CLIPPINGS FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2019

A. SEC. EFP QUOTED

MANILA BULLETIN
SAAD beneficiaries

BUSINESS WORLD
Sugar production estimate raised amid rising yields

THE DAILY TRIBUNE
Disarm, farm lands

B. DA FAMILY

MANILA BULLETIN
Pampanga still positive, Bataan cleared for red tide

BALITA
Red tide alert sa Pampanga
Vietnam seen hiking rice exports to PH

MANILA STANDARD
What we need to do in Manila Bay

BUSINESS MIRROR
'Liberalization' will kill industry, sugar workers' group insists
DENR: 2-month 'Tawilis' fishing prohibition won't hurt that much
Canberra just a 'small' market for Philippine banana produce

PILIPINO MIRROR
Pag-import ng asukal inalmahan

C. AGRI-RELATED STORY

THE MANILA TIMES
How animal dung coffee is making big money

THE PHILIPPINE STAR
Farming group seeks 'Filipino First' policy

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT
Filipino farmers first policy pushed

BUSINESS WORLD
Solar para sa pulitika, rice tariffication para sa masa
PHL sweet potato farmers need access to more tech

PEOPLE'S JOURNAL TONIGHT
Biz backs rice tariffication

D. FOREIGN STORY

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT
Chicago wheat eases on ample supplies

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
Date: FEBRUARY 12, 2019 Page: 11

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

SAAD beneficiaries

COTABATO CITY (PNA) – One of the most successful programs and brainchild of Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel "Manny" Piñol has been making waves in his home province of North Cotabato after it made impressions in Luzon and the Visayas. "The Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) is one of DA's successful and effective agricultural programs," Department of Agriculture Region 12 Director Milagros Casis said. Even on a Sunday, Casis led the mass distribution in two municipalities of the province that included work animals, seeds, agricultural equipment, among others. More than P5-million worth of farm inputs was distributed by Casis to farmer beneficiaries of preferred far-flung barangays in the towns of Midsayap and Alamada.

BusinessWorld
INCREASE YOUR BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: 4/S1

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Sugar production estimate raised amid rising yields

THE Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) raised its estimate for sugar production for the crop year 2018-2019 to 2.79 million metric tons (MMT) from 2.225 MMT previously, with favorable weather producing higher yields.

"As of week ending Jan. 27, we are still almost as the same level as last year. What we don't know is how long the milling period will last. Apparently, we have hit the peak of the milling season. Usually, when you have a long period of fair weather, it is easier for our farmers from the mountains to bring their cane to the sugar central. Assuming the milling season will be the same as last year, then we might hit the target but if the milling season is fairly short, then we might come out with a new crop estimate," Emilio Bernardino L. Yulo, SRA Board Member Planters' Representative, told *BusinessWorld* on the sideline of the Sugarcane Stakeholders' Summit held in Quezon City on Monday.

"The original estimate was at 2.225 million metric tons. I think the SRA is about to release (an estimate of) 2.79 million MT," Mr. Yulo added.

According to SRA data, raw sugar production for January during crop year 2017-2018 hit 256,336 MT. Total output for crop year 2017-2018 was 2.1 million MT.

"On the ground, our planters are experiencing reduced tonnages but higher purity. That's brought about by weather conditions. Luzon and Visayas are down, but Mindanao is up," Mr. Yulo said.

Meanwhile, SRA Board Member and Millers' Representative Roland B. Beltran said that sugar production has significantly decreased over the years, and the industry is on its way to recovery after being affected by importation of high fructose corn syrup.

"We lost a lot of plantation area for many reasons. One of the reasons is the competition with banana plantations offering good deals [starting] five to six years ago," Mr. Beltran said in a separate interview.

Mr. Beltran said that Budget Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno's proposal to liberalize sugar imports will further reduce the production of sugar in the Philippines. Mr. Beltran pointed out that SRA has specific importation programs to address demand that cannot be filled by domestic sugar production.

"If we flood the market with imported sugar, the intention is to drive down the prices including mill gate prices, who would still plant sugar cane if they are incurring losses?" Mr. Beltran said.

"On the part of SRA, our programs for importation are timely... demand increased after high-fructose corn syrup imports were restricted," Mr. Beltran added.

Mr. Beltran said that a two-day summit is being planned to identify the industry's problems, and come up with recommendations to specific government agencies.

"After this summit, all the problems will be identified. We will come up with recommendations. What we are trying to achieve in this summit is to have an updated sugarcane industry roadmap," Mr. Beltran said.

On the other hand, Mr. Yulo said that importers used to be required to supply a portion of their shipments to the food industry.

"We had an important program specific for the industrial users... In the old SRA, if you had an importation program, you had to give part of it to producers. That's no longer done today. We have practically given up everything. What more can they ask?," Mr. Yulo said.

Sugar Order (SO) No. 10 for crop year 2017-2018 called for the importation of 200,000 MT of sugar. SO No. 2 meanwhile called for the importation of 150,000 MT of sugar for crop year 2018-2019.

Mr. Yulo called on the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to address high retail prices, amid a push for a liberalized sugar industry by business groups and some economic managers.

"Why doesn't DTI come in strong against those retailers selling at P60 (per kilo)? This is a consumer issue. This is no longer a regulatory issue. They can go as low as P55 or even P54, but how come they are allowing retailers, even supermarkets here in Metro Manila, to sell at P60 and we are being unfairly blamed for these prices?"

"If the DTI can prove that producers are at fault for high prices, we will allow them to import," Mr. Yulo added.— **Reicelene Joy N. Ignacio**

THE DAILY tribune
Without fear or favor

Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: 1 & 2

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Disarm, farm lands

Reds get peace offer anew

You cannot solve this through killing each other. We will be wiped out over foolish reasons

By Kristina Maralit

Lay down your arms and cultivate your lands.

This was President Rodrigo Duterte's offer to the New People's Army (NPA) as he urged communist rebels to put an end to their decades-long armed struggle with the government as he will distribute all state-owned lands.

"I have always told everybody - the military, police, everyone, even the Cabinet - that we will not have peace until we do not arrive at a resolution with our rebel brothers and give them land," the President said in his speech during the ceremonial distribution of Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) to more than 800 agrarian reform beneficiaries in Maguindanao last night.

"You cannot solve this through killing each other. We will be wiped out over foolish reasons," he continued.

Joined by Agriculture Secretary Manny Piñol and Agrarian Reform Secretary John Castriciones, along with Maguindanao Gov. Esmael "Toto" Mangudadatu and other local officials, Mr. Duterte stressed there is no more need for the NPA's revolutionary movement for the poor to have land to till because his administration is already implementing land reform.

Turn to page 2

PART 1 OF 2

THE DAILY tribune
Without fear or favor

Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: 1 & 2

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PART 2 OF 2

Disarm, farm lands

We will not have peace until we do not arrive at a resolution with our rebel brothers and give them land

From page 1

"What for? Their campaign of giving land to the people, I'm already doing that," he said.

"Drop your weapons. That will do no one any good. It is useless, very useless to fight. Let's talk. Bury your arms. You don't need it," Mr. Duterte said.

"Join the government. This is not mine alone. This is ours," he added.

Hands tied

Noting that his hands are tied when it comes to the rising prices of oil and its by-products even if the people threaten to "hang" him, the President encouraged new land owners to cultivate their lands as he said there will come a day when even the countries who are the richest in oil resources will be knocking on their doors.

The Philippines may not have been blessed with oil, but it was blessed with lands so rich that they can produce food not just for Filipinos but even other nations, he said.

"My Moro brothers, I just distributed those documents you are holding right now. That's about on the average two, three hectares. I distributed something like 1,740 hectares. Many of you are beneficiaries. Take what is yours, cultivate it," Mr. Duterte urged. "Just wait. The time will come that when food becomes scarce because of climate change, nothing will grow anymore in other lands. It will be us, those with lands, who can dictate the prices."

Fertile lands are blessings

The President also mentioned that, although the country may not be much of a rice producer anymore, more agricultural products may be produced because of the vast farmlands.

He also vowed to spend a big portion of his remaining years in office to working toward achieving lasting peace in Mindanao and that he will start with restarting peace talks with Nur Misuari and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

Mr. Duterte expressed optimism that with Misuari's help and leadership, the government will finally quash the security threat that is the Islamic State.

"I'm telling you now. Whatever else we need (for peace), I will give you as long as it is within the bounds of the Constitution," he expressed.

Until that is realized, however, the Chief Exclusive made one last appeal to communist rebels to peacefully surrender and pledge allegiance to the government.

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
Date: FEBRUARY 12, 2019 Page: 10

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

BALITA
PAGE: 5

Pampanga still positive, Bataan cleared for red tide

By **JONAS REYES**

SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga – The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) released Shellfish Bulletin No. 03, stating that the coastal waters of Pampanga are still positive for red tide toxins while the Bataan has already tested negative.

Red tide toxins have plagued the province of Pampanga for more than two months now and have been noted by the BFAR as still having paralytic shellfish poison beyond regulatory limit.

The bulletin stated that based on their latest laboratory results, all types of shellfish and Acetes or alamang that were gathered from the province's waters are still not safe for human consumption due to paralytic shellfish poison.

The BFAR also stated that not all marine delicacies are affected, stating that fish, squids, shrimps, and crabs are safe for human consumption as long as they are prepared fresh and are washed thoroughly, with the internal organs removed before cooking.

The bureau, on the other hand, lifted the red tide alert on the province of Bataan as the shellfish samples that were collected from the coastal waters of Samal, Abucay, Orani, Balanga, Pilar, Orion, Limay and Mariveles were already tested negative of the toxin.

Bataan markets on Saturday have already been selling green mussels or tahong after it was lifted by the BFAR on Thursday. The bureau stated that after three consecutive weeks of sampling in the province yielded negative results for the toxin.

A report on the sale of the green mussels showed that the price of one gallon of tahong and talaba costs P100 each. The red tide ban started on November 24 of last year and was only lifted on Thursday.

Red tide alert sa Pampanga

SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga – Positibo pa rin sa red tide ang malaking bahagi ng baybayin ng Pampanga, ayon sa Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

Sa abiso ng BFAR, nakitaan pa rin ng paralytic shellfish poison ang coastal areas ng lalawigan.

Ayon sa BFAR, dalawang buwan nang ipinaiiral ang naturang babala sa lalawigan kung saan bawal anihin ang mga uri ng shellfish, kabilang na ang tahong.

Paglilinaw ng ahensya, hindi lahat ng lamang-dagat ay apektado ng red tide toxins dahil maaari namang anihin sa lugar ang isda, pusit, hipon, alimasag at acetes (alamang) basta linisin lamang ng mabuti at tanggalin ang mga lamang-loob nito bago lutuin.

Kaugnay nito, inalis na ng BFAR ang red tide alert nito sa walong lugar sa Bataan na kinabibilangan ng baybayin ng Samal, Abucay, Orani, Balanga, Pilar, Orion, Limay at Mariveles matapos magnegatibo sa lason ng red tide.

Pinayuhan naman ng BFAR ang publiko na sumunod sa kanilang ipinatutupad shellfish ban para na rin sa kapakanan ng mga ito.

Jonas Reyes

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
Date: FEBRUARY 12, 2019 Page: B-3

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Vietnam seen hiking rice exports to PH

By **MADELAINE B. MIRAFLOR**

Vietnam, which expects higher rice export sales this year, is seen to benefit the most once the Philippines entered a liberalized rice market.

A report in US Department of Agriculture (USDA) showed that Vietnam is expected to make some gains in the coming year as it is "well poised to continue to supply the Philippines, which has been a more active buyer in recent months, and where pending legislation would likely keep imports at robust levels."

USDA is referring to the Rice Tariffication Bill, which seeks to replace the volume restriction on rice imports with a specific tariff rate.

Next to China and Nigeria, Philippines has always been one of the world's top rice importers over the past years, with its local production only protected by World Trade Organization's (WT) Quantitative Restriction (QR).

Sans the QR, the country's rice imports is seen to balloon. From its previous projection of 1.8 million metric tons (MT), USDA alone now expects the Philippines to import as much as 2.3 million MT of rice this year. In 2018, Philippines only imported as much as 1.9 million MT.

Vietnam, on the other hand, is seen to export as much as 6.5 million MT of rice this year.

"Imports are raised for the Philippines due to the expected continued robust purchases from competitively priced exporters," USDA said.

Last year, most of the country's additional supply came from Vietnam and Thailand, which was procured through a series of government-to-government and open tender importation conducted by the National Food Authority (NFA).

Unlike Vietnam, Thai exports are set to contract more substantially, with its carrying stocks at lowest level in 10 years which is held primarily by the private sector. This year, Thailand may export as much as 11 million MT of rice.

While Thailand clearly has bigger exports, the Southeast Asian country is disadvantaged by uncompetitive prices.

"Over the past couple of months, the strengthening baht has kept Thai prices well above other Asian exporters. Thailand is set to engage in intense competition with other Southeast Asian suppliers, so the relatively uncompetitive prices put it at a distinct disadvantage," USDA said.

Even if the Philippine government's Rice Tariffication Bill is yet to take effect, the unlimited rice importation program actually started already with NFA's out quota importation program.

Based on NFA's latest data, 180 companies have applied for clearance to bring in as much as 1.2 million MT of rice into the country. Most of the additional supply will come from Thailand and Vietnam.

Under the out quota importation, everyone can import rice if they have the financial, warehousing, retailing capacity to do so.

It was reported last week that NFA, which will no longer be allowed to import rice once the Rice Tariffication Bill takes effect, is now waiting for the delivery of the last batch of imported rice it bought last year.

A recent data from the state-run grains agency showed that of the rice imports contract awarded last year, a total of 1.01 million metric tons have already been delivered in the country.

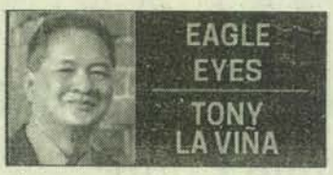
The balance of 236,196 MT of rice from last year's importation is now in "transit and expected to arrive soon," said the NFA.

Manila Standard

Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: A4 & A5

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

What we need to do in Manila Bay



LAST Saturday, I wrote about the 2008 decision of the Supreme Court Decision which ordered the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and other government agencies to clean up, rehabilitate and preserve Manila Bay in their different capacities. This continuing mandamus order, according to the Court, would remain pending until the cleanup was achieved.

Two months after that historic decision, on Febr. 10, 2009, the Court En Banc created the Manila Bay Advisory Committee (MBAC), composed of two members of the Court and three technical experts (I was one of those originally appointed but stayed only for three years because of other commitments). MBAC was created to monitor the execution of the Court's decision and was chaired by Justice Presbitero Velasco, the ponente of the 2008 decision.

Following the recommendations of MBAC, the Court issued another resolution on Feb. 15, 2011 giving timeframes and tasks for the concerned agencies to implement the 2008 decision. In that decision, Associate Justices Antonio Carpio and Maria Lourdes Sereno dissented on the basis that the resolution constituted judicial overreach by usurping and performing executive functions by giving specific orders to the agencies on what to do to clean up and rehabilitate Manila Bay. The majority of the Court disagreed as for them the issuance of subsequent resolutions by the Court was simply an exercise of judicial power under Article VIII of the Constitution, the execution of the decision being an integral part of the adjudicative function of the Court. It should be noted that the 2011 Resolution was based on the discussions with the concerned agencies and none of the directives were new to them.

I summarize below these directives to emphasize that the government does not have to start from scratch in doing its work on Manila Bay. The 2011 resolution might be a good starting point now that the executive branch is giving the highest political priority to Manila Bay.

First, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) was ordered to submit within a specified period the updated Operational Plan for the Manila Bay Coastal Strategy. It was further ordered to submit the names and addresses of persons and companies in Metro Manila, Rizal, Laguna, Cavite, Bulacan, Pampanga and Bataan that generate toxic and hazardous waste.

Second, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) asked by the Court to order the mayors of all cities in Metro Manila; the governors of Rizal, Laguna, Cavite, Bulacan, Pampanga and Bataan; and the mayors of all the cities and towns in said provinces, to inspect all factories, commercial establishments and private homes along the banks of the major river systems to determine if they have wastewater treatment facilities and/or hygienic septic tanks, as prescribed by existing laws, ordinances, rules and regulations.

Third, the MWSS was ordered to submit to the Court on or before June 30, 2011 the list of areas in Metro Manila, Rizal and Cavite that do not have the necessary wastewater treatment facilities.

Fourth, the Local Water Utilities Administration is ordered to submit on or before Sept. 30, 2011 its plan to provide, install, operate and maintain sewerage and sanitation facilities in said cities and towns and the completion period for said works.

> *"It is time now for the Supreme Court to remand this case to the lower court for execution of its final order."*

Fifth, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) was ordered to submit, among others, the names and addresses of the informal settlers in Metro Manila.

In addition, the Departments of Agriculture, Health, and Education, the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), and the Philippine National Police (PNP) were also ordered to do specific tasks related to the cleanup.

This was a comprehensive order but clearly it was not enough and 10 years after the original decision, Manila Bay is even more polluted; its environment degraded.

In my view, it is time now for the Supreme Court to remand this case to the lower court for execution of its final order. There is no value in this case remaining any further in the Supreme Court. Justice Velasco, the MBAC, and the Supreme Court were diligent in push-

Turn to A5

Manila Standard

Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: A4 & A5

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PART 2 OF 2

What we...

From A4

ing this to the limit but clearly it is the executive branch, and specially the DENR and DILG with the local governments, that should get this done.

With the executive branch firmly in charge again of this monumental task of cleaning Manila Bay, I suggest an overall approach to that effort that would be based on two pillars—sustainable development and environmental justice. These two principles should guide the government strategy and interventions in Manila Bay.

Sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of present generations while not sacrificing the interests of future generations. Obviously it is not an option to stop economic activities in the Manila Bay area, a region which comprises all of Metro Manila and several Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog provinces. In fact, if anything, given the needs for the future of this region, more development is needed—but development that is environmentally smart and climate friendly while also sustainable and equitable, For that to be achieved, a long-term masterplan must be adopted, and faithfully implemented. Such a plan is now being developed by a team commissioned by the National Economic Development Authority (disclosure: I have a mirror advising role in this project) and should be ready for presentation to the government this year.

As I pointed out last Saturday, the first thing to do is to accelerate the putting into place of a comprehensive sewerage system for the region. We must all be connected to a modern sewerage system in ten years. This was the big mistake of the Ramos government when it privatized the water system of Metro Manila; it should have embedded into the contracts of Manila Water and Maynilad stipulations that required them to prioritize sewerage.

As I have written, before, all major reclamation projects in the Manila Bay region must be stopped. It is immoral and criminal to allow activities that would lead to the destruction of Luneta, Manila Hotel, Intramuros, Chinatown, Ermita, our national museums, and other heritage sites. Thousands of lives could also be lost when the impact of reclamation combines with subsidence (the sinking of Metro Manila and surroundings because of unsustainable extraction of water) and climate change impact (sea level rise and storm surges) in future disasters.

Environmental justice must animate the clean-up of Manila Bay. The burden should fall principally on those who have polluted the Bay the most and those who have the resources to bear the costs. I support the DENR's enforcement efforts being directed first at the big malls, hotels, and condominiums in the Roxas Boulevard area, but these efforts should be expanded to the whole region as every discharge from every establishment, village, household, and building ends up in the bay and if untreated pollutes its waters. The rich should be targeted first because they have the means to put up facilities to manage their waste and treat their waste water.

Informal settlers should be given a just transition, their relocation on or near their places of work and business (and their children's schools) to be given priority. It is never right to use the law to further marginalize and disadvantage the poor even for a good cause like a clean environment. In fact, environmental injustice usually backfires and makes matters worse for the environment.

Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu is a visionary and decisive leader. He has said that fixing Manila Bay requires a change of culture, in my view from a culture of reckless economic and bad land use decisions to sustainability as the norm for those decisions—from treating the poor terribly to making development truly inclusive. With sustainable development and environmental justice as our guiding principles, we will yet save Manila Bay.

Facebook Page: Professor Tony La Viña
Twitter: tonylavs
Email: tonylavs@gmail.com

BusinessMirror
A broader look at today's business
Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: A4

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

'Liberalization' will kill industry, sugar workers' group insists

By Jonathan L. Mayuga
@jonlmayuga

A FEDERATION of sugar workers on Monday rejected a proposal to "liberalize" the sugar industry, saying it will only lead to the industry's untimely demise.

John Milton Lozande, secretary-general of the National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW), said in a news statement that most of the sugar produced in the Philippines goes to the domestic market.

The group issued the statement as the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) held a two-day Sugarcane Stakeholders' Summit, which kicked off on Monday at the Bureau of Soils and Water Management in Quezon City Hall.

Joining the NFSW, members of KAISAHAN-Batangas expressed their strong opposition to the proposal to remove fees for importing sugar and stopping the SRA from regulating shipments, hence, further opening up the Philippine market for sugar by-products like sweeteners.

They likened the proposal to the liberalization of the rice industry wherein there will be no limit to imported rice with the imposition of higher tariffs.

If the sugar industry is liberalized, nobody in the country would dare engage in agriculture for the local market as the government would rather import cheaper agricultural products while, at the same time, promoting export crops such as palm oil, cavendish bananas, pineapples and the like for the global market.

In effect, Philippine agriculture would only cater to large foreign and local corporations that produce the above export crops and control its markets. The country would thus never achieve food security and sovereignty, said Lozande.

BusinessMirror
A broader look at today's business

Date: FEBRUARY 12, 2019 Page: A4

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

DENR: 2-month 'tawilis' fishing prohibition won't hurt that much

THE two-month moratorium on catching the diminishing *tawilis* population will not severely affect the income and livelihood of fishermen and other stakeholders of Taal Lake in Luzon.

This was underscored by Jose Elmer C. Bascos, the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources officer of Batangas, saying Taal Lake, the country's third largest lake after Laguna de Bay in Luzon and Lanao Lake in Mindanao, is home to other commercially viable fish like carp, tilapia and *bangus*.

Starting on March 1 until the end of April this year, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Agriculture (DA) through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and concerned local government units (LGUs) will ban the fishing of *tawilis* to allow the rare freshwater sardine to reproduce and replenish the lake with new stocks.

"It is just for two months. They [fishermen] can still go fishing in the lake and there are other fish that are more commercially viable than tawilis," Bascos told the BUSINESSMIRROR in a telephone interview.

He added that for the fishermen's personal consumption, catching *tawilis* will still be allowed.

"What is not allowed is fishing by huge volume," he stressed in Filipino. ***Jonathan L. Mayuga***

BusinessMirror
A broader look at today's business

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Date: FEBRUARY 12, 2019 Page: A4

Canberra just a 'small' market for Philippine banana produce

By Jasper Emmanuel Y. Arcalas @jearcalas

THE possible opening of the Australian market to homegrown bananas would only have a slight effect on the country's overall export of the fruit as Canberra remains a "small" market for the local produce, the Pilipino Banana Growers and Exporters Association (PBGEA) said.

"[It would have] very minimal effect [on our exports]," PBGEA Executive Director Stephen A. Antig told the BusinessMirror in an interview.

"Australia is a small market considering they have banana plantations also and export it, too," Antig added.

Nonetheless, Antig said, the Philippines's competitive advantage is that locally produced bananas are cheaper than those grown in Australia.

Last year, the Philippines and Australia held another round of agricultural talks in Canberra, which focused comprehensively on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) concerns of Canberra over Manila's bananas.

Following the results of the meeting, Agriculture Undersecretary Ariel T. Cayanan expressed optimism on that homegrown banana fruits would finally enter the Australian market this year.

Cayanan said the Philippines explained extensively to Australia the current SPS measures undertaken by local banana growers and exporters to address various diseases during the fourth Australia-Philippines Agriculture forum held on November 28 in Canberra.

Cayanan pointed out that the Philippines currently employ superior banana technologies to address SPS problems compared to Australia.

Among these technologies, according to Cayanan, banana growers eradicate the infestation and spread of black sigatoka disease through plant tissues.

"Their primarily concern is the entry of sigatoka disease, and they are saying that the remedial measures is having five leaves, eight leaves," he told the BusinessMirror in an interview in December.

"But we are doing the roots. If we see something wrong with the roots, we address it immediately and the plant will not grow anymore," he added.

The Philippines, through the Bureau of the Plant Industry (BPI) and the PBGEA, would submit the technical documents covering the comprehensive SPS measures undertaken by the country to Australia within the month, according to Cayanan.

Cayanan mentioned that the meeting has set a six-month time frame—which would be from January to June—for Australia to evaluate the documents on whether it would pass their SPS and quarantine standards.

Cayanan said they are optimistic that the Philippines would now overcome the SPS concerns set by Australia for the entry of locally grown banana fruits, and even sees the conclusion of Australia's evaluation earlier than June next year.

"I think we were able to inculcate and to impress on them that we are doing things right," he said.

"We didn't just accelerate the talks but we have made it time-bounded, technology and science-based. The negotiations were very good and we are very very happy on how the negotiations went," he added.

Manila is set to host the fifth Philippine-Australia agriculture forum in 2020.

The Philippines reclaimed its position as the second-largest exporter of bananas in the world last year on the back of higher supplies due to better planting conditions.

However, PBGEA urged the government to provide more support to local growers to maintain the stature as competition with South American producers tightens.

In its preliminary market review report, the United Nations's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimated that Philippine banana exports last year expanded by 77.34 percent to an all-time high of 2.95 million metric tons, from a recorded volume of 1.663 MMT in 2017.

"Banana production in the Philippines had been affected by a series of adverse conditions between 2015 and 2017, in response to which significant investments were made in area expansion, new technologies and improved inputs," FAO said in the report published recently.

"Thanks to the strong performance in 2018, the Philippines regained its place as second-largest supplier of bananas behind Ecuador, at a volume share of 16 percent of global shipments," it added.

PILIPINO MIRROR
FILIPINO MIRROR MEDIA GROUP CORPORATION
• SALAMIN NG KATOTOHANAN •

Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: 8

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PAG-IMPORT NG ASUKAL INALMAHAN

MATINDING pagtutol ang ipinahayag ng mga kasapi ng National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW), partikular ng Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (UMA), sa pagpapatuloy ng panukalang importasyon ng asukal sa idinaos na Sugarcane Stakeholders Summit ng Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) kahapon.

Sa isang kilos-protesta, mariing binatikos ni UMA chairperson Guillermo Hernandez ang liberalisasyon sa pinaniniwalaang ito ang papatay sa industriya ng asukal sa bansa.

Ipinahayag ng grupo na naghihingalo na ang industriya ng asukal kung kaya dapat nang manindigan ang mga stakeholder na kontrahin ang liberalization kung saan nabatid na patuloy nilang sinusuportahan ang ilang patakaran katulad ng isinusulong ni Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Secretary Benjamin Diokno kaugnay sa walang habas na pagpasok ng imported na asukal sa lokal na merkado.

Aniya, gagawin ito sa pamamagitan ng pag-alis ng quota sa pag-angkat, pagtanggal ng mga kabayaran para makapag-angkat o Certificate of Reclassification Rights na P200 kada 50 kilograms ng asukal, pagpapahinto sa pagkontrol ng SRA sa pagpasok ng mga imported na asukal, at pagbibigay-daan sa direktang importasyon ng mga korporasyong magnanais mag-angkat nito.

Sinabi pa ni Hernandez na ang nais ng pamahalaan ay magtanim ng ibang export crop ang mga magsasaka tulad ng oil palm, saging na cavendish at pinya upang muling i-export sa halip na tugunan ang mga pangunahing pangangailangan nito para sa bigas.

Napag-alamang sakaling maipatupad ang mas matinding liberalisasyon sa sugar industry, inaasahang mawawalan ng trabaho ang halos 7,000 manggagawa sa iba't ibang panig ng bansa, partikular sa Negros habang tinatayang 75,000 maliliit na magtatanim din ang apektado.

Samantala, hiniling din ng UMA sa administrayong Duterte na tugunan ang usapin ng manggagawa sa asukal at kilalanin ng mga big planter at haciendero ang karapatan ng mga manggagawa kung nais nilang patibayin ang naturang industriya.

Iginiit pa ng grupo na dapat ding itaas ang sahod ng mga manggagawa na lumalabas na P80 hanggang P120 lamang kada araw at mas mababa pa dahil sa niligalisang sistemang pakyawan, at direktang ipamahagi ang Social Amelioration Fund sa mga manggagawa.

BENEDICT ABAYGAR, JR.

The Manila Times

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Date: FEBRUARY 12, 2019 Page: B2

How animal dung coffee is making big money

BEYOND BUZZWORDS

REY ELBO

SINCE time immemorial, the world's expensive brew is from the civet cat coffee, also known as Indonesia's 'kopi luwak.' In the Philippines, it is called by so many names depending on the location where the cat's feces is found. In the Cordillera region, it is called *'kape motit,'* in Tagalog areas, it is known as *'kape alamid'* and in Mindanao, it is brewed as *'kape musang.'*

I'm not sure if these local brewa are easily available. If not, then we can understand as most of us are practical and would readily succumb to what's easy, accessible and inexpensive — the 3-in-1 sold by different competing brands.

But the 3-in-1 coffee is not what I'd like to tell you. Believe it or not, the prized kopi luwak and other varieties are digested coffee cherries, eaten and defecated by the Asian palm civet *(Paradoxurus hermaphroditus)*. It's not the variety of coffee that makes it uniquely smooth and tasty but the fermentation process inside the cat's intestine.

The cat's digestive enzymes change the structure of protein in coffee beans which removes acidity for a smoother cup of coffee. Kopi luwak or any of its authentic variety (not the forced-fed caged civet cat) commands "retail prices of over $100 per pound in what the Specialty Coffee Association of America, a Long Beach, California-based trade association, describes as an $11-billion plus specialty coffee market," according to a Forbes article by Hyon Jung Lee.

Today, the Asian civet cat is no longer a monopoly when it comes to premium coffee. The Indonesian cat has been beaten by a formidable opponent — Thailand's elephant. "As the luwak label became tarnished by accusations that some producers were selling counterfeit blends, an entrepreneur in Thailand supersized the operation" with a successful experiment on elephant dung that started in 2012 at Chiang Rai, according to a report by Bloomberg.

Enter Black Ivory Coffee. It is sold "online at $198 for three 35-gram (1.2-ounce) packets, equivalent to $1,886 a kilogram." Its website proclaims to the whole world that they're producing "the world's rarest coffee. Naturally refined by elephants." And what makes the maker of Black Ivory Coffee doubly proud of its produce is their adherence to an "ethically and socially program" that supports the Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation and the farmers and caretakers of elephants.

If you're not part of the world's millionaire's club or prefer to use the excuse that you don't like cat or elephant coffee, then you need not worry as you can always switch to other coffee-feces made brew by goat, donkey, panda, monkey and your favorite dog. Yes, seriously.

After all, whether you like it nor not, you may have already consumed enough fecal matter than what you can imagine when you drink coffee in the office. Noelle Devoe, in her 2017 article in Seventeen says: "20% of office coffee mugs contain fecal matter. The fecal matter is apparently spread through the use of an office "sponge," which basically means you'll never want to wash your coffee mug with a sponge again."

Enough of gourmet coffee from animal feces. There are other animals that gave rise to popular products without us consumers knowing about it. In fact, CBS News has listed down "11 Revolting Things Government Lets in Your Food." The report cites canned mushrooms with maggots, mold in apple pie, mouse fur in peanut butter, fruit flies in tomato sauce, and parasites in fish that are allowed under the law as long as they're in minimal quantity.

Back to our favorite coffee. If you don't care much about cat, elephant or other animal's dung coffee, will you be adventurous enough to care for a sip of human excrement coffee? In December 2012, the year when the elephant dung coffee was born, there was a man who created a first in the world — human poop coffee.

Randy Goldman (not his real name) is cited by Sprudge.com, a blog dedicated to reviewing wine and related beverages in its article titled "We Drank Human Poop Coffee."

"Randy's was one of the most highly sought after stories in the world, and all because of his listing on a Portland area Craigslist page for "Human Kopi Luwak." While fielding calls and inquiries from feature writers — *The Atlantic* and *The New York Times* both came calling — Randy quickly sold nearly 30 pounds of coffee he'd eaten and pooped out for his eager customers" until the demand outstripped the supply side.

Forget about the human poop coffee. What does the animal dung coffee tell us about business innovation, which according to The Future of Jobs Report 2018 by World Economic Forum remains to be the number one trending job up to year 2022? In Frugal Innovation (2014), co-authors Navi Radjou and Jaideep Prabhu say that: "To produce affordable and sustainable products, firms must develop a fast, better, and cheaper system of innovation.

"The frugal approach is disruptive...as it seeks to reduce not just the financial cost of doing business but also its environmental cost. Frugal innovation also seeks to minimize time, especially important in such situations as bringing a promising new drug to market."

The frugal approach is akin to kaizen and lean thinking which I've been writing about every now and then. Fend off what's not working. Kick out "yes men" in your midst. You need more people who think differently than you do. Learn from ordinary people, even coffee farmers who can give you many sustainable business ideas that are low-cost and yet profound to implement.

Rey Elbo is a business consultant specializing in human resources and total quality management as a fused expertise. Send feedback to elbonomics@gmail.com or via https://reyelbo.consulting

THE PHILIPPINE STAR
TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL

Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: B9

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Farming group seeks 'Filipino First' policy

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

The private farm sector is calling on the government to adopt a "Filipino Farmers First" policy as it rejects the liberalization of rice imports into the country.

The Philippine Chamber of Agriculture and Food Inc. (PCAFI) is urging President Duterte to zero in on a policy adopted by economic giants US and China.

"Since rice is most political of commodities, if the government will be seen as having abandoned rice farmers to the ravages of unfair trade so that consumers can savor the magic of the market, then investments in the sector will shrink. Why produce when the signal from the government is to import?" PCAFI president Danilo Fausto said.

He said the bill replacing quantitative restriction on rice with tariffs may threaten local food security as climate change could unexpectedly shrink global rice supply anytime.

The group argued that providing subsidies to farmers has been the success track of countries like the US and China which have become leaders in agriculture.

"Subsidies in one form or another have been the template for other countries with successful agricultural sectors. If we are to win the struggle for the future of agriculture, a more pragmatic approach as practiced by countries like the US and China should be the way forward," Fausto said.

PCAFI said even the current QR policy, which imposes a maximum volume per crop year that may be imported by the National Food Authority, is a weak one that will not optimize opportunities for Filipino farmers nor boost food production.

The group is also questioning a bill which provides for an automatic appropriation of P10 billion for the proposed Rice Competitive Enhancement Fund over the next five years.

"The Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act of 1997 also provided for an automatic appropriation of P17 billion annually for six years on top of the regular Department of Agriculture budget, but it never happened," Fausto said.

He added that the 1995 Tariffication Act, which established an Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund, was known for corruption than enhancing agricultural competitiveness.

"These safety nets seemed to be more for show because up to now the government has no trade data system to determine if an importation is in accordance with the rules of the WTO in terms of valuation and trade remedies, if any," Fausto said.

Malaya
Business Insight

Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: A1 & A7

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Filipino farmers first policy pushed

THE Philippine Chamber of Agriculture & Food Inc. (PCAFI) is opposing the planned rice import liberalization in the country and urging the government to instead adopt a Filipino Farmers First rice policy.

.The group said the government must adopt the United States and China's policies in pouring significant subsidies in the local farm sector.

"On December 20, 2018, the US passed another farm bill into law granting subsidies to both producers and consumers in the amount of $867 billion in the next 5 years. It must be noted that these are federal subsidies and do not include those granted at the State level," the group said.

PCAFI claims that allowing imports to flood the Philippines' rice market is not the ultimate solution to push down rice prices in the interest of consumers as it will have "adverse repercussions" in the local rice sector.

"Since rice is most political of commodities, if the government will be seen as having abandoned rice farmers to the ravages of unfair trade so that consumers can savor the magic of the market, then investments in the sector will shrink. Why produce when the signal from the government is to import?" Danilo Fausto, PCAFI president, said.

Fausto added the bill may also threaten the country's food security citing that climate change can unexpectedly shrink global rice supply available for trade.

See FILIPINO ➤ Page ~~A2~~ A7

No to liberalization. The agri group says even advanced countries like the US grant subsidies to their farming sector.

FILIPINO

"If we are to win the struggle for the future of agriculture, a more pragmatic approach as practiced by countries like the US and China should be the way forward," he said.

Under the proposed rice tariffication bill, rice importation will be deregulated in exchange of tariffs and an annual support of P10 billion to local rice farmers. The law is already submitted to the Office of the President for signature and is bound to become an official legislature if it is not vetoed by Friday.

BusinessWorld
INCREASE YOUR BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: 6/S1 + S1/7

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

SOLAR PARA SA PULITIKA, RICE TARIFFICATION PARA SA MASA

MY CUP OF LIBERTY

BIENVENIDO S. OPLAS, JR.

The cronyist "Solar para sa Bayan Corporation" (SPBC) franchise bill (HB 8179) was magically passed by the House of Representatives despite opposition by many groups in the energy sector. Among the oppositors is the Developers of Renewable Energy for AdvanceMent, Inc. (DREAM), the umbrella organization of all RE associations in the Philippines.

As I did in my letter to Sen. Grace Poe, arguing for the junking of HB 8179, DREAM said the bill is unconstitutional and should not be passed. In particular, (1) it violates the equal protection clause under Article III, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution. The proposed SPBC franchise has no substantial distinction with other generators that will not be granted a similar franchise. (2) It violates the fundamental right to due process of law under the Constitution. And (3) it violates the proscription against unfair competition.

Nonetheless, a Senate Committee Report 659 was passed last week, February 7, 2019, and some outlandish provisions from the original bill have been tamed. Among the changes is that the operational coverage "in any... areas throughout the Philippines" has been limited to only 13 provinces.

Note three things here: (1) SPBC claims it is competitive yet it requires a Congressional franchise and a franchise by nature is a monopoly, (2) EPIRA law of 2001 has unbundled energy components and players are classified as transmission, generation, distribution, supply companies; SPBC is a generation, distribution and supply company rolled into one, and (3) first time that a franchise will have implementing rules and regulations (IRR).

BusinessWorld reported ("Court challenge looms for Solar Para Sa Bayan franchise," February 08, 2019) that the Coalition for Rural Electrification (CoRE) warned that such a franchise bill may not hold up to a court challenge. Good. It is shameless that this bill was rushed at the House and the Senate where a member is the mother of the company owner as we all know. If it becomes law, the measure should be called as Solar para sa Pulitika Corp.

Meanwhile, on another front, there is a last-minute lobby by various protectionist groups who insist that expensive rice is good for the country and the poor. They oppose SB 1998 or the Rice Tariffication bill, removing quantitative restrictions (QR) and replacing it with a 35% tariff rate on imported rice from ASEAN, and 40% or higher on imported rice outside of ASEAN.

The protectionists' main argument is that rice liberalization will lead to the demise of the local rice industry as there will be a huge influx of imported rice from our neighbors.

This is outright disinformation, deception and lie. Even if we wanted to import one-half or even one-fourth of our domestic rice consumption, it is not possible, it is not going to happen.

Data from the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) show that Philippine rice production has been steadily rising and the average productivity per hectare has also been rising, from only 2.2 tons per hectare in 1980 to 4.0 in 2017.

The two big rice exporters in the world, Thailand and Vietnam, have actually experienced a declining or low expansion in rice output. Thailand's output declined from 35.7 M tons in 2010 to 33.4 M tons in 2017. Over the same period, Vietnam's output increased a little from 40 to 42.8 M tons.

Myanmar and Cambodia can be the next group of rice exporters but they also have a rising demand and population (see table).

So the Philippines' rice importation will be limited and

PART 1 OF 2

BusinessWorld
INCREASE YOUR BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: C/S1 & S1/7

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PART 2 OF 2

RICE, PADDY PRODUCTION (MILLION TONS) AND YIELD (TONS PER HECTARE) IN EAST ASIA

Economy	Factor	1980	1990	2000	2010	2017
Indonesia	Production	29.7	45.2	51.9	66.5	81.4
	Yield	3.3	4.3	4.4	5.0	5.2
Vietnam	Production	11.6	19.2	32.5	40.0	42.8
	Yield	2.1	3.2	4.2	5.3	5.5
Thailand	Production	17.4	17.2	25.8	35.7	33.4
	Yield	1.9	2.0	2.6	3.0	3.1
Myanmar	Production	13.3	14.0	21.0	32.1	25.6
	Yield	2.8	2.9	3.3	4.0	3.8
Philippines	Production	7.6	9.9	12.4	15.8	19.3
	Yield	2.2	3.0	3.1	3.6	4.0
Cambodia	Production	1.7	2.5	4.0	8.2	10.4
	Yield	1.2	1.3	2.1	3.0	3.5
S. Korea	Yield	4.3	6.2	6.7	6.5	7.0
China	Yield	4.1	5.7	6.3	6.6	6.9
Japan	Yield	5.1	6.3	6.7	6.5	6.7
Taiwan	Yield	4.7	5.0	5.6	6.0	6.1
Laos	Yield	1.4	2.3	3.1	3.6	4.2
Malaysia	Yield	2.9	2.8	3.1	3.6	4.2
World	Yield	2.7	3.5	3.9	4.3	4.6

SOURCE: UN FAO STAT, 2018

restricted even if it wants to import more and there will be no such demise in the local rice industry. Rice trade liberalization should proceed, and NFA's distortionist monopoly of power to regulate rice imports should be removed.

The 35% tariff is actually high. Why should a P30/kilo potential landed price of rice from ASEAN neighbors be made P40.50/kilo to many poor Philippine households? That 35% should go down through time, down to zero for rice imports from ASEAN. ■

BIENVENIDO S. OPLAS, JR. is the president of Minimal Government Thinkers
minimalgovernment@gmail.com

BusinessWorld
INCREASE YOUR BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE™

Date: FEB 12, 2019 Page: 4/S1

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PHL sweet potato farmers need access to more tech

THE International Potato Center (CIP) said the sweet potato industry in the Philippines is not pushing out processing technology to the farm level and in many cases has insufficient linkages between the producers and markets.

"There are lot of technologies there. There are organizations with developing technologies, available in the Philippines and elsewhere. But the thing is how it will reach farmers? We are looking at that gap and how we can fill up that gap," CIP Asia Regional Director Samarendu Mohanty said in an interview on Thursday, on the sidelines of the Opportunities for a Climate-Smart Food System in the Philippines Regional Policy Forum held in the Ortigas district of Pasig City.

"There are different technologies but farmers don't have any clue," Mr. Mohanty said.

"We are trying to identify who the trusted agencies are where farmers can get the information," Mr. Mohanty said.

Mr. Mohanty said when climate change effects are becoming evident, a shift in the planting calendar is necessary. He said sweet potatoes are resilient crops that can survive floods, and are recommended for planting during the rainy season, while the dry season can be devoted to other crops. — **Reicelene Joy N. Ignacio**

FULL STORY

Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link **<https://goo.gl/oRQY5v>**

PEOPLES JOURNAL Tonight
http://www.journal.com.ph

Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: 15

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Biz backs rice tariffication

THE bill seeking to impose tariffs on rice imports in lieu of quantitative restrictions (QRs) has gained the full backing of the business sector, with several groups sending their expressions of support for this consumer-friendly measure to Malacañang, the Department of Finance (DOF) said.

According to DOF Assistant Secretary Antonio Joselito Lambino II, these organizations have forwarded a copy of their joint statement expressing their support for the rice tariffication bill to Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III last month:

"Consumers must be freed from food supply apprehension and provided with price stability at an affordable level. This measure will address those concerns through free and open competition," they said in their joint statement.

The joint statement was signed by the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (AmCham), Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP), Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines (FINEX), Foundation for Economic Freedom (FEF), Judicial Reform Initiative (JRI), Makati Business Club (MBC), Philippine Investment Funds Association (PIFA), and the Semiconductor and Electronic Industries in the Philippines Inc. (SEIPI).

"We, the undersigned business and professional organizations, hereby strongly support ongoing efforts and measures of the administration to liberalize the economy and thereby unleash its full potential to ensure sustainable, robust and inclusive economic growth, while ensuring better quality of life for our people through affordable food," they said in their statement.

"The need is to balance the interest of both producers and consumers," they added. "One key measure of this effort is the rice tariffication bill approved by both Houses of Congress. This bill is intended to decisively and quickly address the rice supply disruption problem and concomitant high prices experienced last year to the detriment of consumers."

Malaya
Business Insight

Date: FEB. 12, 2019 Page: A6

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Chicago wheat eases on ample supplies

SINGAPORE- Chicago wheat futures slid for a third session in four on Monday as ample global supplies weighed on the market, although lower plantings in the United States kept a floor under the market.

Soybeans rose for a second consecutive session on expectations of positive results from US-China trade talks.

The most-active wheat contract on the Chicago Board of Trade lost 0.1 percent to $5.16-3/4 a bushel.

Soybeans Sv1 gained 0.3 percent to $9.17-1/2 a bushel and corn was up 0.1 percent at $3.74-3/4 a bushel.

US soybean supplies as of Dec. 1 were the biggest on record as demand for the oilseed fizzled amid the trade war between the United States and China, the US Department of Agriculture said on Friday.

The USDA also said that farmers seeded the smallest winter wheat area - 31.290 million acres - since 1909. An abundance of cheaper supplies around the globe has made US wheat less desirable to overseas buyers in recent years.

"US growers have now cut their wheat planting by more than a quarter over the past five years," said Tobin Gorey, director of agricultural strategy at Commonwealth Bank of Australia. - ***Reuters***