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Manila Standard

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2nd defense witness taking MRI, can't appear as VP trial resumes

By Maricel V. Cruz and Ram Superable

VICE President Sara Duterte's defense faces two witness setbacks as her impeachment trial resumes today, with their first witness withdrawing and another unable to appear because of a scheduled medical examination.

House lead prosecutor and Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro said lawyer Suzette Balucanag-Punay, corporate counsel of Gencorp Industries Inc. and Metro City Chow Foods Corp., would miss the hearing because of a

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DFA to officials: Don't weaken China stance

'Foreign parties could exploit conflicting PH statements'

By Charles Dantes and Jimbo Gulle

THE Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has warned government officials against publicly undermining the administration's diplomatic approach toward China, saying conflicting statements could weaken the Philippines' negotiating position and create divisions that foreign parties could exploit.

In a statement Sunday, the DFA said President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has the constitutional authority to determine the country's foreign policy and that individual officials and agencies cannot independently pursue their preferred approaches toward China or other international partners.

The warning came amid renewed tensions over maritime disputes, China's claims over the Batanes Islands and exchanges involving Philippine officials and the Chinese Embassy.

"Public statements that undermine the government's diplomatic approach do more than complicate the work of

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LUNA'S CLEOPATRA. Juan Luna's painting ,The Death of Cleopatra, will be among the the collection of paintings and sculptures that will be shown in the first exhibition of 19th-century Filipino artists at Spain's Museo Nacional del Prado in November 16 next year. Luna won his first medal with this painting at Spain´s 1881 Exposición General de Bellas Artes (General Exhibition of Fine Arts). Inset shows, at right, the Prado's Director, Miguel Falomir Faus, with Carlos Navarro, art historian and chief curator of the museum's 19th-century paintings. Museo Nacional del Prado, VC Galvez

Spain's Prado sets Manila exhibitions of 19th-century Filipino artists

By VC Galvez

FOR over a hundred years, some of the best 19th-century Filipino artworks in the world sat quietly—not in Manila, but tucked away in museums and public buildings across Spain.

That's about to change.

In an interview with journalists at the Ayala Museum, Museo Nacional del Prado Director Miguel Falomir Faus and chief curator Carlos Navarro shared a discovery that even surprised Falomir himself.

"We have this extraordinary collection, the best collection of Filipino art outside the Philippines. More than 100 pieces, mostly paintings and sculptures," says Falomir.

"But although I have been working in the Prado for almost 30 years, I didn't know about this collection."

Many of the works weren't even in the Prado. They were on permanent deposit in local museums and government offices around Spain — beautiful, important, but largely forgotten.

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BRIDESMAID FINISH. Filipina ace Alexandra 'Alex' Eala ended her breakthrough year with a runner-up finish in the Hong Kong Tennis Open 2026 after bowing to American Claire Liu, 3-6, 0-6, on Sunday at the Victoria Park Tennis Stadium. **AFP**

Eala ends breakthrough year with bridesmaid finish in HK

By Jeremiah Sevilla

FILIPINA ace Alexandra "Alex" Eala ended her breakthrough year with a bridesmaid finish in the Hong Kong Tennis Open 2026 after bowing to American Claire Liu, 3-6, 0-6, on Sunday at the Victoria Park Tennis Stadium.

Playing her fourth grueling match in as many days, Eala struggled to find her rhythm after taking a medical timeout midway ~~through the opening set as the~~ world No. 17 netter wound up as runner-up in the WTA 250 tournament.

Despite missing out on the title, Eala cemented her hold on a new career-high No. 15 in the WTA live rankings with 2,392 points, a position she is expected to maintain for the year-end rankings.

The 21-year-old Pinay lefty likewise marked the best finish of her career in the Asian swing.

"This season has changed my life for the better," an emotional Eala said during her on-court interview.

"I'm incredibly proud of all the

Next page

NGCP unveils Project Airbag to ease grid strain

THE National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) is pushing Project Airbag, a transmission-side battery energy storage initiative aimed at providing additional flexibility to the power grid amid tight supply conditions and preparing the country for possible generation constraints associated with super El Niño.

Project Airbag will deploy battery energy storage systems that can store available electricity and release it when the grid is under greater pressure,

Next page

Pope Leo's advice to the young: 'Get married. . . don't be afraid of forever'

POPE Leo XIV on Saturday urged young people to "dare" to get married and slammed the deaths of children in areas of wealthy Uruguay gripped by drug violence on the second day of his South American tour.

Just three weeks after undergoing surgery for lung cancer, the 71-year-old pontiff is on a 12-day tour of the continent where he served nearly two decades as a missionary.

As police helicopters flew overhead, locals waved and cheered to welcome the head of the world's 1.4 billion Catholics, who blessed 12 new low-income houses financed by the Church.

"Being here with you makes me feel at home, and brings back memories of the visits I made to various

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SM Foundation feted at Asia ESG Positive Impact Awards 2026

SM Foundation, Inc. was recognized with the Silver Award at the Asia ESG Positive Impact Awards 2026 for its Community Health Systems Initiative under the Social Category - Health and Wellbeing.

SM Foundation's Executive Director for Health and Wellness Connie Angeles and Sr. Project Manager Albert Uy represented SM Foundation during the awarding ceremony recently.

SM Foundation's Health and Wellness Program bridges critical healthcare gaps in underserved and geographically isolated communities across the Philippines

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SILVER AWARDEE. SM Foundation's Executive Director for Health and Wellness Connie Angeles and Sr. Project Manager Albert Uy receive the award for SM Foundation.

'ASEAN TEAMWORK MAY CUT OIL RESERVES' COST' NEWS / A4

2 TANKERS ON FIRE, HIT BY MINES IN HORMUZ WORLD / A6

DBM TO AGENCIES: RELEASE YEAR-END BONUS, CASH GIFT BUSINESS / B1

2nd...

From A1

scheduled magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan.

Her testimony is expected to be rescheduled to Wednesday, Nov. 11.

The development followed the withdrawal of constitutional law professor Ralph Sarmiento, who had been designated as the defense's first witness.

Sarmiento said he declined to participate to preserve the independence of his constitutional law scholarship and the impartiality of his legal views.

Luistro said the defense's presentation was expected to open with Davao City Assessor Jaime Adalin, Island Garden City of Samal Assessor John Kenneth Enumerables and Matina Crossing Barangay Chairperson Cindy Colina.

The Senate impeachment court will convene at 10 a.m. before the Senate holds an afternoon session and resumes the trial.

2 properties in focus

Luistro said the local officials were expected to address two properties identified in Land Registration Authority (LRA) records but allegedly not reflected in Duterte's Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALNs).

The prosecution earlier presented property titles and deeds of sale, which Luistro said did not match the vice president's declarations.

The defense is expected to use the assessors' testimonies to explain the questioned property records, while prosecutors said they were prepared to challenge the witnesses' accounts.

Luistro said witnesses who withdraw from testifying may simply not want to be identified with either the prosecution or the defense.

She commended Sarmiento for prioritizing his independence and impartiality, while noting that the defense's witness list had decreased from 25 to 24.

'VP can explain financial records best'

The prosecution chief also challenged Duterte to testify personally, saying she was best positioned to explain the financial records, property documents and business interests presented against her.

Prosecutors have cited bank records, tax documents, corporate filings and forensic accounting findings alleging at least P817.87 million in unexplained wealth involving Duterte and her husband, lawyer Manases Carpio, from 2022 to 2025.

Forensic financial analyst Alexander Cabrera estimated the amount at P817.87 million under a conservative computation and as much as P1.5 billion under a broader calculation. Duterte declared a net worth of P98.66 million in her 2025 SALN.

"We can't think of anyone else. The only person who can truly explain what happened is none other than the Vice President," Luistro said.

Private prosecutor Benjamin "Jay" Tolosa Jr. said the prosecution was prepared to cross-examine Duterte if she takes the witness stand. The defense has not confirmed whether she will testify.

The prosecution has withdrawn three articles of impeachment, leaving the alleged unexplained wealth charge as the remaining basis of the trial.

The Senate impeachment court has cautioned that the withdrawal does not authorize unrestricted disclosure or dissemination of evidence presented in connection with the dropped articles.

Hontiveros: Predictions premature

Meanwhile, Sen. Risa Hontiveros said it was premature to predict whether the Senate would convict or acquit Duterte, stressing that senator-judges have yet to hear the defense's evidence.

She said the judges must consider all testimony and evidence before deciding and would not determine the vote count until the day of voting.

Hontiveros also urged the public not to lose interest in the proceedings, describing the trial as a constitutional responsibility to uphold accountability.

House prosecutor Terry Ridon, meanwhile, said the impeachment proceedings could be affecting Duterte's popularity, citing an OCTA Research survey that placed her at 40 percent among potential presidential candidates for the 2028 elections.

She compared this with ratings of 49 to 50 percent in surveys by other polling firms and attributed the decline partly to the trial. Her assessment was an interpretation of the survey results.

DFA...

From A1

our diplomats. They risk eroding the country's credibility in international affairs and project an image of internal division that external parties can exploit," the DFA said.

The statement was an apparent reaction to a newspaper column, published Saturday, by Rear Admiral Jay Tarriela, Philippine Coast Guard spokesperson on the West Philippine Sea, titled "Why Beijing wants us to go quiet."

The DFA also welcomed the statement of support over the weekend by 20 business, labor, industry, and civil society organizations of its diplomatic engagement with China.

The groups said sustained dialogue and cooperation are essential to protecting Philippine economic interests while upholding the country's sovereignty.

"The DFA is grateful for the appreciation of these sectors regarding the challenges of diplomatic work, and how candor, composure, principled conduct, sound judgment, and measured engagement are vital in the conduct of foreign relations, even as we firmly assert and uphold the Philippines' rights and entitlements," it added.

Tarriela defends transparency campaign

In his column, Tarriela argued that China's reported call for the Philippines to speak with a "unified voice" effectively seeks to limit public disclosure of incidents involving Chinese vessels.

He said videos, photographs and other evidence released since 2023 had exposed Chinese activities at sea, countered Beijing's narrative and helped generate international support for the Philippines.

Ending the disclosures, he warned, would reduce global attention to the disputed waters and weaken support for Philippine maritime interests.

Tarriela also argued that public awareness of Chinese actions had influenced domestic political discourse, making pro-China positions less popular among Filipino voters.

He suggested Beijing wanted to reduce scrutiny ahead of future elections and cited differing Philippine and Chinese accounts of recent diplomatic phone calls as evidence of efforts to shape the narrative.

While acknowledging the importance of diplomacy, Tarriela said the Philippines should continue documenting and publicizing incidents at sea to protect its interests and maintain public accountability.

DFA reaffirms Lazaro-Yi conversation

The DFA reaffirmed its account of the Nov. 3 telephone conversation between Foreign Affairs Secretary Theresa Lazaro and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, describing it as part of efforts to maintain stable and predictable bilateral relations while managing differences responsibly.

Although it did not identify the officials whose remarks it was addressing, the department said public commentary had blurred the distinction between documenting incidents, public messaging and official diplomatic engagement.

It stressed that diplomacy remains the principal means of negotiating disputes, filing formal protests and asserting Philippine rights. It also cautioned against treating footage of Chinese activities in the West Philippine Sea as a substitute for diplomatic engagement.

"Transparency is a tool, not a strategy in itself," the DFA said, noting that publicizing maritime incidents helps establish facts, counter disinformation and build international awareness.

However, such disclosures do not provide physical deterrence at sea or constitute a legal strategy, it added.

The department cited the Philippines' 2016 arbitral victory against China, which ruled that Beijing had no legal basis to claim historic rights to resources within its nine-dash line beyond its entitlements under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. China has rejected the ruling.

Using 'tools of statecraft'

The DFA said the Philippines must combine international law, diplomacy and other instruments of statecraft to protect its sovereignty.

Civilian authorities direct foreign relations, while security agencies and uniformed services provide operational assessments and document developments on the ground, it added.

Officials should raise professional advice through established channels and follow the president's policy directions.

"Firmness in defending national sovereignty does not require inflexibility. Diplomatic engagement is not appeasement," the DFA said, adding that some circumstances call for public disclosure while others require discretion and quiet engagement.

The statement came as the Philippines prepared to host the 49th Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit on Nov. 15 to 17.

Teodoro calls for stronger defenses

Meanwhile, Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. rejected China's renewed claims over the Batanes Islands, saying the Philippines had sufficient historical and legal grounds to defend its sovereignty.

He described China as unresponsive to diplomatic messaging and urged Filipinos to resist disinformation and support troops serving the country, including those in Ayungin.

"There is no message that works with them. China is numb to it," Teodoro told ABS-CBN News.

His remarks followed claims by Chinese scholars that Batanes was a natural geographical extension of Taiwan and should fall under Chinese sovereignty.

The National Historical Commission of the Philippines rejected the assertions, citing records showing that Batanes was incorporated into the Spanish colonial administration in 1783 and that there was no historical evidence of Chinese governance over the islands.

Teodoro called for strategic military bases along the country's Pacific-facing coastline and an accelerated expansion of the Philippine Marine Corps (PMC), including a stronger presence in the Kalayaan Island Group.

Speaking at the PMC's 76th anniversary celebration at Fort Bonifacio on Saturday, he said its four marine brigades and one service support brigade were too small for a country with 7,600 islands.

He urged closer coordination among the Marines, Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard, stronger logistics and reserves, continued modernization, and expanded military exercises and international ties.

He also said the government had begun laying the groundwork for Pacific-facing bases and that diplomatic developments would not affect Department of National Defense and Armed Forces of the Philippines operations.

Spain's...

From A1

A few years ago, Falomir asked Navarro, chief curator of 19th-century paintings, to take a closer look.

"He said we have this amazing collection and we should do something," Falomir recalls.

So they launched an ambitious project: bring all the works back to Madrid, restore them, and study them properly — the first-ever technical study of Filipino painting.

Today, the Prado has a dedicated research team, two scholars writing dissertations on Filipino art, and a curator from the Philippines' National Museum doing research in Madrid.

You can already see some of the results in the Prado's 19th-century galleries, including Juan Luna's Cleopatra.

Two major exhibitions in Manila

But the biggest news is still to come: two major exhibitions, both heading to Manila.

The first opens in Madrid on November 16, 2027, featuring 67 works exclusively from the Prado's collection. It will travel to the National Museum of Art in Manila some time in April 2028. The show focuses on works made in the Philippines by Filipino artists and sent to Spain for the 1887 Philippine Exhibition — the kind of art barely represented in Filipino museums today because so much was lost in World War II.

Held during the dying days of the Empire, the exhibition was the brainchild of Spanish Overseas Minister Victor Balaguer and staged at the main park in Madrid, the Parque del Buen Retiro.

It became controversial because the exhibition also showcased indigenous folk, local products and plants which critics described as a 'human zoo'.

The second will celebrate the European careers of ilustrado expatriates Luna, Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo, and their contemporaries, including works never seen before by Filipinos. After they are shown in Madrid, it will be brought to Manila in 2029.

In Madrid, each show runs for about three months. In Manila, they'll stay much longer — 9 to 12 months, according to Falomir.

Anthropological curiosities

Why now? Falomir is candid. In the early 1900s, non-European works were treated as anthropological curiosities, not fine art. That thinking, he says, "does not make sense in the 21st century."

"It was true in the past, Spain was a country of emigrants but right now, it is a country of immigrants. What we are doing with Filipino art is the second stage in a process that we started with American art," explains Falomir.

"So like 10 years ago, we began to realize that we were living in a society in Madrid where easily a third of the population is from Latin America," he points out.

The Prado already saw what happened when it launched its Latin American collection — new audiences walked through its doors for the first time.

Now, they want the same for Filipinos.

NGCP...

From A1

giving NGCP an additional fast-response tool during short-duration shortages and system disturbances.

The initiative comes as the Visayas continues to experience tight supply conditions aggravated by simultaneous generator outages.

While new generation capacity remains the fundamental long-term requirement, battery storage can be deployed more quickly to help reduce immediate system vulnerability while additional power plants and other infrastructures are being developed.

"Project Airbag is not being presented as the overall solution to generation adequacy," NGCP said.

"Batteries do not create electricity and cannot substitute for sufficient dependable generation over prolonged periods. They can, however, provide the grid with greater flexibility while the country develops the additional generation capacity it needs," it added.

The NGCP clarified that the planned battery rollout is not limited to the Visayas.

The company is also looking at the wider Philippine grid as the power sector prepares for the possible effects of El Niño in 2027, particularly reduced hydroelectric output in areas dependent on rainfall and reservoir levels.

Battery systems can capture electricity available during periods of higher supply, including daytime solar production, and release it during evening peaks, periods of reduced hydro output, or other tight system conditions.

The NGCP said early deployment of storage is intended to strengthen the grid before supply conditions deteriorate rather than respond only after shortages occur.

The NGCP stressed that the value of battery storage extends beyond the current Visayas situation or a single El Niño cycle.

As electricity demand increases and the country's generation mix becomes more diverse and variable, the transmission system will require greater flexibility to balance supply and demand and accommodate changing patterns of generation.

Strategically located battery storage can provide fast-response support during disturbances, improve the utilization of existing transmission infrastructure, and help shift available energy from periods of high production to periods of greater demand.

Battery storage

Battery storage can therefore form part of the country's longer-term transmission infrastructure and grid resilience strategy, subject to the appropriate regulatory processes.

SM...

From A1

through its medical and diagnostics missions and wellness Center Program. SM Foundation's health and wellness program delivers immediate medical intervention by combining preventive healthcare services, diagnostics, infrastructure rehabilitation, and multi- stakeholder collaboration, and strengthens long-term healthcare systems. Since inception, SM Foundation has conducted 1,797 medical missions serving over 1.39 million patients and rehabilitated 228 health and wellness centers benefitting more than 7.66 million patients nationwide. Advancing SDG 3, the initiative promoted inclusive and sustainable healthcare access for vulnerable communities.

The SM Group also received the Silver Award for SM Prime's #WasteFreeFuture in the Transformation category and Bronze for SMIC's SM Sustainability in the Talent Management category-- a testament to its continued commitment to sustainability and creating a positive impact.

The regional competition, held in Kuala Lumpur, was participated in by companies from Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. Fifty-two awards were given to 40 winners across 12 categories showcasing successful ESG practices.

Pope...

From A1

communities as a missionary," Leo told residents, who

At a candle-lit prayer vigil on Saturday evening in Montevideo's Centenario stadium, he remarked on the "advance of secularization" in the world's most Catholic continent.

Sharply falling fertility rates in Latin America—down from nearly six children per woman in the 1950s to 1.8 children in 2024—could spell further decline in the Catholic population.

"Young people, dare to take the step of marrying and starting a family yourselves. Don't be afraid of 'forever'!" Leo told the packed 60,000-capacity football venue.

"Having the pope among us is an amazing goal!" Montevideo Archbishop Daniel Sturla told the crowd.

"Pope Leo, we love you so much!" the worshippers chanted.

Condemning drug violence

On Saturday, he visited the crime-blighted Montevideo neighborhood of Casavalle.

The murder rate in the impoverished district is four times the national average and residents spoke movingly of the dangers they faced, like commonplace gun violence.

Katherine Silva's voice cracked with emotion as she told the pope about the violence and abuse she had suffered as a child.

After ending up homeless at 15, the young mother said she "went through very dark times" and "nearly died."

"There are children in Uruguay who do not go to school for fear of never returning home," Leo said.

"In a country as rich in resources as this, children should never have to go to bed hungry… Much less should they have to suffer violence to the point of losing their lives," he added.

The murder rate in Uruguay, one of Latin America's safest and wealthiest countries, has risen sharply in recent years due to its growing role in the cocaine trade.

Claudia, a 33-year-old nurse who did not wish to give her surname, described to AFP once seeing a motorcycle pull up in front of her house "and riddle someone with bullets."

"You don't know what to do when your children see a body lying there. It's become very normalized," she said.

Mad about mate

Latin America is the world's most Catholic continent but the number of people who define themselves as such has plummeted in the past 30 years, from 80 percent to 55 percent, a Latinobarometro poll showed. **AFP**

Eala...

From A1

work we've put in this year," the Mubadala DC Open champion added.

For her part, world No. 102 Liu claimed her first Tour-level title without dropping a set throughout the tourney and replicated her victory over Eala after beating the Filipina, 2-6, 6-4, 6-4, in last year's Guangzhou Open.

Eala entered the final with less than 24 hours to recover from her taxing semifinal victory over Greece's No. 30 and fourth seed Maria Sakkari, 7-5, 3-6, 6-4, in a match that lasted nearly three hours and was interrupted by rain delays.

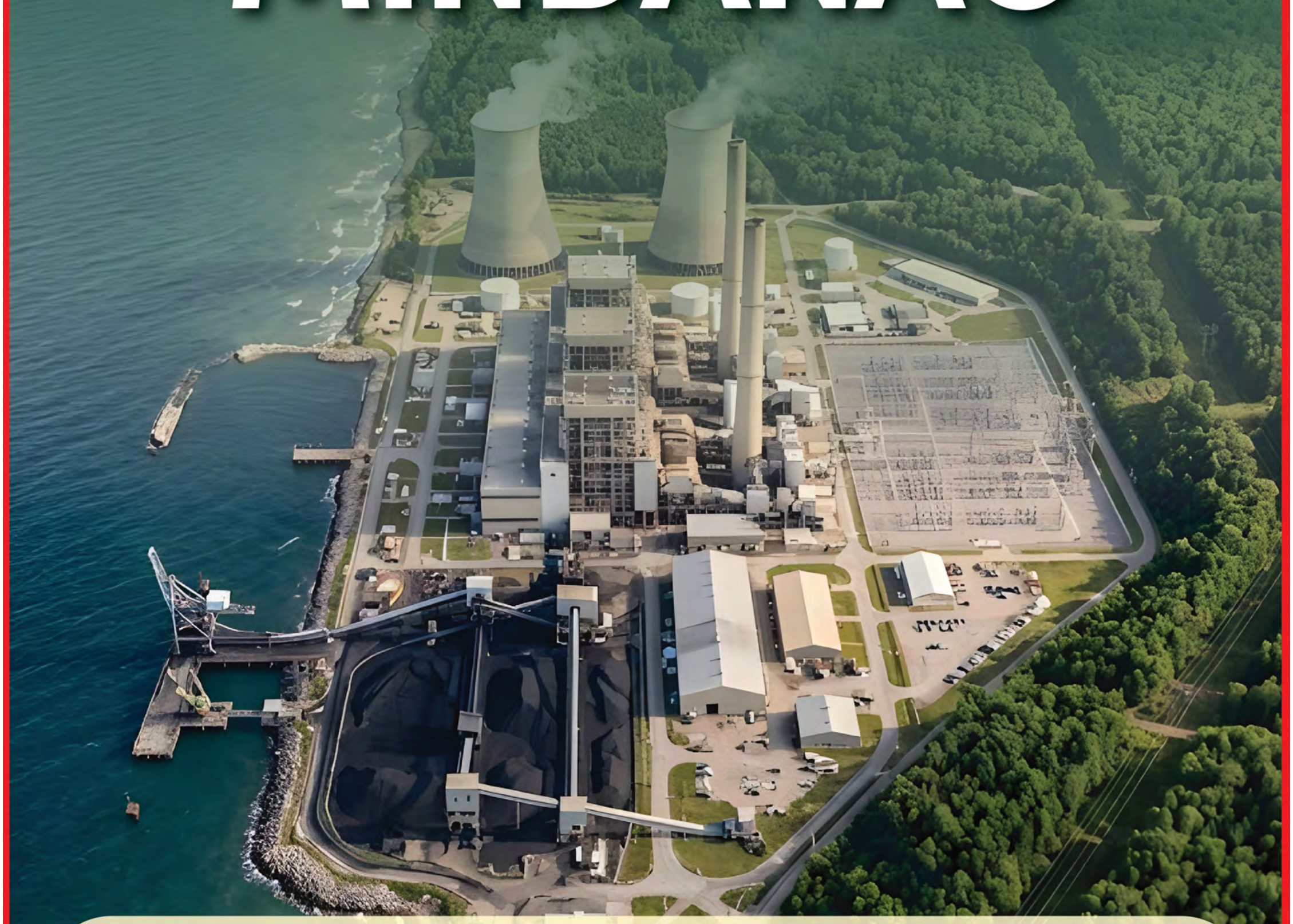
The physical toll appeared to have caught up with the Pinay, who called for a medical timeout ahead of the eighth game of the opening set, while trailing 3-4 to have her right leg heavily strapped.

The 26-year-old Liu capitalized to take the opening set in 36 minutes, then survived a lengthy game one in the second set, wherein Eala saved four break points.

Liu eventually broke through after 10 deuces and never looked back from there, keeping Eala on the defensive before delivering the bagel for a straight-set victory.

The American fired 33 winners against Eala's 16 and dominated on first serves, converting 88 percent of those compared to the Filipina's 48 percent.

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Abrahano directs strict enforcement of ASEAN security

By Vince Lopez

WITH the 49th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits just days away, National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Brig. Gen. Christopher Abrahano on Sunday directed all security units to strictly enforce designated security perimeters and access-control protocols around summit venues, ensuring that only authorized individuals and vehicles are allowed into restricted areas.

Abrahano joined a high-level inter-agency coordinating meeting where officials discussed synchronizing security deployments across all strategic sectors and ensuring full operational readiness to guarantee a safe, secure, and orderly summit.

The NCRPO chief emphasized that security checkpoints, exclusion zones, and identification procedures must be implemented consistently and professionally to prevent unauthorized entry, detect suspicious activities, and protect foreign delegates, summit participants, and the general public.

He ordered police personnel to carefully verify identification documents, credentials, and vehicle authorizations while maintaining close coordination with venue security teams and local government authorities to ensure that access restrictions are properly enforced.



IBAGIW FESTIVAL. Baguio City's iconic Session Road comes alive during the monthlong Ibagiw Festival as the city closes the thoroughfare to vehicular traffic every Sunday, allowing locals and tourists to enjoy outdoor shopping, culinary treats, fresh farm produce, souvenirs and the sunny afternoon. Dave Leprozo

DFA rejects passport irregularities issue

By Charles Dantes

THE Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on Sunday defended its statutory authority to issue Philippine visas and rejected allegations of irregularities in its passport and visa services.

In a statement, the DFA disputed claims that its authority over visa issuance was merely delegated by the Department of Justice (DOJ), stressing that its mandate is explicitly provided under the Administrative Code of 1987.

The department cited Section 21(3), Chapter 7, Title I, Book IV of Executive Order No. 292, which recognizes visa issuance as a statutory function of Philippine consular offices.

It also invoked Articles 3, 5(d), and 70 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, which recognize visa issuance as a consular function that may be exercised by diplomatic missions.

The DFA's statement came after Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla questioned its authority over visa matters and argued that such powers belong exclusively to immigration authorities under the DOJ.

The department also rejected Remulla's suggestion to transfer visa processing to a third-party service provider such as VFS Global, saying private companies may assist in receiving and facilitating applications but cannot assume the government's authority to assess, approve, or deny visas.

"Such authority remains vested in duly authorized government officials," the DFA said.

On the 14-day visa-free entry arrangement for Chinese nationals, the DFA said it was implemented pursuant to a directive from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to promote trade, investments, tourism, and people-to-people exchanges between the Philippines and China.

The arrangement, under DFA Foreign Service Circular No. 2026-005, allows Chinese nationals to enter the Philippines for tourism or business purposes for up to 14 days. The privilege is non-extendible and non-convertible.

The DFA said the arrangement's implementing procedures were determined in coordination with concerned government agencies under the One-Country Team policy.

It added that reports of possible misuse of the visa-free entry privilege should be investigated by Philippine law enforcement agencies, but such incidents do not establish wrongdoing by the DFA or prove that the arrangement was unlawfully implemented.

The department also addressed complaints about the difficulty of obtaining Philippine business visas, citing a Chinese businessman's comparison of the country's requirements with those of another nation.

It said each country has sovereign authority to establish its own visa requirements and procedures.

For Chinese nationals applying for a Section 9(a-1) business visa, the standard processing period is five working days from submission of complete requirements, provided there is no derogatory information, the DFA said.

Chinese nationals visiting for short-term business activities may also use the 14-day visa-free entry arrangement, subject to its conditions.

The foreign affairs department likewise rejected allegations concerning its passport services, including insinuations that it issues fake passports or deliberately makes applications difficult through excessive documentary requirements.

IN BRIEF

Pope accepts resignation of Bangued bishop—CBCP

POPE Leo XIV has accepted the resignation of Bishop Leopoldo Jaucian as head of the Diocese of Bangued in Abra, raising to seven the number of vacant ecclesiastical jurisdictions in the Philippines, according to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) website.

The Vatican announced the decision on Saturday, Nov. 7, saying the resignation was accepted under Paragraph 2 of Canon 401 of the Code of Canon Law, which covers bishops unable to perform their duties because of ill health or another serious reason.

Jaucian, 66, was appointed bishop of Bangued on Jan. 5, 2007. He was ordained a bishop on March 26 and formally installed on March 31 of the same year. He served the diocese for nearly 19 years and was among three active Filipino bishops belonging to the Society of the Divine Word. **Vito Barcelo**

Taiwan set to hire more Pinoys for hospitality industry

TAIWAN is expected to hire more Filipino workers for its hospitality industry following the renewal of a bilateral hiring agreement with the Philippines, the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) said.

The agreement, covering the Special Hiring Program in Taiwan (SHPT), was formalized through a memorandum of understanding signed by the Manila Economic and Cultural Office (MECO) and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO).

DMW Secretary Leo Hans Cacdac welcomed the renewed arrangement, describing it as another milestone in labor cooperation between the two sides.

The department identified Taiwan's hospitality sector as a key area for expanded employment opportunities but stressed that recruitment must be accompanied by fair and ethical hiring practices and decent working conditions. It also emphasized the need to protect Filipino workers' rights and welfare while providing opportunities to develop their skills and advance their careers overseas. **Vito Barcelo**

Batangas robbery suspects arrested in Taguig City

A JOINT operation between the Taguig City Police Station and Talisay Municipal Police Station led to the successful arrest of three out of four suspects involved in a robbery-holdup at a convenience store in Talisay, Batangas, on Nov. 7.

Taguig police chief Col. Julius Añonuevo said in an exclusive interview with Manila Standard that the three suspects, identified only by their aliases "Joshua," "Awa" and "Antonio," were arrested in Barangay Bambang, Taguig City. They were apprehended following a joint hot-pursuit operation by Talisay and Taguig police.

The arrests stemmed from a robbery at a convenience store in Barangay Quiling, Talisay, Batangas, at around 12:40 a.m. on the same date. Four armed suspects forcibly took approximately ₱6,000 in cash before fleeing aboard two motorcycles. Follow-up and dragnet operations led to the recovery of two motorcycles believed to have been used as getaway vehicles. **Vince Lopez**



QC CHILDREN'S RUN. Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte, Councilor Ally Medina, Novo Philippines General Manager Wei Sun and Danish Ambassador to the Philippines Franz-Michael Skjold Mellbin join QC Takbulilit 2026, the city's first children's run, at the Quezon City Hall Compound on Sunday, Nov. 8. Around 2,000 public school learners take part in the event, which promotes physical activity and healthy habits in celebration of National Children's Month. **Manny Palmero**

ASEAN teamwork may cut oil cost—study

By Charles Dantes

JAKARTA — Regional cooperation could cut the cost of maintaining emergency oil reserves across Southeast Asia by about 22%, according to research from the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s push for a coordinated regional oil-stockpiling system.

President Marcos called for a regional study on joint oil stockpiling during the Asia Zero Emission Community Plus online summit on April 15, urging Southeast Asian countries to strengthen their energy security amid disruptions to global oil supplies.

He also proposed accelerating the implementation of the ASEAN Petroleum Security Agreement. He offered the Philippines as host or co-chair of an emergency simulation exercise to test the regional fuel-sharing mechanism.

ERIA estimates that maintaining additional oil reserves across the Association of Southeast Asian Nations would cost $2.19 billion annually under a cooperative arrangement, compared with $2.8 billion if countries pursued separate national approaches.

The estimates suggest that countries could save about $610 million annually by coordinating their emergency oil-stockpiling arrangements for the same volume of additional reserves.

Under the proposed cooperative approach, oil stocks would remain owned by producers or partners, while participating countries would secure negotiated access to the supplies. The estimates, however, exclude additional costs for emergency delivery and replenishment.

Lawmaker files bill to protect workers from layoffs due to AI

By Ram Superable

SENATOR Erwin Tulfo introduced a measure on Sunday designed to shield Filipino workers from job losses triggered by corporate automation and the adoption of artificial intelligence technologies.

Senate Bill No. 2563 seeks to amend the Labor Code of the Philippines by establishing strict conditions that must be met before an employer can legally lay off personnel due to technological advancements.

"Companies cannot avoid adopting AI, but the jobs of our fellow citizens should not be compromised just like that, because their income is what they use to support their families," the lawmaker said.

Under the proposed measure, companies must prove an actual business necessity for implementing AI, operate in good faith, and demonstrate that automation aims to improve services and reduce operational costs.

Employers must also show that no alternatives exist aside from workforce reduction and that any resulting dismissals are conducted in a fair and reasonable manner.

"Technological progress cannot be avoided, but the Filipino worker should not be left behind to suffer alone just because they were laid off out of nowhere," Tulfo said.

The bill requires firms intending to implement AI-driven layoffs to notify the Department of Labor and Employment at least six months before the planned transition.



FIESTA CARACOL. Devotees and residents celebrate the annual Fiesta Caracol in honor of Cavite City's patroness, the Blessed Virgin of Soledad de Porta Vaga, on Saturday, Nov. 7, keeping alive the city's cherished religious and cultural traditions inherited from generations past. **Dennis Abrina**



So I See
Lito Banayo

A Gordian Knot opportunity

IN A stinging rebuke to the 19th Congress, the Supreme Court declared their acts of transferring items in the National Expenditure Program to fund their pork barrel insertions as unconstitutional.

The decision cited further the repetition though in limited scope of the practice in the 2026 budget by the 20th Congress.

The 2027 House General Appropriations Bill has been railroaded, amid the inexplicable tears of the crying lady chair of the Appropriations Committee and the ruling out of order by another lady legislator of those who would oppose the silence of the lambs.

The ball is now in the court of the Senate, which is pressed for time to go through the HGAB as it is also presiding over a highly politicized impeachment trial sent to it by the House upon orders of their masters in the Executive.

But for the objections of the trio of staunch oppositionists in the House, namely Toby Tiangco of Navotas, Egay Erice of Kalookan and Sid Ungab of Calinan upon Davao City, the fattened lambs would have gotten away with their crimes once more.

Timely if delayed came the Supreme Court decision which now forced the issue. And the Senate finds itself amid a tempest not in a teapot, but in the ways and means of an economy trying to survive holocaust proportions.

In aid of their scissor-snipping came young hopes of the fatherland, a coalition of bright young men and women coalesced under the People's Budget Alliance discovered through an amalgam of accounting diligence and artificial intelligence, the many anomalous insertions by the congressmen and even submissions in the NEP itself, all of which point out to a repeat of the 2024 and 2025 practices by the 19th Congress.

The Senate Finance Committee, now chaired by JV Ejercito of San Juan, will have its hands full if it wishes to excise the 2027 budget of these insertions, and with little time left.

Even assuming the senators can trim the liempo in the appropriations bill, and even assuming that they can curtail their own greed, what will happen in the bicameral conference committee when the porkers fight for their share of the pork?

In the 2024 and 2025 budgets, our senators led by their president and the finance committee chairs succumbed to the HoR and merrily participated in the partician de bienes, as in "one for you, two for me."

In 2026, after the scandal of ghosts in flood control became a national shame, the bicam under the current Senate President tried to be more transparent, an improvement of sorts.

Were it not for the SC decision and the work of the young patriotic "nerds," Congress, as I am sure the House planned, would be all focused on the impeachment trial, and could have gotten away with murder, their foul deed approved by their "majo" who must have assured them the President would be silent and just look the other way as he did in all the previous budgetary anomalies, until that belated soundbyte of "Mahiya naman kayo."

So let me make a suggestion to my friend JV.

You and the Senate would now have a Gordian Knot opportunity.

Excise the HGAB completely of all its pork barrel allocations, be they allocated in the NEP or as inserted by the House. None for them, and none for you.

> *Excise the HGAB completely of all its pork barrel allocations, be they allocated in the NEP or as inserted by the House. None for them, and none for you*

This singular act of self-abnegation, especially in a time of economic hardships like no other in our contemporary history, will finally endear you to the people.

If Ping Lacson could survive without pork through all 19 years of being a senator, so could you all.

You do not have to go through the minutiae of classifying good pork versus bad pork. Just cut ALL the liempo off the budget, like Alexander when faced with the Gordian Knot.

That would make history for a Senate that, through its collective actions, is no longer considered "august."

* * *

You have to give it to the Iranians, heirs to the great Persian Empire that ruled the known world before Alexander of Macedonia defeated Darius III in the decisive Battle of Gaugamela.

They have survived the missiles of the Israeli and US forces combined through the last nine months and counting.

They have closed the Strait of Hormuz and paralyzed the flow of oil from the Middle East to the rest of the world and held on despite the threats of the powerful POTUS.

Now Netanyahu has been deposed through the votes of his own countrymen as leader of Israel.

And the pompous Trump eats crow, as his own countrymen thrashed his allies in the Republican Party including its generational strongholds, and delivered the same to his Democratic enemies.

Whatever the gods may have designed in the last two weeks, the Iranians have reason to rejoice.



Open Thoughts
Orlando Oxales

The critical infra imperative in the Luzon Economic Corridor

THE Luzon Economic Corridor has emerged as one of the Philippines' most ambitious development initiatives.

By connecting Subic, Clark, Metro Manila, and Batangas, the corridor seeks to strengthen logistics, attract investments, support manufacturing expansion, and position the country more competitively within regional and global supply chains.

Most discussions surrounding the corridor understandably focus on visible infrastructure.

Airports, seaports, railways, expressways, industrial parks, and energy facilities are viewed as the physical backbone of economic growth.

Yet beneath these investments lies a broader challenge that deserves equal attention: ensuring that the country's critical infrastructure systems remain operational and resilient in the face of disruptions.

In today's interconnected economy, three sectors stand out as strategic assets that underpin almost every aspect of national development: transportation connectivity, power, and telecommunications. Transportation moves people and goods.

Power enables homes, industries, and public services to function.

Telecommunications provides the information flows that allow governments, businesses, financial institutions, and communities to coordinate their activities efficiently.

The tendency is to view these as separate sectors.

In reality, they function as a single ecosystem. Transportation systems increasingly depend on digital technologies.

Power utilities rely on communications networks for monitoring and operational control. Telecommunications infrastructure, in turn, depends heavily on electricity and physical access through transportation networks. A disruption in one can quickly cascade into the others.

Recent research by the GSMA reinforces the importance of this interdependence. Globally, weather-related telecommunications outages affect approximately 215 million users annually and are projected to increase as climate risks intensify.

More importantly, many telecommunications disruptions are not caused by damage to telecom facilities themselves but by failures involving electricity supply, fuel availability, transportation access, and site accessibility.

For a country like the Philippines, these findings carry important lessons.

We are among the world's most disaster-prone nations, regularly contending with typhoons, flooding, earthquakes, and other hazards.

> *Transportation connectivity, power, and telecommunications should be viewed as interlinked strategic assets whose resilience will help determine the Philippines' competitiveness, security, and long-term growth trajectory*

In addition, geopolitical uncertainties and growing security concerns are prompting countries around the world to reassess the resilience of assets that support economic continuity and national security.

Against this backdrop, telecommunications can no longer be viewed solely as a commercial service or consumer utility. Just as roads facilitate the movement of goods and people, communications networks facilitate the movement of information that enables economic activity.

Digital payments, logistics management, cloud computing, e-commerce, government services, emergency communications, and industrial automation all depend on reliable connectivity.

This is why digital infrastructures should be recognized not only as critical information infrastructure but also as a strategic national asset.

The same principle applies to power and transportation connectivity.

Taken together, these sectors form the operational backbone of modern economies.

Without them, economic growth slows, supply chains become vulnerable, government services become less effective, and recovery from disasters becomes more difficult.

The implications for the Luzon Economic Corridor are particularly significant.

The corridor is being developed not merely as a collection of infrastructure projects but as an integrated economic ecosystem.

Investors evaluating expansion opportunities do not simply assess the capacity of ports, airports, and industrial zones.

They also assess reliability, resilience, and the ability of infrastructure systems to remain functional during disruptions.

A factory cannot operate without electricity. A logistics network cannot function efficiently without transportation access.

Increasingly, neither can operate effectively without communications networks that enable visibility across supply chains, coordinate deliveries, process transactions, and support decision-making in real time.

This reality should also influence government policy.

For decades, telecommunications development in the Philippines has been driven largely by private-sector investment.

While this model has delivered substantial progress, relying exclusively on private investment may no longer be sufficient when telecommunications increasingly serves broader public-interest funcGovernments routinely allocate public resources to roads, airports, seaports, power infrastructure, and flood-control systems because the benefits extend far beyond commercial returns.

They support economic continuity, public safety, and national resilience.

As telecommunications assumes a similar role, there is a compelling case for government to prioritize the investment of resources towards strengthening the resilience of digital connectivity infrastructure, particularly in areas related to disaster preparedness, emergency response, continuity of government services, and the restoration of essential services and economic activity after calamities.

Ultimately, the success of the Luzon Economic Corridor will depend on more than efficient transportation links or expanded industrial capacity.

It will depend on whether the critical infrastructure systems supporting the corridor can withstand disruption and recover quickly when disruptions occur.

Transportation connectivity, power, and telecommunications should therefore be viewed not merely as infrastructure sectors, but as interlinked strategic assets whose resilience will help determine the Philippines' competitiveness, security, and long-term growth trajectory.

EDITORIAL

The trial resumes

THE impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte resumes today, after a three-week break. The prosecution has wrapped up its presentation of the evidence; it is the defense's turn to call its witnesses to the stand.

Both camps claim that they have the upper hand in the trial at this point.

Duterte's lawyers have submitted a list of individuals who will act as their witnesses this week, even as the first person on the list, former University of St. La Salle law dean Ralph Sarmiento, has declined to take the stand. The other witnesses are Davao-based public servants, corporate employees, and bank officers.

The trial's coverage has been narrowed down to the single article on Duterte's unexplained wealth after the prosecution dropped the three other articles. This was intended to save the Senate impeachment court time, so that the trial woud not extend into 2027. The prosecution has also insisted that all the articles are airtight and each could, on its own, warrant a conviction on the strength of the evidence.

Meanwhile, the Vice President remain as unbothered as ever, going on a trip to Hong Kong – a personal trip and not on the government's expense, her camp insists -- on the eve of her trial's resumption.

> ***Filipinos must continue to tune in.***

During the pause, many other things caught the public's attention. For instance, it was revealed that the 2027 national budget, after passing through the House of Representatives, contained billions of pesos in insertions without the corresponding supporting documents and justification. The looming super El Nino has also spooked the nation, with scenarious of drought and supertyphoons threatening to endanger people's lives and wipe out agricultural produce. Peace has also been precarious, even in our own backyard, the West Philippine Sea.

All these rightfully deserve the people's attention.

In the meantime, there are indications that Filipinos have lost interest in the trial because of the legalistic/technical approaches adopted by the parties, even as it partakes of a partly judicial, partly political nature.

We should not allow our interest to waver. Public clamor for transparency can encompass more than one issue at a time, and the issue of unexplained wealth is important in the fight against corruption. The VP's camp has always claimed that politics is the main driver of her trial. To dispel this, the public must look at the strength or weakness of the evidence alone – and this will be unearthed only through a rigorous technical process. It is precisely our observations during the trial, including the paper trail and the demeanor the senator-judges themselves, that will inform our democratic decisions in the near future. If we do not want to rely on politics alone, we have to look at incontrovertible proof.

Filipinos must continue watching. The court and its parties need to know that people are still invested in the conduct and the outcome of this trial.



Grinding Grains
Honor Blanco Cabie

Withstanding the graveyard of amnesia

IN A country of nearly 100 major languages, our collective soul is carried by a vast, brilliant polyphonic texture.

But, step into any state office or open a standard textbook, and you will witness a quiet cultural catastrophe.

Under the guise of national unity, we have permitted a single tongue to drown out all others, burying our rich regional epics and ancestral narratives into a graveyard of historical irrelevance.

We must definitively correct a dangerous, deep-seated misconception: Tagalog is not the national language.

By clear legal mandate under Article XIV, Section 6 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, "The national language of the Philippines is Filipino. As it evolves, it shall be further developed and enriched on the basis of existing Philippine and other languages."

The law is unambiguous – Filipino is an evolutionary, collaborative concept designed to draw structural substance directly from across the archipelago.

Furthermore, Section 7 decrees that regional languages shall serve as "auxiliary official languages in the regions."

Sadly, our regulatory systems have completely abandoned this constitutional covenant.

In the view of many scholars and linguists, the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino operates less like a democratic national commission and more like a restrictive Kawanihan ng Wikang Tagalog.

It has superintended a rigid system where Tagalog blooms exclusively, violating the spirit of institutional inclusion and treating regional mother tongues as mere peripheral dialects.

This institutional centralization is a form of cultural erasure. When a regional language is sidelined, we do not just lose a vocabulary; we lose a divergent cosmology.

Consider concepts that standard Filipino currently lacks. Standard Tagalog-based Filipino has no direct equivalent for the Ilocano "nakem" – a profound blend of consciousness, moral will, and inner soul.

It lacks the holistic warmth of the Bisayan "pangga" or the deep, collective sense of communal property and mutual responsibility found in the Ivatan "kapanyidungan."

By forcing our national discourse through a purely Tagalog filter, we flatten the complex emotional and intellectual domain of the 118 million Filipinos.

To resist this linguistic monopoly, regional leaders have spent decades building their own self-sustaining literary ecosystems.

A premier example is GUMIL Filipinas, the national association of Ilokano writers here and abroad.

> *When a regional language is sidelined, we do not just lose a vocabulary; we lose a divergent cosmology*

Bypassing Manila's corporate publishing gatekeepers, GUMIL and its chapters, including GUMIL Metro Manila, have relentlessly published an extensive library of anthologies, ensuring that the heritage, poetry, and modern struggles of the Ilokanos are permanently preserved in print.

On Dec. 12, 2026, GUMIL Metro Manila will mark its 60th anniversary. Operating directly within the centralized capital, it stands as arguably the oldest and most cohesive regional literary organization in the country – a living proof that regional identity refuses to be blended in.

Themed "GMM at 60: Writing • Remembering • Becoming" the three-hour golden milestone will serve as a reunion of sorts both for the older generation of writers and those navigating the digital age.

GMM president Faye Q.F. Melegrito, of Caoayan, Ilocos Sur, says: "We are at that point where we assess how we are at present by looking back (on) where GMM has been and looking forward to where GMM could be.

"We learn from our elders and honor their works, as we plan our projects that will continue to promote Ilokano literature.

"GMM Sisenta is one event where we bring together both groups. We are like the middle generation. We serve as a bridge. We connect. Until we are all one. One for GMM. One for Ilokano literature."

Cles B. Rambaud, of Pinili, Ilocos Norte, GMM's ninth president from 2000 to 2002, says, "For 60 years, GMM has stood as a vital bridge, translating the soul of the northerner – short stories, poetry, essays, plays and novels – for others to look at and appreciate.

"While the mediums change, the power of our regional voice remains absolute. I stand fully ready to offer my guidance, mentorship, and support as both groups master these new platforms to keep our language alive.

"Let us carry this legacy forward with pride, ensuring that the flame of Ilokano writing burns brighter than ever in the digital age."

The language debate has evolved. Today, regional languages face the adulteration of Mother Tongue education and a gargantuan digital divide where global AI models are trained almost exclusively on English and Tagalog data.

To survive in 2026 and beyond, organizations like GUMIL have adapted, launching ambitious series of webinars, virtual workshops, and hybrid literary gatherings.

These digital platforms have become vital spaces for a crucial exchange of ideas, connecting the "Lost Generation" of traditional language masters with the X, Y, and Z internet generations.

In these webinars, tech-savvy youth are actively discussing the deployment of open-source, localized Large Language Models trained on regional text repositories, alongside specialized neural machine translation apps built to accurately decode vernacular idioms.

By building localized speech-to-text tools and digital databases for ancestral epics, the younger generation is transforming technology into a shield for heritage.

The government must immediately step up and match these bottom-up innovations.

We must demand that the national linguistic framework formally incorporate the unique alphabets, phonetics, and vocabularies of our regional languages into mainstream Filipino as mandated by law.

Manila Standard

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Iran: 2 tankers caught fire in Hormuz after mines hit

TEHRAN – Two oil tankers caught fire in the Strait of Hormuz after hitting mines, Iran's Revolutionary Guards said on Sunday, according to state news agency IRNA.

Since the outbreak of the Iran war in late February, Tehran has severely restricted traffic through the strategic waterway, insisting vessels use routes authorised by the Islamic republic.

The United States has in response imposed a naval blockade on Iranian ports and helped tankers travel the strait, which normally carries about one-fifth of global oil consumption.

"Two oil tankers violating regulations -- one in the eastern part of the Strait of Hormuz and the other within the strait -- caught fire and are currently engulfed in intense flames after striking naval mines while attempting to cross through unauthorized routes," the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the ideological arm of Iran's military, said in a statement.

"The two tankers had reportedly committed multiple violations, including switching off their navigation and positioning systems, as they attempted to transit through an unauthorised route," the statement added.

The Guards did not specify the name or nationality of the tankers.

Tehran has made multiple announcements in recent weeks saying that ships have caught fire in the Hormuz strait.

US Central Command said last month that it had helped Gulf countries export 1.5 billion barrels of oil via Hormuz since the summer and has recently said that all mines have been cleared from the waterway.

The IRNA separately reported late on Saturday that sounds of explosions were heard in parts of the country.

"Sounds resembling explosions were heard in Qeshm, Sirik, Jask, and Bandar Abbas. The cause of the sounds remains unknown," the news agency wrote on Telegram.

Officials confirmed an "impact" in the port city of Jask, the IRNA said.

US President Donald Trump previously talked up the possibility of resuming heavy strikes on Iran but has since walked back from the idea.

Nevertheless, the US military has conducted occasional limited strikes. **AFP**

IN BRIEF

Magnitude 5.7 quake injures dozens

TOKYO – A strong 5.7-magnitude earthquake shook central Japan early Sunday, injuring dozens of people, shattering windows and disrupting train services, officials and local media said.

The quake struck at 1:04 am in Shizuoka Prefecture, west of Tokyo, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. No tsunami warning was issued.

Authorities reported no deaths, but the quake shattered storefront windows and knocked items off shelves and caused transport disruption in parts of the country.

An emergency official in Aichi told AFP authorities had received 16 reports of mostly minor injuries.

Authorities in neighbouring Shizuoka said at least three women sought emergency medical care, including a woman in her nineties who injured her shoulder after falling from her bed during the shaking.

The local Chunichi Shimbun newspaper and Tokai Television separately reported at least 24 were hurt across the two regions.

In Toyohashi city in the Aichi region, windows of a car dealership were found shattered after the quake.

A large book store in Toyota city, also in Aichi, reported that its merchandise dropping from shelves.

The quake also forced temporary delays and suspensions of regional train services Sunday morning, including the Shinkansen bullet trains.

The quake was felt as far west as Osaka, where a foreign resident was taken to hospital after falling from a second-floor apartment when the shaking startled them, local media reported.

Officials in Osaka couldn't be reached for immediate comment.

Separately, a 4.3-magnitude quake struck the Kumamoto region at 10:53 am (0153 GMT) Sunday, the Meteorogolical Agency said.

There were no immediate reports of serious damage or injuries from the second quake.

The southwestern region is still trying to recover from a 7.1-magnitude tremor that killed 38 people, flattened homes and left tens of thousands without power in July. **AFP**

Israel president taps Eisenkot

JERUSALEM – Israel's president announced during the weekend he would task Gadi Eisenkot with forming the next government following last week's election, in what Netanyahu's rivals see as a first step to remove the country's longest-serving prime minister.

The opposition bloc led by Eisenkot, a former military chief and political newcomer who has tried to appeal to secular and liberal Israelis, has opened the door to a once improbable alliance with ultra-Orthodox Jews, which could give it the numbers to form a coalition.

President Isaac Herzog said that after consultations with all parties during the week, he would grant Eisenkot the first chance to form a government after the October 27 election, in which neither side secured a majority in a country deeply polarised by Netanyahu's hard-right rule and worn down by three years of war.

The formal appointment would take place in an official ceremony on Sunday at the president's residence in Jerusalem, Herzog's office said.

Eisenkot, who later pledged to "do everything" to form a new government, was recommended by parties representing 67 lawmakers as opposed to 46 for Netanyahu's bloc.

But the recommendations for Eisenkot included members of Israel's Arab minority -- whose seat haul soared in the election on the back of anger against Netanyahu -- and right-leaning segments of the opposition that are against relying on Arab votes. **AFP**



DRUG VIOLENCE CONDEMNED. A group of Catholic faithful waits to board a bus in Colon, Entre Rios province, Argentina, during the weekend on their way to Paysandu, Uruguay, where Pope Leo XIV celebrated a pontifical mass. In Uruguay, the Pope slammed the deaths of children in areas of wealthy Uruguay gripped by drug violence and urged young people to 'dare' to get married, on the second day of his South American tour. AFP

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF RIZAL
Antipolo. City

INVITATION FOR PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP PROPOSALS UNDER THE LGU- PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

The Rizal Provincial Government through the LGU-Public Private Partnership under Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Rizal, Ordinance No. 03 Series 2017, invites interested Service Providers to submit proposal and must ensure they are financially and supplies capable to provide at its own cost the project and other necessities to cover the following projects:

PROJECT I.		SPECIFICATION
Name of Project:	General Radiographic X-ray System	**"Annex A"**
Project Location:	The Rizal Provincial Hospital System (RPHS)– Morong	
Project Duration:	FIVE (5) Years	
Brief Description:	The Provision for Services shall cover the supply, delivery, installation, commissioning, management, and its operation including repair and maintenance of the X-ray Equipment and its required accessories.	

Proposals must be duly received by the BAC Secretariat at the address mentioned below on or before **23 November 2026** at **2:00 p.m.**

Providers may obtain further information from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat at G/F Procurement Division, Ynares Center Complex Antipolo City, Rizal from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and declare the proposals disqualified.

For further information, please refer to:

MA. TERESA E. LASQUETY
BAC Secretariat
G/F Procurement Division, Ynares Center, Complex, Antipolo, City, Rizal
Tel. Nos. 620-2470
E-mail Address: rpgprocurement28@gmail.com

ENGR. LUISITO G. MUNSOD
BAC Chairman

"ANNEX A"

PROJECT I. General Radiographic X-ray System	
1. MEDICAL EQUIPMENT	a. 1 unit – X-ray Equipment – Brand New Floor Mounted General Radiographic X-ray System b. RADspeed Fit (STD, 32kW) c. X-ray High Voltage Generator d. X-ray Tube Support e. 4-Ways Floating Radiography Table f. Collimator g. Console h. BR-120 Fit Wall Bucky Stand i. Wireless Portable Flat Panel Detector Digital Radiography System
2. OTHER SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT	a. Radiologist's Workstation b. Technologist's Workstation c. FPD Charging Cradle d. Paper Printer e. UPS for X-ray System (40kVn) – single phase
3. OTHER ACCESSORIES	a. Lead Gown b. Thyroid Shield c. Gonadal Shield
4. OTHER SUPPORT PROGRAMS	a. User Training Programs b. Insurance for X-ray Equipment c. Preventive Maintenance
5. STAFF AND PERSONNEL	a. Radiologists b. Radiation Technologists c. IT d. Encoder e. Administrative Staff

(MS-NOV. 9 & 16, 2026)

Republic of the Philippines
RIZAL PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
Antipolo City
Tel. No. : 8256-3000 loc. 3505 / Email address: spsec_rizal@yahoo.com

31st SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN NG RIZAL

PROPOSED ORDINANCE NO. 27, s. 2026

Introduced by **BM JOHN PATRICK M. BAUTISTA**
Sponsored by the Committee on Ways and Means

ORDINANCE NO. 28, S. 2026

AN ORDINANCE
APPROVING THE FOUR HUNDRED FORTY SIX PESOS & 51/100 (PHP446.51) PER SQUARE METER PER MONTH, AS FLOOR PRICE FOR THE LEASE OF SPACE IN RPHS-BINANGONAN, OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE RIZAL PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT LOCATED IN BRGY. DARANGAN, BINANGONAN, RIZAL

WHEREAS, Section 129 of R.A. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991 provides that each local government unit shall exercise its power to create its own sources of revenue and to levy taxes, fees and charges subject to the provisions consistent with the basic policy of local autonomy;

WHEREAS, Section 4B.01 of SP Ordinance No. 2008-01, otherwise known as the Revenue Code of the Province of Rizal, has authorized the Provincial Finance Committee (PFC) to establish the floor price for the different facilities owned by the Rizal Provincial Government subject to the approval of the Provincial Governor;

WHEREAS, on 17 June 2026, the Provincial Finance Committee (PFC) has approved Resolution No. 2026-05, entitled: "A Resolution Recommending the Adoption of Four Hundred Forty Six Pesos & 51/100 (Php446.51) per Square Meter per Month as Floor Price for the Lease of Space in RPHS-Margarito A. Duavit Memorial Hospital, owned and operated by the Rizal Provincial Government located in Brgy. Darangan, Binangonan, Rizal;

WHEREAS, finding the said rate reasonable and at par with the current rates of commercial spaces in the vicinity of the RPHS-Binangonan, this Sanggunian finds that the recommendation of the PFC be given due course.

NOW, THEREFORE, *Be It Ordained by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng Rizal, in a session assembled:*

Section 1. That, the amount of **FOUR HUNDRED FORTY SIX PESOS & 51/100 (PHP446.51)** per square meter per month as floor price for the lease of vacant space for the commercial use at the RPHS-Binangonan.

Section 2. That, the Provincial Governor, Honorable Nina Ricci A. Ynares, or her duly authorized representative is hereby authorized to enter into, and sign a contract agreement relative thereto.

Section 3. That, all previous issuances, ordinances, rules and regulation or parts thereof which are inconsistent or in conflict hereof are hereby repealed amended or modified accordingly.

Section 4. That, this Ordinance shall take effect immediately within ten (10) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation and/or posting in at least three (3) conspicuous places in the Province of Rizal.

ORDAINED, this 11th day of August 2026, at the Rizal Provincial Capitol, Antipolo City, Province of Rizal.

I hereby certify to the correctness and truthfulness of the foregoing Ordinance which was approved by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng Rizal on 11 August 2026.

ATTY. ROSELLE G. ANDALLO-RAMILO
Secretary to the Sangguniang Panlalawigan

ATTESTED:

REYNALDO NICOLAS R. PUNO
Acting Provincial Vice-Governor
Temporary Presiding Officer
Board Member, 1st District of Antipolo

APPROVED:

JOSEFINA G. GATLABAYAN, Ph.D.
Acting Provincial Governor

(MS-NOV. 9, 16 & 23, 2026)

Republic of the Philippines
RIZAL PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
Antipolo City
Tel. No. : 8256-3000 loc. 3505 / Email address: spsec_rizal@yahoo.com

31st SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN NG RIZAL

PROPOSED ORDINANCE NO. 28, s. 2026

Introduced by **BM JOHN PATRICK M. BAUTISTA**
Sponsored by the Committee on Ways and Means

ORDINANCE NO. 29, S. 2026

AN ORDINANCE
APPROVING THE THREE HUNDRED PESOS (PHP300.00) PER SQUARE METER PER MONTH, AS FLOOR PRICE FOR THE LEASE OF SPACE IN RPHS-ANTIPOLO ANNEX I, OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE RIZAL PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT LOCATED IN BRGY. DELA PAZ, ANTIPOLO CITY

WHEREAS, Section 129 of R.A. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991 provides that each local government unit shall exercise its power to create its own sources of revenue and to levy taxes, fees and charges subject to the provisions consistent with the basic policy of local autonomy;

WHEREAS, Section 4B.01 of SP Ordinance No. 2008-01, otherwise known as the Revenue Code of the Province of Rizal, has authorized the Provincial Finance Committee (PFC) to establish the floor price for the different facilities owned by the Rizal Provincial Government subject to the approval of the Provincial Governor;

WHEREAS, on 18 June 2026, the Provincial Finance Committee (PFC) has approved Resolution No. 2026-06, entitled: "A Resolution Recommending the Adoption of Three Hundred Pesos (Php300.00) per Square Meter per Month as Floor Price for the Lease of Space in RPHS-Antipolo Annex I, owned and operated by the Rizal Provincial Government located in Brgy. Dela Paz, Antipolo City;

WHEREAS, finding the said rate reasonable and at par with the current rates of commercial spaces in the vicinity of the RPHS-Antipolo Annex I, this Sanggunian finds that the recommendation of the PFC be given due course.

NOW, THEREFORE, *Be It Ordained by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng Rizal, in a session assembled:*

Section 1. That, the amount of **THREE HUNDRED PESOS (PHP300.00)** per square meter per month as floor price for the lease of vacant space for the commercial use at the RPHS-Antipolo Annex I.

Section 2. That, the Provincial Governor, Honorable Nina Ricci A. Ynares, or her duly authorized representative is hereby authorized to enter into, and sign a contract agreement relative thereto.

Section 3. That, all previous issuances, ordinances, rules and regulation or parts thereof which are inconsistent or in conflict hereof are hereby repealed amended or modified accordingly.

Section 4. That, this Ordinance shall take effect immediately within ten (10) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation and/or posting in at least three (3) conspicuous places in the Province of Rizal.

ORDAINED, this 11th day of August 2026, at the Rizal Provincial Capitol, Antipolo City, Province of Rizal.

I hereby certify to the correctness and truthfulness of the foregoing Ordinance which was approved by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng Rizal on 11 August 2026.

ATTY. ROSELLE G. ANDALLO-RAMILO
Secretary to the Sangguniang Panlalawigan

ATTESTED:

REYNALDO NICOLAS R. PUNO
Acting Provincial Vice-Governor
Temporary Presiding Officer

APPROVED:

JOSEFINA G. GATLABAYAN, Ph.D.
Acting Provincial Governor

(MS-NOV. 9, 16 & 23, 2026)

Manila Standard



SOCIAL WELFARE IN ACTION. The Bangsamoro government's Kupkop Program embraces vulnerable and orphaned Muslim children, providing them monthly socioeconomic and educational support, including a P5,000-monthly subsidy. The Ministry of Social Services and Development currently serves 184 beneficiaries under the program, according to Haron Amer, provincial social welfare officer of the agency. MSSD photo

BARMM social dev't initiative serves over 2k Muslim kids

By Rex Espiritu

BARMM—The Bangsamoro government's Kupkop Program keeps over 2,000 vulnerable Muslim children under its care, especially those in Special Geographic Area (SGA) where access to basic services are few and far between.

The Ministry of Social Services and Development (MSSD) currently serves 184 beneficiaries under the program in SGA, providing each with P5,000 in monthly assistance.

Haron Amer, head of the MSSD provincial operations office. said the program aims to provide orphaned children, especially those from poor families facing heightened vulnerabilities, with the necessary resources to ensure their basic needs for food and clothing are met, alongside access to education, healthcare, and a secure, caring alternative family environment.

In the whole region, the program serves over 2,000 children.

But Amer said the needs of children extend beyond financial support.

"Children's needs extend beyond financial assistance," Amer said, citing barriers to education and healthcare, inadequate nutrition, unregistered births and psychosocial concerns among children affected by armed conflict.

The SGA, which has experienced both armed conflict and flooding, faces multiple challenges in ensuring that children can access essential services, he added.

An MSSD regional official, who requested anonymity for security reasons, said birth registration is particularly important because birth certificates serve as a primary requirement for accessing education and other basic social services.

Solon calls for civilian readiness against all forms of emergencies

By Maricel V. Cruz

FORMER Surigao del Norte Rep. Ace Barbers has called for a nationwide campaign to make every Filipino household prepared to survive at least 72 hours without immediate government assistance, warning that the country's exposure to natural disasters, geopolitical tensions and threats to critical infrastructure demands a more comprehensive approach to national security.

Barbers, who also serves as House impeachment prosecution panel adviser and spokesman, said the growing emphasis on civilian emergency preparedness among several European and Asian governments should serve as a wake-up call for the Philippines, particularly amid escalating tensions in the Indo-Pacific, continuing maritime confrontations in the West Philippine Sea, and the strategic uncertainties surrounding the Taiwan Strait.

"National security is not just about having modern warships, fighter jets, missiles and military personnel. It is also about ensuring that our people can survive when a crisis disrupts the basic services they depend on. A country cannot claim to be resilient if its citizens are completely unprepared for emergencies," Barbers said in a statement on Sunday.

He stressed that a major regional security crisis, even without direct military confrontation on Philippine territory, could have serious consequences for the country, including disruptions to shipping, fuel and food supplies, telecommunications, financial, and other essential services.

He also cited the growing importance of protecting undersea communications cables, power facilities, transportation networks and government information systems against cyberattacks and other forms of disruption.

"Look at our geographical position. We are situated in a strategically important part of the Indo-Pacific, close to the Taiwan Strait and at the center of continuing maritime tensions. We cannot simply assume that conflicts elsewhere will have no consequences for the Philippines. We must prepare for the possibility of disruptions without creating unnecessary fear or suggesting that war is inevitable," he said.

The solon from Mindanao pointed out that the Philippines faces an equally serious domestic challenge from earthquakes, super typhoons, flooding, volcanic eruptions and other natural calamities.

He cited the Office of Civil Defense-NCR's October 2025 warning that households should be capable of surviving at least 72 hours following a major earthquake, recognizing that rescue operations and government assistance may not reach all affected communities immediately.

He said this reinforces the need to make emergency preparedness a permanent household and community responsibility.

DepEd set to hand out over 372k laptops to teachers

By Gabriel Oliva

THE Department of Education (DepEd) has issued guidelines for the distribution of laptops to public school teachers nationwide under its computerization program.

A memorandum signed by Undersecretary for Information and Communications Technology Marcelino Veloso III on Nov. 6, stated that DepEd had procured a total of 372,155 laptops from 2022 to 2026.

The guidelines, outlined in Memorandum No. OUICT-MEM-110626-01-1, or the Guidelines on the Selection of Laptops for Teachers (L4T) Recipients under DCP FY 2025 and FY 2026, seek to establish policies and procedures for identifying eligible teacher-recipients.

Initial prioritization will focus on schools that have not previously received laptops for individual issuance to teachers from DepEd, other government agencies, local government units (LGUs), or private donations," the memorandum read.

Under the implementing rules, laptop allocations are determined based on teacher population at the regional, division, and school levels.

Regional allocations are computed by dividing the region's teacher population by the national teacher population, then multiplying the result by the total number of laptop units.

Division allocations are based on the division's share of the regional teacher population, while school allocations are determined by the school's share of the division's teacher population.

In a separate statement, DepEd said distribution will start with schools that have not yet received laptops from the L4T program, other government initiatives, local government units, or donations to the school.

"Selection within each school strictly prioritizes teachers with the greatest need for a functional device by evaluating their existing access to gadgets, teaching responsibilities, and digital readiness consistently and fairly," DepEd said.

In order to qualify, the teachers must hold active teaching assignments, have their own DepEd email accounts with multi-factor authentication, and must not have received a laptop from the government or the school between Jan. 1, 2023, and Nov. 6, 2026.



THOU SHALL NOT MULTIPLY. Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte inspects an ongoing free pet spaying and neutering drive in barangays Payatas and Commonwealth, aiming to prevent the unwanted proliferation of stray cats and dogs across the city. **QC PIO photo**

N. Vizcaya gov't gives away 15 dump trucks to barangays

By Jessica M. Bacud

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—The provincial government has turned over brand new dump trucks worth P45 million to each of 15 selected barangays in various municipalities.

"Our goal is simple: every barangay should have the capacity to serve its own people without waiting, without borrowing, without renting," said Gov. Jose Gambito during the turnover ceremony.

Each dump truck is fully operational and ready for deployment, complete with three-year registration at the Land Transportation Office, third-party liability and comprehensive insurance, along with global positioning systems with three-year subscriptions,

They are also equipped with blinkers, public-address systems, and touchscreen stereo head units.

The distribution followed the first batch of 20 units awarded last year under a ₱60-million program, bringing the total to 35 trucks delivered so far. The latest procurement was funded through the office of the governor.

The recipient barangays were Tukod in Kasibu; Bantinan, Malico and Sinapaoan in Sta. Fe; Doña Mariano Perez and District 4 in Bayombong; Banganan, Balite and Tucanon in Aritao; Abuyo in Alfonso Castañeda; Sawmill in Villaverde; Bitnong and Munguia in Dupax del Norte; Bugnay in Diadi; and Poblacion in Ambaguio.



REFLECTING POOL. A group of bikers, part of over 1,300 cyclists taking in the part Bike and Run Sunday at Vermosa Ayala in Imus City, Cavite pedal their way close to a crystal clear pool that reflects images like a giant mirror. **Dennis Abrina**

IN BRIEF

DepEd, Microsoft prep teachers for AI usage

THE Department of Education (DepEd) has partnered with international technological company Microsoft to give 2,000 Filipino teachers credits in AI literacy and equip classrooms for safe, responsible AI use.

Microsoft and DepEd launched on Nov. 5 the Microsoft Elevate for Educators, the AI Classroom Toolkit resource suite and Behind the Chat: A Human Guide to Safe AI Conversations in designed to assist Filipino teachers navigate AI.

In a statement, Microsoft said it invited around 100 senior high school teachers to the Microsoft Philippines office in Makati for a day-long hands-on training. "The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) and ChildFund Philippines also offered their support, joining the morning program to share their perspectives on keeping young people safe online," the statement read. **Gabriel Oliva**

Solon seeks BAI okay for pet crematoriums

PAMPANGA First District Rep. Carmelo Lazatin Jr. has filed a bill mandating all pet crematoriums across the country to secure accreditation from the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI).

To be known as the "Pet Crematorium Accreditation Act," House Bill 11784 provides that no city or municipality shall issue or renew a business permit for a pet crematorium unless the facility presents proof of valid BAI accreditation, along with all other permits, clearances, registrations, and authorizations required under applicable national and local laws.

"Pets are not just domesticated animals. They become part of the family and are loved by their owners. It is only right that they are accorded proper burial or cremation services when they pass away," Lazatin said.

Lazatin filed HB 11784 following reports that a crematorium based in Bacoor, Cavite was dumping dead cats and dogs in a vacant lot in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. **Butch Gunio**

Balanga City to roll out e-buses on trial basis

BALANGA CITY—Mayor Raquel Garcia has announced free rides on electric buses along the Balanga University Town Loop on Nov. 9 to 15 as part of a dry run for the vehicles.

The buses will operate from 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. daily during the trial period.

The COMET-owned all-electric buses aim to provide city residents with a "affordable and environment-friendly way to travel."

Passengers must download the GET-PASS Lite app and create an account to get an individual QR code required for boarding. The app will also allow commuters to track the buses along their routes. **Butch Gunio**

Manila Standard



NU's Mo Diassana and La Salle's Seven Gagate jockey for better rebounding position in a UAAP game won by the Bulldogs, 84-80.

Bulldogs whip Archers by 4, boost Final 4 bid

REINHARD Jumamoy starred in the fourth quarter, while Paul Francisco buried the go-ahead triple to propel National University past De La Salle University, 84-80, in the UAAP Season 89 Collegiate Men's Basketball Tournament on Sunday at the SMART Araneta Coliseum.

The Bulldogs improved to 8-3 to remain in second place and guarantee at least a playoff for a Final Four spot with three games remaining in the elimination round.

Jumamoy poured in 14 of his 21 points in the payoff period, powering NU's 26-19 fourth-quarter rally. Francisco, meanwhile, who had struggled all game with a 1-of-9 shooting clip and had missed his first seven attempts from beyond the arc, came through when it mattered most, knocking down a triple from the right corner with 50.2 seconds remaining to give the Bulldogs an 82-80 lead.

"Congratulations kay Reinhard kasi he's been off through the past games, medyo natamaan din siya sa shoulder before, so at least hats off sa kanya kung papaano niya dinala 'yung team, hindi sila bumigay nung dulo kahit nagkamomentum 'yung La Salle," said NU head coach Jeff Napa.

Jumamoy's final field goal, a deep three-pointer, gave the Bulldogs a 77-70 cushion with 4:01 remaining.

However, the Green Archers quickly erased the deficit as Earl Abadam, Doy Dungo, and the returning Jacob Cortez orchestrated a 10-2 run to reclaim the lead, 80-79, with 2:01 left.

Games on Wednesday
(Smart Araneta Coliseum)
8 a.m. – UPIS vs UE (16U Boys)
10 a.m. – UST vs UE (Women)
12 p.m. – AdU vs NU (Women)
2:30 p.m. – UST vs UE (Men)
5 p.m. – AdU vs Ateneo (Men)
7:30 p.m. – Ateneo vs DLSU (Women)

Francisco then delivered the biggest shot of the game, helping NU avenge its 89-87 first-round loss to the Green Archers.

Dungo had a chance to respond but missed badly on his three-point attempt. The Bulldogs then had opportunities to put the game away, but Mo Diassana and Tebol Garcia missed their shots. NU, however, retained possession following a scramble for the loose ball with 4.3 seconds remaining.

PJ Palacielo eventually sealed the victory at the free-throw line.

Jumamoy finished with 21 points, six assists, five rebounds, and four steals, while Diassana contributed 19 points, eight rebounds, and two steals.

Palacielo added 14 points, six rebounds, three assists, and two steals.

NU will look to secure its second consecutive Final Four appearance on Saturday when it takes on the University of the East.

Meanwhile, La Salle suffered its first loss of the second round, snapping its three-game winning streak and dropping to 6-5 at solo fourth. The Green Archers remain a full game ahead of Ateneo de Manila University (5-6).

Bullpups near sweep, extend winning streak to 28 games

Games on Wednesday
(Smart Araneta Coliseum)
8 a.m. – UPIS vs UE (16U)
10 a.m. – UST vs UE (Women)
12 p.m. – AdU vs NU (Women)
2:30 p.m. – UST vs UE (Men)
5 p.m. – AdU vs Ateneo (Men)
7:30 p.m. – Ateneo vs DLSU (Women)

DEFENDING champion National University Nazareth School moved closer to an elimination-round sweep after scoring a statement 75-67 victory over Far Eastern University-Diliman in the UAAP Season 89 High School Boys' 16-and-under Basketball Tournament on Sunday at the SMART Araneta Coliseum.

Following their Season 88 Finals rematch, the Bullpups maintained their unblemished record at 12-0, extending their winning streak to 28 games dating back to last season.

With the victory, NUNS also completed a sweep of last season's finalists.

"'Di po pwede talaga mag-relax kasi hindi pa naman champion eh. Kung manalo o matalo kami, wala naman kwenta yun eh," said RJ Mayor, who started in place of Dwyane Wade Enriquez, who was under the weather and saw limited minutes.

"Kumbaga mag-celebrate lang kami kapag tapos na yung liga, matalo, matalo, stay composed lang kami," Mayor added.

After the Baby Tams took an early 9-7 lead in the first quarter, the Bullpups responded with a 15-4 run to close the period ahead, 22-13.

From there, NUNS asserted its dominance in the paint to maintain control of the game, stretching its advantage to as many as 14 points, 54-40, in the third quarter.

Although FEU-D managed to cut the deficit to single digits in the fourth quarter, the Bullpups' dominance inside on both ends of the floor proved decisive.

"Mataas naman ang morale ng mga bata. We're doing fine, kung hindi, edi yari sila sa akin," quipped head coach Leo Pujante.

Abra eyes 2-0 lead; San Juan seeks equalizer

TESTED to the hilt in Game 1, the Abra Solid North Weavers seek a more convincing win over the San Juan Knights in Game 2 of their SportsPlus MPBL (Maharlika Pilipinas Basketball League) 2026 Season North Division Finals on Monday at the Gov. Andres Bernos Memorial Gymnasium in Bangued, Abra

The defending champion Weavers leaned on Dave Ildefonso's follow-up of his own miss with 15.4 seconds left to nip the Knights, 59-58, Saturday in the opener of their best-of-five title series.

The Weavers would not want to be in a scary situation again, and are expected to bear down on the Knights early to pull away and rev up their drive for a 2-0 lead.

To do that, Ildefonso, DJ Fenner, Jake Figueroa, Mike Ayonayon, Raven Gonzales, Tucker Molina, Encho Serrano, John Uduba and Nico Elorde must score more and tighten up defensively.

Drex Delos Reyes will again pose matchup problems because of his 6-foot-8 height and bulk.

JD Cagulangan, the KBL (Korean Basketball League) Rookie of the Year, was fielded briefly in Game 1 and could be used again to boost the Waevers' backcourt.

The Knights have proven they are no pushovers, despite not using skipper Orlan Wamar in Game 1 due to a sprain.



Dave Ildefonso of Abra

San Diego, Mendoza kiss title hopes goodbye

THE Philippines' Marie Antoinette San Diego and Shania Mae Mendoza battled to a truce, while Pau Bersamina suffered a heartbreaking defeat, shattering their title and Grandmaster dreams in the eighth and penultimate round of the 7th ASEAN+ Individual Chess Championships at the AMORAP in Misamis Occidental on Sunday.

Left with no choice but to go for a victory, the three threw caution to the wind and went for the win, but San Diego and Mendoza couldn't come out with anything and drew in 30 moves of a Queen's Gambit, while Bersamina crumbled against a veteran GM Nguyen Duc Hoa of Vietnam and suffered a 50-move loss of a Sicilian.

The results denied the three their hopes of winning the tournament and claiming the GM and WGM titles that will go with it in this event bankrolled by host Gov. Henry Oaminal, Sr. and supported by the PSC and WR Chess.

San Diego and Mendoza, however, remained sharing second with top seed WIM Bordoloi Pratitee of India, who split the point with Filipina WGM Janelle Mae Frayna in 31 moves of a Sicilian, with 5.5 points apiece.



Shania Mae Mendoza



Marie Antoinette San Diego

Indonesian WIM Shafira Devi Herfesa waylaid Indian WFM Shree Reddy Keerti in 44 moves of yet another Sicilian to virtually clinch the crown and the WGM title with a round to go as she already amassed seven points.

But Mendoza, 28, could still gun for a WIM title if she could finish in the top three.

The Sta. Rosa, Laguna bet was tackling Herfesa on top board in the final round at press time.

Also in the top 10 were Frayna, WIM Ruelle Canino, who halved the point Mongolian WGM Enkhtuul Aktan-Uzii, and Mhage Sebastian, who bested Malaysian WFM Ainul Mardhiah Mohd Afif in 44 moves of an English Opening, with five points each.

Bersamina dropped out of the top 10 but FM Alekhine Nouri and IM Michael Concio, Jr. took over with five points apiece.

Nouri trounced WIM MJ Bacojo in 25 moves of a Siclian while Concio drew with Indian IM Antonio Dcunha Viani in 57 moves of a Slav.

Nouri and Concio were facing each other in the last round for a potential top five finish and the distinction as the best Filipino finisher.

Lascuña shares seniors spotlight at Club Intramuros

TONY Lascuña added another seniors title to his growing collection, but this time, he had to share the spotlight with Aging Gabo and Gil Aunzo in the PSPGTO Charity Senior Golf Pro-Am tournament at Club Intramuros last Tuesday.

Unlike his victory in the Pasay City Mayor Emi Cup at Villamor last month, the 55-year-old Lascuña found himself in a three-way tie for the top honors in the 50-59 age division after the trio carded identical 39-point totals under the Stableford scoring system.

Ronald Pactolerin came close to joining the leaders, finishing just a point behind with 38, while Sonny Almazan settled for fifth with 37 points in the centerpiece division of the one-day tournament organized by the Pilipinas Senior Pro Golf Tour Organization (PSPGTO), headed by president and Philippine Golf Tour mainstay Mars Pucay.

The 60-69 division likewise produced a tie at the top, with Roger Linde and former Philippine Open champion Mario Manubay matching 37 points to share the crown. Leonardo Estrera placed third with 35, followed by many-time Masters winner and former Philippine Open champion Robert Pactolerin with 34 and Doming Umadhay with 33.

Orlan Sumcad and Jun Marasigan ruled the pro-am division with a combined 90 points, narrowly turning back Alden Bait and Boggie Pascual, who finished with 89. Gerome Malaga and Lin Pan took third place with 87.

Danny Fortusa topped the 70-and-above category with 33 points, while Beloy Tiamzon and Mario Ramones placed second and third with 31 and 29 points, respectively.

The amateur competitions also produced impressive scores, led by James Cruz, who captured the Class A title with 55 points. Mitsuharo Kitaura took runner-up honors with 43, edging Allan Maligaya on countback.

Pan claimed the Class B crown with 54 points, just one ahead of Pascual, who posted 53 to finish second, also edging Marasigan on countback.

Rizza Kiongson provided another highlight, dominating the women's amateur division with 49 points. Jazziel Lorenzo finished second with 42, while Teresa Lasala placed third with 38.



Tony Lascuña (right) shares center stage with Aging Gabo (second from left) and Gil Aunzon alongside PSPGTO president Mars Pucay (left)

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RODERICK T. DELA CRUZ, *Editor*
ALENA MAE S. FLORES, *Asst. Editor*
Manila Standard



HEALTH SUMMIT. Leaders from the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines, Department of Health, World Health Organization, and Philippine Health Insurance Corp. reaffirm their commitment to accelerating Universal Health Care at the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific in Manila on Nov. 5, 2026. The High-Level UHC Summit 2026 focused on improving local health systems, financing, and evidence-informed local leadership.

P82.998 billion
2026 total bonus, cash gift allocation

P73.449 billion
Yearend bonus allocation for 2026

P9.549 billion
Covers employees P5,000 cash gift

DBM mandates release of P83-b yearend bonus

By Thony Rose Lesaca

THE Department of Budget and Management said Saturday it allotted P82.998 billion for the 2026 year-end bonus and cash gift for qualified civilian, military and uniformed government personnel.

A total of P73.449 billion was allocated for the year-end bonus, while the remaining P9.549 billion covers the P5,000 cash gift per employee.

Under DBM Budget Circular No. 2024-3, qualified government employees are entitled to receive a year-end bonus equivalent to one month's basic pay as of Oct. 31, 2026, alongside the P5,000 cash gift, subject to eligibility rules.

The DBM said both benefits must be released simultaneously with employees' first November salary, rather than through a separate or later payroll. The actual payment date depends on each agency's payroll schedule.

The agency emphasized that funding for both benefits was released to concerned agencies at the beginning of fiscal year 2026.

"The DBM has already released the funds for this, so we want to remind our agencies to ensure the timely release of these benefits. We know that this is a big help to our employees and their families, especially now that Christmas is approaching," Budget Secretary Kim Robert De Leon said.

Government employees must have rendered at least four months of aggregate service from Jan. 1 to Oct. 31, 2026, and remain in service as of late October to qualify. Qualifying service includes regular, contractual or casual work in the national or local government, including authorized paid leaves of absence.

"More importantly, this is our way of recognizing and thanking our government workers for their hard work, dedication and continued service to the Filipino people," De Leon said.

PH risks losing 40% of hotel investments amid high costs

By Othel V. Campos

AS MUCH as 40 percent of potential hotel investments in the Philippines could fall through because of high development costs and uncertainty over government incentives, prompting the Department of Tourism to push for streamlined investment procedures and stronger fiscal support.

Tourism Secretary Ma. Bernardita Angara-Mathay said investors hesitate to commit capital without assurances that their projects will qualify for incentives, threatening the country's target to expand hotel capacity to 500,000 rooms by 2030.

"It's hard to put in capital when you don't know if you'll be given incentives," she said.

Angara-Mathay said the DOT is working with business groups to consolidate their concerns and seek additional incentives and lower regulatory fees from government agencies.

"We're going to give the big businesses a voice and put in a united request so that government authorities can help businesses survive by giving more incentives and cutting out regulatory fees," she said.

Angara-Mathay, who previously served as a commercial counselor for the Department of Trade and Industry in Japan, urged agencies to simplify investment registration, saying tourism developers should not have to navigate multiple offices and submit excessive documents to secure incentives.

"Investors have money. They bring in capital. Don't make it hard for them. Give them a one-stop action center. For example, if they're asking for 50 documents, give them two," she said.



Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF THE POWER SUPPLY AGREEMENT (PSA) BETWEEN NEGROS OCCIDENTAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE AND MALITA POWER INC., WITH PRAYERS FOR ISSUANCE OF PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY OR INTERIM RELIEF AND CONFIDENTIAL TREATMENT OF INFORMATION

ERC CASE NO. 2026-175 RC

NEGROS OCCIDENTAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (NOCECO) AND MALITA POWER INC. (MPI),
Applicants.
x----------x

Promulgated:
November 06, 2026

NOTICE OF VIRTUAL HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given that on 26 October 2026, Negros Occidental Electric Cooperative (NOCECO) and Malita Power Inc. (MPI) filed a *Joint Application* dated 01 October 2026, seeking the Commission's approval of their Power Supply Agreement (PSA), with prayers 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
26 November 2026 (Thursday) at two o'clock in the afternoon (2:00 P.M.)	**Microsoft Teams**	Determination of compliance with jurisdictional requirements and Expository Presentation
10 December 2026 (Thursday) at two o'clock in the afternoon (2:00 P.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 **NOCECO's principal office in Naga, Binucuil, Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental** 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 become a party by filing with the Commission via e-mail at docket@erc.ph, a verified Petition to Intervene at **least five (5) calendar days** prior to the date of the initial virtual hearing. The verified Petition to Intervene must follow the requirements under Rule 7 of the Commission's 2026 Rules of Practice and Procedure (2026 RPP), indicating therein and stating the following:

1) Applicable docket number and title of the proceeding;
2) Petitioner-intervenor's name, address, and e-mail address;
3) Nature of 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
4) A statement of the relief desired.

A Petition to Intervene filed by an organization, association, or entity shall be accompanied by a Special Power of Attorney, Board or Sanggunian Resolution, a Secretary's Certificate, or any competent proof of authority, authorizing the signatory thereto to file the same and represent the organization, association, or entity in the proceedings before the Commission.

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, their Opposition or Comment thereon at **least five (5) calendar days** prior to the initial virtual hearing and subject to the requirements under Section 5, Rule 7 of the 2026 RPP. No particular form of Opposition or Comment is required, but the document, letter, or writing should contain the following:

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

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

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 AUTHORITY
OF THE COMMISSION:

ATTY. MARIA CORAZON C. GINES'
Director III, Legal Service

15.ERC.RA/RVM

' Authority granted during Commission Meeting on 20 August 2025.

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Exquadra Tower 1 Jade Drive, Ortigas Center,
Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF THE POWER SUPPLY AGREEMENT (PSA) BETWEEN NEGROS OCCIDENTAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE AND MALITA POWER INC., WITH PRAYERS FOR ISSUANCE OF PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY OR INTERIM RELIEF AND CONFIDENTIAL TREATMENT OF INFORMATION

ERC CASE NO. 2026-175 RC
October 26, 2026

NEGROS OCCIDENTAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (NOCECO) AND MALITA POWER INC. (MPI),
Applicants.
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JOINT APPLICATION
(With Prayers for the Issuance of Provisional Authority or Interim relief and Confidential Treatment of Information)

Joint Applicants, **NEGROS OCCIDENTAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (NOCECO),** and **MALITA POWER INC. (MPI),** through respective counsel, and unto this Honorable Commission, respectfully state that:

I
THE APPLICANTS

1. Applicant NOCECO is an electric cooperative (EC) duly organized and existing under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, with principal office address at Naga, Binicuil, Kabankalan City.

1.1 NOCECO holds an exclusive franchise issued by the National Electrification Administration (NEA), to operate an electric light and power distribution service in the Cities of La Carlota, Himamaylan, Kabankalan and Sipalay and the Municipalities of Pulupandan, Valladolid, San Enrique, Pontevedra, Hinigaran, Binalbagan, La Castellana, Moises Padilla, Isabela, Ilog, Cauayan, Candoni and Hinoba-an, all in the Province of Negros Occidental.

1.2 NOCECO is duly represented herein by its Project Supervisor / Acting General Manager Domingo S. Santiago, Jr.

2. Applicant MPI is a domestic corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines with principal office address at the Republic of the Philippines, with principal office address at 5th Floor, CS Office Building Complex, #100 E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., C5 Road, Bo. Ugong, Pasig City.

2.1 MPI is the owner and operator of the 300.050 MW Malita Circulating Fluidized Bed Coal Fired Thermal Power Plant (CFB CFTPP) and its 0.770 MW Emergency Diesel Engine Generating Unit (EDEGU) (Power Plant), located at Sitio Inaburan, Brgy. Culaman, Malita, Davao Occidental.

2.2 MPI is represented herein by its General Manager, Elenita D. Go, who is duly authorized by its Board of Directors to file this *Joint Application*.

(MPI and NOCECO are jointly referred hereinafter as "Joint Applicants".)

3. Joint Applicants are filing this Joint Application pursuant to the Honorable Commission's *Resolution No. 7, Series of 2026* (Amended CSP Guidelines)[1] requiring distribution utilities (DUs) and generation companies to jointly file applications for the approval of their PSAs with generation companies (GenCos)

4. Joint Applicants may be served with the orders, notices, and other processes of the Honorable Commission through undersigned counsels at the addresses given below.

II
NATURE AND TIMELINESS OF THE APPLICATION

5. This Joint Application seeks the Honorable Commission's approval of the PSA dated 09 September 2026 between Joint Applicants pursuant to Sections 25[2] and 45(b)[3] of Republic Act No. 9136, otherwise known as the *Electric Power Industry Reform Act* of 2001 (**EPIRA**), Rules 5, Section 4(e)[4] and 11, Section 54 of its *Implementing Rules and Regulations* (**IRR**), Rule 20(B) of its *Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure*,[5] Article VII of the Amended CSP Guidelines,[6] and other pertinent rules and regulations.

III
LEGAL BASES

6. Section 5.4. of the Department of Energy (DOE) Department Circular No. DC2023-06-0021, as amended by DOE Department Circular No. DC2025-10-0022 (DOE CSP Policy) provides that *"in case an EC is unable to complete the CSP one (1) year before said scheduled date as indicated in its PSPP, the NEA shall undertake or continue the CSP on behalf of the EC."*

7. Section 5.2 of the DOE CSP Policy further provides that *"ECs with limited capability to undertake CSP may request the NEA to provide the necessary assistance and resources to conduct the same x x x"*.

8. Article XIII, Sections 13.1 and 13.2 of the National Electrification Administration (NEA) Memorandum No. 2023-057 **(NEA 2023 CSP Guidelines)** reiterate the DOE CSP Policy and further provide *"[i]n case an EC (or [a]ggregated ECs) requests the NEA['s] assistance xxx or is unable to complete its CSP one (1) year before the scheduled date as indicated in the PSPP, the NEA shall undertake the CSP on behalf of the EC. For this purpose, the NEA can mobilize its own manpower complement and structure, the manpower of the EC itself, as well as those of other ECs to undertake the CSP process, as necessary"*.

IV
STATEMENT OF FACTS

The Conduct of Joint CSP

9. Based on the latest Power Supply Procurement Plans (PSPP), several ECs connected to the Luzon and Visayas grids faced baseload power supply deficits that needed to be addressed through the timely conduct of CSPs to ensure sufficient and reliable power supply for their respective captive markets.[7]

10. However, the CSPs intended to address the baseload supply deficits by ECs, including NOCECO, were not completed within one (1) year prior to the expiration of their existing PSAs or prior to the increase in demand of the Luzon and Visayas ECs, as provided in their respective PSPPs.

11. Pursuant to the foregoing, NOCECO and other ECs were included in the Luzon and Visayas Electric Cooperatives Aggregation (LVECA) for NEA's conduct of Joint Competitive Selection Process (Joint CSP) for their aggregated baseload supply requirements.

12. On February 3, 2026, NEA issued Office Order No. 2026-043, Series of 2026 where the NEA - Special Bids and Awards Committee (NEA-SBAC), its Secretariat, and the Technical Working Group (NEA-SBAC-TWG) for the Joint CSP for the Luzon and Visayas ECs were constituted.

13. The Joint CSP was structured into two (2) Lots: Lot 1, covering the Luzon Member ECs, and Lot 2, covering the Visayas Member ECs. For each Lot, the Bidder shall submit an offer and commit to supply a fixed percentage of the Aggregated Contract Capacity for such Lot (Offered Contract Capacity), which shall not be less than twenty percent (20%) nor more than fifty percent (50%) of the Aggregated Contract Capacity for any given year. The percentage proposed by the Bidder for a Lot shall remain fixed for the entire PSA Term and shall apply uniformly to all Member ECs within that Lot.

14. On 13 and 14 April 2026, NEA-SBAC-TWG presented the draft Terms of Reference (TOR), Invitation to Bid (ITB), and bidding documents to the NEA-SBAC.

15. On 15 April 2026, or at least five (5) calendar days before the first publication of the ITB, the NEA-SBAC informed the DOE and Honorable Commission of the conduct of the Joint CSP.

16. On even date, the NEA issued the Certificate of Conformity No. NEA-RAO-COC-2026-02, which certified that the respective contract quantities and cooperation periods covered by the Joint CSP were consistent with the latest posted PSPPs of each Member EC.

17. On 21 April 2026 and 28 April 2026, the ITB and TOR were published in The Manila Times Newspaper. The NEA-SBAC and the Member ECs likewise caused their posting on the DOE CSP e-based portal, NEA website, and Member ECs' respective official websites and social media accounts.

18. On 06 May 2026, copies of the Invitation for CSP Observers were sent to the DOE, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Institute of Integrated Electrical Engineers of the Philippines, and Nationwide Association of Consumers, Inc. A general invitation for CSP Observers was likewise posted on the NEA website.

19. On May 14, 2026, the Pre-Bid Conference took place with the participation of the representatives from the NEA-SBAC-TWG, Secretariat, CSP Observers, and all interested bidders.

20. Following the pre-bid conference, NEA released Bid Bulletin Nos. 01 to 04, that included the revised schedule of bidding activities, responses to concerns from prospective bidders, and clarifications on the final bidding procedures and related transaction documents.

21. On June 17, 2026, NEA-SBAC issued the Final Transaction Documents, that were subsequently amended on 25 June 2026, setting 10 July 2026 as the deadline for submission of bids and the date for the opening and evaluation thereof.

22. On 10 July 2026, the submission, opening, and evaluation of bids were conducted.[8]

23. For Lot 1, three (3) out of six (6) prospective bidders timely submitted their respective bids, namely, Mariveles Power Generation Corporation (MPGC), Therma Luzon, Inc. (TLI), and Sual Power, Inc. (SPI).

24. For Lot 2, six (6) out of ten (10) prospective bidders timely submitted their respective bids, namely, MPI, Therma Visayas, Inc. (TVI), Energy Development Corporation (EDC), Cebu Energy Development Corporation (CEDC), Panay Energy Development Corporation (PEDC), and Palm Concepcion Power Corporation (PCPC).

25. The following withdrew from the Joint CSP: GNPower Dinginin Energy Ltd. Co. (GNPD), GNPower Mariveles Energy Center Ltd. Co (GMEC), and PEDC for Lot 1, as well as FDC Misamis Power Corporation (FDCMPC), GN Power Kauswagan Ltd. Co. (GNPK), Therma South, Inc. (TSI), and Toledo Power Co. (TPC) for Lot 2.

Evaluation of Bids for Lot 2

26. Upon careful evaluation, NEA-SBAC determined that MPI, PCPC, TVI, and EDC for Lot 2 successfully passed the preliminary evaluation for their respective Eligibility Requirements, Technical Proposal, and Bid Security submissions.

27. NEA-SBAC issued separate Notices of Disqualification dated 14 July 2026 to CEDC and PEDC, disqualifying them from further participation in Lot 2 due to non-compliance with the Technical Proposal Requirements.[9]

27.1 They failed to submit their Generation Company Management Reports (GCMR) for the years 2021 to 2024, which were necessary to verify compliance with Requirement 2 of Section II-10 of the Bidding Procedures.

27.2 They filed their respective Requests for Reconsideration dated 23 July 2026, which were denied for lack of merit by the NEA-SBAC through its separate Decisions dated 30 July 2026.

27.3 CEDC and PEDC did not file any protest against the NEA-SBAC Decisions both dated 30 July 2026.

28. After completing the preliminary evaluation, the Financial Proposals of MPI, PCPC, TVI, and EDC were subsequently opened and compared. These are summarized as follows:

RANK NO.	BIDDER	LCOE (PhP/kWh)	BID SECURITY AMOUNT (PhP)	OCC (in %)	REMARKS
1	MPI	5.6845	530,000,000.00	20	Lowest Calculated Bid 1
			Compliant		
2	PCPC	5.798	500,000,000.00	20	Lowest Calculated Bid 2
			Compliant		
3	TVI	5.8899	727,000,000.00	40	Lowest Calculated Bid 3
			Compliant		
4	EDC	5.9388	550,967,142.96	20	Lowest Calculated Bid 4
			Compliant		

29. Following the completion of the Post-Qualification activities, the TWG submitted its Post-Qualification Report on 11 August 2026, that confirmed that the legal, technical, and financial documents of MPI, PCPC, TVI, and EDC for Lot 2, are genuine, valid, and accurate.

30. Accordingly, the TWG recommended that the NEA-SBAC declare MPI, PCPC, TVI, and EDC for Lot 2 as the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidders and that Notices of Award be issued in their favor.

31. On 12 August 2026, Bid Bulletin No. 05 was issued, announcing the revised schedule for the issuance of the Notice of Award to the Winning Bidders and signing of the PSAs.

32. On 17 August 2026, the NEA-SBAC issued Resolution No. 13, Series of 2026, declaring, among others, that MPI, PCPC, TVI, and EDC for Lot 2 as the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidders.

33. In accordance with NEA Memorandum No. 2023-057, the NEA-SBAC endorsed the aforementioned resolution to the NEA Office of the Administrator for the issuance of Notices of Award in favor of said bidders.

34. On 18 August 2026, NEA Office of the Administrator issued the Notices of Award that were acknowledged and accepted by the Winning Bidders.[10]

35. From 24 August 2026 to 04 September 2026, duly authorized representatives of the Member ECs negotiated and finalized their respective PSAs with the Winning Bidders.

36. On 04 September 2026, the negotiated and finalized PSAs were submitted to the NEA-SBAC for evaluation and approval.

37. Through Resolution No. 14, Series of 2026, NEA-SBAC approved the negotiated PSAs and endorsed the same to the NEA Office of the Administrator for the issuance of the corresponding Notices to Execute the Agreement.

38. On 08 September 2026, the NEA Office of the Administrator issued the Notices to Execute the Agreement, instructing the Member ECs to proceed with the execution and signing of their respective PSAs.

39. **On 09 September 2026, Joint Applicants executed the subject PSA.**

40. The procurement outcome assures compliance with the EPIRA's principles of least-cost and transparency principles. Implementing the PSA will ensure a stable and least-cost power supply to NOCECO's franchise area, benefitting consumers through long-term price stability, reduced Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM) exposure, improved supply reliability, and reduced overall generation cost.

ABSTRACT OF THE PSA

41. Under the PSA, MPI shall supply power to NOCECO for the Agreement Term, with a Contract Capacity of 4 MW Baseload (Firm).

42. The power supply will be sourced from MPI's Power Plant.

43. The following are the Salient Features of the PSA:

43.1 Sale and Purchase of Energy/Capacity: Subject to and in accordance with the terms of this Agreement, Seller shall make available and sell to Buyer, and Buyer shall purchase from the Seller for the consideration described in SECTION 11, the Contract Capacity and Associated Energy from and after the Delivery Date until the expiry of the Term, unless sooner terminated in accordance with this Agreement and upon approval by the ERC.

43.2 Contract Term: This Agreement shall take effect immediately from the Effective Date, and from such date shall remain in force and effect for fifteen (15) years from Delivery Date unless sooner terminated in accordance with this Agreement and upon approval by the ERC.

43.3 Delivery Date: The Seller shall commence delivery of the Contract Capacity provided in SCHEDULE 2 to Buyer on Delivery Date. The Delivery Date shall be the later of either: a.) 26 December 2026; or b) The next immediate 26th day of the month following the ERC's issuance of a Provisional Authority or Interim Relief to implement the Agreement, as applicable, or Final Authority to implement the Agreement, if neither Provisional Authority nor Interim Relief was issued.

43.4 Supply of Energy: Subject to the approval of the ERC, beginning on the Delivery Date and until the termination or expiration of this Agreement, Seller shall supply and deliver the Contract Capacity as provided in SCHEDULE 2 to Buyer at the Delivery Point, and Buyer shall purchase the Contract Capacity and Associated Energy and pay Seller as provided in SCHEDULE 7. The Delivery Point shall be the point/s specified in SCHEDULE 3.

43.5 Seller's Outage Allowance: Seller is allowed a Scheduled Outage Allowance and Unscheduled Outage Allowance (taken together, the "Outage Allowance") not to exceed the number

43.6 of days for each Year as set forth in SCHEDULE 6, during which times, reduced or no deliveries shall be available to Buyer, subject to ERC rules and regulations on reliability performance indices applicable for the Facility.

Scheduled Outages	0 days
Unscheduled Outages	0 days

43.7 Line Rental Cap: The Line Rental Cap is PhP0.2784/kWh and shall apply on a per Billing Period basis throughout the entire Term. For each Billing Period, the Buyer shall pay only the lower of: (a) the Actual Line Rental Charges incurred for the energy delivered during such Billing Period; or (b) Capped Line Rental Charges.

43.8 Prompt Payment Discount: Seller shall extend a three percent (3%) discount based on the total Capital Recovery Fee, Fixed Operations and Maintenance Fee, and Variable Operations and Maintenance Fee for the Billing Period to Buyer as a Prompt Payment Discount if: a. Payment by Buyer is made in full or partial within fifteen (15) Days (upon receipt of the Seller Invoice for a Billing Period (the "Prompt Payment Period"); and b. Buyer is up to date with all its payment obligations under this Agreement.

43.9 Replacement Power during Outages: The procurement of any Replacement Power shall be the responsibility of Seller, provided that the rates to be paid by Buyer for the procurement of Replacement Power shall be the lower between: i. the actual rate of the Replacement Power; or ii. the generation rate based on the approved tariff for this Agreement.

If Seller provides Replacement Power, Seller shall attach to the Seller Invoice the computation showing both the actual rate of the Replacement Power and the generation rate based on the approved tariff for this Agreement.

If the Seller is able to supply only a portion of the Contract Capacity, contrary to its committed capacities under this Agreement, the Seller shall procure and provide Replacement Power for the deficient capacity at the generation rate equivalent to the Provisional or Final Approved Generation Rate, or the actual rate of the Replacement Power, whichever is lower.

43.10 Contract Capacity (in MW):

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2027	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2028	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2029	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2030	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2031	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2032	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2033	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2034	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2035	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2036	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2037	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2038	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2039	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2040	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2041	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

43.11 Monthly Payment, Indexation, and Adjustment:

Total Generation Charge

Total Generation Charge= CRF_{CUF1} + $FOMF_{CUF1}$ + $VOMF_t$ + FC_t + VAT

A. Capital Recovery Fee ("CRF")

The CRF_{CUF1} shall be calculated as the product of the Capital Recovery Rate ("CRR_{CUF1}"), in PhP/kWh, and the Actual Energy Delivered during the Billing Period or the equivalent Associated Energy based on the 65% Monthly Minimum CUF, whichever is higher. The formula to calculate the CRF_{CUF1} shall be:

$$CRF_{CUF1} = CRR_{CUF1} \times max\,(AE_t, AED_t)$$

$$CRR_{CUF1} = \frac{CRR_{100\%CUF}}{CUF_t}$$

Where:

CRF_{CUF1}	Corresponding CRF_{CUF} to calculate the Total Generation Charge, expressed in PhP, for the Billing Period
CRR_{CUF1}	Rate Component to calculate CRF_{CUF1}, expressed in PhP/kWh, for the Billing Period.
AE_t	As previously defined
AED_t	As previously defined
$CRR_{100\%CUF}$	Corresponding CRR at 100% CUF, which is **PhP2.2500 /kWh**. For reference, the CRR_{CUF} from 65% to 100% is presented below:

CUF	CRR PhP/kWh
100%	2.2500
99%	2.2727
98%	2.2959
97%	2.3196
96%	2.3438
95%	2.3684
94%	2.3936
93%	2.4194
92%	2.4457
91%	2.4725
90%	2.5000
89%	2.5281
88%	2.5568
87%	2.5862
86%	2.6163
85%	2.6471
84%	2.6786
83%	2.7108
82%	2.7439
81%	2.7778
80%	2.8125
79%	2.8481
78%	2.8846
77%	2.9221
76%	2.9605
75%	3.0000
74%	3.0405
73%	3.0822
72%	3.1250
71%	3.1690
70%	3.2143
69%	3.2609
68%	3.3088
67%	3.3582
66%	3.4091
65%	3.4615

- The CUF_t shall be calculated in accordance with the formula below:

$$CUF_t = \frac{Q_t}{CC_t \times (H_T - H_O - H_{FM})}$$

Where:

CUF_t	As previously defined
Q_t	Energy delivered during the Billing Period or the equivalent associated energy based on the Monthly Minimum CUF, whichever is higher
CC_t	Contract Capacity for the Billing Period in, kW, as indicated in Schedule 2
H_t	Total number of hours in the Billing Period
H_O	Zero (0) for each Billing Period, as the Seller has no Outage Allowance
H_{FM}	The Equivalent Hours of Force Majeure in the Billing Period
t	As previously defined

- Formula to calculate the Q_t:

$$Q_t = max\,(AE_t, TED_t)$$

$$AE_t = 65\% \times CC \times (H_T - H_O - H_{FM})$$

Where:

Q_t	As previously defined
AE_t	As previously defined
TED_t	Total Energy Delivered, which is Actual Energy Delivered from the Facility and the Replacement Power energy, during the Billing Period, in kWh
CC	As previously defined
H_t	As previously defined
H_O	As previously defined
H_{FM}	As previously defined
t	As previously defined

- The formula to calculate the H_{FM} shall be:

$$H_{FM} = \sum_{i=1}^{y} \left(1 - \frac{Seller\ Actual\ BCQ\ Declared, due\ to\ force\ majeure}{Buyer\ Day\ Ahead\ Nomination}\right)$$

Where:

y	Total number of Hours in a Billing Period
Seller Actual BCQ Declared due to Force Majeure	The actual reconciled quantity of BCQ declared by the Seller to the Buyer for the relevant hour *i*, expressed in kW, which was affected by or reduced due to an event of force majeure for either the Buyer or the Seller, in accordance with the BCQ Nomination Protocol under the PSA
Buyer Day Ahead Nomination	The quantity of BCQ nominated by the Buyer for delivery for the relevant hour *i* in the Day-Ahead Nomination, expressed in kW, submitted in accordance with the BCQ Nomination Protocol under the PSA

B. Fixed Operation and Maintenance Fee ("FOMF")

The $FOMF_{CUF1}$ shall be calculated as the product of the Fixed Operation and Maintenance Rate ("$FOMR_{CUF1}$"), in PhP/kWh, and the actual energy delivered during the Billing Period or the equivalent associated energy based on the Monthly Minimum CUF, whichever is higher. The formula to calculate the $FOMR_{CUF1}$ shall be:

$$FOMF_{CUF1} = FOMR_{CUF1} \times max\,(AE_t, AED_t)$$

$$FOMR_{CUF1} = \frac{FOMR_{100\%CUF}}{CUF_t}$$

Where:

$FOMF_{CUF1}$	Corresponding $FOMF_{CUF}$ to calculate the Total Generation Charge, expressed in PhP, for the Billing Period
$FOMR_{CUF1}$	Rate Component to calculate $FOMF_{CUF1}$, expressed in PhP/kWh, for the Billing Period.
AE_t	As previously defined
AED_t	As previously defined
$FOMR_{100\%CUF}$	Corresponding FOMR at 100% CUF, which is **PhP0.4500 /kWh**. For reference, the $FOMR_{CUF}$ from 65% to 100% is presented below:

CUF	FOMR LOCAL PhP/kWh
100%	0.4500
99%	0.4545
98%	0.4592
97%	0.4639
96%	0.4688
95%	0.4737
94%	0.4787
93%	0.4839
92%	0.4891
91%	0.4945
90%	0.5000
89%	0.5056
88%	0.5114
87%	0.5172
86%	0.5233
85%	0.5294
84%	0.5357
83%	0.5422
82%	0.5488
81%	0.5556
80%	0.5625
79%	0.5696
78%	0.5769
77%	0.5844
76%	0.5921
75%	0.6000
74%	0.6081
73%	0.6164
72%	0.6250
71%	0.6338
70%	0.6429
69%	0.6522
68%	0.6618
67%	0.6716
66%	0.6818
65%	0.6923

C. Variable Operations and Maintenance Fee ("VOMF")

The $VOMF_t$ shall be calculated as the product of the Variable Operation and Maintenance Rate ("VOMR"), in PhP/kWh, and the actual energy delivered for the Billing Period. The formula to calculate the $VOMF_t$ shall be:

$$VOMF_t = VOMR_t \times AED_t$$

$VOMF_t$	Corresponding VOMF to calculate the Total Generation Charge, expressed in PhP, for the Billing Period
$VOMR_t$	Rate Component to calculate $VOMF_t$ which is **PhP0.2600/kWh**
AED_t	As previously defined

D. Fuel Cost ("FC")

The FC_t for the Billing Period shall be calculated as follows:

$$FC_t = \left(\frac{FP_t \times FCR_t}{1000}\right) \times AED_t$$

$$FP_t = (FCC_t \times FX_m) + NFCC_t + Applicable\ Taxes$$

Where:

FC_t	Corresponding FC to calculate the Total Generation Charge, expressed in PhP, for the Billing Period
FP_t	Applicable Fuel Price for the Billing Period, expressed in PhP/MT
FCC_t	Fuel Commodity Cost in USD/MT calculated using the formula below: $35.00\% \times \left\{66.00 \times \left[\left(96.97\% \times \frac{NFI\,1_{3m\,avg}}{NFI\,1_O}\right) + 3.03\%\right]\right\} +$ $65.00\% \times \left\{41.01 \times \left[\left(95.73\% \times \frac{NFI\,2_{3m\,avg}}{NFI\,2_O}\right) + 4.27\%\right]\right\}$
$NFI\,1_{3m\,avg}$	The average value for the three (3) months preceding the Billing Period for which the Invoice is being prepared of the Indonesian Coal Index 4 (4,200 GAR/ 3,800 NAR) as published by the Argus/Coalindo for Indonesian Coal Index Report, in USD/MT
$NFI\,1_O$	Value of Indonesian Coal Index 4 (4,200 GAR/ 3,800 NAR) for the month of May 2026, which is 64.00, in USD/MT
$NFI\,2_{3m\,avg}$	The average value for the three (3) months preceding the Billing Period for which the Invoice is being prepared of the Indonesian Coal Index 5 (3,400 GAR/ 3,000 NAR) as published by the Argus/Coalindo for Indonesian Coal Index Report, in USD/MT
$NFI\,2_O$	Value of Indonesian Coal Index 5 (3,400 GAR/ 3,000 NAR) for the month of May 2026, which is 39.26, in USD/MT
AED_t	As previously defined
$NFCC_t$	Weighted average of the actual Freight Cost, Marine Cargo Insurance, Letter of Credit Opening Charges, Disport Surveyor Fees, Wharfage, Brokerage Fees, Port Charges, Pilotage Fee, and Tugboat Service Charges in PhP/MT. When applicable, Seller must disclose actual cost of NFCC in USD/MT and disclose the actual foreign exchange rate used to convert USD denominated costs into PHP. Demurrage costs arising from this Agreement shall be a pass-through cost subject to the following: (a) Any demurrage arising from the Seller's procurement of coal in excess of its requirements, including demurrage resulting from the use of a port or vessel as temporary storage for such excess coal, shall be solely for the account of the Seller and shall not be passed on to the Buyer; provided, however, that this limitation shall not apply where such excess procurement or the resulting demurrage is attributable (i) to a directive of a relevant government agency, regulatory authority, or market operator, such as the Department of Energy, the Energy Regulatory Commission, the System Operator, or the Independent Electricity Market Operator of the Philippines; or (ii) to comply with applicable laws, regulations, or mandatory fuel inventory requirements, in which case the resulting demurrage cost or PhP 190/MT, whichever is lower, shall be passed on to the Buyer, net of despatch or other similar credits. (b) Demurrage costs arising from causes other than the Seller's excess procurement of coal, negligence, or fault, as stated above, shall be passed on to the Buyer and shall be the lower of PhP190/MT or the actual demurrage cost, net of despatch or other similar credits. (c) Any penalty, fine, surcharge, or similar charge imposed by the DOE or BOC arising from the failure to timely secure, submit, or comply with the requirements relating to the Certificate of Compliance for coal importation issued by the DOE shall be solely for the account of the Seller. Seller can only recover the NFCC items listed above and shall submit to the Buyer proof of actual costs in the form of official invoices and supporting documents.
FX_m	The monthly average of the PhP/USD exchange rate for the month (i.e., first until last day of the month) for which the invoice is being prepared, as published in the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas website
Applicable taxes	Applicable taxes relating to FC for the Billing Period, in PhP/MT

In the event that the index (a) becomes unavailable, (b) is replaced by a new benchmark rate as determined by the relevant authorized entity, its successor-in-interest, or (c)

ceases to exist, the Parties shall agree to adopt a new price index.

The FP_t to be billed by Seller shall be the lower between:

1. The sum of the (i) resulting value using the Fuel Commodity Cost Formula and (ii) the Non-Fuel Commodity Cost; or

2. The actual Fuel Commodity and Non-Fuel Commodity Cost as billed by the suppliers supported by actual invoices and other documents for the relevant Billing Period.

FCR_t	Applicable Fuel Consumption Rate ("FCR") for the Billing Period, expressed in kg/kWh, shall be the lower between: (i) the guaranteed FCR_{CUFt}; or (ii) the actual plant FCR

If Buyer fails to utilize the Contract Capacity at the Monthly Minimum CUF, Seller may apply the higher of its actual plant FCR or the guaranteed consumption rate corresponding to the Minimum CUF for that Billing Period.

If the resulting CUF_t is a whole percentage number, the guaranteed FCR_{CUFt} shall be the corresponding FCR set forth in the table below for CUF levels from 65% to 100%.

If the resulting CUF_t is not a whole percentage number, the guaranteed FCR_{CUFt} shall be determined using the following formula:

$$FCR_{CUFt} = FCR_{CUF1} + \frac{(FCR_{CUF2} - FCR_{CUF1}) \times (CUF_t - CUF1)}{(CUF2 - CUF1)}$$

FCR_{CUFt}	guaranteed FCR corresponding to the Actual CUF for the Billing Period
CUF_t	as previously defined
FCR_{CUF2}	corresponding FCR for CUF2 set forth in the table below
FCR_{CUF1}	corresponding FCR for CUF1 set forth in the table below
CUF2	CUF increment of the nearest upper value, in %
CUF1	CUF increment of the nearest lower value, in %

Illustration: CUF_t 89.27%

CUF2	90%
CUF1	89%
FCR_{CUF2}	0.8207
FCR_{CUF1}	0.8227

The FCR at CUF levels from 65% to 100% are as follows:

CUF	FCR, kg/kWh
100%	0.8057
99%	0.8073
98%	0.8082
97%	0.8100
96%	0.8112
95%	0.8129
94%	0.8142
93%	0.8159
92%	0.8174
91%	0.8192
90%	0.8207
89%	0.8227
88%	0.8243
87%	0.8263
86%	0.8281
85%	0.8305
84%	0.8321
83%	0.8346
82%	0.8364
81%	0.8390
80%	0.8410
79%	0.8438
78%	0.8461
77%	0.8488
76%	0.8514
75%	0.8545
74%	0.8569
73%	0.8607
72%	0.8631
71%	0.8669
70%	0.8699
69%	0.8741
68%	0.8771
67%	0.8814
66%	0.8850
65%	0.8901

Note: For avoidance of doubt, the Buyer shall bear all other applicable costs, charges and taxes pursuant to Section 13.2 of this Agreement.

E. Value-added Tax ("VAT"), if any. VAT shall only be chargeable to the Buyer if prevailing laws expressly allow its passing on by the Seller.

Except for VAT, which shall be a pass-through component of the price, all other taxes and government dues, the WESM market fees, and ER 1-94 (Benefits to Host Community) shall be to the account of the Seller.

Replacement Power Charge

If Seller provides Replacement Power, Seller shall attach to the Seller Invoice the computation showing both the actual rate of the Replacement Power and the generation rate based on the approved tariff for this Agreement.

In computing the actual rate of the Replacement Power, Seller shall declare whether the replacement energy was generated from a renewable energy source/s or from sources exempt from Value-Added Taxes and shall provide the invoice issued to it by the replacement power plant clearly showing the breakdown of the rate for the replacement energy delivered.

The generation rate based on this Agreement shall be computed in accordance with Schedule 7 as follows:

- The CRR_{CUFt}, $FOMR_{CUFt}$ and $VOMR_t$ shall be as previously defined above.
- Further, the Fuel Cost shall be calculated using a fuel rate based on the FP_t and FX_m as previously defined above and the Seller's Fuel Consumption Rate at the CUF level associated with the CRR_{CUFt} and $FOMR_{CUFt}$.
- In the event that the FP_t is unavailable due to the Facility being unable to utilize fuel and generate power for the supply under this Agreement, the fuel rate shall be based on the most recent 3-month average fuel cost, in PhP/kWh.

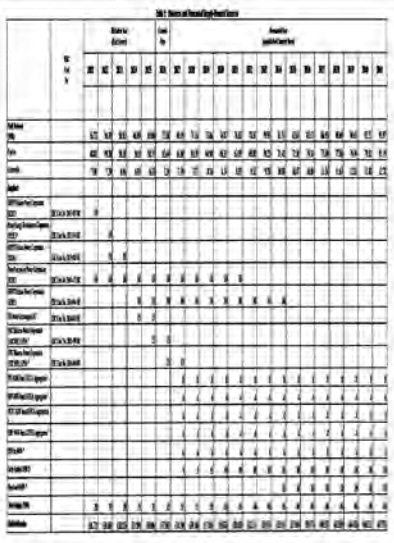
Thus, the Replacement Power cost shall be:

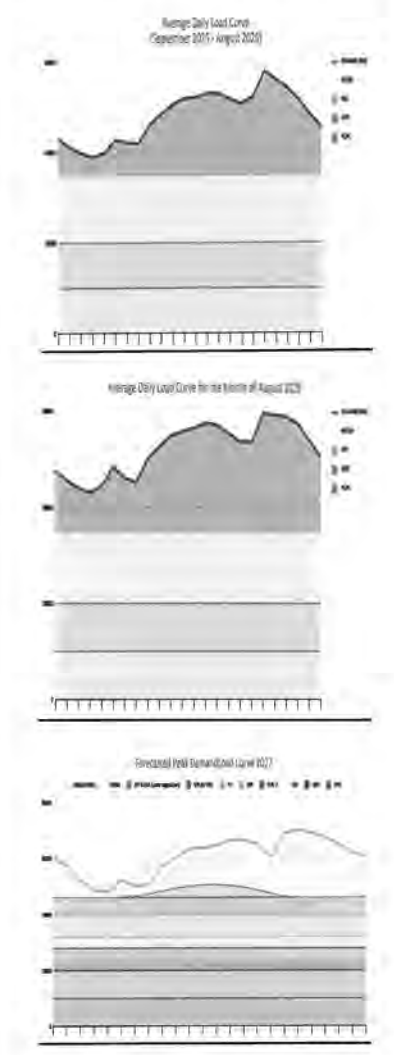
$$RP_t = [Min(RP_r, CP_r) \times RE_t] + VAT_t, if\ applicable$$

$$CP_r = [(CRR_{CUFt} + FOMR_{CUFt} + VOMR_t) + (\frac{FP_t \times FCR_{CUFt} \times FX_m}{1000})]$$

RP_t	Replacement Power cost for the Billing Period, in PhP
RP_r	Actual generation rate of the Replacement Power exclusive of VAT, in PhP/kWh
CP_r	Generation rate based on this Agreement exclusive of VAT, in PhP/kWh
RE_t	Replacement Power Energy supplied by the Seller to the Buyer for the Billing Period, in kWh
CRR_{CUFt}	As previously defined
$FOMR_{CUFt}$	As previously defined
$VOMR_t$	As previously defined
FP_t	As previously defined
FCR_{CUFt}	As previously defined
FX_m	As previously defined
VAT_t	Applicable VAT for the Replacement Power Cost for the Billing Period, if any.
t	Billing Period

44. NOCECO's Supply and Demand Scenario (Yearly) and Average Daily Load Curve are as follows:





INDICATIVE RATE IMPACT

45. The indicative rate impact on NOCECO's overall generation rate with the additional supply from MPI shows a **decrease of about PhP0.6812 per kWh**, to wit:

Simulation of Generation Mix Rate with MPI	
Generation rate with MPI	PhP8.2558/kWh
Generation rate without MPI	PhP8.9370/kWh
Rate Impact, Increase/(Decrease)	**PhP(0.6812)/kWh**

46. In *Alyansa Para sa Bagong Pilipinas, Inc. vs. Energy Regulatory Commission, et. al.*,[11] the Supreme Court held that the purpose of the CSP is to ensure transparency and competition in the procurement of power supply by distribution utilities (DUs) so as to provide the least-cost electricity to the consuming public. This was also adopted by the Honorable Commission and is provided under Article I, Section 1(c), (d), and (i) of its Amended CSP Guidelines.

47. Considering that the subject PSA is the result of a valid Joint CSP conducted by NEA, Joint Applicants respectfully submit that the rates in the subject PSA should be approved by the Honorable Commission, as is and without any adjustments, because such rates will ultimately redound to the benefit of NOCECO's MCOs.

IV
PRE-FILING REQUIREMENTS
AND OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS

48. In support of the Joint Application, the following documents are attached herein as annexes and made integral part hereof:

TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS	
ANNEX	**Name of Document**
01	Power Supply Agreement ("PSA")
02 and series	Certified True Copy of the Articles of Incorporation ("AOI"), By-laws, and latest General Information Sheet ("GIS") of Malita Power Inc. ("MPI"). Certified True Copy of the proof of Business Registration, Board Resolution that will indicate the list of Board Directors and Board Members of the Electric Cooperative ("EC")/Distribution Utility ("DU").
03 and series	Supply and Demand Scenario of Existing Suppliers, Contract Utilization, Average Daily Load Curve of the EC/DU. Distribution Development Plan ("DDP") and the Power Supply Procurement Plan ("PSPP") as submitted for issuance of Certificate of Conformity ("COC") by the Department of Energy ("DOE").
04	Table showing matrix of comparison showing the requirements in the DU Terms of Reference ("TOR") and the relevant PSA provision.
05 and series	Bid forms submitted by participating Generation Companies during the Bidding. ***(Confidential)*** Financial model containing the derivation of rates including the equivalent PhP/kWh ***(Confidential)*** Sample Bill. Rate Impact Analysis.
06	Certificate of Compliance ("COC") or Provisional Authority to Operate ("PAO") or any Certification coming from the ERC of the ongoing COC/PAO application or renewal, pursuant to the Guidelines for the issuance of COC for Generation Companies/Facilities including Annexes of MPI.
07 and series	Certificate of Documents Previously Submitted - Whole Electricity Spot Market ("WESM") Certificate of MPI - Shareholder's Agreement - Certificate of Registration with attached Terms and Conditions issued by the DTI – Board of Investments ("BOI") (if applicable) or proof of application to the BOI. - Environmental Compliance Certificate ("ECC") issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources ("DENR") or proof of application to the DENR. - Certificate of Endorsement ("COE") from the Department of Energy ("DOE") regarding Philippine Development Plan ("PDP") or proof of application to the DOE. - For Genco utilizing or will utilize Renewable Energy technology: Certificate of Confirmation of Commerciality issued by the DOE to the developer and Renewable Energy Service and Operating Contract from the DOE or proof of application to the DOE. - Certified True Copy (or Secretary's Certificate signifying that the said documents are true and correct) of the Distribution Wheeling Service ("DWS") Agreement (for embedded generators), if applicable. - Water Permit from the National Water Resources Board ("NWRB") or proof of application to the NWRB.
	- Transmission Service Agreement ("TSA"). - IPPA Agreement. - EPC Contract. - O&M Contract. - Project Feasibility Study. - Wholesale Aggregator Agreement. - All details on the procurement process of fuel including requests, proposals received, tender offers, etc.- Fuel/Coal/Steam Sale Agreement. (***confidential***) - Sworn Statement by the competent Genco officer detailing how the fuel was competitively procured, contract terms, unbundled price components. (***confidential***) WESM Certification of the EC/DU.
08	Latest Audited Financial Statement ("AFS") of MPI.
09	Affidavit of Undertaking and Explanation on the following documents: - Verified Certification showing list of Board of Directors and Board Members of the ultimate parent company, its subsidiaries, and all its affiliates of MPI. - Transmission Wheeling Contract. - Rental Agreements for rental generating units.
11	EC/DU's estimation of the potential for a reduction in load supplied by the DU due to retail completion, GEOP, etc.
LEGAL DOCUMENTS	
A and series	Board Resolutions of the DU/ECs on the Authority of the Counsel to File the Subject Application and Authority of the Affiant to execute Verification and Certification of Non Forum Shopping for the subject application.
B and series	Documents Related to the Competitive Selection Process ("CSP")
C	Affidavit in Support of the Issuance of a Provisional Authority or Interim Relief

PRAYER FOR CONFIDENTIAL TREATMENT OF INFORMATION

49. Pursuant to *Rule 4* of the Honorable Commission's *Rules of Practice and Procedure*, Applicants may request that certain information not be disclosed and be treated as confidential.[12] Pursuant to this, MPI prays for the confidential treatment of the information contained in the **Annexes 05, 05A and 7A.**

50. MPI treats the information contained in the above-mentioned documents, such as sources of funds/financial plans, certifications from bank/lending institutions, generation rate and derivation, cash flow, description of power plant, and fuel supply agreement, as **proprietary** in nature considering that it involves trade secrets reflecting investment and business calculations.

51. These documents are considered as trade secrets contemplated by law and jurisprudence. In the case of *Air Philippines Corporation vs. Pennswell, Inc.*[13], the Supreme Court defined a trade secret, as follows:

> A trade secret may consist of any formula, pattern, device, or compilation of information that: **(1) is used in one's business; and (2) gives the employer an opportunity to obtain an advantage over competitors who do not possess the information.** Generally, a trade secret is a process or device intended for continuous use in the operation of the business, for example, a machine or formula, but **can be a price list or catalogue or specialized customer list.** It is indubitable that trade secrets constitute proprietary rights. The inventor, discoverer, or possessor of a trade secret or similar innovation has rights therein which may be treated as property, and ordinarily an injunction will be granted to prevent the disclosure of the trade secret by one who obtained the information "in confidence" or through a "confidential relationship". American jurisprudence has utilized the following factors to determine if an information is a trade secret, to wit:
>
> (1) the extent to which the information is known outside of the employer's business;
>
> (2) the extent to which the information is known by employees and others involved in the business;
>
> (3) the extent of measures taken by the employer to guard the secrecy of the information;
>
> (4) the value of the information to the employer and to competitors;
>
> (5) the amount of effort or money expended by the company in developing the information; and
>
> (6) the extent to which the information could be easily or readily obtained through an independent source.[14]

52. The foregoing documents were prepared and developed for the exclusive use of MPI and were designed for its specific use in its power generation business. If the information contained in these documents are disclosed to the public, MPI' competitors or other entities engaged in the power business they will gain undue advantage and could incorporate the said information in their operations. Consequently, the negotiating power of MPI with parties it plans to contract with or who it is currently doing business with will be undermined if it is compelled to disclose such information.

53. Accordingly, Joint Applicants hereby submit one (1) copy of the confidential documents *via*: in a sealed envelope, with the envelope and each page of the document stamped with the word "*Confidential.*"[15]

PRAYER FOR PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY OR INTERIM RELIEF

54. Joint Applicants re-plead, by reference, all the foregoing allegations to support its prayer for provisional authority or interim relief.

55. Joint Applicants pray for the issuance of a provisional authority or interim relief for the implementation of the PSA pending the issuance of a final decision pursuant to Section 1, Rule 14 of the ERC Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure, which provides:

> Section 1. Provisional Authority or Interim Relief. - For applications or petitions covered by Section 1, Rule 6 of these Rules, the Commission may grant either a provisional authority or an interim relief, upon motion included in the application or petition and indicated in the caption thereof that such relief is requested.

56. Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM) prices have been surging in the Visayas grid resulting in extraordinarily high electricity prices experienced by consumers in the Visayas grid, as recognized by the Commission when it recently ordered the regional implementation of the Secondary Price Cap (SPC) in the WESM retroactive to the August 2026 billing period.

57. Even with SPC, WESM prices are still substantially higher than the prices under this PSA with MPI and NOCECO's other bilateral contracts.

58. NOCECO has struggled to shield its MCOs from rising power bills because it depends on WESM even for its baseload supply. NOCECO's ability to fully insulate its MCOs from increases in power costs has been constrained by the gap between its actual baseload requirements and the capacity covered by its existing bilateral supply contracts. As of August 2026, NOCECO had a baseload demand of 44 MW, with a 12-month average baseload demand of 39 MW, compared with 35 MW of contracted bilateral baseload supply, inclusive of the 15 MW Emergency PSA. The balance was sourced from WESM at a rate more than double the proposed rate in the instant PSA.

59. This gap will be significantly reduced by the implementation of all the PSAs arising from the joint CSP, including the instant PSA with MPI. Joint Applicants thus pray for the issuance of a provisional authority or interim relief to be able to implement the PSA as soon as possible.

60. The PSA was the product of a duly conducted and fully compliant CSP, pursuant to NEA Memorandum No. 2023-057, DOE Department Circular No. DC2023-06-0021, and ERC Resolution No. 16, Series of 2023, as amended by ERC Resolution No. 07, Series of 2026, ensuring that the resulting rates are transparent, least-cost, and beneficial to end-users.

61. The Levelized Cost of Electricity (LCOE) rate of PhP5.6845/kWh offered by MPI, stands as the lowest calculated bid among the Winning Bidders, and falls within the declared ceiling price of PhP6.3000/kWh. This rate is demonstrably reasonable and advantageous to consumers. Its implementation will reduce NOCECO's effective generation charge and stabilize its power supply portfolio.

62. With the issuance of provisional authority or interim relief, NOCECO's MCOs will benefit from a reduction in the overall generation rate. To further highlight the necessity for provisional approval of this Joint Application, an Affidavit of Merit is executed by the Corporate Planning Manager of NOCECO, Shiela Marie A. Heyrosa.

PRAYER

WHEREFORE, premises considered, Joint Applicants, respectfully pray unto the Honorable Commission to:

1. **APPROVE** the **JOINT APPLICATION** and **PSA** including all the rates, fees, charges and tariff adjustment mechanisms set out therein, and authorizing NOCECO to charge and collect the fees therein from its customers reckoned from the start of power supply by the Joint Applicants under the PSA;

2. **ISSUE** a Provisional Authority or Interim Relief, as the case may be, authorizing the immediate implementation of the PSA; and

3. **TREAT** Annexes **"05", "05A" and "7A"** inclusive of their submarkings, and the information contained therein as confidential and **DIRECT** their non-disclosure to persons other than the necessary officers and staff of this Honorable Commission in accordance with *Section 2, Rule 4 of the Rules of Practice and Procedure.*

Other reliefs, just and equitable under the premises, are likewise being prayed for.

Pasig City 1 October 2026.

[redacted]
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Roll No. 49866, Page No. 474, Book XX
MCLE Compliance No. VIII-0022963; 02/25/25
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MALITA POWER INC.[16]

by:

[redacted]
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PTR No. 3977996 / 05 January 2026 / Pasig City
IBP Lifetime No. 010380 / PPLM Chapter
MCLE Compliance No. VIII - 0029077 valid until 14 April 2028
Roll No. 54500

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PTR No. 3978000 / 05 January 2026 / Pasig City
IBP Invoice No. 536845 / 07 January 2026 /
Central Luzon Bulacan Chapter
MCLE Compliance No. VIII-0016943 valid until 14 April 2028
Roll No. 39024

VERIFICATION AND
CERTIFICATION OF NON-FORUM SHOPPING

I, **ELENITA D. GO**, Filipino, of legal age, and with office address at the 5th Floor, 100 Eulogio Rodriguez Jr. Avenue C5 Road (North Bound) Pasig City, after having been duly sworn to in accordance with law, hereby depose and state, that:

1. I am the authorized representative of Malita Power Inc. ("MPI") a co-applicant in the Joint Application for Approval of the Power Supply Agreement between Negros Occidental Electric Cooperative ("NOCECO") and MPI";

2. I have caused the preparation and filing of the Joint Application and that I have read the contents thereof and aver that all the factual/legal allegations contained therein are true and correct based on my personal knowledge and/or on authentic documents/official records;

3. The Joint Application is not filed to harass, cause unnecessary delay, or needlessly increase the cost of litigation and that the factual allegations therein have evidentiary support or, if specifically so identified, will likewise have evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for discovery; and,

4. I hereby certify that MPI has not filed/commenced any action or proceeding arising from the same issues raised in the Joint Application before the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, or any other courts or tribunals or quasi-judicial bodies/agencies and to the best of my knowledge, no such other similar action or claim is pending therein. If ever there is a case pending before the said courts or tribunals involving the same issues, I undertake to inform the Honorable Energy Regulatory Commission of such fact within five (5) calendar days from knowledge thereof.

I am executing this undertaking in support of the Joint Application and the veracity of the allegations therein as well as for any other legal purpose this may serve.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this OCT 01 2026 at Pasig City.

[redacted]
ELENITA D. GO
Affiant

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this OCT 01 2026 in Pasig City. Affiant personally appeared and exhibited to me her Philippine Passport No. P1876103B issued on June 7, 2019 at the DFA NCR East as her competent proof of identity and with affiant waiving the right to receive a duplicate and original electronic copy of the Verification and Certification of Non-Forum Shopping in effect waiving any objection to the completeness of the reproduction of the same.

Doc. No.: 352
Page No.: 72
Book No.: X
Series of 2026.

[redacted]
RUDILICIA P. ESPIRITU
Commission No. 274 (2025-2026)
Notary Public for Pasig City
Until December 31, 2026
5th Floor, C5 Office Building Complex
#100 E Rodriguez Jr. Ave., C5 Road,
Bo. Ugong, Pasig City 1604, Metro Manila
Roll No. 53391
PTR No. 3977996 / January 5, 2026, Kabankalan City
IBP Receipt No. 582572 / December 4, 2025 / Pasig City
Attorney's Roll No. 79662
MCLE No. VIII-0017974, Valid until April 14, 2028
Rm. 2, Colmac Bldg., Brgy. 3, Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental

NOTARY PUBLIC
ROLL NO. 53391
PASIG CITY, PHILIPPINES

VERIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION
AGAINST FORUM SHOPPING

I, **DOMINGO S. SANTIAGO, JR.**, of legal age, Filipino and with office address at NOCECO Main Office, Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental, after being sworn to according to law, depose and state that:

1. I am the Project Supervisor and Acting General Manager of the NEGROS OCCIDENTAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (NOCECO) and I have been duly authorized to represent NOCECO in the instant Application;
2. As such, I am duly authorized to sign this Verification and Certification Against Forum Shopping;
3. I authorized and caused the preparation of the foregoing Application and have read all the allegations contained therein and: (a) the allegations in the pleading are true and correct based on my personal knowledge, or based on authentic documents; (b) the pleading is not filed to harass, cause unnecessary delay, or needlessly increase the cost of litigation; and (c) the factual allegations therein have evidentiary support;
4. I further certify that NOCECO has not heretofore commenced any action or filed any claim involving the same issues in any court, tribunal or quasi-judicial agency and, to the best of my knowledge, no such other action or claim is pending therein;
5. If I should hereafter learn that the same or similar action or claim has been filed or is pending with any court, tribunal or quasi-judicial agency, I shall report such fact to this Honorable Commission within five (5) days therefrom.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand in Kabankalan City this 1st day of October 2026.

[redacted]
DOMINGO S. SANTIAGO, JR.

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 1st day of October 2026 in Kabankalan City, Philippines, affiant exhibiting to me ID No. Phil ID CARD 2391-4534-8657-0672 as proof of identity.

Doc No. 169;
Page No. 34;
Book No. I;
Series of 2026

[redacted]
ATTY. ADRIAN RUZ C. VIDAL
NOTARY PUBLIC
For and in the City of Kabankalan, and the Municipalities of E.B. Magalona, and Salvador Benedicto, Negros Occidental
Rm. 2 Colmac Bldg., Brgy. 3, Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental

---

1 *ERC Resolution No. 07, Series of 2026*, promulgated on 01 April 2026, entitled *"Amended Implementing Guidelines for the Procurement, Execution, and Evaluation of Power Supply Agreements Entered into by Distribution Utilities for the Supply of Electricity to their Captive Market."*

2 Section 25. Retail Rate. - The retail rates charged by distribution utilities for the supply of electricity in their captive market shall be subject to regulation by the ERC based on the principle of full recovery of prudent and reasonable economic costs incurred, or such other principles that will promote efficiency as may be determined by the ERC.

3 Distribution utilities may enter into bilateral power supply contracts subject to review by the ERC, viz inter.:

4 Limits on Bilateral Supply Contracts by a Distribution Utility.

5 Resolution No. 01, Series of 2021.

6 Amended Implementing Guidelines for the Procurement, Execution, and Evaluation of Power Supply Agreements Entered into by Distribution Utilities for the Supply of Electricity to their Captive Market.

7 Luzon Visayas Electric Cooperatives Aggregation (LVECA) is composed of: **For Luzon Member ECs:** 1) Abra Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 2) Aurora Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 3) Batangas II Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 4) Cagayan I Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 5) Camarines Sur II Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 6) Camarines Sur III Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 7) First Laguna Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 8) La Union Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 9) Nueva Ecija I Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 10) Nueva Vizcaya Electric Cooperative, 11) Pangasinan I Electric Cooperative; 12) Pampanga III Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 13) Quezon I Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 14) Quezon II Electric Cooperative, Inc; 15) Quirino Electric Cooperative; 16) San Jose City Electric Cooperative; 17) Tarlac I Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 18) Zambales I Electric Cooperative Inc.; and 19) Zambales II Electric Cooperative, Inc.

For Visayas Member ECs: 1) Capiz Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 2) Cebu I Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 3) Cebu II Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 4) Guimaras Electric Cooperative; 5) Iloilo I Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 6) Iloilo II Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 7) Iloilo III Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 8) Negros Occidental Electric Cooperative; 9) Negros Oriental I Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 10) Negros Oriental II Electric Cooperative.
"Collectively referred to as Member ECs."

8 The NEA-SBAC set a Reserve Bid Price of PhP6.3000/kWh for both Lots in the Transmittal, which was disclosed in the bidders during the opening of bids.

9 Technical Proposal Requirements: Envelope 1, Folder 1-A did not include the 2031-2034 CCMSs necessary to independently verify the planned and unplanned outages, the Plant Availability Factor (PAF) computation, and compliance with the applicable PAF requirement.

10 G.R. No. 227678, 08 May 2019.

11 Section 1, Rule 4, *Rules of Practice and Procedure* of the Honorable Commission.

12 G.R. No. 172639, 13 December 2007.

13 Ibid., emphasis supplied.

14 In line with the Honorable Commission's rules and regulations, with copies of the documents covered by the prayer for confidential treatment were password-protected and submitted via electronic submission.

15 Given registered email.

(MS-NOV. 9 & 16, 2026)

Foreign reserves fell to 3-year low of $97.35b

By Thony Rose Lesaca

THE Philippines' gross international reserves dropped 11.7 percent to $97.35 billion in October from $110.25 billion a year earlier, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported Friday.

The October figure marks the lowest reserve level since September 2023, when reserves stood at $98.12 billion. Reserves totaled $99.49 billion in September 2026.

The central bank attributed the year-over-year decline to its net foreign exchange operations, downward valuation adjustments in its gold holdings amid lower global prices, and the national government's net foreign currency withdrawals from its deposits with the BSP.

Foreign currency reserves consisted mainly of $62.84 billion in securities and $3.65 billion in foreign currency and deposits as of late October. Securities holdings slipped 20.93 percent from $79.47 billion last year, while foreign currency and deposits surged from $236.1 million.

Gold holdings rose 0.37 percent to $16.95 billion from $16.89 billion a year earlier, while other reserve assets increased 2.43 percent to $9.24 billion from $9.02 billion.

The country's reserve position in the International Monetary Fund jumped 3.69 percent to $755.1 million, and special drawing rights rose 0.38 percent to $3.92 billion.

Month-over-month, gold holdings fell 4.88 percent from $17.82 billion in September, while securities holdings declined 1.74 percent from $63.95 billion.

The BSP said the October reserve level remains an adequate external liquidity buffer equivalent to 6.1 months of imports of goods, service payments, and primary income. It also covers about 3.1 times the country's short-term external debt based on residual maturity.

Jonathan Ravelas, senior adviser at Reyes Tacandong & Co., said the decline bears watching, though reserves remain at a comfortable level. He noted that reserve adequacy becomes a concern if reserves fall below six months of imports or if the drop reflects persistent external financing pressures.



CLEAN ENERGY SHIFT. Executives from Pepsi-Cola Products Philippines Inc. and First Gen Corp. participate in a signing ceremony to power three PCPPI plants with geothermal energy. Present at the event are Arlene Soriano, head of sales and engagement at First Gen (left); Carlo Vega, chief customer engagement officer at First Gen; Youngho Kim, chief manufacturing officer at PCPPI; and Lyn Udarbe, head of procurement at PCPPI.

PH stocks track Q3 GDP data amid inflation concerns

By Jenniffer B. Austria

SHARE prices are expected to track the release of third-quarter economic growth data this week, as investors weigh the outlook for interest rates following another acceleration in inflation.

The Philippine Statistics Authority is scheduled to release the country's gross domestic product figures Monday.

Online brokerage firm 2TradeAsia.com expects the economy to have grown 2.3 percent to 2.7 percent in the third quarter, with public infrastructure spending remaining a key concern.

The brokerage noted that GDP growth of 2.3 percent or lower could add to concerns over the economy and strengthen the case for a 50-basis-point interest rate hike by the Bangko



Sentral ng Pilipinas in December.

The central bank's next policy meeting is set for Dec. 17.

"We keep last week's stance of trimming or avoiding names with rising leverage, near-term refinancing needs or large capex commitments," 2TradeAsia.com said.

Investors will also assess the impact of higher prices after inflation rose to 7.8 percent in October from 7.2 percent in September.

The Philippine Stock Exchange Index gained 1.44 percent, or 81.60 points, to close at 5,761.95 last week.

Financial stocks led the advance with a 4 percent gain, followed by holding firms, which rose 2.96 percent. Mining and oil shares added 2.4 percent, while property stocks gained 1.05 percent.

Improved sentiment following the US midterm elections helped lift markets, while Brent crude prices eased to around $95 per barrel amid hopes of progress in resolving the Middle East conflict.

The peso also strengthened to around P62.90 against the US dollar last week.

DA allocates 30-hectare Quezon property to FTI for regional mega food hub

By Othel V. Campos

THE Department of Agriculture has granted government-owned Food Terminal Inc. a 25-year usufruct over 30 hectares in Tiaong, Quezon, paving the way for a mega food hub to improve storage, logistics and market access for farm and fishery products.

The property is part of a 49-hectare government site administered by the Bureau of Plant Industry, portions of which are used by the DA's Quezon Agricultural Research and Experiment Station.

Ownership will remain with the DA, while FTI will develop and operate the 30-hectare site.

"The arrangement puts an underutilized government property in Tiaong, Quezon, to work for food security without transferring ownership to FTI," Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said.

The facility will include cold storage for vegetables, fruits, fish, meat and other agricultural products, as well as wholesale trading, processing, logistics and distribution facilities.

These facilities are expected to reduce post-harvest losses, extend product shelf life and improve market access, allowing farmers and fisherfolk to avoid distress sales immediately after harvest.

Consumers are also expected to benefit from a more reliable food supply and reduced wastage, helping ease price pressures.

FTI is mandated to help stabilize prices and ensure steady supplies of basic commodities through the procurement, processing and distribution of agricultural and marine products. Its strategic plan includes regional food terminals and mega food hubs to strengthen the farm-to-market supply chain.

In exchange for the usufruct, FTI will provide the BPI with annual institutional support worth P12 million, either in cash or through approved infrastructure, equipment, technical services and other assistance.



CLIMATE WORKSHOP. Delegates from the Philippines, Nepal and Malaysia participate in a regional peer-learning workshop focused on greenhouse gas inventory quality, assurance and control systems, as well as preparations for their second Biennial Transparency Reports. The Climate Change Commission stressed that building review-ready reporting systems is essential to maintaining the credibility of national climate data.

Thailand's EGCO unit investing P95b for natural gas plant

By Alena Mae S. Flores

QUEZON Power (Philippines) Ltd. Co., a subsidiary of Thailand-based Electricity Generating Public Co. Ltd., plans to build a P95 billion, 1,230-megawatt combined-cycle gas turbine power plant in Mauban, Quezon.

In filings submitted to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for an environmental impact assessment, QPL said the proposed San Francisco Power Plant will span 18.55 hectares across Barangays Cagsiay I and Cagsiay II.

The site sits adjacent to QPL's existing 400 MW coal plant and the 500 MW coal plant operated by San Buenaventura Power Ltd. Co., a joint venture of Meralco PowerGen Corp. and EGCO subsidiary New Growth B.V.

The project features a liquefied natural gas import terminal, onshore regasification and storage facilities, a power plant, a seawater system, an LNG jetty and electrical interconnections designed to supply reliable power to the Luzon grid.

Natural gas from imported LNG will serve as the primary fuel source, with fuel oil serving as a backup. LNG will arrive by sea, unload at the site, remain in onshore storage tanks and undergo regasification before entering the power generation cycle.

QPL plans to connect to the National Grid Corp. of the Philippines transmission network via an existing 31-kilometer, 230-kilovolt right-of-way that terminates at the NGCP substation in Mauban. The company selected the location due to its strategic proximity to operational power infrastructure, road and sea access, seawater availability and sufficient land for future expansion.

The project prequalified to participate in the Department of Energy's auction for 3,840 MW of gas-fired mid-merit capacity, covering delivery windows between 2026 and 2031.

Because the gas plant qualifies as an environmentally critical project under the Philippine Environmental Impact Statement System, QPL must submit an environmental impact statement to the Environmental Management Bureau central office to secure an Environmental Compliance Certificate. The report will outline potential environmental and social impacts alongside mitigation strategies for the plant's lifecycle.

PLDT flags ICT cost pressures amid weak peso but bullish on data centers

By Darwin G. Amojelar

PLDT Inc. said the depreciation of the Philippine peso is increasing cost pressures on information and communications technology projects, particularly those requiring imported equipment and materials.

Blums Pineda, senior vice president and head of PLDT and Smart Enterprise Business Group, said the company is closely monitoring peso movements as it manages spending for infrastructure and connectivity projects.

Pineda said exchange rate fluctuations could affect project costs when equipment and materials are imported and suppliers cannot honor previously agreed prices.

"On one hand, we also have dollar-denominated revenue, so that I think is upside," Pineda said. "But the big part to me is for a lot of our projects, connectivity-wise, in ICT, where we're importing."

The peso closed at 63.05 to the U.S. dollar Friday, down from Thursday's close of 62.97.

Despite the cost pressures, Pineda said PLDT remains bullish on the outlook for enterprise digital infrastructure, particularly data centers, as demand from hyperscalers and businesses continues to grow.

Meanwhile, Pineda said the company remains prepared to pursue Vitro REIT Corp., but will carefully assess market conditions to ensure the transaction delivers the desired returns.



CLASSROOM TURNOVER. Executives and community leaders turn over a new two-story, 10-classroom building for Grade 9 students at Iloilo City National High School, the city's largest public high school with 6,500 students. Under its Build a School, Build a Nation program, Security Bank Foundation Inc. funded and managed construction. A.C. Steel Industries supplied steel materials, Signify Philippines donated electrical fixtures, and LBC Express subsidized the delivery of program materials.

IN BRIEF

NFA buys palay at P30 per kilo to build rice stocks

THE National Food Authority is offering farmers up to P30 per kilogram for clean and dry palay and has raised its procurement limit to as much as 500 bags per farmer per cropping season to boost farm incomes and replenish government rice reserves ahead of a potentially strong El Niño.

NFA administrator Larry Lacson said about 80 percent of the agency's branches nationwide are buying clean and dry palay at P30 per kilogram, with the lowest price at P28.

The agency has also scrapped its previous 200-bag ceiling, adopting instead a procurement limit based on provincial average palay yield and the farmer's cultivated area, capped at 5 hectares.

Under the new scheme, farmers can sell volumes equivalent to the average provincial yield multiplied by their farm area, with those cultivating 5 hectares potentially selling 500 bags or more, depending on local productivity.

"We want our farmers to earn more from their labor and have greater confidence that there is a reliable market for their harvest. Even with a strong El Niño looming, we want to encourage them to keep planting because the country will need every kilogram of rice they can produce," Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said.

The NFA classifies clean and dry palay as grain with 11 percent to 14 percent moisture content. Freshly harvested palay fetches about P25 to P26 per kilo, or roughly P4 less.

The expanded procurement will help replenish rice stocks for the Benteng Bigas Meron Na program and emergency distribution during natural disasters. **Othel V. Campos**

Monde Nissin targets P6b premium noodle segment

MONDE Nissin Corp. is expanding its premium noodle offerings to compete with Korean and Indonesian brands that have captured a growing share of the Philippine noodle market.

The company estimates the premium noodle segment, most of which are Korean and Indonesian brands, is now about P6 billion, or nearly 10 percent of the market in value terms.

"Most of the premium brands are actually Korean and Indonesian. They are getting a substantial portion of the market," a Monde Nissin chief finance officer Jessie Teo said during a recent investors briefing.

The maker of Lucky Me! noodles has responded by developing products that offer a more affordable entry into the premium segment.

"We are responding by coming up with our own premium, a bit more affordable, but still premium," he said.

The company began with its stir-fried Jjamppong offering and has introduced limited-time flavors, including barbecue and chili cheese. **Jenniffer B. Austria**

PH exports to hit $108b on electronics, agri products

THE Philippines' merchandise exports could reach about $108 billion in 2026, supported by continued growth in electronics shipments and agricultural products, although the pace of expansion may moderate after a strong September performance, Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc. president Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr. said.

Ortiz-Luis said the country's export industry remained on an upward trajectory, with electronics continuing to account for much of the growth, alongside agricultural products benefiting from zero-tariff access to the United States.

"We think it will not be a big jump, but it will continue to increase," he said, citing the sustained performance of electronics and agricultural exports.

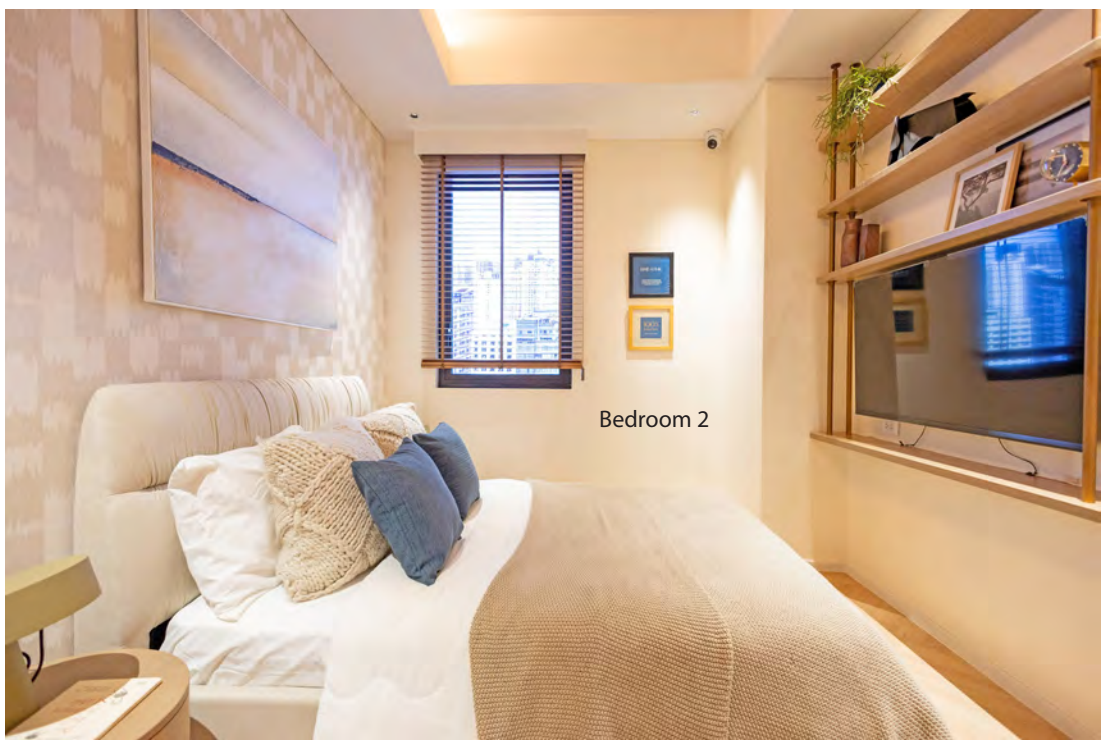
Merchandise exports grew 35.6 percent year over year in September, although Ortiz-Luis said the increase was driven largely by electronics shipments, which remain the country's biggest export category.

He said the electronics and semiconductor industries continued to perform well despite exposure to higher import costs, as manufacturers source about 70 percent of their raw materials from overseas.

While a weaker peso raises the cost of imported production inputs, exporters still benefit from stronger peso conversion of their dollar revenues, allowing the industry to remain competitive, he said. **Othel V. Campos**

Second bedroom enhances city living

THE idea of having a second bedroom in a city home goes beyond having extra space. It offers homeowners more flexibility, whether they need a separate home office, a room for visiting family and friends or a private area for personal activities.


Bedroom 2

This is the thinking behind the two-bedroom units at Sondris, Arthaland's residential development along Arnaiz Ave. in Makati City. Designed for professionals and couples who want more room to move around, the residences range from 91 to 117 square meters.

All two-bedroom units are corner residences, offering added privacy. Each also has a sun room that extends the living area and brings in natural light. The space can be used as a reading nook, a place to work or simply an area to unwind.

Designed by international architecture firm AEDAS, Sondris was developed in partnership with Mitsui Fudosan (Asia), the regional arm of Japanese property group Mitsui Fudosan. The partnership brings together Arthaland's experience in sustainable development and Mitsui Fudosan's international real estate expertise.

"What sets Sondris apart is how it makes the most of every space while keeping sustainability in mind. Drawing from Japanese design sensibilities, the residences are planned to make everyday living more comfortable and functional. They also incorporate systems that help conserve energy and water while supporting better indoor air quality. We want residents to enjoy a home that is well-designed, comfortable, and more efficient to live in," said Pamela Go, Arthaland head of marketing.

Makati address

Sondris is located in Legazpi Village, within reach of Makati's business districts, shopping centers and dining establishments.

The neighborhood has its own mix of cafés, restaurants, art spaces and wellness destinations. Greenbelt and other retail areas are also nearby, giving residents access to shops and services while keeping them close to their workplaces.

The residences offer views of San Lorenzo Village and the Makati skyline. The location also puts residents near the area's parks and open spaces, providing a break from the surrounding commercial district.

The development has a 25-meter heated saltwater pool, a Potager Garden and a Sky Terrace. These facilities give residents options for exercise, outdoor activities and quiet time without leaving the property.

Comfort and efficiency

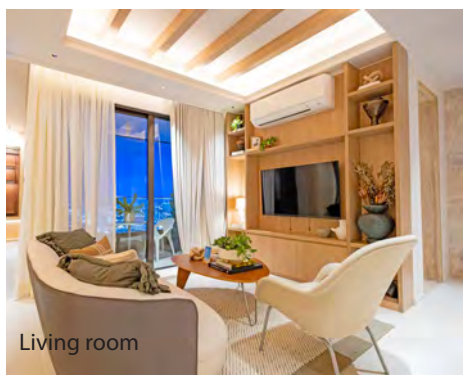
Sondris is targeting LEED, WELL, EDGE and BERDE certifications. Its planned features include low-emissivity, double-glazed windows that let in natural light while reducing heat transfer, helping keep indoor spaces comfortable and manage energy use.

The interiors also reflect the project's focus on space planning and functionality.

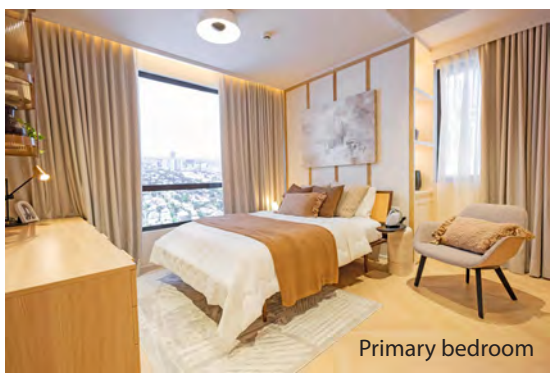
Arthaland worked with Cebu-based Studio Ong, led by principal architect Charisse Ong and principal designer Coleen Ong, on the design of the gallery and model residences. San Francisco-based interior designer Twenty Third by Deanne provided additional styling.

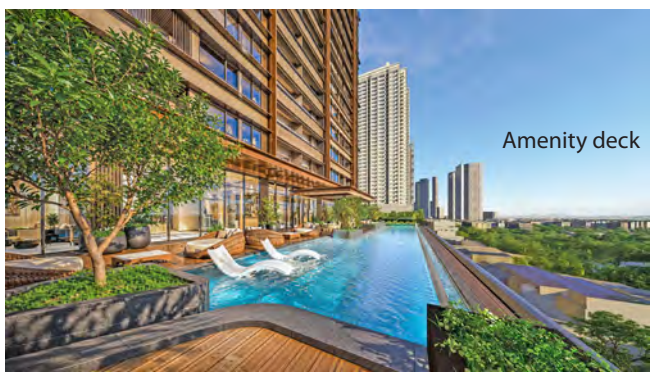
The model units and common areas were furnished in partnership with CWC Interiors, using pieces from international brands such as Vitra, Muuto, HAY, Walter Knoll and Herman Miller. **Jenniffer B. Austria**


Sondris in Legazpi Village


Living room


Kitchen


Primary bedroom


Amenity deck

Ayala Land lines up new housing projects as leasing fuels growth

AYALA Land Inc. (ALI) is betting on its leasing business to drive much of its growth next year, while preparing to launch P30 billion worth of residential projects, mostly outside Metro Manila.

After holding back on new residential launches this year, the property developer is preparing to return to the market with more horizontal projects in regional growth areas. A significant portion will be priced below P20 million, where demand from homebuyers remains stronger.

"We have P30 billion worth of launches planned for next year and a good percentage of those are going to be below P20 million because that's where we see the market demand continuing to be strong," ALI president and chief executive officer Anna Margarita Dy said.


ALI president and chief executive officer Anna Margarita Dy

The company has brought its unsold inventory down to P99 billion as of end-September 2026, from a peak of P214 billion in 2024. This represents about 15 months of inventory, with 74 percent of the remaining units in the premium segment.

ALI launched two premium horizontal projects in the third quarter, one in Naval and another in Batangas, with a combined value of P4.2 billion. Another project in Tarlac is scheduled for launch this month.

The company said housing lots outside Metro Manila continued to account for much of its residential sales, with more end-users buying properties rather than investors.

While the company prepares to launch more residential projects, Dy said leasing would remain a major source of growth in 2027.

"We still believe that that's where most of the growth will come from for the company next year," she said.

The company expects nearly 200,000 square meters of new mall space to open toward year-end including Ayala Malls Naval and The Gatewalk on Cebu. Dy said renovations and new commercial space would help ALI improve revenue per square meter and add to leasing income next year.

Italpinas brings solar power plans to affordable housing projects


Households and businesses with rooftop solar contribute surplus generation to the network.

THE cost of electricity is becoming an important consideration for homebuyers, particularly those looking for affordable homes where monthly expenses can add to the cost of owning a property.

Italpinas Development Corp. is looking at ways to address this through a partnership with SunShare Philippines Inc., which will explore the use of renewable energy in the developer's residential projects.

The two companies recently signed a memorandum of understanding to work on energy sourcing strategies and rooftop solar installations that could help lower power costs for residents and unit owners.

Under the agreement, SunShare will help Italpinas assess ways to increase the use of clean energy and reduce electricity expenses. Its digital platform will also allow homeowners to monitor their power consumption and better understand their electricity bills.

The companies will develop rooftop solar photovoltaic systems suited to Italpinas properties. Savings from the electricity generated are expected to benefit residents, unit owners and homeowners' associations.

The partnership will also cover projects under IDC Homes, Italpinas' wholly owned subsidiary focused on affordable housing.

For buyers in this market, lower electricity bills could make a difference in managing household expenses. The companies are also looking at SunShare's group-buying arrangements, which aggregate electricity demand to help secure better power rates.

The partnership builds on Italpinas' use of green building features in its residential developments. Its designs incorporate natural lighting and ventilation, measures to limit direct sunlight and landscaping intended to improve the living environment.

The developer's portfolio is certified under the Excellence in Design for Greater Efficiencies (EDGE) standard, developed by the International Finance Corp., a member of the World Bank Group.

Italpinas has used energy- and water-saving features in its projects in emerging cities across the country. Through IDC Homes, it plans to bring the same approach to the affordable housing market.

The company sees the tie-up with SunShare as a way to make energy-efficient homes more practical for a wider group of buyers, rather than limiting green features to higher-priced developments.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2026
lifeandshow.manilastandard@gmail.com
NICKIE WANG, *Editor*
ANGELICA VILLANUEVA, *Writer*
JASPER VALDEZ, *Writer*
Manila Standard

SHOWBIZ

South Border...

From C3

compositions through the stories and inspirations behind them, offering audiences a glimpse into Durias' creative process.

Joining him onstage are former South Border frontman **Luke Mejares**, powerhouse vocalist **Janine Teñoso** and singer-songwriter **Ice Seguerra**. Additional OPM artists and special guests will be announced in the coming weeks.

Directed by **Roy San Luis**, the production will open with a cinematic presentation exploring Durias' musical journey before transitioning into live performances with the composer and his South Border bandmates.

Promising "Timeless Songs. New Perspectives. Unforgettable Stories," the concert aims to give longtime fans a fresh appreciation of the band's music while introducing its legacy to a younger generation.

Tickets are available through TicketWorld, priced at P2,000 for Bronze, P3,500 for Silver, P5,000 for Gold, P6,500 for VIP, P7,500 for SVIP and P8,500 for Platinum. For reservations and inquiries, call or text 0917 803 2571.

Republic of the Philippines
National Capital Judicial Region
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
Branch 85, Quezon City
rtc1qzn085@judiciary.gov.ph
/09161222996

LETICIA P. LIGON,
Plaintiff,
-versus-

CASE NO. R-QZN-20-06216-CV
For: Revival of Judgment

SPOUSES SATURNINO M. BALADJAY and ROSARIO A. BALADJAY, and OLIVIA MARASIGAN,
Defendats.
x--x

AMENDED ORDER

Pursuant to the inherent power of the court to amend its processes and orders, as provided for in Section 5 (g), Rule 135 of the Rules of Court, the Order2 dated May 17, 2021 is hereby amended herein.

For Resolution is the plaintiff-movant Leticia P.Ligon's Motion for Leave to Serve Summons by Publication3 filed through her counsel Atty. Glenn A. Remigio Jr. on March 11, 2021.

In her Motion, the movant averred that the Sheriff's Return of Summons1 4 dated February 1, 2021 could not be served to defendants Spouses Saturnino Baladjay and Rosario Baladjay as well as to Olivia Marasigan. She emphasized that despite Sheriff IV Alquero's efforts and diligent inquiry in determining the whereabouts of the said defendants through investigations made upon several persons who personally knew the latter, still their whereabouts are unknown. Hence, the movant prayed, with leave of court, to serve summons by publication considering that the defendants were no longer residing in their last known address.[5]

Hence, this resolution.

ISSUE

Whether or not the plaintiff-movant's Motion for Leave to Serve Summons by Publication should be granted.

THE COURT'S RULING

The plaintiff-movant's Motion for Leave to Serve Summons by Publication is granted.

As a rule, summons should be personally served on a defendant. When summons cannot be served personally within a reasonable period of time, substituted service may be resorted to, Service of summons by publication can be resorted to only if the defendant's "whereabouts are unknown and cannot be ascertained by diligent inquiry."[6] The relevant sections of Rule 14 of the Rules of Court provide, thus:

SEC. 6. Service in person on defendant. – Whenever practicable, the summons shall be served by handing a copy thereof to the defendant in person, or, if he refuses to receive and sign for it, by tendering it to him.

SEC. 7. Substituted service. – If, for justifiable causes, the defendant cannot be served within a reasonable time as provided in the preceding section, service may be effected (a) by leaving copies of the summons at the defendant's residence with some person of suitable age and discretion then residing therein, or (b) by leaving the copies of defendant's office of regular place of business with some competent person in charge thereof.

Xxx

SEC. 14. Service upon defendant whose identity or whereabouts are unknown. – In any action where the defendant is designated as an unknown owner, or the like, or whenever his whereabouts are unknown and cannot be ascertained by diligent inquiry, service may, by leave of court, be effected upon him by publication in a newspaper of general circulation and in such places and for such times as the court may order.

Simply put, personal service of summons is the preferred mode. The rules on the service of summons other than by personal service may be used only as prescribed and only in the circumstances authorized by statute. Thus, the impossibility of prompt personal service must be shown by stating that efforts have been made to find the defendant personally and that such efforts have failed before substituted service may be availed.7 Furthermore, these rules must be followed strictly, faithfully and fully as they are extraordinary in character and considered in derogation of the usual method of service.[8]

In Manotoc vs. Court of Appeals,[9] the Supreme Court enumerated and explained the requirements to effect a valid service of summons other than by personal service, viz:

(1)Impossibility of Prompt Personal Service

Xxx

Sheriffs are asked to discharge their duties on the service of summons with due care, utmost diligence, and reasonable promptness and speed so as not to prejudice the expeditious dispensation of justice. Thus, they are enjoined to try their best efforts to accomplish personal service on defendant. On the other hand, since the defendant is expected to try to avoid and evade service of summons, the sheriff must be resourceful, persevering, canny, and diligent in serving the process on the defendant. For substituted service of summons to be available, there must be several attempts by the sheriff to personally serve the summons within a reasonable period of one month which eventually resulted in failure to prove impossibility of prompt service. "Several attempts" means at least three (3) tries, preferably on at least two different dates. In addition, the sheriff must cite why such efforts were unsuccessful. It is only then that impossibility of service can be confirmed or accepted.

(2) Specific Details in the Return

The sheriff must described in the Return of Summons the facts and circumstances surrounding the attempted personal service. The efforts made to find the defendant and the reasons behind the failure must be clearly narrated in detail in the Return. The date and time of the attempts on personal service, the inquiries made to locate the defendant, the name/s of the occupants of the alleged residence or house of defendant and all other acts done, though futile, to serve summons on defendant must be specified in the Return to justify substituted service. The form on Sheriffs Return of Summons on Substituted Service prescribed in the Handbook for Sheriffs published by the Philippine Judicial Academy requires a narration of the efforts made to find the defendant personally and the fact of failure Supreme Court Administrative Circular No. 5 dated November 9, 1989 requires that "impossibility of prompt service should be shown by stating the efforts made to find the defendant personally and the failure of such efforts," which should be made in the proof of service.

In Express Padala (Italia) S.P.A., now BDO Remittance (Italia) S.P.A., now BDO Remittance (Italia) S.P.A. vs. Helen M. Ocampo, [10] the sheriff resorted to substituted service upon Ocampo through her uncle, who was the caretaker of Ocampo's old family residence in Tanauan, Batangas. The Supreme Court held that substituted service was improperly resorted to. It found that since Ocampo's "whereabouts are unknown and cannot be ascertained by diligent inquiry, service may be effected only by publication in a newspaper of general circulation."[11]

Here, the Branch Sheriff filed his Sheriff's Return of Summons[12] on February 17, 2021, stating that Spouses Saturnino are no longer residing at Aspen Tower, Alabang, Muntinlupa City for almost fifteen (15) years. Also, the Chief Security Officer Lenard Brosas revealed that Spouses Saturnino were merely tenants of the said building. Further, Sheriff Alquero emphasized that the other defendant Marasigan was no longer residing at #58 Saint John Street, Maricaban, Pasay City. Upon inquiry, certain Leonie Tagawa who is a resident thereof informed Sheriff Alquero that defendant Marasigan was last seen there in 2011.

Clearly, there was diligent effort exerted to find the defendants and properly serve them the summons. Howerver, despite such diligent efforts, personal service of summons or substituted service could not be had. Hence, it has become now impossible to locate the residence of the defendants and their whereabouts considering that they are no longer residents at their respective addresses. Thus, the circumstances surrounding the case justifies the movant's motion.

It must be emphasized that the service of summons is a vital and indispensable ingredient of a defendant's constitutional right to due process.[13]

WHEREFORE, the Motion for Leave to Serve Summons by Publication is hereby GRANTED. Accordingly, let summons by publication be served to the defendants SPOUSES SATURNINO M. BALADJAY and ROSARIO A. BALADJAY, and OLIVIA MARASIGAN at the expense of the plaintiff.

Accordingly, let the copy of the Complaint, Summons dated January 5, 2021, and this Amended Order dated May 17, 2021 be published once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation pursuant to Section 1614, Rule of the 2019 Amended Rules of Court.

SO ORDERED.
In Chambers, Quezon City, Philippines, May 17, 2021.

(Sgd.) **JURIS S. DILINILA-CALLANTA**
Presiding Judge

Copy furnished:
ATTY. GLENNA A. REMIGIO, JR.,
Counsel for the Plaintiff
Unit 8, Ground Floor, Prince David Condominium
305 Katipunan Avenue, Loyola Heights, Quezon City
LETICIA P. LIGON
Plaintiff
846 Harvard St., Wack Wack Subdivision
Mandaluyong City
RTC-Office of the Clerk of Court
Quezon City

JSDC
judgy

Republic of the Philippines
National Capital Judicial Region
Regional Trial Court
Branch 85, Quezon City

LETICIA P. LIGON,
Plaintiff,

-versus-

CASE NO. R-QZN-20-06216-CV
For: Revival of Judgment

SPOUSES SATURNINO M. BALADJAY and ROSARIO A. BALADJAY and OLIVIA MARASIGAN
Defendants.
x--x

SUMMONS

TO :
Olivia Marasigan
No. 58 St. John St.
Maricaban, Pasay City

TO :
Saturnino M. Baladjay
23/F Aspen Tower, Alabang
Muntinlupa City

GREETINGS:
Pursuant to A.M. No. 19-10-20-SC, you are hereby required, within thirty (30) days after service of this summons upon you, to file with this Court and serve on the petitioner your answer to the Complaint, copy of which is attached herewith, together with the annexes. You are reminded of the provision in the IBP-OCA Memorandum on Policy Guidelines, dated March 12, 2002, to observe restraint in filing a motion to dismiss and instead allege the grounds thereof as defenses in the Answer. If you fail to answer within the time fixed, the petitioner will take judgment by default and may be granted the relief applied for in the complaint.

WITNESS, the HON. JURIS S. DILINILA-CALLANTA, Presiding Judge of this Court, this 5th day of January 2021.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. SYLVIA PATRICIA DC SARMIENTO-CASTILLO**
Branch Clerk of Court

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
Quezon City
Branch 85

LETICIA P. LIGON,
Plaintiff,

vs.

Civil Case No. R-QZN-20-06216-CV
For: REVIVAL OF JUDGMENT

SPOUSES SATURNINO M. BALADJAY and ROSARIO A. BALADJAY, and OLIVIA MARASIGAN,
Defendants.
x---x

COMPLAINT

COMES NOW Plaintiff LETICIA P. LIGON, by counsel and to this Honorable Court, respectfully states that:

1.Plaintiff LETICIA P. LIGON is of legal age, Filipino, and a resident of 846 Harvard St., Wack Wack Subd., Mandaluyong City. She may be served with Orders, Notices and other processes of this Honorable Court through the office address of the undersigned counsel indicated below.

2.Defendants SPOUSES SATURNINO M. BALADJAY and ROSARIO A. BALADJAY, of legal age, Filipino, with last known address at 23/F Aspen Tower, Alabang, Muntinlupa City, and OLIVIA MARASIGAN of legal age, Filipino, with last known address at No. 58 St. John St., Maricaban, Pasay City. They may be served with Summons, Orders, Notices, and other processes of this Honorable Court through their respective addresses. They are impleaded in this action being named defendants in the judgment sought to be revived.

3.In 2002, Complainant filed an action for Collection of Sum of Money against Spouses Saturnino M. Baladjay and Rosario Baladjay (referred herein as Sps. Baladjay) / Olivia Marasigan, before the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City, which was raffled to Branch 101, docketed as Civil Case No. Q-02-48145. This case is referred herein as *"Quezon City Case".*

4.During the proceedings of the Quezon City Case, the Plaintiff secured an Amended Writ of Preliminary Attachment (referred herein as WPA) dated November 26, 2002 commanding the Branch Sheriff to attach the properties of the Defendants.

5.The aforementioned WPA was supposed to be annotated on TCT No. 8502, covering a parcel of land (referred herein as Subject Property) with an area of 2,309 square meters situated in Alabang, Muntinlupa under the name of Defendant Rosario Baladjay, married to Saturnino Baladjay. However, Plaintiff discovered that the subject Property was transferred to Polished Arrow Holdings Inc., (referred herein as Polished Arrow) which resulted in the cancellation of TCT No. 8502 and issuance of a new one, TCT No. 9273 under the name of Polished Arrow.

6.Contending that the transfer to Polished Arrow was made in fraud of creditors, Plaintiff was able to annotate the WPA on TCT No. 9273 under Entry No. 32667 and inscribed on December 3, 2002. Copy of the title is attached as ANNEX A, and the annotation of the said WPA is bracketed and marked as ANNEX A-1.

7.On March 26, 2008, Plaintiff obtained a favorable Decision, the dispositive portion of which states:

"WHEREFORE, the Court finds for the plaintiff and hereby orders the defendants Spouses Saturnino M. Baladjay and Rosario A. Baladjay to pay Leticia Pasion Ligon the following:

1.The sum of P3,000,000.00 representing the face value of the dishonored / unpaid Allied Bank Check No. AAA0003485001;
2.The sum equivalent to 12% per annum as interest based on no. 1 above computed from October 24, 2002 until the principal is fully paid for;
3.The sum equivalent to 6% per annum as damages based on no. 1 above computed from November 4, 2002 until the principal has been fully paid for;
4.The sum of P30,000.00 as and by way of attorney's fees;
5.The costs of the suit

The complaint with respect to the defendant Olivia Marasigan is hereby DISMISSED.

SO ORDERED."

This Decision is referred herein as *"Quezon City Decision",* a copy of this Decision is attached as ANNEX B.

8.The Decision became final and executory on September 25, 2008 by virtue of an Entry of Final Judgment issued by the Branch Clerk of Court on September 26, 2008, a copy of which is attached as ANNEX C.

9.Then in the process of implementing the Quezon City Decision, the Plaintiff found for the first time that her victory in the Quezon City Case has become inutile, futile, useless and worthless as said Decision could no longer be implemented for the reason that the annotation of the WPA had been deleted from TCT No. 9273 when the Subject Property was sold on September 9, 2005 by way of public auction to the highest bidder, a certain Leonardo J. Ting (referred herein as Ting), where TCT No. 9273 was cancelled and a new one issued TCT No. 19756 under the name of Ting. Copy of this new title is attached as ANNEX D.

10.The sudden deletion of Plaintiff's annotation clearly prevented her to execute the favorable final and executory judgment by levy on execution. It was at this moment when Plaintiff's ordeal to restore the WPA annotation started and took her several years in litigation to finally restore the same on DECEMBER 13, 2019.

11.The long period of time was due to Plaintiff resorting to the Court of Appeals, Supreme Court, and finally with the pertinent Court which ordered the deletion of the WPA annotation. In resorting to the Supreme Court, it ruled partially in favor of the Plaintiff, the dispositive portion of which is as follows:

"WHERFORE, the petition is PARTIALLY GRANTED. The Decision dated October 30, 2009 of the Court of Appeals in CA-G.R. SP No. 106175 is REVERSED and SET ASIDE. Accordingly, the Assailed Orders subject of this case are hereby declared NULL and VOID only insofar as they relate to the issuance of Transfer Certificate of Title No. 19756 in the name of respondent Leonardo J. Ting free from any liens and encumbrances. The Register of Deeds of Muntinlupa City is DIRECTED to carry over and annotate on TCT No. 31001 in the name of respondent Benito G. Techico the original attachment lien of petitioner Leticia P. Ligon as described in this Decision. The indirect contempt charges are, however, DISMISSED." (Emphasis supplied)

12.To ensure that factual circumstances of the case are accurate, Plaintiff respectfully adopts the above-stated Supreme Court Decision (referred herein as SC Decision) docketed as *G.R. No. 190028 entitled LETICIA P. LIGON, Petitioner, vs. THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT, BRANCH 56 AT MAKATI CITY AND ITS PRESIDING JUDGE, JUDGE REYNALDO M. LAIGO, SHERIFF IV LUCITO V. ALEJO, ATTY. SILVERIO GARING, MR. LEONARDO J. TING, AND MR. BENITO G. TECHICO, Respondents,* promulgated on February 26, 2014, and attained finality on August 8, 2014. Copies of the Decision and Entry of Judgment are attached hereto as ANNEXES E and F.

13.The pertinent factual circumstances in the aforementioned SC Decision are as follows:

"The Facts

On November 20, 2002, petitioner Leticia P. Ligon (Ligon) filed an amended complaint before the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City, Branch 101 (Quezon City RTC) for collection of sum of money and damages, rescission of contract, and nullification of title with prayer for the issuance of a writ of preliminary attachment, docketed as Civil Case No. Q-10-48145 (Quezon City Case), against Sps. Baladjay, a certain Olivia Marasigan (Marasigan), Polished Arrow Holdings, Inc. (Polished Arrow), and its incorporators, namely, Spouses Julius Gonzalo and charaine Doreece Anne Fuentabella (Sps. Fuentabella), Ma. Linda Mendoza (Mendoza), Barbara C. Clavo (Clavo), Bayani E. Arit, Jr. (Arit, Jr.), and Peter M. Kairuz (Kairuz), as well as the latter's spouses (individual defendants).

In her complaint, Ligon alleged, inter alia, that Rosario Baladjay (Rosario) enticed her to extend a short-term loan in the amount of P3,000,000.00, payable in a month's time and secured by an Allied Bank post-dated check for the same amount. Ligon likewise claimed that Rosario, as further enticement for the loan extension, represented that she and her husband Saturnino were in the process of selling their property in Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City (subject property), covered by a clean title, i.e., TCT No. 8502 in the name of Rosario Baladjay, married to Saturnino Baladjay, and that the proceeds of the said sale could easily pay-off the loan. Unfortunately, the Allied Bank check was dishonored upon presentment and, despite assurances to replace it with cash, Rosario failed to do so. Moreover, Ligon discovered that the subject property had already been transferred to Polished Arrow, alleged to be a dummy corporation of Sps. Baladjay and the individual defendants (defendants). As a result, TCT No. 8502 was cancelled and replaced on October 11, 2002 by TCT No. 9273 in the name of Polished Arrow. Thus, Ligon prayed that all defendants be held solidarily liable to pay her the amount of P3,000,000.00, with interest due, as well as P1,000,000.00 as attorney's fees and another P1,000,000.00 by way of moral and exemplary damages. Asserting that the transfer of the subject property to Polished Arrow was made in fraud of Sps. Baladjay's creditors, Ligon also prayed that the said transfer be nullified, and that a writ of preliminary attachment be issued in the interim against defendants' assets, including the subject property. Subsequently, an Amended Writ of Preliminary Attachment was issued on November 26, 2002, and annotated on the dorsal portion of TCT No. 9273 on December 3, 2002 (December 3, 2002 attachment annotation).

On February 18, 2003, a similar complaint for collection of sum of money, damages, and cancellation of title with prayer for issuance of a writ of preliminary attachment was lodged before the Makati City RTC, docketed as Civil Case No. 03-186 (Makati City Case), by Spouses Cecilia and Gil Vicente (Sps. Vicente) against Sps. Baladjay, Polished Arrow, and other corporations. In that case, it was established that Sps. Baladjay solicited millions of pesos in investment from Sps. Vicente using conduit companies that were controlled by Rosario, as President and Chairperson. During the proceedings therein, a writ of preliminary attachment also against the subject property was issued and annotated on the dorsal portion of TCT No. 9273 on March 12, 2003. Thereafter, but before the Quezon City Case was concluded, the Makati City RTC rendered a Decision dated December 9, 2004 (December 9, 2004 Decision), rescinding the transfer of the subject property from Sps. Baladjay to Polished Arrow upon a finding that the same was made in fraud of creditors. Consequently, the Makati City RTC directed the Register of Deeds of Muntinlupa City to: (a) cancel TCT No. 9273 in the name of Polished Arrow; and (b) restore TCT No. 8502 "in its previous condition" in the name of Rosario Baladjay, married to Saturnino Baladjay.

Meanwhile, in the pending Quezon City Case, Polished Arrow and the individual defendants (with the exception of Marasigan) were successively dropped as party-defendants, after it was established that they, by themselves directly or through other persons, had no more ownership, interest, title, or claim over the subject property. The parties stipulated on the existence of the December 9, 2004 Decision of the Makati City RTC, and the fact that the same was no longer questioned by defendants Sps. Fuentebella, Arit, Jr., and Polished Arrow were made conditions for their dropping as party-defendants in the case. In view of the foregoing, the Quezon City Case proceeded only against Sps. Baladjay and Marasigan and, after due proceedings, the Quezon City RTC rendered a Decision dated March 26, 2008 (March 26, 2008 Decision), directing Sps. Baladjay to pay Ligon the amount of P3,000,000.00 with interest, as well as attorney's fees and costs of suit.

On September 25, 2008, the March 26, 2008 Decision of the Quezon City RTC became final and executory. However, when Ligon sought its execution, she discovered that the December 3, 2002 attachment annotation had been deleted from TCT No. 9273 when the subject property was sold by way of public auction on September 9, 2005 to the highest bidder, respondent Ting, for the amount of P9,000, 000. 00 during the execution proceedings in the Makati City Case, as evidenced by the Officer's Final Deed of Sale dated October 27, 2006 (Officer's Final Deed of Sale) issued by Sheriff Alejo. In this regard, Ligon learned that the Makati City RTC had issued its first assailed Order dated February 9, 2007 (First Assailed Order), directing Atty. Garing, as the Register of Deeds of Muntinlupa City, to: (a) register the Officer's Final Deed of Sale on the official Record Book of the Register of Deeds of Muntinlupa City; and (b) cancel TCT No. 8502 in the name of Sps. Baladjay and issue a new title in the name of Ting, free from any liens and encumbrances.

Atty. Garing manifested before the Makati City RTC that it submitted the matter en consulta to the Land Registration Authority (LRA) as he was uncertain whether the annotations on TCT No. 9273 should be carried over to TCT No. 8502. In response to the manifestation, the Makati City RTC issued its second assailed Order dated March 20, 2007 (Second Assailed Order), directing Atty. Garing to comply with the First Assailed Order under pain of contempt. It explained that it could not allow the LRA to carry over all annotations previously annotated on TCT No. 9273 in the name of Polished Arrow as said course of action would run counter to its December 9, 2004 Decision which specifically ordered the cancellation of said TCT and the restoration of TCT No. 8502 in its previous condition. It further clarified that:

[I]f there were liens or encumbrances annotated on TCT No. 8502 in the name of Rosario Baladjay when the same was cancelled and TCT No. 9273 was issued by the Register of Deeds of Muntinlupa City in favor of Polished Arrow Holdings, Inc. based on the Deed of Absolute Sale executed between the former and the latter, only such liens or encumbrances will have to be carried over to the new Transfer Certificate of Title that he (Atty. Garing) is mandated to immediately issue in favor of Leonardo J. Ting even as the Order of the Court dated February 9, 2007 decreed that a new TCT be issued in the name of Mr. Leonardo J. Ting, free from any encumbrance. On the other hand, if TCT No. 8502 in the name of Rosario Baladjay was free from any liens or encumbrances when the same was cancelled and TCT No. 9273 was issued by the Register of Deeds of Muntinlupa City in favor of Polished Arrow Holdings, Inc. by virtue of that Deed of Absolute Sale executed between Rosario Baladjay and Polished Arrow Holdings, Inc., it necessarily follows that the new Transfer of Certificate of Title that the said Registrar of Deeds is duty bound to issue immediately in favor of Leonardo Ting will also be freed from any liens and encumbrances, as simple as that. (Emphases and underscoring supplied)

Based on the foregoing, it pronounced that it was Atty. Garing's ministerial duty "to promptly cancel TCT No. 8502/T-44 in the name of defendant-spouses Baladjay and to issue a new Transfer Certificate of Title in the name of the highest bidder, Leonardo J. Ting."

Separately, Ting filed a motion before the Makati City RTC on account of Atty. Garing's letter dated March 26, 2006 requiring him to comply with certain documentary requirements and to pay the appropriate capital gains,documentary stamp and transfer taxes before a new title could be issued in his name. In its third assailed Order dated April 25, 2007 (Third Assailed Order), the Makati City RTC directed Ting to pay the aforesaid taxes and ordered Atty. Garing to immediately cancel TCT No. 8502 and issue a new title in the former's name.

On June 7, 2007, Atty. Garing issued TCT No.1 9756 in the name of Ting, free from any liens and encumbrances. Later, Ting sold the subject property to respondent Benito G. Techico (Techico), resulting in the cancellation of TCT No. 19756 and the issuance of TCT No. 31001 in Techico 's name.

In view of the preceding circumstances, Ligon filed, inter alia, a certiorari petition against respondent Presiding Judge Reynaldo Laigo (Judge Laigo), Sheriff Alejo, Atty.Garing, Ting, and Techico (respondents), alleging, among others, that the Makati City RTC committed grave abuse of discretion in issuing the Assailed Orders. In this relation, she prayed that the said orders be declared null and void for having been issued in violation of her right to due process, and resulting in (a) the deletion of the December 3, 2002 attachment annotation on TCT No. 9273 which evidences her prior attachment lien over the subject property, and (b) the issuance of new titles in the names of Ting and Techico.

Consolidated with Ligon's certiorari petition is a complaint for indirect contempt against respondents, whereby it was alleged that the latter unlawfully interfered with the court processes of the Quezon City RTC, particularly by deleting the December 3, 2002 attachment annotation on TCT No.9273 which thereby prevented the execution of the Quezon City RTC's March 26, 2008 Decision.

The CA Ruling

In a Decision dated October 30, 2009, the CA dismissed Ligon's certiorari petition, finding that the Makati City RTC did not gravely abuse its discretion in issuing the Assailed Orders, adding further that the same was tantamount to a collateral attack against the titles of both Ting and Techico, which is prohibited under Section 48 of Presidential Decree No. (PD) 1529. Likewise, it dismissed the indirect contempt charge for lack of sufficient basis, emphasizing that the Assailed Orders were issued prior to the Quezon City RTC's Decision, meaning that the said issuances could not have been issued in disregard of the latter decision.

Aggrieved, Ligon filed the present petition."

14. In resolving the Petition of Plaintiff, the Supreme Court ruled as follows:

"A. Issuance of the Assailed Orders vis-a-vis Grave Abuse of Discretion.

Attachment is defined as a provisional remedy by which the property of an adverse party is taken into legal custody, either at the commencement of an action or at any time thereafter, as a security for the satisfaction of any judgment that may be recovered by the plaintiff or any proper party. Case law instructs that an attachment is a proceeding in rem, and, hence, is against the particular property, enforceable against the whole world. Accordingly, the attaching creditor acquires a specific lien on the attached property which nothing can subsequently destroy except the very dissolution of the attachment or levy itself. Such a proceeding, in effect, means that the property attached is an indebted thing and a virtual condemnation of it to pay the owner's debt. The lien continues until the debt is paid, or sale is had under execution issued on the judgment, or until the judgment is satisfied, or the attachment discharged or vacated in some manner provided by law. Thus, a prior registration of an attachment lien creates a preference, such that when an attachment has been duly levied upon a property, a purchaser thereof subsequent to the attachment takes the property subject to the said attachment. As provided under PD 1529, said registration operates as a form of constructive notice to all persons.

Applying these principles to this case, the Court finds that the CA erred in holding that the RTC did not gravely abuse its discretion in issuing the Assailed Orders as these issuances essentially disregarded, inter alia, Ligon's prior attachment lien over the subject property patently anathema to the nature of attachment proceedings which is well-established in law and jurisprudence. In this case, Ligon, in order to secure the satisfaction of a favorable judgment in the Quezon City Case, applied for and was eventually able to secure a writ of preliminary attachment over the subject property on November 25, 2002, which was later annotated on the dorsal portion of TCT No. 9273 in the name of Polished Arrow on December 3, 2002. Notwithstanding the subsequent cancellation of TCT No. 9273 due to the Makati City RTC's December 9, 2004 Decision rescinding the transfer of the subject property from Sps. Baladjay to Polished Arrow upon a finding that the same was made in fraud of creditors, Ligon's attachment lien over the subject property continued to subsist since the attachment she had earlier secured binds the property itself, and, hence, continues until the judgment debt of Sps. Baladjay to Ligon as adjudged in the Quezon City Case is satisfied, or the attachment discharged or vacated in some manner provided by law.

The grave abuse of discretion of the Makati City RTC lies with its directive to issue a new certificate of title in the name of Ting (i.e., TCT No. 19756), free from any liens and encumbrances. This course of action clearly negates the efficacy of Ligon's attachment lien and, also, defies the legal characterization of attachment proceedings. It bears noting that Ligon's claim, secured by the aforesaid attachment, is against Sps. Baladjay whose ownership over the subject property had been effectively restored in view of the RTC's rescission of the property's previous sale to Polished Arrow. Thus, Sps. Ligon's attachment lien against Sps. Baladjay as well as their successors-in-interest should have been preserved, and the annotation thereof carried over to any subsequent certificate of title, the most recent of which as it appears on record is TCT No. 31001 in the name of Techico, without prejudice to the latter's right to protect his own ownership interest over the subject property." (Emphasis supplied)

15. As mentioned above, the SC Decision became final and executory on August 8, 2014 evidenced by the Entry of Judgment, attached herein as ANNEX F.

16. Pursuant to the foregoing SC Decision, it was clear that the deleted WPA Annotation should have been "preserved and carried over" on TCT No. 31001.

17. Hence, on MARCH 12, 2015, the Plaintiff filed a Motion for Execution before the Court of Appeals. However, a month later or on April 24, 2015, Plaintiff, through counsel, received a Letter from the Clerk of Court of the Court of Appeals dated April 8, 2015 acknowledging receipt of the said Motion for Execution, and informing Plaintiffs counsel that the records of the case were already remanded to Regional Trial Court, Branch 56, of Makati City (RTC Makati), with a directive that Plaintiff may re-file the Motion for Execution to the court of origin which has the custody of the records of the case. Attached in the said Letter is the Transmittal dated February 24, 2015. Copies of these Letter and Transmittal are attached as ANNEXES G and G-1, respectively.

18. Pursuant to the foregoing Letter, on APRIL 30, 2015, the Plaintiff filed a Motion for Execution before the RTC Makati, copy of which is attached as ANNEX H.

19. On NOVEMBER 7, 2017, RTC Makati issued an Order for the issuance of a Writ of Execution, copy of which is attached as ANNEX I.

20. On AUGUST 15, 2018, annotation was made on TCT No. 31001 under Entry No. 2018004781 and entered on August 15, 2018. For reference, attached herein is TCT No. 31001, marked as ANNEX J, where the said annotation was made particularly on Page 5 thereof, bracketed and marked as ANNEX J-1.

21 . However, a perusal of the foregoing annotation showed that the same was not in accordance with the SC Decision. This compelled Plaintiff to file, on NOVEMBER 9, 2018, an Urgent Motion to Correct Annotation before RTC Makati. Copy of this Motion is attached as ANNEX K.

22. On DECEMBER 18, 2019, Plaintiff through counsel, received an Order from RTC Makati dated November 27, 2019, the dispositive portion of which states:

"Accordingly, as prayed for, the Register of Deeds of Muntinlupa City is hereby directed to CANCEL Entry No. 2018004781 on TCT No. 31001; and to TRANSFER Entry No. 32667. 9273 from (cancelled) TCT No. 9273 to TCT No. 31001.

SO ORDERED. " (Emphasis supplied)

Copy of this Order dated November 27, 2019 is attached as ANNEX L.

23. Pursuant to the foregoing, the deleted WPA Annotation on TCT No. 9273 was finally restored, carried over, and annotated on TCT No. 31001 under Entry No. 2019007253 and entered on December 13, 2019, in accordance with the SC Decision, which is bracketed and marked as ANNEX J-2.

24. While it may be true that under Section 6 of Rule 39 of the Revised Rules of Court provides execution of final and executor judgment or order be made by motion within five (5) years from date of entry, or by independent action within ten (10) years in relation to Articles 1144(3) and 1152 of the Civil Code, the present case, by reason of EQUITY and peculiarities of the case, calls for an exception of the said provisions considering that Plaintiff was clearly prevented from executing the QC Decision by levy on execution against the property without any fault on her part. The delay in executing the QC Decision should not prejudice Plaintiff especially she took the necessary legal steps and remedies to enable her to execute said Decision. Unfortunately for her, the legal remedies Plaintiff availed of took several years, without any delay or fault on her part, to finally restore the deleted WPA Annotation. It must be remembered that the prescription of 10 years is to prevent judgment obligors from sleeping on their rights, which herein Plaintiff was never guilty of. Hence, the filing of this Complaint.

25. There are several cases where the Supreme Court applied the principle of equity as an exception to the 5-year and 10-year prescriptive period in execution of judgments, to wit:

a. *Lancita vs. Magbanua. G.R. No. L-15467. January 31. 1963.*

"There has been no indication that respondents herein had ever slept on their rights to have the judgment executed by mere motions, within the reglementary period. The statute of limitations has not been devised against those who wish to act but cannot do so, for causes beyond their control."

b. *Gonzales vs. CA, G.R. No. 62556, August 13, 1992.*

"In the case before Us, We agree with the trial court that the time during which the records of Civil Case No. 0-5550 were lost or misplaced through no fault of herein petitioner shall be deducted or subtracted from the period for execution of judgment by motion, and in its holding that the motion for execution was filed within the period when the final and executory decision of the Court of Appeals may be enforced by motion. It is thus clear that petitioner had never slept on his rights as the delay in the execution was beyond his control. Verily then, under the circumstances and in the interest of equity and justice, the writ of execution issued by the lower court on August 27, 1979, should be deemed proper and timely. "

c. *Camacho vs. CAr G.R. No. 118339 March 19, 1998.*

"The purpose of the law in prescribing time limitations for enforcing judgments or actions is to prevent obligors from sleeping on their rights. Far from sleeping on their rights, respondents persistently pursued their rights of action. It is revolting to the conscience to allow petitioner to further avert the satisfaction of her obligation because of sheer literal adherence to technicality. After all, the Rules of Court mandates that a liberal construction of the Rules be adopted in order to promote their object and to assist the parties in obtaining just, speedy and inexpensive determination of every action and proceeding. This rule of construction is especially useful in the present case where adherence to the letter of the law would result in absurdityand manifest injustice. "

d. *Villeza vs. German Management and Services, Inc., G.R. No. 182937, August 8, 2010.*

"The Court has pronounced in a plethora of cases that it is revolting to the conscience to allow someone to further avert the satisfaction of an obligation because of sheer literal adherence to technicality; that although strict compliance with the rules of procedure is desired, liberal interpretation is warranted in cases where a strict enforcement of the rules will not serve the ends of justice; and that it is a better rule that courts, under the principle of equity, will not be guided or bound strictly by the statute of limitations or the doctrine of laches when to do so, manifest wrong or injustice would result. These cases, though, remain exceptions to the general rule. The purpose of the law in prescribing time limitations for enforcing judgment by action is precisely to prevent the winning parties from sleeping on their rights. This Court cannot just set aside the statute of limitations into oblivion every time someone cries for equity and justice. Indeed, "if eternal vigilance is the price of safety, one cannot sleep on one's right for more than a 10th of a century and expect it to be preserved in pristine purity. ""

e. *Rubio vs. Alabata, G.R. No. 203947, February 26, 2014.*

"Due to the peculiarities of this case, the Court, in the exercise of its equity jurisdiction, relaxes the rules and decides to allow the action for the revival of judgment filed by petitioners. The Court believes that it is its bounden duty to exact justice in every way possible and exercise its soundest discretion to prevent a wrong. Although strict compliance with the rules of procedure is desired, liberal interpretation is warranted in cases where a strict enforcement of the rules will not serve the ends of justice; and that it is a better rule that courts, under the principle of equity, will not be guided or bound strictly by the statute of limitations or the doctrine of laches when to do so, manifest wrong or injustice would result. "

f. *Piedad vs. Bobilles, G.R. No. 208614, November 7, 2017*

"To reiterate, jurisprudence is consistent that when the delay in filing a motion or action for execution could not be attributed to the prevailing party, a liberal interpretation of the rules of procedure should be resorted to where a literal and strict adherence will most likely result in miscarriage of justice."

26. Consistent with the principles laid down by the Supreme Court, the present case is no different with the afore-cited cases. Upon finality of the QC Decision, she let no time pass in executing the said Decision but because of the sudden deletion of her WPA annotation, without her knowledge, execution became legally impossible. It was only after several years of asserting her right, even spending considerable amount of money, where she can finally be able to reap the fruits of her long and hard-fought legal battle. To deny her this legally established right would clearly result in miscarriage of justice.

27. For purposes of jurisdiction and venue, the filing of the instant case is laid before the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City pursuant to the case of *Heirs of Numeriano Miranda Sr., et. al. vs. Miranda, G.R. No. 179638, July 8,2013,* where the Supreme Court held:

"RTC has jurisdiction over the Petition for Revival of Judgment

As to whether the RTC has jurisdiction, we rule in the affirmative. An action for revival of judgment may be filed either "in the same court where said judgment was rendered or in the place where the plaintiff or defendant resides, or in any other place designated by the statutes which treat of the venue of actions in general. " In this case, respondent filed the Petition for Revival of Judgment in the same court which rendered the Decision dated August 30, 1999." (Emphasis supplied)

COMPLIANCE TO SECTION 6 OF RULE 7
(A.M. No. 19-10-20-SC, October 15, 2019)

28. The following are the witnesses the Plaintiff intends to present including the summary of their intended testimonies:

a. Plaintiff Leticia P. Ligon. The following is the summary of her intended testimony:

i. She is the Plaintiff in the present case.
II. She obtained a final and executory judgment in Civil Case No. Q-02-48145 in the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City, where she was the Plaintiff.
III. She was prevented from executing the judgment by levy on execution because the Writ of Preliminary Attachment (WPA) annotated in the title of the subject property was suddenly deleted without her knowledge.
IV. She had to file cases before the Regional Trial Court of Makati, Court of Appeals, and Supreme Court to restore the deleted WPA Annotation.
v. The delay in the execution was beyond her control without any fault on her part.
vi. She will also prove other material allegations in this Complaint.

The Judicial Affidavit of Plaintiff Leticia P. Ligon is attached as ANNEX M.

b. Respective court and government officers who will identify and testify on the documentary evidence of the Plaintiff. Considering that they are public officers, the Plaintiff is constrained to request issuance of Subpoena Duces Tecum and Ad Testificandum at the proper time, and for such purpose, is reserving to file their respective Judicial Affidavits, if warranted.

PRAYER

WHEREFORE, premises considered, Plaintiff respectfully pray of this Honorable Court that, after due hearing, a Decision be rendered reviving the Decision of the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City dated March 26, 2008.

Further and other reliefs as may deemed just and equitable are likewise prayed for.

Quezon City, August 24,2020.

(Sgd.) ATTY. GLENN A. REMIGIO JR.
Counsel for Plaintiff
LETICIA P. LIGON

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MCLE Compliance No. VI - 0026753 05.24.19

VERIFICATION AND CERTIFICATIONAGAINST FORUM SHOPPING

I, LETICIA P. LIGON, of legal age, Filipino and presently residing at 846 Harvard St., WackWack Subd., Mandaluyong City, after having been duly sworn to in accordance with law, depose and say:

1. That I have caused the preparation and filing of the foregoing pleading.
2. That I have read the contents thereof and the same are true of my personal knowledge and based on authentic records.
3. That the foregoing pleading is not filed to harass, cause unnecessary delay, or needlessly increase the cost of litigation.
4. That the factual allegations therein have evidentiary support or, will likewise have evidentiary support after reasonable opportunity for discovery.
5. That I have not theretofore commenced any action or filed any claim involving the same issues in any court, tribunal or quasi-judicial agency and, to the best of his or her knowledge, no such other action or claim is pending therein. If there is such other pending action or claim, a complete statement of the
present status thereof, and if he or she should thereafter learn that the same or similar action or claim has been filed or is pending, I shall report that fact within five (5) calendar days therefrom to the court wherein my aforesaid complaintor initiatory pleading has been filed.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this AUG 24, 2020 at Quezon City, Philippines.

(Sgd.) LETICIA P. LIGON
Affiant

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this AUG 24, 2020 at Quezon City, Philippines, by LETICIA P. LIGON whom I identified through competent evidence of identity bearing her photograph and Signature.

ATTY. GLENN A. REMIGIO JR.
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Sanya Lopez leads FHM Philippines' sizzling comeback



Very Wang
Nickie Wang



Sanya Lopez embraces the cover opportunity as a platform for self-confidence, body acceptance and a broader view of what makes a woman attractive



From left: Faye Lorenzo, Vanessa Peña, Liezel Lopez, Analyn Barro and Arra San Agustin join the roster of personalities featured as the publication returns across print, digital and live platforms

EIGHT years after its last issue, *FHM Philippines* is making a much-anticipated comeback, bringing back the celebrity glamour that made it a household name and reviving one of its most talked-about traditions: the 100 Sexiest Women list.

Leading the magazine's return is actress and "Hot Maria Clara" singer **Sanya Lopez**, who made a sizzling entrance in a fiery red gown with a daring high slit and plunging neckline as she was unveiled as the cover girl of its November issue.

Landing the cover came as a surprise for Lopez but she welcomed the opportunity to represent a broader definition of beauty and confidence.

"I was surprised. I hope people see that being sexy is something that goes beyond the physical. I want them to see women empowerment in me. Loving yourself, accepting yourself and being confident in your own skin," the 30-year-old actress told the crowd during an interview.

Her unveiling was among the evening's biggest moments, particularly for longtime readers who have waited years for the return of a publication that once dominated conversations about beauty, celebrity, and popular culture.

But while its signature glamour remains, *FHM Philippines* is returning to a media landscape vastly different from the one it left behind. With PlayTime Entertainment backing the relaunch, the publication is being developed as a multiplatform entertainment property, combining print, digital content, video production, social media, and live events.

Among the biggest announcements for longtime followers is the return of the *FHM 100 Sexiest Women* list, an annual feature that helped establish the magazine's place in Philippine pop culture. Reimagined for a new generation, the list aims to celebrate beauty, confidence, influence and women's evolving roles in entertainment and society.

The comeback also opens opportunities for aspiring Filipinas hoping to enter the entertainment industry. Through public voting, audiences will have a say in selecting personalities featured in FHM's exclusive digital album, which will be available through the magazine's official social media platforms.

The November issue's digital album is scheduled for release the following day, while followers are invited to participate in the 4x4 Challenge through *FHM Philippines*' social media accounts.

The magazine is also expanding its content lineup with *FHM Afters: The Podcast*, an audio-visual series featuring candid conversations and previously untold stories from familiar personalities.

Beyond its online presence, FHM Nights will bring cover stars and other personalities to nightlife events and venue activations. Its luxury lifestyle arm, FHM World, will cater to high-end experiences, private gatherings, and fashion-oriented events.

Print will retain its place in the brand's new direction, with limited physical copies bearing the featured cover girl's autograph intended as collectibles.

Other women associated with the relaunch include **Faye Lorenzo, Vanessa Peña, Liezel Lopez, Analyn Barro,** and **Arra San Agustin,** personalities who have established their own followings as actresses and content creators.

PlayTime Entertainment president **Crisanto Roy Alcid** said the relaunch was designed to take the magazine's legacy into a new chapter of audience engagement.

"*FHM* is not coming back to repeat its past. Today's talents don't wait to be discovered, they build their own audiences. What we offer is the stage, the partners and the reach to take them further. That is the print we want to leave on this industry," he said.

PlayTime Entertainment spokesperson **Adela-Mae Marshall**, who delivered the welcome address, described *FHM* as an important part of the company's ambition to expand its presence in Philippine entertainment.

She said the goal was to build on the magazine's established identity and loyal following while introducing it to younger audiences through digital content, video production, social media, live events and strategic partnerships.

Marshall also pointed to opportunities for advertisers, agencies, and media organizations to work with the revived publication, combining FHM's brand recognition with PlayTime Entertainment's growing content production and distribution capabilities. **Images by Basilio Sepe**

The Bistro Group expands Makati presence with new dining outlet

By Angelica Villanueva



The new Pablo Ocampo Extension location combines all-day meals, coffee and quick treats for diners with different schedules and appetites

SOME days call for a hearty plate of food, while others need only a cup of coffee and something sweet. These different cravings reflect the varied ways people fit meals and snack breaks into their daily routines.

The Bistro Group brings these options together at the new Denny's and Randy's Donuts standalone location along Pablo Ocampo Extension in Makati, which opened on Oct. 22. The store combines Denny's American-style diner fare with Randy's selection of donuts and coffee, offering customers different ways to satisfy their appetites at one location.

"This was another milestone for The Bistro Group as we opened the doors to Denny's at Pablo Ocampo Makati. Bringing hearty meals, comfort classics, and genuine hospitality closer to the community is always exciting," said **Jean Paul Manuud**, president of The Bistro Group.

For those looking for a complete meal, Denny's offers its All Day Combo for P375. The set includes one starter, one entrée, and one drink, giving diners a meal option at a fixed price.

The combo caters to different dining occasions, from breakfast and lunch to dinner and late-night cravings. Denny's menu centers on American-style comfort food, making it an option for customers who prefer a more substantial meal.

Meanwhile, Randy's Donuts caters to those looking for a quick break or a smaller treat. Its Hearty Combo, priced at P90, includes one coffee and one Classic Rounds donut.

The pairing offers an option for customers who want coffee with something sweet, whether during a break from work, between errands, or while on the go.

Together, the two concepts cover different dining needs. Customers looking for a full meal have Denny's, while those stopping by for coffee and a donut have Randy's. The arrangement brings the two food offerings together without requiring customers to visit separate locations.

Manuud also thanked the local government for its support, acknowledging the City of Makati under Mayor **Nancy Binay** and Makati Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office officer-in-charge PBGen. **Rodelio Jocson** for their support of business growth and community development. He also congratulated the team behind the opening.

For customers who prefer to eat at home, Denny's and Randy's Donuts favorites are available through the Bistro Delivers app, which offers free 24/7 delivery, subject to applicable terms and service coverage.

With the two brands sharing one location, the new store brings together all-day dining, coffee, and donuts for customers with different appetites and schedules around the area.

South Border revisits OPM legacy in Jay Durias tribute concert

AFTER more than three decades of shaping Original Pilipino Music (OPM), **South Border** is paying tribute to the man behind many of its enduring hits.

Titled *Jay Durias Reimagined: A Musical Tribute by South Border*, the concert is set for Jan. 30, 2027, at 8:00 p.m. at the Newport Performing Arts Theater in Pasay City.

Presented by Dragon Arc Events Management, the show celebrates **Jay Durias**, the singer-songwriter, composer and arranger whose creative vision helped define the band's signature sound.

Since emerging in the early 1990s, South Border has carved out a distinct place in OPM with its blend of R&B, soul, jazz and pop. Durias' songwriting and arrangements produced hits such as "Rainbow," "Kahit Kailan," "Ikaw Nga," "Love of My Life," "Wherever You Are," "Once Again," "May Pag-ibig Pa Kaya?" and "Habang Atin ang Gabi."



Jay Durias brings familiar South Border compositions back to the stage with new arrangements and stories behind songs that have endured across generations

With their soulful melodies and intricate arrangements, these songs have become part of the soundtrack to Filipino love stories and cherished memories, connecting with listeners across generations.

The concert will revisit the familiar

Turn to C2

DOT, Viber team up to help tourism businesses reach more travelers

THE Department of Tourism (DOT) is turning to digital technology to help Filipino tourism businesses reach more travelers, strengthen customer trust, and guard against online scams through a new partnership with communications platform Rakuten Viber.

Tourism Secretary **Maria Bernardita "Dita" Angara-Mathay** and Rakuten Viber senior director for Asia-Pacific **David Tse** formalized the collaboration through a memorandum of understanding that will give DOT-accredited micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) access to Viber Business Accounts.

The initiative aims to help local hotels, travel agencies, tour operators, and other tourism establishments communicate directly with potential customers through the messaging platform, making it easier for travelers to find services, ask questions, and arrange their trips.

Under the agreement, Viber will provide free business account registration, onboarding assistance, and training to DOT-accredited enterprises. Participating businesses will gain access to business pages where they can engage customers through private messaging, calls, and promotional campaigns.

Click-to-Chat QR codes will also allow travelers to scan and start conversations with establishments directly, eliminating several steps between discovering a business and making an inquiry.

The partnership comes as the government seeks to make the country's tourism industry more competitive while addressing concerns over fraudulent online transactions and misleading business listings.

Angara-Mathay said the agreement forms part of the department's efforts to help tourism-related MSMEs adapt to changing travel demands and expand their customer base.

"Travelers should be able to find accredited establishments easily and with confidence," she said.

She added that the partnership would help protect local businesses and tourists while supporting the department's *Love the Philippines* and *Discover More to Love* campaigns.

The DOT will involve its regional and foreign offices in the program, connect Viber with local tourism stakeholders, and provide campaign guidelines and branding materials. Both parties will also explore joint media initiatives, familiarization tours, and tourism promotions.

Viber, meanwhile, will organize MSME caravans at DOT regional offices to help accredited businesses establish their accounts. It will also feature DOT-accredited enterprises and tourism campaigns on its channels every month, with participating businesses receiving equal access to the program.

Tse said the partnership would give travelers a more reliable way to identify and communicate with legitimate tourism establishments.

"Rakuten Viber is committed to supporting initiatives that help curb and prevent scams in the Philippines," he said, adding that the digital tools would encourage travelers to verify businesses before sharing payment details or personal information.



Tourism Secretary Maria Bernardita Angara-Mathay (center right) and David Tse (center left) formalize a digital partnership aimed at helping accredited tourism businesses connect directly with travelers

Beyond business messaging and calls, Viber users can also access ChatGPT features within the app to assist with travel planning.

The collaboration comes as tourism continues to play a significant role in the Philippine economy. Data from the DOT's Philippine Tourism Data Dashboard show the country recorded 6.5 million international arrivals in 2025, an increase of 0.8 percent from the previous year.

The industry contributed P2.27 trillion to the economy and employed 7.7 million Filipinos during the same period, underscoring the importance of supporting businesses that serve both domestic and international visitors.

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Manila Standard

Conrad Manila marks 10th anniversary with festive dining, new events venue

By Nickie Wang

A DECADE by Manila Bay calls for a celebration with a little sparkle, and Conrad Manila is marking its 10th anniversary with a holiday lineup of lavish dining experiences, festive gifts, and year-end gatherings, capped by the unveiling of a new events venue overlooking the historic waters.

Dubbed "A Decade of Brilliance," the anniversary celebration blends Christmas traditions with special culinary offerings and entertainment, giving families, food lovers, and partygoers plenty of reasons to visit this holiday season.

The festivities officially began Nov. 5 with the introduction of the Dewey Room, a new function space on the hotel's eighth floor offering panoramic views of Manila Bay.

Named after US Navy Admiral **George Dewey**, whose forces defeated the Spanish fleet during the 1898 Battle of Manila Bay, the venue follows the hotel's tradition of naming function rooms after prominent figures from the American period in Philippine history. Existing spaces include the Forbes and Park ballrooms, as well as the Roosevelt, Harrison, and Murphy meeting rooms.

SM Hotels and Conventions Corp. executive vice president **Peggy Angeles** said the name was particularly fitting given the venue's vantage point overlooking the waters where the historic battle took place.

Designed for intimate gatherings and special occasions, the Dewey Room accommodates weddings, debuts, despedidas de soltera, corporate cocktails, product launches, and private celebrations. Its indoor-outdoor spaces and private garden provide additional settings for events with at least 50 guests. Set menus start at P279,500, while buffet packages begin at P346,000, before applicable charges.

The holiday dining calendar, meanwhile, puts familiar Christmas favorites and elaborate celebratory menus on the table.

At Brasserie on 3, diners can enjoy lechon, glazed holiday ham, premium roasts, and an assortment of desserts through Dec. 31. The daily buffet costs P3,588 per person for lunch and P3,988 for dinner.

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day come with enhanced buffet selections and live musical performances, with Santa Claus making a special appearance on Christmas Day. Both celebrations start at P4,988 per person.

Those planning to welcome 2027 by the bay can book the restaurant's New Year's Eve buffet, priced at P5,588 for indoor seating and P7,588 for veranda tables. The celebration includes unlimited soft drinks and house-pouring alcoholic beverages, with fireworks rounding out the evening.

Chinese restaurant China Blue by Jereme Leung has prepared special Christmas and New Year's set menus featuring dishes such as golden roasted duck with quinoa, sautéed scallops in ginger garlic sauce, Hong Kong suckling pig, roasted pigeon with truffle barbecue sauce, and braised abalone with fish maw.

The Christmas set menu costs P49,980, while the New Year's selection is priced at P50,880. Both menus are designed for groups of 10.

At C Lounge, afternoon tea gets a seasonal makeover through "A Secret Sparkle," featuring savory bites, festive sweets, and premium tea or coffee. Available from Nov. 16 to Dec. 31, the experience costs P3,288 for two.

The lounge will also host "Midnight Sparkle," a New Year's Eve countdown party featuring handcrafted drinks, food, views of the Manila skyline, and fireworks. Table packages start at P22,888.

For holiday shoppers, Bru Coffee Bar has introduced three Christmas hamper selections priced at P3,888, P5,888, and P7,888. Each contains artisanal treats and seasonal goodies, along with Carey the Carabao, a holiday-exclusive plush companion.

Holiday pastries start at P90, while cakes are priced from P250. The hotel's signature ORKIDÉA gin is available in 200-milliliter and 700-milliliter bottles for P3,100 and P8,500, respectively.

Conrad Spa has also prepared wellness gift packages featuring treatments from ISUN. Voucher bundles start at P40,000 for 10 vouchers, with savings available on larger purchases.

Guests seeking an overnight holiday escape can book a Deluxe Room with city views and breakfast for two starting at P11,500 per night. A one-bedroom suite with executive lounge access and breakfast costs P18,000 nightly. Bookings run from Nov. 17 to Dec. 28 for stays from Dec. 17 to 29, excluding Dec. 24 and 25.

Adding to the anniversary spectacle is a 16-foot crystal Christmas tree in the main lobby, accompanied by smaller trees and a gingerbread house at Bru Coffee Bar. Conceptualized by stylist **Tiger Lim**, the installations take inspiration from the diamond, the traditional symbol of a 10th anniversary.

The tree-lighting ceremony featured performances by soprano **Rachelle Gerodias**, **Imusicapella**, and the **Manila Symphony Junior Orchestra**, giving guests a musical start to the holiday season.



From left: SMHCC executive vice president Peggy Angeles, Pasay City Mayor Imelda Calixto-Rubiano and hotel general manager Rupert Hallam open the hotel's year-end celebrations, which combine holiday dining, entertainment and special gatherings for its 10th year



New Year's Eve programming pairs food, drinks and Manila Bay fireworks as guests prepare to welcome 2027



The Dewey Room adds an intimate function space on Level 8, with Manila Bay views and indoor-outdoor areas for weddings, launches and private celebrations

Investing in the splendor of the Tuna Capital

NAMED after Gen. **Paulino Santos**, who was one of the first settlers in the area, the city, now affectionately called GenSan, prides itself on having the biggest daily catch of fresh, high-grade, and sashimi-grade tuna and a booming fishing industry, as it sits near rich fishing spots like Sarangani Bay and the Celebes Sea. In fact, six out of the seven biggest tuna canning factories in the country operate in the city.



General Santos City Airport supports the city's growing role as a regional gateway as local officials seek more investment in tourism, logistics, manufacturing and other industries

Every September, the city holds a week-long festival featuring sports competitions, live musical performances, and a fireworks display at the city's Oval Plaza. The city government also hosts the National Tuna Congress and Trade Exhibit and the much-awaited "Sugbahan Sa Dalan," the iconic street-grilling event of fresh tuna "panga" and other seafood along the City Hall Drive.



Mercury Rising
Bob Zozobrado

Although GenSan is already considered a progressive city, the local government is still inviting investors to further expand its economic horizon by offering exemptions from the payment of local business taxes and real property taxes, with guidance from the City Economic Management and Cooperative Development Office (CEMCDO).

At a recent investment forum it hosted, I learned that, for those who want to ride on GenSan's upward trajectory, these are the city's investment priority areas: Agriculture/Agribusiness, Health Care Services and Facilities, Housing Projects, Information Technology and Business Process Management Services, Infrastructure and Logistics, Manufacturing, and Tourism.

Being the head of an attached agency of the Department of Tourism, I was interested to find out what exactly the city needs to augment its tourism industry. They are accommodation facilities, convention and exhibition centers, sports and recreation facilities, theme/amusement parks, farm tourism facilities, tourism training centers, adventure and ecotourism facilities, health and wellness facilities, and retirement villages.

I am very interested in helping them out with their need for retirement facilities through my network of business contacts. We now have a total of 227 foreign retirees happily settled in the SOCCSKSARGEN area, and we definitely want this number to grow, knowing fully well the charming bounty of nature that this region is blessed with.

So, what is there to see and do in GenSan or in the province of South Cotabato? The most popular attraction is approximately an hour and a half away from the city: the beautiful Lake Sebu, which is a scenic upland natural lake and eco-tourism destination. The lake covers 354 hectares and is filled with lotus flowers and water lilies, providing a poetic and romantic background to any visitor's Instagram moment. Together with the nearby Lake Seloton and Lake Lahit, these three lakes make up the vital watershed supplying irrigation to the province and to Sultan Kudarat.

There are boat tours that take visitors around the lake, and for the more adventurous type, there are the Seven Falls, which can be seen via trekking or on an exciting zipline. Of course, the area is home to the T'boli and Ubo indigenous communities, which are famous for their exotic and traditional T'nalak weaves. For those who want to try out local cuisine, there is fresh tilapia served at a number of floating and lakeside restaurants.

But for foodies who want to enjoy the culinary treats of GenSan itself, most restaurants in the city offer sashimi-grade tuna and opah (dayana). These are served best as *kinilaw* (fresh fish cuts in vinegar, ginger, shallots, cucumber, and pepper) or *sinugba* (charcoal-broiled in special sauce). These restaurants also serve the mouthwatering *tuna belly, tuna bagaybay* (intestines), *tuna bihod* (roe), *bigeye tuna paksiw, tuna lechon*, and other "Tunarrific" specialties cooked in various ways that easily stir one's appetite.

But a must-see in GenSan is its Fish Port Complex, a 32-hectare facility that is the heart of the country's Tuna Capital. Here, you'll see the 750-meter wharf, which handles the massive daily dockings of yellowfin and bigeye tuna boats, with their loads destined for both local and international markets.

For sports enthusiasts, they have easy access to jet skis, banana boats, paddleboards, skimboards, and kayaks, or they can simply enjoy swimming, snorkeling, and scuba diving, as pristine beaches abound in the area. During the annual Tuna Festival, a dragon boat race is the main feature.

With these tourism and investment opportunities, isn't it time to give yourself a chance to be captivated by the splendor of the South?

For feedback, I'm at bobzozobrado@gmail.com

YOUR MONDAY CHUCKLE

A grade school student asks, "Why is 'abbreviated' such a long word?"



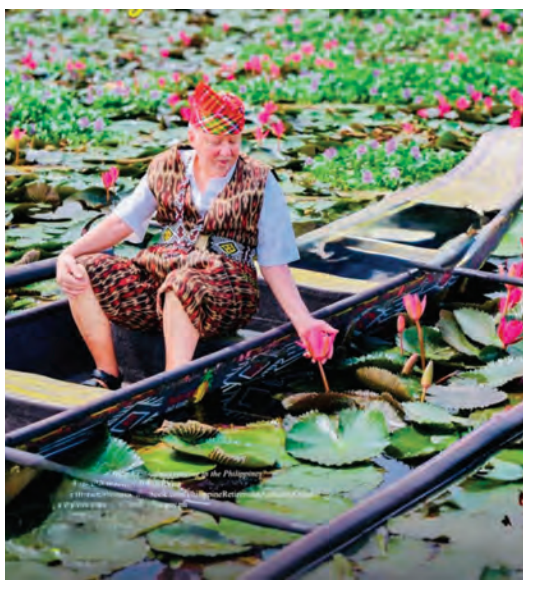
General Santos City's fishing industry remains a major economic driver, with yellowfin and bigeye tuna supplying domestic and overseas markets



The General Santos Fish Port Complex handles the city's daily tuna landings, supporting processors, exporters and restaurants built around the local catch



Lake Sebu's Seven Falls adds trekking and zipline adventures to South Cotabato's mix of nature, culture and community-based tourism



Lake Sebu draws visitors and foreign retirees with its upland scenery, indigenous culture and recreational activities across South Cotabato