Trump cuts tariffs on beef, coffee and other foods as inflation concerns mount

WASHINGTON — US President Donald Trump rolled back tariffs on more than 200 food products, including coffee, beef, bananas and orange juice, in the face of growing angst among American consumers about the high cost of groceries.

The new exemptions — which took effect retroactively at midnight on Thursday — mark a sharp reversal for Mr. Trump, who has long insisted that the sweeping import duties he imposed earlier this year are not fueling inflation.

"They may in some cases" raise prices, Mr. Trump said of his tariffs when asked about the move aboard Air Force One on Friday evening. But he insisted that overall, the US has "virtually no inflation."

Democrats have won a string of victories in state and local elections in Virginia, New Jersey and New York City, where growing voter concerns about affordability, including high food prices, were a key topic.

Mr. Trump also told reporters aboard Air Force One that he would move forward with a \$2,000 payment to lower- and middle-income Americans that would be funded by tariff revenues next year.

"The tariffs allow us to give a dividend if we want to do that. Now we're going to do a dividend and we're also reducing debt," he said.

The Trump administration announced framework trade deals on Thursday that, once finalized, will eliminate tariffs on certain foods and other imports from Argentina, Ecuador, Guatemala and El Salvador, with US officials eyeing additional agreements before year's end.

Friday's list includes products US consumers routinely purchase to feed their families at home, many of which have seen double-digit year-over-year price increases.

It includes over 200 items ranging from oranges, acai berries and paprika to cocoa, chemicals used in food production, fertilizers, and even communion wafers.

The White House, in a fact sheet on the order, said it came on the heels of "significant progress the President has made in securing more reciprocal terms for our bilateral trade relationships." — **Reuters**

India allows 1.5 MMT of sugar exports

MUMBAI — India allowed sugar exports of 1.5 million metric tons (MMT) in the new season, the government said in a notifice, as a decline in the diversion of sugar for ethanol production is expected to leave a larger domestic surplus.

Higher exports from the world's secondlargest sugar producer could pressure benchmark New York and London futures, which are hovering near five-year lows.

Exports will help reduce sugar stocks in the country and support local prices, benefiting producers such as Balrampur Chini Mills, EID Parry, Dalmia Bharat, and Shree Renuka Sugars.

A 1.5-MMT export quota has been shared among operating sugar mills on a pro-rata basis, based on their average sugar production over the last three seasons, the government said in the notifice.

All grades of sugar are permitted for export. India was the world's second-largest sugar exporter in the five years to 2022/23, with shipments averaging 6.8 MMT annually.

But a drought led the government to ban sugar exports in 2023/24, and it allowed only 1 MMT to be shipped overseas last year.

India's net sugar output for the 2025/26 season that started on Oct. 1 is estimated at 30.95 MMT after diverting about 3.4 MMT for ethanol production, up 18.5% from last year, according to the Indian Sugar & Bio-Energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA).

ISMA last week demanded New Delhi allow exports of 2 MMT of sugar in the new season. The industry body had earlier expected a diversion of 4.5 MMT to 5 MMT of sugar for ethanol this year, but only 28% of the total allocation for the biofuel went to sugar-based ethanol, with the remainder allocated to feedbased ethanol plants.

Sugar mills can export their allocated quota, either directly or through merchant exporters or refineries, until Sept. 30.

Mills that do not wish to use their export quota may surrender it by March 31, after which the government will reallocate the un-

used quotas to other mills. India also removed its 50% duty on the export of molasses, the government said. - **Reuters**

Philippines signs seasonal labor deal for farm workers with South Korea



THE PHILIPPINES and South Korea have signed a joint memorandum on the implementation of South Korea's Seasonal Workers Program (SWP), with the agreement billed as improving protections for Filipino farm workers in South Korea.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) said in a statement that the agreement between the two governments establishes a framework that will ensure fair labor practices, legal safeguards, and welfare sup-

port for Filipino seasonal farm workers in South Korea.

The SWP allows foreign workers to take on temporary jobs in South Korean agriculture and fisheries to fill labor shortages during peak seasons.

Under the agreement, the DA will implement agricultural training, livelihood programs, and reintegration assistance for returning workers

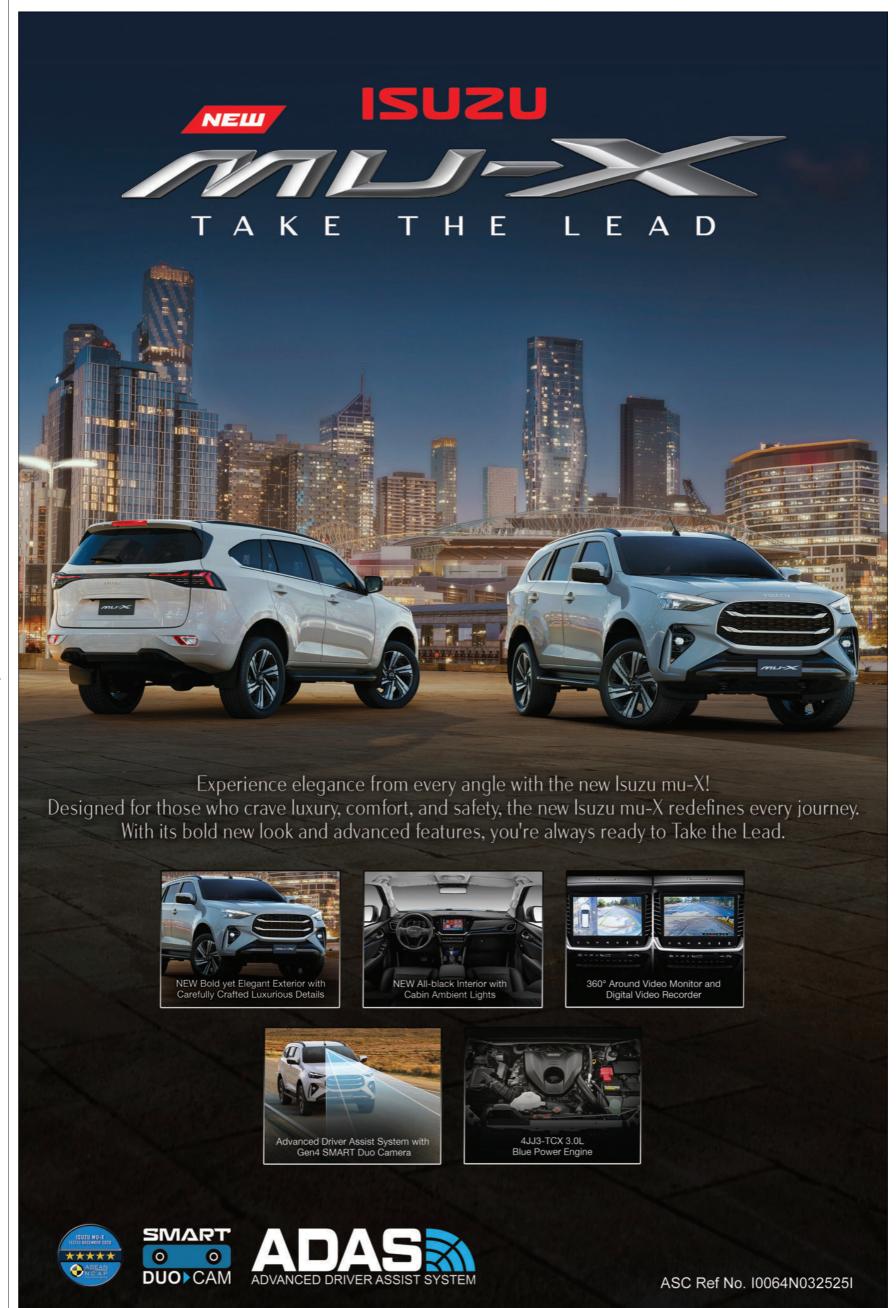
The DA said it will also work closely with local governments and

the Department of Migrant Workers to ensure deployments "match the country's agricultural priorities and global standards."

The memorandum also outlines an integrated support system to monitor workers and work with South Korean local authorities.

"This partnership ensures that our seasonal workers are protected, empowered, and equipped to contribute to both nations' agricultural growth," the DA said in a statement.

— Vonn Andrei E. Villamiel



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