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Gov't perking up coffee industry

By ZALDY COMANDA

BAGUIO CITY - The country's coffee industry got a much-needed shot in the arm after the government, through the Department of Agriculture (DA), allotted P354.6 million to enable it to reach the national production volume of 214,626 metric tons by 2022.

"The medium-term development for coffee is in place with the signing in March last year of the Philippine Coffee Industry Roadmap 2017-2022," DA Secretary Emmanuel Piñol said in a message delivered by Undersecretary Evelyn Laviña of the High Value Crops and Rural Credit (HVCRC) during the 3rd Philippine Coffee Conference here.

"The resources to achieve the growth targets are in the national budget. At this point, extra efforts are being exerted to ensure that both traditional and additional interventions that are in line with the coffee roadmap are sufficiently funded. Inputs have been gathered through consultations on the ground," Piñol added.

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary Ramon Lopez, in his speech during the same event, spelled out President Duterte's 10-point socio-economic agenda which seeks to achieve inclusive growth and bring shared prosperity for all.

"The expected result of these strategies is stated as: By 2022, the Philippines is producing 61 percent more than its consumption requirement. This is a big challenge but indeed if every industry player and enablers are one with this roadmap under the able and effective coordination of the Philippine Coffee Council at every level, we will get there, achieve the goal on time," Lopez said.

Senator Cynthia Villar who was guest of honor during the event on Tuesday called anew for the government to extend more assistance to small coffee growers across the country as she underscored the competitiveness of locally produced coffee beans.

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