

## DBP rice farmer credit program focused on Nueva Ecija, CAR, Pangasinan, Isabela

THE Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) said it launched new agricultural credit programs targeting rice farmers in key growing areas in northern and Central Luzon.

“Our instructions are (to tap farmers) from Nueva Ecija, Cordillera Autonomous Region

(CAR), Pangasinan, and Isabela,” DBP Director Roberto V. Antonio told reporters at a briefing.

The Agri-Puhunan at Panta-wid (APP) program focuses on rice farmers holding less than a hectare, who are deemed eligible to receive on credit P60,000 worth of inputs and allowances

from the DA’s partner banks during the 2024 to 2025 crop year. The interest rate is 2%.

“We want to stick to one farmer, one hectare — or at a maximum of two hectares. We want to make the beneficiaries easily monitored by both the DA and the DBP,” Mr. Antonio said.

The program was initially launched in Guimba, Nueva Ecija with around 5,000 rice farmers as initial enrollees. Funding of about P3 billion was allocated for the APP program.

Another eligibility requirement is that the farmer must be signed up with the DA’s Registry

System for the Basic Sectors in Agriculture. The DBP is looking to enroll an initial 50,000 farmers for the program.

Farmers taking the DBP funding are also required to sell a portion of their harvest to the National Food Authority at a farmgate price of P21 per kilogram.

“We have to get everything in order before the planting season (that will produce) the main harvest,” he added.

Mr. Antonio said that P32,000 will also be given to beneficiary farmers as a subsistence allowance, amounting to P8,000 for four months. — **Adrian H. Halili**

## Honda batting for extension of Palace order cutting EV tariffs

**By Justine Irish D. Tabile**  
*Reporter*

HONDA MOTOR Co., Ltd. is seeking the extension of an executive order (EO) reducing tariffs and duties on all kinds of electric vehicles (EVs) beyond 2028, saying more time is needed to grow the market.

Toshio Kuwahara, Honda vice-president and head of Regional Operations in Asia and Oceania, did not propose a definite ending date for the EO’s effectivity.

“If the Philippine government will kindly consider extending this deadline, I think it will further be positive for the automotive industry to accelerate electrification,” Mr. Kuwahara said during the launch of the company’s EV lineup in the Philippines late Wednesday.

On June 20, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. signed EO 62, which modified the rates of import duty on various EV products.

The EO covered the expansion of the reduced Most Favored Nation tariff rates of the products covered under EO No. 12 to other battery EVs (BEVs), hybrid EVs (HEVs), plug-in

HEVs (PHEVs), and certain parts and components.

Mr. Kuwahara said that the speed of the transition to EVs in the Philippines lags the progress made in other ASEAN countries like Thailand and Indonesia.

“In the Thai market, 23% of their passenger car sales are already BEVs,” he said.

He said the factors that make the Philippines a laggard include “the availability of charging stations, and the electricity cost itself.”

This year, the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines, Inc. (CAMPI) is projecting the share of EVs at below 10% of the industry sales.

Honda has a global target for EVs or fuel cell EVs to constitute 40% of total sales by 2030, rising to 80% by 2035 and 100% by 2040.

Louie C. Soriano, senior vice-president at Honda Cars Philippines, Inc. (HCPD), said Honda Philippines will have to align with the company’s global targets.

“I don’t think it will be the same (progress) for the Philippines ... maybe a little bit later,” Mr. Soriano said on the sidelines of the event.

“We have to understand that we’re just importing. So we have to push it in the Philippine mar-

ket. Because in the future, that (may be) the only automobile we can sell ... so we have to adapt,” he added.

He said Honda is also planning a partnership that will lead to the installation of more charging stations in the Philippines, which aims to address the reluctance of consumers to switch to EVs.

“Of course, we’re also going to support the government’s direction towards electrification. That’s why we’re starting with hybrids, and in the future, we’re going to have the BEV,” he said.

“On charging stations, we are still in the process of discussing it ... because how could we introduce BEV fully to the market if we don’t address these issues? So we are also going to do our part,” he added.

Regarding the duration of the proposed extension, Mr. Soriano gave no timeline but said: “The objective of this EO is to lower the cost in order for the cars to be accessible to the market.”

Meanwhile, Mr. Soriano said that Honda is still confident that sales this year will surpass last year’s result after the industry target was upwardly adjusted last month.

“If the industry increases its target, of course you have to also

aim to have the same growth as the industry,” he said.

“We are going to surpass (our sales last year). We still have the “ber” months, the introduction of the new model, and of course the promotions, which are all going to help,” he added.

Last month, CAMPI raised its sales target to 500,000, from 468,300 initially. If realized, this will be the industry’s highest level of annual sales to date and will represent a 16.3% increase from 2023.

In the first eight months, Honda Philippines was 7<sup>th</sup> in market share at 3.37%. Its sales declined 9.7% to 10,281 units in the eight months to August.

Last year, the company sold 16,645 units, accounting for 3.87% of industry sales.

On Wednesday, Honda introduced its new Honda Civic RS e:HEV which expands the company’s HEV lineup along with its first two-wheeler BEV EM1 e: and new battery-powered handled products.

Honda is targeting to add one dealership in Bacoor and end the year with a store network of 38.

It is targeting to start construction of three more dealerships in Paranaque, Talisay, Cebu, and Tacloban.

## ERC’s Dimalanta warns some co-ops may be affected by delays

DELAYS in the Energy Regulatory Commission’s (ERC) proceedings may affect power rates for some electric cooperatives (ECs) pending the appointment of an acting chair to lead the decision-making on pending power supply contracts, suspended chairperson Monalisa C. Dimalanta said.

Ten days after her suspension, Ms. Dimalanta said in a briefing on Thursday that around 23 ECs have at least 50% exposure to the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM), which is vulnerable to price volatility.

The WESM is the trading floor that such ECs turn to if their contracted power supply proves inadequate. Spot market commodities are typically more expensive than markets where delivery is arranged far in advance, as with the Power Supply Agreements (PSAs) used by the power industry.

She had given instructions to the commission’s technical staff to check whether the ECs with high exposure have pending PSAs for approval “so we could bump up the approval to limit or avoid WESM exposure of the ECs.”

“If they continue to be exposed, there is risk that their rates will be higher,” she said.

In an order dated Aug. 27, the Ombudsman suspended Ms. Dimalanta for six months without pay over a complaint filed by the National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms, Inc. (Nasecore).

The allegations involve grave misconduct, grave abuse of authority, and conduct prejudicial to public service.

Nasecore claims that the ERC “failed to recalculate the rate of Meralco (Manila Electric Co.) that protects the interest of the public and runs counter to the objective of the ERC’s Performance Based Regulation.”

Ms. Dimalanta said she was expecting to receive a resolution from the Ombudsman on her motion for reconsideration within the week, or five days from filing.

She said that the grounds for her suspension are moot as the commission has decided on the matter raised in the complaint against her.

She said that the ERC decided to dismiss the rate application and “consider the fifth

regulatory period (5RP) as a lapsed period.”

This means that Meralco’s rate will remain unchanged until the end of the years covered by the rate reset.

“On Aug. 21, the Commission voted, 3-2, and I was part of the two that dissented, along with Commissioner Maceda. Our dissent vote was that there needs to be a proper reset for the fifth regulatory period, which is the 2022 to 2026 period of Meralco,” Dimalanta said.

“My point was it is the job of the regulator to do the reset. There hasn’t been a reset in 10 years, so why should we let go of our job to reset for a period that is yet to lapse,” she added.

Asked to comment, Meralco said it has yet to receive the copy of the decision.

It added however that “based on ERC Rules, which require that the rate application of distribution utilities must be based on the forecast of their annual revenue requirements in the next four years, the 5<sup>th</sup> RP Application of Meralco should have been decided by ERC before the start of the 5RP on July 1, 2022,” the power distributor said. — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**

## South Africa studying PHL model in globalizing maritime labor force

SOUTH AFRICA is looking at Philippine maritime industry practices to globalize its own maritime workforce, according to a South African academic.

“The state is often an active agent of globalization, it can influence the trajectories and the directions in which globalization takes,” said Shaun Rug-gunan, professor in the School of Management, IT, and Governance, College of Law and Management at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa.

“We see with the Filipino state, that it has successfully managed to

make Filipino seafarers dominant in the seafaring labor market, thereby shaping some of the trajectory of globalization,” he said during a University of the Philippines Diliman School of Labor and Industrial Relations event late Wednesday.

He said South Africa is “really” interested in the Philippine model, specifically the labor-for-export approach.

He noted South African unemployment is close to 50%. In his province of KwaZulu-Nata, one out of three are unemployed. — **Chloe Mari A. Hufana**

### FULL STORY



Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link  
[tinyurl.com/25nb4czb](https://tinyurl.com/25nb4czb)

## Agricultural damage from recent storms tops P107 million

AGRICULTURAL DAMAGE from recent tropical cyclones working in tandem with the effects of the southwest monsoon was estimated at P107.42 million, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Citing initial reports, the DA said Tropical Cyclones Ferdie, Gener, and Helen affected 1,372 farmers and fisherfolk.

The initial reports were filed at DA regional field offices in Mimaropa and the Western Visayas. Volume losses

were estimated at 4,749 metric tons (MT) across 1,547 hectares of farm area.

Rice sustained most of the damage at 91.5% of the total. Lost volume was estimated at 4,340 MT valued at P98.3 million, with the damaged areas spanning 1,536 hectares.

“Most of the damage and losses were to rice in the reproductive and maturity stages,” the DA said, noting that the reports are subject to validation.

Lost corn volume was 336 MT, with most of the crops in the reproductive and maturity stage. The losses were valued at P6.06 million, affecting 91 hectares of farmland.

Damage to high-value crops was valued at P2.99 million, with lost volume of 74 MT, spanning 19 hectares.

The recent tropical cyclones also resulted in the loss of 14 head of livestock, including chicken, swine, and goat, valued at P29,000.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu-Laurel, Jr. has said that overall farm production could be affected by the increased number of storms expected to enter the Philippines during La Niña.

The government weather service, known as PAGASA (Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration), reported a 55% probability that La Niña will occur during the fourth quarter, lasting until early 2025. — **Adrian H. Halili**

**JOB VACANCY**

**Company Name and Address**  
**AMERICAN POWER CONVERSION CORPORATION (A.P.C) B.V**  
Lot 1 Block 5 Phase 2, Cavite Economic Zone, PEZA, Rosario Cavite

**Contact details of the Company**  
ANN VIRGIL ARANEL | annvirgil.aranel@se.com  
**Job Position** PURCHASING SUPPORT SPECIALIST  
**Available Job Vacancy** (1)

**Job Description**

- Provide administration support relating to contractor questions and on boarding on to SAP MDG and Navision with VMD Team requested by the purchasing team. This includes:
- Resolving queries from MDG and VMD finance teams to local purchasing teams
- Responding within agreed SLA of purchasing team requirements
- Coordinating activities of information gathering needed for smooth on boarding to SAP MDG and Navision with VMD Team.
- Clear communication of expectations from contractors and global finance teams
- Manage exceptions of purchasing stakeholders – Leadership, Finance, Projects, Systems, Tendering
- Direct accounts questions to the MDG and VMD finance team.
- Facilitate the feedback survey to stakeholders of process and implement 'room for improvement' activities
- Responsibility of Identification of all existing suppliers that are already registered in SAP-MDG - Frame agreements KPI
- Track existing contracts & SSL
- Help to register strategic suppliers in SSP-SRM (Procurement Portal)
- Support different tasks on SAP
- Assist Team Manager in any issue in first instance and escalate the problem when necessary

**Basic Qualification**

- Bachelor Degree in Business Administration or equivalent courses.
- Minimum of 2 years experience in vendor creation process an advantage
- Knowledge in ERP system such as SAP
- Familiarity with computers and related software (MS Office)
- Flexibility and willingness to work additional hours during high peak volume times during each quarter.
- Organizational and problem-solving skills with attention to detail is highly desired.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills with the ability to work independently and handle multiple tasks at the same time.
- Fluency in English, both verbal and written, is require.

**Monthly Salary**

PHP 36,000.00 monthly base pay and PHP 55,000.00 monthly language premium allowance