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MANILA BULLETIN:

Marcos pays tribute to DA exec Savellano: A true public servant

BY [BETHEENA UNITE](#)

Jan 7, 2025 06:53 PM

President Marcos paid tribute to Agriculture Undersecretary Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano, who passed away on Tuesday, Jan. 7, for his service to his province and the country.



Agriculture Undersecretary Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano (Photo courtesy of Kabsat DV B. Savellano Facebook)

"I am deeply saddened the passing of Undersecretary Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano, a true public servant, a dear friend and someone whose heart always belonged to the people he served," Marcos said in a statement on Tuesday evening.

Marcos honored Savellano for bringing progress to Ilocos Sur and for his contribution to the livestock sector.

"As governor and representative of Ilocos Sur, DV brought meaningful progress to the province, always guided by his love for Ilocos Sur and its people," Marcos said.

"He carried that same dedication to his role at the Department of Agriculture, working tirelessly to strengthen our livestock sector and support farmers across the country," Marcos added.

The President offered his condolences to his family and loved ones. He further honored the late public servant, saying his legacy will endure.

"DV's legacy will endure in the lives he touched and in the progress he brought to Ilocos and the nation," he said. "Agyaman kami kadagiti amin a naipaay a tulong ken serbisyom apo, DV (We thank you for the service you have given, DV)."

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/1/7/marcos-pays-tribute-to-da-exec-savellano-a-true-public-servant>

MANILA BULLETIN:

The Young Pinoy and Agriculture: Bridging the gap

Technology proves farming in PH is now easy, efficient, fun and promising

BY [MANILA BULLETIN](#)

Jan 7, 2025 06:31 PM

Many think the problem with Philippine agriculture can always be described in four words—the price of rice.

But the country’s problem with the price of rice is a mere symptom that’s a result of countless factors.

These factors include climate change and nearly 50 years of government passing over Philippine agriculture for other development priorities.

The backward state of Philippine agriculture was why President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. initially took the helm of the agriculture sector in 2022.

For President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., attaining food security sits on top of his development agenda in a time where the precepts of sustainability remained paramount all over the world.



President Marcos led the ceremonial palay harvesting in Barangay Mandili in Candaba, Pampanga where he also distributed various assistance such as hauling trucks, seeds, financial assistance, among others to more than 12,000 farmers and ten farmers’ cooperatives and associations on February 3, 2024. (Photo: PCO)

Ever the hands-on leader, the President dissected all the problems besetting Philippine agriculture and had the Department of Agriculture (DA) come up with fast and extensive solutions to each one of them.

One of the problems that bears heavily on the country's agriculture sector has to do with the question of who will grow the nation's food of tomorrow?

This question echoes louder as fewer young Filipinos turn to farming—a calling often dismissed as underpaid, undervalued, and out of sync with the times.

Agriculture is seen by many as a last resort—a pursuit for older generations or those with limited access to higher education or lucrative careers.

Yet, the irony persists. In a nation celebrated for its fertile lands and rural heritage, where more than half of the population still resides in the countryside, farming has been left behind.

But all is not lost.



Kevin Wayne Baga and her girlfriend, Ana Cristina Guiang established the KA-Bukid Propagation Farm in Batac City, Ilocos Norte. President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on (Sept. 19, 2024) stressed the need to give land to graduates of agriculture-related courses to produce new breed of farmers equipped with modern technology and tools. (PNA file photo by Leilanie Adriano)^[PDI]

In recent years, glimmers of hope emerged as the nation took decisive steps to address its graying farmer population.

A renewed focus on innovation, empowerment, and modernity may yet sow the seeds for a thriving, youthful agricultural workforce.

In October 2023, Department of Agriculture (DA) Assistant Secretary Arnel V. de Mesa reported the average age of Filipino farmers has slightly increased as younger farmers join the agriculture sector.

According to de Mesa, the government's registry system has shown that the average age of farmers in the country now stands at 49 to 50 years old, an improvement from the previous average age of 57 years old.

While the country has made gains in enticing the youth to engage in farming, President Ferdinand

Marcos himself recognizes that a lot of younger Filipinos are giving the industry the side-eye—mainly due to the stereotypes attached to farming.

Many Filipinos consider farming a laborious and low-paying occupation, leading them to find jobs in the city instead.

Such an issue is counterproductive to the government’s goal of achieving food security for the years to come since for the country to achieve this, it would require the help of the next generation of farmers who would continue the work started by the current generation.



President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. led the distribution of PhP157.9 million in agricultural support to farmers and fisherfolk to boost farm productivity and fight hunger in Ilocos Norte on September 11, 2024. (Photo: PCO)

To address this, the DA implemented several programs to entice the younger generation to hop into the agriculture sector.

To rebrand the image of agriculture among the youth, DA’s Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PHilMech) launched its advocacy campaign “Youth for Mechanization” (Y4M) in 2022.

The campaign believes that farm mechanization is the key to bring back the interest of the youth in agriculture.

Y4M aims to show the younger generation that contrary to common stereotypes in the industry, farming is now easy, efficient, fun, and promising in terms of profit and productivity through farm mechanization.

“The big challenge we face is making farming profitable. The solution lies in embracing technology-based farming methods,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. said.

The campaign is being conducted alongside the implementation of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) Mechanization Program, another program of the DA that seeks to provide machinery to farmers across the country to help improve their productivity and increase their income.

The Program helps Filipino farmers become competitive with those from neighboring countries through machinery grants.

Its adoption among the Farmers Cooperatives and Associations (FCAs) is expected to lessen the production cost by Php3.00/kilo and can save up to 5% of postharvest losses.

Jett Molech Subaba, one of the advocates of Y4M and the supervising science research specialist of the PhilMech-Applied Communication Division, has been traveling across the country—visiting schools, attending summits, and engaging with communities—to inspire the younger generation to embrace careers in agriculture.

According to Subaba, as of November 2024, less than 1,000 individuals have registered on Y4M's database. Aside from this, PhilMech has also trained more than 1,000 young RCEF beneficiaries and children of farmers.

“Nais ng Y4M na i-train, i-mobilize, at i-empower ang ating mga kabataan sa pamamagitan ng mga skills na may kaugnayan sa mechanization na kanilang magagamit para magkaroon ng income gamit ang ating mga makinaryang ating pinamimigay kagaya ng pagiging machine operator o engine mechanic o training specialist o agri-preneur at iba pa,” Subaba told state-run Radyo Pilipinas.

“Should the younger workforce not engage in farming in the next 15 to 20 years, then our farmers will become scarce. Unti-unting hihina at mababawasan. But may magagawa tayo. If we could just show them options and guide them in this path, walang imposible,” he added.

Subaba said that by showing the youth that farming is no longer as physically taxing as it was in the past using modern technology and farm mechanization, “pwede nating ipakita sa kanila na sa pamamagitan ng mga makabagong teknolohiya, hindi na maghapong nakayuko ang ating mga magsasaka na nagtatanim.”

“Pwede na silang sumakay ng transplanter o precision seeder sa pagtatanim ng palay; Pwede na maghanda ng lupa gamit ang four-wheel tractors habang nagv-vlog o pwede na magpataba ng lupa gamit ang drone o kaya ay mag-ani gamit ang rice combine harvester habang nagli-livestream that they can show to the fellow youth,” he added.

According to Subaba, instead of pushing the youth towards taking the old path, the government is creating hybrid, new, and complementary ways to engage the younger generation in agriculture. With machinery, the agriculture industry has also become a more profitable line of work, Subaba added.

He also stressed that the government is putting so much effort into reaching the next generation of farmers in the country, such that “if we can get the youth to join this cause and advocacy, we can ensure food security. Remember that if we are talking about agriculture, we are also talking about the food of every Filipino and the food of every Filipino is very important because it gives life.”

Unlike other DA programs, the Y4M focuses on engaging the youth through mechanization and modernization, in line with the vision of President Marcos and Secretary Tiu Laurel to transform agriculture into a dynamic, technology-driven industry that not only ensures food security but also provides sustainable livelihoods and opportunities for the next generation.

There are various networks under Y4M that its advocates can focus on based on their interests. These networks include the “Young Machinery Operators” or those who have interest in operating machines; “Young Machine Mechanics” or those who are interested in small and big engine mechanics; and “Young Mechanization Specialists” which include future trainers or resource speakers on training courses on rice mechanization or graduates of training of trainers under RCEF.

Other networks include “Young Farmers” for farmer-members or dependents who own farm lands and advocating mechanization in their area; “Young Agripreneurs” are those who own farm machines and are willing to use these for business, willing to be trained, or those who are already practitioners; and “Students Network” or students in senior high or college level who are enrolled in agriculture-related courses and are advocating the use of machines in the farm.

“Looking at the agricultural landscape, meron na tayong mga young farmers. Actually, dominated ng mga youth ngayon ang ating machinery operations. Mula pagtanim hanggang pag-aani, yung mga kabataan natin ay very involved ngayon,” Subaba said, adding that there are machinery operators as young as 19 years old.

In the future, PhilMech aims to establish an online application where farmers can avail the services of Y4M advocates who underwent training on various skills sets such as engine machinery.

“Ang lahat ng services na ito ay ilalagay natin sa isang mobile application in the future kung saan pwede silang i-book ng ating mga kapwa magsasaka na nangangailangan ng ganitong serbisyo na kung saan ay pwede silang kumita. So added income para sa ating kabataan,” Subaba said.

In September 2024, President Marcos stressed the importance of giving land to graduates of agriculture-related courses to produce a new breed of farmers equipped with modern technology and tools.

“Kailangan natin ng mga magsasaka. Kaya’t kasama po sa charter ng Agrarian Reform Program na lahat ng mga Kabataan na dumaaan at naging estudyante na dumaaan sa kurso ng agrikultura ay mabibigyan din ng lupa upang ‘yung kanilang natutunan ay meron silang paglalagyan, meron silang magagamit na lupa para magamit naman nila ang kanilang bagong natutunan tungkol sa agrikultura,” he said.

Other government programs for youth in agriculture

Other than Y4M, the agriculture department has other advocacy programs for the youth.

In October 2024, young farmers Ephraim Laureta and Julius Manuel from Piddig town in Ilocos Norte returned home after their immersion programs in Taiwan under the International Farm Youth Exchange program.

Another young farmer, Windell Dela Cruz, also underwent a similar training program in Japan.

The program is being implemented by the Department of Agriculture- Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI) to develop deserving youth to become farmer leaders and empowered agricultural entrepreneurs in their respective areas.

According to Laureta, an out-of-school youth who lacked a college degree due to family struggles, his training inspired him to pursue cattle fattening in his barangay.

Following the program, Dela Cruz wanted to venture into cattle raising while Manuel eyed to engage into premium rice production and other high value crops.

To support their plans, DA-ATI gave them a P50,000 financial grant each to help them jumpstart their own businesses.

Agriculture Secretary Tiu Laurel said the overseas training programs underscore the DA's continuing commitment to advance the skills of the nation's young farmers and showcase their abilities, values, and competencies in the international arena.

“By banking on the knowledge, skills, and values of young farmers, especially in their exposure as international exchange interns, we will help usher in a Masaganang Bagong Pilipinas filled with a globally competitive, digitally adept, and climate-resilient agricultural workforce,” Secretary Tiu Laurel said.

The DA also has the Young Farmers Challenge (YFC) program, which provides competitive financial grant assistance to encourage the Filipino youth to engage in agriculture by providing access to capital in case they want to try agri-fishery, agribusiness and agri-entrepreneurship enterprises.

Since its launching in 2021, YFC had 3,625 beneficiaries operating their agribusiness enterprises in production, food processing, digital agriculture, and supply chain business solutions sector.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/1/7/the-young-pinoy-and-agriculture-bridging-the-gap-1>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Relief for consumers: Tomato prices ease by February, says DA

BY [JEL SANTOS](#)

Jan 7, 2025 02:53 PM



(DENR PHOTO)

The skyrocketing prices of tomatoes would likely go down by February, an official of the Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Monday, Jan. 6.

According to the DA's price monitoring on January 4, tomato prices in Metro Manila markets range between ₱200 and ₱300 per kilo.

Assistant Secretary Arnel De Mesa, the spokesperson for the DA, said during a press briefing that the steep rise in tomato prices was due to the series of typhoons last year that severely affected crops in their vegetative and productive phases.

Such, he said, resulted in significant supply shortages for tomatoes, which saw a 45 percent reduction going into the fourth quarter of last year.

“So ‘yan, doon ‘yung pinakamalaki ‘yung 45 percent reduction in volume of production (That’s where the largest drop occurred, with a 45 percent decline in production volume),” De Mesa said.

“Sabi nila rito production may resume this January until February, start din ng dry season, and then expectedly prices can go back to normal during this period by February, end of January or early February (They said that production may resume this January until February, coinciding with the start of the dry season. Prices are expected to return to normal during this period, by the end of January or early February),” he added.

There are even reports that some retailers in the metropolis are selling tomatoes at ₱400 a kilo.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/1/7/relief-for-consumers-tomato-prices-ease-by-february-says-da>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Lower rice prices show House quinta-comm's progress, says Salceda

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Jan 7, 2025 01:35 PM

AT A GLANCE

- Albay 2nd district Rep. Joey Salceda credited the progress of the House quinta-committee (quinta-comm), particularly the initiatives led by Speaker Martin Romualdez, for the steady decrease in rice prices.
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Albay 2nd district Rep. Joey Salceda (PPAB)

Albay 2nd district Rep. Joey Salceda credited the progress of the House quinta-committee (quinta-comm), particularly the initiatives led by Speaker Martin Romualdez, for the steady decrease in rice prices.

In a statement on Tuesday, Jan. 7, Salceda said the continued decline in prices would mean that rice was no longer a contributing factor in influencing consumer prices. He anticipates that this would further ease inflation.

“The rice price situation is showing signs of improvement. Month-on-month, prices declined by 0.7 percent, a modest but nonetheless real reduction in price,” the economist-solon said.

“More importantly, year-on-year rice prices are at 0.9 percent, significantly below the overall inflation rate of 2.9 percent,” he added.

Salceda, lead chairperson of the quinta-comm, says credit is due for the initiatives spearheaded by the House Speaker.

He pointed out that just last month, Romualdez compelled major rice industry players in Central Luzon to reduce rice prices.

“We expect more reductions in January and February,” he said.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the country’s inflation rate in December 2024 rose to 2.9 percent from November’s 2.5 percent.

Salceda blamed the increase on corn prices, which he flagged last August as an “emerging food issue”.

“The problem seems to be corn, as I have persistently pointed out in recent months,” the congressman said.

He noted that corn inflation was at 5.0 percent year-on-year, which has dragged up meat inflation to 4.9 percent, as the principal input.

Salceda has emphasized that the quinta-comm, also known as the Murang Pagkain Supercommittee, will “work harder” to address the issue.

“Murang Pagkain will be discussing corn and meat next when we reconvene, probably next week,” he said.

“We will also push the DA (Department of Agriculture) to carry on with its proposal for a rice price emergency,” he continued.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/1/7/lower-rice-prices-show-house-quinta-comm-s-progress-says-salceda>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Ilocos Sur mourns death of former Gov. DV Savellano

BY [TRISTAN LOZANO](#)

Jan 7, 2025 12:10 PM

The province of Ilocos Sur mourned the death of former Ilocos Sur first district Rep. and Gov. Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano on Tuesday, Jan. 7.

Savellano, an Agriculture Undersecretary at the time of his passing at the age of 65, died of an unspecified cause.



The provincial government thanked Savellano for serving Ilocos Sur.

"Dios unay iti agngina for the life-long devotion and commitment to public service," it said in a Facebook post.

People and government officials in the province also mourned the death of the official.

Tributes poured in on Facebook, with one netizen recalling that Savellano was a customer of her delicacy.

His last Facebook post, published on New Year's Eve, paid tribute to the past year and hoped for an amazing 2025.

Savellano, born on Nov. 25, 1959, was congressman from 2016 to 2022. He was House deputy speaker from 2019 to 2022.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. appointed him to the Department of Agriculture in 2023.

As Agriculture Undersecretary, Savellano was the oversight official of the National Tobacco Administration and presiding official of the NTA Governing Board.

The NTA mourned his death and credited him for uplifting the lives of tobacco farmers in the country.

Savellano's wife is actress Dina Bonnevie.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/1/7/ilocos-sur-mourns-death-of-former-gov-dv-savellano>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Relief for consumers: Tomato prices ease by February, says DA

BY [JEL SANTOS](#)

Jan 7, 2025 09:36 AM



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According to the DA's price monitoring on Jan. 4, tomato prices in Metro Manila markets range between ₱200 and ₱300 per kilo.

DA spokesperson Assistant Secretary Arnel De Mesa said that the steep rise in tomato prices was due to the series of typhoons last year that severely affected crops in their vegetative and productive phases.

Such, he said, resulted in significant supply shortages for tomatoes, which saw a 45 percent reduction going into the fourth quarter of last year.

“So ‘yan, doon ‘yung pinakamalaki ‘yung 45 percent reduction in volume of production (That’s where the largest drop occurred, with a 45 percent decline in production volume),” De Mesa said.

“Sabi nila rito production may resume this January until February, start din ng dry season, and then expectedly prices can go back to normal during this period by February, end of January or early February (They said that production may resume this January until February, coinciding with the start of the dry season. Prices are expected to return to normal during this period, by the end of January or early February),” he added.

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<https://mb.com.ph/2025/1/7/tomato-prices-ease-by-february>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA undersecretary Savellano dies

[Helen Flores](#), [Christine Boton](#) - The Philippine Star

January 8, 2025 | 12:00am



Deogracias Victor Savellano

da.gov.ph

MANILA, Philippines — Agriculture Undersecretary Deogracias Victor Savellano passed away yesterday. He was 65.

President Marcos described Savellano as a “true public servant” and a “dear friend.”

“I am saddened by the passing of DV Savellano whose heart always belonged to the people he served,” Marcos said in a statement.

As governor and representative of Ilocos Sur, Savellano brought progress to the province, the President said.

Marcos said Savellano, his fellow Ilocano, carried the same dedication to his role in the agriculture department, working tirelessly to strengthen the livestock sector and support farmers across the country.

“To his family and loved ones, I offer my condolences. His legacy will endure in the lives he touched and in the progress he brought to Ilocos Sur and the nation,” Marcos said.

The National Tobacco Administration announced the passing of Savellano, husband of actress Dina Bonnevie, in a Facebook post.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2025/01/08/2412601/da-undersecretary-savellano-dies>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Palace: Inflation to remain ‘very low’

[Helen Flores](#) - The Philippine Star

January 8, 2025 | 12:00am



A customer buys tomatoes at the Marikina Public Market yesterday. The retail price of tomatoes has risen to P360 a kilo, according to the Department of Agriculture.

Michael Varcas

MANILA, Philippines — Inflation is likely to remain “very low” this year, Malacañang said on Tuesday, vowing to enforce tougher measures against smugglers and hoarders of agricultural commodities.

Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin made the remarks when asked to comment on the high prices of tomatoes in the market.

“There is sufficient supply, but the prices don’t go down. They go up. So, we have been very active in prosecuting hoarders. But that is only one part of the explanation,” Bersamin said at a press briefing at Malacañang.

The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) is confident that the inflation rate “will be very, very low,” he said.

“I just don’t know how the respective departments who are responsible for...will address this issue of bringing down the rate of inflation,” he said.

The retail price of tomato has increased to P360 per kilo, according to the Department of Agriculture.

Based on DA monitoring in Metro Manila markets, a medium-sized tomato costs at least P20.

The country's inflation quickened in December to 2.9 percent, the Philippine Statistics Authority reported.

The December inflation rate was a slight increase from the 2.5 percent in November. This was mainly driven by the higher inflation rate of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan noted the full-year rate of 3.2 percent was within the Development Budget Coordination Committee's annual inflation target of two to four percent through 2028.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/01/08/2412637/palace-inflation-remain-very-low>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Marcos honors late DA Usec. Savellano, mourns loss

By: [Luisa Cabato](#) - Reporter / [@luisacabatoINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 09:39 PM January 07, 2025



Former Deputy Speaker Deogracias “DV” Savellano of Ilocos Sur FILE PHOTO

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. honored Agriculture Undersecretary for Livestock Deogracias Victor “DV” Savellano, who passed away on Tuesday.

His passing was announced by the National Tobacco Administration in a Facebook post.

Marcos, in his message, said he is “deeply saddened” by the death of Deogracias, whom he described as a “true public servant, a dear friend, and someone whose heart always belonged to the people he served.

The President also commended Deogracias for carrying out dedication to his role at the Department of Agriculture and as governor and representative of Ilocos Sur.

“To his family and loved ones, I offer my sincerest condolences. DV’s legacy will endure in the lives he touched and in the progress he brought to Ilocos and the nation,” he said.

Marcos also said in Ilocano, “*Agyaman kami kadagiti amin a naipaay a tulong ken serbisyom apo, DV.*”

(We are thankful for all the help and service you have given, sir/madam. To God be the glory.)

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2022277/marcos-honors-late-da-usec-savellano-mourns-loss>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Agriculture Undersecretary Deogracias Victor Savellano dies at age 65

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 11:50 AM January 07, 2025



Agriculture Undersecretary Deogracias Victor Savellano passed away on Tuesday, January 7, 2025. (Photo from Rep. Savellano's office)

Agriculture Undersecretary Deogracias Victor Savellano passed away on Tuesday, Jan. 7, the National Tobacco Administration (NTA) announced on a Facebook post. He was 65 years old.

Savellano, born in Cabugao town in Ilocos Sur, is the husband of actress Dina Bonnevie. When appointed in 2023, he managed the livestock portfolio under the Department of Agriculture (DA) until his passing.

He was also designated as the oversight official of the NTA and presiding official of the NTA Governing Board.

Prior to his stint as an agriculture official, Savellano served as the deputy speaker and Ilocos Sur 1st district representative. He was likewise part of formulating the Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program (STEP) with NTA officials and other stakeholders in 2020.

“During his two terms as governor of Ilocos Sur, he initiated the KABSAT Caravan, a prosperity program giving free–farm machineries and inputs to all farmers in the province including the tobacco farmers,” the NTA said.

“His dedication, leadership, and invaluable contributions to the agency and to the upliftment of the life of the tobacco farmers will forever be remembered. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family, loved ones, and colleagues during this difficult time. His legacy continues to inspire us,” it added.

<https://business.inquirer.net/500172/agriculture-undersecretary-deogracias-savellano-dies-at-age-65>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

BIZ BUZZ: SSS bullish on PH capital markets

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 02:09 AM January 08, 2025



Expect the Social Security System (SSS) to be more active in finding investment opportunities in the local capital markets.

That is according to SSS president and CEO Robert Joseph de Claro, who expects the state-run pension fund for private sector workers to make a killing with its investments this year.

And there's enough reason to have such a "positive" outlook.

Amid the projected decline in interest rates as the central bank embarks on a calibrated easing cycle, De Claro said there were a lot of opportunities for business expansions. That is something that can boost the performance of companies in the stock market, where the SSS is a big investor.

As it is, the higher profits from investments are expected to augment the overall earnings of SSS, whose fund life is now projected to last until 2053 because of the 1-percent contribution hike starting this year.

"The favorable outlook should enable SSS to actively participate in the capital markets and contribute to jobs generation as companies build and expand their businesses," De Claro said.

"Ultimately, our goal is to make SSS relevant in the life of every Filipino at every point in their lives by providing quality social protection and espousing the value of saving for the future," he added. —

Ian Nicolas P. Cigaral

Postholiday passenger surge

The heavy passenger volume at the airports has yet to wane as travelers fly back to their homes and get back to reality after a long break.

AirAsia Philippines communications and public affairs head Steve Dailisan said they were expecting this to spill over until Jan. 10.

The budget carrier already served over 400,000 passengers from Dec. 16, 2024, to Jan. 6, 2025, higher than the projected 300,000 passengers.

“This is why we remain fully prepared and will continue our operational readiness after the holidays and into the upcoming lively fiesta season in key destinations like Kalibo, Cebu, and Bohol,” he added.

The low-cost airline currently operates 15 aircraft. By next year, the company is hoping to restore its fleet to 24 aircraft, which would allow it to return to pre-pandemic level. —*Tyrone Jasper C. Piad*

Piad

Solid waste management partnership

The Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (PCAF) is pitching in efforts to manage solid waste in the country while protecting the environment through a partnership with nongovernmental organization Ecowaste Coalition.

The memorandum of agreement between the PCAF and Ecowaste Coalition will be implemented in three phases focusing on Poblacion West in Taysan, Batangas.

“This collaboration aligns perfectly with PCAF’s performance indicators and supports the Department of Agriculture’s three-year plan to expand available agri-fishery areas for increased production by improving land fertility and modernizing production systems by increasing the adoption of climate-resilient farming technologies,” PCAF OIC Deputy Executive Director Cyril Soliaban said.

The first phase entails crafting information, education and communication campaigns anchored on social and behavior change communication and conducting capacity-building training on waste management, composting and recycling.

The last two stages will tackle long-term sustainability, with emphasis on behavior change, better compliance with waste segregation policies and an increase in waste diversion success rates.

A technical working committee will also be established to assist local governments in accurately recording waste data and improving waste diversion efforts.

The collaboration coincides with the observance of Zero Waste Month in January. — *Jordeene B.*

Lagare

<https://business.inquirer.net/500262/biz-buzz-sss-bullish-on-ph-capital-markets>

BUSINESS WORLD:

NZ poultry imports banned after bird flu outbreak

January 7, 2025 | 8:37 pm



REUTERS

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said it banned imports of poultry and wild birds from New Zealand (NZ) after an outbreak of Type H7N6 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), commonly known as bird flu.

In Memorandum Order No. 1, the DA said shipments of domestic and wild birds, poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs, and semen from the country were suspended.

“There is a need to prevent the entry of the HPAI virus to protect the health of Philippine poultry,” it added.

New Zealand’s Ministry for Primary Industries submitted a report to the World Organization for Animal Health, regarding an outbreak of HPAI in Canterbury in November affecting domestic birds.

An official report from the New Zealand government was submitted on Dec. 1 following confirmation by the New Zealand National Animal Health Laboratory.

The DA suspended the issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary import certificates for poultry products from New Zealand.

According to the Bureau of Animal Industry, avian flu has been detected in 53 Philippine municipalities across five provinces as of Jan 3. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/01/07/645294/nz-poultry-imports-banned-after-bird-flu-outbreak/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

December inflation rises to 2.9%

January 8, 2025 | 12:34 am



Prices of tomatoes surged to P150-P160 per kilo in markets in Metro Manila. — PHILIPPINE STAR/Ryan Baldemor

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

INFLATION accelerated for a third straight month in December amid a faster rise in food, utility and transport prices, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) said.

ADVERTISING

Preliminary data from the PSA showed the consumer price index (CPI) rose to 2.9% year on year in December from 2.5% in November but was slower than 3.9% a year earlier.

It also settled within the 2.3%-3.1% forecast for the month given by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

The latest inflation print is slightly higher than the 2.7% median estimate in a *BusinessWorld* poll of 13 analysts.

The December print brought 2024 inflation to 3.2%, in line with the BSP's forecast. This was the first time that full-year inflation fell within the central bank's 2-4% target since 2021, when inflation averaged 3.9%. It was also the slowest since 2.4% in 2020.

“On balance, the within-target inflation outlook and well-anchored inflation expectations continue to support the BSP’s shift toward a less restrictive monetary policy. Nonetheless, the monetary authority will continue to closely monitor the emerging upside risks to inflation, notably geopolitical factors,” the central bank said in a statement.

PSA data showed core inflation, which discounts volatile prices of food and fuel, stood at 2.8% in December — faster than the previous month’s 2.5% but slower than the 4.4% a year ago.

For the entire year, core inflation averaged 3%, easing from 6.6% in 2023.

National Statistician Claire Dennis S. Mapa said December inflation was mainly due to the housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels index, which accelerated to 2.9% from 1.9% a month earlier and 1.5% in the previous year.

The index accounted for more than half or a 52.9% share of the uptrend in inflation during the month.

One of the main drivers was electricity, which jumped to 1.6% in December from the 2.5% contraction in November and 7.8% decline a year ago.

In December, Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) raised the overall rate by P0.1048 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to P11.9617 per kWh from P11.8569 in November.

The PSA also cited faster inflation in rentals at 2.4% from 2.2% a month ago and liquefied petroleum gas or LPG at 7.8% from 6.7%.

The PSA also cited transport as a main source of faster December inflation.

Transport inflation picked up to 0.9%, a reversal of the 1.2% drop in November and faster than the 0.4% clip a year earlier.

Mr. Mapa said the rise in transport inflation was due to the slower deceleration of prices of gasoline (-2.4% from -8%) and diesel (-2.9% from -9.4%).

In December, pump price adjustments stood at a net increase of P1.40 a liter for gasoline and P1.45 a liter for diesel, while kerosene prices had a net decrease of P0.80 a liter.

Passenger sea transport jumped to 71.9% in December from 17.1% in November. Mr. Mapa said this was due to seasonal factors amid the holidays.

RICE

Meanwhile, the heavily weighted food and nonalcoholic beverage index remained steady at 3.4% during the month. Food inflation was likewise steady at 3.5%.

PRICES

“The good news is that the inflation rate of rice is easing. In fact, there’s even an expectation that inflation for rice will turn negative this January,” Mr. Mapa added.

Rice inflation slowed to 0.8% from 5.1% in November and 19.6% a year prior. Rice is typically the biggest contributor to overall inflation but has recently been on a downtrend since the government slashed tariffs on rice imports in July.

However, faster increases were recorded for vegetables, tubers, plantains, cooking bananas and pulses, which climbed to 14.2% from 5.9% a month ago.

Mr. Mapa said the price increase of tomatoes soared to 120.8% in December from 31.3% in November. It also accounted for 0.3 percentage point (ppt) of overall inflation.

The average price of tomatoes stood at P147.23 per kilo in December, rising from P84.64 per kilo year ago.

Mr. Mapa said higher vegetable prices could be partly attributed to storm damage in the past few months.

“That of course has an effect. It is not unique to this December, every time there’s a typhoon, it’s the prices of vegetables that really spike. Add to that the high demand (for vegetables) over the holidays,” he added.

Data from the PSA showed inflation for the bottom 30% of income households eased to 2.5% from 2.9% a month prior and 5% in the previous year. Year to date, inflation for the bottom 30% averaged 4.2%.

Inflation in the National Capital Region (NCR) accelerated to 3.1% in December from the 2.2% print in November and 3.5% a year ago. For 2024, inflation in NCR averaged 2.6%.

Outside NCR, consumer prices quickened to 2.9% from 2.6% a month earlier and 4% in the year prior, bringing the average to 3.4% in 2024.

“We are seeing the fruit of our efforts in bringing down inflation within the government’s target range of 2-4%,” BSP Governor Eli M. Remolona, Jr. said in a statement.

National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan said the full-year average inflation in 2024 is a “significant improvement” from 2023.

“Despite the risks we encountered throughout the year, our combined efforts to temper inflation have largely been successful. We will build upon this momentum as we commit to keep the inflation rate within our target range in 2025,” he added.

In a separate statement, the BSP said the latest inflation outturn is “consistent with the BSP’s assessment that inflation will remain anchored to the target range over the policy horizon.”

The BSP expects inflation to average 3.3% this year and 3.5% in 2026, both within the 2-4% target.

However, it said the balance of risks to the inflation outlook continues to lean to the upside, citing “potential upward adjustments in transport fares and electricity rates.”

“The impact of lower import tariffs on rice remains the main downside risk to inflation. Domestic demand is likely to remain firm but subdued. Private domestic spending is expected to be supported by easing inflation and improving labor market conditions,” the BSP said.

“However, downside risks in the external environment could materialize and temper economic activity and market sentiment,” it added.

Amid these risks, the BSP said “complacency is not an option.”

“Prices of certain commodities may rise due to supply-side factors like geopolitical tensions and adverse weather conditions,” it added.

WITHIN

Analysts still see inflation settling firmly within the 2-4% range.

TARGET

“For now, we’re sticking to our below-consensus forecast for average annual inflation to fall further this year to 2.4% from 3.2% in 2024, though the risks to this projection are skewed to the upside,” Pantheon Macroeconomics Chief Emerging Asia Economist Miguel Chanco said.

Chinabank Research in a note said bad weather poses a risk to food prices amid the expected La Niña this quarter.

“Still, barring unexpected shocks, we project inflation will remain within target going forward,” it added.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort said a “relatively benign” inflation print might still be seen up to early 2025, which would justify further policy easing.

Last year, the central bank delivered a total of 75 basis points (bps) worth of rate cuts, bringing the benchmark rate to 5.75% by yearend.

“Still, the BSP will likely continue to be vigilant of upside risks to prices. However, with inflation still expected to settle within target this year, we think the BSP has room to continue with its gradual pace of monetary policy easing,” Chinabank said.

It expects the BSP to deliver 75 bps of cuts this year to bring the policy rate to 5%.

The Monetary Board’s first policy review for the year is on Feb. 20.

<https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2025/01/08/645274/december-inflation-rises-to-2-9/>

REMATE:

Maximum SRP' system para sa bigas ikakasa ng DA

January 7, 2025 18:45



MANILA, Philippines- Magtatakda ang Department of Agriculture (DA) ng “maximum suggested retail price (SRP) system” bago matapos ang buwan.

Layon nito na tugunan ang hindi makatwirang retail prices ng bigas sa ilang lokal na pamilihan.

Sinabi Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na wala dapat imported rice na maipagbibili sa P60 per kg.

“We are now trying to establishano ba ang maximum suggested retail price. So, we will be coming up with a maximum suggested retail price system very soon,” ayon kay Tiu Laurel. Gayunman, nilinaw ni Tiu Laurel na ang sistema ay hindi aakto bilang price cap sa retail rice.

“It’s not a suggestion, it’s like we’re saying na ito dapat ang maximum na presyo niyan. But it’s not a price cap,” ang sinabi pa rin ni Tiu Laurel.

“Moreover, a P60/kg.-level of retail rice may already be considered as profiteering, dagdag na pahayag nito.

At para papanagutin ang importers at retailers para sa posibleng profiteering, nakatakdang makipagpulong ang DA sa Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Philippine National Police (PNP), at Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

“Para ma-sort namin ang aming remedies kung paano ma-address ito. Clearly, nasa Price Act ata ang profiteering angle,” ang winika ni Tiu Laurel.

Pagdating naman sa rice brands, pinanatili naman nito ang plano ng DA na alisin ang “premium” at “special” labels upang lalo pang maiwasan ang panghuhuthot.

“People are very brand conscious and I know that better than anybody in this country dahil I’m a brand owner, I used to be a brand owner myself,” ani Tiu Laurel.

“In the label pagka sinabi mong premium or special, hindi ba mas na-a-attract ka doon at willing ka na bilhin iyon nang mas mahal. Pero actually, hindi naman siya premium o special, parehas lang siya ng mga katabi niya,” dagdag niya.

Tinukoy ang kontradiksyon sa mga antas ng presyo sa merkado gamit lamang ang “rice types, origin, at specification percentage.”

Hanggang noong Enero 3, ang presyo ng local at imported regular at well-milled rice sa Kalakhang Maynila ay umaabot lamang ng mula sa P38/kg. hanggang P54/kg., ayon sa DA-Bantay Presyo.

Ang premium at special-labeled rice, kapuwa imported at local, ay pumapalo naman mula sa P48/kg. hanggang P64/kg. **Kris Jose**

<https://remate.ph/maximum-srp-system-para-sa-bigas-ikakasa-ng-da/>

REMATE:

BFAR pumalag sa desisyon ng SC sa commercial fishing

January 7, 2025 18:00



MANILA, Philippines- Iniapela ng Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) ang desisyon ng Supreme Court (SC) na payagan ang commercial fishing sa loob ng 15-kilometer municipal water zone.

Naghain ang BFAR ng motion for reconsideration at hiniling na mabaligtad ang naging desisyon ng SC First Division na maaaring mag-operate ang mga commercial fishing vessel sa 15-kilometer boundary.

Sinabi ng DA-BFAR na malaki ang epekto ng naturang desisyon hindi lamang sa mga mangingisda at sa komunidad kundi maging sa sustainable resource at environmental protection.

“This move reflects the agency’s proactive stance in ensuring that the implications of the Court’s Decision are thoroughly reviewed, particularly given the potential impact on national policies, environmental conservation, and the livelihoods of those in the fisheries sector,” nakasaad sa mosyon.

Iginiit ng BFAR na pinag-aaralan nito ang lahat ng posibleng legal remedies upang makakuha ng patas na resolusyon sa kaso.

Magugunita na nitong Disyembre, pinawalang-bisa ng mataas na hukuman ang probisyon ng Fisheries Code na naghihigpit ng commercial fishing sa municipal waters.

Pinagtibay ng SC ang desisyon ng Malabon RTC na nagdeklarang unconstitutional ang pagbibigay ng prayoridad sa maliliit na mangingisda.

Iginiit sa mosyon na lalong mababawasan ang marine resources kung hindi mabaligtad ang desisyon ng SC. **Teresa Tavares**

<https://remate.ph/bfar-pumalag-sa-desisyon-ng-sc-sa-commercial-fishing/>

REMATE:

Agri exec Deogracias Victor ‘DV’ Savellano pumanaw na

January 7, 2025 16:02



ILOCOS SUR- Gulat ang buong mamayan ng lalawigang ito sa biglaang pagpanaw ng mister ng aktres na si Dina Bonnevie na si Undersecretary Deogracias Victor “DV” Savellano.

Pumanaw sa edad na 65 si Savellano, naninilbihan bilang Undersecretary for Livestock ng Department of Agriculture.

Isang Filipino politician si Savellano na naging vice governor at gobernador ng Ilocos Sur.

Naging kinatawan din siya ng 1st District ng Ilocos Sur na naging daan para maging Deputy Speaker siya ng House of Representatives (2019-2022).

Ikinasal sila ng aktres noong 2012.

Wala pang inilalabas na impormasyon kung ano ang ikinamatay nito. **Rolando S. Gamoso**

<https://remate.ph/agri-exec-deogracias-victor-dv-savellano-pumanaw-na/>

REMATE:

BFAR: Shellfish sa Zambo, Biliran, Samar coastal waters positibo pa rin sa red tide toxin

January 7, 2025 15:49



MANILA, Philippines- Inihayag ng Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) nitong Martes na ang shellfish na nakolekta at sinuri sa ilang katubigan ng Zamboanga, Samar, at Biliran ay positibo pa rin sa toxic red tide.

Sa bulletin, sinabi ng BFAR na nananatiling positibo ang shellfish sa Dumanquillas Bay sa Zamboanga del Sur; coastal waters ng Daram Island at Irong-Irong Bay sa Samar; Matarinao Bay sa Eastern Samar; coastal waters ng Tungawan sa Zamboanga Sibugay Province; at coastal waters ng Biliran Islands sa Biliran Province sa Paralytic Shellfish Poison (PSP) o toxic red tide.

Inihayag ng BFAR na lampas ito sa regulatory limit.

Samantala, wala namang natukoy na toxic red tide sa coastal waters ng Zumarraga Island.

Hindi ligtas kainin lahat ng uri ng shellfish at *Acetes* sp. O alamang na nahuli mula sa mga nabanggit na lugar.

Samantala, ligtas kainin ang isda, pusit, hipon, at alimango sa kondisyong sariwa ang mga ito at hinugasang mabuti at tinanggalan ng lamang-loob bago lutuin. **RNT/SA**

<https://remate.ph/bfar-shellfish-sa-zambo-biliran-samar-coastal-waters-positibo-pa-rin-sa-red-tide-toxin/>

REMATE:

Presyo ng kamatis sa NCR lumobo sa shortage

January 7, 2025 09:36



MANILA, Philippines – Tumaas ng hanggang 400 percent ang retail price ng mga kamatis sa Metro Manila dahil sa pagbaba umano ng suplay nito makaraan ang serye ng mga bagyo sa bansa noong nakaraang taon.

Sa price monitoring ng Department of Agriculture (DA), ang mga kamatis ay ibinibenta sa pagitan ng P200 at P350 kada kilo.

Mas mataas ito kumpara sa P40 hanggang P100 sa kada kilo ng kamatis noong nakaraang taon.

Sinabi naman ng DA na posibleng bumaba ang presyo nito sa pagtatapos ng Enero o sa Pebrero sa pagsisimula ng dry season production.

“Production may resume this January until February. It is the start of the dry season and then expectedly, the prices can go back to normal during this period . . . , [probably by the] end of January or early February,” ayon sa DA. *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/presyo-ng-kamatis-sa-ncr-lumobo-sa-shortage/>

REMATE:

Maximum SRP sa imported na bigas, target ng DA

January 7, 2025 09:23



MANILA, Philippines – Plano ng Department of Agriculture (DA) na magpatupad ng maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) sa imported na bigas para matugunan ang umano’y profiteering.

Ang imported na bigas sa kasalukuyan ay ibinibenta hanggang P65 kada kilo sa ilang pamilihan sa Quezon City.

Ayon kay Agriculture Secretary Francis Tiu Laurel Jr., hindi dapat umabot sa mahigit P60 kada kilo ang presyo ng imported na bigas.

“[That is] already profiteering in my opinion,” ani Tiu-Laurel.

Plano ng DA na ipatupad ang MSRP bago matapos ang Enero.

“It is not a suggestion. It is like we are saying na ito dapat ang maximum presyo nyan. But it is not a price cap. We will be coming up with the MSRP system very soon,” sinabi pa ng opisyal.

Makikipagpulong ang DA sa mga rice importer, retailer, at iba pang ahensya ng pamahalaan para ipatupad ang MSRP, kung saan ito ipatutupad at ang pananagutan ng mga lalabag. *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/maximum-srp-sa-imported-na-bigas-target-ng-da/>

ABANTE:

Agri Usec Savellano pumanaw na

Abante News

- **January 7, 2025**



Pumanaw na si Agriculture Undersecretary for Livestock Deogracias Victor “DV” Savellano.

Ang pagpanaw ni Savellano ay inihayag ng National Tobacco Administration (NTA) nitong Martes. Siya ang oversight official ng NTA at bahagi ng Governing Board nito.

“His dedication, leadership and invaluable contributions to the agency and to the upliftment of the life of the tobacco farmers will forever be remembered.”

“Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family, loved ones, and colleagues during this difficult time. His legacy continues to inspire us,” ayon sa NTA.

Si Savellano ay dati ring nagsilbi bilang Deputy House Speaker at representative ng 1st District ng Ilocos Sur. (Carl Santiago)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2025/01/07/agri-usec-savellano-pumanaw-na/>

MANILA STANDARD:

December inflation rose to 2.9%, settled within 2024 gov't target

By Darwin G. Amojelar

January 7, 2025, 9:10 pm

Inflation rate rose to 2.9 percent in December from 2.5 percent in November, led by higher prices for housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) said Tuesday.

The December inflation brought the 2024 average to 3.2 percent — well within the government's target range of 2 percent to 4 percent. Inflation rate was at 3.9 percent in December 2023.

Data showed that inflation for food and non-alcoholic beverages fell to 4.4 percent in 2024 from 7.9 percent in 2023. Rice inflation, in particular, slowed to 0.8 percent in December 2024, the lowest since January 2022.

“The 3.2-percent average inflation rate in 2024 is a significant improvement from the 6.0 percent figure in 2023. Despite the risks we encountered throughout the year, our combined efforts to temper inflation have largely been successful. We will build upon this momentum as we commit to keep the inflation rate within our target range in 2025,” said National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Secretary Arsenio Balisacan.

The Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) announced during its Dec. 2, 2024 meeting that the government retained its annual inflation target of 2 percent to 4 percent for 2025 to 2028.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said the latest inflation outturn was consistent with its assessment that inflation would remain anchored to the target range over the policy horizon.

“Nonetheless, the balance of risks to the inflation outlook continues to lean to the upside due largely to potential upward adjustments in transport fares and electricity rates. The impact of lower import tariffs on rice remains the main downside risk to inflation,” the BSP said.

“Domestic demand is likely to remain firm but subdued. Private domestic spending is expected to be supported by easing inflation and improving labor market conditions. However, downside risks in the external environment could materialize and temper economic activity and market sentiment,” it said.

It said the within-target inflation outlook and well-anchored inflation expectations continue to support the BSP's shift toward less restrictive monetary policy. "Nonetheless, the monetary authority will continue to closely monitor the emerging upside risks to inflation, notably geopolitical factors," it said.

Finance Secretary Ralph Recto credited the easing of the 2024 inflation to effective government interventions that sustained the moderation of rice prices, providing much-needed relief to low-income families.

"With the President's decisive leadership, whole-of-government approach, and concerted efforts of stakeholders, we were able to manage the inflation to finally settle within our target after two years. The sustained moderation in rice prices is particularly a welcome relief especially to our lower-income households and highlights the positive impact of our interventions," said Recto.

https://manilastandard.net/business/314544396/december-inflation-rose-to-2-9-settled-within-2024-govt-target.html?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR3rwo40YV2ln74qGmeKu2XjnnojNfYLHZwSktF1Y1-5w0SXyEPqxMCXADc_aem_WU_Ga2DDPxT2ncLKggOzgw

MANILA STANDARD:

Agriculture executive Savellano dies at 65



By Rolando Ng

January 7, 2025, 2:07 pm

Department of Agriculture (DA) Undersecretary Deogracias Victor 'DV' Savellano passed away this morning. He was 65.

The DA official also served as Ilocos Sur first district representative to the Lower House from 2016 to 2022. He was also the governor of the same province.

The National Tobacco Administration (NTA), an attached agency of the DA, where he served as oversight official expressed its condolences in a Facebook post.

“His dedication, leadership, and invaluable contributions to the agency and to the upliftment of the life of the tobacco farmers will forever be remembered,” the NTA statement read.

In another Facebook post, the Provincial Government of Ilocos Sur thanked Savellano for his lifework in public service and extended its sympathies to his family.

Savellano was married to actress Dina Bonnevie.

https://manilastandard.net/news/314544129/agriculture-executive-savellano-dies-at-65.html?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR16ghgKjQmg10r9naPQOTllOx3d-CUITLs5q3eitLX6PHjP4CywKCb5NHw_aem_49QGm5_9YkF24lpJtm5bAw

MANILA STANDARD:

Price surge



By Manny Palmero

January 8, 2025, 12:42 am

Consumers buy tomatoes at P280 per kilo at the Marikina public market on Tuesday, January 7, 2025. Retail prices of tomatoes in Metro Manila have gone up by as much as 400 percent since the weekend due to a substantial decrease in local supply following a series of typhoons that devastated parts of the country last year.

https://manilastandard.net/gallery/314544471/price-surge.html?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR2nIhxmvtnkeDxyUPFmztIRMpHHyBUJ360aS77iAyTMtpsQG2p6uXMVi3M_aem_JCfaUI30Y38j2BM7OfzaHQ

MANILA STANDARD:

The price is right



By Manny Palmero

January 8, 2025, 12:34 am

Retailers at the Marikina public market see to it that the price tags for their rice, both imported and locally produced, are right. The Department of Agriculture is poised to implement at the end of this month a maximum suggested retail price for imported rice which should not be sold above P60 a kilo.

https://manilastandard.net/gallery/314544469/the-price-is-right-2.html?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMATAAR16ghgKjQmg10r9naPQOTlIQx3d-CUITLs5q3eitLX6PHjP4CvwKCb5NHw_aem_49QGm5_9YkF24lpJtm5bAw

THE MANILA TIMES:

DA official Savellano, husband of Dina Bonnevie, passes

By Giselle P. Jordan

January 8, 2025

DEPARTMENT of Agriculture (DA) Undersecretary Deogracias Victor Savellano passed away at age 65. He is survived by his wife, actress Dina Bonnevie.

Savellano's death was announced by the National Tobacco Administration (NTA) on their Facebook page.

Savellano served as the DA undersecretary for livestock from July 2023 until his passing. He was also an oversight official of the NTA and the presiding official of the agency's governing board.

Before that, he was the representative of the 1st District of Ilocos Sur from June 2016 to June 2022. He also served as the deputy speaker of the House of Representatives from August 2019 to June 2022.

He served several terms as the governor and vice governor of Ilocos Sur and six years as the vice mayor of his hometown of Cabugao, also in Ilocos Sur.

The NTA expressed its condolences to Savellano's family and thanked the former official for his contributions to the agency and to the lives of tobacco farmers.

Savellano and Bonnevie married in 2012.

https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/01/08/news/national/da-official-savellano-husband-of-dina-bonnevie-passes/2032560?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMATAAR1vK12chz0GwszszxUToVPvfRmjIMZxvnYFQSduCsy5zFkhPmjSOgj-KZUQ_aem_OyAzLSJxXyJe4zx-fdJczA

THE MANILA TIMES:

Usufruct pact signed in Cotabato

By **Giselle P. Jordan**

January 8, 2025

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) Soccsksargen and the National Dairy Authority Regional Dairy Farmers Livelihood Center (NDA RDFLC) Southern Mindanao signed an usufruct agreement allowing the NDA RDFLC to use a portion of the Aroman Research Experiment Station (ARES) in Cotabato for its projects.

ARES will become the NDA RDFLC-Southern Mindanao's primary source of livestock for their animal dispersal initiatives.

Marlon Flores, OIC department manager of NDA RDFLC-Southern Mindanao, said that their partnerships with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Education (DepEd) on their Milk Feeding Program (MFP) would likely contribute to the project's success.

DA Soccsksargen Regional Executive Director Roberto Perales urged the NDA RDFLC to continuously give market access to local dairy products. He also expressed hopes that the quality of milk available to the public will improve through the sponsorships of the DSWD and DepEd.

The NDA RDFLC-Southern Mindanao and DA Soccsksargen vowed to help strengthen the dairy industry through their collaboration.

https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/01/08/regions/usufruct-pact-signed-in-cotabato/2032315?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMATAAR3gTaZxfXeFmPVDo6hEKNwhApQWUytyIMOqgZdisGYM-t6G99XG_M5Cf9o_aem_oeFjFZVzG3LqaxJ3w_ucvA

THE MANILA TIMES:

'Sulit Rice' to be sold in more areas, says DA

By Giselle P. Jordan
January 8, 2025

THERE are plans to expand the sale of 100-percent broken but high-quality and cheaper "Sulit Rice" to more areas, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said in a statement.

Broken rice — fragments that result from drying, transport, and milling — is shorter in length but equal in quality to regular white rice. It currently sells at P36 per kilogram (kg).

Tiu Laurel noted that since Sulit Rice was well-received in two pilot testing areas, the Department of Agriculture (DA) will make it available in more Kadiwa ng Pangulo centers.

Lower-priced 5-percent broken rice will likewise be offered as options, Tiu Laurel said while denouncing profiteers behind the selling of imported rice at P60/kg.

In consultative meetings with rice importers and millers, Tiu Laurel explained that profiteering undermined the efforts of the DA and the government in stabilizing the rice market, and negatively affected the livelihood of local farmers.

"In our meetings, it was clear that [5-percent broken] imported rice should not be sold at P60 per kilo," Tiu Laurel said. "Selling imported rice at that price is profiteering..."

Imported rice should ideally be sold at P50 per kg, enough for importers and retailers to make a decent profit, Tiu Laurel pointed out.

More consultative meetings will be held this week to set a maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) for rice to be finalized by the end of January.

However, the MSRP won't be a price cap, but rather a guide to make rice affordable to the public.

https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/01/08/business/top-business/sulit-rice-to-be-sold-in-more-areas-says-da/2032473?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR2nIhxmvtnkeDxyUPFmztIRMpHHyBUJ360aS77iAyTMtpsQG2p6uXMVi3M_aem_JCfaUI30Y38j2BM7OfzaHQ

THE MANILA TIMES:

Tobacco farmers get livelihood assistance

By **Giselle P. Jordan**

January 8, 2025

A TOTAL of 2,224 tobacco farmers nationwide received vegetable seeds and broiler chickens from the National Tobacco Administration's (NTA) Gulay at Manukan sa Barangay (GMB) project in 2024, the agency reported.

The package included seeds of leguminous vegetables and other produce common in the farmers' respective communities, as well as fertilizers and crop-protection agents.

The NTA allotted P16.6 million to the program for 278 farmer-beneficiaries in each of the agency's eight branch offices.

The program required beneficiaries to be in good standing and be registered in the Tobacco Contract Growing System program.

NTA Administrator and CEO Belinda Sanchez said the project would help augment the income of tobacco farmers through additional livelihood opportunities.

The GMB project is one of the NTA's livelihood assistance programs to encourage tobacco farmers to produce their own food, find other sources of income and engage in sustainable farming through diversified practices.

https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/01/08/business/top-business/tobacco-farmers-get-livelihood-assistance/2032471?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR2aX8-Fw-HTOAg02gLIXC8sPNP0-v8WqZf_49VvY2KM0aDaMoaTjIC-agQ_aem_QpXVcqE7uNvlMFLL4hXdnw

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Rice stockpile hits 2-year high in December

[Ada Pelonia](#)

[January 7, 2025](#)

THE country's rice stockpile hit a 2-year high in December, with the commercial sector and the National Food Authority (NFA) posting a bigger inventory.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed that rice stocks surged by 34.5 percent to 2.55 million metric tons (MMT) as of December 1 from the previous year's 1.90 MMT.

This was higher than the 2.53 MMT recorded in the same period in 2022, based on PSA data.

“This month's rice stocks inventory registered annual increases from the NFA depositories by 152.1 percent and from the commercial sector by 77.1 percent. On the other hand, an annual decrease was noted from the household stocks by 9.0 percent,” the PSA said.

The state statistics agency also noted that last month's stock inventory was 3.6 percent higher than the 2.46 MMT recorded in November.

The agency said 59.2 percent or some 1.51 MMT of rice were held by commercial entities while 35.2 percent or 897,920 MT were stored by households.

It added that rice stocks in the NFA warehouses as of December 1 reached 144,050 MT, accounting for 5.6 percent of total inventory during the reference period.

“In comparison to the November 2024 rice stocks levels, increments were noted from the commercial sector by 6.3 percent, and in the NFA depositories by 1.7 percent. Meanwhile, rice stocks inventory from the households decreased by 0.4 percent.”

In the same report, the PSA said total corn inventory as of December 1 dropped by 19.6 percent to

551,450 MT from 685,890 MT last year.

It added that the latest total corn inventory was 10.9 percent lower than the 619,160 MT recorded in November.

PSA data showed that the corn inventory in commercial entities reached 484,200 MT while corn stocks in households were at 67,250 MT.

“From the same month of the previous year’s level, corn stocks inventory recorded annual decreases from the households by 43.0 percent and from the commercial sector by 14.7 percent,” the PSA said.

“Relative to the inventory level in November 2024, decreases in the volume of corn stocks were noted from the households by 14.4 percent and from the commercial sector by 10.4 percent,” it added.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/01/07/rice-stockpile-hits-2-year-high-in-december/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR3gTaZxfXeFmPVD06hEKNwhApQWUy tyIMOggZdisGYM-t6G99XG M5Cf9o aem oeFjFZVzG3LqaxJ3w ucvA>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Rising meat prices worry Murang Pagkain panel head

Jovee Marie N. de la Cruz
January 7, 2025

WHILE rice prices demonstrated improvement, the lead chairman of the Murang Pagkain Supercommittee of the House of Representatives on Tuesday expressed concern over corn and meat prices.

Albay Rep Jose Maria Clemente “Joey” Sarte Salceda, the lead chairman of the super committee, expressed cautious optimism regarding the December 2024 rice price situation, crediting recent policy interventions while emphasizing the need for continued efforts in addressing inflation challenges.

Salceda made the statement in the wake of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) report showing an increase in the country’s inflation rate to 2.9 percent in December from 2.5 percent in November.

Salceda, chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means, stressed that rice prices demonstrated improvement, with a month-on-month decline of 0.7 percent and a year-on-year increase limited to 0.9 percent. These figures are notably below the overall inflation rate, signaling progress in stabilizing rice prices under the government’s initiatives.

“The rice price situation is showing signs of improvement. Month-on-month, prices declined by 0.7 percent, a modest but nonetheless real reduction in price. More importantly, year-on-year rice prices are at 0.9 percent, significantly below the overall inflation rate of 2.9 percent. That means rice is no longer a drag up for consumer prices,” he said.

He attributed these developments to actions taken by Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, particularly following recommendations from the Murang Pagkain Supercommittee. In December, the Speaker urged major rice industry stakeholders in

Central Luzon to lower rice prices, a move expected to yield further reductions in early 2025.

“We expect more reductions in January and February,” Salceda said.

Salceda also reiterated support for the Department of Agriculture’s (DA) proposal for a rice price emergency to further stabilize the market.

Despite the encouraging rice price trends, Salceda expressed concern over corn and meat prices. Corn inflation surged to 5 percent year-on-year, exerting upward pressure on meat prices, which rose by 4.9 percent in the same period.

“The problem seems to be corn. It remains the principal input for meat production, which is why addressing corn prices is critical,” he explained.

Salceda assured that the Murang Pagkain Supercommittee would shift focus to these issues in its next meeting, likely taking place next week.

The super committee, composed of five powerful panels—Ways and Means, Trade and Industry, Agriculture and Food, Social Services, and Food Security—serves as a united force to expose irregularities and strengthen government programs.

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/01/07/rising-meat-prices-worry-murang-pagkain-panel-head/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR3rwo40YV2ln74qGmeKu2XjnojNfYLHZwSktF1Y1-5w0SXyEPqxMCXADc_aem_WU_Ga2DDPxT2ncLKggOzww

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Savellano, champion of tobacco farmers, Ilocano heritage, dies

Ada Pelonia
January 7, 2025



AGRICULTURE Undersecretary Deogracias Victor Savellano, whose lifelong advocacy for the welfare of tobacco farmers and passion for promoting heritage and culture in Ilocos Sur has been widely hailed, died on Tuesday, January 7. He was 65.

His death was announced by the National Tobacco Administration (NTA), an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture (DA), where he served as oversight official of the NTA and presiding official of the NTA Governing Board.

“His dedication, leadership, and invaluable contributions to the agency and to the upliftment of the life of the tobacco farmers will forever be remembered. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family, loved ones, and colleagues during this difficult time. His legacy continues to inspire us,” the NTA said in a Facebook post, on the sudden death of Savellano, married for over a decade to veteran actress Dina Bonnevie.

The NTA noted that during his stint as a Deputy Speaker and Representative for the First District of Ilocos Sur, Savellano took an active part in formulating the Sustainable Tobacco Enhancement Program (STEP) with NTA officials and other stakeholders in 2020.

During his two terms as governor of Ilocos Sur, the NTA said Savellano initiated the KABSAT Caravan, a prosperity program giving free-farm machineries and inputs to all farmers in the province including the tobacco farmers.

The National Museum also mourns the passing of Savellano whom they called a “deep lover and staunch promoter of the cultural heritage of his province and the wider Ilocos region.”

It stated that when Savellano was vice governor, he was instrumental in the expansion of the NMP in the Unesco World Heritage City of Vigan, Ilocos Sur, with the addition in 2013 to the previously existing museum at the Burgos House of the entire Carcel or Ilocos Sur Provincial Jail, which made possible today’s NMP’s spacious regional museum complex in Ilocos Sur.

“Kabsat DV was a great friend of the NMP and a longstanding patron of our work in many areas of shared interests. He will be very much missed and we convey our admiration and gratitude for all his support, as well as our deepest condolences to his wife, family and friends,” the agency said.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/01/07/savellano-champion-of-tobacco-farmers-ilocano-heritage-dies/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAAR3oGmAXX-h6zh5BpPT0lgvvtxV0gSSI73GKDxOR01aBTap WPDEKkhiDOQ aem Ulw4TMWB63bA PTq ST1mVQ>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

DA suspends importation of poultry products from NZ

Ada Pelonia
January 7, 2025

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) has slapped a temporary ban on poultry products from New Zealand following a bird flu outbreak.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. signed Memorandum Order (MO) 1, which banned the entry of imported domestic and wild birds including their products, such as poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs, and semen from that country.

The DA said it imposed the ban after Mary Van Andel, Council member-Chief Veterinary Officer of the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries, confirmed an H7N6 High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) case in East Otago, Waitaki, Canterbury, New Zealand, on November 23.

Based on the order, the agency submitted its official report on December 2.

“There is need to prevent the entry of HPAI virus to protect the health of the local poultry population,” it read.

Following this report, Laurel ordered the immediate suspension of the issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary import clearance (SPSIC) to the affected commodity.

He also noted that only birds slaughtered or products processed on or before November 9, 2024, will be allowed to enter the country. The ban does not cover heat-treated products.

The order said heat-treated products are acceptable following a provision under the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Terrestrial Animal Health Code of 2019.

Meanwhile, the agency warned that shipments which failed to comply would be stopped and confiscated by all veterinary quarantine officers or inspectors at all major ports of entry.

The order took effect immediately. Manila usually imposes a

temporary ban on poultry products from areas with bird flu outbreaks as a preventive measure.

Figures from the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) showed that the country imported 917 metric tons (MT) of chicken from New Zealand as of October 31.

The country's meat imports grew by 16.84 percent to 1.19 million metric tons (MMT) from January to October 2024, compared to the 1.02 MMT recorded in the same period of the previous year.

BAI data indicated that chicken imports grew by 8.55 percent to 389,952 MT from 359,230 MT. Mechanically deboned meat (MDM) accounted for the bulk of the shipments at 213,490 MT.

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/01/07/da-suspends-importation-of-poultry-products-from-nz/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR1vK12chz0GwszszxUToVPvfRmjIMZxvnYFQSDuCsY5zFkhPmjSOgj-KZUQ_aem_OvAzLSJxXyJe4zx-fdJczA

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Lack of opportunities blamed for decreasing number of fishers

Jonathan L. Mayuga

January 7, 2025

LIKE farmers, Filipino fishermen are faced with the dilemma of convincing their children to embrace fishing as a way of life.

The declining number of family members, especially the youth, engaged in fishing is a reflection that the sector is “lacking opportunities due to government neglect,” the militant group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) said in a statement on Tuesday.

The group cited the latest report of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) that said that the number of fishing operators below 50 years old decreased by 3.6 percent to 557,368 in 2022, from 578,249 in 2012.

Ronnel Arambulo, national chairman of Pamalakaya said the trend is alarming.

He said it is unfortunate that despite being an archipelago, today’s youth is unconvinced of the opportunities for fishing.

Arambulo said this can be blamed on the decades of neglect of the government to develop the economic opportunities in fishing. He blamed the lack of significant support for the sector as the primary reason and the lack of programs or policies to protect the fishermen’s way of life, citing the Department of Agriculture’s alleged inaction or failure to defend the municipal fishing ground against commercial fishers.

Arambulo was referring to the ruling of the Supreme Court’s First Division allowing commercial fishing vessels to operate within the 15-kilometer municipal fishing grounds.

Pamalakaya said that the latest PSA report should alarm the Marcos administration, and seriously address the plight of the fishing sector.

Arambulo reiterated his group's demands to address the plight of the fishing sector, including:

- Stop all destructive projects in fishing grounds and coastal communities such as reclamation;
- Carry out genuine rehabilitation of major fishing waters in the context of fishery and marine resources development; and
- Uphold the exclusive rights of Filipinos in municipal waters and territorial waters, especially in the resource-rich West Philippine Sea.

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/01/07/lack-of-opportunities-blamed-for-decreasing-number-of-fishers/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAR0jAmJpPsQww5q3e7HmQcz1ZjuQRwAbHihFIXOTP36LurIkDNVdf2oMJP0_aem_LcKlAzOoqoP-DnsZWG9PnQ

PILIPINO STAR NGAYON:

Inflation bumilis sa 2.9 porsyento - PSA

[Angie dela Cruz](#)

January 8, 2025 | 12:00am



Rice retailers manage their stalls at Marikina Public Market on January 7, 2025 offering a range of local and imported rice varieties priced between P40 and P64 per kilo.

Michael Varcas/The Philippine STAR

MANILA, Philippines — Bumilis sa 2.9% ang inflation o pagtaas sa presyo ng mga bilihin at serbisyo noong Disyembre ng 2024.

Ayon kay Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) Usec. Dennis Mapa, mas mabilis ito sa 2.5% inflation noong Nobyembre pero mas mabagal kung ikukumpara sa 3.9% sa kaparehong buwan ng 2023.

Dahil dito, ang full-year average inflation ay naitala sa 3.2% na mas mababa mula sa 6% inflation sa buong 2023.

Anya, pasok pa rin naman ito sa target range ng gobyerno na average inflation sa 2024.

Sinabi ni Mapa na ang pagtaas ng December inflation ay bunsod nang mabilis na galaw sa singil sa kuryente, LPG at renta sa bahay.

Nakaambag din ang mabilis na inflation sa gasolina, diesel at pamasaha sa barko.

Naitala naman sa 3.4% ang food inflation na pangunahing nakaambag sa mabilis na galaw ang presyo ng kamatis, at manok. Nananatili namang mababa ang inflation sa bigas na nasa 1.3%.

https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2025/01/08/2412573/inflation-bumilis-sa-29-porsyento-psa?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR1vK12chz0GwszxsUToVPvfRmjIMZxvnYFQSDuCsY5zFkhPmjSOgi-KZUQ_aem_OvAzLSJxXyJe4zx-fdJczA

PILIPINO STAR NGAYON:

Kamatis higit P300/kilo na sa Metro Manila

[Angie dela Cruz](#)

January 8, 2025 | 12:00am



A customer buys tomatoes priced at P280 per kilo at Marikina Public Market on January 7, 2025.

Michael Varcas/The Philippine STAR

MANILA, Philippines — Sumipa nang hanggang higit P300 ang kada kilo ng kamatis sa mga palengke sa Metro Manila habang umabot nang hanggang P280 kada kilo sa Calabarzon na pangunahing pinagkukunan ng naturang gulay.

Sa Metro Manila, nitong weekend ay nagkaroon ng pagsipa ang halaga ng kada kilo ng kamatis dahil sa kakulangan ng suplay na naipapasok sa mga palengke sa NCR.

Sa Calabarzon, tumaas ang presyo dahil sa umano'y nawasak ng nagdaang mga bagyo ang pataniman ng kamatis kayat kakaunti lamang ang na-harvest laluna noong holiday.

Ayon sa Department of Agriculture (DA) price monitoring, ang kamatis ay ibinebenta mula P200 hanggang P350 kada kilo sa Metro Manila.

Tinaya ng DA na bababa na ang halaga ng kamatis sa nabanggit na mga lugar sa Pebrero sa pagsisimula ng produksyon ng dry season.

Noong January 2024, pumapalo lang sa P50-P100 ang kada kilo ng kamatis.

https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2025/01/08/2412575/kamatis-higit-p300kilo-na-sa-metro-manila?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR2feHQnhAB9CwewBfmZ8K4AJbvSw8K8SdZplrvWnA7w1R-n-dpXX5SE8nk_aem_JWqi0SFIVev2E0Os2c6ZBQ

PILIPINO STAR NGAYON:

EDITORIAL — Mahal na bigas, pasang krus sa mga mahihirap

January 8, 2025 | 12:00am



KUNG bibisitahin ni Agriculture Secretary Francis Tiu Laurel Jr., ang mga tinitindang bigas sa mga palengke sa Metro Manila, ang mga presyo ng bigas kada kilo ay nagsisimula sa P50 hanggang P65. Wala nang mas mababa pa rito. Sa presyong P50 bawat kilo, nahihirapan na ang mamamayan lalo na ang kakarampot ang suweldo. Paano pa ang mga kumikita lamang ng P300 bawat araw gaya ng mga jeepney at traysikel drayber. Ang kinikita ngayon ng mga drayber ay P300 hanggang P400. Kung bibili sila ng apat na kilo ng bigas, P200 na iyon. Ano pa ang ibibili ng ulam? At hanggang kailan aabot ang apat na kilong bigas?

Nang ibaba ni President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ang taripa para sa imported na bigas, ang inaasahan niya ay bababa ang presyo ng bigas. Pero nagkamali siya sapagkat sa halip na bumaba, lalo pang tumaas ang presyo. Sa halip na makakain nang husto ang mga

mahihirap, lalo pang nagsalat—kanin lamang ay hindi pa mapunuan ang kumakalam na sikmura.

Noong Lunes, sinabi ni Secretary Tiu Laurel na plano niyang magpatupad ng maximum suggested retail price sa imported na bigas para maiwasan ang profiteering. Ayon kay Tiu Laurel, hindi dapat umabot sa P65 kada kilo ng imported na bigas sa mga palengke. Kapag umabot aniya sa ganito kataas na presyo, maliwanag na ito ay profiteering. Sa lalong madaling panahon aniya ay ipatutupad ang sinasabi niyang MSRP system. Makikipagpulong umano siya sa rice importers at retailers para maipatupad ang MSRP.

Kung ang imported na bigas ay hindi dapat umabot sa P65 per kilo, mataas pa rin kung tutuusin ito. Hindi kaya ng mahihirap ang presyong mula P50 hanggang P64. Ang pinaka-ideyal na presyo ng bigas na maaabot ng mahihirap na mamamayan ay P40 per kilo. Ang ganitong presyo ang inaasahan nang ibaba ni Marcos Jr. ang taripa sa imported na bigas. Ang nararapat gawin ng DA, humanap ng paraan para mapababa hanggang P40 per kilo ang bigas.

Noong Hunyo 2024, iniisyu ni Marcos Jr. ang Executive Order 62 na nagbababa sa taripa ng imported rice mula 35 percent sa 15 percent. Layunin ng EO na mapababa ang presyo ng bigas pero walang epekto. Isa sa dahilan kaya hindi bumababa ay dahil sa sabwatan ng mga ganid na rice importers at negosyante.

Maaring patuloy pa rin ang sabwatan ng mga ganid kaya nagmistulang ginto ang bigas. Ang sabwatang ito ang dapat putulin ng DA ganundin ang hindi maawat na agricultural smuggling. Hamon ito kay Tiu Laurel ngayong 2025. Pagaanin ang pasang krus ng mga mahihirap dahil sa mahal na bigas.

https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/opinyon/2025/01/08/2412619/editorial-mahal-na-bigas-pasang-krus-sa-mga-mahihirap?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR3rwo40YV2ln74qGmeKu2XjnojNfYLHZwSktF1Y1-5w0SXyEPqxMCXADc_aem_WU_Ga2DDPxT2ncLKggOzwg