

Palay farmgate price up 12.7% in September

THE average farmgate price for palay or unmilled rice rose 12.7% year on year to P22.43 per kilogram in September, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

The PSA said that most regions reported growth in the average farmgate price of palay during the month, while three regions — the Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, and Mimaropa — reported falling prices.

The highest palay prices for September were posted in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), where palay prices rose 95.8% year on year to P26 per kilo.

The lowest farmgate price was recorded in Mimaropa at P19.7 per kilo, down 1.2% year on year.

The National Food Authority (NFA) said last week that it will

set the buying price for palay at P23 to P25 per kilo depending on location and grain quality, allowing it to better compete with private traders for grain to build up its inventory.

On a month-on-month basis, the farmgate price slipped 4.5% from August.

The PSA said 11 regions posted higher farmgate prices month on month, while five regions posted declines.

Mimaropa reported the highest decline of 22.65%, from P24.15 per kilo a month prior.

BARMM saw a 10.1% increase month on month from August.

The PSA reported that palay production is expected to decline by 11.9% year on year to 3.35 million metric tons during the three months to September. — **Adrian H. Halili**

PPP project pipeline now at 169, valued at P3.18 trillion

THE pipeline of public-private partnership (PPP) projects is now at 169, with a total value of P3.18 trillion, the PPP Center said.

These include 113 national PPP projects and 56 local ones, according to the PPP Center website.

Of the national PPP projects, 75 are solicited and 38 unsolicited. Of the local PPP projects, 16 were solicited and 40 unsolicited.

The PPP Center has said that five PPP projects valued at around P28 billion will be awarded this year and by early 2025.

These include the New Bohol International Airport and the Negros Occidental Bulk Water Supply Project, which will be awarded by the end of this year, the PPP Center said in an e-mail reply to queries.

Also to be awarded next year are the University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital (UP-

PGH) Cancer Center, the Boracay Bridge project, the Bislig City Bulk Water Supply project, the Bislig City Septage project, and a dialysis center at the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center.

Projects due for submission to approving bodies by the end of this year include the Boracay Bridge project, the San Ramon Newport project, the UP-PGH Diliman project, and the Iloilo International Airport Project.

The operations and maintenance contract of the Metro Manila Subway and North South Commuter Railway, and rehabilitation, operations and maintenance of the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) Line 3 are also scheduled for awarding in 2025.

PPP projects for submission to approving bodies by next year are the Cagayan Valley Medical

Center – Hemodialysis Center, the Kalibo International Airport project, and the Puerto Prinsesa International Airport project.

The government enters into PPPs to mobilize private funds to build needed infrastructure.

Meanwhile, National Economic and Development Authority Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan cited the importance of PPPs in building climate-resilient infrastructure.

“Limited fiscal space, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, necessitates developing our governance framework for public-private partnerships to finance climate-resilient infrastructure,” Mr. Balisacan told a forum on Tuesday.

The pipeline for PPP projects also includes major water supply, flood control, and irrigation

infrastructure projects, Mr. Balisacan said. This is expected to help meet the economy’s growing needs while increasing resilience against climate change.

During the forum, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. emphasized the need to increase investment in disaster risk reduction and develop financing mechanisms to help address disaster risks.

“Sustained and predictable data and financing would help address disaster risks better,” he said in his speech.

“This entails ensuring that developing countries, particularly the least-developed countries, landlocked countries, and small island developing states, are provided greater access to these resources to advance their policies and build disaster resilience.” — **Beatriz Marie D. Cruz**

FAO working to expand Philippine Anticipatory Action project

THE Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said that it is seeking to expand its anticipatory action (AA) project in the Philippines.

“We’re working very closely with the Department of Social Welfare and Development to be able to scale up our pilot anticipatory action work in three provinces,” FAO Social Policy and Program Coordinator Ruth Honculada-Georget told *BusinessWorld* on the sidelines of a forum at the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

“So right now, it’s just limited. But FAO is planning,” she added.

Since 2021, the FAO, an arm of the United Nations, had been conducting simulations in disaster-prone regions of the Philippines.

The FAO said AA covers measures taken to reduce the humanitarian impact of expected disasters before they happen or before its acute impacts can be felt.

The FAO had also partnered with the Department of Agriculture (DA) to address food insecurity and protect the livelihoods of farmers and fisherfolk from natural disasters.

She added that the Philippines needs more risk information, early

warning systems and a reliable information system to reduce crop losses from climate-related risks.

Agricultural production had been affected by the recent El Niño, where cropland endured droughts and dry spells.

La Niña, meanwhile, increases the chances of tropical cyclone activity in the coming months.

“We need to be better in not just understanding the forecast but communicating that information to our farmers so that they can prepare better... even local government units who really are there at the frontlines to help farmers,” she said.

The DA, FAO, and PAGASA, the government weather service, will pursue a seven-year project seeking to promote climate resilient agriculture.

The project will be rolled out in the Cagayan Valley, the Cordillera Administrative Region, Bicol, Northern Mindanao, and Soccsargen, covering nine provinces and 100 municipalities.

Ms. Honculada-Georget added that the FAO will continue to work with the government and civil society organization to bring in technical expertise to scale up the program.

“It’s the government that has the resources to reach the most vulnerable and poorest households in at-risk areas,” she said.

She added that financial constraints continue to hinder the wider adoption of AA.

“There’s a lot of challenges in the sense that when you talk about financing, the knee-jerk reaction would be that (it) is not enough,” Ms. Honculada-Georget said.

According to an FAO report, the Philippine government has been making policy and legislative changes to enable local governments to access their Quick

Response Fund on the declaration of an imminent disaster.

“From our end, it’s important for us to recognize that the challenge may seem like it’s just the financing, but it’s more about having the systems, the laws in place to make available those resources,” she added.

Legislators have filed bills seeking to establish a mechanism to ensure AA measures are in place ahead of natural disasters. Senate Bill No. 2643 was filed in April, while a similar bill was filed before the House of Representatives in February. — **Adrian H. Halili**

Robinsons Land Honors Philippine Business Trailblazers at Asia CEO Awards 2024

Robinsons Land Corporation (RLC), one of the country’s leading property developers, recently took center stage at the 15th Asia CEO Awards as the Title Sponsor, highlighting its dedication to business excellence and the growth of the Philippine economy. Held on October 8, 2024, at the Marriott Grand Ballroom, the event celebrated outstanding companies and leaders driving the nation’s progress.

HONORING EXCEPTIONAL LEADERS AND BUSINESSES

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Lifetime Contributor Awards. The Honorable Secretary Ralph Recto of the Department of Finance, a distinguished member of the Monetary Board received the Lifetime Contributor Award for the Public Sector. With a political career that includes serving multiple terms in the Senate, where he held roles such as Senate President and Senate Minority Leader, and as a former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), his work has made a lasting impact on national development.

The Lifetime Contributor Award for the Private Sector was presented to Ramon del Rosario, Jr., Chairman and CEO of PHINMA Corporation. He is also Chairman of Philippine Business for Education (PBEd) and Vice Chairman of Caritas Manila and PHINMA Foundation. His past roles as Chairman of the Makati Business Club and the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation highlight his dedication to business growth, corporate excellence, and education.

This year, 188 individuals and organizations were named Circle of Excellence awardees across various categories, representing the best and brightest of the Philippine business community, showcasing diverse leadership across sectors. The winners are as follows:

- Service Excellence Company of the Year - VXi Global Holdings BV Philippines
- Governance Organization of the Year - Polytechnic University of the Philippines



A Grand Toast to Business Excellence -- RLC executives, together with the Asia CEO judges and winners, marked the occasion with a grand toast by Barun Jolly, Senior Vice President and Business Unit General Manager of Robinsons Hotels & Resorts, reaffirming their shared vision of a collaborative and thriving business community.

- Young Leader of the Year - Leonard G. Jabolin of Casapa Livestock Raisers Association, Inc.
- IT-BPM TechBlazer of the Year - Macario Solis Fojas of Seven Seven Global Service, Inc.
- Entrepreneur of the Year - Chino San Diego of What’s Your Flan International
- CSR Company of the Year - SM Foundation Philippines
- Wellness Company of the Year - Ubisoft Philippines
- SME Company of the Year - Angkat PH
- Diversity Company of the Year - Shopee Philippines, Inc.
- Technology Company of the Year - Citicore Renewable Energy Corporation
- Most Innovative Company of the Year - Pili AdheSeal, Inc.
- Sustainability Company of the Year - Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI)

- Woman Leader of the Year - Cherrie Atilano of AGREA Agricultural System International Inc.
- CEO of the Year - Sanjeev Kumar Gupta of IBM Solutions Delivery, Inc.
- Company of the Year - Concenterx Philippines
- Employer of the Year - Gcash

the 5-star Fili Hotel in NUSTAR Resort Cebu and Holiday Inn Manila Galleria, adding a touch of luxury to their recognition.

SHARED VALUES AND ADVOCACY FOR NATIONAL GROWTH

Robinsons Land’s support for the Asia CEO Awards reflects its advocacy for sustainable development, economic progress, and the spirit of collaboration. For Robinsons Hotels & Resorts, the event was a meaningful way to support industries vital to promoting tourism and hospitality, contributing to national growth.

Robinsons Offices found the awards to be aligned with its mission to provide work environments that empower businesses to thrive and drive the country’s economic engine. The presence of RLX Logistix and Industrials, Inc. signified the importance of seamless logistics and

infrastructure in creating an efficient business environment, a key element in the nation’s economic landscape.

Robinsons Destination Estates highlighted the event’s focus on building integrated communities that support business, leisure, and lifestyle emphasizing RLC’s commitment to fostering long-term, sustainable growth for communities across the Philippines.

Robinsons Malls, through its expansive retail developments, supports businesses of all sizes by providing strategic commercial spaces that drive growth for both local and international brands. This reinforces RLC’s commitment to building environments where businesses can thrive and contribute to the country’s economic strength.

“It was an honor to recognize these exceptional individuals and organizations who are helping shape our country’s business landscape. Through partnerships like this, Robinsons Land is committed to supporting innovation, progress, and community-building in every industry,” said Chad B. Sotelo, RLC Chief Marketing Officer, during his Welcome Remarks.

RLC Chairman, President and CEO, Lance Y. Gokongwei, addressing over 1,000 guests, including industry leaders, entrepreneurs, and professionals, shared, “Let’s support one another—whether through collaboration, mentorship, or partnerships. When we work together, we elevate not just our businesses but our country as a whole. My message to you is simple: stay focused on your mission, be open to learning, and always keep in mind the bigger purpose behind what you do. Together, we can build a better and stronger Philippines.”

The 15th Asia CEO Awards presented by Robinsons Land reaffirmed RLC’s dedication to nurturing a business ecosystem where economic growth and social development go hand in hand. The company’s diverse portfolio serves as a platform to support the country’s vision of being a hub for global enterprises, while also prioritizing shared values and societal impact.

For more information, visit www.robinsonsland.com or follow them at their social media channels on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn @officialrobinsonsland.



Lifetime Awardees Ramon del Rosario (center left) and Hon. Secretary Ralph Recto of the Department of Finance (center right) awarded by Mybelle Aragon-GoBio, President of RLX Logistix and Industrials, Inc., and Senior Vice President and Business Unit General Manager of Robinsons Destination Estates and joined on stage by the Asia CEO of Panel of Judges (from left-to-right) Don Felbaum, Felino “Jun” Palafox, Dr. Bernie Villegas, Alex Cabrera, Darlene Berberabe, Jack Madrid, and Richard Mills.



Chad Sotelo, Senior Vice President & Business Unit General Manager, RLC Residences and Chief Marketing Officer, Robinsons Land.



Lance Y. Gokongwei, Chairman, President & CEO of Robinsons Land shared an inspiring message to the business community and congratulated the winners of Asia CEO.



Barun Jolly, SVP and Business Unit General Manager of Robinsons Hotels and Resorts, presenting Employer of the Year



SMEs and top local and global enterprises and leaders gathered to champion business excellence.



Richard Mills of Asia CEO Awards with the RLX Logistix and Industrials team.



Joy de Mesa, Director for Sales and Marketing of Robinsons Hotels & Resorts and Patricia Mendoza, Assistant Vice President for Corporate Digital Marketing for Robinsons Land, recognized the best-dressed of the evening with the Leadership in Style Award.