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## DOH chief Herbosa gets 2nd chance at CA on Dec. 5

By ELLSON QUISMORIO

Department of Health (DOH) Secretary Teodoro Herbosa will face the screening panel of the bicameral Commission on Appointments (CA) for the second time on Dec. 5, CA Assistant Minority Leader Surigao del Sur 2nd district Rep. Johnny Pimentel bared.

Pimentel said the CA's Committee on Health has scheduled Herbosa's

new confirmation hearing on the same morning that the commission's Committee on Agriculture will deliberate on **Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.'s** appointment as Department of Agriculture (DA) secretary.

Citing "lack of material time," the CA's Committee on Health had deferred consideration of Herbosa's initial appointment as health secretary when it first met on Sept. 26.

"Assuming the two CA committees

will be able to come up with actionable recommendations on Dec. 5, Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri has also called the entire commission to assemble in a plenary session at noon on the same day," Pimentel said.

"Under CA rules, officials that fail to obtain the commission's consent by the time Congress adjourns will have to be reappointed by Malacañang," Pimentel pointed out.

Congress is set to adjourn for the

Christmas holidays on Dec. 16 and will not resume session until Jan. 22, 2024.

The 25-member CA is empowered by the Constitution to examine the competence, suitability and integrity of key presidential appointees, including Cabinet members, and to approve or disapprove them.

Thus far, the CA has confirmed the appointments of 21 Cabinet members named by President Marcos.



## United effort makes rice sufficiency reachable – DA chief

**By Joel dela Torre**

THE dream of being rice sufficient is very much achievable for as long all sectors in the society work in harmony.

This was stressed by Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel as the department is set to

launch massive modernization in compliance to the directive of President Marcos Jr.

In his visit to the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) in the Science City of Munoz, Nueva Ecija, Laurel told rice experts and scientists the importance of harmonized efforts from all sectors to

attain food sufficiency.

A confident DA chief said he would not take the cabinet post and taken the responsibility if he didn't see any hope in the agriculture sector.

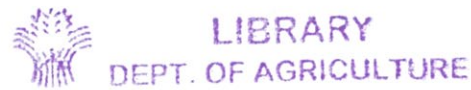
"We just have to work in harmony," Laurel said.

The government he pointed out, is now focused on improving rice

production and reducing post-harvest losses through science and technology.

"We just have to focus our efforts and synchronize with each other in implementing our rice programs with all agencies, local government units, and stakeholders," Laurel said.





# Urban farming model to be put up in Taguig

By **DANESSA RIVERA**

The **Department of Agriculture (DA)** has partnered with religious group Ligaya ng Panginoon Foundation Inc. (LNPF) to achieve food security through urban farming.

The DA, through the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) and the National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program (NUPAP), signed a memorandum of agreement with LNPF to jointly put up a greenhouse with hydroponics technology in Taguig City.

The project aims to ensure the availability, accessibility, and affordability of safe food in the area, as well as to generate supplementary income for households and communities.

DA director Gerald Glenn Panganiban said the collaboration is geared towards promoting more sustainable agricultural practices and securing the future of the agriculture sector.

This as he emphasized NUPAP's commitment to addressing challenges in food security.

Meanwhile, LNPF executive director Jeffrey Keith Lansangan said the project's success would serve as a model that will be replicated among their numerous outreach sites in Metro Manila and even in other parts of the country, thus bringing food security and financial stability within reach of the less fortunate.

The collaboration between government and LNPF is part of the government's ongoing efforts to achieve food security and sustainable

agriculture by collaborating with public and private organizations.

In the recent Pandesal Forum, Panganiban highlighted the imperative need for adopting and supporting urban farming as an integral part of a holistic approach towards ensuring food sustainability, mitigating environmental impact, and fostering inclusive community development.

"Urban and peri-urban agriculture do not supplant rural production; rather, they complement it.

It embodies a sustainable lifestyle where food is cultivated within our cities and communities," he said.

Dr. Joel Cuello, Professor of Biosystems Engineering at the University of Arizona, also emphasized the pivotal role of vertical and indoor farming in the Philippine context.

"To foster the prosperity of urban agriculture, integrating various forms of modern technologies, especially vertical or indoor farming, is essential for building climate-resilient systems," he said.



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## Napocor, NIA team up for water management

The **National Power Corp. (Napocor)** has joined forces with the **National Irrigation Administration (NIA)** for sustainable water resource management in the Makiling-Banahaw Geothermal Reservation (MBGR) in Laguna.

The two state agencies sealed a partnership for the implementation of the irrigation water resources management plan in the Sta. Cruz River Irrigation System within the MBGR.

Napocor said the undertaking will span from 2023 to 2026.

"As Napocor and NIA embark on this joint venture, the collaboration holds the promise of cultivating a greener, more sustainable future for the Makiling-Banahaw Geothermal Reservation," Napocor said.

"This collaborative endeavor sees NIA's commitment to funding project implementation reciprocated by Napocor's assurance of providing consent and technical assistance," it said.

The MBGR, which sprawls across 165,960 hectares in Laguna, Batangas, and Quezon provinces, falls under Napocor's management by virtue of Executive Order 224 and Presidential Proclamation 1111.

NIA, through the Laguna-Rizal Irrigation Management Office, will spearhead agroforestry and streambank protection initiatives in specific municipalities of Laguna, covering a substantial 196-hectare area within MBGR.

Aside from powering islands through Small Power Utilities Group or SPUG plants, Napocor is also mandated by Republic Act 9136 or EPIRA to manage 11 watershed areas and 22 dams in the country that support power generation.

As such, it performs watershed rehabilitation and protection programs for the watershed reservations which have a total area of 485, 199 hectares, including the Angat Watershed in Bulacan and Rizal.



— **Richmond Mercurio**



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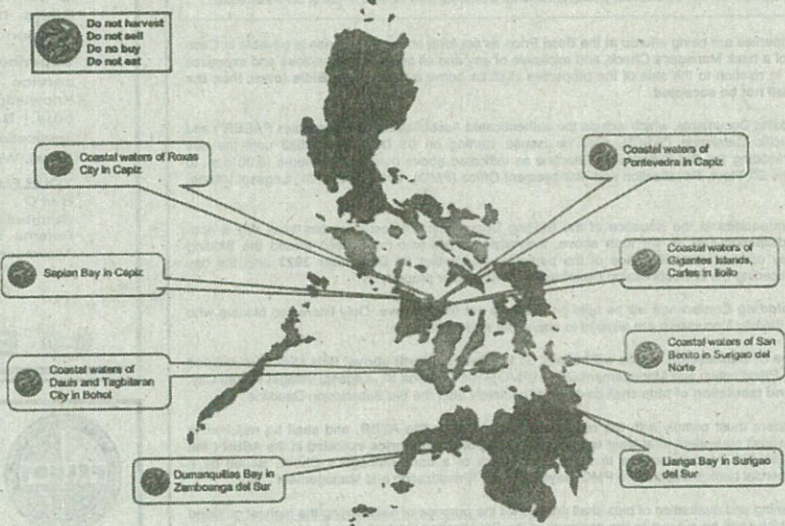
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**Shellfish Bulletin No. 28**  
**Series of 2023**  
**01 December 2023**

Shellfishes collected and tested from **Saplan Bay** (Ivisan and Saplan in Capiz; Mambuquio and Camanci, Batan in Aklan); coastal waters of **Roxas City** in Capiz; coastal waters of **Gigantes Islands, Carles in Iloilo**; coastal waters of **Daus and Tagbilaran City in Bohol**; **Dumanquilas Bay in Zamboanga del Sur**; **Uanga Bay in Surigao del Sur**; and coastal waters of **San Benito in Surigao del Norte** are still positive for Paralytic Shellfish Poison (PSP) or toxic red tide that is beyond the regulatory limit. Moreover, coastal waters of **Pontevedra in Capiz** is now positive for PSP.



**Do not harvest  
Do not sell  
Do not buy  
Do not eat**

Coastal waters of **Roxas City in Capiz**

**Saplan Bay in Capiz**

Coastal waters of **Daus and Tagbilaran City in Bohol**

**Dumanquilas Bay in Zamboanga del Sur**

Coastal waters of **Pontevedra in Capiz**


Coastal waters of **Gigantes Islands, Carles in Iloilo**

Coastal waters of **San Benito in Surigao del Norte**


**Uanga Bay in Surigao del Sur**


**All types of shellfish and *Aceres* sp. or *alamang* gathered from the areas shown above are NOT SAFE for human consumption. Fish, squids, shrimps, and crabs are safe for human consumption provided that they are fresh and washed thoroughly, and internal organs such as gills and intestines are removed before cooking.**

The following areas continue to be **FREE** from toxic red tide: coastal waters of Cavite, Las Piñas, Parañaque, Navotas, Bulacan, and Bataan (Mariveles, Limay, Orion, Pilar, Balanga, Hermosa, Orani, Abucay, and Samal) in Manila Bay; mariculture areas in Infanta, coastal waters of Bolinao, Anda, Alaminos, Sual, and Wawa, Bani in Pangasinan; mariculture areas in Rosario, and Sto. Tomas in La Union; coastal waters of Pampanga; Masinloc Bay in Zambales; Pagbilao Bay, Pagbilao, and coastal waters of Walay, Padre Burgos in Quezon; Honda, and Puerto Princesa Bays, Puerto Princesa City, and coastal waters of Inner Malampaya Sound, Taytay in Palawan; coastal waters of Misamis Occidental, Zamboanga, and Misamis Oriental; coastal waters of Sorsogon, Matnog in Sorsogon; coastal waters of Borongan, San Dionisio in Iloilo; coastal waters of Altavas, Batan, and New Washington in Batan Bay, Aklan; coastal waters of Panay in Capiz; coastal waters of E.B. Magalona, Talisay City, Silay City, Bacolod City, Hinigaran, and Victorias City in Negros Occidental; Tambobo, and Sili Bays, Siaton; and Bais Bay, Bais City in Negros Oriental; coastal waters of Daram, Calbayog, and Zumarraga, San Pedro, Maqueda and Villareal Bays in Samar; coastal waters of Leyte, Calubian, Ormoc, Sogod, Carigara Bay, and Cancabato Bay, Tacloban City in Leyte; coastal waters of Biliran Island; Tantanang Bay in Zamboanga Sibugay; Murcielegos Bay in Zamboanga del Norte and (Sapang Dalaga, and Baliangao) in Misamis Occidental; Panguil Bay, Tangub City, and coastal waters of Ozamiz City in Misamis Occidental; coastal waters of Baroy in Lanao del Norte; Taguines Lagoon, Benoni, Mahinog in Camiguin; Balite, and Pujada Bays, Mati City in Davao Oriental; Malalag Bay in Davao Occidental and Davao del Sur; and coastal waters of Hinatuan, and Cortes in Surigao del Sur. Moreover, coastal waters of **President Roxas and Pilar in Capiz** are now free of the toxic red tide.



**ZALDY P. PEREZ**  
Office-in-Charge  
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources

 [www.bfar.da.gov.ph](http://www.bfar.da.gov.ph)

 /BFAR.Central

P.S. December 3, 2023



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## BPI inaprub import pa more ng sibuyas

Pinayagan ng Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) ang pagpasok ng higit 21,000 imported na sibuyas sa bansa upang patatagin umano ang presyo nito sa merkado ngayong holiday season.

Base sa pahayag ng Department of Agriculture noong Biyernes, nag-isyu na ang BPI ng Sanitary and Phytosanitary Import Clearance para sa pag-import ng mga sibuyas.

Manggagaling umano ang mga imported na pula at dilaw na sibuyas sa China, India at Netherlands.

Ayon sa DA, inaasahan ang pagdating ng mga imported sibuyas bago matapos ang buwan ng Disyembre.

Ipinaliwanag pa ng DA na nagpasya ang gobyerno na magpapasok ng imported sibuyas para matiyak ang sapat na suplay nito ngayong palapit ang holiday season.





# DBP lends P180 M for livestock production

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

State-run Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) has extended a P180-million loan to the local government of Iloilo in a bid to boost livestock production amid increasing demand.

DBP recently approved the funding support to the Iloilo City government for the construction of a fully mechanized modern slaughterhouse in the area.

The loan is under DBP's Assistance for Economic and Social Development (ASENSO) for LGUs Financing Program, the bank's credit facility that aims to finance LGU projects meant to accelerate infrastructure and socioeconomic development.

DBP president and CEO Michael de Jesus said the project would help ensure food safety and security in the city, as well as generate more economic opportunities in the locality.

The modern slaughterhouse is expected to attain export-grade classification, with capacity to process more than 500 swine heads per day.

A first class and highly urbanized city, Iloilo is the center of trade and commerce in Western Visayas with an estimated population of 490,000.

The DBP credit assistance is part of a bigger P2.13-billion loan granted under the ASENSO program to the LGU. This was used to enhance vital

public services such as rehabilitation of public markets, construction of the city hospital and acquisition of medical equipment, construction of a parking building, and acquisition of relocation sites for informal settlers.

"We will continue to partner with more LGUs nationwide and enable them to implement their projects, particularly those designed to accelerate infrastructure and socioeconomic development," De Jesus said.

Under the program, DBP has so far approved P91.7 billion in financing to 362 LGU-borrowers, with loan releases reaching P26.3 billion as of end-September.

DBP is the ninth largest bank in the country in terms of assets. It provides credit support to four strategic sectors of the economy namely, infrastructure and logistics, MSME, environment, and social services and community development.



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# RICH WATERS, EMPTY TABLES

Can science and technology fast-track  
growth of the 'blue economy'?  
Government experts, academics think so.



THE M/V Capt. John B. Lacson, docked in the Iloilo River at Muelle Loney Street, Iloilo City. DOST REGION VI



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By REINE JUVIERRE S. ALBERTO

**T**HE poorest of the poor.” This is how the Filipino fisherfolk, the ones who catch the fish and other seafood to feed a population of 111 million people consuming an average per capita of 34 kilograms of fish and fishery products annually, could be described.



DR. Jesrelljane Amper delivers the results of their study about the impacts of Covid-19 on small-scale fisherfolk in Danajon Bank. DOST REGION VI

The total fisheries production volume in 2021 reached 4.25 million metric tons equivalent to P302.44 billion, according to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources' data. Fishing and aquaculture contributed P248.47 billion or 12.70 percent to the national economy in the same year, ranking third to the total agricultural Gross Valued Added (GVA).

In the 2021 poverty statistics of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) released in 2023, the fisherfolk posted the highest incidence rate at 30.6 percent, which significantly increased by 4.4 percent compared to the year 2018.

So when the pandemic hit, the small-scale fisheries (SSF) sector—those who fish using traditional gear and small vessels and engines, owned by a family or locals who live near the coast for their livelihood—

couldn't keep up with the waves.

## SSF in Danajon Bank

THE Danajon Bank is the largest double-barrier reef and one of only six in the world. It is located off northern Bohol Island in the Visayas with an overall area of 272 square kilometers and an aggregate coastline of 699 kilometers, including 40 islands.

Its jurisdiction covers four provinces: Cebu, Bohol, Southern Leyte and Leyte, encompassing 17 municipalities, with 10 of them falling under the domain of Bohol.

The SSF sector emerged as one of the most vulnerable sectors to the far-reaching impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, according to the study of Dr. Jesrelljane Amper, dean of Bohol Island State University's College of Fisheries and Marine Sciences, titled "Navigat-



# BusinessMirror

A broader look at today's business

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THE Aquarium Tunnel at the Lawud: Marine S&T Exhibits on M/V Capt. John B. Lacson. DOST REGION VI

ing the Storm: Understanding the Impact of Covid-19 on Small-Scale Fisherfolk in Danajon Bank and Building Resilience for a Sustainable Blue Economy.”

The study, which concluded in July and was presented at the recent

National Science, Technology and Innovation Week 2023 held in Iloilo City, found that since most small-scale fisherfolk heavily rely on their daily catch sales, their vulnerability is rooted in economic factors.

This resource dependence is

aggravated by limited financial reserves, lack of access to support systems and the information nature of their operations. The community's proximity to the coast also exposes them to environmental threats.

“In the midst of the challenges faced by small-scale fisheries communities in the country, the small-scale fisherfolk in Danajon Bank stands out as a critical player in the fishing industry of Bohol,” said Dr. Amper in her presentation.

The 51 percent of the total value of fisheries production in Bohol is attributed to the substantial contribution of the small-scale fisherfolk in Danajon Bank, according to PSA data in 2019 as cited by Amper.

The primary livelihood focus for fisherfolk is capture fishing—harvesting fish directly from their natural habitat.

The primary livelihood for most males involves aquaculture, cultivating fish and other aquatic products. On the other hand, most females are engaged in gleaning—collecting edible marine invertebrates and seaweed during low tide, as well as participating in fish processing.

## Challenges and coping strategies

VARIOUS impacts of Covid-19 on the SSF were found in the study,

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such as disruptions of supply chain and market access due to the “no sail policy” and limited or controlled mobility, greater decline in income for women, low fish prices, increased incidents of blast fishing to extract for fish, which leads to the destruction of marine biodiversity, and the additional burden for parents to take the role of teachers during the shift to online learning.

To cope with the challenges intensified by the pandemic, the fisherfolk shifted to post-harvest processing—specifically drying and salting of fish catch—to extend shelf life and for ease of marketing, engaged in backyard gardening and food vending as alternative livelihood sources.

The fisherfolk also substituted food and nutritional sources using seaweeds, since most of them do seaweed farming, to make *puto*, jams and biscuits.

“They could live with having no fish or meat because they can get the fish as an alternative to the meat. *Pero pag walang rice, gutom daw. Kung anong meron sa kanila, ginagawa nilang alternative sa rice* [But if there's no rice, they get hungry. With what they have, they turn it to an alternative for rice],” Amper said, referring to the *puto* and biscuits.

## Policy recommendations

THE fisheries sector is part of the concept called the “Blue Economy,” which seeks to promote economic growth, social inclusion, and the preservation or improvement of livelihoods while ensuring the en-





environmental sustainability of the oceans and coastal areas.

To achieve a sustainable blue economy, it recommended having an Integrated Support Framework specifically tailored to the needs of SSF to ensure a "unified approach" to address the needs of the SSF sector, based on the results of the study.

Programs that focus on livelihood assets, such as subsidies and training for sustainable fishing practices, vocational training, infrastructure development for fish processing facilities, and market access and value chain integration, were also raised.

Since most small-scale fisherfolk are not members of PhilHealth, it suggested establishing a social insurance program for SSF communities to provide health coverage and financial support during emergencies, specifically a community-based health fund or insurance scheme.

Dr. Amper added that right now, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, local government units (LGUs), academe, and non-government organizations are forming the Danaon Council to address the common problems of those in the area, including the SSF sector.

Similar to the vast marine resources available in the waters, the problems faced by fisherfolk in the Danaon Bank are just among the many problems surrounding the fisheries sector and the so-called blue economy.

## 'Aquaculture is the way forward'

THERE are three major sectors in the fisheries industry: commercial capture fisheries, municipal capture fisheries, and aquaculture, which contributed the largest, at 52.88 percent, to the total fisheries volume of production in 2021.

"I think the way forward now is in our aquaculture," said Dr. Christopher Caipang from the Division of Biological Sciences at the University of the Philippines Visayas in an interview with the *BusinessMirror*.

He said the aquatic products that dominate our tables now come from aquaculture, which is now rapidly growing, whereas in the past, it used to be capture fisheries.

The five priority commodities in aquaculture are seaweeds, milkfish, tilapia, shrimps/prawns, shellfish, and other aquatic products.

Caipang shared that when he returned to the Philippines, he developed a project to ensure the sustainable production of shrimps through biofloc technology for shrimp nurseries, funded by the DOST-Philippine Center for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD).

The technology, he explained, is based on the manipulation of the microorganisms inside the nurseries. Once the microorganisms grow and clog together, they act as food for the small shrimps and regulate and improve the water quality as well.

Since the nurseries are of good quality, shrimps grow fast and can be harvested after a short time. Farmers can now improve their production of shrimp to four or five times a year, Caipang added.

## Can S&T benefit the blue economy?

AS a maritime and archipelagic nation, the Philippines has a total territorial water area of 2.2 million square kilometers and a coastline stretching up to 266,000 square kilometers, including the contentious exclusive economic zone.

However, Caipang said, "The people who are dependent on these resources are the ones marginalized."

He stressed the crucial role of technological support based on the needs of a particular sector, instead of imposing the developed technology or innovation on them: such imposition makes it doomed to fail.

"It should be a close coordination. The academe or the research institution should work hand-in-hand with the sector to know what they need," he said. Adding that once the needs and gaps are identified, that's when the government should provide infrastructure and funding support.

Dr. Juanito Batalon, Deputy Executive Director for Research and Development of DOST-PCAARRD, told the *BusinessMirror* that to address the interconnected problems in the blue economy, "planning and development through the fundamentals of science, technology and innovation (STI) is a vital output."

Batalon emphasized that science and technology will lead in discovering new growth sources and are necessary to contribute to evidence-based policy making that

will "greatly impact marine conservation and management."

Innovations, meanwhile, will "help open doors to new development areas for an advancing economic development."

## Pagtanaw 2050

ACADEMICIAN Dr. Rhodora Azanza is advocating "the use of STI not only for the preservation and sustainable utilization of the marine environment but all the natural endowments of the country."

In the three-part series "The Way Forward" aired on CNN Philippines, Azanza highlighted the "Pagtanaw 2050," a blueprint on STI developed by the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) and funded by the DOST, in which she was the project leader.

She said that while most of the government strategies are short-term or mid-term, the Pagtanaw 2050 is an outlook for the next 30 years, embodying the overarching concept of the blue economy as part of its 12 key operational areas.

The document suggests the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive action plan for a National Coast and Ocean Strategy using the framework for an STI-based development of the country's blue economy as a starting or shifting point.

It said this will allow the Philippines to anticipate and make important changes to its national political, economic and social spheres, as well as to its stance vis-à-vis Asian neighbors and the rest of the world.

The current blue industries in the Philippines include tourism, fisheries, coastal manufacturing, marine transportation, ocean energy, seabed mining, marine biotechnology and medicine, and marine technology and environmental services.

All these industries rely on the oceans and their resources, but it cannot be denied that certain constraints such as the lack of scientific knowledge and capability impede their development.

To achieve an inclusive and sustainable "Prosperous, Archipelagic and Maritime Nation," as NAST would refer to the country, it suggested the development and implementation of a Philippine Coasts and Ocean Strategy to be a top Philippine government priority.



# BusinessMirror

A broader look at today's business

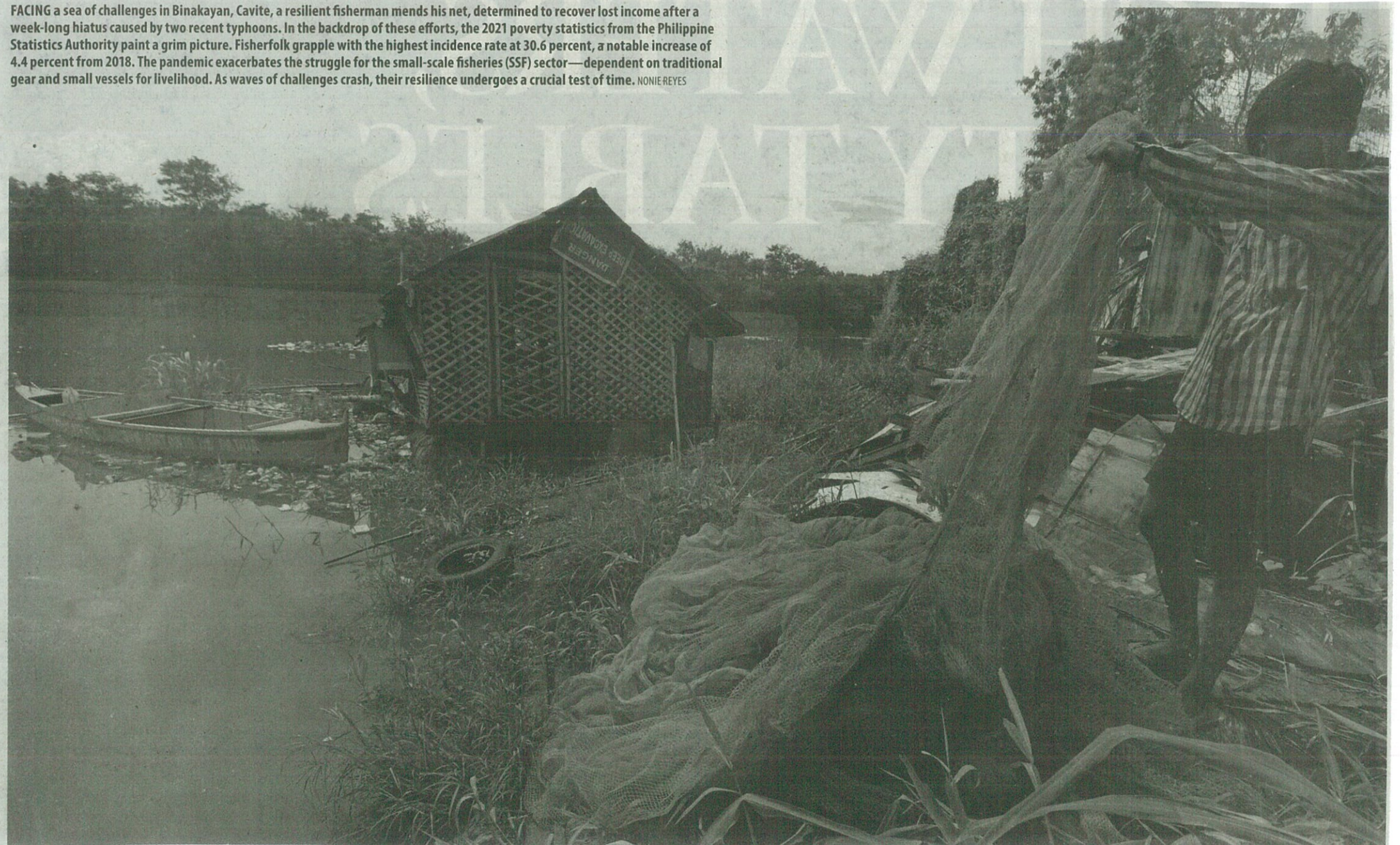
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FACING a sea of challenges in Binakayan, Cavite, a resilient fisherman mends his net, determined to recover lost income after a week-long hiatus caused by two recent typhoons. In the backdrop of these efforts, the 2021 poverty statistics from the Philippine Statistics Authority paint a grim picture. Fisherfolk grapple with the highest incidence rate at 30.6 percent, a notable increase of 4.4 percent from 2018. The pandemic exacerbates the struggle for the small-scale fisheries (SSF) sector—dependent on traditional gear and small vessels for livelihood. As waves of challenges crash, their resilience undergoes a crucial test of time. NONIE REYES





# The Manila Times®

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## Taiwan pork connects cultures via exceptional quality, taste

KNOWN for its rich culinary heritage and commitment to quality, Taiwan is proud to introduce its premium pork products to the Philippine market.

Under the sponsorship of the Taiwan Ministry of Agriculture and led by the Commerce Development Research Institute (CDRI) of Taiwan, the initiative aims to bring high-quality Taiwan pork products to Filipino consumers and businesses, and to establish a strong presence in the Philippines.

This campaign is set to create new opportunities for importers and strengthen bilateral trade relations between Taiwan and the Philippines.

To enhance its local presence and to better connect with Filipino consumers, Taiwan is actively

seeking partnerships with local distributors, retailers and other key stakeholders. These collaborations will contribute to the growth of the local economy while ensuring efficient distribution of Taiwan pork products.

The CDRI is working with various meat suppliers to offer a diverse array of pork products to cater to the varied preferences and needs of Filipino consumers. From premium cuts to specialty products, Taiwan Pork is committed to providing a wide range of options that meet the discerning culinary needs of the Philippine market.

These suppliers include Black Bridge Foods, Cha I Shan, Chia Nan Food, Du Hsiao Yueh, Food Lee, Hairei, Jin Tian Foods, Odiva and Way Fong.



■ The first leg of the Taiwan pork road show in Manila is at Ayala Malls Manila Bay. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

To kick off the campaign in Manila, Taiwan Pork has partnered with Spiral, Sofitel Manila's flagship restaurant and award-

winning dining destination, to incorporate Taiwanese pork products in the Spiral buffet menu from Nov. 29, 2023 to Jan. 29, 2024.