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MANILA BULLETIN:

The surprising story of the potato

From ancient roots to modern plates: The potato's incredible journey

BY [JESSICA PAG-IWAYAN](#)

Mar 21, 2025 07:32 AM



RUSSET potatoes—one of the many varieties grown in the U.S.

The humble potato. We mash it, bake it, fry it, and love it in countless ways. But how much do we really know about this versatile veggie? During the recent event of Potatoes USA, one of the leading importers of potatoes in the Philippines, the Manila Bulletin learned some fun facts about this well-loved root crop.

A global traveler

During the event, nutritionist and dietitian Joe Sebastian shared the origin of potatoes. She said that Inca Indians in Peru were the first cultivators of potatoes during the years 8,000 and 5,000 B.C. Meanwhile, other references said that in the 16th century, Spanish conquistadors brought potatoes back to Europe, and from there, they spread like wildfire, becoming a global food staple.

A nutritional powerhouse

Since potatoes are known as a carbohydrates-packed food, some associated it with weight gain, especially for those who are into their fitness journey. However, the truth is, potatoes are a nutritional superhero in disguise. It's packed with complex carbohydrates for sustained energy, making it a favorite among athletes. A medium-sized, skin-on potato provides 26 grams of these power-packed carbs, giving you nine percent of your daily value needed. Plus, it's loaded with vitamin C, potassium, fiber, and even plant-based protein. On top of this, potatoes are naturally gluten-free, fat-free, sodium-free, and cholesterol-free, making it the perfect canvas for your culinary masterpieces like potato pasta, and even soup.



LATTICE or basket-weave cut, a deep-fried frozen potato, is one of the many ways to prepare the versatile spud.

Space spuds

Another interesting fact about this crop is in 1995, the potato boldly went where no vegetable had gone before: space. It was the first vegetable grown in space, proving its adaptability and resilience. Back on Earth, the potato's versatility shines.

U.S. potato farmers provide various gluten-free, fat-free, cholesterol-free, and sodium-free potatoes nationwide. They come in three forms: fresh, frozen, and instant (dehydrated). Plus, there's a wide range of potato recipes to explore for pre-and post-workout meals at www.potatogoodness.ph. Also, U.S. potato products provide the nutrition, versatility, and superior quality that will bring out the best in all your culinary masterpieces. They are easy to use, consistent, and readily available in a variety of formats all of which are graded based on standards of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The potato has come a long way from its humble beginnings. It's a global food staple, a nutritional powerhouse, and a culinary superstar. It's a must-have in every kitchen, bringing comfort, versatility, and deliciousness to every meal. So, next time you reach for a potato, remember its incredible journey and its amazing superpowers.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/3/21/the-surprising-story-of-the-potato>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Zero energy cooling chamber to prolong shelf life of vegetables

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Mar 20, 2025 03:19 PM



A look at ZEC-C (DA photo)

The Department of Agriculture's (DA) Cagayan Valley office has unveiled a new technology designed to extend the shelf life of freshly harvested vegetables, particularly tomatoes and eggplants.

Known as the zero-energy cooling chamber (ZEC-C), this new tool provides farmers with a cost-effective and energy-efficient storage system that extends the freshness of their produce.

Farmers across Region 2, where lowland vegetable production is a vital industry, face the perennial problem of vegetable spoilage.

"My anxiety level rises around this time of the year, when farmers harvest their produce, especially vegetables like tomatoes. We constantly worry about hearing news of vegetables being dumped by the roadside," said DA-Regional Field Office 2 Regional Executive Director Rose Mary Aquino in a statement. "We needed a solution to this persistent problem, and our Cagayan Valley Research Center (CVRC) delivered ZEC-C," she added.

According to the DA, the development of ZEC-C took two years and involved collaboration among stakeholders in the agriculture industry.

A team of technology developers, led by CRVC's Mary Jane Ibarra, conducted various trials to identify the appropriate walling material.

It was then discovered that charcoal insulation effectively lowers temperatures by five to 10 degrees Celsius, maintaining humidity levels of 85 to 90 percent that are ideal for vegetable storage.

"This is the kind of creative thinking we need to modernize agriculture, increase farmer profits, reduce waste, and improve food security," said Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel.

Laurel said the new technology not only supports the government's goal of enhancing food security but also helps farmers increase their income.

ZEC-C can preserve tomatoes for up to 21 days and eggplants for up to five days, based on freshness, firmness, and color.

Other vegetables, such as bottle gourd (upo) and sponge gourd (payola) can stay in excellent condition for up to six days.

A ZEC-C unit can store as much as 500 kilos of fresh harvests or approximately ₱45,000 worth of vegetables.

“An economic analysis showed a return on investment of at least 71 percent for tomatoes and 32 percent for eggplants over a five- to 21-day storage cycle,” the DA said.

ZEC-C will officially launch later this March at the Nueva Vizcaya Agricultural Trading Center, where two units with one-ton capacities will be awarded.

Additional units with capacities ranging from 200 kilos to one ton will be distributed to towns in Isabela.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/3/20/zero-energy-cooling-chamber-to-prolong-shelf-life-of-vegetables>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Cotabato tops commodity production in Central Mindanao

BY [IVY TEJANO](#)

Mar 20, 2025 01:53 PM

KIDAPAWAN CITY – Cotabato Gov. Emmylou Taliño-Mendoza announced on Tuesday, March 18, that the province remains No. 1 in commodity production in Central Mindanao in 2024.



MENDOZA (FB)

Philippine Statistics Authority said data showed that the province was No. 1 in rice, cacao, mango, banana (lakatan and cardava), and rubber production on the regional level, followed by corn, coconut, oil palm, cassava, and coffee production.

Cotabato was No. 1 in mango, banana (lakatan and cardava), and rubber production in Mindanao last year. The province was third in rice and oil palm production and ninth in cacao.

The province remains No. 1 in banana (lakatan and cardava) and rubber production on the national level. Mango and oil palm were third and rice and cacao production were 10th.

Mendoza attributed the success of their commodity production to the collaborative efforts of the local and national governments, national government programs, and locally funded interventions for farmers.

“We have been prioritizing the agricultural sector during our tenure. We believe that promoting sustainable agriculture ensures food security and long-term environmental health, supports local economies, conserves natural resources, and fosters resilient farming practices,” Mendoza said.

She said that they have collaborated with the Department of Agriculture on regional and national levels to boost production yields and farmers’ earnings.

As a result of such collaboration, Mendoza said the province had the lowest poverty incidence rate at 18 percent and 5.6 percent lower compared to the 2018 and 2021 estimates.

Mendoza said the provincial government distributed certified palay seeds, inorganic seeds, hybrid corn seeds, Adlai seeds, organic fertilizers, cassava farm inputs, and two Adlai thresher to over 80,000 beneficiaries to increase the rice and other cereal production.

She said high-value crop farmers received a P48-million assistance to enhance production. Mendoza added that the provincial government organized an irrigators’ association forum with a P222,900 fund and training programs for cereal commodities funded with P469,740.

Cotabato introduced the Rice Revolution Program (RRP), a convergence initiative built on convergence, collaboration, and cooperation principles. The program will benefit 7,000 pilot farmers and pools resources from the provincial government, municipalities, and DA-12.

“In line with the program, each hectare of farmland received a total of six sacks of fertilizer – two sacks each from the provincial government, municipal government, and DA-12,” Mendoza said.

She said the DA-Philippine Rice Institute distributed quality rice seeds as part of the convergence. At the same time, the National Food Authority committed to purchasing a portion of the beneficiaries’ harvests to ensure stable demand and boost production rates.

Mendoza said the province’s Serbisyong Totoo Convergence Program continues to innovate and expand its support for rice farmers and among their key initiatives is the Palay Marketing Assistance for Legislators and Local Government Units (PALLGU) launched in 2023.

She said that the PALLGU’s mechanism aims to purchase farmers’ rice at a higher price, adding P1 to P2 per kilo on top of the existing support price set by the NFA, which is P16 on the wet classification of rice and P18 on the dry classification of rice.

According to the provincial government’s PALLGU data on unmilled rice, the local government’s counterpart will add P2 for both classifications of rice and another P2 from the provincial counterpart, bringing the total price for wet rice to P20 and P22 for dry rice.

Mendoza said she believes North Cotabato solidified its status as a leader in agricultural production through the provincial government’s programs and fostered a more resilient and prosperous farming community.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/3/20/cotabato-tops-commodity-production-in-central-mindanao>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Illegal commercial fishing worsens poverty, threatens PH food security – Oceana

BY [JEL SANTOS](#)

Mar 20, 2025 01:07 PM



(MB FILE PHOTO)

Illegal commercial fishing in municipal waters is worsening poverty and food insecurity in coastal communities as the country’s fish stocks continue to decline international advocacy group Oceana said. In fact, the group said latest data revealed that 87 percent of municipal waters are now classified as overfished.

On Thursday, March 20, participants of the Convergence Summit for the Protection of Municipal Waters raised alarm over the Supreme Court’s (SC) decision upholding a lower court ruling that removed the preferential access of small-scale fisherfolk and the authority of local governments over 15-kilometer municipal waters.

Lawyer Liza Eisma-Osorio, the acting vice president of Oceana, decried the increasing violations of Republic Act No. 10654, the amended Fisheries Code, which prohibits commercial fishing in municipal waters.

“Municipal waters are reserved for small-scale fishers. This is aligned with the Constitution that promotes social justice,” Osorio said in a statement.

“Yet we see illegal commercial fishers blatantly violating this and outcompeting our artisanal fishers, further intensifying socio-economic inequalities. This isn’t just an environmental crisis; it’s an economic and food security emergency,” she went on.

Data from Karagatan Patrol, which monitors commercial fishing vessel activity using the Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS), confirmed the continued presence of commercial fishing vessels illegally operating inside municipal waters.

Oceana warned that illegal commercial fishing remains a major threat to efforts to restore depleted fish stocks, which are already suffering from overfishing, habitat destruction, marine pollution, and harmful coastal development projects.

According to the 2017 National Stock Assessment Program of the National Fisheries and Research Development Institute (NFRDI), 87 percent of the country’s fish stocks are overfished.

A briefer from the Philippine Association of Marine Science (PAMS), citing a report by Dr. Wilfredo Campos, also noted that the average catch per municipal fisher has dropped from 5 kilograms in 2010 to 4 kilograms in 2023.

Over the past 13 years, the Philippines has lost 591,136 metric tons of fish, an amount that could have fed 42 million Filipinos, based on an average per capita consumption of 14 kilograms per year.

“This goes beyond mere statistics; it’s a crisis threatening the nation’s food security and the livelihoods of countless Filipino families,” said Osorio.

Poverty in coastal communities worsening

The summit also highlighted the worsening poverty among municipal fishers, one of the poorest sectors in the country, with a poverty incidence of 30.6 percent in 2021.

“Full implementation of our laws, particularly stopping commercial fishing inside municipal waters, is not only desirable but also essential,” summit organizers said in a statement.

“This requires a collaborative effort involving government agencies, scientists, and local communities to implement science-based policies that protect both the ecosystem and the livelihoods of those who depend on it,” they added.

Illegal fishing incidents increasing

Karagatan Patrol recorded 860 detections of commercial fishing vessel lights inside municipal waters from March 2 to 8, 2025—an 18.9 percent increase from the 723 detections recorded in the previous week (Feb. 23 to March 1, 2025).

A year-on-year analysis of VIIRS data also showed a 15 percent increase in commercial fishing vessels detected in municipal waters, from 27,654 in 2023 to 31,843 in 2024.

Among the identified hotspot areas for illegal commercial fishing are Zamboanga City; Cuyo, Palawan; San Pascual, Masbate; Tongkil, Sulu; Languyan, Tawi-Tawi; Pagbilao, Quezon; and Carles, Iloilo.

Local officials push back vs ruling

The League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP), representing local government units (LGUs) across the country, has opposed the SC ruling, arguing that it weakens LGUs’ ability to protect marine resources and enforce environmental and fisheries laws.

On Feb. 10, the LMP issued a resolution asserting local government autonomy under Article X of the 1987 Constitution and the Local Government Code of 1991.

The league warned that the ruling sets a dangerous precedent that could further erode decentralized governance and undermine conservation efforts in municipal waters.

“We are grateful that the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) has joined our call and, through a recent resolution, commits to their duties to fully enforce environmental and fisheries laws,” Osorio said. Stakeholders at the summit urged the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and local government units (LGUs) to file criminal cases against violators of the Fisheries Code and impose higher fines and stricter penalties on illegal commercial fishing operations.

Summit participants also called on the Department of Agriculture-BFAR and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) to develop sustainable fishing programs and alternative livelihoods to support coastal communities affected by declining fish stocks.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/3/20/illegal-commercial-fishing-worsens-poverty-threatens-ph-food-security-oceana>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Tigkiliwi shows that one can thrive, even during dead season

BY [YVETTE TAN](#)

Mar 21, 2025 00:04 AM

AVANT GARDENER



“If you plant, you can eat.”

So goes the often repeated line from the multi-award-winning Tigkiliwi, one of the eight full-length films in the Puregold CinePanalo Festival, which runs until March 25 at Gateway Cineplex 18. The film garnered seven awards, including Best Actress, Best Actor, Best Supporting Actress, Best Screenplay, and Best Ensemble.

The film begins when, after the sudden and tragic death of his mother, a little boy suspects that his neighbor is an aswang. What the director first leads us to think is a horror film evolves into an earnest tale of curiosity, friendship, and strangely enough confronting the harsh realities of adulthood.

Directed by Tara Illenberger, Tigkiliwi is set in a small town in Iloilo and shot in Hiligaynon. There are many aspects to the film but since this is an agriculture column, I'll be concentrating on its agricultural aspects.

Tigkiliwi is the Hiligaynon term for “dead season,” more commonly known as “tiempos muertos.” It comes from the Hiligaynon word “kiwi,” which means askew, referring to, according to the press release, “when the smiles on faces of people disappear.” It’s a time marked by extreme hardship. The superstitious believe that it’s a time when malevolent spirits descend upon an area while the more pragmatic believe that crime rises during this vulnerable time.

Illenberger, who hails from Iloilo, said that the film was inspired by her real-life neighbor. “...when I was a child, there was a lonely but kind old woman rumored to be an aswang. Among her very few friends was my mom. And we had many domestic issues ourselves. Let's just say my father struggled with his temper.”

The film, which revolves around stories of found families, also emphasizes the opportunities that can be found in planting and post-processing. In this case, a small backyard cacao farm accidentally becomes the way for friendships (and in some cases, potentially even more) to blossom and for a bunch of outcasts to make money.

For Illenberger, the cacao plant, which is turned into tablea and is a cottage industry in many provinces, is significant. “Not many people know that a fresh cacao bean tastes like santol. It looks and tastes nothing like chocolate. It is one product that has undergone such a big transformation...went through a complex process...and changes from bitter to sweet. Much like the human character.”

Nor is her interest in agriculture accidental. Illenberger is an avid gardener and native tree enthusiast. Farming has also formed a big part of her youth. “We had a rice farm and fish pond. I have observed the lives of rural folk, their rhythms, and their goodness. I wish to go back to the land when I retire in a few years.”

Despite Tigkiliwi’s light tone, the film tackles some dark themes and some plot points don’t find resolution. When asked what Illenberger hoped viewers would take away from the film, she said, “We see a lot of urban poverty in the movies. Sometimes we romanticize the quaint countryside. But even there, people struggle with poverty. It is sad yet beautiful. Also, poor people have beautiful, hopeful hearts too.”

The film is straightforward about the realities of small farming. It’s difficult, but with the right strategy, one might be able to make good business out of it. But most of all, there’s less chance of starving if one can harvest one’s food from one’s own space.

“If you plant, you can eat,” Illenberger said. “It might not be enough to send you to college or buy you luxury, but it surely will afford you a level of dignity.”

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/3/21/tigkiliwi-shows-that-one-can-thrive-even-during-dead-season>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Imported red onions sold out – DA

Bella Cariaso - The Philippine Star

March 21, 2025 | 12:00am



DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said the red bulbs were part of the 4,000 MT red and white onions allowed by Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. to be imported to bring down the retail price of onions, which reached P200 per kilo in February.

STASTAR / FileR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The 2,300 metric tons (MT) of imported red onions, which arrived in the country last month are already sold out, according to the Department of Agriculture.

DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said the red bulbs were part of the 4,000 MT red and white onions allowed by Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. to be imported to bring down the retail price of onions, which reached P200 per kilo in February.

“Of the approved 1,000 MT for white onions, only 986 MT arrived in the country. For red onions, of the expected 3,000 MT, only 2,300 MT arrived,” De Mesa said.

He said only imported white onions are still competing with the local produce.

Based on the report of the Bureau of Plant Industry, De Mesa said there are no more imported red onions in the markets.

“That’s how fast the red onions were sold in a few days,” he said.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2025/03/21/2429911/imported-red-onions-sold-out-da>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Stop budget thievery by Congress



DEMAND AND SUPPLY - Boo Chanco - The Philippine Star

March 21, 2025 | 12:00am

Over the last three years, Congress reduced the budgets for badly needed infrastructure and social services originally proposed by the BBM administration, to fund Congressional pork barrel projects to the tune of over a trillion pesos.

There were unprecedented huge cuts and diversions in the first three budgets of BBM. Congress offered no explanations for mangling the budgets proposed by BBM with big cuts and diversions. BBM also didn't say a word until PhilHealth and DepEd budget issues became running headline news stories.

In specific terms, the first three BBM budget proposals suffered deep cuts: In the 2023 GAA, P219 billion was cut; in the 2024 GAA, P449.5 billion was cut; in the 2025 GAA, P373.0 billion was cut, translating to total cuts of P1,041.6 trillion less veto of P26 billion, resulting in a net cut of P1,015.6 trillion.

What justified the huge budget cuts and realignment? Where were the funds used? Difficult to answer: Only a select group of House and Senate officials, called the bicameral conference committee (bicam), decided on amendments and finalized the GAA. There were no public discussions. No minutes nor records of bicam proceedings. Absolutely no transparency.

Nevertheless, a sampling of where the cuts were inflicted should be worrisome because of the negative impact on the nation's economic development.

In 2024, a significant cut of P157.8 billion was made on required counterpart funding for foreign assisted projects of the DOTr, essentially, the big-ticket rail projects we badly need.

PhilHealth suffered a P40-billion cut and the AFP modernization budget was cut by P10 billion. There are others including a P10 billion cut in the budget of the NDRRMC of P10 billion which undermines its ability to respond to calamities.

Where were the slashed funds diverted? A sampling of where funds went: flood control P28.9 billion (now P245 billion); DPWH P174.6 billion; House of Representatives P12 billion (to P28.7 billion); Senate P10 billion; ayuda P26.7 billion (from zero); AICS P9 billion (to P28.9 billion).

It should blow our minds that flood control is bigger than the budgets of the Departments of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform combined. Flood control is the biggest component of the DPWH budget. Yet, as we all know, floods haven't been controlled. Instead, our money is probably flooding the bank accounts of our politicians.

For the GAA this year, 2025, a total of P347 billion in cuts were made: The already insufficient agriculture budget was cut by P22.4 billion.

DepEd, with its extremely important mission to lift the math and reading proficiency scores of millions of our youth, suffered a P12-billion cut.

The DOH budget was cut by P25.8 billion, diminishing further its ability to address our health needs. PhilHealth's P74.4 billion budget was totally cut.

AFP Modernization budget was cut by P5 billion. There are others.

Where did the cut funds go? First on the list of beneficiaries of the funds diversion is the House of Representatives with P17.3 billion (to P33.4 billion); OP P5 billion; Senate P1 billion; AKAP P26 billion (from zero); AICS P9.5 billion (P44.7 billion); MAIFIP P14.3 billion (P41.2 billion); TUPAD P3.4 billion (P18.3 billion).

The big problem with these massive budget cuts and realignments is that national priorities for development have been set aside.

We see a clear movement away from investing in strategic transport, infrastructure, agricultural productivity, to graft-prone projects like flood control and drainage systems and hyper-micro local projects, like local roads, bridges and multi-purpose halls.

There is no long-term payback on dole outs, making the increased borrowings to cover these allocations unsustainable.

There is no question that the poor must be helped. But our legislators are moving away from programs for empowerment, self-reliance and community engagement, like 4Ps, PhilHealth and health facilities enhancement.

Instead, Congress is spending big money on ayuda cash dole-outs, like AKAP, AICS, MAIFIP and TUPAD. The participation of legislators in identifying the beneficiaries and in distributing the cash doleouts of ayuda beneficiaries and in issuing guarantee letters to hospitals under the Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients (MAIFIP) reminds us of PDAF.

Recall that in a landmark decision, the Supreme Court nullified PDAF as unconstitutional "for the post-enactment, non-oversight intervention of legislators in budget execution," the exclusive domain of the Executive. The High Court should realize that PDAF and all the new alphabet soup programs favored by our legislators are one and the same.

It's also disgusting that social services are being used to establish a debt of gratitude to politicians when it should be treated as a matter of right. Taking budgets from social service agencies to fund cash doleouts and their control and distribution by politicians lead to a relationship of dependency which deepens the culture of patronage, the very conditions that perpetuate poverty and political dynasties.

To put things bluntly, our senators and congressmen are enriching themselves and enhancing their political careers at the expense of taxpayers.

A big hindrance to attracting foreign investments is inadequate infrastructure.

Yet, Congress chose to de-prioritize the strategic projects of DOTr from programmed to unprogrammed appropriations like MRT Line 4 Project; Davao Public Transport Modernization Project; North-South Commuter Railway System; EDSA Greenways Project; Cebu Bus Rapid Transit Project; Metro Manila Subway Project; PNR South Long-Haul Project.

Strategic projects were de-prioritized to free up fiscal space for funding pork barrel instead. If we continue with this bad prioritization of resources, we will have no funds to economically advance our country. We are doomed to eat the dust of our fast-moving neighbors in the region.

BBM can say that the budget proposal he sent Congress adhered to accepted principles in setting budget priorities and it was Congress that made a mess of it. But his silence on the congressional abuse and his token veto of some minor items makes him complicit to the crime of pillaging the Treasury by his political allies in Congress.

BBM has three years left to shape up or miss the opportunity to redeem his family's name.

Boo Chanco's email address is bchanco@gmail.com . Follow him on X @boochanco

Stop budget thievery by Congress

Demand and Supply

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BBM has three years left to shape up or miss the opportunity to redeem his family’s name.

Boo Chanco’s email address is bchanco@gmail.com . Follow him on X [@boochanco](https://x.com/boochanco).

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2025/03/21/2429859/stop-budget-thievery-congress>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Municipal fishing crisis deepens

By: [Cristina Eloisa Baclig](#) - Content Researcher Writer / [@inquirerdotnet](#)
INQUIRER.net / 09:11 AM March 20, 2025



FISHING composite image from Inquirer files

MANILA, Philippines — The waves off the Philippine coast have always provided a lifeline for millions of small-scale fishers. But in recent months, a legal storm has threatened that lifeline.

A controversial Supreme Court First Division ruling issued in August 2024 overturned long-standing protections for municipal waters, allowing commercial fishing vessels to operate within the 15-kilometer zone previously reserved for small-scale fishers.

The decision stemmed from a legal challenge filed by Mercidar Fishing Corp. on October 25, 2023, against fishing restrictions in municipal waters. Less than two months later, the Malabon Regional Trial Court ruled in favor of Mercidar, nullifying municipal control over commercial fishing in the 15-km zone and lifting the ban on commercial fishing in waters shallower than 12.8 meters.

The Supreme Court upheld this decision on August 19, 2024, citing the Office of the Solicitor General's (OSG) late appeal.

Current legal protection for artisanal fishers

→ **Municipal waters (15-kilometer zone)**
reserved for small-scale fishing

Current legal challenge

Supreme Court 1st Division resolution and a Malabon Regional Trial Court ruling may override these protections, leading to:



More than 90% of municipal waters in 533 out of 884 coastal municipalities are being opened to commercial fishing.



Artisanal fishers will have to compete with technologically advanced commercial fishing vessels, which could reduce their daily catch.

INQUIRER.NET SOURCE: OCEANA PHILIPPINES

Studies indicate that if the ruling stands, municipal fishers could be left with just 2 percent of their traditional fishing grounds, while 98 percent of the country's waters would be open to commercial fishing vessels.

With fisheries production at its lowest in two decades, many fear this ruling will accelerate the decline of marine resources and threaten the livelihoods of coastal communities.

Marine resources under threat

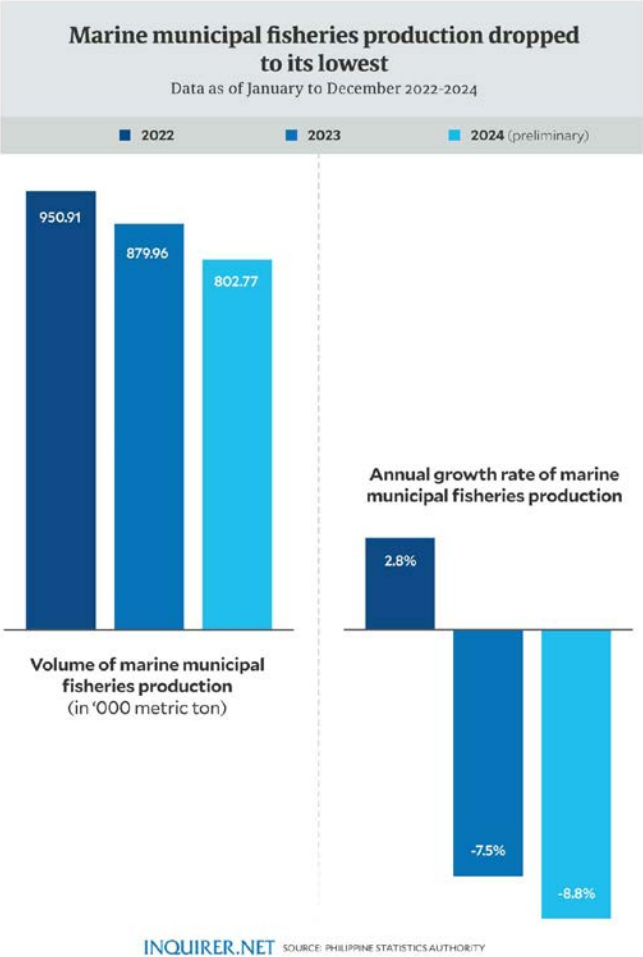
For generations, municipal waters — those extending 15 kilometers from the shoreline — have been the exclusive domain of small-scale fishers. This preferential access, enshrined in the Fisheries Code of 1998, was designed to ensure the sustainability of marine ecosystems and protect the livelihood of artisanal fishers.

But with the Supreme Court's ruling nullifying key provisions of the law, commercial fishing fleets now have legal footing to encroach on these once-protected waters.

Local officials are raising alarm over the ruling's environmental and economic impact. Negros Occidental Governor Eugenio Jose Lacson warned that allowing commercial vessels into municipal waters could destroy crab habitats in the Guimaras Strait and Visayan Sea, both vital to the region's fishing industry.

In Iloilo, municipal leaders — including those from Carles, Ajuy, and Estancia — fear that artisanal fishers, who rely on sustainable fishing practices, will struggle to compete with large commercial fleets.

The decline in fish stocks is already evident. In 2024, fisheries production dropped to 4.05 million metric tons, a 5 percent decrease from 2023 and the lowest in two decades, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).



The biggest decline was in marine municipal fisheries, which saw an 8.8 percent drop from 879,960 metric tons in 2023 to 802,770 metric tons in 2024. Meanwhile, commercial fisheries output grew by 4.2 percent to 857,330 metric tons, emphasizing the widening gap between small-scale and large-scale fishers.

Experts warn that the continued encroachment of commercial fishing vessels into municipal waters will accelerate fish stock depletion, particularly for species such as sardines and anchovies, which are critical to food security and the fishing economy.

Overfishing, habitat destruction, and bycatch could further destabilize marine ecosystems, making it harder for municipal fishers to earn a living.

LGUs push back

Fearing economic and environmental fallout, LGUs have launched legal and political challenges to the ruling.

All 19 mayors from the League of Municipalities of the Philippines – Surigao del Sur and the 13 mayors from the Alliance of LGUs along Samar Bays and Channels (ALSBACH) have signed resolutions supporting the Department of Agriculture, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), and the OSG in their bid to reverse the SC decision.

In Iloilo, the provincial government filed a motion on February 21 to intervene in BFAR's appeal for reconsideration. Other municipalities—including Carles, Oton, Ajuy, Anilao, Barotac Nuevo, Barotac Viejo, Batad, Concepcion, Dumangas, San Dionisio, San Joaquin, Guimbal, Miagao, Tigbauan, and Estancia—have also urged President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to take action to protect small-scale fishers.

Similarly, the municipality of Santa Fe has joined international marine protection group Oceana and civil society groups in a petition filed on January 2 to remand the case to the lower court so affected communities can be recognized as indispensable parties.

The municipality of Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro, led by Mayor Walter Marquez, filed another motion for intervention on January 24, alongside civil society groups and people's organizations.



Oceana Acting Vice President Rose-Liza Eisma-Osorio emphasized the significance of LGUs uniting to fight the ruling.

“Rather than compete with each other’s resources, the local governments opted to collaborate, ultimately benefiting their communities,” she said, adding that their collective effort underscores the importance of municipal waters to the food and livelihood security of coastal communities.

Antique Vice Governor Edgar Denosta has urged the Supreme Court to reconsider, warning that allowing commercial vessels in municipal waters will deplete fish stocks.

In Libertad, Antique, Mayor Mary Jean Te, who also leads the Libertad, Pandan, Sebaste, and Culasi (LIPASECU) Bay-Wide Management Council, emphasized the challenges that small fishers will face if they must compete with large-scale operators.

Meanwhile, Del Carmen officials in Surigao del Norte have echoed the sentiments of municipal fisherfolk, urging the Supreme Court and the President to uphold the preferential rights of small-scale fishers and regulate commercial fishing operations.

“The legal dispute over commercial fishing in municipal waters continues as LGUs, fisherfolk, and advocacy groups oppose the controversial ruling and seek answers about the statutory authority given to local governments and preferential rights of municipal fisherfolk,” said Osorio.

With motions pending before the Supreme Court, the fate of municipal fisheries remains uncertain. If the ruling stands, commercial fleets will gain unprecedented access to coastal fishing grounds, further pushing thousands of small-scale fishers to the margins. If overturned, it would restore protections that have long been in place to balance economic survival with ecological sustainability. For now, coastal communities remain resolute. The fishers who have relied on the sea for generations refuse to surrender without a fight.

As the Supreme Court deliberates, the future of the country's marine resources — and the communities that depend on them — hangs in the balance.

Graphics by Ed Lustan/Inquirer.net. Sources: Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Philippine Statistics Authority, AGHAM, Oceana

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2045333/municipal-fishing-crisis-deepens-2>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Cagayan Valley agriculturists develop zero-energy cooler to reduce vegetable waste

March 20, 2025 | 8:36 pm



DA PHOTO

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said its Cagayan Valley office has developed a zero-energy cooling chamber designed to extend the shelf life of freshly harvested vegetables like tomatoes and eggplant.

The P45,000 ZEC-C or Zero Energy Cooling Chamber is capable of storing 500 kilos, with larger capacities becoming more cost effective, the DA said in a statement.

“An economic analysis showed a return on investment of at least 71% for tomatoes and 32% for eggplant over a five to 21-day storage cycle,” it said.

ZEC-C, which took two years, was developed by researchers, farmers, cooperatives, and agribusinesses.

Principal technology author Mary Jane Ibarra of the Cagayan Valley Research Center in Ilagan City and her team conducted the trials comparing the performance of suitable materials, including coconut coir, charcoal, and a bricks-and-sand mix.

The trials in Aurora and Roxas, Isabela found that charcoal insulation effectively lowered temperatures by 5-10 degrees Celsius, and maintained humidity levels of 85-90% that are deemed ideal for vegetable storage.

Rose Mary Aquino, regional executive director for the DA’s Regional Field Office II, said ZEC-C preserved tomatoes for up to 21 days and eggplant for up to five days, based on initial freshness, firmness, and color.

The farmgate price of tomatoes in parts of the country in early March fell to as low as P4 per kilo due to excessive supply.

Due to lack of cold storage facilities, farmers in the Philippines either sell their excess at lower prices or dump them.

Ms. Aquino said other vegetables, such as bottle gourd (*upo*) and sponge gourd (*patola*) stayed in excellent condition for up to 6 days.

The ZEC-C technology launch and transfer are scheduled for late March at the Nueva Vizcaya Agricultural Trading Center, where two units with one-ton capacities will be awarded.

Additional units with capacities ranging from 200 kilos to one ton will be distributed to other towns in Isabela.

— **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/03/20/660782/cagayan-valley-agriculturists-develop-zero-energy-cooler-to-reduce-vegetable-waste/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Demand driving pineapple output growth

March 20, 2025 | 8:36 pm



DEL MONTE PHILIPPINES FACEBOOK PAGE

PINEAPPLE OUTPUT is expected to grow this year, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA), in response to increasing demand from China and Europe.

The Philippines is expected to produce more than 3.12 million metric tons (MMT) of pineapples this year, against 2.9 MMT in 2024, Assistant Secretary Arnel V. de Mesa told reporters.

He said pineapple yields are expected to hit 44 MT per hectare this year.

Exports of pineapple and pineapple products rose 7.5% to \$787.12 million in 2024.

Mr. De Mesa noted “growing demand” from China, the top destination of Philippine pineapple exports, as well as Europe.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization reported that demand is increasing for premium pineapples, especially the Philippine MD2 variety, from Chinese consumers.

It said the Philippines has been the second-biggest exporter of pineapples — next to Costa Rica — over the past 15 years.

Mr. De Mesa said the government continues to assist the industry through research and development efforts.

The government is also focusing on the production of organic pineapples, for which there is a “niche market,” he added.

Currently, there are about 24,000 pineapple farmers in the Philippines, many in Mindanao. — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/03/20/660856/demand-driving-pineapple-output-growth/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

The rice farmers and their rice farms

March 21, 2025 | 12:04 am



By Benjamin R. Punongbayan



PHILIPPINE STAR/EDD GUMBAN

(Part 1)

THERE have been continuing commentaries on how bad our agricultural sector, particularly rice farming, has been for a long time now. Sadly, there appears to be no clear dramatic improvement in sight. For this reason, I thought I would try to get an understanding of the current characteristics of the two major factors in rice production — the rice farmers and their farmland.

I have been able to obtain some relevant information through the internet which I am using in this commentary. These are: “Factsheet: Resilience Solutions for the Rice Sector in the Philippines” which forms part of the Private Markets Resilience Project for selected emerging markets countries published in June 2020 by a group of non-government entities, namely, the Nordic Development Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank, Grupo Laera, and the Oscar M. Lopez Center (to be referred to here as Factsheet); “The Philippine Rice Industry Road Map – 2030,” published by the Department of Agriculture in September 2018 (Road Map); and press releases from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) in December 2024 and January 2025 relating to its Census of Agriculture and Fisheries conducted in 2022 (Census). The Census has much broader coverage as it combines the whole agriculture sector, consisting of all crops and livestock and poultry.

The Factsheet indicates that rice is the staple food for about 80% of the Philippine population. It consists of 23% of the total “consumption” (I take this to mean “food consumption”) of the poor and 10% of that of the non-poor. At the outset, this portrayal clearly shows that if we could significantly reduce the number of our poor citizens, we can largely lower our rice consumption requirements, a substantial proportion of which we are currently importing.

RICE FARM OWNERS AND RICE FARM WORKERS

The Factsheet reports that our rice farmers who own their farmland number come to about 2.4 million Filipinos and each own farmland with an average area of 1.4 hectares. Most rice farmers are poor and old (with an average age of 57 years).

On average, each rice farm owner had an annual income in 2018 of \$2,000. This dollar amount is now equivalent to P116,000. It is likely that this peso equivalent has increased by now, but it is still useful for purposes of this commentary.

The P116,000 annual income is an average. If we plot in a graph the distribution of each of the landowning farmers’ annual income and determine the mean (middle point) it is reasonable to expect that the mean is lower than the average. This means that the annual income of most of the landowning farmers is below the average of P116,000, indicating that most of them had an annual income from rice farming that is significantly lower than the comparable poverty threshold of P129,000 in 2018.

And so, with the average farm size of 1.4 hectares owned by these rice farmers, when determined, the mean can reasonably be expected to be lower than the average, meaning that there are more rice farmers whose farm has an area falling below the average than those whose farm size is above it. These two measures, farm income and farm size, generally relate to each other in harmony.

While the Census covers the whole agriculture sector, it provides some insights that we can use to relate to rice farming. The Census indicates that the agricultural population, 18 years and older, number to a total of 19.68 million persons. Of this total, those who have ownership and secured rights over their farmland number to 4.3 million persons or 21.8% of the total agricultural population. This means that the balance of 78.2% or 15.4 million persons is not farm owners but are farm workers. This information translates to a ratio of one farm owner to 3.6 farm workers. There is no way to extricate from these data the equivalent ratio pertaining to rice farming only.

But making an inference may be good enough. A few agricultural sectors, such as sugar cane farming and livestock and poultry raising, may have a higher ratio. This means that the rice sector farm owner/farm worker ratio is lower than 3.6. The significance of this proportion is that for one rice farm owner, there are one or more rice farm workers. Given that the average annual income of the 2.4 million rice farm owners of P116,000 in 2018, the average annual income of more than 2.4 million rice farm workers is much less than P116,000 in the same year. Combining then the landowning rice farmers and rice farm workers, the average farming annual income of most of them in 2018 is much lower than the poverty threshold of P129,000 in that year.

Of course, some of these farmers and members of their families may have additional income that raises each of these families’ total income. But I consider that taking account of such additional income earned by each of these farmer families will not make much difference, for purposes of this commentary, when comparing the family’s total income with the poverty threshold, especially in the case of rice farm workers. The Census does not provide for a separate count of sharecroppers or tenants. I gathered that in Tarlac and Nueva Ecija there are two forms of this practice: a “*sama*” shares with the farm owner half of the net profit of the harvest after deducting all allowable expenses, while a “tenant” may be given a share of the produce or be paid in the form of wages, depending upon the agreement between the two parties.

A “*sama*” or “tenant” may hire additional farm workers at his own expense. Presumably, similar arrangements are practiced in the other parts of the country. What is important to note for purposes of clarity is that a “*sama*” or “tenant” or a similar person described by some other name is not a landowner and therefore is part of the term “farm workers” in this commentary.

RICE

FARMLAND

The Fact Sheet reports that the total land area devoted to rice farming is 4.8 million hectares in 2018 which represents about 35% of total agricultural land. It also indicates that the average farmland area is 1.4 hectares as mentioned earlier (this average does not add up when related to the reported rice farm owners of 2.4 million people mentioned earlier, which difference I had ignored).

Interesting to note is the related information in the Census which reported that the average farm area in the whole agriculture sector (covering all crops and non-crops) continued to drop from 3.5 hectares in 1960 to .83 hectare (yes, .83 hectare) in 2022.

It can be implied that the average rice farm area follows the same downward trend over time and, therefore, the average rice farm area today is smaller than 1.4 hectares in 2018.

(To be continued.)

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<https://www.bworldonline.com/opinion/2025/03/21/660719/the-rice-farmers-and-their-rice-farms/>

REMATE:

Bicol, red-tide free na – BFAR

March 20, 2025 10:52



MANILA, Philippines – Idineklara ng Bureau of Fish and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) Bicol na walang red tide sa rehiyon kaya ligtas nang kainin ang mga shellfish.

Binibigyang-diin ni Rowena Briones ang regular na monitoring upang maiwasan ang sakit gaya ng paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP).

May apat na red tide monitoring areas sa Bicol: Sorsogon Bay, Juag Lagoon sa Matnog, at baybaying dagat ng Milagros at Mandaon sa Masbate.

Ang Milagros, na apektado mula Enero hanggang Pebrero, ay idineklarang ligtas na.

Patuloy na nagsasagawa ang BFAR ng pagsusuri, advisory, at suporta sa kabuhayan upang mabawasan ang epekto ng red tide.

Pinapaalalahanan ang publiko na huwag kumain ng shellfish mula sa apektadong lugar dahil sa panganib sa kalusugan. *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/bicol-red-tide-free-na-bfar/>

ABANTE:

NFA iniisnab bentahan ng murang palay

Abante News

• **March 20, 2025**



Bumulusok na ng 15-20% ang farmgate price ng palay ngayong Marso at patuloy na nababarat ng traders ang mga magsasaka dahil hindi masyadong namimili ang National Food Authority (NFA).

Nasa P20 per kilo pa ang average na presyo ng palay noong Pebrero, ayon sa datos ng Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). May mga ulat na umabot sa P11 per kilo ang palay.

Ayon kay Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura Executive Director Jayson Cainglet, P16 hanggang P17 per kilo na lamang ang farmgate price ng palay.

Sabi naman ni Federation of Free Farmers National Manager Raul Montemayor, P15-P17 per kilo ang presyo ng bagong aning palay at P18-20 per kilo naman ang presyo ng tuyong palay.

“NFA buying is minimal despite lower trader prices,” sabi ni Montemayor.

Sa pagbulusok ng presyo ng palay, tatlong magsasaka na sa Nueva Ecija ang nagpakamatay dahil sa desperasyon sa pagkabalugos sa utang, sabi ni dating Magsasaka party-list Representative Argel Joseph Cabatbat na kasalukuyang kumakandidato bilang congressman sa Nueva Ecija. (Eileen Mencias)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2025/03/20/nfa-iniisnab-bentahan-ng-murang-palay/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

DA pins hopes on cooling tech to boost veggie farms

Ada Pelonia

March 21, 2025

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) on Thursday introduced a zero energy cooling technology that would prolong the shelf-life of vegetables like tomatoes and eggplants.

The DA Cagayan Valley office said the Zero Energy Cooling Chamber (ZEC-C) provides farmers with a sustainable, cost-effective, and energy-efficient storage system that extends the quality of their harvests, reduces wastage at the farm level, and bolsters profitability.

“My anxiety level rises around this time of the year, when farmers harvest their produce, especially vegetables like tomatoes. We constantly worry about hearing news of vegetables being dumped by the roadside,” Rose Mary Aquino, regional executive director for DA Regional Field Office II, said in a statement.

For his part, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. commended the DA-RFO II for this initiative, which he said would prop up the government’s aim to enhance food security by helping farmers increase their income.

“This is the kind of creative thinking we need to modernize agriculture, increase farmer profits, reduce waste, and improve food security,” Laurel said.

The agency said it took two year to develop ZEC-C and involved a collaborative approach with researchers, farmers, cooperatives, and agribusiness partners.

A team of technology developers, led by principal technology author Mary Jane Ibarra of the Cagayan Valley Research Center, conducted trials comparing different walling materials, including coconut coir, charcoal, and a bricks-and-sand mix.

The trials in Aurora and Roxas in Isabela found that charcoal insulation effectively lowered temperatures by 5-10 degrees Celsius, and maintained humidity levels of 85-90 percent, which are ideal for vegetable storage.

Aquino noted that the ZEC-C preserved tomatoes for up to 21 days and eggplants for up to 5 days, based on freshness, firmness, and color.

Furthermore, other vegetables like bottle gourd (upo) and sponge gourd (payola) stayed in “excellent condition” for up to 6 days.

“We needed a solution to this persistent problem, and our Cagayan Valley Research Center delivered ZEC-C,” Aquino said.

A unit of ZEC-C which could store 500 kilos of produce costs around P45,000, with reduced costs for larger capacities.

An economic analysis showed a return on investment of at least 71 percent for tomatoes and 32 percent for eggplants over a 5-21 day storage cycle, the agency said.

The launch of the ZEC-C technology is slated later this March at the Nueva Vizcaya Agricultural Trading Center (NVAT), where two units with one-ton capacities will be awarded.

Additional units with capacities ranging from 200 kilos to one ton will be distributed to other towns in Isabela, the DA said.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/03/21/da-pins-hopes-on-cooling-tech-to-boost-veggie-farms/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

‘Overfishing pushes PHL fish stock to brink of collapse’

Jonathan L. Mayuga
March 21, 2025

ILLEGAL commercial fishing activities in municipal waters continue to threaten coastal communities and the country’s food security. Making commercial fishing legal will push the country’s fish stock to the brink of collapse, the country’s food security organizers and participants of a Convergence Summit for the Protection of Municipal Waters said.

They attribute the strong opposition to commercial fishing in municipal fishing ground to the unfair competition between commercial fishers and artisanal and small fishers who depend mainly on fishing as a way of life.

Citing the 2017 National Stock Assessment Program report of the National Fisheries and Research Development Institute (NFRDI), Oceana said 87 percent of the country’s fishing grounds are already overfished.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya), a summit participant, said they are banding together to strengthen the ranks of small-scale fisherfolk and civil society organizations for the protection of the municipal waters.

In a brief talk, Pamalakaya Secretary General Salvador France discussed the implications of the ruling.

There are over 2 million registered small fisherfolk across the country who stand to be affected, he said.

Summit participants expressed their alarm over the compounding impacts of the Malabon Regional Trial Court’s decision that declared unconstitutional the preferential access accorded to municipal fisherfolk and the jurisdiction of local governments in the 15-kilometer municipal waters. The Supreme Court 1st Division issued a resolution last year, upholding this decision.

“Municipal waters are reserved for small-scale fishers. This is aligned with the Constitution that promotes social justice. Yet we see illegal commercial fishers blatantly violating this and outcompeting our artisanal fishers, further intensifying socioeconomic inequalities. This isn’t just an environmental crisis; it’s an economic and food security emergency,” Atty. Liza Eisma-Osorio, acting vice president of Oceana said.

Citing data from the FB Page Karagatan Patrol, monitoring in the detection of Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) from night lights of commercial fishing vessel revealed that commercial fishing illegally operating inside the 15-kilometer municipal waters continues and remains one of the significant threats to efforts to recover the country’s fisheries resources from overfishing, habitat destruction, marine pollution, and coastal projects.

A briefer prepared by the Philippine Association of Marine Science (PAMS), citing the presentation of Dr. Wilfredo Campos in their forum on January 22, said the average catch per fisher dropped from 5 kilograms in 2010 to 4 kilograms in 2023.

Over the past 13 years, the Philippines has lost an estimated 591,136 metric tons of fish. The quantity of fish lost during this period is sufficient to sustain 42 million Filipinos, based on an average per-capita consumption of 14 kilograms.

“This goes beyond mere statistics; it’s a crisis threatening the nation’s food security and the livelihoods of countless Filipino families,” said Osorio.

The Convergence Summit highlighted the aggravating threat of the court’s decision on the already dire poverty and hunger situation in coastal communities. Municipal fisherfolk who are among the poorest in the country with a poverty incidence reaching 30.6 percent in 2021, face further hardship.

“Full implementation of our laws, particularly stopping commercial fishing inside municipal waters, is not only desirable but also essential. This requires a collaborative effort involving government agencies,

scientists, and local communities to implement science-based policies that protect both the ecosystem and the livelihoods of those who depend on it,” the summit organizers stated.

Karagatan Patrol found 860 detections of vessel lights inside municipal waters on March 2-8, 2025. This is an 18.9-percent increase from 723 detections recorded from the previous week, on February 23–March 1, 2025.

A year-on-year analysis of VIIRS data further showed a 15-percent increase in boats detected inside municipal waters with 27,654 in 2023 to 31,843 in 2024. The hotspots among the municipalities are Zamboanga City; Cuyo, Palawan; San Pascual, Masbate; Tongkil, Sulu; Languyan, Tawi-Tawi; Pagbilao, Quezon; and Carles, Iloilo.

Osorio urged the local government officials, and other enforcement agencies to uphold their mandates to protect municipal waters and champion the interest of poor artisanal fishers and their families in coastal communities. “We are grateful that the League of Municipalities of the Philippines [LMP] has joined our call and through a recent resolution, commits to their duties to fully enforce environmental and fisheries laws,” Osorio added.

The LMP issued a resolution, dated February 10, 2025, upholding local autonomy as enshrined in Article X of the 1987 Constitution and the Local Government Code of 1991, granting municipalities the authority to manage, conserve, and protect municipal waters, ensuring ecological balance and sustainable use of marine resources. In the resolution, the league said the Supreme Court ruling not only disregards the rights and responsibilities of LGUs but also sets a dangerous precedent that could further erode decentralized governance and weaken LGUs’ capacity to enforce environmental and fisheries regulations.

During the summit, the stakeholders urged the BFAR, LGUs and other enforcement agencies to file criminal cases to ensure that more stringent fines and penalties under the Fisheries Code, as amended, are enforced. In a commitment statement read to representatives of DA- BFAR and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the summit participants sought to develop sustainable fishing programs and alternative livelihoods to help affected communities recover.

To recall, in Panay Island, fisherfolk led by Pamalakaya-Panay and various sectors launched the “Aton ang Kinse Kilometro” alliance.

In La Union, the Timek Ken Namnama dagiti Babassit a Mangalap ti La Union (TIMEK), Pamalakaya’s provincial chapter launched a petition against the controversial SC ruling.

Pamalakaya earlier warned that the municipal fisheries output might “fall significantly” if the Court ruling takes effect.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/03/21/overfishing-pushes-phl-fish-stock-to-brink-of-collapse/>

ABANTE TONITE:

Sobrang supply ng kamatis, sibuyas binibili ng Kadiwa stores

March 20, 2025

Binibili ng Kadiwa stores ang mga sobrang suplay ng kamatis at sibuyas, at ipinatutupad ang market matching o pagtutugma ng ilalaang suplay sa pangangailangan.

Ito ang tugon ni Department of Agriculture (DA) Spokesperson at Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa sa panayam ng programang `Easy Lang' ng DWAR Abante Radyo, bilang pansamantalang hakbang at solusyon nila sa pagkalugi ng mga magsasaka ng sibuyas at kamatis dahil sa pagbagsak ng presyo ng mga ito.

Ayon kay De Mesa, pansamantala o short term solutions ito habang hindi pa tapos ang pagpapatayo nila ng trading hubs at cold storage facilities na paglalagakan ng sandamakmak na suplay upang hindi kaagad nasisira ang mga produkto at napapanatili ang magandang presyo nito sa buong taon.

Paliwanag ni De Mesa, pinagtitibay nila ang pagkakaroon ng mga pasilidad dahil kung walang ganitong imprastraktura ang agrikultura, magpapatuloy ang pagkalugi ng mga magsasaka at pagkasira ng mga produktong labis ang suplay.

Dagdag pa niya, liban sa nasabing pansamantalang solusyon ng gobyerno ay hindi rin sila tumitigil sa pag-abot ng ayuda sa mga magsasakang apektado ng labis na suplay at pagkalugi.

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2025/03/20/sobrang-supply-ng-kamatis-sibuyas-binibili-ng-kadiwa-stores/>

PILIPINO STAR NGAYON:

Importasyon ng bigas babawasan - DA

[Angie dela Cruz](#)

March 21, 2025 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Inihayag ng Department of Agriculture (DA) na binawasan na ng mga importers ang importation ng bigas kasunod ng inaasahang magandang ani ng lokal na maisasakatuparan sa bansa ngayon.

Ayon kay Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa, sa report ng Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), nasa 640,915.708 metric tons (MT) na ng imported na bigas ang pumasok sa bansa ngayong taon.

Mas mababa ito ng 46 percent kumpara sa 1.19 million MT ng imported rice mula Enero hanggang Marso noong nakaraang taon.

“This means that a large volume of imported rice entered the country last year, plus the expectation that this year’s harvest will improve. We can see that importation is adjusting,” ani De Mesa.

Sinabi naman ni Federation of Free Farmers national manager Raul Montemayor na kaya umatras ang mga importers sa pang-angkat ng mas maraming bigas ay dahil sa itinakdang maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) ng DA sa imported rice na nasa P45 hanggang P49 kada kilo.

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/metro/2025/03/21/2429983/importasyon-ng-bigas-babawasan-da>