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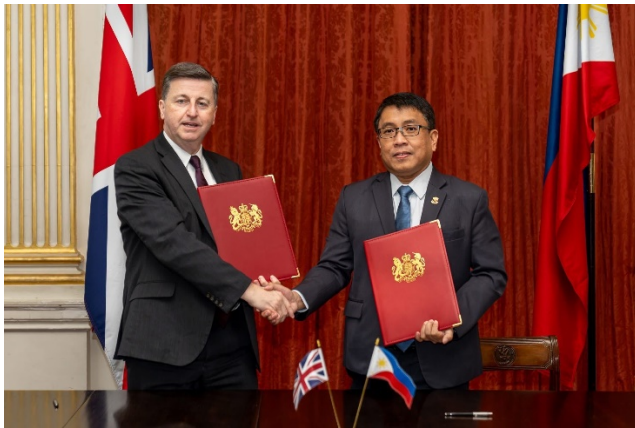
Fish unloading volume in regional ports dips in February–PFDA

MANILA BULLETIN:

Philippines, UK unveil 18-month plan for enhanced trade, investment

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Mar 24, 2025 03:06 PM



(Left) UK's Minister for Trade Policy and Economic Security Douglas Alexander and DTI Undersecretary Allan Gepty (UK Business and Trade photo)

The Philippines and the United Kingdom (UK) have endorsed several programs, including government-to-government and government-to-business activities, over an 18-month period aimed at advancing bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

These programs were discussed during the inaugural Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) meeting hosted in London last week by the UK's Minister for Trade Policy and Economic Security, Douglas Alexander. He was joined by Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Undersecretary Allan Gepty.

In a joint statement published on the DTI's website, the JETCO meeting was described as a clear affirmation from both countries of their collective pursuit to enhance bilateral economic relationship.

Based on data from the UK Department of Business and Trade, the Philippines was its 60th largest trading partner by the end of the third quarter of 2024. This accounted for 0.2 percent of total UK trade.

Total trade in goods and services between the two nations during the same period was £2.8 billion (around ₱207 billion).

"The new Philippines-UK JETCO adds extra emphasis to the UK's deepening relationships across the wider Asia Pacific region," the statement read.

The JETCO meeting acknowledged the potential for future economic growth and shared prosperity through deepening trade links, such as addressing barriers to market access.

Based on data provided by the DTI, the UK was the largest single investor in the Philippines, fueled by investments in renewable energy (RE).

The Philippines, meanwhile, was cited as having the capacity to boost UK trade—being one of the fastest-growing economies in Southeast Asia last year.

Both governments, represented by Alexander and Gepty, endorsed efforts to fully maximize the Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS), which offers Philippine exporters tariff-free access on 92 percent of products.

The two officials reached terms on strengthening the business landscape in the country, including collaboration on regulatory reform initiatives, facilitating business linkages, and capacity building on artificial intelligence (AI).

With this, the Philippines and the UK recognized the importance of growing the energy sector, particularly RE, given its contribution to a sustainable and green economic growth.

The two pledged to work closely in this sector for the coming year, with an emphasis on policy and regulatory engagement.

Meanwhile, in the infrastructure sector, a government-to-government financing framework partnership was discussed to support the key infrastructure projects in the Philippines.

This framework aims to expand access of the Philippines to a potential £5 billion of financing from UK Export Finance (UKEF) and other sources of cooperation.

“Both countries agreed to develop a project pipeline through the Infrastructure Sectoral Working Group in anticipation of the establishment of the framework,” the statement read.

Agriculture was also mentioned as a key sector for additional cooperation, especially on expanding market access for agri-food exporters.

The Agriculture Sectoral Working Group is expected to be established under JETCO, which will be tasked to drive trade and investment in both countries’ agriculture sectors.

During the said meeting, collaboration in animal disease detection and antimicrobial resistance as well as precision breeding and genetics were deemed to be among the priorities.

“Undersecretary Gepty and Minister Alexander emphasized the importance of delivering real impact from strengthened trade and economic discussions,” the statement noted.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/3/24/ph-uk-unveil-18-month-plan-for-enhanced-trade-investment>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

China vessels swarm Panatag anew – PCG

Ghio Ong - The Philippine Star

March 25, 2025 | 12:00am



Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) spokesman for the West Philippine Sea Commodore Jay Tarriela on February 2, 2025.

Photos courtesy of PCG | via Mark Villeza

MANILA, Philippines — Chinese vessels – including a warship – were again seen swarming around Bajo de Masinloc or Panatag Shoal, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) reported yesterday.

An air patrol over the area by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) revealed the presence of five China Coast Guard (CCG) vessels, according to Commodore Jay Tarriela, PCG spokesman on West Philippine Sea issues.

Four Chinese maritime militia ships were detected at distances of 2.7 nautical miles and 8.69 nautical miles, both southeast from the area considered as a traditional fishing area of Filipinos.

In addition, there was a warship of China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA)-Navy with bow number 574 seen around 25 nautical miles southeast of Bajo de Masinloc.

At an online briefing, Tarriela also reported that PCG patrol vessels BRP Bagacay and BRP Cabra, four BFAR ships and 26 Filipino fishing boats were also around Bajo de Masinloc.

The two PCG vessels kept distance of 13 nautical miles southwest of Bajo de Masinloc, he noted.

“The reason why we kept such a distance was because the PCG and BFAR vessels stopped at that position to give away fuel subsidy and food items to the Filipino fishing boats,” according to Tarriela.

The information gathered by the BFAR in its air patrol was contrary to a post on X by former US Air Force official and defense attaché Ray Powell that “BRP Bagacay & BRP Datu Pagbuaya have been intercepted by 2 China Coast Guard as a third & 6 maritime militia ships set up blocking positions.”

Powell could not properly monitor the operation of the PCG and BFAR because “he is just basing on the movement of the AIS (automatic identification system),” hence “he doesn’t have a clear picture,” he added.

Tarriela also disclosed that CCG once again installed floating barriers at the entrance of Bajo de Masinloc, which he said were “placed every time Chinese forces monitor the presence of Philippine government vessels.”

Furthermore, a PLA-Navy helicopter appeared to follow the BFAR aircraft that conducted the air patrol – from a distance of three nautical miles, he added.

Last month, a PLA-Navy aircraft came as close as three meters to a BFAR aircraft conducting patrol.

“I’d like to believe the PLA-Navy learned from the backlash from the international community,” he said.

‘Mysterious’

Meanwhile, the PCG said in a statement that eight Chinese crew members of a vessel in the anchorage area in Manila Bay may have disembarked “mysteriously” from the ship, the Coast Guard said.

In a statement, the PCG said it discovered the incident after conducting joint inspection with other agencies of three foreign-manned vessels last March 20. One of the vessels, MV Huagan 98, was supposed to have Chinese crew based on the ship’s records, but none were found during inspection.

“Authorities found no Chinese nationals onboard. However, a vessel calendar indicated the presence of seven Chinese crew members as of 19 March 2025. A review of the logbook revealed that eight Chinese nationals mysteriously disembarked before dawn on 20 March 2025,” the PCG said.

“Despite existing MARINA (Maritime Industry Authority) regulations limiting foreign crew members to supernumerary roles for a single voyage without prolonged stay onboard, all Chinese nationals were assigned official designations,” it added. The ship’s unnamed captain reportedly denied the presence of Chinese nationals on board.

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) is set to summon officials of the shipping company involved to explain misrepresentation issues.

Authorities also took note of a missing Domestic Shipping Operation Certificate and raised safety and security concerns due to non-functioning close circuit television.

The PCG, DOLE, MARINA, Bureau of Immigration and the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency also reportedly noted deficiencies in two other foreign ships checked at the anchorage area last Thursday, namely the MV An Da Kang and MV Shingping.

According to the PCG, the An Da Kang was found to have illegal manning and crew turnover violations.

The Chinese crew members were reportedly authorized to work in Zambales but were found operating in Manila waters. The vessel also reportedly did not have a valid Domestic Shipping Operation Certificate.

As for the Shingping, authorities said its crew had questionable designations. There were reportedly 12 Chinese nationals onboard the Shingping, all designated as “technicians.” Their designation did not match their Alien Employment Permits. DOLE said such discrepancy could lead to the revocation of their AEPs.

“The PCG and its partner agencies remain steadfast in ensuring compliance with Philippine maritime laws.

Appropriate legal actions will be pursued against the erring shipping companies and vessel operators found violating labor and immigration policies,” the Coast Guard said. — **Evelyn Macairan**

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/03/25/2430863/china-vessels-swarm-panatag-anew-pcg>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Abalos: National Land Use Act vital to PH food security

By: [Jan Escosio](#) - Reporter / [@JEPOI04](#)
INQUIRER.net / 01:31 PM March 24, 2025



Benhur Abalos in the Alyansa campaign rally in Sta. Rosa, Laguna

MANILA, Philippines – Former Interior Secretary and senatorial candidate Benjamin “Benhur” Abalos Jr. vowed to push for the immediate passage of the long-delayed passage of the National Land Use Act if elected to the Senate in the May 2025 elections.

Speaking during a press conference of Alyansa Para sa Pagbabago senatorial candidates held in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, Abalos echoed growing concerns over the rapid loss of farmlands amid unchecked urban development. He stressed the urgency of passing the long-overdue National Land Use Act to prevent a deeper food crisis.



Benhur Abalos greeted warmly by Laguna folk watching the motorcade

“Importante ang food security sa ating bansa damang dama natin ang issue ay presyo ng bigas, ang presyo ng palay at ang issue nitong itong klase na nangyayari sa ating mga palayan ay hindi lang nangyayari sa Laguna ito ay nangyayari sa buong Pilipinas,” Abalos stressed.

“This is about food. This is about life. This is about our future,” he added. “Without food sustainability, we put our future at risk.”

Abalos said local governments must also act swiftly by offering incentives to landowners to retain their farmlands, such as lowering real property taxes (amilyar) on agricultural land.

“What we could do is provide incentives at the local level so that landowners would think twice before selling their land. If you give them incentives not to sell, and on top of that, offer them property tax discounts,” he said.

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He also called for stronger support systems for farmers — from better infrastructure to more accessible loans and affordable crop insurance.

“Second, we need to strengthen infrastructure, especially when it comes to agriculture,” he stressed.

“You wake up one day, and the rice fields are gone. That’s why we need the National Land Use Act now. For me, food sustainability is our lifeline. If elected to the Senate, I will fight for its immediate passage. Nakarekord ito — count me in,” he vowed.

As former DILG secretary, Abalos said he saw the gap in technical capacity among many LGUs, particularly 4th to 6th class municipalities, which he said often lack the legal and planning expertise to create their own comprehensive land use plans.

“Many local governments don’t even have lawyers or urban planners. That’s the reality on the ground. During my time at DILG, I tapped DHSUD and universities to help them, but we need a more permanent solution,” he explained.

“This is not just about zoning or development — this is about our ability to grow food, to survive. That’s why I’m all in for the Land Use Act,” he said.

<https://www.inquirer.net/433523/abalos-national-land-use-act-vital-to-ph-food-security/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Onion crop losses attributed to fungus, fall armyworm by DoST

March 24, 2025 | 9:04 pm



BOC PHOTO

THE Department of Science and Technology (DoST) said fungal and worm diseases were largely behind losses in the onion crop of Nueva Ecija and other growing areas.

The DoST said the onion anthracnose fungal diseases caused “significant yield losses” in Nueva Ecija, a leading onion-producing province.

It said fall armyworm “continues to threaten corn and onion crops,” after it caused significant damage to sugarcane fields, particularly in Negros Occidental.

The DoST said the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD) is researching methods to combat pests and diseases affecting onion yields.

“These combined efforts aim to stabilize supply, support farmers’ productivity, and promote sustainable agricultural practices for long-term market resilience,” it said.

PCAARRD is funding a research project led by the College of Agriculture and Food Science’s National Crop Protection Center at the University of the Philippines Los Baños to develop sustainable chemical and biological management strategies for onion anthracnose.

“The project aims to assess current disease management practices, evaluate fungicides with different modes of action, identify biological control agents, and determine alternative hosts of anthracnose pathogens,” it said.

The project, set for completion in June 2026, will produce two fungicides and one biological control agent.

PCAARRD is also funding another research project under the Harnessing Adaptive Responses and Best Practices against Fall Armyworm using Science and Technology program to manage the fall armyworm in corn, onion, and sugarcane.

The project aims to train farmers in Nueva Ecija, Laguna, Batangas, and Negros Occidental and equip them with “science-based management approaches.” — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/03/24/661429/onion-crop-losses-attributed-to-fungus-fall-armyworm-by-dost/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Gov't to review rice tariffs ahead of harvest season

March 25, 2025 | 12:31 am



Farmers dry rice grains along a highway in Catillejos, Zambales. — PHILIPPINE STAR/ WALTER BOLLOZOS

THE GOVERNMENT is reviewing the lower tariffs on imported rice ahead of the local harvest season next month, according to the presidential palace.

“To ensure our farmers are not significantly affected (by lower tariffs), this will be reviewed... Once the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) provides a detailed report, it will be forwarded to the Office of the Executive Secretary for submission to the President,” Presidential Communications Office (CO) Undersecretary Clarissa A. Castro said at a Palace briefing in mixed English and Filipino.

Executive Order (EO) No. 62, which took effect in July 2024, lowered import tariffs on rice to 15% from 35% until 2028 to tame inflation.

Under the EO, the rice tariff is subject to a review by the NEDA every four months.

Despite the implementation of lower tariffs, prices of rice have remained elevated in local markets.

According to the Agriculture department’s price monitoring of Metro Manila markets as of March 22, a kilogram of imported special rice was priced around P50-P60, slightly lower than the P57-P65 a year ago.

Local well-milled rice is now priced at P38-P54 per kilo versus P49-P58 a year ago. Regular milled rice is priced at P32-P49 per kilo versus P50 a year ago.

The Tariff Commission is scheduled to hold a public hearing on March 28 to tackle the Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura’s (SINAG) petition seeking to raise the rice tariff back to 35%.

SINAG Executive Director Jayson H. Cainglet said in a Viber message the Tariff Commission would likely raise tariffs due to admissions from agencies such as NEDA and the Bureau of Customs that rice prices remain high despite the lower tariffs.

“We cannot see how the Tariff Commission will decide otherwise,” he said. “And they should explain if they will decide otherwise, on what basis? What data will they use?”

Former Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar said lower tariffs will help bring down prices of rice.

“While imported rice is more than enough, the problem remains having high rice prices in the market... The reason why tariffs were lowered was due to spiraling rice prices and I believe that lowering tariffs will contribute to lower rice prices,” he said in a Viber message.

Mr. Dar said the government should also ramp up efforts against hoarding and price manipulation.

“The key problem now for the government to handle is the alleged hoarding and price manipulation,” Mr. Dar said. “Smuggling is another issue to be handled squarely.”

Former Agriculture Undersecretary Fermin D. Adriano backed a review of the lower tariffs on rice.

“For as long as the decision is based on sound analysis such as considering the impact on producers, consumers and the economy and not on political consideration alone, (a review on rice tariffs) should be done,” he said in a Viber message. — **JVDO**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2025/03/25/661413/govt-to-review-rice-tariffs-ahead-of-harvest-season/>

REMATE:

Mas mababang taripa sa PH bananas inihirit sa Japan

March 24, 2025 08:31



MANILA, Philippines- Nanawagan si Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. nitong weekend ng pagtapyas sa Japanese tariffs sa Philippine bananas, dahil para sa ibang bansa, kasado ang zero o preferential tariffs.

Ayon kay Tiu Laurel, ang Japan ang pinakamalaking market para sa local bananas, subalit nagbabayad pa rin ang Pilipinas ng 18% taripa sa mga saging na ini-export ng Pilipinas mula April hanggang September, at mas mababang 8% taripa mula October hanggang March, sa ilalim ng Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA).

Samantala, nagpapataw ang Japan ng zero o preferential tariffs sa mga saging na inaangkat mula Cambodia, Laos, Mexico, at Vietnam.

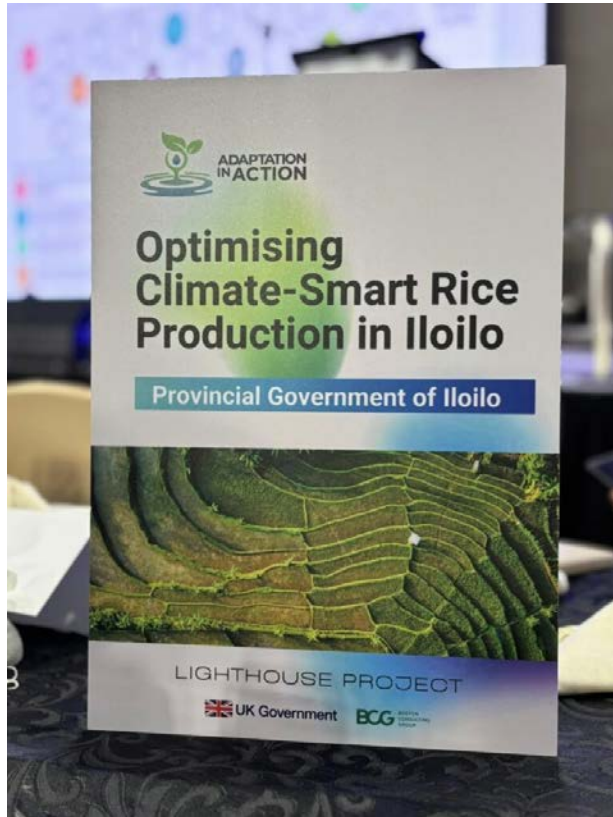
“The banana industry is a lifeline for thousands of farmers and workers, especially in Mindanao, where it serves as a major economic pillar,” wika ni Tiu Laurel.

“To sustain and expand this industry, we must push for tariff reductions on our bananas. This will not only attract greater investment in banana production but also drive poverty alleviation, job creation, and security in Mindanao,” dagdag niya.

Sa kasalukuyan, sinusuplyan ng Pilipinas ang tatlo sa kada apat na bananas consumers sa Japan, na nag-aangkat ng mahigit 1 million metric tons kada taon upang tugunan ang domestic demand. **RNT/SA**
<https://remate.ph/mas-mababang-taripa-sa-ph-bananas-inihirit-sa-japan/>

MANILA STANDARD:

Iloilo eyes private sector collab to boost climate-resilient rice production



Courtesy: Iloilo Provincial Government

By Caloy Lozada

March 24, 2025, 11:20 am

The Iloilo provincial government is seeking private sector partnerships to enhance rice production and ensure agricultural sustainability in the face of climate challenges.

This was announced during the unveiling of its SERBISYO Program (System Enhancement for Rice to Boost, Increase, and Sustain Yield Onwards) at the National Adaptation Plan Investment Forum on March 21, 2025, at the SMX Convention Center in Taguig.

The SERBISYO Program aims to increase rice yields in Iloilo to six metric tons per hectare by promoting climate-resilient, high-yielding rice varieties, constructing small-scale reservoirs, and rehabilitating existing irrigation systems to enhance water supply.

Iloilo Provincial Administrator Raul Baniyas emphasized the urgency of boosting agricultural efficiency, citing data from the Provincial Agriculture Office that revealed a decline in rice production, from 3.79 metric tons per hectare in 2023 to 3.64 metric tons per hectare in 2024.

“This decline poses a significant risk to food security not just in Iloilo but across Western Visayas. As the region’s rice granary and the fifth largest rice-producing province in the country, Iloilo must act swiftly,” he said.

Banias warned that Iloilo could lose an average of 7% of total rice production by 2030, escalating to 25% during severe climate years. This inaction could lead to ₱11 billion in losses across the rice value chain.

Through the SERBISYO Program and private sector support, the provincial government aims to not only mitigate these losses but surpass them by producing an additional 240,000 tons of rice by 2040.

Banias invited partnerships with agricultural input manufacturers, irrigation companies, and innovative technology providers to scale up rice production efficiency and water sustainability.

“In scaling climate-resilient seeds, we aim to partner with private input suppliers and agricultural innovators to distribute optimal varieties and implement crop-scale solutions. We also plan to collaborate with water service providers to establish small-scale reservoirs across 30,000 hectares of rain-fed farms,” he said.

Resilient rice varieties are expected to enhance water-use efficiency by 29%, conserving resources while improving yields.

The SERBISYO Program will be implemented in phases, with full execution targeted for completion within five years.

“We invite our partners to come onboard the SERBISYO Program and work with us to build a resilient and productive agricultural sector,” Banias said.

With Iloilo’s pivotal role as a major rice producer, the program underscores the province’s commitment to addressing climate risks and securing food security for future generations.

<https://manilastandard.net/news/314571916/iloilo-eyes-private-sector-collab-to-boost-climate-resilient-rice-production.html>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Toward rice sufficiency

Managing For Society

By Cristina Lim

March 25, 2025

RICE is a central crop in the Filipino table and a backbone of agricultural employment in the Philippines. The ongoing debate between local rice self-sufficiency and rice importation highlights the tension between national food security goals and economic practicality. The country is expected to remain the world's largest rice importer in 2024, surpassing even China in 2023.

I looked into an empirical analysis to ascertain the key drivers of rice production, consumption and pricing using data from 15 rice-producing regions in the Philippines.

In the analysis, I identified four key recommendations to bolster self-sufficiency in rice production.

First, expanding rice farming areas and improving irrigation systems significantly enhance rice production. The positive relationship between irrigation costs and production suggests that investments in irrigation technologies can boost yields. To support this, policy initiatives should prioritize increasing land allocated for rice farming and modernizing irrigation infrastructure.

Legislative bodies could allocate budgets to incentivize farm owners to convert their land into rice paddies or shift from crops like sugarcane to rice farming. The Department of Agriculture (DA) could expand the ARGIP-Puhunan program, which aids rice farmers, and encourage non-rice farmers to adopt rice farming. Beyond offering free seedlings, the government may incentivize crop farmers to convert some of their land into rice paddies. A clause in government memoranda could encourage the conversion of other agricultural land to rice farming.

Second, technologies are needed to improve consumption monitoring and buffer stock management of rice supply. Spikes in consumption could threaten self-sufficiency by depleting available supply. The government should implement a real-time monitoring system to track consumption trends and identify periods of high demand, such as during holidays or following natural disasters.

When consumption spikes, the government can respond by increasing rice imports to fill the gap, mobilizing existing buffer stocks, or encouraging local farmers to boost production through short-term support measures like subsidies or tax incentives. Expanding rice reserves during periods of lower consumption would better prepare the country for future demand fluctuations.

Third, since rice prices and self-sufficiency levels influence production, a surge in self-sufficiency driven by rice imports has led to a decline in domestic production, highlighting the challenges local farmers face competing with cheaper imports. The government should partner with private lending institutions to create low-interest loan programs for rice farmers, improving their access to capital for purchasing seeds, equipment and fertilizers. These loans could include performance-based criteria to encourage better farming practices and ensure repayment.

The Department of Agriculture should expand training programs teaching farmers modern techniques, sustainable practices and yield maximization. Resources should be mobilized to link rice farmers with millers, distributors and retailers to reduce post-harvest losses and improve market access. Farmer cooperatives could facilitate bulk purchasing of inputs and collective selling of harvests, helping farmers negotiate better prices and reducing transaction costs.

Finally, the analysis revealed the negative effects of increasing rice prices on production. While higher prices may encourage more rice production, they also reduce consumer purchasing power, increase reliance on imports, and shrink the local market share. Maintaining stable rice prices is crucial to support sustainable production and prevent market volatility from harming both producers and consumers.

The government could adopt measures such as setting price floors and ceilings — a price floor would protect farmers from price drops, while a ceiling would prevent prices from becoming too high for consumers. These measures would reduce market uncertainty on rice prices and promote rice sufficiency in the country.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/03/25/business/top-business/toward-rice-sufficiency/2078933>

THE MANILA TIMES:

NHA, DA teaming up for food security plan

By Arlie O. Calalo

March 25, 2025

A MEMORANDUM of understanding (MOU) has been sealed between the National Housing Authority (NHA) and Department of Agriculture (DA) in a bid to provide a steady supply of agricultural products in resettlement sites.

"The collaboration aims to promote food security and sustainability while addressing economic challenges in agriculture," NHA General Manager Joeben Tai said.

"This initiative is part of the Kadiwa ng Pangulo (KNP) program, which supports President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s goal of helping farmers sell directly to consumers," Tai added.

He told The Manila Times on Monday that the MOU was signed by him and DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. at the DA's central office in Quezon City.

By bridging the gap between farmers, fisherfolk, micro-enterprises and consumers, the Kadiwa Program provides fresh, locally produced commodities at affordable prices, the two officials said.

Tai also highlighted that the program has been an integral part of every NHA People's Caravan, ensuring that communities benefit from its initiatives.

The NHA chief also thanked the DA for supporting the mission of the agency in bringing government services accessible to the resettlement sites.

Those who also signed and witnessed the event were NHA Assistant General Manager Alvin Feliciano, acting Community Support Services Department chief Donhill Alcain, and Assistant Secretary for Agribusiness, Marketing, and Consumer Affairs and Kadiwa Program head Genevieve Velicaria-Guevarra.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/03/25/news/national/nha-da-teaming-up-for-food-security-plan/2078952>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Fish unloading volume in regional ports dips in February–PFDA

Ada Pelonia

March 25, 2025

THE country's regional ports registered lower fish unloading volume in February, the Philippine Fisheries Development Authority (PFDA) reported.

Figures from the PFDA showed that regional fish ports (RFPs) delivered 35,725.32 metric tons (MT) to consumers last month. This showed a 12.22-percent contraction from the 40,700.05 MT recorded in the same period the previous year.

The agency said General Santos Fish Port Complex unloaded 20,900.537 MT of fish products in February. This showed a 10.24- percent decline from 23,285.97 MT in the previous year.

The agency said Navotas Fish Port Complex registered a decline last month “due to the prolonged northeast monsoon” or amihan season as it unloaded 9,082.352 MT. This was 24.29 percent lower than the 11,996.62 MT of fish products distributed to consumers in February 2024.

The PFDA noted that fish unloaded in Lucena Fish Port Complex also slid by 7.67 percent to 1,618.29 MT last month from 1,752.66 MT last year.

For the country's sole Visayas port, the agency said fish unloaded in the Iloilo Port Complex shrank by 10.71 percent in February to 1,946.245 MT from 2,179.59 MT in the previous year.

It also said that Camaligan Fish Port supplied clients with 0.153 MT of fish and fishery products from 2.13 MT in February 2024.

Meanwhile, the PFDA also registered increases in unloaded volume last month.

It added that the Bulan Fish Port Complex had a “significant jump” as it unloaded 1,107.45 MT of fish in February from 558.55 MT last year.

Furthermore, the PFDA said the Davao Fish Port Complex also recorded a rise in fish delivered to consumers last month to 259.03 MT, or 27.12 percent higher than the 203.77 MT in the previous year.

The western Mindanao port, the Zamboanga Fish Port Complex, also experienced an uptick in fish unloading at 811.27 MT from 659.72 MT recorded in the previous year.

The country recently concluded its three-month closed fishing season that started on November 1 in waters northeast of Palawan and from November 15 in the Visayan Seas and Zamboanga Peninsula.

All three areas are considered spawning grounds for small pelagic fishes like sardines and mackerel.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/03/25/fish-unloading-volume-in-regional-ports-dips-in-february-pfda/>