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RP, Bahrain sign accord for project in Mindanao

By Gloria Esguerra Melencio

MANILA - The Philippines and Bahrain have begun discussions on a possible agribusiness project in Mindanao covering an initial area of 10,000 hectares that is expected to create some 20,000 jobs, officials of the Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Wednesday.

Marriz Agbon, president of the Philippine Agricultural Development and Commercial Corp. (PADCC), said Bahraini Industry and Commerce Minister Hassan Fakhro and officials of the Bahrain-based Nader and Ebrahim S/O Hassan (NEH) and its Philippine partner, AMA Group Holdings Corp., recently paid a courtesy call to President Gloria Arroyo to relay their intent to invest in Mindanao's agribusiness sector, particularly in the Davao region.

Ebrahim Hassan Mubarak Al Ameer of NEH and Ambassador Amable Aguiluz V, the chairman emeritus of the AMA Group, were present during the courtesy call to the president.

The meeting was an offshoot of Arroyo's Feb. 4 visit to Bahrain, where an agreement to establish a general framework for agriculture and fisheries cooperation was signed by DA Secretary Arthur Yap and Minister Fakhro," Agbon said.

Agbon and Agriculture Undersecretary Bema Romulo Puyat represented the agriculture department during the initial discussions with Bahraini officials on the project.

Agbon said NEH has organized a technical working group to study which crops could be grown commercially in Davao under its proposed agribusiness project. - SG

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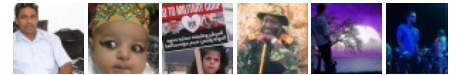
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