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Philippines and Brunei discuss on Agri trade prospects

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To help Brunei with its increasing demand for rice, the Philippines will be exploring heightened production and export opportunities for local Jasmine and sticky rice variants between 2024 and 2025.

A year before the 40th anniversary of the dynamic diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Brunei Darussalam, Philippine Department of Agriculture (DA) Senior Undersecretary and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Megawati Manan exchanged valuable insights on potential agricultural trade opportunities between the two countries, July 26.

The two officials also looked at scholarship opportunities and collaborative hybrid rice research at the Universiti Teknologi Brunei â?? Center for Research on AgriFood Science and Technology (CrAFT), which is the sole research center for agriculture, food science, and nutrition in Brunei.

DA Senior Undersecretary Panganiban proposed the export and promotion of Philippine coconut peat, coconut oil, sweet corn, cacao, pineapples, mangos, avocados, durian, fishery products, and poultry products to Brunei markets, especially through the Brunei Darussalamâ??Indonesiaâ??Malaysiaâ??Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA).

Launched in 1994, the BIMP-EAGA initiative aims to enhance trade, industries, investments, tourism, and socio-cultural exchange by means of newly-established intra-region shipping routes, air links, and power interconnection projects.

On the other hand, Ambassador Manan laid out possibilities of exporting Halal beef, lamb, and other meat products to the Philippines as well as opening Brunei to Filipino industries as a production hub of Halal products.

The two countries also explored the possibility of renewing the Memorandum of Understanding on Food Security and Cultural Cooperation, which was signed in 2011 and had expired in 2016. The said document manifested the spirited collaboration between the Philippines and Brunei towards the realization of the food basket initiatives of the BIMP-EAGA as well as the development of the agriculture, fisheries, food processing and Halal industries in both countries