



## WEEKLY UPDATE ON ASEAN PLUS THREE RICE SITUATIONS

**No. 79**  
**18 - 31 July 2018**

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### Cambodia

***The price of white rice has slightly recovered from a sharp decline by 15 percent.***

Following reports of the steep decline in price of white rice, earlier this week, officials of the Ministry of Commerce visited major rice-producing areas, namely Battambang, Kampong Thom, Kampong Cham, Prey Veng and Takeo, to gather information. After the investigation, the ministry concluded that the price of white rice had dropped by 15 percent. However, according to the Rural Development Bank (RDB), after a number of successful measures were implemented by local and national authorities, the price of white rice is now back to profitable levels for farmers. The current price of white rice is now at 800 riel (0.2 USD) per kilogram, so the revenue per hectare is 4,800,000 riel (about 1,200 USD) when the average yields are 6 tonnes per hectare. With the cost around 700 USD to cultivate a hectare of paddy field, including the costs of fertilizers, labour and transportation to storage facilities, farmers are earning the profits on average about 500 USD per hectare, said the RDB.

\*1 USD = 4,059 riel

**Source:** Khmer Times. (2018, Jul 20). *Rice price on the upswing: RDB*; and Khmer Times. (2018, Jul 19). *Commerce Ministry intervenes to stop fall in rice price.*

### Myanmar

***Trade volume rises but rice exports fall.***

While maritime trade volumes are up by one billion USD year-on-year, rice exports have fallen by 55,000 tonnes but up marginally in value. According to the data as of 20 July 2018, Myanmar has exported 328,706 tonnes of rice worth 109 million USD compared with 106 million USD from exporting of 383,919 tonnes in the same period last year. This is mainly due to the weather conditions, which rice exports always drop during the rainy season, said the assistant secretary of Ministry of Commerce (MOC). Another reason is the domestic rice prices are rising, while the world rice prices are falling. Due to this, exporters will suffer losses from buying local rice for export. As it becomes harder to export, rice volumes also decrease, added vice chair of Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

**Source:** The Myanmar Times. (2018, Jul 31). *Trade volume rises but rice export falls.*

***Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOAI) will distribute paddy seeds to flood-hit areas.***

Until 20 July 2018, floods destroyed more than 100,000 acres (40,485 hectares) of paddy fields. According to the Deputy Permanent Secretary of MOAI, the ministry collected 50,000 baskets (1,043 tonnes) of paddy seeds in late June 2018, which one basket is equivalent to 20.86 kilograms, and will distribute to flood-affected farmers to regrow paddy in time. Regarding to this, the ministry has prioritised the distribution of paddy seeds to farmers in flood-hit areas in Mon State and Bago Region.

\*1 acre = 0.40 hectare

\*1 hectare = 2.47 acres

**Source:** Eleven Myanmar. (2018, Jul 29). *Ministry distributes paddy seeds in flood-hit region*; and The Myanmar Times. (2010, Sep 6). *High-quality rice prices up.*

## Philippines

***The National Food Authority (NFA) continues to make its newly-delivered imported rice available, accessible, and affordable in all parts of the Philippines.***

At present, the NFA is serving a total of 529,942 outlets across the country, selling NFA rice at 27 pesos to 32 pesos per kilogram. Recently, the NFA also partnered with the Department of Agriculture (DA) for the sale of NFA rice in Barangay Food Terminals (BFTs) to make affordable NFA rice accessible to low-income families in some provinces nationally. From January to 25 July this year, the NFA has already distributed a total of 154,499 tonnes of rice through its various outlets nationwide. In July 2018 alone, total distribution has already reached 39,331 tonnes of rice. Moreover, even the delays in unloading of imported stocks due to inclement weather conditions, the NFA needs to calibrate distribution to ensure that there are enough stocks not only in the markets, but also for emergencies and calamity victims, according to NFA administrator.

**Source:** National Food Authority. (2018, Jul 27). *NFA RICE FOR THE MARGINALIZED*; and National Food Authority. (2018, Jul 20). *NFA REACTIVATES RICE OUTLETS IN BARANGAY FOOD TERMINALS (BFTS) TO SERVE MORE CONSUMERS*.

***Bad weather conditions delayed rice shipments for Eastern Visayas region.***

A series of severe weather disturbances from tropical storms, Son-Tinh and Ampil, and tropical depression 13W in the past few weeks have been delayed the delivery of 12,000 tonnes of imported rice from Thailand for Eastern Visayas region. According to National Food Authority (NFA) regional manager, the foreign vessel carrying 7,000 tonnes of rice has been stuck at Bacolod port for weeks and unable to unload the allocation for Negros Island, while it was scheduled to arrive at the region two weeks ago. Another vessel carrying 5,000 tonnes of rice is still taking shelter in the West Philippine Sea due to storm. The vessel was scheduled to arrive at Tacloban port on 15 July 2018, said the NFA regional manager. Of the total 12,000 tonnes of imported rice from

Thailand, 3,100 tonnes will be allocated for Leyte, 1,250 tonnes for Southern Leyte, 750 tonnes for Biliran, 2,000 tonnes for Samar, 2,650 tonnes for Northern Samar, and 2,250 tonnes for Eastern Samar.

**Source:** Philippine News Agency. (2018, Jul 24). *Bad weather delays rice shipment for Region 8*; and Wikipedia. *2018 Pacific typhoon season*.

## Thailand

***The Thai government approved rice aid measures worth 97.95 billion baht (2.94 billion USD) for 2018/19 crop year, aiming to curb and delay rice supply.***

The measures include a loan scheme worth 35.06 billion baht (1.05 billion USD) to be offered by the state-owned Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Co-operatives (BAAC), and 62.89 billion baht (1.89 billion USD) of one-off payments that the government will hand out directly to farmers via the BAAC. According to the Prime Minister's Office, the measures will cover three projects with different proposes. The first is a loan scheme for farmers, who agree to delay their paddy sales, and a grant for harvesting and a price-quality improvement costs with an estimated cost of 22.56 billion baht (676 million USD). The second is the loan scheme for farmer institutes to gather rice and add values to rice with the estimated cost of 12.5 billion baht (374 million USD). The last is the 3 percent interest rate subsidy programme for rice traders, who agree to hold stocks for 60-180 days, estimating to cost the government 572 million baht (17.14 million USD). These programmes will run from September 2018 to September 2019 in all provinces, except the Southern provinces that will run from June to October 2019.

\*1 USD = 33.36 baht

**Source:** Bangkok Post. (2018, Jul 25). *Rice relief gets cabinet go-ahead*; Viet Nam Plus. (2018, Jul 27). *Thailand spends nearly 3 billion USD supporting rice sector*; and Bangkok Post. (2018, Jul 12). *B34.5bn in rice aid measures approved*.

***Food companies launched a joint project, the Sustainable Hom Mali Rice, with the Thai government to improve the economic viability in Roi Et province.***

The Sustainable Hom Mali Rice project aims to support 1,200 rice farmers from each of 12 community rice centers in Roi Et province in the production of 3,500 tonnes of Hom Mali rice. The main partners in the effort are Mars Food, Herba Bangkok SL (Ebro Foods SA), German development agency GIZ and Thai Rice Department. The project will implement many interventions, such as educating farmers on Sustainable Rice Platform standards and agronomic technologies, giving access to high-quality seeds, enhancing the skills of farmer groups, improving gender equality and adopting ICT-enabled traceability for food safety and quality considerations. A great deal of discussion is going on about the sustainability of the rice sector with focus on the livelihood of farmers, chemical usage, food security and the overall condition and well-being of farmers. The project will be implemented for two and a half years (2018-20). Through this project, Rice Department will help farmers produce good-quality rice and reduce the cost of production, while increasing rice yields.

**Source:** Bangkok Post. (2018, Jul 18). *Joint effort with food firms to boost rice.*

## **Viet Nam**

***The summer-autumn rice crop in southern region has been a good harvest.***

The region has planted 1.69 million hectares of summer-autumn rice crop, expecting an average yield of 5.63 tonnes per hectare, while the total output was estimated at 9.51 million tonnes of rice, up 279,700 tonnes from the same period last year. High-quality varieties were chosen for this crop, which fragrant rice accounted for 22.41 percent, to meet with market demand especially export markets. For the next autumn-winter rice crop, the southern region plans to cultivate 978,000 hectares with the expected total output of 5.1 million tonnes of rice.

**Source:** Viet Nam News. (2018, Jul 24). *Summer-autumn rice harvest excellent in southern region; Viet Nam Plus.*

(2018, Jul 23). *Southern localities report bumper summer-autumn crop*; and Xinhua. (2018, Jul 23). *Southern Vietnam produces more summer-autumn rice.*

## **China**

***China is going to import Indian rice from 14 Indian rice companies.***

On 9 June 2018, China and India signed an agreement to amend a protocol on phytosanitary requirements to allow India to export its rice to China. The shipments had to comply with the Chinese plant quarantine laws and regulations, which India has to ensure that processing and storage of the rice to be exported to China is free from pests and live insects, adding that free of soil, seeds of weeds, paddy hull, loose bran and any of plant debris of rice. Recently, China has agreed to import rice from 14 of the total 19 Indian rice exporters. However, the remaining five companies have been asked to improve storage and isolation facilities before applying afresh.

**Source:** Global Times. (2018, Jul 26). *China to import rice from 14 Indian firms*; and Business Standard. (2018, Jul 25). *China clears 14 Indian rice companies for export amid trade war with US.*

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\* This Weekly Update on ASEAN Plus Three Rice Situations is based on all available sources during the period. The APTERR Secretariat shall take no responsibility for data accuracy in this publication and any consequence of their use.