

Philippines to import 500,000 MT of rice from India and Taiwan

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Around 76,000 metric tonnes of rice from Taiwan and India are scheduled to arrive in the Philippines in early January while grains imported by the private sector have started to arrive as part of the broader effort to boost inventory of the national food staple in preparation for the adverse effects of the El Nino weather phenomenon, a ranking official of the Department of Agriculture (DA) said.

Roger Navarro, DA Undersecretary officer-in-charge for operations, said nearly half a million metric tonnes of rice imported by the private sector are due to arrive between December and early February in compliance with the agreement between Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. and holders of rice import permits.

“We received reports that around 100,000 tonnes of imported rice has already arrived in the country. This is part of the 495,000 metric tonnes committed by import permit holders to Secretary Tiu Laurel,” Navarro said.

Separately, a total of 20,000 bags, equivalent to 1,000 metric tons of rice delivered before Christmas Day was the first batch of the 40,000 bags of rice donated by Taiwan, Navarro added.

Within the last week of December and early January, Navarro said 75,000 metric tonnes of rice will arrive from India.

India banned the export of non-basmati white rice last July to stabilise domestic supply and prices. In October, however, India approved the export of over 1 million metric tonnes to seven countries, with the Philippines getting over 28 per cent of the export allocation.

“The 75,000 metric tons due in the coming weeks is part of the 295,000 metric tonnes of rice India has allocated to the Philippines,” Navarro said.