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Foreign militaries offer aid; CBCP rallies emergency funds

By Rex Espiritu, Vito Barcelo, Katrina Manubay and Maricel Cruz

FOREIGN military partners have offered assistance as search and rescue operations continue after a powerful magnitude-7.8 earthquake struck Mindanao Monday morning. Armed

Forces of the Philippines chief of staff Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. said.

Brawner said the United States, Japan, and Indonesia military counterparts have reached out and expressed readiness to provide support as the government continues to assess the situation on the ground.

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Manila Standard

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Quake death toll climbs to 38

4 still missing, over 400 injured, P562.8-m infra damage



DEVASTATION. The extent of the devastation wrought by the powerful quake that shook parts of southeastern Mindanao was evident yesterday in the number of collapsed buildings (top left photo), infrastructure damage (bottom left photo), and the rising number of deaths and injuries (top right and bottom center photos). In the top right photo, there was no respite for a rescue worker and dog in the search for survivors trapped in the rubble. Bureau of Fire Protection Facebook, VM James Yap Jr., Gov. Rogelio 'Ruel' D. Pacquiao - Sarangani Province

By Rex Espiritu, Charles Dantes, Darwin Amojelar, Alena Mae Flores, Pot Chavez, Katrina Manubay, Vince Lopez and Ram Superable

THE death toll from the magnitude-7.8 earthquake that struck parts of Mindanao climbed to 38 yesterday, official tally from the Office of Civil Defense showed, with over 400 injured and four still missing.

Agence France Presse, however, put the death toll at 41, based on interviews from various provincial sources.

Damage to infrastructure was placed at P562.8 million as authorities continue to assess the full extent of destruction in the hardest-hit areas of General Santos City, Sarangani, and South Cotabato, OCD Assistant Secretary Raffy Alejandro said.

He said at least 1,200 school facilities were also damaged from the quake, with the Department of Education saying it may take three to four days before schools can safely resume face-to-face classes.

Authorities also reported around 2,505 damaged houses, including 460 that were totally destroyed and 2,045 that sustained partial damage.

Alejandro said the government is preparing housing repair kits, construction materials, and temporary shelters for affected residents, many of whom remain reluctant to return to their homes

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Win shuts down Senate on reports of threats

By Joel E. Zurbano, Ram Superable and Charles Dantes

ACTING Senate President Win Gatchalian yesterday ordered Senate employees to work from home from June 10 to 11 in "response to reports of security threats."

He said this was to "allow the conduct of the necessary security assessments, inspections and other precautionary measures within the Senate premises" following the information relayed by National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Director Melvin A. Matibag.

Gatchalian and Senator Vicente Sotto III had earlier warned that

the Senate could be placed under lockdown if security threats are confirmed.

The acting Senate chief told reporters that Matibag revealed this potential threat to the Senate building during a Blue Ribbon Committee consultative meeting on Monday.

Meanwhile, Senator Alan Peter Cayetano questioned the credibility of an alleged security threat against the Senate as reported by the NBI, adding that the information could be a political tactic to distract from ongoing corruption inquiries.

Malacañang also said reports of a potential security threat

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COMMISSIONED. President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. speaks at the commissioning of the BRP Rajah Lakandula, one of the new offshore patrol vessels that will strengthen the Philippine Navy's capabilities in patrolling and maintaining peace in the country's territorial waters. PCO

Senate sets pre-trial conference on VP Sara's case on June 18

By Maricel V. Cruz

THE Senate impeachment court has formally scheduled the pre-trial conference in the impeachment case against Vice President Sara Zimmerman Duterte, marking the next major step in the proceedings and setting the

stage for the presentation of evidence and witnesses by both parties, House prosecutor Terry L. Ridon of Bicol Saro Party-list said Tuesday.

In a Notice of Pre-Trial Conference issued on June 9 and signed by Acting Senate President and Presiding Officer Win Gatchalian, Ridon said

the impeachment court directed Vice President Duterte and the House prosecutors to appear on June 18, 2026, at 9 a.m. at the Sen. C.M. Recto Room in the Senate.

Ridon said the notice stated that the parties may attend personally or through counsel and are expected to

address key pre-trial matters, including the stipulation of facts, simplification of issues, marking of documentary and real evidence, identification of witnesses, setting of trial dates, the proposed sequence for the presentation of evidence, and other matters that would

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PBBM: Resolve impasse before special session

By Charles Dantes and Maricel V. Cruz

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. wants senators to settle their internal disputes first before any request for a special session moves forward, Malacañang said Tuesday, warning that legislative deadlock could render such a session ineffective.

Speaking at a Palace press briefing, Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro said discussions regarding a possible special session are still being finalized.

"As of the moment, it is still being finalized, but the President's preference is for the Senate to reach an agreement

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DFA files protest vs. China over structure in Panatag shoal

By Rex Espiritu

THE government has lodged a diplomatic protest against China following the discovery of a structure in Bajo de Masinloc (Scarborough Shoal), which authorities said raises concerns over an unauthorized presence within the country's maritime zones.

The move was confirmed by the National Task Force for the West Philippine Sea (NTF-WPS), which said it is closely coordinating with security and maritime agencies after aerial and sea-based monitoring de-

tected a 6-by-6-meter floating structure equipped with an antenna and reportedly occupied by personnel.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. confirmed Monday that military surveillance assets observed a structure measuring approximately six meters by six meters within the shoal's lagoon.

In response, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has filed the appropriate diplomatic protest with the government of the People's Republic of China, describing the

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Ex-PNP Lt. Col. Rafael P. Dumlaio

Fugitive officer in killing of Sokor exec arrested

A FUGITIVE ex-Philippine anti-narcotics officer was arrested on Tuesday over his conviction in the 2016 kidnapping and killing of a South Korean businessman who was strangled inside the national police headquarters in Manila, officials said.

The case of Jee Ick-joo, abducted by anti-narcotics police under the guise of a drug raid, was one of the most controversial cases of ex-president Rodrigo Duterte's deadly drug war.

"According to a witness, they

kidnapped the Korean, attempted to extort money from him, strangled him, cremated his body and flushed the remains down the toilet," Interior Secretary Juanito Victor Remulla said as he announced the arrest of Rafael Dumlaio.

"The killing of Jee Ick-joo was the result of the abuses of 'tokhang,'" Remulla told a news conference, using the local codename for anti-drug operations that killed thousands during Duterte's 2016-2022 presidency.

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Quake...

From A1

because of continuing aftershocks.

The Supreme Court also announced the suspension of court operations in Sarangani province, Panabo City, as well as courts in the hall of justice of Davao City and Nabunturan, Davao de Oro.

Court operations in Davao del Sur, Davao Occidental, Davao Oriental and South Cotabato were also suspended.

PBBM: Prioritize patients

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. directed government agencies to prioritize the safety and welfare of patients in hospitals affected by the earthquake.

He ordered the conduct of rapid assessments of health facilities damaged or threatened by the earthquake, including ensuring uninterrupted power supply to health centers in affected areas amid ongoing post-disaster response and recovery efforts.

“The President stressed that hospitals must be visited first and that safe areas for patients should be identified immediately,” Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro said.

Castro said Mr. Marcos is also planning to visit affected areas in Mindanao, although she did not disclose a specific date.

“I cannot give the exact date, but he plans to visit. It is already scheduled,” the Palace official said.

Outdoor hospitals, shaken communities

Doctors treated patients in tents set up under a scorching sun on Tuesday

– including helping a young mother give birth.

In hardest-hit Sarangani province, some areas remain accessible only by helicopter while fears of aftershocks were slowing rescue efforts.

“There are still aftershocks, so the rescuers are very cautious in their approach. That’s a challenge,” said regional civil defense chief Rodrigo Sosmena.

A series of powerful aftershocks rocked the area from about two hours after the first quake, while hundreds of tiny tremors followed.

Infrastructure damage, meanwhile, means some communities will be cut off for at least a week because of the damage to roads and the collapse of a bridge.

At a hospital just outside General Santos, the region’s largest city, reporters heard cries of “push” then an infant’s cries as a mother gave birth outdoors behind a makeshift screen.

In Glan municipality, where at least 13 people were buried in their homes by a landslide, staff at another hospital said more than 60 patients were on beds outside the facility due to fears for the building’s structural integrity.

“The hospital sustained a lot of damage,” she said. “The municipal engineer decided we could not use the building.”

‘Back to zero’

Residents described scenes of terror during the earthquake, with many saying the area was no longer safe enough to call home.

“I think everything needs to be demolished,” casino worker Eduardo

Gutierrez Jr. said after returning to his apartment to retrieve belongings now covered in mud.

“When I got out the door, the entire apartment row was swaying,” he said of his experience during the quake.

“We saw walls collapsing, the floors opening up. And then water and mud began spurting up from underneath the flooring.”

Rosalynne Singson said the earthquake had left her “no choice” but to move.

“It’s hard to accept. (Our house) probably needs to be demolished, because we were told we’re on top of a faultline,” she said.

“It’s really back to zero.”

At the hospital outside General Santos, Lourdes Camia said she believed her brother-in-law, who was being treated for a heart attack, was safer outside – despite the heat.

“I can see the cracks (of the wall) from here,” she said. “If there is another quake, I’m scared the hospital will collapse.”

Relief transport, stable fuel supply

Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez ordered the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines to lift the suspension of airport operations to allow military aircraft as well as government and humanitarian flights at the General Santos Airport.

He said this was to ensure unimpeded relief transport and rapid humanitarian response operations.

“The President’s order is that we must quickly and continuously respond to the needs of our countrymen affected by the earthquake. We

must be prompt in responding so that we can immediately help our countrymen,” Lopez said.

The transport chief has likewise ordered CAAP to ensure the integrity of the airport’s structures to guarantee the safety of the passengers and airport personnel.

The Department of Energy said fuel supply remains stable and sufficient in southern Mindanao, with no reported disruptions to the fuel supply chain and enough inventory to meet current demand.

DOE said most bulk terminals, depots, and storage facilities continue normal operations and have reported no critical damage.

In Regions XI and XII --- the areas most affected by the earthquake – detailed inspections indicate that nearly all major downstream facilities remain operational, the department added.

“Consistent with the President’s directive to ensure the uninterrupted delivery of vital services and supplies, our priority following the earthquake has been to guarantee that our affected communities continue to have reliable access to fuel,” Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said.

“We are working closely with industry players and local government units to fast-track safety evaluations and permit approvals so that temporarily affected facilities can safely resume operations as soon as possible. We assure the public that fuel supply remains adequate, and there is no cause for concern over shortages,” she added. **With AFP**

Senate...

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fair and expeditious trial.

He said the impeachment court also directed both parties to submit their respective pre-trial briefs no later than June 15.

Defense wants case outright dismissal

Meanwhile, the House prosecution panel said the impeachment trial should proceed because Vice President Duterte’s answer to the articles of impeachment did not confront the evidence and instead sought to stop the case through procedural, technical, and constitutional objections.

Lanao del Sur Rep. Zia Alonto Adiong, spokesperson for the House prosecution panel, said Tuesday that the prosecution saw no need to file another pleading because the Vice President’s submission was aimed at dismissal rather than a substantive contest of the charges.According to the notice, the pre-trial brief must contain “a summary of admitted facts, proposed stipulations, and issues for resolution,” as well as a list of documents, exhibits, and witnesses presently known and reasonably available to each party.

Ridon said the notice likewise requires parties seeking to reserve evidence or witnesses to disclose the identity of witnesses or describe the documentary or object evidence and state the purpose of their presentation at least three days before they are presented before the impeachment court.

For security and safety reasons, the impeachment court said parties may withhold the identities and details of certain witnesses until their actual presentation, provided such witnesses are included in the total number of witnesses disclosed and corresponding trial dates.

To encourage candid discussions and facilitate the objectives of pre-trial, the proceedings will not be open to the media or the public.

“The Pre-Trial Conference proceedings shall not be open to the media or public,” the notice stated.

Ridon said the impeachment court also warned that failure to file a pre-trial brief on time or failure to appear at the pre-trial conference without a valid and legally justifiable reason could result in the waiver of the right to present specific evidence or witnesses.

He added that the impeachment court may proceed with the formulation of the pre-trial order based solely on the records available if a party fails to comply with the requirements.

Foreign...

From A1

“Many of our counterparts have called and offered assistance,” the military chief told defense reporters on the sidelines of a partnership signing event at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City.

“They said whatever we need, they are ready to provide help. Right now, we’re doing the evaluation under the supervision of the OCD [Office of Civil Defense],” he added.

The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines, for its part, called on dioceses nationwide to hold special prayers and raise emergency funds for communities hit by the powerful earthquake.

CBCP president Gilbert Garcera urged parishes and religious communities to offer special Mass intentions for victims and responders, as well as to dedicate Sunday liturgies to those affected by the disaster.

He also encouraged bishops to authorize a second collection during June 14 Masses to raise funds for relief and rehabilitation, with proceeds to be coursed through diocesan social action centers and Caritas Philippines.

“We grieve with the families who have lost loved ones, pray for the speedy recovery of those who have

been injured, and stand in spiritual communion with all those who have been displaced from their homes and livelihoods,” Garcera said.

“As one family in Christ, we cannot remain indifferent to the suffering of our brothers and sisters. Their pain is our pain; their loss is our loss,” he added.

Hours after the powerful temblor, the international community rallied behind the Philippines, pouring in messages of sympathy and offers of assistance as the death toll climbed to 41 yesterday.

“We continue to monitor the situation closely in coordination with Philippine authorities and stand ready to support Philippine-led response efforts,” the US Embassy said.

Key allies and global partners, including Japan, France, China, Canada, Australia, Germany, the Czech Republic, and the European Union also expressed solidarity with the Filipino people as recovery efforts began. Japanese Minister Sanae Takachi extended her deepest condolences, affirming Tokyo’s readiness to dispatch aid.

“Japan stands ready to provide all possible assistance that the Philippines may need, based on local needs,” she said.

United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al

Nahyan has sent a message of condolences to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. over the victims of the powerful earthquake, extending his sympathies to the bereaved families and wishing a speedy recovery to all those injured.

German Ambassador Andreas Pfaffernoschke also assured the Philippines of his country’s continued support throughout the disaster response phase.

“As recovery efforts continue, Germany stands in solidarity with the Philippines during this difficult time.”

The United Nations in the Philippines likewise conveyed its solidarity with the victims and their families.

“We mourn the loss of lives and the suffering endured by families and communities due to widespread damage to homes and infrastructure, and we stand in solidarity with all those affected during this difficult time,” the UN body said.

The UN also said it would assess the impact of the earthquake and work closely with the government and partner agencies, expressing readiness to support response and recovery initiatives.

“In moments of crisis, unity and compassion are our greatest strengths. The United Nations reaffirms its commitment to help build back stronger, safer, and even more resilient communities,” it added.

PBBM:...

From A1

first because even if the President calls for a special session, if they themselves cannot come to a consensus, the President’s wish would be rendered useless,” Castro told reporters.

She stressed that the senators should focus on resolving their differences because the matter concerns public welfare rather than personal interests.

“They should fix the Senate so that... this is for the people, not for personal gain. So, they should first resolve their conflicts and issues in the Senate,” Castro said.

Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro said a special session may be needed to correct what was overlooked because of the irregularities and commotions in the Senate.

Luistro, chair of the House Committee on Justice and lead prosecutor in the impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte, said she was willing to support a special session if it would help restore order,

address pending matters and keep the impeachment process moving despite the Senate leadership dispute.

“For the country’s sake, we’re going to do a special session,” Luistro said in an interview over dzBB.

A party-list lawmaker on Tuesday expressed strong support for convening an emergency session of Congress to immediately address the backlog of urgent legislative measures left unacted upon in recent weeks.

The proposal for an emergency session was floated by Senate President Pro Tempore Sherwin Gatchalian, amid stalled priority measures among them a supplemental budget to respond to the Middle East crisis.

Akbayan Party-list Rep. Perci Cendaña cited the need for Congress to hold a special session as Akbayan is spearheading efforts in Congress to fast-track a P52.8- billion supplemental budget that will prioritize cushioning vulnerable sectors from the economic and humanitarian impacts of the escalating Middle East crisis.

“This special session is timely so that we can pass the urgent bills that have been pending. One of them is the

time zones as recognized under international law,” the task force said.

The task force emphasized that the Philippines continues to assert its sovereign rights and jurisdiction over its maritime zones in accordance with international law and established legal mechanisms.

“The NTF-WPS remains steadfast in upholding the rules-based inter-

national order, particularly the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the 2016 Arbitral Award,” it added.

The government has yet to release further details pending the completion of validation and assessment activities being conducted by relevant maritime, security, and foreign affairs agencies.

Win...

From A1

to the Senate are being validated by authorities, adding that anyone involved in activities that could endanger public institutions would be held accountable under the law.

For his part, Senator Panfilo Lacson said growing discontent within the military could pose a security risk if exploited by political figures looking to destabilize the government.

“As per information, though still sketchy and raw, the level of frustration within the armed services has reached up to battalion and regional levels,” Lacson disclosed.

He pointed out that the military unrest was mainly driven by public grievances over rising fuel prices, inflation, alleged corruption in flood control projects, and political maneuvering within the Senate.

“The danger is, if some unscrupulous and power-hungry destabilizers among some aligned political groups would take advantage by fanning the flame of discontent, rightly or wrongly, which could trigger widespread mass movements and protests,” Lacson warned.

Palace Press Officer Claire Castro indicated that while the Philippine National Police has not confirmed any alleged plans for an attack on the Palace on June 12, Independence Day, she did not dismiss the potential for destabilization attempts.

“These actions are not new because they have been longing to install their overlord in the post,” Castro said in Filipino.

In a statement, Cayetano raised concerns over why the NBI shared the unspecified intelligence information with only a select group of lawmakers rather than the entire legislative body.

“We must be candid about the source of this ‘threat.’ It did not come from the Senate’s own Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms, the office constitutionally charged with protecting this institution... any honest accounting requires us to weigh that source carefully,” he said.

The senator also expressed skepticism regarding the source, citing a recent incident where NBI personnel allegedly physically assaulted a Senate employee and engaged in a shootout with legislative security.

“And there is a more basic question. Since when has the NBI been the lead agency on matters of national intelligence and security? Where, in all of this, are the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police, the institutions actually mandated to assess and respond to threats of this nature?” he argued.

Cayetano also questioned the timing of the threat notification which “coincides suspiciously” with recent Blue Ribbon Committee testimonies that are beginning to demand answers from high-profile individuals.

The statement came after senators raised concerns over what the NBI had flagged as a possible security threat.

Asked what the government knew about the reported threat and what actions were being taken, Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro said the information was still undergoing verification.

Fugitive...

From A1

“The tokhangs gave too much license to the (police) operatives to do things at their whim without the process of law,” he added.

A lower court in 2023 acquitted Dumlao, the alleged mastermind, of kidnapping and homicide while convicting two other defendants.

An appellate court annulled Dumlao’s acquittal in 2024, saying the lower court had committed a “grave abuse of discretion.”

Dumlao, a former top official of a now-defunct police anti-illegal drugs task force, was sentenced to a minimum of 30 years in prison.

He went into hiding after the Supreme Court affirmed the appellate court’s verdict last year, Remulla said.

Police found him asleep with a handgun near him at a northern Manila property early Tuesday, the national police chief General Jose Melencio Nartatez told the news conference.

The authorities are investigating who helped the fugitive evade the law, Remulla said.

Manila has relayed news of Dumlao’s arrest to the South Korean ambassador and to Jee’s widow, and the South Korean president “has sent his congratulations” to Manila, Remulla added.

Ex-president Duterte was arrested last year and handed over to the Netherlands-based International Criminal Court, where he is to stand trial from November 30 for the crime against humanity of murder. **With Vince Lopez**

DFA...

From A1

structure’s presence as illegal.

Authorities said inter-agency validation is ongoing to determine the nature, purpose, and operational status of the installation, as government agencies continue to monitor

‘Ex-bodyguards must submit affidavits’

By Rex Espiritu
and Maricel V. Cruz

OMBUDSMAN Jesus Crispin Remulla on Tuesday said the alleged former bodyguards and staff of former Ako Bicol Rep. Zaldy Co should submit individual affidavits as part of the ongoing investigation into the alleged flood control controversy.

“They should all issue individual affidavits,” Remulla said following remarks by lawyer Levi Baligod that his clients were prepared to disclose details before the Office of the Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman has invited the individuals to appear before investigators on June 11, 15, and 16.

“Yes, that’s the schedule. In fact, we have been regularly interviewing them even before. It’s part of the effort of the office not to leave any stone unturned. We will go where the evidence takes us,” Assistant Ombudsman Mico Clavano said.

Baligod earlier said they received summonses from the anti-graft body in connection with the complaint-affidavit they filed against those who allegedly received kickbacks.

The lawyer also said his clients would present additional evidence, including photographs and videos, which he claimed were linked to alleged payoffs connected to the investigation of the International Criminal Court.

The group previously alleged that they delivered suitcases containing cash to several government officials and prominent personalities upon the instructions of former congressman Co.

Manila 6th District Rep. Bienvenido “Benny” Abante Jr. on Tuesday filed criminal complaints for cyberlibel and libel before the Department of Justice against lawyer Levito “Levi” Baligod, 18 alleged former soldiers, and media outlet DWSI 864 over allegations linking him to the alleged distribution of cash-filled luggage.

Palace: DILG to probe Davao dumping incident

By Charles Dantes

MALACANANG said Tuesday that the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) will conduct a thorough investigation into the dumping of garbage outside a regional office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Davao City.

Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro said DILG Secretary Jonvic Remulla had assured the Palace that an inquiry would be launched to determine whether negligence or violations of environmental laws were committed in connection with the incident.

“We spoke directly with Secretary Jonvic Remulla today because he was present at the meeting earlier. There will be a thorough investigation into this matter,” Castro said during a press briefing.

Asked whether Davao City Mayor Sebastian “Baste” Duterte could face disciplinary action over the incident, Castro said it was premature to speculate on possible sanctions while the investigation has yet to be completed.



LANDING TEAM. Marines from Marine Battalion Landing Team-8 (MBLT-8) of the 4th Marine Brigade take part in a multi-agency oil spill response operation along the coastal waters of Barangay La Virgen Milagrosa in Badoc, Ilocos Norte, following the grounding of a cargo vessel off the shoreline.



DOE readies contingency plan for the ‘Big One’

By Alena Mae S. Flores

THE Department of Energy (DOE) assured the public that it has prepared a contingency plan for the energy sector in the event a “Big One” earthquake strikes Luzon or Metro Manila.

DOE Undersecretary Felix William Fuentebella said the agency has conducted two tabletop exercises, or simulations, to prepare for a magnitude 7 or stronger earthquake.

“We have a contingency plan. We have assigned roles for every stakeholder from the oil and power sectors on how we will respond. Repeating and expanding these exercises will help our teams internalize standard operating procedures,” Fuentebella said.

DOE Supervising Science Research Specialist S. Magnolia Olvido said preparations for a major earthquake in

the Greater Metro Manila Area began in 2019 and involved power generation firms, transmission operators, electric cooperatives, and other stakeholders.

Meanwhile, the DOE reported that restoration efforts are underway following the magnitude 7.8 earthquake that affected Southern Mindanao. DOE and National Electrification Administration personnel are working with electric cooperatives, distribution utilities, and other stakeholders to safely restore electricity.

Power has already been restored in several communities where conditions allow safe re-energization, while damage assessments and inspections continue to determine the full extent of the impact.

Following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s directive to prioritize the restoration of essential services, the DOE ordered energy stakeholders to focus

on restoring power to hospitals, evacuation centers, water facilities, communication systems, and other critical installations.

As of 7 a.m. Tuesday, restoration and assessment activities remained ongoing. The two generating units of the SMC Malita Coal Plant, with a combined capacity of 300 megawatts, remain offline and are targeted for restoration by June 10 and June 13, respectively.

The two units of the Sarangani Energy Corp. Coal Plant, with a total capacity of 237 MW, also remain under emergency shutdown pending assessment, with restoration initially targeted by June 10. The Sarangani Diesel Power Plants continue to operate normally.

Damage to distribution lines has prevented electricity delivery to about 1,149 consumer connections.



PACT AGAINST POWER THEFT. Philippine National Police chief Gen. Nicolas Torre III and Manila Electric Company officials sign a memorandum of understanding at Camp Crame in Quezon City on June 8, strengthening cooperation against the theft and pilferage of electricity distribution facilities and materials. **Office of the Chief PNP**

PNP tighten crackdown on electricity theft

By Vince Lopez

THE Philippine National Police (PNP) and Manila Electric Company (Meralco) forged an agreement on Tuesday aimed at strengthening coordination to curb electricity theft and the illegal connection of households and communities to power distribution lines.

PNP and Meralco officials signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at Camp Crame on June 8 to enhance their partnership in combating the theft and pilferage of electricity distribution facilities and materials.

Among the signatories were PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr., acting Director for Investigation and Detective Management Brig. Gen. Matthew Baccay, Meralco Executive Vice President and

Chief Operating Officer Engr. Ronnie Apercho, and First Vice President and Head of Facilities Safety and Security Management Engr. Jerry Lao.

“The renewed agreement between the PNP and Meralco is driven by the need to address the rising incidents of electricity theft and the pilferage of power distribution materials, which directly affect public safety, economic stability, and service reliability,” Nartatez said.

The agreement strengthens coordination, information sharing, and joint law enforcement operations in implementing Republic Act No. 7832, or the Anti-Electricity and Electric Transmission Lines/Materials Pilferage Act of 1994.

It also updates an earlier accord signed in December 2024 following a review ordered by PNP leadership.

IN BRIEF

QCPD identifies suspects in Mariano murder case

THE Quezon City Police District (QCPD) on Tuesday identified six individuals allegedly involved in the murder of businessman and sports patron Ceferino “Perry” Mariano and his driver, Norberto Orimaco, at the corner of Timog Avenue and EDSA on April 28.

QCPD chief Brig. Gen. Randy Glenn Silvio declined to disclose the suspects’ identities to avoid compromising ongoing manhunt operations. Police are preparing murder charges against them before the city prosecutor’s office.

Silvio said investigators also identified other individuals who conducted surveillance on Mariano before the shooting. All members of the surveillance team were traced after authorities determined they had stayed in the same location prior to the attack. **Vince Lopez**

Taguig police nab nine of top 10 most wanted

THE Taguig City Police Station on Tuesday reported the arrest of nine of its Top 10 Most Wanted Persons for May, highlighting intensified efforts to track down fugitives and maintain peace and order in the city.

Taguig police chief Col. Julius Añonuevo said the arrests resulted from sustained intelligence and manhunt operations targeting individuals facing charges for offenses such as statutory rape, acts of lasciviousness, qualified theft, robbery, falsification of documents, and drug-related violations.

Police records showed that nine of the 10 individuals on the station-level most wanted list have been arrested and are now undergoing legal proceedings. **Vince Lopez**

MMDA says school zones are now no-parking areas

AS THE new school year begins, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Special Operations Group–Strike Force chief Gabriel Go reminded motorists that areas surrounding schools are strictly designated as no-parking zones.

Speaking during the monthly MACHRA Balitaan forum in Manila, Go warned that the MMDA will not tolerate motorists using school vicinities as parking or waiting areas, saying such practices contribute to traffic congestion.

He urged school officials and the public to report violations through the MMDA’s 24/7 hotline 136, the Presidential Action Center 8888, or the agency’s social media platforms.

Go cited Republic Act 4136, which prohibits parking that obstructs fire hydrants, pedestrian crossings, and street corners. He stressed that roads are intended for public use and should remain free of obstructions. **Itchie G. Cabayan**



‘END FOSSIL-FUEL DEPENDENCE.’ Civil society groups and allied organizations unfurl a banner reading ‘ADB, Stop Fueling the Crisis’ during a forum and report launch in Pasig City on June 9, calling on the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to end support for fossil fuel-dependent projects and pursue a just, community-centered energy transition. **Manny Palmero**

Mishaps forces suspension of 26 Victory Liner buses

By Dexter A. See

BAGUIO City—Nearly half of the serviceable fleet of a major bus company here were grounded following a suspension order issued by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) as an offshoot of traffic accidents that recently hit the firm.

Thirty-six of Victory Liner’s 62 buses remain operational after the LTFRB ordered the suspension of 26 units.

The suspension order came on the heels of road mishaps involving two Victory Liner buses along the Aspiras-Palispis (Marcos) Highway, which resulted in the death of a 35-year-old female passenger from Lubas, La Trinidad, and injury to some 90 others.

Edcel Gadingan, terminal master of Victory Liner-Baguio, said several routes have been adversely affected by the suspension, including trips to Dagupan, Alaminos, Bolinao, and Santa Cruz in Pangasinan. In a statement posted on social media, the company also announced the temporary suspension of its PITX (Metro Manila)-Tuguegarao run.

Gadingan clarified that advance booking does not apply to the affected trips, as tickets are issued on a first-come, first-served basis at the terminal on the day of departure.

He added that the 52 drivers and conductors affected by the suspension will be reassigned to other terminals to ensure their continued employment and minimize disruptions to their livelihood.

Bill seeks inquiry on fund shortage for Brigada Eskwela

By Maricel V. Cruz

AKBAYAN Party-list Rep. Chel Diokno on Tuesday sought a congressional inquiry into the adequacy of government funding for Brigada Eskwela and other school readiness activities amid reports that public school teachers continue to spend their own money to prepare classrooms for the opening of classes.

Diokno filed House Resolution 1102 urging the House Committee on Basic Education and Culture and other appropriate panels to investigate, in aid of legislation, the reported out-of-pocket expenses incurred by teachers for classroom repairs, facility maintenance, sanitation improvements, and other school preparation activities.

According to Diokno, the 1987 Constitution mandates the State to adequately support education—which includes protecting teachers are from financial burdens that undermine their welfare and professional responsibilities.

“Despite existing DepEd memoranda, reports have documented instances of school teachers spending personal funds for classroom repairs, facility maintenance, sanitation improvements, and other Brigada Eskwela activities in preparation for the opening of classes,” Diokno said.



CLAMOR FOR LAND REFORM. Members of the underserved sectors in the provinces of Quezon, Occidental Mindoro, and Eastern Samar stage a protest rally in front of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources central office in Quezon City to demand the distribution of public lands to landless peasants and the immediate resolution of pending land disputes including displacement of farmers, as well as access to government services. **Philippine Movement for Climate Justice photo**



UNIQUE HARD HAT FOR ISKO. Manila Mayor Francisco ‘Isko’ Moreno Domagoso tries for size a hard hat made up of an oversize gourd as he leads the opening of One Ilocos Sur Bazaar at the Kartilya ng Katipunan in Manila on Tuesday to promote Ilokano agricultural products among the residents of the big city. **Norman Cruz**

Pinoy in S. Africa told: Stay vigilant vs. mobs

By Katrina Manubay

THE Philippine Embassy in Pretoria has issued an advisory urging Filipinos in South Africa to exercise extreme caution, remain vigilant, and take proactive safety measures ahead of a planned nationwide shutdown on June 30 over possible unrest and threats against foreign nationals.

“Several anti-illegal immigrant civic groups, notably the March and March movement, have announced

mass demonstrations demanding the immediate repatriation and mass deportation of undocumented foreign nationals, alongside stricter domestic labor market restrictions,” the advisory read.

The notice comes as various anti-illegal immigration groups prepare for protests calling for the deportation of undocumented migrants, citing concerns that their presence worsens South Africa’s high unemployment and strains public health and education systems.

“While organizers assert that the movement does not support unlawful actions, security experts and human rights organizations have warned of a high risk of localized unrest, xenophobic violence, and targeted intimidation against foreign nationals,” the advisory read.

The embassy advised Filipinos to carry valid passports, visas, and work permit copies—either physical or digital—and avoid protest zones, march routes, and political gatherings to prevent escalation of violence.

“Avoid confrontation. Do not engage, argue, or confront individuals or groups conducting unauthorized document checks or participating in mass marches,” the embassy said, pledging to monitor the situation and remain ready to assist Filipinos.

Reports indicated that the African President promised to act on what he called “concerns over illegal migration” following a rise in anti-immigrant protests and sentiment in Africa’s most developed economy.



POST HARVEST PROCESS THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY. A Kankanaey woman does solar drying of freshly harvested palay in Mainit, Bontoc, Mt. Province. **Dave Leprozo**

Bill privatizes services for Hajj journey

By Ram Superable

A BILL seeking to privatize the operational aspects of the annual Hajj pilgrimage to improve services for Filipino Islamic devotees was introduced on Tuesday by Senator Robinhood Padilla.

Senate Bill No. 599, otherwise known as the proposed “Privatization of the Annual Hajj Pilgrimage” aims to amend Republic Act No. 9997, also known as the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos Act of 2009.

Under the legislative measure, qualified and accredited private service providers would handle the travel arrangements, accommodations, and logistics for the sacred journey.

The National Commission on Muslim Filipinos would retain its regulatory, accreditation, and oversight functions rather than managing

day-to-day operations.

“As a result, travel service providers will continuously endeavor to improve the quality of Hajj services, offer a wide range of flexible travel packages within the average market price range, and reinforce innovative and enhanced strategies in Hajj operations,” Padilla explained in the bill.

According to Padilla, the measure forms part of a broader legislative effort to ensure that Filipino Muslims receive dignified, safe, orderly, and deeply meaningful support while fulfilling their sacred faith obligations.

“Attended by millions of Muslims from different walks of life all over the world every year, it is a momentous spiritual gathering intended to call forth greater humility and unity among Muslims by virtue of their bond in faith and complete submission to Allah,” he said.

IN BRIEF

No happy homecoming for trafficking suspect

A TRAFFICKING suspect who briefly sought refuge in Cambodia came back home recently into the waiting handcuffs of the Cordillera Administrative Region police.

The suspect, identified as John Lerry Amit, of Los Baños, Laguna, was arrested last April 21 upon arrival from Cambodia.

According to the police, Amit allegedly recruited a resident of La Trinidad, Benguet, with a promise of a ₱70,000 monthly salary as a casino dealer in Cambodia. Upon arrival in Phnom Penh last January, the victim’s passport was confiscated, and he was forced to work in an online scam hub.

The victim eventually managed to escape and filed criminal charges against Lerry upon his return to the Philippines. **Dexter See**

Bam eyes early rehab of quake-hit schools

SENATOR Paulo Benigno “Bam” Aquino IV, returning as chairman of the Senate Committee on Basic Education, outlined key reforms to address the country’s education crisis, focusing on the 166,000-classroom backlog.

Aquino at the same time urged the government to expedite the allocation of funds for the restoration of classrooms in regions affected by the Magnitude 7.8 earthquake in Mindanao.

“According to the Department of Education, over 1,000 classrooms were damaged by the earthquake in Mindanao. The release of funds should be accelerated to ensure these are repaired as soon as possible,” he stated.

Aquino said one of his top priorities is scrutinizing the slow rollout of the P67-billion allocation that he helped secure in the 2026 national budget for the construction of 25,000 classrooms. **Joel E. Zurbano**

BOC to donate seized items to quake victims

THE Bureau of Customs (BOC) is set to donate seized and forfeited goods to communities affected by the strong earthquake in Mindanao as part of its continuing efforts to ensure that confiscated items are used for public benefit.

Customs commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno said the BOC is facilitating the donation of various essential goods, including clothing, footwear, school supplies, tents, and multifunction mobile power supply units, to help affected families and communities.

Based on updates presented during the recent collectors conference, director Melon Carlo Santiago of the Port Operations Service reported that several ports nationwide are processing the donation of these goods for immediate distribution to the earthquake victims.

The donated items will be turned over to relevant government agencies, local government units, and partner organizations to ensure their timely and proper distribution to affected communities. **Vito Barcelo**



About Town
Ernesto M. Hilario

The Enrique Manas case:
Will the DOJ stand by its own decision?

LAST week, I wrote that the Enrique Manas case had become a test of the Department of Justice’s credibility. That question remains relevant today.

After nine years of investigation and review, the DOJ has already determined that criminal charges should be filed in connection with the 2017 killing of Enrique Manas Sr. in Samar.

The question now is whether the DOJ will stand by that determination. The issue extends beyond a single criminal case. It goes to the heart of how our justice system is designed to function.

In a Constitutional democracy, prosecutors determine whether sufficient evidence exists to bring a case to court. Judges determine whether the accused are guilty.

The distinction is important because preliminary investigation was never intended to be a substitute for trial.

Prosecutors are tasked with determining whether evidence meets the legal threshold. They do not make final findings of guilt or innocence. That responsibility belongs exclusively to the judiciary.

This principle was recently reinforced when the Supreme Court upheld DOJ Circular 20, which requires prosecutors to determine the existence of prima facie evidence with reasonable certainty of conviction before filing criminal charges.

In the Manas case, this principle is not merely theoretical.

On Jan.16, 2025, then Justice Secretary Jesus Crispin Remulla directed the filing of criminal charges against Emilio Zosa and his co-accused after determining that the evidence met the DOJ’s standards for prosecution and warranted presentation before the trial court.

In March 2026, DOJ Prosecutor General Richard Fadullon implemented that directive through the filing of the Information, which was received by the court, reflecting the DOJ’s judgment after nine years of review.

Once prosecutors have completed that evaluation and concluded that the evidentiary standard has been met, the next stage belongs to the courts.

This is why many criminal law practitioners maintain that when a life has been taken, the ultimate determination of guilt should occur in a court of law.

When cases remain unresolved for years, victims’ families continue to wait while respondents remain under unresolved accusations.

When government agencies issue resolutions after extensive review, the public expects them to be implemented according to law. If a position changes, the reasons should be clear and grounded in legal principles.

This is where the role of Acting DOJ Secretary Fredderick Vida becomes significant.

The issue before the DOJ is not whether legal remedies should be entertained. They should. Nor is it whether Secretary Vida must simply agree with a decision

because it was reached by a predecessor.

The question is whether the DOJ will stand by conclusions already reached through its own processes, absent compelling legal grounds to depart from them.

For Secretary Vida, this is an opportunity to demonstrate that the DOJ’s strength lies in institutional consistency.

By ensuring that the DOJ’s actions remain anchored on evidence, established standards, and its own findings, he can reinforce public confidence that prosecutorial decisions are guided by law rather than personalities.

“
The ultimate question is not who wins, but whether institutions stand by the decisions they have already made under the law

If there are compelling legal grounds that warrant a different course of action, the public deserves to understand them. Transparency strengthens confidence in institutions.

It also protects the DOJ itself. Without clear explanations, speculation can arise and unfairly cast doubt on the DOJ and the officials entrusted with its decisions.

If no such grounds exist, then the public is entitled to expect consistency from the DOJ. The Enrique Manas case highlights this challenge.

Whatever one’s view of the allegations, the broader issue remains the same: once prosecutors determine that a case should proceed, courts should be allowed to perform their constitutional role.

The ultimate question is not who wins, but whether institutions stand by the decisions they have already made under the law.

Last week, the question was whether the DOJ would stand by its decision. The same question now confronts the DOJ leadership. After nine years of review, the DOJ is expected to have fully examined the case.

Once prosecutors have determined that it should proceed, will the DOJ stand by that determination and allow the courts to perform their constitutional role?

For the Manas family and other families waiting for justice, every delay deepens loss and prolongs the absence of closure. At some point, justice must move from review to resolution—and from institutions to the court.

That is why consistency matters. When decisions are made under law and after full review, they must be carried through with clarity and resolve.

Otherwise, confidence in the justice system is weakened not by outcomes, but by hesitation. (Email: ernhil@yahoo.com)



The Fifth Gospel
Jude Avorque Acidre

Renewing faith and politics

THERE are times when public life asks us to step back and reconsider how we relate to one another.

In our country, the relationship between legislators and bishops often passes through the narrow lens of conflict.

When bishops speak, some hear interference. When lawmakers respond, some hear defensiveness. Soon, the conversation becomes trapped in old categories: Church against State, faith against politics, pulpit against parliament.

A better path is possible.

That path begins with a simple recognition: both institutions can serve the Filipino people better while remaining faithful to their distinct roles.

Legislators carry the mandate of law-making, budgeting, oversight, and representation. Bishops carry the mission of moral teaching, pastoral care, spiritual guidance, and service to communities.

These responsibilities differ, yet they often meet in the same human realities: poverty, hunger, education, health, labor, migration, family life, peace, justice, and care for creation.

These issues reach beyond politics. They touch the human person. They touch conscience. They ask what kind of society we are building together.

This is why engagement between legislators and bishops deserves a new frame, one grounded in dialogue.

Dialogue begins with the courage to listen before reacting. It allows pastoral experience and policy experience to meet.

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When legislators and bishops engage each other with humility and respect, public life becomes less hostile, less cynical, and more hopeful

Bishops see the daily struggles of families in parishes, schools, hospitals, and mission communities. Legislators see the complexity of turning public needs into laws, budgets, and programs.

When these perspectives meet with respect, both sides see the whole picture more clearly.

From dialogue, we move to discern-



EDITORIAL

A grim reminder

THE earthquake that struck Mindanao on Monday morning was a stark reminder of what is truly important and what should take precedence at any given time.

Before the quake, people were riveted by what was happening in the Senate – the power struggle, the shamelessness of some legislators, and the inability to act on legislative matters because of the stalemate. Filipinos were both lamenting the depths to which the institution had gone, while also bracing themselves for even greater circus acts. People, not knowing how else to make sense of the situation, were also entertaining themselves with memes and other unflattering portrayals of the offending senators. It’s a small but cathartic way of getting even with these so-called public servants who are out there to serve themselves.

But when the country learned about the magnitude 7.8 that struck the Southern Philippines, we came face to face with a problem that renders the infighting petty and insignificant.

Nobody is saying that legitimate

government business must stop. On the contrary, more than ever, we need to see our taxes working for us. The fire sparked by paper trails of wrongdoing must burn with equal zeal. At the same time, people must learn to be discerning of those who speak with forked tongues, and who deliberately confuse the public on what really happened.

“
In the grand scheme of things, would any of this pettiness even matter?

All these must persist, driven by a renewed commitment to do right by a people already so battered by nature on the one hand, and by the acts and omissions of the people they had



EVERYMAN

By Melandrew T. Velasco

AS FILIPINOS celebrate the 128th anniversary of Philippine Independence, I am reminded of a patriotic journey undertaken more than a decade ago with former President Fidel V. Ramos and a distinguished group of fellow advocates who believed deeply in the Filipino spirit and the promise of our nation.

In June 2013, we embarked on the Pilipinas Road Show, a series of engagements in key cities across the United States that sought to rekindle among Filipino-Americans a deeper appreciation of their heritage, identity, and responsibility to the motherland.

The road show was inspired by our book, Silver Linings: The Continuing Saga of the 1986 People Power Revolution, which I had the privilege of co-authoring with former Interior and Local Government Secretary Rafael M. Alunan III and retired General Reynaldo V. Velasco, the first commander of the Philippine National Police Special Action Force.

Former President Ramos served as the book’s editorial chairman. More than a book tour, the Pilipinas Road Show evolved into a patriotic mission.

At every stop, we met Filipinos who had built successful careers and families in America while maintaining a deep emotional connection with the Philippines.

Many had left decades earlier, yet their love for the homeland remained evident in their stories, their values, and their desire to contribute to the country’s progress.

President Ramos delivered a message that remains as relevant today as it was then. “Forget not your roots and motherland.” Simple words. Yet they carried profound meaning. For FVR, patriotism was never confined by geography.

One could live thousands of miles away and still be a proud Filipino.

One could embrace the opportunities offered by another country while remaining faithful to the values, culture, and heritage that shaped one’s identity.

His message resonated strongly with Filipino-Americans, many of whom were raising second- and third-generation children far removed from the towns and cities where their parents and grandparents were born.

“
One could live thousands of miles away and still be a proud Filipino

In my remarks during the road show, I emphasized that the Filipino diaspora represents one of our nation’s greatest strengths.

Across the world, Filipinos have distinguished themselves as professionals, entrepreneurs, educators, healthcare workers, engineers, artists, and community leaders.

Yet regardless of where life takes us, our shared identity remains.

We carry with us the values of faith, family, perseverance, compassion, and resilience that have defined generations of Filipinos. Independence Day reminds us that freedom is not merely the absence of foreign rule. It is the freedom to preserve our identity, uphold our values, and contribute meaningfully to society.

For overseas Filipinos, this means remaining connected to the Philippines not only through remittances but through mentorship, investments, philanthropy,

cultural preservation, and active participation in nation-building.

For those of us at home, it means creating a country worthy of the sacrifices made by our heroes and of the continued faith shown by millions of Filipinos abroad.

The story of Philippine independence did not end in Kawit in 1898.

Nor did it end at EDSA in 1986.

Each generation is called upon to write its own chapter. Today, that challenge includes protecting our environment, strengthening our democratic institutions, uplifting the poor, investing in education, and preparing future generations for an increasingly complex world.

These are the modern expressions of patriotism. As I reflect on that memorable Pilipinas Road Show thirteen years ago, I remember not only the speeches and book signings but the pride that filled every gathering whenever the Philippine flag was raised and the national anthem sung.

Thousands of miles from home, Filipinos stood together, united by a common heritage and a shared hope for a better Philippines.

That, perhaps, is the enduring lesson of Independence Day. The Filipino spirit knows no borders.

And as President Ramos reminded us, wherever we may be in the world, we must never forget our roots and our motherland.

For our love of country remains one of the strongest bonds that unite us as one people, one nation, and one culture.

(The writer, president/chief executive officer of Media Touchstone Ventures, Inc. and president/executive director of the Million Trees Foundation Inc., a non-government outfit advocating tree-planting and environmental protection, is the official biographer of President Fidel V. Ramos.)

A democracy becomes healthier when conscience is welcomed, when faith communities contribute to public reasoning, and when elected leaders listen beyond political circles.

A Church becomes more credible when its public witness is rooted in compassion, truth, humility, and closeness to the people.

In the end, legislators and bishops can share one concern: the dignity of every Filipino.

That shared concern gives us enough reason to keep talking. Enough reason to keep listening. Enough reason to keep building bridges.

Because politics, at its best, must serve the human person. And faith, at its best, must move us toward love in action.

When legislators and bishops engage each other with humility and respect, public life becomes less hostile, less cynical, and more hopeful.

And from that kind of engagement, a better politics can begin.

Palestinians ‘trapped’ between troops, Hamas

GENEVA – Palestinian civilians are caught between “mass atrocities” of Israeli forces, settlers and Hamas’s brutal rule, a UN-mandated inquiry said Tuesday.

Civilians across war-ravaged Gaza and the occupied West Bank are being “systematically and deliberately” subjected to severe rights violations, the UN’s Independent International Commission of Inquiry said. The investigative team, which last year concluded that Israel had committed “genocide” in the war in Gaza, highlighted in a new report that civilians in the territory were also being “violently repressed and

controlled by the very faction that claims to govern them.” In the Gaza Strip, “ordinary Palestinians find themselves trapped between the structural violence and mass atrocities of Israeli forces and the predatory, fear-based rule of Hamas”, the report said. And in the West Bank, which has seen soaring violence since Hamas’s October 7, 2023 attack on Israel triggered the Gaza war, it described how Palestinian civilians were increasingly targeted by Israeli settler attacks. “Violence by settlers is the direct outcome of Israeli policies that support, enable and protect their actions,” commission chair Srinivasan Muralidhar said in a statement. Hamas-affiliated forces, he added, had meanwhile “exploited the vacuum created by relentless Israeli attacks and widespread destruction of Gaza.” “What is alarmingly similar is the deliberate infliction of suffering on Palestinian civilians. While their origins and motivations differ, both operate within environments engineered by Israel,” said Muralidhar, an Indian judge. The three-person commission was established by the UN Human Rights Council in May 2021 to investigate alleged rights violations in Israel and the Palestinian territories. Tuesday’s report focused heavily on the situation in the West Bank, which has been occupied by Israel since 1967. In the territory, Israeli soldiers or settlers have killed at least 1,080 Palestinians since October 2023, according to an AFP tally based on Palestinian health ministry data. **AFP**



CRIPPLING PROTESTS. People with Bolivian national flag take part in a march against the blockades and for the resignation of Bolivia’s President Rodrigo Paz, in La Paz on Tuesday, Manila time. Bolivia’s legislature gave the green light on June 7, 2026 for President Rodrigo Paz to use the military to clear roadblocks that have crippled key cities for weeks. **AFP**

India breaks through Himalayan tunnel to China boundary zone

ZOJILA, India – Indian engineers broke through the final rock section in the strategic Zojila tunnel through a Himalayan mountain on Tuesday, a milestone in providing all-weather access to the frontier Ladakh region with China. India and China, the world’s two most populous nations, are intense rivals competing for strategic influence across South Asia. Ties have thawed since a 2020 border clash, but their 3,500-kilometre (2,200-mile) frontier has been a perennial source of tension. The tunnel forms part of a broader infrastructure push, creating a link with roads and railways that will allow trade, troops and supplies to move year-round from India’s sweltering lowland plains to the soaring icy border

zones. “This is not just a tunnel but a lifeline,” said India’s minister of roads, Nitin Gadkari, during a breakthrough ceremony on Tuesday at the high-altitude tunnel, which is part of a route designed to rapidly improve connectivity between Srinagar, the main city in Indian-administered Kashmir, and Leh, Ladakh’s key city. At present, road travel between the cities is blocked during winter due to heavy snowfall, which can often rise higher than a truck. Diggers cut through the final stretch of rock in a milestone in the creation of the 13.14-kilometer Zojila tunnel, which will connect two sides otherwise cut off by snow during the bitter winters. **AFP**

Residents of Lebanon’s Tyre flee after warning

TYRE – Residents of south Lebanon’s Tyre including the Christian quarter fled on Tuesday, an AFP correspondent said, after Israel’s army for the first time warned the entire city to evacuate ahead of strikes.

The warning came a day after Iran, which insists a halt to the wider Middle East conflict must include a ceasefire in Lebanon, warned it would resume attacks on Israel if it kept striking its neighbour.

Israel has repeatedly struck the coastal city of Tyre since the latest war erupted with Hezbollah, following the Iran-backed group’s rocket fire on March 2 to avenge the killing of Iran’s supreme leader. Hezbollah, which is backed by Iran, is the only group in Lebanon that has refused to surrender its arsenal to the state since a civil war ended in 1990.

Until Tuesday, Tyre’s Christian quarter in the Old City -- a small, picturesque area where many displaced people have sought refuge -- had been spared Israeli evacuation warnings and strikes targeting the rest of the city in the ongoing war. **AFP**

Career Opportunity in **888 Tripacific Corporation**

Quality Assurance Specialist
Eight (8) Vacancy

Job Description:

- ENSURE PRODUCTS MEET THE ESTABLISHED QUALITY STANDARDS AND INDUSTRY BENCHMARKS.
- MONITORS PROCESSES AND INSPECT PRODUCED GOODS AND SERVICES.

Qualification:

- OUTSTANDING PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION-MAKING SKILLS.
- EXCELLENT VERBAL AND WRITING SKILLS.
- STRONG ANALYTICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS.

Applications may be sent to: tripacific.corp@gmail.com

Company/Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: 888 Tripacific Corporation	Name: 1. Tan Calvin, 2. Nguyen Thi Quynh Nhu, 3. Kyi Kyi Oo, 4. Tran Phuong Thao 5. Zhu Yijiong 6. Liu Qiang 7. Wang Hongjun 8. Sam Tong Sang
Company Address: Unit 1001 Cityland 10 Tower 1, 154 H.v. Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Bel-Air Makati City	Address: 1-2. Manila City 3-4. Makati City 5,8.Pasay City 6. Valenzuela City 7. Quezon City
	Nationality: 1. Indonesia 2,4,8., Vietnamese 3. Myanmar 5-7. Chinese
Nature of Business: Manufacturing	Intended period of employment: 1-8 - Three 3(years)

888 Tripacific Corporation hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.

Career Opportunity in **S & P Construction Technology & Development Co., Inc.**

Project Technician
Two (2) Vacancy

Job Description:

- Project technicians design and test new products for customers based on their company's quality standards and customer requirements.
- Other duties include generating reports, conducting inspections and serving as a point of contact for technical customer questions.

Qualification:

- Excellent verbal and written communications skills, with a strong attention to detail are required.
- Must be capable of working with minimal supervision, and have the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships.
- The candidate must be able to operate conventional and electronic survey and data-collection equipment.

Applications may be sent to: sandpconstructiontechanddevt@gmail.com

Company/Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: S & P Construction Technology & Development Co., Inc.	Name: 1. Xu Guojie, 2. Yuan Xiao
Company Address: 12/F Times Plaza Bldg, United Nation Ave.cor.taft Ave.brgy.670 Ermita,City Of Manila	Address: 1-2. Makati City
	Nationality: 1-2. Chinese
Nature of Business: Construction	Intended period of employment: 1-2 - Three 3(years)

S & P Construction Technology & Development Co., Inc. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.

Career Opportunity in **Vehicle Master Service Corp.**

Service And Parts Director
One (1) Vacancy

Job Description:

- The Service and Parts Director oversees the overall operations of the service department and parts department of the company.
- The position is responsible for ensuring efficient workshop operations, high customer satisfaction, profitability, inventory control, and effective coordination between technicians, service advisors, and parts personnel.

Qualification:

- Strong knowledge of vehicle repair, diagnostics, and automotive parts management.
- Excellent leadership, communication, and organizational skills.
- Experience in handling service KPIs, inventory systems, and customer relations.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office and dealership/service management systems is a plus.
- Strong problem-solving and decision-making abilities.
- Preferably with experience in automotive dealerships or fleet service operations.

Applications may be sent to: vehiclemasterservicecorp@gmail.com

Company/Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: Vehicle Master Service Corp.	Name: 1. He Jiacheng
Company Address: 27 T. Santiago St., Canumay West Valenzuela	Address: 1. Valenzuela City
	Nationality: 1. Chinese
Nature of Business: Repairs And Maintenance Of Motor Vehicles	Intended period of employment: 1 - Three 3(years)

Vehicle Master Service Corp. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.

Career Opportunity in **S & P Construction Technology & Development Co., Inc.**

Chinese Construction Technician
Ten (10) Vacancy

Job Description:

- Manage and supervise facility development and image enhancement projects.
- Coordinate logistics and communication between clients, vendors, and stakeholders.
- Follow all state and safety requirements to implement good safety conditions at work site.

Qualification:

- Able to speak and communicate using Mandarin is an advantage.
- Able to explain problems simply and clearly.
- Proficient in MS Office.
- Able to follow health and safety regulations.
- Excellent mathematical and problem-solving skills.

Applications may be sent to: sandpconstructiontechanddevt@gmail.com

Company/Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: S & P Construction Technology & Development Co., Inc.	Name: 1. Liu Lin, 2. Feng Yu, 3. Ye Jianquan, 4. Su Shuqing, 5. Shi Lei, 6. Yang Ping, 7. Xiong Ying, 8. Qu Ganchuang, 9. Chang Yuhao, 10. Xiao Minghui
Company Address: 12/F Times Plaza Bldg, United Nation Ave.cor.taft Ave.brgy.670 Ermita,City Of Manila	Address: 1-3,7-8,10. Manila City 4-5. Manila 6. Mandaluyong City 9. Makati City
	Nationality: 1-10. Chinese
Nature of Business: Construction	Intended period of employment: 1-10 - Three 3(years)

S & P Construction Technology & Development Co., Inc. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.

Career Opportunity in **Vehicle Master Service Corp.**

Marketing And Sales Consultant
Six (6) Vacancy

Job Description:

- Identify effective marketing campaigns that will reach targeted audiences effectively and efficiently.

Qualification:

- Strong knowledge of sales and persuasion techniques coupled with excellent knowledge of the products.
- Knowledge of data analysis and market research.
- Intuition about customer desires and practical needs.

Applications may be sent to: vehiclemasterservicecorp@gmail.com

Company/Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: Vehicle Master Service Corp.	Name: 1. Xie Jinfu, 2. Li Yuxiang, 3. Jin Jiahui, 4. Truong Thi Lan Anh, 5. Lin Guicheng, 6. Nguyen Van Chung
Company Address: 27 T. Santiago St., Canumay West Valenzuela	Address: 1. Taguig City 2-3. Makati City 4,6. Quezon City 5. Pasig City
	Nationality: 1-3,5. Chinese 4,6. Vietnamese
Nature of Business: Repairs And Maintenance Of Motor Vehicles	Intended period of employment: 1-3,5 - Three 3(years), 4,6 - Two 2(years)

Vehicle Master Service Corp. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.

Career Opportunity in **888 Tripacific Corporation**

Chinese Product Trainer And Researcher
Seven (7) Vacancy

Job Description:

- CREATE TRAINING MATERIALS AND PERFORM INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS ABOUT PRODUCTS OFFERED BY THE COMPANY & GATHERING INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRODUCT'S PURPOSE, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTION, AND WHICH SOLUTIONS SHOULD OFFER TO CREATE CUSTOMER DELIGHT.

Qualification:

- STRONG KNOWLEDGE IN ORGANIZING PHYSICAL TRAINING COURSES.
- GOOD COMMUNICATION SKILLS SPECIFICALLY IN PUBLIC SPEAKING.
- EXPERIENCE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS FOR PRODUCT RESEARCH.

Applications may be sent to: tripacific.corp@gmail.com

Company/Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: 888 Tripacific Corporation	Name: 1. Gu Yuxin, 2. Yang Bingxin, 3. Shi Zhenwei, 4. Xu Zhize, 5. Song Xuanding, 6. Lin Zhengcong, 7. Liu Yan
Company Address: Unit 1001 Cityland 10 Tower 1, 154 H.v. Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Bel-Air Makati City	Address: 1. Taguig City 2-4. Manila City 5. Parañaque City 6. Muntinlupa City 7. Makati City
	Nationality: 1-7. Chinese
Nature of Business: Manufacturing	Intended period of employment: 1-7 - Three 3(years)

888 Tripacific Corporation hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.

Career Opportunity in **S & P Construction Technology & Development Co., Inc.**

Technical Consultant
One (1) Vacancy

Job Description:

- A skilled Technical Consultant provides expert guidance and support on construction projects.
- The role involves analyzing technical requirements, advising on best practices, and ensuring that all construction processes meet industry standards and project specifications.

Qualification:

- Proven experience in construction or technical consulting.
- Strong knowledge of construction methods, materials, and regulations.
- Ability to interpret technical drawings, plans, and specifications.
- Excellent analytical, problem-solving, and communication skills.
- Proficiency in relevant software (e.g., AutoCAD, MS Office) is a plus.
- Professional license or certification is an advantage.

Applications may be sent to: sandpconstructiontechanddevt@gmail.com

Company/Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: S & P Construction Technology & Development Co., Inc.	Name: 1. Luo Guibin
Company Address: 12/F Times Plaza Bldg, United Nation Ave.cor.taft Ave.brgy.670 Ermita,City Of Manila	Address: 1. Manila City
	Nationality: 1. Chinese
Nature of Business: Construction	Intended period of employment: 1 - Three 3(years)

S & P Construction Technology & Development Co., Inc. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.

Career Opportunity in **Vehicle Master Service Corp.**

Chinese Project Manager
One (1) Vacancy

Job Description:

- Managing daily cash balances; Ensuring that cash flows are adequate to allow business units to operate effectively.
- Preparation of financial accounts and other reports based on accounting standards.
- Arranging financial audits and reviews as required.

Qualification:

- Have fluent or Native Mandarin Traditional Chinese language skills in speaking, reading, and writing areas.
- Strong planning, problem-solving and organizational & time management skills and is able to prioritize and manage multiple tasks and deadlines.
- With good written and oral communication skills.

Applications may be sent to: vehiclemasterservicecorp@gmail.com

Company/Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: Vehicle Master Service Corp.	Name: 1. Zhu Chengquan
Company Address: 27 T. Santiago St., Canumay West Valenzuela	Address: 1. Valenzuela City
	Nationality: 1. Chinese
Nature of Business: Repairs And Maintenance Of Motor Vehicles	Intended period of employment: 1 - Three 3(years)

Vehicle Master Service Corp. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.

Career Opportunity in **S & P Construction Technology & Development Co., Inc.**

Chinese Construction Technician
Seven (7) Vacancy

Job Description:

- Manage and supervise facility development and image enhancement projects.
- Coordinate logistics and communication between clients, vendors, and stakeholders.
- Follow all state and safety requirements to implement good safety conditions at work site.

Qualification:

- Able to speak and communicate using Mandarin is an advantage.
- Able to explain problems simply and clearly.
- Proficient in MS Office.
- Able to follow health and safety regulations.
- Excellent mathematical and problem-solving skills.

Applications may be sent to: sandpconstructiontechanddevt@gmail.com

Company/Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: S & P Construction Technology & Development Co., Inc.	Name: 1. Zhu Deyun, 2. Hu Xuwei, 3. Deng Lifeng, 4. Pan Zhifa, 5. Wang Chaojiang, 6. Chen Xiao, 7. Zhao Lei
Company Address: 12/F Times Plaza Bldg, United Nation Ave.cor.taft Ave.brgy.670 Ermita,City Of Manila	Address: 1. Makati City 2-5. Manila City 6-7. Manila
	Nationality: 1-7. Chinese
Nature of Business: Construction	Intended period of employment: 1-7 - Three 3(years)

S & P Construction Technology & Development Co., Inc. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.

NOTICE FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THE EXTRAJUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF THE ESTATE OF IRMA DELA CRUZ PEÑA FUERTE

Notice is hereby given that the Extrajudicial Settlement of the Estate of the deceased Irma Dela Cruz PeñaFuerte, who died on 21 May 2025, has been executed by her heirs on May 6, 2026. (Doc. No. 249, Page No. 51, Book No. II, series of 2026) before Notary Public Atty. Armin L Roxas, declaring that the deceased has no outstanding debts, obligation or liabilities at the time of her death.

(MS-JUNE 3/10/17, 2026)

Career Opportunity in **SALES RAIN BPO INC.**

Position Title : Manager Operations
(1 Vacancy)
Key Responsibilities:

- Operations Management**
 - Manage day-to-day CDI and IP DRG coding operations. Ensure productivity, accuracy, and TAT targets are achieved.
- Quality & Compliance**
 - Maintain quality scores above defined benchmarks (e.g., >95%). Lead root cause analysis for DRG shifts, denials, and audit findings.
- Financial & Performance Management**
 - Manage FTE planning, budgeting, and cost optimization. Ensure optimal DRG assignment to prevent revenue leakage.
- Team Leadership & Development**
 - Lead, mentor CDI specialists, and IP DRG coders. Conduct performance reviews and succession planning
- Risk & Escalation Management**
 - Develop mitigation plans for quality dips or productivity gaps. Ensure data security and HIPAA compliance

Qualification (Education, Experience, Professional License, Skills Certification, Specialized Training):

- B.A Psychology
- Certification (CPC, CCS)
- 7 Years of IP DRG/ CDI experience including team management
- client management, quality management, and Risk management.

Company / Employer : SALES RAIN BPO, INC.	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: SALES RAIN BPO INC. Complete Address: 26F IBM PLAZA EASTWOOD CITY, QUEZON CITY	NAME: SANKURATHI KEERTHI Address: 26F IBM PLAZA, EASTWOOD CITY, QUEZON CITY
Nature of business: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	Nationality: INDIAN Intended period of employment: THREE (3) years

Company hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.

Wemby finds answers in art as Spurs fight back in Finals

NEW YORK—Victor Wembanyama escaped the NBA Finals whirlwind with some drawing in a park before playing a starring role in the San Antonio Spurs’ 115-111 victory at the New York Knicks on Monday.

The French superstar scored 32 points and grabbed eight rebounds to spark a San Antonio win that pulled them within 2-1 in the best-of-seven series, which continues on Wednesday.

“Wemby” escaped the mental tensions of the NBA Finals by leaving the hotel hours before game three and making a drawing of a statue in a park.

“Really tried to relax,” said Wembanyama. “The playoffs, it’s like a whirlwind. It’s hard to put your head out of the water.”

“I need some time off, let my brain cool down, recover as much for the body as for the mind.”

The 22-year-old worked with monks in the off-season, but physically he was anything but zen.

“I remember running laps and laps during the summer, and like my hamstrings were burning. But I was pushing through because I was trying to push my limit,” he said.

“In the playoffs I felt the hamstrings burning from running so much, playing sometimes 25 minutes in a row, so the physical aspect is really the difference maker.”

Spurs coach Mitch Johnson was pleased with the aggressive play from his big man at Madison Square Garden.

“I’m sure Victor has numerous sources of motivation,” Johnson said. “I don’t think any of us are surprised or expect anything different than a strong performance and him being on his front foot in terms of being in attack mode.”

For the Knicks, who made 13 turnovers and were outscored 25-18 from the free throw line, a perceived lack of second-half foul calls upset coach Mike Brown. **AFP**



San Antonio superstar Victor Wembanyama of the San Antonio Spurs dunks against the New York Knicks during Game 3 of the 2026 NBA Finals at Madison in New York. **AFP**

Tolentino: 6 modern pentathlon athletes qualify for Asian Games

FOUR male and two female athletes earned qualification in modern pentathlon as the Team Philippines grows bigger by the week for the Nagoya-Aichi 20th Asian Games in September.



Abraham Tolentino

Just last week, two poomsae and kyorugi athletes in taekwondo made the grade for the Asian Games with Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) president Abraham “Bambol” Tolentino gaining more confidence for a better performance in the games set for September 19 to October 4.

“We got the email from the organizers about the qualification of six modern pentathlon athletes and that’s another piece of good news for our campaign,” Tolentino said. “The opportunities to do better in Nagoya and Aichi continue to grow wider.”

The Philippines got four gold, two silver and 12 bronze medals in the Hangzhou 2022 (2023) edition and with Paris 2024 Olympics gymnastics double gold medalist Carlos Yulo and reigning champion and record holder pole vaulter EJ Obiena

leading the charge, Tolentino said the chances are getting bolder.

“We’re hoping that more of our athletes will qualify for the Asian Games, where the competitions have gotten close to the level of the Olympics,” Tolentino said.

One of the more welcome developments for the Asian Games was the qualification of the men and women teams in indoor volleyball—women’s beach volleyball was a shoo-in following the gold medal won in last December’s Bangkok Asian Games.

Binan trounces Marikina; Zamboanga, Pasig win

RESURGENT Binan Tatak Gel battered Marikina, 103-73, on Monday and sustained its climb in the SportsPlus MPBL (Maharlika Pilipinas Basketball League) 2026 Season at the One Arena Cainta in Rizal Province.

Showing its firepower, Binan led as far as 96-56 before cruising to its sixth straight win and a 9-3 slate in the round-robin elimination phase of the two-division, 28-team tournament.

Carlo Lastimosa paced Binan with 21 points and 2 rebounds in just 12 minutes and 37 seconds of action to clinch the SportsPlus best player honors over Nic Cabanero, with 17 points, 9 rebounds, 4 assists and 2 steals, and Warren Bonifacio, with 15 points, 11 rebounds and 2 assists.

With Lastimosa sinking 3 of 4 triple tries, Bam Lopez making 1 of 1, Ronnie Alonte canning 1 of 2, and Ryan Sual hitting 1 of 2, Binan drilled in nine of 20 from long distance for a high 45 percent conversion that eclipsed Marikina’s 4 of 20 for 20 percent.

The Marikina Shoemasters slid to 4-8 as only JR Alabanza, with 15 points, 9 rebounds and 3 assists, and Ed Daquiaoag,

with 13 points, 8 rebounds and 2 steals, to push Pasig farther away, 82-66, with 7 minutes and 20 seconds left.

Pasig subdues Bacolod

Pasig City hit its stride midway through the first quarter and kept the pace to beat Bacolod, 96-84, in the first game.

Held to a 58-58 count, Pasig drew back-to-back triples from John Felix Corpuz and Jerome Garcia and seven straight points from Michael Lambino to surge ahead, 71-64, after three quarters.

Warlo Batac then presided over an 11-2 run opening the fourth quarter

to push Pasig farther away, 82-66, with 7 minutes and 20 seconds left.

Pasig halted a two-game skid and improved to 6-3.

Lambino, a prized find from the University of Luzon Golden Tigers, posted 13 points, on a perfect 4 of 4 field goals and 5 of 5 charities, to capture best player honors over Garcia, with 17 points, 4 rebounds and 3 assists, Jacob Galicia, with 17 points and 6 rebounds, and Batac, with 15 points and 7 rebounds.

Galicia and Corpuz combined for 16 points in the first half as Pasig led, 47-43, despite Ram Mesque-riola’s 12 points for Bacolod.

Carlo Lastimosa turns hot for Binan Tatak Gel.



NAVI PH wins PLDT Home-powered Athena Cup, gears up for MLBB Women’s International 2026

FOLLOWING its championship run at the all-female Mobile Legends tournament Athena Cup 2026, esports team NAVI PH is now setting its sights on the Mobile Legends: Bang Bang Women’s Invitational (MWI) this July.

The team emerged victorious in the month-long PLDT Home-powered Athena Cup, which served as the Philippines’ premier all-female MLBB competitive platform and official qualifier for the global tournament.

The Athena Cup underscores the discipline, coordination, and rising talent driving the country’s growing presence in global women’s esports, reflecting PLDT Home’s continued support for platforms that provide female players with greater visibility and opportunity.

As they prepare for MWI 2026, NAVI PH remains focused on refin-

ing their team’s consistency and cohesion, which were key to their recent win.

“What sets our team apart is our discipline,” said jungler Keishi. “We have a deep level of trust in each other, and that shows in how we play. Our in-game discipline and

chemistry are at 100 percent.”

Roamer Meraay emphasized the importance of platforms like the Athena Cup for elevating women in esports.

“We’re very thankful that we had this opportunity and exposure to showcase our potential, especially in a male-dominated industry,” she said. “This serves as a bridge for others to see what we’re capable of. We hope women in esports continue to receive more support so more players are inspired to pursue this path.”

“To aspiring women players, just keep going and continue doing what you love – that’s where we all started,” she added.

Rainn, who was named the Most Valuable Player, emphasized the team’s mindset heading into the international competition.



Esports team NAVI PH

Olympians in spotlight as athletics’ meet starts

By Jeremiah Sevilla

CAPAS, Tarlac—Olympic veterans Kristina Knott and Lauren Hoffman are set to plunge into action as the ICTSI Philippine Athletics Championships 2026 presented by the Philippine Sports Commission, gets underway on Wednesday at the New Clark City Athletics Stadium here.

Tokyo Olympian Knott is out to reclaim the crown in the centerpiece women’s 100-meter sprint after opting to skip the event last year due to an injured right elbow she suffered in her 200-meter title defense.

With the Southeast Asian Games 2019 double gold medalist reduced to a spectator, the Filipino-Australian sprinter Jessica Laurence ruled the century dash in the previous edition after clocking 11.76 seconds.

SEA Games 2025 bronze medalist Zion Corrales Nelson is another contender to watch out for in the trackfest backed by the ICTSI Foundation after she was hailed as the new Philippine sprint queen just two weeks ago.

Nelson set the new record of 11.19 seconds in the McNab Sprint Series in California, shattering Knott’s previous mark of 11.27 seconds. That performance also made her the fastest Southeast Asian woman as she eclipsed Singaporean Veronica Pereira’s 11.20 seconds.

Meanwhile, Paris Games veteran and 2025 SEA Games double bronze medalist Hoffman is also eager to restake her claim on the women’s 400-meter hurdles title with reigning champion Robyn Brown out this year due to pregnancy.

Career Opportunity in 3M Service Center APAC Inc.	
Position title: Intercompany Outbound Analyst (Thai)	
Vacancy (1)	
Job Description:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Manages intercompany orders utilizing Corporate ERP (SAP) and/or Legacy Systems COMS (Corporate Order Management System), ICMS (International Order Management System Salesforce, BPCS, Lotus Notes databases and etc. where applicable)Work directly with source of supply locations, BG/division supply chain, functional work streams and/or 3PL freight forwarders to ensure the timely export of international orders.Understands and supports the export rules and regulations to comply with source country and international Export Regulatory policies and procedures for international shipments.	
Qualification (Education, Experience, Professional License, Skills Certification, Specialized Training):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bachelor level university college degree or higher.Flexible in taking ad-hoc assignments as needed (i.e., work transitions/migrations, SAP and/or other connected application (CAP) deployment activities, lead continuous, improvement projects, etc.+2 years of experience in Customer Service, Supply Chain, Manufacturing, Finance, and/or Transportation.Must be fluent in English and Thai Language (oral & written)	
Applications may be sent to: 3M GSC Philippines Talent Acquisition Email address: ph-gscrecruitment@mmm.com	
Company/ Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: 3M Service Center APAC Inc. Complete address: 18 th and 19 th Floors Bonifacio Stopover Corporate Center, E-Square Information Technology Park Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City 1634 Nature of business: a domestic corporation engage in Shared Services.	Name: Peraya Suntopwatt Address: Taguig City Nationality: Thai Intended period of employment: One (1) Year
3M Service Center APAC Inc. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Malingaya Street, Malate, Manila.	



Korean players celebrate their victory over Alas Pilipinas. Roman Prospero

Korea’s win pushes Alas Pilipinas on the brink

CITY OF CANDON—South Korea sustained its charge with a 25-16, 25-18, 25-22 victory over Alas Pilipinas on Tuesday, leaving the home squad clinging to slim hopes in the Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) Women’s Volleyball Cup at the Candon City Arena.

Sohwi Kang had 19 points on 15 attacks, three service aces as the Koreans notched their third consecutive straight-sets win.

Juah Lee had 12 points, delivering five of South Korea’s seven blocks, while Hyunsoo Na also scored 12 on 10 attacks and two aces.

Alas Pilipinas absorbed its second loss in four matches in the 12-nation tournament presented by the Philippine Sports Commission and the City of Candon headed by Mayor Eric D. Singson.

Thea Gagat paced the Filipinas with nine points on five attacks, three blocks and a service ace, Nina Ytang had eight points on seven attacks and a block, while skipper Alyssa Valdez and Alyssa Solomon contributed seven points each.

Chinese Taipei improved to 3-0 after routing Uzbekistan, 25-17, 25-13, 25-19 for second spot in Pool A.

Australia, which dealt Alas Pilipinas its first loss, looks to improve its 1-1 record when it takes on winless Kyrgyzstan.

Alas Pilipinas needs a big win over Chinese Taipei, although its semifinal hopes also hinge on the results of Korea and Australia.

Valdez vowed to continue fighting. “We will give our best. We have learned a lot and we will face the fight with all our heart,” Valdez said.

Iran beat Lebanon, 25-9, 25-8, 25-15, for a 1-2 record in Pool B. Lebanon is winless in three matches.

PSC to craft athletes’ safety policies after 2 cagers’ death

By Randy Caluag

PHILIPPINE Sports Commission (PSC) chairman Patrick Gregorio said he will convene a “stakeholders’ panel” today (Wednesday) to address athletes’ safety, following the drowning deaths of two Ateneo de Manila University basketball players during a team-building activity in Dipaculao, Aurora.

The victims, 19-year-old rookie prospect Rene Baterbonia and 21-year-old foreign student-athlete Divine Adili, died in what authorities described as a drowning incident during the team’s water activity.

“The nation is weeping,” Gregorio said in a media briefing. “But this is something that we, as the PSC and caretaker of sports, must do.”

Gregorio clarified that the panel will not serve as a probe into the incident,

but will instead focus on crafting policies to enhance athlete safety.

“This is not an investigation. We leave that to the proper authorities,” he added.

The panel will include key stakeholders from government and sports organizations, among them PSC Commissioner Fritz Gaston, Samahan Basketball ng Pilipinas executive director Erika Dy, Commission on Higher Education Chairman Shirley Agrupis, and



PSC chairman Patrick Gregorio (middle) with executive director Atty. Guillermo Iroy and commissioner Fritz Gaston. Randy Caluag

representatives from the University Athletic Association of the Philippines in Rebo Saguisag and Fr. Aldrin Suan.

Also invited are National Youth Commission Chairman Jeff Ortega and Department of Education Undersecretary Malcolm Garna.

The PSC said Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla has assured that an official report from the Philippine National Police in Aurora will be made available

for the meeting scheduled on June 10 or in subsequent sessions.

“Kailangang maunawaan ng lahat na kailangan naming gawin ang trabaho namin dito sa PSC. We are the government agency na nangangalaga sa Philippine sports, lalo na sa grassroots at amateur sports,” Gregorio said.

The PSC said it will coordinate the panel’s findings with the PNP and the Department of Justice.

Solon calls for stronger safeguards for athletes

By Maricel V. Cruz

PINOY Workers Party-list Rep. Karl Fernandez Legazpi on Tuesday extended his condolences to the families of two Ateneo de Manila University student-athletes who died during a team-building activity in Aurora, while calling for a congressional investigation on the review of safety measures protecting young athletes.

Legazpi, a former commissioner of the National Youth Commission and currently vice chairperson of the House Committee on Youth and Sports Development, said the deaths of Divine Adili and Rene Clert Baterbonia underscore the need to ensure that institutions entrusted with the development of student-athletes maintain the highest standards of safety and care.

“I extend my deepest condolences to the families, friends, and the entire Ateneo community following the tragic deaths of student-athletes Divine Adili and Rene Clert Baterbonia during a team-building activity in Aurora,” Legazpi said who vowed to file a resolution calling for a congressional investigation.

“In light of these events, I will be filing a House Resolution urging the House Committee on Youth and Sports Development to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the adequacy of existing policies, safety standards, and accountability mechanisms governing school-sponsored athletic programs, with the end in view of strengthening the protection and welfare of student-athletes,” Legazpi said.

Horse owners’ group protests coming Triple Crown, warns of revenue losses

KLUB Don Juan de Manila (KDJM) has filed a formal protest with the Philippine Racing Commission (PHILRACOM) regarding the upcoming 2nd Leg of the 2026 PHILRACOM-PCSO Triple Crown Stakes Race, scheduled for June 14, 2026 (Sunday).

In a letter to PHILRACOM Chairman Hon. Aurelio P. De Leon, KDJM raised concerns over the race’s shrinking field size. The organization warns that proceeding with too few horses violates regulations and will cause severe

financial damage to the industry.

KDJM outlined three critical issues, namely, Regulatory Violation: Rule PR 58-E requires a minimum of five participating entries for stakes races. Running the race with fewer starters directly violates PHILRACOM’s own rules; Loss of Betting and Prize Money: If the field drops below five horses, the race must become a non-wagering exhibition. This removes the race from public betting and strips winning owners of their prize money; and Impact on Public Revenue: A de-

pleted field destroys the betting pool. This eliminates guaranteed public revenues and statutory funding allocations, including the 10% withholding tax on winnings and the 0.5% commissions for PHILRACOM and the Games and Amusements Board (GAB).

“To preserve the prestige of the Triple Crown Series and safeguard public wagering revenues, the Board must ensure strict compliance with field minimums,” said Ryan B. Ponce, President of KDJM.



KDJM demands that PHILRACOM immediately review the entry list and either postpone the event or take administrative action to ensure the race meets legal field requirements.

Aguilar, Ong punch JPGT Elite Finals tickets in Negros thriller

BACOLOD City—Darren Ong and Ana Marie Aguilar delivered stunning, last-ditch charges to secure their spots in the Junior PGT Elite Finals, conquering the ICTSI Negros JPGT Championship in contrasting but equally spectacular fashion at the Negros Occidental Golf and Country Club here on Tuesday.

Both golfers didn’t just win the tournament – they crashed the party for the South team rankings, punching their tickets to the Ryder Cup-style national finals.



Shown here are golf winners (from left) Ken Edward Guillermo, Marqaela Dee, Ana Marie Aguilar and Darren Ong holding their medals. (Manny Marcelo)

For Ong, the final round of the boys’ 7-10 division was less of a shootout and more of a victory lap. Holding a huge 14-stroke lead after Monday’s opening round, Ong showed no signs of slowing down. He slowed down with an 80 in scorching conditions after a 76 but still won by 22 strokes on a 156 total over 36 holes.

Anthony Avila carded an 88 to finish a distant second at 178, while Joaquin Limjap took third with a 199 after a 98.

Ong’s dominant performance catapulted him from No. 6 to No. 4 in the Visayas-Mindanao Series rankings. Accumulating 35 points across the six-stage circuit, he dislodged the absent Thomas Ngo (26) to claim the fourth and final qualifying spot. Ong thus joined Ethan Lago, Stephen Clementer and Lucas Revilla to form the South’s youngest squad, ready to battle the North side on Aug. 17-20 at the Pueblo de Oro Golf and Country Club.

“I’m so excited to play in the grand finals. I’m going to practice hard to turn my weaknesses into strengths, but my goal is to keep playing pressure-free,” said the nine-year-old Ong.

“Everything just clicked today, espe-

cially my chipping and putting, though I still feel like I could’ve done better,” he added.

Looking ahead to the team format, Ong promised to spark the lineup: “I’m ready to bring good vibes, high energy and strong cooperation to the South team.”

While Ong coasted, home-grown talent Aguilar had to grind it out in the girls’ youngest category. Trailing Vanya Go by two strokes entering the final 18 holes, Aguilar locked into a high-stakes showdown of grit, nerves and shifting fortunes that came down to the absolute wire.

The pendulum first swung in Aguilar’s favor around the turn. Go, looking steady early on, suddenly suffered back-to-back triple bogeys starting from No. 9. Despite Aguilar opening her back nine with consecutive bogeys, Go’s missteps allowed the local favorite to wrest the lead.

But the drama was far from over. On No. 14, it was Aguilar’s turn to stumble, holing out with a triple bogey of her own, enabling Go to re-claim a one-stroke advantage and setting the stage for a dramatic finish with just two holes left to play.

4.7%

PH unemployment
in April 2026

4.1%

PH jobless rate in
April 2025

2.41m

Filipinos out of
work
in April 2026



TESDA VISIT.

Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) Secretary Francisco “Kiko” Benitez tours members of the media through the agency’s learning facilities during a visit Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at the TESDA Complex in Taguig City. With him is Ramon Ilagan, undersecretary of the Presidential Communications Office. Joseph Muego

Unemployment hit 4.7% in April

By Thony Rose Lesaca

THE Philippine unemployment rate climbed to 4.7 percent in April 2026 as the local economy struggled to absorb a growing labor force despite major hiring bumps in the tourism and manufacturing sectors.

Data released by the Philippine Statistics Authority showed the jobless rate increased from 4.1 percent in April 2025.

This means 2.41 million Filipinos were out of work in April 2026, up from 2.06 million individuals during the same month last year.

“The latest labor market indicators reflect both the challenges confronting the economy and the resilience of

Filipino workers and businesses,” Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev) Secretary Arsenio Balisacan said in a statement.

He said the government continues to monitor the employment and livelihood impacts of recent disruptions, including the Middle East crisis, the El Niño phenomenon, and the 7.8-magnitude earthquake in Mindanao.

“We remain committed to provid-

ing timely support to affected workers and households,” Balisacan said.

The latest figure, however, represented an improvement from the 5.8 percent unemployment rate recorded in January 2026, when 2.96 million people were jobless.

The quality of available jobs also worsened over the year. The underemployment rate — which measures the share of employed people who want more hours or an additional job — rose to 15.2 percent in April 2026 from 14.6 percent in April 2025 and 13.2 percent in January 2026.

Out of 48.89 million employed Filipinos, 7.41 million expressed a desire for more work. Among those underemployed, 56.8 percent worked less than 40 hours a week, while 43.2 percent already logged 40 hours or

more.

Total employment levels technically increased to 48.89 million in April 2026 from 48.67 million in April 2025 and 47.94 million in January 2026. However, the overall labor force participation rate dropped to 62.7 percent from 63.7 percent last year, representing 51.30 million economically active Filipinos aged 15 and over.

The services sector drove the bulk of local employment with a 62.3 percent share, followed by agriculture at 19.4 percent and industry at 18.3 percent.

By specific industries, wholesale and retail trade led all sub-sectors by employing 19.8 percent of the workforce, followed by agriculture and forestry at 16.8 percent and construction at 9.8 percent.

DICT expects
\$30b investments
from 7-year AI
infra roadmap

By Darwin G. Amojelar

THE Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) expects to attract \$30 billion in investments over seven years under its Philippines AI+ Infrastructure Masterplan (PAIIM 2033).

“We expect the Economic Development Committee to approve the masterplan by July this year,” DICT Secretary Henry Rhoe Aguda told reporters on the sidelines of the agency’s 10th anniversary.

The PAIIM 2033 outlines the country’s long-term strategy for developing AI-ready infrastructure, expanding digital connectivity, enabling high-performance computing capabilities, fostering local innovation and attracting global digital industries.

While the Philippines ranks fourth overall in ASEAN in the Oxford Insights Government AI Readiness Index 2025, it performs strongly in governance and adoption, ranking third in policy capacity and fifth in public sector AI adoption.

Despite these legislative and policy strengths, the country continues to lag behind regional leaders in physical AI infrastructure, particularly in compute capacity, data center development and robust digital connectivity.

Addressing these gaps is essential to unlocking the full potential of AI. PAIIM 2033 provides the roadmap for achieving this through coordinated investments in AI-ready infrastructure, paving the way for the Philippines to become a regional hub for AI infrastructure, innovation and digital industries.

“Countries that build the infrastructure of the AI economy today will attract the investments, industries and high-value jobs of tomorrow. PAIIM 2033 ensures that the Philippines is prepared not only to adopt AI, but to become a regional leader in powering it,” Aguda said.

PAIIM 2033 envisions the establishment of up to 1.5 gigawatts of AI-ready data center capacity by 2033, supported by expanded digital connectivity, renewable energy, skilled talent and a robust regulatory framework.

SMC enters next
growth phase, eyes
energy, mass transit

By Jenniffer B. Austria

DIVERSIFIED conglomerate San Miguel Corp. (SMC) is moving into its next phase of growth, with plans to expand power generation capacity, accelerate renewable energy investments and push ahead with key infrastructure projects.

SMC chairman and chief executive Ramon Ang, speaking during the company’s annual stockholders meeting Tuesday, June 9, 2026, said the investments previously made across the company’s businesses are now translating into higher earnings, improved efficiency and expanded capacity.

“Many of our major projects we invested in over the past few years are now operational and generating significant value for our company,” Ang said. “Across our businesses, these investments are improving efficiency, expanding capacity and strengthening market position and creating new opportunity for growth.”

Moving forward, Ang said the company would focus on energy security, transportation connectivity, food security and sustainability as it pursues long-term growth.

Among the group’s priorities are expanding power generation capacity and increasing investments in renewable energy projects, particularly pumped-storage hydropower and solar facilities.

“We are expanding our power capacity, pushing ahead with investments in renewable energy such as pumped hydro and solar,” Ang said.

The conglomerate is also continuing work on its major infrastructure projects, including the New Manila International Airport in Bulacan, MRT-7 and the South Luzon Expressway Toll Road 4 (TR4) project extending to Lucena.

Ang said the airport project remained on schedule, with the first runway expected to be operational by 2028 and possibly ahead of target.

“I believe the first runway will be ready by at least the second quarter of 2028,” he said.

He noted that construction of the passenger terminal and logistics center could take longer due to additional land development requirements. The logistics hub, however, is expected to be completed by the end of 2026.



GENSAN
AIRPORT
DAMAGE.

Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez and other DOTr officials inspected the damages sustained by the General Santos International Airport following the Magnitude 7.8 earthquake yesterday. The airport is still closed to commercial flights, but remains open to government and humanitarian flights to ensure the continuity of relief operations, following the President’s order.

ALI to reopen Mandarin Oriental Makati in December

PROPERTY giant Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) is set to reopen the Mandarin Oriental brand on Dec. 14, 2026, as it seeks to strengthen Makati’s position as the country’s premier business, lifestyle and cultural destination.

The new Mandarin Oriental Makati, Manila, which will rise above Ayala Triangle Gardens in the Makati central business district, will charge room rates starting at about P29,000 per night. It will target high-end business and leisure travelers.

The hotel marks the return of the luxury hospitality brand to Manila more than a decade after the closure

of its original property in 2014.

ALI said the project forms part of continuing investments in Makati’s urban transformation through mixed-use developments, public spaces, hospitality, retail and cultural destinations.

“Mandarin Oriental has long held a special place in the story of Makati. Its return reflects not only the enduring appeal of Makati but also our vision of creating world-class city destinations that celebrate Filipino culture and foster meaningful connections,” said Paloma Urquijo Zobel de Ayala, creative director of ALI.

Developed in partnership with

Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group, the property will feature 275 guestrooms and suites designed with elements inspired by Filipino craftsmanship and local materials.

Located within Makati’s financial district, the hotel will offer direct access to major office towers, shopping destinations, restaurants and cultural attractions.

For meetings and events, the hotel will feature a 740-square-meter grand hall that can accommodate up to 1,000 guests, as well as boardrooms and flexible event spaces.

Jenniffer B. Austria



DOT UNDERSECRETARIES. The Department of Tourism (DOT) welcomed three new officials to the agency: Stanley Ng, Maria Victoria Jasmin and Maria Dionesia Rivera-Guillermo, who will serve as undersecretaries. With extensive experience in both the public and private sectors, the new officials bring expertise and leadership intended to strengthen the department’s programs, partnerships and efforts to advance a more competitive, inclusive and sustainable Philippine tourism industry. The agency noted that the new undersecretaries will focus on driving initiatives to support tourism stakeholders, local communities and travelers.

PH fresh mangoes enter Canada market

By Othel V. Campos

THE Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and partner agencies facilitated the country’s first commercial shipment of fresh Philippine mangoes to Canada on June 3, 2026.

The shipment, consisting of 400 cartons of fresh mangoes, was sent off at the Philippine Airlines International Cargo Terminal with officials from the government and the private sector in attendance. Attendees included representatives from the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Export Marketing Bureau (EMB), Philippine Airlines, Hi-Las Marketing Corp. and Canadian importer TSI Tropicals Inc.

DTI said the shipment opens access to a new North American market for Philippine mangoes, which have traditionally been heavily concentrated in a single export destination. In 2025, fresh mango exports were valued at about \$7.9 million, with more than 94 percent shipped to one market, underscoring the need to expand to other countries.

Trade Secretary Ma. Cristina Roque said the development showcases the improving competitiveness of Philippine exports and ongoing efforts to widen market reach.

“Canada is a promising market for premium Philippine products, and this shipment shows that our exporters can compete in high-potential destinations,” Roque said.

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE
JOINT APPLICATION FOR
APPROVAL OF THE POWER
SUPPLY AGREEMENT
ENTERED INTO BY AND
BETWEEN OCCIDENTAL
MINDORO ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC. AND
DMCI POWER CORPORATION
FOR THE SUPPLY OF 4 MW
CONTRACTED CAPACITY,
WITH PRAYER FOR
PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY
OR INTERIM RELIEF AND
CONFIDENTIAL TREATMENT
OF INFORMATION

ERC CASE NO. 2026-074 RC

OCCIDENTAL MINDORO
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE,
INC. (OMECO) AND DMCI
POWER CORPORATION (DPC),
Applicants.

May 26, 2026

NOTICE OF VIRTUAL HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given that on 21 May 2026, Occidental Mindoro Electric Cooperative, Inc. (OMECO) and DMCI Power Corporation (DPC) filed a Joint Application dated 07 May 2026, seeking the Commission's approval of their Power Supply Agreement (PSA), with prayer for provisional authority or interim relief and confidential treatment of information.

The docketed copy of the Joint Application, excluding its annexes, is attached as Annex "A" of the Notice of Virtual Hearing.

The Commission has set the instant Joint Application for hearing, pursuant to the pertinent rules of the Commission, as follows:

Date and Time	Platform	Activity
01 July 2026 (Wednesday) at nine o'clock in the morning (9:00 A.M.)	Microsoft Teams	Determination of compliance with jurisdictional requirements and Expository Presentation
08 July 2026 (Wednesday) at nine o'clock in the morning (9:00 A.M.)		Pre-Trial Conference and Presentation of Evidence

Accordingly, Applicants are hereby directed to mirror the virtual hearings, to be hosted by the Commission, at OMECO's principal office at M.H. del Pilar St., San Jose, Occidental Mindoro as the designated venue for the conduct thereof and ensure that the same is open to the public. Moreover, Applicants shall guarantee that, during the conduct of the expository presentation, the participation of the public shall not be impaired.

Any interested stakeholder may submit its comments and/or clarifications at least one (1) calendar day prior to the scheduled initial virtual hearing, via e-mail at docket@erc.ph, copy furnish the Legal Service through legal@erc.ph. The Commission shall give priority to the stakeholders who have duly submitted their respective comments and/or clarifications, to discuss the same and propound questions during the course of the expository presentation.

Moreover, all persons who have an interest in the subject matter of the instant case may be a party by filing with the Commission via e-mail at docket@erc.ph, and copy furnish the Legal Service through legal@erc.ph. The Commission shall give priority to the stakeholders who have duly submitted their respective comments and/or clarifications, to discuss the same and propound questions during the course of the expository presentation.

- The petitioner's name, mailing address, and e-mail address;
- The nature of petitioner's interest in the subject matter of the proceeding and the way and manner in which such interest is affected by the issues involved in the proceeding; and
- A statement of the relief desired.

Likewise, all other persons who may want their views known to the Commission with respect to the subject matter of the case may file through e-mail at docket@erc.ph, and copy furnish the Legal Service through legal@erc.ph. The Commission shall give priority to the stakeholders who have duly submitted their respective comments and/or clarifications, to discuss the same and propound questions during the course of the expository presentation.

- The name, mailing address, and e-mail address of the person;
- A concise statement of the Opposition or Comment; and
- The grounds relied upon.

All interested parties filing their Petition to Intervene, Opposition or Comment are requested to submit the hard copies thereof through personal service, registered mail, or ordinary mail/private courier, within five (5) working days from the date that the same were electronically submitted, as reflected in the acknowledgement receipt e-mail sent by the Commission.

Finally, all interested persons may be allowed to join the scheduled virtual hearings by providing the Commission, through legal@erc.ph, their respective e-mail addresses, indicating therein the case number of the instant Application. The Commission will send the access link/s to the aforementioned hearing platform within five (5) working days prior to the scheduled hearings.

WITNESS, the Honorable Chairperson and CEO FRANCIS SATURNINO C. JUAN and the Honorable Commissioners FLORESINDA G. BALDO-DIGAL, MARKO ROMEO L. FUENTES, AMANTE A. LIBERATO and PARIS G. REAL, Energy Regulatory Commission, in Pasig City.

FOR AND BY THE AUTHORITY OF
THE COMMISSION:

Atty. MARIA CUAZON C. GINES
Director III, Legal Service

Authority granted during Commission Meeting on 20 August 2025.

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE JOINT
APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF THE
POWER SUPPLY AGREEMENT
ENTERED INTO BY AND BETWEEN
OCCIDENTAL MINDORO ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC. AND DMCI
POWER CORPORATION FOR THE
SUPPLY OF 4 MW CONTRACTED
CAPACITY, WITH PRAYER FOR
PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY OR
INTERIM RELIEF AND CONFIDENTIAL
TREATMENT OF INFORMATION

ERC CASE NO. 2026-074 RC

May 21, 2026

OCCIDENTAL MINDORO ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC. AND DMCI
POWER CORPORATION,
Joint Applicants.

(With Prayer for Provisional Authority or Interim Relief and Confidential Treatment of Information)

Joint Applicants OCCIDENTAL MINDORO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (OMECO) and DMCI POWER CORPORATION (DPC) (collectively, the "Applicants"), through the undersigned counsels and unto the Honorable Commission, most respectfully state, that:

THE JOINT APPLICANTS

1. Applicant OMECO is a non-stock, non-profit Electric Cooperative ("EC") duly organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, with principal office at M.H. del Pilar St., San Jose, Occidental Mindoro. Applicant OMECO holds a franchise from the National Electrification Commission, to operate an electric light and power distribution service in the nine (9) municipalities of the province of Occidental Mindoro, namely: Abra de Ilog, Calintaan, Magsaysay, Mamburao, Rizal, Sablayan, San Jose, Santa Cruz, and Paluan, (the "OMECO Coverage Area"). For purposes of this Joint Application, applicant OMECO is represented herein by its General Manager, CLEO D. GARCIA, duly authorized by virtue of OMECO Board Resolution No. 47, Series of 2025.¹

The filing of the instant Joint Application is likewise authorized by virtue of the afore-mentioned Board Resolution.

2. Applicant DPC is a corporation duly organized and existing by virtue of and under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, with principal office address at the 3/F MNI Bldg., DMCI Homes Corporate Center, 1321 Apolinario Street, Bangkal, Makati City, Metro Manila, Philippines. For purposes of this Joint Application, applicant DPC is represented by its Senior Manager, MS. JASMIN E. LAPAN, duly authorized by virtue of Secretary's Certificate dated 13 March 2025.²

The filing of the instant Joint Application is likewise authorized by virtue of the afore-mentioned Board Resolution.

3. The Applicants may be served with the orders, notices, and other processes of the Honorable Commission through their undersigned counsels at the addresses indicated herein.

NATURE OF THE APPLICATION

4. The instant Joint Application for approval of the Power Supply Agreement ("PSA") entered into by and between applicants OMECO and DPC dated 26 February 2026 for the supply of 4 MW Contracted Capacity (the "OMECO-DPC PSA") is being submitted to the Honorable Commission for its review and approval pursuant to Sections 25³ and 45(1)⁴ of Republic Act No. 9136, otherwise known as the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (the "EPIRA"), Rule 200(1) of the Honorable Commission's Resolution No. 01, Series of 2021 (the "ERC Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure")⁵, the

Department of Energy ("DOE") Department Circular No. DC2023-06-0021,⁶ as amended and supplemented by DOE Department Circular No. DC2025-10-0022,⁷ (the "DOE CSP Policy"), Rule 20(8) of the Honorable Commission's Resolution No. 01, Series of 2021 (the "ERC Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure"),⁸ and the Honorable Commission's Resolution No. 7, Series of 2026 (the "ERC CSP Guidelines").

5. In compliance with Section 2, Rule 6 of the ERC Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure, a copy of the instant Joint Application (with all its annexes and accompanying documents, except those subject of a motion for confidential treatment of information) shall be furnished to the following offices:¹⁰

- Office of the Municipal Mayor of San Jose;
- Office of the Presiding Officer of the Sangguniang Bayan of San Jose;
- Office of the Governor of the Province of Occidental Mindoro;
- Office of the Presiding Officer of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of the Province of Occidental Mindoro;
- Office of the Mayor of Makati City;
- Office of Presiding Officer of the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Makati City.

6. Further, this Joint Application shall also be published in a newspaper of general circulation.¹¹

ALLEGATION ON TIMELINESS

7. Pursuant to the ERC 2026 CSP Guidelines, the timeliness of the pre-filing of this Joint Application shall be reckoned from 26 February 2026, the date of execution of the OMECO-DPC PSA.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

8. Power Situation in the Province of Occidental Mindoro. As an off-grid EC, applicant OMECO is entirely reliant on bilateral power supply contracts to meet the energy demands of its member-consumers. Unlike grid-connected distribut

9. To date, applicant OMECO sources its power supply from the following suppliers, with their respective contract capacities shown below:

Supplier	Contract Capacity (in MW)	ERC Docket No.	PSA Expiration
Occidental Mindoro Consolidated Power Corp. ("OMPCO")	9 MW	2022-027 RC	1/12/2027
DMCI	6 MW	2023-031 RC	1/12/2027
OMPCO	24 MW	2023-045 RC	05/26/2029

10. As of 2025, the average peak demand within the OMECO Coverage Area has reached 33.48 MW.¹² Based on applicant OMECO's 2025 Power Supply Procurement Plan ("PSP")¹³ peak demand in the OMECO Coverage Area is projected to further increase annually, primarily due to sustained load growth driven by population increase, expansion of commercial and industrial activities, and continued energization of new consumers.

11. The PSAs docketed under ERC Case Nos. 2023-027 RC and 2023-031 RC are set to expire by March 2027. Absent timely procurement of replacement capacity, applicant OMECO will face a capacity shortfall upon the expiration of said PSAs.

12. In view of the increasing electricity demand within its franchise area and the projected supply deficiency by March 2027, applicant OMECO sought to procure an additional 17 MW of power supply to ensure adequate capacity for its member-consumers. In order to ensure operational efficiency, grid stability, and security of supply, OMECO further determined that the required capacity should be strategically allocated across two (2) locations, namely: (i) 13 MW power supply at the Mamburao, Paluan, Sta. Cruz, and Abra de Ilog area (collectively referred to hereinafter as the "MAPSA Area"); and (ii) 4 MW power supply dedicated at the Sablayan area.

13. Accordingly, consistent with its PSP, applicant OMECO conducted a Competitive Selection Process ("CSP") pursuant to Department of Energy ("DOE") Department Circular No. DC2023-06-0021¹⁴ and the Honorable Commission's Resolution No. 16, Series of 2023 (the "ERC 2023 CSP Guidelines"),¹⁵ which were the governing rules for the CSP. The CSP was conducted to secure the capacity necessary to meet the energy requirements of its member-consumers.

14. Conduct of the CSP. On 30 July 2024, the OMECO Board of Directors passed and approved Board Resolution No. 110-B, Series of 2024, designating the members of the Bids and Awards Committee (the "OMECO BAC") for the conduct of the CSP pursuant to applicant OMECO's 2025 PSP. The members of the OMECO BAC and OMECO BAC Technical Work Group, all of whom are OMECO employees, are as follows:

OMECO BAC		
Name	Position	
Engr. Rachel Ann O. Acenas	Chairman	
Engr. John Dave C. Pascual	Vice Chairman	
Marlene C. Acotina	Member	
Zeinaida Y. Calingasan	Member	
Yvel Gley J. Tapay	Member	

OMECO BAC Technical Work Group		
Name	Position	
Prudencio B. Morena	Chairman	
Engr. Lee F. Sebastian	Vice Chairman	
John Patrick G. Loyzaga	Member	
Engr. Yandro O. Gaspar	Member	
Engr. Austin John Anzai	Member	

15. On 30 July 2024, the OMECO Board of Directors passed and approved Board Resolution No. 110-A, Series of 2024, approving the bidding documents for the CSP to be conducted and endorsing the same to the National Electrification Administration ("NEA"). Pursuant thereto, the OMECO BAC submitted the draft bidding documents to the NEA, together with the above-mentioned Board Resolutions in compliance with NEA Memorandum 2023-057.¹⁶ After several exchange of correspondence with the NEA, applicant OMECO's draft bidding documents were approved and the Notice to Commence ("NTC") dated 14 October 2025 was issued stating that:

"This refers to Occidental Mindoro Electric Cooperative, Inc. (OMECO), Board Resolution No. 62, Series of 2025, endorsing the Terms of Reference (TOR) and the bidding documents for the conduct of the Competitive Selection Process (CSP) for the supply of a MW (Lot 1) and 13 MW (Lot 2), for a total of 17 MW Guaranteed Dependable Capacity for NEA's review.

The submitted revised TOR along with the Bidding Documents, is found to be in accordance with the minimum requirements of the National Electrification Administration (NEA) Memorandum No. 2023-57, or the NEA 2023 CSP Guidelines. OMECO may now commence its Competitive Selection Process upon the NEA's issuance of the Certificate of Conformity."

16. Consequently, the NEA issued the Certificate of Conformity No. NEA-RAO-CC-2025-12, dated 14 October 2025,¹⁷ stating that:

"This is to certify that the contract quantities and cooperation period for the Competitive Selection Process (CSP) of Occidental Mindoro Electric Cooperative, Inc. (OMECO) for the 4 MW (Lot 1) and 13 MW (Lot 2), for a total of 17 MW Guaranteed Dependable Capacity power supply requirement with a 10-year cooperation period is consistent with the latest posted 2025-2034 Power Supply Procurement Plan."

17. Salient Terms of the CSP. Following applicant OMECO's 2025 PSP, the CSP was divided into two (2) lots. The salient terms of the CSP, as contained in the Terms of Reference ("TOR") duly issued by the OMECO BAC, are as follows:

- Demand Requirement:** OMECO Full Load Requirement
- Term:** Ten (10) years
- Type of Contract:** Physical Power Supply Agreement
- Bid Type:** The CSP shall consist of two (2) Lots: Lot 1 is for Sablayan area and Lot II is for MAPSA area.
- Target Delivery Date:** For both Lots, the Winning Bidder/s shall commence delivery on the later of the following dates: a. 26 March 2027; or b. The 26th day of the calendar month immediately following the month in which the ERC issues a Provisional Authority or Interim Relief, as applicable, or Final Authority, if neither Provisional Authority nor Interim Relief, and the fulfillment of other conditions prescribed stated on the PSA.
- Contracted Capacity:**

Lot	Location	Contracted Capacity (in MW)
Lot I	Sablayan Area	4
Lot II	MAPSA Area	13

Note: The PSA subject to this instant Joint Application pertains to the 4 MW Contracted Capacity for Lot I (Sablayan Area).
- Source of Power:** Bids are open to all technologies, except for coal-fired power plants, in compliance with Ordinance No. 99, Series of 2019 of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Occidental Mindoro. The generating facilities and equipment of the Winning Bidder/s shall comply with all the requirements for Transmission Connected Generators, including the capabilities of generating units prescribed by the latest edition of the Philippine Distribution Code and the applicable provisions of the Philippine Small Grid Guidelines.

18. A *Sworn Report*, executed by both the General Manager and President of the Board of Directors of OMECO in accordance with NEA Memorandum 2023-057, Article 8.2.11(1)(i), detailing the manner in which the CSP was conducted is attached hereto as Annex "B". A summary of the key dates and events of the CSP is provided below:

- 14 October 2025** Issuance of NEA Notice to Commence and Certificate of Conformity.
- 15 October 2025** OMECO BAC sent letters to DOE, NEA, and the Honorable Commission informing them of the conduct of the CSP.
- 23 and 30 October 2025** Invitation to Bid with the Terms of Reference was published in the Manila Bulletin newspaper issues dated 23 and 30 October 2025. Invitation to Bid was likewise posted on the NEA website and applicant OMECO's official website and social media page except on the DOE CSP e-based portal due to the temporary shutdown of the website as evidenced by DOE Advisory No. 2024-07-001-SEC. Eight (8) prospective bidders purchased the Bidding Documents for Lot I as follows:
 - Joint Venture of Bar Light and Power Corp. and Mindoro Grid Corporation;
 - United Power Rentals, Inc.;
 - Applicant DPC;
 - Agreent Corporation;
 - Agreent Energy Retail Solutions, Inc.;
 - Asian Solar Options Corp.;
 - RMS Petroleum Technology and Waste Management Corporation; and
 - Smartvolt Energy, Inc.
- 02 November 2025** Invitations to Participate as CSP Observer were sent to the following:
 - Mindoro Progressive Multi-Purpose Cooperative;
 - Local Chamber of Commerce;
 - Homeowners Association Dona Consuelo Sub., Pagasa, San Jose;
 - Local Pastoral Council, Unda Christian Church;
 - Occidental Mindoro State College;
 - Parent-Teachers Association, San Roque Elementary School;
 - MCO-EC Wide Federation Chairman;
 - Nationwide Association of Consumers, Inc.;
 - NEA;
 - DOE;
 - National Power Corporation ("NPC");
 - National Transmission Corporation ("TransCo");
 - Interested consumer.
- 30 October 2025** Issuance of Bid Bulletin ("BB") No. 1, Series of 2025 changing the venue of the Pre-Bid Conference from the Seasons Hotel and Convention Center, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro to the Skatuna Beach Hotel, San Roque, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro.
- 07 November 2025** The Pre-Bid Conference for the CSP was held at the Skatuna Beach Hotel, Mamburao Building, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro. The Pre-Bid Conference was attended by the following prospective Bidders:
 - Agreent Energy Retail Solutions, Inc.;
 - Asian Solar Options Corp.;
 - Bar Light and Power Corp.;
 - DMCI Power Corporation;
 - Greenheart Corporation.

	6. RMS Petroleum Technology and Waste Management Corporation; 7. Smartvolt Energy, Inc.; 8. United Power Rentals, Inc.; The following CSP Observers were likewise present: 1. NEA Representatives; 2. NPC Representatives; 3. TransCo Representatives; 4. DOE Representative; 5. Mindoro Progressive Multi-Purpose Cooperative; 6. Local Chamber of Commerce Representative; 7. Local Pastoral Council Representative; 8. Occidental Mindoro State College Representative; 9. San Roque Elementary School Representative; 10. MCO-EC Wide Federation Chairman; 11. Interested consumer.
17 November 2025	Issuance of BB No. 2, containing the responses to advanced written clarifications, Pre-Bid Conference questions and clarifications, post-Pre-Bid Conference written clarifications, and the Revised Transaction Documents.
26 November 2025	Issuance of BB No. 3, containing the responses to written questions and clarifications on the Revised Transaction Documents, the Final Terms of Reference, and the Final Transaction Documents, as well as a reminder of the bid opening date and the deadline for bid submission.
10 December 2025	Invitations to Participate as CSP Observer for the opening and evaluation of Bid proposals were sent to the following: 1. Mindoro Progressive Multi-Purpose Cooperative; 2. Local Chamber of Commerce; 3. Homeowners Association Dona Consuelo Sub., Pagasa, San Jose; 4. Local Pastoral Council, Unda Christian Church; 5. Occidental Mindoro State College; 6. Parent-Teachers Association, San Roque Elementary School; 7. MCO-EC Wide Federation Chairman; 8. Nationwide Association of Consumers, Inc.;
15 December 2025	The submission, opening, and evaluation of bid proposals was held at the Seasons Hotel and Convention Center, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro. For Lot I, three (3) bidders submitted bid proposals, namely: 1. Joint Venture of Bar Light and Power Corp. and Mindoro Grid Corporation; 2. United Power Rentals, Inc.; and 3. Applicant DPC. For Lot II, two (2) bidders submitted bid proposals, namely: 1. United Power Rentals, Inc.; and 2. Applicant DPC. On the same date, the respective bid proposals were evaluated in accordance with the parameters set forth in the Final Transaction Documents issued by the BAC, with applicant DPC emerging as the winning bidder for both Lots, having submitted the lowest Calculated Bid for each. The post-qualification process was conducted to determine whether applicant DPC complied with and is responsive to all the requirements and conditions as specified in the bidding documents. It included, but not limited to, the Detailed Evaluation and Post-qualification Report. As a result of BAC Resolution No. 01, Series of 2025 entitled "A Resolution Respectfully Recommending to the Board of Directors, the Award of Contract for the Procurement of Seventeen Megawatts (17 MW) Contracted Capacity for Lot I – 4 MW (Sablayan Area) and Lot II – 13 MW (MAPSA Area) to DMCI Power Corporation (DPC), and Requesting the Boarding of Directors to submit to the National Electrification Administration (NEA) the Board Resolution (i) Adopting the C&P-A&C's Recommendation and (ii) Requesting the Issuance of the Notice to Issue Award."
17, 18, 22, 29, December 2025 and 07 January 2026	On the same date, the respective bid proposals were evaluated in accordance with the parameters set forth in the Final Transaction Documents issued by the BAC, with applicant DPC emerging as the winning bidder for both Lots, having submitted the lowest Calculated Bid for each. The post-qualification process was conducted to determine whether applicant DPC complied with and is responsive to all the requirements and conditions as specified in the bidding documents. It included, but not limited to, the Detailed Evaluation and Post-qualification Report. As a result of BAC Resolution No. 01, Series of 2025 entitled "A Resolution Respectfully Recommending to the Board of Directors, the Award of Contract for the Procurement of Seventeen Megawatts (17 MW) Contracted Capacity for Lot I – 4 MW (Sablayan Area) and Lot II – 13 MW (MAPSA Area) to DMCI Power Corporation (DPC), and Requesting the Boarding of Directors to submit to the National Electrification Administration (NEA) the Board Resolution (i) Adopting the C&P-A&C's Recommendation and (ii) Requesting the Issuance of the Notice to Issue Award."
09 January 2026	Final award of the CSP to applicant DPC.
29 January 2026	Issuance of the Notice of Award in favor of applicant DPC for Lot I and II of the CSP.
30 January 2026	Applicant OMECO receives the Notice to Execute Agreement issued by the NEA, directing the EC to execute the NEA-approved PSAs with applicant DPC, within (3) calendar days from receipt.
23 February 2026	Applicant OMECO receives the Notice to Execute Agreement issued by the NEA, directing the EC to execute the NEA-approved PSAs with applicant DPC, within (3) calendar days from receipt.

19. In compliance with the Notice to Execute Agreement issued by the NEA, applicants OMECO and DPC executed the OMECO-DPC PSA on 26 February 2026, which is the subject of this instant Joint Application.

SALIENT TERMS OF THE OMECO-DPC PSA

20. The OMECO-DPC PSA, a copy of which is attached as Annex "A" hereof, contains the following salient terms:

20.1. **Term:** The OMECO-DPC PSA shall take effect immediately from Effective Date, and from such date, shall remain in force and effect for ten (10) years from the Delivery Date unless sooner terminated in accordance with the PSA and upon approval by the ERC.

20.2. **Delivery Date:** Applicant DPC shall commence delivery of and make available at the Delivery Point the Contracted Capacity to applicant OMECO on Delivery Date. The Delivery Date shall be the later of either:

- 26 March 2027 (at 12:00NN); or
- the 26th day (at 12:00NN) of the calendar month immediately following the month in which the ERC issues a Provisional Authority ("PA") or Interim Relief ("IR"), as applicable, or Final Authority ("FA"), subject to the timely fulfillment of specific conditions outlined in Section 3.3 of the OMECO-DPC PSA, unless waived in writing by the Parties, (except for the ERC's PA, IR, or FA, which shall not be subject to waiver).

20.3. **Supply of Power:** The Seller shall supply the Contracted Capacity and the Associated Energy in accordance with the Dispatch Schedule of the System Operator and the Nomination Protocol, subject to the terms and conditions in this Agreement

20.4. **Contracted Capacity:** 4 MW

20.5. **Seller and Buyer Obligations:** Beginning on the Delivery Date, until the termination or expiration of the OMECO-DPC PSA, applicant DPC shall supply and deliver the Contracted Capacity and Associated Energy as detailed in SCHEDULE 3 of the PSA to applicant OMECO at the Delivery Point, and applicant OMECO shall purchase and pay applicant DPC the Contracted Capacity and the delivered Associated Energy at the rate provided in SCHEDULE 2 of the PSA resulting from the CSP and subject to the approval of the ERC.

20.6. **Payment of Fees:** Applicant OMECO shall pay to applicant DPC, within five (5) working days prior to the 30th day of each Month upon receipt of the billing invoice, an amount equal to the Monthly Payment in accordance with SCHEDULE 2 of the PSA. Applicant DPC shall bear all costs of such transmission service rendered by the Metering Point, including the cost of any electric losses incurred in such transmission.

Payments to applicant DPC shall be made by applicant OMECO from the collection of generation charges from its member-consumers, according to the Subsidized Approved Generation Rate ("SAGR") approved by the ERC. Further, subsidy shall be disbursed by the NPC and Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation ("PSALM") for applicant DPC to recover its costs according to the True Cost Generation Rate ("TCGR"), in accordance with Section 4 of the "Guidelines for the Setting and Approval of Electricity Generation Rates and Subsidies for Missionary Electrification Areas" adopted under ERC Resolution No. 21, Series of 2011, as amended, and the prevailing regulations of the ERC.

The TCGR for each Billing Period shall be determined in accordance with the formulas set forth in SCHEDULE 2 of the PSA. If the Subsidy Fee is greater than zero (0), applicant DPC shall, within fifteen (15) Days from the end of each Billing Period commencing on the Delivery Date, deliver to applicant OMECO a Subsidy Invoice containing computation of the Subsidy Fee to be paid by the NPC-Small Power Utilities Group (the "NPC-SPUG") based on the formulas under the OMECO-DPC PSA. Applicant OMECO shall review and verify applicant DPC's computation of the Subsidy Fee for the applicable Billing Period and certify that such amounts were computed and paid in accordance with the pricing structure under the OMECO-DPC PSA. After applicant OMECO's confirmation, applicant DPC shall deliver the certified Subsidy Invoice to NPC-SPUG.

Applicant OMECO shall pay the Monthly Power Bill stated in the Invoice in full, free and clear from encumbrances and without set-off, counterclaim, or necessity of demand, no later than 1200 hours on the 30th day of the calendar month succeeding the applicable Billing Period ("Payment Due Date"). In case the Payment Due Date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Holiday, the payment shall be made on the next Business Day.

20.7. **Tariff Structure and Rates:** The unbundled tariff structure and rates, namely, the Capital Recovery Rate ("CRR"), Fixed Operations and Maintenance Rate ("FOMR"), Variable Operations and Maintenance Rate ("VOMR"), Fuel Fee ("FF") as well as the formulas to compute the Total Generation cost per billing period are provided in Schedule 2 of the OMECO-DPC PSA. A summary of the unbundled tariff and rates is provided below:

	Rate	Indexation
CRR	Php 1,850,000 / kW-month	None
FOMR	PHP 650,000 / kW-month	Philippine Consumer Price Index
VOMR	PHP 0.7700 / kWh	Philippine Consumer Price Index
FF	Pass-through cost subject to fixed fuel consumption rates cap of 0.3300 / kWh and actual consumption rate per billing period, whichever is lower.	

1. Computation of Monthly Fees

The Monthly Fees for the power plant shall be calculated according to the following formula:

$$TCGR = (CRR + FOMR + CC_{fuel}) + (VOMR \times H_{actual}) + FF$$

Where:

TCGR – True Cost Generation Fee for the Billing Period

CRR – The Fixed Capital Recovery Rate (CRR) component for the Billing Period.

FOMR – The Fixed Operations & Maintenance Rate (FOMR) component for the Billing Period.

CC_{fuel} – Contracted Capacity in equivalent to 13,000kW.

VOMR – The Variable Operations & Maintenance Rate (VOMR) component for the Billing Period.

H_{actual} – The actual Energy Delivered in the Billing Period measured based on the agreed metering point.

FF – The fuel fee component for the Billing Period.

VAT – The applicable Value Added Tax, if any.

2. Capital Recovery Rate

The Capital Recovery Rate for the Billing Period (month) shall be calculated as follows:

$$CRR_{adjusted} = CRR_{base} \times (1 + \frac{H_{actual} - H_{planned}}{H_{planned}})$$

Where:

CRR_{adjusted} – The product of the base CRR in the Billing Period, adjusted monthly based on the total available capacity.

CRR_{base} – The base CRR equivalent to PHP1,850/kW-month.

H_{planned} – The total number of hours of the Billing Period.

H_{actual} – The Equivalent Hours of actual Planned and Unplanned Outages in the Billing Period.

H_{renew} – The Equivalent Hours of Outages due to Force Majeure affecting both Seller or Buyer for the Billing Period.

The formula to calculate H_{planned} and H_{actual} shall be:

$$H_{planned} = \sum_{i=1}^n \left(1 - \frac{C_{outage,i}}{TCC} \right) \times Outage_{duration,i}$$

$$H_{renew} = \sum_{i=1}^n \left(1 - \frac{C_{outage,i}}{TCC} \right) \times Outage_{duration,i}$$

Where:

n – Total number of hours in a Billing Period.

C_{outage,i} – Contracted Capacity available during outage, in kW.

TCC – Total Contracted Capacity, in kW.

Outage_{duration,i} – Number of hours of actual outage.

3. Fixed Operations & Maintenance Rate

The Fixed Operations & Maintenance Rate for the Billing Period (month) shall be calculated as follows:

$$FOMR_{adjusted} = FOMR_{base} \times \frac{PHCP_{actual}}{PHCP_{planned}}$$

Manila Standard

PLDT eyes \$400m from REIT offering

By Darwin G. Amojelar

PLDT Inc. plans to raise between \$300 million and \$400 million from a real estate investment trust (REIT) listing of its data center assets by the fourth quarter of 2026 and use the proceeds to pay down its heavy debt load.

The targeted fund generation covers eight of the company’s data centers under its subsidiary VITRO Inc., excluding a major facility in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, PLDT chairman Manuel Pangilinan told reporters on the sidelines of the company’s

stockholders meeting.

Pangilinan said the total valuation of the group’s entire data center portfolio stands at about \$1.6 billion to \$1.8 billion. Proceeds from the public offering will primarily pay down company debt, which stood at

a consolidated gross of P297.3 billion and a net debt of P282.3 billion at the end of March.

“Hopefully, by the fourth quarter of the year,” Pangilinan said when asked about the timeline for the public launch.

The move follows new regulatory guidelines from the Securities and Exchange Commission, which recently revised the implementing rules of the Real Estate Investment Trust Act of 2009.

The amended rules broaden the definition of income-generating real estate to include digital infrastructure assets with predictable cash flows,

such as data centers and information and communications technology infrastructure.

The proposed VITRO REIT serves as a capital recycling platform to unlock value from PLDT’s stabilized digital assets and fund future data center expansions.

While ePLDT Inc. is considering injecting certain income-generating assets into the REIT, PLDT noted that no final terms have been determined regarding the exact asset portfolio, offer size, valuation, or ownership structure.

“This is an important step in our efforts to unlock value from PLDT’s

digital infrastructure portfolio, while continuing to support the country’s growing demand for enterprise-grade and AI-ready data center capacity,” ePLDT president Victor Genuino said.

VITRO operates a nationwide data center network serving enterprise, cloud, and hyperscale customers. Financial firms UBS AG and BPI Capital are assisting ePLDT with the transaction, which remains subject to regulatory approvals from the Securities and Exchange Commission of the Philippines and the Philippine Stock Exchange.

NEW GSIS CHAIR.
Finance Secretary Frederick Go (left) administers the oath of office of Ricardo Blancaflor as acting chairperson of the board of Trustees of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS). A seasoned public servant, Blancaflor brings extensive experience in governance, law and public administration. As acting chair, he will guide GSIS in strengthening fund sustainability, enhancing member services and advancing its mandate of providing responsive and reliable social insurance benefits to government employees and pensioners.

Petron to expand Bataan terminal to meet fuel demand

By Alena Mae S. Flores

OIL refiner Petron Corp. plans to expand its storage terminal in Limay, Bataan province to meet surging demand for aviation fuel and ensure compliance with a government biodiesel mandate.

Petron said in a report to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources that current fuel inventory at the site can only support operations for about 3.4 days. The company said this falls below

preferred levels for maintaining a stable, uninterrupted supply.

To address the shortage risk, Petron proposes to increase its white fuel storage capacity by nearly 58 percent, raising it from 20,746 kiloliters to 32,785 kiloliters. The expansion will involve installing additional fuel storage tanks.

“Because the terminal serves as a key distribution hub for Jet A-1 fuel supplied to other terminals and airports, maintaining adequate storage capacity is essential to prevent fuel

shortages that could disrupt aviation operations and related economic activities,” Petron said.

The company said the new infrastructure will also serve as swing tanks to hold fuel temporarily while existing units undergo scheduled maintenance, out-of-service inspections or emergency repairs.

“This operational flexibility is important for maintaining safety standards while avoiding interruptions in fuel distribution,” Petron said.

IN BRIEF

PH stocks climb past 5,900 level

PHILIPPINE stocks rose Tuesday as the benchmark index climbed back above the 5,900 level, led by bargain-hunting and easing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. The Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) gained 66.30 points, or 1.13 percent, to close at 5,945.71. The broader all-shares index also advanced 22.97 points, or 0.70 percent, to end at 3,325.28.

Global oil prices pulled back after Iran stopped its military strikes against Israel, which provided a boost to the local equity market. “The local stock market rose as Iran stopped its military strikes against Israel causing global oil prices to pull back,” Philstocks Financial Inc. said.

Most sectors logged gains during the session. Holding firms led the market’s advance by jumping 2.09 percent, followed by industrials which climbed 1.16 percent. Services added 1.34 percent and financials edged up 0.39 percent.

mining and oil dropped 1.51 percent, while property dropped 0.63 percent.

Value turnover reached P5.53 billion. Despite the main index gains, the broader market showed 96 decliners against 82 gainers, while 64 stocks remained unchanged. Foreign investors registered as net sellers, recording outflows of P155.98 million.

Jennifer B. Austria

BOI approves 2 mass housing projects

THE Board of Investments approved the registration of two mass housing projects and a domestic industrial park in Central Luzon worth a combined P1.98 billion to boost regional economies and expand housing access.

The projects support efforts to direct investments toward initiatives that expand access to affordable housing, generate jobs and strengthen regional economies, Trade Secretary and BOI chairman Cristina Roque said.

“These projects will provide housing for families seeking affordable homeownership and create spaces for businesses to expand

and generate jobs through an industrial park. These developments help build stronger communities and bring economic growth closer to where Filipinos live and work,” Roque said.

Borland Development Corp. is spending P1.36 billion to develop the housing projects in Nueva Ecija. The projects will deliver more than 1,700 economic housing units for Filipino families, begin operations in June 2026 and generate construction-related employment.

Meanwhile, Fortunetown Properties Corp. will develop a 24-hectare domestic industrial park in Mexico, Pampanga, with investments amounting to P630 million.

Othel V. Campos

DTI ramps up aid for MSMEs

THE Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is ramping up financial and recovery assistance for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) affected by recent disruptions, combining immediate financing support with a price freeze on basic goods under a declared state of calamity.

The government agency is prioritizing the continuity of supply chains and market stability alongside daily monitoring of prices and the availability of basic goods through its regional offices.

DTI Secretary Ma. Cristina Roque said MSMEs can access loan facilities and the Enterprise Rehabilitation Fund to help them quickly restart operations and stabilize business activity in affected areas.

“Again, the loans are in place, and then we have the Enterprise Rehabilitation Fund, which they can loan right away. So we’ve set aside money for that,” Roque said, adding that funding is already in place for rapid deployment.

“We’ve already instructed them to make sure that there’s enough food supply and that prices are stable,” she said.

The department noted that a 60-day price freeze on basic necessities and prime commodities automatically applies under a state of calamity, providing additional consumer protection while recovery efforts are underway. Othel V. Campos

Empire East Holdings sees resilient demand for middle-income housing

By Jennifer B. Austria

EMPIRE East Land Holdings Inc. remains optimistic about the long-term prospects of the country’s mid-income housing sector on strong demand from buyers looking for homes rather than investment properties, company executives said at an annual stockholders’ meeting on Tuesday.

The property sector has seen a shift toward buyers purchasing real estate for long-term living rather than market speculation, according to company officials.

“As portions of the industry recalibrated, particularly those driven largely by investment activity, a clearer direction emerged. Demand is increasingly anchored on

end-users—homebuyers purchasing not for speculation, but for long-term living,” Empire East president and chief executive Anthony Charlemagne Yu said.

Yu said the market shift favors developers that focus on affordability, accessibility and long-term community development.

Overseas Filipino workers also remain a highly resilient and important source of demand for the Philippine residential property market.

“While global uncertainties and economic fluctuations in certain regions may affect purchasing timelines and sentiment, we continue to see sustained interest in homeownership in the Philippines,” Yu said.

DRONE LOGISITCS. Steve Lo, EY2 Greater China Alliances and Ecosystems Leader (left) and Paul Loo, Lalamove chief operating officer (right) sign a memorandum of understanding to advance innovations in the low-altitude economy and next-generation enterprise logistics, driving long-term market efficiency. Under the MOU, EY and Lalamove will combine their complementary strengths to deliver intelligent, scalable, resilient and compliant logistics solutions for large enterprise customers.

Casino Plus executive wins global gaming award, urges responsible gaming

INLIFE’S REVENUES. InLife, the country’s first and largest Filipino life insurance company, reports strong financial position in 2025. InLife’s 2025 consolidated revenues climbed to P36 billion from P27 billion in 2024, led by higher premiums and one-time gain from the purchase of Generali Philippines, now InLife Benefits. Consolidated assets also jumped to P176 billion in 2025 from P159 billion in 2024 – resulting from insurance receivables from InLife Benefits and higher Variable Unit-Linked (VUL) insurance assets.

CASINO Plus chief executive Evan Spytma received the “Hall of Game” award from global gaming authority SiGMA at the SiGMA Asia Awards 2026, where he urged players to practice responsible gaming.

The honor recognizes industry leaders whose vision, innovation and leadership shape the global gaming landscape. SiGMA cited Spytma’s decades of experience across gaming, technology and hospitality as a driving force behind the rapidly expanding digital entertainment industry in the Philippines.

Casino Plus operates as one of the leading entertainment and gaming platforms in the Philippines, licensed by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR).

“This milestone is both humbling

and deeply reassuring. I could not have done this alone — not without the game developers, partners and government regulators who share our commitment to responsible gaming. We know how demanding this industry can be, but that challenge is precisely what pushes us to do better,” Spytma said during his acceptance speech.

Spytma said the accolade represents a long journey and highlighted the importance of maintaining a healthy playing environment.

“At Casino Plus, while we strive to provide a healthy playing environment, we constantly remind our players to stay in control and play responsibly — and that is how we truly win the game,” Spytma said.

Darwin G. Amojelar

House panel reviews TV’s blocktime rules

A HOUSE of Representatives panel opened an inquiry on June 3, 2026 into broadcast blocktime and content licensing rules after top executives of ABS-CBN Corp. skipped a hearing questioning the media company’s primetime airing arrangements.

The House Committee on Legislative Franchises launched the review to determine whether existing franchise laws adequately cover current media partnerships.

The inquiry followed a privilege speech by PhilRECA Party-list Rep. Presley De Jesus, who questioned how ABS-CBN produces and airs broadcast content through stations that hold valid congressional franchises.

“The issue before the committee is whether our franchise laws are clear enough to guide broadcasters, content producers, regulators and the public,” De Jesus said after the hearing.

“But I hope that the decision of the top ABS-CBN executives to skip the hearing is not to show disdain for the congressional body. Otherwise, this may be an affront to the legislating powers of the House of Representatives,” he said.

Under Philippine law, radio networks and broadcast facilities should secure a legislative franchise from Congress to operate. Congress denied ABS-CBN’s renewal application after its 25-year free-to-air broadcast franchise expired in May 2020.

Since the closure of its standalone broadcast operations, ABS-CBN has produced news and entertainment programs that air through commercial partnerships with other franchised networks.

Text and photos by Diana Noche

LUNETATA Park provides a means of escape, a lightness of one’s spirits, and front-row seats to the perky slices of life at somehow uncontrived times and commonplace elements.

Most people come to Luneta Park for other reasons, of course. The fountains throwing columns of mist in almost hallucinogenic bursts of color into the air. Balloons sagging in the summer heat. Picnics on the



grassy lawns. Staying until the day is totally engulfed by sunset streaks and purple haze. And in the cool, peaceable accustomedness to the ways of the park, there’s that all-present, recognizable peer group—close-knit yet eagle-eyed, going where the crowds are, ready to eat the competition. The shutterbugs.



Photographers capture candid moments at Luneta Park, engaging with clients, haggling with would-be customers, and navigating the park’s vibrant daily life to preserve fleeting memories.

These are the Luneta “litratistas,” recognizable in their blue and orange vests, point-and-shoot cameras slung around their necks and carrying prints of previous sample shoots. Not museum-quality images, no Sebastião Salgado approach, no attempts at social commentary, nothing Shakespearean in scope and capture, but nevertheless fluid impressions preserved during spontaneous and unaffected Luneta Park moments. Each day is a long, hard slog. He faces a constant enemy—an empty wallet at day’s end, plus skin burnished by the harsh sun. It happens. Smooth talk to sell himself and his wares, rough tailing of potential subjects with zero success. Still, the man just has to keep mov-

ing. Finally... finally! There will be changes of heart, deliberations, careful thought before the yeses. Progress comes click by click. Say cheese! Kids ham it up for the camera. Uptight subjects offer coy half-smiles. Leave the shades on or take them off? The shutterbug happily squints through the viewfinder and checks the composition, angle, posing, background cropping, and available light. Not exactly paparazzi stuff. Just a capture with honest fluency, simple turns of the wrist, nothing spectacular or monumental in impact. The shutter clicks and the result is an image printed on glossy photo paper that never fails to produce enthusiastic responses and shrieks—not exactly the kind of image that posers expected to see, but it is, of course, part of the fun, worthy of TikTok and Instagram viral posts. These days, photography being computer-intensive, digital image capture takes only a few minutes—simple and direct, stopping time and light, while preserving that high-octane fun against a casual Luneta Park backdrop. These shutterbugs help us hold on to moments that we know will eventually disappear. We leaf through our albums of yellowed photographs and recall those fleeting instances that have now become investments in our memory for a long time.

UBS Women and Finance series explores the art of crafting a lasting legacy

UBS gathered some of the country’s leading women changemakers for the latest edition of its Women and Finance series, titled “Crafting a Legacy,” featuring philanthropists and advocates Elizabeth “Lizzie” Eder Zobel de Ayala, Co-founder of Teach for Philippines and Nanette Medved Po, Founder & Chairwoman, HOPE and PCX Groups. The discussion, moderated by Susan Sy, Executive Director at UBS, centered on purpose driven leadership, philanthropy, and creating impact across generations. “Through our Women and Finance series “Crafting a legacy”, we continue to empower our clients to creating a family legacy. Here in Asia, we are seeing more women taking charge of family businesses, leading innovative startups, and making impactful investment decisions. What is striking is that women tend to approach wealth beyond financial returns,” said Robby Go, Country Head of UBS Philippines. Speaking about her work with Teach for the Philippines, Lizzie Zobel de Ayala shared how her advocacy was rooted in listening to communities and addressing systemic gaps in education. “At the heart of Teach for the Philippines is a commitment to addressing a systemic problem, and we believe that true change begins with genuinely listening to the needs of the communities we serve,” she said.

“Our approach from the start was to build a business model that is both scalable and financially sustainable, ensuring that our efforts can create lasting impact,” Medved-Po shared. “We are dedicated to building a brand that unites everyone in the community around a shared vision of educating one child, constructing one classroom, and ultimately building one school at a time.” HOPE has become widely recognized for investing its profits into public school infrastructure, environmental initiatives, and programs supporting local communities, while PCX has emerged as one of the leading plastic responsibility platforms. Since its launch in the Philippines in 2023, the UBS Women and Finance series has brought together more than 200 women leaders, entrepreneurs, and executives for conversations on financial empowerment, leadership, and building meaningful careers and lives.



From left: Kristen Quintos, Executive Director, UBS AG; Nanette Medved Po, Founder & Chairwoman, HOPE and PCX Groups; Lizzie Zobel de Ayala, Co-founder of Teach for Philippines; Susan Sy, Executive Director UBS, Kristina Chua, Executive Director UBS AG, and Robby Go, Country Head of UBS Philippines

Laguna enterprise keeps Filipino food traditions alive

By Lyschelle Joy Armijo

LILIW, Laguna — In an era when global food trends often overshadow local flavors, one enterprise in the heart of Laguna is quietly proving that traditional Filipino delicacies still have a place on modern shelves—and in the hearts of consumers. For more than a decade, Golden Arrow Food Enterprises has been producing familiar Filipino treats such as uraro, pilipit, and turones—snacks that many Filipinos grew up seeing in family gatherings, town fiestas, and neighborhood stores. What began as a small business in the rural town of Liliw has evolved into a company whose products now reach major supermarkets, tourism hubs, and overseas markets. Yet the story goes beyond expanding distribution. At a time when many traditional delicacies face the risk of being forgotten, enterprises like Golden Arrow help preserve culinary practices that have been passed down through generations. Products such as uraro, made from arrowroot flour and deeply rooted in Southern Luzon’s food culture, carry stories of local communities, agricultural traditions,

and Filipino craftsmanship. The company’s growth also reflects the often-overlooked potential of rural entrepreneurship. While economic opportunities are frequently concentrated in urban centers, businesses operating in provincial communities create jobs closer to home, allowing families to remain together while earning a stable livelihood. Golden Arrow’s commitment to generating employment in the countryside highlights how local enterprises can contribute to community development beyond financial gains. Food, after all, is more than nourishment. For many Filipinos living far from home, familiar delicacies evoke memories of childhood, family, and tradition. A simple biscuit or wafer roll can become a connection to one’s roots, especially for those separated from their hometowns or living overseas. As the Philippines continues to navigate modernization and globalization, stories like this serve as a reminder that preserving culture does not always happen in museums or history books. Sometimes, it begins in a small town bakery, where recipes endure, traditions survive, and a taste of home continues to be shared across generations.



JCI MANILA CELEBRATES EXCELLENCE IN POLICE SERVICE. Awardees of the 7th Ignacio B. Jimenez Outstanding Police Service Awards proudly pose with JCI Manila officers during the ceremony at PNP Multipurpose Hall, Camp Crame. The event recognized 20 exemplary police officers for integrity, dedication, and service to communities across the Philippines.

Cabalen Group brings Filipino, Japanese, Thai dining to Iloilo



Iloilo City Mayor Raisa Maria Lourdes S. Treñas-Chu joins officials from The Cabalen Group, Fujio Group, SM Supermalls, and local stakeholders during the opening of Cabalen, Tsurumaru, and Soi at SM City Iloilo.

FOOD, culture and community came together as The Cabalen Group officially opened Cabalen, Tsurumaru and Soi at SM City Iloilo on June 8, giving Ilonggos a new dining destination that brings Filipino, Japanese and Thai flavors under one roof. The opening celebration featured cultural performances inspired by the three restaurant concepts, including Dinagyang dancers representing Cabalen’s Filipino heritage, Thai cultural dancers for Soi, and Japanese-inspired performances for Tsurumaru. The ceremonial ribbon-cutting was led by Iloilo City Mayor Raisa Maria Lourdes S. Treñas-Chu, Ilo-

lo’s UNESCO focal person Leny Ledesma, The Cabalen Group founder and president Maritel O. Nievera, Fujio Group executive vice president Hideo Fujio, SM Supermalls vice president for Visayas mall operations Michelle Leslie Llanos, and other guests. “This opening is more than just the launch of three restaurants—it is an invitation for Ilonggos to experience different cultures and flavors through food,” said Ian N. Tiongson, vice president of The Cabalen Group. Guests also enjoyed the launch of the “Passport to Cravings” promotion, which rewarded the first 100 customers with exclusive vouch-

ers and special offers from all three restaurant brands. The initiative encourages diners to explore Filipino favorites at Cabalen, Japanese comfort food at Tsurumaru, and the bold flavors of Thailand at Soi. The opening also serves as a prelude to The Cabalen Group’s upcoming 40th anniversary celebration, marking four decades of serving Filipino families and creating shared dining experiences across the country. With the addition of Cabalen, Tsurumaru and Soi in Iloilo, the group hopes to continue bringing people together through food while introducing diners to flavors and traditions from different cultures.

Linda Walker becomes a familiar figure among Filipino audiences as Zhang Yingfei encourages students to keep studying and protect their well-being



Zhang Yingfei says her role as Linda Walker resonates with Filipino viewers because of the character's intelligence, perseverance, and drive



Very Wang
Nickie Wang

ZHANG Yingfei is setting the record straight: she is not artificial intelligence, despite online chatter linking her to her breakout role as Linda Walker in *The Heiress Who Won With Brains*.

"I'm an actress and starred in many dramas. No, I am not AI. I'm a breathing, living human being," she said, addressing netizens who suggested otherwise.

Her character, Linda Walker, portrayed as a prodigy with an IQ of 180 and a score of 719 in a mock exam, quickly gained traction among Filipino audiences. The role has since become a symbol of intelligence, perseverance, and academic excellence in online discussions.

Zhang spoke during a press conference at a hotel in Quezon City organized by the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Inc. (FFCCCII), which brought her to Manila.

She arrived at Ninoy Aquino International Airport shortly before midnight on June 7 and began a packed schedule the following morning. Her itinerary included a tour of Intramuros focused on Philippine history, culture, and traditions, followed by a courtesy call at Manila City Hall, where she met Mayor **Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso**.

During the meeting, Domagoso encouraged her to explore more of Manila, including Binondo, to better understand the city's history and the long-standing ties between Filipino and Chinese communities. Both exchanged tokens of appreciation, with the mayor giving her a traditional lamp and Zhang

presenting a gift in return.

In her first Philippine television interview on *Unang Hirit* on June 9, Zhang acknowledged learning about her viral popularity in the country through social media.

"During the Spring Festival in February, she saw on her social media platform that many people had commented on this one. So she was really surprised. She realized that this



Zhang Yingfei (center) arrives in Manila for a packed visit tied to education, cultural exchange, and stronger Filipino-Chinese ties. **Photo from Manila Public Information Office**



Zhang Yingfei (center) meets the local press as FFCCCII presents her as the face of its campaign for education, tourism, and cultural connection

SHOWBIZ

Linda Walker is no AI

Chinese actress Zhang Yingfei on fame, artistry, and Filipino connection

character really resonated not just in China, but also in the Philippines," she said through an interpreter.

Asked about similarities between herself and Linda Walker, Zhang said the character has left a lasting impression on her.

"As an actress, I really cherish all of my roles. So I believe that every role will have like a shadow in me. But of course, to be honest, I'm not as smart as Linda Walker. But she really cherishes her roles."

After her morning TV appearance, she visited ABS-CBN for a guest appearance on *It's Showtime*, where she bonded with the hosts who sang her a birthday greeting.

She then proceeded to Luxent Hotel for a grand press conference, where members of the entertainment press were gathered. There, Zhang discussed the purpose of her visit, aligned with the FFCCCII advocacy promoting education and stronger cultural ties.

"In China, there's this saying that, 'Education could change your destiny,'" she said through an interpreter. "So I encourage everybody to study hard and do your best because that could change your lives."

She also encouraged students to persevere, drawing inspiration from her character, while reminding audiences to prioritize mental health.

"I'd like to take the role of Linda Walker. She's very persevering, brave, and never backs out. She always does her very best. So maybe Linda Walker could be a very great role model," she said.

"But at the same time, for those who are dealing with mental health problems, it's very important to take care of your health because if you have good health you could do anything," she added.

FFCCCII officials also explained during the press conference why Zhang was chosen as the face of its civic campaign promoting education, Philippine tourism, and stronger ties between Filipinos and Chinese communities.

'Tayo Sa Wakas' expands global screenings after strong local debut

STAR Cinema's romance drama *Tayo Sa Wakas* (*Us in the End*) is set to roll out in cinemas worldwide following a strong performance in the Philippines, the studio said.

The film, starring **Donny Pangilinan** and **Belle Mariano**, is scheduled for screenings in Australia and New Zealand beginning June 11, followed by the United States, Canada, and Guam on June 12. It will open in Hong

Kong and Macau on June 21, with additional releases in Malaysia and the Middle East later in June and in Taiwan on July 10.

The movie previously posted the highest opening for a Philippine film in 2026, earning P70 million in its first week, according to Star Cinema.

As it enters its third week in local cinemas, the international rollout brings the romantic drama to wider audiences.

Directed by **Cathy Garcia-Sampana**, *Tayo sa Wakas* explores themes of love, timing, and second chances.

The story follows Cisco (Pangilinan) and Cheska (Mariano), a couple whose relationship is tested by their personal ambitions. As they drift apart, they embark on a breakup trip to decide whether to end their relationship or try to save it.



Donny Pangilinan (left) and Belle Mariano bring Cisco and Cheska's story to more audiences as the romance drama reaches cinemas outside the Philippines



The 'Schmigadoon!' team celebrates its Best Musical win at the 79th Tony Awards

'Liberation' and 'Schmigadoon!' top Tony Awards

BESS Wohl's play *Liberation*, a look at second-wave feminism, and musical *Schmigadoon!* earned the top prizes on Sunday at the 79th Tony Awards, the highest honors in American theater.

The ceremony, held at Radio City Music Hall, reflected the political climate of President **Donald Trump's** America, with host Pink taking a stand in support of transgender people and freedom of expression.

The awards honored socially conscious works that explored feminism, antisemitism, and US history, and celebrated LGBTQ culture.

Liberation, which explores

sexuality and the place of women in society in the 1970s, was named Best Play after winning a Pulitzer Prize in May.

Wohl is only the fourth woman to receive the honor.

The award for Best Musical went to *Schmigadoon!*, a humorous tribute to Broadway's greatest hits and an adaptation of the series of the same name.

John Lithgow won Best Actor for his portrayal of **Roald Dahl** in *Giant*, and praised the play as "extraordinarily important right now."

The play by British writer **Mark Rosenblatt** revisits a period in Dahl's

career after he published an essay about the 1982 Israeli siege of Beirut that was deemed antisemitic.

Another adaptation, that of **Arthur Miller's** *Death of a Salesman*, won six awards, more than any other work. Among them were Best Revival of a Play and Best Supporting Actress for **Laurie Metcalf**, known for her role in the series *Roseanne*.

Theater remains a hit with New York audiences, with 14.6 million tickets sold during the 2025–2026 season and bringing in \$1.9 billion in gross revenue, according to the Broadway League, the industry's leading trade association.

AFP, Raphaëlle Peltier

Araneta City celebrates Independence Day with #TatakPinoy

By Nickie Wang

ARANETA City commemorates the 128th anniversary of Philippine independence this June with #TatakPinoy, a series of activities highlighting Filipino food, fashion, games, arts, and culture across the City of Firsts.

“The City of Firsts believes that Filipino pride and identity are best celebrated with a community. We are proud to provide a space to commemorate our independence. Through the activities we’ve prepared, we hope to strengthen our collective sense of pride and a deeper appreciation of our culture, history, and identity,” **Marjorie Go**, vice president for marketing of Araneta City, said.

The celebration begins with #TatakPinoy: Tara Merienda! from June 11 to 14 at the Gateway Mall

Activity Area, featuring Filipino snacks including halo-halo, empanada, fruit shakes and rice meals. Visitors may also learn and practice Baybayin, one of the country’s earliest writing systems.

On June 12, the Quantum Skyview at Gateway Mall 2 hosts Pork Labanan: The Great Pinoy Pork Culinary Wars, organized in partnership with the National Federation of Hog Farmers Inc. The event features aspiring chefs competing to create pork dishes.

From June 12 to 17, #TatakPinoy: Larong Pinoy transforms the MacArthur Activity Area at Ali Mall into a venue for traditional Filipino games. The activity also includes teks and tatsing tournaments and a display of Manny Pacquiao’s vintage memorabilia as part of the Timber Toys and Antiques Retro & Toy Hunters Community’s Freedom Fair.

Also on June 12, Dream Entertainment stages #TatakPinoy:



Araneta City’s June program brings Filipino food, fashion, games, arts, and culture together for the country’s 128th independence anniversary

Tagpi-Tagpi at Farmers Plaza. The fashion show features models wearing casual outfits accented with the colors of the Philippine flag as a contemporary interpretation of patriotic style.

Ali Mall also hosts #TatakPinoy: Pista sa Nayon from June 13 to 14 in partnership with Maevn Designs, DreamLab Studio, Malikhaya Performing Arts Group, and the Our

Lady of Perpetual Help Parish Youth Ministry.

A fashion presentation called Kalye Estilo on June 13 highlights Filipino streetwear through various interpretations of contemporary Pinoy fashion.

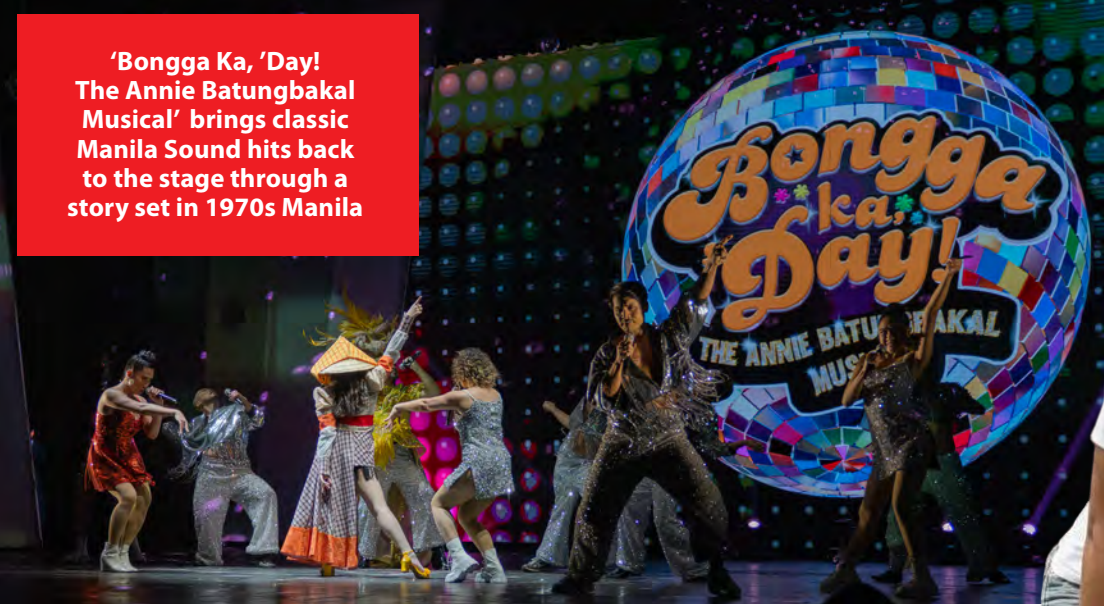
On June 14, guests can enjoy performances of Kundiman music, a runway showcase of reimagined Asian-Filipino ethnic wear, and a dance theater presentation by the Malikhaya Performing Arts Group.

The #PinoyAko: aRUNeta Run Club event on June 14 brings together participants for a fun run celebrating fitness and Filipino pride. Runners are encouraged to wear red, blue, white or yellow to represent the Philippine flag.

Araneta City also holds the Digital Promo: My Pinoy Figure from June 12 to 17. Participants create Pinoy Figures using rotatable blocks located at the MacArthur Activity Area in Ali Mall and Gateway Mall 1, then post photos or videos of their creations and tag Araneta City’s official social media page for a chance to win prizes.

Why Filipinos keep coming back to Manila Sound

‘Bongga Ka, ‘Day! The Annie Batungbakal Musical’ brings classic Manila Sound hits back to the stage through a story set in 1970s Manila



MANILA Sound, shaped in the 1970s amid disco lights and bell-bottom fashion, continues to echo across generations of Filipino listeners, long after its commercial peak.

Songs such as “Bakit Labis Kitang Mahal” still surface at karaoke nights, while “Rock Baby Rock” often becomes a spontaneous staple at family gatherings. The genre remains deeply embedded in Original Pilipino Music, or OPM, with even younger audiences recognizing its distinct rhythm and Taglish lyricism.

Before OPM took shape

Before OPM became the umbrella term for Filipino music, Manila Sound helped define a modern local pop identity. At the time, Philippine radio was dominated by American and British rock, while traditional kundiman and folk music represented a more formal cultural lineage.

Manila Sound emerged in the middle, representing an urban youth culture that was expressive, playful, and distinctly Filipino.

Hotdog leads the movement

The genre’s rise is closely linked to **Hotdog**, formed in 1972 by brothers **Dennis** and **Rene Garcia**.

The group helped popularize Manila Sound through hits such as “Ikaw Ang Miss Universe Ng Buhay Ko” and “Pers Lab,” followed by defining tracks including “Manila,” “Annie Batungbakal,” and “Bongga Ka, Day.”

Hotdog’s approach used conversational Taglish lyrics paired with Western-style pop and disco arrangements. The result resonated widely, capturing everyday experiences of young, middle-class Manileños and

reshaping local pop radio.

As Hotdog gained traction, the recording industry expanded its support for similar acts. Vicor Music Corporation, led by **Vic del Rosario** and



Hotdog, formed by brothers Dennis and Rene Garcia in 1972, helps define a Taglish pop sound that reshaped modern OPM



From left: Rey Valera, Hajji Alejandro, Rico J. Puno, and Marco Sison represent the artists who helped expand Manila Sound into a broader OPM tradition

Orly Ilacad, played a key role in developing artists aligned with the Manila Sound movement.

Artists such as **Rico J. Puno** helped broaden the genre’s reach by blending soul and R&B influences with Filipino storytelling in songs like “Kapalaran” and Taglish reinterpretations of Western hits.

Disco era dominance

By the late 1970s, disco influence pushed Manila Sound further into mainstream entertainment. **VST & Company** became synonymous with upbeat party tracks such as “Awitin Mo At Isasayaw Ko” and “Magsayawan,” while **Hagibis** introduced funk-driven

performances with songs like “Katawan” and “Legs.”

These acts turned dance floors and live shows into central spaces for Filipino pop culture.

Alongside disco, groups such as **Cinderella** and **The Boyfriends** shaped the genre’s sentimental side.

The Boyfriends became known for “Bakit Labis Kitang Mahal” and “Dahil Mahal Kita,” while **Cinderella** produced hits including “T.L. Ako Sa’yo” and “Bato sa Buhangin,” reflecting themes of youthful romance.

Transition into OPM

By the late 1970s, Manila Sound began evolving into a broader musical identity. Songwriters including **Ryan Cayabyab**, **Rey Valera**, **Hajji Alejandro**, **Marco Sison**, **Basil Valdez**, and **Freddie Aguilar** expanded Filipino pop into more diverse and sophisticated forms.

Danny Javier of **APO Hiking Society** later helped coin the term Original Pilipino Music, or OPM, to describe this wider musical landscape.

Manila Sound ultimately served as a foundation for modern Filipino pop, proving that local stories told in local language could dominate mainstream airwaves.

The genre is returning to the spotlight through the upcoming musical *Bongga Ka, ‘Day! The Annie Batungbakal Musical*, set in 1970s Manila. The production revives classic Manila Sound hits and opens in September 2026 at the Newport Performing Arts Theater.

GMA Network chief marketing officer **Lizelle G. Maralag** has been included in Campaign Asia-Pacific’s APAC Power List 2026, which recognizes the region’s top 50 marketers.

Maralag is one of three Filipinos on the list and among 23 women honored this year, according to Campaign Asia-Pacific.

She is recognized for her leadership in driving GMA Network’s revenue growth and advancing marketing initiatives across digital, broadcast, and local and international platforms.

Under her leadership, GMA Network has received recognition as one of the most awarded Philippine broadcast and media companies in local and international marketing competitions.

In 2025, the Media Specialists Association of the Philippines awarded Maralag the Media Icon Award, citing her contributions to creativity, innovation, commercial impact, strategic thinking, and professionalism in the industry.

In 2023, she was credited for leading



Lizelle Maralag is named among the region’s top marketers for work spanning revenue growth, brand partnerships, and media platforms

brand collaborations that helped GMA Network secure Media Network of the

Year at the PANata Awards of the Philippine Association of National Advertisers.

GMA Network executive joins Campaign Asia-Pacific APAC Power List 2026

She previously received the Hildegard Award for Women in Media and Communication (Advertising category) in 2019 for her work in promoting youth welfare and social impact through media.

Before joining GMA Network in 2010, Maralag spent more than two decades at Starcom Mediavest Group Philippines, where she served as managing director and concurrently held leadership roles at Publicis Groupe Media Philippines and Zenith Optimedia Philippines.

She also led multiple media agency of record pitches during her tenure from 2000 to 2009.

Maralag holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Statistics from the University

of the Philippines Diliman and pursued further studies at INSEAD in Singapore.

She previously served as founding co-chairperson of the Media Specialists Association of the Philippines from 2008 to 2009 and has held leadership roles in industry research organizations, including the Radio Research Council Adjudication and Review Board and the TV Research Council. She continues to serve as a juror in local and regional advertising awards, including the Asia-Pacific Advertising Effectiveness Awards.

The APAC Power List 2026 covers marketers across markets, including Singapore, China, Hong Kong, India, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Japan, Taiwan, and Thailand.

Learn the language of grace through Sunshine Place’s ballet classes

SUNSHINE Place is offering ballet classes designed to provide a structured environment for children and adults to develop grace, coordination, strength, flexibility, and confidence through classical ballet training.

The program covers foundational ballet techniques, positions, posture, musicality, and expressive movement, along with discipline and artistic appreciation under experienced instruction.

Baby Ballet is open to children ages 3 to 5 and is held every Monday and Wednesday from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Adult Ballet is open to ages 18 to 40 and runs every Monday and Wednesday from 5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. Classes are conducted by **Ma. Pamela Angela Pujante-Ramos**.

For young learners, the sessions focus on ballet fundamentals through age-appropriate exercises and creative movement activities aimed at developing imagination, body awareness, and self-expression while building coordination, balance, rhythm, and confidence.

Adult classes are designed to improve posture, flexibility, strength, and overall body awareness. The program accommodates beginners and those returning to dance, offering a supportive environment for personal growth, physical wellness, and artistic expression.

Sunshine Place said consistent training helps students of all ages build technical skills, confidence, poise, and appreciation for ballet.

Pujante-Ramos began ballet training at age 7 at St. Theresa’s College under **Felicitas L. Radaic**. She completed Royal Academy of Dance examinations from Primary to Grade 4. At age 12, she trained at the School of Ballet and Dance Arts under **Vella C. Damian**.

She later joined the Dance Concert Company under **Eric V. Cruz** and served as junior faculty at SBDA. In 1987, she became a company member of the Philippine Ballet Theatre, and in 1990 joined The Oscars under **Bobby Ongkiko**.

From 1990 to 2009, she taught ballet in various schools and earned her Teacher’s Methodology certification under TESDA in 1991. In 2009, she founded the Little Ballerina School of Dance, first in Moonwalk and later in Cubao.

She has held leadership roles in the Association of Ballet Academies of the Philippines, including assistant treasurer, assistant secretary, treasurer and secretary.

For inquiries and enrollment, contact (632) 8856-4144 / 8856-4162, mobile 0917-801-6440 or email hello@sunshineplaceph.com.

More information is available at www.sunshineplaceph.com, Facebook @SunshinePlace56Jupiter, Instagram @sunshineplaceph and YouTube Sunshine Place: Senior Recreation Center.



Sunshine Place offers ballet classes for children and adults, giving learners a space to build grace, discipline, coordination, and confidence through classical dance training

NOW & NEXT



After the opening showcase, the fair continues with a broader designer lineup presenting fresh ideas for wedding fashion



Furne Amato opens the 2026 bridal fair with ‘Harvest,’ a collection that brings rustic romance to the event’s fashion program

Where ‘I do’ begins

Furne Amato kicks off Conrad Manila’s Inspired Beginnings

By Nickie Wang

EVERY love story eventually arrives at two simple words: “I do.”

Behind those words are months, sometimes years, of planning, anticipation, and countless decisions that turn a wedding day into a lasting memory. For the past decade, Conrad Manila has been part of many of those moments, hosting celebrations that mark the start of new chapters for couples and their families.

That connection to weddings continues with the 2026 edition of *Inspired Beginnings*, the hotel’s signature bridal fair. As part of Conrad Manila’s 10th anniversary celebration, this year’s showcase brings together some of the country’s leading designers, stylists, and wedding specialists, with internationally recognized designer **Furne Amato** opening the three-day event with a fashion presentation of his latest bridal creations.

The internationally recognized designer will headline the opening night of *Inspired Beginnings 2026* with *Harvest*, a bridal collection that combines rustic influences with contemporary romance. The fashion show, directed by **Robby Carmona**, is set for June 26 at the Forbes Ballroom and serves as the centerpiece of the event’s opening day.

Conrad Manila’s annual bridal showcase, mounted in partnership with Getting Married

Wedding Coordinators and Event Planners led by **Kutchie Zaldarriaga**, runs from June 26 to 28 and gathers some of the country’s leading wedding suppliers, designers, and event specialists.

“For the past ten years, Conrad Manila has had the privilege of being part of life’s most cherished milestones, particularly the beginning of lifelong journeys,” Hallam said. “Inspired Beginnings was created to honor precisely that: the beauty, emotion, and significance of every love story entrusted to us.”

Following Amato’s opening showcase, a multi-designer fashion presentation on June 27 will feature collections by **Ryan Ablaza Uson, Vee Tan, Michael Chiu Rosero, Joe San Antonio, Manny Halasan, Ehrran Montoya, Jazel Sy, Andrea Tetangco, and Pablo Mendez**.

The fair will also include a styling exhibit featuring tablescapes inspired by historical eras, from the Victorian and Edwardian periods to Art Deco, Old Hollywood, and Rococo influences. Participating stylists include **FJ Sionson, Kathy Sy King, Dave Sandoval, Drew Menor, Jacqs Floral, Il Fiore, Randy Lazaro, and Tiger Lim**.

Guests may also meet wedding coordinators, photographers, makeup artists, jewelers, and other industry suppliers during the three-day expo. Philippine Airlines, Jeweler, Metrophoto, Nice Print Photography, and Nova Aesthetics are among the participating brands and exhibitors.

The event formally opens with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on June 26 at the Level 3 Atrium, led by Zaldarriaga, Hallam, and other partners.

A GROUP of international students from the College of Global Liberal Arts of Ritsumeikan University in Japan took part in an interdisciplinary exploration of disability studies within Philippine history, culture, and contemporary practices.

The short course, *Islands of Inclusion: A Philippine Immersion in Disability Studies*, was offered by De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde (DLS-CSB) to give delegates an opportunity to work with advocates, organizations and local communities.

Participants included **Yu Iwamoto** of Japan, **Kao Nhu Ngoc Nguyen** of Vietnam, **Enkhtsag Ganzorig** of Mongolia, **Putra Kusumo Marcel** of Indonesia, and **Aimelia Andrei Velasquez** of the Philippines. They were accompanied by faculty members Sakura Ito and Eri Yamashita from Japan.

The program examined how culture shapes perceptions of disability and inclusion, combining academic discussions with experiential learning, applied projects, and reflective synthesis. It also looked at accessibility in education, workplace, and tourism settings.

The weeklong program opened

with the session *Living Disability in the Philippines: Lived Experiences and Everyday Realities*, which focused on community building and intercultural exchange.

Participants were introduced to basic Filipino Sign Language and engaged in dialogue with persons with disabilities on challenges related to education, employment, and access to services.

The group visited the School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies and the Benilde Deaf School, followed by the Philippine School for the Deaf.

Discussions also covered economic empowerment and workplace support services for persons with disabilities. As part of an industry visit, the students went to tech consultancy firm Accenture to observe inclusive hiring practices and workplace accessibility.

They also visited the Department of Social Welfare and Development’s Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services program to learn about community-driven and social enterprise models of disability inclusion.

During a city excursion in

International students explore Filipino culture, disability inclusion practices



Intramuros, the delegates learned about Filipino historical figures with disabilities, rode a kalesa, toured Fort Santiago with Deaf guides, sampled local cuisine, and observed traditional dances. They also visited the National Museum, Rizal Park, and other cultural landmarks.

The program concluded in the municipality of San Antonio, Zambales, and at nearby beaches, where the delegates presented their outputs and participated in a synthesis session that brought together key insights from the course.

The Philippine immersion program’s participants pose in front of national hero Jose Rizal’s monument at Rizal Park