raul Montemayor said the minimum export price set by India is about 10 percent or \$50 percent lower than the equivalent prices of Thailand and Vietnam, the country's major sources of imported rice.

"Historically, Filipino importers have not patronized Indian rice despite their lowest prices due to a variety of reasons (quality, reliability, etc.). In the past, more rice from Pakistan was imported than from India," FFF national manager Raul Montemayor said in a message.

Montemayor said African and Middle Eastern countries are expected to resume importing rice from India after temporarily shifting to Asian suppliers when the ban was still in place.

"Lower demand could force Asian exporters like Thailand and Vietnam to lower their prices to maintain their market share, and this could mean lower import prices overall for Filipino importers," he added.

<https://business.inquirer.net/482985/lower-rice-prices-seen-as-india-lifts-export-ban>

Smugglers' days numbered?

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 04:40 AM September 30, 2024

During his third State of the Nation Address (Sona) last year, President Marcos identified smuggling, hoarding, and manipulation as a major cause of high agricultural commodity prices. Labeling them as “cheaters” who take advantage of farmers and consumers, he vowed that the government would chase after them and put them in jail. Last week, he signed into law Republic Act No. 12022, or the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act, which now classify smuggling, hoarding, profiteering, and cartel operations involving agricultural and fishery products as economic sabotage — a nonbailable offense punishable by life imprisonment and fines of up to five times the value of the goods involved.

“Let me be clear: This law does not just target the masterminds; it holds all accomplices accountable—financiers, brokers, employees, even transporters,” the President warned during its signing in Malacañang. As in any other law, however, there are crucial issues that need to be addressed to be able to fulfill the intent of RA 12022. The most crucial is enforcement. The country’s experience in this regard has been very poor, simply look at the environmental destruction taking place across the country despite the existence of several laws against them.

Gargantuan task

The scores of undisciplined motorists disregarding even the most basic traffic regulation is another proof (for example, jeepney drivers picking up and dropping off passengers in areas clearly marked “no loading/unloading zones”).

Perhaps what will differentiate RA 12022 is that the President looks intent on leading the task. The law calls for the establishment of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Council, which he will head, alongside other key government officials, to harmonize and coordinate efforts against smugglers and hoarders. An Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Enforcement Group will also be set up to focus on dismantling smuggling and cartel operations and apprehending offenders.

Another concern is prosecution. Once cases were filed in court, these remained in the dockets for ages, delaying the serving of justice. RA 12022 mandates the formation of a special team of prosecutors that will expedite cases related to agricultural sabotage. “No longer will these cases gather dust; they will be prioritized, and they will be resolved urgently,” the President noted.

The public also has a role and cannot rely solely on the government to do this gargantuan task of ending smuggling, hoarding, and price manipulation in the agricultural sector.

Onion saga

Given the country's porous borders, ordinary citizens can help the government intensify its watch on ports of entry for contraband goods. "This law is not just another policy; it is your battle cry," said the President.

The onion saga clearly demonstrates the harm caused by smuggling. Lawmakers previously blamed agricultural smuggling for the high prices during the latter part of 2022. At one point, onion prices skyrocketed to about P500 to P700 a kilo from the usual P80 to P200. According to Marikina Rep. Stella Quimbo, the hearings done by the House committee on agriculture and food showed that the onion cartel manipulated prices by creating a fake shortage of cold storage facilities needed to keep onions fresh.

In June 2023, the President himself noted that the sky-high prices of agricultural products were due to no other reason other than smuggling and hoarding. "The onions were sufficient; they were just hoarding and tightening prices. The cold storage (facilities) were not allowed to be used, so the syndicates controlled the onions that would reach the market," he lamented.

Blatant collusion

The enforcement office of the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC), which filed early this month charges and penalties totaling P2.42 billion against 12 onion traders and importers for allegedly acting as a cartel since 2019, shows how they operate.

They allocated the supply of imported onions by assigning among themselves the clearances issued by the Department of Agriculture. These importers and traders also divided among themselves the volume of onions allowed to be imported.

"So, by agreeing to allocate ... among themselves the actual volume of imports, respondents effectively controlled more than 50 percent of the volume of onions imported into the Philippines," said lawyer Christian Loren de los Santos, the director of the PCC's enforcement office. "This agreement leads to lower supply, higher prices, poorer quality and less innovation, which harm consumers, businesses, and the economy in general."

This blatant collusion of cartels and syndicates manipulating the onion trade is replicated in other agricultural products, including rice, sugar, and even vegetables. It is hoped that RA 12022's signing into law and the measures lined up to strictly enforce it will fulfill the President's warning during his Sona that the days of agricultural smugglers are numbered. This is one promise worth keeping.

<https://opinion.inquirer.net/177166/smugglers-days-numbered>

BUSINESS WORLD:

BIR signals major push against smuggling of farm commodities

September 30, 2024 | 8:30 pm



PHILSTAR/MIGUEL DE GUZMAN

THE Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) said on Monday that it will deploy as many personnel as needed to deter the smuggling of farm commodities.

“The BIR will deploy all revenue officers needed to fully enforce the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act,” BIR Commissioner Romeo D. Lumagui, Jr. said in a statement.

The recently signed law, which went into the books as Republic Act (RA) No. 12022, expanded the definition of agricultural products to cover livestock, aquatic products, and tobacco.

Under the law, selling tobacco products at 30% below the daily price index will be deemed an act of smuggling.

The law covers both unmanufactured and manufactured tobacco products. It will also include cigarettes, cigars, heated tobacco products, vape, or any form of tobacco product for smoking, heating, puffing, oral or nasal use.

For 2024, the government is expected to forego P33.7 billion in revenue due to the illicit tobacco trade, Mr. Lumagui told a forum last year.

RA 12022 also classifies the smuggling and hoarding of agricultural products as economic sabotage if the value of goods is over P10 million.

The possession of smuggled goods in a warehouse, vessel, vehicle, or other storage area also counts as economic sabotage under the law.

Violators could face a fine worth five times the value of the smuggled or hoarded goods, and face life imprisonment.

The law also empowers BoC to act against corporations or entities involved in acts of economic sabotage.

Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto last week said the new law will help boost the government's revenue collections.

“Through a stronger and stricter crackdown on these offenders, we protect our people's access to affordable goods and boost our revenue collections, which will allow the government to provide more essential public services to Filipinos,” he said in a statement. — **Beatriz Marie D. Cruz**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/30/624887/bir-signals-major-push-against-smuggling-of-farm-commodities/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Councils to oversee individual farm commodities

September 30, 2024 | 8:30 pm



BW FILE PHOTO

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said it hopes to organize councils to oversee each key commodity, which will meet monthly in order to achieve more systematic industry consultation.

“We will be creating councils between the DA and the private sector and the other stakeholders who will meet on a monthly basis,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. told reporters, noting the need to promote and increase farm output.

He added that the DA officials on the council will be tasked with managing specific commodities commonly grown in the Philippines.

“It really needs to be focused; there should be someone assigned to each industry,” he said.

He added that the DA will set short-term goals in addressing the concerns of various industries.

“We are the most complicated department in the country; we have fertilizer, pesticides, various commodities. We need to be creating councils and assigning a person per council,” he said. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/30/624889/councils-to-oversee-individual-farm-commodities/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Vietnam to remain top rice supplier after India eases restrictions

September 30, 2024 | 8:31 pm



REUTERS

RICE IMPORTERS are expected to continue relying on Vietnam for their supply even after India eased its export controls on white rice, analysts said.

On Saturday, the India's Directorate of Foreign Trade announced the lifting of the export ban on non-basmati white rice, citing high inventory levels. The Indian government imposed a minimum export price of \$490 per metric ton (MT).

Former Agriculture Undersecretary Fermin D. Adriano said Vietnamese traders are expected to match India's low export price, pushing prices lower overall.

Vietnam is the Philippines' top supplier of rice. Both governments signed a supply agreement in January giving the Philippines a quota of 1.5 million MT to 2 million MT of rice annually for five years.

"If that happens, our traders will import from their usual Vietnamese *'suki'* (trusted sellers) instead of buying from India as they are not familiar with the exporters there," Mr. Adriano said via Viber.

India, the world's largest exporter of white rice, suspended exports of non-basmati white rice last year amid concerns over domestic supply, putting upward pressure on international prices.

"We hope that world price of rice will go down a bit," Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said via text message.

Mr. Laurel has said that the ban on Indian rice exports pushed world rice prices higher, elevating the cost of imports which the government is counting on to keep rice affordable.

To lower the price of rice, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. signed Executive Order No. (EO) 62, which reduced tariffs on imported rice to 15% from 35% until 2028.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) said that EO 62 could bring down rice prices by P6 to P7 per kilogram.

“The lifting of the import ban could increase overall supply in the global rice market and lead to a softening of international rice prices,” Federation of Free Farmers National Director Raul Q. Montemayor said via Viber.

He added that the minimum export price is about 10% less than the \$500 per MT export price charged by Vietnam and Thailand.

“It is only a minimum, so actual selling prices could be higher,” Mr. Montemayor said.

He added that importers have not patronized Indian rice despite the low price, citing quality and reliability concerns. “In the past, more rice from Pakistan was imported than from India,” he added.

“This is a big relief globally and particularly the Philippines. With EO 62 in place, the importers will now have a choice as where to source rice, much more affordable rice,” former Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar said in a text message.

The Philippines typically imports about 20% of its rice requirement.

“The Indian rice will be an attraction to importers because it will be cheaper as long as the quality is the same as that those coming from Vietnam and Thailand,” he added.

Rice imports totaled 3.09 million MT as of Sept. 19, according to the Bureau of Plant Industry. Rice imports from Pakistan amounted to 157,044 MT.

The US Department of Agriculture said that Philippine rice imports are expected to hit 4.6 million MT this year. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/30/624890/vietnam-to-remain-top-rice-supplier-after-india-eases-restrictions/>

MANILA STANDARD

Farmers' groups form alliance to address agricultural issues

By Manila Standard

October 1, 2024, 7:00 am

The MAGSASAKA party-list led by lawyer Argel Cabatbat, teamed up with the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) and other agricultural groups to uplift the lives of Filipino farmers and fisherfolk.

Signatory groups include the National Federation of Small Water Irrigation Systems Associations (SWISAs), Philippine Tobacco Growers Association (PTGA), National Federation of Tobacco Agricultural Cooperatives (NAFTAC), *Kalipunan ng Maliliit na Magniniyog sa Pilipinas* (KAMMPIL), *Aniban ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura* (AMA), and several regional and local organizations.

Joining Cabatbat in the alliance are FFF leader Leonie Montemayor, SWISAs head Joel Pangalilingan, AMA leader Ronaldo Doganasol, and KAMMPIL leader Reynaldo Monteverde.

In a Unity Statement, the groups expressed their goal of creating a prosperous, self-sufficient Philippines where every Filipino has access to safe, affordable, and nutritious food.

“Together, we will strive to uplift each other and to ensure that every voice in our agricultural community and marginalized sectors is heard and valued,” the statement read.

“Our Alliance is here to support, not as leaders, but as true partners standing with you every step of the way. Your challenges are our shared concern, and your successes are victories for every Filipino who dreams of a better, fairer, and more prosperous future,” it added.

During the “*Magsasaka Para sa Lahat*” National Consultation Conference, held from September 27 to 29 in Quezon City, the groups discussed the challenges facing farmers. These include land rights issues, low commodity prices, and the influx of imported agricultural products.

Municipal fisherfolk raised concerns about dwindling fish stocks and commercial fishing encroaching on their grounds. Imported fish in the market also makes competition difficult for local fishers.

Meanwhile, poultry, hog, and livestock raisers struggle with rising production costs, diseases like African swine fever, and instability caused by imported meat.

“These challenges, fueled by unfair trade policies and importation practices, threaten not only the survival of our agricultural sectors, but also our nation’s food security and self-sufficiency,” the joint statement added.

The alliance vowed to support the agricultural sector and ensure that the voices of farmers and fishers are heard.

“We will ensure that the needs and rights of those who feed our nation—from rice fields to fishery areas, from poultry farms to piggeries—are finally given the attention they deserve.”

<https://manilastandard.net/news/314504347/farmers-groups-form-alliance-to-address-agricultural-issues.html>

Rate of ocean warming has nearly doubled since 2005

By Agence France-Presse

October 1, 2024

BREST, France — The pace at which oceans are warming has almost doubled since 2005 as global temperatures rise because of human-caused climate change, a report from the EU monitor Copernicus said Monday.

The findings by the Copernicus Marine Service underscore the consequences of a warming planet on oceans, which cover 70 percent of Earth's surface and acts as a major regulator of the climate.

Ocean warming has "increased continuously" since the 1960s but sharply accelerated in the years since 2005, oceanographer Karina von Schuckmann from Copernicus told reporters.

Over the past two decades, the pace of warming has nearly doubled from a long-term rate of 0.58 watts per m² (square meter) to 1.05 watts per m².

"Ocean warming can be seen as our sentinel for global warming," said von Schuckmann, a specialist on the unique role the ocean plays in Earth's climate system.

The findings echo the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the expert panel of climate scientists mandated by the United Nations, on the longer-term heating of the oceans because of humanity's release of planet-heating emissions.

Since 1970, some 90 percent of excess heat trapped in the atmosphere due to the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses has been absorbed in the oceans, the IPCC says.

Warmer oceans fuel storms, hurricanes and other extreme weather by influencing global weather patterns and where rainfall lands.

Copernicus said its report detailed "record-breaking ocean temperatures, marine heat waves stretching down to the deep ocean, unprecedented sea ice loss and rising levels of heat stored in the ocean."

Ripple effect

It said in 2023, more than 20 percent of the world's oceans experienced at least one severe to extreme marine heat wave, events that have ripple effects for marine life and fisheries.

Such heat waves can lead to the migration and mass mortality of certain species, harm fragile ecosystems and interfere with the flow of deep and shallow waters, hindering the distribution of nutrients.

Ocean warming "can affect all aspects of the marine world, from biodiversity to chemistry to fundamental oceanographic processes, currents and as well as the global climate," said von Schuckmann.

More extensive marine heat waves also tend to be longer.

The average annual maximum duration of such a heat event has doubled since 2008 from 20 to 40 days, according to the latest "Ocean State Report" by Copernicus.

Compared to an earlier baseline, the bottom of the north-east Barents Sea in the Arctic appears to have "entered a state of permanent marine heat wave," said von Schuckmann, citing a research paper.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/01/news/national/rate-of-ocean-warming-has-nearly-doubled-since-2005/1976510>

From onion crisis to tough new law: Declaring war on agricultural crime

BusinessMirror Editorial
October 1, 2024

The recent signing of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act (AGES) by President Marcos is a much-needed and long-overdue measure to address the persistent issue of market manipulation and exploitation in the country's agricultural sector. (*Read the BusinessMirror story: "New law will dismantle cartels behind smuggling of agri goods," September 27, 2024*).

The Philippines was thrust into the global spotlight last year when unscrupulous groups engineered a dramatic surge in onion prices, making the humble vegetable unaffordable for many Filipinos. This embarrassing incident underscored the urgent need to tackle the networks of market manipulators who have been wreaking havoc on food prices and supply.

The new AGES law rightly classifies smuggling, hoarding, and profiteering of agricultural products as economic sabotage—a serious offense punishable by life imprisonment and hefty fines. This sends a clear message that the government will no longer tolerate these exploitative practices that undermine the livelihoods of farmers and the welfare of consumers.

By targeting not just the masterminds but also all accomplices involved in these criminal activities, including financiers, brokers, and transporters, the law leaves no room for loopholes in accountability. By casting a wide net, the law seeks to dismantle the intricate webs of collusion that have enabled cartels to dictate prices and supplies.

The establishment of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Council, led by the President himself, and the dedicated team of prosecutors to handle these cases, demonstrate the administration's commitment to effective enforcement and swift justice. The promised rewards and incentives for whistleblowers will also incentivize the public to assist in rooting out these economic saboteurs.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.'s endorsement of the AGES highlights the importance of imposing stiffer penalties on violators to deter smuggling and hoarding activities that threaten the livelihoods of farmers and fisherfolk.

Moreover, the requirement for establishing a Daily Price Index for agricultural products underscores the government's commitment to transparency and fair pricing mechanisms, benefiting both producers and consumers. The proactive measures outlined in Republic Act 12022 are essential not only for safeguarding the agricultural sector but also for preserving the socio-economic well-being of the nation.

While the new law is a significant step forward, its success will ultimately depend on the government's ability to follow through with consistent and decisive implementation. The challenge will be to overcome the deep-rooted networks of influence and corruption that have long plagued the agricultural sector.

Nonetheless, this legislation represents a bold and necessary move to protect the country's food security, safeguard the livelihoods of farmers and fishermen, and ensure that all Filipinos have access to affordable, quality agricultural products.

The successful implementation and enforcement of RA 12022 hinges on the strong collaboration and cooperation of government agencies, farmers, and consumers. Eradicating corruption, smuggling, and hoarding is essential to creating a sustainable and equitable agricultural sector, which will ultimately benefit more than 110 million Filipino consumers.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/01/from-onion-crisis-to-tough-new-lawdeclaring-war-on-agricultural-crime/>

DA to conduct monthly dialogue with farmers, businessmen, traders of key commodities to bolster local output

Ada Pelonia
October 1, 2024



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) plans to conduct a monthly dialogue with farmers, businessmen, and traders of every agricultural commodity to bolster local output.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said that with the number of agricultural commodities to boost, the monthly dialogue would help the DA attend to the needs of every industry.

“There’s many of them [agricultural commodities]. We really need to focus, and DA must assign someone for each industry,” Laurel told reporters, partly in Filipino, on the sidelines of an agriculture forum held recently in Makati City.

“Now, all of our Undersecretaries, all Assistant Secretaries, and directors, we will be assigning one of them to each and every commodity that we have in the Philippines,” he said.

The agriculture chief said the DA officials would have to submit a monthly report on what they agreed upon with the stakeholders and what should be done in the succeeding months.

Competitive enhancement

Earlier, a lawmaker said a total of P8.3 billion in funds from tariffs can be used to enhance the competitiveness of local agricultural producers. (See: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/25/%e2%82%b18-3b-from-tariffs-seen-to-aid-farm-production/>)

During plenary deliberations at the Lower House on the 2025 budget for the Department of Agriculture (DA), Bagong Henerasyon (BH) Party-list Rep. Bernadette Herrera said the balance of the Competitive Enhancement Measures Fund (CEMF) was around P4.5 billion while the Trade Remedies Fund (TRF) stood at P3.8 billion.

However, Herrera believes the P10 million allocation by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) for the TRF in 2025 isn't enough.

“Maybe it's possible to increase this P10 million [allocation]. The DA's Trade Remedies Unit is a critical policy-making body that deals with unfair trade practices,” said the solon in Filipino.

Republic Act 8800 (Safeguard Measures Act) defines the TRF as consisting of 50 percent of revenues collected from fees, charges and duties on imports. The funds are earmarked for the implementation of remedies, including safeguard measures.

The other half going to the CEMF would be used for competitiveness-enhancement measures for industries affected by the increased imports.

Government documents showed that the DA received a P10-million appropriation from TRF and P250 million appropriation from CEMF.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/01/da-to-conduct-monthly-dialogue-with-farmers-businessmen-traders-of-key-commodities-to-bolster-local-output/>

Dip in rice, oil prices to spur growth till 2026

Cai U. Ordinario
October 1, 2024

THE expected decline in rice and oil prices could boost the country's economic growth this year until 2026, according to market analysts.

In its latest Asia economic outlook, ANZ Research said inflation is expected to average 3.4 percent in 2024; 3.2 percent in 2025; and 3.3 percent in 2026. These are within the inflation expectations of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

This will help boost the country's economic growth to 5.9 percent in 2024; 5.7 percent in 2025; and 6 percent in 2026. However, all these forecasts remain below the government's GDP targets at 6 to 7 percent this year; 6.5 to 7.5 percent next year and 6.5 to 8 percent in 2026 to 2028.

“Inflation is set to ease materially over the coming months as the reduced tariffs on rice imports soften food inflation, and lower crude oil prices bring down transport inflation,” ANZ said. “Overall, we forecast a GDP growth of 5.9 percent in 2024.”

Inflation is expected to slow significantly on the back of lower rice tariffs—reduced to 15 percent from the 35 percent effective in July 2024.

ANZ added that rice production in major rice-exporting countries such as India, Vietnam and Pakistan have increased due to the La Niña weather phenomenon.

With lower tariffs and the possible reduction in international rice prices due to the good harvest among major rice exporters, lower rice costs may be expected.

Rice is one of the biggest components of the Philippine Consumer Price Index. In the All Households CPI, it has a weight of 8.87 percent while in the Bottom 30 percent CPI, it has a bigger weight of 17.87 percent as poor households are larger consumers of the country's staple.

“Rice production in the major rice-exporting countries [India, Vietnam and Pakistan] has turned up amid favorable rainfall on account of the La Niña weather pattern. This will increase the supply of rice in the global market and help lower rice prices,” ANZ said.

Base effects and inflation

Meanwhile, Moody’s Analytics said favorable base effects may have reduced the country’s inflation rate to 2.5 percent year on year in September.

If this will be the case, this would be the first time the country’s inflation rate went below 3 percent since October 2020 when inflation averaged 2.3 percent. In that year, inflation averaged 2.4 percent.

“Price pressures will ease on rice, which makes up a significant proportion of the heavily weighted food component of CPI. Prices for the staple soared in 2023 when India banned the export of nonbasmati white rice,” Moody’s Analytics said.

Similar to ANZ Research, Moody’s Analytics also expects the reduction in tariff rates on imported rice to play a major role in the slowdown in inflation.

Moody’s Analytics said, however, that an electricity rate hike will keep utilities inflation heated.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/01/dip-in-rice-oil-prices-to-spur-growth-till-2026/>

India easing of rice exports to cool down global prices

Ada Pelonia
October 1, 2024

INDIA'S lifting of its export ban on non-basmati white rice would "significantly" push down world and domestic rice prices, according to an economist.

This, after Bloomberg recently reported that the world's largest rice exporter lifted its ban on non-basmati white rice shipments and set a minimum export price (MEP) of \$490 per metric ton (MT).

"[This] will significantly lower world and domestic prices. However, the MEP will put a floor on the decline of export price," Roehlano Briones, a senior research fellow at the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) told the BusinessMirror.

University of Asia and the Pacific's Center for Food and Agribusiness (CFA) Executive Director Marie Annette Galvez-Dacul said India's return to the export market would help ease global rice supply.

"It could stabilize rice prices in countries heavily dependent on its exports, mainly Africa and the Middle East," Dacul told the BusinessMirror via Viber.

However, she noted that for the Philippines, India is a minor source of imports, which accounts for less than one percent of total imports.

"Considering that it is cheaper compared to Vietnam and Thailand, it can be an option for additional rice supply and import diversification," she said.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said that since India accounts for 40 percent of rice being traded worldwide, it would have an effect on global prices.

“If the volume being traded, especially for rice, is big, it will have an impact on the pricing for the entire global trade of rice,” de Mesa told reporters, speaking partly in Filipino, in a briefing on Monday.

He also noted that the MEP was lower than the prevailing export rice prices of over \$500 per MT.

“What’s important here is that the volume being traded is big, internationally speaking. That means, the other countries will also be easing restrictions on their exports,” de Mesa said.

Imported rice that arrived in the Philippines reached 3.09 million metric tons (MMT) as of September 19, according to data from the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI).

Of the volume that arrived in the Philippines, over 2.43 MMT came from Vietnam, which maintained its status as the country’s top source of imports. Thailand was the second-largest supplier as it accounted for 396,005.74 metric tons (MT).

BPI data also showed that the Philippines imported rice from other countries like Pakistan (157,044.48 MT), Myanmar (69,567 MT), and India (21,997.04 MT).

The DA recently said it expects a significant drop in rice prices by January as the full impact of the reduction in rice tariffs takes hold. (See: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/18/big-drop-in-rice-prices-once-tariff-cuts-take-hold-da/>)

“Since demand for food usually spikes in December, we anticipate seeing a more substantial drop in rice prices by January,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said in a statement.

Executive Order 62 signed by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., which reduced the tariff on rice to 15 percent from 35 percent, took effect in July.

Economic managers estimated that the tariff reduction could cut rice prices by around P5 to P7 per kilo.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/01/india-easing-of-rice-exports-to-cool-down-global-prices/>

REMATE:

Poultry products galing France ipinagbawal sa Pinas

September 30, 2024 10:41



MANILA, Philippines- Pansamantalang ipinagbawal ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang pagpasok ng poultry imports mula sa France dahil sa bird flu outbreak sa European country.

Agad na pairalin, nilalayan ng Memorandum Order No. 40 na may petsang September 27, 2024, na protektahan ang local poultry population at Filipino consumers mula sa epekto ng highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI).

Kasado ang moratorium sa domestic at wild birds at mga produkto ng mga ito, kabilang ang poultry meat, day-old chicks, at mga itlog at semilya ng poultry mula sa France.

Haharangin at kukumpiskahin ng DA ang lahat ng poultry shipments, maliban sa heat-treated products, sa lahat ng major ports of entry.

Hindi saklaw ng ban ang shipments galing France na in transit na, naikarga o tinanggap sa mga pantalan bago ang official communication ng kautusan, sa kondisyong ang poultry products ay kinatay o prinodyus bago o sa mismong araw ng Hulyo 25. **RNT/SA**

<https://remate.ph/poultry-products-galing-france-ipinagbawal-sa-pinas/>

ABANTE:

Warship hinabol pa barko ng PH: China ni-laser eroplano ng BFAR

Abante News

- September 30, 2024



Hinabol ng dalawang barko ng China ang barko ng Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) sa West Philippine Sea (WPS) at tinutukan din ng laser ang eroplano ng ahensiya na nagsasagawa ng air patrol sa nasabing lugar.

Patungo sa Hasa-Hasa Shoal ang BRP Datu Romapenet, isang civilian vessel ng BFAR, noong Biyernes, Setyembre 27 para magdala ng suplay ng pagkain sa mga mangingisdang Pinoy doon. Kasama nito sa paglalayag ang BRP Datu Matanam Taradapit.

Habang naglalayag ang dalawang barko, binuntutan ito ng dalawang missile boat ng People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) ng China.

Namataan din sa hindi kalayuan ang isang barko ng China Coast Guard (CCG). Ang barkong ito ang natukoy na dating bumangga sa BRP Bagacay ng Philippine Coast Guard at BRP Sanday ng BFAR.

Isang aircraft naman ng BFAR na nagpapatrulya sa lugar ang tinutukan ng laser ng Chinese warship. Rumadyo lamang ang BFAR plane sa Chinese missile boat pero hindi sila sumagot.

Ayon sa isang non-profit military association US Naval Institute, ang Houbei-class guided-missile craft ng PLAN ay madaling mamukhaan dahil sa kulay asul na camouflage na pintura nito.

Mayroon lamang itong 12 crew at kayang magkarga ng walong anti-ship cruise missiles.

Sinabi naman ni National Maritime Council spokesperson Undersecretary Alexander Lopez na ilegal ang presensiya ng missile ship ng China sa WPS.

Ito umano ang unang pagkakataon na hinabol ng Chinese warship ang civilian vessel ng Pilipinas sa WPS.

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/09/30/warship-hinabol-pa-barko-ng-ph-china-ni-laser-eroplano-ng-bfar/>