CLIPPINGS FOR THURSDAY, JULY 18, 2019

A. SEC. EFP QUOTED

MANILA STANDARD
Palace scouting for new Agri chief

BUSINESS WORLD
DA to impose price controls on rice

MANILA BULLETIN
Palay prices falling; SRP on rice eyed
Rice revolution

THE PHILIPPINE STAR
Gov't set to impose SRP on imported rice

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT
Another ex-military official as DA chief?

THE MANILA TIMES
Military man may replace Piñol
Benguet potato boost yields, earnings

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Review of rice tariff law pushed

BUSINESS MIRROR
Planters seek review of rice trade lib law on record-low prices
Duterte eyes military man as agri chief
Israel engages in PHL agriculture, defense

PILIPINO MIRROR
Bagong SRP sa bigas
Ex-soldier papalit kay Piñol sa DA

ABANTE
Militar ipapalit kay Piñol sa DA

TEMPO
Gov't acts on low palay prices
Ex-Military to replace Piñol at DA?

B. DA FAMILY

THE MANILA TIMES
BFAR introduces safe, sustainable aquaculture

THE DAILY TRIBUNE
CoA red flags BFAR
NFA assures sufficient rice stocks
Rebooting agricultural management
Rice tariff review urged

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
'Fishy' legal turnaround of fisherfolk

PILIPINO MIRROR
Sa mga lugar na hahagupitin ni 'Falcon': Supply ng bigas sapat

C. AGRI-RELATED STORY

MANILA STANDARD
LandBank BOOSTS Ato Belen's Farm, other agribiz

MANILA BULLETIN
How farm tourism nourishes environmentalism: Back to Earth

THE MANILA TIMES
Filipino leads Asian plant research group
PH on track for 2019 coco oil export target
The power of technology and innovation in agriculture

BUSINESS MIRROR
DTI: Manufacturing must create jobs for FIR-displaced farmers

ABANTE TONITE
Pilipinas hindi kailanman magiging rice sufficient! - Duterte

D. FOREIGN STORY

No stories

Manila Standard

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: A1 & A2

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Palace scouting for new Agri chief

By MJ Blancaflor

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte on Wednesday said he might appoint another military man to replace Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol, following the latter's upcoming reappointment in Mindanao Development Authority.

The Chief Executive, in a television interview, said it was easier to have Cabinet men from the military because his orders were carried out without question and corruption.

"I'm scouting around. Maybe again a military man because it's easy to give order and they do it without question," Duterte said when asked about Piñol's possible replacement. *Next page*

Palace...

From A1

While Piñol was never in the military service, he was former governor of North Cotabato and a former senior editor of the old Philippines News Agency and a former sportscaster.

"When I tell you do this or do that, do not question. I will never give you an order that is something illegal," Duterte said.

The President has been criticized for appointing military men in his administration, among them: Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, Interior Secretary Eduardo Año, Social Welfare Secretary Rolando Bautista, and Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero.

Duterte earlier announced that Piñol would serve as his "point man" to help the new Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, a region created as a result of the passage of the Bangsamoro Organic Law.

He described Piñol as a "very good Cabinet member," believing he was qualified for the post due to his experience as a former North Cotabato governor and a farmer.

BusinessWorld
INCREASE YOUR BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: S1/5

LIBRARY
DEPT OF AGRICULTURE

DA to impose price controls on rice

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said it is seeking to rein in what it called "uncontrolled" market prices for rice by imposing a suggested retail price (SRP) system for the staple grain.

Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol said the DA is currently drafting a memorandum of agreement (MoA) with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to implement the SRP system.

"We will now be using the Price Act as basis for addressing the uncontrolled prices in the market. We are coming up with the SRP to curb profiteering," Mr. Piñol said in a briefing Wednesday, adding that he expects the MoA to be signed within the month.

The farmgate price of palay, or unmilled rice, the form in which domestic farmers sell their harvest, has been falling in recent months. Palay prices have been under pressure from the threat of competition from cheaper foreign grain that is now imported more freely after the enactment of rice tariffication.

Mr. Piñol said the SRP on imported commercial rice will be based on the landed cost, while the price of palay will help determine the price ceiling for domestic rice, with the exact price levels to be determined by the DTI, Department of Finance (DoF), and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA).

Before the tariffication law, the National Food Authority (NFA) was effectively the commodity's price regulator, helping moderate local swings in price and supply by releasing quantities of subsidized rice, as a way of ensuring poor families could access the staple.

Mr. Piñol met with rice industry stakeholders on Tuesday, discussing possible market distortions produced by the Rice Tariffication Law, like the attractive profits to be realized from selling importing rice, at the expense of domestic producers.

"Everybody would like to import to the detriment of the Filipino farmer, *wala nang gustong bumili ng* (nobody wants to purchase) local palay," he said.

"This was not the intent of the law. The intent is to make affordable rice available to consumers. That's the purpose," he said.

He said it is too early to talk about amending the law, and his focus for now is to "plug loopholes."

The Rice Tariffication Law, which liberalized rice imports by private traders who must pay a 35% tariff on most of their shipments, particularly on rice from Southeast Asia, is pressuring farmers to sell their harvest for less while also depressing future planting intentions.

Mr. Piñol said in a social media post on Wednesday that according to Customs records, the landed cost of Myanmar 25% broken rice is P18.22 per kilo; Vietnam 5% broken P25.33; and Thailand 5% broken is P23.06.

In early July, the Bureau of Customs (BoC) reported that it collected a total of P5.9 billion in tariffs from P1.43 MMT of rice imported by private traders flowing the implementation of the Rice Tariffication Law.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PPSA) estimates that the average farmgate price of palay fell 0.3% week-on-week during the fourth week of June to P17.85 per kilogram (kg), suggesting that many farmers are disposing of their harvests to private traders at well below the price they might obtain at the NFA, which acquires palay for a base price of P17 plus incentives that can bring the final price up to P20.70.

The NFA is now exclusively focused on buying rice from domestic farmers to maintain its grain reserve. — **Vincent Mariel P. Galang**

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: 1 & 4

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PART 1 of 2

Palay prices falling; SRP on rice eyed

The only way to help farmers is to buy their harvest at competitive price – Duterte

By **MADELAINE B. MIRAFLOR** and **ARGYLL B. GEDUCOS**

A nationwide uproar among rice farmers in the country has forced the government to act on the falling palay prices – a trend that could rob farmers of potential income worth ₱114 billion for the entire 2019.

On Wednesday, Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol sought a meeting with Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez and National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Undersecretary Mercedita Sombilla to discuss the implementation of the Suggested Retail Price (SRP) policy on commercial rice sold in the market based on the Price Act.

"The only way that we can help them [rice farmers] is to buy their harvest at a competitive price. Palugi talaga ang gobyerno (The government is at the losing end but it is) to save the farmers. So another working productive day for them," President Duterte said in a separate interview.

"With the NFA [National Food Authority] stripped of its supervisory and regulatory powers over the rice industry, the Price Act is the only remaining instrument of government to rationalize the pricing of agricultural products in the market," Piñol said.

During the meeting with ▶4

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: 1 2 4

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PART 2 of 2

Palay prices falling...

◀1

Sombilla and Lopez, which was also attended by Finance Assistance Secretary Tony Lambino, they decided to put an SRP on the retail price of rice based on the landed cost of imported stocks, Piñol said.

A joint memorandum of agreement between the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) will be signed within this month to impose this.

This decision came a day after farmer leaders and rice industry stakeholders asked the DA during an impromptu consultation meeting to address the continuous decline in the prices of palay, which was possibly triggered by the loopholes in the Rice Tarification Law or Republic Act (RA) 11203, which legalized in March the unlimited entry of cheaper, imported rice into the Philippines.

Piñol said the meeting took place amid the "nationwide uproar" among farmers who have been suffering since farm gate prices of paddy rice dropped to a record low of ₱12 per kilogram (/kg) to ₱14/kg in many parts of the country, a steep drop from an average of ₱20/kg price for fresh palay earlier this year.

During the fourth week of June alone, the average farmgate price of palay continued to decline, falling by 0.3 percent to ₱17.85 per kilogram (/kg) from previous week's level of ₱17.90/kg. This was a huge drop of 16.5 percent from the previous year's same week level of ₱21.38/kg.

What upsets the farmers is that while the price of palay remains to be on a downtrend, the retail price of rice or the price that consumers are paying for to buy a kilo of the staple has remained the same, Aldrin Cardenas, a leader of a farmers' cooperative in Tarlac, pointed out.

Based on their computation, the market prices of rice – which was expected to drop by ₱7/kg with the entry of more imported rice – have remained relatively high, reporting a drop of only ₱1/kg to ₱2/kg four months since the passage of RA 11203.

"The drop in the price of rice in the market of ₱1 to ₱2 per kilo does not even come close to the financial sacrifices of the rice farmers," said farmer leader Pedro Lim of Caraga Region.

The rice industry stakeholders also decried the massive profits being enjoyed by rice importers and traders, as the stocks they have imported are now being sold in the market at prices higher than their landed cost.

A data from Bureau of Customs (BOC) showed that the imported rice that entered the country so far had landed cost of only ₱18.22/kg for Myanmar's 25 percent broken rice; ₱25.33/kg for Vietnam's 5 percent broken rice; ₱23.06/kg for Thailand's 5 percent broken rice.

These are being sold in the local market for ₱32/kg to a high of ₱70/kg, while the average selling price is at ₱42 per kilo, based on the validation conducted by the DA Regional Offices.

Premium or 5 percent broken rice imported from Vietnam and Thailand is sold from ₱50/kg to ₱60/kg for a whooping margin of ₱25/kg to ₱35/kg.

At the end of their meeting, Piñol assured the rice industry stakeholders that their concerns will be submitted in a formal memorandum to President Duterte.

President Duterte, in an interview with Pastor Apollo Quiboloy, said the government has no choice but to import rice from other countries since the harvest of farmers are not enough for the entire country.

Duterte said he recognizes the plight of Filipino farmers who are selling palay for prices as low as ₱12/kilo, a figure below the production cost.

The President said the government is willing to buy the harvest of the farmers but said this will still not be enough since the country has run out of lands for planting crops.

"The Philippines cannot be a rice sufficient nation. We have run out of lands and most of the prime real estate went to big corporations now planting cash crop: Banana, pineapple," he said early Wednesday.

Meanwhile, a group of rice farmers sounded the alarm last week over a possible price manipulation among local rice traders, which may be declaring the wrong import price to reduce their tariff obligations to the Philippine government.

Based on its latest monitoring, the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) said it has noticed a huge gap between the value of imported rice declared by local traders and the landed cost of rice based on the data from international monitoring groups such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Under the Rice Tariffication Law, importers are allowed to bring in any volume of rice at any time provided they pay a 35 percent tariff based on the declared value of their imports.

The Department of Finance (DOF) recently reported that the BOC had collected ₱5.9 billion in tariffs from imports of 1.43 million metric tons (MT) of rice since the effectivity of RA 11203 in March.

FFF National Manager Raul Montemayor said that using DOF's data and assuming a ₱52 per dollar exchange rate, it will come out that the average landed price of the rice imports before imposing tariffs was US$227 per MT.

Data from international monitoring groups such as the FAO, however, indicate that the real landed cost of these imports should have been around US$391 per ton if these were 25 percent broken rice.

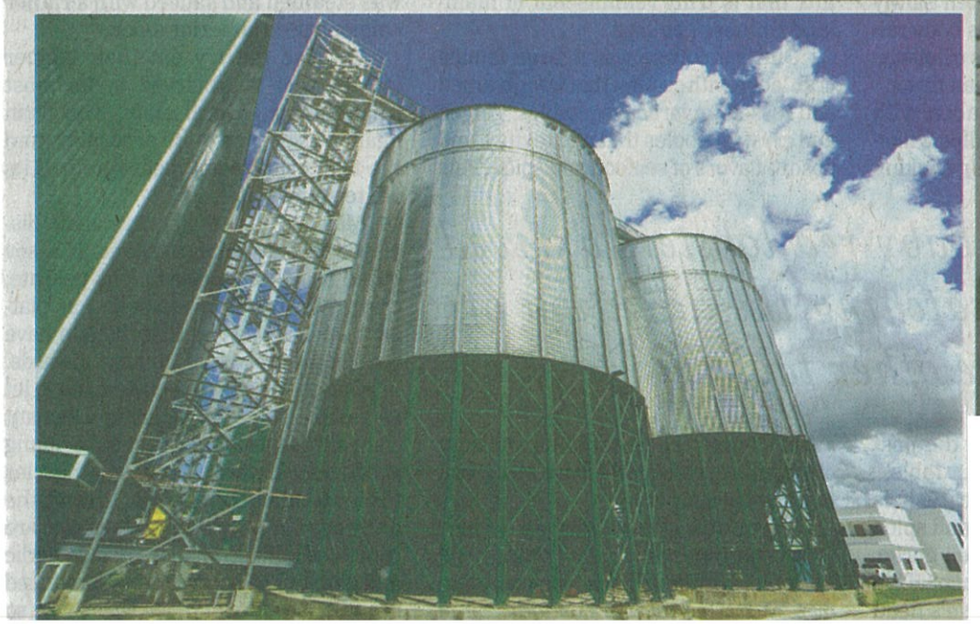
"In effect, importers appear to have undervalued their shipments by 42 percent and paid ₱4.24 billion less than what was due from them," Montemayor said.

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: C1

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
PART 1 of 4

RICE REVOLUTION

Leyte just opened the most advanced rice processing complex in all of Southeast Asia



MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: C1

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PART 2 of 4

By **YVETTE TAN**

Rice is an integral part of the Filipino diet. It's present in all meals, from breakfast to dinner, even snacks. And yet it seems more and more of a challenge to get enough rice to feed the entire country. A rice processing complex in Alangalang, Leyte, wants to lead the way in reversing this.

The Chen Yi Agriventures Rice Processing Center is a two-hectare complex that houses the most advanced rice processing machinery in Southeast Asia. It is also the largest of its kind in the Visayas and Mindanao.

The inauguration of the Complex was graced by President **Rodrigo Duterte** and Agriculture Secretary **Manny Piñol**. "When they reached out to us, we partnered them with Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice)," Piñol said. "I would say that this is the best of its kind in the country."

The desire to help

The company is run by **Patrick Renucci** and **Rachel Renucci-Tan**, a husband and wife team who, four years ago, packed up their life in Paris and moved to Leyte after Typhoon Yolanda with the intention of uplifting the lives of local farmers through agribusiness.

Rachel was an investment banker and fund manager while Patrick ran one of the largest printing companies in France. After seeing the devastation Yolanda wrought, they decided to come home.

"We said, 'In order to find more meaning in our lives, we'd like to come back to the Philippines and give back to the country, to my country," Rachel said. "I dragged along my husband and the first thing we wanted to do was lift the province of Leyte from the ravages of Typhoon Yolanda. Alangalang is the granary of Leyte, that's why we decided to set up our rice processing complex (here)."

"We are not farmers. We came here to do sustainable business. We came here because nobody would come here," Patrick said. "We came here to change the way people farm, to increase the income of the farmer, to increase the yield of the farmer, and to get them out of the cycle of poverty."

Delicious, nutritious rice

The facility, fully automated, costs ₱1.7 billion. "Since there's no manual intervention, there's much less room for error," Rachel explained.

Once the rice is harvested, it is brought to the facility without ever touching the ground. The complex's drying facilities have a continuous cleaning process that allows the grain to dry and kill pests before it is stored in temperature-controlled bins that allow it to stay in a freshly-harvested state. The rice is milled on demand. "We provide according to supply, not according to price. So when the consumers need our rice, that's when we mill and process," Rachel said.

The milling process uses Japanese technology so that the rice is processed less. "Our rice is very white because we

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: C1

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PART 3 of 4

PRECIOUS GRAINS (Clockwise from top) Patrick Francois Renucci with DA Sec. Manny Piñol; and with Rachel Renucci-Tan; and the Chen Yi Agventures Rice Processing Center

'When you see Renucci Rice, it's really white, it's really clean, very light and we don't spray chemicals, we don't fumigate our rice. We use technology to keep out pests in our (packaging).'

work more on the polishing and therefore we manage to retain the essential nutrient. Our rice has the same fiber content as the brown rice and double the protein levels because of our industrial processes," Rachel explained. "When you see Renucci Rice, it's really white, it's really clean, very light and we don't spray chemicals, we don't fumigate our rice. We use technology to keep out pests in our (packaging)."

Helping farmers

Chen Yi works with about 5,000 farmers through the Renucci Partnership Program, providing them with high quality seeds, fertilizers, and pest control, as well as giving them access to equipment and low interest loans.

"The farmers that follow our protocol have achieved up to 200 *kabans* per hectare," Rachel said. "Those who did not really follow are still able to double (their yield) from (the usual) 50 to 60 *kabans* to 80 to 100 *kabans* per hectare."

The harvest is then bought through the Renucci *Palay* Procurement Program. "We go to the fields and buy the *palay* directly from the farmers in cash so that we avoid intermediaries, so that all the benefits go directly to the farmers," Rachel said.

Rejuvenating the industry

The Renuccis are optimistic about their endeavor. "(We're) very excited that we have come to this stage. We started with just faith in God and faith in ourselves. We moved from Paris and Hong Kong and London to Alangalang, Leyte. We didn't know anyone, we're not from here, and we're foreigners. We've had many challenges, many times we've wanted to give up but we said that we should prevail and we're still here," Rachel said.

"My deepest wish is for our model to be replicated across the country," she added. "Then, there would be less (need) to rely on imports because food security is really important."

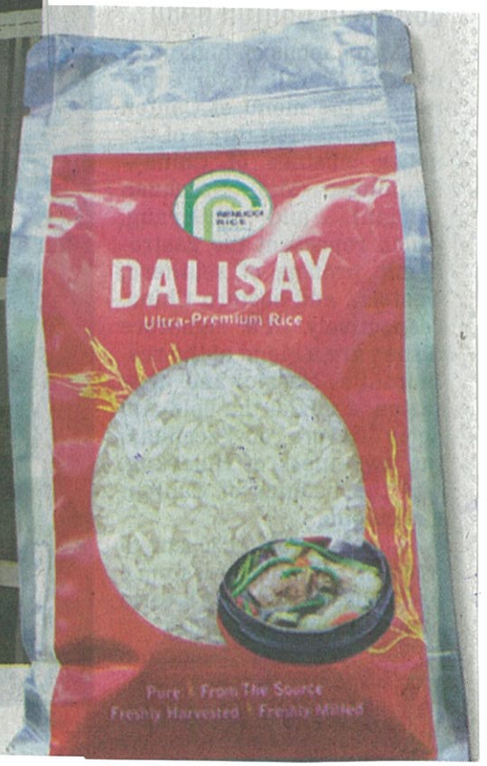
The rice variety is called Dalisay and will be sold under the brand name Renucci Rice. "We know where the seed comes from, that's why we call it '*Dalisay*,'" Rachel said. "We want that when you say '*Dalisay*,' you'll think 'oh it's from Leyte.'"

Renucci Rice will be available in leading supermarkets by August.

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: C1

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PART 4 of 4



RENUCCI IT IS! President Rodrigo Duterte at the inauguration of the Chen Yi Agventures Rice Processing Center with Sec. Michael Dino and Sec. Manny Piñol with the owners of Chen Yi Agventures; Patrick Francois Renucci shows off the rice from the paddy separator that sorts the brown rice from the *palay*; and the rice of Leyte, the *Dalisay*

THE PHILIPPINE STAR
TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: B1&B8

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Gov't set to impose SRP on imported rice

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

The government will impose a suggested retail price (SRP) for imported rice as farmers sought intervention amid the continued decline in farm gate prices due to the liberalization of the industry.

In an interagency meeting yesterday, the Departments of Agriculture, Trade and Finance, and the National Economic and Development Authority agreed to set the SRP on commercial rice at P35 to P38 per kilogram effective this month.

"We came up with the solution. We will now be using the Price Act as basis in addressing the uncontrollable prices in the market. We are now drafting a joint MOA (memorandum of agreement) to implement this," Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol said in a briefing.

"The SRP of imported commercial rice we will set will be based on the landed cost. We will come up with a formulation to check the accepted profit for consumers to really feel the benefits of the tariffication law," he said.

Farmers have been complaining of the plunge in palay farmgate prices to a low of P12 per kilo in some areas from the P20 per kilo before the law took effect four months ago.

However, retail prices of rice have only dropped by up to P2 per kilo even with the deluge of imported rice. The economic team earlier promised that prices would decline by as much as P7 a kilo.

"We saw the loopholes of the law, traders are so into importing right now because they feel like no one is controlling the prices, their margin of profit is too big. And that is not the intent of the law because the intent is to make affordable rice available to consumers," Piñol said.

"Because of the good profit, everybody would like to import to the detriment of the Filipino farmers, no one wants to buy local anymore," he said.

Turn to B8

Gov't... From B1

The National Food Authority used to control the volume and pricing of rice, but with the open market, the grains agency has been stripped of its supervisory and regulatory powers over the rice industry.

"The Price Act is the only remaining instrument of government to rationalize the pricing of agricultural products in the market. The President has the right to protect the farmers," Piñol said.

"We are not talking about the volume here, they can bring in as much as they want, we don't care, but in terms of prices, that is something that we can actually control," he added.

"The intention of the move is to allow consumers to feel the tariffication law. Palay prices have dropped but it remains the same in the retail market. This will also address the undervaluation in tariffs," he said.

Malaya
Business Insight

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: B1 & B2

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Another ex-military official as DA chief?

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

ANOTHER retired military official might soon join the Cabinet of President Duterte.

The President, during the "Give Us This Day" program of Pastor Apollo Quiboloy, said he has yet to pick a replacement for Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol who will be named head of the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDa).

"(I am still) scouting around. I assume, maybe again a military man. Because it is easier to order them, they will work. And they do it without a question," Duterte said.

Duterte had repeatedly said he prefers to appoint former military soldiers and policemen to government posts because they get the

See ANOTHER ➤ Page B2

• FROM PAGE B1 •

ANOTHER

work done.

Among the retired military officials who are part of the Duterte Cabinet are Information and Communications Technology Secretary Gregorio Honasan, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Social Welfare Secretary Rolando Bautista, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año, Peace Process Adviser Carlito Galvez Jr., Housing Secretary Eduardo del Rosario, and National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon.

Duterte, during the interview, expressed confidence Piñol will do good as MinDa head and that he will contribute well in the ongoing establishment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) given his background as a farmer and former governor.

"He was a very good Cabinet member," Duterte said of Piñol.

Meanwhile, Communications Secretary Martin Andanar yesterday hinted the President might implement "minor" changes in the Cabinet in the next few weeks.

Andanar, in an interview over ANC's Beyond Politics program, said talks about minor changes in the Cabinet had been going on for some time now, including his transfer to another post.

"There is talk of minor changes in the Cabinet. And I don't know if it's going to happen during the State of the Nation or after the State of the Nation or maybe this week, we'll see," he said.

He did not say what position he would possibly occupy but said that it will be awkward if he is called "Papa Martin."

Rumors have been going around that Andanar is allegedly being considered to succeed former Presidential Adviser for Political Affairs (PAPA) Francis Tolentino, who was elected as senator in the recent mid-term elections.

Andanar said he is happy that he had served the Presidential Communications Operations Office for the past three years.

"Whatever the President wants, if he wants to move me to this position or that position, I serve at the pleasure of the President," he said.

The Manila Times

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: A3

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Military man may replace Piñol

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte on Wednesday said he was considering appointing a military man to replace Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol.

In a television interview with Pastor Apollo Quibuloy, Duterte said he was searching for the replacement of Pinol, who has been transferred to the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) following his resignation.

"I am scouting around. Maybe again a military man because I can order easily and they do it without question," he said.

"When I tell you do this, do that, do not question me because I will never give you an order to do something that is illegal," he added.

Last week, Duterte told *The Manila Times* in an interview that he would appoint more military men to the government.

He said he preferred military men because they do things quickly and without corruption.

Among the former military men in the Cabinet are Presidential Political Adviser Carlito Galvez Jr., Social Welfare Secretary Rolando Bautista, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr., Interior Secretary Eduardo Año, Information Technology Secretary Gregorio Honasan 2nd, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority Secretary Isidro Lapeña and Customs Commissioner Rey Leonardo Guerrero.

RALPH U. VILLANUEVA

The Manila Times

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: B9

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Benguet potato farmers boost yields, earnings

POTATO farmers in Benguet province are increasing their harvest and improving quality, enabling them to earn higher incomes, thanks to the sustainable initiative between the Department of Agriculture (DA) and Universal Robina Corp. (URC).

Through the use of modern potato seeds provided under the DA-URC's Potato Development Program, farmers in Benguet have doubled their yield earning up to P600,000 per hectare in 100 days, said Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol, who attended the Potato Harvest Festival in Buguias town in the province.

"Farmers said that the potatoes they produced have better quality and bigger than the traditional varieties that they have been using for decades now. Farmers reported that they harvested an average of 20 metric tons (MT), which at only P30 per kilo could easily earn them P600,000 in just three months and 10 days," Piñol said in a statement on Tuesday.

In November last year, Piñol, URC President and Chief Executive Officer Irwin Lee, and URC Chairman Lance Gokongwei signed the contract for the program in support of the country's Potato Industry Roadmap to make local produce competitive against neighboring countries in the Asian region.

URC had requested for assistance from the DA in importing the chipping potato variety that local farmers do not grow, Piñol said.

Farmers in Benguet province enjoy a bumper harvest of potatoes, thanks to an initiative between the Department of Agriculture and Universal Robina Corp. that seeks to increase the quantity and quality of their yields. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE PHOTO

As support to local farmers, URC volunteered to bring in over 100 MT of G-3 Potato planting materials from Prince Edward Island in Canada, he added.

The agriculture chief earlier said URC's donation was "historic" as it was the first time that a big corporation provided support to local potato farmers.

The good quality potato seeds arrived in the Philippines in March this year and were distributed to farmers in three areas, namely Buguias, Benguet Province; Talakag, Bukidnon; and Kapatagan, Davao del Sur.

"Under the agreement with the farmers, URC will buy the medium size potatoes as planting materials which will then be distributed to other farmers. The large, extra large and marble potatoes will be sold by the farmers to the open market," Piñol said.

Furthermore, farmers' produce would also be bought by the URC, through its sister corporation, Robinson's Supermarket, providing a steady market for them.

Piñol noted that the DA and URC were also looking forward to a program that would pave the way for the importation of chipping potatoes variety planting materials "so that URC does not have to rely on imported potatoes for their potato chips production."

The country's annual potato production is 118,000 MT with Cordillera Administrative Region, Davao and Northern Mindanao as major contributors to the total output.

Meanwhile, the consumption is at 370,000 MT, more than half of the volume that the farmers can produce. **EIREENE JAIREE GOMEZ**

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: B1 & B3

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Review of rice tariff law pushed

Despite big volume of imports, critics note minimal drop in retail prices

By Karl R. Ocampo
@kocampoINQ

Industry stakeholders are appealing to President Duterte to order a review of the rice import liberalization law after palay prices reached its breakeven point, leaving local rice producers without any profit.

At the same time, rice prices in the market have remained "almost constant" despite the assurance of economic managers that these would go down by P7 a kilo.

Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol relayed these concerns on his Facebook page on Wednesday after he engaged in a dialogue with farmers, assuring them that their concerns would be submitted to the President through a formal memorandum.

The rice law, passed barely four months ago, has already resulted in the continuous decline in the buying price of palay. Farmers in some provinces reported that it had plummeted to as low as P12 a kilo or the same as the average cost of producing rice.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, the average farm-gate price as of June was P17.85 a kilo—the lowest in almost three years.

Piñol said stakeholders also decried the "massive profits enjoyed by rice importers and traders" who bought imported rice at low prices and yet sold them to retailers at jacked-up rates.

"The prevailing farm-gates prices showed a steep drop from an average of P20 a kilo of fresh palay earlier this year, which resulted in an estimated P114 billion in losses to Filipino rice farmers for the whole year," he said.

"In contrast, the market prices of rice, expected to drop by P7 a kilo with the rice tariffication law, have remained almost constant with some areas reporting a drop of only P1 to P2 a kilo even with the deluge of imported rice," he added.

Shipment entry records lifted from the Bureau of Customs showed that the landed cost of rice coming from Myanmar, Vietnam and Thailand were P18.22, P25.33 and P23.06 a kilo, respectively.

However, validation of market prices conducted by the Department of Agriculture's regional offices showed that the staple was being sold between P32 and P70 a kilo nationwide.

"The drop in the price of rice in the market of P1 to P2 a kilo does not even come close to the financial sacrifices of rice farmers," Pedro Lim, a farmer leader from the Caraga region, said.

"Palay prices are aground but rice prices in the market are still the same," Aldrin Cardenas, a former overseas worker who now heads a farmer-cooperative, added.

While the policy ensures an annual subsidy of

B3

REVIEW OF RICE TARIFF LAW

FROM B1

P10 billion to the rice industry to cushion it from the measure's adverse effects, former professor at the University of the Philippines Los Baños Teodoro Mendoza said this would not be enough, noting that the amount was only 2.5 percent of the sector's P400-billion contribution to the economy.

The fund, which was supposed to jump-start modernization programs for the industry this year, has yet to reach the farmers due to bureaucratic bottlenecks. INQ

BusinessMirror
A broader look at today's business
JULY 18, 2019 / PAGE: A2

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Planters seek review of rice trade lib law on record-low prices

By Jovee Marie N. dela Cruz
@joveemarie

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) on Wednesday said the average farm-gate price of unhusked rice has dropped to a record low of P12 to P14 per kilogram in many parts of the country.

Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol said the prevailing farm-gate price of palay is 30 percent to 40 percent lower than the average of P20/kg recorded earlier this year.

If this trend continues, Piñol warned that Filipino rice planters could lose an estimated P114 billion for the whole year.

"In contrast, the market prices of rice, expected to drop by P7/kg with the rice tariffication law, have remained almost constant, with some areas reporting a drop of only P1/kg to P2/kg, even with the deluge of imported rice," he said.

The decline in farm-gate prices, Piñol said, prompted farmers and other rice industry stakeholders to urge President Duterte to review into the loopholes of Republic Act (RA) 11203.

"[However, it is] too early to say if the law should be amended, we just have to check the loopholes and plug these," he said in a statement posted on his Facebook page. Piñol told reporters in an interview in Quezon City on Wednesday that the government will strictly implement the Price Act to ensure that rice, particularly imports, will remain affordable for consumers.

"We will come up with the SRP [suggested retail price for rice], because beyond that is profiteering," he added.

According to Piñol, the DA is now drafting a joint memorandum of agreement with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to implement the Price Act. The MOA will be signed this month.

"Traders are eager to import because they believe that no entity will regulate prices. The margin of profit is too huge for importers, but this was not the intent of the law. The intent is to make affordable rice available to consumers," he said in a mix of English and Filipino.

"As for the SRP for imported commercial rice, the government will set it based on the landed cost. The DTI, the Department of Finance and the National Economic and Development Authority will come up with a computation," he added.

Cheap imports

DURING a dialogue with rice farmers, Piñol said the unrestricted entry of imported rice pulled down the average farm-gate price of local paddy to a level not seen in decades.

Farmer leader Pedro Lim of Caraga region said rice farmers will lose over P100 billion this year, but the government will only deliver P10 billion worth of interventions under RA 11203 which took effect on March 5.

Lim said the drop in rice prices of P1/kg to P2/kg does not even come close to the financial sacrifices of rice farmers.

Citing industry stakeholders who looked into the shipment entry records of the Bureau of Customs, Piñol said importers are making a lot of money from imports.

"The landed cost of Myanmar's 25-percent broken rice is only P18.22/kg, Vietnam's 5-percent broken is at P25.33/kg, while Thailand's 5-percent broken is at P23.06/kg," he said. Premium rice or the 5-percent brokens imported from Vietnam and Thailand is sold in the Philippines for P50/kg to P60/kg. Traders, he said, earn a "whopping" margin of P25/kg to P35/kg.

Piñol also said monitoring of market prices by the DA's regional offices on Monday showed photos of rice stalls with prices ranging from a low of P32/kg to a high of P70/kg. The average selling price is P42/kg.

"The only area which posted a huge drop in price was Region 2, considered as the rice granary of the Philippines, where rice could be bought for as low as P30/kg, but farm-gate prices there also dropped to about P12/kg," he said.

Piñol assured farmers and other rice industry stakeholders that their concerns will be submitted in a formal memorandum to Duterte.

BusinessMirror
A broader look at today's business

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: A8

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Duterte eyes military man as agri chief

PRESIDENT Duterte said he is keen on appointing a military man as the next agriculture secretary following the transfer of Emmanuel F. Piñol to the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA).

Aside from heading MinDA, Piñol was also designated as the President's "point man" in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

The President issued the statement in a one-on-one interview with Pastor Apollo C. Quiboloy on *Give Us This Day* where he was asked about Piñol's replacement.

"I'm scouting around. I may appoint a military man again as military men do the tasks given to them without question. When I tell you do this, do that, do not question because I will never give you an order to do something that is illegal," he said.

The President reiterated that he has no problem with Piñol, who he even described as a "very good Cabinet member."

"My problem is, I do not have a man in the BARMM. There is nobody on my side talking to the BARMM to make necessary arrangements for this entity to grow and address their needs," Duterte said.

"You must remember [BARRM] is an agricultural region and Piñol is a farmer. He was once a governor and he was born there. And he's good. He's really very good," he added.

In a related development, Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Martin Andanar said on Wednesday there could be "minor changes in the Cabinet in the next few weeks" as the President mentioned during the last Cabinet meeting.

"As to who and when the exact date is, I don't know. What I know is we all serve at the pleasure of the President," Andanar said in a text message to reporters. ***Bernadette D. Nicolas***

BusinessMirror
A broader look at today's business

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: E2

EMBASSIES, EVENTS, ETC.

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Israel engages in PHL agriculture, defense

IN a bid to strengthen the agriculture industry and support local farmers, the Department of Agriculture (DA) recently closed a deal with the Israeli government for a P44-billion loan to complete a proposed solar power plant project.

Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol and Israel's Ambassador to the Philippines Rafael Harpaz signed the Implementing Agreement (IA) on Agricultural Cooperation at the DA Central Office in Quezon City.

The IA on Agricultural Cooperation is the final output of a series of negotiations between Israel and the Philippines, which started during the visit of President Duterte to the Holy Land in 2018.

"The banner program under the agreement is the transfer of technology, funding and establishment of solar-powered irrigation systems all over the country funded by a long-term loan of P44 billion being offered by the Israeli government," Piñol said in his statement posted on social media.

'High-tech' irrigation

THE project will involve the establishment of 6,200 units of computerized solar-powered irrigation systems (SPIS) intended to irrigate 500,000 hectares of rice farms and other high-value agricultural products over the next three years.

SPIS units will be interconnected with a computer program, which would allow the DA Central Office to monitor the performance of each system all over the country.

"The Israeli government is currently completing the installation of two prototypes of the SPIS: one for a small farm setup of up to 5 hectares and the other, for a big farm setup of up to 100 hectares," the DA chief added.

The prototypes are a donation from an Israeli company, which is also one of those interested in undertaking the SPIS projects in the Philippines.

The prototypes are expected to be operational by the end of July.

Harpaz, in an interview with Philippine News Agency, added that the agreement also includes that of Mashav, the agency that offers international workshops and courses.

"Israel has been sharing knowledge and skills for many years in various areas such as agriculture, water management and innovation through Mashav. We are looking forward to deepen our cooperation with

PART 2 OF 2 JULY 10, 2019 PAGE: E2

BusinessMirror

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

AMBASSADOR of Israel Rafael Harpaz (foreground, left) and Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE/PNA

the Philippines in the near future," the diplomat explained.

He added that the signed agreement reflects the good bilateral relations between the two countries.

Exchanging views on counterterrorism

MEANWHILE, Harpaz also had a meeting with the chief of the Philippine Army (PA), Lt. Gen. Macairog S. Alberto in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, to exchange views on counterterrorism.

Harpaz's courtesy call is in line with the Counter-Terrorism Trainers Training (CTTT) between the PA and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) conducted at Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija.

HARPAZ and Philippine Army chief Lt. General Macairog S. Alberto OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS/PNA

During his visit, the Israeli official recalled the time when former Philippine President Manuel L. Quezon opened the country to 1,300 Jewish refugees from Europe in 1937 to 1941. He said this gesture is one of the reasons Filipinos are welcome in Israel even without a travel visa.

Alberto added the PA is looking forward to more training exchanges with Israel to raise the army's determination to defeat threats of terrorism.

In light of the recent terror attack in Sulu, the army chief pointed out the need for the country to learn from the IDF's years of experience and victories against counterterrorism. He also emphasized that the mandatory military service in Israel is also key in addressing terrorism.

"Be strong," the Israeli envoy told the audience composed of high-ranking officers of the PA. "We cannot have 100-percent success against terrorism, but we must continue to share our experiences on best addressing it."

After the call, the PA's commanding general and Harpaz flew to Fort Magsaysay to observe the ongoing CTTT.

"The Philippine Army recognizes the evolving security environment in the country and its neighboring states. Thus, we welcome the help from our international counterparts to enhance our counterterrorism capabilities through various training and information exchange," Alberto said. ***Christine Cudis, Priam Nepomuceno/PNA***

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

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: 2

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

NAKATAKDANG magpatupad ng bagong suggested retail price (SRP) sa bigas sa bansa ang Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

BAGONG SRP SA BIGAS

Mula sa pahina 1

Sinabi ni Department of Agriculture Manny Piñol na magdedepende ang SRP sa landed cost ng produkto, at sa inisyal na kompyutasyon. Nasa P35 hanggang P38 ang magiging SRP ng commercial rice alinsunod sa rekomendasyon ng DA sa Department of Trade and Industry sa kanilang pulong at iba pang ahensiya na inaasahang maipatutupad na sa susunod na linggo.

Para mabalanse ang kapakanan ng rice traders, local farmers at mamimili, napagdesisyunan sa nasabing pagpupulong na gagamitin na aniya ang Price Act, o magkakaroon na ng SRP.

Ikinaalarma ng DA ang naging malaking pagbaba ng farmgate price ng palay.

Sa isang press briefing, sinabi ni Piñol na hindi nila inaasahan na ganito ang mangyayari, na taliwas sa inaasahang magiging epekto ng Rice Tariffication Law na pagbuti sa presyo ng ipinagbibiling commercial rice sa merkado.

Sinabi ng kalihim na upang alamin ang dahilan ng pagbulusok ng farmgate price ng palay na nasa dose hanggang katorse pesos lamang mula sa dating mahigit P20.00, nagpulong na aniya ang DA, DTI at National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), na dinaluhan din ng Department of Finance (DOF) at Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

Natukoy aniya sa ginawang pagpupulong na nasarapan sa pag-import ang traders dahil sa ang pakiramdam nila ay walang magkokontrol sa presyo. Tulad ng imported rice mula sa Thailand, Vietnam at Myanmar na nasa P18 hanggang P25 lamang ang landed price, subalit ibinebenta sa presyong P40 hanggang P60. Bunsod nito, wala na aniyang gustong bumili ng lokal na palay dahil bukod sa mahaba ang proseso bago maging bigas, maliit pa ang kita dahil sa baba ng presyo nito sa farmgate.

Sinabi rin ng kalihim na hindi rin nangyari ang inaasahang P7 na pagbaba ng presyo ng bigas sa merkado dahil ang mas dumami aniya ay ang mga nagnegosyo o nag-import ng bigas.

BENEDICT ABAYGAR, JR.

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

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: 8

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

EX-SOLDIER PAPALIT KAY PIÑOL SA DA

INAASINTA ni Presidente Rodrigo Duterte ang isang dating opisyal ng militar na pumalit kay Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol na nakatakdang lumipat sa Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA).

Ayon kay Duterte, sa kasalukuyan ay naghahanap pa siya ng kapalit ni Piñol.

"I'm scouting around. Maybe again a military man kasi madali magutos ng trabaho and they do it without a question," wika ni Duterte sa isang panayam sa television program ni Pastor Apollo Quiboloy.

"When I tell you do this and do that do not question me because I will never give you an order to do something that is illegal."

Nauna rito ay ipinagkibit-balikat ng Pangulo ang kritisismo na nagpapatupad siya ng militarisasyon sa kanyang Gabinete, at sinabing mas gusto niya ang mga dating uniformed personnel dahil sumusunod sila sa utos nang walang reklamo.

Sa kasalukuyan, ang mga dating military official sa Gabinete ay kinabibilangan nina Interior Secretary Eduardo Año, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr., Peace Adviser Carlito Galvez Jr., Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council chairperson Eduardo del Rosario at Social Welfare Secretary Rolando Bautista.

Itinalaga rin ni Duterte ang mga dating military at police official sa iba pang posisyon sa gobyerno.

Ayon sa Pangulo, nais niyang maging point man si Piñol sa Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) dahil wala aniyang ibang maaasahan na makipag-usap sa BARMM para sa kinakailangang arrangements upang umunlad ito.

"Nobody is talking to the BARMM. What else do you want? What else do you need? What happens to this office? Would it be dissolved or you want another entity to make it work? Wala, eh so I have to have my man there. Piñol is from Cotabato," aniya.

Si Duterte ay nakipagpulong sa mga opisyal ng Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) noong nakaraang linggo upang talakayin ang kanyang plano na ilipat si Piñol sa Mindanao at sinang-ayunan naman ito ng BTA officials, sa pangunguna ni interim chief minister Murad Ebrahim.

"ABANTE"
PAGE: 3

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Militar ipapalit kay Piñol sa DA

ISANG militar ang napipisil ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na ipalit kay Agriculture Secretary Manny Piñol.

Sinabi ng Pangulo sa naghahanap na ito ng bagong Agriculture secretary at planong ibigay ito sa isang militar.

Ipinaliwanag ng Pangulo na madaling utusan at madaling umaksiyon ang militar gaya ng iba nitong miyembro ng gabinete napawang mga retiradong heneral.

"I'm scouting around. I feel maybe again a military man. Kasi madali mag-utos, magtrabaho," anang Pangulo.

Sinabi ni Pangulong Duterte na kailangan niya si Piñol sa Mindanao dahil wala siyang tao na magtitimon at tutulong sa pagbangon ng Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

Si Piñol aniya ang magiging tulay ng gobyerno sa BARMM para mabilis na maiparating ang mga pangangailangan para sa pag-unlad ng rehiyon.

Sinabi ng Pangulo na maraming lupang pang-agrikultura sa Mindanao at kailangan ang expertise ni Piñol para umunlad ang BARMM.

"Piñol is a very good cabinet member. And problema, wala akong tao, there's nobody on my side talking to the BARRM to make the necessary arrangements for this entity to grow and their needs," dagdag ng Pangulo.

Pangangasiwaan ni Piñol ang Mindanao Development Authority na isa ring cabinet post. **(Aileen Taliping)**

Tempo
NEWS IN A FLASH
THE NATION'S FASTEST GROWING NEWSPAPER

Date: JULY 19, 2019 Page: 4

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Gov't acts on low palay prices

By MADELAINE MIRAFLOR

A "nationwide uproar" among rice farmers in the country has forced the government to act on the falling palay prices, a trend that could rob farmers of potential income worth ₱114 billion for the entire year.

The main culprit? The Rice Tarrification Law or Republic Act (RA) 11203, which legalized in March the unlimited entry of cheaper, imported rice into the Philippines.

On Wednesday, Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol had sought a meeting with Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez and National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Undersecretary Mercedita Sombilla to discuss the implementation of the Suggested Retail Price (SRP) policy on commercial rice sold in the market based on the Price Act.

"With the NFA [National Food Authority] stripped of its supervisory and regulatory powers over the rice industry, the Price Act is the only remaining instrument of government to rationalize the pricing of agricultural products in the market," Piñol said.

This was after farmer leaders and rice industry stakeholders asked the Department of Agriculture (DA) during an impromptu consultation meeting to address the continuous decline in the prices of palay, which was possibly triggered by the loopholes in RA 11203.

Piñol said the meeting took place amid the "nationwide uproar" among farmers who have been suffering since farm gate prices of paddy rice dropped to a record low of ₱12 per kilogram (/kg) to ₱14/kg in many parts of the country, a steep drop from an average of ₱20/kg price for fresh palay earlier this year.

During the fourth week of June alone, the average farmgate price of palay continued to decline, falling by 0.3 percent to ₱17.85 per kilogram (/kg) from previous week's level of ₱17.90/kg. This was a huge drop of 16.5 percent from the previous year's same week level of ₱21.38/kg.

But the thing is, the retail price of rice or the price that consumers are paying for to buy a kilo of the staple has remained the same, Aldrin Cardenas, a leader of a farmers' cooperative in Tarlac, pointed out.

Based on their computation, the market prices of rice – which was expected to drop by₱7/kg with the entry of more imported rice – have remained relatively high, reporting a drop of only ₱1/kg to ₱2/kg four months since the passage of RA 11203.

Tempo
NEWS IN A FLASH
THE NATION'S FASTEST GROWING NEWSPAPER

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: 2

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Ex-military to replace Piñol at DA?

Another military man may join the Duterte Cabinet soon.

President Duterte has announced that he might choose a former military officer to take the place of Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol when he moves to head the Mindanao Development Authority.

"I'm scouting around. Maybe again a military man kasi madali mag-utos ng trabaho and they do it without question," the President said in a television interview early yesterday morning.

"When I tell you do this or do that, do not question. I will never give you an order that is something illegal," said Duterte who has appointed several retired military officers to the Cabinet and other government agencies.

The President said Piñol would serve as his point man to spur socio-economic development in the new Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. He described Piñol as a "very good Cabinet member," believing he is qualified for the MinDA job due to his experience as a former North Cotabato governor and a farmer.

"It's Piñol who is moving to another entity. Piñol is a very good Cabinet member," he said.

At present, Duterte said no one was coordinating with the interim government of the Bangsamoro region about their needs.

"Ang problema ako kasi wala akong tao in BARMM. There is nobody on my side talking to the BARMM to make necessary arrangements for this entity to grow, and address their needs. It is an agricultural country and Piñol is a farmer who is once a governor and he was born there and he's good, he's really very good," he said.

"Parang naiwanan natin. Nobody is talking to BARMM. What else do you want, what else do you need? What happens to this office? Will it dissolved or you want to add another entity? Wala eh so I have to have my man there," he added.

The President had earlier said Bangsamoro region interim chief minister Murad Ebrahim has welcomed the transfer of Piñol as head of the MinDA. The two reportedly met last week to tackle updates about the progress in the new region.

Piñol earlier offered to be relieved from his post and reassigned to another agency, including the MinDA. **(Genalyn Kabiling)**

The Manila Times

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: B9

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

BFAR introduces safe, sustainable aquaculture

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya: To ensure safe produce from aquaculture, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) conducted a series of orientation on Philippine Good Aquaculture Practices (PhilGAqP), which also aimed to enable fish farmers to achieve higher socio-economic benefits.

According to Jefferson Soriano, BFAR Region 2-Regional Fisheries Laboratory (RFL) head, PhilGAqP aims to prevent or minimize the risks associated with aquaculture production.

PhilGAqP applies to hatcheries, nurseries, fish cages, fish pens and fishponds, and seaweeds and mollusks farms.

Soriano said the Philippine Fisheries Code mandates fishery operators to "comply with good aquaculture practices and guidelines for environmentally sound design and operation for the sustainable development of the aquaculture industry."

PhilGAqP is also concerned with compliance of fish farms with guidelines set forth on siting and design, facilities and sanitation, water use, farm management, feeds and feeding, mortalities, diseases, drugs and chemical use, and harvesting and transport.

"With the conduct of similar orientation, we help fisherfolk comply with what the fisheries code requires," Soriano said.

During the training in this town, Soriano, who discussed the background, legal basis, scope and requirements, and the components of PhilGAqP with fish farm owners from the province, was joined by Jennifer Tattao, BFAR Region 2 Production Division's senior aquaculturist.

Tattao said that better-managed fish farms produce quality products, resulting in more acceptability in the marketplace and ensuring sustainable production with minimal impact on the environment and the community.

Participants also had a workshop on preparation of farm layout and held a site visit to government-operated and private fish farms, bringing along their PhilGAqP checklist.

The bureau has held similar orientation in the provinces of Quirino and Isabela in June, and a training activity in Cagayan province is scheduled in August.

LEANDER C. DOMINGO

THE DAILY tribune
Without fear or favor

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: 13

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

CoA red flags BFAR

By Hananeel Bordey

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has P536 million in unliquidated fund transfers to various implementing agencies (IA) and non-governmental organizations (NGO) in 2018 aside from the P1.658 billion unliquidated money from the previous years, the Commission on Audit (CoA) disclosed on Wednesday.

In its 2018 annual audit report, the state auditors flagged BFAR for its failure to comply with the CoA's auditing rules and regulations on transfer and liquidation of funds.

"Out of the P608,805,432.00 fund transfers during the year, P536,126,034.00 or 88 percent remained unliquidated. Also, there were still unliquidated fund transfers of P1,658,170,387.45 or 52 percent of prior year balance P3,176,708,660.00," the audit agency said.

The state auditors also noted that additional fund transfers were granted by BFAR Central Office (CO), Regional Field Office (RFO) VI and Foreign-Assisted Projects (FAP) to IA despite the outstanding unliquidated balance.

CoA disclosed that in RFO VI and VII, P1.980 million of the P1.658 billion unliquidated funds from previous years were from the P20.737 million Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP) funds sourced from Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and BFAR-CO in 2011.

In 2014, the Supreme Court declared the unconstitutionality of major parts of DAP, a spending scheme approved during the administration of former President Benigno Aquino III to accelerate government spending.

Of the P20.737 million, P7.515 million was received by RFO VI from DBM and the unliquidated fund pertained to the transfer of money to Aklan State University which requested for extension of fund utilization.

Meanwhile, P13.222 million of the same P20.727 million was received by RFO VII from BFAR-CO and was downloaded to four state universities, namely Cebu Technological University, Bohol Island State University-Clarin Campus, Negros Oriental State University and Bohol Island State University-Candijay Campus.

The audit agency reminded BFAR that it is the source agency's duty to monitor the implementation of the projects and see to it that IAs submit liquidation reports.

It added that BFAR failed to closely monitor timely liquidation from the IAs or NGO which resulted in the increase and accumulation of the unliquidated balances.

THE DAILY tribune
Without fear or favor

Date: JULY 19, 2019 Page: B15

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

NFA assures sufficient rice stocks

Dansal said rice stocks of provinces projected to be hit by the typhoons were bolstered this week

The National Food Authority (NFA) has assured the public that there are sufficient rice stocks in the regions hit by typhoon Falcon.

Earlier, NFA Administrator Judy Carol Dansal had instructed NFA offices in Regions 1, 2, 3, CAR, NCR and all regions hit by heavy rains brought by typhoon Falcon to secure their rice stocks, in anticipation for heightened rice distribution and relief operations during and after the storm.

Dansal said rice stocks of provinces projected to be hit by the typhoons were bolstered this week.

She said the NFA has around 4 million bags of rice strategically stored in its different warehouses in Luzon, including the National Capital Region, ready for distribution for relief operations during calamities.

NFA now holds more than 10 million bags of rice stored in all of its warehouses nationwide.

To recall, NFA was able to procure 5.412 million bags of palay from local farmers in the first half of 2019 to bolster its buffer stock. Since the signing of RA 11203 or the rice trade liberalization law in February, the NFA has been mandated to focus on local palay procurement to ensure rice buffer stock for the country during calamities and emergencies.

"We are closely monitoring and coordinating with the LGU. If there will be areas that need rice for relief, our stocks are available," Dansal said.

Tropical Storm Falcon is forecasted to pass through Northern Luzon, Batanes and in other Cagayan Valley provinces. The storm is expected to cause heavy rains, floods and landslides in many areas. **KAC**

THE DAILY tribune
Without fear or favor

Date: JULY 10, 2019 Page: A4

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Rebooting agricultural management

BYSTANDER
Dean de la Paz

> ***"Mechanization and corporate farms are options where private-public consortia might explore and derive elusive viabilities.***

As discussed in a forum that explored a government "to-do" list as Congress reopens and starts with renewed vigor from fresh new legislators and heartening approvals for the Executive from the public, after passing needed legislation, we need to focus on rebooting agricultural management.

Its criticality cannot be denied given the disturbing downsides even under former Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Emmanuel Piñol, carried over from systemic flaws and fraud from the Aquino administration.

For the economy to achieve its targets, the Ateneo Center for Economic Research and Development, proposed a reboot of our agricultural programs, among other things. Given that the sector accounts for a third of domestic productivity, agriculture is indeed among our highest priorities.

Allow us to review its decline and the consequences of an overwhelming and unhealthy focus on patronage politics.

There is no better example of lazy "Noynoying" than that inflicted on the sector by the government of Benigno Aquino III. Kicking off with a rehashed "Build, Operate and Transfer" scheme Aquino's "monkey see, monkey do" model was focused on creating consortia most of which ignored agricultural productivity. Their natural impetus was on returns on investments and quick bucks. Where agriculture was concerned even as huge requisite funds were needed, margins were thin and payback periods, long.

Rather than choose to tackle the agricultural dilemma head-on, the strategy eventually pursued was simply to ignore the problem. Trust a bungling dispensation to find innovative ways to worsen a bad situation.

Surrendering to the wishes of presidential whisperers and influence peddlers and not knowing any better, Aquino appointed to the DA a Liberal Party-mate. He was not alone. Aquino's appointee joined other similarly skewed officials hitched to his bandwagon. Giving new meaning to the term gullible, his travails in agriculture continued even where his appointee ended up accused of malversation and corruption.

> ***"By the end of Aquino's term the sector registered an effective growth rate of zero.***

All post-Aquino administration analyses declared that the sector had not only been sorely ignored and rendered unproductive but where high-level corruption seeped into it, the net effect was a sector so victimized by "Noynoying" that it was populated by the economy's poorest and most indigent.

Do the arithmetic. The economy in 2015 grew by as much as 6 percent. Agriculture which accounts for 33 percent of GDP contributed only 0.3 percent.

Not that Malacañang cared to fix the problem. Aquino's signature cop-out was to retain corrupt incompetents even where they were surrounded with charges of ineptitude and corruption. As a palliative Aquino resorted to what his presidential whisperers did best – create "alternate realities" and force those down the public's collective throats.

Alongside one incompetent, Aquino simply added another.

Then idling away, Francis Pangilinan was tending to his organic garden when Aquino tasked him with a mandate that dovetailed and duplicated those of the DA Secretary. Two zeros equal zero. By the end of Aquino's term the sector registered an effective growth rate of zero.

Unfortunately, not only did the Duterte administration inherit this headache, it created some of its own where the eventual 2018 rice crisis essentially resulted in a one-way increase in aggregate prices.

While tariffication addressed some of the demand side concerns by removing import selectivity, domestic farm production suffered and the needs of rice farmers remain unaddressed. To attain a 2 percent growth for the sector some real brainpower, elbow grease and private capital infusion are needed to reboot the sector.

Mechanization and corporate farms are options where private-public consortia might explore and derive elusive viabilities. But that's a tectonic paradigm shift for a sector trapped over two centuries in the past where infrastructure and ancient technologies are concerned.

Wherever the solutions lie, job one will still be to appoint a competent and honest technocrat to the DA. That hasn't been done in almost 10 years.

THE DAILY tribune
Without fear or favor

Date: JULY 10, 2019 Page: B12

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Rice tariff review urged

The rice farmers will lose over P100 billion this year but the government will only deliver P10 billion worth of interventions

Following a sharp decline in the farm gate price of paddy rice, farmer leaders and industry stakeholders urge the government to review the Rice Tariffication Law.

At a consultation convened by the Department of Agriculture (DA), the farmers blamed the "unrestricted inflow of imported rice" for the emaciated rice prices.

The price of paddy rice in various parts of the country have plunged to P12 to P14 per kilo at present from P20.

Aldrin Cardenas, head of a farmers' cooperative in Tarlac, said that despite the tariffication and the surge of imports, the price of rice only slightly declined by P1 to P2 when they were supposed to decrease by roughly P7.

"*Palay* prices are at rock bottom the price of milled rice in markets have hardly decreased," he said.

Based on their calculations, if the cutback lingers, farmers would incur estimated losses of some P114 billion annually.

"The rice farmers will lose over P100 billion this year but the government will only deliver P10 billion worth of interventions," Pedro Lim, farmer leader of Caraga Region pointed out.

During the consultation, farmers also criticized the profits enjoyed by rice traders and importers due to the alleged undervaluation of imported rice.

Citing Bureau of Customs shipment entry records, the farmers said the landed cost of Myanmar 25 percent broken rice is only P18.22 per kilo; Vietnam at 5 percent broken is P25.33 per kilo, and Thailand at 5 percent broken is at P23.06 per kilo.

But premium rice or 5 percent broken from Vietnam and Thailand are sold from P50 to P60 per kilo for a margin of P25 to P35 per kilo.

Subsequent validation of market prices conducted by DA Regional Offices early this week show rice stalls with prices ranging from P32 per kilo to P70 per kilo or an average selling price of P42 per kilo.

Among the regions, only Cagayan Valley posted a reduction in price at P30 per kilo. Farm gate prices in the region have also dropped to roughly P12 per kilo.

Outgoing Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol assured stakeholders their concerns will be submitted as a formal memorandum to President Duterte.

Meanwhile, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) told the *Daily Tribune* on Wednesday it is presently studying a suggested retail price mechanism that will control the retail price of rice in the market based on the Price Act.

With the National Food Authority stripped of its supervisory and regulatory powers over the rice industry, the Price Act is the remaining instrument of government to rationalize the pricing of agricultural products in the market.

Subsequent validation of market prices conducted by DA Regional Offices early this week show rice stalls with prices ranging from P32 per kilo to P70 per kilo or an average selling price of P42 per kilo.

Earlier, the Federation of Free Farmers said the revenue generated by replacing quantitative restrictions on rice with a tariff schedule would be insufficient to finance the P10 billion Rice Competitiveness Enhance Fund (RCEF).

Funds raised from the tariffs will go to the RCEF which was established to provide farmers with easier access to financing, rice seeds, and machinery.

Trade Secretary Lopez said the RCEF will be released soon. **Maria Romero**

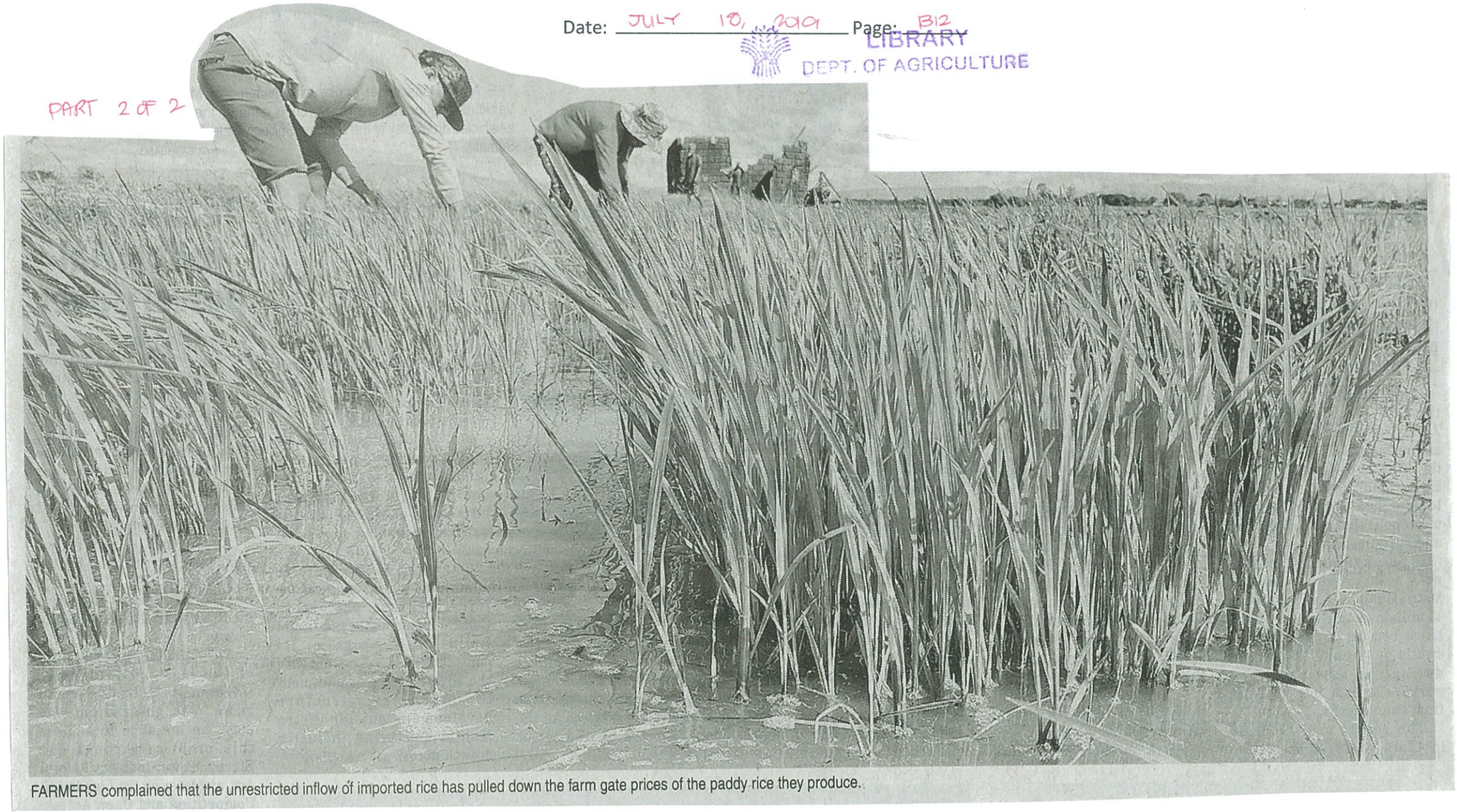
PART 1 OF 2

THE DAILY tribune
Without fear or favor

Date: JULY 10, 2010 Page: B12

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PART 2 OF 2



FARMERS complained that the unrestricted inflow of imported rice has pulled down the farm gate prices of the paddy rice they produce.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Date: JULY 18 2019 Page: A9

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

'Fishy' legal turnaround of fisherfolk

HUMAN FACE

MA. CERES P. DOYO

I begin by quoting the late human rights lawyer and senator Joker Arroyo: "Like a mackerel lying in the moonlight, it shines and it stinks" (a variation of John Randolph of Roanoke's quote).

On April 16, fisherfolk from Palawan and Zambales filed a petition for a writ of kalikasan and a writ of continuing mandamus asking the Supreme Court to compel the government to perform acts mandated upon it and enforce environmental laws in the Philippines' territory. The fisherfolk were represented by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) and collaborating counsel Jose Manuel "Chel" Diokno.

Something strange surprised the counsels. During the oral arguments this month of July, Solicitor General Jose Calida asked for the dismissal of the petition by saying that the fishermen-petitioners were withdrawing and have executed affidavits denying that they authorized the filing of the petition. Huh?!

Counsel Diokno replied and stressed then that the petition was filed with "full knowledge and consent" of the fisherfolk. The petition was filed so that the government would protect the fisherfolk who only want to be able to fish in their country's own territory and to earn enough for their families.

Over the weekend, I sought out Diokno because I learned that officials from the Philippine Navy visited the fisherfolk, after which the latter changed their minds. What happened was highly suspicious ("kahinahinala"), and was against legal ethics.

I was able to watch Pinky Webb's interview with lawyer Theodore Te ("The Source" on CNN Philippines) who expressed the same thing. A video clip showed the fisherfolk approaching some lawyer to withdraw their petition. Te said that lawyer should have dismissed the fisherfolk (the legally ethical thing to do) and advised them instead to tell their lawyers that they were being fired.

Something suspicious about that video... Did the fishermen know their action was being recorded?

In a statement, IBP national president Domingo Cayosa vouched for the integrity of the lawyers (Diokno et al.) involved in filing the petition on behalf of the fisherfolk: "The IBP advocates for the enforcement of environmental laws, protection of the rights and welfare of fisherfolk, and securing the territory and patrimony of our country in the West Philippine Sea... the IBP stands firmly with the fishermen, IBP chapters and the lawyers involved in the petition for a writ of kalikasan filed before the Supreme Court."

To Diokno's accusation that the government was using underhanded tactics, the spokesperson of President Duterte, Salvador Panelo, responded by saying that Diokno manipulated the fisherfolk into signing the petition.

Diokno hit back by saying it was the government's lawyer that committed a "breach of legal ethics" when he secretly talked to their clients, the fishermen.

I am getting curiouser and curiouser. The petition for a writ was to protect the environment and the country's territory. Why is the government averse to that? And why seek out the petitioners in the dead of night, so to speak? *Ano meron?*

"There was a breach of legal ethics in this case," someone told me, "... the Navy lawyer bypassed the fisherfolk's lawyers. The IBP team, and Diokno as collaborating counsel, acted in good faith. They only wanted to help our countrymen, the fishermen, because they have the right to fish in our own territory, free from fear and harassment from certain forces. That was what the petition for a writ of kalikasan was all about."

By the way, this is not the first time that Diokno represented fisherfolk. In October 2018, he filed a petition before the Supreme Court for continuing mandamus, on behalf of three fishermen from Navotas and Oceana Philippines International, to compel the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources to formulate rules on legal, sustainable and proper fishing methods, for the delineation of all municipal waters in the Philippines and many other things besides that would benefit and protect our fishermen. Enforcement of our Fisheries Code, Diokno says, is weak.

This recent petition for a writ of kalikasan and Diokno's involvement as collaborating counsel is a logical extension of his support for our fisherfolk and the preservation of our marine ecosystem and for our people's food security.

The petitioners' turnaround is a big blow to their own selves. Whoever instigated that "midnight visit" that made the petitioners change their mind....

Send feedback to cerespd@gmail.com.

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

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: 9

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Sa mga lugar na hahagupitin ni 'Falcon'

SUPPLY NG BIGAS SAPAT

TINIYAK ng National Food Authority (NFA) na may sapat na supply ng bigas sa mga lugar na tatamaan ng bagyong Falcon.

Sinabi ni NFA Administrator Judy Carol Dansal na maaga niyang inatasan ang regional offices ng ahensiya na siguruhing may stock ng bigas para makaalalay sa isasagawang rice distribution at relief operations sa Regions 1, 2, 3, Cordillera at National Capital Region na nakaranas ng malalakas na pagulan.

Inaasahang tatahakin pa ng bagyo ang hilagang Luzon, kabilang ang Batanes at Cagayan Valley provinces.

Ayon kay Dansal, mayroon na ngayong 10 milyong sako ng bigas sa NFA warehouse sa buong bansa na anumang oras ay maaaring makuhanan ng bigas ng local government units (LGUs) o institusyon na mangangailangan.

Sa pinakahuling ulat ng PAGASA ay napanatili ni 'Falcon' ang lakas nito habang kumikilos pa-hilaga, hilagang kanluran.

Taglay ng bagyo ang lakas ng hangin na umaabot sa 65 kilometers/hour malapit sa gitna at pagbugso ng hangin na aabot sa 80 kilometers/hour. **BENEDICT ABAYGAR, JR.**

Manila Standard

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: B4

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Spouses Renato and the late Eleanor Belen at their farm, Ato Belen's Farm, in San Pablo, Laguna.

LandBank boosts Ato Belen's Farm, other agribiz

EVEN the largest harvests start from the smallest of seeds. This was proven true by the success of agricultural entrepreneurs Renato "Ato" Belen and his late wife Eleanor, owners of Ato Belen's Farm.

The Belens' story began in 1987 when they decided to put up a small plant nursery in their home city of San Pablo in Laguna, with only P700 as initial capital.

With Eleanor's education in agriculture and experience in running the day-to-day operations of her father's farm, complemented by Ato's hard work and determination, they became well-known in their community as trusted producers of planting materials.

Soon enough, the small seed of their family's dream started to grow. Their 600 sq m plant nursery grew into a 1.2-hectare farm, and Ato Belen's Farm was born.

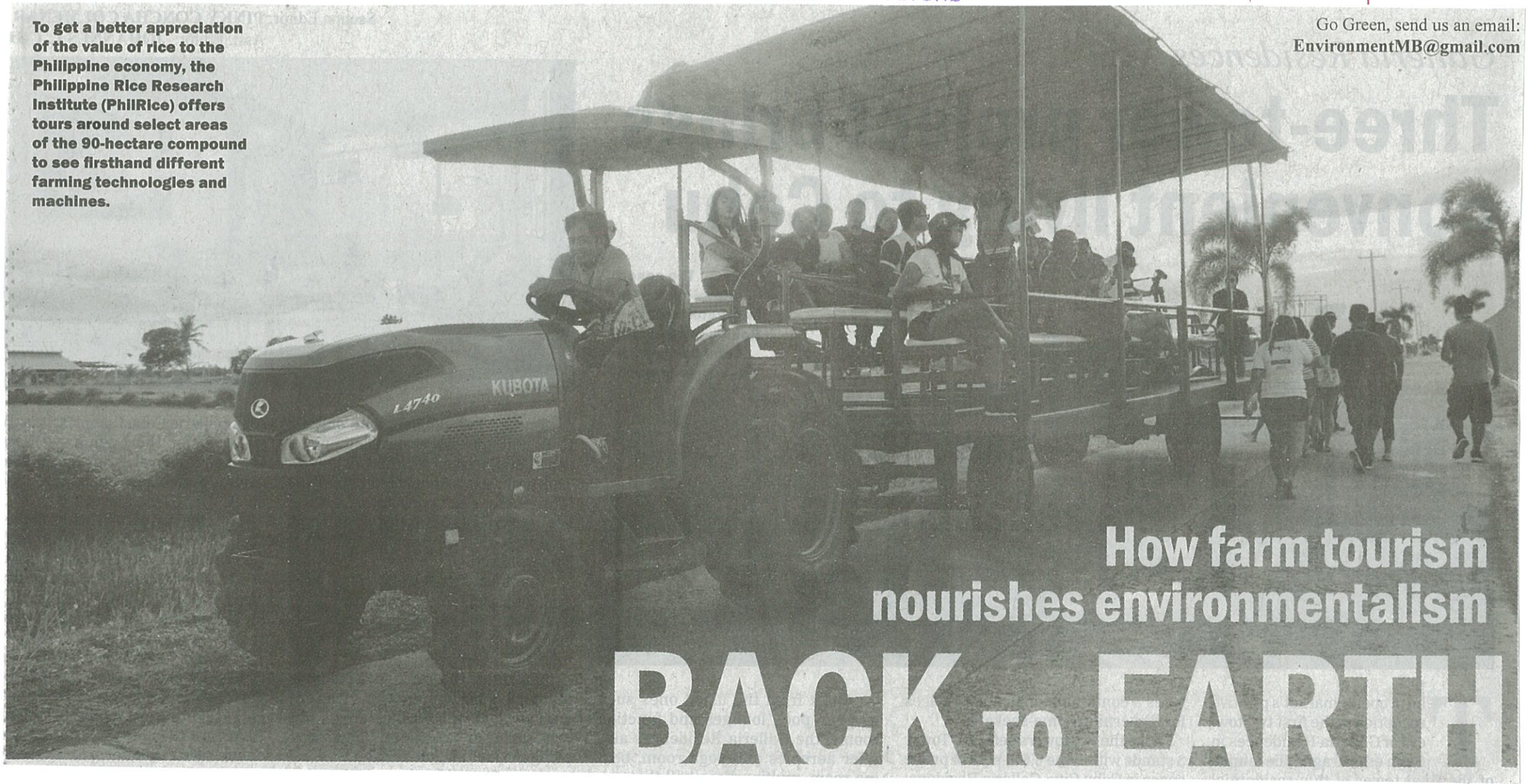
The Belens also acquired an additional 10-hectare property that they developed into an integrated farm engaged in crop, livestock and farming inputs production, fishery, and the provision of tourism and agriculture-related services.

The couple's relationship with LandBank started in 2000, when they were sourcing for additional working capital. They learned from a friend that LandBank offers small enterprises access to credit, with affordable interest rates and manageable payment terms.

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: B-6

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PART 1 of 3



To get a better appreciation of the value of rice to the Philippine economy, the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) offers tours around select areas of the 90-hectare compound to see firsthand different farming technologies and machines.

Go Green, send us an email:
EnvironmentMB@gmail.com

How farm tourism nourishes environmentalism

BACK TO EARTH

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: B-6

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
PART 2 of 3

Text & photos by **KARA SANTOS**

'We could all benefit from visiting farms when we travel. Getting our hands in the dirt, learning where our food comes from, and communing with nature instill a love for the environment. When we see food at the source and the hard work that it takes growing it, we see the value of not wasting food.'

One of the best ways to commune with nature and appreciate its gifts and role in human life is to literally go back to the Earth. It could mean spending time in a garden, in an eco-park or joining the growing popularity of farm tours.

We could all benefit from visiting farms when we travel. Getting our hands in the dirt, learning where our food comes from, and communing with nature instill a love for the environment. When we see food at the source and the hard work that it takes growing it, we see the value of not wasting food.

Unlike visiting beaches or going on extreme adventures, visiting farms and ranches may seem a little tame. But the Philippines is largely an agricultural country, with literally plenty of room to grow.

Agritourism or agrotourism, refers to tourism that involves any agriculturally-based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch. With the awareness of Filipinos about climate change and sustainable food, agri-tourism is gaining ground.

Organic farms, nature-friendly farms and health and wellness farms are among the top tourism farm destinations in the country.

If you're looking for a getaway where you can have fun communing with nature, here are just a few of the farm tourism destinations you can visit.

Cavite

Tagaytay is a popular weekend destination because of its cooler climate and restaurants.

One of the most known establishments here is Sonya's Garden. Secluded in a lush verdant slope of Cavite, Sonya's Garden gained prominence from its tranquil ambiance and organic gastronomical offering.

Today, it's one of the best B&B gardens and popular among couples for pre-nup pictorial and wedding receptions. Sonya's Garden is also famous among vegans and organic epicureans, as it offers farm-to-table dining in an alfresco area. The garden is well maintained and is continuously teeming with floral varieties and other greeneries.

Visitors will enjoy walking around the garden trails, seeing fresh flowers in bloom and partaking of healthy meals served with herbs and vegetables directly from their gardens.

Other popular farm destinations in Cavite include Nurture Wellness Village, Ilog Maria Bee Farm in Silang and Gourmet Farms, which is a sprawling 10-hectare compound housing a restaurant, plantations areas, salad production section, coffee factory and a church.

Above: Fresh flowers inside Sonya's Garden. Below: Lush surrounding of Sonya's make it a popular venue

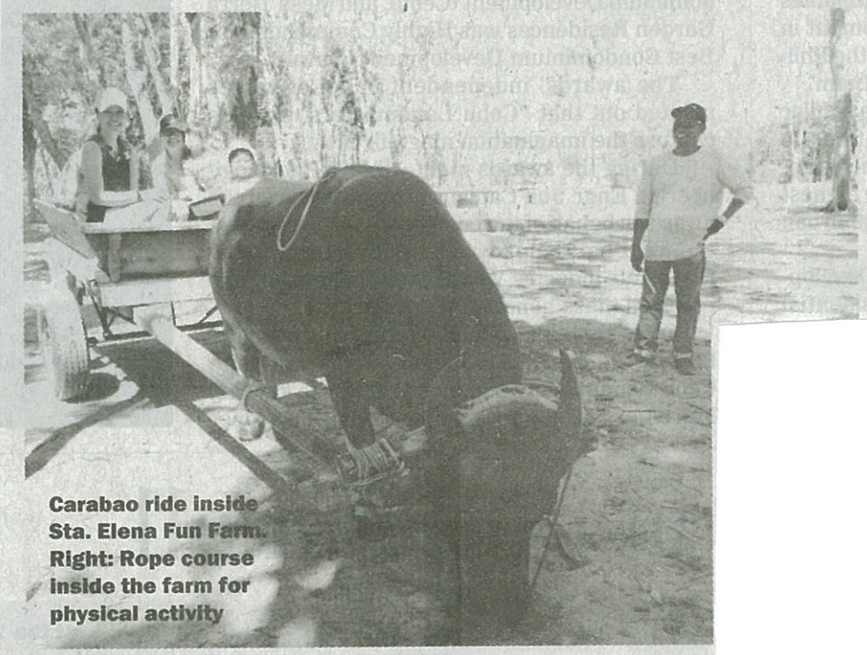
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: B-6
LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
PART 3 of 3

Benguet

You can't go to Baguio City without feasting on fresh strawberries. Grown in farmlands around Benguet, fresh strawberries (and products like strawberry jam, strawberry wine, etc.) are popular souvenirs from the Summer Capital.

For a fun experience, you can try strawberry-picking at the Strawberry Farm in La Trinidad on the outskirts of Baguio City. The best time to visit in order to harvest strawberries is from March to April. But aside from strawberries, you can also find flowers and green, leafy vegetables in the farm. There's no entrance fee to explore the farm, but it costs ₱350 per basket for those who want to pick the strawberries themselves.

Benguet is home to numerous farms including flower farms, vegetable farms and coffee farms.



Carabao ride inside Sta. Elena Fun Farm. Right: Rope course inside the farm for physical activity

Laguna

If you want to introduce kids to the simple farm life, Sta. Elena Fun Farm in Cabuyao, Laguna is an ideal destination near Metro Manila. This natural playground offers a space to escape the world of gadgets and technology.

Kids are free to run in open spaces and connect with animals. The Fun Farm offers party and picnic areas, pockets of natural playgrounds, zip lines, a sand box, animal feeding stations, a lagoon where you can fish, horse stables, and an amphitheater. Activities include horseback riding, carabao pulled-cart riding, fishing, row boating, and zip-line. It's ideal for field trips, family outings and team building activities.

Costales Nature Farms, nestled at the foothills of mystical Mt. Banahaw in Majayjay, is another agri-tourism destination in Laguna. Their farm tour packages cater to anyone who wants to relax and experience farm life for a day or two. Learn the basics of integrated organic farming and enjoy the amenities of the farm.

Meanwhile, the Villa Socorro Farm is an agri-eco village where you can learn more about the process of growing native saba bananas.

Nueva Ecija

Nueva Ecija may be best known for Minalungao National Park where visitors ride rafts through limestone rock formations. But aside from that, this largely agricultural province has its share of farm tourism attractions.

How about sampling the quirky Tilapia Ice Cream at the College of Home Science and Industry in the Science City of Munoz?

You can spend the day at PMP Paradise Farm, an agro-reforestation project in General Tinio that offers immersive tours. Visitors can experience firsthand what it takes to run a farm, including identifying different fruit trees and feed animals like sheep and goats.

Left: Fresh strawberries can be picked in La Trinidad. Above: Visitors can try sheep-herding at PMP Paradise Farm in Nueva Ecija

To get a better appreciation of the value of rice to the Philippine economy, the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) offers tours around select areas of the 90-hectare compound to see firsthand different farming technologies and machines.

Davao

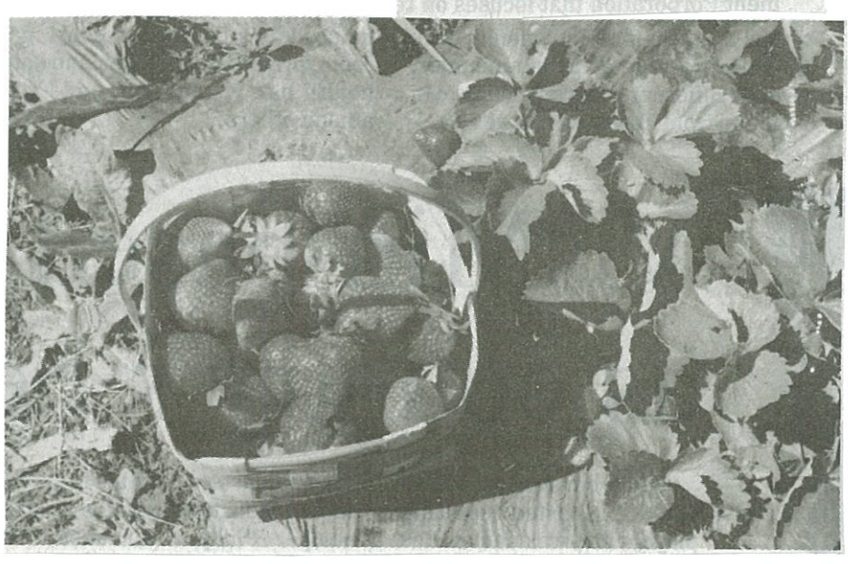
Who doesn't love chocolate?

Malagos Garden Resort is a cacao plantation in Davao City. Among its must-visit attractions is the only Chocolate Museum in the country where visitors get to make their own chocolates with cocoa sourced from the plantation.

Experience kalesa rides, go horseback riding or get a spa treatment with cacao butter, citronella, tropical fruits, and local oils.

Bemwa Farms, is a rising farm tourism destination known for its fresh strawberries, sunflowers, fresh organic products, and other potted herbs for sale.

With all these options available, bring the family one weekend to these destinations. Aside from offering something different from the malls, these farm tours open the eyes of the young ones to how important it is to nurture the environment. After all, they are the ones who will inherit the Earth.



The Manila Times

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: B9

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Filipino leads Asian plant research group

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna: A Filipino has been elected president of an international society dedicated to basic and applied aspects of breeding research in economically important plants.

Glenn Gregorio, National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) academician, is the new president of the Society for the Advancement of Breeding Research in Asia and Oceania (Sabrao) and will serve from 2019 to 2023.

Gregorio is also the director of Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (Searca), an inter-government treaty organization hosted by the Philippine government on the campus of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB).

Leah Lyn Domingo, Searca public relations specialist, said Gregorio takes the helm from, Sang-Nag Ahn, a professor at the Chungnam National University in South Korea.

Domingo said Sabrao was formed in 1968 at a time when many countries did not have strong government agencies focused on agricultural research or national programs for major crops.

Sabrao holds conferences and its general assembly every four years, often in collaboration with a national breeding society.

"The latest of which was the 14th International Conference on Plant Breeding for Sustainable Development held on July 2-5 in Gwangju, Korea," Domingo said.

Glenn Gregorio (left), Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture director and new president of the Society for the Advancement of Breeding Research in Asia and Oceania (Sabrao), with outgoing Sabrao President Sang-Nag Ahn, professor at Chungnam National University, South Korea.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The conference was jointly organized by Sabrao the Korean Society of Breeding Science (KSBS) and coincided with the 50th anniversary of KSBS.

The society has an official publication called the *Sabrao Journal of Breeding and Genetics* that was first published in 1969.

The journal operates on a not-for-profit basis and focuses on plant species or topics that are relevant to developing countries in Asia and Oceania.

LEANDER C. DOMINGO

The Manila Times

Date: JULY 10, 2019 Page: B9

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PH on track for 2019 coco oil export target

BY EIREENE JAIREE GOMEZ

WITH the pace of the country's coconut oil export performance in the first four months of 2019, the Philipines is on track to hit its export target of 970,000 metric tons (MT) for the entire year, the United Coconut Associations of the Philippines Inc. (UCAP) said.

At the recent press briefing for the 2nd World Coconut Congress held in Quezon City, UCAP Executive Director Yvonne Agustin told the media that the country was aiming to ship out a higher volume of coconut oil in the international market for this year. The target is 4.2 percent higher than the 951,353 MT in 2018 and 912,631 MT in 2017.

"I think we are [on track] based on the performance of the four months. We hit the average for the year," she said.

In January to April, the total outbound shipments of coconut oil reached 366,992 MT, up 35 percent from last year's 271,696 MT, contributing 37.8 percent to the total export target for 2019.

Revenues from coconut oil exports, however, is expected to decrease by 17 percent to $1.185 billion from $1.430 billion a year earlier and $1.830 billion in 2017.

Export revenues stood at $297.718 million in the first four months of the year, a 20.5-percent decline from $374.458 million recorded in 2018.

"I hope that still we will reach $1 billion. We're only in the halfway anyway," Agustin said, citing volatility of coconut prices in the global coconut market.

"Looking at the current market prices for coconut oil, it's really below our projected price. We projected a price of $700 to $800 per ton. Now we're at $600 to $650 per ton," she added.

Agustin said the industry was banking on the increasing prices of other coconut export commodity such as copra that could offset the drop in the revenues from coconut oil exports this year.

"Right now, the price of copra is increasing. Maybe that can help," she said.

The UCAP official also noted that the local industry would be willing to ship out additional volume of coconut oil in the global market as long as there would be allocations available.

"The things is the stocks and inventories here and at destinations. So we're thinking that if inventories at destinations are still high, not unless these are reduced by consumption then they can start buying again, although there's a regular shipment of coconut oil to the foreign market. As a matter of fact, our preliminary for May alone is more than 100,000 tons. I hope there's still volume to sell," Agustin said.

The Manila Times

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: B9

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

The power of technology and innovation in agriculture

Second of two parts

WAYS OF THE OASIS
DR. WILLIAM DAR

IN the first part of this series, I discussed how technology and innovation could be a tool to fight and reduce poverty, if those are used in helping smallholders in the agriculture sector achieve productivity, competitiveness, sustainability and resiliency.

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte would be happy that by 2022, most if not all of farmers and fisherfolk shall have been empowered with technology and innovation, and many other things for them to be more prosperous.

So, the overall objective should be to make smallholder farmers and fisherfolk prosperous and, more importantly, food secure. Bureaucrats must also start thinking along the line that prosperity is the opposite of poverty, and prosperity also solves the persisting problem of hunger.

Furthermore, food security should be among the cornerstones of a country and government's agricultural policy, as food self-sufficiency may no longer be applicable because of globalization and import liberalization.

Defined internationally, food self-sufficiency is a country achieving production of a staple that is enough to feed its population. However, the traditional approach to food self-sufficiency usually negates the food security situation of the farmers and fisherfolk themselves, which is ironical.

So the policy that places emphasis only on production, production, production could end up having the same result — farmers and fisherfolk not earning enough to buy food for themselves and their families.

In the third part of the four-part series on "The 'new thinking' for agriculture," I discussed how India has taken steps to revise its policies and approaches for farmers so their incomes would be doubled by 2022 or 2023. The initiative is being led by the National Institution for Transforming India, which admitted in a paper that over a 50-year period, the country's food and agricultural "strategy did not explicitly recognize the need to raise farmers' income and did not mention any direct measure to promote farmers' welfare."

So when will the time come when there would be an admission those past and present policies, programs and projects largely negated the need to increase the earnings of the smallholders, marginalized and disadvantaged in the agriculture sector?

Also, I have observed that much of the research and development efforts in the Philippines are not skewed toward poverty reduction. And this is where the need for common sense comes in when using technology and innovation to levelling up the economic and social status of smallholder farmers and fisherfolk.

Technology is just technology

Technology is just technology until is it used for a noble purpose. And with common sense, researchers, scientists and extension workers would be able to develop their abilities to collaborate and work with smallholder farmers and fisherfolk, with the aim of doubling the latter's incomes.

Gone are the days when scientists and researchers holed up themselves in a laboratory or their offices developing or researching scientific breakthroughs that have little or no application in the real world. But scientists and researchers must also keep their feet anchored on the ground, and this applies literally when working with smallholder farmers and fisherfolk.

Common sense dictates that scientists and researchers just don't dictate to agriculture smallholders what could work for them; pushing for "once size fits all" science-based solutions no longer works. So, again, scientists and researchers keeping their feet anchored on the ground is really important.

As important as common sense in using technology and innovation to fight poverty is collaboration among institutions and stakeholders, and this should also count besides agriculture smallholders the scientists/researchers, private sector, local government units, academe, state colleges and universities, and nongovernment organizations, among others. Of course, the research institutions of the government should take the lead in developing and implementing the country's agricultural research and development (ARD) agenda.

The "united front" formed from the collaboration should have as its ultimate aim the doubling of the income of agriculture smallholders and making food more accessible to them, and using technology and innovation to achieve those goals.

Eventually, an agriculture sector that successfully uses technology and innovation will see the formation of more agribusiness enterprises and creation of more agripreneurs. Cooperatives that benefit greatly from technology and innovation eventually become more competitive business enterprises, with the potential of improving their profitability and increasing their capital base over the long term.

Agripreneurs, most especially the younger ones, could also take the lead in introducing digital and disruptive technologies into agriculture, if government fails to do that. The private sector could also take the lead in that and seek the cooperation of the government, or vice versa.

Among the digital and disruptive technologies that are currently transforming agriculture and agribusiness in the developed world are drones, block chain and data analytics, among others.

The urgent message here is that without a unified ARD agenda and funding or investments, the country's farmers and fisherfolk would be left behind and continue to wallow in poverty, which is ironic since it is them whom we still count upon to produce the country's food stocks. The unified ARD agenda should also have as one of its main objectives the doubling of the income of agriculture stakeholders in five years.

Without that objective, poverty reduction in the countryside would be close to impossible.

So besides using technology and innovation, what are the other ways to increase or double the income of farmers and fisherfolk?

Expect another column-series to discuss that.

BusinessMirror
A broader look at today's business

Date: JULY 18, 2019 Page: A1&A2

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

DTI: Manufacturing must create jobs for FIR-displaced farmers

By Bernadette D. Nicolas
@BNicolasBM

THE Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is eyeing to further boost the country's manufacturing sector, which it deems the cushion to reduce an estimated 6 million job losses in the agriculture sector, with the Fourth Industrial Revolution (FIR).

Citing a 2018 study from McKinsey Global Institute on the employment impact of Industry 4.0, Trade Undersecretary Rafaelita M. Aldaba said a total of 18.2 million jobs could be lost in the country due to automation.

"And mostly, it's gonna affect agriculture with 6 million jobs being lost due to automation; retail, 3.4 million jobs; in manufacturing, 2.4 million jobs," Aldaba said in a Palace briefing.

See "DTI," A2

DTI. . .

Continued from A8

On top of this, the agriculture sector is also seen to have the highest risk to automation at 90 percent, according to a 2019 study conducted by the Asian Institute of Management (AIM).

Agriculture, forestry and fishing was also seen to have the highest average probability of jobs being automated at 90 percent, followed by finance and insurance at 79 percent and mining and quarrying at 78 percent.

In a separate interview, Aldaba told the BusinessMirror that there's hope for the agricultural workers who may lose their jobs due to automation, as the potential job losses give the government even more reason to really develop the manufacturing sector.

From the current average manufacturing growth rate of 7.3 percent, Aldaba said she personally wants to see this sector post a double-digit growth as high as 10 percent by 2030.

"Those who will be losing their jobs in agriculture will be transferred to manufacturing," she said. That is why manufacturing should be developed because it will absorb [the job losses]," she said.

Despite the transfer of agriculture workers to manufacturing, she said this will not spell the death of the agriculture sector, adding that a non-labor intensive agriculture sector can still result in a huge production.

"Even if you have less people, [if you're] using technology, your production will still be huge. Can you imagine how other countries were able to sustain their agriculture sector which is not labor-intensive? It is because they are using machines that will allow you to do agriculture in large tracts of land," she said.

Besides, the manufacturing sector provides high-paying jobs with benefits, she added.

"If you will not grow the manufacturing sector, where will the agriculture workers go? They cannot be absorbed by call centers. Otherwise , they will just go sell [things] or go to retail, which are also low-value jobs but if they go to manufacturing, they will have high-paying jobs," she said.

ABANTE TONITE
MABILIS SA BALITA

Date: JULY 19, 2019 Page: 15

LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Pilipinas hindi kailanman magiging rice sufficient! — Duterte

Malabong maging rice sufficient ang bansa dahil naubos na ang mga lupang pinagtataniman ng palay.

Ito ang inihayag ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa harap na rin ng reklamo ng mga magsasaka ng palay na binabarat ang kanilang produkto dahil sa malayang pagpasok ng mga imported na bigas matapos maging batas ang rice tariffication.

Sinabi ng Pangulo na wala ng gaanong nagtatanim ng palay dahil ang mga dating lupang tinataniman ng palay ay ginawa nang taniman ng saging at pinya.

"The Philippines cannot be a rice sufficient nation. We have run out of lands and most of the prime real estate went to big corporations now planting cash crop: banana, pineapple, lahat 'yan," anang Pangulo.

Ang ginagawa aniya ngayon ng gobyerno para masagip ang mga magsasaka ay bilhin ang kanilang palay nang mas mataas ng kaunti kahit malugi ang gobyerno.

Wala aniyang pagpilian kundi mag-import ng bigas dahil hindi kayang tugunan ng produkto ng mga magsasaka ang pangangailangan ng buong bansa .

"Buy it at a higher price during harvest time para makabawi sila. Palugi talaga tayo. At the end of the day, COA says that you lose how much? Sabi ko 'I purposely did it because I have to save the Filipino.' Its a lost, but we have to," dagdag ng Pangulo.

Batay sa reklamo ng mga magsasaka mula sa Ilocos at Central Luzon, binabarat ang kanilang palay at binibili lamang ng dose hanggang trese pesos kada kilo kaya nalulugi sila sa kanilang gastos sa pagtatanim. **(Aileen Taliping)**