

Expansion planned for cattle, carabao, goat production

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said it will seek to expand production of ruminant animals like cattle, carabao, goat, and sheep.

"We are happy to contribute to the call of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. to produce more food and to ensure our country's food sufficiency, while at the same time, helping boost ruminant production," DA Climate Resilient Agriculture Office Program Director Alicia G. Ilaga said.

According to the department, the Philippines had an estimated 2.6 million head of cattle inventory as of January. The annual beef requirement is the equivalent of 2 million head, based on annual per capita consumption of 3.15 kilograms by a population of 110 million.

"This means that, if we do not (intervene), we will run out of cattle. That's why it is good to start this project in our villages," Adelaide River Farms co-owner Arnel T. Corpuz said.

Under the project, beneficiaries and resident farmers in

selected reintegration sites will be immediately engaged fatten cattle before they are brought to market.

"They will also be engaged in forage development to ensure feed supply for their livestock and to help improve their income by assuring maximum weight gain for their livestock. For the next phase of the project, the beneficiaries will be engaged in breeding, which will allow the production of cross breeds which can help provide high-value, high-quality, and low-cost beef products to the market," the DA added.

"Villages were established to serve as sites where current and future beneficiaries can be reintegrated into. These sites, called climate-resilient villages, are being taught various climate-resilient agriculture practices and technologies to help them manage their climate risks and pursue sustainable, climate-resilient livelihoods and enterprises toward increased productivity and income," the DA said. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson**

Congressional leaders' stature seen smoothing Marcos agenda

By Alyssa Nicole O. Tan
Reporter

THE administration's legislative agenda is expected to benefit from the stature enjoyed by the congressional leadership, with the projected speaker also a cousin of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., analysts said.

Mr. Marcos, who won the May 9 election by a landslide, will deliver his first address to Congress on July 25. The State of the Nation Address also marks the opening of Congress with the newly elected members taking their seats.

Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri will likely lead the Senate in the 19th Congress, while Leyte Representative Martin G. Romualdez is expected to lead the House. The leaders of both chambers will be selected following the opening ceremony of Congress on Monday.

Both legislators enjoy a "gravitas (that) will be useful in pushing President Marcos' legislative agenda," according to Robin Michael U. Garcia, a political economy professor at the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P).

Of the two, Mr. Garcia said in a Viber message to *BusinessWorld*, Mr. Romualdez, the President's cousin, can be expected to enjoy the Palace's trust, while Mr. Zubiri could help with outreach to his allies, Sen. Mary Grace S. Poe-Llamanzares and Sen. Emmanuel Joel J. Villanueva.

"We may see more interesting dynamics in the Senate in the next few years," Mr. Garcia said, noting that the Senate has several neutral and non-aligned members whose votes will not be a given.

"The opposition will have to find alliances among these non-aligned senators," he added, noting that the opposition has lost three recent elections. "It may lose a fourth in 2025 if it does not reinvent its approach."

Senators Ana Theresia N. Hontiveros-Baraquel and Aquilino Martin L. Pimentel III are the only two senators who have confirmed their intention to join the minority bloc. However, Sen. Pia S. Cayetano and Sen. Alan Peter S. Cayetano, who are siblings, are also considering siding with the minority.

Mr. Zubiri, who organized a "supermajority" coalition allied with Mr. Marcos, has said he hopes the Cayetanos will join them as well.

"Let's hope that they are with us in the majority, especially Sen. Pia. Their input is important. Although the committee chairmanships that remain are limited," he told reporters at the weekend.

Institute for Political and Electoral Reform Executive Director Ramon C. Casiple told *BusinessWorld* in a text message that actual numbers gathered by the blocs do not matter. "Even one opposi-

tion (senator) is enough," he said. "The real opposition comes from the people. The opposition (senator) is an articulator. As long as the people support him or her, he will be effective."

Ms. Hontiveros has said that in a diverse society, there will always be a need for people in government to represent a wide range of opinions.

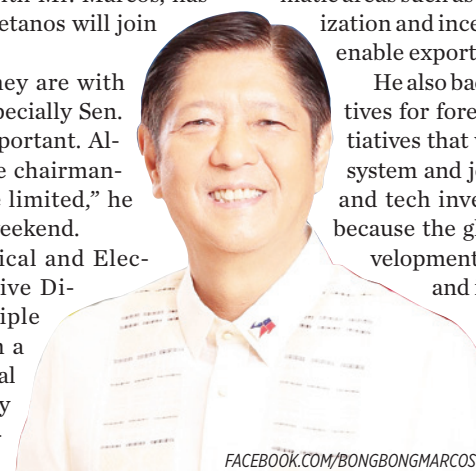
Mr. Casiple said he expects Congress to focus on measures like tax bills, adjustments to worker incomes, and an easing of business regulations.

Any measure that is "designed to provide more income, or provide more opportunities for income" should be welcomed and deliberated, he added.

Mr. Garcia of the UA&P said the legislative agenda he expects to be prominent are "thematic areas such as transportation, industrialization and incentives for local business to enable export-oriented growth."

He also backed more attractive incentives for foreign direct investment, initiatives that will improve the education system and job skills, and digitalization and tech investment, which is "crucial because the global rules of catch-up development have shifted to technology and innovation," he said.

He said that despite current problems like the rising cost of living and the national debt, it is still possible to improve digitalization.



FACEBOOK.COM/BONGBONGMARCOS

Rising inflation seen deterring employers from hiring more workers

RISING INFLATION may prolong underemployment situation in the Philippines as higher costs deter employers from expanding, economists said.

"High and persistent inflation can reduce consumer demand, leading to less profitable businesses. This can lead to reduced operating hours for these businesses or reduced working hours for their workers, which could lead to affected workers wanting more hours of work," Geoffrey M. Ducanes, economist at Ateneo de Manila University, said in an e-mail.

According to preliminary data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), 6.668 million Filipinos were underemployed in May, 4.2% or about 269,000 more than the 6.399 million underemployed in April.

Underemployed persons are those who have expressed a desire to take on either additional work hours, an additional job, or a new job with longer work hours, the PSA said.

"Underemployment will remain especially because of inflation. The workers cannot afford to be unemployed so we expect more employment and greater labor force participation. However, informal jobs may often

be the best option for them as the formal firms are unlikely to expand as a result of poor economic prospects both here and abroad," Director of the Ateneo Center for Economic Research and Development Leonardo A. Lanzona, Jr. said.

"These workers will accept any job available in the absence of better job alternatives. To some extent, employers may also take advantage of this by offering them wages below the expected market rates," he added in an e-mail.

Senior Economist at the University of Asia and the Pacific Cid L. Terosa said that "underemployment will continue to slide because rising production costs will curtail firms from hiring workers."

"Consequently, many will opt to take on temporary, transient, or casual jobs to make ends meet. Inflation can (also) impede the growth of consumption spending, which will eventually become a disincentive for firms to produce more and employ people," Mr. Terosa said in an e-mail.

"High inflation reduces the purchasing power of households. For households whose incomes barely cover their usual expenses, their employed members are likely to want to work more hours to

earn the income that would allow them to at least maintain their consumption pre-high inflation," Mr. Ducanes said.

Mr. Ducanes also said that high inflation could make monetary authorities raise borrowing costs — as already seen in the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' 75 basis point rate hike to 3.25% — thereby slowing down growth and, possibly, demand for labor.

However, the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) said high underemployment is mainly due not to rising inflation but to the economic scarring of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

In answer to whether the uptick in inflation exacerbated underemployment, AMRO country economist for the Philippines Heung Chun Tsang said that there is no evidence to suggest it.

"According to the latest figures, the underemployment rate moved around 14-15% in the first five months of this year — 14.9% in January and 14.5% in May. According to the authorities, underemployment rate increased to 15.8% in March due to seasonal factors. Meanwhile, inflation rate increased from 3% in January to 5.4% in May, and increased further to 6.1% in June," Mr. Tsang



PHILIPPINE STAR/EDD GUMBAN

UNDEREMPLOYMENT will remain especially because of inflation. The workers cannot afford to be unemployed so we expect more employment and greater labor force participation.

said in an e-mail to *BusinessWorld*, citing data from the PSA.

With the gap in causation, "the high underemployment is mainly due to the scarring effect of the COVID-19 pandemic," he said.

During AMRO's 2021 Annual Consultation Report on the Philippines on Wednesday, AMRO said that the most serious impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was on the quality of human capital going forward.

"One of the sectors that was hit badly is the education sector.

A lot of schools were closed and, in the case of the Philippines, it was closed for quite a long time. (Students) had to go online and it depends very much on the digital infrastructure to some extent. But not withstanding that, I think there was a lot of scarring in the education sector. Kids fell behind in terms of education," Hoe Ee Khor, chief economist at AMRO, said during the briefing.

Graduates from 2019 to 2021 are unable to find quality jobs, with the poor in particular set-

ting for insufficient work hours, inadequate security and protection, or skills mismatches, University of the Philippines Professor Emeritus Rene E. Ofreneo said.

Nonetheless, "as to inflation, its immediate impact is to depress the economy, weaken recovery, (and) stop those planning to invest or re-launch business. Hence, it does not take any imagination to conclude that inflation will exacerbate mass underemployment. In fact, we are now, like many countries around the world, in a situation of stagflation — high inflation in a stagnant economy," he said.

Asked to comment on AMRO's statements, Mr. Terosa agreed but said that "prolonged inflation will eventually take its toll on unemployment and underemployment."

In May, the proportion of underemployed persons working less than 40 hours a week was at 9.8%, higher than 8.9% reported last year and 9.2% the previous month, according to the PSA.

On the other hand, the proportion of underemployed persons working at least 40 hours a week stood at 4.7%, higher than 3.4% from a year earlier. — **Diego Gabriel C. Robles**

Revenue, from S1/1

"Digitalization is the key. It removes discretion," Mr. Diokno said.

MARCOS ESTATE TAX

Meanwhile, the DoF appears reluctant to tackle the unpaid estate tax of the late president Ferdinand E. Marcos.

Asked if the matter was brought up during the meeting with the BIR, Mr. Diokno replied: "No, that was not discussed."

BIR chief Lilia C. Guillermo last month said she would enforce the collection of the unpaid estate tax, as ordered by the courts. She said the Marcoses would become "role models" if their unpaid estate tax was settled.

The unpaid estate tax was worth P23 billion in 1997 and had ballooned to more than P200 billion due to interests and other fees, according to former Supreme Court Justice Antonio T. Carpio.

In December, the BIR sent a written demand to the Marcos family to settle the tax.

Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. assumed the presidency on June 30.

In an ambush interview by GMA Network last month, Mr. Diokno said that it was "unfair" to put the burden of collecting the estate tax on him.

"It has been 40 years or 35 years... I think it's unfair to put the burden on me. It should have been collected if it was collectable. And so, we will leave it to the courts to decide," he said. — **Diego Gabriel C. Robles**



PHILIPPINE STAR/MIGUEL DE GUZMAN

DPWH, from S1/1

Mr. Canlas said another DPWH priority is the construction of water impounding facilities in selected areas.

"These (proposed) locations are Sto. Domingo Church, 537 Quezon Avenue Sta. Mesa Heights in Quezon City; National Center for Mental Health in Mandaluyong City; and St. Paul Street, Barangay Veinte Reales in Valenzuela City," he said.

The DPWH recently completed the P92-million rehabilitation of a drainage structure along E. Quintos Street in Sampaloc, Manila.

Many areas in Metro Manila are low-lying and prone to flooding, while natural drainage is often restricted during rainfall events by high river and sea water levels, according to the World Bank.

The DPWH said in May that civil works had started on a major pumping station serving a flood-prone area in Valenzuela City. The station is being implemented by DPWH Metro Manila third District Engineering Office and is "expected to address the city's perennial flooding problem as well as of neighboring areas along Meycauayan River," it said in a statement.

Under the DPWH's flood management master plan for the Greater Metro Manila area, one of the proposed measures is the application of rainwater catchment system that will enable some communities to store rainwater for reuse instead of allowing it to run off into a waterway.

MOTORISTS ply the southbound lane of the EDSA-Kamuning flyover in Quezon City, Sunday (July 24). The flyover reopened to the public on July 23, after a month of repairs by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

Republic of the Philippines
PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
APO PRODUCTION UNIT, INC.

Compliance on Newspaper Posting for Post-Award Information

Pursuant to **Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB) Resolution No. 04-2021**, as mandated by **Administrative Order No. 34 series of 2020**, Procuring Entities under Executive Department, including **Government-Owned or -Controlled Corporations** and Government Financial Institutions, and state universities and colleges, shall **publish, in a newspaper of general circulation, the post-award information for projects with an Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of Fifty Million Pesos (PhP 50,000,000.00) and above.**

The following are the post-award information:

Project Name	Approved Budget of the Contract (ABC)	Winning Supplier	Amount of Contract Awarded	Date of Notice of Award
Lease of Flexographic Press and Slitting/Rewinding Machines with Operational and Technical Support System, printing and finishing process of one (1) year Supply of Thermal Rolls of Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO)	PhP 55,000,000.00	Intelliprint Corporation	PhP 54,670,050.00	18 March 2022
Supply and Delivery of 468,859.50 kilograms of Thermal Rolls, coated outside and printable inside - Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) Lotto Online Lottery Operations	PhP 87,501,000.00	Niclaio Trading	PhP 87,442,296.75	8 June 2022

Atty. Vincent Steve P. Badong
**Head of the Procuring Entity
Chairman and President - designate
APO Production Unit, Inc.**

ISO 9001:2015
APO PRODUCTION UNIT, INC. is an ISO 9005:2015 registered company with certification no. PH1379.
2/F PIA Building, Visayas Avenue, Brev. YASRA, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines 1128 • Trunkline: (632) 8282-5309 • Fax: (632) 8927-6793 • www.apo.gov.ph