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Impeach trial open to public

As Senate seeks to shorten proceedings Win sees lasting until February 2027

By Ram Superable and Rio N. Araja

THE Senate will open its impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte to the public when the trial begins on July 6, even as the chamber's leaders study ways to shorten proceedings that could otherwise last up to eight months.

Senate Secretary Renato Bantug Jr., clerk of the impeachment court, said Filipinos may watch the trial live from the Senate by registering through the Senate's Visitor Management system.

Walk-in visitors will also be accom-

modated, subject to available seating.

"Pwedeng walk-in pero kailangan mag-register sa Visitor Management ng Senado. Yung reservation ay maaaring gawing online," Bantug said in an interview on DZMM Teleradyo.

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Manila Standard

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Twin rallies push accountability, anti-corruption, electoral reforms

By Vince Lopez and Jimbo Gulle

THOUSANDS of people joined separate protest marches in Quezon City and Makati on Sunday, calling for government accountability, anti-corruption reforms, electoral reforms, and the continuation of the impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) reported that both events remained peaceful and orderly.

The largest gathering, the White Ribbon March, drew participants from the EDSA Shrine to the People Power Monument in Quezon City following a Holy Mass attended by church leaders, advocates, and supporters.

The Quezon City Police District (QCPD) estimated the crowd at about 3,600 participants as of 3:30 p.m., while organizers projected attendance of up to 10,000.

The march brought together Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, members of the Aglipayan Church, evangelical Christians, and various civil society and cause-oriented groups.

Among those present were Makabayan president Liza Maza, former lawmakers Teddy Casino and France Castro, and Kontra Daya convenor Danilo Arao.

Organizers said the march formed part of a broader campaign urging the government to hold erring officials accountable, enact a genuine anti-dynasty law, reform the electoral process, and combat corruption.

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ANTI-CORRUPTION, ANTI-DYNASTY. Several thousand people join two separate rallies at EDSA and Ayala Avenue in Makati calling for accountability in the flood control mess and the impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte. The protesters also urged Congress to pass a bill banning political dynasties. PNP, Edd Castro, Norman Cruz



Groups to Senate: Reject or revise anti-dynasty bill

By Jimbo Gulle

A COALITION of business, governance, and civil society organizations has urged the Senate to reject or substantially revise the House-approved anti-political dynasty bill, saying its provisions could allow political families to retain power instead of curbing political dynasties.

The coalition, led by the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), said House Bill No. 8389 contains loopholes that would permit political families to maintain their influence through succession, position switching, and holding different elective offices.

"They must take us for fools for them to pass that kind of proposed legislation," MAP Ethics Committee Chair Alex Cabrera said in an interview on ANC's Business Outlook.

"Forty years after the 1987 Constitution, you come up with a bill which

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MISS EARTH PHILIPPINES. Rina Andrea delos Santos, center, joins her elemental court of honor after besting thirty-one candidates to win Miss Philippines Earth 2026 during the coronation night on Saturday in Malitbog, Bukidnon. With De Los Santos are Miss Philippines Air 2026 Prima Joy Alamban; Miss Philippines Water 2026 Alyssa Villariña; Miss Philippines Fire 2026 Patricia Bangug; and Miss Philippines Eco-Tourism 2026 Roveelaine Eve Castillo. **Eton Concepcion**

Trump vows to annihilate Iran if Mideast war resumes

TEHRAN said Sunday it carried out a third day of retaliatory strikes against US attacks on Iranian territory, even as US President Donald Trump warned Iran would "no longer exist" if the United States is "forced" to resume the war.

Trump's threat came after US forc-

es said they struck "multiple" Iranian targets Saturday in another tit-for-tat response to attacks on shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.

"United States aircraft just struck Iranian missile and drone storage locations, and coastal radar sites, for violating the Cease Fire Agree-

ment, AGAIN!" Trump wrote on Truth Social.

"There may come a point when we are no longer able to be reasonable, and will be forced to militarily complete the job that we very successfully started. If that happens, the Islamic

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One of 20 hurt in shooting in ICU; Cavite stab suspects surrender

By Vince Lopez and Jimbo Gulle

AN OFFICIAL of the Department of Education (DepEd) on Sunday said only one of the 20 hurt in the deadly shooting inside the San Jose National High School in Tacloban City remains in the intensive care unit (ICU) while the rest of the cases are now stable.

In another development, a suspect in a stabbing death during a water festival on June 24 surrendered yesterday to Cavite City

Mayor Denver Chua.

The suspect, identified only as Rick, 25, was turned over to the police for investigation and proper disposition.

Another suspect, known as alias John, 34, gave himself up earlier.

Meanwhile, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said it will strengthen its coordination with schools and local authorities to comply with President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr.'s directive to create a safer environment for students inside and outside of school premises.

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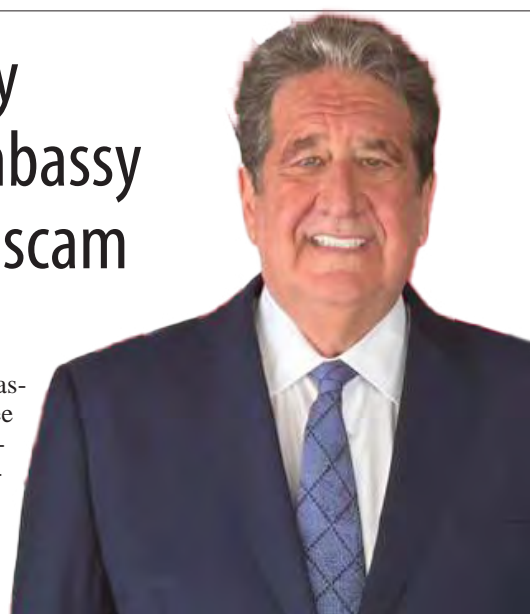
New US envoy in Manila; embassy warns of visa scam

By Katrina Manubay

THE new United States Ambassador to the Philippines, Lee Lipton, arrived in Manila yesterday, the U.S. Embassy announced in an X post.

"Mabuhay and welcome back to the Philippines, U.S. Ambassador Lee Lipton! We look forward to your leadership

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US Ambassador to the Philippines Lee Lipton

Impeach...

From A1

(Walk-ins are allowed, but visitors must register through the Senate’s Visitor Management System. Reservations may also be made online.)

The Senate’s main plenary hall has seating for 340 people in the gallery and 30 in the VIP section.

Bantug said available seats will be divided equally among guests of the prosecution, the defense, and the public.

Bantug said preparations are now focused on logistical requirements, including inspection of hearing rooms and testing of the audio system in the session hall.

"Our preparations tomorrow and Tuesday will include doing the rounds and checking the rooms to be used and the audio in the session hall. We are more on physical logistics now,"

he said.

Gatchalian: Trial could run until February 2027

Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian said the chamber is studying ways to expedite the proceedings because, if the trial starts in July, it could run until February 2027.

"We are studying how to fast-track the impeachment trial because the Senate does not just handle impeachment, we still have proposed bills to discuss," Gatchalian said.

He added that he is preparing to serve as presiding officer of the impeachment court by consulting legal experts and individuals with previous impeachment trial experience.

House prosecutor and Manila Rep. Joel Chua said the prosecution panel is prepared to pursue the case regardless of how long the trial lasts.

"There is no resignation," Chua said when asked about the possibility of a seven- or eight-month trial.

"We will just do what we can, everything we can to present the evidence based on the article to our countrymen and the impeachment court," he added.

Chua said the prosecution's proposed 62 presentation days should not be interpreted as the actual duration of the trial.

"But that doesn't mean that everything will be followed," he said.

Chua said the schedule assumes one witness per hearing and could be shortened if prosecutors present two or three witnesses in a single day.

He also said the prosecution may opt not to present all four Articles of Impeachment if it believes the evidence already presented is sufficient to secure a conviction.

"If, for example, after two articles come out, we think that there are enough numbers and that we have presented really strong, solid evidence, then the opportunity may also

come for us to waive the other articles," Chua said.

Trial documents doubled to 8,000

Chua also explained that the number of documentary exhibits doubled from about 4,000 to 8,000 after the defense declined a common marking procedure for documents.

"Common marking is possible, meaning that in one document, both the defense and the prosecution can mark the same document," he said.

"But it happened because the defense didn't want to agree and they wanted separate marking done on them, so the 4,000 documents became 8,000," he added.

Vice President Duterte faces impeachment over allegations that include misuse of confidential funds, unexplained wealth, bribery involving Department of Education personnel, and threats against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., First Lady Liza

Araneta-Marcos, and former Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez.

Meanwhile, Akbayan Party-list Rep. Percival Cendaña criticized the Vice President's camp for invoking freedom of expression in defending her alleged assassination threats.

"VP Sara's thinking is really wrong. Only consistent corrupt law-breakers will call threatening the life of another person as freedom of expression," Cendaña said.

Referring to Duterte's 2024 statement that she had instructed someone to kill the First Couple and then Speaker Romualdez if she were killed, Cendaña said: "It's true, when you are accustomed to impunity, justice feels like oppression."

"When you are accustomed to not being visited whenever you threaten others or steal the people's money, being held accountable for your sins feels like an aggravation," he added.

Twin...

From A1

Kidapawan Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo said the religious group Iglesia ni Cristo (INC) had also been invited to participate.

"Well we invited them, hindi ko lang alam if they will come. Sabi nila... They will not stop kung sino [sa] mga kasapi nila [ang] gustong sumama. In other words baka may-roong kaniya-kaniya," he added.

(They said they will not stop any of their members who want to join. In other words, there may be individuals acting on their own.)

In his homily at the EDSA Shrine church, Bagaforo said, "Ang tunay na nagmamahal ay hindi magnanakaw sa kapwa.... Kapag 'ako' ang sentro, naging madali ang pagsisinungaling, panlalamang, pang-aabuso sa kapang-yarihan, at korupsiyon."

(A person who truly loves does not steal from others. When 'I' becomes the center, it becomes easy to lie, take advantage of others, abuse power, and engage in corruption.)

‘Walk for Justice’ along Ayala Avenue

Meanwhile, the August Twenty-One Movement (ATOM), Tindig Pilipinas, and several civil society organizations staged a simultaneous "Walk for Justice" along Ayala Avenue in Makati, renewing calls for accountability over alleged corruption and urging the Senate to proceed with the impeachment trial of Vice Presi-

dent Duterte on July 6.

Participants gathered at Ayala Triangle Gardens before marching along Ayala Avenue and concluding the activity at the Ninoy Aquino Monument with speeches, prayers, and the singing of "Bayan Ko."

ATOM president Voltaire Bohol recalled President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s commitment in his 2025 State of the Nation Address to prosecute those involved in corruption.

"Tuloy-tuloy ang panawagan natin na 'Mahiya naman kayo!' dahil magiisang taon na po yung pangako na may mga makukulong na malalaking isda," Bohol said.

(Our call of ‘Have some shame!’ continues because it has been almost a year since the promise was made that the ‘big fish’ would be jailed.)

He also urged the Senate to begin the impeachment trial without further delay.

The group also said Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero should not serve as presiding officer of the impeachment court, arguing that the proceedings should proceed "without taint and bias."

It also criticized former Senate President Alan Peter Cayetano over his recent remarks on the impeachment process and his comparison of his political experience to that of former senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.

Historian and ATOM member Xiao Chua said the movement opposes corruption regardless of political affiliation.

"Sinasabi nila na ang mga dilaw

daw ay pumapanig sa mga Marcos. Pero alam niyo, hindi totoo 'yan. Kaming mga dilaw, lalo na yung mga nanatiling dilaw sa matagal na panahon, kahit sinong kurap, dapat panagutin," Chua said.

"Hindi rin kami takot na magsabi kung may mga kasamang kailangan i-call out din sila, lalo na kung may ebidensya," he added.

(They say that the ‘Yellows’ have sided with the Marcoses. But you know, that is not true. We who identify with the ‘Yellow’ movement—especially those of us who have remained committed to it for a long time—believe that anyone who is corrupt should be held accountable.)

Nartatez lauds police, peaceful demonstrators

The PNP said both demonstrations were conducted peacefully.

PNP chief General Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said reports from commanders on the ground showed participants exercised their right to peaceful assembly in an orderly manner.

"Based on our real-time monitoring and reports from commanders on the ground, the White Ribbon March has remained generally peaceful and orderly," he said.

"Participants have been exercising their right to peaceful assembly responsibly while our personnel continue to ensure public safety, maintain order, and facilitate the smooth flow of traffic without unnecessary disruption," Nartatez said.

The PNP placed concerned units un-

der full alert from 5 p.m. on June 27 until 12:01 a.m. on June 29 and deployed nearly 10,000 police personnel from the National Capital Region Police Office, neighboring police regional offices, and support units to key areas.

These included the People Power Monument, EDSA Shrine, Mendiola Peace Arch, Ayala Bridge, the US Embassy, major thoroughfares, transport routes, and other convergence points.

QCPD Director Brig. Gen. Randy Glenn Silvyo said the White Ribbon March remained peaceful because of close coordination among police, organizers, and the local government.

"The situation here was generally peaceful, there were no untoward incidents recorded and we had a very cooperative coordination between the organizers of the event and the local government unit," Silvio said.

He added that the hot weather contributed to some participants ending their march early after reaching White Plains Avenue.

Reminders for safety, cleanliness

Earlier, QCPD spokesperson Police Major Jennifer Gannaban reminded participants to comply with the memorandum of understanding signed with authorities, observe police safety measures, and help keep the area clean.

Nartatez also commended the police personnel deployed for the operation.

"Our deployed personnel have been performing their duties with professionalism, discipline, and maximum tolerance," the PNP chief said.

Groups...

From A1

is actually a pro-dynasty bill, very contrary to the intent of the constitutional framers," he added.

The MAP is an exclusive organization of top-level executives, business leaders, and management educators in the country, dedicated to promoting management excellence for nation-building.

The House of Representatives approved House Bill No. 8389 on third and final reading by a vote of 267-20, with seven abstentions. The measure now moves to the Senate for deliberation.

The Constitution directs the State to prohibit political dynasties "as may be defined by law," but Congress has yet to enact an implementing measure.

The House bill prohibits relatives within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity from simultaneously holding elective office in the same political jurisdiction.

Cabrera said the restriction is insufficient because it does not prohibit political succession or the exchange of positions among family members.

The House bill prohibits relatives within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity from simultaneously holding elective office in the same political jurisdiction.

It doesn't prohibit succession. It doesn't prohibit switching," he said.

"The saddest thing about it is that after almost 40 years, you come up with a bill which is actually a pro-dynasty bill," he added.

Senate deliberating its own bill

In February, a Senate committee endorsed a consolidated bill prohibiting relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity from simultaneously holding national or local elective posts.

Sen. Risa Hontiveros, who chaired the Senate Committee on Electoral Reforms and People’s Participation Committee at the time, said the proposed coverage includes parents, children, siblings, and spouses.

Hontiveros said the second-degree prohibition is a practical “first step” toward reform.

Its Committee Report No. 33 recommended approval of Senate Bill No. 1901, titled “An Act Prohibiting Political Dynasties in National and Local Elective Offices and Party-Lists, and Providing Penalties Therefore.”

The bill bars both simultaneous and successive holding of elective posts within the same jurisdiction, including party-list participation.

Hontiveros acknowledged that earlier proposals covered up to the third or fourth degree, including her own bill, but said enforceability was a key consideration.

The Senate measure requires candidates and party-list nominees to submit sworn certifications declaring that no prohibited political dynasty relationship exists.

It also authorizes the Commission on Elections to deny or cancel certificates of candidacy upon verified violation and provides for criminal penalties under the Omnibus Election Code.

‘Dynasties limit competition, discourage investment’

Cabrera said entrenched political dynasties also affect the business environment by limiting competition and discouraging investment.

"Business groups thrive well in a level playing field where everything is based on meritocracy," he said.

According to Cabrera, political influence often extends to government contracts, infrastructure projects, and industries where elected officials have business interests.

"The market barriers exist wherever there are dynasties. They are into contracts, they are into mineral extraction, they intervene in businesses that they have interests in," he said.

He added that failed or delayed infrastructure projects reduce employment opportunities and discourage investments.

One...

From A1

This as some students in Tacloban City have considered transferring to other schools following the shooting attack at San Jose National High School that killed three students and injured 20 others, Education officials admitted Sunday.

In an interview over Super Radyo dzBB, Education Undersecretary Malcolm Garcia disclosed that there were a total of 23 total casualties during the June 22 incident, consisting of three fatalities, 15 wounded, and five were indirectly-related injuries.

He said most of the injured are in the process of recovery, while some have been discharged from the hospital.

PNP links up with DepEd, CHed

PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. directed all police regional offices and local stations to establish regular coordination with DepEd and the Commission on Higher Education (CHed) on student security.

This is in line with the presidential directive to strengthen the protection of children and ensure safer learning environments following recent incidents of school violence and accidents involving students.

"We encourage schools to coordinate with local police stations before conducting major off-campus activities so that proper security assessments, emergency response planning, traffic management, and coordination with rescue and medical services can

be undertaken," Nartatez said.

"Prevention begins with strong partnership and advance planning," he said.

According to Garma, aside from those who were injured, the department is also helping those who suffered mental or emotional trauma for those who are suffering fear and anxiety after witnessing or experiencing the results of the shooting.

"Secondly, our priority is to provide psychosocial support or psychosocial first aid to the victims. This includes schoolmates who were not physically hurt during the shooting as well as school staff, the parents of the students and the entire community that the school serves," Garma added.

The DepEd said it is strengthening security measures, expanding psychosocial support, and improving guidance counseling in the aftermath of the June 22 shooting.

San Jose students, parents eye transfer to other schools

DepEd Tacloban City Division information officer Dr. Nilo Eder confirmed that some students and parents have expressed interest in transferring to other schools following the shooting.

"That is the right of the parents or students... we have been assuring them that we have secured the school, and the most secure school now is San Jose National High School," Eder said.

He said the school will continue using an alternative delivery mode of instruction next week, with face-to-face classes expected to resume on July 6.

With Dennis Abrina

Trump...

From A1

Republic of Iran will no longer exist!" Trump wrote.

The exchanges underscored the fragility of a Pakistan-brokered peace process aimed at ending a war launched by the United States and Israel in February, which disrupted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and rattled global energy markets.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said on Sunday they were taking measures to control traffic in the vital Strait of Hormuz and that violating vessels would be dealt with more firmly than before.

The only authorized passage by Tehran passes through a corridor running along Iran's coast.

The Guards said they had also carried out retaliatory strikes in Kuwait and Bahrain.

In a statement, they said the strikes "destroyed eight important US military facilities at the Ali al-Salem base in Kuwait and at the Fifth Fleet naval base in Port Salman in Bahrain."

"Any enemy aggression, whatever the pretext, even against insignificant targets... will have a crushing response," the Guards said.

Air raid sirens rang out twice in Bahrain on Sunday, according to the Gulf nation's interior ministry.

A memorandum of understanding was reached in mid-June under Pakistan's mediation, aimed at putting a lasting end to the war.

The text signed by the United States and Iran said both countries, and their respective allies, were "not to initiate any war or any military operation against each other and to refrain from the threat or use of force against each other".

Iran would 'no longer exist'

Shipping lanes under fire

US Central Command said Saturday's strikes were in response to an Iranian drone attack on the Panama-flagged oil tanker "Kiku," which was carrying some two million barrels of crude.

The US military said its operation targeted "surveillance infrastructure, communication systems, air defense sites, drone storage facilities, and minelayer capabilities."

Iranian media reported several ex-

plosions in the Sirik and Qeshm areas of southern Iran.

Washington had carried out similar strikes on Friday, saying they were a response to an earlier Iranian attack on another vessel, the "Ever Lovely."

Israel, meanwhile, launched strikes in Lebanon as Hezbollah's leader Naim Qassem rejected a deal to end that conflict, which has also threatened to derail the wider US-Iran peace effort.

Iran called "these brutal attacks... a blatant violation" of the interim truce deal.

Iran has warned vessels not to enter or leave the Gulf through the strait without permission, but ships have continued to move, some using a route not authorized by Tehran.

In the memorandum of understanding Iran had previously agreed "safe passage of commercial vessels with no charge, for 60 days only, from the Persian Gulf to the Sea of Oman, and vice versa" in the strait.

H.A. Hellyer, of London think tank the Royal United Services Institute, said "Iran is likely to continue calibrated, low-level coercive activity in and around the Strait of Hormuz... to create persistent pressure on international shipping without triggering a wider conflict."

He said November's US midterm elections for Congress give Washington "incentives for a quicker agreement" while, for Iran, "a drawn-out negotiation accompanied by controlled pressure in the strait can work to its advantage."

Lebanon threats

Lebanon was drawn into the Middle East war in early March, when militant group Hezbollah launched rockets at Israel in support of Iran. That provoked an Israeli invasion and fighting that has also undermined the US-Iran ceasefire.

Israel and Lebanon signed an agreement on Friday supported by the US aimed at securing long-term peace between the two countries.

Hezbollah's chief Qassem rejected the deal a day later, calling it "humiliating, shameful and a surrender of sovereignty."

He instead called for the full implementation of Washington's deal with Tehran, which includes an end to the fighting in Lebanon. **AFP**

Korean-made FA-50 fighters coming in ‘28

IN BRIEF

PUV driver yields P6.8m shabu, nabbed by MPD

OPERATIVES from the Manila Police District-Station 11 arrested a public utility vehicle driver after he allegedly tried to sell a kilo of shabu worth at least P6.8 million to a police poseur-buyer during a buy-bust operation at the corner of Rizal Avenue and Bustos Street in Barangay 303, District III, Sta. Cruz, Manila.

The suspect, identified as Lanie Sauma, 36, of 268 San Guillermo St., Barangay Putatan, Muntinlupa City, is now under the custody of MPD-Station 11.

Investigation showed the operation was conducted at about 4:25 a.m. after police received information that the suspect was offering a kilo of shabu for sale.

Aside from the suspected shabu and the marked money used in the operation, authorities recovered another sachet containing about five grams of shabu from the suspect. **Itchie G. Cabayan**

Isabela 2nd District formalizes ‘Go Serbisyo’

SAN MARIANO, Isabela—Verified service interventions delivered across Isabela’s 2nd District as of mid-2026 have been sustained under formal operating guidelines codified through Representative Ed Christopher S. Go’s “Go Serbisyo” framework.

The long-practiced grassroots service mantra now serves as the standard governing all district-funded programs covering Benito Soliven, Gamu, Naguilian, Palanan, Reina Mercedes, and San Mariano. District interventions include medical assistance for more than 4,900 indigent residents, 75 burial assistance cases, support for senior citizens, 9,465 educational assistance grants, fuel subsidies for over 12,000 tricycle drivers, and livelihood and employment programs in partnership with the Department of Labor and Employment. **Jessica M. Bacud**

Health workers get skills training on cancer

THE Department of Health-Cordillera Administrative Region on Sunday announced that it recently conducted a two-batch training program to boost cervical cancer screening by equipping local health workers with essential testing and counseling skills.

“Every woman you screen correctly when you get back to your respective areas is a woman who might have her cancer caught early. Every client you counsel well is a patient who understands why this matters,” Regional Director Amelita Pangilinan told participants during the Cervical Cancer Screening Training in Baguio City.

Organized under the region’s Cancer Prevention and Control Program, the workshop gathered medical staff from various cities and municipalities across the Cordillera. Participants were trained in human papillomavirus DNA testing, visual inspection using acetic acid, Pap smear collection, patient counseling, documentation, and administrative reporting. **Ram Superable**

By Rex Espiritu

THE Philippine Air Force (PAF) said the first batch of South Korean-made FA-50 Block 70 fighter aircraft is scheduled for delivery in 2028, with all 12 aircraft expected to be delivered by 2030.

“With the signing of the contract for an additional 12 FA-50s last June 3, 2025, the PAF expects deliveries to be completed by 2030,” Air Force

spokesperson Col. Ma. Christina Basco said. She added that the aircraft will be delivered in batches of two until the order is completed.

The government signed a contract worth more than \$700 million with Korea Aerospace Industries Ltd. (KAI) for the acquisition of the 12 FA-50 Block 70 fighter aircraft.

The package includes mission equipment, integrated logistics support, and a training and logistics information system. The acquisition forms part of the Armed Forces of the

Philippines’ Rehorizon 3 modernization program.

The FA-50 Block 70 is the latest version of the South Korean-made combat aircraft, featuring advanced avionics, modern radar systems, an extended operational range, and a top speed of Mach 1.5.

The Department of National Defense earlier said the acquisition “marks a significant enhancement to the country’s air defense capabilities” and supports the Comprehensive Archipelagic Defense Concept.



RISING COSTS. Plastic bags hang at a vegetable stall in a traditional market in Keelung on June 9, as vendors grapple with rising plastic costs driven by supply disruptions linked to the Middle East conflict. AFP

Asia’s vendors grapple with rising costs of ever-present plastics

FOOD vendors across Asia who rely on plastics for bags, cups, and food containers are grappling with rising costs as supply disruptions caused by the Middle East conflict continue to affect petrochemical markets.

Although the United States and Iran have reached a ceasefire agreement, markets have yet to fully recover, with concerns persisting over shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a key

route for oil and petrochemical products.

At Taipei’s Songjiang market, vendors said plastic bag prices have risen by nearly 60 percent while plastic trays cost about a third more. In Bangkok, vegetable vendor Nikorn Sai-inthara estimated his operating costs had increased by 30 percent but said he could not pass the higher costs on to customers.

Ethylene, a key raw material for plastics, is derived from naphtha, around 60 percent of which Asia imports from the Gulf. Supply constraints prompted petrochemical producers in South Korea and Japan to cut production, driving up the cost of plastic products across the region.

Manufacturers in South Korea reported longer delivery times and higher prices, while Indonesia turned

to alternative suppliers to ease supply pressures. In the Philippines, manufacturers said they absorbed part of the additional costs to remain competitive against imports, resulting in only modest price increases for consumers.

Industry officials said prices have yet to normalize because manufacturers continue to process naphtha purchased at higher prices despite the gradual reopening of the Strait of Hormuz. **AFP**



YOUTH FILM HONOR. ‘Tambol,’ produced by Tarlac State University students Khari Angelo Manaloto, Kissy Pingol, and Angel Gabrielle Rico under TR35 Productions, receives the top award at the 4th Refugee Film Festival, which champions youth voices and stories of solidarity.

OSAP warns public vs. fraudsters posing as office representatives

By Ma. Katrina Mikaela Manubay

THE Office of the Special Assistant to the President (OSAP) on Sunday warned the public against individuals and groups falsely claiming to represent the office to solicit money and financial assistance from local government units (LGUs) and the general public.

In an advisory, OSAP emphasized that neither the office nor its personnel solicit funds, request financial assistance, or conduct official transactions through SMS or private messaging applications. It urged the public to remain vigilant against such schemes.

OSAP also called on LGUs, their officials, and employees to exercise caution and verify any funding or project directives that appear to come from the office. It said all transactions should be

confirmed only through official institutional channels.

The office encouraged the public to report suspicious solicitations or communications claiming to represent OSAP through its official email address, osap@malacanang.gov.ph.

The warning followed an advisory from the Misamis Occidental Provincial Government, which said an individual identifying himself as “JP” from OSAP contacted a Provincial Governor’s Office employee via text before asking for P50,000 through the Signal messaging app for a supposed activity the following day.

The Provincial Governor’s Office clarified that Governor Henry S. Oaminal and the office never solicit money, request financial assistance, or conduct official transactions through personal messaging applications or unofficial channels.

PBBM declares special non-working days in nine localities

By Ma. Katrina Mikaela Manubay

PRESIDENT Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. has issued proclamations declaring special non-working days in nine cities and municipalities nationwide to mark local celebrations, anniversaries, and festivals.

Proclamation No. 1332 declares July 3, 2026, a special non-working day in Bambang, Nueva Vizcaya, for Bambang Day. Proclamation No. 1331 sets July 14, 2026, as a special non-working day in Guihulngan, Negros Occidental, for its Charter Anniversary, while

Proclamation No. 1330 designates July 15, 2026, as a special non-working day in Mauban, Quezon, for Mauban Day.

Proclamation No. 1329 declares July 10, 2026, a special non-working day in Santa Rosa, Laguna, for its 22nd Cityhood Anniversary. Proclamation No. 1328 makes July 21, 2026, a special non-working day in Mabalacat, Pangasinana, for its 14th Cityhood Anniversary.

Proclamation No. 1327 declares July 23, 2026, a special non-working day in Nabunturan, Davao del Norte, for its 69th Founding Anniversary, while Proclamation No. 1326 designates the

same date as a special non-working day in Batangas City for its Founding Anniversary.

The President also declared July 25, 2026, a special non-working day in Dapitan City, Zamboanga del Norte, for the Kinabayo Festival, and June 29, 2025, a special non-working day in Mulanay, Quezon, for its town fiesta.

All proclamations were signed on June 25 by Executive Secretary Ralph Recto on behalf of President Marcos. Editor’s note: The proclamation for Mulanay states June 29, 2025, although the other proclamations pertain to 2026.



TOBACCO SEASON. Farmers in Tagudin, Ilocos Sur tend their Virginia tobacco crops, one of the province’s major agricultural products. **Dave Leprozo**

PAGASA to launch wind damage system



OFW LOUNGE LAUNCH. Department of Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac (front, fourth from right) leads the opening of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) Lounge and Facilitation Center at the Mactan Cebu International Airport Terminal 2. Minerva Newman

THE Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) will roll out its new impact-based forecast (IBF) for severe winds beginning July.

The IBF is a system that projects the severity of damage extreme weather events may inflict on specific localities.

It identifies where a weather-related hazard, like severe winds, may occur and suggests appropriate actions that a city or municipality could follow three to five days before it even happens.

At a media workshop on Multi-Hazard Impact-based Forecasting and Early Warning System (MHIBFEWS) on Saturday, PAGASA Deputy Administrator Roy Badilla said the upcoming issuance of “Severe Winds IBF” represents the state weather bureau’s effort to improve the way it communicates risks and enable local actors to prepare ahead.

“Instead of simply telling people what weather to expect, we are moving towards explaining what those weather conditions could mean for communities, who may be affected, what the likely impacts are, and what the actions should be taken before hazard becomes disaster,” he said.

The IBF will complement and be released alongside PAGASA’s regular weather forecasts, advisories, and bulletins.

Under the MHIBFEWS project, PAGASA is piloting four IBFs for severe winds, rain-induced landslides, storm surge, and flooding in Tuguegarao; Legazpi; Palo, Leyte; and New Bataan, Davao De Oro.

PAGASA Weather Services and MHIBFEWS chief Thelma Cinco said the bureau hopes to do a similar nationwide rollout for Storm Surge IBF after the Severe Winds IBF.

“(For) storm surge, we started with Palo (in Leyte), but we’re trying to have it nationwide. It takes time so perhaps next year, it would be available. There’s a plan to have it next year,” she said in a separate interview.

The IBF shifts away from “hazard-based” forecast and answers what the weather “will do” instead of simply identifying what it “will be.”

By doing so, it enables communities and local government units to plan and make “risk-informed decisions” before the cyclone hits their area.

This so-called anticipatory action may range from conducting preemptive evacuation, early harvesting, house strengthening, up to releasing emergency funds.

A PAGASA-issued IBF assesses the risk of a hazard (e.g., severe winds, storm surge, flooding or landslide) to a city or municipality based on its exposure and vulnerability to it.

The potential damage is then categorized and color-coded depending on four “levels of impact severity” from minimal (green), minor (yellow), significant (orange) to severe (red).

IN BRIEF

Cebu City unfolds 2026 Wedding Tourism Expo

CEBU City reinforces itself a nuptial capital in Asia by unfolding the KASALAN2026 National Wedding Tourism Expo at the Ayala Mall in the city.

The exhibits, open on June 28-29, showcases the widest array of wedding venues and event supplier options, guaranteeing lovers the best experience in celebrating their union.

Dubbed the Queen City of the South, Cebu offers idyllic island weddings, historic century-old churches and creative event suppliers for unforgettable weddings, honeymoons, and romantic escapes.

Be it Cebuanos looking for quality, affordable celebration packages or visiting couples looking for the ideal wedding arrangements, Cebu promises to provide all the answers to their needs. **Minerva Newman**

SU to present awards to 8 outstanding alumni

SILLIMAN University (SU) will honor eight distinguished alumni with the Outstanding Sillimanian Award (OSA) during the school’s 125th anniversary on August 28 at the Claire Isabel McGill Luce Auditorium, recognizing their exceptional contributions in their respective fields and embodiment of Silliman’s enduring values.

The awardees are Edwin Caliolio for community and business leadership, Rev. Juancho Campañano for healthcare chaplaincy, Cris Jude Lacsican for inclusive finance, Edwin Somera Mananquil for military policy and leadership, Dr. Junice Lirza Demeterio-Melgar for advancement of women’s health, Albert Salamanca for climate change adaptation and resilience, Cristina Taniguchi for visual arts, and Merlie Alunan-Wenceslao for revival of regional literature.

Since its inception in 1962, SU has conferred the award to 269 alumni whose achievements have brought distinction to their professions, communities, and alma mater. **Minerva Newman**

House okays bill setting up LTO in E. Samar town

THE House of Representatives has approved on third and final reading a measure seeking to establish a regular Land Transportation Office (LTO) district office in the municipality of Guiuan, Eastern Samar.

The measure, authored by Eastern Samar Lone District Rep. Christopher Sheen Gonzales and 4Ps Party-list Rep. Marcelino Libanan, was approved by the House before Congress adjourned earlier this month. It has since been transmitted to the Senate for consideration.

“Our bill will bring essential LTO services closer to the people of Eastern Samar. A regular district office will be better equipped to serve motorists, vehicle owners and transport operators in a faster, more efficient and more responsive manner,” Gonzales said.

“Many of our constituents currently spend considerable time and money traveling to other areas simply to renew their driver’s licenses, register their motor vehicles, transfer ownership, secure permits, and complete other LTO transactions,” he added.

10k-strong TUPAD force eyed for cleanup drive

By Vito Barcelo

THE Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will deploy 10,000 beneficiaries of the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged Workers (TUPAD) program beginning July 17 to carry out cleanup and flood mitigation activities across Metro Manila ahead for the rainy season.

Labor Secretary Francis Tolentino

and MMDA general manager Nicolas Torre III finalized the plan during a meeting on June 25, including the training, equipment, and personal protective equipment (PPE) to be provided to the beneficiaries.

An initial batch of 500 TUPAD workers will be deployed ahead of the project’s official launch.

Tolentino said the partnership aims to keep waterways and other critical areas free of obstructions, including water hyacinths and other

debris that contribute to flooding.

Torre said the deployment of additional workers follows President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.’s directive to intensify cleanup efforts due to the volume of waste and sanitation challenges in Metro Manila’s waterways.

The initiative is part of the government’s efforts to strengthen flood preparedness while providing temporary employment to disadvantaged workers through the TUPAD program.

PH eagle has very low DNA diversity—Study

By Jimbo Gulle

SCIENTISTS have found that the critically endangered Philippine eagle has exceptionally low genetic diversity, a discovery that could help guide future conservation efforts for the country’s national bird.

A research team led by Dr. Cynthia Saloma of the University of the Philippines Diliman College of Science’s National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (UPD-CS NIMBB) analyzed the DNA of 35 Philippine eagles under the care of the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) in Davao City to produce the first draft genome for the species.

The study involved Dhan Mikhail Perdon, Francesca Pascual, Francis Tablizo, Carlo Lapid, John Michael Egana, Renato Jacinto Mantaring, Kris Punayan, Shiela Mae Araiza, Jo-Hannah Llamas, and Ma. Celeste Abad of the Philippine Genome Center, Dr. Juan Carlos Gonzalez of the University of the Philippines Los Baños, and Dr. Jayson Ibañez of the Philippine Eagle Foundation.

The researchers said the draft genome will help inform conservation strategies for the species.

“A genome is a living organism’s complete set of genes,” the scientists said in a statement. “From the extracted DNA sequences, we were able to assemble a representative genome for the species.”

The study found that Philippine eagles have exceptionally low genetic diversity, meaning individual birds are genetically very similar.



WALKING CANES SHOW. Cebu artisans put together at a hotel lobby an exhibition dubbed ‘Art for Cane’ for the benefit of the elderly and other vulnerable people encountering walking challenges. Global Creators Festival founder Mary Jane Salomon says the exhibits are presented under the concept of creativity with accountability, transforming creative expression into a tool for restoring dignity to the less fortunate. **Minerva Newman**



YORME SPONSORS WEDDING. Manila Mayor Francisco Moreno Domagosa is key persona in the matrimony of Harold Santos and Vernie Espino. **Mayor’s FB photo**

MCIA, partners sign agreement on OFW lounge, facilitation hub

By Minerva Newman

LAPU-LAPU City — The Mactan-Cebu International Airport (MCIA), the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW), the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), and Aboitiz InfraCapital Cebu Airport Corporation (AICAC) have signed a memorandum of understanding to launch an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) Lounge and a Facilitation Center at MCIA Terminal 2.

The facilities form part of MCIA’s Balik program which aims to provide a comprehensive support system for OFWs and establish MCIA as a gateway for migrant workers from the Visayas and Mindanao.

“This is not just a waiting area with chairs, it is a space of care, a space of comfort, tangible proof of love. If OFWs go out to serve the world, their government must

serve them first,” DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac said.

The OFW Lounge, located at the Terminal 2 departures level near Gate 16, provides departing OFWs with seating, charging stations, refreshments, and access to OWWA services, including OFW e-Card printing.

The OFW Facilitation Center, located at the Terminal 2 arrivals level near the pickup area, was established in partnership with Cebu Pacific and serves as a one-stop center where returning and transiting OFWs can process Overseas Employment Certificates (OECs) and other government transactions.

The center is staffed by personnel from the DMW and OWWA and provides contract verification, pre-departure briefings, arrival assistance, exit clearances, and e-Card printing.



Commemorations

UP TILL Diosdado Macapagal became president, we had July 4 as National Day. I recall being brought by my parents to the Luneta to watch the grand parade, lingering with them in short pants among thousands upon thousands of people. At the time, I was more interested in the ice cream treat from the Magnolia vendor. Then it became June 12, by which time I was already in high school, already in long pants, no longer awed by the uniformed military marching before officialdom. The next time I would attend the Luneta ceremonies was when I was in government, with Cory as the president. We were still giddy over our regained freedom, but still I did not see the Burnham Green filled to its brim unlike in the mid-fifties when I was in grade school. Even the “pwera ng masa” was not as many at the Luneta when Joseph Ejercito Estrada vowed “walang kamag-anak, walang kaibigan” just as the sun was about to set from the back of the Quirino Grandstand. Cory-Doy’s “miting de avance” in the snap elections where the stage was a make-shift contraption, had about a hundred thousand, perhaps more, occupying a third of the elevated green. In support of Erap in 2000, the INC and El Shaddai held a massive rally that filled the Luneta all the way to the flagpole, but that was not enough to stop the House from impeaching him the following week. The only other time I saw a crowd even more massive was during Rodrigo Duterte’s “miting de avance,” which has never yet been matched by any other political rally in my lifetime. What I found disgusting was the sight of the “balimbings” taking turns at greeting the “incoming” president in the tent at the back of the stage, they who swore by Grace Poe or Mar Roxas just a few weeks back. The president I did not support in 2022 spoke before a sparse crowd facing him at the Quirino Grandstand last June 12. There were more government officials and functionaries at his back, seated comfortably in plastic chairs or the cement bleachers than the motley couple of thousands behind the steel barricades. So much for national pride, I thought to myself as I watched the “spectacle” on the TV monitor. Were there a hundred in front of the Bonifacio monument in Kalookan, or in Kawit when the flag was unfurled? I was invited by Manila Mayor Francisco Domagoso to his State of the City address and though the grandstand bleachers and the Burnham Green were filled with city employees and barangay delegations, there must have been more than sixty, thousand spectators at the Luneta, much more than in BbM’s parade. I have seen grand parades before the presidential palace in Taipei on October 10, and it makes you wonder where our national pride has gone through all these years compared to an island state recognized by just about a dozen other countries. Why, I wonder, cannot all the people em-

ployed by the national government residing in Metro Manila attend our June 12 commemoration? Why, I wonder as well, did half a million or more from all walks of life march all by themselves voluntarily to the Luneta just to hear Rodrigo Duterte’s almost midnight speech before they were to cast their ballots days after, but could not care less about our National Day commemoration? June 24 was also the day when honest Noynoy died just five years ago in the solitude of his parents’ Times Street residence, too modest compared to the mansions in exclusive villages where current and previous other presidents live.



The only other time I saw a crowd even more massive was during Rodrigo Duterte’s miting de avance, which has never yet been matched by any other political rally in my lifetime

The day before, Liberal Party president Erin Tanada, grandson of the illustrious Lorenzo Tanada, was interviewed by Atty. Karen Jimeno at Bil’onaryo News Channel’s At the Forefront.

Towards the end of the show, Erin was asked whether he thought it likely that the Liberal Party candidate, who he earlier enumerated as either Leni, Risa, Kiko or Bam, would be in coalition with the present dispensation headed by Bongbong Marcos. Instead of dismissing the possibility, Erin said, in so many words, “it depends.” What? PNoy, who stood by the Liberal Party even during its darkest days, and whose father would have been its presidential candidate had not Bongbong’s father proclaimed a dictatorship and jailed Ninoy for more than seven years, must have been turning in his grave. A month or so earlier, PNoy’s presidential chief of staff, Rene Almendras, in an interview by ANC’s Rico Hizon was asked about a possible coalition between the “yellow” forces and BbM, and his very confident answer was “It’s already happening!” Kalookan’s Egay Erice, LP loyalist and the HoR’s voice of the opposition, stated in disgusted exception: “Ninoy and PNoy’s sacrifices should never be diminished by political expediency.”



Chief Nartatez and the measure of leadership

By Jose Antonio Goitia

THREE students are dead. Several others remain in the hospital. A school in Tacloban, where parents expected their children to learn and return home safely, has instead become the scene of one of the country’s most heartbreaking tragedies. In moments of profound grief and anger, the public does not look for polished public relations statements. People demand justice for the victims, honest answers, and leaders willing to confront uncomfortable truths rather than retreat behind bureaucratic walls. This was the exact crucible confronting Philippine National Police Chief, General Jose Melencio C. Nartatez Jr. His initial response was swift. Nartatez extended the PNP’s deepest sympathies to the grieving families, ordered a comprehensive investigation, and directed Police Regional Office 8 to ensure strict, professional handling of the case. He also instructed police units nationwide to collaborate closely with the Department of Education, local government units, and school officials to immediately tighten security around campuses. Then came the revelation no law enforcement organization ever wants to face. Initial reports indicated that one of the firearms used in the shooting had been officially issued to a police officer. Instantly, the narrative shifted. This was no longer just an isolated incident of youth violence; it became a direct test of institutional accountability. The central question became how the PNP responds when its own personnel may have failed the sacred responsibility entrusted to the badge. To his credit, Nartatez did not dodge the issue nor offer defensive deflections. Instead, he made it clear that the investigation would follow the evidence wherever it leads, emphasizing that accountability would be determined strictly by facts, not by rank. This is precisely the right approach. Public institutions preserve their institutional credibility not by pretending errors never occur, but by demonstrating a fearless willingness to confront mistakes out in the open. Of course, these initial commitments must now be matched by unyielding execution. The ongoing investigation must remain thorough, transparent, and absolutely fair. If negligence or systemic failures are established, those responsible—regardless of stature—must face the consequences. Demanding internal accountability is never a sign of institutional weakness; rather, it is the fundamental way public confidence is rebuilt from the ground up. Beyond the immediate investigation, this tragedy forces us to confront broader, systemic questions. How stringently are service firearms being monitored and secured? Are our schools genuinely protected, or are we relying on a false sense of security? Most importantly, are law enforcement, educators, parents, and local leaders pro-

EDITORIAL

Sara’s box

IN 2001, a commonplace piece of stationery—
an envelope—sparked public outrage. At the impeachment trial of former President Joseph Estrada, the Senate voted against opening what

thereafter became known as the “second envelope,” then believed to contain explosive evidence bolstering the charges against the impeached chief executive.

A quarter of a century later, Vice President Sara Duterte’s version could be a nondescript box. The sealed Bureau of Internal Revenue box is supposed to contain the tax records of Duterte and her husband, lawyer Manases Carpio. Even before the pre-trial conference held last week, Duterte’s lawyers had been moving heaven and earth to prevent access to the tax files. The defense team objected not just to the opening but even the marking of the box containing the couple’s income tax returns. But the returns are a vital piece of evidence showing just how much money the Duterte-Carprios were truly making during the periods in question. There is a specific complaint



Whether here or already abroad, Filipinos are far from content.

—unexplained wealth—that the tax documents could settle, once and for all. The confidentiality provided by law is never absolute, and the interest of transparency in the impeachment proceedings should take precedence over all. Confidential—that word, yet again. The matter will be decided by the Senate as an impeachment court on Monday. We brace ourselves for more legal acrobatics. There will be no shortage of this from those hell bent to use and bend legal processes to suit their purposes. Technicalities, as we know too well, have a way of muddling fundamental truths. In this case, it is a simple, basic demand: to let the records speak and determine whether or not the wealth of the couple can be explained by their legitimate incomes.



Open Thoughts
Orlando Oxales

The critical minerals window will not stay open forever



The global race for critical minerals is accelerating, and the window for positioning ourselves within emerging supply chains is narrowing

THE latest production figures from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau offer a welcome signal: the value of the Philippines’ metallic mineral output surged in early 2026, with total metal production rising by nearly a third to roughly P83 billion in the first quarter alone. This reflects what geologists have long known—that the country sits on substantial mineral wealth. But the more important question is whether the Philippines can convert this moment of favorable market conditions into long-term national competitiveness. The global race for critical minerals is accelerating, and the window for positioning ourselves within emerging supply chains is narrowing. Copper, nickel, cobalt, graphite, and rare earth elements now underpin electric vehicles, renewable energy systems, semiconductors, artificial intelligence, and modern defense technologies. Countries are not only securing access to these minerals; they are competing to anchor processing, manufacturing, and strategic partnerships. For a mineral-rich country like the Philippines, this is a rare geo-economic opening. Yet the country’s investment attractiveness tells a different story. In the 2025 Annual Survey of Mining Companies by the Fraser Institute, the Philippines fell 49 places to 65th out of 68 jurisdictions. The decline points not to geological limitations, but to a lack of regulatory confidence. Investors remain concerned about policy predictability, regulatory consistency, and the risk of sudden shifts that undermine long-term capital-intensive projects. This is where the national conversation must be clearer. Large-scale mining projects are not ordinary commercial ventures. Under the Constitution, mineral resources belong to the State. Mining companies do not own these resources; they act as contractors of government, providing the capital, technology, and operational expertise needed to responsibly develop assets held in trust for the Filipino people. Every major mining project is, in essence,

a public-private partnership in which the State is the resource owner and principal. For this partnership to work, responsibilities must be shared. Mining companies must comply with one of the most demanding environmental and social regulatory regimes in the world while investing billions of pesos over decades. Government, for its part, must provide coherent policies, predictable regulation, and efficient permitting. Without these, even highly prospective mineral assets remain undeveloped. A major source of uncertainty lies in the gap between national policy and local implementation. While national law mandates the responsible development of mineral resources as a driver of industrialization and inclusive growth, some local ordinances have imposed blanket restrictions that conflict with national policy. These inconsistencies delay or derail projects already authorized under the Mining Act. The result is not simply lost investment; it is lost employment, lost local revenues, and lost opportunities for host communities. Exploration illustrates this challenge clearly. No mine can be developed unless minerals are first discovered, yet exploration remains the weakest link in the Philippine mining value chain. Permitting is lengthy and fragmented, and in areas within ancestral domains, overlapping procedures and incomplete docu-

mentation create uncertainty for both Indigenous communities and legitimate investors. Respecting the constitutional rights of Indigenous Peoples—including the requirement for Free, Prior and Informed Consent—is non-negotiable. But protecting these rights should not mean tolerating processes that are unclear, inconsistent, or open-ended. Governance must be strengthened through transparent procedures, clear timelines, and institutional accountability. This is why the anticipated Executive Order establishing a National Policy Framework on Developing a Critical Minerals Industry is so important. Properly designed and implemented, it can address long-standing structural constraints by improving policy coordination, clarifying regulatory pathways, and ensuring that national policy is applied consistently across agencies and local governments. It can also help align the country’s mining policy with broader economic, energy, industrial, and national security objectives—an alignment that is increasingly essential as global supply chains reorganize around strategic minerals. One element deserves particular emphasis: stability provisions in mining contracts. These provisions are not loopholes or concessions. They are safeguards that protect legitimate investments from retroactive changes in national laws, local ordinances, or regulatory interpretations that can render long-term mineral development projects unviable. Stability provisions do not weaken government oversight; they strengthen the State’s ability to attract responsible capital by ensuring that the rules of engagement remain clear and consistent. The MGB is correct that global demand can sustain the growth of the mining industry. But demand alone will not build an industry. The measure of our success will not be the value of minerals beneath our soil, but whether we have the governance, institutions, and policy coherence to transform those resources into industries, jobs, stronger communities, and long-term national prosperity.



Nartatez has responded with the requisite urgency and transparency

actively communicating before a tragedy happens, rather than reacting in its painful aftermath? These are difficult questions, but they demand serious, actionable answers. Nartatez’s directive to intensify police

visibility around schools is a necessary first step. However, the more enduring, difficult work lies ahead: turning the agonizing lessons of Tacloban into institutional reforms that permanently strengthen both public safety and public trust. For the families who lost their children, no amount of reform can erase the hollow ache of their grief. What they deserve right now is an investigative process they can actually believe in—one that is transparent, credible, and unwaveringly committed to the truth. The PNP has long championed its vision of a “Bagong PNP para sa Bagong Pilipinas: Serbisyon Mabibilis, Tapat at Nararamdaman” (A New PNP for a New Philippines: Fast, Honest, and Tangible Service).

Following this disaster, Nartatez has responded with the requisite urgency and transparency. If these principles continue to strictly guide the investigation and the systemic reforms that must follow, Tacloban will be remembered not only as a profound tragedy, but as the exact turning point where public trust was restored.

(The writer is the Chairman Emeritus of several civic organizations, including the Alyansa ng Bantay sa Kapayapaan at Demokrasya and the Filipinos Do Not Yield Movement. He holds a Juris Doctor and a PhD, plus multiple master’s degrees in National Security and Public Administration).

Records tumble as European deadly heatwave moves east

BERLIN—Tens of millions are braving a weekend of extreme temperatures in Europe as a deadly heatwave moves eastwards, with some countries announcing rising death tolls and health services warning of saturation.

While some mild relief is expected Sunday in western Europe, German forecasters are warning that more temperature records could still be broken over the weekend as eastern countries issue a slew of red alerts for the coming days.

AFP analysis suggested almost 200 million people faced temperatures of more than 35C on Saturday as an unprecedented hot spell that has already seen records tumble in Britain, France, Switzerland drags on.

France is seeing “a higher than normal number of deaths” due to the

heatwave baking the country, Health Minister Stephanie Rist said Saturday.

“We’re seeing indicators that mortality will very likely be higher than at the same time last year,” Rist told La Tribune newspaper.

Spain had already said Thursday that the heatwave could be linked to 212 deaths over a four-day period.

Paris’ hospitals said that visits to emergency rooms were 36 percent higher than normal on both Friday and Saturday, while Vienna said its emergency services were 15 percent busier and that they had put on extra staff.

Street parties and music festivals were cancelled in France, Germany and the Netherlands—though a Pride March went ahead in Budapest despite the extreme heat warnings. **AFP**



RECORD-BREAKING HEATWAVE. Residents of Warsaw cool off near a fountain in the city center during the heatwave that has reached Poland during the weekend. In France, health officials said Sunday there had been around 1,000 more deaths than expected during a record-breaking heatwave that has baked much of western Europe for days. ‘Since June 24, approximately 1,000 additional deaths (unconsolidated figures) have been observed compared to the deaths recorded in previous months,’ Public Health France said in a statement. **AFP**

Venezuela quakes kill 1,400 as time running out to rescue survivors

LA GUAIRA, Venezuela—Rescue crews raced Saturday (Sunday, Manila time) to find survivors in the rubble of Venezuela’s powerful earthquakes as the death toll reached 1,430 and hopes dwindled more than three days after the earth roared and rumbled.

Tens of thousands of people were reported missing as collapsed buildings dotted cities in a country already enduring an economic crisis and political upheaval after US special forces captured authoritarian leader Nicolas Maduro in January.

Millions of people were also feared to lack sanitation and other basic needs.

Experts say the first 72 hours after natural disasters are the key, narrow window for finding the living. After that the search becomes one of recovering bodies.

A Salvadoran rescue worker who declined to give his name put it this way: “At this point, they are probably dead bodies. Thanks to God maybe we can find people still alive.”

An 11-year-old boy was rescued from the rubble in Caraballeda, in the north of the country, late Saturday, interim leader Delcy Rodriguez said.

“Every life is a source of hope for Venezuela,” she said in a post on X, accompanied by a video of the rescue.

Facing public outrage at the response by local officials, US-backed Rodriguez thanked other countries for the outpouring of aid.

The United States said one runway at Simon Bolivar International Airport was partially functioning to receive C-17 US military planes, while a naval ship had arrived off the coast.

The search for survivors saw desperate attempts by local residents to

claw away rubble from buildings that collapsed in Wednesday’s two quakes.

“It’s just very chaotic, hot and un-organized,” said Australian firefighter Craig Demeillon, 43, who traveled alone to La Guaira from Miami to help. “Hopefully there’s more people to find.”

UN aid chief Tom Fletcher on Friday told AFP the death toll could continue to soar, adding that more than 50,000 people were missing.

There was joy in the hardest-hit coastal area of La Guaira, north of Caracas, when locals pulled an infant alive out of the wreckage on Friday, around 32 hours after the magnitude 7.2 and 7.5 tremors. **AFP**

Netanyahu plans ‘broad nat’l govt’ after Israel vote

JERUSALEM—Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared his intention during the weekend to form a broader coalition after the upcoming election, explicitly distancing himself from both the far-right and the left.

Netanyahu, the country’s longest serving prime minister across multiple terms, has already announced that he plans to run in the national elections to be held no later than Oct. 27.

“I intend to establish a broad national government, not a right-wing government, not a left-wing government that depends on Arab parties, but a broad national government,” Netanyahu said, in a televised briefing, signaling a significant shift in his political strategy.

“Because only in this way, I think, can we reach internal agreements ... It means, first of all: enough with boycotts. I am not boycotting anyone. I say, everyone will be able to join; they simply need to agree to our basic principles, that Israel is the nation-state of the Jewish people and that we respect individual rights,” he added.

Netanyahu’s remarks come as he himself—currently heading one of the most right wing government in Israel’s history—has been polling badly in recent surveys.

By reaching across the aisle, Netanyahu appears to be trying to reframe his electoral pitch around national unity rather than ideological alignment.

A recent survey showed that a majority of Israelis want him to leave office.

Public opinion is critical of the war that Israel and the US launched on Iran in late February, whose ceasefire talks Israel was left out of, leading to a deal between Tehran and Washington viewed by many as unfavourable to Israel.

A recent poll by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem found that more than 92 percent of Israelis believe Iran had won the war, and support for Netanyahu’s premiership plummeted from 40.5 percent in early March to 29.4 percent in June.

Public anger also lingers over the security failures surrounding the October 7 attacks, continuing to weigh on his standing. **AFP**



VANDALISM BLAMED. People view the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool from behind a fence on June 27, 2026 in Washington, DC. Fencing has been installed around the area after claims made by President Trump that vandalism was the cause of the damage. **AFP**

Seoul, Tokyo reaffirm pledge to denuclearize peninsula

SEOUL—The defense ministers of South Korea and Japan reaffirmed on Sunday their countries’ commitment to the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, despite Pyongyang’s repeated pledges to expand its nuclear arsenal.

The meeting comes after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to strengthen his country’s defence capabilities, including equipping its navy with nuclear weapons and pressing ahead with missiles testing.

South Korean Defense Minister Ahn Gyu-back held talks with Japanese counterpart Shinjiro

Koizumi in Seoul, who is on a two-day visit, during which the two agreed to explore ways to deepen defense cooperation.

Seoul and Tokyo are both security allies of Washington, but cooperation between their militaries has been hampered by historical tensions stemming from Japan’s colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula in the early 20th century.

But the two “reaffirmed their commitment to the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the establishment of lasting peace, and agreed to continue bilateral cooperation... as well as

trilateral cooperation among South Korea, Japan and the United States”, Seoul’s defense ministry said in a statement released after the bilateral meeting.

The meeting also came weeks after the two neighbours held their first joint maritime search-and-rescue exercise in nine years, a move widely seen as another step towards closer defense cooperation.

The renewed commitment by the two defense chiefs to rid the peninsula of nuclear weapons, however, comes as Pyongyang has recently vowed not only to retain its nuclear arsenal but also to expand it.**AFP**



UKRAINE HITS BACK. This handout photograph taken and released by the State Emergency Service of Ukraine during the weekend shows firefighters evacuating a wounded person from a damaged residential building following a Russian strike in Sumy, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. **AFP**

Ukrainian strike kills one in southern Russia

MOSCOW—A “massive” Ukrainian drone strike killed one person and wounded another in southern Russia and caused a fire in a refinery, the regional governor said on Sunday.

Krasnodar regional governor Veniamin Kondratyev said several houses were also damaged by falling debris.

“Krasnodar region came under a massive enemy drone attack... Sadly, one person was killed,” Kondratyev said in a post on Telegram, adding that “one person was wounded and received the necessary assistance on site”.

He said that a “fire also broke out at an oil refinery in the city, and a power line and gas pipe were damaged”.

IN BRIEF

Israel army says killed ‘terrorists’

JERUSALEM—The Israeli military said Sunday it killed several “armed terrorists” a day earlier in southern Syria.

“Yesterday (Saturday), IDF soldiers eliminated several armed terrorists in the Security Zone in southern Syria,” it said in a statement.

The Israeli army has occupied what it calls a “security zone” in southern Syria since late 2024 and said it would remain in place there “in order to remove any threat to Israeli civilians and IDF soldiers”.

Israeli defence minister Israel Katz said earlier this month that it planned to keep its troops in Syria “for an unlimited period,” as well as in Lebanon and Gaza.

After the December 2024 overthrow of Syria’s longtime ruler Bashar al-Assad, Israel sent troops into a UN-patrolled buffer zone that separated Israeli and Syrian forces on the Golan Heights.

Israel has also carried out repeated incursions into Syrian territory since then, as well as bombings, and has said it wants a demilitarized zone in the country’s south.

Israel captured most of the Golan Heights from Syria in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and later annexed the areas under its control, in a move not recognised by most of the international community. **AFP**

3 Pakistani troops killed in attack

KARACHI—Three Pakistani Rangers were killed in a terror attack in the southern megacity Karachi on Saturday evening, the country’s military said, following an explosion and heavy gunfire.

A statement released Sunday by the Pakistan Armed Forces said terror group Jamaat-ul-Ahrar was responsible for the “cowardly” raid on a Rangers camp in the port city.

“The assailants, after a blast at main gate of the camp, attempted to breach the perimeter security, however, their nefarious designs were decisively foiled by the vigilant and resolute response of Rangers troops,” which left three attackers dead and another wounded.

The statement added that three Rangers died and four more were wounded.

Jamaat-ul-Ahrar is a militant group often linked to Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Attacks, many claimed by the TTP and its affiliates, have escalated in recent years in Pakistan.

Islamabad has accused Afghanistan of providing a safe haven to militants since the Afghan Taliban returned to governing the country in 2021, which Kabul has repeatedly denied.

The armed forces statement said Pakistan will “continue at full pace to wipe out menace of foreign sponsored and supported terrorism from the country”, and vowed retaliation.

AFP journalists heard heavy gunfire in Karachi on Saturday night, as armed service personnel cordoned off streets around the Mosamiat Chowrangi area of the city, the capital of Sindh province. **AFP**

Sun Life 5150 Bohol sets landmark 10th staging

FRESH from successful inaugural races in Guimaras and Camiguin, the 5150 Triathlon Islands of the Philippines Series heads to Bohol on July 12 for the pivotal third leg of the four-stop circuit showcasing Olympic-distance racing across some of the country’s most breathtaking island destinations.

More than just the penultimate stop of the inter-island series, the Sun Life 5150 Triathlon carries added significance as it celebrates its historic 10th staging, a milestone that underscores its status as one of the Philippines’ most enduring and well-loved races.

Over the past decade, the event has earned a reputation for competitive racing, strong community support and a festival-like atmosphere that continues to attract both elite athletes and first-time participants.

Set against the backdrop of one of the country’s premier sports tourism destinations, Bohol offers competitors a unique racing experience amid stunning natural attractions, rolling countryside and warm island hospitality. Beyond the racecourse, athletes and visitors can explore the province’s world-famous Chocolate Hills, pristine beaches, centuries-old churches, lush forests and vibrant marine sanctuaries, making the event as much a travel experience as a sporting challenge.

Organized by Sunrise Events, Inc., the series forms part of the National Sports Tourism-Inter Agency Council’s initiative to position the Philippines as a premier global destination for endurance sports, with support from the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA).

The Philippine Sports Commission is at the forefront of the campaign, stressing that internationally recognized races held in scenic natural settings can promote both the nation’s sporting prestige and its tourism industry.

In Bohol, the Sun Life 5150 Triathlon combines high-performance racing with the island’s signature charm. Athletes will tackle the classic Olympic-distance format featuring a 1.5-km swim, 40-km bike ride and 10-km run across a course expected to test endurance, speed and strategy under the tropical sun, over rolling terrain and against a highly competitive field.

The event is expected to draw many of the country’s top triathletes, including elite Under-23 standouts, alongside seasoned age-group racers eager to make their mark on one of the most prestigious stops on the local circuit.

Athletes from various countries are also expected to compete, adding international flavor to the blue-ribbon event and further reinforcing the growing global reach of IRONMAN-branded races in the Philippines.



Argentina’s forward Lionel Messi celebrates scoring his team’s third goal during the 2026 World Cup Group J football match between Jordan and Argentina at the Dallas Stadium in Arlington. AFP

Messi stars as Argentinians head into final 32 on a high

ARLINGTON—Lionel Messi came off the bench to score his sixth goal of the tournament as Argentina warmed up for their World Cup knockout match with Cape Verde by beating Jordan 3-1 on Saturday.

The ageless Messi tops the scoring charts in North America as the tournament heads into the last 32.

Cape Verde’s players will be wondering how they can stop Messi when the debutants ranked 67 face the champions on July 3 in Miami.

With qualification already in the bag, Messi started on the bench but came on after an hour in Texas to huge cheers to get his side’s third with a free-kick.

Argentina finished emphatically top of Group J with maximum points after also beating Algeria 3-0 and defeating Austria 2-0, all those goals coming from Messi.

The holders and their 39-year-old talisman look formidable, albeit in one of the weaker groups.

Coach Lionel Scaloni said Messi could have played the full game.

“But he chose to let his teammates have minutes, he chose to think about what’s coming, and that speaks volume about him,” he said.

Giovani Lo Celso, who scored Argentina’s first

of the evening, said it had been almost the perfect group stage.

“We knew we had very tough opponents, that it wasn’t going to be easy,” he said.

“It’s a pity about the goal we conceded today, we would’ve liked to end with a clean sheet.

“Still, I think it was a very good group stage. Now the most important part begins.

“From now on, it’s about turning the page and thinking about Cape Verde, who will be a very tough opponent.”

Fans demand Messi

A much-changed Argentina scored in the first half through a Lo Celso free-kick and a penalty by Lautaro Martinez.

Mousa Al-Tamari pulled one back 10 minutes after half-time for Jordan, whose first World Cup was already over.

Scaloni made nine changes, retaining only goal-

keeper Emiliano Martinez and forward Lautaro Martinez from the Austria win.

Jordan were already eliminated after defeats to Algeria and Austria, rendering the match inconsequential in terms of the tournament.

But competition in the Argentina squad is fierce and Scaloni wanted his side to join France and co-hosts Mexico with nine points.

Argentina also wanted to make a statement ahead of the meeting with surprise packages Cape Verde as they attempt to become the first team since Brazil in 1962 to win back-to-back World Cups.

The home of the Dallas Cowboys was packed with Argentina fans and their team dominated from the off.

Lo Celso got the party started, bending in a free-kick on 19 minutes that goalkeeper Yazeed Abulaila got nowhere near having inexplicably moved in the opposite direction.

A relaxed-looking Messi smiled broadly from the sidelines.

Soon after the champions doubled their lead when Martinez rifled in a penalty following a VAR review when Marcos Senesi appeared to be kicked in the face as he went for a diving header. AFP



Inand Fornilos of Imus Yangkee

GenSan edges Pasig in MPBL; Zamboanga, Imus win

THE GenSan Warriors escaped Pasig City, 81-80, on Saturday to retain top spot in the SportsPlus MPBL (Maharlika Pilipinas Basketball League) 2026 Season South division at the Olivarez College Gym in Paranaque.

Behind, 75-80, Pasig threatened following two free throws by Keith Pido and a layup by Jacob Galicia with 6.4 seconds left.

GenSan’s Larry Rodriguez missed two charities with 3.8 seconds to go, and Galicia snagged the rebound.

GenSan climbed to a 14-2 record, while Pasig slid to 7-5.

Zamboanga batters Bacolod

Zamboanga SiKat battered Bacolod, 117-80, in the second game to regain traction with a 5-9 slate.

Inand Van Fornilos paced Zamboanga with 18 points, 7 rebounds and 2 assists, followed by former University of Santo Tomas Growling Tiger Forthsky Padrigao, with 13 points, 12 assists, 2 rebounds and 2 steals, and Brandon Wilson, with 13 points plus 9 rebounds.

Bacolod tumbled to 3-14.

Imus subdues Manila

Imus Yangkee banked on Noel Santos and Dylan Darbin to beat Manila Batang Quiapo, 74-64, in the nightcap.

Santos chalked up 25 points, 12 rebounds, 2 assists and 2 steals, while Darbin chipped in 15 points, 5 rebounds and 4 assists.

Manila, which stumbled to 2-13, got 25 points and 6 rebounds from Mark Doligon, and 10 points, 3 rebounds and 2 steals from Ivann Salinel.

The tournament returns to the Paco Arena in Manila on Monday, featuring games between Pasay and Ilagan Isabela at 4 p.m., Caloocan and Paranaque at 6 p.m., and Cebu and Quezon City at 8 p.m.

Que eyes back-to-back wins, but wary of Pinewoods test

EVEN after decades of competing on some of golf’s toughest courses around the world, Angelo Que isn’t about to make bold predictions heading into unfamiliar territory.

Coming off a victory at Caliraya Springs and carrying solid form into the third leg of this year’s Philippine Golf Tour, the veteran campaigner is approaching the ICTSI Pinewoods Challenge with guarded optimism, fully aware that the mountain course’s reputation – not its modest length – could prove the biggest obstacle in his bid for back-to-back championships beginning Tuesday (June 30) at Pinewoods Golf and Country Club.

“I’ve never played Pinewoods so I’ll have to see it first before making any comment over how I would assess my chances,” said

Que, whose honesty reflects the respect the layout commands despite his extensive international experience.

For all his success, Que understands that Pinewoods is anything but a familiar power golf test. Designed around the rugged mountainside, the par-72 layout demands precision far more than brute strength. Its fairways leave little room for aggressive driving, thick rough punishes even slight misses, while dramatic elevation changes and sloping greens require precise club selection, patience and disciplined course management.

Que and the rest of the field will get their first competitive look at one of Sta. Lucia’s premier courses during Monday’s traditional pro-am, where they will team up with guest amateurs in the 18-hole event that doubles as the players’ final tune-up. More importantly,

it will provide the pros a valuable opportunity to familiarize themselves with the mountain layout – studying its fairways, elevation changes, tricky green complexes and demanding shot values before the P2.5 million championship begins.

Que’s confidence, however, continues to grow following his dramatic one-shot victory over Tony Lascuña at Caliraya Springs, where he survived a tense final-round duel to claim his first win of the season. He further boosted his credentials with a joint eighth-place finish in a regional event last week, making him one of the hottest players entering the Baguio stop.



Angelo Que

Underdog Congo advances but Iran out in World Cup

LOS ANGELES—The Democratic Republic of Congo became the latest underdogs to roar at the World Cup on Saturday, battling into the knockout rounds for the first time as Iran’s rollercoaster campaign ended in elimination.

A chaotic finale to the tournament’s expanded group phase saw Austria and Algeria fill the final two berths in the last 32 late Saturday after battling to an extraordinary 3-3 draw in Group J -- a result that dashed Iran’s hopes of advancing from their group.

A win for either Austria or Algeria would have allowed Iran to squeeze into the last 32, and it looked as if the Asian side would advance when Riyadh Mahrez scored in the third minute of stoppage time to put the Algerians into a 3-2 lead.

But Iranian joy was shortlived when Sasa Kalajdzic arrowed in a header in the sixth minute of injury time to snatch a draw for Austria and spark pandemonium in Kansas City.

Austria midfielder Marcel Sabitzer, who scored Austria’s second goal, described the closing moments as “weird”.

“It’s a draw normally, so you think you go through and then one moment from Algeria,” he said. “We did it and we were very lucky at the end, but very happy about that.”

It was the final act of another enthralling day at the tournament which saw DR Congo emulate fellow African minnows Cape Verde by reaching the knockouts following a 3-1 defeat of Uzbekistan.

DR Congo’s win in Atlanta -- their first ever victory in a World Cup match -- was enough to secure third place in Group K, setting up a dream clash with England in the next round.

“We love our national team. We love what we represent. I think tonight we just showed what it means for us is just to fight no matter what,” said DR Congo striker Yoane Wissa.

DR Congo’s progression continued a stunning World Cup for African sides. Only one of 10 African teams -- Tunisia -- failed to reach the second round. AFP



Princess Aumagel Cortez drapes the Philippine flag over her shoulders after clinching the 59kg women's class combat sambo gold in the 11th Asia-Oceania Sambo Championships at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium on Saturday evening. At right, Aislinn Agnes Yap rejoices after retaining her women's -80-kilogram combat sambo crown on Sunday.

PH fighters bag 3 golds, finish 5th in Sambo meet

FILIPINO fighters finished with a flourish, adding a third and final gold from Aislinn Agnes Yap to cap a highly-fruitful local campaign in the 11th Asia-Oceania Sambo Championships presented by the Philippine Sports Commission yesterday.

In front of animated hometown fans at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium, Yap took down bull-strong Zamzagul Faizollanova of Kazakhstan midway into their match to fashion a close 1-0 decision in retaining her women's -80-kilogram combat sambo crown. Yap's pin-down of the five-time Kazakhstan national champion was placed under protest by her camp, but a review of the tape by technical officials upheld the previous decision.

It was a third mint for the hosts after national team members Jomary Torres and Aumagel Princess Cortez ruled their respective divisions the

previous night in the meet held under the auspices of the National Sports Tourism Interagency Committee led by PSC Chairman Patrick Gregorio.

Ranked No. 7 in the world, Torres had literally a knockout performance, striking with a picture-perfect right roundhouse kick to the head of Kazakhstan's Zhadyra Paiyz barely seconds into their women's 50kg combat sambo finals match.

Taking stock of the condition of Paiyz, who stayed on her knees and looked glassy-eyed from the hit, the referee stopped the fight and declared the Filipina fighter the winner by an 8-0 count for the gold.

In gesture of concern and sportsmanship, Torres then stooped down beside her fallen foe to see if she was okay.

Inspired by her national teammate's sterling outing, Cortez struck hard and early in fashion in an emphatic 9-2 triumph over another Kazakhstani, Mervet Berdzhinakova in the women's 59kg women's combat sambo class.

Their triumphs softened somewhat the 0-6 loss in the women's +80kg combat sambo defending champion Sydney Sy to familiar rival and former world champion Arailym Abenova of Kazakhstan the same night.

The third silver for the country came yesterday courtesy of national team newcomer Jasmaine Henryk Ching, who lost by submission to Kazakhstan's Gulo Almukhanbetova in the women's -54kg sport sambo finals.

Cone: Gilas can shock Australia, NZ in World Cup qualifiers

GILAS Pilipinas head coach Tim Cone is optimistic of the national team's chances to pull off an upset in its road games against powerhouses New Zealand and Australia in the third window of the 2027 FIBA World Cup Asian Qualifiers.

"We've been a team that pulled surprises before and I'm not going to be surprised if we pulled it off," Cone said ahead of his squad's matches against the New Zealand Tall Blacks and the Australia Boomers next week.

Under the veteran tactician, Gilas stunned host China, 77-76, in the semifinals then went on to win the gold medal against Jordan, 70-60, in the 2023 Asian Games in Hangzhou, ending a 31-year title drought in the continental showpiece.

The Nationals also pulled the rug from under home squad and former world No. 6 Latvia, 89-80, in the 2024 FIBA Olympic Qualifying Tournament in Riga.

Cone is urging his Gilas men to treat their crucial tiffs versus New Zealand and Australia as championship games, with win-loss records set to be carried over to the next round of the qualifiers.

"Every game for Gilas is a championship game. It's a Game 7," the PBA's winningest mentor said. "And we just got to be prepared the best way we can."

The PH basketball squad will tangle with New Zealand in Auckland on July 3 before travelling to Perth to take on Australia on July 6 to close out its Group A campaign in the first round.

Gilas will be eager to avenge their home losses to the Tall Blacks and the Boomers as it seeks to improve its 2-2 record with six points heading to the crossover round where it could possibly face Jordan, Iran, and Syria from Group C.

The national squad will aim to finish in the top three of its crossover group to secure a spot in the World Cup next year in Qatar.

Cone lauded the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas (SBP) for setting up the team's training camp in Brisbane, Australia and friendlies in New Zealand ahead of the final window.

"I like the way the SBP has set it up for us in terms of being able to go down to Brisbane and acclimatize ourselves to the weather a little bit, get a camp down there, and play a couple of friendlies against pro New Zealand teams," Cone said.

"I've always said a prepared team is a confident team. If we feel like we're prepared and ready to go, then we're going to be confident, and that will show in our game," he added. **Jeremiah Sevilla**

Hovland grabs 1-shot PGA Travelers lead over Scheffler

NEW YORK—Norway's Viktor Hovland sank a birdie putt from just beyond six feet on the 18th hole to grab a one-stroke lead over top-ranked Scottie Scheffler after Saturday's third round of the PGA Tour Travelers Championship.

A two-shot swing on the final hole after Scheffler missed a par putt from just inside nine feet left Hovland on 20-under par 190 after 54 holes at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell, Connecticut.

Hovland fired a six-under 64 while playing partner Scheffler, who led the Norwegian by two when the day began, settled for a 67 to stand on 191.

"We were both in perfect position there in the fairway. It's a tough pin," Hovland said. "Scottie hit a great shot and it almost spun back but it takes the hill down there and it's a really tough two-putt from down there."

"I stuck a good wedge shot in there and made a putt."

Hovland was cheered by Norwegian football fans in the United States for the World Cup, cheering his name while wearing their homeland football kit.

"The atmosphere was absolutely electric out here," Hovland said. "It was really cool to see some Norwegian jerseys out there and it was a blast to play in front of everyone."

Patrick Cantlay fired a 64 to share third on 195 with fellow American Akshay Bhatia.

Hovland seeks his eighth PGA Tour title and first since last year's Valspar Championship.

Scheffler, a four-time major champion seeking his 21st career PGA Tour title, took his season opener in the California desert but has not won since, settling for second at the Masters, Heritage and Doral tournaments.



Abraham Tolentino

Alas Men, Women pools to Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games named

THE Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) has identified on Friday the members of the men's and women's volleyball pools—head coaches and athletes—for the Aichi-Nagoya 20th Asian Games.

The pools are composed mostly of the players who saw action in the FIVB Men's World Championship the country hosted last September and the Bangkok Southeast Asian Games last December.

According to POC president Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino, POC secretary-general Atty. Wharton has sent out letters informing the reappointment of Italian Angiolino Frigoni and Japanese Takayuki Minowa as head coaches of the Alas Pilipinas Men and Women, respectively, to the Asian Games set from September 19 to October 4.

The head coaches' appointment take effect on July 1 and expire on October 15.

At the same time, the POC has also sought the full support of the Premier Volleyball League through its president Ricky Palou and commissioner Sherwin Malonzo for the Alas Women, most of who are playing for PVL teams.

Named to the women's pool are Jia De Guzman, Justine Yliyzeth Jazaren, Jennifer Nierva, Dawn Nicole Catindig, Mhicaela Belen, Eya Laure, Angel Anne Canino, Thea Gagate, Fifi Sharma, Vanessa Gandler, Alleiah Jan Malaluan, Amie Provideo, Nina Ytang, Janette Panaga, Erika Santos, Arah Panique, Marionne Angelique Alba, Maria Angelica Cayuna, Shaira Jardio, Dell Palomata, Shaina Marie Nitura

and Alyssa Jae Solomon.

The men's squad is made up of Bryan Bagunas, Marck Jesus Espejo, Lloyd Josafat, Jude Garcia, Michaelo Buddin, Leo Ordiales, Al Bukharie Sali, Rwenzmel Taguibolos, Ave Joshua Retamar, Josh Ybanez, Adrian Villados, Vince Patrick Lorenzo, Kristofer Rodge Alejos and Trevor Torio.

The POC is tasked to manage the country's national volleyball team program while the national federation is suspended by the FIVB—it's also the POC's task to supervise and managed national teams in all sports for the Olympics, Asian Games and SEA Games.

The deadly for the submission of the Entry By Names to the Aichi-Nagoya Organizing Committee is Wednesday (July 1).

Eala opens Wimbledon campaign against former tormentor Zarazua

By Jeremiah Sevilla

FILIPINA tennis standout Alexandra Eala is putting the finishing touches on her preparations for a historic main draw campaign as a seeded player in the Wimbledon Championships 2026 in London, England.

In an Instagram reel posted by Wimbledon early Sunday (Philippine time), the world-ranked No. 30 Eala (seeded 29th) was shown practicing her shots with doubles' partner Nikola Bartunkova of the Czech Republic at the All England Club.

Eala, who soared back to the top 30 to emerge as the first Filipino tennister to be seeded in a Grand Slam singles tournament, is eyeing a deeper run this time after a first-round exit in her debut last year.

Eala lost to eventual champion Barbora Krejickova of Czech Republic, 6-3, 2-6, 1-6, in her first Wimbledon appearance.

The 21-year-old Eala is set to clash against familiar foe No. 75 Renata Zarazua of Mexico in the opening round (Round of 128) on Tuesday.

Eala and Zarazua first locked horns in the quarterfinals of the ITF/USTA W100 Cary, North Carolina in the USA where the Mexican prevailed over the Pinay lefty, 3-6, 6-4, 6-3,

back in August 2024.

Eala bowed to Joint in the WTA 125 Lexus Eastbourne Open final, 4-6, 6-1, 6-7, last January.

Eala will also play in the Wimbledon doubles with Bartunkova. The Filipina-Czech pair, who teamed up in the Birmingham Open earlier this month, will go up against eighth seeds Jelena Ostapenko of Austria and Sofia Kenin of USA in the opening Round of 64.

The Pinay ace heads into the most prestigious Grand Slam brimming with confidence following a stellar grass-court swing highlighted by a victory in the WTA 125 Birmingham Open and a semifinal finish in the WTA 500 Berlin Tennis Open after beating top 10 players Elena Rybakina and Elina Svitolina.

Eala holds an overall record of nine wins against three defeats in four tourneys prior to Wimbledon.



Should Alexandra Eala settle the score with Renata Zarazua, she will either have a dream match against American multiple Grand Slam champion Serena Williams or a grudge rematch versus Maya Joint of Australia.

Banks, e-wallets told to cut fees

4.5%

Home price
increase in Q1

P3.39 million

Median price
of new houses

P4.7 million

Median price
of condo units

Home prices
increased 4.5%
in first quarter

By Thony Rose Lesaca

RESIDENTIAL property prices picked up 4.5 percent in the first quarter of 2026, faster than the 1.6-percent rise in the previous quarter amid renewed market momentum, data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) showed.

The BSP said quarterly growth in property prices was broad-based, with values increasing across the National Capital Region (NCR) and areas outside the capital.

Residential property prices rebounded by 3.5 percent annually within NCR after three quarters of decline, while property values grew 5.7 percent across several other metro areas.

“Price growth recovered in [the first quarter of 2026] across both houses and condominium units, indicating renewed momentum in the residential property market,” the BSP said.

It said that on a quarter-on-quarter basis, condominium prices strongly rebounded by 11.1 percent compared to a negative 1.7 percent increase in the fourth quarter.

“The increase in prices was supported by the broader recovery in the property sector, alongside developers’ aggressive promotional offers and more flexible payment terms, particularly for ready-for-occupancy units,” the BSP said.

House prices, which include single-attached or detached units, apartments, townhouses and duplexes, also modestly rose by 0.8 percent quarter-on-quarter from the negative 0.9 percent recorded previously.

The median price for all housing units in the Philippines stood at P3,900,610 in the first quarter of the year. Broken down, the median price for condominium units stood at P4,717,037 while house prices reached P3,388,383.

THE Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said Sunday it ordered banks and e-wallet operators to lower their interbank digital transaction fees and justify how they calculate their costs to make electronic payments more affordable.

Under Circular No. 1238 issued on June 17, 2026, the BSP ruled that person-to-person e-payment fees across different financial institutions should not be materially different from fees charged within the same institution.

“Lower fees will encourage more Filipinos and businesses to use and benefit from digital transactions,” BSP Governor Eli Remolona Jr. said.

“The BSP sees this as a step toward making digital transactions even more mainstream. At the same time, greater adoption can help improve efficiency across the payments system, reducing costs for everyone,” said Remolona.

The BSP said that as transfers within a single bank or e-wallet are

often free, any pricing differences should primarily reflect the fees paid to network switch operators BancNet for InstaPay and the Philippine Clearing House Corp. for PESONet.

The new directive requires BSP-supervised financial institutions to maintain a detailed cost analysis for delivering electronic payment products and services, which central bank officials can review during oversight activities.

The policy shift targets a key hurdle identified in the BSP Consumer Expectations Survey for the fourth quarter of 2025, which revealed that 1 in 3 Filipino consumers view high fees as a primary barrier to using digital payments more frequently.

The measure amends both the National Retail Payment System Framework and the Regulatory Framework for Merchant Payment Acceptance Activities (RFMPAA).

The BSP also updated the RFMPAA to expand transaction points where users can make digital payments to accelerate the growth of the local digital ecosystem.

To bring more informal businesses into the formal financial fold, the circular allows micro-merchants like sari-sari stores to open accounts using a National ID or any official document that establishes identity. Eligible micro-businesses include small and informal merchants with monthly aggregate gross receipts that do not exceed P250,000.

For these low-risk customers, acceptable onboarding documents include the national ID of the proprietor alongside evidence of business existence, such as barangay permits, self-attestation, digital storefronts, social commerce profiles or sustained wallet activity.



LANDMARK INVESTMENT. Finance Secretary Frederick Go is advancing a landmark foreign investment in the country’s renewable energy sector, reinforcing the Marcos Jr. administration’s commitment to attracting high-impact investments that strengthen energy security, create jobs and deliver long-term benefits for every Filipino. Go recently engaged executives of Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP) to accelerate the development of the 901-megawatt (MW) San Miguel Bay Offshore Wind Power Project in Camarines Sur. Once completed, the project is expected to become the first offshore wind farm in the Philippines and Southeast Asia.

PEZA welcomes lifting of new Metro Manila IT park ban

By Othel V. Campos

THE Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) welcomes the government’s decision to lift a moratorium on new information technology parks in Metro Manila and Cebu which will expand office location options for outsourcing companies.

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary and PEZA board chair Ma. Cristina Roque confirmed that the trade department approved the lifting of Administrative Order (AO) 18 and will endorse it to Malacañang for final presidential approval.

“We already approved the lifting of the AO18,” Roque told reporters on June 26 on the sidelines of the 2026 Wedding Fair at SMX Aura.

Issued in 2023, AO 18 imposed a freeze on the establishment of new economic zones for IT parks and centers in Metro Manila and Cebu to encourage development in rural areas. The restriction excluded applications that had already secured prior endorsements.

PEZA director-general Tereso Panga said lifting the moratorium would allow several brand-new, energy-efficient office developments in Metro Manila, including projects in Makati and Arca South, to host PEZA-registered IT-Business Process Management (IT-BPM) locators.

“These are brand new buildings, energy-efficient buildings. They can now offer special inventories. The goal is that IT park developers will not enjoy incentives but to the locator companies,” Panga said.

Panga said despite the moratorium, IT-BPM companies continued to expand in the Philippines, although some prospective locations could not be considered for PEZA tax incentives.

PEZA is evaluating a pending application involving a building developed by RCBC in Makati.

Apex Malasakit Village because home is where the heart is...



In photo, Sarmiento (fourth from left) is joined by Maco Mayor Arthur Carlos Voltaire Rimando (2nd from left) and Joan Villarmino (3rd from left), the happy new homeowner. Others in the photo are Joel S. Penido (4th from right), Charles Quilla (3rd from right) and Atty. Rodolfo A. Palma (extreme right), Apex Mining’s vice president for Legal, Risk and Mine Compliance.

ON 08 June 2026, through its Apex Malasakit Village Project, Apex Mining turned over 40 housing units in Brgy. Calabacab (Maco, Davao de Oro) to select families who needed relocation.

The event brought together Apex Mining executives, local government representatives, community leaders, and the beneficiary-families in a simple ceremony that celebrated not only the completion of the houses but also the realization of safer, more secure, and more dignified living conditions for the recipients. According to Luis R. Sarmiento, ASEAN Eng., president and CEO

of Apex Mining, “The project reflects our malasakit for our host communities. We want all families to be resilient and build better futures, living in homes that are safe.”

Highlights of the activity included the blessing of the housing units, ribbon-cutting ceremony, ceremonial handover of house keys, messages of support from stakeholders, and expressions of gratitude from beneficiary families.

The partnership between Apex Mining, the LGU of Maco, Barangay Calabacab, and the community remains strong

Steel industry expects softer demand this year

By Othel V. Campos

THE steel industry expects softer demand this year as slower government spending and weaker construction activity weigh on steel consumption.

Industry players, however, remain optimistic that infrastructure projects and a long-awaited industry roadmap will support long-term growth.

“More than 80 percent of steel use goes to construction and infrastructure. When construction slows down, steel consumption also slows down. It’s really a demand issue. Supply is not a problem,” South East Asia Iron and Steel Institute (SEAISI) and ASEAN Iron and Steel Council (AISC) chairman Ronald Magsajo said.

The sector has been monitoring declining building permits and slower infrastructure spending, both of which serve as indicators for steel demand. Magsajo said the performance of the steel sector has historically been closely linked to the country’s economic growth and construction activity.

“There are two factors. One is GDP performance. When GDP goes up, we also go up. The second is construction,” he said.

Despite near-term challenges, Magsajo expressed optimism that the resumption of government infrastructure projects, particularly flood control projects, could spur a recovery in the second half of the year.

“If the program restarts, they will boost construction, and steel is just one of the sectors that will benefit and grow with it,” Magsajo said.

Local steel producers account for about 60 percent of steel used in government projects, while imports supply the remainder.

The industry is also banking on the completion of a steel industry roadmap. Stakeholders expect to launch the roadmap within the year to outline the sector’s development plans through 2040.

The roadmap aims to revive the domestic roofing industry, which remains dependent on imports, while local mills produce about 90 percent of rebars.

To help substitute some imports, SteelAsia is developing two new mills in Lemery, Batangas and Candelaria, Quezon to produce structural steel products such as H-beams locally.



TOURISM CAMPAIGN. Department of Tourism Secretary Dita Angara-Mathay (center) visits exhibition booths featuring tourism attractions and locally made products from various provinces in Central Philippines during the launch of the ‘Discover More to Love’ domestic tourism campaign at the Central Philippines Tourism Expo (CPTEx) 2026 at Ayala Malls Solenad in Nuvali, Santa Rosa City, Laguna on June 26, 2026. The event also features cultural performances celebrating the region’s rich traditions as part of efforts to encourage domestic travel through immersive cultural and tourism experiences. Norman Cruz

Stock investors likely to stay cautious

By Jenniffer B. Austria

THE local stock market is expected to remain range-bound this week, with investors likely to stay cautious as key market risks continue to weigh on sentiment.

Japhet Tantiangco, research head at Philstocks Financial Inc., said the benchmark index will continue to trade within the 6,000 to 6,150 range as investors assess both domestic and global developments before taking on fresh positions.

“Failing to take 6,150, the local market gave up some of its grounds last week, falling back near the 6,000 support line. The loss of momentum implies that investors are not yet fully confident with risky assets amid downside risks to the general economy,”



Tantiangco

Tantiangco said.

Traders are also likely to monitor economic data releases, corporate earnings updates and signals from major central banks for clues on the direction of interest rates. Lingering concerns over inflation, geopolitical tensions and uncertainties surrounding global economic growth may also limit risk appetite.


“Amid upside risks to inflation, both from the demand and supply side, the BSP is seen to remain hawkishly biased with its policy. This would be a downside risk to the local market,” Tantiangco said.

Despite the cautious outlook, bargain hunting could emerge when the index approaches the 6,000 support level, while profit-taking may cap gains near the 6,150 resistance.

Last week, the index fell 1.03 percent to close at 6,072.24, while the broader all shares index dropped 1.5 percent to 3,330.35. Average daily value traded reached P8.8 billion, while foreign investors were net sellers with outflows at P2.14 billion.



EARTHQUAKE RELIEF. Newport World Resorts turned over 1,000 relief bags to the Philippine Air Force in support of communities hit by the Mindanao earthquake. The turnover was led by Newport World Resorts president and CEO Nilo Thaddeus Rodriguez, center left; chief legal and administrative officer Walter Mactal, second from left; vice president for Human Resources Al Formalejo, left; and Human Resources Culture and Engagement assistant director Carl Ervin Lumanlan, right. Joining them are PAF Col. Chester Guanzon, center right, commander of the 520th Air Base Group, Air Installation and Base Development Command; and 1st Lt. MC Felixes Cataylo, second from right, director for civil-military operations.



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
DANGEROUS DRUGS BOARD

BOARD REGULATION NO. 5
Series of 2026

SUBJECT: EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION FOR ORDINARY PRESCRIPTIONS FOR DANGEROUS DRUGS FOR A PERIOD OF ONE (1) YEAR

WHEREAS, the mandate and jurisdiction of the Dangerous Drugs Board are enumerated in Republic Act No. 9165, as amended—otherwise known as the “Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002”—which requires the use of special prescription forms for the dispensation of dangerous drugs under normal circumstances;

WHEREAS, the Dangerous Drugs Board, through Section 40(b) of Republic Act No. 9165, as amended, may nevertheless authorize the use of ordinary prescriptions in times of public emergency;

WHEREAS, the Board recently exercised this power through Board Regulation No. 10, series of 2025, as a response to then global public health concerns;

WHEREAS, the authorization to use ordinary prescriptions under Board Regulation No. 10 is set to expire on June 30, 2026;

WHEREAS, extending the use of ordinary prescription is a proportionate regulatory response to prevent disruption in treatment, avoid undue burden on medical practitioners and patients, and uphold the state’s obligation to balance drug control with public health and patient welfare, until such time that the DOH resumes full availability of the Special Prescription Forms;

WHEREFORE, the Board, by exercising its authority under Section 40(b) of Republic Act No. 9165, as amended, hereby promulgates this Regulation:

Section 1. DECLARATION OF POLICY—The Board extends the authorization to use ordinary prescriptions in order to allow the dispensing of medicines and pharmaceutical products classified as dangerous drugs, thereby relieving stakeholders of the transportation, logistics, and financial burdens of obtaining special prescription forms from the Department of Health.

Section 2. COVERAGE—This Regulation applies to medical practitioners with a valid and subsisting S2 license.

Section 3. IMPLEMENTATION AND DURATION—The guidelines and protocols on the issuance of ordinary prescriptions for dangerous drugs under Board Regulation No. 10, series of 2025, are extended until **June 30, 2027**.

Section 4. SUSPENSION AND REPEAL OF PREVIOUS REGULATIONS—Section 8 of Board Regulation No. 10, series of 2025, is expressly repealed.

The contrary provisions of Board Regulation No. 1, series of 2014, as well as other regulations, issuances, and rules inconsistent with this Regulation, are hereby suspended during the effectivity of this Regulation.

Section 5. DISSEMINATION—Upon approval of this Regulation by the Board, a copy thereof, as well as a soft copy of Board Regulation No. 10, series of 2025, shall be publicized in all the digital platforms of the Dangerous Drugs Board and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency.

Copies of the two Board Regulations, digital or otherwise, shall also be disseminated by the Board, through the Secretariat, to its network of medical associations, reputable newspapers and publications, and other key private sector stakeholders, to increase awareness of the policy among pharmacists, physicians, and patients as soon as possible.

Section 6. SEPARABILITY—If any provision or part of this Regulation is declared unauthorized, unconstitutional, or invalid by any court of law, those provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain valid and effective.

Section 7. EFFECTIVITY—The Board Regulation shall take effect immediately upon its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation and its registration with the Office of the National Register (ONAR), UP Law Center, Quezon City.

APPROVED and ADOPTED this 23rd day of June in the year of Our Lord, 2026, in Quezon City.

Secretary OSCAR F. VALENZUELA
Chairperson

Attested by:

Undersecretary EARL R. SAAYEDRA, CESO I
Board Secretary / Executive Director V

Using quality assurance to transform accounting education



GREEN LIGHT
Arnel Onesimo O. Uy

THE global accountancy profession is undergoing a profound identity shift. Driven by rapid advancements in artificial intelligence and complex global crises, the traditional view of the accountant as a mere processor of financial data is obsolete. As articulated by Garry Carnegie and his colleagues (2021, 2024), accounting must be understood as a “technical, social, and moral practice” whose ultimate purpose is to serve the public interest and enable the “flourishing of organizations, people, and nature.”

For higher education institutions, preparing future professionals to deliver this multi-dimensional function requires a complete transformation of academic programs. This identity shift cannot be achieved through passive curriculum updates. It demands the synchronized use of outcomes-based education (OBE) and quality assurance (QA). By embedding robust QA frameworks based on OBE practice into the institutional fabric, universities can transform accountancy education into a dynamic platform for professional and social transformation.

A fundamental premise of contemporary educational management is that quality assurance is not a static destination; it is an ongoing journey. This journey is rooted in a volitional choice by a university to ensure its curriculum remains relevant to the changing needs of society. In accountancy, that relevance means designing an educational ecosystem that explicitly supports the “technical, social, and moral practice” of the profession. The most effective vehicle for operationalizing this transformation is the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) approach.

By embedding robust QA frameworks based on OBE practice into the institutional fabric, universities can transform accountancy education into a dynamic platform for professional and social transformation.

OBE structures education backward: it begins by explicitly defining the core competencies, social values, and ethical mindsets a graduate must possess, and then designs the curriculum and assessments to achieve those targets. When aligned with Carnegie’s vision for accounting, OBE ensures that learning outcomes embraces professional skepticism, moral courage, and accountability to complement the technical skills needed for accountants to step up as pillars of trust, guardians of financial integrity, and strategic advisors.

This is where quality assurance provides a continuous and systematic process to assess, guide, and enhance alignment of teaching and learning strategies and assessments with the defined learning outcomes. QA allows learning institutions to ask the deep, qualitative questions: Are our students learning to exercise professional courage? Are they equipped to act as a moral compass when confronted with corporate fraud, or do they merely know how to mechanically apply standard accounting rules? And then enable the faculty, students, and university leaders to take proactive steps in successfully achieving the learning outcomes aligned with the societal mandate of the profession.

While the quest for quality often begins as a defensive response to regulatory compliance, it must eventually evolve into authentic institutional ownership. When a university transitions from compliance to ownership, the drive for quality is internalized, turning QA from a bureaucratic obligation into a shared institutional mission.

While internal QA systems cultivate daily educational habits, external quality assurance systems provide the diagnostic objectivity needed to navigate this journey successfully. Accreditation and assessment agencies—such as the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) locally, alongside international bodies like the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and the ASEAN University Network-Quality Assurance (AUN-QA)—serve as vital external partners.

These agencies offer universities diverse QA models, perspectives, and structured frameworks. Rather than acting as regulatory hurdles, external peer reviews provide schools with macro-level insights and specific suggestions for improvement. By evaluating programs against international benchmarks, external QA helps universities identify curricular gaps, update outdated instructional methods, and realign their accounting programs with global sustainability, ESG reporting, and public interest mandates.

External QA is not merely a box-checking exercise; it represents a commitment to building an institutional quality culture that is alive and dedicated to continuous improvement. For QA to drive genuine progress, the assessment process requires profound institutional humility. Robust assessments act as diagnostic mirrors, reflecting the true state of student learning and program effectiveness. They provide clear data revealing where instructional methods fall short or where the curriculum has become obsolete.

Accepting these findings requires universities to be humble enough to admit that historical practices may no longer serve the students or society. Instead of hiding deficiencies to project an illusion of perfection, a healthy QA culture views these gaps as valuable opportunities to change and improve. This humility shifts the institutional mindset, framing evaluation not as a threat, but as an essential catalyst for meaningful growth.

Through a continuous cycle of plan-do-check-act (PDCA)—which evaluates learning evidence, updates pedagogical techniques, and align practices with global standards—universities ensure that they are raising a new generation of accountants. These future professionals will not merely survive in the age of AI—they will lead, ensuring that the financial ledgers of the 21st century serve as reliable roadmaps for the holistic flourishing of organizations, people, and nature.

Arnel Onesimo O. Uy is a Full Professor at the Department of Accountancy of the Ramon V. del Rosario College of Business of De La Salle University (DLSU). He is a member of both the Philippine Interpretations Committee and the Philippine Sustainability Reporting Committee and the former chair of the Commission of Higher Education (CHED) Technical Committee on Accountancy. He can be reached at arnel.uy@delasalle.ph.

The views expressed above are the author’s and do not necessarily reflect the official position of DLSU, its faculty, and its administrators.

Career Opportunity in Orica Singapore Pte. Ltd. Philippines Branch

Position Title: Processor - Accounts Payable

Vacancy (1)

Job Description:

- Assists with monthly status reports, and monthly closings.
- Reconciles various accounts by identifying errors in posting or omissions by applying appropriate accounting standards.
- Receives, researches and resolves a variety of routine internal and external inquiries concerning account status, including communicating the resolution of discrepancies to appropriate persons.
- Files, maintains, and distributes accounting documents, records and reports.

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

- At least 2 years of relevant experience within the Finance / Accounting department of a large corporate organisation
- Possess intermediate understanding of basic accounting principles and practices and internal policy
- Well versed with ERP and other business / accounting tools
- Good communication skills (proficiency in conversational English language both written and verbal).

Applications may be sent to:
Name of Company HR: Alex Baldomero Oliver Jr.
Email address: oliv.alex@orica.com

Company/ Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: Orica Singapore Pte. Ltd. Philippines Branch	Name: Misael Miguel Luis
Complete address: 11th Floor, Tower 2 Rockwell Business Center Ortigas Avenue Ulgong Pasig City 1604	Address: Mandaluyong City
Nature of business: a domestic corporation primarily engaged in the business as a Shared Service Center	Nationality: Argentinian
	Intended period of employment: two (2) years

Orica Singapore Pte. Ltd. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Bureau of Local Employment located at 6F First Intramuros BF Condominium, Solana St.cor. A. Soriano Ave., Intramuros, Manila.

Any Filipino jobseeker who is competent, able and willing to perform the services for which the foreign national is intended to be hired for, may file an objection at Bureau of Local Employment located at 6F First Intramuros BF Condominium, Solana St. cor. A. Soriano Ave., Intramuros, Manila after this publication. Please inform Bureau of Local Employment, if you have any information on criminal offenses committed by the foreign national.

amazon

Career Opportunity in Amazon Operation Services Philippines Inc (AOSPI)

Position Title: Manager 1, Seller Support

Vacancy (2)

Job Description:

- Conducts Seller interaction audits and provides coaching to improve performance.
- Maintains a positive and professional demeanor, always portraying the company in a positive light and effectively managing sensitive issues.
- Demonstrates excellent time-management skills and the ability to work independently while using departmental resources, policies, and procedures.
- Collaborates with other departments such as Customer Service, Merchant Investigations, or Payments teams as required to resolve Seller's issues and questions.
- Create analytical capability in the process to analyze performance trends and follow-up on corrective plans.

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

- Fluent in Vietnamese, Written/Verbal Communication Skills
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills with the ability to communicate effectively to a wide range of constituencies in a diverse environment.
- Ability to maintain composure in critical situations and communicate clearly with both internal and external stakeholders.
- Demonstrates ability to analyze data, using the data to drive decision making.
- Fosters a positive team environment and collaboration within the site.

Applications may be sent to: Name of Company HR: Ivabelle Patricia Camalil
Email address: https://www.amazon.jobs/en/search

Company/ Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
Company Name: Amazon Operation Services Philippines Inc (AOSPI)	Name: Le Ngoc Huong Quyen
Complete address: Unit No. 2C, Flr. no. 4th, One E-Com Bldg., Ocean Drive, Mall of Asia Complex 5A, Zone 10, Barangay Orla, District 1, Pasay City, Metro Manila, NCR, 1300	Address: Mandaluyong City
Nature of business: AOSPI is a corporation organized under Philippine laws. It is registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) under SEC Certificate of Registration No. C285727208. It is authorized to provide support services, including but not limited to remote technical support services, IT development, customer support, customer care services, business process outsourcing, back office support (including but not limited to systems, hardware, software, financial operations, vendor management, and human resources relating to the back-office) and other activities, necessary or useful thereto, as well as marketing support activities, without engaging in retail trade, the practice of a profession, or acting as an Internet Service Provider.	Nationality: Vietnamese
	Intended period of employment: two (2) years

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

Any Filipino jobseeker who is competent, able and willing to perform the services for which the foreign national is intended to be hired for, may file an objection at Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila after this publication. Please inform Department of Labor and Employment - NCR, if you have any information on criminal offenses committed by the foreign national.

DA earmarks P68m to restore
Ifugao Rice Terraces by 2027

By Othel V. Campos

THE Department of Agriculture has invested more than P2.025 billion in rural infrastructure projects in Ifugao under the Philippine Rural Development Project and has earmarked another P68 million to restore the iconic Ifugao Rice Terraces starting in 2027.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. announced the investments during a visit to Banaue on Friday, as the DA moves to protect the UNESCO World Heritage site from climate change, deteriorating infrastructure and shifting farm economics.

The proposed funding forms part of a P147 million DA program to restore rice terraces across the Cordillera region in 2027, with Ifugao accounting for 46 percent of the allocation.

“Our goal is to ensure that preservation goes hand in hand with modernization by helping farmers become more productive, climate-resilient and profitable while protecting a heritage that has sustained generations,” Tiu Laurel said, adding that the department has also proposed P30 million to rehabilitate two agricultural tramlines in the province.

The DA has allocated more than P218.8 million to Ifugao’s agriculture sector this year to support rice, corn, high-value crops, livestock, climate adaptation and farmer development programs benefiting more than 400 farmers’ organizations and agricultural communities.

While visiting the Batad Rice Terraces, Tiu Laurel observed sections of the centuries-old landscape have shown signs of deterioration due to damaged stone walls, aging irrigation systems and increasingly unpredictable weather patterns.

Local stakeholders have sought government support for terrace rehabilitation, irrigation restoration, disaster mitigation measures and the expansion of programs to conserve heirloom rice varieties. A growing concern is the gradual conversion of some rice terraces into vegetable farms as farmers contend with water shortages and pursue higher incomes from high-value crops.

Tiu Laurel also inspected the damaged 1.2-kilometer San Fernando-Lubu-ong tramline connecting farming communities in Banaue and Hungduan, and the 520-meter Viewpoint-Ki-iyang tramline in Banaue, which has suffered repeated cable failures due to continuous use and heavy loads.

Silangan mine expected
to lift Philex revenues

By Jenniffer B. Austria

THE Silangan copper-gold project is expected to become the biggest contributor to Philex Mining Corp.’s revenues once it reaches full-year operations in 2027, according to a top company official.

Philex president and chief executive Eulalio Austin Jr. said Silangan would eventually generate more revenues than the Padcal mine because of its richer ore grades.

“Silangan is a higher-grade mine. Even if it has lower tonnage, it will produce more revenues than Padcal,” Austin said on the sidelines of the company’s annual stockholders meeting.

He said that by 2027, the project’s first full year of operations, Silangan was expected to become the company’s largest revenue contributor.

Commercial operations at Silangan are now targeted by the end of September as it is still in the final stages of completing the installation and testing of its highly

automated processing plant.

Silangan will initially process 2,000 metric tons of ore per day before gradually ramping up to as high as 10,000 to 12,000 metric tons per day. The company has already built an ore stockpile equivalent to about 2.7 months of operations, allowing the plant to begin processing immediately once commissioning is completed.

Meanwhile, Philex is also studying the possibility of extending the life of the Padcal mine beyond its current 2028 estimate.

Austin said drilling in a nearby mineralized area first identified in the 1980s had already been completed, with the company targeting the completion of a technical study before year-end to determine whether the resource could be economically mined.

For the longer-term expansion of Silangan, Austin said Philex remained open to bringing in strategic investors to accelerate the project’s planned expansion to as much as 12,000 tons per day. He said foreign investors had already visited the project site for due diligence.

If new equity investors come in, the company could speed up the expansion timetable instead of waiting several years to ramp up production, he said.

Rockport Power
expands retail
electricity network

By Alena Mae S. Flores


ROCKPORT Power Inc., a licensed retail electricity supplier, is expanding its reach across the Philippines to help customers lower their electricity bills by choosing their own energy provider.

The company said that through new partnerships with major distributors and electric cooperatives, Rockport Power is making the government’s energy choice programs more accessible to the public. These initiatives include Retail Competition and Open Access, which allows large-scale power users to shop for the best rates, and the Green Energy Option Program, which gives customers the choice to switch to purely renewable energy sources. It also includes the Retail Aggregation Program, which enables smaller customers to group together to negotiate lower electricity prices.

“We see our role not just as a supplier, but as a partner in helping Filipinos find real savings,” said Rockport Power President Marvee Espejo. “By working with local utilities, we are helping customers unlock more competitive and optimized energy solutions.”

Rockport Power is growing its presence through tie-ups with key utilities, including Manila Electric Co., Batangas I Electric Cooperative Inc. and Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative Inc. Area 2. The company also plans to partner soon with Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, reflecting strong momentum as its footprint extends into Mindanao.

Espejo noted that strong collaboration with these local distributors is essential to building a market that responds to what customers actually need.



Bright Kindle Resources
& Investments, Inc.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

To All Stockholders:

Please be advised that the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of **BRIGHT KINDLE RESOURCES & INVESTMENTS, INC.** (the “Corporation”) will be held virtually on **22 July 2026 (Wednesday) at 2:00 p.m.** There will be no physical venue for the Meeting. The Meeting will be held via remote communication at <https://bkr.com.ph/asm-bkr2026> with the Chairman of the meeting presiding from Makati City.

The Agenda of the Meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order

2. Proof of Notice and Certification of Quorum

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Stockholders' Meeting

4. Approval of the Management Report and Audited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2025

5. Ratification of All Acts of the Board of Directors and Management

6. Election of Directors

7. Appointment of the Independent External Auditor

8. Other Matters

9. Adjournment


For purposes of the Meeting, stockholders of record as of **25 June 2026** are entitled to receive notice and to vote at the said Meeting. Stockholders intending to participate by remote communication should pre-register at service@brightkindle.com on or before **10 July 2026**. Please refer to the **Requirements and Procedure for Participation and Voting at the 2025 Annual Stockholders' Meeting** (attached to the Definitive Information Statement) for detailed information on participation by remote communication and voting *in absentia* (electronic voting) or by proxy. The deadline to submit proxy forms is on **10 July 2026**. Validation of proxies is on **17 July 2026**.

A copy of the Notice of the meeting, Proxy Form, Definitive Information Statement, Management Report, minutes of the previous meeting of the stockholders, and other documents relating to the meeting may be accessed through the Company's website: <https://brightkindle.com/>.

By registering to participate in the virtual meeting, a stockholder, or proxy or representative of the stockholder, authorizes the Corporation and its service providers to process all their sensitive personal information necessary to verify their identity and authority. A stockholder who fails to comply with the registration requirement will not be able to participate in the virtual Annual Stockholders' Meeting.


For any question about the conduct of the virtual meeting, you may refer to the Frequently Asked Questions at <https://bkr.com.ph/asm-bkr2026> or email service@brightkindle.com.

Makati City, 8 June 2026.



ANA MARIA KATIGBAK
Corporate Secretary

SCN FORM NO. 1
(R.A. NO. 9139)
002072



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON NATURALIZATION

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF
KENT NICER LANG CHAN
Municipality of PASAY, Province of METRO MANILA, and all my former places of residence
pursuant to Republic Act No. 9139, as amended, to be naturalized as Filipino citizen

SCN CASE NO. 000971

PETITION

Pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act No. 9139, petitioner hereby submits a petition for naturalization to become a citizen of the Republic of the Philippines and respectfully declares:

1. My full name is **KENT NICER LANG CHAN**, but I have also been known since childhood as **KENT NICER LANG CHAN**, or I have been judicially authorized to use the alias name(s) **ZENG JINXIN**.

2. My present place of residence is **UNIT 202 JOLLIFLAND CONDOMINIUM, 670 EDSA Municipality of PASAY, Province of METRO MANILA**, and all my former places of residence are (please indicate periods of residence)
ELYSIUM TOWN HOMES UNIT 18-15 WEST AGUIRRE AVE., BF HOMES, PARAÑAQUE (1998-2007)
UNIT 304 MCS TOWER, CHINO ROCCES AVE., MAKATI CITY (2007-2011)
UNIT 601 MCS TOWER, CHINO ROCCES AVE., MAKATI CITY (2011-2021)

3. I was born on **MARCH 29, 1998**, in **MANILA**, Philippines. I have been a resident of the Philippines since birth. At present, I am a citizen or subject of **CHINA**.

4. My father's name is **EDWIN CO. CHAN** and he was born on **APRIL 11, 1963** in **FUJIAN**. He is a citizen or subject of **CHINA**. My mother's name is **ANNIE YAO ANG**, and she was born on **NOVEMBER 03, 1963**, in **FUJIAN**. She is a citizen or subject of **CHINA**.

5. My trade, business, profession or lawful occupation is **STUDENT** and from which I derive an average annual income of **N/A**, inclusive of bonuses, commissions and allowances. My wife's/husband's trade, business, profession or lawful occupation is **N/A** and from which she derives an average annual income of **N/A**.

(Where the above does not apply): I am exempt from the requirement of lucrative trade or occupation and from submitting income tax returns for the past three (3) years because I am a college degree holder [please state (1) degree obtained: **N/A** (2) name of school: **N/A** and (3) years graduated: **N/A**] who cannot practice my profession [the practice of which requires a government licensure examination] by reason of my citizenship.

6. My civil status is **Single**, I was married in **N/A** in **N/A**. My wife's/husband's name is **N/A** and she/he was born on **N/A** in **N/A**. She/he is a citizen or subject of **N/A** and presently resides **N/A**.

7. I am legally separated from my spouse; my marriage was annulled, per decree of legal separation/annulment dated **N/A** granted by **N/A**, [please indicate the particular court which granted the same]. I am a widower/widow and my spouse died on **N/A** in **N/A**.

8. I have **N/A** child/children, whose names, dates and places of birth and residences are as follows:

Name	Date of Birth	Place of Birth	Residence
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

9. I received my primary and secondary education from the following public schools or private educational institutions duly recognized by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), where Philippine history, government and civics are taught and prescribed as part of the school curriculum and where enrollment is not limited to any race or nationality:

Name of School	Place of School	Dates of Study	Highest Grade Completed
PHILIPPINE CULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL	MANILA	2004-2007	GRADE 2
MAKATI HOPE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL	MAKATI	2007-2015	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE
UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS	ESPANA, MANILA	2015-2019	BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN BIOLOGY (GRADUATE)
SAN SEBASTIAN UNIVERSITY	MENDOCIA, MANILA	2022-PRESENT	DOCTOR OF MEDICINE 3RD YEAR (ONGOING)

10. I am able to read, write and speak Filipino and/or any of the following dialects of the Philippines: **TAGALOG**.

11. I have enrolled my minor children of school age in the following public schools or private educational institutions duly recognized by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), where Philippine History, government and civics are taught and prescribed as part of the school curriculum and where enrollment is not limited to any race or nationality:

Name of Child	Name and Place of School	Date of Enrollment
N/A	N/A	N/A

12. I shall never be a public charge. I am of good moral character. I believe in the principles underlying the Philippine Constitution. I have conducted myself in a proper and irreproachable manner during the entire period of my residence in the Philippines in my relations with the constituted government as well as with the community in which I am living. I mingled socially with Filipinos and have evinced a sincere desire to learn and embrace the customs, traditions and ideals of the Filipino people. I have all the qualifications and none of the disqualifications under Republic Act No. 9139.

I am not opposed to organized government or affiliated with any association or group of persons who uphold and teach doctrines opposing all organized governments. I am not defending or teaching the necessity or propriety of violence, personal assault or assassination for the success and predominance of one's ideas. I am not a polygamist nor a believer in the practice of polygamy. I have not been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude. I am not suffering from mental alienation or from any incurable contagious disease. The country of which I am a citizen or subject is not at war with the Philippines and grants to Filipinos the right to be naturalized citizens or subjects thereof.

13. It is my true and honest intention to become a citizen of the Philippines and to renounce absolutely and forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty, and, particularly, to **CHINA** of which at this time I am a citizen or subject. I will reside continuously in the Philippines from the date of the filing of this petition up to the time of my admission to Philippine citizenship.

14. My character witnesses are **LYNN SABILLO QUISIMUNDO** and **DAENIELLE TAPIA PEREZ**, both Filipino citizens, of legal age, and residing at **UNIT 202 JOLLIFLAND CONDOMINIUM, 670 EDSA, BRGY 152, PASAY CITY** and **45-E 16TH AVE., BRGY. SAN ROQUE, QUEZON CITY**, respectively, who have executed sworn statements attached hereto in support of my instant petition, together with: (a) brief biographical data about themselves; (b) detailed statements on the dates they first came to know me, the circumstances of our initial acquaintance and the reasons and extent of our continuing familiarity; and (c) the number of times they have acted as character witnesses in other petitions for naturalization.

15. Attached hereto as annexes and made part of this petition are the **duplicate originals or certified photocopies** of the following documents (please check the appropriate box):

☒ Authenticated copy of Birth Certificate of petitioner [Issued by PSA (Philippine Statistics Authority)]

☒ Certified true copy of petitioner's **Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR)** or **I-Card Certificate** [Issued by BI (Bureau of Immigration)];

☐ Certified true copy of petitioner's **Native-Born Certificate of Residence (NBCR)**, if available (issued also by BI);

☐ Authenticated copy of petitioner's **Marriage Certificate**, if petitioner is married (issued by PSA);

☐ Authenticated copy of **Death Certificate** of his/her spouse if petitioner is widowed, or of his/her parent/s if petitioner is a student or candidate for a government licensure exam;

☐ Certified true copy of **Court Decree Judgment** annulling/nullifying of petitioner's marriage or granting legal separation, if such was the fact;

☐ Authenticated **Birth Certificate/s** of petitioner's child/children (issued by PSA);

☐ Certified true copy of **ACR** or **1-Card Certificate/s** of petitioner's child/children (issued by BI);

☐ Certified true copy of **NBCR/s** of petitioner's child/children (issued also by BT);

☒ Duty notarized Affidavit of Financial Capacity of the petitioner, or Affidavit of Support from the person financially supporting petitioner, if petitioner is either a student, a new graduate, spouse or war cities without income or a candidate for a government licensure exam, who has no own income. In addition, submit: (1) Bank Certifications (two are required: (1) said bank certifications must indicate the present balance and (2) average daily balance for the past six months); (2) Certificate of Employment if employed or Proof of Registration of Company if doing business (if doing business, please submit also the latest GIS (General Information Sheet) which was submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the financial statements of the company, which was submitted to the SEC; and (3) Proof of Ownership of Real Properties such as condominium, etc.; and if owner of motor vehicle, proof of ownership of the same (4) Proof of Ownership of other properties, such as shares of stock, insurance, etc. Note: If petitioner is relying on support from another person, the said person must also submit the above-mentioned documents. Note: If petitioner is already a graduate but unemployed, submit a notarized affidavit of what petitioner is currently preoccupied with.

☒ Latest Income Tax Returns (ITR) and Tax Documents (must show the receiving stamp of the BIR (Bureau of Internal Revenue)) for the past three (3) years of the petitioner or of the person supporting him/her, with **Proof of Payment** of said taxes (such as official receipts, aliphast, etc.). Note: If petitioner is employed in a family-owned company, the company's ITR and the company's Proof of Payment of Taxes must also be submitted, along with the submission of petitioner's own ITR and tax documents and Proof of Payment of Taxes. Note: The company's latest GIS (General Information Sheet), which was submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the financial statements of the company, which was submitted to the SEC) appropriate government agency, must also be submitted.

☒ Duty notarized Affidavits of at least two (2) credible and disinterested witnesses who must be Filipino citizens (preferably natural-born citizens of the Philippines), of good repute in their community, and have no criminal record (Note: submit National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) clearance of character witnesses; also submit a copy of the character witness used in the notarization of the affidavit. (Note: character witness must attest in the affidavit: (a) that he/she has known petitioner for at least 10 years or more (must also indicate how he/she got acquainted with the petitioner); (b) the good moral character of the petitioner (and how he/she mingles with Filipinos and the society); (c) that in his/her own opinion, petitioner has all the qualifications necessary to become a citizen of the Philippines and none of the disqualifications provided for by law);

☒ Medical Certificate from a government hospital stating that petitioner is not suffering from mental alienation, or a user of prohibited drugs or otherwise a drug dependent, and that he/she is not afflicted with acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) or any incurable contagious disease (please attach the following to the certificate: (1) Neuro-Psychiatric Evaluation Report (from a duly licensed psychiatrist (who is a medical doctor), not a psychologist); (2) Laboratory Test Results for Drugs Test and HIV Test; and, (3) other laboratory tests. (Note: all laboratory tests must also be conducted from a government hospital); Note: Petitioners for naturalization are required to have their medical examination/diagnostic procedures conducted in a government hospital or facility, not merely hospitals or facilities which are accredited by the government. The mere fact that the government hospital or facility is not near the residence or place of work of petitioner is not a valid reason for petitioner not to have said medical examination or diagnostic procedure conducted in a government hospital or facility. Note: It must be clear in the medical certificate and the diagnostic laboratory test results that the subject of said medical examination or diagnostic laboratory test is the petitioner.

☒ Certified true copy with school seal of the **Diploma and Transcript of Records** of the petitioner from the school's he or she attended to and/or graduated from in the Philippines (Elementary, High School and College). Note: If petitioner is still a student, please submit a **Certification** from the school where he/she is currently attending, stating his/her year level, that he/she is currently enrolled therein, and please attach proof of petitioner's enrollment therein and submit a certification as to the amount of tuition fee and other required school fees paid (such as official receipts, certificate of matriculation, etc.). Note: If petitioner has no own income and is relying on another person for support, the person financially supporting petitioner must submit certifications as to the amount of tuition and other required school fees paid by said person for the education of his/her other dependents (example: the tuition and other required school fees of the children of the person financially supporting petitioner).

☐ Certified true copy with school seal of the **Diploma, Transcript of Records, or Certification** (if applicable) from the school's attended by, currently enrolled in, and/or graduated from by petitioner's child/children (the school's must either be public schools or private educational institutions duly recognized by the DEPED (Department of Education), where Philippine history, government and civics are taught and prescribed as part of the school curriculum and where enrollment is not limited to any race or nationality. (Note: please submit a **Certification** from the school where said child/children/s are currently attending, stating his/her year level, that he/she is currently enrolled therein, and please attach proof of said child/children's enrollment therein and submit a certification as to the amount of tuition fee and other required school fees paid (such as official receipts, certificate of matriculation, etc.) for said child/children's enrollment in said school.


☒ Clearances **NBI Clearance**; **Barangay Clearance** of the barangay where petitioner is currently residing (it should be a barangay clearance, not a residence certification); **Police Clearance** from the Police Station Police Office having jurisdiction of the place where petitioner is currently residing; **RTC Clearance** (Regional Trial Court), from the RTC which has jurisdiction over the place where petitioner is currently residing; **MeTC/MCTC/MCTC Clearance** (Metropolitan Trial Court/Municipal Trial Court in Cities/Municipal Trial Court/Municipal Circuit Trial Court, as the case may be) from the MeTC/MCTC/MTC/MCTC which has jurisdiction over the place where petitioner is currently residing; and Office of the Prosecutor Clearance, from the Office of the Prosecutor of the place where petitioner is currently residing. Note: All clearances must be current and must not be expired.

16. Other documents submitted by the petitioner in support of his/her petition:

PRAYER

WHEREFORE, it is respectfully prayed that petitioner be conferred Philippine citizenship pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act No. 9139.

Dated at Parañaque City, Metro Manila, this 30th day of March, 2026.



KENT NICER LANG CHAN
Name and Signature of Petitioner
Telephone Number: 09958515333
Email Address: kentnichan1@gmail.com

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
CITY/MUNICIPALITY OF CITY OF PASAY S.S.

I, **KENT NICER LANG CHAN** AKA **ZENG JINXIN**, of legal age and a resident of **UNIT 202 JOLLIFLAND CONDOMINIUM, 670 EDSA, BRGY 152, PASAY CITY** after being duly sworn, depose and say that I am the petitioner herein, that I have read the foregoing petition and know the foregoing petition and know the contents thereof, and that the same is true of my own knowledge.

KENT NICER LANG CHAN
Name and Signature of Petitioner

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me at CITY OF PASAY this 30th day of MAR, 2026.

ATTY. JULIUS WINCHAY LIBANG
NOTARY PUBLIC/PSA CITY
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NTC to collect P3.8b from NOW after court ruling

By Darwin G. Amojelar

THE National Telecommunications Commission said it will proceed with the collection of nearly P3.8 billion in outstanding regulatory fees from NOW Telecom Inc. following a final and executory Supreme Court ruling.

The regulator welcomed the Supreme Court resolution dated April 21, 2026, which denied with finality a motion for reconsideration filed by NOW Telecom.

The ruling affirmed the commission's decision to disqualify the telecommunications company from a 3G frequency assignment because it failed to pay supervision and regulation fees and spectrum user fees.

The high court also ordered the immediate issuance of an entry of final judgment in three cases covering all lawsuits involving NOW Telecom, which was formerly known as Next Mobile Inc. The cases were included in a consolidated decision dated November 13, 2023.

In the 2023 decision, the Supreme Court upheld the regulator's assessment and imposition of fees arising from a debt-to-equity conversion by NOW Telecom.

The court rejected the company's argument that additional paid-in capital result-

ing from the debt conversion should have been excluded from the computation of its Supervision and Regulation Fee.

The court ruled that the conversion of creditors' liabilities into stock subscriptions resulted in a corresponding increase in the company's capital stock. This made the converted liabilities equivalent to fully paid shares and subject to the applicable regulatory fees.

The Supreme Court also sustained the disqualification of NOW Telecom from the 3G frequency assignment and cited its continued refusal to settle its outstanding regulatory obligations.

"As of December 2005, Next Mobile had an unpaid supervision and regulation fee of P126,094,195.67 and a spectrum user fee of P9,674,190.00. As the National Telecommunications Commission pointed out, Next Mobile did not pay these fees even under protest. Next Mobile was, thus, correctly disqualified for non-payment of fees," the court said in its decision.

Aboitiz Group remains top PH power generator with 24.3% market share

By Alena Mae S. Flores

THE Aboitiz Group remained the dominant player in the Philippine power generation sector, holding a 24.30-percent market share of the national grid as of June 2026, according to the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC).

The company has an installed capacity of 6,850.63 megawatts (MW), below the national market share limit of 7,049 MW, or 25 percent of the total national installed capacity of 28,197 MW.

San Miguel Corp. ranked as the second-largest power generator on the national grid with a 19.62-percent market share, equivalent to 5,533 MW. First Gen Corp. followed as the third-largest power firm with a 10.74-percent market share, accounting for 3,028.41 MW.

Ayala Corp. climbed to the fourth-biggest power generation company

from fifth place last year, capturing 6.91-percent of the national grid at 1,948.58 MW. Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) slid to fifth place, holding a 6.7-percent market share with a capacity of 1,889.67 MW.

The Aboitiz Group also led power generation across all three regional grids. The company captured a 27.53-percent market share in the Luzon grid with a capacity of 5,621 MW, 16.99 percent in the Visayas grid with a capacity of 591.10 MW and 14.85 percent in the Mindanao grid with a capacity of 637.92 MW.

San Miguel secured the second-biggest spot in the Luzon and Mindanao grids, holding a 24.67 percent share at 5,038.89 MW and an 8.12 percent share at 349.84 MW, respectively. First Gen Corp. took the third-biggest share in the Luzon grid with 12.07 percent, equivalent to 2,465.72 MW.



INSURANCE PROTECTION. Corporate Guarantee (CG), a non-life insurance company, takes part in the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) Ready for School 2026 (RFS 2026) program, in support of the Department of Education's initiative to strengthen school readiness by ensuring public schools are better equipped to support both teachers and learners ahead of the new academic year. Instead of providing a traditional cash donation, Corporate Guarantee leveraged its expertise as an insurer to provide a customized personal accident insurance package for 300 selected learners from Grades 1 to 3 at Highway Hills Integrated School in Mandaluyong.

ERC allows Visayas power distributors to stagger rate hike amid tight supply

THE Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) has approved requests from 26 power distribution utilities, mostly in the Visayas region, to stagger the recovery of rising electricity costs to shield consumers from severe bill shocks.

The decision allows utilities to spread out an expected P1 to P4 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) rate hike over a period of up to three months starting with the June billing cycle. Ten other distribution utilities chose to implement the higher rates immediately without staggering.

"As the Energy Regulatory Commission remains committed to protecting consumers from undue financial burden, we allow for the

staggered recovery of electricity costs over several months rather than imposing a single, lump-sum collection that can cause severe bill shocks to households and businesses alike," ERC chairman Francis Saturnino Juan said.

A series of red and yellow grid alerts across Luzon and Visayas since May triggered the rate spikes, driven by widespread power plant outages and intense heat that drove up demand. Juan noted that the rate increases vary based on how individual utilities source their power and how much they rely on the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM).

Alena Mae S. Flores



OECD VISIT. Department of Economy, Planning and Development Undersecretary Joseph Capuno (right) welcomes a courtesy call from Yasushi Masaki, deputy secretary-general of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on June 23, 2026 at the DEPDev office in Mandaluyong City, to explore avenues strengthening cooperation between the Philippine government and the organization. The officials discussed priorities for cooperation, including the strategic objectives of the Philippines' ASEAN Chairship, and expanding OECD support in the country.

PH, Japan plan to complete trade review by November

By Othel V. Campos

THE Philippines and Japan plan to conclude and sign a review of their landmark trade pact by November 2026 or 20 years after the initial agreement was signed, Trade Secretary Ma. Cristina Roque said on Friday.

Negotiations for the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) are in their final stages, with only one remaining agricultural issue left to resolve.

"We're hoping to fully get it signed by November," Roque told reporters on the sidelines of the 2026 Wedding Fair.

"There are other considerations, and there's one remaining bottleneck

also in agriculture from their part, but the DA said it's not a problem," she said.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. assured DTI the remaining issue would not derail the negotiations, according to Roque. Both sides are actively working to wrap up the review and are keen to avoid introducing new complications.

"Our negotiators are there. So, it's very close because Japan also wants it done," Roque said, noting that recent high-level engagements between the 2 countries accelerated the momentum of the review.

Signed in 2006 and implemented in 2008, JPEPA stands as the first bilateral free trade agreement for the Phil-

ippines.

It covers trade in goods and services, investments, intellectual property and economic cooperation. Agricultural products, particularly bananas, remain a vital component of Philippine exports to Japan.

Roque also announced that the Department of Trade and Industry will join a trade mission to Canada starting July 1. The mission aims to secure more foreign investments and advance discussions on a potential free trade agreement, specifically targeting investors from the agriculture, technology and energy sectors.

"We're hoping to get, again, investments," Roque said.



POWER REFORMS. The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) convenes a luncheon meeting with Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) chairperson and chief executive Francis Saturnino Juan on June 25, 2026 at Dusit Thani Manila in Makati City. The event brought together energy industry leaders and members of the European-Philippine business community for a timely discussion on the future of the country's energy sector.

IN BRIEF

Borrowings fell 44% to P108.03b in May

THE government's gross borrowings fell 43.82 percent to P108.03 billion in May 2026 from P192.31 billion a year ago as lower domestic debt issuances reduced overall financing, data from the Bureau of the Treasury showed.

The January-May period still saw total government gross borrowings reach P1.24 trillion despite the single-month slowdown.

Domestic borrowings dropped 56.85 percent to P80.29 billion in May 2026 from P186.06 billion in May 2025. Fixed-rate Treasury bonds accounted for the bulk of local financing at P88.72 billion, but a negative P8.43-billion Treasury bill financing position partly offset the total.

The Treasury said on a month-on-month basis, domestic financing declined from P122.28 billion recorded in April 2026.

External borrowings grew 344.1 percent to P27.74 billion from P6.25 billion a year earlier. Program loans worth P14.98 billion and project loans worth P12.76 billion supported this foreign financing expansion. The external debt figures also marked an increase from the P7.91 billion in foreign borrowings in April 2026. **Thony Rose Lesaca**

FAST expands fleet to over 3,100 trucks

FAST Logistics Group, the largest third-party logistics provider in the Philippines, has deployed 45 new delivery vehicles to strengthen its last-mile and nationwide freight operations amid rising demand for faster cargo movement.

The rollout expands the nationwide fleet of the company to more than 3,100 trucks operating across Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The expansion aims to improve cargo movement from ports, airports, and distribution hubs to final delivery points, particularly for consolidated shipments.

The new fleet includes 25 delivery vehicles for last-mile, less-than-container load and less-than-truckload shipments. The company also added 15 six-wheeler trucks and five 10-wheeler wing vans to support

the growing transport requirements of major multinational and local fast-moving consumer goods companies.

FAST Logistics chief executive Manuel Onrejas Jr. said the additional vehicles would improve delivery frequency and enable the company to respond more quickly to customer requirements.

"These new units allow us to respond more quickly to customer requirements, improve delivery frequency, and ensure consistent service across our network," Onrejas said. **Othel V. Campos**

WTO members laud PH for trade reforms

THE Philippines won praise from World Trade Organization (WTO) members during the opening session of its sixth Trade Policy Review (TPR), with officials highlighting the nation's strong economic performance and sustained reform agenda since 2018.

Samoa Ambassador Nella Pepe Tavita-Levy, who chairs the review, cited the traded-led growth of the Philippines, noting that it bolstered economic resilience and contributed to significant poverty reduction. She also highlighted reforms that eased business and foreign investment rules, expanded infrastructure development, advanced the digital economy and reduced trade barriers.

The TPR mechanism serves as an important exercise to promote transparency, strengthen mutual understanding and foster constructive dialogue among members, according to Department of Trade and Industry Undersecretary Allan Gepty.

"It is likewise an opportunity for the Philippines to demonstrate that we are open for business and ready to engage with all our partners," Gepty said.

Mexico Ambassador Manuel Aguilar Perez, who served as the discussant for the review, underscored the longstanding ties between the Philippines and Mexico dating back to the Manila-Acapulco Galleon Trade.

Aguilar Perez commended the Philippines for deepening and accelerating trade liberalization reforms despite successive global crises, instead of resorting to protectionist measures. **Othel V. Campos**

Gatchalian urges faster switch to power suppliers

By Ram Superable

SENATE President Sherwin Gatchalian urged the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) to shorten the turnaround time for switching electricity suppliers, saying the move is crucial to ensuring more consumers benefit from the expanded retail electricity market.

The call follows the commission's move to lower the contestability threshold from 500 kilowatts to 100 kilowatts beginning June 26.

The policy shift allows more small businesses, schools and households to choose a retail electricity supplier instead of remaining with their traditional distribution utility.

"Opening the market is a big step, but we need to make switching faster and easier," Gatchalian said.

"Right now, it can take weeks. If the process is expedited, more consumers will have the opportunity to choose another electricity supplier besides their distribution utility, such as Meralco. That way, they will have easier access to more competitive prices and cleaner energy resources," he said.

Gatchalian said the reform comes at a critical time as the country accelerates its transition to renewable energy. Making switching seamless will help drive demand for cleaner and more affordable power, ensuring more people benefit from cheaper electricity and cleaner energy, he said.

He also urged the Department of Energy, local government units and distribution utilities to reduce red tape and simplify the requirements for installing rooftop solar systems.

Rooftop solar can help consumers lower their electricity bills, ease pressure on the power grid during periods of high demand and reduce the country's dependence on imported fossil fuels, Gatchalian said. However, he noted these benefits would remain out of reach for many Filipinos unless authorities streamline permits, standardize requirements and shorten processing times.

"The problem with solar rooftops is red tape. The DOE should reduce the number of steps and requirements that those who want to install solar panels must go through," Gatchalian said, noting that cumbersome procedures continue to discourage households, businesses, schools and government offices from shifting to solar energy.

Gatchalian cited Pakistan as an example of how rooftop solar can expand rapidly when consumers receive a practical and affordable way to reduce electricity costs and lessen their dependence on an unreliable power grid. **With Alena Mae S. Flores**



Artist's illustration of the activity lawn.

DMCI Homes expands hospitality portfolio

DMCI Homes is broadening its presence in the hospitality sector with the upcoming opening of Solmera Beach Park Resort, a beachfront development in San Juan, Batangas that combines leisure facilities with venues for business and social events.

Set within the company's 7.5-hectare Solmera Coast estate, the resort is scheduled to open in February 2027. The project reflects growing demand for destinations that cater not only to vacationers but also to corporate gatherings, celebrations and group travel.

Located along San Juan's coastline, the resort benefits from the municipality's growing popularity as a weekend destination for travelers from Metro Manila. Improved road connectivity and increasing domestic tourism have helped position the area as an emerging hub for beach vacations, eco-tourism and events.

Designed as an integrated beachfront estate, Solmera Beach Park Resort features landscaped open spaces, lounge areas and recreational facilities that encourage guests to enjoy both active pursuits and quiet relaxation within a coastal setting.



Artist's illustration of the kiddie pool.



Artist's illustration of the Sky Lounge.

One destination

As leisure destination, Solmera Beach Park Resort offers elevated amenities against the backdrop of sparkling sea views and panoramic mountain horizons. These include a 4,000-square-meter pool complex with lap and kiddie pools, complemented by a pool pavilion for families and groups and a sky deck pool and sky promenade.

The resort will also feature a variety of dining options, ranging from an all-day restaurant serving local and international cuisine to specialty dining concepts, a lobby bar, snack bar and food kiosks spread across the property. Spa and wellness facilities are likewise planned to complete the guest experience.

Accommodation options include studio units as well as one-bedroom and two-bedroom suites designed for leisure travelers, families and guests attending events.

Meetings, incentives, conferences and celebrations form another key component of the development. Several function rooms will be located across the estate, while a convention center with a function hall of more than 2,000 square meters and an adjoining veranda is designed to accommodate conferences, banquets and exhibitions. Additional venues, including landscaped lawns and open-air spaces, provide flexibility for weddings and outdoor gatherings.

Hospitality brand

The resort will be operated by DMCI Hospitality and Leisure Inc., the company's newly-established hospitality arm, under the DMCI Resorts brand.

According to DMCI Homes president Alfredo Austria, the company is focused on establishing the systems and operational standards needed to deliver consistent guest experiences once the property opens.

"Our immediate priority is to put the right operating systems and people in place to ensure consistent service delivery, efficient property management and reliable guest experiences," Austria said.

With Solmera Beach Park Resort, DMCI Homes is expanding beyond residential development into destination hospitality, strengthening its presence in one of Southern Luzon's growing tourism markets while responding to the increasing demand for integrated resort experiences that combine recreation, accommodation and events in a single location. **Jenniffer B. Austria**

RLC Residences advances SYNC N-Tower as Pasig community takes shape

FUTURE homeowners are moving closer to life at SYNC Towers following the structural completion of SYNC N-Tower, the third residential building in RLC Residences' four-tower development along the C5 corridor in Pasig City.

RLC Residences said this milestone marks another step toward delivering a community designed for accessibility, smart living, and integrated urban conveniences.

Part of the larger SYNC master plan, N-Tower is envisioned to serve professionals, growing families and investors looking for a home in one of Metro Manila's emerging growth corridors.

Located along C5 Road in Barangay Bagong Ilog, the development provides convenient access to major business districts such as Ortigas Center, Bridgetowne, Kapitolyo and Bonifacio Global City, allowing residents to stay connected to work, leisure and everyday essentials.

For homebuyers, the structural completion reflects the project's continued progress and reinforces confidence that their investment is on track and being executed with the highest standards of quality and care.

As the project enters its next phase, construction will focus on architectural works and the installation of building systems.



"Reaching the topping-off stage of SYNC N-Tower reflects the dedication of the project teams and partners behind this development," said Engr. Emmanuel Arce, vice president and head of construction of RLC Residences.

"Every stage of construction requires careful planning, coordination and commitment to quality. More importantly, this brings future homeowners closer to a community designed to support their routines, aspirations and evolving lifestyles."

SYNC is designed with efficiently planned residential units equipped with smart home features, complemented by indoor and outdoor amenities that support modern lifestyles. A retail wing within the development is also intended to provide residents with greater day-to-day convenience.

One of the project's defining features is its Sky Bridge, an elevated structure that will connect all four residential towers. Beyond creating seamless access across the development, the bridge also contributes to the project's structural resilience during seismic events, reflecting the emphasis on engineering and long-term sustainability.

SYNC N-Tower follows earlier milestones achieved by the development's S and Y Towers, reflecting the steady progress of the overall project.



Retail center



Fitness area

Sondris sets the standard for premium green living in Makati



Jaime C. González, vice chairman and president of Arthaland, and Mitsuru Umemura, managing director of Mitsui Fudosan (Asia), complete the symbolic installation, signifying the shared vision, partnership, and commitment that drive the development of Sondris.

ARTHALAND and Japan's Mitsui Fudosan are moving forward with Sondris, a premium residential development in Legazpi Village, Makati City, with construction now underway for the 37-story tower targeted for completion in April 2030.

Rising along Amaiz Avenue, Sondris is positioned in one of Makati's most established neighborhoods, offering residents unobstructed views of San Lorenzo Village and the Makati skyline while providing easy access to the city's business districts, retail destinations and cultural hubs.

The development will feature 252 residences in a low-density configuration of only six to 10 units per floor. Buyers can choose from one-, two- and three-bedroom residences, as well as Garden Units designed to maximize natural light, ventilation and flexible living spaces. Homeowners will also have the option to personalize their residences through three curated interior design themes that cater to different lifestyles and preferences.

Sondris is targeting a 40-percent reduction in energy consumption and a 20-percent reduction in water use through energy-efficient building systems, double-glazed windows and water-saving fixtures.

The residential tower will also incorporate a Dedicated Outdoor Air System (DOAS), which continuously supplies filtered fresh air to improve indoor air quality while helping maintain thermal comfort.

As with other Arthaland developments, Sondris is pursuing multiple local and international certifications, including LEED, WELL, EDGE and BERDE.

Complementing the residences is a selection of lifestyle amenities that encourage wellness and community living, including a 25-meter heated saltwater lap and leisure pool, fitness center, steam and sauna rooms, Sky Terrace, landscaped roof deck, a garden, children's play areas and a retail promenade with al fresco dining options.

Sondris also marks the continued

collaboration between Arthaland, known for pioneering green developments in the Philippines, and Mitsui Fudosan, one of Japan's largest real estate companies with extensive expertise in residential development and long-term asset management.

"Sondris reflects our vision of creating homes that let life in," said Jaime C. González, vice chairman and president of Arthaland. "Set in one of Makati's most connected and desirable locations, it represents our commitment to building residences that combine sustainability, quality and lasting value for generations to come."

Mitsuru Umemura, managing director of Mitsui Fudosan (Asia), said the partnership aims to create a community that delivers enduring value and provides residents with comfort and peace of mind for years to come.

With construction officially underway, Arthaland said the project remains on schedule for its 2030 turnover.



Very Wang
Nickie Wang

Why Anne Curtis chooses to be Filipino every single day

BEING a “halfie” has never been a source of confusion for actress and TV host **Anne Curtis**. If anything, it has only made her more certain about where she belongs.

The Filipino-Australian said she takes pride in both sides of her heritage but made it clear that the Philippines remains home, a choice she continues to make every day.

Anne spoke about identity during a recent thanksgiving party celebrating her latest milestones in show business, including a busy year that serves as a lead-up to her 30th year in the entertainment industry next year. The 41-year-old actress was asked to comment on being a “halfie” following recent online backlash involving male pageant winners **Brandon Espiritu** and **Jether Palomo**.

She declined to weigh in on the controversy itself.

“I don’t even want to comment on it. I am proud to be a halfie, but I’m also very proud of my Filipino roots. This is my home. This is where I choose to be,” she said with a smile.

“Everyone has their own opinion, but for me, I will always be proud to be Filipino. Whenever I’m on a global stage, I’m representing the Philippines. When I’m invited, the seat is for the Philippines, so I’m always proud. When they ask me, ‘Where are you from?’ The Philippines.

I will always be proud of that,” Anne went on.

She said people have different views, but her perspective remains personal and clear.

“But for me, personally, as a halfie, yes, I’m also proud of being half-Australian, which comes from my father. But I’m also very proud to be Filipino. That’s why I’m here,” she asserted.

Away from public conversations on identity, Anne has also been immersed in work, particularly on *BuyBust: The Undesirables*, a project that partly explains her limited appearances on *It’s Showtime*.

“Whenever I come back, it feels like there’s so much I’ve missed, but it always feels like a grand homecoming. That’s how they treat me on *It’s Showtime*,” she said of the noontime show where she is one of the main hosts.

Production on the series began three years ago, and Anne revealed she is now close to wrapping her scenes.

“I’m back in my action era, but it’s a totally different story from what you’ve seen in the film,” she said, alluding to the 2018 movie *BuyBust*.

“The film happened in just one night. This is a nine-episode series, and it’s a totally different



The actress becomes emotional discussing her long relationship with Viva, recalling a promise made by Vic del Rosario Jr. to her father



Anne Curtis proudly embraces both sides of her heritage but continues to choose the Philippines as the place she calls home



Anne is currently working on action series ‘BuyBust: The Undesirables’

world. We’ve been working on it for around three years. It’s been exhausting, especially because it’s action,” Anne shared.

Still, the physical demands have been worth it. “But when I saw the preview, I said, wow, it looks so good. It was all worth it. And I can’t wait for the world to see it. It’s coming very soon.”

Meanwhile, when the conversation headed to her being with Viva for almost three decades now Anne became especially emotional as she spoke about her long relationship with her talent management.

She recalled a promise made by **Vic del Rosario Jr.** to her late father, one that helped shape the course of her career.

“Sorry, I just remembered my dad,” she said. “I’ll never forget what Boss Vic told my dad: ‘I promise, I will make your daughter into a star.’ My dad was eternally grateful to Boss Vic.”

Anne shared that a contract renewal had been planned, along with what would have been a meaningful reunion involving her father and del Rosario.

“I know Ninong Vic wanted to do a contract signing because we were going to renew, even if I didn’t need to renew with them because, obviously, my loyalty will always be with Viva. But it would have been a great reunion with Ninong Vic and my dad. Sadly, my dad passed earlier this year.”

‘Kapamilya Deal or No Deal,’ ‘Everybody Sing’ to air on TV5

TELEVIEWERS will be able to watch *Kapamilya Deal or No Deal* and *Everybody Sing* as the two game shows begin airing on TV5 starting July 4 and 5.

The shows will air simultaneously on ALLTV2, A2Z, Kapamilya Channel, *Kapamilya Online Live* on YouTube and Facebook, iWant, and TFC.

Luis Manzano returns as host of *Kapamilya Deal or No Deal*, where contestants compete for a chance to win up to P1 million.

Meanwhile, **Vice Ganda** continues to host *Everybody Sing*, where members of the Songbayan guess song lyrics and titles through a series of musical challenges for a chance to win P1 million.

The expanded broadcast reflects continued collaboration among media companies as they seek to bring local programs to wider audiences across multiple platforms.

The two weekend shows will air back-to-back every Saturday and Sunday, beginning with *Kapamilya Deal or No Deal* at 7:30 p.m., followed by *Everybody Sing* at 8:30 p.m. on ALLTV2, TV5, A2Z, Kapamilya Channel, *Kapamilya Online Live*, iWant, and TFC.



Vice Ganda returns to ‘Everybody Sing’ as the game show expands its reach with simultaneous broadcasts across multiple television and digital platforms beginning July 5



Luis Manzano remains as the host of ‘Kapamilya Deal or No Deal,’ with contestants vie for P1 million

Billy Crawford wins France’s ‘Mask Singer’ season 9



Billy Crawford celebrates his ‘Mask Singer France’ Season 9 victory after winning the competition while performing as L’Ane, or The Donkey

By Jasper Valdez

BILLY Crawford has scored another major win in France after being named the champion of *Mask*

Singer Season 9.

The Filipino host and singer kept his identity hidden throughout the competition, performing as L’Ane, or The Donkey, before he was unmasked during the finale and declared the winner.

“This was an absolutely amazing experience! Thank you to my @mask singer_tf1 family for keeping me a secret for a whole month!” Billy wrote on Instagram.

He said the character was personally meaningful because he chose it with his son, Amari, in mind.

“L’Ane was a very special character to me because I chose it with my son Amari in mind. I figured if he loved it, everyone else would too!” he shared.

Billy performed both French and English songs during the competition, including “Le Portrait,” “I Feel Good,” and “Uptown Funk.” In the final round, he faced singer **Carla Lazzari**, who competed as Le Poussin.

His latest victory adds to his growing list of achievements in France, following his 2022 win in the French edition of *Dancing with the Stars*.

Kim Chiu draws flak over Ryzza Mae joke

By Angelica Villanueva

ACTRESS and television host **Kim Chiu** came under fire from some netizens after making a joke that appeared to reference fellow television personality **Ryzza Mae Dizon** during an episode of *It’s Showtime*.

During the show’s “Lights, Camera, Act-Song” segment on June 20, Kim was performing alongside **Brent Manalo** and **Jugs Jugueta** when Brent warned her that a ghostly figure was standing behind her.

After turning around and seeing Jugs dressed as Lotus Feet, a character from **Kris Aquino**’s 2004 horror film *Feng Shui*, Kim said, “Ay! Bakit si Ryzza Mae?”

Jugs then joined in the joke by dancing to “Cha Cha Dabarkads,” mimicking one of Ryzza’s signature moves.

Kim later shared a clip of the segment on Facebook, where some users criticized her comment and urged her to apologize to Ryzza, saying the joke was inappropriate.

Others defended it, saying it was just lighthearted banter between television personalities.

As of writing, neither Kim nor Ryzza has publicly addressed the issue.



Kim Chiu (left) faces mixed reactions online after a joke referencing Ryzza Mae Dizon during an ‘It’s Showtime’ segment sparks debate among netizens

The charm of summer in Hong Kong



Pixar favorites welcome visitors as Hong Kong expands its summer lineup with family-friendly attractions and seasonal events



Pixar Summer Fest brings new character encounters and seasonal entertainment to Hong Kong Disneyland through Aug. 31

Visitors who register through Discover Hong Kong can access limited offers such as HK\$1 abalone bites at On Kee, HK\$1 wife cake at Kee Wah Bakery, and HK\$10 meals at McDonald's and Men Wah Bing Teng.

But the summer campaign is not only about discounts. Hong Kong is also banking on large-scale events to keep visitors engaged.

At Hong Kong Disneyland, Pixar Summer Fest runs until Aug. 31, featuring character meet-and-greets and new nighttime entertainment built around Pixar franchises such as *Inside Out* and *Toy Story*.

Dragon boat racing also returns to Victoria Harbour with the Sun Life Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Festival, where more than 220 teams are competing, including Team Philippines.

At Ocean Park, a panda-themed celebration runs through summer, while the M+ museum is hosting the interactive "Design Ah!" exhibition.

Another new attraction, Bubble Planet, opens at Kai Tak Cruise Terminal starting June 29, adding another family-friendly stop to the city's growing list of immersive experiences.

For Filipino travelers, Hong Kong's latest push comes at a fitting time. With short-haul travel remaining popular, the city continues to offer what many visitors seek in a quick escape: good food, familiar comforts, and enough new experiences to make every return trip feel different.

FRONT ROW

By Nickie Wang

THE "Fragrant Harbor" has long held a special place among Filipino travelers. Just a short flight from Manila, Hong Kong presents a fast-paced mix of soaring skyscrapers, bustling street markets, world-class shopping, and food stalls that stay busy well into the night. Its efficient transport system and compact layout also make it easy to explore, allowing visitors to squeeze shopping, sightseeing, and dining into even a long weekend.

That familiar appeal continues to draw Filipino tourists, whether for family holidays, barkada trips, or solo getaways. This year, the city is giving visitors

another reason to return.

The Hong Kong Tourism Board has launched its "Hong Kong Summer Fun" campaign, offering more than HK\$20 million (about P150 million)

worth of retail and dining deals, along with citywide events running until Aug. 31.

The campaign comes as tourism across Asia continues to recover, with destinations competing to attract travelers through discounts and limited-time experiences. In Hong Kong, that strategy leans heavily on shopping, dining, and entertainment, long considered among the city's strongest draws.

One of the biggest offers centers on discounted attraction tickets.

The tourism board partnered with travel booking platforms Trip.com and Ctrip to release "Summer Getaway Packs," which offer up to 50 percent off tickets to 19 attractions and transport services.

Travelers who book participating Hong Kong hotel stays worth at least HK\$1,500 for trips between July 1 and Sept. 14 can unlock the discounts.

Among the offers are up to 50 percent off roundtrip tickets for Ngong Ping 360, 50 percent off selected Big Bus Tours tickets, and discounted food-and-tour packages at the Sha Tin and Happy Valley racecourses.

The vouchers are limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis, with the final major release scheduled for July 14.

Once in Hong Kong, visitors can access additional shopping rewards through digital vouchers.

More than 100 malls, including K11, SOGO, Times Square, and IFC Mall, are participating in the campaign. Shoppers can scan QR codes using supported e-wallet apps for digital cash vouchers worth up to HK\$500.

Dining deals also form a major part of the campaign, underscoring how food remains central to the Hong Kong experience.



Nighttime entertainment adds to Hong Kong Disneyland's lineup of limited-time attractions during its summer celebration



More than 220 teams, including Team Philippines, compete in this year's Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Festival at Victoria Harbour



Ocean Park spotlights its giant pandas as part of a summer celebration that adds to Hong Kong's seasonal tourism offerings

Elegance on a plate

A lavish tea experience blooms at Raffles Makati

RAFFLES Makati has partnered with La Prairie for a two-month collaboration that brings together luxury hospitality and skincare through a curated dining experience in Makati City.

Until July 15, guests can indulge in a special La Prairie Afternoon Tea at the Writers Bar, featuring a menu inspired by La Prairie's White Caviar collection.

The limited offering, available daily from 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., is priced at P3,200 for two persons. The menu includes sweet and savory selections such as salmon gravlax and caviar, truffle foie gras and smoked eel, strawberry tiramisu caviar, and tropical mango passion desserts.

The experience also includes two signature beverages: the Luminous Pearl cocktail and the non-alcoholic Ivory Cloud.

The partnership was launched following La Prairie's unveiling of its White Caviar Collection on May 14 at Writers Bar, where the two brands came together through a shared appreciation for craftsmanship, heritage, and design.

Located in Makati's central business district, Raffles Makati is known for its all-suite accommodations and hospitality offerings. The hotel is part of Raffles Hotels & Resorts, a luxury hospitality brand with properties in key global destinations such as Paris, London, Dubai, and Makati.



The Makati hotel offers a limited afternoon tea built around refined flavors, sweet and savory bites, and luxury



La Sagrada Família keeps Barcelona high on Europe itineraries as airlines add more options for travelers heading to Spain

SINGAPORE'S flag carrier is betting on Europe's sustained travel demand by adding more flights to key cities and opening a new route to Spain's capital later this year.

Singapore Airlines is increasing services to Manchester, Milan, Munich, and London Gatwick in the coming months, while also launching five-times-weekly flights to Madrid via Barcelona starting Oct. 26, subject to regulatory approval.

The move comes as airlines continue to respond to strong passenger demand for both leisure and business travel across Europe, with long-haul routes regaining momentum after years of shifting travel patterns.

Madrid will become Singapore Airlines' 15th destination in Europe and its second in Spain. The airline will restructure its current twice-weekly Singapore-Barcelona service to accommodate the new route.

"Europe is an important market for Singapore Airlines," said **Dai Haoyu**, the airline's senior vice president for marketing planning. He said the added services are meant to give travelers more options as demand for European destinations continues to grow. Several route expansions will roll out in phases.

Flights between Singapore and Manchester will increase from five times weekly to daily beginning July 13.

Services to London Gatwick will also rise from three times weekly to daily starting Oct. 25, giving the airline two daily flights to the airport and six flights a day to London overall, including existing

Asia's leading carrier expands Europe network with new route to Madrid



Almudena Cathedral stands among Madrid's major cultural landmarks as travel demand to Spain continues to grow



Puerta del Sol remains one of Madrid's central public spaces as the city gains more long-haul travel access from Asia



Park Güell adds to Barcelona's draw for leisure travelers as Spain becomes a larger part of the expanded European network

services to Heathrow.

Flights to Milan will increase from four times weekly to daily from Oct. 25. Meanwhile, the current three-times-weekly Singapore-Milan-Barcelona service will be discontinued after the Madrid route begins.

The airline will also launch a new three-times-weekly service to Munich on Oct. 26, bringing total weekly flights to the German city to 10.

The new Madrid route will be operated using the Airbus A350-900 long-haul variant configured with 253 seats, including 42 in business class, 24 in premium economy, and 187 in economy.

Madrid has long been one of Europe's major cultural and economic centers, known for landmarks such as the Royal Palace and its role as a financial gateway to both Europe and South America.

Where California begins

A journey through the birthplace of the Golden State

SACRAMENTO, even if it is the capital city of the state of California, has always taken a back seat to both San Francisco and Los Angeles when it comes to popularity as a tourist destination. This is probably why the city came up with this tourism slogan, to banner the city’s importance as the state’s capital and to look back at the city’s history as the gateway to the famous Gold Rush.

The city also promotes itself as “America’s Farm-to-Fork Capital,” to highlight its abundance of farm produce, resulting in a thriving bounty of culinary offerings for visitors. It also prides itself on the moniker “City of Trees” because of its massive urban canopy of more than 2 million trees that ensure a comfortable environment for all its residents.

I have always wanted to discover more of the city, but my previous trips to California were always centered only around San Francisco and Los Angeles. So, this time, when I had to attend an event in Sacramento, I made sure I would find time to explore what the city has to offer.

The city’s most popular attraction is historic Old Sacramento. This is a 28-acre national historic landmark district that has been meticulously restored to recreate the Gold Rush era for which the state is known. The town is filled with 19th-century buildings made of wood and concrete. It has wooden sidewalks, just like what we see in cowboy movies, with the lead stars walking over them as they go in and out of a saloon.

Also in the area are horse-drawn carriages, the main mode of transportation during those days. Near where these carriages are is a “Wanted Rider” leaflet (shown on this page) for Pony Express, the legendary mail-delivery service that connected Sacramento to the East Coast through continuous horse-and-rider relays. The requirements mentioned in the poster are a reflection of the danger attached to the task of being a rider in those days.

Going around town was surreal. I felt like I had been transported to a **John Wayne**



Mercury Rising Bob Zozobrado

cowboy movie, walking along wooden sidewalks, going past parked horse-drawn carriages, and entering a saloon for a cold glass of beer.

Everything around me was made up of wooden and concrete buildings similar to what I see in those movies. While in the midst of this mid-1800s scenario, I could almost hear the



The California State Capitol anchors Sacramento's government district while its landscaped grounds add another layer to the city's heritage trail



Old Sacramento's Booth & Co. offers a glimpse of the Gold Rush-era district that shaped the city's early identity



The Delta King adds to Sacramento's riverfront story as the former steamboat continues to draw visitors through lodging, dining, and theater



Sacramento's old Supreme Court building points to the city's early role in California's legal and political history

YOUR MONDAY CHUCKLE

How do you think the unthinkable? With an iceberg!

noisy “hee-haws” of rowdy cowboys galloping around town, leaving a trail of dust, as in the movies. It was a beautiful experience.

A few steps away toward the waterfront is the Delta King, the 1928 riverboat that is now permanently docked and converted into a luxury hotel with elegant suites, including a fancy dining room and a theater.

Since we were right in front of it at around noontime, my companions and I decided to try out the offerings of the plush dining room for lunch. It was definitely not a disappointment. The food was very good, and the portions were, as expected, “gigantic.” It was a great experience having a delicious lunch by the river, which is very much a part of the city’s history.

On another block was the California State Railroad Museum, one of the best railroad museums in the country. Here I saw massive locomotives and vintage railcars, which were considered, at that time, a big advancement in the country’s transportation system.

A few blocks away from this deeply historical district is the seat of the state’s government, the California State Capitol. This beautiful neoclassical structure houses the chambers of the State Legislature and the Office of the Governor. What makes this edifice even more impressive are the 40 acres of landscaped gardens surrounding it. The sprawling grounds feature a rose garden and various memorials and monuments dedicated to veterans and historical personalities.

My companions told me that during the time of Governor **Arnold Schwarzenegger**, visitors to the State Capitol were always invited to visit his office, and if he was not in a meeting, he would spend time entertaining the visitors. I’m sure that added more fun and treasured memories to the visit to this historical edifice.

I didn’t have time to visit more attractions, as this sightseeing tour was done only after my business commitments in the city. Nevertheless, it gave me enough information on the state’s history and, most importantly, it gave me the feel of how it all started for California, the Golden State.

For feedback, I’m at bobzozobrado@gmail.com.

Batangas’ coastal sanctuary invites travelers to slow down

SUN-DRENCHED coastlines, sweeping sea views, and the promise of uninterrupted calm are becoming the new symbols of modern luxury. And destinations such as CaSoBe in Batangas are emerging as havens for those seeking rest and renewal.

The 15-hectare estate in Batangas serves as the flagship development of Landco Lifestyle Ventures, offering a mix of leisure attractions, accommodations, and open spaces designed for rest and relaxation.

Located about two to three hours from Metro Manila, CaSoBe offers a welcome break from city life. Set along the coast of Calatagan, the master-planned estate gives visitors room to enjoy the quieter side of travel, where the sea and open skies set the pace.

“As people place greater value on well-being,



CaSoBe provides a peaceful escape from city life with its beachfront location and focus on relaxation



CaSoBe offers a coastal escape in Calatagan, bringing together leisure attractions, accommodations, and spaces designed for rest and relaxation

we’re seeing a move toward experiences that help them slow down, reconnect, and find balance amid increasingly busy lives,” said **Janine Huang**, head of brand experience and hospitality commercial at Landco Lifestyle Ventures.

Huang said the company’s “Life on Vacation” philosophy centers on creating destinations where people can experience the ease and renewal often associated with travel.

“At CaSoBe, that philosophy takes on a more mindful pace,” she said. “Surrounded by nature and the sea, guests are invited to step away from constant distractions, reconnect with loved ones, and embrace moments of rest.”

The estate recently hosted a leadership retreat for professionals seeking time for reflection and renewal. Participants joined mindfulness activities and guided self-discovery sessions centered on balance and purposeful living.

Life at CaSoBe moves at a gentler rhythm. Mornings may begin with a walk along the beach or quiet moments by the water. Days can be spent

swimming, enjoying the shoreline, or simply resting. At sunset, the changing colors over the sea offer a daily reminder to stay present.

Its accommodations reflect the same relaxed atmosphere. Among them are the Crusoe Cabins, resort units built from upcycled shipping containers and designed with both rustic charm and modern comforts. Each cabin includes bedrooms, living areas, private terraces, and views of either the beach or landscaped gardens.

The estate also offers Cocoons, pod-inspired rooms for cozy stays, Apollo units suited for families and small groups, and Cupola, whose dome-inspired design creates a setting ideal for quiet evenings and stargazing.

One of the property’s standout accommodations is the Chairman’s Cabin, a beachfront villa originally built as the private retreat of **Manuel V. Pangilinan**, chairman of Metro Pacific Investments Corporation. Select rooms are available for guest bookings on designated dates, while the chairman’s private suite remains reserved.



The 15-hectare estate in Batangas encourages guests to reconnect with nature and loved ones

The iconic CaSoBe Lighthouse also adds to the estate’s identity. Inspired by Calatagan’s maritime heritage, the structure offers panoramic views of the coastline.

For guests who wish to extend their stay, The Nautilus condotel offers an option for longer-term living. Inspired by **Jules Verne’s** *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, the beachfront property has become one of CaSoBe’s defining landmarks.

Designed as both a resort and residential property, The Nautilus appeals to buyers seeking a vacation home, retirement retreat, or rental investment.

CaSoBe also offers spaces for shared experiences. Families and friends can gather for meals at Captain Barbozza, spend afternoons by the beach, or visit Aquaria Water Park, one of the estate’s signature attractions.