PHILIPPINES SECURITY ANALYSIS REPORT

AI-Assisted Open Source Intelligence Assessment

Analysis Period: March 02, 2026 - March 09, 2026

This report was produced using automated open-source intelligence analysis. The assessment is grounded in publicly available reporting and should be cross-referenced with primary sources. RSS feed articles are listed in the annex for reference.

Executive Summary

This automated analysis could not be generated due to a technical issue with the AI service.

Key Developments

- Unable to generate a security analysis for Philippines at this time.
- Please try again later or select an alternative analysis method.

Outlook

Please check back later for an updated analysis.

ANNEX: COLLECTED ARTICLES BY SOURCE

Source: GMA Network

- Hontiveros calls for P52.8-B supplemental budget due to looming oil crisis (2026-03-09 05:37)

Senate Deputy Majority Leader Risa Hontiveros on Monday called for the passage of a P52.8-billion supplemental budget in response to the impending increase in oil prices amid heightened tensions in the Middle East.

- DOH, FDA urge consumers to verify health products online (2026-03-09 05:33)

The Department of Health (DOH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Philippines are urging the public to verify whether health and consumer products are registered or approved before purchase, using the agency"s newly launched verification portal.

- Sandiganbayan moves to seize 16 real properties of Zaldy Co (2026-03-09 05:20)

The Sandiganbayan has ordered the seizure of at least 16 properties belonging to former House appropriations panel chairperson Zaldy Co of the Ako Bicol party-list, who faces graft charges related to an allegedly substandard flood control project in Oriental Mindoro.

- Palace warns profiteers amid Middle East tension: Legal actions possible (2026-03-09 04:06)

Malacañang reiterated Monday its warning against profiteers who are taking advantage of the continuing tension in the Middle East, stressing that the law will go after them.

- Joseph Sy attends Senate hearing after complaining of 'chest pain" (2026-03-09 04:00)

Embattled businessman Joseph Sy on Monday complained of “chest pain” prior to going to the Senate to attend a hearing about the alleged falsification of his Filipino citizenship.

- De Lima, priest file raps vs 18 'ex-Marines' over cash delivery claims (2026-03-09 03:20)

House Deputy Minority Leader Leila de Lima of ML party-list and Fr. Flavie Villanueva on

Monday filed complaints against 18 personalities who introduced themselves as former Marines and their counsel Levito Baligod amid allegations that they received money from former Ako Bicol party-list Rep. Zaldy Co.

- Palace to VP Sara: Gov't can't send aircraft as airspace still closed (2026-03-09 02:26)

Malacañang on Monday hit back at Vice President Sara Duterte for saying that the government could simply send an aircraft to the Middle East to bring home overseas Filipino workers amid the ongoing conflict there.

- DepEd implements 4-day onsite workweek with Friday WFH to save energy (2026-03-09 02:03)

The Department of Education (DepEd) has directed its offices nationwide to adopt a four-day onsite work arrangement from Monday to Thursday, with Fridays designated as a work-from-home (WFH) day, as part of government efforts to conserve energy and reduce fuel consumption.

- LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East (March 9, 2026) (2026-03-08 23:01)

LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East (March 9, 2026)

- Marcos to urge for peaceful resolution of Middle East crisis during New York visit (2026-03-08 21:51)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will call for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East crisis as well as campaign for the Philippines" bid for a non-permanent seat to the United Nations (UN) Security Council during his two-day working visit here.

- Marcos arrives in New York for 2-day working visit (2026-03-08 19:22)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is now in the United States for a two-day working visit that includes high-level engagements at the United Nations (UN).

- GSIS, SSS to shift to 4-day work week for energy conservation (2026-03-08 18:36)

The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) and the Social Security System (SSS) will be observing a four-day onsite work week starting March 9 in line with the government"s energy conservation efforts.

- Prosecutors ask about roles of Duterte"s Filipino lawyers in ICC (2026-03-08 15:23)

Prosecutors have asked the International Criminal Court (ICC) to compel former President Rodrigo Duterte"s legal team to confirm that the six Filipino lawyers who flew to The Hague for Duterte"s confirmation of charges hearing are not official members of his defense team before the ICC.

- PCSO: No jackpot winners in 6/49, 6/58 lotto draws on March 8 (2026-03-08 14:10)

No one won the jackpot prizes in the major lotto draws of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) on Sunday night, March 8.

- SC: Judiciary to adopt 4-day onsite work set-up to conserve energy (2026-03-08 13:48)

The judiciary will follow suit in implementing flexible work arrangements beginning Monday, March 9 to save energy resources amid the tensions in the Middle East, the Supreme Court (SC) said.

- House bill seeks 50% power discount for minimum wage earners (2026-03-08 09:47)

A bill has been filed in the House of Representatives proposing a 50% discount on electricity charges for qualified households of minimum wage earners.

- DA freezes fertilizer stocks over quality concerns (2026-03-08 08:55)

The Department of Agriculture (DA) has ordered the suspension of fertilizer distribution from five suppliers following complaints over product quality.

- Recto, Angara, Estrella tasked as PH caretakers during Marcos" US trip (2026-03-08 08:50)

Executive Secretary Ralph Recto, Education Secretary Sonny Angara, and Agrarian Reform Secretary Conrado Estrella III will serve as the country"s caretakers while President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. is on a work visit to the United States.

- Escudero: 4-day work week could cut P3.5B daily traffic losses (2026-03-08 07:57)

Senator Francis “Chiz” Escudero on Sunday called on private companies to follow suit in implementing a four-day work week to cushion the impact of fuel price hikes amid tensions in the Middle East.

- Marcos pushes faster, simpler aid distribution for seniors (2026-03-08 07:31)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Sunday called on local government units (LGUs) to hasten and simplify the distribution of aid for senior citizens by digitalizing the process.

- Marcos assures faster, non-political distribution of gov't aid (2026-03-08 06:47)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Sunday assured that the government will promptly distribute assistance to Filipinos, particularly senior citizens, regardless of their political affiliation.

- P7B more needed for OFW repatriation amid Middle East conflict -- Win Gatchalian (2026-03-08 06:09)

The government needs an additional P7 billion for the repatriation of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) should the conflict in the Middle East worsen, Senator Sherwin Gatchalian said Sunday.

- PH gov"t fight vs Chinese-linked espionage to continue -- PH Navy (2026-03-08 04:38)

The Philippine government will continue its efforts to combat alleged espionage activities of China, following the arrest of three Filipinos who were allegedly involved in foreign-backed spying activities, a senior Philippine Navy official said Sunday.

- Game Over: Navy uncovers espionage plot hidden in “Tetris” game app (2026-03-08 03:49)

What looked like an ordinary mobile game turned out to be a covert communication tool used in an alleged espionage network recruiting Filipinos to pass sensitive information to foreign handlers believed to be linked to China.

- P2-B worth of smuggled cigarettes seized in 317 ops -- Customs (2026-03-08 03:08)

Authorities have seized P2 billion worth of smuggled cigarettes in 317 operations, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) reported Sunday.

- Marcos leaves for US work visit (2026-03-08 02:49)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Sunday departed the country for a work visit to the United States.

- Sara Duterte urges stronger support for women, marginalized groups on Int"l Women"s Day (2026-03-08 02:23)

Vice President Sara Duterte on Sunday called for stronger support for women and marginalized groups as the country marks International Women"s Day.

- Marcos vows more leadership opportunities for women on International Women's Day (2026-03-08 02:10)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Sunday vowed to create more opportunities for women to lead and recognized their potential as the country marked International Women"s Day.

- PH has two-month supply of oil -- BOC (2026-03-08 01:52)

The Philippines has a two-month supply of petroleum products amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, the head of the Bureau of Customs said Sunday.

- Philippines shifts to four-day work week as Iran war pushes oil prices up (2026-03-07 23:55)

Oil-poor Philippines is to shift to a four-day work week with fuel prices set to rocket up amid the Iran war, President Ferdinand Marcos said Friday.

- LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East (March 8, 2026) (2026-03-07 22:18)

Live updates on the Conflict in the Middle East for March 8, 2026.

- AFP tightens rules for foreign visitors using camp facilities (2026-03-07 18:10)

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Saturday reminded all foreign nationals that a visit clearance is required before entering military camps" recreational facilities, including golf courses, amid heightened vigilance following recent espionage reports linked to China.

- Private sector work arrangements flexible, say DOLE, ECOP (2026-03-07 17:07)

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) on Saturday said private sector companies may adopt flexible work arrangements, provided both employers and employees agree.

- Jinggoy defends 'boyfriend" queries on woman athlete (2026-03-07 16:23)

Senator Jinggoy Estrada on Saturday defended his recent remarks about American basketball player Elizabeth Means" romantic relationships, saying they were meant as friendly banter with

Senator Kiko Pangilinan.

- Filipino spies" motives behind Chinese-linked espionage: 'all financial' (2026-03-07 15:31)

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) said on Saturday that the recent alleged espionage activities of three Filipinos for China were purely financial, supposedly involving hefty salaries and bonuses from their Chinese handlers.

- Lacson to 'ex-Marines": Don"t talk numbers if you can"t compute the truth (2026-03-07 13:40)

Senate President Pro Tempore and Blue Ribbon Committee chair Panfilo Lacson on Saturday said individuals should avoid citing numbers they cannot defend with reasonable probabilities.

- DOH urges caution vs. rabies despite fewer cases in early 2026 (2026-03-07 09:53)

The Department of Health (DOH) on Saturday called for vigilance against rabies even though cases have dropped 65% in the first two months of 2026 compared to the same period last year.

- US urges Americans in PH to stay vigilant amid Middle East conflict (2026-03-07 09:41)

The United States Embassy in the Philippines has urged Americans to remain alert, heighten situational awareness, and practice personal security measures after the US and Israel launched attacks against Iran.

- VP Sara: Marcos lied about not knowing impeach efforts against me (2026-03-07 08:52)

Vice President Sara Duterte said President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. knew about impeachment efforts against her, but he allegedly denied this when she confronted him about the matter years ago.

- VP Sara calls on gov't agencies to 'act now' amid expected major fuel price hikes (2026-03-07 02:37)

VP Sara calls on gov't agencies to 'act now' amid expected major fuel price hikes

- Marcos teases son Sandro in birthday greeting: Where's my grandchild? (2026-03-07 00:09)

Marcos teases son Sandro in birthday greeting: Where's my grandchild?

- LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East (March 7, 2026) (2026-03-06 23:28)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Friday talked on the phone with UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and expressed solidarity with the people of the United Arab Emirates amid the continuing tension in the Middle East.

- ICC Appeals Chamber: Duterte to remain in detention (2026-03-06 14:38)

The International Criminal Court's Appeals Chamber affirmed on Friday the Pre-Trial Chamber I's ruling to detain former President Rodrigo Duterte on allegations of crimes against humanity.

- No winners of major lotto draws on Friday, March 6, 2026 (2026-03-06 14:37)

There were no winners of either of the major lotto jackpots offered on Friday, March 6, 2026, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) announced.

- Marcos shows solidarity with UAE amid ongoing Middle East conflict (2026-03-06 12:47)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Friday talked on the phone with UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and expressed solidarity with the people of the United Arab Emirates amid the continuing tension in the Middle East.

- SPU-Tuguegarao grad named February 2026 Nurses licensure exam topnotcher (2026-03-06 11:54)

A Saint Paul University - Tuguegarao graduate gained the highest percentage rating in the February 2026 Nurses Licensure Examination, the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) announced.

- VP Sara to House members: Show me the 'unexplained wealth" on my SALN (2026-03-06 11:50)

Vice President Sara Duterte on Friday challenged members of the House of Representatives, alleging she has unexplained wealth, to point out which part of her Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth (SALN) is questionable.

- Marcos warns traders: Don't hoard amid Middle East tension (2026-03-06 10:58)

President Ferdinand ''Bongbong'' Marcos Jr. on Friday warned businessmen and traders not to take advantage of the continuing tension in the Middle East.

- Health groups back DOH chief's call to ban vape among youth (2026-03-06 10:44)

Health and child rights advocates have expressed support for the call of Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa to raise the minimum age for purchasing vape and tobacco products to 25 years old and increase taxes on nicotine products.

- Marcos: Gov't ready for big-time pump price hikes, orders fuel subsidy release (2026-03-06 10:35)

Marcos said he is already coordinating with Congress to grant him the authority to reduce excise tax once crude exceeds $80 per barrel.

- Annual fishing ban boosted PH galunggong stocks, BFAR says (2026-03-06 10:25)

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) on Friday said the annual closed fishing season for galunggong (roundscad) has been instrumental in ensuring the fish staple's sustainable yield and enhanced volume production.

- Marcos orders 4-day work week in government agencies (2026-03-06 10:21)

President Ferdinand ''Bongbong'' Marcos Jr. on Friday announced that beginning March 9, 2026, a four-day work week will temporarily be implemented in some offices of the Executive department.

- Marcos reappoints Sabuddin Abdurahim as NCMF chief (2026-03-06 10:15)

President Ferdinand ''Bongbong'' Marcos Jr. on Friday administered the oath of office to Sabuddin Abdurahim, who was reappointed as Secretary of the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF).

- Impeachment proceedings vs. VP Sara may begin in March --Luistro (2026-03-06 10:00)

House committee on justice chairperson Rep. Gerville Luistro said Friday that the start of the proper hearing in the impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte may be held in March instead of April if the vice president does not submit her reply to the allegations.

- Zaldy Co's fugitive status affirmed by Sandiganbayan (2026-03-06 09:08)

The Sandiganbayan has upheld its declaration of former House appropriations panel chairperson Zaldy Co of Ako Bicol party-list as fugitive from justice.

- Juan Miguel Cuna takes oath as DENR acting secretary (2026-03-06 08:48)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Friday administered the oath of office to Juan Miguel Cuna as acting secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

- 3 Pinoys in alleged foreign-backed espionage placed under AFP control (2026-03-06 08:45)

Three Filipinos who were allegedly involved in foreign-backed espionage activities have been placed under the control of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), a senior military official said Friday.

- Trillanes: ICC probers, witnesses exposure part of 'well-funded" destab plot (2026-03-06 08:08)

Former senator Antonio Trillanes IV said Friday said the exposure of International Criminal Court (ICC) investigators and witnesses was part of a “well-funded, well-planned destabilization plot” against the administration of President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr.

- DFA says Middle East conflict may last 4-8 weeks (2026-03-06 07:46)

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on Friday floated the possibility of the tensions in the Middle East extending to up to eight weeks.

- NSA Año: No top-secret data leaked amid alleged espionage activities (2026-03-06 07:15)

Alleged espionage activities may have accessed schedules of West Philippine Sea missions but no top-secret information was compromised, National Security Adviser Eduardo Año said Friday.

- NBI subpoenas 18 alleged ex-Marines, Baligod, Defensor (2026-03-06 05:47)

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has issued subpoenas to former congressman Mike Defensor, lawyer Levito Baligod, and 18 alleged former Marines who claimed that they made cash deliveries to several personalities as instructed by former Ako Bikol party-list representative Zaldy Co.

- Suntay faces complaint filed with Ombudsman over remarks on Anne Curtis (2026-03-06 05:10)

A complaint against Quezon City Rep. Bong Sunday was filed Friday with the Office of the Ombudsman over his remarks on actress Anne Curtis.

- 18 Marines now in hiding due to security threats --UPI (2026-03-06 05:04)

18 Marines now in hiding due to security threats --UPI

- Sara Duterte no hand in Madriaga 'death threat" --lawyer (2026-03-06 04:56)

Sara Duterte no hand in Madriaga 'death threat" --lawyer

- Marcos to call for restraint, respect for int'l law during US trip --DFA spox (2026-03-06 04:20)

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on Friday underscored the significance of President Ferdinand ''Bongbong'' Marcos Jr.'s working visit to the United States amid the tension in the Middle East.

- Bong Revilla seeks bail in malversation case over Bulacan flood control project (2026-03-06 04:07)

Former senator Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. has filed a petition for bail with the Sandiganbayan Third Division pending the resolution of the malversation case filed against him in relation to the alleged anomalous P92.8-million flood control project in Pandi, Bulacan.

- PNP tightens counter-intelligence vs possible foreign-backed spies within ranks (2026-03-06 03:56)

PNP tightens counter-intelligence vs possible foreign-backed spies within ranks

- Tau Gamma Phi members in Cavite 'hazing" to undergo expulsion proceedings --frat spox (2026-03-06 03:37)

Members of the Tau Gamma Phi fraternity who were directly involved in the fatal hazing of 19-year-old freshman maritime student Kenneth Alcedo in Cavite will undergo expulsion proceedings, according to the fraternity"s spokesperson on Friday.

- Marcos vows to continue reskilling, upskilling programs for MSMEs (2026-03-06 03:03)

President Ferdinand ''Bongbong'' Marcos Jr. on Friday reaffirmed the commitment of his administration to push for reskilling and upskilling programs for the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

- Win Gatchalian urges DTI, DA to monitor retail prices amid US-Iran conflict (2026-03-06 02:18)

Senator Sherwin Gatchalian on Friday called on the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) to closely monitor the supply and retail prices of basic goods amid the conflict between the US and Iran.

- PhilHealth YAKAP's services, 75 free medicines: Who can avail and how (2026-03-06 01:31)

PhilHealth YAKAP's services, 75 free medicines: Who can avail and how?

- LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East (March 6, 2026) (2026-03-05 23:49)

Sri Lanka said it was trying to "safeguard lives" on a second Iranian ship off its coast on Thursday, a day after 87 people were killed in a US submarine strike on an Iranian warship in the same region.

- Chinese Embassy denies NSC"s spy claims (2026-03-05 15:21)

The Chinese Embassy in Manila on Thursday denied that Beijing is connected to alleged espionage activities in the Philippines involving Filipinos.

- BFAR reminds public to avoid eating poisonous fish, crabs (2026-03-05 15:12)

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) issued a reminder on Thursday for the public to avoid eating certain crabs and types of fish as these contain poisonous toxins.

- Transport group graft complaint vs. Mendoza over fees; LTFRB chair points to reforms (2026-03-05 14:46)

A transport group has filed a graft complaint against Land Transportation, Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) chairperson Vigor Mendoza II and Anthony Quiambao of Stradcom Corporation over the alleged unlawful collection of P169 million in computer fees from public utility vehicle owners.

- South Cotabato bettor hits P39.3M jackpot prize in 6/42 lotto draw (2026-03-05 14:29)

A lucky bettor won the P39.3 million jackpot prize in the Lotto 6/42 draw of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) on Thursday, March 5.

- Erice sees Sandro Marcos' hand in removing him from House leadership post (2026-03-05 13:48)

Caloocan Representative Edgar Erice on Wednesday accused House Majority Leader Sandro Marcos of Ilocos Norte of playing a role in his removal from the House Senior Deputy Minority Leader post.

- Who among politician"s kin can run for office and where under Anti-Dynasty Bill? (2026-03-05 13:12)

The proposed Anti-Political Dynasty Bill that was approved by the House committee on suffrage and electoral reforms earlier this week will ban relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity from running or holding elective posts within the same area of jurisdiction at the same time.

- Sotto bats for strategic petroleum reserve for energy security (2026-03-05 11:23)

Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III has filed a measure seeking to establish a national petroleum reserve to enhance the country"s energy security and protect consumers from extreme price instability amid rising tensions in the Middle East.

- Denmark renews support for PH in beefing up national defense (2026-03-05 10:56)

Ambassador Franz-Michael Mellbin has reaffirmed Denmark"s support for the Philippines in strengthening its national defense and underscored the need for a broad approach to boosting its security capabilities.

- Filipino 'spies" describe how they passed info on WPS missions to China (2026-03-05 10:49)

Two Filipinos apprehended for allegedly spying for China described their actions to Reuters under an agreement with security sources on the condition that their identities not be revealed.

- Comelec: Over 41K registered to vote for 2026 BSKE, Bangsamoro polls (2026-03-05 10:25)

More than 41,000 Filipinos have registered to vote for the 2026 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections (BSKE) and the first-ever Bangsamoro parliamentary elections in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), latest data from the Commission on Elections (Comelec) showed.

- Esperon backs 18 alleged ex-Marines on cash delivery claims (2026-03-05 10:03)

Former Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff, retired General Hermogenes Esperon Jr., expressed support Thursday to the 18 personalities who introduced themselves as former Marines and claimed delivering suitcases of money to several politicians upon the instruction of resigned Ako Bikol representative Zaldy Co.

- Bernardo to testify for prosecution in flood control rap vs. Zaldy Co (2026-03-05 09:54)

Former Public Works Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo will testify for the prosecution in the malversation case filed against resigned Ako Bicol Party-list Rep. Zaldy Co and 15 others in connection with an allegedly substandard P289 million flood control project in Naujan, Oriental Mindoro.

- CHR demands stricter adherence to gender sensitivity in Congress after Suntay remarks (2026-03-05 09:29)

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) has called for stricter enforcement of gender-sensitivity standards in the House of Representatives following the “desire” remarks of Quezon City 4th District Rep. Bong Suntay about actress Anne Curtis.

- Bong Revilla graft trial over alleged ghost Bulacan project to begin April 7, 2026 (2026-03-05 09:12)

The Sandiganbayan has scheduled the graft trial of Ramon Bong Revilla, Jr. and six other co-accused over the alleged ghost P92.8-million flood control project in Bulacan for April 7.

- South Korean fugitive posing as Pinoy nabbed in Batangas (2026-03-05 09:03)

A South Korean fugitive who allegedly claimed he was a Filipino was nabbed in an entrapment operation in Laurel, Batangas.

- Curlee Discaya brought to hospital due to 'painful shoulder,' says SP Sotto (2026-03-05 08:50)

Embattled contractor Pacifico "Curlee" Discaya II was brought to a hospital Thursday morning due to concerns about his shoulder, Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III said. Viscaya, however, has returned to his Senate detention facility.

- Palace to gov't agencies: Be vigilant, protect sensitive data (2026-03-05 08:34)

Malacañang on Thursday warned government agencies and offices to be vigilant and cautious

following the confirmation of the National Security Council (NSC) that authorities arrested Filipinos allegedly involved in Chinese-linked espionage.

- Marcos OKs extension of EDCOM 2 to oversee education reforms (2026-03-05 08:07)

President Ferdinand ''Bongbong'' Marcos Jr. has signed into law the extension of the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM 2) for another two years, allowing it to continue overseeing education reforms.

- BJMP: Alleged 'threat" vs Ramil Madriaga"s life stemmed from altercation with fellow PDL (2026-03-05 08:02)

The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) on Thursday clarified that the alleged threat to the life of Ramil Madriaga stemmed from an altercation with another person deprived of liberty at the Taguig City jail.

- DTI allocates P2B business fund for OFWs (2026-03-05 07:44)

The Department of Trade and Industry has allocated P2 billion for the newly established OFW Negosyo Fund.

- House panel-approved anti-dynasty bill won't make a difference --Bag-ao (2026-03-05 07:10)

The anti-political dynasty bill approved by the House committee on suffrage and electoral reforms will not make any difference to stop the practice of political families, opposition lawmaker and Dinagat Representative Kaka Bag-ao said Thursday.

- Luistro: Impeach raps vs VP Sara Duterte can be decided within 2 months (2026-03-05 05:59)

The House committee on justice can finish its deliberations and decide on the merits of the two impeachment complaints lodged Vice President Sara Duterte within two months from the start of the trial proper.

- AFP supports stronger safeguards in PH security amid espionage reports (2026-03-05 05:09)

AFP supports stronger safeguards in PH security amid espionage reports

• Trillanes files complaints vs. 18 ex-Marines, Baligod, Defensor and others (2026-03-05 04:55)

Trillanes files complaints vs. 18 ex-marines, Baligod, Defensor and others

• DILG files raps vs BFP chief Fernandez, supplier over alleged P14.7-M ambulance kickbacks (2026-03-05 04:46)

Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) chief Fire Director Jesus Fernandez and a private supplier are now facing administrative and criminal charges at the Office of the Ombudsman over alleged P14.752 kickbacks in ambulance deals, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said Thursday.

• House panel officially orders VP Sara Duterte to answer impeachment raps (2026-03-05 03:53)

The House justice panel on Thursday officially ordered Vice President Sara Duterte to answer allegations of impeachable offenses against her.

• Women"s rights advocates file ethics complaint vs. Bong Suntay over Anne Curtis remark (2026-03-05 03:05)

Women"s rights advocates on Thursday filed an ethics complaint against Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay over his controversial remarks involving actress Anne Curtis.

• Sara Duterte questions 'silence" of concerned groups on cash delivery claims (2026-03-05 02:36)

Vice President Sara Duterte on Thursday questioned the supposed deafening silence of civil society groups, religious leaders, and lawmakers about the claims of the 18 alleged former Marines that they delivered suitcases of cash to certain individuals on instructions of former Ako Bicol Rep. Zaldy Co.

• Sablayan escapee arrested -- BuCor (2026-03-05 02:17)

The Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) on Thursday announced the re-arrest of a person deprived of liberty who escaped from the Sablayan Prison and Penal Farm.

• PNP eyes electric patrol cars amid fuel cost concerns (2026-03-05 01:09)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Thursday said it is considering integrating electric

vehicles (EVs) into its patrol fleet in response to expected fuel price hikes from supply disruptions amid the United States-Iran conflict.

- LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East (March 5, 2026) (2026-03-04 23:35)

Indonesia's foreign minister said talks on US President Donald Trump's Gaza "Board of Peace," of which the Southeast Asian nation is a key troop-contributing member, were on hold due to the Middle East war.

- LTO calls out gov"t vehicle for having passengers on pick-up bed (2026-03-04 17:15)

The Land Transportation Office (LTO) has issued a show cause order (SCO) against the driver of a government-owned pick-up truck which went viral on social media for having three passengers on its pick-up bed.

- LTFRB warns public vs groups misusing names of LTFRB officials (2026-03-04 15:33)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Wednesday warned the public not to transact with persons or groups who are misusing the names of the agency"s key officials.

- PH, Singapore partner for child care, protection initiatives (2026-03-04 14:56)

The Philippines and Singapore signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on Wednesday to work on social sector development, including initiatives supporting the first 1,000 days of a child"s life.

- No jackpot winners for PCSO"s March 4 major lotto draws (2026-03-04 14:21)

There were no jackpot winners in the major lotto draws of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) on Wednesday, March 4.

- 83% of Filipinos see a woman"s role as home, family -- SWS (2026-03-04 14:02)

A vast majority of Filipinos believe a woman"s role is to look after the home and family, according to a survey by Social Weather Stations (SWS).

- Gov"t agencies told: Set aircon thermostat not lower than 24°C, among others (2026-03-04 13:46)

An inter-agency committee on Wednesday ordered government offices to observe

energy-saving measures, such as setting air-conditioning thermostats to no lower than 24° Celsius and utilizing renewable energy sources if possible.

- Bong Suntay"s 'lewd' comments on actress deemed sexual harassment, says professor (2026-03-04 13:17)

The supposedly lewd remarks made by Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay about actress Anne Curtis can be considered a form of sexual harassment, a gender studies professor said on Wednesday.

- Bong Suntay faces House ethics probe over 'desire' remarks (2026-03-04 12:39)

The House of Representatives on Wednesday ordered Quezon City Fourth District Rep. Bong Suntay to face the House Committee on Ethics over his controversial remarks involving actress Anne Curtis.

- Sotto flags paramours, kin in anti-political dynasty bill (2026-03-04 12:02)

Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III on Wednesday raised concerns about potential “loopholes” in the anti-political dynasty bill, specifically on whether it will cover extramarital partners and their relatives.

- NSC confirms: Filipinos nabbed for Chinese-linked spy activities (2026-03-04 11:47)

The National Security Council (NSC) on Wednesday evening confirmed a report that authorities discovered and arrested Filipinos allegedly involved in Chinese-linked espionage and foreign-directed malign activities in the country.

- Lawmaker urges 4-day workweek, online classes amid expected oil price hikes (2026-03-04 11:46)

A lawmaker has proposed the implementation of a four-day workweek and online classes for students to cushion the impact of expected oil price surges due to the conflict in the Middle East.

- UPCAT 2027 set for Aug. 1-2 (2026-03-04 11:31)

Applications for the University of the Philippines College Admission Test (UPCAT) 2027 opened on Tuesday, March 3.

- DFA rebuts 'flawed" criticisms of Ayungin arrangement (2026-03-04 11:13)

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on Wednesday defended a provisional deal it reached

with China in 2024, saying it has allowed food, medicine, fuel, and other supplies to reach Filipino troops at Second Thomas Shoal without clashes with Chinese coast guard and naval vessels nearby.

- DSWD bats for stronger collaboration vs hunger, malnutrition (2026-03-04 11:00)

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is pushing for stronger public-private collaboration in addressing hunger and malnutrition ahead of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summits this year.

- House leaders: Justice panel has authority to open, examine VP Sara"s bank records (2026-03-04 09:50)

The House Committee on Justice has the authority to subpoena and subsequently examine the bank records of Vice President Sara Duterte, House leaders said Wednesday.

- PH, South Korea boost ties with new defense deals (2026-03-04 09:45)

The Philippine and South Korean governments have formalized several new agreements seeking to enhance the defense capabilities of two countries during the state visit of South Korean President Lee Jae Myung on Tuesday, March 3.

- Eduardo Año files raps vs. 18 'ex-Marines,' Defensor, Baligod (2026-03-04 09:25)

National Security Adviser Eduardo Año on Wednesday filed a complaint against former congressman Mike Defensor, lawyer Levito Baligod, and 18 alleged former Marines for implicating him in the controversy over alleged cash deliveries from former Ako Bicol representative Zaldy Co.

- Tourism group wants simpler Japan, Korea visa process for Pinoys with US, Canada visas (2026-03-04 09:07)

A travel industry group has proposed to exempt Filipinos with valid tourist visas issued by the United States or Canada from regular visa processing when traveling to Japan and South Korea.

- Who is Bong Suntay? (2026-03-04 08:34)

Jesus Manuel “Bong” Suntay is a Filipino businessman and politician currently serving as the representative of Quezon City"s 4th District in the House of Representatives.

- Who can wage a good fight vs. Sara Duterte in 2028? Jonvic Remulla answers (2026-03-04 08:34)

Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla on Wednesday named some opposition and independent politicians who "can wage a good fight" against "hard to beat" Vice President Sara Duterte in the 2028 presidential elections.

- Comelec: Overseas voter registration halted in Israel, Iran (2026-03-04 08:31)

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) on Wednesday announced the suspension of overseas voter registration in Israel and Iran amid the escalation tensions in the Middle East.

- DILG chief Remulla to talk to Tau Gamma Phi over alleged hazing in Cavite (2026-03-04 08:29)

Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla on Wednesday said he would coordinate with the leadership of the Tau Gamma Phi fraternity following an alleged hazing incident in Cavite that left a 19-year old college freshman dead.

- Senate ethics panel to begin action on complaints vs senators on March 18 (2026-03-04 08:24)

The Senate committee on ethics and privileges is set to reconvene on March 18 to start the vetting process on the six complaints filed against incumbent senators, Senator JV Ejercito said Wednesday.

- ASEAN foreign ministers urge parties in Middle East conflict: Resolve issues through peaceful means (2026-03-04 08:06)

The foreign ministers of ASEAN on Wednesday urged parties involved in the Middle East conflict to respect international law and settle the conflict through peaceful means.

- Palace rebukes Bong Suntay for downplaying VP Sara"s kill threat vs. Marcos (2026-03-04 05:02)

Malacañang on Wednesday pushed back against Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay for saying that Vice President Sara Duterte"s alleged threat to kill President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos, and former Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez was not an actual threat.

- NBI investigates 18 ex-Marines" credibility, cash delivery allegations (2026-03-04 04:57)

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) is investigating the credibility and claim of 18 alleged former Marines that they delivered cash to public officials and personalities, Director Melvin Matibag said Wednesday.

- Fate of ICI may be out next week, ES Recto says (2026-03-04 04:54)

Fate of ICI may be out next week, ES Recto says

- Marcos may study 4-day workweek proposal -- Palace (2026-03-04 04:18)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. may consider studying a proposal to adopt a four-day workweek as part of efforts to conserve energy, Malacañang said Wednesday.

- Hontiveros: No excuse for Bong Suntay"s remarks about Anne Curtis (2026-03-04 04:14)

Senator Risa Hontiveros on Wednesday lambasted Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay over his controversial remark about actress Anne Curtis, saying he should apologize for what he said.

- Marcos won't intervene in Sara Duterte impeachment proceedings, says Palace (2026-03-04 03:48)

President Ferdinand ''Bongbong'' Marcos Jr. would not intervene in the ongoing impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte, Malacañang said on Wednesday.

- Bong Suntay apologizes to Anne Curtis, but stands by 'analogy' (2026-03-04 03:48)

Quezon City Representative Bong Suntay has apologized to actress Anne Curtis and to those who were offended by his remarks during the House Committee on Justice's deliberations on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte on Tuesday.

- Luistro: Threats from top officials are 'never just imagination' (2026-03-04 03:27)

Threats from high-ranking public officials are never just imagination, House justice panel chairperson Gerville Luistro of Batangas said Wednesday.

- Win Gatchalian: Congress may grant Marcos power to cut fuel excise taxes (2026-03-04 03:19)

Senator Sherwin Gatchalian on Wednesday expressed belief that Congress will give President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. emergency powers to reduce excise taxes on petroleum

products amid the heightened tensions in the Middle East.

- House approves bill allowing dual citizens to be SUC faculty members (2026-03-04 02:44)

House approves bill allowing dual citizens to be faculty members in SUCs

- VP Sara Duterte files perjury complaint vs. Ramil Madriaga (2026-03-04 02:37)

Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday filed a perjury complaint against Ramil Madriaga, her alleged former aide who claimed that her campaign was funded by drug dealers and Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGOs).

- DepEd, South Korea renew partnership to expand Korean language in public schools (2026-03-04 02:34)

Filipino high school students will gain expanded opportunities to learn the Korean language and strengthen global competitiveness after the Department of Education (DepEd) renewed its partnership with the Republic of Korea to continue and enhance Korean language teaching in select public schools.

- PNP probes fake class, work suspension advisory (2026-03-04 02:26)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Wednesday said it is investigating a fake advisory on supposed work and class suspension due to an alleged security threat amid the United States-Iran conflict.

- DBM says national tax allotment not under GAA amid SC petition (2026-03-04 01:00)

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) on Wednesday said that the National Tax Allotment (NTA) is not legislated under the General Appropriations Act (GAA).

- LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East (March 4, 2026) (2026-03-03 22:50)

Global oil and gas prices jumped on Tuesday as the US-Israeli war on Iran halted energy exports from the Middle East, with Tehran attacking ships and energy facilities, closing navigation in the Gulf and forcing production stoppages from Qatar to Iraq.

- PNP to continue energy-saving measures amid Middle East tension (2026-03-03 17:12)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) will continue implementing energy-saving measures such as rationalized deployment and reduced non-essential travel in compliance with President

Ferdinand Marcos Jr."s directive to conserve energy resources.

- LTFRB to fuel subsidy beneficiaries: Have your cards validated or replaced (2026-03-03 16:16)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has advised qualified beneficiaries with lost or expired fuel cards to coordinate with authorities for the validation and replacement of their card.

- PCSO: No jackpot winners in March 3 major lotto draws (2026-03-03 14:22)

No one won the jackpot prizes in the major lotto draws of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) on Tuesday, March 3.

- PH, Korea vow to uphold rules-based order amid geopolitical uncertainty (2026-03-03 12:15)

The Philippines and the Republic of Korea on Tuesday reaffirmed their commitment to uphold the rules-based order amid geopolitical developments in the region.

- PCG promotes 641 officers in donning of ranks ceremony (2026-03-03 11:45)

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) recognized the promotion of 641 officers during a simultaneous donning of ranks and oath-taking ceremony on Tuesday, March 3.

- Quimbo files bill authorizing Marcos to suspend fuel excise taxes during emergencies (2026-03-03 11:43)

House ways and means panel chair and Marikina City 2nd District Rep. Miro Quimbo has filed a bill seeking to allow the President to suspend or reduce the excise tax on petroleum products during national or global economic emergencies.

- Solon"s remark about Anne Curtis struck from record at impeachment hearing (2026-03-03 11:30)

House Justice members called out Rep. Bong Suntay for expressing his thoughts about Anne Curtis during the hearing on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte.

- Marcoleta cries foul over 'spliced" remarks on Kalayaan Island Group (2026-03-03 11:29)

Senator Rodante Marcoleta took the Senate floor on Tuesday to protest what he called the

splicing and distortion of his statements on the Kalayaan Island Group (KIG) by a fellow senator.

- Marcos: PH, Korea"s dynamic ties tested by history of sacrifice (2026-03-03 11:20)

The relations between the Philippines and the Republic of Korea have been tested by sacrifice and made more dynamic by this history, President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. said on Tuesday.

- LTFRB considers provisional fare hike if diesel reaches P60 per liter (2026-03-03 10:59)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) is looking into granting provisional fare increases for almost all types of public transportation if diesel prices reach P60 per liter.

- DOF inks P8.2-B loan for MRT-3 restoration (2026-03-03 10:54)

The Department of Finance (DOF) on Tuesday said it has secured an P8.2-billion loan from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to fund the restoration of the Metro Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT-3) and prepare for its future expansion.

- Councilors question inclusion of national tax allotment in 2026 budget (2026-03-03 10:05)

The Philippine Councilors League (PCL) on Tuesday asked the Supreme Court (SC) to declare the inclusion of the National Tax Allotment (NTA) for local government units (LGUs) as part of the 2026 General Appropriations Act (GAA) as unconstitutional.

- BuCor's Catapang orders probe on 'special treatment' for Chinese inmates (2026-03-03 09:54)

Corrections Director General Gregorio Catapang Jr. on Tuesday ordered an investigation into allegations that some Chinese who are detained at the Sablayan Prison and Penal Farm (SPPF) in Occidental Mindoro are being given preferential treatment.

- Hold departure order issued vs. Rep. Eric Yap, brother Edvic Yap (2026-03-03 09:51)

The Sandiganbayan has issued a precautionary hold departure order against Benguet Representative Eric Yap and his brother, former ACT-CIS party-list congressman Edvic Yap.

- PHLPost suspends outbound mail to 35 countries amid Middle East conflict (2026-03-03 09:36)

The Philippine Postal Corporation (PHLPost) has temporarily suspended the acceptance of all international outbound mail items bound for 35 countries following airspace closures in key Middle East transit hubs.

- Revilla camp opposes additional respondents in plunder complaint (2026-03-03 09:33)

The camp of former Senator Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. opposed Tuesday the inclusion of additional respondents in the plunder complaint filed against him with the Department of Justice (DOJ), his spokesperson said.

- DepEd urges school trimesters, says 53 school days disrupted in SY 2023-2024 (2026-03-03 09:18)

DepEd proposed to shift to a three-term school calendar, saying it would meaningfully address learning loss, recurring class suspensions, and teacher workload pressures.

- De Lima replaces Erice as House senior deputy minority leader (2026-03-03 09:02)

Mamamayang Liberal party-list Representative Leila de Lima has replaced Caloocan Representative Edgar Erice as House senior deputy minority leader.

- No law bars PH gov"t from coordinating with ICC -- DOJ (2026-03-03 08:53)

There is no existing law that bars the Philippine government from coordinating with the International Criminal Court (ICC), even as the Supreme Court (SC) reviews petitions challenging the arrest and transfer of former President Rodrigo Duterte to the tribunal, a Justice official said on Tuesday.

- MARINA tells PH ships to implement 'heightened security' amid US-Iran tension (2026-03-03 05:07)

MARINA tells PH ships to implement 'heightened security' amid US-Iran tension

- SC: Corporate execs liable with manning agency over seafarer's disability benefits (2026-03-03 04:52)

Corporate directors, officers, and manning agencies can be held liable over the payment of disability benefits to seafarers, the Supreme Court (SC) reiterated Tuesday.

- EDCOM 2: Funding cuts, teacher gaps hindering expansion of science high schools (2026-03-03 04:31)

The Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM 2) on Tuesday warned that shrinking funding, weak curriculum oversight, and a shortage of specialized teachers are preventing science high schools under the Department of Education (DepEd) from expanding -- even as demand from high-performing students continues to rise.

- LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East (2026-03-03 04:25)

Amid the ongoing tension in the Middle East, President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. ensured that the Philippines has enough supply of oil while the Department of Agriculture is closely monitoring how the developments would affect the country's agriculture sector.

- House panel OKs anti-political dynasty bill barring relatives from same-area posts (2026-03-03 04:17)

The House committee on suffrage and electoral reforms on Tuesday approved a proposed Anti-Political Dynasty bill that would stop close relatives--up to second-degree family members--from running for or holding office in the same area at the same time, House Deputy Minority Leader Edgar Erice of Caloocan City said on Tuesday.

- DA worried over impact of US-Iran conflict on PH agri (2026-03-03 03:59)

The Department of Agriculture on Tuesday said it is closely monitoring how the developments in the Middle East following the US and Israel airstrikes on Iran could affect the country"s agriculture sector.

- DepEd clears 5,335 delayed teacher promotions under career reform (2026-03-03 03:46)

The Department of Education (DepEd) has approved 5,335 long-pending teacher promotion requests that were filed under the old rules, marking what it described as a "significant step" in its transition to the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) System.

- PH Navy: 62 Chinese ships spotted in WPS features in February 2026 (2026-03-03 03:16)

A total of 62 Chinese vessels including warships were monitored over some features in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) in February, the Philippine Navy said on Tuesday.

- Imee insists Senate duty to probe 18 'ex-Marines' claims (2026-03-03 03:08)

Senator Imee Marcos questioned Tuesday why there are fears to investigate the alleged delivery by supposed former members of the Philippine Marine Corps of cash to various individuals, saying that it is the duty of the Senate to examine such claims.

- PH has enough supply of oil amid Middle East conflict --Marcos (2026-03-03 03:00)

PH has enough supply of oil amid Middle East conflict - Marcos

- LTFRB kicks off program to encourage public to report PUV-related abuses (2026-03-02 20:05)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Monday launched an information campaign to encourage commuters to report abuses of public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers and operators.

- DOT OKs 15 senior citizens as Intramuros tour guides (2026-03-02 19:29)

The Department of Tourism (DOT) has recently accredited 15 senior citizens as tour guides in the historic Intramuros district under the Tourism Legacy and Livelihood Program.

- Sandro Marcos files bill seeking to criminalize road rage (2026-03-02 18:31)

House Majority Leader and Ilocos Norte 1st District Rep. Ferdinand Alexander “Sandro” Marcos on Monday filed a measure seeking to criminalize road rage and tighten penalties for aggressive and retaliatory driving.

- DND: AI-generated videos on Middle East conflict are fake news (2026-03-02 17:38)

The Department of National Defense (DND) on Monday warned the public against AI-generated videos and other similar materials spreading false narratives on the conflict in the Middle East.

- DOTr readying fuel subsidy for PUV operators, drivers amid Middle East conflict (2026-03-02 16:00)

The Department of Transportation (DOTr) on Monday said it is preparing for the possible release of fuel subsidies for public utility vehicle (PUV) operators and drivers should fuel prices further spike amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

- PCSO: Bettor from Rizal hits ₱17.9M jackpot in 6/45 lotto draw (2026-03-02 14:03)

A bettor who placed a bet at a lotto outlet in Rizal won the P17.9 million jackpot prize in the Megalotto 6/45 draw on Monday, March 2, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said.

- Ombudsman seeks individual affidavits from 18 ex-Marines in cash deliveries tale (2026-03-02 13:48)

Ombudsman Jesus Crispin "Boying" Remulla said he wanted to secure individual affidavits from each of the 18 former soldiers who have alleged in a single sworn statement that they delivered suitcases of cash to some officials on instructions of former Ako Bicol Rep. Zaldy Co.

- How to spot 'red flags' in online lending apps (2026-03-02 13:13)

The Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center (CICC) on Monday warned the public against suspicious online lending platforms, as it noted that it has received 599 reports of Filipinos who were harassed by such apps since January this year.

- Middle East-bound OFWs stranded at NAIA amid crisis (2026-03-02 12:33)

Several overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) were stranded at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) after flights going to countries in the Middle East were cancelled amid the ongoing conflict in the region.

- Lacson raises questions on supposed ex-Marines" flood control kickback claims (2026-03-02 11:32)

Senator Panfilo “Ping” Lacson on Monday raised questions of “logic and mathematics” over the allegations of 18 supposed ex-Philippine Marines members who claimed that they delivered suitcases of cash as kickbacks linked to the flood control mess.

- Bulacan Gov. Daniel Fernando addresses alleged NLEX road rage (2026-03-02 11:25)

Bulacan Governor Daniel Fernando on Monday addressed the issue of alleged road rage incident at the Northern Luzon Expressway (NLEX) involving his convoy.

- Why the US and Israel attacked Iran (2026-03-02 11:06)

The attacks led to the death of Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. His daughter, son-in-law, and grandchild were also killed in the middle of the tension. But why exactly did the US and Israel attack Iran?

- PH to hold 3 ASEAN high-level forums this week --DSWD (2026-03-02 09:52)

The Philippines will hold high-level ASEAN forums this week on family resilience, youth empowerment, and advanced inclusive development for marginalized and vulnerable communities.

- Senators urge enhanced OFW protection, oil contingency amid Middle East crisis (2026-03-02 09:27)

Amid escalating tensions in the Middle East and fears of potential oil supply disruption, several senators on Monday urged the government to step up protection for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) while preparing economic safeguards for a possible fuel price spike.

- SP Sotto wants to clarify 'marginalized" groups in party-list reform bill (2026-03-02 09:04)

Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III on Monday sought to clarify who belong to marginalized groups as the Senate tackles the proposed measure on the country"s party-list system.

- Boying Remulla confirms meeting Trillanes, ICC investigators in 2025 (2026-03-02 07:58)

Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla on Monday said that he met with International Criminal Court (ICC) personnel to discuss the protection of Filipino witnesses in the crimes against humanity case against former President Rodrigo Duterte.

- Middle East tensions have no direct threat to PH -- DND (2026-03-02 06:38)

Philippine military and security officials said Monday that tensions in the Middle East will have no direct threat to the country"s security following a call by a senator to review the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) between Manila and Washington.

- Two impeach raps vs. VP Sara Duterte sufficient in form --House justice panel (2026-03-02 05:47)

The House committee on justice on Monday found the two impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte sufficient in form.

- House panel sets aside 1st impeach rap vs. VP Sara for violating 1-year bar rule (2026-03-02 05:29)

The House committee on justice voted Monday to set aside the first impeachment complaint filed against Vice President Sara Duterte for violating the one-year bar rule that only allows initiation of one impeachment proceedings against an official per year.

- Overseas voter registration in Middle East continues -- Comelec (2026-03-02 04:46)

Overseas voter registration in the Middle East continues as Philippine foreign posts remain operational despite the ongoing conflict in the region, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) said Monday.

- Lawyers ask SC: Compel Senate disclosure of draft report on flood control mess (2026-03-02 03:25)

A group of lawyers on Monday asked the Supreme Court (SC) to compel the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee to disclose the draft report on its investigation into alleged anomalies in flood control projects.

- House panel chair: SC didn't clear VP Sara Duterte of impeachment allegations (2026-03-02 03:00)

The Supreme Court did not absolve Vice President Sara Duterte of any impeachable offense, House committee on justice chairperson and Batangas Second District Rep. Gerville Luistro said Monday.

- Tindig Pilipinas drops 2nd impeach rap vs Sara Duterte, backs 3rd complaint (2026-03-02 01:17)

The petitioners of the second impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte submitted their letter of withdrawal to the Office of the House Secretary General Monday morning.

- Australia rules out military role in Iran conflict (2026-03-02 00:56)

SYDNEY -- Australia said on Monday it would not take part in any military operations in Iran, ruling out deploying troops to the Middle East if the conflict escalates, as Israel launched fresh strikes on Tehran and Iran responded with more missile attacks.

Source: PhilStar Global

- Landmark anti-scam partnership eyes stronger protection for OFWs (2026-03-08 22:00)

The agreement sets a clear direction to strengthen digital safety programs for overseas Filipino workers, deepen cross-border intelligence sharing, and widen access to practical tools and resources.

- 2 cops, 3 civilians held for drugs in Taguig (2026-03-08 16:00)

Two policemen allegedly moonlighting as drug dealers and their three civilian cohorts were apprehended in an anti-narcotics operation in Taguig on Saturday.

- License of driver in road rage suspended (2026-03-08 16:00)

The Land Transportation Office (LTO) has suspended the license of a driver involved in a road rage accident in Manila.

- Rabies cases drop – DOH (2026-03-08 16:00)

Seventeen rabies cases have been recorded from Jan. 4 to Feb. 21, which is lower compared to the 49 cases logged in the same period last year, according to the Department of Health.

- DepEd holds unified science school entry test in Metro Manila (2026-03-08 16:00)

The Department of Education (DepEd) has conducted the first unified science high school admission test or USHAT in Metro Manila.

- PCSO aids 1,907 Quezon City families (2026-03-08 16:00)

Some 1,907 families displaced by a fire in Quezon City have received aid from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO).

- Mother, children held over land row (2026-03-08 16:00)

A mother and her three children were detained for hours inside their house by four men in Barangay Cupang in Antipolo City, Rizal on Saturday.

- Nueva Vizcaya activates price council (2026-03-08 16:00)

Amid concerns over possible increases in prices of basic commodities due to rising fuel costs, the Nueva Vizcaya Provincial Price Coordinating Council will convene today to monitor the market and ensure compliance with suggested retail prices.

- ISIS-linked leader killed in North Cotabato clash (2026-03-08 16:00)

A key leader of the terror group Dawlah Islamiyah (DI), which has links with the Islamic State or ISIS, was killed in a military assault yesterday in Banisilan town in North Cotabato, the Armed Forces said.

- 48,722 register for BARMM elections (2026-03-08 16:00)

As the registration of voters continues, at least 48,722 people have registered for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao or BARMM parliamentary election in November, the Commission on Elections said.

- ‘Treat hazing as organized crime’ (2026-03-08 16:00)

After the death of another student in a fraternity initiation rite, Senior Citizens party-list Rep. Rodolfo Ordanes is urging the government to treat hazing as an organized crime.

- Dawlah Islamiya-Hassan faction’s ‘emir’ killed in Cotabato encounter (2026-03-08 09:05)

Soldiers killed the top leader of a Dawlah Islamiya faction during an encounter in Barangay Tinimbacan, Banisilan, Cotabato, on Sunday morning, March 8.

- Father shoots son dead with shotgun in Koronadal (2026-03-08 05:29)

A drunk father shot dead his 32-year-old son with a 12-gauge shotgun during a heated argument in their yard in Barangay San Jose, Koronadal City, on Saturday, March 7.

- School building grant awarded to ethnic Blaan children (2026-03-08 04:18)

Ethnic Blaan children and their classmates from settler families now have a new two-classroom building on their campus in Barangay Kipalbig, Tampakan, South Cotabato, constructed by a private firm based in Metro Manila.

- 3 Chinese nabbed over P70 million kush (2026-03-07 16:00)

Three Chinese nationals were arrested upon arrival at the Clark International Airport yesterday for allegedly carrying high-grade marijuana or kush valued at P70 million.

- Siblings die in Maguindanao vehicular mishap (2026-03-07 16:00)

A 16-year-old high school student and her brother died after their motorcycle collided with a delivery van in Datu Anggal Midtimbang in Maguindanao del Sur on Friday.

- Power bill subsidy program launched in Iloilo (2026-03-07 16:00)

Up to 149,896 family-beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program or 4Ps in Western Visayas may benefit from the electricity bill discount provided by the government under the expanded Lifeline Rate Subsidy Program.

- Chinese trader seized in Cavite; family tied up (2026-03-07 16:00)

A Chinese businessman was seized by seven unidentified men who barged into the victim’s house, tied and locked up his wife, children and three others in the toilet in Bacoor, Cavite on Thursday night.

- Cushion Middle East crisis impact on sugar industry, government urged (2026-03-07 16:00)

The government has been asked to cushion the impact of the Middle East crisis on the local sugar industry by providing sugarcane farmers and agrarian reform beneficiaries fertilizer assistance and other subsidies.

- Court orders release of Chinese convict (2026-03-07 16:00)

The Court of Appeals has ordered the release of a Chinese national found guilty of possession and sale of over 90 kilos of shabu in 2024, as the CA pointed out deficiencies in the handling of drug evidence.

- DOTr orders MRT-3 disinfection (2026-03-07 16:00)

The Department of Transportation ordered the sanitation, disinfection and pest control of Metro Rail Transit 3 train sets after a photo of small insects in a train car went viral online, the DOTr said.

- 4,000 families left homeless in Quezon City fire (2026-03-07 16:00)

t least 4,000 families lost their homes after a fire razed a shantytown along the NIA Road in Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City on Friday night.

- Suspect in Parañaque condo shooting nabbed (2026-03-07 16:00)

Police arrested a 59-year-old man who allegedly opened fire at a basketball court inside a condominium complex in Parañaque City, killing two people and injuring four others.

- Hundreds evacuate as firearms seized from feuding Moro factions (2026-03-07 10:53)

Security forces recovered 13 high-powered firearms after clashes between rival Moro groups along the Cotabato border.

- Quezon City fire along NIA Road contained after highest alarm level (2026-03-07 04:40)

A large fire that broke out in a residential area along NIA Road in Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City late Friday.

- Quezon City opens water testing lab (2026-03-06 16:00)

The Quezon City government has opened its own water testing laboratory to ensure the safety and quality of water used in households across the city.

- PNP, MMDA expand healthcare services for personnel, dependents (2026-03-06 16:00)

The Philippine National Police and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority have expanded the healthcare services for PNP and MMDA personnel and their dependents.

- Tondo fire displaces 200 families, disrupts port ops (2026-03-06 16:00)

A fire reached the fourth alarm at dawn yesterday in Tondo, Manila, displacing 200 families and disrupting port operations.

- Jonvic urges public: Report BFP irregularities (2026-03-06 16:00)

Determined to stamp out corruption in the Bureau of Fire Protection, Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla yesterday urged the public to report irregularities or abusive practices of BFP personnel.

- Taft Avenue drainage rehabilitation finished by 2027 (2026-03-06 16:00)

The drainage rehabilitation project of the Department of Public Works and Highways along Taft Avenue in Manila will be completed before the end of 2027, DPWH Secretary Vince Dizon said yesterday.

- NBI summons ex-Marines, others over bagmen claims (2026-03-06 16:00)

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has issued subpoenas to former lawmaker Mike Defensor, lawyer Levito Baligod and 18 men, mostly former Marines who claimed that they delivered suitcases of cash to several people on orders of former House appropriations committee chair Zaldy Co.

- Release P630 million to Globe Asiatique, Pag-IBIG asked (2026-03-06 16:00)

The Home Development Mutual Fund or Pag-IBIG has been asked to release P630 million in escrow funds to property developer Globe Asiatique Realty Holdings Corp. after a court dismissed an estafa case filed against officials of the company.

- Missing captain among bodies retrieved from Trisha Kerstin 3 (2026-03-06 16:00)

Police forensic experts have identified one of the bodies recovered from the wreckage of the sunken M/V Trisha Kerstin 3 to be the missing ship captain.

- 2 killed in Baguio road crash (2026-03-06 16:00)

Two people were killed while a minor was injured when a truck loaded with cattle crashed along a road in this city yesterday afternoon.

- Jonvic to suspects in maritime student’s hazing death: Surrender or be hunted down (2026-03-06 16:00)

Members of the Tau Gamma Phi fraternity tagged in the hazing death of a freshman maritime student in Cavite should surrender immediately or face a police manhunt, Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla warned yesterday.

- 3 shabu, marijuana dealers linked to Dawlah Islamiya face charges (2026-03-06 10:28)

Three shabu dealers, who ran a drug den in the city and sold marijuana reportedly linked to remnants of the defunct Dawlah Islamiya terror group, are now in detention and awaiting prosecution in court.

- MRT-3 inspects train after commuter posts about cockroaches (2026-03-06 05:05)

MRT-3 management inspected and disinfected its train after a commuter reported seeing small cockroaches inside a car

- South Korean fugitive posing as Filipino arrested in Batangas (2026-03-05 23:15)

Authorities arrested a South Korean fugitive in Batangas who allegedly used fake documents to pose as a Filipino citizen.

- Bomb threat disrupts classes at Quezon NHS (2026-03-05 16:00)

As students were taking their examinations yesterday morning, tension gripped the Quezon National High School after a bomb threat was sent to the QNHS social media pages, forcing authorities to send learners home as a precautionary measure.

- Sablayan fugitive rearrested (2026-03-05 16:00)

Authorities recaptured yesterday a prisoner who escaped from Sablayan Prison and Penal Farm in Occidental Mindoro, after a resident alerted police that his motorcycle was stolen.

- 1 dead, 5 others injured in Muslim feud (2026-03-05 16:00)

A graduating high school student was killed while five members of another family were injured in the crossfire between two heavily armed Muslim groups at the border of Datu Piang town in Maguindanao del Sur and Nabalawag town in the Bangsamoro Special Geographic Area in Cotabato.

- Stranded vice mayors on way back to Philippines (2026-03-05 16:00)

The 11 vice mayors from Bulacan who got stranded in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates while on a personal trip in the Middle East are on their way back to the Philippines, Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla said yesterday.

- Remulla to meet with frat leaders over hazing death (2026-03-05 16:00)

Concerned over the death due to hazing of a freshman maritime student in Cavite, Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla will meet with senior Tau Gamma Phi officials to end violence within the fraternity.

- P237 million fake luxury goods seized in Binondo (2026-03-05 16:00)

The National Bureau of Investigation confiscated more than P237 million worth of counterfeit luxury goods in Binondo earlier this week.

- 2 dead in Parañaque condominium shooting (2026-03-05 16:00)

Two people were killed after a man fired indiscriminately at a condominium in Parañaque on Wednesday.

- DILG tells agencies: Cut fuel use (2026-03-05 16:00)

With fuel prices expected to further surge amid the Middle East crisis, the Department of the Interior and Local Government has ordered its attached agencies to enforce cost-cutting measures.

- Jonvic tags fire chief in P14.75 million bribe scheme (2026-03-05 16:00)

Bureau of Fire Protection chief Jesus Fernandez allegedly received P14.75 million in bribe money for the procurement of 132 type 1 basic life support ambulances when he headed the BFP’s bids and awards committee.

- DMW: P150K aid for OFWs not true (2026-03-05 16:00)

The Department of Migrant Workers and Overseas Workers Welfare Administration on Wednesday warned the public against false online information about financial assistance of P150,000 for overseas Filipino workers.

- Women's Month in 10th ID kicks off with promotion ceremony for female soldiers (2026-03-05 11:27)

The Army’s 10th Infantry Division capped off the start on Monday, March 2, of its observance of the International Women’s Month with a symbolic donning of higher rank insignias to its newly-promoted female personnel.

- BARMM lawmakers continue Ramadhan outreach activities (2026-03-05 10:28)

Marginalized Muslims in Cotabato City and nearby Moro communities in Cotabato province, Region 12, have benefited from ongoing Ramadhan outreach missions by members of the 80-seat regional parliament of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, which began last week.

- Student dies, 5 hurt in crossfires between feuding Moro factions (2026-03-05 08:23)

A graduating female high school student was killed while five members of a family were wounded in crossfire between two heavily armed Moro groups locked in a standoff at the border of Datu Piang, Maguindanao del Sur, and Nabalawag town in the Bangsamoro Special Geographic Area in Cotabato province since Tuesday, March 3.

- Vice mayor charged over woman’s slay (2026-03-04 16:00)

A municipal vice mayor in x and his companions have been charged in connection with the fatal shooting of a woman and the wounding of another in Initao, Misamis Oriental last month.

- Rare ‘corpse flower’ discovered in Apayao (2026-03-04 16:00)

A rare “corpse flower” has been found thriving in the forest of Calanasan town in Apayao on Tuesday.

- Jonvic denies beating up Fernando (2026-03-04 16:00)

Department of the Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla has denied allegations that he beat up Bulacan Gov. Daniel Fernando.

- 21 eyed in hazing death of maritime student (2026-03-04 16:00)

Twenty-one people were reportedly involved in the death by hazing of a freshman maritime student in Cavite, police said yesterday. Of the 21, nine directly participated in the hazing rites, which resulted in the death of Mark Kenneth Alcedo, 19, Cavite police director Col. Ariel Red said during a briefing at Camp Crame.

- Explosion hits fastfood outlet in Basilan; 1 hurt (2026-03-04 16:00)

Motorcycle-riding men believed to be extortionists hurled a grenade at a fastfood outlet, injuring a worker in Lamitan, Basilan on Tuesday night.

- Fire-hit families in Mandaluyong get aid (2026-03-04 16:00)

Families displaced by a fire in Mandaluyong’s Barangay Addition Hills received aid from Sen. Bong Go on Tuesday.

- LTO revokes licenses of 7 drivers for drunk driving (2026-03-04 16:00)

The Land Transportation Office has revoked the licenses of seven drivers for drunk driving.

- PNP probes fake class, work suspensions (2026-03-04 16:00)

The Philippine National Police is investigating a social media post about nationwide work and class suspensions from March 4 to 6 due to an alleged security threat.

- 9 Customs employees face agricultural smuggling, corruption cases (2026-03-04 16:00)

Nine employees of the Bureau of Customs will face agricultural smuggling and corruption charges for illegally importing farm products.

- 1 dead in Las Piñas village standoff (2026-03-04 16:00)

A standoff over the leadership of BF Resort Village in Las Piñas turned bloody, leaving a security guard dead on Wednesday.

- Ex-police major, companion shot dead in Maguindanao del Sur ambush (2026-03-04 10:44)

A retired police major with a long history in peacebuilding, along with his companion, was killed in an ambush in Barangay Pagagawan, Datu Montawal, Maguindanao del Sur, on Tuesday afternoon, March 3.

- Bystander injured in grenade attack at Basilan fast food outlet (2026-03-04 10:17)

A bystander was injured when two men on a motorcycle set off a fragmentation grenade in front of a newly constructed fast food outlet in Lamitan City, Basilan, on Tuesday night, March 3,

causing panic among nearby residents.

- PDEA 9 seizes P9.8-M worth of marijuana plants in Sulu (2026-03-04 10:06)

Anti-narcotics agents uprooted 11,516 marijuana shrubs, worth P9.8 million, in an operation in Barangay Masjid Punjungan, Kalingalan Caluang, Sulu, on Tuesday, March 3.

- Palace pushes for quick passage of House bill resetting BARMM parliamentary polls (2026-03-04 03:00)

Malacañang has called for the immediate passage of the House counterpart measure on the Bangsamoro Parliamentary Elections (BPE), after the Senate approved on third and final reading Senate Bill No. 1823, resetting the first regular polls in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) from March to September 2026.

- Engineer shot dead by ex-partner (2026-03-03 16:00)

A female engineer was killed while her brother was wounded after her former partner, who is an Army soldier, allegedly shot them in Catarman, Northern Samar on Monday.

- Comelec flags fake news on Antipolo poll bet‘s ‘disqualification’ (2026-03-03 16:00)

A post on social media claiming that a son of the late congressman Romeo Acop has been disqualified from running in a special election in Antipolo City this month is false, according to the Commission on Elections.

- ‘Danger level’ heat index seen in Palawan (2026-03-03 16:00)

Residents of Coron in Palawan may likely experience a “danger level” heat index of 42 degrees Celsius today, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

- 4.8 quake jolts Iloilo; work, classes suspended (2026-03-03 16:00)

A magnitude 4.8 earthquake jolted several areas in Iloilo on Monday night, prompting schools and local government officials to suspend classes and work in government, respectively, the following day.

- Maritime student dies from ‘hazing’ (2026-03-03 16:00)

A freshman maritime student has died reportedly from hazing in General Trias, Cavite.

- PNP backs Marcos order to save energy (2026-03-03 16:00)

Backing President Marcos’ directive to conserve energy amid global fuel price volatility due to the Middle East crisis, the Philippine National Police has ordered the implementation of energy-saving measures.

- Vlogger sued for unjust vexation, cyberlibel (2026-03-03 16:00)

National Police Commission vice chairman Rafael Vicente Calinisan yesterday filed criminal complaints against vlogger Francis Leo Marcos, whose real name is Norman Mangusin, before the Quezon City prosecutor’s office.

- Voter registrants for BSKE hit 2.6 million (2026-03-03 16:00)

The number of voters who registered for the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections has reached over 2.6 million, according to the Commission on Elections.

- Women get free train, bus rides this month (2026-03-03 16:00)

In celebration of International Women’s Month next week, women may avail themselves of free train and bus rides this March.

- Helicopter crashes in Rizal; 2 dead (2026-03-03 16:00)

Two people were killed while three others were injured when a private helicopter crashed in a farm in Pililia, Rizal yesterday morning.

- Navy seizes P270.9-M worth of cigarettes in Maguindanao offshore operation (2026-03-03 11:02)

A Navy team foiled, on Sunday, March 1, an attempt by seafaring smugglers to deliver P270.9 million worth of cigarettes from Indonesia to dealers in this city and in nearby beachfront areas of Maguindanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur provinces in the Bangsamoro region.

- PDEA declares Cotabato City LGU center a ‘drug-free workplace’ (2026-03-03 06:37)

The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency declared the large People’s Palace, the main operations center of the city's local government unit, an absolutely drug-free workplace during a symbolic ceremony on Monday, March 2.

- Helicopter crashes in Rizal; 2 reported dead (2026-03-03 06:01)

Two people were killed after a civilian helicopter crashed in Pililla, Rizal, police said.

- Bullet hits US tourist in Bukidnon (2026-03-02 16:00)

A 38-year-old American was injured after a shotgun bullet hit him as he was taking photos at Bayug Falls, the country’s second highest waterfall, on Sunday.

- Teenager nabbed for murder of 2 girls (2026-03-02 16:00)

An 18-year-old former construction worker was arrested for the murder of two girls inside a cemetery in Barangay San Juan in Morong, Rizal close to midnight on Saturday.

- Senate bill sets September BARMM poll (2026-03-02 16:00)

The Senate approved yesterday on third and final reading a bill resetting the first regular elections in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao to the second Monday of

September and every three years thereafter.

- Jordanian linked to Bondi Beach suspects nabbed (2026-03-02 16:00)

A Jordanian, whose business is allegedly linked to the two suspects in the Bondi Beach terror attack in Australia in December, was arrested for immigration violations yesterday in Pagadian City, Zamboanga del Sur.

- Sandro files Anti-Road Rage bill (2026-03-02 16:00)

The lawmaker-son of President Marcos filed a bill yesterday before the House of Representatives seeking to protect the public from road rage, after his younger brother figured in an incident along the North Luzon Expressway or NLEX last month.

- More policewomen deployed to boost VAWC response (2026-03-02 16:00)

The Philippine National Police will field more policewomen in barangays amid rising cases of violence against women and their children reported to the PNP emergency hotline.

- Muntinlupa opens Philippines first road safety park (2026-03-02 16:00)

The first road safety park in the Philippines has been opened in Muntinlupa.

- Malaysian yields P112 million shabu (2026-03-02 16:00)

A Malaysian national allegedly carrying over P112 million worth of shabu has been arrested at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

- Erice’s brother loses P.4 million to thief (2026-03-02 16:00)

Caloocan Rep. Edgar Erice’s brother has been targeted by a thief who stole P480,000 from his car.

- Manhunt for Atong Ang continues – PNP (2026-03-02 16:00)

The Philippine National Police continues its intensified manhunt for gambling tycoon Charlie “Atong” Ang, who is wanted for the murders of cockfight aficionados.

- Police fatally shoot villager who killed brother and resisted arrest in Zamboanga del Sur (2026-03-02 10:44)

Policemen shot dead, in self-defense, a man who attacked them with a machete after he hacked his brother to death on Saturday, February 28, in their yard in Purok Hayahay, Barangay Santo Antonio, Tukuran, Zamboanga del Sur.

- Panagbenga organizer accepts responsibility for dancers’ artificial turf injuries (2026-03-02 10:44)

The Baguio Flower Festival Foundation Inc. has accepted full responsibility for injuries sustained by performers on the new artificial turf at Melvin Jones Football Field during the Panagbenga

Grand Street Dance Parade.

- Cops seize P2.6 million worth of shabu in Lanao del Sur operation (2026-03-02 10:02)

Policemen seized P2.6 million worth of shabu from four dealers linked to remnants of the now-defunct Dawlah Islamiya, who were entrapped in Saguiaran, Lanao del Sur, on Saturday, February 28.

- ARRAPI pushes for activation of more AFP reservists amid global security tensions (2026-03-02 10:00)

The Association of Reservists and Reservist Administrators of the Philippines, Inc. (ARRAPI) is intensifying its call for the activation, organization, and full integration of more AFP reservists to reinforce the country’s territorial defense posture.

- 3 villagers killed in separate ambushes in Cotabato (2026-03-02 09:16)

Three Moro villagers were killed in separate ambushes in two neighboring towns in Cotabato province over just two days.

- Isko orders 50% fuel cut for Manila LGU amid US-Iran crisis (2026-03-02 04:07)

Manila will cut LGU fuel use by 50% as global oil tensions threaten price spikes.

Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer

- Pampanga Board member surrenders on multiple estafa charges (2026-03-09 13:43)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga — Facing 10 criminal cases of estafa with no bail, Pampanga Board Member Estelito “Shiwen” Lim voluntarily surrendered on Monday morning to Vice Gov. Dennis “Delta” Pineda at the provincial capitol. Pineda, who serves as the presiding officer of the Provincial Board, immediately turned Lim over to Col. Eugene Marcelo,

- Koronadal City Mayor Eliordo Ogena dies at 71 (2026-03-09 13:20)

KORONADAL CITY – With a heavy heart, the city government of Koronadal on Monday announced the passing of Mayor Eliordo Ogena at a hospital in General Santos City due to a lingering illness. He was 71 years old. “He dedicated his life to all Koronadaleños, his leadership had a huge impact that led to the

- Dy rallies House: Shield Filipinos from oil price shock amid US-Iran war (2026-03-09 13:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Speaker Faustino “Bojie” G. Dy III on Monday urged the House of Representatives to pursue legislation and policy measures that will protect Filipinos from the impact of oil price shocks caused by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. In a statement, Dy said lawmakers and House committees will push priority bills

- 4-day workweek does not cover PNP administrative work – spokesperson (2026-03-09 13:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Even administrative work in the Philippine National Police (PNP) is not covered by the government’s new four-day workweek set-up, the law enforcement agency clarified on Monday. “This is because our administrative personnel, as well as the non-uniformed personnel, their work is needed in the Philippine National Police,” spokesperson Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño,

- Biliran is first Eastern Visayas province to adopt 4-day workweek (2026-03-09 13:02)

TACLOBAN CITY — The provincial government of Biliran has begun implementing a four-day workweek for its offices starting Monday, as part of a nationwide push to conserve energy amid rising fuel costs. Through Executive Order No. 12, Governor Rogelio Espina directed all provincial offices and departments to adopt flexible work arrangements in line with Memorandum

- DEPDev warns: Worst-case scenario sees diesel hitting P96 per liter (2026-03-09 12:56)

MANILA, Philippines — Diesel prices by March 2026, considering a worst-case scenario wherein war in the Middle East drags on and passage along the Strait of Hormuz remains restricted, may rise up to P96 per liter according to an official of the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev). During Monday’s hearing of the House of Representatives’

- De Lima denies receiving millions of pesos from Co (2026-03-09 12:53)

MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal party-list Rep. Leila de Lima on Monday denied allegations that she received millions of pesos in cash from former Ako Bicol Rep. Zaldy Co, stressing that the claim remained false regardless of whether the money was supposedly delivered in a suitcase or a paper bag. Her statement came after lawyer

- PNP tightens watch of gas stations amid Middle East oil price hike (2026-03-09 12:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) has deployed additional police officers to monitor gas stations nationwide amid looming price increases driven by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. “Since day one of the crisis, that has been the order of our chief,” PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño, speaking Filipino, told reporters in

- Landslide debris blocks road in Southern Leyte town (2026-03-09 12:26)

TACLOBAN CITY- A landslide triggered by continuous heavy rains has blocked the road in Sitio Caingin, Barangay Pinut-an, San Ricardo, Southern Leyte, on Monday, authorities reported. READ: LPA may become cyclone in 24 hours but low chance to enter PAR Luckily, no one was hurt, and no residents were in the area at the time, but the Provincial Disaster

- 11 houses destroyed in Cavite fire (2026-03-09 12:18)

LUCENA CITY — A fire of undetermined origin destroyed 11 houses in General Trias City, Cavite, on Sunday. Police Regional Office 4A reported Monday that the blaze broke out around 10:30 a.m. in Barangay San Gabriel. It quickly spread to homes, most of which were made of light materials, before firefighters contained it at 12:26

- PNP on alert for protests marking first year of Duterte’s ICC detention (2026-03-09 12:14)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) is on alert for possible protests marking the first year of former President Rodrigo Duterte’s detention at the International Criminal Court (ICC) this coming Wednesday, March 11. “We are closely monitoring developments and coordinating with local units to ensure public safety,” PNP Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez

- Free MRT, LRT rides pushed amid looming big time fuel increases (2026-03-09 12:13)

MANILA, Philippines — To cushion the impact of big-time oil price hike due to Middle East tension, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) should provide free rides in metro rails and increase the availability of buses in the Edsa busway, lawmakers said on Monday. Such calls came amid the looming P20 and P10 per liter price hike

- 3.2 magnitude quake strikes off Occidental Mindoro town (2026-03-09 12:09)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — A magnitude 3.2 earthquake struck off Abra de Ilog town in Occidental Mindoro early Monday morning, according to state seismologists. The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) reported the quake occurred at 5:59 a.m., with its epicenter 11 kilometers northwest of Abra de Ilog at a depth of 111

- NCRPO urged to probe security lapses after Parañaque condo shooting (2026-03-09 12:02)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) has been requested to investigate whether there were any security lapses on the part of the Parañaque City condominium complex where a shooting left two dead and four injured. A resident of the condo, the suspect — who had been wanted for a homicide case

- De Lima says Dutertes behind ex-Marines’ allegations; NBI probes angle (2026-03-09 12:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima and 2025 Ramon Magsaysay awardee Fr. Flaviano “Flavie” Villanueva both believe that the Dutertes are behind the allegations of the 18 alleged former Marines who claimed to be “bagmen” of former Ako Bicol Rep. Elizaldy Co. De Lima and Villanueva said this on Monday as they

- Zambales state university adopts compressed workweek (2026-03-09 11:55)

SAN ANTONIO, ZAMBALES —The President Ramon Magsaysay State University (PRMSU) in this province has adopted a compressed workweek arrangement across its campuses starting today, with in-person classes from Monday to Thursday and online classes on Fridays to conserve

energy. In an advisory, the university said the policy will be implemented through the Office ofthe

- Western Visayas state universities shift to 4-day workweek (2026-03-09 11:46)

ILOILO CITY — Several state universities in Western Visayas will implement a four-day on-site workweek starting Monday in compliance with a presidential directive to conserve energy. This is in line with Memorandum Circular No. 114 issued by the Office of the President, which directs government agencies to adopt stricter energy conservation measures. READ: Save energy

- DOST-Oriental Mindoro adopts 4-day workweek to cut energy use (2026-03-09 11:24)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The Department of Science and Technology – Provincial Science and Technology Center (PSTC) in Oriental Mindoro adopted a flexible work arrangement on Monday, in line with a national directive to reduce energy consumption and fuel use. READ: Save energy as Mideast conflict threatens oil supply – Marcos In a public

- Alcedo hazing case: 6th Tau Gamma Phi member surrenders (2026-03-09 11:21)

MANILA, Philippines — A sixth Tau Gamma Phi member has surrendered to the authorities over the alleged fatal hazing of 19-year-old maritime student Mark Kenneth Alcedo, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Monday. The sixth member — whom the police only identified as a 19-year-old boy — voluntarily turned himself over to Dasmariñas City

- 15 Bataan municipal employees face dismissal over positive drug tests (2026-03-09 11:13)

LIMAY, Bataan — At least 15 employees of the Limay municipal government may face dismissal after testing positive for illegal drugs during a surprise drug screening, local officials said. Limay Mayor Richie Jason David said the 15 employees were among around 350 municipal workers who underwent drug testing conducted last week by the Philippine Drug

- Zambales town creates task force to monitor fuel prices (2026-03-09 10:54)

SAN MARCELINO, Zambales— In response to the continuing rise in fuel prices, authorities in the town of San Marcelino have implemented new measures to monitor fuel costs and prevent unauthorized price increases. READ: Gas stations warned: No advance price hikes Mayor Elvis Soria issued an executive order on Sunday creating the Municipal Task Force on

- 3 major shipping lines raise fares on Batangas–Mindoro routes (2026-03-09 10:19)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Three major shipping lines operating between Batangas and Mindoro have announced successive fare increases, citing the continued rise in global oil prices. Among those implementing fare adjustments are Montenegro Shipping Lines, FastCat, and Starlite Ferries — key operators of sea travel to and from Mindoro. In an advisory, Starlite Ferries

- Arrest awaits gas stations execs hoarding supply amid oil price spike (2026-03-09 09:59)

MANILA, Philippines — Gas station managers and personnel found to be withholding their supply may be arrested, the Philippine National Police (PNP) warned amid looming oil price increases driven by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. “Our intelligence units are monitoring warehouses for possible hoarding and other similar illegal activities,” PNP Chief Gen. Jose

- DILG gives frat until March 10 to surrender members in Alcedo hazing (2026-03-09 09:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla gave the Tau Gamma Phi National Council until Tuesday, March 10, to surrender its members involved in the alleged fatal hazing of 19-year-old maritime student Mark Kenneth Alcedo. He said this in a phone interview with reporters on Monday, during which he confirmed that four

- Heavy rains prompt class suspensions in parts of Eastern Visayas (2026-03-09 09:41)

TACLOBAN CITY — Several local governments in Eastern Visayas suspended classes on Monday, following warnings of moderate to heavy rainfall from a weather disturbance affecting the region. The class suspensions came after the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), under the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), issued a weather advisory early Monday,

- De Lima, Fr. Villanueva file raps vs 18 ‘ex-Marines,’ counsel (2026-03-09 09:19)

[Updated March 9, 2026, 12:36 p.m.] MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima and 2025 Ramon Magsaysay awardee Fr. Flaviano “Flavie” Villanueva on Monday filed a cyber libel complaint before the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) against the lawyer and the 18 alleged former Marines who held a press conference and claimed to

- HPG’s Marantan is new Calabarzon PNP regional director (2026-03-09 08:33)

MANILA, Philippines — Highway Patrol Group (HPG) Police Brig. Gen. Hansel Marantan has been appointed the new director of the Police Regional Office Calabarzon (PRO 4A) effective on Monday. The appointment came through the Philippine National Police Directorate for Personnel and Records Management (PNP DPRM) General Orders No. NHQ-GO-DES-2026-1126 dated March 9. READ: 8 ranking

- Palace: 54 gas stations ordered to explain price hikes (2026-03-09 08:27)

NEW YORK CITY – Malacañang on Sunday (New York time) warned that gasoline stations charging “unreasonable” prices may be meted with sanctions as the government monitors compliance amid the Middle East crisis. In a media briefing here, Palace press officer Claire Castro said the Department of Energy (DOE) hd issued show-cause orders to 54 gas stations

- Alcedo hazing case: 4 Tau Gamma Phi members surrender to police (2026-03-09 08:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Four Tau Gamma Phi members have surrendered to the police over the alleged fatal hazing of 19-year-old maritime student Mark Kenneth Alcedo, Interior and Local

Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla confirmed on Monday. Asked in a text message to theInquirer whether the four fraternity members turned themselves in to the General Trias

- Marcos to formally ask Congress for emergency power for excise tax cut (2026-03-09 08:14)

NEW YORK CITY – President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will formally ask Congress to grant him emergency powers to reduce excise tax on petroleum products amid the crisis in the Middle East, Malacañang said on Sunday (New York time). In a media interview here, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said the Department of Energy (DOE) would submit

- Philippine fish production falls anew in 2025 (2026-03-09 08:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines' fisheries sector produced fewer fish in 2025 than in the previous year, according to new data released by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), continuing a decline in output across several key subsectors. Preliminary data from the PSA's Fisheries Situation Report showed that the country's total fisheries production reached 3,956,913.39 metric

- LPA may become cyclone in 24 hours but low chance to enter PAR (2026-03-09 07:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The low pressure area (LPA) being monitored outside the Philippine area of responsibility (PAR) still has a medium chance of developing into a tropical depression within the next 24 hours. However, the LPA has a low chance of entering the PAR, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said in

- Courts join '4-day' setup; labor groups opposed (2026-03-09 05:55)

MANILA, Philippines — All courts nationwide, except the Sandiganbayan and the Court of Tax Appeals, will implement a four-day on-site work schedule and one day of work-from-home (WFH) starting today, March 9. This followed President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s directive adopting a four-day workweek for the executive branch offices to reduce fuel consumption. Local governments nationwide

- IBP probe sought on Topacio's remarks (2026-03-09 05:45)

MANILA, Philippines — As the world marked International Women's Day on Sunday, Laguna Rep. Ann Matibag called on the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) to investigate lawyer Ferdinand Topacio's recent "degrading remarks" against her fellow female lawmaker. Topacio, in his radio program, said he "desired" Gabriela Rep. Sarah Elago, after the lawmaker defended actress

- Motorists: Better road conditions to help prevent accidents (2026-03-09 05:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Kirk James Gonzales, a food delivery and motorcycle taxi rider, recalled a time when he was flagged down and issued a ticket by a traffic enforcer for failing to follow a traffic sign. He noted that some road signs are not visible to motorcycle riders like him because

of their placement or

- Senators warn vs premature fuel price hikes (2026-03-09 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Gasoline stations and oil companies must be held accountable for profiteering if they raise prices ahead of scheduled adjustments, Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo Lacson and Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian said on Sunday. They made the remarks in separate statements following reports of increased fuel prices in some gasoline establishments shortly after the

- LGUs shift to 4-day workweek amid energy crunch (2026-03-09 04:40)

OLONGAPO CITY, ZAMBALES, Philippines — Government offices nationwide are adopting compressed four-day workweeks and fuel conservation measures amid rising global fuel prices triggered by escalating tensions in the Middle East. The adjustments aim to reduce electricity and fuel consumption while maintaining public services. The Department of Tourism (DOT) in Central Luzon will implement a four-day

- Albay town serves 300 kilos of ‘tinapa’ at festival (2026-03-09 04:35)

PIO DURAN, ALBAY, Philippines — More than a thousand tourists and residents feasted on over 300 kilos of tinapa (smoked fish) during a 225-meter boodle fight at this town’s Tinapa Festival on Sunday. The long communal table at the town pier featured six tinapa dishes—dinakdakan, sisig, lumpia, embutido, Bicol Express and traditional fried tinapa—using around

- Aetas in Pampanga honor bamboo advocate (2026-03-09 04:30)

ANGELES CITY, PAMPANGA, Philippines — The spacious backyard of Henry Pan in the upland village of Sapang Bato here, was filled with more than 200 Aeta on last Feb. 21. They shared food with unat (straight-haired people) under the shade of trees in Sitio Target, as the Tayag clan marked the first death anniversary of

- House sessions today, March 9, to be led by women legislators (2026-03-09 01:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Female lawmakers are set to lead the House sessions on Monday in observance of the National Women’s Month and as part of the lower chamber’s recognition of the “vital role women play in shaping laws.” The session, scheduled at 3 p.m., is part of the chamber’s annual tribute to the role of

- ALC Group chair Dominic Edgard Cabangon dies at 61 (2026-03-08 23:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Dominic Edgard Angeles Cabangon, chairperson of the ALC Group of Companies, has died at the age of 61. According to the conglomerate in a statement, Cabangon died on Sunday afternoon, March 8, 2026. Born on April 9, 1964, Cabangon led the ALC Group, a diversified conglomerate with interests in media, insurance, pre-need

- No jackpot winners in Super Lotto 6/49, Ultra Lotto 6/58 draws on Mar. 8 (2026-03-08 21:57)

MANILA, Philippines – No bettor won the jackpot prize in the Super Lotto 6/49 and Ultra Lotto 6/58 draws on Sunday, March 8. The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office announced that the Ultra Lotto 6/58 draw, with a jackpot of P83.70 million yielded the combination 44-07-09-28-06-17. The SuperLotto 6/49 draw, with a P94.53 million jackpot, meanwhile,

- Small vessels' trips in parts of N. Samar suspended due to rough seas (2026-03-08 21:49)

TACLOBAN CITY—The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) on Sunday suspended the operations of small vessels on the northern and eastern coasts of Northern Samar due to strong winds triggered by the northeast monsoon. In a sea travel advisory issued at 5 p.m. , the PCG Station – Northern Samar ordered the suspension of voyages for all

- PCSO, MMDA, QC extend immediate aid to 2,000 families affected by fire (2026-03-08 21:12)

QUEZON CITY, Philippines — In response to President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s instruction to provide immediate relief, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), and the Quezon City local government teamed up and extended immediate assistance to the almost 2,000 families displaced by a fire in Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City

- Senior citizen dies in Ormoc City blaze (2026-03-08 21:01)

TACLOBAN CITY—A 72-year-old man died after a fire razed his house Sunday afternoon in Ormoc City, Leyte, according to the Bureau of Fire Protection(BFP). Authorities identified the fatality as Alejandro Fernandez, the owner and lone occupant of the house located in Purok Million, Barangay Punta. The BFP said the fire was reported at around 2:14

- Pampanga digital connectivity gets boost amid rising demand (2026-03-08 20:22)

MABALACAT CITY, Pampanga — As Pampanga's economy steadily grows and digital activity rises, mobile and internet networks across the province are being expanded and upgraded to meet increasing demand. Figures from the Philippine Statistics Authority show the province's economy grew by 5.1 percent in 2024, reaching roughly P595.36 billion in output. Growth driven largely by

- Ex-deputy Ombudsman eyed as resource person in Sara Duterte impeach hearing (2026-03-08 20:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Deputy Speaker Paolo Ortega V on Sunday called on the House committee on justice to invite former Overall Deputy Ombudsman Melchor Carandang as a resource person in its deliberations on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte, particularly on issues involving Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN) and alleged

- Albay solon urges LTFRB to release Pantawid Pasada guidelines (2026-03-08 19:51)

PIO DURAN, Albay — Albay 3rd District Rep. Raymond Adrian Salceda on Sunday (March 8) asked the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) to release guidelines for the Pantawid Pasada Program "as soon as possible," citing possible fuel price spikes due to the ongoing war in the Middle East. "The US$ 80 per barrel

- LTO summons driver, car owner in viral QC road rage (2026-03-08 19:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Office (LTO) has summoned the driver and registered owner of a motor vehicle involved in a viral road rage incident in Quezon City. The LTO required both the driver and registered owner to appear before its Intelligence and Investigation Division for a hearing to submit sworn statements and explain

- BPO workers call for expanded WFH set-up amid rising oil prices (2026-03-08 17:39)

MANILA, Philippines—A group of business process outsourcing (BPO) employees called for an expansion of work-from-home (WFH) arrangements in order to ease the burden of Filipino workers amid the increase in fuel prices caused by the escalating conflict in the Middle East. In a statement on Saturday, BPO Industry Employees Network (BIEN Pilipinas) said the

- SC: Courts except Sandigan, CTA to adopt revised workweek by March 9 (2026-03-08 17:17)

MANILA, Philippines — All courts nationwide, except the Sandiganbayan and the Court of Tax Appeals (CTA), will implement a four-day on-site work schedule and one day of work from home (WFH) starting Monday, March 9. This comes after President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. announced a four-day workweek beginning March 9 for executive branch offices to

- Healthy Food Marketing and Labelling Act pushed as NCD cases rise (2026-03-08 16:25)

MANILA, Philippines – A health advocacy group called for the passage of a bill that will implement front-of-package warning labels and comprehensive marketing restrictions for unhealthy food and beverages in a bid to curb cases of obesity and other noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) in the Philippines. In a statement on Friday, the Healthy Philippines Alliance (HPA)

- Revised work schedules set for S. Kudarat, Cotabato employees (2026-03-08 16:00)

KORONADAL CITY – Government employees in the provinces of Sultan Kudarat and Cotabato may either opt for a four-day onsite work arrangement (compressed workweek) or a five-day work week but with a designated one-day work-from-home setup in line with the efforts to conserve energy amid rising fuel prices due to the Middle East conflict. Governors

- Negros Occidental provincial gov' t offices on 4-day workweek by March 16 (2026-03-08 15:45)

BACOLOD CITY – Governor Eugenio Jose Lacson has ordered the implementation of a compressed four-day workweek for the provincial government of Negros Occidental starting March 16. Executive Order No. 26-05, which the governor issued on Saturday, March 7, directed provincial offices and departments to operate from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday to Friday, to

- Taguig police chief: Zero tolerance for 2 cops nabbed in drug buy-bust (2026-03-08 15:18)

MANILA, Philippines—The Taguig City police chief announced on Sunday that two of his own officers, arrested in a drug buy-bust operation in Barangay Western Bicutan, will face criminal and administrative charges, underscoring the commitment to strict accountability and zero tolerance for misconduct. “The Taguig City Police Station reiterates its firm stance against criminal activity, especially

- Private companies urged to adopt 4-day workweek (2026-03-08 15:09)

MANILA, Philippines — Private companies were urged to consider adopting the government’s four-day onsite work week, or at the very least, implement staggered work-hour schemes to cushion the impact of fuel price hikes amid escalating military conflict in the Middle East. Sen. Francis Escudero made the proposal after President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. recently announced

- Solon slams Sara Duterte over secret funds remark (2026-03-08 15:04)

MANILA, Philippines – “Talagang nabubuhay sa sariling mundo ng guni-guni itong si VP Sara Duterte.” (VP Sara Duterte is truly living in her own fantasy world.) ACT Teachers Party-list Rep. Antonio Tinio made the remark on Sunday after Vice President Sara Duterte accused members of the House of Representatives of using as a political weapon

- ‘Staggered, 10-hour’ 4-day workweek proposed in Metro Manila (2026-03-08 14:35)

MANILA, Philippines – A staggered implementation of the temporary four-day workweek across Metro Manila was proposed by. a lawyer on Sunday. Following President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.’s announcement of a four-day workweek in the executive branch of government, Romulo Macalintal issued a proposal applying the measure across the capital region. The first part of Macalintal’s plan

- Marcos to PSA: Make processing of documents faster, simpler (2026-03-08 14:32)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Sunday ordered the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) to simplify and speed up the processing of civil registry documents, particularly the correction of birth certificates. The President addressed public concerns and suggestions regarding the challenges in obtaining identification documents, especially those belonging to the poorest of the poor

- Alleged Dawlah Islamiya sub-leader killed in Cotabato (2026-03-08 14:21)

COTABATO CITY — The military here announced that a sub-leader of Dawlah Islamiya operating in Cotabato province was killed during a military operation before dawn today, Sunday, March

8. Maj. Gen. Jose Vladimir Cagara, commander of the 6th Infantry Division, identified the slainDawlah Islamiya-Hassan Group sub-leader as Emarudin Kulaw, alias “Alpha King,” who once

- ₱640M worth of marijuana seized at Manila Port; suspect arrested – PDEA (2026-03-08 13:54)

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) intercepted 800 kilograms of suspected high-grade marijuana, known as “kush,” worth ₱640 million on Saturday. The operation took place at the Designated Examination Area, Container Facility Station 3, Manila International Container Port in Tondo, Manila. The movement was in coordination with the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the

- Bohol adopts 4-day on-site workweek starting March 9 (2026-03-08 13:50)

TAGBILARAN CITY — The provincial government of Bohol will implement a four-day onsite work arrangement starting Monday, March 9, in line with the national government’s directive to adopt energy conservation measures. In a memorandum dated March 7, Governor Erico Aristotle Aumentado ordered all department heads, heads of attached offices, and chiefs of hospitals to implement

- Eastern Visayas LGUs to go on 4-day workweek to conserve electricity (2026-03-08 13:43)

TACLOBAN CITY — Several local government units in Eastern Visayas will implement a compressed four-day workweek beginning Monday, March 9. This comes following a national government directive encouraging energy conservation amid ongoing tensions in the Middle East. In Maasin City, Southern Leyte, the city government announced the adoption of a compressed four-day work schedule starting

- Marcos pushes for faster, non-political gov’t aid distribution (2026-03-08 13:18)

MANILA, Philippines — The government will streamline the distribution of financial assistance to beneficiaries, especially senior citizens. The plan comes after President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. stressed that national government aid programs should not be used for political patronage. Marcos made the commitment in his vlog on Sunday, where he addressed policy suggestions from the public to

- House panel on women wants IBP to probe into Topacio ‘lusting after’ solon (2026-03-08 13:12)

MANILA, Philippines — House Committee on Women and Gender Equality chairperson Rep. Ann Matibag on Sunday called on the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) to investigate lawyer Ferdinand Topacio’s alleged “degrading remarks” against a female lawmaker. Topacio, in his radio program, revealed that he “desired” Gabriela Party-list Rep. Sarah Elago, after the lawmaker defended

- Group stands with women in media, politics amid attacks, sexist remarks (2026-03-08 12:38)

MANILA, Philippines—The International Association of Women in Radio and Television–Philippines (IAWRT) condemned attacks and harassment against women journalists. The group is also calling for the release of detained community journalist Frenchie Mae Cumpio and denouncing misogynistic remarks targeting women in media and politics. Their actions come as the world marked International Women’s Day 2026. In

- Alleged drug den operator, 3 others arrested in Subic (2026-03-08 11:48)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales — Authorities dismantled a suspected drug den and arrested its alleged operator and three other individuals in Barangay Calapacuan in Subic, Zambales during a late-night anti-drug operation on Saturday, March 7. According to reports from the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), some P47,600 worth of suspected shabu (crystal meth) was also seized

- Fuel price surge hits Bukidnon farmers, PUV drivers; LGU cuts spending (2026-03-08 11:01)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — Rising fuel prices driven by tensions in the Middle East are beginning to strain sugarcane farmers and public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers in Bukidnon, prompting local governments to adopt austerity measures to curb fuel use. Sugar planter Jude Palmada, who manages several hectares of sugarcane plantation in southern Bukidnon, warned that diesel prices

- Marcos: Gov’t to make Filipino women respected, protected, empowered (2026-03-08 10:37)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Sunday pledged his commitment to safeguarding the rights and welfare of Filipino women, as the country marked International Women’s Day and National Women’s Month. In a message released by Malacañang, Marcos underscored the central role women have played in shaping the nation, describing them as a driving force

- Camarines Sur launches anti-flood, green embankment project (2026-03-08 10:34)

IRIGA CITY — The provincial government of Camarines Sur has launched an anti-flood and Green Embankment Project aimed at protecting flood-prone and coastal communities. Gov. Luis Raymund “LRay” Villafuerte Jr. led the rollout of the initiative on Friday, March 6, dubbed “Aksyon Kontra Baha,” in the towns of Garchitorena and Milaor. Provincial workers and residents

- Senators warn vs profiteering, premature raising of gas prices (2026-03-08 10:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Gas stations and oil companies must be held accountable for profiteering if they raise prices ahead of scheduled adjustments, Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo Lacson and Sen. Win Gatchalian said on Sunday. The two made the remarks in separate

statements following reports of increased fuel prices in some gasoline establishments shortlyafter

- DOT Central Luzon adopts 4-day workweek to conserve energy (2026-03-08 10:21)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales — The Department of Tourism (DOT) in Central Luzon will implement a compressed four-day workweek beginning Monday (March 9) to support the national government’s call to conserve energy. The initiative comes amid rising global fuel prices linked to tensions in the Middle East. In an advisory issued late Friday night (March 6),

- No damage reported after magnitude 5 quake jolts Calatagan, Batangas (2026-03-08 09:33)

LUCENA CITY — A magnitude 5 earthquake struck the coastal town of Calatagan in Batangas province early Sunday, March 8, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs). Phivolcs said the quake occurred at 12:04 a.m., with its epicenter located nine kilometers northeast of the municipality. The tremor, which was tectonic in origin,

- PH leads Asia in women’s education, but falls behind in jobs (2026-03-08 08:00)

MANILA, Philippines — More women are finishing high school and reaching higher levels of education, but those gains have yet to be fully reflected in their participation in the labor force. Inquirer data scientist Alicor Panao pointed to the 2023 Gender Inequality Index (GII) by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which he said “serves

- Cloudy Sunday in Luzon due to amihan, easterlies – Pagasa (2026-03-08 07:27)

/ MANILA, Philippines — Cloudy skies are expected in Luzon on Sunday due to the effects of the northeast monsoon, or “amihan,” and the easterlies, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said. In its 5 a.m. advisory, Pagasa weather specialist Veronica Torres bared the areas affected by the two weather systems. “The

- Gas stations warned: No advance price hikes (2026-03-08 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Energy (DOE) has called in law enforcers to heighten its monitoring of fuel prices, as some gas stations have already raised prices by about P8 per liter ahead of schedule. With the assistance of the Philippine National Police, the DOE on Saturday said that it had begun its inspection

- De Lima: We need anti-espionage law (2026-03-08 05:28)

MANILA, Philippines — Rep. Leila de Lima of Mamamayang Liberal Party-list on Saturday renewed her call for the passage of a new law against foreign espionage operations in the country following the exposure of alleged Beijing-directed Filipino spies. De Lima filed House Bill 1844, or the proposed “Anti-Espionage Act” in July 2025, which seeks to

- Pro-Hitler attorney bares ‘desires’ for actress, lawmaker (2026-03-08 05:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Controversial lawyer Ferdinand Topacio, who once professed admiration for fascist dictator Adolf Hitler, defended a congressman for making lewd remarks about actress Anne Curtis and himself made off-color remarks about the actress’ sister, Jasmine, and incumbent Gabriela Rep. Sarah Elago. Topacio, who once displayed in his office a large portrait of Hitler,

- Global rice prices start to increase (2026-03-08 05:24)

MANILA, Philippines — The benchmark for international prices registered a small increase in February despite sustained demand for basmati and japonica varieties, according to the United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The FAO All Rice Index marginally increased by 0.4 percent to 103.2 points in February from 102.8 points a month ago. The global

- P119-M ‘shabu’ found in countertop shipment at Clark (2026-03-08 05:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Customs authorities said on Saturday that they intercepted about P119 million worth of suspected “shabu” (crystal meth) hidden inside resin countertops in a shipment that arrived from the United States. The seizure was conducted by the Bureau of Customs (BOC)-Port of Clark in coordination with the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA)and the

- Checking private wharves still a deep challenge for Customs (2026-03-08 05:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Billions of pesos worth of smuggled goods are intercepted in major ports across the country each year, with customs authorities stepping up efforts to curb illegal shipments. But while the nation’s eyes are on the main access points, other entrances, like private wharves, largely remain under the radar. These wharves—some tucked away

- From soil to survival: Agusan del Sur shows way to defeat poverty (2026-03-08 05:17)

PROSPERIDAD, AGUSAN DEL SUR, Philippines — Inside the provincial capitol complex here, workers carefully handle bags of soil collected from farms across the province—dark earth from upland slopes, clay from river valleys and sandy loam from fields planted with vegetables and timber trees. Soon these samples will pass through microscopes and chemical analyzers inside a

- This week’s milestones: March 8 to March 14 (2026-03-08 05:15)

March 10, 2001 A plebiscite was held which duly ratified and approved the cityhood of Tanauan, Batangas by virtue of Republic Act No. 9005, signed on February 2, 2001 by then President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. It was originally founded as a town in 1572 by Augustinian missionaries near the lake of what was then called

- Laguna mayor urges workers to bike, walk to work amid fuel hikes (2026-03-07 23:47)

LUCENA CITY, QUEZON, Philippines — The mayor of San Pedro City in Laguna province had urged local government employees to walk or ride bicycles to work as fuel prices continue to rise amid tensions in the Middle East. In a memorandum issued on Friday and posted on his

Facebook page Saturday, Mayor Art Mercado encouraged

- Migratory bird species increase in Quezon’s Bondoc Peninsula (2026-03-07 23:37)

LUCENA CITY, QUEZON, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources Office (DENR) in the Bondoc Peninsula district of Quezon province recorded an increase in migratory bird species during last month’s Asian Waterbird Census. “Compared to last year, migratory bird species increased from 25 to 29 across the three sites, reflecting seasonal migration patterns,”

- Roxas City gov’t orders mandatory fuel conservation amid energy crisis (2026-03-07 23:24)

ILOILO CITY, Philippines — Roxas City (provincial capital of Capiz) government has issued an executive order mandating fuel conservation measures for all city government offices in response to the ongoing global energy crisis. In Executive Order No. 4, Series of 2026, signed by Mayor Ronnie T. Dadivas on March 4 and made public on Friday,

- Bohol tightens security in Panglao beach after theft incident (2026-03-07 22:50)

TAGBILARAN CITY, BOHOL, Philippines — Closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras will soon be installed at Alona Beach in Panglao Island, Bohol to strengthen monitoring and improve security in one of the province’s top tourist destinations. Bohol Governor Erico Aristotle Aumentado said he personally inspected the area as part of heightened security efforts aimed at protecting both

- Red tide alert up in Biliran town (2026-03-07 22:38)

TACLOBAN CITY, LEYTE, Philippines — Authorities have raised a red tide alert in the coastal waters of Maripipi, an island municipality in Biliran province, after the presence of the organism “Noctiluca scintillans” was confirmed earlier this week. According to the Maripipi Municipal Public Information Office, the organism was observed in the island’s coastal waters and

- No jackpot winners in Grand Lotto 6/55, Lotto 6/42 draws on Mar. 7 (2026-03-07 21:54)

MANILA, Philippines—No bettor won the jackpot prize for Grand Lotto 6/55 and Lotto 6/42 draws on Saturday, March 7, 2026. According to Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) , the Grand Lotto 6/55 draw yielded the combination 17-44-02-05-28-45, with a jackpot prize of ₱45 million. The Lotto 6/42 draw with a P10 million jackpot came up

- Davao Light welcomes SC ruling, controls Samal power assets (2026-03-07 21:28)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — The Aboitiz-owned Davao Light and Power Co. Inc (DLPC) has welcomed a Supreme Court (SC) ruling dismissing petitions filed by the Northern Davao Electric Cooperative Inc. (NORDECO) questioning the constitutionality of Republic Act No. 12144, the law expanding the utility firm’s franchise in parts of the Davao Region.

- Maramag, Bukidnon eyes 80% cut in power costs via solar energy (2026-03-07 21:17)

MARAMAG, Bukidnon — The local government here expects to cut its electricity expenses by as much as 80 percent once solar panels installed across major government buildings become fully operational, a move projected to save millions of pesos annually and ease pressure on the town’s operating budget. Officials said the municipality currently spends about P12

- Social research fund launched to honor pioneering Mindanaoan demographer (2026-03-07 20:49)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY — To preserve the legacy of a pioneering social scientist from Mindanao, Xavier University (XU)-Ateneo de Cagayan here launched the Dr. Magdalena Canag Cabaraban (MCC) Memorial Fund on Friday. The launch served as a centerpiece of the closing activities of the 2026 International Scientific Conference of the Philippine Population Association (PPA).It

- Montenegro Shipping to raise fares by March 23 due to fuel price hike (2026-03-07 20:43)

CITY OF CALAPAN, ORIENTAL MINDORO – Montenegro Shipping Lines, Inc. announced that it will implement a fare adjustment for passengers and vehicles beginning March 23, citing a sharp rise in fuel prices linked to developments in the Middle East. In an advisory posted on its official Facebook page, the company said the adjustment was necessary

- P69.7M kush seized at Clark airport, 3 Chinese nationals busted (2026-03-07 20:31)

MABALACAT CITY, Pampanga – Authorities arrested on Saturday three Chinese nationals after their luggage yielded some 46.5 kilos of suspected kush or high-grade marijuana, during inspection at the Clark International Airport. In a statement, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA)- Region 3 identified the Chinese nationals only as alias Ang See, 39; alias Kim Tan,

- Supply, prices of basic commodities in Central Visayas stable – DTI (2026-03-07 20:04)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in Central Visayas has assured the public that prices of basic commodities remain stable and supplies are sufficient in Cebu and Bohol amid the Middle East conflict. In a statement on Friday, DTI-Central Visayas said its latest monitoring showed that major supermarkets, grocery stores,

- Sogod, S.Leyte gas stations told to adhere to gov’t – approved fuel prices (2026-03-07 19:58)

TACLOBAN CITY – The municipal government of Sogod, Southern Leyte told gasoline station owners to strictly follow government-authorized fuel prices amid concerns over possible increases linked to global geopolitical tensions. In a public notice issued on Friday, March 6, by the Office of the Municipal Mayor, Acting Mayor Jose Ramil Golo reminded fuel retailers in

- LMP – Iloilo hits Rep. Suntay over remarks on actress (2026-03-07 19:49)

ILOILO CITY — The League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) – Iloilo Chapter expressed concern over remarks made by Quezon City 4th District Rep. Bong Suntay during a recent House of Representatives committee hearing, saying the statements have been widely perceived as inappropriate and inconsistent with the standards of respect expected from public officials.

- Drug suspect busted in Lucena City sting (2026-03-07 19:41)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon – Police confiscated more than P400,000 worth of shabu from an suspected drug pusher during a buy-bust operation shortly before midnight here on Friday. Lt. Col. Ryan Hernandez, chief of the Lucena City police, said anti-illegal drug operatives arrested the suspect, identified as "Owel," 31, after he allegedly sold P500 worth of

- 2 cops nabbed in Taguig City drug buy-bust (2026-03-07 19:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Two police officers and three other individuals were arrested on Saturday in a drug buy-bust operation in Taguig City, according to the Philippine National Police – Drug Enforcement Group (PDEG). READ: P6.6B drugs seized in alleged shabu lab in Valenzuela City — PDEA The PDEG identified the arrested police officers ass PCpl.

- MMDA imposing 4-day work week for office personnel (2026-03-07 18:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will be adjusting its office hours in compliance with the directive of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to implement a four-day work week amid rising fuel prices due to the Middle East conflict. The MMDA said that it is implementing the four-day work week schedule starting

- Makabayan bloc solons slam Topacio's rants (2026-03-07 18:41)

MANILA, Philippines – Lawmakers from the Makabayan bloc on Saturday called for an investigation into the lewd remarks made by lawyer Ferdinand Topacio and urged the radio station where he uttered his "vile" words about women to take a closer look at his program's content. Gabriela Rep. Sarah Elago, ACT Teachers Rep. Antonio Tinio and

- DOE assures enough fuel supply, urges public to keep calm (2026-03-07 18:27)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Energy (DOE) has urged the public to remain calm as it assured that there is enough fuel supply amid the projected oil price increase triggered by the continuing conflict in the Middle East. In a Facebook post on Saturday, Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said that oil prices should not

- Edcom 2 term extended: Legarda vows to address gaps, drive educ reforms (2026-03-07 18:22)

MANILA, Philippines – Senator Loren Legarda welcomed the enactment of Republic Act No. 12315, which extends the term of the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II) for two more years. As the author and principal sponsor of the law, Legarda underscored

that this enactment secures the Commission’s mandate to continue diagnosing systemic failures and

- Sara Duterte recalls confronting Marcos over impeachment, Cha-cha (2026-03-07 18:10)

MANILA, Philippines – Vice President Sara Duterte on Friday narrated that she once confronted President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. over her impeachment. Duterte spoke at an episode of “Ibalik ang Tapang at Malasakit,” an apparent online web series from her office and hosted by vloggers who are staunch supporters of the Duterte family, where she

- De Lima bats for passage of Anti-Espionage Act (2026-03-07 17:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal Party-list Rep. Leila de Lima on Saturday renewed her call for the passage of the Anti-Espionage Act amid the National Security Council’s (NSC) discovery of espionage operations linked to the People’s Republic of China. De Lima filed House Bill 1844 or the proposed Anti-Espionage Act in July 2025 which seeks

- NLEX issues Meycauayan Bridge repair advisory (2026-03-07 17:45)

CITY OF MEYCAUAYAN, Bulacan—Motorists using the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) are warned of possible travel delays due to the ongoing repair of Meycauayan Bridge. Work began with the stretch of the bridge along the right outermost southbound lane but full lane closures will be implemented from March 7 to March 13, the NLEX Corporation said

- Sugarcane planters’ group seeks gov’t action amid fuel price spike (2026-03-07 16:01)

BACOLOD CITY—The Confederation of Sugar Producers Association Inc. (CONFED) has appealed to the Department of Agriculture (DA) for immediate government intervention to shield the local sugar industry from what it described as the “crushing economic impact” of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. In a letter dated March 5 and addressed to Agriculture Secretary

- Mayon Volcano logs 2 minor eruptions, Alert level 3 stays (2026-03-07 15:54)

LIGAO CITY — The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) recorded two minor, or Strombolian, eruptions at Mayon Volcano on Saturday, March 7. Close-up footage taken at 12:09 p.m. and 12:22 p.m. showed the volcano spewing dark, cauliflower-shaped smoke. Despite the activity, no ashfall was reported in towns and cities across Albay. Dr. Paul

- Possible motive behind Parañaque basketball court shooting bared (2026-03-07 15:51)

Photographs of the crime scene after a shooting spree at a basketball court of a condominium complex in Parañaque City last March 4. (Photo from Southern Police District) MANILA, Philippines — A previous altercation is seen as a motive behind the fatal shooting of one of the victims in a condominium complex in Parañaque City,

- Fuel price hike disrupts Visayas ferry operations (2026-03-07 14:57)

CEBU CITY — Rising fuel prices linked to tensions in the Middle East are beginning to disrupt ferry operations in the Visayas, marked by fare increases and the cancellation of several trips on key inter-island routes. FastCat announced it implemented an updated fare matrix for passengers and vehicles effective Friday, March 6, citing a sharp

- Foreigners need clearance to enter military bases – AFP (2026-03-07 14:25)

MANILA, Philippines—The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) reminded foreign nationals on Saturday that they must secure a proper clearance before entering military camps, including recreational areas such as the Camp Aguinaldo Golf Course. The AFP issued the statement after social media posts suggested that Chinese nationals were being barred from playing at the golf

- Sara Duterte bats for gov’ t action, measures vs oil price hike (2026-03-07 14:05)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte on Saturday urged concerned government agencies to monitor the rising cost of fuel and implement measures to alleviate its impact on the lives of the Filipinos. Duterte made this statement amid the projected of oil price increase next week, with a possible surge of over P2 for a

- 800 tourist police officers to be deployed starting April — DILG (2026-03-07 12:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) will start deploying 800 tourist police officers across major tourism spots in the country in April to strengthen safety and security, the agency said on Saturday. DILG chief Jonvic Remulla said that President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. approved his plan to deploy tourist officers, in

- P235-M cigarettes from UAE seized in Batangas — BOC (2026-03-07 11:41)

MANILA, Philippines — Undeclared cigarettes worth P235 million from the United Arab Emirates have been seized by the Bureau of Customs (BOC) in Batangas, the agency said on Saturday. According to the BOC, the operation at the Port of Batangas stemmed from information received that the shipment coming from the United Arab Emirates reportedly contained

- Seismic activity slightly rises at Taal Volcano (2026-03-07 10:41)

LUCENA CITY — Taal Volcano recorded 13 seismic events in the past 24 hours, indicating a gradual increase in activity, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) on Saturday, March 7. In its morning bulletin, Phivolcs said the volcano logged seven volcanic earthquakes and six volcanic tremors lasting between one and three

- 2 dead as truck carrying cattle crashes in Baguio (2026-03-07 10:07)

BAGUIO CITY — Two people were killed and another injured after a truck carrying cattle figured in a road accident in Suello Village here on Friday afternoon, March 6. Police said the fatalities were the truck driver and a helper, while another helper was injured and taken to a nearby hospital for treatment. Initial reports

- PAGASA: 3 areas may reach 40°C heat index Saturday (2026-03-07 10:03)

MANILA, Philippines — Three areas are forecast to experience the highest heat index at 40°C on Saturday, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said. According to Pagasa's heat index, the following areas are: Dumangas, Iloilo; Borongan, Eastern Samar; and Cotabato City, Maguindanao. These areas are also under the "extreme caution" category, where

- Pagasa: 'Amihan,' easterlies to bring rains in parts of PH on Saturday (2026-03-07 09:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Two weather systems are forecast to bring rains over parts of the country for 24 hours, the state weather bureau said on Saturday. In its 24-hour weather forecast issued at 4 a.m., the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said that the northeast monsoon or amihan will be prevailing over

- PH records 701,884 deaths in 2024; nearly half occur outside health facilities (2026-03-07 06:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines recorded 701,884 deaths in 2024, or an average of 1,918 a day, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority, with nearly half occurring outside health facilities. The 2024 figure reflected a 1 percent increase from the 694,821 deaths recorded in 2023. This corresponded to a crude death rate of 6.2, or

- Sara Duterte's camp: We want Madriaga alive (2026-03-07 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The legal team of Vice President Sara Duterte on Friday maintained she had nothing to do with the death threats reportedly received by Ramil Madriaga, who claimed to be her "bagman," saying they actually want him to stay unharmed for an eventual confession. "VP Sara has nothing to do with any death

- SWS: 83% of Filipinos want to focus on home and family (2026-03-07 05:48)

MANILA, Philippines — More than 80 percent of Filipinos say a woman's primary role is to look after her home and family, according to a Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey released this week. Conducted Nov. 24 to Nov. 30, the poll found that large shares of both men and women continue to agree with six

- 9 women sue Bong Suntay over 'lewd' remarks about Anne Curtis (2026-03-07 05:44)

MANILA, Philippines — Nine women, including members of the World March of Women, filed a letter serving as a complaint-affidavit on Friday against Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay, accusing him of violating several laws, such as Republic Act No. 11313 or the Safe Spaces Act. The complaint sent to the Office of the Ombudsman stemmed from

- Four-day workweek starts in some gov't offices (2026-03-07 05:34)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday announced the implementation of a four-day work week in offices of the executive branch starting March 9, amid rising fuel costs linked to tensions in the Middle East. The president said the temporary measure was part of the government’s efforts to conserve energy and reduce fuel

- Fuel subsidy to help Iloilo City transport workers amid oil price hikes (2026-03-07 05:06)

ILOILO CITY — The Iloilo City government is set to launch a fuel subsidy program for transport workers to help cushion the impact of rising petroleum prices driven by ongoing tensions in the Middle East. Mayor Raisa Treñas announced the initiative on Thursday, saying the city has allocated P3 million for the program, which will

- ‘Butanding’ season begins in Donsol Bay (2026-03-07 05:04)

LEGAZPI CITY—Whale sharks, locally known as “butanding,” have started surfacing in Donsol Bay in Donsol town, Sorsogon, as the annual interaction season begins, prompting conservationists to remind tourists to strictly observe the no-feeding policy. Manuel Narvadez Jr., World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines Donsol Integrated Conservation Program manager, said the gentle giants are drawn

- Sugar Board favors gov’t buying to prop up prices (2026-03-07 05:02)

BACOLOD CITY—The Sugar Board is set to endorse a government sugar-buying program to the Department of Agriculture to help prop up mill-gate prices, a situation that has been hurting planters, particularly in Bukidnon and Negros provinces. Sugar Regulatory Administrator Pablo Luis Azcona said they will be ironing out the program’s details with industry groups to

- No jackpot winners in Ultra, Mega draws on Mar. 6 (2026-03-06 23:33)

MANILA, Philippines — No bettor won the jackpot prizes for Ultra Lotto 6/58 and MegaLotto 6/45 in the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) draws on Friday, March 6. PCSO said the winning combination for Ultra Lotto 6/58 was 37-34-13-26-06-54 for a jackpot of ₱79.56 million. No ticket holder matched all six numbers to claim

- Drug trafficker arrested in Calamba with P340,000 worth of meth (2026-03-06 23:28)

LUCENA CITY — A suspected drug trafficker was arrested Thursday, March 5, in a buy-bust operation in Calamba City, Laguna, where authorities seized suspected crystal meth worth P340,000. Laguna police director Col. Jonar Yupio said anti-illegal drug operatives arrested the 21-year-old suspect, identified only as “Jalal,” at around 11:32 a.m. after he allegedly sold P500 worth

- Marcos: Four-day workweek for executive offices starts March 9 (2026-03-06 23:22)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. announced a four-day workweek for executive branch offices starting Monday, March 9, amid rising fuel costs linked to tensions in the Middle East. In a message on Friday, Marcos said the temporary measure aims to conserve

energy and reduce fuel consumption amid global oil price surges caused by

- Bukidnon sugar planters brace for fuel price surge (2026-03-06 23:01)

DON CARLOS, Bukidnon — Sugar planters and other agricultural producers in Bukidnon are bracing for higher production costs as fuel prices rise amid escalating Middle East tensions. Industry leaders warned that the surge in oil prices will increase costs for farm operations, including land preparation, hauling, fertilizer application, and milling. Manuel Antonio Zubiri, president of

- Suspect in Parañaque condo shooting arrested — NCRPO (2026-03-06 23:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The suspect who allegedly shot two people dead at a Parañaque City condominium complex basketball court was arrested Friday night, the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) said. Operatives tracked the suspect to another condominium complex in Barangay Moonwalk, Parañaque City, according to an NCRPO police report. Authorities recovered two firearms, four

- 1 dead, another hurt in Bohol road mishap (2026-03-06 22:40)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — A 67-year-old man died after the motorcycle he was riding crashed into the rear of a bus and, after being thrown onto the road, was run over by a cargo truck. The accident occurred along the national highway in Barangay Pinayagan Norte, Tubigon town, Bohol, on Thursday evening, March 5.

- Estrada on his question to athlete that drew flak: ‘friendly banter’ (2026-03-06 22:23)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Jinggoy Estrada on Friday broke his silence after his question to an athlete seeking Filipino citizenship drew flak online, saying it was “just a friendly banter.” Gilas Women prospect Elizabeth Means, who has undergone the naturalization process, was the subject of Estrada’s personal question. During the Senate committee on justice and

- Bill proposes ‘Homonhon Landing Day’ to mark Magellan arrival in PH (2026-03-06 22:11)

TACLOBAN CITY — Eastern Samar Rep. Christopher Sheen Gonzales is pushing for the passage of a measure declaring March 17 of every year as “Homonhon Landing Day,” commemorating the arrival of the expedition led by Ferdinand Magellan on Homonhon Island in 1521. Under House Bill No. 122, the proposed observance would be a special non-working

- 45 hot-air balloons to greet sunrise in Lubao, Pampanga on Saturday (2026-03-06 21:49)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—Around 45 hot-air balloons are slated to fly to the skies on Saturday, March 7, as the Lubao International Balloon and Music Festival (LIBMF) resumes for the second time after the COVID-19 pandemic. Began in 2014 at the Pradera Verde in Lubao town in Pampanga, the LIBMF took a five-year break

- Nartatez eyes stronger response system for Safe Spaces Act violations (2026-03-06 19:59)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. ordered the agency's commanders to strengthen their reporting and response mechanisms for violations of Republic Act No. 11313 or the Safe Spaces Act. "Part of our mandate is to ensure protection of the vulnerable sectors of our society," Nartatez said in a

- Manila Water boosts service reliability with Balara facility upgrade (2026-03-06 19:56)

MANILA, Philippines — As part of Manila Water's push to strengthen water security for its 7.8 million customers in the East Zone, the company has rolled out a series of structural and technology upgrades across its Balara Facilities, which serve as vital assets in providing 24/7 water service to some of Metro Manila's busiest districts.

- ₱132,000 worth of cigarettes haul in Nueva Vizcaya tied to illicit trade (2026-03-06 19:46)

MANILA, Philippines — Allegedly undocumented cigarettes worth P132,000 — supposedly connected to the illicit contraband trade in Central Luzon — were confiscated in Nueva Vizcaya, the Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (PNP HPG) said on Friday. The cigarettes were intercepted when the police flagged a Toyota Vios at a checkpoint along Maharlika Highway in

- VP Duterte's appearance in House impeachment hearings optional — solon (2026-03-06 19:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The appearance of Vice President Sara Duterte in the House hearings on impeachment complaints against her is only optional, according to justice panel chair Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro. Both complaints against Duterte were already found to be sufficient in form and substance since Wednesday. On Thursday, the House committee on

- Parañaque condo shooter has pending arrest warrant for homicide — police (2026-03-06 19:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The suspect in the shooting of a Parañaque City condominium complex basketball court has a pending warrant of arrest for a homicide case, the Southern Police District (SPD) confirmed on Friday. The suspect, whom the SPD previously only identified as a 59-year-old male resident of Barangay Marcelo Green, remains at large. READ:

- Nadia Montenegro on legal win vs Senate staff: 'Gift for Women's Day' (2026-03-06 19:22)

MANILA, Philippines — In a significant legal victory, Nadia Montenegro, the Pasay City Prosecutor's Office, has approved the filing of an unjust vexation case against a Senate security officer in connection with a 2025 incident leading to her being labeled as a "drug user" on social media. In a resolution dated March 2, Senior Assistant

- Retired PNPA alumni to Remulla: Don’t turn BFP probe into a ‘spectacle’ (2026-03-06 19:20)

MANILA, Philippines — A group of retired Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) alumni urged Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla not to make the investigation into Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) Chief Fire Director Jesus Fernandez into a “public spectacle.” In a letter sent to Remulla on Friday, the PNPA Lakan Retirees Association, Inc.

- 149,000 4Ps beneficiaries get electricity discounts in Western Visayas (2026-03-06 19:07)

GUIMBAL, Iloilo–Some 149,896 beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) across Western Visayas are set to avail of discounts in their electricity bills via the lifeline rate program of the Department of Energy (DOE). The program was launched here on Friday, graced by Energy Secretary Sharon Garin and Energy Undersecretary Mylene Capongcol. According to

- HPG to study use of ‘more comfortable’ uniforms ahead of hot, dry season (2026-03-06 17:57)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (PNP HPG) on Friday said it will study the use of “more comfortable” uniforms for its patrol officers ahead of the hot, dry season. HPG spokesperson Lt. Nadame Malang said this in a press briefing in Camp Crame as the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical

- Women’s groups demand accountability, file raps vs Suntay (2026-03-06 17:44)

MANILA, Philippines — Women’s groups marked this year’s International Women’s Day with a clear message: Justice for victims of sexual violence can only be achieved when perpetrators — especially those in positions of power — are held accountable. The call came as advocates staged a symbolic protest in front of the Office of the Ombudsman

- Mark Villar files bill to launch national youth environmental program (2026-03-06 17:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Mark A. Villar filed a bill seeking to establish a nationwide program aimed at mobilizing Filipino youth to lead environmental protection and sustainability initiatives amid growing climate threats to the country. Filed on Feb. 23, 2026, Senate Bill No. 1882 proposes the creation of the National Youth Environmental Advocacy and Sustainability

- HPG orders fuel conservation as Mideast tensions drive oil price hikes (2026-03-06 17:35)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police – Highway Patrol Group (PNP -HPG) ordered its patrol officers to save on fuel amid looming price hikes triggered by escalating tensions in the Middle East. HPG chief Brig. Gen. Hansel Marantan issued the directive as part of efforts to cut operational costs while ensuring that patrol duties

- 4 child victims of online sexual exploitation rescued in Cavite – NBI (2026-03-06 17:28)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has rescued four elementary students who were victims of online child sexual abuse and exploitation in Imus City, Cavite. In

a statement on Friday, the NBI said the victims are all male and identified as students in apublic elementary school in Imus City. READ: NBI

- Food processing facility upgrade boosts livelihood for Muntinlupa women (2026-03-06 17:23)

MANILA, Philippines — Women’s livelihood opportunities in the city received a boost following the turnover of newly upgraded food processing equipment at the Muntinlupa Training and Resource Center for Women (MTRCW). The facility upgrade was made possible through the Department of Agriculture’s KADIWA Financial Grant Assistance Program, which provided a ₱2.5 million grant, complemented by

- HPG logs 14.25% drop in carnapping cases in first 2 months of 2026 (2026-03-06 17:11)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (PNP HPG) recorded a 14.25-percent decrease in carnapping cases in the first two months of 2026. In a briefing in Camp Crame on Friday, HPG spokesperson Lt. Nadame Malang said the unit recorded 391 carnapping incidents from Jan. 1 to Feb. 28, 2026; a drop

- HPG to probe ‘unauthorized’ VIP escorts (2026-03-06 17:04)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (PNP HPG) is investigating allegations of police officers escorting VIPs without proper authorization, spokesperson Lt. Nadame Malang said on Friday. This came after Senate public order committee chairperson Sen. JV Ejercito questioned the PNP HPG at a hearing late last February for allegedly escorting 20

- Suntay faces complaint over lewd remarks on Anne Curtis (2026-03-06 16:58)

MANILA, Philippines — Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay is facing a complaint at the Office of the Ombudsman, accusing him of committing “public crime” over his lewd remarks on actress and television host Anne Curtis during the impeachment proceedings at the House of Representatives. Nine women including members of the widely-known organization World March of

- NCMF chief reappointed (2026-03-06 16:42)

MANILA, Philippines — National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF) Secretary Sabuddin N. Abdurahim has been reappointed as the agency’s chief, according to the Presidential Communications Office (PCO). In a statement issued on Friday, the PCO said President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. administered the oath during a ceremony, noting that Abdurahim will serve as NCMF Secretary for

- SWS: 83% of Filipinos say women’s role is home and family (2026-03-06 16:40)

MANILA, Philippines — More than 80% of Filipinos say a woman’s primary role is to look after her home and family, reflecting a long-held conservative view on gender roles. A Social Weather

Stations (SWS) survey released this week tracked Filipinos' views on women's roles in familylife, including attitudes toward women's work and family responsibilities.

- Police say probe unaffected by Cavite hazing site fire (2026-03-06 16:20)

MANILA, Philippines — The investigation into the alleged fatal hazing of 19-year-old maritime student Mark Kenneth Alcedo is not affected by a fire hitting the site where the supposed initiation rites occurred, the Cavite Provincial Police Office maintained on Friday. "Even before the fire occurred, our Soco's processing had finished," Cavite police chief Col. Ariel

- 'Middlemen' caught selling 5-day-old boy for P70,000 (2026-03-06 16:11)

MANILA, Philippines — A couple was arrested by the police for allegedly selling another mother's five-day-old boy for P70,000 in San Pedro City, Laguna, the Philippine National Police Women and Children Protection Center (PNP WCPC) said on Friday. Operatives monitored the first suspect, a woman, online last Feb. 13 allegedly arranging to sell the child,

- 2 suspects in killing of Cagayan village chair arrested in Bulacan (2026-03-06 15:51)

TUGUEGARAO CITY — After a 10-month manhunt, police arrested two alleged gunmen on Wednesday evening (March 4) in Bulacan for the killing of a village chair in Barangay Dos, Enrile, Cagayan, authorities said Thursday. In a news briefing Thursday afternoon, Police Brig. Gen. Antonio Marallag Jr., Cagayan Valley regional police director, identified the suspects by

- Olongapo limits fuel use of gov't vehicles amid oil price surge (2026-03-06 15:39)

OLONGAPO CITY — The city government on Thursday (March 5) has ordered the immediate implementation of fuel conservation measures for all government-owned vehicles as "global oil prices continue to rise". Mayor Rolen Paulino Jr. said the directive was issued in response to increasing fuel costs triggered by global market instability and the ongoing conflict in

- Online baby-selling cases in 2026 now at 9, surpasses 2025 record – PNP (2026-03-06 15:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Reported cases of persons selling babies online have now reached nine in 2026 so far, surpassing the eight cases recorded in the entirety of 2025, according to the Philippine National Police Women and Children Protection Center (PNP WCPC) on Friday. WCPC chief Brig. Gen. Maria Sheila Portento attributed the increase in reported

- 3 civilians linked to foreign handlers now under its control, says AFP (2026-03-06 15:28)

MANILA, Philippines — The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has taken control of three civilians who allegedly provided sensitive defense-related information to foreign contacts after they were flagged under the military's Insider Threat Program, the Philippine Navy said on Friday. Navy spokesperson for the West Philippine Sea Rear Adm. Roy Vincent Trinidad said the

- 2 flee as boat seized in suspected whale shark feeding in Bohol (2026-03-06 15:27)

TAGBILARAN CITY, BOHOL, Philippines — Two unidentified men fled from authorities during a joint maritime patrol after they were suspected of engaging in illegal whale shark feeding in the seawaters off Barangay Bool here early Friday morning, March 6. Personnel from the Bohol Maritime Police Station (Marpsta) and the Tagbilaran City Police Station conducted the

- ‘We will not forget’: Peasant group marks 5th year of ‘Bloody Sunday’ (2026-03-06 15:00)

LUCENA CITY – A militant peasant group in Southern Tagalog on Friday vowed to continue seeking justice for the victims of the so-called “Bloody Sunday” raids that left nine activists dead across the region five years ago. “The attack faced by Southern Tagalog activists that day was a glaring example of state violence inflicted by

- Tau Gamma eyes stricter monitoring after fatal Cavite hazing (2026-03-06 14:33)

MANILA, Philippines — Tau Gamma, the fraternity implicated in the fatal hazing of 19-year-old maritime student Mark Kenneth Alcedo, has committed to ensuring tighter protocols and monitoring of its members. The fraternity’s national council issued the commitment after meeting with Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla in Manila on Friday. In a press briefing, Remulla said the

- Caap: Laoag Airport’s night ops back after runway lighting restored (2026-03-06 13:38)

MANILA, Philippines — The suspension of night operations at Laoag International Airport has already been lifted, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (Caap) announced on Friday. In a statement, Caap said night operations have returned after the affected runway lightings at the airport was restored. READ: CAAP to roll out airport development initiatives to

- Tau Gamma vows expulsion for members involved in Cavite hazing death (2026-03-06 13:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Members of Tau Gamma Phi found to be involved in the alleged fatal hazing of 19-year-old maritime student Mark Kenneth Alcedo will face expulsion from the fraternity, its spokesperson Martin Asturias said on Friday. Asturias issued the statement during a press briefing in Manila with Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla

- Marcos: 74,000 Filipinos hired via gov’t job fairs since 2025 (2026-03-06 12:51)

MANILA, Philippines — A total of 74,000 Filipinos secured jobs nationwide with the help of the Trabaho at Negosyo program, with hundreds landing positions on the spot during various job fairs since last year, according to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Speaking during the program’s launch on Friday, Marcos said the government held more than 2,300

- MRT-3 maintenance provider told to explain presence of roaches in train (2026-03-06 12:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Manila Metro Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT-3) General Manager Michael Capati has issued a notice to explain to the train system’s maintenance provider after a post online about small cockroaches in a train car went viral on social media. Based on a Facebook group post on Thursday, a netizen shared photos showing

- Herbosa, 3 other DOH execs face graft raps for alleged ‘bid rigging’ (2026-03-06 12:27)

MANILA, Philippines — Another complaint has been filed against Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa, along with three other health officials and employees, over alleged rigging in the procurement of mobile primary care facilities (MPCF) worth P1.8 billion. The nine-page complaint was filed on Friday at the Office of the Ombudsman by a group of individuals who

- Sandigan sets Revilla’s bail hearing for malversation on April 6 (2026-03-06 12:18)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan on Friday set April 6 as the start of the bail hearing for the malversation case of former Sen. Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr. and his co-accused, who filed a bid for temporary release. Malversation can be a discretionary bail offense if the penalty involved is reclusion perpetua. In such cases,

- 123 grade schoolers get sick after feeding program in Pampanga (2026-03-06 11:46)

MABALACAT CITY, Pampanga — At least 123 students were brought to hospitals due to symptoms of food poisoning after participating in a feeding program at the Maimpis Integrated High School in the City of San Fernando on Thursday, March 5. In a statement, the City Government of San Fernando said its health office had responded

- OceanJet trips canceled in Visayas amid fuel supply pressures (2026-03-06 11:22)

TACLOBAN CITY — OceanJet has canceled several ferry trips in the Visayas starting March 6 due to the ongoing fuel supply pressures linked to the Middle East tensions, highlighting the growing impact of rising oil prices on local transport. Affected routes include Cebu-Palompon, Palompon-Cebu, and Cebu-Getafe trips, with cancellations extending to March 7, officials said.

- Marcos urges Filipinos to embrace tech, boost skills (2026-03-06 10:22)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday urged Filipinos pursuing jobs and business opportunities under the Trabaho at Negosyo program to embrace technology and enhance their skills as industries continue to transform due to digital innovation and artificial intelligence. Marcos made the remark during the launch of the Trabaho at Negosyo event organized

- Tau Gamma Phi urges members tagged in Cavite ‘hazing’ death to surrender (2026-03-06 10:21)

MANILA, Philippines — The Tau Gamma Phi fraternity on Friday urged its members linked to the alleged fatal hazing of 19-year-old PNTC Colleges maritime student Mark Kenneth Alcedo to surrender to the authorities. “We strongly condemn the event that happened last March 1. We

also would like to offer our sympathy and condolences to the

- NBI subpoenas 18 alleged ex-Marines over bribery claims (2026-03-06 08:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has subpoenaed the 18 alleged former Marines who accused several former and current government officials of receiving either a suitcase, a bag, or a paper bag full of cash. NBI Director Melvin Matibag confirmed this to the Inquirer on Friday. According to Matibag, the subpoena against

- 42°C ‘dangerous’ heat index forecast in Coron, Palawan on Friday (2026-03-06 08:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The heat index in Coron, Palawan, is forecast to be the highest recorded for Friday at 42°C, falling within the “danger” level threshold, the state weather bureau said. Heat index, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), measures the level of discomfort an average person experiences due to

- Cool ‘amihan’ to strengthen on Saturday, says Pagasa (2026-03-06 07:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The state weather bureau reported on Friday that the northeast monsoon, or amihan, is forecast to strengthen and bring cool winds or light rain to more areas in Luzon beginning Saturday, March 7. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said this in a Friday morning forecast, noting that currently,

- Senate probe sought on commercial fishing in municipal waters (2026-03-06 06:50)

MANILA, Philippines — A Senate investigation has been sought into what critics describe as a failure to fully enforce vessel monitoring rules meant to keep commercial fishing boats out of municipal waters reserved for small-scale fishers. In a resolution filed Monday, Sen. Risa Hontiveros urged the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform to

- Untangling the ‘balikbayan’ box pileup at BOC (2026-03-06 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — On average, hundreds of thousands of “balikbayan boxes” enter the Philippines every year, carrying not just gifts, but the love and sacrifice from overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to their families. Thousands of these boxes, however, have been abandoned, some sitting in warehouses for nearly three years. Their contents have been spoiled, damaged, or

- DILG charges BFP chief over P14-M ‘kickbacks’ (2026-03-06 05:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) has filed a criminal complaint against Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) chief Jesus Fernandez for allegedly receiving P14.7 million in kickbacks from the “systematic manipulation” of the bureau’s bidding process. The alleged anomaly stemmed from the bidding for the supply of 132 ambulances

- NBI raids in Binondo yield over P237-M fake goods (2026-03-06 05:44)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) seized over P237 million worth of counterfeit products in a series of raids in Binondo, Manila. In a statement on Thursday, the NBI said that members of its Intellectual Property Rights Division served search warrants on several retail outlets within a shopping mall in the area

- ‘Mt. Kamuning’ replaced with pedestrian-friendly footbridge (2026-03-06 05:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Pedestrians no longer need to scale “Mt. Kamuning,” the towering footbridge near the corner of Edsa and Kamuning Road in Quezon City, with the opening of the new overpass that is just 5.3 meters high, compared to the old one, which is 9 meters tall. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday led

- Women’s rights groups file ethics complaint vs Suntay (2026-03-06 05:36)

MANILA, Philippines — Groups advocating for women’s rights filed an ethics complaint against Quezon City Rep. Jesus Manuel “Bong” Suntay before the House of Representatives on Thursday, accusing him of violating laws protecting women and of conduct contrary to that expected of public officials. Among the complainants were Gabriela National Alliance national chair Gert Libang,

- Trillanes sues Baligod, others on ICC bribe claim (2026-03-06 05:34)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV on Thursday struck back against 18 men identifying themselves as ex-Marines, their lawyer Levi Baligod and several others for spreading allegedly false information that he received $2 million from fugitive former Rep. Zaldy Co to bribe International Criminal Court (ICC) investigators. Trillanes filed criminal complaints at the

- Sara Duterte’s lawyer: Madriaga can’t be allowed to mislead public (2026-03-06 05:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte was not bothered by the allegations made last year by Ramil Madriaga, who claimed that he was her bagman, but she took action and sued him for perjury after lawmakers seeking her ouster announced plans that they were going to use his affidavit to impeach her, her lawyer

- Lawyer, clients seek SC help over red-tagging (2026-03-06 05:06)

BACOLOD CITY—A group of development workers in Negros Occidental and their legal counsel elevated their plea for safety to the Supreme Court on Thursday amid alleged threats, harassment, and intimidation by police officers and soldiers. They also alleged a systematic pattern of Red-tagging and surveillance. Lawyer Rey Gorgonio, chair of the National Union of Peoples’

- Fry scarcity hits ‘bangus’ growers in Pangasinan (2026-03-06 05:04)

CALASIAO, PANGASINAN—After typhoons ravaged Pangasinan’s bangus (milkfish) industry last year, aquaculture operators now face another tide of hardship: a shortage of fry that has nearly doubled in price. The cold spell in December and January further slowed recovery. Low temperatures stunt bangus growth, prompting many operators to delay stocking their ponds and pens. With the

- Tacloban court junks terror funding rap vs NGO exec (2026-03-06 05:02)

TACLOBAN CITY—A court here dismissed three counts of terrorism financing charges against a nongovernmental organization (NGO) worker over the government’s failure to officially publish the terrorist designation of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People’s Army (NPA) before the alleged offenses were committed. In a 14-page order dated Feb. 27, Presiding

- Ombudsman to present 56 witnesses in graft case vs Revilla (2026-03-06 02:40)

MANILA, Philippines — A total of 56 prosecution witnesses are expected to testify against former Sen. Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr. and his six coaccused, who are facing graft charges before the Sandiganbayan’s Fourth Division in connection with an alleged “ghost” flood control project in Pandi, Bulacan. “We are ready with the witnesses,” Christina Marallag-Batacan, acting

- Residents rescue distressed Brahminy Kite in Samar (2026-03-05 23:44)

TACLOBAN CITY — What began as an ordinary day in a coastal barangay in Daram town, Samar, turned into a timely wildlife rescue after a concerned resident reported a distressed bird on Tuesday, March 3. The bird, identified as a Brahminy kite (Haliastur indus), was found in Barangay Astorga and immediately reported to the Municipal

- Cops nab colleague during drug sting in Naga City (2026-03-05 23:26)

LEGAZPI CITY — Police arrested a fellow officer in a buy-bust operation in Barangay Cararayan, Naga City, on Wednesday, March 4, the Police Regional Office in Bicol said on Thursday. Police Lieutenant Colonel Maria Luisa Calubaquib, Naga police chief, identified the suspect only by his alias “Jay,” who is assigned to the City Mobile

- Bohol youth urged to take interest in farming (2026-03-05 23:16)

CARMEN, Bohol — Local officials urged the youth to take a more active interest in agriculture and farming, emphasizing its vital role in ensuring food security. This was the central message as the key agricultural town, home to the world-famous Chocolate Hills, celebrated its 157th founding anniversary. Farmers from the town’s 29 barangays showcased and

- Quezon environmentalists urge action vs growing wildlife threats (2026-03-05 23:07)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — Environmental protection advocates in Quezon province have called on the government to take decisive action against escalating threats to wildlife. “As we

celebrate World Wildlife Day, we honor the creatures of our forests, rivers, and seas, yet theynow face growing threats from industrialization, exploration, mining, quarrying, and illegalhuman activities

- Kush declared as woven shirt intercepted at Clark Freeport (2026-03-05 22:54)

MABALACAT CITY, Pampanga — Authorities recently intercepted a parcel containing about 504 grams of high-grade marijuana, known as “kush,” at the Port of Clark inside the Clark Freeport Zone in this province. In a statement on Thursday, the Bureau of Customs (BoC)–Port of Clark said the parcel was declared as a “women’s woven shirt.” “The

- Middle East war continues to spark local jitters in N. Mindanao (2026-03-05 22:11)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY — The rapidly expanding armed hostilities across the Middle East have triggered deep concern among locals across Northern Mindanao, especially families whose members are overseas workers stationed in the troubled region. As the conflict escalates, families of overseas workers worry about the immediate safety of their family members, as well as

- DA orders nationwide survey of farmers over seed, machinery issues (2026-03-05 22:10)

MANILA, Philippines — Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has ordered a nationwide survey of farmer-beneficiaries as the Department of Agriculture (DA) intensifies its probe into allegedly substandard seeds, farm machinery, and questionable fertilizer grades under government programs. Tiu Laurel issued the order after assuring the public that complaints about agricultural programs are being taken

- NBI deploys agent at Madriaga’s jail for his safety, ‘peace of mind’ (2026-03-05 22:05)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has deployed an agent to the detention facility of Ramil Madriaga, the alleged former bagman of Vice President Sara Duterte, to ensure his safety and “peace of mind,” according to the agency’s director, Atty. Melvin Matibag. Matibag said this after Madriaga’s counsel, Atty. Mark Anthony Te,

- March 5: Lotto 6/42 jackpot won; SuperLotto prize climbs (2026-03-05 21:56)

MANILA, Philippines — One bettor won the Lotto 6/42 jackpot worth about ₱39.39 million in Thursday night’s draw, while the SuperLotto 6/49 top prize went unclaimed, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. The winning combination for Lotto 6/42 was 33-32-18-01-10-04. The jackpot, estimated at ₱39.39 million, was won by a single ticket holder, PCSO

- Surigao town lauded for local support for eagle conservation (2026-03-05 21:47)

GIGAQUIT, Surigao del Norte — Conservationists lauded the local government here for declaring the Philippine Eagle (Pithecophaga jefferyi) and the Mindanao bleeding-heart as their town’s flagship species. “By declaring these species as municipal symbols, Gigaquit has made

a powerful statement: biodiversity is identity and conservation is policy,” said retired Lt. Gen. William Hotchkiss III, president

- Bohol lawmakers push for health, social protection measures (2026-03-05 21:08)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — Bohol 2nd District Rep. Maria Vanessa Cadorna-Aumentado has filed four bills seeking to bolster emergency health response, protect disaster frontliners, expand mental health services, and improve care for senior citizens. The measures, docketed as House Bill Nos. 7764, 7765, 7766, and 7767, aim to address urgent gaps in public health and

- Aboitiz adds personnel to oversee vehicle flow at Laguindingan Airport (2026-03-05 20:59)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY, Philippines — Aboitiz InfraCapital Airports, the operator of Laguindingan Airport in Misamis Oriental, has deployed additional security personnel and parking attendants at the premier airport in Northern Mindanao after receiving complaints from commuters about the management of the congested traffic situation. The move came as the company also adjusted its parking

- Batangas Gov. Vilma Santos orders fuel, energy cuts amid Mideast crisis (2026-03-05 20:55)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon – Batangas Gov. Vilma Santos-Recto has ordered measures to reduce fuel and electricity consumption across provincial government offices amid escalating tensions in the Middle East. In her Executive Order No. 07, issued on Wednesday, Santos-Recto directed provincial offices to cut fuel use by 30 to 50 percent “during the existence of the

- Bomb threat disrupts classes in Lucena public high school (2026-03-05 20:27)

LUCENA CITY, QUEZON, Philippines — The government-run Quezon National High School (QNHS) in Lucena City received a bomb threat on Thursday morning, prompting authorities to inspect the campus and temporarily evacuate those inside, police said. In a spot report, the Philippine National Police in Quezon province said the alleged threat was sent through a chat

- Fire guts 23 houses in Bacolod City (2026-03-05 20:26)

BACOLOD CITY — Twenty- three houses were destroyed in a fire that hit Purok Lampirong Compound in Barangay 2 here at past 1 p.m. on Thursday, Bacolod City Fire Marshal Jenny Mae Masip said. The fire occurred in an identified red zone or fire-prone area where houses made of light materials were built close to

- Edcom 2 welcomes extension; vows close working ties with gov’t agencies (2026-03-05 20:03)

MANILA, Philippines — The Second Congressional Commission on Education (Edcom 2) on Thursday welcomed its additional two-year mandate after the law extending its term was recently signed by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., committing close coordination with education agencies and even other government agencies to better respond and address education gaps in the country. President Marcos

- As Edcom 2 gets extended, Legarda vows to address gaps, drive reforms (2026-03-05 19:28)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Loren Legarda welcomed the enactment of Republic Act No. 12315, which extends the term of the Second Congressional Commission on Education (Edcom 2) for two more years. As the author and principal sponsor of the law, Legarda underscored that this enactment secures the Commission’s mandate to continue diagnosing systemic failures and

- Suspect in ‘Sangla-Tira-Benta’ scheme nabbed in Rizal (2026-03-05 19:12)

MANILA, Philippines — A woman was arrested in Cainta, Rizal, for allegedly orchestrating a fraudulent “Sangla-Tira-Benta” scheme targeting property renters and buyers, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) reported on Thursday. According to the NBI, the suspect pretended to be the owner of a condominium unit, which she advertised for rent in a Facebook group

- Mark Villar pushes bill declaring Firefighters Recognition Day in March (2026-03-05 19:03)

MANILA, Philippines — As the country marks March as Fire Prevention Month, Sen. Mark A. Villar has filed a measure seeking to formally recognize the country’s firefighters with a dedicated national day of honor. Villar’s Senate Bill No. 1797 proposes declaring the first Friday of March as Firefighters Recognition Day, in tribute to what he

- 4 men nabbed for illegal small-scale mining in Cagayan (2026-03-05 18:35)

TUGUEGARAO CITY — Four men allegedly caught in the act of illegal mining were arrested in Santiago, Claveria, Cagayan at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, March 4, police said on Thursday. Capt. Armando Tolentino Jr., Claveria police chief, identified the arrested persons as Ben, 67, of Bakakeng Norte in Baguio City; Metring, 70, of Davildavilan, Dingalan

- LIST: Canceled flights on Friday, March 6 (2026-03-05 18:04)

MANILA, Philippines — Several flights to and from the Middle East continued to be canceled on Friday, March 6 due to rising military tensions in the region. READ: LIST of canceled flights up to March 5, 2026 The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines in an advisory said the following flights have been canceled on

- Madriaga’s lawyer claims bounty on his life; BJMP sees ‘no threat’ (2026-03-05 18:03)

MANILA, Philippines — The counsel of Ramil Madriaga, the alleged former bagman of Vice President Sara Duterte, said his client has been receiving rumors of up to a P5 million bounty for anyone in the cell who can kill him, but the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) stated that no threat to the

- LIST: Canceled flights on Thursday, March 5 (2026-03-05 18:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Several flights to and from West Asia, commonly known as the Middle East, were canceled on Thursday, March 5, amid escalating military tensions in the region. According to the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines in an advisory, the following flights have been canceled on Thursday: Cebu Pacific Air Philippine Airlines Emirates READ:

- 4 MILF members hurt in Maguindanao del Sur armed clash (2026-03-05 18:00)

COTABATO CITY – Four members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) were injured following a clash between two of the group’s commanders in Linantananga village, Shariff Saydona Mustapha town on Sunday, March 1. Lt. Colonel Ronald Suscano, spokesperson for the 6th Infantry Division, however, assured the situation had already calmed down. He identified the

- CAAP: Laoag International Airport night ops suspended on Thursday (2026-03-05 17:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Night operations will be temporarily suspended in Laoag International Airport on Thursday due to ongoing maintenance activities, said the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP). According to CAAP in an advisory, runway maintenance is currently being conducted at the airport after an open circuit was detected on its runway edge lights.

- CHR condemns Bong Suntay’s sexist remarks, calls Congress to set example (2026-03-05 17:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) condemns Quezon City 4th District Rep. Jesus Manuel “Bong” Suntay for making sexist remarks toward actress Anne Curtis during a hearing, saying it was particularly “troubling” as it came at the start of Women’s Month. According to the CHR, Rep. Suntay’s remarks during the House Committee

- Legarda’s Veterans Month Act targets institutional reform (2026-03-05 17:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Loren Legarda sponsored Senate Bill No. 1719, declaring April of every year as Philippine Veterans Month while establishing a permanent national framework to honor Filipino veterans and ensure sustained access to services and education. In her sponsorship speech on March 4 during the plenary session, Legarda emphasized the urgency of institutionalizing

- DILG sets meeting to revisit local gov’t code, eyes SK reform (2026-03-05 17:10)

MANILA, Philippines — Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla on Thursday said a meeting to revisit Republic Act No. 7610 or the Local Government Code will be held next week and may include discussions on reforming the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK). Remulla previously called for the abolition of the SK, citing dwindling participation, a proposal

- Dy: Law extending Edcom 2 will ensure long-term reforms in education (2026-03-05 16:57)

MANILA, Philippines — House Speaker Faustino “Bojie” G. Dy III on Thursday welcomed the signing of a new law by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. extending the work of the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II). He said the move ensures that major

reforms to improve the Philippine education system will continue and deepen

- Senate detainee Curlee Discaya briefly hospitalized for MRI – lawyer (2026-03-05 16:46)

MANILA, Philippines – Government contractor Pacifico “Curlee” Discaya was taken out of Senate detention to visit the hospital, his lawyer confirmed on Thursday. “He’s been feeling a lot of things during his seven months in Senate detention,” Discaya’s lawyer, Cornelio Samaniego III, told the Inquirer in a mix of Filipino and English text message. In

- DepEd advances voucher reforms, strengthens classroom observation system (2026-03-05 16:43)

DAVAO DE ORO — Education Secretary Sonny Angara pushed forward key reforms, engaging private school partners to improve the voucher program implementation and directing the Department’s Management Committee to enhance the classroom observation system under the Teacher Growth and Performance framework. These initiatives aim to ensure smoother voucher delivery for learners while strengthening instructional support

- DILG to LGUs, agencies: Cut costs amid Mideast fuel price hike (2026-03-05 16:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) will order all its offices, attached agencies, and local government units (LGUs) to cut operational costs amid fuel price hikes driven by ongoing tensions in the Middle East. After oil companies jacked up the prices of diesel, kerosene, and gasoline by P1.20, P1.50, and

- 56 witnesses to testify vs Revilla in Sandiganbayan graft trial (2026-03-05 16:23)

MANILA, Philippines — A total of 56 prosecution witnesses will testify in the Sandiganbayan trial of the alleged ghost flood-control project in Pandi, Bulacan province, involving former Senator Ramon “Bong” Revilla and six others. Christina Marallag-Batacan, acting director of the Ombudsman prosecution bureau, said this was provided in the pretrial brief presented at Thursday’s pretrial

- Remulla: 6 of 18 ‘ex-Marines’ in bribery exposé are facing murder raps (2026-03-05 16:21)

MANILA, Philippines – Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla on Thursday said that the 18 individuals representing themselves as former Marines were acting for “political effect,” noting that while several signatories are no longer in active service, six were charged with murder. “Not all of them are in active service, and many of them were discharged. Alam

- Iloilo City mayor seeks new parking rules for public markets (2026-03-05 15:47)

ILOILO CITY–In a bid to maintain public order and ensure equal access to public market parking spaces, Iloilo City Mayor Raisa Treñas has proposed a new ordinance to the City Council regulating parking at the Terminal Public Market and the Central Public Market. A key feature of the mayor’s proposal is the implementation of a

- Marcos signs law extending Edcom 2 for 2 more years (2026-03-05 15:39)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has signed into law the extension of the Second Congressional Commission on Education (Edcom 2) for another two years, allowing it to continue overseeing education reforms and aligning the country’s education system with national development and workforce needs. President Marcos signed Republic Act No. 12315, which amends RA 11899,

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- PNP burns over P16-M worth of marijuana in Benguet anti-drug ops (2026-03-05 15:25)

MANILA, Philippines – The Philippine National Police (PNP) destroyed over P16-million worth of marijuana during an eradication operation on Wednesday in a communal forest in Kibungan, Benguet. Authorities uprooted and burned 8,350 fully grown marijuana plants and 120 kilograms of dried stocks across four plantation sites totaling about 1,400 square meters. “We will not stop.

- Meeting with frat leaders over hazing death set on Friday — DILG chief (2026-03-05 14:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla will be meeting with the leaders of the Tau Gamma Phi fraternity amid the alleged fatal hazing of 19-year-old maritime student Kenneth Alcedo. In a briefing in Quezon City Thursday, Remulla was asked whether he had already scheduled a meeting with the fraternity, to which

- NUPL seeks SC protection for human-rights lawyer, NGO vs red-tagging (2026-03-05 14:09)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Union of Peoples’ Lawyers (NUPL) filed a petition before the Supreme Court on Thursday for writs of amparo and habeas data, seeking protection for its Negros chairperson, Atty. Rey Gorgonio, and his clients from the Negros-based NGO Paghidaet sa Kauswagan Development Group (PDG) against red-tagging and harassment. READ: IBP: ‘Lawyers

- DILG chief hopes to stop ‘culture of corruption’ in BFP (2026-03-05 14:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla on Thursday said he hoped to stop a supposedly prevailing “culture of corruption” within the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP). He made this pronouncement in a press briefing in Quezon City after revealing that his department filed a graft and corruption complaint against BFP Chief

- DILG Sec. Remulla: Report fire inspection anomalies, I’ll handle them (2026-03-05 13:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla urged the public to immediately report anomalies in their establishments' fire safety inspections, assuring them he himself would handle the erring inspectors. Remulla once touted that his department procured and mandated the use of body cameras for fire inspectors to curb corruption, but conceded that

- Sara Duterte hits critics' silence on flood mess amid impeachment raps (2026-03-05 13:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte on Thursday criticized what she called the "deafening silence" of civil society and other groups on corruption allegations involving anomalies in infrastructure and flood control projects as the House of Representatives continued to advance impeachment complaints against her. Duterte issued the statement as she commended former la former

- Trillanes tags Duterte's camp in $2 million ICC bribery allegation (2026-03-05 13:23)

MANILA, Philippines—Former Senator Antonio Trillanes IV on Thursday filed criminal complaints at the Department of Justice against 18 former military personnel, lawyer Levi Baligod, former Quezon City Rep. Mike Defensor and several media personalities. According to the senator, these persons had wrongfully accused him and had spread false information that he received US$2 million from

- PDEA nets P1.3-million illegal drugs from gov't employee in Albay (2026-03-05 13:21)

LEGAZPI CITY – Operatives of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) 5 (Bicol) arrested a female job order employee found in possession of more than P1.3 million worth of suspected shabu during a buy-bust operation in Ligao City, Albay, on Wednesday. The PDEA-5, in a report on Thursday, identified the arrested suspect only as alias Nef,

- DILG to require BFP to livestream bidding procedures (2026-03-05 12:48)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) will now be requiring the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), which it supervises, to livestream the bureau's bidding procedures moving forward. This came after Remulla announced that they had filed graft and corruption complaints against BFP Chief Fire Director Jesus Fernandez for allegedly

- House panel asks Sara Duterte to respond to impeachment complaints (2026-03-05 12:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The House justice panel has told Vice President Sara Duterte to respond to the two verified impeachment complaints against her. Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro, the chairperson of the House committee on justice, signed the "Notice to Respondent" for Duterte, the copy of which was furnished to the media on Thursday.

- Family of Pangasinan caregiver slain in Israel attack seeks privacy (2026-03-05 12:39)

CALASIAO, PANGASINAN—The death of 32-year-old Basista town native Mary Ann de Vera in a missile attack in Tel Aviv, Israel, has left her family grieving and seeking privacy. Local authorities and officials said the family remains in shock over the tragedy. READ: Caregiver first PH casualty in Mideast; gov’t all set for repatriation “The family

- 2 replacements eyed for BFP chief Fernandez amid graft, corruption raps (2026-03-05 12:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Two Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) officials are in the running to replace Fire Director Jesus Fernandez as bureau chief amid graft and corruption charges filed against the latter, Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla said on Thursday. “This morning, we have panel interviews here for the next BFP chief,” Remulla

- Women’s rights advocates file ethics case vs Suntay over lewd remarks (2026-03-05 11:47)

MANILA, Philippines — Women’s rights advocates, accompanied by Gabriela Party-list Rep. Sarah Elago and the organization’s former representative Liza Maza, filed an ethics complaint against Quezon City Rep. Jesus Manuel “Bong” Suntay before the House of Representatives on Thursday. This move comes following the lawmaker’s lewd comments about actress Anne Curtis. The women lodged the

- P25 million suspected smuggled footwear seized in Pampanga (2026-03-05 11:39)

MABALACAT CITY, Pampanga — Authorities confiscated some P25 million worth of suspected smuggled footwear at a warehouse in Apalit, Pampanga, on Wednesday. The Crocs brand of footwear, believed to have been smuggled, was discovered after police and Bureau of Customs (BoC) operatives opened a warehouse in Calantipe village around 4 p.m., according to the statement

- ‘Mt. Kamuning’ replaced with commuter-friendly P55-M footbridge (2026-03-05 11:02)

MANILA, Philippines — The infamous “Mt. Kamuning” in Quezon City has been replaced with a more accessible footbridge. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. led on Thursday the inspection of the newly built Kamuning Footbridge and Busway Station project. The President, along with First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos and their son Vinny, scaled the nine-meter high old Kamuning footbridge to

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- DILG sues BFP chief Fernandez over alleged P14-M kickbacks (2026-03-05 10:26)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) filed a criminal complaint before the Office of the Ombudsman against Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) Chief Fire Director Jesus Fernandez over alleged kickbacks, Secretary Jonvic Remulla announced on Thursday. Fernandez is accused of receiving a total of P14.7 million in kickbacks for

- Iloilo quake causes minor structural damage in city buildings (2026-03-05 10:10)

ILOILO CITY — Several government buildings, schools, and community facilities in Iloilo City sustained cracks and minor structural damage following the magnitude 4.8 earthquake that struck off the coast of Guimbal, Iloilo, last March 2. This was based on a situational report released by the Iloilo City Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on Wednesday. READ: No major damage reported

- P237-M counterfeit products seized in Binondo raids (2026-03-05 09:54)

PASAY CITY, Philippines — Over P237 million worth of counterfeit products were seized during raids conducted in Binondo, Manila over two days, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) reported on Thursday. In a statement, the NBI said the confiscation followed its Intellectual Property Rights Division’s enforcement operations on Monday, March 2, and Tuesday, March 3,

- PNP backs Palace initiative vs fake news, offers technical aid (2026-03-05 09:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Thursday expressed support for the Presidential Communications Office’s (PCO) memorandum of understanding with print media publishers in a bid to combat fake news. The police organization is offering technical aid for the initiative. “We are intensifying our 24/7 cyber patrolling and we are prepared to link

- Permanent powers for Marcos to handle oil prices sought in Senate (2026-03-05 09:35)

MANILA, Philippines — A senator wants President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to have permanent powers to deal with rising oil prices amid conflicts. Sen. Chiz Escudero is calling for amendments to the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law that will empower the president to suspend or lower excise and value added taxes on fuel. The

- Warmest weather on Thursday (March 5) of up to 42°C forecast in Palawan (2026-03-05 08:42)

MANILA, Philippines — Coron in Palawan is expected to record the highest heat index at a scorching 42°C on Thursday, which could place it under the “danger” category. This forecast comes from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa). Under this category, Pagasa warned that “heat cramps and heat exhaustion are likely” and

- 2 dead, 4 hurt in Parañaque condo basketball court shooting (2026-03-05 08:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Two were killed and four were injured when a gunman opened fire on a basketball court at a Parañaque City condominium complex on Wednesday night, according to a Southern Police District (SPD) police report. “While the victims and witnesses were playing basketball at the basketball court at Azure Residence, they heard a

- Southern PH Sea shows ocean renewable energy potential—study (2026-03-05 08:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Scientists from the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute (UP MSI) have identified a region in the southern Philippine Sea with strong potential for renewable ocean energy, following a deep-sea expedition that also mapped submarine volcanoes, active faults and internal wave generation zones in the Sulu and Celebes seas. The findings

- PNP mulls procuring electric vehicles amid rising fuel costs (2026-03-05 07:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) is considering procuring electric vehicles for its mobile asset fleet amid fuel price increases driven by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. “For an agency that is dependent on fuel in its daily operation, we view the Middle East tensions as a wake-up call for us

- Overcast skies to prevail in Luzon, Mindanao on Thursday (March 5) (2026-03-05 07:24)

MANILA, Philippines — Parts of Luzon and Mindanao will experience overcast skies and light rain showers, while the rest of the country is expected to have warm and generally fair weather on Thursday. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), in a morning forecast, the two weather systems — the northeast

- Desalination project to boost freshwater access, jobs in Sagay island (2026-03-05 07:00)

BACOLOD CITY — A proposed national government-funded desalination project in Molocaboc Island of Sagay City in northern Negros Occidental is poised to boost freshwater access and provide an alternative source of income for its residents. The two-year initiative, with a project cost of P8.5 million, will develop the village into a pilot site for a first-of-its-kind

- 300 Pangasinan coop consumers avail of solar-powered metering (2026-03-05 06:44)

MALASIQUI, Pangasinan — A total of 300 consumers of the Central Pangasinan Electric Cooperative (Cenpelco) have availed of the net metering program for their solar-powered homes. “When our net metering rules came out, its maximum range is 100 kilowatt (kW) per household or per installation, which we immediately implemented. And now, we have more or less

- Palace, print media join forces vs fake news (2026-03-05 05:44)

Malacañang on Wednesday joined forces with the country’s nine leading newspapers, including the Philippine Daily Inquirer, to combat “fake news” across digital and social media platforms, calling it a “poisonous” venom. In a program held in Kalayaan Hall at the Palace,

Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Secretary Dave Gomez signed a memorandum ofunderstanding (MOU) with

- 8 suspects, 12 persons of interest sought in alleged hazing death (2026-03-05 05:42)

The police are looking for eight other suspects and 12 persons of interest in the death of 19-year-old maritime student Kenneth Alcedo, who is believed to have died after undergoing hazing rites in Cavite province on March 1. Cavite police chief Col. Ariel Red said in a press briefing at Camp Crame on Wednesday that

- Sara Duterte sues alleged ‘bagman’ Madriaga for perjury (2026-03-05 05:40)

Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday filed a perjury complaint against Ramil Madriaga over claims he made last year that he served as her “bagman” who handled drug money during her election campaign in 2022. Accompanied by her lawyer Salvador Paolo Panelo Jr. during the filing at the Taguig City prosecutor’s office, Duterte again not

- Erice says he lost House post after ‘legit criticism’ of Marcos (2026-03-05 05:38)

Caloocan Rep. Edgar Erice on Wednesday said his “legitimate criticism” of President Marcos was the reason for his sudden replacement as House senior deputy minority leader, and that the President’s son, Ilocos Norte Rep. Sandro Marcos, had been seeking his removal from the post “for quite some time.” Erice was replaced by Mamamayang Liberal Rep.

- Bill filed giving President special powers to suspend oil tax (2026-03-05 05:36)

A bill that seeks to give President Marcos powers to suspend the excise on petroleum products when warranted, such as during the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, was filed by Marikina Rep. Miro Quimbo on Tuesday. In a statement, Quimbo said he supports calls to suspend the excise on fuel to protect consumers from

- From Palace to City Hall, Suntay reaps a storm (2026-03-05 05:34)

From Malacañang to City Hall, Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay on Wednesday reaped a storm of criticism over his lewd remarks about actress Anne Curtis after earlier drawing flak from his own colleagues in the House of Representatives. “I was offended on behalf of all women, especially when it is even being touted as an

- ‘Oil shock’ subsidies set for farmers, drivers (2026-03-05 05:32)

Key government agencies are set to give subsidies to agricultural workers and public utility drivers to help them cope with the expected increase in fuel prices arising from the escalating tensions in the Middle East. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is also meeting with manufacturers to discuss the possibility of holding prices of

- 2 raps vs Sara Duterte found ‘sufficient in substance’ (2026-03-05 05:30)

The House committee on justice on Wednesday declared the fourth impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte to be sufficient in substance, in addition to the third complaint that earlier passed the sufficiency test. The proceedings will now move forward with the committee expected to ask Duterte to answer the two complaints within 10 calendar

- Water crisis grips 40,000 families in Bulacan (2026-03-05 05:04)

CITY OF SAN JOSE DEL MONTE—This city in Bulacan province has been under a state of calamity since last week as more than 40,000 of its households are grappling with a water crisis. The calamity declaration was recommended by the Local Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (LDRRMC) and approved by the city council on Feb.

- ‘Green’ transport pushed as fuel prices increase (2026-03-05 05:02)

BAGUIO CITY—Top leaders in tourism and trade pushed for green transportation to lessen the carbon footprint of the travel and farming sectors as the war in the Middle East is expected to result in major oil price increases in the coming weeks, highlighting domestic reliance on imported fossil fuel. The idea was discussed on Wednesday

- Stray bullet kills high school student in BARMM town (2026-03-05 01:17)

COTABATO CITY – A stray bullet believed to be from warring clans in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) resulted in the death of a 19-year-old senior high school student on Wednesday, March 4. She is the second victim hit and killed by a stray bullet in the BARMM this year. Capt.

- 2 elementary students drown in Bohol irrigation canal (2026-03-05 01:07)

TAGBILARAN CITY— A tragic incident claimed the lives of two young pupils who drowned while swimming in an irrigation canal in Ubay, Bohol on Tuesday, March 3. The victims, aged 9 and 10, were both Grade 3 students of Governor Boyles Elementary School. According to a report from the Ubay Police Station, the children’s bodies

- Work from home, online classes pushed to cut power costs (2026-03-05 00:37)

MANILA, Philippines — Parañaque 2nd District Rep. Brian Raymund Yamsuan has suggested that work-from-home and online class setups be adopted to reduce power expenses, amid fears that tensions due to the Middle Eastern conflict may escalate further. Yamsuan, in a statement on Wednesday said the government must act fast to ease the burden of workers and

- Solons counter Suntay: Checking witness’ credibility to be done later (2026-03-05 00:19)

MANILA, Philippines — Lawmakers from the House of Representatives’ committee on justice have reminded their colleague, Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay, that checking a witness’ credibility comes in the later stages of impeachment proceedings. During the committee’s hearing on Wednesday regarding the impeachment complaints filed against Vice President Sara Duterte, Suntay questioned Manila Rep. Joel Chua

- Suntay’s Anne Curtis remark an affront to Filipino women – PCW (2026-03-04 23:38)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) on Wednesday denounced Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay’s suggestive remarks about actress Anne Curtis and called on the lawmaker to issue an actual public apology, as well as to undergo gender sensitivity training. READ: Suntay hit for risqué remarks about Anne Curtis at impeachment hearing The

- Madriaga needs more protection amid reported intimidation – De Lima (2026-03-04 23:24)

MANILA, Philippines — Ramil Madriaga, Vice President Sara Duterte’s alleged former bagman, should be given more protection amid supposed acts of intimidation against him, Mamamayang Liberal party-list Rep. Leila de Lima said on Wednesday. De Lima made the call after Madriaga’s counsel claimed that his client faced a threat to his life while detained at

- Sara Duterte asserts Madriaga was never a part of her staff (2026-03-04 22:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday maintained that Ramil Madriaga was never her aide, friend, or staff member, and therefore should not be described as her “former aide” or “bagman.” According to Duterte in a statement, doing so is “inaccurate and misleading” and “assumes as fact the very lie” that the perjury

- Sara Duterte’s alleged bagman Madriaga faced threat to life in jail (2026-03-04 22:17)

MANILA, Philippines — The alleged former bagman of Vice President Sara Duterte, Ramil Madriaga, faced a threat to his life while detained at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City, his counsel said Wednesday. In a message to the INQUIRER, Madriaga’s counsel, Atty. Raymund Palad said the incident occurred on Tuesday, March 3 at the second

- No jackpot winners in Grand, MegaLotto draws Mar. 4 (2026-03-04 21:49)

MANILA, Philippines — No bettor won the jackpot prizes for Grand Lotto 6/55 and MegaLotto 6/45 during Wednesday night’s draw on March 4, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO). The winning combination for Grand Lotto 6/55 was 33-13-44-50-47-42, with a jackpot prize of ₱45 million. No ticket matched all six numbers. READ: PCSO: No

- Solon: Perjury raps vs Madriaga won’t affect Duterte impeachment case (2026-03-04 20:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The perjury case filed by Vice President Sara Duterte against her alleged former aide Ramil Madriaga won’t affect the impeachment proceedings against her, Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon said on Wednesday. The affidavit of Madriaga submitted before the Office of the Ombudsman last year were cited in the two impeachment complaints

- P500,000 reward up for arrest of suspects in Basilan grenade blast (2026-03-04 20:42)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur – Basilan Gov. Mujiv Hataman on Wednesday strongly condemned the violence perpetrated in Lamitan City on Tuesday night when a grenade was blasted near a construction site in Barangay Malakas. Hataman described the act a “stumbling block” to the city’s economic progress. In a statement, he said the provincial government

- Gabriela slams Bong Suntay’s ‘non-apology’ over remarks on Anne Curtis (2026-03-04 20:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Gabriela Women’s Party Rep. Sarah Elago on Wednesday criticized Quezon City Rep. Jesus “Bong” Suntay’s “non-apology” in response to criticisms over his lewd remarks on actress Anne Curtis. READ: Suntay OK with critique as long as it brings attention to argument Last Tuesday, the justice panel was deliberating impeachment complaints against Vice

- House refers Bong Suntay’s Anne Curtis remarks to ethics committee (2026-03-04 19:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives has authorized and directed its committee on ethics and privileges to assess the remarks lewd made by Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay toward actress and television host Anne Curtis, requiring the lawmaker to attend the panel’s meeting. At the tail end of the House’s session on Wednesday, Assistant Majority

- Laguna Water, Sta. Rosa jointly renew TSEK ng Bayan sanitation program (2026-03-04 19:24)

MANILA, Philippines – Laguna Water, a Non-East Zone operating unit of Manila Water, and the City Government of Santa Rosa have renewed their TSEK ng Bayan Partnership Agreement, reaffirming their shared commitment to promoting safe sanitation and healthier communities across the city. TSEK ng Bayan, which stands for “Tamang Sanitasyon Equals Kalusugan, Kalinisan at Kaunlaran

- Mistresses may be covered by Senate’s anti-political dynasty bill (2026-03-04 19:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Even mistresses may be covered by the proposed law banning political dynasties in the Philippines up to the second degree of consanguinity and affinity. At Wednesday’s Senate discussion, Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III noted a provision in Senate Bill No. 1901, which defines partnerships without the benefit of marriage as “common-law

- P1.36-M shabu seized in Albay (2026-03-04 19:02)

Photo from the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency MANILA, Philippines — Anti-narcotics operatives arrested an alleged drug personality in Albay on Wednesday and seized P1.36 million worth of crystal methamphetamine, locally known as shabu. The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) identified the suspect only by the alias “Net,” a 46-year-old job-order messenger at the Municipality of

- Baguio youths, activists stage anti-war protest (2026-03-04 18:49)

BAGUIO CITY — About 60 youths and activists staged an anti-war protest on Wednesday, March 4, at the Igorot Park in Baguio to condemn the weekend attacks on Iran by the United States and Israel. Youth leader Glen Cabayanan said Americans are acting like terrorists, and not the Iranian population being decimated by US and

- Año strikes back: Sues 18 ‘ex-Marines’ for fake news on cash delivery (2026-03-04 18:45)

MANILA, Philippines – National Security Adviser Eduardo Año initiated the first legal action against 18 supposedly former Marines, a lawyer and a former congressman for what he described as “malicious and fabricated” claims that he participated in a questionable meeting and receiving paper bag full of cash. Año personally went to the Department of Justice

- P1.84-M shabu seized, 6 nabbed in Parañaque, Makati, Taguig drug stings (2026-03-04 18:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Suspected shabu (crystal meth) worth P1.84 million was confiscated, and six individuals were arrested in buy-bust operations in Parañaque, Makati, and Taguig City, the Southern Police District (SPD) said on Wednesday. A drug sting early Wednesday morning along Lopez Jaena Extension in Barangay San Dionisio, Parañaque City, caught suspects Tom, 53, and

- LTO revoking licenses of drivers caught drunk driving in QC (2026-03-04 18:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Office (LTO) will revoke the driver’s license of seven drivers caught drunk-driving in Quezon City, the agency said on Wednesday. According to the LTO, the decision came after the agency’s Law Enforcement Service-Field Enforcement Division from the Intelligence and Investigation Division submitted its report on the drivers apprehended during

- 1 of 6 suspects behind P653,000 jewelry store heist in QC falls (2026-03-04 18:09)

MANILA, Philippines — One of six suspects was arrested by authorities following the robbery of a Quezon City jewelry store, taking P653,000 worth of cash and jewelry, the police said on Wednesday. A hot pursuit operation led the police to catch the first suspect, identified as Wilfredo, 59, early Tuesday morning in Bagong Silang, Caloocan

- TUCP renews call for P200 wage hike amid Middle East conflict impact (2026-03-04 18:04)

MANILA, Philippines—The Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) on Wednesday renewed its call for a P200 minimum wage increase, citing potential impacts of the Middle East conflict on the prices of basic goods and services. In a statement, the labor confederation urged President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to “proactively protect the purchasing power of Filipino

- Remulla to meet frat leaders over hazing death; school vows legal action (2026-03-04 17:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla on Wednesday said he will speak with the Tau Gamma Phi fraternity leaders regarding the recent hazing incident that left a college student dead in General Trias, Cavite, while the victim’s school vowed to pursue legal action against those responsible. At “Kapihan sa Manila Bay” forum, Remulla named

- 4 nabbed over ‘car-smashing’ scheme in Quezon City (2026-03-04 17:53)

MANILA, Philippines — Four individuals were arrested for an alleged “basag-kotse” (car-smashing) scheme, in which vehicle windows are smashed to steal valuables, the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) said Wednesday. Two of the suspects, identified as Jhon, 32, and Eugene, 27, were arrested late Monday night in Tondo, Manila, after security footage caught them riding

- Zubiri urges strict anti-hazing law enforcement after Cavite death (2026-03-04 17:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Senator Juan Miguel Zubiri on Wednesday called for stricter implementation of anti-hazing laws and for schools to be held accountable after another reported death in Cavite. Zubiri made the pronouncement after condemning the death of 19-year-old Mark Kenneth Alcedo, a first-year maritime student in Cavite, who is alleged to have died due

- Kerwin Espinosa opens drug reform facility in Leyte town (2026-03-04 17:44)

TACLOBAN CITY — Albuera town in Leyte province takes a significant step in its anti-drug campaign with the launch of its Balay Silangan Reformation Center on Tuesday, March 3, in a ceremony led by Mayor Rolan “Kerwin” Espinosa. The facility, located in Barangay Canlalin 1, Poblacion, is the sixth to be established in Leyte province. Unlike

- Mandate to save power: Gov’t office aircons must be no colder than 24°C (2026-03-04 17:36)

MANILA, Philippines – Government offices have been ordered to intensify energy-saving measures, including stricter air-conditioning settings, in compliance with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s directive to conserve energy amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. In an advisory issued on Wednesday, the Inter-Agency Energy Efficiency and Conservation Committee (IAEECC) called on all government agencies to strictly implement

- PNP wants joint probe into Jordanian linked to Bondi Beach attack (2026-03-04 17:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. ordered the agency’s Intelligence Group to coordinate with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to investigate a Jordanian national allegedly linked to the Bondi Beach attack in Australia. The foreigner, identified as Mohammad Saleh Odeh, was arrested on Monday in Pagadian

- Women journalists condemn Suntay’s ‘degrading’ remarks at House hearing (2026-03-04 17:26)

MANILA, Philippines – A coalition of women journalists on Wednesday condemned what it described as inappropriate and misogynistic remarks made by Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay during the second day of the House committee on justice hearing on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. In a statement, the Movement for the Safety and

- Docs show VP Duterte’s net worth rose over 1,000% – Ridon (2026-03-04 17:21)

MANILA, Philippines — Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon downplayed claims that there was no documentary evidence to support allegations that Vice President Sara Duterte amassed ill-gotten wealth, saying that her net worth from 2008 to 2024 rose by over 1,000 percent. At Wednesday’s hearing of the House of Representatives committee on justice, Cagayan de Oro

- PCW: Suntay’s ‘predatory’ remarks break at least 3 local laws (2026-03-04 17:19)

MANILA, Philippines — The agency responsible for the promotion of women’s rights on Wednesday called out Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay and pressed him to issue an “unqualified public apology” over his lewd remarks as his actions were violative of at least three local laws. The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) issued a response to

- Erice on relief: Sandro Marcos wants me out over infra mess twit vs dad (2026-03-04 17:18)

MANILA, Philippines — House Majority Leader and Ilocos Norte 1st District Rep. Ferdinand Alexander “Sandro” Marcos sought the replacement of Caloocan 2nd District Rep. Edgar “Egay” Erice as the senior deputy minority leader “for quite some time”. Erice said this Wednesday, claiming the move was due to his “legitimate criticisms” against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

- Gabriela lawmaker eyes ethics complaint vs Bong Suntay for lewd remarks (2026-03-04 17:15)

MANILA, Philippines — An ethics complaint against Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay is among the “options” being considered for his lewd remarks about actress Anne Curtis, according to Gabriela Party-list Rep. Sarah Elago. Elago likewise emphasized the need for stronger reporting systems, mandatory gender-sensitivity training, and proactive measures to protect women. “We are studying many

- Suntay’s Anne Curtis remark highlights lingering sexism in Congress (2026-03-04 16:57)

Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay’s remark, which drew a strong rebuke from the public, has prompted renewed discussions on ethics and the broader culture within the country’s legislative institutions. Suntay’s comment, made on Tuesday, March 3, during a House impeachment proceeding against Vice President Sara Duterte, invoked the name of actress Anne Curtis in a

- PNP probes political, extortion motives in Basilan grenade blast (2026-03-04 16:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) said Wednesday it is investigating whether a grenade explosion that damaged a fast-food chain in Basilan was linked to politics or an alleged extortion scheme. In a press briefing, PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño stressed that the incident was not a spillover of escalating tensions in

- Legarda calls for literacy reforms, lighter teacher loads in basic ed (2026-03-04 16:43)

MANILA, Philippines – Senator Loren Legarda, Co-chair of the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II), pressed education officials during the Senate Committee on Basic Education hearing on March 3 to confront declining literacy and numeracy rates by strengthening teacher training and redefining functional literacy standards. “What are we doing differently from before, and what

- Police link Rizal robbery spree to group behind Calabarzon, NCR hold-ups (2026-03-04 15:44)

MANILA, Philippines — The Rizal Provincial Police Office on Wednesday said it believes a series of convenience store robberies there over the weekend is linked to a group behind at least 17 robbery hold-up and theft incidents in Calabarzon and the National Capital Region (NCR). In a press briefing in Camp Crame, Rizal police chief

- House panel declares 2 Sara Duterte impeach raps sufficient in substance (2026-03-04 15:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives’ committee on justice on Wednesday declared the third and fourth impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte sufficient in substance, allowing the proceedings to move forward. During the panel’s hearing, 54 lawmakers voted to separately declare both the third and fourth complaints as sufficient, while only one voted

- Comelec proclaims Jeffrey Soriano as ACT-CIS representative (2026-03-04 15:16)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Elections proclaimed businessman Jeffrey Soriano on Wednesday as the ACT-CIS Party-list representative following Edvic Yap’s resignation. The party-list won two seats in the 2025 elections, seating Yap as its first nominee and Rep. Jocelyn Pua Tulfo as its second nominee in the House of Representatives. Soriano, the party-list’s third

- Madriaga camp: Perjury case shouldn’t be used to intimidate (2026-03-04 14:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The camp of Ramil Madriaga, the alleged former bagman of Vice President Sara Duterte, on Wednesday said he will defend himself against the perjury case she filed against him and maintained that his affidavit was truthful. One of Madriaga’s lawyers, Mark Anthony Te, acknowledged the perjury complaint filed by the Vice President

- House panel finds 4th impeach rap sufficient in substance, orders VP to answer (2026-03-04 14:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Voting 54 against one, with no abstentions, the House justice committee on Wednesday declared the fourth impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte sufficient in substance, bringing to two the number of complaints that have passed the sufficiency tests. Only Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay voted against the fourth impeachment complaint filed by

- Palace chides Suntay for downplaying Duterte's death threats vs Marcos (2026-03-04 14:19)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Wednesday chided Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay for claiming that Vice President Sara Duterte's remarks that she had hired a hitman to kill President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos and former Speaker Martin Romualdez were not actual threats. In a briefing on Palace press officer Claire Castro said any

- Dad believes Cavite hazing victim 'intimidated' into joining frat (2026-03-04 14:15)

MANILA, Philippines — The father of 19-year-old maritime student Kenneth Alcedo believes his son was "intimidated" into joining a fraternity, whose supposed initiation rites allegedly killed him. In a phone interview with reporters on Wednesday, Kenneth's father, Jun, remembered his son as a "playful but affectionate" person with many friends. According to Jun, he had

- Abante to Sara Duterte's defenders: She can't have split personality (2026-03-04 13:56)

MANILA, Philippines — Manila Rep. Bienvenido Abante Jr. reminded fellow lawmakers defending Vice President Sara Duterte that she cannot have a split personality, after it was raised that her role as vice president is different from her role as education secretary. During the House of Representatives justice committee hearing on Wednesday, Abante called Cagayan de Oro

- Luistro on Suntay's remarks: Justice panel is 'not a forum' for fantasy (2026-03-04 13:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The House justice committee is "not a forum for fantasy," its chair, Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro, said on Wednesday following the remarks of one of its members, Quezon City 4th District Rep. Jesus "Bong" Suntay, about actress Anne Curtis. "Threats from high office are never just imagination. They carry weight.

- P10.3-million marijuana plants uprooted in Sulu (2026-03-04 13:43)

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Authorities have destroyed two plantations and uprooted P10.3 million worth of marijuana plants in an inter-agency law enforcement operation in the province of Sulu, officials said Wednesday. Brig. Gen. Alaric Avelino Delos Santos, commander of the Army's 1102nd Infantry Brigade (1102Bde), said the two marijuana plantations were destroyed on Tuesday in Barangay Masjid

• Ejercito: Senate ethics panel to start vetting 6 senators March 18 (2026-03-04 13:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate panel on ethics and privileges will begin vetting the pending ethics complaints against six incumbent senators on March 18 according to Sen. JV Ejercito, saying they cannot act on it now. Panel head Ejercito, in a press conference, said they adopted the rules of the committee during early Wednesday’s executive

• BFP chief under fire as DILG set to file graft, corruption charges (2026-03-04 13:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla said on Wednesday that he would file corruption charges against the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) chief, Director Jesus Fernandez, before the Office of the Ombudsman on Thursday, vowing to end the P15-billion-per-year corruption network inside the bureau. “The big issue is the BFP. Tomorrow, I will file

• Palace: Marcos may study 4-day work week proposal to save energy (2026-03-04 13:22)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. may consider studying a proposal to adopt a four-day workweek as part of the government’s efforts to save energy as conflict in the Middle East intensifies, according to Malacañang. In a briefing on Wednesday, Palace press officer Claire Castro said the President could look into the suggestion, especially if

• CHED asks House panel for new funding source if travel tax is abolished (2026-03-04 13:20)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has urged the House committee on ways and means to identify a substitute funding source should the travel tax be abolished, warning that the sector could be “left behind” without adequate support. During a hearing on Wednesday, CHED Chairperson Shirley Agrupis emphasized that the Higher Education

• Solon argues: Sara Duterte as VP different from her as DepEd chief (2026-03-04 13:13)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives’ committee on justice supposedly has no jurisdiction over the violations thrown at Vice President Sara Duterte in her capacity as Education secretary because these are two different personas, Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez said. Rodriguez on Wednesday reiterated the arguments he raised when the committee discussed on Tuesday

• Dy vows to uphold dignity, safety, equal voice of women in Congress (2026-03-04 12:46)

MANILA, Philippines — House of Representatives Speaker Faustino “Bojie” Dy III on Wednesday reaffirmed the chamber’s commitment to uphold the dignity, safety and equal voice of women, as the country marks Women’s Month. “As we observe Women’s Month, we reaffirm our commitment to uphold the dignity, safety, and equal voice of women in every space,

• Suntay’s lewd remarks about Anne Curtis ‘offensive for all women’ – Castro (2026-03-04 12:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Palace press officer Claire Castro slammed on Wednesday the lewd remarks made by Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay about actress Anne Curtis during the hearing of impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. “I was offended on behalf of all women, especially when it is even being touted as an honor for a

- 8 more suspects, 12 persons of interest eyed in Cavite hazing death (2026-03-04 12:07)

MANILA, Philippines — Eight more suspects and 12 other persons of interest are being investigated over the death of maritime student Kenneth Alcedo in a supposed case of hazing, the Cavite Provincial Police Office said on Wednesday. In a press briefing in Camp Crame, Cavite police chief Col. Ariel Red detailed that one of the

- Hontiveros: No excuse for Suntay’s ‘repulsive’ remarks (2026-03-04 12:06)

MANILA, Philippines – There is no excuse for Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay’s “repulsive remarks,” according to known women’s right advocate Sen. Risa Hontiveros. “Rep. Bong Suntay must apologize and make the necessary amends to Ms. Anne Curtis. There is absolutely no excuse for his repulsive remarks,” Hontiveros said in a statement on Wednesday. “What’s

- Group asks Marcos to save sugar industry, revamp Sugar board (2026-03-04 11:52)

BACOLOD CITY–The National Congress of Unions in the Sugar Industry of the Philippines (Nacusip) is asking President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to take immediate action to save the sugar industry from what it described as a “death sentence” caused by collapsing prices and market manipulation. READ: More groups press Marcos to act on ‘sugar crisis’ Roland C. de

- BOC pursues charges vs staff over illegal agri importation (2026-03-04 11:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) is pursuing charges against some of its own personnel over their alleged involvement in the illegal importation of agricultural products, the agency said on Wednesday. According to the BOC, the six cases it recently endorsed to the Department of Finance (DOF) against three consignees include BOC personnel

- PCO signs MOU with print media publishers to combat fake news (2026-03-04 11:38)

MANILA, Philippines — The Presidential Communications Office (PCO) and print media publishers on Wednesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the “Oplan Kontra Fake News,” an initiative that aims to uphold transparency and combat disinformation in the country. PCO Secretary Dave Gomez led the signing at the Kalayaan Hall, Malacañang Complex in Manila. READ:

- Suntay OK with critique as long as it brings attention to argument (2026-03-04 11:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay has accepted his fate — being criticized for his lewd remarks towards actress and television host Anne Curtis — as long as it brings attention to the arguments he raised at the impeachment hearing. In an ambush interview on Wednesday, Suntay lamented that all the questions he had

- Sara Duterte files perjury complaint vs alleged bagman Ramil Madriaga (2026-03-04 11:24)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday filed a perjury complaint against Ramil Madriaga, her alleged former aide, at the Office of the City Prosecutor of Taguig. Duterte claimed that Madriaga is being used in the same way as witnesses in the International Criminal Court case against former President Rodrigo Duterte, calling it

- Cut pork imports to protect local producers – hog raisers (2026-03-04 11:03)

MANILA, Philippines — The Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (Sinag) called on government agencies to reduce pork imports to encourage hog raisers to rebuild domestic production. Its chairman, Rosendo So, said cutting import volumes would create an economic incentive for local farmers to replenish their swine herds and eventually increase supply in the domestic market. So

- 3rd impeach raps vs Sara Duterte declared sufficient in substance (2026-03-04 10:14)

MANILA, Philippines —The third impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte has been declared sufficient in substance by the House of Representatives' committee on justice, setting the stage for the next step in the proceedings. After the committee ended its discussions on the fourth impeachment complaint after Wednesday's hearing, chairperson and Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro allowed

- Suspect in alleged hazing of Cavite maritime student who died surrenders (2026-03-04 10:04)

MANILA, Philippines — A suspect surrendered in the alleged hazing that killed a maritime student in Cavite, General Trias City Mayor Jon-jon Ferrer confirmed. "Based on the initial statement, the suspect admitted he was one of those who hurt the victim and he was also the one who volunteered to bring him to the hospital,"

- Iloilo transport operators to seek fare hike as oil prices spike (2026-03-04 10:03)

ILOILO CITY — The recent increase in petroleum product prices is taking a heavy toll on city passenger transport operators, with the Western Visayas Transport Cooperative among those feeling the impact. READ: LTFRB eyes provisional fare increase if MidEast crisis worsens According to Boyet Parcon, chairman of the cooperative, rising diesel costs — which transport groups fear

- Suntay sorry for Anne Curtis risqué comment but insists no malice (2026-03-04 09:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay apologized for his lewd remarks about actress Anne Curtis but stood by the analogy he made during a hearing on impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte, insisting it carried no malice. Suntay issued his apology after several lawmakers — and even the actress's sister, Jasmine Curtis-Smith

- Quezon governor orders fuel-saving measures amid oil concerns (2026-03-04 09:43)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon – Quezon Gov. Angelina Tan has directed all provincial government offices to implement fuel conservation measures as a preemptive response to possible global supply disruptions amid tensions in the Middle East. READ: Marcos: Gov’t offices to cut fuel use by at least 10% Under Executive Order No. DHT-08 issued on Tuesday, Tan

- House panel tackles 4th Duterte impeach rap, to vote on substance (2026-03-04 09:42)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives’ committee on justice has started tackling the fourth impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte, as the panel continues discussions to determine if the two remaining raps are sufficient in substance. The fourth impeachment complaint, filed by lawyer Nathaniel Cabrera and endorsed by Deputy Speaker Paolo Ortega V and Manila

- Belmonte urges QC Rep. Suntay to apologize for ‘inappropriate’ remarks (2026-03-04 09:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte has urged 4th District Rep. Jesus Manuel “Bong” Suntay to apologize for remarks that were made during a recent House committee hearing, which she described as “inappropriate.” Belmonte highlighted how the congressman’s comments amounted to the objectification of women and clashed with the city’s policies, calling on

- No security threat amid ‘unauthorized’ class, work suspension post – PNP (2026-03-04 09:36)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) sees no verified security threat to the country amid a post circulating online claiming that work and classes were supposedly suspended nationwide from March 4 to 6 over an alleged threat. In a statement on Wednesday, the PNP said the social media post “has no official basis

- Grenade blast injures 1 at construction site in Lamitan, Basilan (2026-03-04 09:25)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur — A grenade explosion shattered the glass wall of a newly constructed building of a fast food chain in Barangay Malakas, Lamitan City in Basilan on Tuesday night, injuring a laborer and prompting police to launch a citywide dragnet operation. Lt. Col. Elmer Solon, Lamitan City police chief, said they

- WATCH: House deliberates on the sufficiency in substance of VP Sara impeachment complaints | March 4 (2026-03-04 08:51)

The House Committee on Justice resumes its deliberations on Wednesday, March 4, on the sufficiency in substance of the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. READ: What to expect: VP Sara Duterte’s impeachment proceedings READ: House panel declares impeachment raps vs Sara Duterte sufficient in form

- Mayon Volcano sends lava bursts as eruption enters 57th day (2026-03-04 08:44)

MANILA, Philippines — Mayon Volcano in the province of Albay was seen producing small bursts of lava and flowing molten rock along its slopes amid 57 consecutive days of eruption, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said. According to the state volcanology bureau, the eruptions on Tuesday evening were small and short-lived, a

- Easterlies, amihan prevail on Wednesday (March 4) (2026-03-04 07:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The easterlies are prevailing over most parts of the country on Wednesday while the northeast monsoon, or amihan, continues to affect the extreme northern part of Luzon, the state weather bureau said. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), the easterlies will bring warm and humid weather with

- Laoag village transforms idle lots into agro-tourism flower farm (2026-03-04 07:14)

LAOAG CITY — A rice farming village in this city is slowly developing idle lots into a vibrant agro-tourism flower farm to attract more visitors and generate income, local officials announced Tuesday. Barangay 30 Suyo launched its agro-tourism flower farm near the village hall, developed by village officials and volunteers. Edmar Tagama, village councilor and president

- Marcos seeks emergency powers to cut fuel tax (2026-03-04 05:55)

President Marcos is seeking emergency powers from Congress to allow him to reduce the excise tax on petroleum products once prices of oil and gas imports soar as a result of the escalating conflict in the Middle East. At a Palace briefing on Tuesday, the President said he was in talks with leaders of the

- LTFRB eyes provisional fare increase if MidEast crisis worsens (2026-03-04 05:50)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) is studying a provisional fare increase for all public transport services amid the expected rise in fuel prices due to the worsening conflict in the Middle East. “Across the board, if necessary,” LTFRB Chair Vigor Mendoza II told reporters following a public consultation on Tuesday. The potential

- Sara Duterte’s videos replayed as impeach raps tackled (2026-03-04 05:40)

Two videos involving Vice President Sara Duterte were replayed at Tuesday’s hearing by the House committee on justice, as it tackled the two remaining impeachment complaints against her. From an initial four complaints, the committee is now determining the substance of two complaints—one filed on Feb. 9 by civil society groups and a Feb. 18

- 2 dead, 3 hurt as chopper crashes in Pililla, Rizal (2026-03-04 05:25)

Aviation officials said an investigation was underway after two persons were killed while three others, including a pilot, were hurt when their helicopter crashed while making an emergency landing in Pililla town, Rizal, on Tuesday morning. “Unfortunately, one of them was dead on

site. The other was declared dead on arrival at the hospital," Pililla

- Sandiganbayan bars Yaps from leaving PH (2026-03-04 05:15)

The Sandiganbayan on Wednesday issued a precautionary hold departure order (HDO) against Benguet Rep. Eric Yap and his brother, former ACT-CIS party list Rep. Edvic Yap, in connection with a complaint stemming from two allegedly anomalous projects in Bauang town, La Union. Eric Yap was named "beneficial owner" of Silverwolves Construction Corp., contractor of the

- 'Love Bus' coming to QC, Pasig: 10 units to serve Robinsons Galleria-Eastwood loop (2026-03-04 05:10)

Commuters get to ride for free on the "Love Bus" when 10 units of the electric vehicles start regularly plying selected routes in Quezon City and Pasig City, from Robinsons Galleria to Eastwood City and vice versa, starting on the last week of April or the first week of May. Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA)

- Retired cop, companion killed in Maguindanao del Sur ambush (2026-03-04 04:47)

COTABATO CITY – Gunmen ambushed and killed on Tuesday, March 3, a retired police officer and his companion in Datu Montawal, Maguindanao del Sur. Captain Nurjhasier Sali, police chief of Datu Montawal, identified the victims as Elias Dandan, former police chief of Pikit, Cotabato, and Raymund Bioy, both residents of Barangay Kalawag, Pikit, Cotabato. Sali

- Senate sets 56-month term for first elected BARMM execs (2026-03-04 04:40)

COTABATO CITY—The Senate version of the measure resetting the parliamentary elections in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) grants the first elected members of parliament (MPs) a term of 56 months, or four months short of five years. This provision is contained in Senate Bill No. 1823, which was approved on third and

- DPWH to complete shortened rockshed on Kennon Road (2026-03-04 04:35)

BAGUIO CITY—The first rockshed built along the century-old Kennon Road will finally be completed as originally designed after it was damaged by heavy landslides in 2025 and left unrepaired for six months despite being reopened to motorists. Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon on Sunday directed the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to source

- Save Surigao forests for eagles, conservationists ask locals (2026-03-04 04:30)

GIGAQUIT, SURIGAO DEL NORTE—Conservationists and local leaders have joined forces to call for the protection of the forests of this frontier town and other areas in Surigao del Norte province to secure nesting sites for the critically endangered Philippine eagle, the country's national bird. On Monday, in celebration of World Wildlife Day 2026, the Philippine

- Price freeze on basic goods urged if MidEast conflict drags on (2026-03-04 00:49)

MANILA, Philippines — The government must explore the possibility of implementing a price freeze on basic goods and commodities should the Middle East conflict between the United States and Iran continue, Agimat party-list Rep. Bryan Revilla said. Revilla, in a statement on Tuesday said that while hopes tensions would deescalate, the government — especially key agencies

- Substitute anti-dynasty bill not perfect, but a good start, says 2 solons (2026-03-04 00:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Two ranking House of Representatives members have reminded their colleagues that while the approved anti-political dynasty substitute bill is not perfect, it is still a good start and is better than having no enforceable law in the next elections. In a press briefing on Tuesday, both Bukidnon Rep. Jonathan Keith Flores and Lanao

- House bill seeks powers for President to suspend fuel excise tax (2026-03-03 22:20)

MANILA, Philippines — A bill that seeks to give the President powers to suspend the excise tax on petroleum products when warranted — like during the current conflict in the Middle East —was filed by Marikina Rep. Miro Quimbo on Tuesday. Quimbo, in a statement, said that he supports calls to suspend excise taxes on fuel

- PCSO: No jackpot winners in 3 major lotto draws on March 3 (2026-03-03 22:07)

MANILA, Philippines—No bettor won the jackpot prizes in the major Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) lotto games on Tuesday, March 3. According to PCSO, the Ultra Lotto 6/58 draw yielded the combination 30-40-01-24-04-21 with a jackpot of ₱75 million. The Super Lotto 6/49 draw produced the numbers 02-44-13-29-08-41 with a jackpot of ₱83.67 million. Meantime,

- Loren Legarda underscores women’s leadership as Women’s Month opens (2026-03-03 21:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Loren Legarda opened the celebration of National Women’s Month 2026 by honoring the indispensable role of women in building a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable Philippines. She underscored that empowering women is a prerequisite for social transformation and effective governance. Reflecting on this year’s national theme, “WE for Gender Equality and Inclusive

- ‘Muntinlupeño First’: Ruffy Biazon exhorts city during 31st anniversary (2026-03-03 21:09)

MUNTINLUPA CITY — The principle of “Muntinlupeño First” anchored Mayor Ruffy Biazon’s State of the City Address during the celebration of Muntinlupa’s 31st Cityhood Anniversary on March 2, 2026. For the mayor, the phrase is not rhetoric but a governing standard — a discipline that requires every decision of government to begin with one question:

- Senate to get articles of impeachment on time, solon vows (2026-03-03 21:08)

MANILA, Philippines — A member of the House justice committee on Tuesday vowed that the panel will transmit to the Senate on time the articles of impeachment of Vice President Sara Duterte. Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon made this remark as Mamamayang Liberal party-list Rep. Leila de Lima, member of the House prosecution panel,

- PCG nabs 5 for illegal fishing in Romblon town (2026-03-03 20:53)

CALAPAN CITY, ORIENTAL MINDORO — The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) apprehended five individuals for alleged illegal fishing using a compressor in the waters off Isabel Island in Banton town, Romblon province on March 2. In a report posted on social media on Tuesday, the PCG said personnel of Coast Guard Sub-Station (CGSS) Banton conducted the

- Suntay told: Sharing imagination of women is objectification (2026-03-03 19:17)

MANILA, Philippines — Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay should apologize for sharing his "imagination" about actress and television host Anne Curtis, as doing so amounts to the objectification of women, Gabriela party-list Rep. Sarah Elago said Tuesday. In a statement, Elago said Suntay's remarks are unacceptable and disrespectful to women, adding that there should be no

- Odette Khan's plight reaches Senate: It is about compassion (2026-03-03 19:05)

MANILA, Philippines — The call for help from the family of veteran actress Odette Khan has reached the halls of the Senate, as Sen. Erwin Tulfo called for compassion for patients who are struggling to pay hospital bills like hers. Tulfo raised the plight of 80-year-old Khan in a privilege speech at the Senate on Tuesday.

- Lawmakers withdraw support for 'weak,' watered-down anti-dynasty bill (2026-03-03 18:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Several lawmakers from the Minority have withdrawn support for the anti-political dynasty bill approved by a House of Representatives panel, as it was supposedly "watered down" and may even worsen the status quo. Caloocan Rep. Edgar Erice on Tuesday withdrew his House Bill (HB) No. 2037 as the House of Representatives' committee on

- Teacher killed in Ormoc road mishap (2026-03-03 18:35)

TACLOBAN CITY — A public school teacher was killed Tuesday morning, March 3, when a truck allegedly lost control and struck the motorcycle she was riding in Ormoc City, Leyte. The crash occurred at 7:10 a.m. near the Leyte V Electric Cooperative office in Barangay San Pablo, according to local police and eyewitnesses. The teacher

- Second missing teen found dead off Calico-an Island in Eastern Samar (2026-03-03 18:33)

TACLOBAN CITY — Rescuers recovered the body of the second missing teenager, Kyle Baguinon, Monday afternoon, March 2, along the coastline of Calico-an Island in Guiuan, Eastern Samar, days after he and another minor were swept away by powerful waves. The 1:48 p.m. recovery at

Sungi Point in Barangay Sulangan was later confirmed by his

- Preliminary probe in Revilla plunder case hits home stretch (2026-03-03 18:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Government prosecutors on Tuesday established a firm timeline for the ongoing preliminary investigation into the plunder case involving former senator Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., after the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) added additional respondents based on newly discovered evidence. During Tuesday's preliminary investigation, Department of Justice (DOJ) spokesperson Atty. Polo Martinez said

- Solons put holes in Suntay's 'hyperbole' defense of Duterte's threat (2026-03-03 18:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Several lawmakers countered Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay's defense that Vice President Sara Duterte's threats against ranking officials was mere hyperbole — with one saying that threats led to her husband's death. During Tuesday's hearing of the House of Representatives' committee on justice, the third impeachment complaint against Duterte was being discussed, particularly

- Former DOH chief Alfredo Bengzon, 91 (2026-03-03 18:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Health Secretary and Ramon Magsaysay Awardee Dr. Alfredo Bengzon passed away on Tuesday at the age of 91. "It is with profound sadness that we share the passing of Dr. Alfredo Rafael Antonio Bengzon, a distinguished physician, educator, public servant, and visionary leader who helped shape healthcare and public policy in

- First Sandiganbayan trial on flood control case begins (2026-03-03 17:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan held its first trial on a flood control-related case on Tuesday. The 6th Division tried the P289.5 million malversation case against Sunwest Corporation, which also named former Ako Bicol Rep. Zaldy Co as one of the respondents. The case arose from the inspection of Sunwest's P289,498,230.06 project, which was found

- NBI arrests woman for allegedly embezzling P5.28M in Muntinlupa (2026-03-03 17:52)

MANILA, Philippines – The National Bureau of Investigation–National Capital Region (NBI-NCR) arrested a Muntinlupa City resident on February 25 for allegedly embezzling over P5.28 million from her company through 176 unauthorized online transactions. In a statement on Tuesday, the NBI said the individual was arrested for 176 counts of qualified theft under Section 6 of

- Senate bill protecting persons with autism passes 2nd reading (2026-03-03 17:48)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate approved on second reading a bill aimed at protecting the rights of persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Under Committee Report No. 28, Senate Bill No. 1822, or the "National Autism Care, Support, and Inclusion Act," was approved during the plenary session on Tuesday. The bill was submitted jointly by

- Marcos: Gov’t offices to cut fuel use by at least 10% (2026-03-03 17:38)

MANILA, Philippines — On orders of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the Inter-Agency Energy Efficiency and Conservation Committee (IAEECC) urged government offices to strictly implement energy-saving measures amid ongoing tensions in the Middle East. Signed by IAEECC chair and Energy Secretary Sharon Garin, the advisory directs all national government agencies, government-owned or controlled corporations, state universities and

- Hold departure order issued vs Eric, Edvic Yap over flood control mess (2026-03-03 17:06)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan has granted the request by state prosecutors to issue a precautionary hold departure order (HDO) against Benguet Rep. Eric Yap and his brother, former ACT-CIS party-list Rep. Edvic Yap, over the alleged anomalous infrastructure projects in La Union handled by a construction company linked to them. Assistant Ombudsman Mico Clavano

- Pagasa: El Niño may develop August to October, intense habagat looms (2026-03-03 17:01)

[Updated March 3, 2026, 7:32 p.m.] MANILA, Philippines — The El Niño phenomenon may start developing by August to October this year, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa). In an interview with the INQUIRER, Pagasa Climate Monitoring and Prediction Section Chief Ana Liza Solis said that since they started monitoring the potential development

- BFP: Incident response now at 3 to 4.5 minutes with revamped 911 system (2026-03-03 16:51)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) on Tuesday said that its fire incident response was between three and 4.5 minutes with the newly revamped 911 emergency call system. The newly revamped 911 system was relaunched last September in a bid to streamline local governments’ emergency hotlines as well as requests for firefighter,

- De Lima named as new House senior deputy minority leader (2026-03-03 16:47)

MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal party-list Rep. Leila De Lima was named the new House senior deputy minority leader, replacing Caloocan City Rep. Edgar Erice. House Minority Leader Marcelino Libanan moved to replace Erice and nominate De Lima during the regular House session on Tuesday. READ: Leila De Lima ‘reveals’ contents of ‘maleta’ in viral

- DepEd advances teacher career progression with 5,335 promotions (2026-03-03 16:20)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Education (DepEd) has received the approval of 5,335 teacher reclassification applications processed under previous guidelines during the transition phase of the Expanded Career Progression (ECP) implementation. It marked another major milestone in strengthening career advancement opportunities for public school teachers nationwide. The clearing of the reclassification applications processed under

- Gatchalian: PH may face P300B shortfall if excise taxes cut for a year (2026-03-03 16:05)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine government could face a revenue shortfall of around P300 billion if excise taxes are cut for one year, according to Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian. Gatchalian, head of the Senate finance panel, explained that there used to be a threshold for suspending excise taxes, but it expired in 2020. “Right now, there

- Sara Duterte to supporters: Refrain from motorcades amid fuel hike (2026-03-03 16:03)

MANILA, Philippines – In the wake of rising fuel prices due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, Vice President Sara Duterte on Tuesday appealed to her supporters to reconsider organizing motorcades or vehicle caravans in support of her father, former President Rodrigo Duterte, and in protest against the Marcos administration. Not only that. According to Duterte,

- DOTr to plant 690,000 trees in Pampanga, Cavite watersheds (2026-03-03 16:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Transportation (DOTr) will plant 690,000 trees in selected watersheds of Pampanga and Cavite starting in July 2026 to mitigate the environmental impact of cutting trees during the construction of the North-South Commuter Railway (NSCR) project. In a statement on Tuesday, the DOTr said that this is their fulfillment of

- Bojie Dy lauds panel approval of second-degree political dynasty ban (2026-03-03 16:00)

MANILA, Philippines — House Speaker Faustino “Bojie” G. Dy III on Tuesday hailed the approval by the House Committee on Suffrage and Electoral Reforms of the consolidated Anti-Political Dynasty bill anchored on a second-degree prohibition. He called it a decisive step toward enforcing a long-standing constitutional mandate. The committee action moves the measure one step

- Suntay hit for risqué remarks about Anne Curtis at impeachment hearing (2026-03-03 15:56)

MANILA, Philippines — Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay was called out on Tuesday by several of his colleagues for his lewd remarks about actress Anne Curtis, as he tried to establish a point during the hearing of impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. During the House committee on justice hearing, Suntay was criticizing the third

- Peasants, workers protest new fuel price hike (2026-03-03 15:18)

MANILA, Philippines—Rural groups led by peasant group Anakpawis staged a protest at a gasoline station in Quezon City on Tuesday, March 3, as fuel prices rose for the ninth straight week, accusing oil firms of using the escalating Middle East conflict to justify higher pump prices. In a statement, the group warned that oil companies

- Cops identify suspect in Cavite hazing death (2026-03-03 15:07)

LUCENA CITY – Police have identified one of the suspects in the death of a 19-year-old college student who is suspected to have succumbed to injuries sustained during hazing rites in Cavite

on Sunday. READ: Cops probe suspected hazing death in Cavite In a report on Tuesday, Cavitepolice named the driver of the Mitsubishi

- Sara Duterte’s threats, bribery allegations replayed at House hearing (2026-03-03 15:05)

MANILA, Philippines — Two videos involving Vice President Sara Duterte were replayed at the House of Representatives’ justice committee hearing to show that the allegations in the third impeachment complaint against her are sufficient in substance. At the panel’s hearing on Tuesday, endorser and Mamamayang Liberal party-list Rep. Leila De Lima said allegations that Duterte contracted

- Napolcom chief files another case vs vlogger Francis Leo Marcos (2026-03-03 15:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Vlogger Norman Mangusin, commonly known as Francis Leo Marcos, is facing another criminal case after National Police Commission (Napolcom) Commissioner Rafael Calinisan filed a complaint against him on Tuesday. In a phone interview with reporters, Calinisan detailed that he sued Mangusin before the Quezon City Prosecutor’s Office for unjust vexation and cyberlibel

- No major damage reported after 4.8-magnitude quake jolts Iloilo (2026-03-03 14:41)

ILOILO CITY — Authorities reported no major injuries or significant structural damage in Iloilo City following the magnitude 4.8 earthquake that struck 5 kilometers west of Guimbal, Iloilo at 6:13 p.m. on Monday, according to the Iloilo City Emergency Operations Center (EOC). READ: Magnitude 4.8 earthquake hits Iloilo – Phivolcs In its Situational Report No.

- Most senators back Marcos’ fuel tax cut push amid tension in Middle East (2026-03-03 14:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Several senators have now signified their intent to give way to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s appeal for emergency legislation that would allow him to reduce excise taxes on petroleum products amid the ongoing crisis in the Middle East. Committee on Foreign Relations chairperson Sen. Erwin Tulfo, Senate President Pro Tempore Panfio Lacson,

- P2P service providers seek up to 40% fare hike to sustain operations (2026-03-03 13:59)

MANILA, Philippines — A group of point-to-point (P2P) transport service providers are seeking a 30 to 40-percent increase in their fares before the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), citing the rising costs to sustain their operations. The P2P Alliance met with the LTFRB at a public consultation at the latter’s office in Quezon

- 125 Iloilo schools shift to alternative learning mode after quake (2026-03-03 13:55)

ILOILO CITY – The Department of Education Western Visayas (DepEd-6) reported that 125 schools in Iloilo have shifted to the Alternative Delivery Mode (ADM) following the magnitude 4.8 earthquake on Monday evening, allowing authorities to conduct structural safety assessments of school buildings. READ: Magnitude 4.8 earthquake hits Iloilo – Phivolcs As of 8

a.m. Tuesday, the

- Duterte’s secret fund use, even if for safe houses, questionable – Ridon (2026-03-03 13:42)

MANILA, Philippines — Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon has reminded his colleagues that Vice President Sara Duterte’s confidential fund (CF) expenditures, even if they were supposedly used for accepted purposes, remain questionable. At Tuesday’s hearing of the House of Representatives committee on justice, Ridon said there is basis to declare the first ground of the

- LTFRB eyes fare hike amid oil price surge over Middle East conflict (2026-03-03 13:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said Tuesday that it is considering provisional fare increases amid escalating tensions in the Middle East. This came a day after Seaoil, Jetti Petroleum, Caltex, and Petron’s advisories that diesel and kerosene prices would go up by P1.20 and P1.50 a liter, marking the

- MMDA revives ‘Love Bus’ with free rides Robinsons to Eastwood (2026-03-03 12:44)

MANILA, Philippines — The iconic “Love Bus,” which offers free rides, will be launched on routes from Robinsons Galleria to Eastwood City in the last week of April or the first week of May this year. Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) chair Don Artes announced this on Tuesday as he led the signing of the

- Batangas power coop quizzed about inaction on Meralco JVA proposal (2026-03-03 12:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Senior Citizens Party-List Rep. Rodolfo Ordanes called out on Tuesday the Batangas II Electric Cooperative (Batelec II) for its allegedly delayed action on the joint venture agreement (JVA) proposal submitted by the Manila Electric Company (Meralco), as the partnership could have addressed the issue of power shortages. In a statement, Ordanes said that

- Marcos seeks ‘emergency power’ to cut excise tax on petroleum products (2026-03-03 12:00)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is asking for emergency legislation from Congress that would allow him to reduce the excise tax on petroleum products such as oil and gas. The action comes as the prices of these commodities are expected to soar amid the escalating conflict in the Middle East. In a surprise briefing

- Luistro: ‘Premonition’ can’t be used in scrutinizing impeach raps (2026-03-03 11:17)

MANILA, Philippines — Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro has reminded her colleagues that “premonitions” cannot be used in scrutinizing the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte, as they have to discuss the merits of the case by checking every ground raised. In her opening speech at Tuesday’s hearing of the House of Representatives’

committee on justice,

- 2 dead, 3 hurt in Rizal chopper crash – mayor (2026-03-03 10:29)

MANILA, Philippines — Two individuals were killed and three were injured after the helicopter they were riding in crashed near a residential area in Pililla, Rizal on Tuesday morning, the town mayor said. “Unfortunately, one of them was dead on site… The other was dead on arrival at the hospital,” Pililla Mayor John Masinsin told

- Day 2 of Sara Duterte impeachment hearings on; substance to be tackled (2026-03-03 09:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The second day of hearings on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte started on Tuesday, with the House of Representatives’ committee on justice discussing the sufficiency in substance of the two remaining complaints. As both the third and fourth complaints were declared sufficient in form durign the hearing on Monday, the

- WATCH: House resumes deliberations on impeachment cases vs. VP Sara Duterte | March 3 (2026-03-03 09:42)

The House Committee on Justice resumes its deliberations Tuesday, March 3, on the impeachment cases against Vice President Sara Duterte. READ: What to expect: VP Sara Duterte’s impeachment proceedings READ: House panel declares impeachment raps vs Sara Duterte sufficient in form

- Cool ‘amihan’ resurges in extreme northern part of Luzon (2026-03-03 07:33)

MANILA, Philippines — The northeast monsoon, locally known as amihan, has returned and is expected to bring light rains to two areas in extreme northern portion of Luzon on Tuesday, the state weather bureau reported. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), the amihan will bring partly cloudy to cloudy skies

- 2 impeach raps vs VP remain; panel says ‘form’ OK (2026-03-03 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The remaining two of the four initial impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte hurdled their first test on Monday, when the committee on justice of the House of Representatives unanimously declared them sufficient in form. The committee also on Monday “set aside” the first impeachment complaint, which the Makabayan bloc filed

- SC urged to order release of Senate report on flood probe (2026-03-03 05:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Three lawyers on Monday filed a petition before the Supreme Court (SC) to order the Senate blue ribbon committee to release the draft of its original report on the investigation into flood control anomalies. Eldrige Marvin Aceron represented his fellow lawyers Sikini Labastilla and Purificacion Bartolome-Bernabe in filing the petition for mandamus

- DOJ summons Villars over SEC complaint (2026-03-03 05:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Justice (DOJ) has issued subpoenas to members of the Villar family over the criminal complaint filed by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) against their company, Villar Land Holdings Corp., for alleged market manipulation, insider trading and misleading disclosures that distorted share prices. The SEC complaint filed on Jan.

- PNP: No continuing killings under Marcos administration (2026-03-03 05:05)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. on Monday refuted the statement of Nicholas Kaufman, former President Rodrigo Duterte’s counsel at the International Criminal Court (ICC), that killings have continued under the Marcos administration. Kaufman made the claim on the third day of Duterte’s confirmation of charges hearing before the

- Still no sign of Atong Ang after cops search 20 places (2026-03-03 04:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Gambling tycoon Atong Ang remains at large despite multiple raids on at least 20 places where he is believed to be hiding since January, Philippine National Police chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said on Monday. Ang is facing multiple arrest warrants over several counts of kidnapping filed against him in courts

- Mindoro folk still await compensation 3 years after oil spill (2026-03-03 04:45)

CALAPAN CITY, ORIENTAL MINDORO, Philippines — For communities along the Verde Island Passage (VIP), the memory of the 2023 oil spill that swept through coastal areas remains painfully fresh. On Feb. 28, exactly three years after the tragedy, residents, fisherfolk and advocates gathered in Pola, Oriental Mindoro—one of the hardest-hit towns—to call for compensation, environmental

- Crown-of-thorns starfish cleared from Leyte reefs (2026-03-03 04:40)

TACLOBAN CITY, LEYTE, Philippines — To prevent further damage to coral reefs in Southern Leyte, personnel of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) joined local divers in removing some 1,300 crown-of-thorns (COT) starfish from the waters off Barangay Himay-angan in Liloan town. The large-scale injection and extraction activity is part of the PCG’s iCare Program, a

- Kapampangan dictionary is country’s ‘thickest book’ (2026-03-03 04:35)

ANGELES CITY, PAMPANGA, Philippines — With a staggering 2,852 pages and some 8,500 entries, the newly released “Capampangan Words with Chinese Roots” by Papa Osmubal (real name: Oscar Muñoz Balajadia) is not only a record-setter in the Philippine publishing industry but also a strong testament to the long-standing ties between the Kapampangan language and Chinese

- Highway closed after retaining wall collapse in Zamboanga (2026-03-03 04:30)

PAGADIAN CITY, ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR, Philippines — A retaining wall along the Bogayo–Gatub section of the Maharlika Highway in Kumalarang town collapsed on Sunday morning, rendering the road impassable. The Kumalarang local government unit (LGU) said no motorists or civilians were injured. READ: DPWH rushes new segment of Bukidnon-Davao road The highway had been under

- San Juan Mayor Francis Zamora formalizes institutional tie-up with UP (2026-03-02 23:06)

MANILA, Philippines — San Juan City Mayor Francis Zamora, in his capacity as President of the Metro Manila Council (MMC) and National President of the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP), met with key officials of University of the Philippines (UP) on February 27, 2026 to formalize and expand institutional cooperation on transport management,

- Manila Water conducts readiness check of 3,300 fire hydrants in its area (2026-03-02 22:20)

MANILA, Philippines — As it ushers in Fire Prevention Month, Manila Water has reinforced its fire preparedness and emergency response program with the maintenance and readiness check of more than 3,300 operable fire hydrants across its East Zone concession. As of December 2025, the company manages 3,300 hydrants within its service area. The network includes

- MegaLotto 6/45 bettor wins ₱17.98M on March 2 (2026-03-02 22:04)

MANILA, Philippines—A bettor won the jackpot prize in the MegaLotto 6/45 draw on Monday, March 2. According to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), the winning combination for MegaLotto 6/45 was 12-25-45-40-33-27, worth ₱17.98 million. One ticket holder won the jackpot. In the Grand Lotto 6/55 draw, no bettor won the ₱45 million jackpot. The

- Solon: Bringing down impeachment raps to 2 won’t weaken case (2026-03-02 21:58)

MANILA, Philippines — Bringing down the number of impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte from four to two will not weaken the case, San Juan Rep. Ysabel Maria Zamora said on Monday. In a press briefing after the first day of hearing on Duterte’s impeachment complaints, Zamora said that there would be no effect on

- DOTr, LTFRB: Fuel subsidy being prepared as oil price hikes loom (2026-03-02 21:44)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Transportation (DOTr) on Monday said it has already begun preparing for the release of fuel subsidies for public utility vehicle operators and drivers amid rising oil prices fueled by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. According to the DOTr in a statement, the department together with the Land

- Guimaras jolted by two quakes following Iloilo tremor (2026-03-02 21:09)

ILOILO CITY— Two earthquakes struck parts of Guimaras on Monday evening, minutes after a stronger tremor was recorded off Guimbal, Iloilo, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs). In separate bulletins, Phivolcs reported that a

magnitude 2.1 earthquake occurred at 6:34 p.m., located 13 kilometers south 70 degrees west of Nueva Valencia,

- DILG: Violence against women public crime; settlement won’t halt case (2026-03-02 20:52)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) emphasized that violations under the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act (RA 9262) are public crimes, adding that settlements do not automatically halt legal action. At a recent DILG Kapihan on February 27, the PCW

- LTFRB urges public to report erring PUV drivers, operators (2026-03-02 20:44)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Monday launched a commuter service program to encourage public participation in reporting abuses or poor service by drivers and operators of public utility vehicles (PUVs). In a statement, the LTFRB said its newly launched Komyu-Konek program aims to strengthen the agency’s hotlines and

- 181 Capiz cops deployed to secure Asean meetings in Boracay (2026-03-02 20:31)

ROXAS CITY, Capiz — A total of 181 police personnel from the Capiz Police Provincial Office (PPO) have been deployed to support security operations for the Asean Senior Level Committee (SLC) on Financial Integration and Related Meetings, scheduled from March 1 to 7 on Boracay. The Capiz PPO conducted an early morning accounting of augmented

- Muntinlupa, DOTr launch Road Safety Park at 31st cityhood anniversary (2026-03-02 20:21)

MUNTINLUPA CITY — As part of the celebration of its 31st Cityhood Anniversary, the City Government of Muntinlupa, in partnership with the Department of Transportation (DOTr), formally inaugurated and blessed the Muntinlupa Road Safety Park—a purpose-built learning facility designed to instill road discipline among young Muntinlupeños. The 3,140-square-meter Road Safety Park is a dedicated experiential

- Leila De Lima ‘reveals’ contents of ‘maleta’ in viral video (2026-03-02 20:08)

MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal party-list Rep. Leila De Lima on Monday acted out in humor the kickback allegations by “bagmen” with her clutching a “maleta” (suitcase) and a paper bag in a video clip that has since gone viral. De Lima was accused by the supposed 18 former Marines-turned-“bagmen” of receiving wads of cash

- Magnitude 5 earthquake hits Iloilo — Phivolcs (2026-03-02 19:48)

MANILA, Philippines — A magnitude 5 earthquake jolted Iloilo early Monday evening, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said. Phivolcs reported that the earthquake occurred at 6:13 p.m., with its epicenter 6 kilometers northeast of Tigbauan, Iloilo. READ: Minor tremor recorded in Marinduque The earthquake was tectonic in origin, with a

depth of

- Arrapi calls for activation of more AFP reservists amid global conflicts (2026-03-02 19:42)

MANILA, Philippines — Amid global security tensions — including the ongoing wars in the Middle East and rising conflict in the West Philippine Sea — the Association of Reservists and Reservist Administrators of the Philippines, Inc. (Arrapi) is intensifying its call to activate, organize, and fully integrate more AFP reservists to reinforce the country’s territorial defense posture.

- Loren Legarda ties Oplan: Talk Read to national push for literacy reform (2026-03-02 19:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Loren Legarda drew a clear connection between grassroots literacy efforts and her national push for stronger early-grade learning during the Oplan: Talk Read – Pagpupugay sa Tagumpay ng Pagbasa graduation ceremony in Caloocan on February 28. She delivered an inspirational message praising the perseverance of learners, tutors, and educators, while underscoring

- MRT-3 to offer free rides for women on March 8 (2026-03-02 18:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Women can ride for free during specific hours on March 8 on the Metro Rail Transit 3 (MRT-3) in celebration of International Women’s Day, the train line announced on Monday. READ: #HerStory: Women transforming society “In support of the celebration of International Women’s Day on March 8, 2026, DOTr-MRT 3, led by

- QC General Hospital ranks among Newsweek’s top hospitals in PH (2026-03-02 18:51)

MANILA, Philippines — The Quezon City General Hospital (QCGH) has been recognized as one of the country’s top hospitals by the New York City–based weekly news magazine Newsweek. It ranked 24th nationwide and standing out as the only Level III Local Government Unit hospital with 10 fully accredited departments and a fellowship training program included

- Marcoleta seeks audience removal for not-yet-committed rowdy acts (2026-03-02 18:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Several lawmakers expressed confusion over why Sagip party-list Rep. Paolo Henry Marcoleta sought the removal of an audience member during the hearing on Vice President Sara Duterte’s impeachment over an act he had yet to commit. At Monday’s hearing of the House of Representatives’ committee on justice, Marcoleta attempted to raise a point

- Solons call out Suntay over unrelated affidavit in impeachment talks (2026-03-02 18:04)

MANILA, Philippines — Several lawmakers have called out Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay for bringing the affidavit of 18 former Marine officers to the hearings on Vice President Sara Duterte’s impeachment hearings, with several members noting that the matter is unrelated to the discussions. During Monday’s hearing of the House of Representatives’ committee on justice, Suntay

• Sandro Marcos seeks to criminalize road rage after NLEx incident (2026-03-02 17:58)

MANILA, Philippines — House Majority Leader Ferdinand Alexander “Sandro” Marcos III on Monday filed a bill seeking to criminalize road rage. This came days after the reported road rage incident between a “presidential son” and Bulacan Gov. Daniel Fernando at the North Luzon Expressway (NLEx). READ: DILG calls Bulacan gov Fernando over alleged harassment of Marcos’

• Ejercito seeks automatic fuel tax halt amid oil price surge (2026-03-02 17:39)

MANILA, Philippines – With ongoing conflicts in the Middle East involving the United States, Israel, and Iran threatening to push oil prices even higher, Senate Deputy Majority Leader JV Ejercito renewed his call for the immediate passage of his bill mandating the automatic suspension of excise taxes on petroleum products. “It is clear that ordinary Filipinos are

• DA expands P20-rice program to Baguio (2026-03-02 17:26)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) said it has expanded the implementation of its flagship food security initiative, the P20 Benteng Bigas, Meron Na!’ Rice Project, to Baguio City. According to the DA, the project was first rolled out in Baguio during the city’s Panagbenga Festival, benefiting at least 500 households from various

• Isabela bridge now open to light vehicles (2026-03-02 17:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Light vehicles can now cross the Cabagan-Sta. Maria Bridge in Isabela, a year after a segment collapsed due to overloading. Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon on Monday led the reopening of the bridge to motorists and residents. The temporary bridge connector was completed on February 27, following Dizon’s order on January 5

• Impeachment ‘should not be reduced to elections’ – Hontiveros (2026-03-02 16:37)

MANILA, Philippines — An impeachment complaint is a call for accountability and should not be reduced to an election, Sen. Risa Hontiveros told reporters on Monday. Hontiveros, chair of the Senate Committee on Electoral Reforms and People’s Participation, made the remark the same afternoon that the third and fourth impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara

• Traumatized? Chua says first impeach rap set aside to avoid issues (2026-03-02 15:54)

MANILA, Philippines — Manila Rep. Joel Chua clarified that they are not against the complainants who filed the first impeachment case against Vice President Sara Duterte, explaining that setting aside their petition was a prudent step after their unsuccessful bid in the 19th Congress. At Monday’s House Committee on Justice hearing, Chua told Makabayan bloc members

• DOJ subpoenas Villars over SEC’s complaint (2026-03-02 15:44)

[Updated March 2, 2026, 5:16 p.m.] MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Justice (DOJ) confirmed on Monday that it has already subpoenaed the Villars in connection with the complaint filed by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) against Villar Land Holdings Corp. The complaint involves alleged market manipulation, insider trading, and misleading disclosures that affected the

- Weeklong ‘Session Road in Bloom’ caps off 30th Panagbenga Festival (2026-03-02 15:43)

BAGUIO CITY— In a fitting finale to the monthlong festivities of the Panagbenga Flower Festival, “Session Road in Bloom 2026” officially opened on Monday along Upper Session Road in Baguio City, ushering in a weeklong celebration that serves as the festival’s culminating highlight. For seven days, until March 8, the city’s iconic main thoroughfare transforms into

- Caloocan solon’s brother victimized by ‘broken car window’ theft (2026-03-02 15:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The brother of Caloocan City 2nd District Rep. Edgar Erice was victimized by an unidentified male perpetrator of a “basag-kotse” modus, in which vehicle windows are smashed to steal valuables, according to a police report. The alleged incident took place in front of the Zugbo Grill & Restaurant at the corner of

- Lacson fears probe into ex-Marines’ delivery story may turn into circus (2026-03-02 15:24)

MANILA, Philippines— Allowing the 18 former Marines to appear in the Senate probe into the flood control projects mess may just turn the proceeding into a circus, according to Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo Lacson, noting that their stories were “lacking in believability” at the onset. This is why Lacson, who heads the Senate blue ribbon

- Sotto: PH party-list system is ‘misinterpreted, abused’ (2026-03-02 14:55)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate President Vicente Sotto III on Monday questioned the Philippine party-list system, saying he remains very disappointed by how it has been “misinterpreted and abused.” At the Committee on Electoral Reforms and People’s Participation public hearing, Sotto said party-list members should ideally represent marginalized, underrepresented, or specific sectoral groups. “Who are the

- Cops probe suspected hazing death in Cavite (2026-03-02 14:19)

LUCENA CITY – Police in General Trias City, Cavite, have launched an investigation into the death of a man suspected to have succumbed to injuries sustained during hazing rites. READ: PNP: 22 cops in restrictive custody over alleged Basilan hazing In a report released Monday, the Police Regional Office 4A (PRO-4A) said that at around

- Mayor Biazon DJs at ‘Rock the South’ for Muntinlupa’s 31st cityhood (2026-03-02 14:13)

MANILA, Philippines – Mayor Ruffy Biazon surprised music fans when he stepped into the DJ booth during Rock the South: Muntinlupa Cityhood Band Showdown on March 1, kicking off Muntinlupa’s 31st Cityhood Anniversary celebration with a high-energy tribute to the city’s thriving music scene. Held at the Water Garden of Festival Mall, the battle of the bands showcased eight

- Army soldier sought for wounding 2 civilians in Catarman shooting (2026-03-02 14:08)

TACLOBAN CITY– Police have launched a manhunt for an active Philippine Army member allegedly involved in a shooting incident that left two civilians wounded Monday morning in Barangay Dalakit, Catarman. The incident occurred at 8:45 a.m. and was reported to the Catarman Municipal Police Station (MPS) at about 9 a.m., authorities said. The victims were

- House panel declares impeachment raps vs Sara Duterte sufficient in form (2026-03-02 13:46)

Updated @ 4.44 p.m., March 2, 2026 MANILA, Philippines — The third and fourth impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte hurdled the first test before the House of Representatives’ committee on justice on Monday. No House lawmakers objected in a motion to declare sufficient in form the impeachment complaints against Duterte, prompting the committee

- DepEd backs Filipino teachers in Middle East via reintegration program (2026-03-02 13:31)

MANILA, Philippines — In light of the evolving security situation in parts of the Middle East, the Department of Education (DepEd) affirms its readiness to support Filipino teachers who may be affected and are considering returning to the Philippines. Through the Sa Pinas, Ikaw ang Ma’am at Sir (SPIMS) Program, DepEd, in coordination with the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW), provides

- BREAKING: 1st impeach rap vs VP Duterte set aside for violating one-year bar rule (2026-03-02 13:11)

MANILA, Philippines — The first impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte, filed by the Makabayan Coalition, was set aside on Monday by the House of Representatives’ committee on justice for allegedly violating the one-year bar rule. During the hearing, committee chair and Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro presided over discussion on whether the complaint was sufficient

- Dy: Impeachment proceedings will be conducted fairly, lawfully (2026-03-02 13:10)

MANILA, Philippines – “We will allow the process to take its course fairly, lawfully and transparently. The House of Representatives will do its duty.” With that declaration, Speaker Faustino “Bojie” G. Dy III on Monday set the tone for the opening of deliberations by the House Committee on Justice on four verified impeachment complaints against

- Luistro to impeachment naysayers: Constitution doesn’t get tired (2026-03-02 12:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro reminds people who may be getting tired of impeachment discussions that the rule of law, the pursuit of accountability, and the 1987 Constitution itself do not get tired — and instead require all complaints to be examined. In her opening speech during the House of Representatives’ committee on

- PNP to deploy more female cops to aid women, children victims of violence (2026-03-02 12:06)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Monday said it was deploying more female officers to assist victims of violence against women and their children (VAWC). In a statement, PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. cited a “growing trust” in the 911 emergency call system of the Department of the Interior and

- Bulusan Volcano shows increased seismic activity – Phivolcs (2026-03-02 11:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Increased seismic activity has been observed at Bulusan Volcano in Sorsogon since Feb. 26, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) reported on Monday. In an advisory, Phivolcs said the Bulusan Volcano Network recorded 49 volcanic earthquakes since 3 a.m. on Feb. 26. Of these, 16 were volcano-tectonic earthquakes “associated with rock fracturing between 3

- PNP eyes distribution of 700 motorcycles for tourist security units (2026-03-02 11:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) will soon be issuing around 700 motorcycles to different units to aid the security of foreign tourists visiting the country. The motorcycles were procured in recent months but have yet to be distributed, PNP Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. noted in a press briefing in Camp

- Second impeachment case vs Sara Duterte formally withdrawn (2026-03-02 11:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The second impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte has been formally withdrawn after both endorsers and complainants took an oath swearing that they are pulling out their petition. During the House of Representatives committee on justice’s hearing on Monday, committee chairperson and Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro called on the endorsers — Mamamayang

- PNP chief defends use of motor escorts for VIPs (2026-03-02 11:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. on Monday defended the agency’s use of motorcycle escorts to secure VIPs in transit. This followed Senate public order committee chairperson Sen. JV Ejercito questioning the PNP Highway Patrol Group (HPG) at a hearing last Wednesday for allegedly escorting 20 to 30

- PNP complies with SC ruling on ‘plain view’ searches (2026-03-02 11:24)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Monday said it will comply with a Supreme Court (SC) ruling that items seized during a lawful warrantless arrest are admissible as evidence in court, even if they were not initially visible to the arresting officers. Asked to respond to the ruling, in a press briefing in

- PNP chief orders review of cases vs cops tagged in killings since 2022 (2026-03-02 11:17)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. ordered their Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM) to review cases against officers implicated in alleged killings since 2022. Nartatez said this in a press briefing on Monday in response to a statement by Nicholas Kaufman, former President Rodrigo Duterte’s counsel

- WATCH: House hearing on the impeachment complaints vs VP Sara Duterte | March 2, 2026 (2026-03-02 11:06)

MANILA, Philippines — The House Committee on Justice holds a hearing on Monday, March 2, 2026, on the determination of the sufficiency in form of four impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. READ: House hearing on Sara Duterte’s impeachment case begins READ: What to expect: VP Sara Duterte’s impeachment proceedings

- PNP: Crime rate drops by 19.96% in February 2026 (2026-03-02 10:48)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Monday said crime rates across the country decreased by 19.96 percent in February 2026. The agency recorded 2,269 incidents of focus crimes from Feb. 1 to 28, 2026, which are 566 cases fewer than the 2,835 incidents recorded during the same period in 2025, PNP Chief

- Body of missing teen found in Guiuan; 14-year-old pal still missing (2026-03-02 10:29)

TACLOBAN CITY — The body of a 15-year-old boy who was earlier reported missing was recovered on Sunday morning in the waters off Barangay Sulangan, Guiuan, Eastern Samar, as search operations continue for his 14-year-old companion. READ: 2 teens missing after being swept by strong currents in Eastern Samar Police identified the fatality as Irish

- SC asked to tell Senate to release draft report on flood probe (2026-03-02 10:07)

MANILA, Philippines — Three lawyers on Monday filed a petition before the Supreme Court (SC) to order the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee to release the draft of its original committee report on the investigation into flood control anomalies. Atty. Eldrige Marvin Aceron represented his fellow lawyers Sikini Labastilla and Purificacion Bartolome-Bernabe in the lodging of

- Atong Ang still at large after 20 police raids since January – PNP (2026-03-02 10:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Gambling tycoon Atong Ang remains at large despite multiple raids in at least 20 locations since last January, Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr., chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP), said on Monday. Ang is wanted on kidnapping charges in connection with the

disappearance of at least 34 cockfighting enthusiasts (sabungeros) who allegedly cheated in hisgames between

- House hearing on Sara Duterte’s impeachment case begins (2026-03-02 09:48)

Updated @1:30 p.m., March 2, 2026 MANILA, Philippines — The House committee on justice on Monday began its deliberations on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte to determine if they are sufficient in form and substance. The deliberation’s first day expectedly met with protests by progressive groups in front of the House of

- `Extreme caution’ heat index prompts class suspensions in Negros (2026-03-02 09:34)

BACOLOD CITY—Local government units in Negros Occidental suspended classes on Monday following a forecast heat index of 40°C, as authorities warned of possible heat-related illnesses. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said the projected heat index falls under the “extreme caution” level. READ: Hot, humid weather expected in PH on Monday At this

- House will fairly tackle Sara Duterte’s impeachment – Dy (2026-03-02 09:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Hearings on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte will be tackled fairly and will not be a venue for trial by publicity, House Speaker Faustino “Bojie” Dy III said on Monday. Dy, in a statement before the House committee on justice starts deliberations on the four complaints, said that the hearing

- De Lima, allies drop 2nd Duterte impeach case, back civil society’s rap (2026-03-02 09:22)

MANILA, Philippines — A letter seeking the withdrawal of the second impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte has been formally sent by the complainants to the office of House of Representatives Secretary General Cheloy Garafil. Complainants from the different civil society group, including Tindig Pilipinas co-convenor Kiko Aquino Dee, went to the Garafil’s office on

- Hot, humid weather expected in PH on Monday (2026-03-02 07:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Most parts of the country, including Metro Manila, are expected to experience hot and humid weather on Monday due to the effect of easterlies, according to the state weather bureau. The easterlies, as defined by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), refer to the warm wind coming from the

- House to scrutinize Madriaga testimony (2026-03-02 05:40)

Bicol Saro Rep. Terry Ridon on Sunday said the House of Representatives would coordinate with the court, as well as the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), to ensure the safety and attendance of detained witness Ramil Madriaga in the impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte. Ridon, who chairs the House committee on

- PH liver center pushed as cancer cases rise (2026-03-02 05:35)

With the Philippines recording 32 deaths daily due to liver cancer, a group of hepatologists or doctors specializing in liver diseases has urged the government to establish a national liver center to help patients and also serve as a training ground for more liver specialists. Speaking to reporters after a recent briefing, Dr. Jennielyn Agcaoili-Conde,

- Impeachment case vs Sara Duterte to be further consolidated (2026-03-02 05:30)

Civil society leaders and clergy who filed the second impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte will formally withdraw their case today, saying they will now give their "full support" to the third complaint. "We believe that the impeachment process must proceed at the earliest possible time, free from procedural limbo and unnecessary legal delays

- Scrap ECCs of Manila Bay projects, new DENR chief urged (2026-03-02 05:20)

A fisherfolk group wants newly appointed acting Environment Secretary Juan Miguel Cuna to revoke the environmental compliance certificates (ECCs) issued to at least 13 reclamation projects in Manila Bay. Cuna took over the post from Raphael Lotilla, whom the group Pamalakaya had earlier criticized for allegedly failing to safeguard Manila Bay, nearby coastal communities, and

- DPWH starts Abra probe of corruption in infra projects (2026-03-02 04:40)

BAGUIO CITY—Abra, the Cordillera province of former Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin, is now under scrutiny in an ongoing internal corruption probe by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) aimed at uncovering multibillion-peso fraud and kickbacks in government infrastructure projects, Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon said here on Saturday . Speaking on the sidelines

- Star-studded Panagbenga thrills crowd in Baguio (2026-03-02 04:35)

BAGUIO CITY—Celebrities added star power to the 30th Panagbenga or Baguio Flower Festival Grand Float Parade on Sunday, as thousands packed Session Road to witness the floral spectacle. Actor James Reid, riding a soft drink brand float, drew loud cheers from the crowd. He was joined by veteran actress Rosanna Roces, who appeared on the

- Bohol strengthens marine wildlife tourism rules (2026-03-02 04:30)

TAGBILARAN CITY—The Bohol Provincial Board (PB) has approved the "Enhanced Sustainable Marine Wildlife Interaction Ordinance," imposing stricter regulations on whale shark, dolphin and other marine wildlife tourism across the province. Passed on third and final reading on Feb. 27, during a special session of the PB presided over by Vice Gov. Nick Besas, the ordinance

- Zambo Sur highway section impassable due to retaining wall collapse (2026-03-02 00:48)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur – The Bogayo–Gatub section of the Maharlika Highway in Kumalarang, Zamboanga del Sur was rendered impassable Sunday morning after a retaining

wall collapsed. The Kumalarang local government said no injuries were reported. Even before the incident, the highway had been under a temporary “stop and go” traffic scheme since January,

Source: The Manila Times

- Manila City Hall adopts 4-day workweek (2026-03-09 04:57)

MANILA, Philippines—Manila Mayor Isko Moreno on Monday signed Executive Order (EO) 8, mandating a 4-day work week for city hall employees.In his Facebook live address, Moreno said that on-site work would be from Monday to Thursday under two schedules: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. There is no office work on Friday.He clarified that essential and frontline workers were exempted from the order.

- Palace: 54 gas stations ordered to explain price hikes (2026-03-09 04:09)

NEW YORK CITY – Malacañang on Sunday (New York time) warned that gasoline stations charging “unreasonable” prices may be meted with sanctions as the government monitors compliance amid the Middle East crisis.In a media briefing here, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said the Department of Energy (DOE) has issued show-cause orders to 54 gas stations to determine if they have violated government warnings against hiking fuel prices.“Ngayon po, isinasagawa po ngayon dahil nagka-problema po at marami daw po yatang mga gasoline stations na nagtaas ng presyo (Right now, it is being carried out because there were problems, and apparently many gasoline stations have increased their prices),” Castro said.“So, nag-issue po ang DOE ng show-cause order sa 54 gas stations para po makita natin kung sila ba ay lumabag sa panawagan na huwag magtaas ng presyo ng gasoline (The DOE has issued show-cause orders to 54 gas stations to determine whether they violated the government’s warning not to raise fuel prices),” she added.Castro said the Palace would continue to monitor the situation closely and would take strict action against violators, including possible revocation of permits.“Kasi kapag po napakita rito na sila po ay may mga fraudulent acts, maaari po silang makanselan ng permit sa kanilang mga transaksyon (Because if it is shown that they committed fraudulent acts, their permit to conduct transactions may be canceled),” Castro said.She said the DOE would coordinate with gas stations, stressing that the government’s intervention is intended to prevent price manipulation while promoting fair business practices.The Middle East crisis has triggered global oil price surges, prompting the Philippine government to implement several contingency measures to address the issue.Castro emphasized President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.’s call for unity and cooperation during the crisis.“Kapag kayo po ay nagsamantala, meron po kayong kalalagyan. Kayo po ay madedemanda at maaaring matanggalan po kayo ng pagkakataon na kayo ay makapag-negosyo (Those who exploit the situation may face consequences. You may be sued and could lose the opportunity to do business),” she said.“So, tandaan niyo po, ang sabi po ng Pangulo, magtulungan tayo. Pero pag hindi po kayo tumulong at kayo po ay nang-abuso sa kahinaan po

na nangyayari ngayon, kayo po ay maaaring mademanda at may kaukulang parusa po ‘yan (Remember, the President says we should work together. But if you fail to help and abuse the weakness amid the situation, you may face lawsuits and corresponding penaltie),” Castro added.Consumers were earlier advised to brace for higher pump prices, with gasoline projected to rise by P7.48 per liter, diesel by P17.28 per liter, and kerosene by P32.35 per liter.

- Marcos to request Congress for emergency powers to reduce fuel excise tax (2026-03-09 04:00)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is set to issue a formal request to Congress to grant him emergency powers to reduce the fuel excise tax as part of the government’s efforts to cushion the impact of rising fuel prices.In an interview with reporters in New York City, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro said Marcos would be sending his request at the soonest possible time.“Yes, according to (Department of Energy) Secretary (Sharon) Garin. We have spoken to them. We are in contact and this call will be made,” Castro said in Filipino.The president said he was considering exercising emergency powers to reduce the excise tax on petroleum products if oil prices reached or exceeded the $80 per barrel mark.The proposed measure will be temporary and should be authorized by Congress.Castro likewise noted that the Palace has been made aware of the 54 gasoline stations who prematurely adjusted their fuel prices despite the DOE’s announcement that there were no price increases in the past week.“The DOE has issued a show-cause order to these 54 gas stations so we can prove whether or not they violated the call not to increase gasoline prices. If it is proven that they have committed fraudulent acts, they can have their transaction permits canceled,” Castro said.

- De Lima files libel, cyber libel raps vs Baligod, 18 alleged ex-Marines over P805B claim (2026-03-09 03:54)

MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal Party-list Rep. Leila de Lima on Monday filed complaints for libel and cyber libel before the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) against lawyer Levi Baligod and 18 individuals who introduced themselves as former members of the Philippine Marine Corps.The complaints stemmed from allegations linking De Lima to the supposed delivery of P805 billion in cash intended for several government officials.Speaking to reporters after filing the complaint, De Lima said the statements attributed to the alleged former Marines and remarks made by Baligod in media interviews contained “lies” meant to damage her reputation.“We are here to file a complaint for libel and cyber libel against the 18 alleged ex-Marines and also against Attorney Levi Baligod,” De Lima said, adding that the sworn statements and subsequent interviews repeated accusations that she had received money.“It’s very clear to me that these are being done… to besmirch my reputation and smear my name,” she said.De Lima denied claims that she received cash deliveries, whether in suitcases, paper bags, or other containers, calling the accusations “pure lies.” “I have not received any cash money, wherever it may have been placed,” she said.The lawmaker said she decided to pursue legal action to prevent the allegations from further damaging her name.“I

will not allow them again to destroy my character and malign my name for whatever agenda they may have," she said.The complaints came after the group allegedly circulated affidavits and made public statements claiming that large sums of money had been delivered to certain officials, with De Lima's name among those mentioned.

- UP Manila implements 4-day workweek to conserve energy (2026-03-09 02:05)

MANILA, Philippines —The University of the Philippines Manila (UPM) implemented a four-day compressed workweek and designated Mondays as a no-onsite workday starting today as part of energy conservation measures.This comes after President Bongbong Marcos issued Memorandum Circular 114, s. 2026, which mandates government offices to adopt energy conservation protocols, as a massive oil price increase is expected amid the widening conflict in the Middle East.The memorandum requires government offices to implement a 4-day onsite work setting beginning March 9, 2026.In a statement late Sunday, UPM Chancellor Michael Tee said Mondays would be designated as a "no onsite workday," which means administrative personnel will not physically report to campus.Employees will instead complete their required 40-hour workweek across the remaining four on-site days from Tuesday to Friday.Meanwhile, Tee also noted that classes will proceed as scheduled, emphasizing that teaching and learning remain its top priority.

- Marcos arrives in New York for UN engagements (2026-03-09 01:28)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. arrived in New York for his engagements in the United Nations where he is expected to participate in high-level discussions, including the situation in the Middle East and women's rights.The chartered flight carrying Marcos and his delegation touched down at the Newark Liberty International Airport at 2:45 p.m. on Sunday (New York time).On his agenda during his two-day working visit are his attendance to the opening of the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) where he will reaffirm the Philippines' support to efforts championing the rights and empowerment of women and girls.He is also slated to meet with UN Secretary-General António Guterres and is expected to highlight the country's commitment to multilateralism and international cooperation as well as reiterate his administration's call for rules-based international order and end to conflicts.The president will likewise take the floor at the special session of he UN General Assembly to push the country's bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2027 to 2028.Apart from his UN-related activities, Marcos will also be having meetings with American business leaders.The chief executive is accompanied by First Lady Louise "Liza" Araneta-Marcos; Foreign Affairs Secretary Maria Theresa Lazaro; Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac; Presidential peace adviser Carlito Galvez Jr.; and Presidential Communications Office Acting Secretary Dave Gomez.

- LPA outside PAR likely to become tropical depression in 24 hours (2026-03-09 00:10)

MANILA, Philippines – The low-pressure area (LPA) outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) has been forecast to develop into a tropical depression within 24 hours, the national

weather bureau said on Monday.Weather specialist Aldczar Aurelio of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said, however, that the weather disturbance has a slim chance to enter PAR. “It would also be unlikely to affect the country's weather directly, but its trough or extension was already bringing cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms over Visayas, Mindanao, Sorsogon, and Masbate,” Aurelio said during a 5 a.m. briefing.The northeast monsoon or 'amihan' is expected to prevail over the next three days. Today, it is affecting Cagayan Valley, Aurora, Quezon, and the rest of the Bicol Region, bringing overcast skies and rain.Moreover, the same weather system is affecting the Cordillera Administrative Region, Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, and Romblon, where cloudy skies with light rain are likely, according to its latest advisory.Pagasa said amihan would also be experienced over Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon, where partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated light rains would prevail.

- Oil prices continue rapid climb (2026-03-08 16:18)

(UPDATE) THE price of oil surged higher and showed no signs of halting its rapid climb a week after the US and Israel launched major attacks on Iran that escalated into a war in the Middle East.The conflict, in which nearly every country in the Middle East has sustained damage from missiles or drone strikes, has left ships that carry roughly 20 million barrels of oil a day stranded in the Persian Gulf, unable to safely pass through the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Gulf that is bordered on its north side by Iran.The shipping disruption and damage to key Middle East oil and gas facilities have interrupted supplies from some of the world’s largest oil producers.Kuwait, for example, said on Saturday that it would reduce its oil production as a “precautionary” measure due to the war, which could jolt global energy markets even further.Oil prices surpassed $90 a barrel Friday, with American crude settling at $90.90, up 36 percent from a week ago, and Brent, the international standard, climbing 27 percent over the course of the week to land at $92.69.The fallout is ratcheting up what consumers and businesses will pay for gasoline, diesel and jet fuel, with some drivers already feeling it at the pump. “It’s crazy. It’s not needed, especially at a time when people are already struggling, but not unexpected from all this turmoil that’s going on,” said Mark Doran, who was pumping gas in Middlebury, Vermont, on Friday. “I don’t think there’s been an end in sight to any Middle East conflict that’s been started by us, so the fact that they say that there’s going to be an end that quickly is not believable, and the Middle East is, you know, a place that the US is not going to solve.” President Donald Trump said Monday that the US expected its military operations against Iran to last four to five weeks but has “the capability to go far longer.” On Friday, Trump appeared to rule out talks with Iran absent its “unconditional surrender.” “The more news we get, the more it seems like this is going to last a really long time,” said Al Salazar, head of macro oil and gas research at Enverus.In the US, a gallon of regular gasoline rose to $3.41 on Saturday, up about 43 cents from a week ago, according to AAA motor club. Diesel was selling for $4.51 a gallon Saturday, up about 75 cents from last week.The price shocks were felt even more heavily in Europe and Asia, markets that rely more heavily on energy supplies from the Middle East.Diesel prices doubled in Europe, and

jet fuel prices rose by close to 200 percent in Asia, according to Claudio Galimberti, chief economist at Rystad Energy.Energy prices climbed throughout the week as Iran launched a series of retaliatory attacks, including a drone strike on the US Embassy in Saudi Arabia, and the conflict widened.Iran also hit a major refinery in Saudi Arabia and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility in Qatar, halting flows of refined products and taking about 20 percent of the world’s LNG supply offline. “We keep seeing news of vessels being hit or refineries or pipelines, so the list is very long,” Galimberti said.As a result, roughly 9 million barrels of oil per day are off the market because of facilities being hit or producers taking precautionary measures, he said. “Right now, with all of this shut-in, we are in a situation of extreme deficit.” Trump issued a plan Friday to insure losses up to approximately $20 billion in the Gulf region, aiming to restore confidence in maritime trade, help stabilize international commerce, and support American and allied businesses operating in the Middle East.But some energy experts said extra insurance won’t solve the problem. “The problem is that in the oil trading, oil shipping world, people are worried about counterterrorism,” said Amy Jaffe, director of the Energy, Climate Justice and Sustainability Lab at New York University, adding that they’re worried about automated drone speedboats, weapon-carrying flying drones and mines or other devices. “In order for the United States to create the atmosphere that undoes the current bottleneck at the Strait of Hormuz, there has to be some credible demonstration of solutions to the counter-terrorism problem.” Salazar wondered what the “new normal” would look like if the Strait of Hormuz were effectively re-opened, and what effective security would look like. “All it takes is one individual with an RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) to stand on the shore and take out a tanker, right?” Salazar said. “And this is forever, do you know what I mean?” The Philippines is also feeling the aftershocks of the conflict in the Middle East, with increases in pump prices this week expected to be massive.There were reports last week that the per-liter price of kerosene may go up by P24.92, diesel by P19.62, and gasoline by P10.43.Final price movements are scheduled to be announced today, March 9.Some gas stations were reported to have already jacked up their prices.Sen. Panfilo Lacson urged the public to report gas stations that “prematurely” increase prices.Lacson said prematurely increasing fuel prices violates Republic Act 8479, or the Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Act of 1998 and RA 7394, or the Consumer Act of the Philippines.He said the public can report violations to the Philippine National Police (PNP) and concerned local government units (LGUs). “Amid reports that some gasoline stations have already increased prices, they must be reported to authorities,” Lacson wrote on X on Saturday.Another senator, Win Gatchalian, urged the Department of Energy (DOE) to monitor retailers and oil companies for possible profiteering amid what he described as an “energy crisis” stemming from the escalating conflict in the Middle East.DOE Director Rino Abad said the government has no control over the pricing of petroleum products due to the oil deregulation law. “The increase in the oil prices in the world market has just been announced. But some retailers have already raised their prices. This is profiteering,” Gatchalian said. “They cannot increase prices immediately because they had bought their current stocks at a lower price. They should sell at a reasonable price,” said Gatchalian, vice chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy.Oil companies have an inventory of about 50 days, “so they should not jack up pump prices that quickly,” he said.From January to March 4,

gasoline pump prices increased by 13.7 percent, from P55 to P62 per liter. Diesel prices rose by 41.4 percent, from P54 to P76 per liter, while kerosene prices went up by 43 percent, from P79 to P114 per liter.Lacson said Energy Secretary Sharon Garin had instructed the PNP and local governments to monitor and report violations "so [that] appropriate criminal and administrative proceedings may be initiated against erring gas station operators."

- China maritime militia activity in SCS peaked in 2025 (2026-03-08 16:17)

(UPDATE) CHINA' S maritime militia deployed a record number of vessels in the South China Sea in 2025, particularly around key disputed reefs near areas of tension with the Philippines, according to a Washington-based research project that monitors maritime disputes and activities in Asia.Satellite imagery analysis by the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI) found a daily average of 241 militia vessels operating across monitored reefs in 2025, slightly higher than the 232 recorded in 2024.The figure represents the highest level observed since the group began systematic monitoring in 2021.The militia fleet — composed of professional militia units and civilian vessels belonging to China' s "Spratly Backbone Fishing Fleet" — was detected in all reefs monitored by the initiative, although activity continued to shift toward Mischief Reef and Whitsun Reef, which together accounted for nearly half of the total observed vessels.Researchers said tracking militia vessels remains challenging because most ships turned off their automatic identification system (AIS).Instead, AMTI relied on commercial satellite imagery to count ships massing at key reefs.The study expanded its dataset to 12 reefs with the addition of Mabini (Johnson) Reef, where satellite imagery revealed a moderate seasonal concentration of vessels east of the feature during the past year.Most ships identified were believed to belong to the Spratly Backbone Fishing Fleet, which is numerically larger than the professional militia component.For the study, researchers counted only vessels between 45 and 65 meters in length, a size commonly associated with Chinese militia trawlers and rarely seen among other fishing fleets or the China Coast Guard.Satellite imagery was analyzed roughly four times each month at each reef, with gaps between observations filled using interpolation to allow comparison across locations.Seasonal patterns remained consistent with previous years. Vessel presence was lowest from January to mid-February, rising after the Lunar New Year.Two major surges were observed across most features — one in June and another in late November.At Panganiban (Mischief) Reef, militia presence showed four separate peaks exceeding 200 vessels, reinforcing its role as a key staging point for monitoring disputed areas near the Philippines, including Escoda (Sabina) Shoal and Ayungin (Second Thomas) Shoal.Julian Felipe (Whitsun) Reef displayed a similar seasonal trend, with vessel numbers peaking in the spring before dropping during the summer and early fall and rising again later in the year.Other features recorded increased militia activity compared with previous years. Rozul (Iroquois) Reef showed higher peaks and a stronger baseline presence throughout 2025, while Pag-asa (Thitu) Reef experienced increases in both average and peak vessel counts despite reduced coast guard activity in the area. Burgos (Gaven) Reef maintained peak levels similar to those seen in 2024 but had a higher average daily presence.In contrast, Kagitingan (Fiery Cross) Reef had a sharp drop in militia activity. After averaging 32 vessels per day in 2024, the reef had almost no

observable militia presence in 2025, suggesting a possible redeployment of Chinese vessels rather than an overall reduction in militia operations.The research also compared militia deployments with patrols by the China Coast Guard. Despite a record rise in coast guard presence around Bajo de Masinloc (Scarborough) Shoal, militia vessels remained relatively few in the area.Analysts said this pattern suggests that Beijing relies more heavily on smaller but more capable professional militia units and coast guard ships to patrol disputed areas, while larger numbers of Spratly Backbone vessels remain anchored at safer locations such as Mischief and Whitsun reefs.AMTI said the 2025 data mirrors patterns seen in 2024 but with slightly higher overall militia presence and a redistribution of vessels across eastern areas of the Spratly Islands.

- Asean, China ‘heavily invested’ in SCS Code of Conduct (2026-03-08 16:16)

First of three partsTHE Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) and China are “heavily invested” in the finalization of the 2026 Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea (SCS), which has dragged on for the past 17 years because of some contentious issues.This was how Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro described the commitment of Asean and China in the “termination of negotiations” for a COC during the Philippines’ chairmanship of Asean this year.Asean is composed of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Timor-Leste, Thailand, and Vietnam.The negotiation for a COC stemmed from the need to address mounting tension in the 1990s amid the overlapping claims in the contested Spratly Islands in the South China Sea.The atolls, islets, and other features in the Spratlys — believed to be rich in oil and mineral deposits — are being claimed in whole by China and in part by Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam, Taiwan, and the Philippines.The COC timeline or milestonesThe quest for a COC began in 2002 after the signing of the Declaration on the Conduct (DOC) of Parties in the South China Sea on Nov. 4, 2002, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.The Philippines’ signatory at that time was then Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) secretary Blas Ople. For the Chinese side, it was Wang Yi, then special envoy and vice minister of foreign affairs. Wang is now China’s top envoy.The DOC states that Asean and China reaffirmed that the “adoption of a code of conduct in the South China Sea would further promote peace and stability in the region and agree to work, on the basis of consensus, towards the eventual attainment of this objective.” The nonbinding DOC was considered to be more of a confidence-building measure to lay down a very important foundation of how Asean and China should work together in the South China Sea to maintain harmony in the region.The parties recognized the need “to enhance favorable conditions for a peaceful and durable solution of differences and disputes” in the SCS. Hence, the need for a COC.Under the DOC, they should “resolve their territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means, without resorting to the threat or use of force, through friendly consultations and negotiations by sovereign states directly concerned, in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos).” Enforced in 1994, the International Maritime Organization said the Unclos laid down a comprehensive regime of law and order for the world’s oceans, including the establishment of rules for the

allocation of States’ rights and jurisdiction in maritime spaces and the peaceful use of oceans and the management of their resources.They should “undertake to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability, including, among others, refraining from action of inhabiting the presently uninhabited islands, reefs, shoals, cays, and other features and to handle their differences in a constructive manner,” the DOC read.Since 2002, the COC has undergone three phases.Phase 1, which saw the signing of the DOC as its foundation. It took almost nine years, from 2002 to 2011, to craft the COC framework.Phase 2, wherein the drafting of the COC began in 2012. By 2019, Asean and China had completed the crafting of the COC’s “table of contents.” It was under Thailand’s Asean chairmanship that they finished the first review or “first reading” of the draft COC.Phase 3 covered the years 2020 to 2023, wherein new guidelines had been adopted to accelerate the deadline within which to finish the COC.However, the COC discussion was stalled at the height of the Covid-19 (Coronavirus disease 2019) pandemic from 2020 to 2022.It was in 2023, during Indonesia’s Asean chairmanship, that the bloc and China managed to approve the COC on “second reading.”The Asean foreign ministers in 2023 have agreed that the COC should be finished within three years or in 2026 — which happened to be the Philippines’ turn to lead the regional grouping.2026 ‘make or break’ year for Philippines to finalize COCGeopolitical analysts viewed 2026 as a “make or break” year for the Philippines to finally realize Asean’s aspiration to sign the COC with China that would govern their actions in the SCS to maintain peace, stability and economic growth in the region.Lazaro said as the 2026 Asean chairman, the Philippines has to build up consensus to overcome the difficult task of having Asean and China finally sign the COC. “Right now, we’re doing the role of a consensus-builder. So, let’s see. We’ll cross our fingers.”The Philippines “will endeavor to conclude the negotiations of an effective, substantive code of conduct that is in accordance with international law, particularly the 1982 Unclos within this year,” Lazaro said. “We are doubly, even triply working hard to make sure that there is something of a confluence or rather some kind of a consensus,” she said in a press briefing in January after the Asean Foreign Ministers Retreat held in Cebu City.The so-called four “milestone issues” hampered the completion of the COC. These are: the geographical scope, the link between the DOC and the COC, the legally binding element or the characteristic of the COC, and the definition of self-restraint relative to the claimants’ action in the SCS.Chinese Ambassador to Manila Jing Quan had said China and the Philippines hope to accelerate consultations on the COC. “Reaching an agreement would lay a solid foundation for managing maritime differences and advancing bilateral relations,” he said. “The COC has been under discussion for more than a decade. It is time to see real results. Both sides should keep the bigger picture in mind and work together to deliver,” Jing said.Lazaro said the Philippines would be holding monthly consultations with China and fellow Asean members to address these milestone issues.Some Asean members have expressed “willingness to host face-to-face meetings” to show their commitment to the COC completion.She said the Philippines discussed this proposed monthly meeting with China and hoped that Beijing would agree to this. “I don’t see any difficulties with that. I think everybody is trying to do their respective way on how to do things,” the DFA chief said.Lazaro revealed that one of the Asean member-states has come up with a paper on one of the

milestone issues. “So now everybody is trying to put in definitions, as well as possible areas of cooperation, in trying to address the milestone issues. We, the Philippines, we’ll just be open about it.” Asean Secretary General Kao Kim Hourn, in November 2025, said the regional grouping looked forward to the conclusion of a binding COC during the Philippines’ chairmanship of Asean in 2026. “We expect that this will conclude next year as we have agreed to try to conclude around July 2026, which is during the Philippines’ chairmanship,” Kao said during a press briefing with journalists attending the Asean Media Forum in Malaysia. “We should not prolong the drafting of the COC. The process is very important. It is equally important as the outcome,” he stressed.The COC “will make sure that the South China Sea will remain peaceful, stable,” he added. “We have a non-binding DOC already. This is among other issues that need to be sorted out. I am sure we will finalize at some stage. I have every confidence to believe that this work will be finalized next year,” Kao said.Asean Foreign Ministers’ vision in maintaining harmony in the regionLazaro said during their meeting in Cebu City, her fellow Asean leaders “welcomed the positive momentum and progress achieved in the ongoing negotiations” on the COC. “We will endeavor to conclude the negotiation of an effective and substantive COC that is in accordance with international law, particularly the 1982 Unclos, within 2026,” Lazaro said in a statement. “We emphasized the need to maintain and promote an environment conducive to the COC negotiations, including the situation in the South China Sea, and thus welcomed practical measures that could reduce tensions and the risk of accidents, misunderstandings, and miscalculations,” Lazaro added.She said they discussed the situation in the South China Sea, wherein they expressed concerns on “land reclamations, serious incidents in the area, including actions that put the safety of all persons at risk, damage to the marine environment.” They said these incidents may “have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions, and may undermine peace, security and stability in the region.” “We reaffirmed the need to pursue peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with international law, particularly the 1982 Unclos,” Lazaro said in a statement. “We emphasized the importance of self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states, including those mentioned in the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea,” she said.Lazaro said Asean reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, freedom of navigation in and overflight above the SCS, and recognized the benefits of having the SCS as a “sea of peace, stability, prosperity and sustainable development.” BERNADETTE E.TAMAYO

- Marcos off to US for working visitMarcos off to US for working visit (2026-03-08 16:15)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. left for the United States on Sunday for a working visit that will include addressing a special session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).The chartered flight carrying the president and his lean delegation, which include first lady Louise “Liza” Araneta-Marcos, Foreign Affairs Secretary Maria Theresa Lazaro, Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac, Presidential Peace Adviser Carlito Galvez Jr., and Presidential Communications Office Acting Secretary Dave Gomez took off from the Villamor Air Base in

Pasay City at 10:22 a.m.The agenda of Marcos’ four-day trip to New York includes his attendance at the opening of the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) at the United Nations Headquarters, where he will highlight the Philippines’ commitment to promoting, advancing and protecting the rights and well-being of women and girls.The chief executive is also expected to speak at the special session of the UNGA where he will rally for additional support for the country’s candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council (UNSC) for 2027 to 2028.By getting a seat in the council, the Philippines will have a voice in the discussions concerning global safety and security, Malacañang had said.The Philippines previously served as a non-permanent member of the UNSC in 1957, 1963, 1980–1981, and 2004–2005.The president is likewise scheduled to meet with UN Secretary-General António Guterres to discuss the situation in the Middle East and reiterate the importance of promoting peace and supporting the protection of civilians affected by the crisis in the region.Lazaro said the UN provided the most appropriate platform for the president to call for peace in the Middle East and the protection of civilians, including overseas Filipinos in the region.This is Marcos’ sixth visit to the US since 2022, becoming the country that he has visited most during his administration.The president’s last visit to the US was in July 2025, meeting with President Donald Trump.But Lazaro said Marcos would not meet with Trump and other state leaders during his visit to the US this week.

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- Gulf waters declared ‘Warlike Operations Areas’ (2026-03-08 16:14)

THE Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) has declared the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Gulf of Oman as “Warlike Operations Areas.” DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac said the declaration is in keeping with the decision by the Warlike Operations Area Committee (WOAC) of the International Bargaining Forum (IBF) reclassifying the sea lanes around the Gulf following a surge in attacks on commercial shipping and growing instability in the region.Under the advisory, Filipino seafarers are granted immediate and significant protections, Cacdac said.In a video message, Cacdac said the declaration gives seamen the “right to refuse sailing” and decline deployment to high-risk areas before the vessel enters the designated zones.Seafarers who exercise this right are entitled to repatriation at the company’s expense, along with compensation equivalent to two months’ basic wage.The advisory also mandates that shipowners implement increased security arrangements equivalent to ISPS Level 3, the highest maritime security alert. This includes 24/7 monitoring and strict access control to ensure the safety of the crew while navigating these volatile waters.Financial safeguards have been bolstered. Families of seafarers who are killed or injured within the warlike areas will receive twice the usual compensation.On Sunday, the DMW and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) also announced that another batch of Filipinos was returning from the Middle East to escape the conflict in the region.The agencies said 65 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and three dependents arrived at Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) from Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.The latest batch was supposed to fly home last March 3, but their flight was delayed because the airspace in many parts of the region was shut down.The Philippine Embassy in Lebanon has urged Filipinos to take advantage of the government’s repatriation program.There are over 14,000 Filipinos in Lebanon, mostly working in Beirut as household helpers. Some of them work as cooks, waiters, salespersons and nurses.The embassy in Iran reported that the internet connection in Iraq is still down. “No one cannot even receive international calls,” it said.The embassy in Bahrain urged Filipinos to “avoid public gatherings,” in compliance with the directive of the Bahraini government.Majority Leader Ferdinand Alexander Marcos on Sunday said Speaker Faustino Dy III has asked the chamber’s Committees on Foreign Affairs and on Overseas Workers Affairs to hold a joint briefing on March 11 on the Middle East conflict.“With a significant number of Filipinos working across the Middle East, it is important that we stay ahead of developments and ensure that the necessary support mechanisms are in place,” Marcos said.“The House wants to receive a full briefing on the situation on the ground and on the readiness of our agencies to assist our nationals should conditions require government intervention,” he said.Invited were officials from relevant agencies, including the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and DMW.The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Sunday said it has ordered the deployment of a special team to support the repatriation of OFWs in the Middle East.PNP chief Gen. Jose

Melencio Nartatez Jr. directed the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) to lead agencies, such as the DMW and OWWA, in ensuring the safe and orderly return of Filipinos from the region.The team will screen returning OFWs to identify possible victims of illegal recruitment or human trafficking and gather evidence against individuals who may have exploited Filipino workers abroad. “We will not let our countrymen go home without support from the government. We will make sure that those responsible for illegal recruitment and human trafficking will be investigated and held accountable,” Nartatez said.During a hearing of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations last week, DMW’s Cacdac and OWWA’s Cunanan requested additional funding to support the repatriation of OFWs stranded in conflict zones in the Middle East.They said the P1.7-billion 2026 Emergency Repatriation Fund (ERF) may not be sufficient if the conflict escalates and more OFWs request repatriation.

- Marcos vows opportunities for Filipino women (2026-03-08 16:13)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Sunday hailed the contribution of Filipino women to nation-building and vowed to lead a government that works just as hard as they do.In his message for the commemoration of International Women’s Day, Marcos lauded how the Filipina is “a mother, a worker, a leader” and oftentimes, “all of these at the same time.” “The progress of our nation will always carry the imprint of the Filipina, and she deserves a government that works as hard as she does,” he said in a statement posted on his social media accounts.He tagged women as “the heartbeat of every nation,” and particularly lauded Filipino women for facing responsibilities “with resilience and heart, turning obstacles into opportunities and hardship into hope.” The chief executive vowed to keep championing the rights of women and provide equal and additional opportunities for them until his last day in office. “Under this administration, we will continue to expand opportunities, protect rights, and ensure that every Filipina has access to the health, education, and livelihood programs she needs to thrive,” he said.It was in 1996 when the United Nations (UN) formally launched International Women’s Day, commemorating women’s fight for equality and liberation along with the women’s rights movement. It likewise gives focus to issues such as gender equality, reproductive rights, and violence and abuse against women.Support and solidarityIn her message during the occasion, Vice President Sara Duterte pushed for support for and solidarity for women. “I stand in solidarity with every Filipino woman this National Women’s Month,” Duterte said. “Women do not just survive crises — we rebuild lives and communities,” she said. “We are the strong pillars of our country, from mothers who thrift every peso, farmers who get back up after flooding, to our women who work in various parts of the world,” she said in Filipino. “But it is time to move beyond just praising our resilience,” she said.Duterte pushed for systems “that will truly support our strength.” “We need real protection for the informal sector,” she said. She also pushed “climate-resilient support” for farmers as well as “genuine access to financing for women entrepreneurs.” Duterte said supporting women “is a strategy for inclusive growth.” She urged Filipinos to unite for a future where “our daughters inherit opportunities, not just duties.” Modern babaylansLast Wednesday, Speaker Faustino Dy III honored Filipinas as babaylan of the modern times. The babaylan served as female spiritual

leaders in pre-colonial Philippines. “This National Women’s Month, under the theme ‘Lead Like the Babaylans, Filipinas,’ let us remember the strength that has long been in every Filipina — the spirit of the Babaylan: a leader who has wisdom, compassion, courage, responsibility towards our community,” Dy said in a video message. “This spirit is alive in every mother who fights for the future of her child, in every female teacher who shapes dreams, in every woman leader in government and various other sectors,” he said.Dy vowed that the House would keep pushing measures empowering women. “Your House will strengthen every Filipina, especially those who are marginalized: women in farms, Indigenous peoples, and women with disabilities,” he said. WITH A REPORT FROM REINA TOLENTINO

- ‘4-day work schedule to ease oil crisis impact’ (2026-03-08 16:12)

SEN. Francis Escudero urged private companies to consider adopting the proposed four day onsite workweek or implement staggered work hour schemes to cushion the impact of fuel price hikes amid the war in the Middle East.President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. earlier ordered a temporary four day workweek for some executive branch offices starting March 9 to conserve energy and reduce fuel use.The Palace issued Memorandum Circular 114, which mandates, among others, to cut on electricity and fuel consumption by 10-20 percent, maintain air conditioning at 24 C, and suspend nonessential travel and activities.Escudero on Sunday said that flexible work arrangements could help reduce daily transportation demand and lower operating costs as oil prices in the global market remain volatile.The senator said it would provide workers with added relief and reduce billions of pesos in lost opportunities every day because of traffic congestion. “Acting this early as we anticipate what could happen would strengthen the country’s resilience should the situation get worse,” Escudero said.He noted that Congress has long implemented a four day workweek for its personnel. Extending similar schemes in the private sector could help reduce fuel consumption, save energy, and ease traffic congestion.According to a study by the Japan International Cooperation Agency, Metro Manila’s traffic congestion alone costs the economy an estimated P3.5 billion per day, a figure projected to rise to P5.4 billion daily by 2035 if unaddressed. “If we are losing P3.5 billion every single day because of traffic, that means Metro Manila is bleeding roughly P105 billion a month and more than P1.27 trillion a year,” Escudero said.He said, private-sector participation would amplify the benefits of the government’s temporary shift to a compressed work arrangement, especially in major business districts.Escudero urged firms in Makati and Bonifacio Global City to explore flexible setups that can meaningfully reduce peak hour congestion. “These areas experience some of the heaviest daily traffic volumes, making them ideal starting points for mobility oriented workplace reforms,” he said.The circular also allows agencies to implement the four day onsite setup through a compressed workweek or a designated work from home day, consistent with Civil Service Commission policies.He encouraged LGUs in major business districts to collaborate with employers on area wide mobility strategies, including synchronized staggered schedules, improved pedestrian access, and safer cycling routes.He also urged the public to contribute to energy conservation through everyday habits such as biking short distances, carpooling, and adopting energy efficient practices at home.

- P100M illegal drugs seized in 2-day ops (2026-03-08 16:11)

OVER P100 million worth of illegal drugs were seized in a two-day intensified anti-narcotics operation from March 7-8, resulting in the arrest of nine wanted persons, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said.Among those arrested were high-ranking most wanted persons, including the top three fugitives and others listed as top four, top five, top seven, top nine, and top 10 in their regions. The suspects face charges of rape, statutory rape, murder, and violations of the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, with several cases carrying no bail recommended.Among them are a 25-year-old suspect in Negros Oriental for violation of the anti-illegal drugs law, one in Davao City for murder, and a 55-year-old from the National Capital Region arrested in Pangasinan for multiple counts of qualified rape of a minor.Other fugitives facing rape charges were separately arrested in Bataan, Davao Oriental, Davao Occidental, Bukidnon, and Rizal, along with another suspect wanted for drug-related offenses.Meanwhile, intensified anti-drug operations resulted in the seizure of illegal drugs with a total estimated value of P99,742,575.00, including shabu worth P1.19 million and marijuana valued at P98.55 million.Authorities also uprooted and destroyed marijuana plants with a combined estimated value of about P28.75 million from plantation sites discovered in Ilocos Sur, Kalinga, and Benguet.In a separate interdiction operation at Clark International Airport in Pampanga, authorities arrested two Chinese nationals and seized marijuana worth approximately P69.8 million.In Cebu City, operatives also arrested a 21-year-old Filipino male classified as a high-value individual and seized around 175 grams of shabu worth approximately P1.19 million.PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. commended the operating units and reiterated the PNP’s firm stance against fugitives and illegal drugs.“It is our job to ensure that these lawless elements are accountable. We will not let them escape. Our operations will continue until they face justice,” he said.

- President wants politics-free, swift aid distribution (2026-03-08 16:10)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Sunday pushed for a faster, politics-free distribution of government aid to Filipinos in need.In his latest BBMVLOG, the chief executive encouraged the public to let their sentiments, big or small, be heard so that the government can provide the appropriate action.“It is only right for you to express your thoughts. There are no big or small grievances; all of them are problems that burden people’s lives. And we are here to listen and take action on those things,” he said in Filipino.In providing government services and aid, efforts will be streamlined for the convenience of beneficiaries, particularly senior citizens, and reminded that programs must not be used for political promotion and should instead be delivered more efficiently.“You know, as long as these involve national government programs, speeches, and other publicity before distribution, those will not be allowed. Government services cannot be used for politicking or self-promotion,” the president said.“This is already stated in the DILG (Department of the Interior and Local Government) Memorandum Circular and is also included in the provision of the GAA (General Appropriations Act) on how public funds should be used. It is no longer allowed in the distribution of aid from the national government,” he added.Among those Marcos wants to improve is the processing of civil

registry documents, particularly the correction of birth certificates, as part of the government’s broader push for digitalization and improved public service.He noted receiving countless complaints about the challenges in obtaining documents and applying for an identification card, especially for the vulnerable sector and those living in Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDAs).

- NCR, 5 neighboring areas face power cuts this week (2026-03-08 16:09)

SOME areas in the National Capital Region (NCR) and provinces of Batangas, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal will experience power outages this week due to scheduled maintenance work, power distributor Meralco said on Sunday.In Metro Manila or NCR, Brgy. Holy Spirit and Brgy. Fairview will have no power on March 10 between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. due to line reconstruction work and pole replacement along Republic Ave. in Brgy. Holy Spirit.Some parts of Santa Quiteria in Caloocan City and the whole of Rivera Compound in Brgy. Baesa, Quezon City will have no electricity from March 11-12 between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. for line reconductoring work and replacement of power facilities along Reparo Road in Sta. Quiteria.Also in Caloocan City, some areas in Pilarville 3 Subdivision, and properties in Sterling Phase 1 and Phase 2 Subdivision in Deparo will have no power from March 11-12 between 11 p.m. and 4:30 a.m. due to the replacement of electric poles and conversion of facilities along Diamante St. in Deparo.In the provinces, some parts of the villages of San Luis and Sta. Elena in Sto. Tomas City, Batangas and some service areas in Brgy. Bitin, Bay, Laguna will experience power interruptions on March 10 between 10 a.m. and 30 p.m. due to the relocation of power facilities along Rizal Blvd. in Brgy. San Luis, Sto. Tomas City.In Laguna, some areas in the villages of Real and Turbina in Calamba can expect power interruptions on March 10 between 12:01 a.m. and 5 a.m. due to relocation of facilities and line reconstruction works in Brgy. Real.In Bulacan, some areas in Brgy. Tikay, Malolos City and also in Brgy. Sta. Rita, Guiguinto will have power cuts on March 10 between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. due to the relocation of some facilities in Cyberville Subd., Brgy. Sta. Rita and also in Brgy. Tikay.Some areas in the villages of Bagong Barrio and Cupang in Pandi, Bulacan will have no power supply on March 11 between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. due to the installation of electricity facilities along Sayo and Palanas Sts. in Brgy. Bagong Barrio, Pandi.In Cavite, some portions of The Istana Subd. in Brgy. Malagasang 1-E, Areas Green Gate Subd., Brgy. Malagasang 2-A, locations of Green Estate Phase 1 Subd. in Brgy. Malagasang 1-G, and a portion of Green Place Homes 2 Subd. in Brgy. Malagasang 2-A, all in Imus City, will experience short power interruptions on March 10 between 8:15 a.m. and 8:45 a.m., between 11 a.m. and 11:45 a.m., between 8 a.m. and 8:30 a.m., and between 11:15 a.m. and 12:00 noon, respectively, because of line reconstruction work.Still in Imus, the whole of Tierra Vista Homes in Brgy. Malagasang 2-B and the whole of Villa Susana Homes and Aguirre Subd. in the villages of Malagasang 1-F and Malagasang 2-A will have short power interruptions on March 11 between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m., and between 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m., respectively, also due to line reconstruction work.Some areas in the villages of Salinas 1 and Salinas 2 in Bacoor, Cavite will have short power interruptions on March 11 between 11 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. due to line reconstruction work along Salinas St. in Brgy. Salinas 1.Still in Bacoor, a portion of Capt. M.

Sarino St. from Gen. Evangelista St. to Sgt. E. Gavino St. in Brgy. Mabolo 1 will also experienceshort power outages on March 12 between 1 a.m. and 1:30 a.m. due to line reconstruction workalong Capt. M. Sarino St. in Brgy. Mabolo 1.In General Trias, Cavite, some areas in Il GiardinoSubd. Phase 1 and Phase 2, and some parts of Buenavista Townhomes Subd. Phase 1 and Phase2, together with Sitio Julugan, in Brgy. Buenavista 1, will have short power outages on March 12between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. and between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m., respectively, due to linereconstruction work.Lastly, some parts of Brgy. Cuyambay in Tanay, Brgy. San Jose, AntipoloCity, and Brgy. Pinugay, Baras in Rizal, will have no power on March 12 between 11 a.m. and 2p.m. due to line reconductoring work along Marcos Highway.

- Violence against women rap vs businessman junked (2026-03-08 16:08)

THE Department of Justice (DOJ) has dismissed two separate complaints for violation of the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children (VAWC) Act (Republic Act 9262) against a prominent Filipino Indian businessman, ruling that the psychological report submitted by the complainant lacked evidentiary value.In a 16-page resolution, the DOJ’s Provincial Prosecution Office in Bohol, through Officer in Charge Provincial Prosecutor Eric Ucat, described the psychological report presented by Vicki Narwani as “evidentially bankrupt,” noting it relied solely on her personal account and failed to independently establish any psychological or emotional harm allegedly inflicted by the complainant’s estranged husband, Rajiv Prem Chandiramani.“Though presented as an expert evaluation, it is wholly dependent on the complainant’s unilateral narration and utterly fails to identify — much less analyze — the alleged Panglao, Bohol incident as a factual source of any psychological or emotional injury,” the resolution read.Narwani alleged that Chandiramani verbally abused and physically threatened her in May 2018 while on vacation in Panglao, Bohol, claiming that resort employees called the police due to the commotion. She submitted the psychological report, including a sworn statement from SSg. Rommel Roy Villareal, and screenshots from text messages.The DOJ dismissed Villareal’s statement as “pure hearsay,” citing the absence of official documentation such as a police blotter entry, dispatch log, or incident report. “A careful dispassionate scrutiny of his affidavit... reveals grave, fundamental, and irreconcilable defects that altogether obliterate its credibility,” the resolution said.The decision stressed that RA 9262 protects genuine victims but cannot be used to advance “legally untenable, manufactured, or unsupported claims.”In a separate 10-page resolution, the DOJ’s Provincial Prosecutor in Pampanga also dismissed a similar complaint by Narwani. Associate Prosecutor Mayda Lintag-Ursua found the allegations “couched in general terms lacking details” and noted that the complainant sought psychological consultations 11 years after the alleged Pampanga incident.“Complainant should have subjected herself to a medical examination right after the incident, considering she was seven months pregnant at that time,” the Pampanga resolution read, adding that the delay undermined the credibility of her claims.Chandiramani denied all allegations. Both prosecutors concluded that the complaints lacked sufficient evidence to proceed to court, highlighting the psychological reports’ failure to provide objective, verifiable proof of harm.

- Acosta hails firemen for saving PAO from fire (2026-03-08 16:07)

PUBLIC Attorney’s Office (PAO) chief Persida Rueda-Acosta on Sunday expressed gratitude over firefighters’ prompt actions that spared the building which houses PAO and Board of Parole and Pardon (BPP) from Friday’s massive fire which displaced over 4, 000 families and left residents dead.Rueda-Acosta was likewise hailed by many netizens when she was seen wearing house clothes, among the people, at the height of the fire that swept through a slum area in Brgy. Pinyahan, Quezon City, on Friday night until early Saturday morning.The chief public attorney, who was also with PAO’s chief finance officer — Alma Dumago-Latosa — managed to persuade volunteers and firefighters coming from different fire stations in Metro Manila to save the PAO and BPP building from being engulfed by the massive fire, as it was right beside the burning residential area.Rueda-Acosta and Dumago-Latosa were seen mingling with the fire victims as the PAO head promised to seek help from concerned government agencies for assistance.“I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the fire volunteers and firemen coming from different fire stations in the metropolis for their effort, which effectively spared the building from being caught by the fire, as they also tried to put it out, but the blaze was really massive,” Rueda-Acosta said.With over 4,000 families that lost their homes, reports from the Bureau of Fire Protection said that one male resident died of a heart attack and four volunteers were injured while the fire was sweeping through the squatters’ area, spreading along NIA Road, and lasted until early Saturday morning.Mayor Joy Belmonte, who visited the displaced residents in several temporary shelters, assured them of any assistance, including support to rebuild their homes.Belmonte was with Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) General Manager Mel Robles and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) General Manager Nicolas Torre III when they distributed, also on Sunday, some 2,000 “Charitimba” buckets containing food and other essential supplies as well as modular tents.The city chief executive praised the immediate support and assistance from concerned government agencies, made possible through the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

- PCSO, MMDA, Quezon City distribute relief items to 2K fire-hit families (2026-03-08 16:06)

THE Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), and the Quezon City local government unit (LGU) joined forces on Sunday to distribute relief assistance to nearly 2,000 families displaced by the fire that hit a residential area in Brgy. Pinyahan, Quezon City, late Friday night.In a statement, the PCSO said 2,000 “Charitimba” or charity buckets containing food and other essential supplies, and modular tents, were distributed at Quezon City Hall’s Risen Garden.The distribution was led by PCSO General Manager Melquiades Robles, with Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte and MMDA General Manager Nicolas Torre III.“Our teams worked closely with the local government to help ensure that immediate assistance reached the affected families,” Robles said in a statement.Meanwhile, the MMDA also provided modular evacuation tents as temporary shelters for the families displaced by the blaze.“The MMDA remains ready to assist local governments during emergencies. Through our coordination with Quezon City and PCSO, we hope to provide temporary shelter and support for families while other relief efforts

continue,” Torre said.In all, according to the PCSO’s statement, the goods were distributed to 1,907 families staying in evacuation centers in Flora Ylagan High School, Pinyahan Covered Court, San Isidro Labrador Parish, NIA Covered Court, Pinyahan Elementary School, NHA Balik-Probinsiya Covered Court, and the National Power Corp. (Napocor).

- QC sets up water testing lab for safe drinking water (2026-03-08 16:05)

THE Quezon City government has opened its water testing laboratory to ensure safe drinking water, especially for its QCitizens, citing a report that acute gastroenteritis is the 32nd leading cause of death in the city.Mayor Joy Belmonte said on Sunday that the water testing laboratory, which will be managed by the city’s Drinking Water Quality Monitoring Committee, is located on the second floor of the Quezon City Health Department (QCHD) building within the City Hall compound.“This initiative reflects the city’s commitment to providing clean and safe drinking water to all residents. We are taking proactive steps to protect our communities from diseases related to poor water quality,” Belmonte said.Belmonte said that access to clean and safe water is fundamental to public health and safety.She cited QCHD’s 2023 report, which placed acute gastroenteritis — causing infection of the stomach and intestines due to viruses, bacteria, or parasites in contaminated water — as the 32nd leading cause of death in the city.The city chief executive told The Manila Times that the Sangguniang Panlunsod (city council) also responded by passing an ordinance in 2024, mandating the regular monitoring and testing of water sources across the city.According to the local government, the water laboratory will serve as a testing site in conducting regular microbiological examinations of drinking water from all 382 regular sampling sites (RSPs) in the city.These points represent households served by the water concessionaires, Maynilad and Manila Water, it added.The laboratory will also initially test water from all refilling stations and ice plants operating within the city’s jurisdiction, to ensure compliance with water safety and quality standards established by the Department of Health (DOH) and the Philippine National Standards for Drinking Water 2017.“This initiative is part of the local government unit’s strategy to establish its own laboratories,” Belmonte said.She added that the city government is looking to enhance its capacity to manage water safety once the water laboratory becomes fully functional.

- SC: Corporate execs share liability with agencies for seafarers’ claims (2026-03-08 16:04)

CORPORATE officers of recruitment or manning agencies may be held personally liable, together with their companies, for disability benefits owed to Filipino seafarers, the Supreme Court ruled.In a decision written by Associate Justice Jhosep Lopez, the Court’s Special First Division granted a motion for partial reconsideration in a seafarer’s disability case.The Court had earlier found Magsaysay Maritime Corporation and Princess Cruises Ltd. liable for the disability benefits of their seafarer, Ruthgar Parce. In its latest ruling, it added Magsaysay fleet director Sorwin Joy Rivera as a solidarily liable party.Magsaysay hired Parce as an electrical fitter for Princess Cruises. He suffered an injury while onboard and was repatriated to Manila for treatment. The company doctor diagnosed rotator tendinitis and later declared the treatment period complete, prompting the employer to consider him fit for work.Parce sought a second

opinion that found him unfit for sea duty, and asked for a referral to a third doctor, as required when medical findings conflict. Instead, the company asked for the second report and explored a settlement, prompting Parce to file a complaint before the National Labor Relations Commission.A Labor Arbiter awarded him $60,000 in disability benefits, ruling that the company doctor’s report failed to clearly state he was fit to work and that the 240-day period to issue a final assessment had already lapsed. The NLRC affirmed the ruling.The Court of Appeals of the Philippines later reversed the decision, but the Supreme Court reinstated the liability of Magsaysay and Princess Cruises and ruled that Rivera must also share liability.The Court cited Section 10 of Republic Act 8042, which provides that officers of recruitment or manning agencies are jointly liable with the company for monetary awards granted to overseas Filipino workers.

- ‘Nearly 5M learners will benefit from 2026 feeding program’ (2026-03-08 16:03)

SEN. Sherwin Gatchalian said that about five million learners would benefit from the government’s expanded, school-based feeding program (SBFP) in 2026.The senator, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, said on Sunday that with a P28.6 billion budget, the SBFP would cover 4.81 million learners nationwide.He urged the Department of Education (DepEd) to tap local government units (LGUs) to ensure the program's efficient rollout. “The fastest way to implement this is to tap the LGUs. We can go all the way down to the municipal level because the real challenge here is logistics,” Gatchalian said in a statement.The 2026 General Appropriations Act authorized DepEd to enter into memoranda of agreement with LGUs, from barangay (villages) to provinces, as implementing partners of the feeding program.The budget increased feeding days from 120 to 200 and covers all kindergarten to Grade 1 learners, while continuing to support wasted, severely wasted, stunted, and severely stunted children from Grades 2 to 6.Dr. Miguel Angelo Mantaring, DepEd’s Bureau of Learner Support Services Director, said the department will engage LGUs through the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines.

- Ban sought on FB groups linked to child trafficking (2026-03-08 16:02)

THE National Authority for Child Care (NACC) is calling on Meta PH to remove several Facebook groups and user accounts involved in online child trafficking, child exploitation and illegal adoption. “We call on social media intermediaries, particularly Meta PH, to totally ban groups and accounts being used as a platform to facilitate child trafficking — especially online baby selling, illegal adoption, and child exploitation,” NACC Executive Director and Undersecretary Janelle Ejercito Estrada said on Sunday.Estrada said in a statement emailed to The Manila Times that Meta PH and other social media platforms cannot evade accountability by claiming they do not officially operate within the Philippines.She said it was preparing to officially communicate with Meta PH and other social media platforms like Instagram, Tiktok and YouTube.Estrada said such platforms are liable under Republic Act 11862 or the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2022 to knowingly or by gross negligence allow their internet infrastructure to be used for the purpose of promoting trafficking in persons. “More so that social media platforms have a

moral obligation to self-regulate. Their responsibility extends to ensuring their services are not used for criminal activity — especially for vulnerable children,” Estrada pointed out.An attached agency of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the NACC made the call following an entrapment operation by the Philippine National Police (PNP) Women and Children Protection Center, which resulted in the rescue of four children in San Pedro City, Laguna, on Feb. 26.Arrested were two suspects who were common-law partners, ages 43 and 34, who allegedly tried to sell a five-day-old female infant for P35,000.Three other children in their custody, ages 2, 11 and 12, who were deemed at risk, were also rescued.The couple was also trying to sell the two-year-old female child. Police are determining the suspects’ relation to the children.Charges of violating existing laws on anti-trafficking in persons, as well as RA 7610, or the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act, were filed against the suspects.The NACC continues to work closely with law enforcement agencies and partners to combat online child trafficking, child exploitation and illegal adoption “to ensure that every child is protected and given the opportunity to grow in a safe, loving, and permanent family,” said Estrada, a former San Juan City vice mayor and daughter of Sen. Jinggoy Estrada.

- Water interruptions to hit Metro Manila, Rizal, Cainta due to maintenance, high demand (2026-03-08 05:18)

MANILA, Philippines -- Parts of Metro Manila, Rizal and Cavite will have scheduled water interruptions this week because of maintenance works and high demand, the two water concessionaires said on Sunday. Manila Water and Maynilad said on Sunday.For Manila Water, affected areas in Metro Manila are Comembo and East Rembo, West Bicutan in Taguig; Marikina City, parts of Quezon City, Mandaluyong and San Juan.In Rizal, affected areas are in Binangonan and Cainta.Affected areas serviced by Maynilad are Manila, Caloocan City, Valenzuela City, parts of Quezon City, Parañaque, Pasay and Cavite.

- 2 policemen, civilians nabbed in Taguig drug bust (2026-03-08 04:28)

MANILA, Philippines -- Two policemen and several civilians were arrested in a buy-bust operation over the weekend in Taguig City.In a statement on Sunday, the Taguig City Police Station (TCPS) said the operation, carried out on Saturday with the help of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Group (PDEG), led to the arrest of the unidentified suspects and the recovery of around 100 grams of shabu with an estimated Dangerous Drugs Board value of P680,000, along with police-issued firearms, cellular phones, and identification cards.Taguig City condemned the involvement of its police personnel, reiterating that it maintained zero tolerance for illegal drugs and any form of misconduct in law enforcement.

- Public urged to report gas stations 'prematurely' increasing fuel prices before scheduled adjustments (2026-03-08 03:49)

MANILA, Philippines -- Sen. Panfilo Lacson urged the public to report gas stations that have " prematurely" increased fuel prices as some have reportedly raised pump prices ahead of the scheduled adjustments.Filipinos are bracing for another round of fuel price hikes as crude oil

prices in the international market surged amid possible supply disruptions arising from the conflict in the Middle East.Earlier reports indicated prices of kerosene may go up by ₱24.92 per liter; diesel by ₱19.62 per liter; and gasoline by ₱10.43 per liter. Final price movements are scheduled for official announcement on Monday, March 9.Lacson said prematurely increasing fuel prices violated Republic Act 8479, or the Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Act of 1998 and RA 7394, or the Consumer Act of the Philippines.The Senate president pro tempore said the public could report violations to the Philippine National Police (PNP) and concerned local government units (LGUs)."Amid reports that some gasoline stations have already increased prices, they must be reported to authorities," Lacson wrote on X on Saturday.Sen. Win Gatchalian urged the Department of Energy (DOE) to monitor retailers and oil companies for possible profiteering amid what he described as an “energy crisis” stemming from the escalating conflict in the Middle East.DOE Director Rino Abad said the government has no control over the pricing of petroleum products due to the oil deregulation law.

- Marcos leaves for US working visit (2026-03-08 03:42)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. left for the United States on Sunday for his working visit.The chartered flight carrying him and his lean delegation which include First Lady Louise “Liza” Araneta-Marcos; Foreign Affairs Secretary Maria Theresa Lazaro; Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac; Presidential peace adviser Carlito Galvez Jr.; and Presidential Communications Office Acting Secretary Dave Gomez took off from the Villamor Air Base in Pasay City at 10:22 a.m.The agenda of Marcos’ four-day trip to New York includes his attendance at the opening of the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) at the United Nations Headquarters where he will highlight the Philippines’ commitment to promoting, advancing, and protecting the rights and well-being of women and girls.The chief executive is also expected to speak at the special session of the UN General Assembly where he will rally for additional support for the country’s candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2027 to 2028.By getting a seat in the council, the Philippines will have a voice in the discussions concerning global safety and security, Malacañang previously said.The president is likewise scheduled to meet with UN Secretary General António Guterres to discuss the situation in the Middle East to reiterate the importance of promoting peace and supporting the protection of civilians affected by tensions in the region.This is Marcos’ sixth visit to the US since 2022.

- Vico Sotto pays tribute to contributions, leadership of Filipinas on Women’s Month (2026-03-08 03:04)

MANILA, Philippines — Pasig City Mayor Vico Sotto called on residents to recognize the contributions and leadership of women as the country observes National Women’s Month, in a video greeting shared by the Pasig Public Information Office on Saturday.Sotto highlighted the national theme “Lead Like the Babaylans, Filipinas,” which underscored the role of women in shaping the country’s identity.He also stressed the importance of continuing to acknowledge women’s capabilities and contributions across different sectors of society.“Happy National

Women’s Month Pasigueños! Under this year’s national theme of Lead Like the Babaylans, Filipinas, we recognize and we remember the role of women’s leadership in our national identity,” Sotto said.Sotto said the city government was implementing policies aimed at protecting women and ensuring their participation in governance, including the Safe Spaces Ordinance and representation in local special bodies where women have a voice in policymaking.“Pasigueños, let us continue to recognize the contributions and capabilities of women in various fields and in our society,” he added.

- China’s maritime militia presence in South China Sea hit record high in 2025, says US-based monitor (2026-03-08 02:53)

MANILA, Philippines -- China’s maritime militia were deployed in record-high numbers across the South China Sea in 2025, with vessels increasingly concentrated around key disputed reefs near areas of tension with the Philippines, according to a Washington-based research project that monitors maritime disputes and activities in Asia.Satellite imagery analysis by the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI) found a daily average of 241 militia vessels operating across monitored reefs in 2025, slightly higher than the 232 recorded in 2024. The figure represents the highest level observed since the group began systematic monitoring in 2021.The " Spratly Backbone Fishing Fleet” composed of professional units and civilian vessels belonging to China was detected across all reefs monitored by the initiative, though activity continued to shift toward Mischief Reef and Whitsun Reef, which together accounted for nearly half of the total observed vessels.Researchers said tracking militia vessels remained challenging because most ships did not broadcast positions through automatic identification system (AIS) platforms. Instead, AMTI relied on commercial satellite imagery collected throughout 2025 to count ships congregating at key reefs.The study expanded its dataset to 12 reefs with the addition of Johnson Reef, where satellite imagery revealed a moderate seasonal concentration of vessels east of the feature during the past year.Most ships identified were believed to belong to the Spratly Backbone Fishing Fleet, which is numerically larger than the professional militia component. For the study, researchers counted only vessels between 45 and 65 meters in length, a size commonly associated with Chinese militia trawlers and rarely seen among other fishing fleets or the China Coast Guard.Satellite imagery was analyzed roughly four times each month at each reef, with gaps between observations filled using interpolation to allow comparison across locations.Seasonal patterns remained consistent with previous years. Vessel presence was lowest from January to mid-February before rising after the Lunar New Year. Two major surges were observed across most features—one in June and another in late November.At Mischief Reef, militia presence showed four separate peaks exceeding 200 vessels, reinforcing its role as a key staging point for monitoring disputed areas near the Philippines, including Sabina Shoal and Second Thomas Shoal.Whitsun Reef displayed a similar seasonal trend, with vessel numbers peaking in the spring before declining during the summer and early fall and rising again later in the year.Other features recorded increased militia activity compared with previous years. Iroquois Reef showed higher peaks and a stronger baseline presence throughout 2025, while Thitu Reef experienced increases in both average and peak

vessel counts despite reduced coast guard activity in the area. Gaven Reef maintained peak levels similar to those seen in 2024 but had a higher average daily presence.In contrast, Fiery Cross Reef recorded a sharp drop in militia activity. After averaging 32 vessels per day in 2024, the reef had almost no observable militia presence in 2025, suggesting a possible redeployment of Chinese vessels rather than an overall reduction in militia operations.The research also compared militia deployments with patrols by the China Coast Guard. Despite a record-high coast guard presence around Scarborough Shoal, militia vessels remained relatively few in the area.Analysts said this pattern suggests that Beijing relied more heavily on smaller but more capable professional militia units and coast guard ships to patrol highly contested areas, while larger numbers of Spratly Backbone vessels remain anchored at safer locations such as Mischief and Whitsun reefs.According to the AMTI, the 2025 data mirrors patterns seen in 2024 but with slightly higher overall militia presence and a redistribution of vessels across eastern areas of the Spratly Islands, according to the study.Researchers added that the shift may reflect Beijing’s evolving strategy as international scrutiny has increasingly identified the fleet as part of China’s maritime militia rather than a traditional fishing force.

- Service with a smile: Filipino workers help make cruising memorable (2026-03-08 00:29)

SINGAPORE — When the Adventure, Disney Cruise Line’s newest ship, opens its doors to tourists for the first time on March 10, 2026, hundreds of Filipinos will be among the more than 2,000 personnel who will ensure that their stay on board will be pleasant and memorable.The Adventure, Disney’s biggest cruise ship, has Singapore as its home port. It is the first DCL ship to target the Asian market. The 16-story vessel, which can be considered a floating theme park, can carry over 6,000 guests.One of the Filipino employees interviewed by The Manila Times considers herself lucky to be working on the cruise ship. Although work hours can be long, she said the crew, a mix of various nationalities, cruises along well, reporting to their posts with cheer, always gracious and ready to assist guests.Filipino personnel abound on the Adventure. In the restaurants, pools, shops, recreation rooms or staterooms, one can bump into them at every turn.One employee who hails from Northern Luzon said that he believed Filipinos’ innate sense of hospitality and service with a smile, in addition to their mastery of the English language, make them the preferred crew for the cruise industry. He said they worked long hours but Disney compensates well.No figure was given on how many Filipinos have been hired by DCL to work on the Adventure, but by the looks of it, seems like a majority. And if you’re a Filipino cruising for the first time, that makes all the difference. Seeing a compatriot who is willing to go the distance can make one’s vacation truly more fun and memorable.

- Pagasa monitors low-pressure area outside PAR (2026-03-08 00:10)

MANILA, Philippines – A low-pressure area (LPA) has been spotted outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR), but is unlikely to affect the country, the state-run weather agency said on Sunday.Weather specialist Veronica Torres of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said in a 5 a.m. briefing that the LPA, which was estimated to be 1, 710 kilometers east of northeastern Mindanao, also has a slim chance to

enter PAR. “In fact, it was not seen to intensify into a tropical depression in the coming days,” Torres said.She said two weather systems – the northeast monsoon, locally known as ‘amihan’, and the easterlies – have been prevailing in most parts of the archipelago.These weather systems have been bringing scattered and isolated rain showers and thunderstorms, but hot and humid weather is likely during late morning until mid-afternoon, according to the Pagasa forecaster.In particular, Metro Manila, Ilocos Region, Occidental Mindoro, the rest of Central Luzon, and the rest of CALABARZON (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon) would likely have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated light rains due to the effect of amihan, the national weather bureau said.The rest of the country, meanwhile, could experience partly cloudy to overcast skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms due to the easterlies – winds that carry warm and humid weather, it added.

- Another batch of Pinoys return from Dubai, Jeddah (2026-03-08 00:04)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) announced another batch of Filipinos returning from the Middle East, amid the ongoing conflict in the region.On Sunday morning, OWWA, on its Facebook page, said that 65 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and three dependents arrived in the country from Dubai, United Arab Emirates via Emirates Flight EK 334, which landed at Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 3.Late on Saturday, the DMW said that 19 OFWs returned to the country safely from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, through coordination with the Migrant Workers Office (MWO) in the city.According to the DMW and the MWO, they were supposed to return home last March 3, but their flight was delayed because of the conflict.

- Pagasa monitors LPA outside Philippines (2026-03-08 00:01)

MANILA, Philippines – A low pressure area (LPA) has been spotted outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) but is unlikely to directly affect the country, the state-run weather agency said on Sunday.Weather specialist Veronica Torres of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said in a 5 a.m. briefing that the LPA, which was estimated to be 1, 710 kilometers east of northeastern Mindanao, has also a slim chance of entering PAR. “In fact, it was not seen to intensify into a tropical depression in the coming days,” Torres said.She said two weather systems – northeast monsoon or "amihan" and the easterlies – have been prevailing in most parts of the archipelago.These weather systems have been bringing scattered and isolated rains and thunderstorms but hot and humid weather will be felt especially during late morning until mid-afternoon, according to the Pagasa forecaster.In particular, Metro Manila, Ilocos Region, Occidental Mindoro, the rest of Central Luzon and the rest of Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) will likely have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated light rains owing to the effect of amihan, the national weather bureau said.The rest of the country, meanwhile, will be experiencing partly cloudy to overcast skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms due to the easterlies – winds that carry warm and humid weather – it added.

- DOH reports 65% drop in rabies cases (2026-03-07 18:55)

MANILA, Philippines—The Department of Health (DOH) on Saturday reported a 65 percent decrease in rabies cases compared to the same period last year.According to its latest data, only 17 cases were reported from January 4 to February 21 this year, down from 49 cases reported during the same period in 2025.Despite the decline, the agency urged pet owners to have their pets vaccinated annually to prevent the spread of rabies, especially as March is observed as Rabies Awareness Month.

- DOH urges parents to vaccinate girls vs HPV starting at age 9 (2026-03-07 18:51)

MANILA, Philippines—The Department of Health (DOH) on Saturday urged parents to have their children vaccinated against the human papillomavirus (HPV) as early as age 9.In a radio interview, the DOH said free HPV vaccinations are available for young girls and stressed that the vaccine is most effective for those who have not yet had sexual contact.Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa noted, however, that despite the availability of free vaccination, only about 70 percent of parents have agreed to have their daughters immunized.“We need to convince more parents to have their young girls be vaccinated,” he said.

- BREAKING NEWS NO. 1: ‘Amihan’ affecting NLuzon, easterlies in rest of PH (2026-03-07 18:50)

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration on Saturday said that Northern Luzon will be hit by the northeast monsoon or “amihan”.In its morning bulletin on Saturday, the weather bureau said that Batanes and Babuyan Islands will have cloudy skies with rains, Apayao and Mainland Cagayan will have cloudy skies with light rains, while the Ilocos Region, the rest of Cordillera Administrative Region, and the rest of Cagayan Valley will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated light rains.Meanwhile, Metro Manila and the rest of the country is expected to have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms because of the easterlies.

- DOST-FNRI warns vitamin A deficiency threatens health (2026-03-07 16:36)

MANILA, Philippines—The Department of Science and Technology-Food and Nutrition Research Institute (DOST-FNRI) on Saturday warned that the lack of essential nutrients—such as vitamin A—in diets threatens eyesight, weakens the immune system, and affects brain development.In its latest report, the agency noted that 3 in every 100 Filipinos have vitamin A deficiency (VAD), a problem they called “hidden hunger.” This, they claim, highlights the need for stronger nutrition education among Filipino families and improved access to vitamin and mineral supplementation for vulnerable groups—particularly pregnant women and children.“When intake is too low, children become more vulnerable to infections and, in severe cases, may suffer from visual problems. Among pregnant women, adequate vitamin A is important for maternal and child health,” the DOST-FNRI said in a statement.

- ICC rejects bid to free Duterte (2026-03-07 16:21)

(UPDATE) THE Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Court (ICC) confirmed the continued pre-trial detention of former president Rodrigo Duterte, rejecting a defense appeal that sought his release on health grounds, as prosecutors separately asked judges to clarify the conduct of lawyers representing him in the case.In a unanimous judgment dated March 6, the five-judge Appeals Chamber upheld the Jan. 26 ruling of Pre-Trial Chamber I that ordered Duterte to remain in custody while facing charges of crimes against humanity linked to killings during his anti-drug campaign.The decision came as the Office of the Prosecutor filed a separate request asking the chamber to clarify rules governing the actions of Duterte’s defense lawyers, particularly their communications with individuals connected to the case, including victims or potential witnesses.The developments mark the latest procedural steps in the ICC proceedings against Duterte, who has been detained in the court’s facility in The Hague, the Netherlands, since March 2025.Health-based release rejectedDuterte’s lawyers had appealed the Pre-Trial Chamber’s decision maintaining his detention, arguing that his deteriorating health and alleged cognitive impairment constituted a “changed circumstance” that justified his immediate release under Article 60(3) of the court’s statute.The defense relied in part on a medical report prepared by doctors it commissioned, which it said showed Duterte’s health condition significantly reduced the risks cited by judges when ordering his detention.Those risks include the possibility that the accused might flee, obstruct proceedings, intimidate witnesses, or continue committing crimes if released.However, the Appeals Chamber ruled that the Pre-Trial Chamber did not commit legal or factual errors when it declined to rely on the defense-commissioned report.Judges noted that the report did not contain new medical findings and that the doctors who authored it did not conduct a fresh examination of Duterte.The ruling said the report itself acknowledged that “no independent clinical re-examination was conducted,” and instead relied on earlier assessments by an independent medical panel appointed by the court.The Appeals Chamber said those court-appointed experts provided the most reliable and up-to-date information regarding Duterte’s health condition.While the panel’s reports constituted new medical information considered during the detention review, the judges said the findings did not amount to a change in circumstances significant enough to alter the earlier ruling keeping Duterte in custody.The Appeals Chamber also agreed with the Pre-Trial Chamber’s approach of refusing to rely on medical reports submitted by parties to the proceedings in order to preserve the neutrality of expert evidence.The judges rejected the defense’s argument that disregarding the report violated Duterte’s fair trial rights or the principle of equality of arms between prosecution and defense.According to the ruling, the defense had multiple opportunities to present arguments and observations regarding Duterte’s health condition, and the chamber had adequately explained the basis for its decision.Having dismissed all arguments raised by the defense, the Appeals Chamber confirmed the earlier decision ordering Duterte’s continued detention while the case proceeds toward the confirmation of charges stage.Defense conduct questionedAt the same time, prosecutors asked the Pre-Trial Chamber to clarify issues related to the conduct and authority of Duterte’s defense counsel in dealings with individuals connected to the case.In a filing titled “Request for Clarification regarding Defense Counsel,” the Office of the Prosecutor sought judicial guidance on whether members of the defense team may contact

victims or potential witnesses and under what conditions such communication would be allowed.The request followed instances in which individuals connected to the case were reportedly contacted by lawyers associated with Duterte’s defense.Prosecutors said the chamber should clarify the limits of such communication to ensure that contacts with victims or witnesses do not interfere with the proceedings or undermine safeguards protecting participants.The filing also asked judges to clarify the scope of authority claimed by individuals communicating on behalf of Duterte’s defense, including whether those individuals are formally recognized as part of the defense team before the court.According to prosecutors, judicial guidance is necessary to avoid confusion among victims and other participants about the status and authority of lawyers reaching out to them in relation to the case.Duterte was arrested in March 2025 after the ICC issued a warrant accusing him of crimes against humanity for murder.Prosecutors later filed a document containing charges alleging that he is criminally responsible for murder and attempted murder committed between November 2011 and March 2019.The prosecution alleges the killings formed part of a widespread and systematic attack against civilians during anti-drug operations carried out while Duterte served first as mayor of Davao City and later as president of the Philippines.

- Tiangco asks: What's going on with Zaldy Co? (2026-03-07 16:19)

(UPDATE) NAVOTAS Rep. Toby Tiangco has urged Congress to conduct a public hearing in aid of legislation to speed up the serving of an arrest warrant against Zaldy Co, the fugitive ex-congressman at the center of the flood control bribery scandal.The anti-graft court, the Sandiganbayan, has issued three arrest warrants against Co, but he remains at large outside the country.In a statement on Saturday, Tiangco said he filed House Resolution 808, which urges the House leadership to convene the Committee of the Whole to conduct a public inquiry in aid of legislation regarding the status of the arrest warrant against Co and to recommend legislative measures, if necessary.Tiangco questioned whether the authorities are still looking for Co, with many asking if there is "no sense of urgency" to find and hold him accountable.He further said there is a need for "clear-cut guidelines" for enforcing arrest warrants when a subject is outside Philippine jurisdiction, citing the conflicting positions of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) in implementing Co's warrant of arrest."DILG earlier said DFA is the agency primarily responsible for ensuring that Co will be successfully prosecuted before our court. The DFA, however, clarified that the enforcement of legal processes against Co involves a 'whole-of-government approach.' Whose agency should be responsible for cases such as this?" Tiangco said.Tiangco also stressed the need to determine whether legislative gaps allow individuals with substantial resources to evade legal processes and hide in foreign jurisdictions with which our country has no extradition treaty."There appears to be a compelling need to determine whether existing laws sufficiently define institutional cooperation and accountability on the service and execution of warrants and bringing before our jurisdiction politically exposed persons who leave Philippine territory," Tiangco said.He said the inability to immediately enforce an arrest warrant against a high-profile individual allegedly hiding abroad raises serious questions about which

government agency bears responsibility for the execution of the warrant, coordination with foreign jurisdictions, and engagement with international law-enforcement agencies.Officials from the Department of Justice (DOJ); the secretary of DILG; the secretary of DFA; the head of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI); the chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP); the head of the Bureau of Immigration; and the ambassador of Portugal to the Philippines will be invited to the hearing."Given the magnitude of the alleged flood control anomalies, there is a compelling need for the cooperation and active involvement of multiple agencies to effect legal process against fugitives from justice," Tiangco said.Meanwhile, the Sandiganbayan's Sixth Division has denied Co’s motion for reconsideration to nullify his declaration as a "fugitive from justice."In a decision written by division chairman Associate Justice Sarah Jane Fernandez and released on March 5, the court denied Co's motion for being filed beyond the reglementary period, noting that his motion should have been filed within a non-extendible period of five calendar days.Co, in his motion, received his copy of the resolution on Feb. 3, meaning he only had until Feb. 9 to file his motion, but he filed it on Feb. 18, which is beyond the five-day period.Even if he filed the motion within the reglementary period, the court said it would still deny Co's petition for lack of merit, stating that there is nothing in his motion that would warrant the reversal of the resolution.Aside from Fernandez, the other justices who concurred in the resolution were Associate Justices Kevin Narce Vivero and Lord Villanueva.

- Oil prices surge as Mideast war rages (2026-03-07 16:18)

NEW YORK — Crude prices surged Friday on mounting fears about oil supply disruption during the Middle East war, while equities retreated on poor US hiring data.The conflict, in which nearly every country in the Middle East has sustained damage from missiles or drone strikes, has left ships that carry roughly 20 million barrels of oil a day stranded in the Persian Gulf, unable to safely pass through the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the gulf that is bordered on its north side by Iran.The disruption and damage to key oil and gas facilities in the Middle East have led to an interruption in the supply of oil and gas.Oil prices surpassed $90 a barrel Friday, with American crude settling at $90.90, up 36 percent from a week ago, and Brent, the international standard, climbing 27 percent over the course of the week to land at $92.69.The international benchmark oil contract, Brent North Sea crude, surged to $92.69 per barrel, up 8.5 percent for the day and nearly 30 percent for the week, after US President Donald Trump said only the “unconditional surrender” of Iran would end the Middle East war.The main US contract, West Texas Intermediate, soared more than 12 percent to over $90 per barrel, topping off the biggest weekly gain on record.Maritime traffic has all but dried up through the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world’s crude oil and liquefied natural gas supplies run.Market reaction to the conflict had been tempered by hopes that it would be short, but Trump’s demand for Iran’s capitulation increases the prospect of a long conflict.Trump’s comments “dashed hopes that the conflict will be averted quickly, and the oil price has continued its push” higher, said XTB Research Director Kathleen Brooks.The prospect of high energy prices for a sustained period has fanned fears of a fresh spike in inflation that could hit the global economy while curbing the ability of central banks to cut

interest rates to prop up growth. “The longer that key energy infrastructure and shipping routes in the region are affected, the greater the chance of a significant inflationary impact,” said AJ Bell Investment Director Russ Mould.Attacks on oilfields were reported in southern Iraq and in the northern autonomous Kurdistan region, which forced a US-run oilfield to cease production. Kuwait has also begun cutting production due to a lack of storage capacity, the Wall Street Journal reported.Earlier this week, Trump pledged to protect ships through the Strait of Hormuz, but shipping companies have exercised caution in the region.Trump’s pledge helped “reduce some of the risk premium in oil markets,” but will have “limited impact unless Iran’s extensive disruption capabilities are first neutralized,” said a note from analysts at JPMorgan Chase.War’s falloutThe fallout is ratcheting up what consumers and business will pay for gasoline, diesel and jet fuel, with some drivers already feeling it at the pump. “It’s crazy. It’s not needed, especially at a time when people are already struggling, but not unexpected from all this turmoil that’s going on,” said Mark Doran, who was pumping gas in Middlebury, Vermont, on Friday. “I don’t think there’s been an end in sight to any Middle East conflict that’s been started by us, so the fact that they say that there’s going to be an end that quickly is not believable, and the Middle East is, you know, a place that the US is not going to solve.” On Monday, President Donald Trump said the US expected its military operations against Iran to last four to five weeks but has “the capability to go far longer.” And on Friday, Trump appeared to rule out talks with Iran absent its “unconditional surrender.” “The more news we get, the more it seems like this is going to last a really long time,” said Al Salazar, head of macro oil and gas research at Enverus.In the US, a gallon of regular gasoline rose to $3.32 on Friday, up 11 percent from a week ago, according to AAA motor club. Diesel was selling for $4.33 a gallon Friday, up 15 percent from a week ago.The price shocks were felt even more heavily in Europe and Asia, markets that rely more heavily on energy supplies from the Middle East. Diesel prices doubled in Europe, and jet fuel prices rose by close to 200 percent in Asia, according to Claudio Galimberti, chief economist at Rystad Energy.Energy prices climbed throughout the week as Iran launched a series of retaliatory attacks, including a drone strike on the US Embassy in Saudi Arabia, and the conflict widened. Iran also hit a major refinery in Saudi Arabia and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility in Qatar, halting flows of refined products and taking about 20 percent of the world’s LNG supply offline. “We keep seeing news of vessels being hit or refineries or pipelines, so the list is very long,” Galimberti said. As a result, roughly 9 million barrels of oil per day are off the market because of facilities being hit or producers taking precautionary measures, he said. “Right now, with all of this shut in, we are in a situation of extreme deficit.” The US is a net exporter of oil, but that does not mean it is immune to increases in the price of oil or gasoline, or that its producers can just make up the difference.Oil is traded on global markets, so even the oil produced in the US has risen in price based on what’s happening in the Middle East. And for many American oil producers, “if you put more wells in the ground, there’s about a six-month lag before you get that production uplift,” Salazar said.In addition, the US can’t simply turn all of its crude oil into gasoline. That’s because most of the oil produced in the US is light, sweet crude, and refineries on the East and West coasts are primarily designed to process heavier, sour crude. As a result, the US exports some of its crude oil and imports some

refined products such as gasoline.US job lossesMeanwhile, data showed the US economy had unexpectedly lost jobs in February, while unemployment also edged up.The world’s biggest economy shed 92,000 jobs last month, down from revised job growth of 126,000 in January, said the Labor Department.New data released Friday also showed US retail sales had fallen by 0.2 percent in January.Conserving energyIn the Philippines, Vice President Sara Duterte called on everyone to save energy costs amid rising fuel and commodities prices due to the war in the Middle East.“Many of us are worried. The prices of basic commodities continue to rise, and alongside the increase in fuel prices, the hardship will become even more severe. Parents are counting every peso, and many of us are anxious about what will happen next,” Duterte said in a video statement on Saturday.“I want you to know — you are not alone. We are all going through this struggle. We will all feel the weight of rising prices, especially for food. But there is still something we can do as citizens and as a community. And there is even more that the government must do,” she added.She urged local government units to prohibit non-essential activities that consume fuel, such as festival parades, as well as providing early notices to consumers and businesses regarding price hikes.

- Eala win sets up Gauff rematch at Indian Wells (2026-03-07 16:17)

(UPDATE) BACKED once more by the Filipino diaspora packing the stands, Alexandra "Alex" Eala staged an impeccable comeback to enter the BNP Paribas Open third round.The Filipino tennis ace came back from a 4-5 game deficit in the 12th game of the third set, turning back Ukrainian Dayana Yastremska, 7-5, 4-6, 7-5, at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden Stadium 3 Saturday afternoon in Manila.Aided by Yastremska's three double faults late in the 12th game, Eala withstood a rally and clinched the match when the Ukrainian hit a long return.After hugging Yastremska and clasping hands with the umpire at center court, the emotional Eala yelled in celebration, riling up the already boisterous Filipino crowd.Winning the 2-hour and 43-minute duel, Eala repeated over world no. 52 Yastremska whom she first defeated at the Eastbourne Open quarterfinals last year, 6-1, 6-2."It was incredible," Eala said in the post-match court interview. "This is my first time in Indian Wells."Seeded 31st in the tournament, world no. 32 Eala set up a rematch against fourth seed and world no. 4 Coco Gauff in the round of 32, likely on Monday.Eala fell to Gauff at the Dubai Tennis Championships, 0-6, 2-6.Gauff defeated Uzbekistani Kamilla Rakhimova in their round of 64 clash, 6-3, 7-6(5).Before facing Gauff, Eala competes in the doubles event with American partner Iva Jovic.Eala and Jovic take on the American-Latvian pair of Hailey Baptiste and Jelena Ostapenko on Sunday morning, Manila time.

- Anne Curtis rejects Bong Suntay's apology for 'vulgar analogy' (2026-03-07 16:16)

(UPDATE) ACTRESS and TV host Anne Curtis on Saturday rejected the apology issued by Quezon City 4th District Rep. Bong Suntay, who said during a congressional hearing that he imagined he saw her at a hotel and wondered, his heart full of desire, what might happen.Curtis broke her silence through a lengthy social media post days after Suntay referenced her in a "sexualized analogy" during a March 3 House Committee on Justice hearing.“Hi. It took me a while to speak up. I was focused on what mattered most, being reunited with my family, who were

stranded in the Middle East and getting home safely,” Curtis began. “I am home now, and now I'm ready to say what needs to be said. Not for revenge or drama, but because remaining silent would be wrong ... for me, and for every woman watching," she said.The actress said she was shocked when she learned that her name had been used during the hearing. “A vulgar, sexualized analogy. My name disgustingly used without my consent, in the wrong context, and more importantly, without an ounce of respect. My initial reaction was one of shock. I was hurt, disturbed by how perverted it was, and angry," she said.The controversy erupted after Suntay referenced Curtis while discussing impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. In defending Duterte’s earlier statements, the lawmaker argued that “imagination” or thoughts cannot be criminalized and used a hypothetical scenario involving the actress to illustrate his point.The remarks were stricken from the record, and quickly drew backlash online and from public figures, particularly as they came at the start of Women’s Month.In her statement, Curtis said the issue extends far beyond the single incident. “What happened to me isn't rare. It happens to women every day ... in offices, in group chats, in rooms where men think no one is listening, or worse, in rooms where they know everyone is and simply don't care," she said.She added that what made the situation especially troubling was that the remark came from a public official.However, she said she would not focus on the lawmaker himself but on the culture that allows such comments to persist. “Mr. Suntay, I won't spend much time on you. Not because what you did was small, but because this was never really about you. Since you used me as an example, let me use you as one too. You've become the poster boy of something much bigger: a culture that still thinks it's acceptable to talk about women this way. Worse, one that tolerates it from our leaders," she said. “As they say, misogyny dressed up as a joke is still misogyny. ... You hold a seat paid for by taxpayers. Women are taxpayers. I am a taxpayer. We are not props in your commentary," she added.Curtis said she does not accept the apology issued by Suntay following the backlash. “I do not accept your non-apology. But I also will not carry this as a personal wound," she said.However, she said she accepted the apology from the lawmaker’s wife, expressing empathy as a spouse and mother. “I do, however, accept your wife's apology. Because as a wife and a mother myself, I know exactly what she must be feeling — that particular kind of embarrassment, that helplessness, that quiet grief of watching someone choose so poorly in public," Curtis said. “To her, and to your children: this is not your shame. Please know that. And I hope everyone reading this extends them the same grace," she continued.Curtis said the incident underscores the broader issue of sexism that women continue to face in everyday life.She also urged the House Ethics Committee to address the matter. “To the ethics committee: I hope you do not let this pass. The integrity of public office depends on the standards it upholds," Curtis said.She added that she is now exploring possible legal action. “I will be seeking legal advice and will consider all my options looking forward," Curtis said.Curtis thanked supporters who spoke out in defense of women following the incident. “To everyone who used their voice to stand up for us and fight for our respect, both men and women, thank you. And if anyone is wondering why Women's Month still matters — this is exactly why," Curtis said.

- More Pinoys fly home amid expanding war (2026-03-07 16:15)

(UPDATE) THE Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) announced the return of more Filipinos, amid the widening conflict in the Middle East brought about by US and Israeli attacks on Iran.On March 6, the OWWA first announced the return of 349 Filipinos, including 44 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) from Dubai on Emirates Airlines Flight EK 334.And on Saturday morning, both agencies said 442 Filipinos, including 81 OFWs, arrived in the country via Emirates Flight EK336.The DMW previously welcomed 333 Filipinos, including OFWs, in its first two batches of returnees from the Middle East.The total number of Filipinos who have returned from the Middle East now stands at 1,124.The returning Filipinos were given assistance upon their arrival at Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 in Pasay City.AdvisoryThe Philippine Embassy in Riyadh has advised Filipinos in Saudi Arabia to remain vigilant and closely monitor official updates following recent security developments in the Middle East that may affect travel and public safety.In an advisory, the embassy encouraged Filipino nationals across the Kingdom to follow reputable news sources and regularly check announcements issued by the embassy, the Philippine Consulate General in Jeddah, and Saudi authorities.The advisory was issued as the widening war in the Middle East disrupted regional air travel. Several airlines have adjusted their routes and canceled flights as a precaution.The embassy also urged Filipino travelers with upcoming flights entering or leaving Saudi Arabia to contact their respective airlines in advance to confirm flight schedules and prepare for possible delays or cancellations.

- MMDA adopts 4-day work week scheme (2026-03-07 16:14)

(UPDATE) THE Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will implement a four-day workweek for personnel assigned to its main building in Pasig City starting Monday as part of energy conservation measures amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, the agency announced on Saturday.The new work arrangement, cited in MMDA Memorandum Circular 05, Series of 2026, follows a directive from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to reduce electricity and fuel consumption across government offices.Under the scheme, covered employees will work 10 hours daily, Monday through Thursday, to complete the required 40 working hours per week, in accordance with Civil Service Commission policies on alternative work arrangements.The prescribed office hours will be 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.Friday, Saturday and Sunday will be nonworking days (or rest days) for employees covered by the scheme.The MMDA said the arrangement applies only to officials and employees performing support and administrative functions at the MMDA New Building in Pasig City, and personnel assigned to essential, field, operational and emergency response functions outside the main building are not covered.As part of the changes, the agency will temporarily suspend shuttle services to remote destinations, including PITX, Lawton, Santa Lucia, MCU Monumento and Fairview.However, a limited shuttle route between the MMDA main building along C-5 in Pasig City and EDSA near SM Megamall will continue to operate.MMDA Chairman Don Artes said the agency will ensure that public services remain uninterrupted despite the new work schedule.The memorandum will remain in effect until further notice or until revoked by the president, the MMDA said.

- Philippines Rabies Cases Down 65% as DOH Urges Pet Vaccination (2026-03-07 16:13)

THE Department of Health (DOH) on Saturday reported a 65-percent decrease in rabies cases compared to the same period last year.According to its latest data, only 17 cases were reported from Jan. 4 to Feb. 21 this year, down from 49 cases reported during the same period in 2025.Despite the decline, the agency urged pet owners to have their pets vaccinated annually to prevent the spread of rabies, especially since March is Rabies Awareness Month.The agency also noted that 13 of the 17 reported cases involved bites from unvaccinated pets. It added that many cases occur when dogs bite their owners, who are unaware of their pets' vaccination status."We shouldn't be complacent; rabies is deadly. If you have rabies, once the symptoms start, mortality is almost 100 percent," said Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa.Herbosa added that animal bites are the top reason for consultations at the DOH's Bagong Urgent Care and Ambulatory Service centers.He noted that following a meeting with the benefits committee, the benefit package for rabies post-exposure prophylaxis — an anti-rabies treatment — will be increased."If you have rabies, you need to get three doses of the rabies post-exposure prophylaxis vaccine. So it is very important that we increase it," Herbosa said.The DOH further reminded pet owners that if they are bitten or scratched by their pets, they should immediately wash the wound with soap and running water for 15 minutes, and seek consultation at the nearest animal bite treatment center for assessment.

- Quezon City fire displaces 4,000 families (2026-03-07 16:13)

A MASSIVE fire that tore through a residential community along NIA Road in Pinyahan village, Quezon City, destroyed 80 to 95 percent of houses in the area, rendering 4,000 families homeless, barangay (village) officials said Saturday.The fire was raised to the first alarm at 9:01 p.m. and then to the 5th alarm at 9:44 p.m., according to the Bureau of Fire Protection-National Capital Region (BFP-NCR).The blaze was later downgraded to Task Force Bravo at 11:18 p.m. and was declared out at 5:17 a.m. on Saturday, March 7.Barangay officials said the Quezon City Social Services Development Department was still assessing the damage and validating the number of affected households following the massive fire.Authorities estimated that each affected household has about four family members, saying the number of displaced residents could easily reach thousands.Many residents were forced to spend the night along nearby roads after the fire destroyed their homes.The BFP-NCR said fewer than 100 fire trucks responded to the incident as firefighters battled the blaze, rapidly ripping through the community.Fire officials noted that most houses in the area were made of light materials, which allowed the flames to spread quickly.Responders also had difficulty accessing portions of the community because fire trucks could not easily enter the narrow interior areas, authorities said.Authorities opened five evacuation centers, including the Pinyahan Covered Court at the National Irrigation Administration compound and the Pinyahan Church, where modular tents, food and hygiene kits were distributed.The BFP said it was still investigating the cause of the fire, the number of houses destroyed, and the overall damage from the incident.The Quezon City government was expected to provide financial assistance to affected families.

- Go files bill to expand special education fund (2026-03-07 16:12)

SEN. Bong Go has filed a bill to expand the allowable uses of the Special Education Fund (SEF), giving local governments greater flexibility to address urgent needs in the country’s public education system.Filed as Senate Bill 1785, the proposed measure seeks to amend Section 272 of the Local Government Code of 1991 to broaden the purposes and applications of the SEF, a fund generated from an additional 1-percent tax on real property.For what the special education fund is usedThe SEF is allocated to local school boards and serves as a key supplemental funding source for public schools. Under existing law, the fund is primarily used for:– Operation and maintenance of public schools.– Construction and repair of school buildings and facilities.– Educational research.– Purchase of books and periodicals.– Support for sports development programs.However, Go said the current law limits the scope of the fund’s use, preventing local governments from maximizing the resource to meet evolving educational needs.Institutionalizing expanded spendingThe senator noted that government agencies have already recognized the need to broaden SEF spending. In 2020, the Department of Education (DepEd), the Department of the Interior and Local Government, and the Department of Budget and Management issued Joint Circular 2, Series of 2020, which expanded allowable expenditures under the fund.The circular allowed SEF to cover expenses related to:– Production of self-learning modules, textbooks, activity sheets and study guides approved by DepEd.– Purchase of external storage devices such as flash drives and hard drives.– Communication expenses related to education delivery.The bill aims to institutionalize these expanded uses into law, ensuring they remain in place beyond administrative directives.Addressing pandemic lessons, infrastructure gapsGo said the Covid-19 pandemic exposed the need for a more adaptable education financing system, particularly during the shift to distance and modular learning.He added that many initiatives that the SEF could have aided remain unfunded due to restrictive provisions in the law.The senator also cited data from the Department of Education showing that, as of May 2025, the country faces a shortage of about 165,000 classrooms, highlighting the urgent need to use all available education funds.Additional proposed usesUnder the proposed measure, the Special Education Fund could also be used for:– Construction and repair of libraries.– Payment of salaries, allowances and benefits for teaching and nonteaching personnel.– Additional education-related programs deemed necessary by local school boards.The measure aims to strengthen the capability of local government units to support public schools and improve access to quality education.Next stepsThe bill will undergo review and hearings in the Senate of the Philippines before it can advance through the legislative process and be considered by the House of Representatives.If passed into law, proponents say the expanded use of the Special Education Fund could help local governments address long-standing classroom shortages, learning materials and education personnel — key challenges facing the Philippine public school system.

- DOH Urges HPV Vaccination for Children as Early as Age 9 to Fight Cervical Cancer (2026-03-07 16:11)

THE Department of Health (DOH) on Saturday urged parents to have their children vaccinated against human papillomavirus (HPV) as early as age 9.In a radio interview, the DOH said free

HPV vaccinations are available for young girls and stressed that the vaccine is most effective for those who have not yet had sexual contact.The agency currently provides free HPV vaccines for 9-year-old girls. Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa urged parents to take advantage of the program, noting that three doses of the HPV vaccine can cost up to P24,000.Herbosa noted, however, that despite the availability of free vaccination, only about 70 percent of parents have agreed to have their daughters immunized.The agency cited the country’s conservative upbringing as a factor contributing to parents’ hesitation to have their children vaccinated.”We need to convince more parents to have their young girls be vaccinated,” Herbosa said.He cited the success of Australia and Canada in reducing cervical cancer cases after implementing widespread HPV vaccination programs.”They did this in Australia and Canada; the cases of cervical cancer declined, and they also included the boys, so much so that gynecologists have no cases anymore,” he said.The DOH also clarified that HPV vaccines can still be administered to individuals who have already had sexual contact, while stressing the importance of HPV testing and screening.

- DILG to Deploy 800 Tourist Police in Key PH Destinations Starting April (2026-03-07 16:10)

THE Department of the Interior and Local Government said it will deploy 800 tourist police officers beginning in April to strengthen safety in key destinations.Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla said the initiative received approval from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and will be carried out in coordination with the Department of Tourism.”The president (Ferdinand Marcos Jr.) has approved my plan that beginning April, we will launch together with the Department of Tourism the tourist police,” Remulla said.The deployment aims to increase police visibility in high-traffic tourist areas, deter criminal activity, and ensure faster emergency response while promoting a safe environment for visitors and local businesses.Remulla said the tourist police will be equipped with motorcycles to improve mobility in crowded tourist sites and remote scenic areas. The Philippine National Police will distribute new motorcycle units dedicated to the deployment.Initial rollout sites include Bonifacio Global City in Taguig, Poblacion in Makati, as well as major tourist destinations such as Boracay, Siargao, Cebu, Bohol and Puerto Princesa.Apart from security duties, the tourist police will also help promote the country’s central emergency hotline so visitors can quickly contact authorities during emergencies.”Every tourist that arrives in the Philippines will be given the calling card of 911 so they know we have a three-minute response time wherever they are in the Philippines,” Remulla said.In 2025, the government’s Unified 911 system recorded a 97-percent response efficiency rate for nearly 4 million calls received nationwide. The emergency hotline has also handled incidents in several tourist destinations, in line with the directive of the president to prioritize tourism safety.Remulla said strengthening security in tourism areas could also generate economic benefits, particularly for the country’s middle class.”When you improve tourism, it’s the middle class that benefits. They contribute the most and they get the very least benefit. We have to strengthen the middle class and make the country better,” he said.

- CHED, CFO Ink Deal to Strengthen Global Filipino Education (2026-03-07 16:09)

THE Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has partnered with the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) to strengthen education opportunities for Filipinos living and working abroad.In a signing ceremony on March 4, CHED Chairman Shirley Agrupis and CFO Chairman Dante Ang II signed a memorandum of understanding to bridge the gap between international migration and academic excellence.The partnership aims to ensure that Filipino students and young professionals are better guided, protected and integrated into the global workforce.Under the agreement, the CFO will share key migration and demographic data with CHED to help guide the development of responsive higher education policies.The initiative, CHED said, will support Filipino students participating in international exchange and internship programs while facilitating smoother academic pathways for graduates of Philippine Schools Overseas (PSOs) who wish to pursue higher education in the Philippines.It also aims to bring international expertise back to Philippine shores through joint learning sessions or research collaboration via the Presidential Awards for Outstanding Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas network.CHED said these global Filipino leaders will serve as mentors or researchers to share their world-class experiences with students and faculty of Philippine universities and colleges.The collaboration also includes the conduct of joint research on migration and development, strengthening awareness campaigns to promote safe participation in overseas academic and internship programs, and enhancing coordination with higher education institutions for smoother academic pathways for returning students.Agrupis said overseas Filipinos remain an integral part of the community and a vital source of knowledge, innovation and expertise.” By strengthening connections between our higher education institutions and Filipino communities abroad, we ensure that global experience contributes directly to national development,” Agrupis added.Ang said the CFO reaffirms its commitment to cultivating the talents of overseas Filipinos and providing platforms that encourage not just diaspora altruism, but also further engagement with their homeland.As the secretariat to the Inter-Agency Commission on PSOs, he added that the CFO will also ensure the ease of integration for overseas Filipino youth into local Philippine higher educational standards and requirements upon their return through the continued provision of the Philippine curriculum overseas.

- New Senate bill seeks to slash Philippines' VAT to boost disposable income (2026-03-07 16:08)

SEN. Mark Villar has filed Senate Bill 1916, which aims to lower the value-added tax (VAT) imposed on the sale of goods, services and imports.If enacted, the measure will amend Sections 106(A), 107(A) and 108(A) of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997.In his explanatory note, Villar cited the mandate under Article VI, Section 28(1) of the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines, which directs Congress to establish a progressive taxation system — one in which tax rates increase according to a taxpayer’s ability to pay.Villar said VAT, by design, is considered a regressive tax because it is imposed uniformly on consumption regardless of income level.” VAT disproportionately burdens lower-income persons and hinders an effective redistribution of wealth,” the senator said.He added that the current tax structure can diminish purchasing power, narrow business profit margins, and discourage entrepreneurship

and capital investment — factors that could slow economic growth.The Philippines currently imposes a 12-percent VAT, one of the highest consumption taxes in Southeast Asia. By comparison, Indonesia imposes an 11-percent VAT, Vietnam imposes a 10-percent VAT and Singapore has a 9-percent goods and services tax.According to Villar, reducing the VAT rate could help improve the country’s competitiveness within the region.The proposed reduction is projected to increase the annual disposable income of the average Filipino household by about P8,000, potentially stimulating consumer spending and supporting business expansion.Supporters of the bill say the tax cut could encourage job creation, entrepreneurship and broader economic activity, particularly as households gain more spending power.To address concerns about possible revenue losses, the bill includes a fiscal safeguard. It authorizes the president to temporarily restore the VAT rate to 12 percent for a specific year if the projected fiscal deficit exceeds the target set by the Development Budget Coordination Committee as a percentage of the country’s gross domestic product.The provision aims to ensure fiscal stability while allowing the government flexibility in managing budget deficits.Senate Bill 1916 will undergo committee review, public hearings and plenary deliberations before it can advance to the House of Representatives for approval.

- DepEd to Reach 1:1 Textbook Ratio Under 2026 National Budget (2026-03-07 16:07)

SEN. Sherwin Gatchalian said the historic P19.5-billion allocation for education in the 2026 national budget could ensure that all public schools receive free textbooks.“Under the 2026 national budget, we have ensured that no student will be left without a book. If before, more than one student used each book, that is no longer the case,” Gatchalian said in Filipino.For decades, public school students have had to share textbooks due to limited government supply. The new funding aims to establish a one-student-one-textbook ratio across all grade levels under the Department of Education (DepEd).The move is also meant to support the nationwide rollout of the Matatag Curriculum, the government’s revised basic education framework designed to strengthen foundational skills, reduce subject overload and improve learning outcomes in public schools.During budget deliberations, the senator sought assurances from DepEd that the funds would be fully utilized.Gatchalian noted that in 2025, the department’s utilization rate for textbooks and other instructional materials stood at only 14 percent, raising concerns about procurement delays and implementation bottlenecks.Carmela Oracion, officer in charge undersecretary for learning systems at DepEd, told the Senate that the agency has already begun early procurement efforts.According to Oracion, the department has procured P7 billion worth of textbooks, which will be distributed to Grades 6, 9 and 10 — the final grade levels needing materials for the full implementation of the Matatag curriculum.The remaining P12 billion will be distributed to DepEd regional offices to support further textbook procurement and distribution across public schools nationwide.Education officials say providing complete textbooks is a crucial step in improving learning conditions in public schools, where shortages of instructional materials have long been cited as a factor affecting student performance.The initiative is expected to benefit millions of learners enrolled in the country’s K-12 basic education system, strengthening classroom instruction and ensuring students have

consistent access to learning resources.The 2026 national budget is currently being implemented following its approval by Congress and enactment by the national government. Education remains one of the largest spending sectors in the government budget, reflecting efforts to address learning gaps and strengthen the country’s public education system.

- Parañaque shooting suspect nabbed; previous dispute eyed (2026-03-07 16:06)

POLICE said a prior dispute between neighbors is being looked into as the possible motive behind a deadly shooting at a residential complex in Parañaque City that left two people dead and four others injured, as authorities announced the arrest of the suspect during a press briefing on Saturday at the PD Multi-Purpose Hall of the Southern Police District (SPD) headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.SPD director Brig. Gen. Randy Arceo said the suspect, identified only as alias “William,” 59, was arrested at around 8:30 p.m. on Friday inside a condominium unit in Barangay Moonwalk, Parañaque City.Police said the arrest came a little over 48 hours after the shooting incident that occurred at around 7:59 p.m. on March 4 inside a residential complex in Barangay Marcelo Green.Investigators said the suspect allegedly opened fire during the incident, killing alias “Edwin,” 57, and alias “Arjay,” 29, both residents of Parañaque City.Four other individuals were wounded in the attack and were rushed to nearby hospitals for treatment.Police said initial investigation showed that the suspect previously had a dispute with some of the victims, which authorities are examining as a possible motive behind the shooting.Authorities said two 9-millimeter pistols, several magazines and live ammunition were recovered from the suspect during the arrest, along with personal items believed to be related to the incident.Police said charges for two counts of murder, four counts of frustrated murder and violation of Republic Act 10591, or the Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Regulation Act, are being prepared for filing before the Parañaque City Prosecutor’s Office through inquest proceedings.The arresting officers also served an existing warrant of arrest for homicide issued by a Taguig regional trial court in 2023, indicating the suspect had a prior pending criminal case, police said.

- Netizens poke fun at BI post, thinking it was K-pop promo (2026-03-07 16:05)

NETIZENS on Friday and Saturday poked fun at the Bureau of Immigration’s (BI) Facebook post, showing several South Korean citizens arrested in Pampanga, thinking it was something similar to a K-pop band.According to the BI on Friday, a raid was conducted on an office in Angeles City last Feb. 25, which led to the arrest of South Korean citizen Yu Jaemin, 33.“The operation stemmed from validated intelligence information indicating that the subject was involved in the operation of a suspected scam hub targeting fellow [South] Korean [citizens] and possibly other foreign victims,” the BI report read.“Upon entry into the premises, BI operatives encountered 11 other [South Koreans] stationed at individual work areas and actively manning operational equipment. The setup, including designated workstations and ongoing digital activities, was consistent with reported scamming operations,” the agency added. “The individuals were found engaged in work-related activities at the time of enforcement, prompting immediate verification of their identities and immigration status.”On Facebook,

netizens compared the photo arrangement to a photo shoot of South Korean pop groups, such as Super Junior and EXO, or even esports teams. “It’s like a Super Junior or EXO-inspired shot,” wrote one netizen in the comment section of the BI post. “The fact that they placed the good-looking man at the front means they’re onto something, y’all,” wrote another. “It’s giving ‘Squid Game,’” another netizen said, referencing a popular South Korean movie. “Selda pop?” wrote another netizen, referencing a popular Korean song. “I have to look twice if this is a K-pop Meme Page,” said another commenter.According to the BI, three of the Koreans arrested are “fugitives from justice with existing derogatory records,” while others were overstaying. “We will not allow organized fraud syndicates to exploit our communities and use Philippine territory as a base for criminal operations,” BI Commissioner Joel Anthony Viado said. “Our intelligence and enforcement units will continue to act decisively, in full coordination with law enforcement partners, to ensure that foreign nationals who violate our laws are arrested and removed,” he added.

- Political group rejects ‘uni-yellow’ label (2026-03-07 16:04)

THE August Twenty-One Movement (ATOM), known for its role in the 1986 People Power Revolution, rejected any connection with the Marcos administration, amid a “social media concoction” of a united force.In a statement on its Facebook page on Saturday, the group said there is no tactical alliance with any of the camps of the so-called UniTeam of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Vice President Sara Duterte. “The social media concoction of a united force between the admin and the tidal wave-organic color that emerged in 2022 has been consistently floated by certain sectors, especially online. Some bought into it, while others remain adamant in rejecting that idea. We feel that this remains a divisive way to weaken the true opposition, especially those who do not have any plans to coalesce with either the Marcos camp or the Vice President’s camp,” the group said. “Although we do not really campaign for any candidate/s since the last time some of us did it with Cory Aquino’s presidential campaign, one thing is certain: there won’t be any ‘uni-yellow’ ever for the ATOM, at least, as far as our values are concerned. No tactical alliance whatsoever with any of those two ‘UniTeam’ camps,” they added.The opposition group said their interpretation of the color yellow was the same yellow that fought to depose the administration of former president Ferdinand Marcos Sr. from 1983 to 1986, and was the same color that welcomed home former senator Benigno Aquino Jr. in 1983. “ATOM’s yellow remains the same yellow that fought to bring down the Marcos dictatorship from 1983 to 1986. It is the same yellow that tried to welcome Ninoy Aquino on Aug. 21, 1983. It is the same yellow that is deeply rooted in the Filipino people’s democratic values, which mobilized from 1983 to 1986, and not rooted in a political party or a politician. But a yellow that will continue to embrace the ideals of those yellow-ribbon-clad Filipinos who blocked tanks in 1986, who tried to give their children and their grandchildren a better future. The same yellow that will never stop seeking closure for the unfinished 1986 People Power Revolution,” the group said. “History has a lot of advice to tell and remind young people of today, which we have completely ignored for the last forty years since the EDSA People Power. This is why we are in this mess,” they added.They specifically

cited that former president Rodrigo Duterte was a “symptom of our failure to address the cause of the illness of our nation,” which was the failure in holding the “conjugal dictatorship” of the first Marcos administration accountable following 1986, as no one was brought to jail.“Even if many trolls on social media say that we’re being hypocritical, sorry to burst the bubble, but there will never be a uni-yellow, at least,” they said.

- Sotto marks Women’s Month, highlights women's role (2026-03-07 16:03)

PASIG City Mayor Vico Sotto called on residents to recognize the contributions and leadership of women as the country observes National Women’s Month, in a video greeting shared by the Pasig Public Information Office on Saturday, March 7.Sotto highlighted the national theme “Lead Like the Babaylans, Filipinas,” which underscores the role of women’s leadership in shaping the country’s identity.He also stressed the importance of continuing to acknowledge women’s capabilities and contributions across different sectors of society.“Happy National Women’s Month, Pasigueños! Under this year’s national theme of Lead Like the Babaylans, Filipinas, we recognize, and we remember the women’s leadership role in our national identity,” Sotto said.Sotto added that the city government is implementing policies that protect women and ensure their participation in governance, including the Safe Spaces Ordinance and representation in local special bodies where women have a voice in policymaking.“Pasigueños, let us continue to recognize the contributions and capabilities of women in various fields and in our society,” he added.

- PH, Malaysia boost aviation ties (2026-03-07 16:02)

THE Philippines and Malaysia updated their 1978 Air Services Agreement following two days of negotiations in Kuala Lumpur, which concluded on March 5, 2026.The agreement has been updated to reflect contemporary travel realities by incorporating revised airline designation rules under the Public Service Act.Under the new terms, airline designation rules have been shifted to recognize carriers based on their principal place of business rather than traditional ownership structures.This policy shift is expected to increase the number of airlines authorized to operate between the two nations, fostering greater competition and lowering airfares for travelers.The deal also expands commercial cooperation by encouraging joint ventures and code-sharing agreements, aimed at creating a more seamless transit experience between the neighboring countries.The Philippine delegation was headed by Transportation Undersecretary Jim Sydiongco, Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) deputy director Gen. Danjun Lucas and Civil Aeronautics Board Executive Director Carmelo Arcilla.The CAAP said the modernization of these bilateral ties is a strategic move to boost the Philippines’ global aviation competitiveness.Officials said they expect the partnership to serve as a catalyst for tourism, economic growth, and strengthened diplomatic ties.

- AFP: No nationality banned from military camps, foreign visitors must follow clearance rules (2026-03-07 15:53)

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Saturday clarified that no nationality is outright prohibited from entering military camps, including recreational areas such as the Camp Aguinaldo Golf Course. All foreign visitors, the AFP stressed, must comply with existing visit clearance policies.The statement came after social media posts suggested that Chinese nationals were being barred from using the golf course. AFP officials said the rules, which are now being more strictly enforced, apply to all foreigners seeking access to military facilities. “These measures are part of internal security protocols within military camps and are intended to ensure the safety and integrity of AFP installations,” the AFP said. Camp Aguinaldo management also noted that the clearance requirements cover recreational areas, including golf courses.The clarification follows a recent Chinese-linked espionage case disclosed by the National Security Council, in which several Filipinos allegedly had foreign handlers. One suspect reportedly worked for the Department of National Defense, another with the Philippine Navy, and a third had ties to a Philippine Coast Guard officer. A separate Navy officer reportedly resisted recruitment attempts.The AFP said the three individuals involved in the case cooperated while under military custody, and the matter has since been resolved.

- Group of Pinoys in the Netherlands welcome ICC decision vs. Duterte (2026-03-07 15:22)

A group of Filipinos in the Netherlands said they welcomed the decision of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in rejecting the appeal of former president Rodrigo Duterte’s defense team seeking release.In a statement on Saturday, Panagutin Netherlands Network said the decision affirms the “importance of accountability and strengthens the pursuit of justice for the thousands of victims under his brutal ‘war on drugs’.” “On behalf of the Filipino migrants, individuals, and organizations that make up our network, we are ready to face Rodrigo Duterte once his trial begins. For years, we have stood with the victims and their families in demanding justice. We are prepared to witness the truth come to light and to ensure that the voices of the Filipino people, especially those who suffered most under Duterte’s bloody campaign, are heard,” the network said. “We thank the ICC for its impartiality and for standing firm on the side of truth despite Duterte’s attempts to evade accountability. This decision gives hope to victims and their families that justice will continue to move forward,” they added.They urged the tribunal to issue warrants of arrest against senators Bato dela Rosa, Bong Go, and other co-perpetrators involved in the controversial drug war. “Justice must not stop with Duterte alone; all those responsible must be held to account,” the group said. “As the trial proceeds, we expect the presence of Rodrigo Duterte in court. He must face the Filipino people and answer for the crimes against humanity committed under his administration,” they added.The Panagutin Netherlands Network is a newly-formed campaign network of Filipino individuals and organizations in the Netherlands that seeks to campaign for justice, accountability, and good governance.

- VP Sara urges everyone to cooperate in saving energy costs (2026-03-07 15:05)

MANILA, Philippines - Vice President Sara Duterte has called on everyone to cooperate in saving energy costs amid increasing fuel and commodities prices due to the ongoing conflict in the

Middle East."Many of us are worried. The prices of basic commodities continue to rise, and alongside the increase in fuel prices, the hardship will become even more severe. Parents are counting every peso, and many of us are anxious about what will happen next," Duterte said in a video statement on Saturday."I want you to know—you are not alone. We are all going through this struggle. We will all feel the weight of rising prices, especially for food. But there is still something we can do as citizens and as a community. And there is even more that the government must do," She added.She urged local government units to prohibit non-essential activities that consume fuel, such as festival parades, as well as providing early notices to consumers and businesses regarding price hikes."Strengthen support for local farmers and small suppliers to reduce reliance on imported products, providing a buffer against sudden price spikes, [and] Issue austerity orders within the LGU to be followed by all offices, including the barangays," Duterte said.She also implored citizens to prioritize essential goods and buying local products to strengthen the local economy, as well as reducing unnecessary energy consumption.Duterte also urged government agencies to implement measures against hoarding and excessive overpricing of fuel and conducting regular inspections while shutting down erring businesses."We will find ways to lighten our burden—through community cooperation, supporting local products, and being mindful of our spending and energy use. At the same time, let us expect government action to protect every Filipino family and ensure a fair and stable market," Duterte said.

- No winner in Grand lotto 6/55, Lotto 6/42 draws for Mar 7 (2026-03-07 14:23)

MANILA, Philippines — There were no winners in the Grand lotto 6/55 and Lotto 6/42 draws on Saturday night, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said.The winning combination for Grand lotto 6/55 was 17-44-02-05-28-45 which had a jackpot prize of P45,000,000.00.There was also no winner for the Lotto 6/42 draw, which drew a winning combination of 40-33-31-16-12-14 for a jackpot prize of P10,000,000.00.

- 976 families in evacuation centers after Quezon City fire (2026-03-07 13:30)

MANILA, Philippines — At least 976 families displaced by a massive fire that struck NIA Road in Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City are temporarily staying in evacuation centers across the city, Mayor Joy Belmonte said Saturday evening, March 7.Belmonte said the affected residents are currently housed in eight evacuation sites: Flora Ylagan High School, Pinyahan Covered Court, San Isidro Labrador Parish, NIA Covered Court, the NIA Building, Pinyahan Elementary School, the Napocor Office, and the NHA Balik Probinsiya Covered Court at the Manila Seedling compound.The mayor personally visited the affected area and several evacuation centers on Saturday to check on the condition of displaced families.City officials said modular tents have been installed at the evacuation sites, while residents are receiving food packs, hygiene kits, medicines, blankets, mats, and other basic necessities. “The Quezon City government continues to assist affected QCitizens and provide other services they may need,” Belmonte said.The Social Services Development Department (SSDD) is also continuing its assessment of affected households, while the city government is coordinating additional assistance for families

displaced by the fire.The blaze that hit the residential community along NIA Road in Barangay Pinyahan on Friday night escalated to Task Force Bravo before it was declared under control early Saturday morning.

- Marcos orders govt agencies to remain vigilant, proactive vs possible effects of Middle East conflict (2026-03-07 11:56)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. directed government agencies to remain vigilant and proactive in addressing the possible effects of the ongoing crisis in the Middle East, warning that complacency could put the country at a disadvantage."The message of President Marcos Jr. regarding our preparedness is appropriate and timely. The President wants us to be ready for any situation, especially since the current conditions in the Middle East have yet to end," Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said in a statement."It is not the time to sleep soundly and do nothing, because we will be the ones who lose if the government becomes complacent," she added.Citing Energy Secretary Sharon Garin’s statement, Castro said the government was adopting a whole-of-government approach, including closer monitoring and enforcement measures on fuel retailers.She said that even before the President made the public announcement, he had already issued marching orders to prepare interventions aimed at easing the burden on the public."Hence, for the whole of government approach, including the monitoring and discipline of gas stations,” Castro added.

- Special police team to aid OFW repatriation from war-torn Middle East (2026-03-07 11:28)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (PNP-CIDG) has deployed a special investigation team to assist in the government’s repatriation efforts for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) currently in the Middle East, authorities confirmed Friday.The move follows directives from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and PNP Chief Lt. Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. to ensure the safety and welfare of Filipinos amid the ongoing regional conflict.According to PGen. Robert Morico II, CIDG director, the team will provide investigative and detective assistance to the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA). Their work aims to expedite government aid, including legal support, for returning OFWs.The special team, drawn from the CIDG’s Anti-Transnational Crime Unit, will interview and screen repatriated workers to determine if any have been victims of human trafficking or illegal recruitment.Investigators will also gather testimonial evidence against illegal recruiters and ensure that complaints are filed against those found responsible for sending OFWs to designated conflict zones.

- MMDA adopts four-day work week scheme (2026-03-07 09:05)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will implement a four-day work week for personnel assigned to its main building in Pasig City starting Monday as part of energy conservation measures amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, the agency announced Saturday.The new work arrangement, contained in MMDA Memorandum Circular 05, Series of 2026, follows a directive from President Ferdinand Marcos

Jr. to reduce electricity and fuel consumption across government offices.Under the scheme, covered employees will work 10 hours a day from Monday to Thursday to complete the required 40 working hours per week, in accordance with Civil Service Commission policies on alternative work arrangements.The prescribed office hours will be 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.Friday, Saturday and Sunday will serve as non-working days or rest days for employees covered by the scheme.The MMDA said the arrangement would apply only to officials and employees performing support and administrative functions at the MMDA New Building in Pasig City, while personnel assigned to essential, field, operational and emergency response functions outside the main building will not be covered.As part of the changes, the agency will temporarily suspend shuttle services to distant routes, including PITX, Lawton, Sta. Lucia, MCU Monumento and Fairview.However, a limited shuttle route between the MMDA main building along C-5 in Pasig City and EDSA near SM Megamall will continue to operate.MMDA Chairman Don Artes said the agency would ensure that public services remained uninterrupted despite the new work schedule.The memorandum will remain in effect until further notice or until revoked by the President, the MMDA said.

- Parañaque shooting suspect arrested, dispute among neighbors eyed in killing (2026-03-07 08:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Police said a dispute between neighbors is being looked into as the possible motive behind a deadly shooting at a residential complex in Parañaque City that left two people dead and four others injured, as authorities announced the arrest of the suspect during a press briefing on Saturday at the PD Multi-Purpose Hall of the Southern Police District (SPD) headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.PBGen. Randy Arceom SPD director, said the suspect, identified only as alias “William,” 59, was arrested at around 8:30 p.m. on Friday inside a condominium unit in Barangay Moonwalk, Parañaque City.Police said the arrest came a little over 48 hours after the shooting incident that occurred at around 7:59 p.m. on Wednesday inside a residential complex in Barangay Marcelo Green.Investigators said the suspect allegedly opened fire during the incident, killing alias “Edwin,” 57, and alias “Arjay,” 29, both residents of Parañaque City.Four other individuals were wounded in the attack and were rushed to nearby hospitals.Police said initial investigation showed that the suspect previously had a dispute with some of the victims, which authorities are examining as a possible motive behind the shooting.Authorities said two 9mm pistols, several magazines and live ammunition were recovered from the suspect during the arrest, along with personal items believed to be related to the incident.Police said charges for two counts of murder, four counts of frustrated murder and violation of Republic Act 10591, or the Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Regulation Act, are being prepared for filing before the Parañaque City Prosecutor’s Office through inquest proceedings.

- Impeachment planned as early as 2023 — Sara (2026-03-07 07:46)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte said the impeachment complaints that were filed against her had been planned as early as May 2023 through the efforts of the Makabayan

bloc and the allies of former speaker Martin Romualdez at the House of Representatives.Speaking at the pilot episode of her SMNI TV program "Ibalik ang Tapang at Malasakit" on Friday, Duterte said that the issue of confidential funds, which is one of the grounds cited in her impeachment case, has been raised by some members of the bloc when she was still vice chairman of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC)."They said that if I became NTF-ELCAC vice chair, I would control more confidential funds. So as early as May 11, 2023, they already have a script," Duterte said.She also accused former House Appropriations Committee Vice Chairman Stella Luz Quimbo of putting the narrative that the P125 million confidential fund of the Office of the Vice President was spent in just 11 days.Duterte also said that the members of the Makabayan bloc met with then speaker Romualdez, which led to a "partnership" against them.She reiterated that the Commission on Audit gave the OVP two Audit Observation Memoranda that specifically stated that the agency has an "unmodified opinion," meaning that its finances were in compliance with the agency's auditing rules.Duterte also defended the use of confidential funds, saying these were used in areas where there is a concentration of threats to education and children, such as criminality, insurgency and violent extremism.

- More Filipinos return home from Middle East (2026-03-07 07:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) announced the return of more Filipinos, amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.Late on Friday, the OWWA first announced the return of 349 Filipinos, including 44 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) from Dubai via Emirates Airlines Flight EK 334.And on Saturday morning, both agencies said that 442 Filipinos, that also included 81 OFWs, arrived in the country via Emirates flight EK336.The DMW previously welcomed 333 Filipinos, including OFWs, in its first two batches of returnees from the Middle East.The total number of Filipinos returning from the Middle East is at 1,124.The returning Filipinos were given assistance upon their arrival at Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 in Pasay City.

- Inquiry pushed on implementation of Zaldy Co's arrest warrant (2026-03-07 05:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Navotas Rep. Toby Tiangco urged the House of Representatives to conduct a public hearing in aid of legislation to fast-track the implementation of an arrest warrant against former Ako Bicol Partylist representative Elizaldy Co.Co remains at-large after being dragged in the flood control scandal involving projects allegedly bagged by his company, Sunwest.In a statement on Saturday, Tiangco filed House Bill 808 which urges the House leadership to convene the Committee of the Whole to conduct a public inquiry in aid of legislation on the status of the arrest warrant against Co, and to recommend legislative measures, if necessary.He further said that there should be a need for "clear cut guidelines" for enforcing arrest warrants when a subject was outside Philippine jurisdiction, and cited the conflicting positions of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) in implementing Co's warrant of arrest."DILG earlier said

DFA is the agency primarily responsible for ensuring that Co will be successfully prosecuted before our Court. The DFA, however, clarified that the enforcement of legal processes against Co involves a 'whole-of-government approach.' Ano ba talaga at sino ba dapat ang ahensyang dapat manguna sa mga kasong gaya nito? (On whose agency should be responsible for cases such as this?), " Tiangco said.Tiangco also stressed need to determine whether legislative gaps allowed individuals with substantial resources to evade legal processes and hide in foreign jurisdictions with which the Philippines has no extradition treaty.

- Marcos declares six local holidays (2026-03-07 05:46)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. declared special non-working days in six areas to allow residents to fully participate in their respective local celebrations.Proclamation 1180, signed by Executive Secretary Ralph Recto on March 4, 2026 declared March 6 a special non-working day in Buguias as the town celebrates its annual Carrot Festival, one of the municipality’s most anticipated events honoring its thriving vegetable industry.March 7 was declared a special non-working day in Tagum City, Davao del Norte in celebration of its 28th Araw ng Tagum, under Proclamation 1184.Under Proclamation 1182, the municipality of Bongabong, Oriental Mindoro will observe a special non-working day on March 19 to celebrate the Sulyog Festival.The same day was also declared a special non-working day in Baco, Oriental Mindoro in celebration of the Banana Festival, under Proclamation 1183.March 21 was declared a special non-working day in Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro in celebration of its founding anniversary, under Proclamation 1185.Meanwhile, Proclamation 1181 declared March 26, Thursday, a special non-working day in Mambusao in observance of its founding anniversary.

- CFO, CHEd to strengthen education opportunities for Filipinos abroad (2026-03-07 05:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) has partnered with the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) to strengthen education opportunities for Filipinos who are now living and working abroad.In a signing ceremony on March 4, 2026, CHEd Chairman Shirley Agrupis and CFO Chairman Dante Francis Ang II signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) which would bridge the gap between international migration and academic excellence.The partnership will ensure that Filipino students and young professionals are better guided, protected, and integrated into the global workforce.Under the agreement, the CFO will share key migration and demographic data with CHEd to help guide the development of responsive higher education policies.The initative, CHEd said, will support Filipino students participating in international exchange and internship programs while facilitating smoother academic pathways for graduates of Philippine Schools Overseas who wish to pursue higher education in the Philippines.Agrupis said that overseas Filipinos remained an integral part of the community, a vital source of knowledge, innovation, and expertise."By strengthening connections between our higher education institutions and Filipino communities abroad, we ensure that global experience contributes directly to national development.” Agrupis added.For his part, Ang said that the CFO reaffirmed its commitment to cultivating talents of overseas Filipinos and provide platforms that would encourage not just diaspora

altruism, but also further their engagement with their homeland.

- Quezon City fire affects 4,000 families (2026-03-07 05:25)

MANILA, Philippines — A massive fire that tore through a residential community along NIA Road in Pinyahan village, Quezon City destroyed 80 to 95 percent of houses in the area and affected about 4,000 families, barangay officials said Saturday.The fire was first raised to the first alarm at 9:01 p.m. on March 6, 2026 before escalating to the 5th alarm at 9:44 p.m., according to the Bureau of Fire Protection-National Capital Region (BFP-NCR). The blaze was later elevated to Task Force Bravo at 11:18 p.m. and was declared fire out at 5:17 a.m. on Saturday, March 7.Barangay officials said the Quezon City Social Services Development Department was still assessing the damage and validating the number of affected households following the massive fire.Authorities estimated that each affected household has around four family members, placing the number of displaced residents in the thousands.Many residents were forced to spend the night along nearby roads after the fire destroyed their homes.The BFP-NCR said fewer than 100 fire trucks responded to the incident as firefighters battled the blaze that spread rapidly through the community.Fire officials noted that most houses in the area were made of light materials, which allowed the flames to spread quickly.Responders also had difficulty accessing portions of the community because fire trucks could not easily enter the narrow interior areas, authorities said.Authorities opened five evacuation centers, including the Pinyahan Covered Court at the National Irrigation Administration compound and the Pinyahan Church, where modular tents, food and hygiene kits were distributed.The BFP said it was still investigating the cause of the fire as well as the total number of houses destroyed and the overall damage from the incident, while the Quezon City government was expected to provide financial assistance to affected families.

- Netizens liken Immigration arrest post to KPop promo (2026-03-07 05:08)

MANILA, Philippines — Netizens on Friday and Saturday poked fun at the Bureau of Immigration’s (BI) Facebook post, showing a South Korean citizen arrested in Pampanga, thinking it was something similar to a KPop band.According to the BI on Friday, a raid was conducted at an office in Angeles City last Feb. 25, 2026, which led to the arrest of South Korean citizen Yu Jaemin, 33.On Facebook, however, netizens compared the photo arrangement to a shoot of South Korean pop groups, such as Super Juuior and EXO or even esports teams. “It’s like a Super Junior or EXO-inspired shot,” wrote one netizen in the comment section of the Immigration post. “The fact that they placed the good-looking man at the front means they're unto something y’all,” wrote another. “It’s giving Squid Game,” another netizen said, referencing a popular South Korean movie. “Selda pop?” wrote another netizen, referencing a popular Korean song. “I have to look twice if this is a Kpop Meme Page,” said another commenter.According to Immigration, three of the Koreans arrested were “fugitives from justice with existing derogatory records”, while others were overstaying.

- Group in 1986 people power revolt denies alliance with either Marcos or Duterte camps (2026-03-07 04:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The August Twenty One Movement, known for its role in the 1986 People Power Revolution that ousted then president Ferdinand Marcos Sr., rejected any connection with the incumbent administration, amid a “social media concoction” of a united force.In a statement on its Facebook page on Saturday, the group said there was no tactical alliance with any of the camps of the so-called “uniteam” of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Vice Presidet Sara Duterte.“The social media concoction of a united force between the admin and the tidal wave-organic color that emerged in 2022 has been consistently floated by certain sectors, especially online. Some bought into it, while others remain adamant in rejecting that idea. We feel that this remains a divisive way to further weaken the true opposition, especially those who do not have any plans to coalesce with either the Marcos camp or the Vice-President's camp,” the group said.“Although we do not really campaign for any candidate/s since the last time some of us did it with Cory Aquino's presidential campaign, one thing is certain: there won't be any ‘uni-yellow’ ever for the August Twenty-One Movement (ATOM) at least, as far as our values are concerned. No tactical alliance whatsoever with any of those two ‘uniteam’ camps,” it added.

- NCCA highlights shared Southeast Asian culinary heritage for Filipino Food Month (2026-03-07 04:07)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) has highlighted how food connects countries across Southeast Asia for the celebration of Filipino Food Month (FFM) in April. During a press conference in Manila, NCCA Chairman and Executive Director Dr. Eric Zerrudo explained how centuries of trade within the region shaped the country’s cuisine. “Within the vibrant tapestry of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, the Philippines stands as both a contributor and a beneficiary of a shared culinary heritage,” Zerrudo said. He added that this year’s celebration is aligned with the country’s chairmanship of the ASEAN 2026, highlighting the country’s role in cultural diplomacy through food. “Many of our culinary traditions rooted in food, this affair that we hold in common with ASEAN communities, that food is life, memory, and belonging,” said Zerrudo.

- Philippines, Malaysia strengthen aviation partnership (2026-03-07 04:07)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines and Malaysia modernized their aviation framework following two days of bilateral negotiations in Kuala Lumpur, which concluded on March 5, 2026.The agreement modernizes the 1978 Air Services Agreement to reflect contemporary travel realities by incorporating revised airline designation rules under the Public Service Act.Under the new terms, airline designation rules have been shifted to recognize carriers based on their principal place of business rather than traditional ownership structures.This policy shift is expected to increase the number of airlines authorized to operate between the two nations, fostering greater competition and lowering airfares for travelers.The deal also expands commercial cooperation by encouraging joint ventures and codesharing agreements, aimed at creating a more seamless transit experience between the neighboring countries.The Philippine delegation was headed by Transportation Undersecretary Jim Sydiongco, alongside

Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) Deputy Director General Danjun Lucas and Civil Aeronautics Board Executive Director Carmelo Arcilla.According to CAAP, the modernization of these bilateral ties is a strategic move to boost the Philippines' global aviation competitiveness, following directives from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez.Officials expect the partnership to serve as a catalyst for tourism, economic growth, and strengthened diplomatic ties.

- ICC Appeals Chamber confirms detention of Duterte, rejects health grounds for release (2026-03-06 16:54)

The Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Court (ICC) on Friday confirmed the continued pre-trial detention of former Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte, rejecting defense arguments that his health condition justified his immediate release.In a unanimous judgment issued March 6, 2026, the five-judge panel upheld the January 26 ruling of Pre-Trial Chamber I ordering Duterte to remain in custody while he faces charges of crimes against humanity, including murder and attempted murder, linked to his administration's deadly anti-drug campaign from 2011 to 2019.The defense appealed on a single ground, arguing that the Pre-Trial Chamber erred in disregarding a medical report submitted by Duterte's legal team, which they said constituted a "changed circumstance" warranting his release under Article 60(3) of the Rome Statute.The Appeals Chamber rejected the argument, ruling that the Pre-Trial Chamber was entitled to rely instead on reports from a court-appointed panel of three independent medical experts."The assessment of the risk factors under article 58(1)(b) of the Statute, including the impact of Mr. Duterte's health condition on these risks, is a legal determination to be made by the Pre-Trial Chamber that does not require any assistance of medical practitioners," the Appeals Chamber said.The defense submitted its medical report on January 9, 2026. Prepared by external practitioners, it argued that Duterte's alleged cognitive deficiencies would prevent him from absconding, threatening witnesses, or continuing to commit crimes — the three statutory risks used to justify pre-trial detention.However, the Appeals Chamber noted that the defense experts had not conducted a new examination of Duterte and instead relied on information already contained in reports prepared by the court-appointed panel in December 2025."The Defense has not explained why or how the Defense's report, without any examination of Mr. Duterte, may provide more updated or reliable information concerning Mr. Duterte's health condition than that provided in the panel's reports," the judgment stated.The court also dismissed defense arguments that the rejection of the report violated Duterte's fair trial rights and the principle of equality of arms. It noted that the Pre-Trial Chamber had consistently maintained it would not rely on medical reports submitted by either party in order to preserve the fairness of the proceedings.Duterte, 80, was surrendered to the ICC on March 12, 2025, after the court issued an arrest warrant. Prosecutors allege he bears criminal responsibility for thousands of deaths in anti-drug operations that they say formed part of a widespread and systematic attack against civilians.The Appeals Chamber also noted that the defense raised arguments that "merely repeat" issues already addressed in earlier rulings, describing the practice as "not an appropriate use of

judicial time and resources.”Friday’s decision marked the second time the Appeals Chamber has upheld Duterte’s detention, after affirming the initial detention ruling in November 2025.

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decision denying his release.The statement came during a public hearing convened to review Duterte’s detention under Article 118 of the Rome Statute, which mandates an annual assessment of a suspect’s custody. The last detention review was conducted on March 14, 2025.Duterte's defense lawyer Nicholas Kaufman confirmed that the team had filed an appeal against the pre-trial chamber’s detention ruling.“As your honors are aware, the defense has appealed the pre-trial chamber’s decision on the first detention review,” Kaufman said. “Since we are still awaiting a judgment of the Appeals Chamber, the defense will not oppose the continuation of Mr. Duterte’s current detention.”What's nextDuring this phase, the Prosecutor’s office prepares to finalize its case file, evidence, witness statements, and documentation to support the charges of crimes against humanity related to alleged extrajudicial killings during Duterte’s time as mayor of Davao City and later as presidentThe defense, on the other hand, will continue to file motions, challenge evidence, and raise procedural concerns, though the Appeals Chamber has already established that release is unlikely unless significant new circumstances arise.

- 20,000 seafarers, 15,000 cruise passengers stuck in Gulf (2026-03-06 16:13)

(UPDATE) AROUND 20,000 seafarers and 15,000 cruise ship passengers are stuck in the Gulf because of the Middle East war, the United Nations’ International Maritime Organization (IMO) said Thursday.The shipping regulator’s secretary-general, Arsenio Dominguez, told Agence France-Presse (AFP) that the “IMO is ready to work with all stakeholders to help ensure the safety and well-being of the seafarers affected.”The maritime sector said it had designated the Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman and Gulf as a “warlike operations area,” granting seafarers additional protections as the Middle East war engulfs the crucial energy transit route.Since war erupted on Saturday, the IMO has recorded seven incidents involving ships in the region that have resulted in two deaths and another seven people wounded.“Beyond the economic impact of these alarming attacks, it is a humanitarian issue. No attack on innocent seafarers is ever justified,” Dominguez said.“I reiterate my call for all shipping companies to exercise maximum caution when operating in the affected region,” he added.Iran has effectively shut down the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world’s crude and considerable supplies of liquefied natural gas travel.Several shipping groups, including Danish shipping giant Maersk, have suspended bookings in the Gulf.Maritime employers and unions representing their workers on Thursday said their upgraded designation of the Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman and Gulf from a “high risk area designation” three days ago “reflects the continuing and heightened threat to seafarers and vessels operating in the region.”“Hundreds of vessels are stranded in the Gulf following the halt of vessel movements through the Strait of Hormuz, highlighting the scale of disruption and risk facing civilian crews in the region,” said a joint statement from the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) and the Joint Negotiating Group, which represents maritime employers.ITF General Secretary Stephen Cotton told AFP that after 32 years involvement with the federation, “this is the worst” he has seen it, “because it’s so unclear on the diplomatic level.”While seafarers can request to leave a ship and be repatriated, the reality is not so clear.“You can’t push a

button, and you immediately leave a vessel," said Cotton. "If you've got a crew of 25, you probably need 16 to safely run the vessel." Iran's Revolutionary Guards on Wednesday claimed "complete control" of the Strait, with reports of additional vessels coming under attack.Energy intelligence firm Kpler said oil tanker transits through the Strait had dropped by 90 percent from last week.With energy prices already soaring, United States President Donald Trump said Tuesday that the US Navy was ready to escort oil tankers through the crucial shipping route.Benchmark US oil contract, West Texas Intermediate, soared more than 5 percent to $78.88 per barrel in trading on Thursday, the highest level since January last year, as the Iran war threatens supplies.International benchmark, Brent North Sea crude, jumped 3.6 percent to $84.34 per barrel.Other regions are already classified as "Warlike Operations Area" by the maritime sector, such as parts of the Sea of Azov, the northern Black Sea, the southern Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.Based on negotiated arrangements reached on Thursday between mariners and commercial shipping companies, known as the International Bargaining Forum (IBF), seafarers have the right to refuse to sail on ships passing through the Gulf, including the Strait of Hormuz, after the threat level for the region was raised to its highest level.Around 300 ships are anchored on both sides of the Strait while the US-led war against Iran escalates. Since Feb. 28, nine ships have been damaged and at least one seafarer has been killed. "Today's designation ensures that seafarers on vessels covered by IBF agreements have critical protections if they operate in this dangerous region," ITF's Cotton said. "The fact we have to take these measures at all is a damning indictment of the situation facing seafarers today. No worker should have to risk being killed or maimed simply for doing their job — particularly when that job is transporting the oil and goods that keep the world's economies running." The war has also prompted a growing number of Filipino migrant workers in the Middle East to seek repatriation.The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) said 299 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) from Dubai, United Arab Emirates, have returned home.A further 34 OFWs arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on an Emirates flight on Friday, the DMW said.Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac led a government team in welcoming the Filipinos home.In a Facebook post, Cacdac thanked the airline and the United Arab Emirates government for helping bring the OFWs home.During a hearing of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on Friday, officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said they were closely monitoring the situation of OFWs in the Middle East and preparing possible evacuation and repatriation efforts as the war in the region escalates.Sen. Erwin Tulfo, who heads the committee, noted that the closure of airspace in parts of the region has prevented many OFWs from immediately returning home.DFA Assistant Secretary Ezzedin Tago said the agency has instructed all foreign service posts in the region to keep communication channels open and respond immediately to requests for help.Embassies have also created communication channels through WhatsApp to monitor developments and maintain contact with Filipinos in their jurisdictions.Cacdac, who was also at the hearing, said the DMW is being updated on the situation on the ground by Filipino community leaders in eight countries across the region.He said the government will prioritize evacuation based primarily on the level of danger in the areas where Filipinos are located. "We have been carefully monitoring the areas attacked by Iranian drones and missiles in every country," Cacdac told the committee.

“Filipinos in nearby areas will be among the first to be moved out for evacuation.” For example, OFWs living near critical facilities such as the Ras Tanura Refinery in eastern Saudi Arabia may be prioritized for evacuation, he said.Aside from security risks, medical and humanitarian considerations are also factored into the government’s decision on who will be repatriated first, Cacdac said.He cited a recent case of an eight-month pregnant Filipina worker who was repatriated to the Philippines on an Emirates flight.Tulfo expressed concerns about domestic workers who might be reluctant to leave their employers.Cacdac said Filipino workers may inform their employers if they need to proceed to the nearest Philippine Embassy or government shelter for safety.Embassies and DMW offices could also coordinate with employers to facilitate the transfer of workers to embassy custody — a process implemented during crises involving Filipino workers in Syria and Lebanon, he said.

- Marcos to appeal for peace in Middle East at UN meet (2026-03-06 16:12)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will call for peace in the Middle East when he takes part in the special session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the Department of Foreign Affairs said Friday.Foreign Affairs spokesman Angelica Escalona said attending the General Assembly session is the highlight of Marcos’ visit to the United States on March 8 to 11.“This trip is very important amid what is currently happening in the Middle East,” Escalona said during a predeparture briefing in Malacañang. “The UN is the most appropriate venue for the President to call for peace in the Middle East and for the safety of all civilians, especially our countrymen.” “The President will offer a voice from our region, from developing countries and call for restraint, respect for international law including the UN charter and humanitarian law, and for all concerned to return to the negotiating table for peace,” Escalona said.Marcos will also seek support for the Philippines’ bid to become a nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council for 2027 to 2028, she said.A seat in the Security Council “gives the Philippines the power and voice in issues of global safety and security,” Escalona said.Marcos is scheduled to meet with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres at the sidelines of his visit. Escalona said Marcos and Guterres would tackle the crisis in the Middle East and reaffirm the Philippines’ commitment to the UN and multilateralism.The president will also address the 70th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, where he “will highlight the Philippines’ commitment to promote, advance, and protect the rights and well-being of women and girls,” she added.Asked if Marcos will also take up the territorial disputes in the South China Sea and other regional issues, Escalona said, “I cannot preempt what the President will say.” “But definitely, he will discuss international developments, regional developments and those matters that will affect our people,” she said.As president, Marcos has made five visits to the US. The last was in July last year, when he met with President Donald Trump.Escalona said Marcos would not meet with Trump and other state leaders during his visit this week.He will not be meeting with members of the Filipino community in New York, either.Joining Marcos during his US visit are first lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, Foreign Affairs Secretary Maria Theresa Lazaro, Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac, Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr., Acting Presidential Communications Secretary Dave Gomez

and other government officials.Last Thursday, Lazaro warned that the world is entering a period of “upheaval, uncertainty and unpredictability,” and urged stronger regional cooperation as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) navigates an increasingly complex global environment.Speaking at the Asia Society Policy Institute in Manila, Lazaro said recent global crises — from the Covid pandemic and the military coup in Myanmar to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine — have reshaped the international landscape.“We are living in a decade defined by what I describe as the ‘three U’s’: upheaval, uncertainty and unpredictability,” Lazaro said.As the Philippines chairs Asean in 2026, Lazaro said the bloc aims to serve as an “anchor for peace, prosperity and stability” through stronger regional integration and adherence to international law.Under the chairmanship theme “Navigating Our Future, Together,” the Philippines will advance three priorities: Peace and Security, Prosperity and People Empowerment.The priorities call for strengthening dialogue and maritime cooperation, deepening economic integration and digital transformation, and promoting inclusive growth and social protection across Southeast Asia.The agenda aligns with the Asean Community Vision 2045, which aims to build a resilient, people-centered Asean and to position the region as the fourth-largest economy globally by 2045.Lazaro also underscored the bloc’s commitment to the rules-based international order as the region marks the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia this year.With a combined economy of more than $4 trillion and a population of more than 684 million, Asean will continue to strengthen regional mechanisms and dialogue to ensure stability in a rapidly changing world, Lazaro said.

- Security officials warn vs espionage, force in WPS (2026-03-06 16:11)

THE Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) admitted Friday that poor handling of classified documents by personnel led to a leak of sensitive operational information related to Philippine activities in the West Philippine Sea (WPS), as national security officials warned of espionage attempts and urged government workers to report recruitment efforts by foreign entities.Speaking on the sidelines of the “Safeguarding the Maritime Domain for the Free and Open Indo-Pacific” symposium organized by the Stratbase ADR Institute in Makati City, PCG spokesman for the WPS RAdm. Jay Tarriela said initial findings pointed to lapses in handling sensitive materials.“Based on my conversation with the personality involved, it was very poor handling of information and documents,” Tarriela said.The leak involved a person close to Coast Guard personnel, although the individual was not an official member of the service, he said. The information reportedly included details about operational plans and supply missions in the WPS.Tarriela said early indications suggested that the leaked material may have enabled the Chinese government to anticipate Philippine operations.He added that authorities had uncovered instances in which some Filipinos admitted being paid by Chinese contacts in exchange for sensitive information about Philippine operations in the disputed waters.“The mere fact that these apprehended informants admitted and cooperated, saying they were being paid to provide sensitive information at the cost of our operations in the West Philippine Sea, is deeply concerning,” Tarriela said.To prevent similar incidents, he said the Coast Guard was strengthening protocols for handling classified information and tightening internal safeguards

related to operational data.The PCG was also coordinating closely with other government security agencies, including the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police, Tarriela said.At the same forum, National Security Adviser and National Security Council (NSC) Director General Eduardo Año said the government was treating the matter as a national security issue. “We assure the public that everything is in check, and we will ensure the failure of any espionage effort in our country,” Año said.He warned that foreign intelligence operations often involve attempts to recruit individuals within government agencies, sometimes beginning with seemingly legitimate job offers or professional engagements. “Look closely at the job offers being made. That’s where it starts, and eventually you may find yourself in a situation where you are already being used as a spy and becoming a traitor to the country,” Año said.The NSC earlier confirmed it had uncovered a serious national security issue involving suspected espionage activities allegedly linked to China, with at least three Filipinos implicated.Año declined to discuss specific cases, citing ongoing investigations.He said that while some internal documents, schedules and reports were exposed, no top-secret material was compromised. “There was sensitive information, but nothing at the highest level,” Año said.Some of the suspected espionage activities dated back several years, predating a provisional agreement reached between Manila and Beijing in 2024, he said.The issue of espionage was raised during a broader discussion at the forum about the mounting maritime tensions in the WPS and the need for stronger cooperation among countries that support a rules-based international order.Stratbase Institute President Victor Andres Manhit said the persistent pattern of coercive actions by Chinese state and state-linked vessels in the disputed waters was part of a broader strategy to gradually alter the situation on the ground — or in this case, at sea — without triggering open conflict.Citing data from the PCG, Manhit said authorities documented 64 incidents of illegal, coercive, aggressive and deceptive actions against Philippine missions or vessels in 2025 alone.Among them are dangerous maneuvers, shadowing of Philippine vessels, water cannon attacks, collisions, radio challenges and even live-fire exercises conducted near Philippine positions. “These are only the incidents that were reported and made public,” Manhit said. “Far from the cameras and the headlines, many more acts of intimidation occur at sea — often involving Filipino fishermen and frontline personnel who continue to operate under constant pressure and uncertainty.” Manhit said the growing frequency and intensity of such incidents reflected a deliberate attempt to normalize coercive behavior in the WPS. “Such behavior, as we have stressed time and again, should not and cannot be normalized or tolerated,” he said.He stressed that the Philippines and its partners must respond with “firm, coordinated and decisive measures” to counter such tactics.Manhit emphasized that the issue went beyond a bilateral dispute between Manila and Beijing, describing it as a broader regional and global concern because of the strategic importance of the Indo-Pacific region, as a vital corridor for global trade, with nearly two-thirds of the world’s commerce passing through its sea lanes. “Safeguarding the maritime domain is not simply about defending territory,” Manhit said. “It is about defending the principles that allow nations — large and small — to coexist peacefully: respect for international law, freedom of navigation and the peaceful management of disputes.” He said the Philippines must continue strengthening cooperation with like-minded nations such as the United States, Japan,

Australia, Canada, New Zealand, France and India to promote transparency, uphold international law and deter coercive actions at sea.The symposium, co-hosted by the Stratbase ADR Institute and the Japan Institute of International Affairs, brought together policymakers, security officials, diplomats, scholars and maritime experts from across the Indo-Pacific region.Participants discussed ways to enhance regional cooperation in maritime security, strengthen adherence to international law, and reinforce the principles underpinning the Free and Open Indo-Pacific framework.

- Govt agencies to adopt energy-saving measures (2026-03-06 16:10)

THE Department of Energy (DOE) has issued an advisory directing all government agencies to strictly conserve energy.The DOE said Friday the advisory forms part of the government’s proactive measures to ease the impact of the conflict in the Middle East and to help ensure sufficient and reliable electricity supply during the dry season, when power demand typically rises.Among the energy-saving measures are the activation of sleep settings on office equipment, setting air-conditioning thermostats at no lower than 24 degrees Celsius, turning off lights and computers during lunch breaks and after office hours when not in use, and shifting to more energy-efficient technologies such as LED lighting and inverter-type air-conditioning systems.The advisory also encourages the adoption of flexible work arrangements, where practical and applicable, and the use of on-site renewable energy systems such as solar power, where feasible.“The government must lead by example in using energy wisely and responsibly, especially during periods of heightened demand and global uncertainty. Through the strict implementation of the Government Energy Management Program, we are reinforcing a culture of conservation in public institutions while helping safeguard the country’s energy security,” Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said in a statement.The department announced a day earlier that it has intensified the monitoring of the downstream oil industry following reports of possible hoarding and profiteering in the sale of petroleum products.It said it coordinated with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the Philippine National Police (PNP) to ensure swift action against any violators, as its field offices have submitted initial reports and supporting evidence indicating potential irregularities in fuel supply and retail practices such as overcharging.“Recently, our field office in Cebu had stated that there have been some stations and retailers that have been charging too much for their fuels. Not only is it illegal, but it is inhumane and anti-Filipino. We have asked the DILG, the PNP and the mayors that we all work together to make sure that this does not happen, because again, you cannot take advantage of the sufferings of the Filipino people,” Garin said.The DOE is asking consumers and the public to promptly report any suspected incidents of hoarding, refusal to sell, price manipulation or profiteering to the DOE through its Oil Industry Management Bureau, Consumer Welfare and Promotion Office, and Field Offices.Consumers may file complaints through the government hotline 8888, the DOE Consumer Welfare and Promotion Office telephone number 8840-2267, the Department of Energy Official Facebook Messenger, or via email at cwpo@doe.gov.ph.

- PH donates $15,000 vs chemical weapons (2026-03-06 16:09)

IN a reaffirmation of its commitment to global chemical weapons disarmament, the Philippines made a voluntary contribution of $15,000 to the Syria Missions Trust Fund of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).The contribution was formalized on March 3 with a signing ceremony at the OPCW headquarters in The Hague between Philippine Permanent Representative to the OPCW J. Eduardo Malaya and OPCW Director General Fernando Arias.The funds will support the work of the OPCW Technical Secretariat in Syria, particularly in determining the scope of the country’s chemical weapons program.The secretariat’s activities form part of broader international efforts to verify compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention, the global treaty banning the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons.In remarks during the ceremony, Malaya said the Philippines’ contribution underscores the country’s commitment to disarmament and nonproliferation.Malaya cited the importance of strengthening international cooperation to address challenges related to chemical security and disarmament, particularly in Syria.Arias expressed appreciation to the Philippine government for its continued support of the organization’s work. He emphasized that contributions from member states are critical in sustaining efforts to eliminate chemical weapons and verify the complete declaration of Syria’s chemical weapons program.Arias described the secretariat’s mission in Syria as “extensive and difficult, but progressing well,” aided by financial and in-kind assistance from OPCW member states.The latest contribution marks the third voluntary donation from the Philippines to support OPCW initiatives in recent years. In 2021, Manila provided funding for the establishment of the OPCW Center for Chemistry and Technology, a facility designed to strengthen the organization’s scientific and technical capabilities.In 2025, the Philippines contributed to support the work of the OPCW Scientific Advisory Board.The Philippine Embassy in The Hague has also played an active role within the organization. From 2019 through February 2026, the embassy served as Coordinator of the Asia Group, representing regional member states in consultations with the OPCW.The Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force in 1997 and currently has 193 member states, making it one of the most widely adhered-to disarmament treaties.The Philippines is among its original signatories, having signed the convention in 1993.Based in The Hague, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is responsible for implementing the treaty and overseeing international verification efforts aimed at eliminating chemical weapons worldwide.

- Marcos unveils 'trabaho at negosyo' to empower filipino entrepreneurs (2026-03-06 16:08)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday launched the first “Trabaho at Negosyo” event, which aims to empower micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).“Today, we live in a very uncertain world. What many of us have studied and developed a decade — or even just a couple of years ago — are sometimes no longer relevant,” Marcos said in a speech during the event’s launch at SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City.“Traditional jobs are transforming. The skills that were once optional, now they are essential,” he added.The president said many Filipinos continue to struggle to find jobs that match their skills and educational backgrounds. He noted that industries are rapidly evolving because of advances in digital technology and

artificial intelligence. “I believe Filipinos can keep up. We know that despite the challenges, our people are resourceful and resilient,” he said.Marcos emphasized the crucial role of the private sector in addressing employment gaps, particularly through partnerships that promote entrepreneurship and skills development. He lauded Go Negosyo founder Jose Ma. “Joey” Concepcion III for championing MSME development in the country.The president promised that the government would continue strengthening skills training, employment programs and support services to help Filipinos secure jobs and grow their businesses. “We equip our people not only to survive, but to succeed in this changing world,” Marcos said. “Through the advocacy of Go Negosyo, we promote a positive mindset towards business — not as a last resort, but as a strong complement to our collective role in nation-building.” Marcos said more than 74,000 jobseekers secured employment when the government conducted more than 2,300 job fairs nationwide in 2025. He added that in January 2026 alone, around 47 job fairs were organized, with more than 2,400 applicants hired on the spot.The president also said government services for entrepreneurs are being streamlined through Negosyo Centers, which provide mentorship, advisory services and assistance in expanding market access. He encouraged participants to take advantage of the learning sessions and opportunities offered through the Trabaho at Negosyo program to strengthen their skills and businesses. “Because when we build skills, we build confidence. When we create jobs, we restore the dignity of our people. And when we strengthen our economic foundations, we build a stronger nation for tomorrow,” Marcos said.The Trabaho at Negosyo program, organized by Go Negosyo, brings together key public-private stakeholders to expand job opportunities, support upskilling and reskilling for MSMEs, and create a platform where jobseekers can connect directly with businesses.Government agencies such as the Department of Trade and Industry, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and Bureau of Internal Revenue are providing one-stop services and pre-employment assistance.Concepcion said the initiative was designed to make employment and small-business development more accessible to the public. “Trabaho at Negosyo will bring job-placement services, skills workshops and entrepreneurship mentoring directly to the people,” he said.He said the program was built on two pillars: job creation and MSME development. “To create inclusive and sustainable growth, we must expand both pathways simultaneously,” he added.MSMEs generate the majority of jobs in the Philippines, accounting for about 6.25 million jobs, or 66.57 percent of total employment, according to Go Negosyo.Micro-enterprises contribute the largest share at 34.24 percent, followed by small enterprises at 25.66 percent and medium enterprises at 6.67 percent. Large enterprises account for 33.42 percent of employment, it added.

- Suntay faces safe spaces act complaint following house hearing comments (2026-03-06 16:07)

A WOMEN’s group has filed administrative and criminal complaints against Quezon City 4th District Rep. Jesus “Bong” Suntay after he made sexist remarks to actress Anne Curtis during impeachment hearings at the House of Representatives earlier this week.In their complaint-affidavit, members of World March of Women (WMW)-Pilipinas accused Suntay of

violations of Republic Act 11313, or the Safe Spaces Act; Republic Act 9710, or the Magna Carta of Women; and RA 6713, or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials. The charges stem from Suntay saying he had a “desire” for Curtis and subsequently justifying his comments.The group is also accusing him of violations of the Supreme Court’s Code of Professional Responsibility and Accountability for lawyers.The complainants were Jean Enriquez, Joanna Bernice Coronacion, Nerissa Gonzales, Liza Garcia, Ana Maria Nemenzo, Jelen Paclarin, Amparo Sykioco, Myrna Jimenez, and Judith Pasimio, all members of WMW-Pilipinas.In a statement, Enriquez, national coordinator of WMW-Pilipinas, said they held their “most important action” on International Women’s Day in the face of “noise of male perpetrators of sexual violence to cover up their sexual crimes.”Paclarin, executive director of the Women’s Legal and Human Rights Bureau, said sexism has “no place in our society” and that the lewd remarks made by Suntay should not be tolerated.“Public office demands the highest standards of accountability, and any conduct that demeans women must be addressed under Philippine law; therefore, Bong Suntay must be held accountable before the Philippine court,” Paclarin said.Pasimio, coordinator of Purple Action for Indigenous Women’s Rights, further stressed that sexism and sexual violence have permeated the halls of Congress and rural and Indigenous communities.“It is this objectification of women that brings about sexual violence against Indigenous women and girls at home, and in areas where so-called development projects, such as mining, are implemented. We have to stand up against sexual violence against all women, in all of its forms,” Pasimio said.Suntay has yet to comment on the case filed against him, but he said in a television interview that his analogy was in “poor taste” and apologized to Curtis and every woman offended by the remarks.The lawmaker is also facing an ethics complaint at the House of Representatives, which was referred by House Committee on Women Chairman and Laguna Rep. Ann Matibag.

- Philippine Space Agency Eyes Local Rocket Launch Site via New Partnership (2026-03-06 16:06)

THE Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) announced it has signed a feasibility study memorandum of understanding to build the country’s first spaceport.In a statement released Friday, PhilSA said the initiative is a collaboration with the Department of Information and Communications Technology, Cagayan Economic Zone Authority, Ascend International Gateway Inc., and South Korea’s Perigee Aerospace Inc.The agency said the project will help reduce costs, improve launch efficiency, and create opportunities for research and commercial space activities.PhilSA noted that the partnership builds on a rocket technology training program conducted in South Korea from October to November 2025. During that program, Filipino engineers received lectures and hands-on training in rocket assembly, testing, and launch vehicle systems with Perigee Aerospace.The agency said the training laid the groundwork for possible localized rocket assembly, testing, and launch operations in the Philippines. During a forum, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said the agreements signed between Philippine and South Korean companies across several industries — including aerospace, shipbuilding, nuclear energy, critical minerals supply chains, retail, and health and wellness — highlight the strengthening

economic partnership between the two countries. “All of these will ripple into significant partnerships that will generate projects, investments, and of course, livelihood,” Marcos said.The initiative is part of broader efforts to strengthen the country’s capabilities in space research, engineering, and rocket and satellite development through international cooperation and private sector participation.

- Panelo Denies Madriaga's P1 Billion Bribery Claim in Duterte Case (2026-03-06 16:05)

PAOLO Panelo Jr., legal counsel for Vice President Sara Duterte, denied claims by self-confessed security consultant Ramil Madriaga of death threats and an offer of up to P1 billion to stop him from testifying in impeachment proceedings against the vice president.In an interview, Madriaga’s counsel, Raymund Palad, claimed his client was being threatened by a fellow inmate at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology compound in Taguig. He also said two government officials offered Madriaga between P500 million and P1 billion to recant his testimony.Duterte filed perjury charges against Madriaga in Taguig on Wednesday. In a statement, Panelo said Duterte has nothing to do with any threats against Madriaga. “[W]e join any calls to provide him with additional protection. We want him alive and in the pink of health because he’s the only one who can admit that he made up his testimony against the vice president and identify his handlers,” Panelo said.Panelo told The Manila Times that Madriaga is the only one who can admit that the allegations against Duterte are false. “He is the only one who can tell who his handlers are, and if he will stand by his testimony, he can add further to his allegations against VP Sara,” Panelo said.Panelo described Madriaga’s affidavit as “overly broad” and unverifiable because it lacks specifics such as dates, exact locations, and the names of other involved individuals. In his affidavit, Madriaga claimed to be a Duterte supporter who received campaign funds from Philippine offshore gaming operators and drug money, as well as confidential funds from two former Vice Presidential Security and Protection Group leaders. “We want him to answer our complaint, give more details so we can destroy his testimony. So if there are calls to protect Ramil Madriaga, we agree to that,” Panelo said.He added that Madriaga’s “worthless” testimony would be used in an impeachment trial that could “deprive the electorate of the public official that they voted for.” “If this was not used in the impeachment trial, then VP Sara could have not filed this, but because this is used to deceive the public and subvert the will of the people, then he should be made liable,” Panelo said.Panelo described claims of paying off Madriaga as “ridiculous,” stressing that Duterte’s camp wants Madriaga to testify so his “lies can be dismantled on cross-examination for the world to see.” “There’s no sense for us to stop him from revealing himself as a fraud,” Panelo said.

- Group raises AU$ 23K for Filipino student who died in Australia (2026-03-06 16:04)

FUND-RAISING platform GoFundMe has raised nearly 23,000 Australian dollars (AU$), roughly P956,263, for the repatriation of the remains of a Filipino student who drowned on the Gold Coast beach in Australia.According to Australian media network 7 News, Filipino student Karlo Bul-Anon, 20, from Consolacion, Cebu, was reported missing after “vanishing in the water.”

His remains were found on Wednesday, March 4, in the afternoon. “Karlo was a student in Australia and was reported missing on 7 News, then found dead the following day. This heartbreaking loss has left the family grieving and facing unexpected financial burdens,” wrote a family friend Alfreda Camasura, in a GoFundMe post. “At an age when most young men are still trying to find their way, he already knew his purpose. He carried his family’s hopes in his heart when he boarded a plane to Australia. He left the comfort of home, his parents’ embrace, and his brother’s laughter,” she added. “What was meant to be a simple swim turned into a tragedy. He drowned, and just like that, the young man full of dreams and love was taken too soon. No goodbye. No last embrace. Only silence. Now his family waits — not for his next call or message — but for his body to come home. The pain is unbearable. A mother’s tears fall endlessly. A father’s heart breaks in quiet suffering. A brother mourns not just a sibling, but his best friend and hero. He is loved by relatives, friends, and everyone who knew him grieve deeply, remembering his kindness, humility, and determination,” Camasura said.As of Friday afternoon, the GoFundMe had raised a total of AU$22,997, with a set goal of AU$40,000. “The financial cost of repatriating his remains from Australia is overwhelming, and in this time of unimaginable grief, they cannot carry this burden alone,” the GoFundMe page read. “To anyone willing to extend financial assistance, any amount — big or small — will be deeply appreciated. Your generosity will help bring their beloved son home so he can finally rest in the arms of the land and the people who love him most,” it added.

- 5th alarm fire hits homes along NIA Road in QC (2026-03-06 16:04)

MANILA, Philippines — A fire struck a residential area along NIA Road in Pinyahan village, Quezon City on Friday evening, March 6, prompting a large response from firefighters.The Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) said the blaze was first raised to the 1st alarm at 9:01 p.m. and quickly escalated to the 2nd alarm at 9:03 p.m.Authorities said the fire was declared 3rd alarm at 9:12 p.m. and further raised to the 4th alarm at 9:22 p.m.The incident later reached the 5th alarm at 9:44 p.m. as firefighters continued efforts to contain the blaze in the residential area.As of 11:18 p.m., the fire had been elevated to Task Force Bravo, according to the BFP National Capital Region.Authorities said NIA Road and BIR Road were not passable to all types of vehicles as fire trucks continued to occupy the area while crews worked to extinguish the blaze.Authorities have yet to release the number of houses affected, possible casualties, or the cause of the fire as of posting time.

- Stradcom mulls legal action vs accusers (2026-03-06 16:03)

STRADCOM Corp. on Friday pushed back against graft allegations linked to the P169-per computer fee collected in transactions with the Land Transportation Office (LTO), warning it is prepared to pursue legal action over what it called baseless accusations.The information technology service provider said that transport group Federated Land Transport Organizations of the Philippines (Feltop) filed a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsman, questioning the legality of the fee and alleging possible preferential treatment for Stradcom. “The company will take the necessary legal steps to address what appears to be unfounded graft allegations

against our company,” Stradcom said.The firm also emphasized that its operations with the LTO are based on a government concession agreement.“For the record and as a gentle reminder to the public, Stradcom Corporation operates and delivers service to the Land Transportation Office pursuant to a valid, legal, binding, and enforceable concession agreement with the government,” it said.“We remain compliant with the terms and conditions of our concession agreement, and faithful in helping the LTO’s service to the motoring public,” the company added.The complaint, filed on March 5, questioned the collection of the P169-computer fee per transaction, alleging it generated more than P169 million and may have been implemented with preferential treatment for Stradcom, which provides the IT infrastructure used for vehicle registration and other digital services of the LTO.Feltop, which represents more than 60,000 small and independent public utility vehicle operators nationwide, argued that the fee has added to the operational costs of transport operators already grappling with rising expenses.Also named in the complaint is Vigor Mendoza II, now chairman of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, for actions allegedly committed during his tenure as LTO chief.Mendoza dismissed the graft complaint against him, describing it as an act of “desperation to get even.”Feltop is seeking a 90-day preventive suspension of Mendoza while the Ombudsman investigates the allegations. It is also asking for a refund of computer fees collected starting Jan. 28, 2025.

- Manila fire displaces more than 200 families (2026-03-06 16:02)

A FIRE of still unknown origin displaced more than 200 families in a residential area in Tondo, Manila, before dawn Friday.According to the City of Manila Disaster Risk Reduction Management Department, the fire was first reported at about 1:09 a.m. Firefighters raised the first alarm at 1:18 a.m., the second at 1:24 a.m., the third at 1:31 a.m., and the fourth alarm at 2:00 a.m.Firefighters said they declared the fire under control at 4:30 a.m.Manila Police District spokesman Philipp Ines told The Manila Times they have yet to determine the cause of the fire and the extent of its damage, adding that no casualties were reported.Meanwhile, the Manila Department of Social Welfare said it continues to provide aid to the families affected by the fire.Also, the Manila Traffic and Parking Bureau (MTPB) has issued a traffic advisory, warning motorists that heavy traffic is expected near the fire scene as they help with the clearing operation.In a Facebook post, the MTPB said emergency responders were at the fire scene and warned of traffic delays on Road 10, encouraging motorists to avoid the area and use alternate routes.“We encourage everyone to stay alert and plan your travel accordingly,” the MTPB said.

- Taguig holds Women’s Bazaar (2026-03-06 16:01)

THE Taguig City government launched a weekly “Women’s Bazaar,” featuring products from local women entrepreneurs as part of its celebration of the National Women’s Month.The activity is held at the Sangguniang Panlungsod parking lot at Taguig City Hall in Tuktukan village.“Starting this March 6 and the following Fridays of this month, March 13, 20, and 27, we will be joined by 14 Taguigeña merchants who will offer various products,” Mayor Lani Cayetano said Friday.The bazaar runs every Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., showcasing goods

produced by women entrepreneurs in the city. “They are 14 women merchants assisted by our Taguig Manpower and Assessment Center, and some of them are self-made, who built their small businesses,” Cayetano said.Cayetano added that the initiative recognizes the skills and capabilities of women in entrepreneurship while providing them a platform for economic empowerment and promoting financial independence.The program is led by the city’s Gender and Development Office as part of the local government’s observance of Women’s Month.Mayor Cayetano also encouraged residents to visit the bazaar and support the booths of the participating women entrepreneurs.

- Massive fuel price hike looms next week (2026-03-06 16:00)

THE price of fuel could climb sharply next week if the conflict in the Middle East continues to worsen, a source in the local oil industry said Friday.Diesel could surge to P20 per liter and gasoline to P10 per liter because of massive disruptions in the global oil supply as the United States and Israel unleash a fresh wave of aerial attacks on Iran, the source said.He based the estimates on the four-day trading of Mean of Platts, the pricing basis of refined goods in Southeast Asia.Pump prices went up for the eighth straight week, even before the attacks on Iran were launched a week ago. “Oil prices jumped as markets were affected by crude shortages due to the conflict in the Middle East.,” the source said. “Asian refiners are struggling to secure prompt replacement crude cargos, with some Chinese refiners already cutting runs and suspending fuel exports, resulting to a reduced available supply in the region.” Another factor pushing up oil prices is the closure of shipping channels in the Gulf by Iran. Because oil tankers are unable to make shipments, “storage tanks across the Middle East are rapidly filling up, forcing producers to cut output if they can’t resume exports soon,” the source added.The Department of Energy (DOE) has asked oil companies to stagger the increases for next week, but no agreement has been reached.The DOE is also studying ordering the Philippine National Oil Co. to procure at least a million barrels of diesel to secure domestic supply.During a hearing of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on Friday, DOE Oil Industry Management Bureau Director Rino Abad said diesel could hit P80 per liter if the increase is not staggered.Abad refrained from giving an exact projection, but warned that the impact of the crisis in the Middle East could be more severe than the price shocks experienced during the Russia–Ukraine War.In the House of Representatives, Ways and Means Committee Chairman Rep. Romero Quimbo said a major crisis could be averted once President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is given emergency powers to suspend or reduce the excise taxes on fuel.Quimbo said House Bill 8257, which he filed on Monday, would amend Sections 148 of the National Internal Revenue Code which would establish a “lawful and conditional mechanism for temporarily suspending fuel excise taxes when extraordinary circumstances arise.” In a phone interview with The Manila Times, Quimbo said his bill would give the president the discretion to “either remove or partly remove on select or all petroleum products” if the Dubai Crude price hits $80 per barrel or higher for three consecutive months, or through a declaration of a state of emergency or calamity arising from petroleum product increases.These provisions, Quimbo said, will act as safeguards against any possible abuse in the granting of such emergency

powers to the president.Quimbo said the revenue loss if the president decides to suspend the fuel excise tax could reach P10 billion a month, based on last year’s collection of P128 billion.But if the government does not intervene, the economy could continue to contract as the prices of commodities rise.“Petroleum is a basic component of any product that you see in the market, whether in the course of its production, in the course of its farming, or if it’s even important, in the course of its logistics, lahat’yan nagbabayad ng gasolina (everyone pays for gasoline). So if you don’t intervene in terms of the price of petroleum, then the price of commodities will escalate even further, driving up inflation,” Quimbo said.In a separate statement, Batangas Rep. Ryan Recto said the passage of the bill granting the president powers to reduce or suspend the fuel excise tax will provide the government with a “flexible mechanism in shielding Filipino consumers from the inflationary impact of volatile global oil prices.” “The current statutory excise tax regime imposes a fixed per-liter tax that provides a stable revenue stream but lacks the flexibility to mitigate the sudden and severe inflationary impact of global price volatility,” Recto said.Albay Rep. Raymond Salceda said the government is now collecting “significant unplanned VAT revenues from the price increases” which could be redirected to affected sectors rather than absorbed into the General Fund.“Most likely we will raise an additional P2 to P2.3 billion in VAT every single month as a result of the price increases. That can help if given to the affected sectors, mainly transport, farmers, fisherfolk,” Salceda said.

- Marcos orders temporary 4-day workweek in some executive offices (2026-03-06 13:21)

MANILA, Philippines- President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday ordered the temporary implementation of a four-day workweek in some executive branch offices starting March 9, as part of the government’s efforts to conserve energy and reduce fuel use amid rising global oil prices triggered by the ongoing crisis in the Middle East."For the part of the government: Beginning Monday, March 9, we will temporarily implement a four-day work week for some offices under the executive branch," the President said in a video message. "This does not include those providing emergency services such as the police, firemen, and other offices offering frontline services to the public," he added. Shortly following the President’s announcement, Malacañang released Memorandum Circular (MC) 114, which provides additional details on the implementation of the directive.The order will cover all national government agencies, government-owned or -controlled corporations, local government units, constitutional bodies, state universities and colleges, and other government instrumentalities.“There is an urgent need to adopt strict energy conservation measures, to further reduce the energy footprint of government operations and optimize the use of public resources,” the President said in his order.The four-day onsite work arrangements will remain in effect until lifted or sooner revoked by the president, according to MC 114.“This arrangement shall serve as an interim measure, to be continued only until circumstances warrant its modification o r discontinuance,” it added.In addition to the shortened workweek, Marcos directed government agencies to cut their electricity and fuel consumption by 10 to 20 percent.Under the memorandum, government offices are instructed to maintain

air-conditioning at 24 degrees Celsius, adding that non-essential lights and electronic equipment must be turned off during lunch breaks and after office hours. Office equipment should also be set to sleep mode when not in use.Marcos also ordered a temporary suspension of non-essential travel and activities, including study tours, team-building activities, and meetings that can instead be conducted online.

- Sara camp wants Madriaga alive amid reports of death threats — lawyer (2026-03-06 06:01)

MANILA, Philippines — The legal counsel of Vice President Sara Duterte denied claims by the lawyer of self-confessed security consultant Ramil Madriaga that there were threats to his life and that he was offered up to P1 billion just to stop him from testifying.In an interview, Madriaga's counsel, Raymund Palad, claimed that his client was being threatened by a fellow inmate at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology compound in Taguig.He also said that Madriaga was being offered from P500 million to P1 billion by two government officials just to recant his testimony.In a statement, Duterte's lawyer, Salvador Paolo Panelo Jr. said that Duterte has nothing to do with any death threats to Madriaga."[W]e join any calls to provide him with additional protection. We want him alive and in the pink of health because he’s the only one who can admit that he made up his testimony against the Vice President, and identify his handlers," Panelo said.He also said that the alleged payoff against Madriaga was a "ridiculous claim,"stressing that Duterte's camp wants Madriaga to testify so his "lies can be dismantled on cross-examination for the world to see,""There’s no sense for us to stop him from revealing himself as a fraud," Panelo said.Duterte filed perjury charges against Madriaga in Taguig City on Wednesday.

- Security chief wants reports on insider threats, assures measures to protect sensitive data (2026-03-06 05:55)

MANILA Philippines — National Security Adviser and National Security Council (NSC) Director General Eduardo Año on Friday urged government personnel to immediately report any attempts at espionage or unauthorized recruitment, stressing the critical need to safeguard national security.Speaking on the sidelines of the “Safeguarding the Maritime Domain for the Free and Open Indo-Pacific” forum organized by the Stratbase Institute, Año warned that individuals who knowingly share sensitive information with foreign entities risk being labeled traitors.“For those who are being approached or recruited, report immediately to your respective superiors so we can assist and ensure that our security forces are ready to prevent any such plans,” he said.The NSC previously confirmed it had uncovered a serious national security issue involving suspected espionage activities allegedly linked to China, with at least three Filipinos implicated. Año, however, declined to comment on specific cases, citing ongoing investigations.“I don’t want to comment on this specific matter… Just rest assured that security has been taken,” he said.On the nature of the information involved, Año clarified that while some internal documents, schedules, and reports were exposed, no top-secret material was compromised. “There was sensitive information, but nothing at the highest level. No

damage to national security has been reported,” he said.Año added that the alleged espionage activities began years before a provisional agreement between Manila and Beijing in 2024. “The other cases that we discovered date back a few years,” he said, noting that authorities are continuing to pursue additional leads.He urged government personnel to remain vigilant and assured that processes for handling sensitive information would continue to be reinforced."From the start of this administration, we have had an insider threat program. This is a collective effort, especially within our intelligence community," said Año.

- Marcos to call for Mideast peace, address women's commission, campaign for UN Security Council membership in US visit (2026-03-06 05:41)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will call for peace in the Middle East when he participates at the special session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said Friday. The president will also address the 70th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) during his working visit from March 8 to 11.Foreign Affairs spokesman Angelica Escalona told a pre-departure briefing that Marcos would discuss international issues, such as the Middle East crisis, during his visit to the United States on March 8 to 11."This trip is very important amid what is currently happening in the Middle East," Escalona said during a pre-departure briefing in Malacañang."The President will offer a voice from our region, from developing countries and call for restraint, respect for international law, including the UN charter and humanitarian law and for all concerned to return to the negotiating table for peace," he added.Escalona said Marcos would also meet with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on the sidelines of his US visit.The President will also address and deliver a message before the special session of the UNGA, where he will reiterate the Philippines' campaign to become a member of the UN Security Council.The President will be accompanied by First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, Foreign Affairs Maria Theresa Lazaro, Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac, Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr., Acting Presidential Communications Secretary Dave Gomez, Sen. Erwin Tulfo, chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, and other government officials.Marcos has made five visits to the United States, becoming the foreign country that he has visited the most during his administration.The President's last visit to the US was in July 2025, meeting with President Donald Trump.But the DFA official said Marcos would not meet with Trump and other state leaders in this trip.

- PCG admits poor handling of classified documents led to West Philippine Sea data leak (2026-03-06 03:53)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) is tightening security measures after a leak of sensitive operational information in the West Philippine Sea was traced to poor handling of classified documents, Admiral Jay Tarriela said Friday.Speaking on the sidelines of the Safeguarding the Maritime Domain for the Free and Open Indo-Pacific forum organized by the Stratbase Institute, Tarriela, PCG spokesman for the West Philippine Sea, confirmed that the leak involved a person close to PCG personnel, though not an official member of the Coast

Guard. “Based on my conversation with the personality involved, it was very poor handling of information and documents,” he said, pointing to internal lapses as a contributing factor to the breach.Tarriela said the leaked details reportedly included operational plans and supply operations in the West Philippine Sea. He said early indications suggest the information allowed the Chinese government to anticipate Philippine operations, efforts to possibly undermine national security.To prevent similar incidents, Tarriela said the Coast Guard was implementing stricter safeguards for handling sensitive information. He did not disclose the rank, location, or assignment of the personnel involved, citing an ongoing investigation. “The main adjustment we are doing right now is to have a more secure way of handling information with regard to our operations in the West Philippines,” Tarriela said.He also said the Coast Guard was coordinating with intelligence agencies across the Philippine government, including the Armed Forces and Philippine National Police, to prevent future leaks and reinforce national security. “The investigation is ongoing, and the individuals involved are cooperating with the National Security Council and other authorities for the necessary measures,” Tarriela said.

- DILG urges cooperation in apprehending fraternity suspects in hazing death of maritime student (2026-03-06 03:42)

(UPDATE) MANILA, Philippines — Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla on Friday urged full cooperation in identifying and turning over those responsible for the hazing death of a first-year maritime student in CaviteSecretary Remulla confirmed that 17 members of the Tau Gamma Phi fraternity were now considered suspects, with authorities expecting to take them into custody soon. “This is unacceptable,” Remulla said in a media briefing. “We expect Tau Gamma Phi, a 1-million-strong organization, to cooperate fully in locating and turning over their members. This will not go unpunished. We will pursue all of them.” He also urged the fraternity’s senior leadership to take proactive measures to end the culture of violence in initiation rites. “The manifesto against violence by the senior leadership does not protect them from tragedies. Real accountability is required,” he added.The case of Mark Kenneth Alcedo, 19, marks the second hazing-related death in Remulla’s province involving the same fraternity in four years. “Someone has to take responsibility for what happened. We cannot blame or quarrel forever. The fraternity has promised to cooperate fully and to reform the culture of violence in their initiations,” Remulla said.SurrenderThe Tau Gamma Phi fraternity urged its members allegedly involved in the fatal hazing to surrender and assured the government of its full cooperation in bringing the perpetrators to justice.The 57-year-old fraternity has expressed condemnation of the hazing rites and other neophytes last March 1 and offered its sympathies and condolences to the family of the victim who died of blunt force trauma due to severe beating. “Sec[retary]. [Jonvic] Remulla asked us for our commitment. We gave them the commitment that we will assist them in all angles of the investigation. They already have the names, [what we will do is find out] where they’re at. We will ask our members, those who have committed the crime to surrender,” Tau Gamma spokesmann Martin Asturias told reporters in a briefing in Manila urging implicated members to go to the nearest police station and turn themselves in.Remulla met with Tau Gamma Phi and asked its

senior leadership to pursue measures ending the culture of violent initiations for neophytes seeking membership into the fraternity.Following the surrender of one of the suspects, authorities have 21 names now considered suspects in violation of Republic Act 11053 or the Anti-Hazing Act of 2018. “This will not go unpunished,” Remulla said.

- Heavy traffic advisory issued in areas near fire in Tondo, Manila (2026-03-06 02:59)

MANILA, Philippines —The Manila Traffic and Parking Bureau (MTPB) issued a traffic advisory on Friday, warning motorists to expect heavy traffic near the site of a fire incident in Tondo, Manila.In a Facebook post, the MTPC said emergency responders were at the fire scene and warned of delays when passing through Road 10, encouraging motorists to avoid the area and use alternate routes.

- Marcos launches first employment, entrepreneurship program (2026-03-06 02:53)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday launched the country’s first " Trabaho at Negosyo" event, an initiative aimed at promoting both employment and entrepreneurship.In his speech during the launching at SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City, Marcos said his administration was committed to strengthening livelihood programs for Filipinos."We equip our people not only to survive, but to succeed in this changing world," Marcos said."Through the advocacy of Go Negosyo, we promote a positive mindset towards business—not as a last resort, but as a strong complement to our collective role in nation-building," he added.The event, organized by Go Negosyo, brings together key public-private stakeholders to expand job opportunities for communities, support upskilling and reskilling for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and create a dynamic platform where job seekers can connect directly with businesses.Highlighting MSMEs as vital engines of inclusive growth and employment creation, the program features plenary learning sessions, a job fair, business mentoring sessions and partner booths.

- 34 more OFWs return home from Dubai (2026-03-06 02:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Following the return of 299 Filipinos from Dubai, United Arab Emirates, the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) announced that 34 more overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 3 on Friday morning.They were aboard Emirates Flight EK 336, that touched down at 5:58 a.m.DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac led a government team in welcoming the Filipinos back home.They would later receive assistance and various forms of support from government agencies.In a Facebook post, Cacdac also thanked the airline and the government of the UAE for the safe return of the Filipinos, amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

- LTO information technology service provider threatens legal action over ‘unfounded’ graft raps (2026-03-06 02:44)

MANILA, Philippines — An information techonology service provider pushed back against graft allegations linked to its transaction with the Land Transportatiion Office (LTO) and said that it

would take the "necessary legal steps" to debunk the "unfounded" accusations.Stradcom Corporation on Friday issued the statement after transport group, Federated Land Transport Organizations of the Philippines (FELTOP), filed a complaint before the Office of the Ombudsman questioning the legality of the P169 computer fee in its transactions with the LTO and alleging possible "preferential treatment for Stradcom." “The company will take the necessary legal steps to address what appear to be unfounded graft allegations against our company,” Stradcom said in its statement to The Manila Times.It stressed that its operations with the LTO were backed by a standing government concession agreement. “For the record and as a gentle reminder to the public, Stradcom Corporation operates and delivers service to the Land Transportation Office pursuant to a valid, legal, binding, and enforceable concession agreement with the government,” it said. “We remain compliant with the terms and conditions of our concession agreement, and faithful in helping the LTO’s service to the motoring public,” the company added.The complaint, filed on March 5, questioned the collection of the P169 computer fee per transaction, alleging it generated more than P169 million and may have been implemented with preferential treatment for Stradcom, which provides the IT infrastructure used for vehicle registration and other digital services of the LTO.FELTOP, which represents more than 60,000 small and independent public utility vehicle operators nationwide, argued that the fee has added to the operational costs of transport operators already grappling with rising expenses.Also named in the complaint was Vigor Mendoza II, now chairman of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, for actions allegedly committed during his tenure as LTO chief.Mendoza dismissed the graft complaint against him, describing it as an act of “desperation to get even.” FELTOP is seeking a 90-day preventive suspension against Mendoza while the Ombudsman investigates the allegations and is also asking for a refund of all computer fees collected starting Jan. 28, 2025.

- Fire affects 200 families in Manila (2026-03-06 02:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Over 200 families were affected by the fire that ravaged a residential area in Tondo, Manila early Friday.According to the Manila City Disaster Risk Reduction Management Department, the fire was first reported at around 1:09 a..m., quickly raised to first alarm by 1:18 a.m, second alarm by 1:24 a.m, third alarm by 1:31 a.m, and fourth alarm by 2 a.m.The fire was only declared under control about two hours later at 4:30 a.m.Authorities have yet to identify the cause of the fire.Meanwhile, the Manila Department of Social Welfare continues to provide aid to the families affected by the fire.

- Workers call for de-escalation, diplomacy to end Middle East crisis (2026-03-05 16:59)

LABOR organizations across the globe has joined the call of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) for the immediate de-escalation, immediate ceasefire and a return to peaceful negotiations to restore peace in the Middle East.Sonny Matula, president of Federation of Free Workers (FFW), an affiliate of ITUC, on Thursday said ITUC issued the call during the March 2 meeting of union leaders from various countries in Washington, where it strongly condemned the bombings carried out by Israel and the United States against Iran.Matula said

the subsequent retaliation by Iran across the region, including attacks on Bahrain, Cyprus, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), further endangers civilian lives and deepens instability.The ITUC has 331 affiliate organizations, representing some 207 million workers in 163 countries.Matula said the FFW supports the call of the ITUC, adding that workers, civilians, and migrant workers must not be treated as collateral damage in political and military conflicts.He also extended its federation’s condolences to the family of Mary Ann de Vera, a 32-year-old Filipina caregiver, and the first Filipino killed in Tel Aviv, Israel, amid escalating tensions.Two other Filipinos were reported injured in separate attacks in Kuwait and the UAE — countries with large populations of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs).“Wars may be planned in command centers, but their impact falls on family dining tables,” Matula said. “Escalation does not remain confined to battle maps — it reaches Filipino homes through grief, loss of livelihood, and rising prices of basic goods.”He said the attacks carried out by Israel and the US violate international law, undermines diplomacy, and threatens to further expand a destructive war in the region.“With an estimated 2.5 million OFWs in the Middle East, this is not a theoretical issue,” he said. “When missiles fly, remittances tremble. When bombs fall, Filipino families feel it.”Matula reiterated the FFW’s call for the immediate convening of a tripartite meeting to strengthen cooperation among the government, workers, employers, and other sectors to ensure preparedness, protection, and swift assistance for Filipinos who may be placed at risk.The group stressed the importance of close coordination among the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), employer groups, unions, migrant worker organizations, and local government units in responding quickly to any worsening of the situation.“Workers build the economy,” the FFW said. “They must not become victims of wars they did not start.”

- Veterinarians overworked, at risk of burnout, study finds (2026-03-05 16:57)

MANY veterinarians in the country work more than 40 hours per week, feel undervalued, and face a high risk of burnout due to limited public awareness of their work and inadequate well-being support, a study has found.In a statement released Thursday, the global pharmaceutical company Boehringer Ingelheim said its paper, “Going Beyond: Charting a Sustainable Future for Veterinary Medicine in Southeast Asia," found that Filipino veterinarians face a plethora of issues in the workplace.The study surveyed 335 veterinarians and veterinary staff across Southeast Asia, and in the Philippines, they found that on top of working over 40 hours per week, 64 percent of veterinary practices lack formal or informal well-being initiatives, leaving them with no mechanisms to prevent burnout.The report noted that 44 percent of veterinarians said increased public recognition of their expertise and commitment could reduce stress and improve their well-being.“Veterinarians go beyond caring for animals — they protect communities, food safety, and public health,” said Dr. Michael Banawa, head of Animal Health, Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health Philippines Inc.Furthermore, the report showed that 74 percent of respondents said that a better work-life balance is essential to motivate new veterinarians and ensure the profession’s long-term sustainability.Boehringer Ingelheim

stressed the importance of collaborating with government and private institutions to establish well-being programs and awareness campaigns about the crucial role of veterinarians.During the 93rd Philippine Veterinary Medical Association Scientific Conference, Boehringer Ingelheim launched the Going Beyond campaign to underscore the importance of veterinarians' contributions in safeguarding the welfare of animals and communities.The firm called on pet owners to practice preventive care, saying it can help foster stronger relationships between veterinarians and their clients.Aside from support, the campaign includes the Boehringer Ingelheim Veterinary Scholars Program, which provides advanced research training and mentorship for veterinary students.

- Filipino students lured to join anti-Japan essay contest – study (2026-03-05 16:56)

FILIPINO public school children were recruited into a Chinese Communist Party (CCP)-linked propaganda campaign last year, an investigation by the SeaLight Foundation has revealed.“This is how influence operations work,” said Ray Powell, executive director of the California-based SeaLight Foundation. “Students and their parents had no idea they were participating in a foreign state’s geopolitical messaging. A contest that looked like peace education was actually a carefully orchestrated propaganda exercise.”SeaLight said Chinese Filipino education groups, working closely with Beijing-affiliated organizations, staged essay contests for students under the guise of “peace education” and historical commemoration. Distributed through official Department of Education (DepEd) channels, the contests urged students to echo anti-Japan sentiments aligned with CCP messaging.DepEd’s National Capital Region office circulated Regional Letter 107, series of 2025, inviting schools to participate in the contest commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Allied victory over Imperial Japan.On the surface, the initiative appeared to be a legitimate educational opportunity, offering cash prizes for winning students and their advisers, as well as additional incentives for schools with high participation, Powell said.But a deeper investigation showed the essays were structured to follow narratives coordinated through Beijing’s United Front Work Department, he said. Filipino children were effectively used as instruments in an international information campaign, with Japan and Taiwan cast as targets of historical grievances.Powell said James Wang, also known as Huang Duanming, president of the Philippine Chinese Education Research Center (PCERC), presented the contest as a way to “remember history, cherish peace, and uphold the spirit of solidarity between the peoples of the Philippines and China.” “But Wang’s group has admitted to close collaboration with Chinese state agencies, including the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture, and the United Front Work Department,” he said.The contest culminated in October during a series of United Front events in Manila, including the Eighth China Peaceful Reunification Asia Forum.Filipino student winners were awarded prizes in the middle of a political rally promoting Beijing’s “one-China” principle and anti-Taiwan messaging, Powell said.“This was not merely a school competition,” he said. “It was a carefully orchestrated operation to use minors in Manila as props for a foreign state’s geopolitical agenda — all under the guise of educational activity.”Similar essay contests have been held in the Philippines during previous CCP commemorations, following a long-standing

pattern of United Front operations targeting the Filipino Chinese community, Powell said. “Parents and educators must know who is behind programs affecting children,” he added. “Foreign governments should not be allowed to hide behind civic groups to recruit minors into political messaging.” The SeaLight study called on Philippine authorities to review protocols for vetting foreign-linked educational initiatives, to ensure that programs distributed in schools are genuinely educational and free from hidden political agendas.

- Quezon City police arrest 3 suspects, recover firearms in 911 response (2026-03-05 16:55)

THREE men involved in a shooting and illegal possession of firearms were arrested by police responding to a 911 call in Barangay Holy Spirit, Quezon City, on Wednesday.In a statement, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said responding officers intercepted a 30-year-old man with bloodstains on his head and back who attempted to flee the scene. Officers found him carrying an undocumented.45-caliber pistol and rushed him to Quezon City General Hospital for treatment.Shortly after, two men, ages 64 and 42, arrived on a motorcycle. One attempted to flee but was apprehended. Police recovered a high-capacity.45-caliber pistol, ammunition, a bulletproof vest and an 18-inch bolo.According to a 16-year-old witness, a heated argument preceded the incident. The older men allegedly struck and stabbed the injured man, who then grabbed a firearm and fired several shots. A crime scene inspection yielded one live.45-caliber round, one fired cartridge case and one deformed bullet.All suspects are in custody. Cases for attempted homicide, attempted murder and violation of Republic Act 10591 are being prepared for inquest."Let this be clear: When firearms are used to threaten lives, the PNP will respond with full authority of the law. We will pursue offenders relentlessly and ensure they answer for their actions," PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said."Violence does not have a place in our community. Those who will violate the law will surely face its full force," he said.

- Adult content creator Salvi, vlogger Tio Bri face cybercrime complaint (2026-03-05 16:53)

THE Kapisanan ng Social Media Broadcasters ng Pilipinas Inc. (KSMBPI) filed a complaint against adult content creator Salome Salvi and vlogger-podcaster Brian Babilonia, popularly known as " Tio Bri," for alleged violations of Article 201 of the Revised Penal Code in relation to Section 6 of Republic Act 10175, or the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012.KSMBPI Chairman Michael Raymond Apacible Aragon said the complaint stemmed from what the group described as " indecent and obscene" materials allegedly posted by the respondents on their respective social media accounts.KSMBPI legal counsel Mark Tolentino said the group documented numerous materials that it believes violate the law. According to Tolentino, at least 50 episodes posted by Salvi and around 100 episodes uploaded by Babilonia allegedly contained sexually suggestive or explicit discussions.He said the group sent a demand letter to both personalities in December 2025 asking them to remove the materials and refrain from posting similar content online."They did not respond to our request. In fact, they even challenged us to go to their set and be interviewed about their views on sex," Tolentino said.Aragon said the group initially planned to file the complaint in January 2026 but decided to give the respondents more time to remove the content from public platforms."We gave them more than enough time to clean up their posts in

open social media because these public online apps can easily be viewed by children," hesaid.Aragon said KSMBPI is not opposing adult-oriented content but maintained that suchmaterial should be restricted to platforms that are inaccessible to minors."If they want to doadult content, they should provide themselves an exclusive and secured adult site that is safeand cannot be accessed by children," he said.He added that freedom of expression has limitswhen it harms others, particularly minors."Freedom of expression is not absolute. Your right tofree speech stops when it starts to cause harm to your fellowmen, most especially our innocentchildren," Aragon said.Aragon also said the group is pushing for the passage of a law creating aNational Social Media Regulatory Board to address what it described as the dangers posed byunregulated online platforms.He said the current mandate of the Movie and Television Reviewand Classification Board, created in 1985, covers only mainstream media and does not extendto social media, which did not exist at the time.

- Pasig City distributes 160,000 hard hats to schools for earthquake readiness (2026-03-05 16:51)

THE Pasig City government has distributed 160,000 hard hats to schools and learning centers to strengthen earthquake preparedness among students, Mayor Vico Sotto said Wednesday.Sotto said the protective gear will be placed in classrooms across Department of Education K-12 schools, child development centers, the Special Children Education Institute, Pasig City Institute of Science and Technology, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasig, and the city library.He said the helmets follow a 1-to-1 ratio with classroom chairs to ensure that each student has access to protective equipment during drills or actual emergencies.Sotto said the hard hats were procured through public bidding at 154 pesos each, significantly lower than the initial estimate of more than P300 per unit. “This is a disaster-preparedness project that is also an awareness-raising campaign,” Sotto said.The mayor said the helmets meet quality standards with Department of Labor and Employment certification and include release buckle whistles and reflectorized stickers. They will remain in classrooms to ensure they are available during drills or emergencies.

- Muntinlupa eyes free bicycle parking mandate for businesses (2026-03-05 16:46)

MUNTINLUPA Mayor Ruffy Biazon has endorsed a proposed ordinance requiring the establishment of free bicycle parking in the city.Biazon said the measure seeks to ensure that malls, businesses, schools, village halls, and government offices provide safe and accessible bicycle parking facilities. “While more people are using bicycles, we must also help ensure they have adequate and safe facilities,” Biazon said.He said the ordinance would require designated locations to provide secure and free bicycle parking spaces that comply with clear standards on location and security once the measure is enacted.Biazon said choosing bicycles as an alternative mode of transportation is practical and helps improve the traffic flow in the city.

- Overseas voter registration suspended in Israel, Iran (2026-03-05 16:38)

THE Commission on Elections (Comelec) has suspended overseas voter registration in Israel and Iran as advised by the Philippine consulates in said countries for security reasons due to continued hostilities.Comelec Chairman George Erwin Garcia said on Thursday that following Israeli government policies, consular services of foreign posts in-country, including the Philippine Embassy in Tel Aviv, were suspended for safety and security reasons until March 7.Garcia added that voter registration for overseas Filipinos in Iran is suspended until further notice.Consular services and voter registration in other countries in the Middle East continue to be available, however, the Comelec said.At the same time, the commission advised Middle East-based overseas Filipinos to remain vigilant and stay informed about the situation in their respective regions.“Be cautious of false or misleading information and rely only on credible sources. Pay close attention to the notices and advisories issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Philippine Embassy or Consulate, and do not hesitate to contact help lines if in distress,” it said.Overseas voters registration is part of Comelec’s preparations for the 2028 presidential and vice presidential elections.Overseas voter registration for the 2028 polls started last Dec. 1, 2025 and will end on Sept. 30, 2027.Garcia said that Comelec is looking forward to increasing the number of overseas voters, saying that at present “there are only 1.67 million registered overseas.” “With our internet voting, we are looking forward to increasing the number of our overseas Filipino voters by 3 million to 4 million,” Garcia added.All Filipino citizens abroad, including dual citizens, are eligible to register as overseas voters, provided they are not disqualified by law and are at least 18 years old on election day, or on May 8, 2028.Both local and overseas absentee voters are only allowed to vote for national candidates — president, vice president, 12 senators and one party-list group — in the upcoming 2028 national and local elections.

- House panel orders VP Duterte to answer impeach complaints (2026-03-05 16:13)

(UPDATE) THE House Committee on Justice on Thursday served a notice directing Vice President Sara Duterte to answer the two impeachment complaints against her that it found sufficient in form and substance.The notice, dated March 4, and addressed to the Office of the Vice President (OVP), ordered her to file her answer within 10 calendar days from receipt of the notice.“Failure on your part to file the Verified Answer within the period herein provided shall be deemed a waiver of your right to file the same, and you shall be considered to have interposed a general denial to the allegations contained in the impeachment complaints,” it read.Lawyer Michael Poa, speaking for Duterte’s defense team, acknowledged receipt of the notice served.“At this point, we see no need to issue any further comment,” Poa said.The committee has yet to determine whether there is sufficient ground to support the complaints. “If the decision of the Justice Committee is in the affirmative, that’s the only time that we will be proceeding to the hearing proper,” said Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro, the chairman of the committee, in a press conference earlier this week.Four impeachment complaints were filed last month against Duterte. The House committee set the first one filed aside, finding that it violated the rule against initiating impeachment proceedings against the same official more than once within a one-year period.The second one was withdrawn by the 17

people who filed it.The third impeachment complaint filed by priests and others alleged, among others, that Duterte committed culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayed public trust in connection with confidential funds allocated to the OVP for 2022 and 2023, and confidential funds allocated for 2023 to the Department of Education (DepEd), which Duterte led as secretary before she resigned in 2024 from that post.The fourth complaint, filed by lawyer Nathaniel Cabrera, said Duterte "betrayed the public trust, and committed acts of graft and corruption by grossly abusing discretionary authority over confidential funds appropriated to the" OVP and DepEd.

- 1st batch of stranded Pinoys back home from the Middle East (2026-03-05 16:12)

MALACAÑANG on Thursday said that nearly 300 Filipinos who were stranded in the Middle East have returned to the Philippines.Presidential Communications Secretary Dave Gomez said the first flight carrying repatriated Filipinos — Emirates EK336from Dubai (DXB) to Manila (MNL) — arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 at 6:45 a.m.Gomez said the passenger manifest included a mix of repatriated Filipinos and other affected travelers seeking to return home.Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac led government officials in welcoming 299 repatriates, including infants and children, upon their arrival, Gomez said."We are thankful that you are all safe. Also, we are much thankful to Emirates, to the UAE (United Arab Emirates) government for taking care of you, in preparing the flight to Manila as we provide support," Cacdac told overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) at the airport.The first batch of returnees included 23 OFWs and two children.The flight that departed at 9:55 p.m. Philippine time brought home OFWs, tourists and other travelers who were stranded as the fighting erupted following an Israeli-US attack on Iran.Upon arrival, the returning Filipinos were immediately provided with a comprehensive support package from a coordinated "whole-of-government" team.This assistance included immediate financial aid from the Department of Migrant Workers through the Aksyon Fund, while the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) arranged for hotel accommodations and onward transport to their respective home provinces.The Department of Health and the Department of Social Welfare and Development were also on-site to offer essential medical checkups and psychosocial support services.Officials earlier assured the public that contingency measures remained in place to assist nationals abroad should conditions further escalate, adding that coordination with relevant government agencies and airline partners were ongoing.On Tuesday, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. advised Filipinos in the Middle East to stay put and seek shelter, as repatriation efforts have stalled due to the ongoing US-Israel-Iran conflict.He said that at least 1,416 Filipinos from conflict-hit areas in the Middle East have requested to be repatriated back to the Philippines.Malacañang earlier said that Filipinos in need of assistance may contact the emergency hotlines of the OWWA to report their concerns and request support.OWWA emergency hotlines are for Metro 1348, for Regional -02-1348, via Viber +63-915-079-5005 (Globe), +63-969-169-7068 (Smart) and +63-966-473-9543 (Globe).More than 2 million Filipinos work in the Middle East, according to government figures.Also on Thursday, the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) assured the family and relatives of overseas Filipino worker Mary Ann

de Vera, who was killed in Israel, that her next of kin will receive full assistance from the agency and OWWA.In a statement late on Wednesday, the DMW said the agencies reached out to de Vera’s family, including her husband in Israel, her sibling in Qatar and her family in Pangasinan.De Vera’s remains are awaiting repatriation and are scheduled to return home as soon as air travel is declared safe.De Vera was escorting her elderly ward to a shelter in Tel Aviv when she was hit by shrapnel from an Iranian missile.

- 3 defense personnel were spies for China — NSC (2026-03-05 16:11)

AUTHORITIES have apprehended three defense personnel who allegedly spied on behalf of China in what the country’s security agency has described as a “serious national security matter,” its spokesman said Thursday.The trio, who worked for the Department of Defense, Navy and Coast Guard, provided their Chinese handlers with lists of military personnel and other sensitive information, National Security Council (NSC) spokesman Cornelio Valencia said.Operational details about resupply missions in the contested South China Sea, where China and the Philippines have frequently clashed in recent years, were also included in the information handed over, he said.“There was co-option over a period of time,” Valencia said of efforts to woo the defense personnel, whom he described as low-level analysts.“At the start you are not aware. And then you’re surprised they’re already asking you for sensitive data.” “At the end of the day, it’s always money,” he said of their motives.Valencia said the three, whose names and genders he did not disclose, were now cooperating with the government “to ensure we no longer have a problem.”In a statement released on Wednesday night, the NSC said it had “addressed and terminated” operations taken at “the behest of Chinese intelligence,” without offering details of the alleged espionage.“For reasons of national security, we cannot discuss identities, methods or timelines so as not to jeopardize ongoing operations,” the security agency said.“Nonetheless, necessary actions have been taken against the individuals concerned — all Filipino nationals — who have all confessed their complicity in espionage activities and are cooperating with authorities.” The Chinese Embassy in Manila did not immediately respond to requests for comment.Wednesday’s NSC statement cited a recent investigation in the news service Rappler, which first reported that Chinese handlers had sought information about maritime deployments and resupply missions in the South China Sea.The Philippines last year announced multiple arrests of Chinese over alleged espionage.In April, a Chinese man was apprehended while operating a surveillance device near the offices of the Philippine election commission, authorities said, less than two weeks before the country’s midterm elections.The man was allegedly using an “IMSI catcher,” a device capable of mimicking a cell tower and snatching messages from the air in a 1- to 3-kilometer radius.Two Chinese men detained in February 2025 were accused of using the same device while driving near sensitive government and military locations in Manila.

- Fire chief faces charges in P14.7M bribery case (2026-03-05 16:10)

THE Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) on Thursday filed administrative and criminal complaints before the Office of the Ombudsman against Jesus Fernandez, chief of

the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), over an alleged P14.752-million bribery scheme tied to the procurement of 132 ambulances for the agency, as authorities disclosed what they described as a broader pattern of corruption within the fire service.Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla said the complaints stemmed from a department investigation that uncovered irregularities in the procurement of 132 Type 1 Basic Life Support ambulances intended to strengthen the BFP’s emergency medical response capability.“Ambulances are meant to save lives. Public funds intended for emergency response will never be allowed to become vehicles for corruption,” Remulla said. “We will pursue the truth and ensure full accountability.”Administrative charges filed against Fernandez include grave misconduct, serious dishonesty and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service. Criminal complaints include violation of Section 3(e) of Republic Act 3019, or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, as well as direct bribery, malversation of public funds and conspiracy.The DILG also asked the Ombudsman to place Fernandez under preventive suspension to safeguard the integrity of the proceedings while the case is under investigation. The department said it had also written to the Office of the President recommending that the official be relieved.Investigators said the procurement process that began in September 2024 was allegedly manipulated to favor a preselected supplier. Records showed the supplier entered into a joint venture with an automotive company in October 2024, allegedly to meet bidding requirements and secure control of the project.According to affidavits submitted to the DILG, Fernandez — who was then-chairman of the BFP Bids and Awards Committee — allegedly received P6 million in a suitcase and another P4.752 million in a bag during a meeting in Quezon City in November 2024.Investigators said he later received an additional P4 million in cash during another meeting in September 2025, bringing the total documented payoffs to P14.752 million.The complaints were backed by sworn testimony from a representative of the supplier describing how the “SOP” payments were computed and delivered, as well as an affidavit from the automotive company’s manager explaining how the joint venture arrangement was used to secure the contract.Remulla said the ambulance procurement case was only one part of a wider corruption problem uncovered by the department within the BFP.“This culture of corruption has to stop. The institutionalization of corruption must come to an end. I believe it has to start from the top,” he said during a media briefing in Quezon City.The DILG chief said the investigation indicated that kickbacks and manipulated procurement processes appeared to extend beyond senior leadership.“If corruption starts at the top, it trickles all the way down. From entry-level inspectors to regional directors, everyone pays to get in,” he said, adding that some applicants allegedly paid as much as P800,000 to enter the BFP and were later required to remit monthly payments tied to fire inspection operations.Remulla also disclosed that additional cases involving alleged bid-rigging in fire truck procurement were being prepared.“If you think this is big, the corruption in fire truck procurement is even larger. I was personally offered P1.5 million per truck as a cut,” he said.Meanwhile, the DILG said the selection of the next BFP chief would undergo a strict vetting process as the department moved to restore integrity within the agency.Remulla said candidates would go through seven rounds of interviews and a thorough review of their financial records, performance history and professional track record.He added that two

candidates interviewed earlier in the day appeared promising for the position, with their financial and service records undergoing scrutiny.Remulla also said Fernandez would still face the cases even if he chooses to retire from government service. “The case will continue. Retirement does not absolve you from allegations or from being tried for corruption. It is not a bulletproof vest that prevents you from being charged,” he said.The DILG said a task force has also been formed to examine the financial records of current and incoming BFP officials as part of a wider effort to uncover irregularities and dismantle what Remulla described as an entrenched “ecosystem of corruption” within the agency.

- Ethics complaint filed vs Suntay (2026-03-05 16:09)

WOMEN’S rights advocates filed on Thursday an ethics complaint at the House of Representatives against Quezon City 4th District Rep. Bong Suntay over his statements involving Anne Curtis in a committee meeting.The statements were made on Tuesday in a meeting of the House Committee on Justice, when Suntay addressed Vice President Sara Duterte’s statement that she imagined killing President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. by saying he saw Anne Curtis at the Shangri-La, and she was so beautiful and desirable that he imagined what might happen. “But of course, it was just my imagination. Maybe I cannot be sued because I imagined various things,” he said in Filipino.His remarks were stricken from the record.In an interview on ANC’s “Headstart” on Thursday, Suntay acknowledged that his “analogy was done in poor taste.” “I want to apologize to Miss Anne Curtis, all the women out there who got offended by the statement that I made,” he said. “I regret making that analogy. It was wrong.”On Wednesday evening, during plenary session, Laguna 1st District Rep. Ann Matibag, the chairman of the House Committee on Women and Gender Equality, asked that the matter be referred to the House Committee on Ethics and Privileges.Suntay said he respected the feelings of his fellow lawmakers.He said, “I was arguing on principles that lawyers and legislators should know” which was that a person “cannot be held liable for mere thoughts, imaginations or associations without an overt act.” “But like I said, the analogy might have been in bad taste and taken in the wrong context,” he said.Suntay said in a radio DZMM interview earlier on Wednesday that “it was an imaginary situation. It was a fictitious situation. I have not even seen Anne Curtis in person, but I have seen her on TV.”He said when he spoke at the plenary on Wednesday evening.“My record on women’s welfare is real. The gender and development code, and the ‘Bawal Bastos Ordinance,’ which I authored in Quezon City, were not small achievements.”He said further on that “we should look at the person by his actions and not mere statements. I think there is no perfect person here.”He hoped that he would “be judged not from one statement but from the kind of person that I am, how, what kind of person I am, what principle I have and how I fight for it.”San Juan Rep. Ysabel Zamora moved to refer Matibag’s speech to the House Committee on Ethics and Privileges for appropriate action. There was no objection, and her motion was approved.

- PH, Singapore boost cooperation on social protection (2026-03-05 16:08)

THE Department of Social Welfare and Development, and Singapore’s Ministry of Social and Family Development have agreed to strengthen their cooperation in advancing social sector development.Social Welfare Secretary Rex Gatchalian, and Singapore Social and Family Development Minister Masagos Zulkifli on Wednesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in Makati City to step up the “exchange of information and experiences in the implementation of programs on social protection, and family and child development.” The partnership includes initiatives focused on early childhood care and child protection systems.The MOU calls for joint activities such as workshops, projects, meetings, seminars, training programs and study visits.It also covers cooperation in programs for persons with disabilities and women’s empowerment.The two countries agreed to promote institutional linkages between agencies and organizations engaged in social development and social work practice.The MOU underscores continuing Asean cooperation aimed at enhancing social protection systems and promoting people-centered development initiatives.

- Ways to ease rising oil prices eyed (2026-03-05 16:07)

SEVERAL senators on Thursday presented proposals aimed at easing the impact of the sudden surge in the price of fuel following the escalation of tension in the Middle East.Sen. Francis “Chiz” Escudero called for amendments to the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (Train) Law to automatically authorize the president to suspend or reduce excise and value-added taxes (VAT) on fuel when global oil prices breach government-set benchmarks.In a statement, Escudero said the current safeguard mechanism under the Train Law, or Republic Act (RA) 10963, is “too narrow,” and limits the president’s ability to respond quickly to fluctuations in oil prices.Under RA 10963, fuel excise taxes are suspended only under specific conditions, such as when the average Dubai crude oil price exceeds $80 per barrel for three consecutive months.Escudero argued that this mechanism is reactive and may not provide timely relief to consumers during force majeure events such as wars, geopolitical tensions, or global economic crises.He said his position has always been to grant the president automatic authority to adjust fuel taxes when global oil prices exceed the assumptions set under the Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing (BESF), which outlines the macroeconomic and fiscal assumptions underpinning the national budget.President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has said he would seek emergency powers from Congress to temporarily reduce excise taxes on petroleum products if Dubai crude surpasses $80 per barrel.While welcoming the president’s plan as a “step in the right direction,” Escudero maintained that a permanent legislative amendment would provide a more efficient and predictable solution.Sen. Raffy Tulfo said key government agencies must coordinate closely to cushion the impact of rising fuel prices on farmers, fisherfolk, and public utility drivers.As chairman of the Senate Committee on Public Services, Tulfo convened officials from the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Agriculture (DA), and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) via Zoom Thursday to review existing fuel subsidy programs and discuss ways to improve the distribution of assistance.The meeting came a day the per-liter price of gasoline swelled by P1.90, diesel by P1.20, and kerosene by P1.50.Energy Undersecretary Sandy Sales

told Tulfo the latest adjustments were part of regular weekly pricing movements, and were not yet directly linked to the conflict in the Middle East. However, Sales acknowledged that global petroleum prices are expected to climb further.He cited reports that Iran has shut down the Strait of Hormuz — one of the world’s most critical oil transit chokepoints, a development that could significantly constrain global oil supply and drive up prices.DOTr Assistant Secretary for Road Transport and Non-Infrastructure Jojo Reyes reported that P2.5 billion has been allocated under the 2025 General Appropriations Act for fuel subsidies.Agriculture Undersecretary Roger Navarro said that around P100 million remains from funds under the Bayanihan law enacted during the Covid-19 pandemic, which could be utilized as fuel subsidies for farmers.Tulfo rejected the amount as insufficient and urged the DA to identify additional funding sources.BFAR National Director Elizer Salilig reported that P50 million is currently deposited at the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) for fisherfolk fuel subsidies.Tulfo also questioned the policy requiring Dubai crude oil prices to reach $80 per barrel before fuel subsidies are triggered.Sen. Bam Aquino called for the immediate reactivation of fuel subsidies for transport sector workers.“We know that our jeepney drivers, tricycle drivers, our PUV (public utility vehicle) drivers will be heavily affected if there will be gasoline and diesel price increases,” Aquino said in a television interview Thursday.He allayed concerns over potential revenue losses if the excise tax on fuel products is suspended. He said that anti-corruption measures should be strengthened to augment government funds for services.Aquino has filed Senate Bill (SB) 1923 that seek to grant the president authority to suspend the excise tax on petroleum products during national or global economic emergencies.A similar measure, SB 1927, was filed by Sens. Pia Cayetano and Alan Peter Cayetano.Senate Bill 1927 amends Article 148 of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997 to establish a standing mechanism that would allow immediate executive action in response to global oil market disruptions.In their explanatory note, the Cayetanos cited escalating conflicts in West Asia — home to key oil-producing nations such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates — as a major threat to global energy stability.They noted that even short-term instability can trigger rapid price surges in international oil markets.Just three days after the US and Israel launched aerial attacks on Iran, “gasoline prices in the international market already surged from $79.63 to $90.32 per barrel,” they said in the bill’s explanatory note.The bill underscores the Philippines’ vulnerability to global price shocks, pointing out that the country remains heavily reliant on imported petroleum products.In 2024, the Philippines imported approximately 340,600 barrels of liquid fuel, accounting for about 99.68 percent of its total petroleum supply, making it highly exposed to fluctuations in international markets.By embedding safeguards in the tax system itself, the government could act immediately to mitigate inflationary pressures without waiting for prior legislative approval, the Cayetanos said.Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian urged the government to consider tapping the president’s contingency fund to provide fuel subsidies to public transport drivers.Gatchalian agreed with his colleagues that the government should not wait for global crude prices to hit the trigger threshold before releasing assistance under the transport fuel subsidy program.He warned that the steady increases in pump prices are already placing significant pressure on drivers and commuters, even before the benchmark is reached.Aside from the early release of subsidies,

Gatchalian also urged the energy department to review the current inventory levels and pricing practices of local oil companies to ensure that retail prices remain fair and reflect actual supply costs.Caritas Philippines, meanwhile, urged the government to shift to renewable sources of energy, warning that continued reliance on fossil fuels could deepen economic vulnerability.In a statement Thursday, the social action arm of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) said the crisis in the Middle East highlights how fossil fuels continue to shape geopolitics and expose import-dependent countries — like the Philippines — to economic risks."When oil becomes entangled with war, the consequences ripple across the world, especially for vulnerable economies like the Philippines," Caritas said."The Philippines remains dangerously dependent on imported coal, oil, and gas. This dependence ties our national stability to conflicts beyond our control and exposes our people to the shocks of volatile global energy markets," it said."For Filipino families, rising oil prices mean immediate hardship: higher transport fares, rising food costs, increasing electricity bills, and deeper economic insecurity. The burden falls heaviest on workers, farmers, fisherfolk, and the urban poor," Caritas said.

- Dizon Orders Accelerated Waterway Improvements to Combat Perennial Flooding (2026-03-05 16:05)

THE Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) said it has ordered the accelerated dredging and widening of waterways in Marikina City and surrounding areas to mitigate flooding."The government is working to expedite waterway improvement. Once completed, floodwaters are likely to recede faster," said Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon after an inspection of the Marikina River flood control project.According to Dizon, the completion of works at Sumulong Drainage, Balanti Creek, and the Manila Water site — along with the resolution of right-of-way issues affecting Phase V of the Pasig-Marikina River Channel Improvement Project (PMRCIP) — will help accelerate the movement of water into the river, allowing floodwaters in Marikina to subside more quickly."We need to complete these projects as quickly as possible. Right now, we are dredging waterways, repairing gaps in the dikes, and fixing drainage systems to ensure that water moves more quickly toward the rivers. All of these efforts must be carried out simultaneously and with urgency," he said.Dizon said the DPWH is undergoing similar works across the country in line with government efforts to address perennial flooding in Metro Manila and other low-lying areas.The DPWH chief has created a task force, Oplan Kontra Baha, in coordination with the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the private sector to institutionalize the government's clearing and cleaning efforts for all waterways.Earlier, the DPWH completed a larger drainage project on G. Araneta Avenue in Quezon City to alleviate flooding in the area as part of the Oplan Kontra Baha program.Dizon said the drainage at G. Araneta is three times larger, adding that he has also ordered the installation of mobile pumps while the pumping station at E. Rodriguez is unfinished, as well as the continuous dredging and cleaning of the San Juan River."The president said we need to speed up the work because come June, it will rain

again, there will be flooding again. So now, that’s what we are really doing; our work is continuous so that we can ensure that these projects are completed quickly,” he added.Dizon said the Oplan Kontra Baha program is in accordance with the directive of the president to mitigate flooding in prone areas in Metro Manila, including Metro Cebu and Bacolod City in the Negros Island Region, among others.“Oplan Kontra Baha not only focuses on dredging, but also includes the implementation of science-based projects, clearing of illegal structures in waterways, and the strict enforcement of proper solid waste management in collaboration with local government units,” he said.In the first week of December, the DPWH-NCR recorded 1,474.18 cubic meters of declogging, while 3,795.64 cubic meters of desilting of waterways in various areas has been completed.Dizon assured that with each week of Oplan Kontra Baha, the public can expect the DPWH to continue to focus on making communities in the NCR safer and more orderly.Dizon noted that the DPWH is keen to complete several infrastructure projects between 2026 and 2027 that have been stalled for the past four to five years.

- Marcos Leads Inspection of New EDSA Kamuning Footbridge Upgrades (2026-03-05 16:04)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday inspected the new commuter-friendly EDSA Kamuning footbridge, located in one of the highway’s busiest sections.Accompanied by first lady Liza Araneta-Marcos and their son William Vincent, Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez and Public Works and Highways Secretary Vince Dizon, the chief executive first scaled the old “Mt. Kamuning” footbridge, which he ordered torn down last year.The structure, he lamented, had long been criticized for being too steep and difficult for commuters to use.“Well, the old one is not very good at all. And then you don’t realize that when you’re down here, it moves when vehicles pass by. So, this one is much better,” Marcos told reporters in Filipino following the inspection.“So, now there’s a change. We fixed it within four months. Our promise was six months. Well, it’s only been four months and it’s done,” he added.The new footbridge, which opened to the public Wednesday, also features a wheelchair lift and elevators for commuters with mobility issues. It likewise gives easier access to the EDSA Busway.It was designed to function as a seamless, intermodal access facility, improving commuter safety, accessibility and transfer efficiency along EDSA.Around 750,000 passengers use the MRT and the EDSA Busway daily, making the Kamuning station a vital structure for workers and other commuters traveling across Metro Manila.“So, it’s good that in four months we have put up new facilities that will make the commuting experience easier. Mt. Kamuning is gone,” the president said.“I’m happy to see that this is the sort of thing that... It’s something that can be done. It’s not that difficult as long as we’re determined to fix the commuter experience,” he added.

- P29.7M Worth of Illicit Drugs Intercepted by BOC-NAIA in Pasay (2026-03-05 16:03)

GOVERNMENT agents seized P29.712 million worth of illicit drugs at a Pasay cargo facility, the Bureau of Customs-Ninoy Aquino International Airport (BOC-NAIA) announced Thursday.The BOC-NAIA reported that three inbound parcels, which arrived separately from Germany and South Africa, were intercepted March 2.The shipment was discovered during routine

examinations of abandoned parcels and confirmed by Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) agents.Two of the parcels, declared as “garden sculptures,” contained 2,032 grams and 2,014 grams of a white powdery substance suspected to be MDMA, commonly known as ecstasy, with an estimated value of P5,259,800. They were shipped from Berlin and consigned to a recipient in Pasig.Meanwhile, the third parcel, declared as “vehicle air filters,” was shipped from Lusaka, Zambia, and consigned to a recipient in Dasmariñas, Cavite.Inspection revealed four cylindrical air filters wrapped in carbon paper and masking tape containing approximately 3,596 grams of suspected shabu valued at P24,452,800.According to Customs District Collector Yasmin Mapa, the operation was carried out in close coordination with the NAIA Inter-Agency Drug Interdiction Task Group, the Philippine National Police Aviation Security Group, the Airport Police Department, PDEA, and the BOC Customs Anti-Illegal Drugs Task Force.The illegal substances were turned over by BOC-NAIA to the PDEA national office, which assumed custody of the case.Recent interceptions at cargo and mail facilities frequently target warehouses and centers near the airport complex in Pasay.On Feb. 11, the Bureau of Customs intercepted approximately 5.4 kilograms of shabu, worth P36.8 million, hidden in containers disguised as CCTV cameras, handbags, and hot water bottles.BOC-NAIA also confiscated 3.7 kilograms of high-grade marijuana, or kush, worth P5.6 million on Feb. 13 at the Central Mail Exchange Center. The drugs were discovered in four abandoned parcels.

- Quezon City Unveils Health Totem for World Obesity Day (2026-03-05 16:02)

QUEZON City observed World Obesity Day with the installation of a health landmark at the Quezon Memorial Circle (QMC), Mayor Joy Belmonte said Thursday.Belmonte led key city officials, Danish Ambassador to the Philippines Franz-Michael Mellbin, and executives from Novo Nordisk, a global health care company based in Denmark, in Wednesday’s unveiling of the health totem at the circle.The mayor said the initiative highlights the city as one of the Philippine models for the global Cities for Better Health program led by the company. The program supports cities in strengthening prevention, early detection, and long-term management of noncommunicable diseases.The World Obesity Day event featured a ceremonial turnover of the health totem, a community walk, and public engagement activities designed to promote awareness of obesity as a chronic disease and encourage an active lifestyle, according to the city’s Public Affairs and Information Services Department (PAISD).Strategically located along the jogging paths of the circle, the totem provides accessible guidance on body mass index, waist measurement, risk factors, and healthy behaviors while introducing metered activity stations to motivate physical activity among park users, the PAISD said.Belmonte said the partnership reflects her administration’s whole-of-government approach to preventive health.“Together with Novo Nordisk and the Royal Danish Embassy, we are institutionalizing programs that make healthy living more accessible for our residents — from primary care and nutrition reforms to active public spaces,” the mayor said.Wei Sun, Novo Nordisk Philippines general manager, said cities play a critical role in addressing obesity by shaping environments that enable healthier choices.“Through Cities for Better Health, Novo Nordisk works with Quezon City to translate global evidence into local action by embedding

prevention, education, and supportive infrastructure into everyday community spaces," Sun said.The Danish ambassador cited the importance of cross-country collaboration in tackling global health challenges."This partnership reflects the strong ties between Denmark and the Philippines in advancing public health innovation. By combining global scientific expertise with local leadership, we can help cities build environments that support healthier lives for generations to come," Mellbin said.

- Mendoza Dismisses Graft Complaint Over P169 Computer Fee as Retaliation (2026-03-05 16:01)

LAND Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) Chairman Vigor Mendoza II has dismissed a newly filed graft complaint against him as an act of "desperation to get even." This comes following allegations over a 169-peso computer fee collected during his tenure as Land Transportation Office (LTO) chief.In a statement released Thursday, Mendoza said his reforms at the LTO, aimed at providing faster and more efficient services, disrupted long-standing interests of certain groups, leaving some "unable to move on." "Our aggressive policy reforms geared towards fast and comfortable services when I was still in the Land Transportation Office cut deep into the interests of some individuals and groups that they still feel the sharp and biting pain of the effects until now — and therefore, could not move on," Mendoza said.Nevertheless, he added, he respects the decision of the Federated Land Transport Organizations of the Philippines (Feltop) to file the complaint with the Office of the Ombudsman, calling it "the proper forum to shed light into this old and recycled issue." The complaint, lodged by Feltop on March 5, questions the collection of a 169-peso computer fee per transaction, alleging it generated more than 169 million pesos and was implemented with possible preferential treatment to Stradcom Corp., the IT service provider used for vehicle registration and other LTO transactions.Feltop represents over 60,000 small and independent public utility vehicle (PUV) operators nationwide, claiming the fee added to their operational costs amid rising expenses. The group has requested a 90-day preventive suspension of Mendoza while the Ombudsman investigates and is also seeking a refund of all fees collected starting Jan. 28, 2025.Mendoza, who now chairs the LTFRB, maintained that the case is not about accountability but retaliation against the reforms he pushed, insisting that his policies benefited the public by modernizing the LTO's services."This is not about accountability, this is plain and simple desperation to get even," he said.

- Baligod, 18 ex-soldiers charged with cyber libel (2026-03-05 16:00)

(UPDATE) FORMER senator Antonio Trillanes IV on Thursday filed criminal complaints against lawyer Levito Baligod, 18 former marines and several pro-Duterte personalities for cyber libel and perjury when they accused him of accepting $2 million to bribe International Criminal Court (ICC) investigators to ensure the prosecution of former president Rodrigo Duterte.In a separate legal action, National Security Adviser Eduardo Año filed criminal charges against the same respondents over what he described as "malicious imputations" and fabricated allegations linking him to large-scale bribery.The respondents were charged by Año with

unlawful means of publication and unlawful utterances under the Revised Penal Code in relation to Republic Act 10175, or the Cybercrime Prevention Act, before the Department of Justice on Wednesday.Año said that the filing of charges marked only the first legal action he intended to pursue against those he believed orchestrated the accusations.“I was really surprised. And of course, you can say I am really mad with their malicious imputations. Never in my life would I do that,” he said.The filing of the criminal complaint arose from the allegations of the 18 alleged former marines that they delivered billions of pesos in “kickback” money in the flood control projects to several government officials, including President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Año.But Año denied allegations, saying that such accusations run contrary to his decades of service in the military and government.He said that integrity has always guided his conduct in public service, including during his tenure as secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government.Año said the complaint “is just the first” charge.“There will be succeeding cases that will be filed,” he said, adding that he intended to file cyber libel and perjury charges against the respondents, too.Controversial press conferenceTrillanes filed before the Department of Justice in Manila, targeting Baligod and the 18 self-confessed former security aides of resigned Ako Bikol Party-list representative Zaldy Co, who claimed in a press conference on Feb. 24 to have delivered billions in cash to President Marcos and even Trillanes himself.Also named respondents in the Trillanes suit were former government official Lorraine Badoy-Partosa, vlogger Cathy Binag, former Anakalusugan Party-list representative Mike Defensor and broadcaster Jay Sonza for their social media posts amplifying the allegations.At the center of the complaint was the Feb. 24 press conference organized by Baligod at Club Filipino in San Juan. During the event, Baligod introduced the 18 respondents — identified as Belnard Tube, Rosebert Waupan, Benny Bulontate, Johnny Buduan, Rodante Orbillo, Reyneboy Julian, Christopher Esquivel, George Villalon Jr., Romeo Rommel Bobares, Gil Navidad Jr., Anselmo Taberdo, Joely Cadiao, Rommel Galapon, Cecilio Larroder Jr., Bernard Gumban, Crisanie Dado, Fidel Corpuz and Walter Manalansan — as former security personnel of Co.Baligod alleged that the 18 “ex-marines” had delivered P805 billion in cash packed in suitcases or “maletas” to President Marcos, several lawmakers and other officials. Most significantly, Baligod claimed Trillanes received $2 million to fund and facilitate the ICC investigation into Duterte’s war on drugs.According to the complaint, Baligod said that two suitcases containing P56 million were handed to Trillanes to facilitate arrangements for the ICC investigators, adding that the vehicles used and the hotel accommodations were allegedly shouldered by Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co and the former senator.The complaint further noted that a day before the press conference, the 18 respondents executed a notarized affidavit detailing the claims. In that affidavit, the affiants made specific allegations against Trillanes, including that they delivered cash to his office in Quezon City on multiple occasions, that Trillanes met with Co and former speaker Martin Romualdez at the Manila Polo Club, and that accommodations for ICC personnel were paid for by Co and Trillanes.The complaint argued that the press conference was part of a carefully conceived and concerted effort to destroy Trillanes’ honor, pointing to the timing as evidence of malice. The event was held a day before the EDSA People Power anniversary, and coincided with the second day of ICC hearings for confirmation of charges against Duterte.This timing, Trillanes asserted, was designed to agitate the public and

undermine the integrity of the ICC proceedings.The complaint also raised questions about the logistics of the alleged cash deliveries, noting that Sen. Panfilo Lacson, chairman of the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee, had pointed out that P805 billion represents more than 70 percent of the P1.13 trillion allocated for flood control projects from 2023 to 2025, and that transporting such an amount would require at least 13,416 large suitcases capable of containing P50 million to P70 million each.Trillanes alleged that the press conference was a premeditated, politically motivated stunt orchestrated by Baligod with support from pro-Duterte allies. The complaint noted that CCTV footage revealed vehicles used to transport the 18 respondents were registered under the name of Defensor’s wife, and Defensor himself was present during the press conference as seen in his Facebook live coverage.Badoy’s pre-event post showing foreknowledge of the subject matter, combined with Binag and Sonza’s prepared online remarks, demonstrated what Trillanes described as “a unity of design, each actor performing acts to accomplish their purpose.” The complaint invoked the Supreme Court ruling in Domingo v Badoy-Partosa, which held that online content creators or influencers with large followings should be held to the same standard as journalists.According to the complaint, Badoy has about 77,000 Meta followers, Binag has 308,000, Defensor has 420,000 and Sonza has 393,000.Trillanes is charging Baligod separately with violation of Article 363 of the Revised Penal Code for incriminating an innocent person. The complaint argued that by alleging Trillanes received $2 million for ICC investigators, Baligod effectively imputed the crimes of bribery or corruption of public officials.However, Trillanes pointed out that he ceased being a public officer when his Senate term ended in 2019, and therefore crimes like bribery cannot be attached to him. “After his 15 minutes of fame, he must be held to account for his clear transgression of the law, together with all his cohorts, who provided him moral comfort and material aid, and connived with him in publicizing his tall tale of lies,” Trillanes said in his complaint.In a statement sent to The Manila Times, Badoy said she is honored “to be standing alongside our courageous heroes who have remained true to their calling as warriors and true sons of the republic.” Defensor also said that he is “honored” to be included in the case alongside the former soldiers. “These soldiers are the only ones speaking the truth on what they have witnessed — the delivery of money that, based on reports, were part of corruption because Zaldy Co is their boss,” Defensor said.Defensor said that both Año and Trillanes, instead of finding out the truth, filed charges and want them jailed.Meanwhile, Vice President Sara Duterte said that “outrage over corruption” must not be selective and should not choose who should be investigated. “And we cannot remain silent whenever those involved are close to power,” Duterte said in a statement on Thursday, adding that she admired the courage of the 18 former security personnel.

- Lone bettor wins P39M in Lotto 6/42 draw for March 5 (2026-03-05 14:13)

MANILA, Philippines — A lone bettor won the ₱39,385,042.44 jackpot prize in the Lotto 6/42 draw on Thursday, March 5, 2026, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PSCO) announced.The winning combination was 33-32-18-01-10-04.According to PCSO, the winning ticket was purchased at a lotto outlet in South Cotabato.Meanwhile, no bettor won the Super

lotto 6/49 jackpot worth ₱88,820,774.31.The winning combination for the 6/49 draw was 23-37-48-44-39-25.

- DILG uncovers 'culture of corruption' in Bureau of Fire Protection; charges filed against officials, supplier (2026-03-05 05:26)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) on Thursday exposed a culture of corruption within the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), involving bribery, bid rigging, and malversation of public funds, prompting the filing of criminal and administrative charges against implicated officials and calls for preventative suspension.Speaking at a media briefing, DILG Secretary Jonvic Remulla said the corruption appears systematic, with kickbacks and manipulated procurement processes extending from top leadership to lower-level officials. “This culture of corruption has to stop. The institutionalization of corruption must come to an end. I believe it has to start from the top,” Remulla said.The first major case involves the procurement of 132 ambulances for the BFP, which began in September 2024. Investigations revealed that a pre-determined supplier manipulated the bidding process by forming a joint venture with an automotive company to secure the contract. Fire Chief Jesus Fernandez, then overseeing BFP operations, allegedly received a total of P10.762 million in illicit payments from the supplier in three separate installments between November 2024 and September 2025, according to affidavits and eyewitness testimony presented during the briefing.Remulla confirmed that charges have been filed with the Office of the Ombudsman, including violations of Section 3(e) of Republic Act 3019, also known as the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, direct bribery, and malversation of public funds. “We are confident that the information gathered is sufficient to charge Fire Chief Fernandez and the supplier for both administrative and criminal cases,” he said.Remulla emphasized that ordinary citizens were the primary victims of the corruption, particularly middle-class business owners and professionals who rely on public services. “If corruption starts at the top, it trickles all the way down. From entry-level inspectors to regional directors, everyone pays to get in,” he said. He cited examples of applicants paying P800,000 just to enter the BFP and monthly remittances tied to fire inspections.The DILG has requested the Ombudsman to preventatively suspend Fernandez to safeguard the ongoing investigation.Remulla also disclosed that additional cases involving bid rigging in the procurement of fire trucks were under development. “If you think this is big, the corruption in fire truck procurement is even larger. I was personally offered P1.5 million per truck as a cut,” he said.A task force has been formed to scrutinize the financial records of current and incoming BFP officials, with the aim of uncovering all irregularities.Remulla assured that more forms of corruption within the agency would be publicly disclosed in the coming days. “The end game is clear: to dismantle this ecosystem of corruption and restore integrity to the Bureau of Fire Protection,” he said.

- PH Govt detains 'China's spy' (2026-03-05 05:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine authorities have apprehended an undisclosed number of Filipinos who allegedly spied on behalf of China, the country's security agency said, calling it a " serious national security matter".In a statement released Wednesday night, the National Security Council (NSC) said it had "addressed and terminated" operations taken at "the behest of Chinese intelligence", without offering details of the alleged espionage."For reasons of national security, we cannot discuss identities, methods, or timelines so as not to jeopardize ongoing operations," the security agency said."Nonetheless, necessary actions have been taken against the individuals concerned -- all Filipino nationals -- who have all confessed their complicity in espionage activities and are cooperating with authorities."The National Security Council and the Chinese embassy in Manila did not immediately respond to AFP comment requests.The Philippines and China have been involved in an escalating conflict over disputed areas of the South China Sea, with vessels from the two sides clashing frequently in recent years, resulting in injuries and damage.China claims almost the entire South China Sea, brushing off rival claims from other countries -- including the Philippines -- and an international ruling that its assertion has no legal basis.Wednesday's NSC statement cited a recent investigation in local outlet Rappler, which reported that Chinese minders had sought information about maritime deployments and resupply missions in the crucial waterway.The Philippines last year announced multiple arrests of Chinese nationals over alleged espionage.In April, a Chinese man was apprehended while operating a surveillance device near the offices of the Philippine election commission, authorities said, less than two weeks before the country's mid-term elections.The man was allegedly using an "IMSI catcher", a device capable of mimicking a cell tower and snatching messages from the air in a one-to-three-kilometre (about 3,200-to-9,800-feet) radius.Two Chinese men detained in February 2025 were accused of using the same device while driving near sensitive government and military locations in Manila.

- House panel orders Sara Duterte to answer impeach complaints (2026-03-05 05:18)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives' Committee on Justice on Thursday served a notice directing Vice President Sara Duterte to answer the two impeachment complaints it found sufficient in form and substance.The notice, which was dated March 4, 2026 and addressed to the Office of the Vice President, ordered her to file her answer within 10 calendar days from receipt of the notice."Failure on your part to file the Verified Answer within the period herein provided shall be deemed a waiver of your right to file the same, and you shall be considered to have interposed a general denial to the allegations contained in the Impeachment Complaints," it read.

- Asean calls for stop to fighting (2026-03-05 05:12)

THE Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) appealed for an immediate cessation of hostilities in the Middle East and called all parties concerned to exercise utmost self-restraint and to respect international law.The Asean said it has been monitoring the situation in the Middle East and expressed serious concern over the escalation of the conflict following the attacks initiated by Israel and the United States against Iran on Feb. 28.They expressed similar

concerns over Iran’s retaliatory attacks against Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — some of which host US military bases.In a joint statement on Wednesday, the Asean foreign ministers urged concerned parties to “avoid any acts that may further aggravate the situation.” They raised the need to “resolve differences through diplomacy and dialogue in the interest of maintaining peace and stability in the region.” The Asean, which includes the Philippines, said the escalating war in the Middle East poses a grave threat to the lives and safety of civilians, as well as to regional and global peace and stability.” “We also reemphasize the shared commitment to provide emergency assistance to Asean nationals, especially during this time,” they said.There are over 2.4 million Filipinos in the Middle East. This figure is broken down as follows: 973,000 in the UAE; 813,000 in Saudi Arabia; 250,000 in Qatar; 211,000 in Kuwait; 56,000 in Bahrain; 49,000 in Oman; 41,600 in Jordan (including Palestine); 31,000 in Israel; 14,000 in Lebanon; 1,600 in Iraq; 800 in Iran; and 700 in Syria. “This escalation [of hostilities] is particularly regrettable as it occurred amid ongoing diplomatic efforts, including mediation initiatives led by Oman aimed at advancing a negotiated solution,” the Asean leaders said. “We reaffirm the obligation of all states to resolve their differences through peaceful means and to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations, in line with international law, including the UN Charter,” they added.The Asean reiterated the obligations of governments to protect civilians and civilian infrastructures in armed conflicts consistent with international law and relevant UN Security Council resolutions. “We call on all countries to respect international law, including the United Nations Charter,” they added.

- First batch of repatriated Pinoys from Middle East arrives in Manila (2026-03-05 01:27)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Thursday said that nearly 300 Filipinos who were stranded in the Middle East have returned to the Philippines.Presidential Communications Secretary Dave Gomez said the first flight carrying repatriated Filipinos — Emirates EK336from Dubai (DXB) to Manila (MNL) —arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 at 6:45 a.m. Gomez said the passenger manifest included a mix of repatriated Filipinos and other affected travelers seeking to return home. Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac led government officials in welcoming 299 repatriates, including infants and children, upon their arrival, Gomez said. The flight thaht departed at 9:55 p.m. Philippine time brought home overseas workers, tourists, and other travelers who were stranded as the fighting erupted following an Israeli-US attack on Iran.

- Ex-lawmaker, lawyer, 18 former Marines face criminal, cyberlibel raps over multibillion peso cash deliveries (2026-03-05 00:44)

(UPDATE) MANILA, Philippines — A former lawmaker, lawyer and 18 ex-Marines are facing criminal and cyberlibel charges before the Department of Justice (DOJ) for linking some individuals to alleged multibillion peso cash deliveries to government officials and the International Criminal Court (ICC) contained in pieces of luggageNational Security Adviser Eduardo Año filed criminal charges against former representative Mike Defensor, lawyer Levi

Baligod, and the 18 former Marines over what he described were “malicious imputations” and fabricated allegations on the alleged paper bag money exchange.The respondents were charged by Año with unlawful means of publication and unlawful utterances before the DOJ on Wednesday.Año said that the filing of charges marked only the first legal action he intended to pursue against those he believed orchestrated the accusations."I was really surprised. And of course you can say I am really mad with their malicious imputations. Never in my life would I do that. That's why I'm going after them. This is just the first case," he said.Año also denied allegations that he received money through paper bags, stressing that such accusations run contrary to his decades of service in the military and government."Meanwhile, former senator Antonio Trillanes IV on Thursday filed criminal complaints against Baligod, 18 former marines, and several pro-Duterte personalities for cyberlibel, perjury, and incriminating an innocent person in connection with the same cash deliveries.The 26-page complaint-affidavit was filed before the DOJ targeting Baligod and the 18 self-confessed former security aides of resigned AKO Bikol party-list representative Zaldy Co, who claimed in a press conference last month to have delivered billions in cash to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., lawmakers, and even Trillanes himself.Also named respondents were former government official Lorraine Badoy-Partosa, vlogger Cathy Binag, Defensor, and veteran broadcaster Jay Sonza for their social media posts amplifying the allegations.At the center of the complaint is the Feb. 24, 2026 press conference organized by Baligod at Club Filipino in San Juan, where the 18 self-described former marines detailed their alleged firsthand knowledge of "maleta" or luggage deliveries containing P805 billion in cash to various officials. Baligod specifically claimed that Trillanes received $2 million to fund and facilitate the ICC investigation into former president Rodrigo Duterte's war on drugs."Instead of doing his job as a lawyer, by helping his clients to prepare their pleading and assisting them in filing a case or presenting the same before the appropriate forum, however, Atty. Baligod gleefully turned himself into a character assassin," Trillanes said in his complaint.The former senator argued that the timing of the press conference — held on the eve of the Edsa People Power anniversary and during the second day of ICC hearings for the confirmation of charges against Duterte — was deliberately malicious and designed to undermine the integrity of the international proceedings.Trillanes maintained that his involvement with the ICC case against Duterte, which dates back to 2017, was driven by moral conviction and not monetary gain. He cited a statement from the ICC Office of the Prosecutor clarifying that all investigation costs are covered by the court's approved budget and managed independently."The filing of the ICC case was done out of my moral and professional conviction and duty as elected representative of the people. I was not motivated by money then to file the case against the most powerful man in the country before the ICC," Trillanes stressed.The complaint also highlighted social media posts from Badoy, Binag, Defensor, and Sonza that allegedly helped spread the defamatory statements. Badoy's posts referred to Trillanes as " Trilling" and a "most rotten dirty scoundrel," while Binag questioned his sources of income. Defensor broadcast the press conference live on Facebook, and Sonza shared detailed summaries of the allegations to his nearly 400,000 followers.Trillanes invoked a Supreme Court ruling in Domingo v. Badoy-Partosa, which held that online content creators with large followings should be held to the same standard as journalists and can be penalized for

recklessly publishing falsehoods.For the 18 ex-marines, Trillanes is pressing perjury charges, arguing that their notarized joint affidavit contained deliberate falsehoods. He pointed to inconsistencies in their statements, including admissions during a "Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho" interview that they did not personally witness the alleged money transfer to him."These hearsays and blatant inconsistencies on whether or not the affiants actually and personally saw the transfer of the alleged 'maleta' containing $2 million to me betray the lies and fabrications necessarily invented to launch and sustain this smear campaign," Trillanes said.Baligod, meanwhile, faces an additional charge of incriminating an innocent person under Article 363 of the Revised Penal Code. Trillanes noted that Baligod later contradicted himself in media interviews, first claiming Trillanes received the funds, then denying the ex-senator was directly given money, and even accusing Trillanes of kidnapping in connection with Duterte's eventual detention in The Hague.Trillanes argued that since he was no longer a public officer, crimes like bribery or corruption of public officials could not apply to him, making Baligod's imputations a clear violation of the law.The complainant urged the Justice Department to find probable cause against all respondents and file the appropriate informations in court."After his fifteen minutes of fame, he must be held to account for his clear transgression of the law, together with all his cohorts, who provided him moral comfort and material aid, and connived with him in publicizing his tall tale of lies," Trillanes said.

- House authorizes ethics panel to review lawmaker's 'inappropriate' statements on actress Anne Curtis (2026-03-05 00:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives has authorized its Committee on Ethics and Privileges to assess the "inappropriate" statements by Quezon City 4th District Rep. Jesus Manuel Suntay on actress Anne Curtis which he made during a hearing on the impeachment charges against Vice President Sara Duterte.Laguna 1st District Rep. Ann Matibag, chairman of the Committee on Women and Gender Equality, asked that the matter be referred to the House Committee on Ethics and Privileges.Suntay later spoke at the plenary, saying in Filipino and English, "I have already explained and I respect the feelings of my colleagues here but I repeat, during the hearings, I was arguing on principles that lawyers and legislators should know" which was that a person "cannot be held liable for mere thoughts, imaginations, or associations without an overt act.""But like I said, the analogy might have been in bad taste and were taken in the wrong context. [...] But like I said, and I have repeated many times, there was no malice intended and if there was malice deduced [...], I wish to apologize to those affected and hurt", he said.Suntay said in a radio interview earlier on Wednesday that "it was an imaginary situation. It was a fictitious situation. I have not even seen Anne Curtis in person but I have seen her on TV."He said when he spoke at the plenary on Wednesday evening, "My record on women's welfare is real. The gender and development code and the" Bawal Bastos Ordinance " which I authored in Quezon City were not small achievements."He said further on that "we should look at the person by his actions and not mere statements. I think there is no perfect person here."San Juan Rep. Ysabel Zamora moved to refer Matibag's speech to the House Committee on Ethics and Privileges "for its appropriate action." There was no objection and her

motion was approved.Zamora then moved to authorize the House Committee on Ethics and Privileges to schedule a meeting to "conduct a thorough assessment on the actuations and statements of" Suntay "relative to the question of privilege of" Matibag.There was no objection and the motion was approved.

- Robert Downey Jr. attends christening of Disney’s biggest cruise ship Adventure (2026-03-04 22:21)

SINGAPORE —Disney Cruise Line christened on March 4, 2026 its newest and largest ship, the Disney Adventure, in a glittering ceremony that was attended by the godfather— Robert Downey Jr.DCL officials and beloved Disney characters led by Captains Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse were present.Adventure is the cruise line’s first ever ship to sail in Southeast Asia.“I’ve had the privilege of getting to know the team at Walt Disney Imagineering, and I can tell you Adventure is the perfect name for what they’ve created,” Downey said.“May God bless this ship and all who sail upon her,” he said.DCL officials and guests witnessed the christening at the Walt Disney Theatre aboard the ship. A 23-piece orchestra, Hollywood Performing Arts Hall of Fame inductee Jed Madela, and international recording artist of Eurovision fam Dami Im provided entertainment with classic Disney, Pixar, and Marvel melodies.Chairman of Disney Experiences and incoming Chief Executive Officer of The Walt Disney Company, Josh D’Amaro, and President of Disney Signature Experiences, Joe Schott, joined the artists on stage to mark the momentous occasion.“The Walt Disney Company has always been built on the power of storytelling and innovation – and Disney Cruise Line brings those values to life in extraordinary ways. Our cruise ships are ambassadors of our brand that carry joy, wonder and enchantment to destinations around the world,” said D’Amaro.“As our first ship to homeport in Asia, the Disney Adventure represents a new chapter for Disney Cruise Line and will introduce Disney to audiences who may be experiencing our magic for the very first time. It offers fans across this region an opportunity to immerse themselves in unforgettable ways and create memories that are uniquely Disney.”The Disney Adventure features seven immersive themed areas, each transporting guests into iconic stories and worlds including San Fransokyo Street from Disney’s “Big Hero 6”. On board, guests can enjoy a brand-new Broadway-style musical, “Remember”; immersive dining experiences; signature fireworks at sea; imaginative clubs for kids of all ages; a dynamic collection of bars and lounges for adults; and thrilling attractions, including Disney Cruise Line’s first-ever roller coaster at sea, Ironcycle Test Run.The Disney Adventure is Disney Cruise Line’s eighth ship and its largest to date. The ship embarks on its maiden voyage on March 10, followed by an inaugural season of three- and four-night itineraries at sea.

- Ethics case filed vs senator should meet committee's requirements, says Ejercito (2026-03-04 17:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The case filed against any senator that fails to meet the requirements set by the Senate Committee on Ethics and Privileges will be returned to the complainant "for correction," Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito said.The Ethics committee, led by Ejercito, convened on

Wednesday in an executive session and adopted rules to ensure the proper handling of complaints filed before the panel against six senators. “Cases that do not comply with the requirements in form and in substance will be returned to the complainant. They will be given the chance to amend their complaint before refiling it," Ejercito said in a briefing.The panel is composed of Sen. Francis Pangilinan (vice chairman) and members Senators Erwin Tulfo, Christopher Go, Rodante Marcoleta and Imee Marcos, and Risa Hontiveros.Senators Francis Escudero, Ronald Dela Rosa, Erwin Tulfo, Hontiveros, and Ejercito himself face ethics complaints on various grounds.Ejercito said the meeting was mainly procedural, allowing members to review the proposed rules and submit their inputs.

- Marcos open to studying 4-day workweek proposal, says Palace* (2026-03-04 17:07)

MANILA, Philippines – President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is open to studying the proposed four-day workweek as a mitigating measure should oil prices in the world market continue to surge and hostilities in the Middle East take longer to resolve.The idea was floated by Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian who said cutting the number of working days or expanding the work-from-home setup could help cushion the effect of high fuel prices. “That suggestion could be suggested by the president, especially if the Israel-Iran issue would worsen. But for now, that isn’t being talked about yet,” Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro said in Filipino in a press conference on Wednesday.Flexible work arrangements for government workers are authorized under Civil Service Commission (CSC) Memorandum Circular 6, series of 2022. For those in the private sector, alternative work arrangements are recognized as stated in Republic Act 11165, or the Telecommuting Act.Marcos earlier this week urged the public to brace for the impact of the conflict in the Middle East which is seen to trigger huge spikes in the prices of oil and its by-products. “But despite this, President Marcos Jr. maintained there is sufficient supply of oil and crude oil in the country which is expected to last from 50 to 60 days. The government is also prepared in case tensions worsen and the price of oil reaches 80 dollars per barrel,” Castro said.

- CHR partners with Supreme Court to expand free legal aid to indigents (2026-03-04 17:03)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) has announced that it partnered with the Supreme Court through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) which would see the implementation of the Unified Legal Aid Service (ULAS) aimed at ensuring adequate and timely legal assistance for indigent, disadvantaged, and vulnerable Filipinos.CHR Chairman Richard Palpal-latoc told The Manila Times that the collaboration was formalized during the high court’s launching of Phase 1 of the ULAS Portal on March 3, 2026 wherein the National Anti-Poverty Commission, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, and the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor were also MOU signatories.ULAS, according to CHR, serves as a centralized digital platform enabling covered lawyers to comply with mandatory pro bono (free or without charge) legal aid obligations while expanding nationwide access to free legal services.Palpal-latoc cited the importance of the partnership, particularly for disadvantaged and vulnerable sectors. “Access to justice is a cornerstone of human dignity, and

institutions must work together to dismantle barriers that prevent individuals from asserting their rights. May our shared work continue to bring the promise of justice closer to every Filipino," the top CHR official said.The CHR, grounded in its constitutional mandate to provide legal aid and preventive measures to individuals whose rights have been violated or require protection, recognizes ULAS as a vital mechanism that strengthens collective efforts to guarantee access to justice, Palpal-latoc said.

- PNP belies online posts on work, class suspensions (2026-03-04 16:46)

THE Philippine National Police (PNP) on Wednesday dismissed social media posts claiming work and class suspensions from Wednesday, March 4, to Friday, March 6, due to alleged security threats.In a statement posted on its Facebook page, PNP Chief Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. was quoted as saying the social media posts have no basis and did not come from any authorized government agency."At present, there is no verified security threat that would warrant such an advisory. The PNP remains in close coordination with concerned agencies to ensure public safety and maintain peace and order," the PNP said."We urge the public to remain calm and rely only on announcements released through official government channels. The deliberate spread of false information that causes unnecessary alarm is addressed under existing laws and will be dealt with accordingly," it added.Also, the PNP said that its Anti-Cybercrime Group is "monitoring the source" of the misleading posts and will take action against those responsible."We remind everyone to verify before sharing. Let us work together to prevent misinformation from disrupting public order," the PNP said.

- Marikina flood strategy cited as model for no-build zones, retention basins (2026-03-04 16:44)

MANILA, Philippines — Marikina City's flood control approach may serve as a model for other local governments as the national government considers establishing no-build zones and water retention basins to reduce flood risks.Department of Public Works and Highways Secretary Vince Dizon made the remark during a visit to Marikina on Wednesday where he inspected flood control projects and met with Mayor Marjorie Ann "Maan" Teodoro and First District Rep. Marcelino "Marcy" Teodoro.Dizon said local governments needed to designate areas where construction would no longer be allowed while developing retention basins that could temporarily store floodwaters during heavy rains."We need to establish no-build zones. Then we will build retention basins where water can go and be contained. We will build parks. That is important. Marikina has shown us that it is possible," Dizon said.He added that Marikina's long experience in dealing with flooding has produced practices that could guide other cities in strengthening their flood mitigation programs."In fact, I invited the mayor and the engineer so we can show other local government units the best practices because Marikina has already learned from experience," he said.During the visit, city officials also presented their integrated flood control strategy, which combined national infrastructure projects with local drainage and river management efforts.Rep. Teodoro said dredging of the Marikina River continued to deepen and widen parts of the channel to improve water velocity and increase the river's

capacity to carry floodwaters.He added that Marikina’s drainage systems were designed so that runoff water from communities flowed directly toward the river through outfall channels, allowing floodwaters to exit the city more quickly.City officials also highlighted coordination between the Marikina local government and the Wawa Dam Authority to manage gradual water releases upstream to prevent sudden surges in the Marikina River during heavy rains.

- PNP belies online posts on work, class suspensions (2026-03-04 16:35)

THE Philippine National Police (PNP) on Wednesday dismissed social media posts claiming work and class suspensions from Wednesday, March 4, to Friday, March 6, due to alleged security threats.In a statement posted on its Facebook page, PNP Chief Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. was quoted as saying the social media posts have no basis and did not come from any authorized government agency.“At present, there is no verified security threat that would warrant such an advisory. The PNP remains in close coordination with concerned agencies to ensure public safety and maintain peace and order,” the PNP said.“We urge the public to remain calm and rely only on announcements released through official government channels. The deliberate spread of false information that causes unnecessary alarm is addressed under existing laws and will be dealt with accordingly,” it added.Also, the PNP said that its Anti-Cybercrime Group is “monitoring the source” of the misleading posts and will take action against those responsible.“We remind everyone to verify before sharing. Let us work together to prevent misinformation from disrupting public order,” the PNP said.

- Pasig secures Oranbo health center site (2026-03-04 16:35)

THE Pasig City government has secured the legal use of the land where the Oranbo village hall and health center stand after signing a usufruct agreement with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), Mayor Vico Sotto said.The agreement was signed on Wednesday, March 4, at the MWSS corporate office in Balara, Quezon City, allowing the Oranbo village government to continue occupying the MWSS-owned property where the village health center and the elevated “overpass” village hall are located.Sotto said he went to the MWSS office with Oranbo village chief Richie Pua to finalize the agreement that resolves a long-standing land concern involving the facilities.“For the information of residents of Oranbo: this morning I went to the MWSS Corporate Office in Balara, Quezon City, with Kap Richie Pua to sign a usufruct agreement so that your Barangay Hall on their land becomes legal,” Sotto said.He said the arrangement ensures residents will no longer worry about losing their village hall and health center, noting that the facilities had been used by the village long before his administration.Sotto also announced Tuesday evening that the city government inaugurated a new village health center in San Jose village, costing P8.7 million.The project upgraded an existing 2013 building constructed during the term of Pasig Rep. Roman Romulo so it could comply with standards set by the Department of Health.City officials said the facility now includes consultation and treatment rooms, a minor surgical room, dental services, a medicine dispensing area, and counseling spaces for mental health and women and child protection programs.The San Jose facility has around 380 square meters of indoor floor area with about

250 square meters of surrounding open space, and features air-conditioning units, CCTV cameras, upgraded lighting, and improvements to the adjacent child development center.

- Security guard dies in Las Pinas village clash (2026-03-04 16:33)

MANILA, Philippines — A security guard in one of the subdivisions in Las Pinas died during a fight that broke out in the enforcement of a court order that involved a leadershp dispute in its homeowners' association on Wednesday.This was confirmed by the Privilege Security and Investigation Agency Inc., employer of the guard whose identity has been withheld pending results of an ongoing investigation into the incident inside the BF Resort Village. “We confirm with deep sadness that a security guard lost his life during the recent enforcement incident at BF Resort Village,” the agency told The Manila Times.The agency said the guard lost his life during the chaotic standoff that erupted while sheriffs from the Human Settlements Adjudication Commission (HSAC) attempted to implement a writ of execution on the transfer of authority over all association assets and common areas from the incumbent board, led by Euan Rex Torralballa, to the one led by Jose Deo Aguinaldo under the BF Resort Village Talon Homeowners Association Inc. (BFRVTHAI).Quoting witnesses, Privilege Security claimed the sheriff ordered a group of men to forcibly open the premises despite an appeal from Torralballa for dialogue and peaceful negotiations.The agency added that the guard fell to the ground during the chaos and was stepped on by a rushing group that forced entry. It called for a full and impartial investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident.

- Don't invoke sovereignty selectively, China told (2026-03-04 16:27)

SOVEREIGNTY must be upheld as a universal principle and not invoked selectively to suit geopolitical interests, national security expert and civic leader Jose Antonio Goitia said.Goitia made the statement on Wednesday following criticism by China against the United States for its recent military strikes on Iran, which Beijing said destabilized the international order and violated Tehran’s sovereignty.A spokesman for China’s defense ministry described Washington as a “war addict” and urged respect for Iran’s territorial integrity while calling for dialogue to address the conflict.Goitia, however, said sovereignty remains a fundamental pillar of international relations, particularly for countries that depend on international law rather than military power to safeguard their rights.“Sovereignty is not a rhetorical device. It is a universal standard. If it is invoked as a principle, it must be honored everywhere,” he said in an interview.Goitia argued that if China insists on respecting Iran’s sovereignty, it must also recognize the maritime rights of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea which form part of the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone as affirmed by the landmark ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in 2016.He said despite the legally binding decision, Beijing has rejected the ruling and continued maritime activities in the disputed waters, including patrols by the China Coast Guard and encounters with Filipino vessels.Philippine authorities have reported incidents involving water cannon use, obstruction of resupply missions and hazardous maneuvers against boats operating within the country’s recognized maritime zones.Goitia said the continued presence of Chinese vessels and infrastructure developments in contested areas indicate a

consistent pattern of maritime pressure. “China’s expansionism is not reactive diplomacy. It is deliberate strategic revisionism, executed through incremental encroachment, sustained maritime pressure and calculated ambiguity,” he said.He added that strategic intent can often be discerned through repeated actions rather than formal declarations, citing the regular patrols and regulatory moves that gradually normalize foreign presence in disputed waters.Goitia said credibility in defending sovereignty depends on consistency. “True authority is earned through consistency. A nation cannot defend sovereignty in distant conflicts while undermining the lawful maritime rights of its neighbors,” he said.He stressed that the issue should not be viewed as a matter of aligning with one global power over another but as a question of respecting established international rules. “The Philippines does not seek confrontation. It seeks adherence to established rules. Economic influence does not supersede legal obligation. Diplomatic statements do not outweigh conduct,” he said.

- Strengthening Social Protection: Cambodia Studies Philippine Legal Frameworks (2026-03-04 16:16)

THE Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on Tuesday welcomed officials from the Royal Government of Cambodia for a study tour on the Philippines’ legal and institutional frameworks for strengthening the social service workforce. “On behalf of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, we would like to express our deepest and heartfelt gratitude to the Royal Government of Cambodia, through the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation, for visiting the department to learn and gain insights on various social protection programs and services of the agency,” said Edmon Monteverde, the DSWD assistant secretary for Promotive Programs.The educational activity, facilitated by the DSWD Academy at the Katapatan Conference Room of the DSWD Central Office, featured presentations from the agency’s Policy Development and Planning Bureau, the Professional Regulation Commission-Professional Regulatory Board, and the Commission on Higher Education.The discussion outlined the country’s systems on professional standards, licensing, accreditation, and workforce management for social workers.It also highlighted child protection case management mechanisms and other reforms that Cambodia is currently enhancing as part of its social service development.Monteverde said such activities among Asean member-states contribute to stronger regional responses to poverty and the needs of vulnerable sectors. “The learning visit is timely as the Philippines assumes its chairmanship of Asean 2026, wherein the DSWD takes a leading role in the Asean Socio-Cultural Community Pillar, championing community empowerment and people-centered initiatives,” he added.Cambodian Secretary of State Toch Channy expressed appreciation for the opportunity to study the Philippine model, describing the visit as both ideal and timely for Cambodia’s ongoing reforms.An open forum concluded the session, allowing representatives from both delegations and partner institutions, including Unicef Philippines and Unicef Cambodia, to exchange insights on advancing social protection systems in the region.

- Marcos Fast-Tracks Agriculture Cooperatives Act to Boost Food Security (2026-03-04 16:14)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said he is ready to certify as urgent the proposed Agriculture Cooperatives Act of 2025 to strengthen support for Filipino farmers and fisherfolk.The Presidential Communications Office (PCO) said Marcos expressed his readiness to certify the bill during a meeting with Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform Chairman Francis Pangilinan and other agriculture stakeholders on Tuesday."President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. expressed readiness to certify the Agriculture Cooperatives Act of 2025 as urgent to expedite its implementation," the PCO said in a social media post.The PCO said the Marcos administration is also studying proposals to amend the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL), which aimed to liberalize rice importation."The goal is to secure approval of the measures as soon as possible," it added.The proposed Agriculture Cooperatives Act of 2025 seeks to strengthen agricultural cooperatives as key partners for national food security and rural development.The measure aims to improve productivity and profitability in the agriculture sector by promoting stronger farmer organizations that can collectively purchase inputs, process agricultural products, and negotiate better prices in the market.It is part of a broader package of proposed reforms that includes the Agricom Act and the Agriculture and Fisheries Extension Act.The reforms aim to raise farmers' incomes and improve agricultural services while enhancing support systems for producers across the country.On the other hand, the RTL, which was enacted in 2019, empowers the president to halt imports under specific conditions.The RTL, or Republic Act 11203, liberalized rice imports by replacing quantitative restrictions with tariffs and established the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund to support farmers through mechanization, seeds, credit and training.The Palace said Tuesday's meeting was attended by the president, Pangilinan, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., Executive Secretary Ralph Recto, and National Economic and Development Authority Secretary Arsenio Balisacan.

- Over 2K benefit from medical services on 64th Caloocan cityhood anniversary (2026-03-04 16:11)

MORE than 2,000 Caloocan residents availed themselves of free medical services provided by the city's public hospitals during the celebration of the 64th Cityhood Anniversary.Mayor Dave Gonzalo Malapitan hailed the project initiated by the City Health Department (CHD) in collaboration with the Caloocan City Medical Center (CCMC) and Caloocan City North Medical Center (CCNMC).While the CCMC and CCNMC held their weeklong initiatives, the CHD conducted its own One-Stop Shop Community-Based Health Services at local health centers across the city, according to the mayor.According to the CHD, various medical and health services were provided, including free X-rays and breast ultrasounds, dental and ophthalmology services, and even free electromagnetic cardiogram (ECG) and bone scans.Malapitan reiterated his gratitude to the city hospitals and CHD for adhering to the local administration's priority on health care.He cited the local government's continuing commitment to make medical programs even more accessible to the public, especially in remote communities and villages in the city.Public health services, including prenatal care, youth immunization, and medical and dental consultations, remain free and accessible at the city's community health centers, according to CHD.

- VP Sara's impeachment case moves forward (2026-03-04 16:11)

THE House Committee on Justice agreed overwhelmingly on Wednesday to advance the impeachment case against Vice President Sara Duterte, setting the stage for a potential vote that could decide her political future.The daughter of former president Rodrigo Duterte, who in February announced a 2028 presidential bid, was impeached last year, only for the Supreme Court to toss the case out over procedural issues.Under the Constitution, an impeachment by the House of Representatives triggers a Senate trial, where a guilty verdict would ban Duterte from elected office for life.Two new complaints, ruled “sufficient in substance” by a vote of 54-1 on Wednesday, accuse her of graft and corruption while in office and of making a death threat against former ally President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.She will now have 10 days to respond before the start of a hearing of probable cause necessary to move the complaints to a House vote.“Our vote today is not a verdict of guilt nor an act of condemnation. It’s simply a decision on whether the constitutional process should move forward,” Rep. Ferdinand Hernandez said minutes before the vote.The vice president’s legal team said Wednesday they would not comment on specific allegations.“For now, we will refrain from discussing the substance of the case in the media and will instead address these matters through the proper constitutional processes,” lawyer Michael Poa said in a statement.The alleged death threat against Marcos stems from a late-night press briefing in which she claimed to have hired an assassin to kill the president and members of his family should he have her cut down first.Analysts have warned that Duterte’s presidential announcement will weigh heavily on lawmakers forced to gauge the repercussions of a vote against someone who may yet hold the country’s highest office.While she later said the comments were misinterpreted, lawmaker Gerville Luistro said Wednesday that the alleged threats could destabilize institutions.“They carry weight. They create fear,” she said.Duterte and Marcos have been engaged in a high-stakes political brawl that erupted within weeks of their 2022 win in the presidential election, when the vice president was denied her favored Cabinet portfolios and instead named education secretary.The justice committee last month tossed out a pair of impeachment complaints against Marcos, ruling that allegations of corruption over a scandal involving bogus flood control projects lacked substance.Although four complaints were endorsed to the committee, only two — one filed by priests and others, and the other filed by lawyer Nathaniel Cabrera — were found to be sufficient in both form and substance.Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro, the committee chairman, said in a press conference on Wednesday the complainant must be provided Duterte’s answer to the charges, then given three calendar days to respond. Thereafter, she will have another three calendar days to file her rejoinder.The panel, he said, would also be ready to accept submitted evidence.“When all this evidence and documents are gathered... and all these responsive pleadings are received, then that is the time for us to determine whether there is sufficient ground” to support the complaint, she said.“And if the decision of the justice committee is in the affirmative, that’s the only time that we will be proceeding to the hearing proper,” she said.Luistro said that if Duterte does not file an answer, it would be “considered as a denial of all the allegations” in the complaint, and the committee “will simply proceed to hearing these impeachment complaints.”In a

press conference on Tuesday, Luistro said the hearing proper would be held after the Holy Week because they needed to provide time for responsive pleadings.While the actual hearing has yet to begin, Akbayan Rep. Percival Cendaña said “there will be more than the necessary number to impeach the VP.” “If the weight of the allegations and evidence is looked at, our Constitution is pointing toward only one recourse, there is only one logical action that Congress should take — impeach the vice president,” he said.Four impeachment complaints were filed last month against Duterte. The House committee set the first one filed aside, finding that it violated the rule against initiating impeachment proceedings against the same official more than once within a one-year period.The second one was withdrawn by the 17 people who filed it.The third impeachment complaint filed by priests and others alleged, among others, that Duterte committed culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayed public trust in connection with confidential funds allocated to the Office of the Vice President (OVP) for 2022 and 2023, and confidential funds allocated for 2023 to the Department of Education (DepEd) which Duterte led as secretary before she resigned in 2024 from that post.Meanwhile, Cabrera alleged that Duterte “betrayed the public trust and committed acts of graft and corruption by grossly abusing discretionary authority over confidential funds appropriated to the” OVP and DepEd.Duterte’s defense team said they will “carefully review” the decision of the House Justice Committee that the third and fourth impeachment complaints were “sufficient in substance.” “At this stage, the vice president’s legal team will carefully review the actions taken by the House and the Committee, as well as the records of the proceedings,” Poa, defense panel spokesman, said.Meanwhile, Davao City Rep. Paolo Duterte said the development “did not come as a surprise” to him, and noted that it exposed how “certain forces in Congress are willing to weaponize impeachment for political ends rather than uphold fairness and justice.”He commended Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay for being the lone vote against finding the complaints sufficient in substance.He also reminded the 54 others who voted in favor of pushing the complaint forward that “political power is temporary, but accountability to the Filipino people is permanent.” “You may have the numbers today, but history has a way of judging those who abuse their authority,” he added.

- Sara files perjury charges vs alleged bagman (2026-03-04 16:10)

VICE President Sara Duterte filed perjury charges against self-confessed security consultant and bagman Ramil Madriaga on Wednesday.She filed the case at the Taguig City Prosecutor’s Office accompanied by her lawyer, Salvador Paolo Panelo Jr.In a statement, Duterte said that Madriaga is an “accused individual in a kidnapping case who posed as a campaign supporter and, from there, suddenly emerged as a supposed witness in the impeachment against me.”She said Madriaga is being used in the same way the International Criminal Court used “fabricated” testimonies from Arturo Lascañas and Edgar Matobato, which were used against her father, former president Rodrigo Duterte.“Because of this, today I have filed a perjury case against Ramil Madriaga to finally hold him accountable for his lies. We cannot allow invented stories to be used to deceive the public,” Duterte said.Madriaga claimed that he was a supporter of Duterte who received campaign funds from Philippine offshore gaming operations

and drug money, as well as confidential funds from two former Vice Presidential Security and Protection Group leaders.In an earlier statement, Duterte said that Madriaga’s revelations were part of efforts to derail her 2028 presidential bid, which she announced last month. “I have never visited him in prison, nor have I spoken to him about anything at any time,” Duterte said.She also said that the photographs he submitted as proof are “unrelated images taken during public events where I was present.” “These images do not support his allegations and merely show that he was present as part of an election campaign group,” she said.She also said Madriaga appears to be acting “out of desperation to secure his release from detention.”

- Suntay draws firestorm of criticsm for remarks about Anne Curtis (2026-03-04 16:09)

THE Quezon City congressman who made sexually suggestive references to the actress Anne Curtis to make a point came under a firestorm of criticism on Wednesday for his “repulsive” remarks, but insisted “there was nothing malicious” in his statements.In a radio interview, Quezon City 4th District Rep. Bong Suntay apologized to those who found his statement offensive but said it was not his intention to offend anyone. “My intention was to drive a point,” Suntay said in Filipino and English in an interview on radio DZMM.In a session on Tuesday, Suntay defended Vice President Sara Duterte, who said she imagined killing President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., likening that to a situation in which he saw the actress Anne Curtis and imagined, in his desire, what might happen. “But of course, it was just my imagination. Maybe I cannot be sued because I imagined various things,” he said in Filipino. “It was an imaginary situation,” Suntay said in his radio interview. “It was a fictitious situation. I have not even seen Anne Curtis in person but I have seen her on TV.” Suntay’s critics, however, were not appeased.Sen. Risa Hontiveros on Wednesday said Suntay should apologize and make the necessary amends to Anne Curtis for his inappropriate remarks. “There is absolutely no excuse for his repulsive remarks,” Hontiveros. “Worse, he insists that there was nothing wrong with what he said,” the senator said in a statement in Filipino.Members of the House Committee on Justice on Tuesday called out Suntay for verbalizing his apparent desire for Curtis during the proceedings on the pending impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte.Suntay said he “imagined something” upon seeing Curtis in a hotel.Hontiveros said Suntay must be reminded that under the Bawal Bastos Law, which she authored, “gender-based harassment is punishable.” “Statements of sexual comments and suggestions can be penalized. As a lawmaker, he should know this. More importantly, he is duty-bound to uphold it,” she said. “As we celebrate Women’s Month, this incident is a reminder that advancing women’s dignity and basic respect is continuous work; work that must be asserted, defended and reaffirmed, again and again,” she said. “We must not normalize lewd behavior. We must continue to defend women,” Hontiveros added.The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) and other women’s rights groups on Wednesday condemned the sexist remarks, saying that his comment violates the law and ethical standards for public officials.In a statement, the PCW said Suntay’s statement is not only offensive but also violates existing laws, such as Republic Act (RA) 11313, or the Safe Spaces Act, and RA 9710, or the Magna Carta

of Women. “The statement bears the hallmarks of gender-based sexual harassment as defined under Republic Act 11313. And when it comes from a public official, it is a serious betrayal of public trust and a violation of the law,” the commission said.Meanwhile, Gabriela Women’s Party Rep. Sarah Elago told The Manila Times that Congress must institutionalize steps to promote gender-sensitive practices and prohibit gender-based sexual harassment.She added that Congress should also strengthen the existing Safe Spaces Act to cover public office and impose stronger penalties for those who violate them.The PCW and Gabriela Women’s Party demanded that Suntay issue a public apology, stressing that his comments were not just “jokes” or “casual banter.” “Silence or inaction from those in oversight positions would be tantamount to complicity in the normalization of harassment,” the PCW said.Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte expressed disappointment as she demanded Suntay to apologize publicly over his “inappropriate remarks.” “But what makes this incident especially troubling is the fact that, as a former member of our city council, he (Suntay) was part of the body that passed our Gender and Development Code,” Belmonte said in a statement emailed to The Manila Times.Moreover, she said Suntay was the council’s majority floor leader when the “Bawal Bastos Ordinance,” which declares that lewd, malicious, and demeaning remarks and acts have no place in public life, was passed and approved.Iloilo City Mayor Raisa Treñas denounced the Suntay’s remarks, calling them unacceptable and out of place. “As a woman and as mayor of Iloilo City, I cannot stay silent,” Treñas said in a statement condemning the congressman’s comments delivered during a House Committee on Justice hearing on Tuesday.Treñas said such statements have no place in public discourse, particularly when uttered by a lawmaker and especially during Women’s Month. “When a public official speaks, their words carry weight. Casual objectification, whether disguised as imagination or humor, demeans women and erodes the very culture of respect and equality that we are working so hard to build,” she said.

- House OKs bill mandating financial literacy course (2026-03-04 16:08)

THE House of Representatives on Tuesday approved a bill seeking to require higher education institutions to have a personal financial literacy course (PFLC) in their curricula.With 251 lawmakers voting for its passage, House Bill 7628 hurdled its third and final reading during the plenary session on Tuesday.The bill also mandates the inclusion of a PFLC in the curricula of technical-vocational institutions, as well as Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) training centers."Financial literacy is life literacy. When students understand savings, credit, and risk early, they protect themselves and their families as they step into adult responsibilities," the bill's authors said.The bill states the PFLC shall include the concept of personal finance; time value of money; "[c]onsumer behavior in the context and culture of the Philippines"; debt management and rehabilitation; savings, emergency, and resilience fund development; investment concepts and planning; retirement planning; insurance planning; credit scoring and credit reports; concept of financial education; "[p]ertinent topics on effective utilization of digital payment platforms, such as modules on observing cyber-hygiene to help safeguard cybersecurity, data integrity, and consumer protection in adopting digital financial services"; and "[o]ther financial literacy issues and concerns."The bill mandates the Commission

on Higher Education and Tesda to collaborate with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Department of Finance, Securities and Exchange Commission, and Insurance Commission "in developing academic standards, curricula, and materials for the PFLC."

- PCO creates Anti-Fake News Desk (2026-03-04 16:08)

THE Presidential Communications Office (PCO) announced on Wednesday the creation of an Anti-Fake News Desk aimed at giving the government’s campaign against disinformation and misinformation more teeth, and holding accountable purveyors of so-called fake news.PCO Secretary Dave Gomez made the announcement during the agency’s ceremonial signing of a memorandum of understanding with media outlets held at the Presidential Broadcast Service Studio in Malacañang.The Anti-Fake News Desk is a dedicated mechanism where citizens can report suspicious or misleading content.“We will immediately evaluate these reports and refer them to the appropriate agencies, such as the Department of Information and Communications Technology and the Department of Justice, among others, for prompt and proper action,” Gomez said.“Beyond monitoring, the PCO will actively go after those who deliberately peddle fake news and disinformation on social media platforms. We will engage and collaborate with platforms such as Meta and Google, seeking their cooperation and assistance in addressing coordinated disinformation campaigns and ensuring accountability in the digital space,” he added.Apart from this endeavor, the PCO also tapped the nine leading newspaper publishers — The Manila Times, Manila Bulletin, Philippine Star, Inquirer, Manila Standard, Malaya Business Insight, Business Mirror, Business World and Daily Tribune — to ensure the public gets only vetted and reliable information.The parties committed to upholding accurate, verified and responsible reporting while maintaining full respect for press freedom and editorial independence.As stated in the memorandum of understanding, “fake news” is defined as having “no factual basis or is materially misleading but is presented as truthful; is deliberately created or shared to deceive, and is capable of causing identifiable public harm such as panic, violence, reputational damage or interference in democratic processes.” “Disinformation thrives in darkness — in confusion, in distortion, in deliberate deceit. But truth has always been like daylight. And just as a magnifying glass focuses sunlight to reveal what is hidden, this collaboration concentrates the light of verified information, sharpening clarity and exposing falsehoods. In shining that light, we dispel the shadows where fake news attempts to hide,” Gomez said.Among the agreement’s key objectives are enhancing the dissemination of verified information, strengthening public trust in credible media institutions, promoting media and information literacy, and enabling coordinated and rapid responses to disinformation during crises, emergencies and disasters.By forging an agreement with the “nation’s most credible and respected news organizations,” Gomez vowed “to open communication channels for verifying social media claims, exercising prudence to curb the spread of fabricated content.” “And we will join forces on media literacy initiatives, empowering Filipinos to discern fact from fiction,” he said.Representing and signing in behalf of their respective publications were Anna Marie Ang-Thompson, chief executive officer, The Manila Times; Herminio Coloma Jr., publisher, Manila Bulletin; Rolando Estabillo, publisher, Manila Standard;

Paolo Prieto, president and chief executive officer, Philippine Daily Inquirer; Teresa Mendoza, senior vice president, The Philippine Star; T. Anthony Cabangon, publisher, Business Mirror; Arjay Balinbin, associate editor, Business World; Luisito Lozada, executive editor, Daily Tribune; and Allen A. Macasaet, publisher and chairman, Malaya Business Insight.Ang-Thompson pledged The Manila Times' "logistical might to ensure that the public will have a beacon of verified, actionable and life-saving information" that the public can trust."We all share a common reality: our ink is only as strong as the public's trust in it," she said."May this cooperation serve the people by ensuring that facts remain the foundation of our national conversation," she added.

- Excise tax bill to be certified as urgent (2026-03-04 16:07)

MALACAÑANG on Wednesday said President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will certify as urgent a proposed measure seeking a new authority to reduce excise tax on fuel products, describing it as "timely" as war spreads in the Middle East.Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said Marcos cannot suspend the imposition of mandatory excise taxes on all oil and fuel products unless Congress passes a new law."We were told that the lifting or suspension of the excise tax applied only from 2018 to 2020," Castro said during a press conference."So, at present, it is no longer in effect, which is why the president wants a new law that would give him the authority to reduce the excise tax," she added.Under Republic Act (RA) 10963, or the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion Law, excise taxes on petroleum products were implemented in three tranches from Jan. 1, 2018 to Jan. 1, 2020.RA 10964 also provides for the automatic suspension of the excise tax increase if the average Dubai crude oil price reaches or exceeds $80 per barrel for three months.On Tuesday, Marcos said he would talk to leaders of Congress about granting him the power to reduce excise taxes on fuel products once the price of Dubai crude hits $80 a barrel.No details are provided on the amount of the reduction in excise taxes or how long it would be in effect."I will discuss it with the leadership of Congress to see if it is going to be an emergency measure," the president said during a press conference in Malacañang."It is not going to be a permanent measure. It will be something that we will dispose of as soon as the crisis is over," he added.Meanwhile, Castro said the economic managers would determine the possible rates of the proposed oil excise tax cut should Marcos exercise his emergency powers."Nothing was discussed yesterday. And he will listen to the economic team on what the best reduction rate would be," Castro said.The Palace official also echoed Marcos' assurance that the excise tax cut proposal would only be temporary.The proposal for emergency powers was among the Marcos administration's moves to cushion the potential impact of the ongoing Middle East war on the country's energy sector and economy.The president also directed the Department of Energy to coordinate with oil companies to ensure that the price increases they would implement were implemented in a staggered manner.The government also plans to provide "targeted" fuel subsidies for the transport — including drivers of public utility vehicles — and agriculture sectors, including farmers and fisherfolk," Marcos said."Hopefully, before the four to five weeks, the level of intensity of the fighting will come down. In other words, that commerce will proceed in a more

or less normal way, number one, and secondly, that oil production will start to normalize," he added.

- Philippines Targets Global Supply Chain with Critical Minerals Drive at PDAC 2026 (2026-03-04 16:06)

PHILIPPINE Ambassador to Canada Jose Victor Chan-Gonzaga said the country "is ready" to be a reliable source of critical minerals essential for the energy transition.The Philippines plays a vital role in global supply chains for clean energy, electric vehicles, and semiconductors with its substantial reserves of copper, nickel ore, cobalt, and other critical minerals.Chan-Gonzaga said the Philippines demonstrated this readiness during its first-ever participation in the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) Convention 2026 in Toronto.PDAC is the world's premier mineral exploration and mining convention that brings together the industry's most important players and stakeholders, he said.He said that with its vast mineral reserves, the Philippines is "well-positioned to expand partnerships with international investors and industry leaders underpinned by a commitment to responsible resource development and sustainable growth." "I view our high-level participation at PDAC 2026, including the first-ever Philippine country space, from the broader perspective of the strong and deep bilateral relations of the Philippines and Canada at this time," Chan-Gonzaga said.The Philippine delegation will engage stakeholders throughout PDAC to tap opportunities in exploration, investment, innovation and sustainable mining practices."This is yet another concrete manifestation of the deepening of our economic partnership [with Canada]," the ambassador said in a statement Wednesday."As we negotiate a bilateral free trade agreement [with Canada] and engage more comprehensively in spaces like mineral exploration and mining, economic ties between our two countries can only further strengthen, to the benefit of our two peoples," he added.Chan-Gonzaga led the Philippine delegation on Feb. 28 at the inauguration of the Philippines' first-ever country space at the Metro Toronto Convention Center.He was joined by Trade and Industry Undersecretary Ceferino Rodolfo, Philippine Consul General in Toronto Kristine Leilani Salle, Department of Environment and Natural Resources Assistant Secretary Michael Cabalda, and representatives of the Philippine Nickel Industry Association and other mining companies.Nina Tangri, a member of Provincial Parliament for Mississauga-Streetsville and associate minister of small business, represented the Canadian government at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

- Philippine Red Cross Partners with Plan International for Climate Resilience (2026-03-04 16:05)

THE Philippine Red Cross (PRC) on Wednesday called for stronger climate collaboration to enhance resilience in vulnerable communities."Climate resilience requires systems coordination. Coordination is the key, but it remains a challenge. It requires policy alignment. It requires trust across institutions. And it requires sustained dialogue that moves us beyond silos," PRC Secretary General Gwendolyn Pang said in her keynote address at the Climate Resilience Multi-Stakeholder Forum in Pasig.Pang highlighted the increasing unpredictability of

weather systems and the intensifying effects of climate hazards, noting these have far-reaching impacts on public health, livelihoods and infrastructure.During the forum, the PRC, along with Plan International Pilipinas and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Philippine country office, signed the country coordination mechanism aimed at strengthening community capacity through partnerships with the public and private sectors.Pang said the initiative with the Z Zurich Foundation initially focused on flood resilience programs but has since expanded to address rising heat levels.“Since there are more risks that we are experiencing, especially, for example, with the rise of the heat that we have experienced from recent years, we have shifted that to include climate resilience, climate in general, and a specific focus also on heat. So then, the goal here is to really help the communities with the mitigation and adaptation to climate risk and climate change,” Pang told The Manila Times.She stressed the need for communities in disaster-prone areas to understand the early warning signs.“They have to actually be the lead on the ground in terms of their own safety, their own preparedness,” she said.“For small enterprises, like small sari-sari stores, we can help them also to move to a safer place. The roofing of the house — we can also teach them and help them to reinforce that before they are devastated. It’s really about empowering the community, making them own it. Not just informing them, but really giving them the tools, giving them the capability to also help them address [it],” Pang added.

- Gatchalian Files Senate Bill 1921 to Overhaul Philippine Budgeting Code (2026-03-04 16:05)

SEN. Sherwin Gatchalian filed Senate Bill 1921 on Tuesday, the Philippine Budgeting Code, which aims to strengthen transparency, accountability and fiscal discipline in government spending.The proposed legislation seeks to consolidate and harmonize the various laws, executive issuances, and policy guidelines that currently govern Philippine budgeting and public financial management (PFM).In his explanatory note, Gatchalian emphasized that the country’s PFM framework remains fragmented, with rules and processes scattered across multiple statutes and executive orders.“For reforms to be preserved, they must be solidified through the enactment of laws,” Gatchalian said, stressing that codifying budgeting principles would “guarantee the perpetuation of reforms notwithstanding changes in administration.”The most comprehensive existing legal basis for PFM is Book VI of Executive Order 292, also known as the Administrative Code of 1987, which was enacted nearly four decades ago.Gatchalian noted that provisions in the annual General Appropriations Act often lack permanence, as general provisions may change yearly depending on the administration’s policy direction.This setup, he said, underscores the need for a stable and permanent legal framework governing budgeting processes.A study by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) pointed out that the Philippines’ PFM legal framework suffers from segmentation.The IMF flagged concerns over special accounts in the general fund and off-budget accounts, which are created by separate laws outside the regular budget process and may not always align with the overall fiscal framework.Similarly, the Asian Development Bank observed that regulatory and oversight functions in the Philippine PFM system are distributed among several government agencies, sometimes with overlapping mandates, resulting in weak integration.

- New bill mandates World War II subject for all college students (2026-03-04 16:05)

THE House of Representatives on Tuesday approved House Bill 7808, which seeks to integrate a comprehensive study of the country’s history during World War II into the higher education curriculum."The House has been moving key education reforms with discipline, and this bill ensures our history is taught with the depth and seriousness it deserves," said House Majority Leader Ferdinand Alexander "Sandro" Marcos, the representative for Ilocos Norte's 1st district and one of the bill's authors.Under the bill, which passed third and final reading with 250 votes, the study "shall cover not less than 50 percent of the mandatory Philippine History subject being offered under the general education curriculum in higher education courses of all higher education institutions (HEIs) in the country."The bill stated that the Commission on Higher Education, in close collaboration with the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office-Department of National Defense, shall develop a program to execute and implement the provisions of the measure. Reina Tolentino

- 28 BOC face criminal, administrative raps (2026-03-04 16:02)

THE Bureau of Customs (BOC) has confirmed that at least 28 of its employees are now the subject of criminal and administrative charges ranging from corruption to neglect of duty and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of service.Customs Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno disclosed on Wednesday that the six cases recently endorsed to the Department of Finance (DOF) under the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act include customs employees and three consignees for alleged involvement in large-scale agricultural smuggling, reinforcing the agency’s serious and uncompromising stance against smuggling and internal misconduct.According to Nepomuceno, nine customs personnel were named in the draft complaint-affidavits for violation of Section 7 in relation to Section 14 of Republic Act (RA) 12022, or the Anti-Smuggling Act of 2016.The same people are being charged for violating Section 3 of Republic Act 3019, otherwise known as the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.In addition, 19 personnel are the subjects of administrative cases for neglect of duty and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service, arising from the same investigation.According to Nepomuceno, the violations were uncovered following a comprehensive investigation into irregularities in the importation and processing of agricultural shipments at the Port of Subic, including suspected misdeclaration and unlawful facilitation of cargo clearance.In compliance with RA 12022, the BOC has transmitted the draft criminal complaints to the DOF for review and approval before filing the cases with the Department of Justice.Nepomuceno vowed to enforce customs laws without exception.“The BOC is doing everything pursuant to Customs laws and regulations to ensure that justice is served. Errant personnel who violate customs laws will not be tolerated, and all responsible individuals will face full accountability,” he added.“These actions aim not only to punish violations but also to protect Filipino farmers, preserve fair market conditions, and safeguard the integrity of the country’s borders and trade system,” he further said.The move, Nepomuceno stressed, affirms the BOC’s commitment to transparency, institutional integrity, and sustained enforcement against agricultural smuggling, ensuring that no one is spared in the fight against illicit trade.

- Comelec: Acop not disqualified (2026-03-04 16:01)

THE Commission on Elections (Comelec) has flagged as “fake news” a report on social media claiming that Bong Acop, son of the late Antipolo City Rep. Romeo Acop, has been disqualified from running in the upcoming special election scheduled for March 14.On Wednesday, the Comelec said that the social media post by VIS News Media alleging that the young Acop is disqualified for vote buying was untrue.“The circulating social media post by VIS News Media stating that Bong Acop is disqualified as a candidate for a member of the House of Representatives in the 2nd district of Antipolo City is fake news,” according to the poll body.The Comelec Law Department has confirmed it received an election complaint against Acop filed by an Antipolo City resident.It pointed out, though, that filing does not automatically disqualify a particular candidate in an election.“The complaint will still undergo a thorough study [before the Comelec en banc can come out with a ruling],” it said.The poll body has advised the public to verify any online information about the election from the Comelec’s social media accounts.It warned that spreading false information constitutes an election offense under the Omnibus Election Code.The Comelec called for a special election to fill the congressional seat in the 2nd district of Antipolo City, left vacant after Romeo Acop’s death.Aside from Acop, six other candidates are vying for the post, including incumbent Councilors Paulo Tapales (Independent) and LJ Sumulong (NPC), and independent candidates Maria Trinidad Cafirma, Dandin Infante, Reden Llaga, and Nathaniel Lobigas.Comelec Chairman George Erwin Garcia said the special election would be held manually. Thus, all those who filed their certificates of candidacy (COC) are automatically considered candidates for the congressional race. This means that they are prohibited from campaigning before Feb. 12, the start of the campaign period.

- 28 Customs personnel face criminal, administrative complaints (2026-03-04 07:01)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BoC) has confirmed that at least 28 of its employees are now the subject of criminal and administrative charges ranging from corruption to neglect of duty and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of service.Customs Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno disclosed on Wednesday that the six cases recently endorsed by the agency to the Department of Finance (DoF) under the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act included Customs employees and three consignees for alleged involvement in large-scale agricultural smuggling, reinforcing the agency’s serious and uncompromising stance against smuggling and internal misconduct.Nepomuceno said that to date, nine Customs personnel were in the draft complaint-affidavits for violation of Section 7 in relation to Section 14 of Republic Act (RA) 12022,or the Anti-Smuggling Act of 2016.The same nine personnel are likewise being charged for violation of Section 3 of Republic Act 3019, otherwise known as the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.In addition, 19 personnel are the subjects of administrative cases for neglect of duty and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service, arising from the same investigation.Nepomuceno said the violations were uncovered following a comprehensive investigation into irregularities in the importation and processing of agricultural shipments at the Port of Subic, including suspected misdeclaration and unlawful facilitation of cargo

clearance.

- Sovereignty cannot be applied selectively, says security expert (2026-03-04 06:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Sovereignty must be upheld as a universal principle and not invoked selectively to suit geopolitical interests, national security expert and civic leader Jose Antonio Goitia said, amid the ongoing crisis in the Middle East.Goitia made the statement on Wednesday following criticism by China against the United States for its recent military strikes on Iran, which Beijing said destabilized the international order and violated Tehran’s sovereignty.A spokesman for China’s defense ministry described Washington as a “war addict” and urged respect for Iran’s territorial integrity while calling for dialogue to address the conflict.Goitia, however, said sovereignty remained a fundamental pillar of international relations, particularly for countries that depend on international law rather than military power to safeguard their rights.“Sovereignty is not a rhetorical device. It is a universal standard. If it is invoked as a principle, it must be honored everywhere,” he said in an interview.Goitia argued that if China insisted on respecting Iran’s sovereignty, it must also recognize the maritime rights of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea.The waters form part of the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone as affirmed by the landmark ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in 2016, which invalidated China’s sweeping “nine-dash line” claim in the South China Sea.Despite the legally binding decision, Beijing has rejected the ruling and continued maritime activities in the disputed waters, including patrols by the China Coast Guard and encounters with Filipino vessels.Philippine authorities have reported incidents involving water cannon use, obstruction of resupply missions, and hazardous maneuvers against boats operating within the country’s recognized maritime zones.Goitia said the continued presence of Chinese vessels and infrastructure developments in contested areas indicated a consistent pattern of maritime pressure.“China’s expansionism is not reactive diplomacy. It is deliberate strategic revisionism, executed through incremental encroachment, sustained maritime pressure, and calculated ambiguity,” he said.He added that strategic intent can often be discerned through repeated actions rather than formal declarations, citing the regular patrols and regulatory moves that gradually normalize foreign presence in disputed waters.Goitia said credibility in defending sovereignty depended on consistency.“True authority is earned through consistency. A nation cannot defend sovereignty in distant conflicts while undermining the lawful maritime rights of its neighbors,” he said.He stressed that the issue should not be viewed as a matter of aligning with one global power over another but as a question of respecting established international rules.“The Philippines does not seek confrontation. It seeks adherence to established rules. Economic influence does not supersede legal obligation. Diplomatic statements do not outweigh conduct,” he said.Goitia also currently serves as chairman emeritus of several civic organizations, including Alyansa ng Bantay sa Kapayapaan at Demokrasya, People’s Alliance for Democracy and Reforms, Liga Independencia Pilipinas, and the Filipinos Do Not Yield Movement.

- House panel finds 2 Duterte impeach complaints sufficient in substance (2026-03-04 06:42)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives Committee on Justice on Wednesday declared the two impeachment complaints filed against Vice President Sara Duterte sufficient in substance.The committee will send its report to the plenary for its consideration.One of the impeachment complaints was filed by priests and others last Feb. 9, 2029 and was endorsed by Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima. The committee voted 54-1 in favor of the motion to declare this complaint sufficient in substance.The vote was also 54-1 in favor of the motion to declare the other complaint sufficient in substance that was filed on Feb. 18 by lawyer Nathaniel Cabrera. It was endorsed by Manila 6th District Rep. Bienvenido Abante Jr., chairman of the House Committee on Human Rights, and Deputy Speaker and La Union 1st District Rep. Francisco Paolo Ortega V.The committee granted the motion to issue a notice to Duterte to file her answer to the impeachment complaints within 10 calendar days from receipt of notice.

- PCO, media executives sign MOU to boost fight against fake news (2026-03-04 05:43)

MANILA, Philippines — The Presidential Communications Office (PCO) on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with leading newspaper companies to help ramp up its campaign against misinformation and disinformation.In a ceremony at the Presidential Broadcast Service (PBS) Studio in Malacañang, the ceremonial signing gathered officials of the PCO, led by Secretary Dave Gomez, and top management from The Manila Times, Manila Bulletin, Philippine Star, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Manila Standard, Malaya Business Insight, Business World, Business World, and Daily Tribune. “Disinformation thrives in darkness — in confusion, in distortion, in deliberate deceit. But truth has always been like daylight. And just as a magnifying glass focuses sunlight to reveal what is hidden, this collaboration concentrates the light of verified information, sharpening clarity and exposing falsehoods. In shining that light, we dispel the shadows where fake news attempts to hide,” Gomez said.Among the key objectives are enhancing the dissemination of verified information, strengthening public trust in credible media institutions, promoting media and information literacy, and enabling coordinated and rapid responses to disinformation during crises, emergencies, and disasters.By forging an agreement with the “nation’s most credible and respected news organizations,” Gomez vowed “to open communication channels for verifying social media claims, exercising prudence to curb the spread of fabricated content.” “And we will join forces on media literacy initiatives, empowering Filipinos to discern fact from fiction,” he said.For her part, The Manila Times CEO Anna Marie Ang-Thompson pledged the company’s “logistical might to ensure that the public will have a beacon of verified, actionable, and life-saving information” that the public can trust. “We all share a common reality: Our ink is only as strong as the public’s trust in it,” she said. “May this cooperation serve the people by ensuring that facts remain the foundation of our national conversation,” she added.

- Comelec flags report of Acop's disqualification as fake news (2026-03-04 04:36)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Elections (Comelec) has flagged as "fake news" a report on social media claiming that Bong Acop, son of the late Antipolo City Rep. Romeo Acop, has been disqualified from running in the upcoming special election scheduled on March

14.The Comelec said on Wednesday that a social media post alleging that Acop was disqualified due to vote-buying was not true."The circulating social media post by VIS News Media stating that Bong Acop is disqualified as a candidate for member of the House of Representatives in the second district of Antipolo City is fake news," the poll body clarified.The Comelec Law Department has confirmed that it received an election complaint against Acop filed by a resident of Antipolo City.It pointed out though that filing did not automatically disqualify a particularl candidate in an election."The complaint will still undergo a through study [before the Comelec en banc can come out with a ruling]," it said.The poll body has advised the public to verify the information they read on online about the election from the Comelec's social media accounts.It warned that spreading false information constituted an election offense under the Omnibus Election Code.The Comelec called for a special election to fill up the congressional post in the second district of Antipolo City which was left vacant with the recent demise of the elder Acop.

- Lawmaker apologizes 'to those who found his statement on Anne Curtis offensive' (2026-03-04 03:48)

MANILA, Philippines — Quezon City 4th District Rep. Jesus Manuel Suntay apologized over allegedly "offensive" statements he made on actress Anne Curtis but clarified that his intention was "to drive a point.""For those who found [...] the statement offensive, I apologize to them. But that was not the intention. My intention was to drive a point," Suntay said in Filipino and English in an interview with DZMM on Wednesday.He made the statement on Tuesday during a meeting of the House of Representatives' Committee on Justice which then voted to strike it out from the record.Suntay said that "if some people were offended, especially it is Women's Month [...], I'm sorry for those who are, were offended. But if you really read the context, there was nothing malicious in it."He said that "it was an imaginary situation. It was a fictitious situation. I have not even seen Anne Curtis in person but I have seen her on TV."Calls for a public apology from Suntay spread as Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte, Gabriela and celebrities rallied behind Curtis who has yet to issue her statement.The House committee on Tuesday deliberated on whether the impeachment complaint filed last month against Vice President Sara Duterte was sufficient in substance and was expected to vote today on that and one filed by lawyer Nathaniel Cabrera.Duterte is accused of betraying public trust and violating the Constitution, among others, for her alleged misuse of intelligence funds from the Office of the Vice President and the Department of Education when she was its secretary.

- Sara files perjury charges against alleged bagman (2026-03-04 03:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte has filed perjury charges against self-confessed security consultant Ramil Madriaga on Wednesday.She filed the case at the Taguig City Prosecutor's Office accompanied by her lawyer, Salvador Paolo Panelo Jr.In a statement, Duterte said that Madriaga was an "accused individual in a kidnapping case who posed as a campaign supporter and, from there, suddenly emerged as a supposed witness in the impeachment against me,".She said that Madriaga was being used in the same way the

International Criminal Court used "fabricated" testimonies from Arturo Lascañas and Edgar Matobato which was used against her father, former president Rodrigo Duterte."Because of this, today I have filed a perjury case against Ramil Madriaga to finally hold him accountable for his lies. We cannot allow invented stories to be used to deceive the public.," Duterte said.Madriaga claimed that he was a supporter of Duterte who received campaign funds from Philippine Offshore Gaming Operations and drug money, as well as receiving confidential funds from two former Vice Presidential Security and Protection Group leaders.

- Rain showers, thunderstorms in Metro Manila, parts of PH due to northeast monsoon, easterlies (2026-03-04 01:21)

MANILA, Philippines —Parts of the country, including Metro Manila, will experience cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms on Wednesday due to two weather systems, the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said.The easterlies and northeast monsoon (‘amihan’) are expected to bring scattered or isolated downpours within 24 hours, the state weather bureau said.Nathaniel Servando, Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) chief, said amihan, which brings cool and dry winds, has resurfaced but will only be only affecting Batanes and Babuyan Islands in extreme Northern Luzon.Meanwhile, the easterlies – winds that pass through Pacific Ocean and carry warm and humid weather – has been prevailing over Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, and Dinagat Islands where cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms were expected.The same weather system will also be experienced over Metro Manila and the rest of the country where partly cloudy to overcast skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms would prevail within 24 hours, the national weather agency said.Servando said flash floods or landslides may occur in the affected areas if the rains become moderate to heavy.No low pressure has been monitored in the next three days, Servando said, but added that Pagasa was monitoring the formation of a tropical cyclone.

- Public apology sought from lawmaker over 'inappropriate remarks' (2026-03-04 00:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Calls for a public apology from a lawmaker at the House of Represntatives grew following his "inappropriate remarks" on an actress, with Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte firing the initial salvo as she expressed her dismay since the congressman in the eye of the storm is from her city.In a statement, Belmonte slammed 4th District Rep. Bong Suntay for the statements he made during a committee hearing on the impeachment complaint filed against Vice President Sara Duterte on Tuesday.“But what makes this incident especially troubling is the fact that, as a former member of our city council, he (Suntay) was part of the body that passed our Gender and Development Code,” Belmonte said.Moreover, Belmonte said that Suntay was the council’s majority floor leader when the ‘Bawal Bastos Ordinance,’ which declares that lewd, malicious, and demeaning remarks and acts have no place in public life, was passed and approved.The city instituted this policy in 2016—ahead of the national Safe Spaces Act, she stressed.The city chief executive said Suntay has directly contradicted the spirit of empowerment that they worked hard to build in the city.Over the

years, the local government embraced the difficult work of establishing protections for women, constantly striving to honor their rights by creating safe spaces and opportunities for them, the mayor said.In this context, it is truly disappointing to witness Congressman Suntay’s casual display of objectification, on Women’s Month no less, according to her.“Our policies are a declaration of our city’s values—of what we stand for and what we refuse to tolerate. We expect our elected officials to be the first to live by them,” Belmonte said.“Thus, it is clear to me: We must not hesitate to push back against any act that undermines the dignity of our women. We must continue to stand for their safety, dignity, and equality—without exception and without compromise,” she added.She reiterated the call on Suntay to take full accountability for his remarks, “issue a proper apology, and conduct himself with the dignity that his office—and our city—demand. Our people deserve no less.”Meanwhile, women’s rights group Gabriela said there was no place for sexism and the objectification of women—especially from public officials.“Expressing his imagination on a woman—for any reason—is a form of objectification of women,” the group said in Filipino.The group also called on Suntay to issue a public apology.During Tuesday’s deliberations, Suntay said that he himself experienced having a ‘strong desire’ and was aroused on seeing actress Anne Curtis but could only ‘imagine’ what could happen.

- Disney’s newest cruise ship arrives in Singapore (2026-03-03 17:20)

SINGAPORE—The Disney Adventure arrived at its home port Singapore on March 3, 2026, a landmark occasion for the cruise line.The ship arrived at the Marina Bay Cruise Center with a stunning water salute and dazzling fireworks, marking the start of an extraordinary new chapter in cruise vacation experiences for guests in the region.The Disney Adventure will set sail on her maiden voyage from Singapore on March 10, 2026, embarking on three- and four-night sailings for families and guests of all ages. Guests can look forward to world-class entertainment, immersive dining experiences, and artful accommodations. The Disney Adventure will continue Disney Cruise Line's tradition and reputation of delivering the most magical and relaxing vacations at sea, bringing this experience to more people globally than ever before.“The arrival of the Disney Adventure in Singapore marks a significant milestone in our global expansion, introducing Disney cruising to Asia for the very first time,” said Joe Schott, president of Disney Signature Experiences. “Honoring Disney Cruise Line’s legacy of unforgettable journeys, our newest ship brings together our signature storytelling and creativity in an exciting new destination.”The launch of the Disney Adventure is part of an unprecedented period of growth for Disney Experiences, which currently has more expansion projects under way than ever before. For Disney Cruise Line, that growth includes moving toward a 13-ship fleet by 2031 following other ship debuts over the last two years including the Disney Treasure and Disney Destiny.Melissa Ow, Chief Executive, Singapore Tourism Board said Disney Cruise Line's decision to homeport their newest ship in Singapore was “a testament to our appeal as a premier cruise destination.” “Singapore’s repertoire of compelling onshore tourism experiences is a fitting complement to the Disney Adventure’s unique entertainment-led vacation at sea. The Disney Adventure’s arrival brings us a step closer towards realizing our

Tourism 2040 vision to drive quality tourism growth. Together with Disney Cruise Line, we're excited to bring magical experiences to travellers from around the world.” The Disney Adventure will offer seven different themed areas for guests to enjoy and explore onboard. It will also debut a series of firsts and exclusives to the region – from regionally authentic cuisines to unique retail experiences and original entertainment offerings.

- Filipino workers on life under fire in Mideast: 'We have to run fast' (2026-03-03 17:12)

MANILA, Philippines — Filipina caregiver Charlot David made the run back and forth to the bomb shelter several times before deciding it was better to simply stay there. The 44-year-old mother of four, who has lived through "several wars" since moving to Israel in 2008, knew exactly what to do when the ear-splitting alert on her mobile phone first woke her on Saturday."Our flat is three minutes away from the bomb shelter, so we really have to run fast," she told AFP in a video interview from her employer's home in Rehovot, a city 20 kilometers (12 miles) south of Tel Aviv.The caregiver is one of an estimated two million overseas Filipino workers, or OFWs, in the region, sending billions of dollars in remittances home each year to families in the Philippines that depend on them as the primary breadwinners."There were several alerts until we concluded, OK, this is no joke. It's Iran. So, we decided to stay inside the bomb shelter," David said.Eight months earlier, a neighbor had not been so lucky when hostilities first erupted between Iran, Israel and the United States."A ballistic missile hit our area, a flat occupied by Filipinos... A fellow Filipina died there, our neighbor," she said, calling the experience deeply traumatic.Anita Bautista, who said alerts had sounded "from morning until dawn," told AFP the latest conflict was "more scary" than others she has lived through in her 12 years in Israel."Before, (the missiles) were not hitting the ground, but now some people are getting killed," said the mother of two who works in the Tel Aviv suburb Petah Tikva.On Sunday, the new outbreak of hostilities claimed their first victim from the archipelago nation of 116 million: Mary Ann Velasquez De Vera, a 32-year-old caregiver killed as she attempted to escort her elderly ward to an Israeli bomb shelter.Filipinos working in Dubai and Bahrain who spoke to AFP that day described being woken by window-rattling explosions and witnessing drones zipping overhead before exploding into nearby buildings.The Philippine government said Monday there were no plans in place for wide-scale repatriations -- an expensive and logistically complicated proposition.However, about 80-100 OFWs working in the United Arab Emirates were seeking repatriation, with a similar number of requests from Israel, migrant workers secretary Hans Leo Cacdac told an afternoon briefing.But Josie Pinkihan of labor rights group Migrante International urged broader action."Before the Iran-US war worsens, our countrymen should be repatriated now," she said in an interview at the group's Manila headquarters, saying the scale of evacuations demanded the process begin immediately.David, the caregiver, however, said she could not envision leaving Israel unless she had "no choice"."We have families in the Philippines who rely on us," she said.

- Iranian drones strike US embassy in Riyadh (2026-03-03 16:20)

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Drones hit the US embassy in Riyadh on Tuesday as Iran hit back at industrial and diplomatic targets across the Middle East and Washington warned its citizens to evacuate the entire region.Four days after US and Israeli strikes killed Iran’s supreme leader and triggered a regional war, reporters in the Saudi capital saw smoke damage on the walls and roof of the embassy.Saudi police were swarming over the diplomatic quarter and checking IDs of everyone who entered. Several roads were blocked, including approaches to the US embassy.Powerful explosions also shook Tehran through the night, as fighter jets flew over the Iranian capital and US President Donald Trump threatened to escalate the conflict.On Monday, the US State Department had urged “Americans to DEPART NOW” from all of the countries and territories of the Middle East “due to serious safety risks.”Israel, meanwhile, said it was seizing new forward positions inside southern Lebanon, after Hezbollah fired missiles in support of its backer Iran and provoked a furious Israeli bombardment.Defense Minister Israel Katz said Israeli forces had been authorized “to advance and take control of additional strategic positions in Lebanon in order to prevent attacks on Israeli border communities.” ‘Burn any ship’Following Israel’s “escalation,” according to a Lebanese military source, the Lebanese army redeployed troops in the south. Hezbollah claimed it had launched strikes targeting three Israeli bases.In Gulf cities and the Omani port of Duqm, Iranian strikes continued to hit oil and gas infrastructure and as European markets opened the benchmark Brent crude price jumped again.“We will burn any ship that tries to pass through the Strait of Hormuz,” Revolutionary Guards Gen. Sardar Jabbari declared, underlining the threat the war poses to the global economy.In Washington, Trump warned that the strikes could continue for weeks or months.“From the beginning we projected four to five weeks, but we have capability to go far longer than that,” Trump said at the White House.In an earlier interview with the New York Post, Trump — who campaigned on promises to end US involvement in wars — refused to rule out deploying US ground troops to Iran “if they were necessary.”And, speaking to NewsNation, Trump warned Iran would “find out soon” how he planned to retaliate for the Riyadh embassy attack.The US president laid out for the first time the operation’s objectives — destroying Iran’s missiles, navy and nuclear program and stopping its support for armed groups across the region.Trump’s goals notably did not include toppling the Islamic republic, even though he and Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have urged the people of Iran to rise up.Saudi Arabia, home to one of the region’s largest oil refineries, some which have already been closed following attacks, said it intercepted eight more drones in two cities, including the capital, on Tuesday.Two, however, got through air defenses and struck the US embassy, causing a fire.In Fujairah, one of the United Arab Emirates, debris from downed drones caused a fire at an oil facility, the state’s media office said. The blaze was brought under control and operations resumed.‘Imminent threat?’US Secretary of State Marco Rubio presented a strikingly new narrative of how the conflict started.Washington’s top diplomat said the United States, which had built up its forces in the Gulf to levels not seen since its 2003 Iraq invasion, attacked only after learning that ally Israel was to strike Iran.Iran had been ready to strike US forces in the region in response to Israel, so Trump decided to intervene “preemptively” alongside Israel, Rubio said.“The imminent threat was that we knew that if Iran was attacked — and we believed they would be attacked —

that they would immediately come after us," Rubio told reporters before briefing lawmakers.Rival Democrats voiced disbelief, with Sen. Mark Warner saying it was "uncharted territory" for the United States to be triggered into action by Israel's perception of a threat.Iran's foreign minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi responded that "there was never any so-called Iranian 'threat'." "Mr. Rubio admitted what we all knew: US has entered a war of choice on behalf of Israel'," he posted on X.Death toll risesThroughout the region, the death toll has steadily increased with six US military personnel killed so far in the war, according to US Central Command.The Iranian Red Crescent said Tuesday that more than 780 people have been killed nationwide since the United States and Israel started striking Iran."According to field reports from operational teams, unfortunately, 787 compatriots have been martyred in these attacks," the Red Crescent said on its website.It said strikes since Saturday had hit 153 cities and more than 500 locations across Iran in more than 1,000 attacks.Separately on Tuesday, loud explosions were heard in Tehran, while Iranian media reported blasts in Karaj west of the capital and in the central city of Isfahan.Iranian media have reported hundreds of Iranian casualties, including scores at a girl's school.The US-based Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) on Tuesday said there were 101 casualties inside Iran on the third day of the war, including "85 civilian deaths and 11 military personnel killed."Many residents in Tehran were torn between fear of the bombings and hope that the government's days might now be numbered."Every time we hear the noises, we get scared for just a second," a 45-year-old lawyer said in a voice message to Europe, "but we experience some joy and excitement every time we hear a hit."

- Marcos eyes cut in oil excise tax (2026-03-03 16:19)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday said he would ask Congress for the authority to reduce excise taxes for petroleum products if Dubai crude prices exceed $80 per barrel.Speaking to reporters, Marcos said the move would be an "emergency measure" and would be lifted once oil prices stabilize.On Tuesday, Dubai crude was trading in the range of $76 to $78 per barrel, up sharply from the average of $63 per barrel in late 2025 because of the widening war in the Middle East.The Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion Law mandates the automatic suspension of excise taxes on petroleum products if the average global oil price reaches $80 per barrel for three consecutive months.The president's economic team will work with Congress to secure the authority for the president to temporarily reduce excise taxes on fuel should the price of Dubai crude oil exceed $80 per barrel, Finance Secretary Frederick Go said on Tuesday."Amid the ongoing conflict, we remain vigilant, prepared, and committed to protecting the welfare of all Filipinos," Go said in a statement.He added they are closely monitoring developments in the Middle East, particularly their impact on global oil markets and the Philippine economy.He emphasized that the proposed authority to reduce excise taxes is a precautionary measure and will not be automatically exercised if oil prices breach the threshold."To be clear, this does not mean the authority will be automatically exercised," Go said."It is a precautionary measure — a ready policy tool that the president may use, if necessary, to act swiftly in protecting Filipino consumers and safeguarding the broader

economy," he added.The Finance chief added that the decision to cut excise taxes would depend on prevailing conditions, including the level and persistence of global oil price increases."Even if it (the price of crude) exceeds $80 per barrel, that doesn't mean we react right away. It also has to exist for a certain period of time. If it goes up to $80 for just one day and then drops back to $77 the next day, why should we react?" he added.Meanwhile, Marcos said there was no significant disruption yet in the global supply chain despite escalating tensions in the Middle East and assured the public that the country maintained oil stockpiles sufficient to cover about 50 to 60 days of supply.He said the available reserves include diesel, sufficient for about 50.5 days; fuel oil and gasoline, each sufficient for about 51.5 days; kerosene, sufficient for about 67.5 days; jet fuel, sufficient for about 58 days; and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), sufficient for about 29 days.He also said oil price shocks take time to move through the system before daily consumers feel the impact on basic commodities."It will take time for any of the effects of the oil price shocks to work through the system. And of course, the prayer that we have is that before they work their way through the system, we hope the situation will be resolved so the public will not feel the impact too much," Marcos said."If this drags on, that's when it will be felt," he added.The president said that the government has prepared various scenarios, with estimates from the United States suggesting the conflict could last four to five weeks. Government agencies were preparing more detailed assessments as developments unfold, he added.He said that the government was also monitoring the dollar's movement, noting that remittances were sent in US currency, although the peso has remained stable so far.Marcos also outlined several interventions to mitigate the impact of potential oil price increases, including fuel subsidies for affected sectors such as transportation and agriculture. He said the government was also looking at the possibility of easing the transport cost burden for commuters, especially the working public, by providing no-fare bus rides along major routes and holding fares down.The president said the Department of Energy was also in close coordination with oil firms in the country to ensure that increases on prices will be implemented on a staggered basis.Meanwhile, two senators filed separate bills which authorize the president to suspend or reduce excise tax on gasoline and diesel if its average prices reach or exceed $80 per barrel based on the Mean of Platts Singapore.Sen. Bam Aquino on Tuesday filed Senate Bill (SB) 1923 to protect Filipinos from the impact of sudden spikes in fuel prices.Sen. Joel Villanueva filed SB 1922, which mandates the Department of Energy to assess current market conditions to help the Department of Finance complete its recommendations to the president.Aquino filed SB 1923 to amend the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997 to allow the chief executive to suspend the collection of excise tax on fuel in times of national emergencies or when public interest so requires, upon the recommendation of the secretary of Finance.Aquino said the bill aims to equip the government "with a practical tool to shield consumers, support transport operators and small enterprises, and help stabilize local prices when global conditions threaten domestic economic stability."Speaker Faustino Dy III said that the House of Representatives was open to working with the Senate on the fuel excise tax.In a statement, Dy said in Filipino and English that it was clear that Filipinos would feel the effects — "in fares, in the cost of food, and other prime commodities" — if the price of Dubai crude exceeds $80 per barrel.He said the House was open "to work with the Senate to study and, if

needed, amend the law to give the president enough power to reduce the excise tax in times when there is a drastic increase in the price of oil.” The move to grant the president emergency powers to suspend the excise tax on fuel products and fuel subsidies drew support from senators on both sides of the political fence.From the majority bloc, Sens. Sherwin Gatchalian, Erwin Tulfo, JV Ejercito and Juan Miguel Zubiri said they supported moves to cushion the impact of rising oil prices, as did Sens. Bong Go and Francis Escudero.

- Justice panel strikes Suntay's Anne Curtis remark from the record (2026-03-03 16:18)

(UPDATED) THE House Committee on Justice met Tuesday to determine if an impeachment complaint filed against Vice President Sara Duterte was sufficient in substance, but did not vote on the matter.Instead, the panel voted to strike from the record a statement by Quezon City 4th District Rep. Jesus Manuel Suntay, who made sexually suggestive references to the actress Anne Curtis while defending Duterte.At the hearing, Suntay said Duterte’s mere presence in a rally did not make her action seditious.As to her appointing herself the designated survivor when she said she would not attend the 2024 State of the Nation Address, he said she was probably joking, since there is no designated survivor mechanism in the country.Then addressing Duterte’s statement that she imagined killing President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Suntay said he saw Anne Curtis at the Shangri-La, and she was so beautiful and desirable that he imagined what might happen. “But of course, it was just my imagination. Maybe I cannot be sued because I imagined various things,” he said in Filipino.San Juan Rep. Ysabel Zamora, vice chairman of the committee, then said she would like to have the statements stricken off the record. “There is nothing sexual in what I said. Nothing immoral. It’s just, I said, I imagined something,” Suntay said.Zamora’s motion was seconded but also objected to and the committee put the matter to a vote.Voting 13-2 with two abstentions, the committee ordered that Suntay’s comment be stricken from the record.He said, “I think we are starting a dangerous precedent because now we are censuring manifestations which [are] neither illegal or immoral.” Zamora said, “With all due respect to my friend, congressman Bong Suntay, it is just the start of the Women’s Month and I don’t think that we should be hearing such comments from our dear colleagues. We are not censuring anything but we are reminding them that in fact, we should support women by not saying these statements.” The House committee finished its deliberations on the substance sufficiency of the complaint but did not yet vote on the matter.On Wednesday, the panel will deliberate on whether the impeachment complaint filed by lawyer Nathaniel Cabrera is sufficient in substance.Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro, chairman of the committee, said in a press conference on Tuesday that they would vote as soon as they finished deliberating on the fourth impeachment complaint.On Monday, the committee declared the two complaints — the third and fourth filed earlier this year against Duterte — as sufficient in form.The third impeachment complaint, endorsed by Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima, was filed on Feb. 9, 2026.The fourth complaint was filed on Feb. 18, 2026. It was endorsed by Manila 6th District Rep. Bienvenido Abante Jr., chairman of the House Committee on Human Rights, and Deputy Speaker and La Union 1st District Rep. Francisco Paolo Ortega V.On Monday, the committee set aside the first of the impeachment complaints

filed earlier this year against Duterte. Voting 22-10, the committee set the complaint aside on the ground of violation of the one-year bar rule.The Makabayan bloc — composed of ACT Teachers Rep. Antonio Tinio, Gabriela Women’s Party Rep. Sarah Elago, and Kabataan Rep. Renee Co — had endorsed the complaint, which was filed on Feb. 2, 2026 by private persons.The 1987 Constitution prohibits the initiation of impeachment proceedings against the same official more than once within a one-year period.While the committee set aside the first of the impeachment complaints filed earlier this year against Duterte and declared the third and fourth ones sufficient in form, it approved the withdrawal of the second one.The withdrawn complaint was filed by 17 people and was endorsed by de Lima and Akbayan Rep. Percival Cendaña. They withdrew their endorsement after the complainants decided to drop the complaint.The lawmakers said the complainants in the second complaint decided to withdraw it “in the interest of procedural expediency and to obviate any needless delay.” Unwanted reactionsActress Jasmine Curtis- Smith took offense on Suntay's lewd remarks on her older sister during the House Commitee on Justice. She posted several messages on social media citing her disgust and dissapointment towards the lawmaker"RESPECTFULLY, BONG SUNTAY, WHAT ON EARTH???BAKIT GANON ANG THINKING?, Curtis wrote.Veteran news Anchor Karen Davila also expressed here disappointed towards Suntay's statement on social media as well and urges him to apologize on behalf on everywomen. “A congressman. A representative of the people. Paid by the people. A husband, a father with daughters. Without the consciousness, knowledge or decency of how women should be talked about. Please keep your sick thoughts to yourself,” Davila wrote.An apology is requiredQuezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte asked Rep. Suntay to apologize over the inappropriate remark he made about Anne Curtis during a House hearing."I urge Congressman Bong Suntay to apologize for the inappropriate remarks that he made at a recent House committee hearing," Belmonte wrote. "His words directly contradict the spirit of empowerment that we have worked hard to build here in Quezon City. Over the years, we have embraced the difficult work of establishing protections for women, constantly striving to honor their rights by creating safe spaces and opportunities for them.""In this context, it is truly disappointing to witness Congressman Suntay’s casual display of objectification, on Women’s Month no less. But what makes this incident especially troubling is the fact that, as a former member of our City Council, he was part of the body that passed our Gender and Development Code, " she adds.

- Panel OKs watered down anti-political dynasty bill (2026-03-03 16:17)

THE House Committee on Suffrage and Electoral Reforms approved on Tuesday an anti-political dynasty bill, but opposition lawmakers withdrew their support from the measure, saying it was watered down from the original draft authored by Speaker Faustino Dy III and House Majority Leader Sandro Marcos.The unnumbered bill approved by the panel relaxed the ban from fourth degree of consanguinity specified in House Bill 6771, to only the second degree.The three-member Makabayan bloc composed of composed of ACT Teachers Rep. Antonio Tinio, Gabriela Women’s Rep. Sarah Elago, and Kabataan Rep. Renee Co, withdrew support from what they described as a watered down version of a weak bill.Caloocan 2nd District Rep. Edgar

Erice also withdrew his support for the bill, calling it “a travesty and disrespect of the Constitution.” But Lanao del Sur 1st District Rep. Zia Alonto Andiong defended the bill. “This is the result of the series of public consultations that we conducted”, he said. “The speaker’s version, which is House Bill 6771, has obtained the biggest number of co-authorships [...]. That is why the committee decided that the version that was filed by the House speaker and the majority leader will be used as the working draft and finally, it also became our substitute bill that we have adopted.” House Bill 6671 was principally authored by Dy and Marcos. “For nearly four decades, the Constitution has directed Congress to prohibit political dynasties. Today, we move closer to fulfilling that mandate,” Dy said in a statement on Tuesday after the substitute bill was approved.Article II, Section 26 of the 1987 Constitution says, “The state shall guarantee equal access to opportunities for public service, and prohibit political dynasties as may be defined by law.” The committee-approved version prohibits “political dynasties within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity,” the statement said. “At the national level, spouses and second-degree relatives are barred from simultaneously holding any national elective position, including president, vice president and senator,” the statement read. The prohibition under the committee-approved bill applies within the same provincial government, the same city or municipality, and the same barangay, the statement said.Adiong bristled at the criticism of the bill. “I don’t understand the basis where this description of ‘weak’ comes from because in the first place, we don’t have [an] anti-political dynasty [law],” Adiong said in Filipino and English. “What we can assure you is that this version, we tried to decongest local political units from [...] control of one particular family,” he said.If the bill becomes law, the ban would take effect starting in the succeeding elections.The bill, the statement from Dy’s office said, “requires candidates to execute and file a sworn statement and undertaking with the Commission on Elections (Comelec) upon filing their certificate of candidacy, declaring that their candidacy will not create a prohibited political dynasty relationship.” “Candidates must also report within five days if circumstances arise that could result in such a relationship. If spouses or relatives file candidacies that would create a prohibited relationship, the Comelec must notify the affected parties within five days,” the statement said.The candidates would “have 48 hours to decide among themselves who will assume office if more than one wins. If no agreement is reached, the Comelec will conduct a drawing of lots. Elected officials may also voluntarily withdraw their candidacy,” the statement said.The substitute bill still has to undergo consideration at the House plenary level. An anti-politica dynasty act is one of the administration’s priority measures.

- PH, South Korea sign 10 deals (2026-03-03 16:16)

(UPDATE) THE Philippines and South Korea on Tuesday signed 10 agreements covering digital innovation, economic and development cooperation, defense, agriculture, trade, education, culture and law enforcement.President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and South Korean President Lee Jae Myung witnessed the exchange and presentation of signed agreements following their bilateral meeting in Malacañang.During their meeting, Marcos said he and Lee covered a wide range of areas in their countries’ bilateral partnership, including defense and security,

maritime cooperation, economic and development cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges. “We agreed that we have made significant strides in advancing and deepening our bilateral cooperation towards the attainment of our mutually beneficial goals,” Marcos said during the joint press statement with Lee. “And as we have just witnessed, we concluded a number of agreements in the fields of defense materials procurement, veterans affairs, agriculture, trade, investment and economic cooperation, intellectual property, digital cooperation, digitalization and innovation, Korean language training in schools, cultural cooperation, and police cooperation, which will sustain the momentum of the Philippines-Republic of Korea Strategic Partnership for the future,” he added.Marcos said that both sides were working to enhance bilateral trade and investment and expressed optimism about realizing the full potential of the Free Trade Agreement to benefit both nations.He also acknowledged the South Korea’s contributions to the modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the strengthening of the Philippine Coast Guard.Marcos also thanked South Korea for its role in reviving the shipbuilding industry and for strategic investments in the semiconductor value chain.The president expressed appreciation to South Korea as well for its support for infrastructure projects such as the Panguil Bay Bridge in Northern Mindanao.Additionally, Marcos noted South Korea’s significant contribution to development programs in health, agricultural mechanization, energy, and artificial intelligence, as well as the protection of the rights and welfare of over 70,000 Filipinos living and working in Korea.Also during the meeting, Marcos exchanged views with Lee on regional and international issues, including the South China Sea and the Korean Peninsula. “We both recognized the growing uncertainty in geopolitical developments, which is why we agreed on the need to firmly and consistently uphold a rules-based order governed by international law, including in the maritime domain,” he said.Lee, accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Kim Hea Kyung, is in the country for a two-day state visit.He kicked off his visit to the country by laying a wreath at the monument to the Philippine national hero, Dr. Jose P. Rizal, at Rizal Park.On Wednesday, he is scheduled to join Marcos at the Philippines-Korea Business Forum in Pasay City.Lee’s visit coincides with the commemoration of the 77th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and South Korea, which was elevated to a strategic partnership in 2024.This is the first state visit to the Philippines by the South Korean leader since the Free Trade Agreement between the two countries took effect on Dec. 31, 2024.Marcos had earlier invited Lee to visit the Philippines during their bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the 2025 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Economic Leaders’ Meeting in Gyeongju, South Korea.

- War won't affect US support to PH, AFP says (2026-03-03 16:15)

(UPDATE) TENSIONS in the Middle East would have no effect on the military support of the US to the Philippines despite its ongoing war against Iran, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said on Tuesday. “There’s been no marked observed downscale in the support of our treaty ally or even other like-minded nations when it comes to West Philippine Sea activities, especially MMCAs (Multilateral Maritime Cooperative Activities), even maybe forthcoming exercises,” said Rear Admiral Roy Vincent Trinidad, Navy spokesman for the West Philippine

Sea. “The MMCA recently conducted is a classic example of that. So there’s been no marked dip in the support of our treaty ally,” Trinidad said.Meanwhile, Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. tagged as unfounded concerns that Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) sites around the country are potential targets for Iran’s retaliatory attacks, after US and Israeli forces attacked the Middle Eastern nation and killed its leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. “We cannot compare the situation in the Middle East [and the one] here in the Philippines. Our bilateral and multilateral alliances are for defensive purposes and deterrent purposes only,” Teodoro said in Filipino in an interview with Malacañang reporters.The United States and Israel launched airstrikes against Iran on Feb. 28, triggering Iranian retaliatory attacks on American bases across the Middle East, including Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Jordan, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates.In the Philippines, there are nine EDCA sites — the Cesar Basa Air Base in Floridablanca, Pampanga; Fort Magsaysay Military Reservation in Nueva Ecija; Lumbia Airport in Cagayan de Oro; Antonio Bautista Air Base in Puerto Princesa, Palawan; Benito Ebuen Air Base in Cebu; Naval Base Camilo Osias in Sta. Ana, Cagayan; Lal-lo Airport in Lal-lo, Cagayan; Camp Melchor Dela Cruz in Gamu, Isabela; and Balabac Island in Palawan.Teodoro echoed the earlier statement of the Department of National Defense and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) that the military installations are not US-controlled bases and remain under the full ownership, control and management of the Philippine military. “These concerns, I will repeat, are baseless. Right now, I will repeat what the Armed Forces said: There is no direct threat to the security of the Republic of the Philippines in the military sense of what is happening in the Middle East right now,” he said.Teodoro said he, as concurrent chief of the National Disaster Risk and Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC), is now coordinating with his counterparts from different agencies to determine how to efficiently assist in the planned repatriation of more than 1,000 Filipinos who have requested to be brought home.As of the latest data reaching the Palace, the repatriation requests are broken down as follows: Dubai (586), Israel (297), Abu Dhabi (270), Bahrain (231), Jordan (22), and Iran (10).

- Israel to provide lifelong support for slain Filipina caregiver's family (2026-03-03 16:14)

THE Israeli government has pledged comprehensive assistance, including lifelong livelihood support and insurance benefits, to the family of Filipina caregiver Mary Anne Velasquez de Vera, who was killed in an Iranian airstrike in Tel Aviv, Ambassador Dana Kursh said.Speaking during a media briefing in Manila on Tuesday, Kursh said the Israeli government would extend to de Vera’s family the same benefits provided under Israeli law to individuals harmed in war or terrorist attacks. “I can guarantee that the government of Israel will support de Vera’s family and provide everything necessary to offer them as much comfort as possible,” Kursh said.She explained that Israel’s national security authorities manage a system providing assistance packages for individuals — whether Israeli citizens or foreign nationals — killed or wounded in incidents linked to war or terrorism.Under the program, de Vera will be formally recognized as a victim of war or a terrorist attack, entitling her family to long-term support.Kursh said the benefits include life insurance and a monthly allowance for surviving family members, including

her spouse and parents, as well as additional support such as psychological assistance if needed. “The government will be providing life insurance for our kababayan (compatriot) Mary Anne,” Kursh said, emphasizing that the package aims to ease the family’s daily burdens. “I don’t know the exact amounts, but what matters is the commitment of the state of Israel to those who lost their lives here,” she added.Acknowledging that no support can undo the pain of losing a loved one, Kursh said the program is intended to help families cope with the aftermath of tragedy. “It will not bring back Mary Anne. It will not remove the grief of her family, her husband and relatives. But it will try to ease, at least in part, the daily challenges they face,” she said.The ambassador added she would personally represent Israel when de Vera’s remains are repatriated to her hometown of Basista, Pangasinan. “I will be there when her body arrives. I will be at the airport with the family,” Kursh said, noting that the gesture reflects Israel’s solidarity with the bereaved family.De Vera, 32, died from shrapnel injuries after an Iranian missile struck her apartment in Tel Aviv on March 1 while she was assisting her ward to safety. She was among Filipino nationals caught in the escalating tensions in the Middle East, where hostilities between Israel and Iran have raised concerns over the safety of foreign workers in the region.In a related development, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said it will extend financial and psychosocial assistance to the family of de Vera.The agency’s Crisis Intervention Program has coordinated with its field office in the Ilocos Region and the local government of Basista, Pangasinan, to ensure proper support for the bereaved family. “The DSWD deeply mourns the death of our fellow Filipino, Mary Anne, a caregiver in Israel, and we extend our condolences to her family as we stand ready to provide assistance to help them overcome this painful ordeal,” DSWD Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlao said.The department also assured aid under the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations program and possible livelihood support while coordinating with concerned agencies on the repatriation of her remains and the welfare of other overseas Filipino workers amid tensions in the region.

- NAMFREL: Stop Government Contractors From Joining Party-Lists (2026-03-03 16:13)

THE National Citizens’ Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) called for a ban on government contractors from party-lists.The group said in a position paper dated Sunday and made public Tuesday that any reform legislation needs to address several core elements: genuine representation and sectoral voting; anti-dynasty and conflict-of-interest barriers; structural reforms for true proportional representation; transparency, campaign finance and naming safeguards; and strengthening political parties and combating turncoatism, or party-switching. “Relatives of sitting elective officials, up to at least the second to fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity, should be explicitly disqualified from serving as party-list nominees,” Namfrel said regarding anti-dynasty and conflict-of-interest barriers. “Individuals who are owners, officers, or partners of businesses with active government contracts or state-funded projects should be disqualified to prevent the weaponization of the party-list system for economic gain,” the group added.The position paper was submitted to the Senate Committee on Electoral Reforms and People’s Participation (CERPP) for Monday’s

deliberation on proposed party-list reform bills.“We commend the Senate CERPP for taking up this important legislative undertaking. The reform of the party-list system is long overdue, and Namfrel is pleased to offer its observations and recommendations to help guide the Committee’s deliberations,” the position paper read.Among its recommendations were consolidating several Senate bills and their best provisions, ensuring constitutional soundness, removing red-tagging provisions, pursuing companion legislation, protecting genuine grassroots organizations, strengthening political parties and addressing turncoatism.“The reform legislation should include provisions that promote party stability, including provisions limiting party-switching (turncoatism), to prevent the use of party-list organizations as mere electoral vehicles abandoned after elections,” the group said.In a party-list system, Namfrel said nominees must demonstrate a “documented track record of sectoral advocacy” of at least three to five years within the specific sector they wish to represent.Each group would be required to submit a minimum of 10 nominees vetted and approved by its highest decision-making body.The group also called on the Commission on Elections to extend the review period to 120 days before an election for background vetting and the conduct of evidentiary public hearings on applicant organizations.“Party-list reform cannot be viewed in isolation. Namfrel urges the committee to consider reforms that strengthen political parties more broadly, including provisions that limit turncoatism and party-switching and that encourage stable, ideologically grounded party organizations rather than personality-based electoral vehicles,” the poll watchdog said.“The party-list system was born from a noble democratic aspiration: to ensure that the voices of the poor, the vulnerable, and the historically excluded would find a seat in the legislative halls of power. After three decades, the system is in dire need of restoration. Namfrel believes that the legislative will to reform it now exists and urges the committee to seize this moment,” it added.

- Ph breast cancer deaths among highest in Asia as cases rise globally (2026-03-03 16:12)

A STUDY released Tuesday found that the Philippines saw a 41 percent increase in breast cancer deaths among women, one of the highest in the Asia-Pacific region.According to a 2026 study published by The Lancet Oncology, annual breast cancer cases are projected to rise by one-third, reaching 3.5 million by 2050.The increase is reportedly the product of lifestyle-related factors, such as smoking, high blood sugar and obesity.The study noted that while new cases remain highest in high-income countries, incidence is growing rapidly in lower-income countries like the Philippines, accounting for over 45 percent of all ill health and premature deaths globally.Kayleigh Bhangdia, lead author from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington, said the growing burden is shifting toward low- and lower-middle-income countries.“While those in high-income countries typically benefit from screening and more timely diagnosis and comprehensive treatment strategies, the mounting burden of breast cancer is shifting to low- and lower-middle-income countries, where individuals often face later-stage diagnosis, more limited access to quality care, and higher death rates that are threatening to eclipse progress in women’s health,” she said.The study stressed the need for preventive measures and ensuring that health systems are capable of

early diagnosis and comprehensive treatment, as well as making cancer services affordable. “LMICs (lower-middle-income countries) are hit hardest by escalating breast cancer burden as many of these nations grapple with lifestyle and demographic changes alongside health systems that are less equipped than ideal to respond, with shortages of radiotherapy machines, chemotherapy drugs, and pathology labs, and standard treatments that can be quite costly,” said Dr. Olayinka Ilesanmi, co-author of the study.The authors stressed the need for equitable access to care in low-income countries, investment in therapies, and strong political will for cancer control. “Collaborative efforts are needed to ensure well-functioning health systems capable of early diagnosis and comprehensive treatment of breast cancer in all countries. Reducing the cost of breast cancer therapies and ensuring that universal health coverage includes breast cancer care essentials would also be valuable in protecting patients from catastrophic costs and improving outcomes,” said Dr. Lisa Force, co-senior author of the study.The study further noted that maintaining a healthy lifestyle could help prevent over a quarter of healthy years lost to illness and premature death due to breast cancer worldwide.

- Ombudsman Hastens Investigation Into Binay Over Flood-Control Project Anomalies (2026-03-03 16:11)

THE Office of the Ombudsman ordered investigators to hasten the investigation into alleged irregularities in flood-control projects linked to former senator and current Makati City Mayor Nancy Binay.This comes following sworn statements submitted by former Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) undersecretary Roberto Bernardo regarding the case.In a directive coursed through the Ombudsman’s General Investigation Bureau, Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla instructed investigators to expedite the inquiry, citing the gravity of the allegations and findings from separate reviews by the Senate and the Independent Commission for Infrastructure (ICI), both of which recommended the filing of charges over alleged anomalies in flood-control projects.As part of the investigation, the bureau issued a subpoena ad testificandum ordering Carleen Yap Villa, a former staff member in Binay’s Senate office who later served in Makati City Hall, to appear before investigators.A copy of the subpoena dated Feb. 24 directed Yap-Villa to appear before the Ombudsman’s Field Investigation Office I at the Ombudsman Annex Building along Agham Road in Quezon City at 10:30 a.m. on March 3 for questioning.The order, signed by Acting General Investigation Bureau Director Ma. Jennifer Lacea, warned that failure to comply would carry penalties under the law.Bernardo, in several sworn affidavits, alleged that Yap-Villa acted as the conduit between Binay and certain DPWH officials in connection with flood-control projects funded across multiple budget cycles.He claimed Yap-Villa handled negotiations and coordination linked to the projects and was involved in the alleged solicitation of kickbacks.Bernardo also said he maintained a detailed list of transactions allegedly facilitated by Yap-Villa, which he claimed showed acceptance of funds not only by Binay but also by her husband, Jose Benjamin Angeles.According to Bernardo, cash deliveries were allegedly made in several tranches in Makati and Quezon City, including two deliveries totaling P340 million in Horseshoe Village in Quezon City and another P200 million released in separate installments.He described the payments as “commitments” or kickbacks

allegedly demanded in exchange for accommodating project allocations.Investigators noted that the accusations were supported by corroborating witnesses who were expected to testify in the coming weeks.The ICI earlier concluded that Binay could no longer plausibly claim lack of knowledge of the transactions, citing the alleged frequency of the dealings and the role of a trusted aide operating within her political and administrative circle.Sources familiar with the probe said the investigation gained urgency following a directive from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to intensify scrutiny of flood-control projects nationwide after reports of irregularities in infrastructure spending.Officials said the Ombudsman’s move to accelerate proceedings indicated that the inquiry had entered a critical stage, with investigators now examining whether sufficient evidence existed to file formal charges against individuals implicated in the alleged scheme.

- PH Ships Urged to Follow New Safety Protocols in Middle East Conflict Zones (2026-03-03 16:10)

THE Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) has issued an advisory urging Philippine-registered ships on international voyages to adopt heightened precautionary measures amid rising tensions in the Middle East.Marina directed shipowners, operators, managers and manning agencies to immediately implement protocols covering navigation, communication, security and crew welfare.The advisory applies to all Philippine-registered ships engaged in international voyages, particularly those operating in or bound for areas affected by heightened military activity.Marina instructed vessels to maintain heightened situational awareness by monitoring maritime security advisories from the International Maritime Organization and the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations.Masters and officers on watch were also directed to remain vigilant and continuously monitor the vessel’s Automatic Identification System and Global Maritime Distress and Safety System.For safe navigation, ships must strictly follow established traffic separation schemes, maintain radio watch with maritime authorities, and monitor Navtex broadcasts for updates on safety zones and naval operations.The agency also ordered stricter communication and reporting procedures. Vessels must immediately report any incident, suspicious approach or observed military activity to Marina’s Overseas Shipping Service while maintaining round-the-clock communication with their shipping companies and the Migrant Workers Office in the region.Masters and crew must regularly report their position, next port of call and operational status to their operators, who will relay relevant information to Marina.Security measures on board must also be elevated in line with the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code.Ships were instructed to conduct crew security briefings, review emergency procedures, and ensure their Ship Security Plan matches the prevailing threat level.Marina said the directive also prioritizes the welfare of Filipino seafarers. Shipowners and operators were reminded of their obligations under the Maritime Labor Convention to safeguard crew safety and facilitate repatriation when necessary.In emergencies requiring assistance ashore, vessels were advised to contact the nearest Philippine Embassy or consulate and coordinate with the Department of Migrant Workers.

- DOLE streamlines construction safety compliance with online filing (2026-03-03 16:09)

THE Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has digitalized the submission of safety protocol requirements in the construction industry to streamline procedures and strengthen regulatory compliance.Labor Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma on Tuesday said the department’s move to modernize the submission process for the Construction Safety and Health Program (CSHP) followed his issuance of Labor Advisory 03, Series of 2026, to ensure that essential safety protections are in place before any construction activity begins.”We are committed to making compliance easier and more transparent for all stakeholders,” Laguesma said. “Digitalizing the CSHP submission not only expedites the process but also reinforces our commitment to safeguarding the welfare of construction workers nationwide.”Under the advisory, contractors, subcontractors or owners directly managing residential or small commercial projects are now required to prepare and submit their CSHP through the DOLE Online Compliance Portal at https://reports.dole.gov.ph/. They must also promptly address any deficiencies identified in their submissions.Applicants will receive notifications, including acknowledgment of receipt of their duly accomplished CSHP, via their registered email addresses.According to the labor department, the submission, evaluation, processing and approval of the CSHP are free of charge. The department also strongly discouraged the involvement of third parties in preparing or submitting the program to prevent undue costs and ensure authenticity.Upon receiving email confirmation of a complete CSHP submission, applicants are required to print a copy of the program, conduct the mandatory orientation as stipulated in Department Order 252, Series of 2025, and prominently post the CSHP in an accessible location for all workers.”This digital shift is part of our broader effort to enhance service delivery and uphold the highest standards of worker safety,” Laguesma added. “We urge all project administrators to comply promptly and help us build safer workplaces.”Laguesma said the issuance supersedes Labor Advisory 06, Series of 2023, reaffirming DOLE’s ongoing commitment to protecting workers’ rights and welfare, and to maximizing digital platforms to improve regulatory processes.

- El Niño weather event may return later this year – UN (2026-03-03 16:08)

GENEVA, Switzerland — The warming El Niño weather phenomenon could return later this year as its cooling opposite, La Niña, fades away, the United Nations said Tuesday.The UN’s World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said the recent, weak La Niña was expected to give way to neutral conditions, which could then swing into El Niño before the end of 2026.La Niña is a naturally occurring climate phenomenon that cools surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, changing winds, pressure, and rainfall patterns.According to the WMO, there was a 60-percent chance of neutral conditions during the three-month window from March to May, with a 30-percent chance of La Niña and a 10-percent likelihood of El Niño.There is a 70-percent chance of neutral conditions during the April-June period.In May-July, the chance of neutral conditions drops to 60 percent, with a 40-percent chance for El Niño.“The WMO community will be carefully monitoring conditions in the coming months to inform decision-making,” said Celeste Saulo, who heads the UN’s weather and climate agency.“The most recent El Niño, in 2023-24, was one of the five strongest on record, and it

played a role in the record global temperatures we saw in 2024," the WMO secretary-general said.El Niño contributed to making 2023 the second-hottest year on record and 2024 the all-time high.Above-average temperaturesAlso, the WMO emphasized that naturally occurring climate events such as La Niña and El Niño take place against the backdrop of human-induced climate change, which is "increasing global temperatures in the long-term, exacerbating extreme weather and climate events, and impacting seasonal rainfall and temperature patterns." The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says there is a 50- to 60-percent chance of El Niño developing during the July-September period and beyond."Seasonal forecasts for El Niño and La Niña help us avert millions of dollars in economic losses and are essential planning tools for climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture, health, energy, and water management," said Saulo."They are also a key part of the climate intelligence provided by WMO to support humanitarian operations and disaster risk management, and thus save lives," she said.WMO's latest Global Seasonal Climate update indicates a widespread global signal for above-average land surface temperatures for March to May.Rainfall predictions in the equatorial Pacific show a lingering La Nina-like pattern, but in other parts of the world, the signal is more mixed, it says.

- Villar pushes to protect remittances (2026-03-03 16:07)

SEN. Camille Villar co-sponsored a measure on Tuesday seeking stronger government protection for the remittances of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), underscoring the need to shield their hard-earned money from excessive fees and inefficient transfer systems.During her co-sponsorship speech for Senate Bill (SB) 1917, or the proposed "Act Providing for the Protection of the Remittances of Overseas Filipino Workers," Villar described OFW remittances as more than economic contributions, calling them "acts of love" and lifelines for millions of Filipino families.Record remittancesCiting data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), Villar said cash remittances reached $35.63 billion in 2025, with total personal remittances climbing to nearly $39.62 billion — the highest levels recorded to date.Remittances from more than 10 million Filipinos living and working abroad account for roughly 8-10 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), making them a key driver of household consumption, education spending, health care access, housing, and small investments."Behind every dollar is a missed birthday. Behind every remittance is a sacrifice," Villar said, highlighting the emotional cost borne by Filipino workers separated from their families.Addressing transfer costs and inefficienciesThe proposed measure aims to ensure OFW remittances are not eroded by unreasonable service fees, hidden charges, or unfair practices by financial intermediaries.While the Philippines has been recognized globally for improving remittance systems through digital banking and financial technology platforms, Villar said more safeguards are needed to ensure transparency and affordability, particularly for low-income migrant workers.Global institutions such as the World Bank have long pushed for lowering remittance costs to below 3 percent of the total amount sent, noting that high fees disproportionately affect developing economies dependent on overseas earnings."When remittances are reduced by excessive fees and by inefficiencies, it is not just money that is lost. It is tuition that goes unpaid. It is medicine that

cannot be bought. It is a dream delayed,” Villar said.Protecting families, strengthening the nationVillar emphasized that protecting OFW remittances is ultimately about protecting Filipino families.“Our OFWs strengthen our economy, yes — but more importantly, they strengthen our families. And when we protect their remittances, we protect Filipino homes,” she said.The senator also shared a personal anecdote about her family’s long-standing connection with OFWs, recalling how her father built a home decades ago for an overseas worker who dreamed of returning to a secure and stable household.“It was never just about building a house. It was about giving a family something to come home to — security, stability, and hope,” she said.Broad support soughtSenate Bill 1917 is expected to complement existing efforts by regulators to promote financial inclusion, enhance digital payment systems, and improve consumer protection in the financial sector.Villar appealed to her colleagues to pass the measure, framing it as both an economic and moral imperative.“Let this measure send a clear message — that the government will stand guard over the sacrifices of our kababayans abroad,” she said.She ended her speech by assuring OFWs that their contributions are recognized and valued.“We see your courage and honor your sacrifice. We will work tirelessly to ensure that every peso you send home reaches the hands of the family you are working so hard for,” Villar said.

- Go's Nationwide Feeding Initiative Supports Patients, Frontliners in Public Hospitals (2026-03-03 16:07)

AN initiative of Sen. Bong Go that aims to provide meals for hospital patients and their companions has evolved into a sustained nationwide outreach program, the senator’s office said.From Feb. 23 to 27, Go’s staff carried out feeding activities in public hospitals across Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, serving warm meals to patients, watchers and health care workers.According to the senator, the initiative was born out of a practical observation: Many families seeking treatment in government hospitals often allocate their limited funds to transportation, medicines and laboratory expenses, leaving little for food while waiting for hours — sometimes days — inside hospital premises.“There are patients and watchers who only have enough for their fare and medicine. If we can help them get something to eat while they wait, that would be a big deal,” Go said in Filipino.Over time, the program expanded to include medical frontliners who endure long shifts and may not always have the opportunity to step away for meals.In Metro Manila, feeding activities were conducted at Ospital ng Muntinlupa and the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine.Across Luzon, the initiative reached several provincial hospitals, including Laguna Medical Center and San Pablo City General Hospital in Laguna; General Emilio Aguinaldo Memorial Hospital in Cavite; and Batangas Provincial Hospital and Batangas Medical Center in Batangas.Further north, meals were distributed at Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center, Benguet General Hospital, Far North Luzon General Hospital, Conner District Hospital, Kalinga Provincial Hospital, Bontoc General Hospital, and Luis Hora Memorial Hospital.In the Visayas, the program covered Leyte Provincial Hospital, Governor Celestino Gallares Memorial Medical Center, Don Jose Monfort Medical Center, Western Visayas Sanitarium and General Hospital, and Northern Samar

Provincial Hospital.In Mindanao, feeding efforts continued at the Southern Philippines Medical Center, one of the country’s largest government-run hospitals.The senator emphasized that the program remains grounded in its original purpose: providing immediate and practical support to people inside public health care facilities.

- DOTr, LTFRB prepare fuel subsidy as fare hikes loom (2026-03-03 16:06)

THE Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) are preparing to release fuel subsidies for public utility vehicle (PUV) operators and drivers if global oil prices reach $80 per barrel, officials said, while fare increases remain a possible contingency.Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez said the road transport sector has been instructed to start processing the necessary documentation so that assistance can be distributed immediately once the price threshold is met.According to him, the government has earmarked P2.5 billion for the subsidy program to cushion the impact of rising fuel costs on the public transport sector.“What is more interesting right now is the fuel subsidy. I instructed the road sector to start the documentation work, the processing of the fuel subsidy, so that if the threshold of $80 per barrel is met, what we will basically do is to give the subsidy,” Lopez said.Preparations for fuel subsidy began after President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s directive to ensure that aid for PUV operators and drivers is ready amid escalating tensions in the Middle East, which could drive up global oil prices.At the same time, the LTFRB is monitoring the possibility of provisional fare increases for buses, jeepneys, and other PUVs if diesel prices surge to P60 per liter, LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza said.While the current diesel price — hovering between P50 and P60 per liter — has not yet reached the threshold for mandatory fare adjustments, sustained increases could prompt action.“If the price of fuel increases — pump price increases more than P60 per liter — then that becomes the challenging portion for us,” Mendoza said.He emphasized that non-fare measures, such as fuel subsidies, remain the agency’s first line of response, with fare hikes considered a last resort.“Our first option, of course, would probably be a fuel subsidy. The fare hike is our last option,” he said.Also, the LTFRB is evaluating pending petitions for fare adjustments to ensure the operational sustainability of transport operators while keeping commuting costs manageable for the public.Mendoza noted that across-the-board provisional fare increases for buses and jeepneys could be implemented if necessary, saying that the welfare of drivers and the roadworthiness of vehicles would be closely monitored.“Again, the balancing act between what is needed to sustain the operations of our public transport, as well as what the public can afford,” he said.

- BOC tops collection target for 2nd straight month (2026-03-03 16:05)

THE Bureau of Customs (BOC) has surpassed its monthly collection target for the second straight month, with a surplus of more than P1.2 billion.Deputy Commissioner Romeo Rosales on Tuesday said preliminary data indicate that 15 of 17 Customs collection districts across the country exceeded their monthly targets.“These are just preliminary figures. We expect our collection surplus to increase further, after we receive all collection reports,” Rosales told The

Manila Times in a Viber message.Preliminary data show that the BOC collected P73.798 billion in February, surpassing its P72.592 billion target by approximately P1.206 billion, or about 1.7 percent. This represents a notable improvement compared to its February 2025 collection of P71.765 billion, reflecting a year-on-year increase of 2.8 percent, or P2.033 billion.From January to February 2026, the BOC recorded total collections of P154.747 billion, representing a 2.5 percent increase or P3.729 billion, compared to the same period last year. The sustained growth underscores steady revenue gains early in the fiscal year.The top five collection districts are the Manila International Container Port (MICP), leading all 16 other collection districts with P18,453,717,837.03; followed by the Port of Batangas, P17,634,956,080.51; Port of Manila (POM), P6,313,644,075.74; Port of Subic (PoS), P3,661,334,447.14; and NAIA, P3,482,258,066.68.The other 10 that exceeded their targets are the Ports of Cebu, Aparri, Cagayan de Oro, Clark, Davao, Iloilo, Legaspi, Surigao, Tacloban and Zamboanga.The non-performing districts are the Port of Limay and the Port of San Fernando. Limay was assigned to collect P9,798,004,554.17 but fell short by P2,129,589,147.30, while San Fernando collected only P550,006,379.08 from its assigned target of P698,495,885.19, or a shortfall of P148,489,506.11.Customs Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno credited the BOC’s sustained revenue collection performance to continuous monitoring of the values and classifications of imported commodities to ensure accurate duty and tax collection.He added that non-traditional sources, such as audits and public auctions, also boosted revenue collection, intensified border control, and improved trade facilitation, contributing to the consistent revenue efficiency.“These efforts not only increase tax collection but also deter smuggling and illegal activities, leading to higher revenue collection,” he further said.“The BOC remains steadfast in its commitment to enhancing revenue collection and contributing to the economic growth of the country. We are proud of this achievement and will continue to work tirelessly to maintain this positive momentum,” said Nepomuceno.The BOC is the government’s second-highest revenue-generating agency, followed by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).For 2026, the Department of Budget Coordinating Committee (DBCC) has assigned the BOC to collect P1.184 trillion, an increase of P1.2 billion from last year’s P1.064-trillion target, to help finance the P6.793-trillion 2026 national budget.Nepomuceno expressed confidence in the bureau’s P1.184-trillion target through various institutional transformations centered on integrity in service, accountability in action, and modernization in governance with the help, support and cooperation of all bureau officials and personnel.“Number one, we will have to modernize through digitalization. Number two, we will need policy interventions, and lastly, we need to reorganize — re-engineer our organization. That’s the only way. Believe me, after one year, BOC will be much better than what it is today, with your help,” the commissioner said, stressing that these reforms form part of the organization’s forward direction and long-term institutional legacy.

- Weather disturbance may develop over the week (2026-03-03 16:04)

AMID the hot and humid weather in most parts of the archipelago, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) on Tuesday said it was

expecting the formation of a low-pressure area (LPA) over the week.But the possible weather disturbance could move away from the country, Pagasa Administrator Nathaniel Servando told The Manila Times via Viber.Servando cited Pagasa’s weather outlook, which shows that four tropical cyclones — one each in March and April and two in May — may enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR).Also, 10 weather disturbances could enter PAR from June to August, or the rainy months, the state-run weather agency said.Asked about the northeast monsoon or “amihan” season, which has weakened in the last few days but resurfaced on Tuesday, Servando said the country could still expect surges of cool, dry winds until the weekend.It may extend up to the middle of next week, with one to two days’ break in between, he said.“Climatologically, amihan’s end usually coincides near the spring equinox or specifically on March 20 this year,” the Pagasa chief said.The national weather bureau said that the spring equinox is the March or vernal equinox, which “marks the astronomical start of spring in the Northern Hemisphere.”According to Pagasa, since the Philippines does not have a spring season, the event typically indicates the approaching warm and dry season.

- PAO, PTFOMS renew partnership for media (2026-03-03 16:03)

THE Public Attorney’s Office (PAO) has renewed its partnership with the Presidential Task Force on Media Security (PTFOMS) through a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to provide continuous legal aid and support services to media personnel.Held at PAO’s central office in Quezon City, the MOA signing between the two agencies would also ensure the conduct of legal education programs and workshops for media practitioners, including editors and even some vloggers in the near future, PAO chief Persida Rueda-Acosta told The Manila Times on Tuesday.A former director of the National Press Club (NPC), PTFOMS Executive Director Joe Torres Jr. said the agreement would symbolize the two agencies’ strong commitment to ensuring the safety, rights and welfare of media workers across the country.“In this MOA, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to a common goal: the protection, safety and security of media practitioners,” Torres, also a former Philippine Information Agency chief, pointed out.Under the agreement, PTFOMS will oversee coordination efforts, identify and refer media personnel in need of legal assistance, and collaborate with PAO on training programs and policy advocacy.PAO, for its part, will provide legal aid, representation and conduct workshops to inform media workers about their rights.“I would like to thank PAO chief Acosta and the entire PAO team for their unwavering dedication and steadfast support for press freedom and media safety,” Torres said.The chief public attorney noted that her agency had already worked with PTFOMS, extending numerous legal services to several media workers in the past.“So, it was a renewal of the partnership that would always be beneficial to the media practitioners who need legal services, especially court representation, among others,” Rueda-Acosta said.During the ceremonial MOA signing, she stressed that the freedom of the press and of expression is the bastion of democracy.“Any individuals, especially people in the government, should be transparent, and if the media practitioners have erred, they should be held accountable in court,” the PAO head said.“Without the media, we have no democracy. Democracy is by the people, for the people, and of the people,” she emphasized.Both Rueda-Acosta and Torres

reiterated that PAO and PTFOMS shall promote awareness and understanding of media-related laws and regulations among media personnel and enhance the overall safety and security environment for media personnel in the Philippines.Deputy Chief Public Attorney Erwin Erfe also signed the agreement as a witness, along with NPC President Leonel Abasola, who thanked the PAO leadership for its commitment to extend all forms of assistance, specifically legal concerns of members of the so-called Fourth Estate.

- Camille Villar takes oath as SET member (2026-03-03 16:02)

SEN. Camille Villar formally assumed her role as a member of the Senate Electoral Tribunal (SET), taking her oath on Monday, March 2, before Senior Associate Justice Marvic Leonen at the Supreme Court of the Philippines.Villar’s entry into one of the country’s most vital constitutional bodies tasked with safeguarding electoral justice and ensuring the integrity of the democratic process.According to the judiciary, “the Senate Electoral Tribunal is the sole judge of all contests relating to the election, returns, and qualifications of members.” Composed of three Supreme Court justices and six senators, the tribunal is an independent body designed to uphold the sanctity of the ballot and, with impartiality, resolve electoral disputes.In her oath-taking, Villar said that her commitment is to protect the people’s mandate and uphold the rule of law.Her appointment comes at a time when public trust in democratic institutions remains paramount, and the credibility of electoral processes continues to be closely scrutinized.Justice Leonen, who administers the oath as a senior member of the high court, plays a key role in the tribunal’s judicial component.The SET’s structure reflects a balance between legislative and judicial oversight, reinforcing constitutional safeguards in electoral contests.Villar’s assumption to office signals a renewed pledge to defend democratic principles and ensure that electoral disputes are resolved fairly, transparently, and in accordance with the Constitution.As the country continues to navigate evolving political challenges, the Senate Electoral Tribunal remains a cornerstone of accountability, tasked with preserving the integrity of elections and protecting the will of the Filipino electorate.

- MMDA to deploy 10 fare-free electric Love Buses on C5 (2026-03-03 16:01)

THE Metropolitan Manila Development Authority will deploy 10 fully electric “Love Bus” units offering free rides along the C5 Corridor starting in the last week of April or the first week of May, under a new partnership with Global Electric Transport Philippines.MMDA Chairman Don Artes said Tuesday, March 3, that the 30-passenger buses will run between Robinsons Galleria and Eastwood City, covering major commercial hubs, such as Estancia Mall, Arcovia, Tiendesitas, and the MMDA head office in Pasig, with operations set from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. or 10 p.m. daily depending on passenger demand.The memorandum of agreement was signed at the MMDA head office in Pasig City with GET Philippines President Sigfrido Tinga, formalizing the roles of both parties in implementing the Electric Love Bus Program.Under the agreement, the MMDA will oversee route management, enforcement support, infrastructure assistance, and alignment with public service goals, and GET Philippines will handle the operations and maintenance of the electric buses.Artes said the initiative is expected to ease commuting costs and reduce

pollution along key routes, particularly in high-traffic business districts along the C5 Corridor.“Through this partnership, we are introducing fully electric buses that are cleaner, quieter and more modern. These buses will help reduce pollution, ease congestion along key routes, and provide a more comfortable riding experience for passengers,” Artes said.He added that with corporate sponsors’ support, the agency will be able to sustain and further expand its free public transportation services in the National Capital Region.Corporate partners backing the program include Robinsons Land Corp., Megaworld Corp., Ortigas Land, and International Solid Waste Integrated Management Specialist Inc.For his part, Tinga said the program aims to make public transport more palatable, enjoyable, safe and environmentally friendly for commuters, with the MMDA ensuring that the Love Bus operations are properly supported and implemented.Robinsons Land Corp. President and Chief Executive Officer Mybelle Aragon-Gobio expressed gratitude for the collaboration, saying that mobility and urban development must move forward together, especially along the C5 Corridor linking Robinsons Galleria, Bridgetowne, and nearby business districts.The routes approved by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board will cover eastbound trips from Robinsons Galleria to Eastwood City via Estancia Mall, MMDA, Arcovia, and Opus Mall, and westbound trips from Eastwood City back to Robinsons Galleria via key C5 stops, including Green Meadows, Tiendesitas, and Julia Vargas.The MMDA chief said each of the 10 buses is expected to complete an average of five to six trips per day, with possible expansion of the Love Bus program to other local government units in Metro Manila once operations along the C5 Corridor are stabilized.

- Mail to 35 countries suspended (2026-03-03 16:01)

THE Philippine Postal Corp. (PHLPost) announced Tuesday the immediate, temporary suspension of all international outbound mail services to 35 countries across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and South America due to airspace closures in key transit hubs.The suspension, outlined in an operational advisory, affects all classes of mail, including letters, parcels, and Express Mail Service (EMS).PHLPost said the precautionary measure responds to regional airspace closures in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and Doha, Qatar, following recent military escalations in the Middle East. These closures have disrupted the primary air transport routes used by PHLPost and its airline partners.“PHLPost continues to prioritize the security of customers’ mail while implementing necessary measures to minimize service delays,” the agency said.The postal corporation is coordinating closely with international postal administrations and customs authorities to ensure the safe handling of mail items and facilitate the gradual restoration of services.The suspension applies to the following countries:Middle East and Africa: Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia (Dammam, Jeddah, Riyadh), South Africa, UAE (Dubai), Israel, IranEurope: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, SwitzerlandAsia: Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Sri LankaSouth America: Colombia, BrazilPHLPost said it will provide updates as the situation evolves and services are gradually restored.

- Health sector mourns passing of former DOH secretary Bengzon (2026-03-03 16:01)

THE Department of Health (DOH) and members of the health sector on Tuesday mourned the passing of former health secretary Alfredo Rafael Antonio Bengzon.Bengzon served as the agency’s secretary from 1986 to 1992. He was 90 years old.In a Facebook post, DOH Secretary Teodoro Herbosa expressed his condolences and paid tribute to Bengzon’s legacy.“Bengzon’s legacy as Secretary of Health is marked by his courageous efforts to make health care more accessible and affordable for Filipinos,” Herbosa said.He credited Begzon for championing the Generic Drug Law, advocating for access to family planning resources and reorganizing the agency, which he said eliminated “corrupt practices and emphasized public education.” “Bengzon’s contributions to health care and social reform earned him the 1991 Ramon Magsaysay Award for Government Service. He continues to be recognized for his leadership in health care,” Herbosa said.Meanwhile, The Medical City (TMC) and the Ateneo School of Medicine and Public Health (ASMPH) also expressed their condolences, honoring Bengzon as their former president and CEO, and founding dean, respectively.“In the private sector, he was respected for his leadership and for elevating standards of patient care and medical excellence at TMC. He also played a key role in shaping future health professionals through his leadership in academia,” the TMC said in a Facebook post.TMC also noted that Bengzon left a lasting legacy for his service.“Through his vision and leadership, ASMPH was established, and generations of physicians were formed in the service of the Filipino people. His legacy will continue to guide our community,” the ASMPH said in a separate Facebook post.

- 5.1M worth of shabu seized, 2 suspects nabbed – PDEA (2026-03-03 16:01)

TWO high-value drug personalities were arrested by local authorities during a buy-bust operation in Barangay Puting Kahoy, Silang, Cavite, on Monday (March 2), according to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).The suspects were identified as Noraina, 36, female, married, businesswoman, and Waled, 28, male, married, and business owner.Seized from the duo were more or less 750 grams of suspected shabu worth P5,100,000 and buy-bust money.Charges for violating Republic Act 9165, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, will be filed against the suspects.

- Gatchalian vows strict oversight of historic 2026 education spending (2026-03-03 16:01)

SEN. Sherwin Gatchalian on Monday pledged rigorous oversight of government education spending as the Senate Committee on Finance prepares to review the implementation of the 2026 national budget.The education sector has received a historic P1.3 trillion allocation for 2026.Gatchalian, chairman of the Senate finance panel, said lawmakers will closely examine how various agencies plan to utilize the record funding to ensure it translates into tangible improvements in learning outcomes.“Following our historic allocation of funds for the education sector, we will also review the plans of various agencies to ensure that our students and teachers will benefit from it,” he said.Under the 2026 General Appropriations Act, education received P1.3 trillion — equivalent to 4.4 percent of the country’s gross domestic product.The allocation marks the first time the Philippines has met the global benchmark set by Unesco, which recommends that countries dedicate 4 percent to 6 percent of GDP to education

spending.The education budget covers key agencies, including the Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education, state universities and colleges, and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.The proposed inquiry aims to ensure that appropriated funds are aligned with efforts to resolve what education officials have described as a learning crisis, exacerbated by years of pandemic-related disruptions and persistent gaps in foundational skills such as reading and mathematics.Gatchalian stressed that increased funding alone will not be enough. “We need to make sure that this historic budget will address the education crisis and lead to improved learning outcomes,” he said, underscoring the importance of measurable targets and accountability mechanisms.

- 1,416 Pinoys want to be flown home as war escalates (2026-03-03 16:00)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday said more than 1,400 Filipinos have reached out to the government for repatriation from different countries in the Middle East as war in the region escalated, but evacuation efforts remained stalled due to airport closures and ongoing missile strikes.In a press conference, Marcos said about 586 Filipinos from Dubai, 297 from Israel, 270 from Abu Dhabi, 231 from Bahrain, 22 from Jordan and 10 from Iran have asked to be repatriated. “Altogether that’s 1,416 Filipino nationals who have requested repatriation,” he said.However, the president said that it has become challenging to repatriate them, as airports in these countries have closed. “Those who helped America and the countries which helped the US are being attacked by Iran as retaliatory strikes,” the president said. “Our situation is very fluid. Our assessment is that it’s dangerous to fly right now even if we are able to get airplanes because number one, the airports are closed. They are all no-fly zones. This is a combat area,” he added.The president said they have initially planned to repatriate overseas Filipinos through areas that were not affected in the beginning.Marcos said that even transporting the Filipinos by land was also dangerous due to friendly fire incidents. “It’s an active combat zone and if they see that there are a lot of vehicles, maybe they will attack them because they will misidentify it as some hostile movement,” he said.Marcos said the government remained in constant contact with labor attachés, ambassadors, labor and defense attachés, to determine the situation on the ground.The president also assured the overseas Filipinos in the Middle East that despite the challenge, the government would find ways to get them out safely.He advised them to “stay in a safe place and stay indoors and stay away from areas of danger.” “And that is the advice we have given to our nationals in Israel and also our nationals everywhere else if you are in a safe place, if you’re far from the conflict, just stay put and be safe. And we will slowly try to find ways to get you out safely,” he said.Israel – the most dangerous areaThe president also said that “the most dangerous area for our people now would be Israel.”Filipina caregiver Charlot David, who has been in Israel since 2008, made the run back and forth to the bomb shelter several times before deciding it was better to simply stay there.The 44-year-old mother of four, who has lived through “several wars” since moving to Israel, knew exactly what to do when the ear-splitting alert on her mobile phone first woke her on Saturday. “Our flat is three minutes away from the bomb shelter, so we really have to run fast,” she told Agence France-Presse (AFP) in a video interview from her employer’s home in

Rehovot, a city 20 kilometers south of Tel Aviv.The caregiver is one of an estimated 2 million overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in the region, sending billions of dollars in remittances home each year to families in the Philippines that depend on them as the primary breadwinners.“There were several alerts until we concluded, OK, this is no joke. It’s Iran. So, we decided to stay inside the bomb shelter,” David said.Eight months earlier, a neighbor had not been so lucky when hostilities first erupted between Iran, Israel and the United States.“A ballistic missile hit our area, a flat occupied by Filipinos... A fellow Filipina died there, our neighbor,” she said, calling the experience deeply traumatic.Anita Bautista, who said alerts had sounded “from morning until dawn,” said the latest conflict was “more scary” than others she has lived through in her 12 years in Israel.“Before, [the missiles] were not hitting the ground, but now some people are getting killed,” said the mother of two who works in the Tel Aviv suburb Petah Tikva.On Sunday, the new outbreak of hostilities claimed their first victim from the archipelago nation of 116 million: Mary Ann Velasquez de Vera, a 32-year-old caregiver killed as she attempted to escort her elderly ward to an Israeli bomb shelter.Filipinos working in Dubai and Bahrain described being woken by window-rattling explosions and witnessing drones zipping overhead before exploding into nearby buildings.The Philippine government said Monday there were no plans in place for wide-scale repatriations — an expensive and logistically complicated proposition.However, about 80-100 OFWs working in the United Arab Emirates were seeking repatriation, with a similar number of requests from Israel, Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac told an afternoon briefing.But Josie Pinkihan of labor rights group Migrante International urged broader action.“Before the Iran-US war worsens, our countrymen should be repatriated now,” she said in an interview at the group’s Manila headquarters, saying the scale of evacuations demanded the process begin immediately.David, the caregiver, however, said she could not envision leaving Israel unless she had “no choice.” “We have families in the Philippines who rely on us,” she said.To date, only de Vera has been confirmed as fatality on the Philippines’ behalf. She died from a bomb shrapnel following an airstrike on Tel Aviv.Military readyThe Philippine Air Force (PAF) on Tuesday said it was ready to deploy planes if the Philippine government calls for an immediate repatriation of Filipinos stranded in the Middle East.Col. Ma. Christina Basco, PAF spokesman, told reporters in a press briefing in Camp Aguinaldo they would most likely deploy its C130s. The Philippine Navy is also ready to deploy sealift vessels, Capt. Marissa Martinez said.Rear Admiral Roy Vincent Trinidad, AFP spokesman for the West Philippine Sea, said the entire military is now drafting contingency plans awaiting signal from higher authorities for deployment.Deep concernSen. Erwin Tulfo, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on Saturday expressed deep concern over the latest escalation of tensions in Iran and other parts of the Middle East following major combat operations between Israel, the United States, and Iran.“We are deeply alarmed by the latest escalation of tensions in various areas in the Middle East,” Tulfo said in a statement. “The situation poses serious risks to civilian populations, including our fellow Filipinos in the region.”Tulfo said the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has been proactive in ensuring exit points for about 823 Filipinos currently in Iran, as well as the thousands of Filipinos residing and working in Israel.He added that Philippine embassies in other affected areas have already established procedures for Filipinos seeking assistance.

- DOH mourns passing of former secretary Bengzon (2026-03-03 12:51)

MANILA, Philippines—The Department of Health (DOH) on Tuesday mourned the passing of former Health secretary Alfredo Rafael Antonio Bengzon.Bengzon served as the agency’s secretary from 1986 to 1992. He was 90 years old.In a Facebook post, DOH Secretary Ted Herbosa expressed his condolences and paid tribute to Bengzon’s legacy.“Bengzon's legacy as Secretary of Health is marked by his courageous efforts to make healthcare more accessible and affordable for Filipinos,” Herbosa said.

- House panel okays anti-political dynasty bill that bars spouses, relatives up to 'second degree' from seeking elective positions (2026-03-03 12:26)

MANILA, Philippines —The House of Representatives' Committee on Suffrage and Electoral Reforms approved on Tuesday the anti-political dynasty bill that prohibited spouses and up to " second degree" relatives from simultaneously holding or seeking elective posts. "The speaker's version, which is House Bill 6771, has obtained the biggest number of co-authorships [...]. That is why the committee decided that the version that was filed by the House speaker and the majority leader will be used as the working draft and finally, it also became our substitute bill that we have adopted," said Lanao del Sur 1st District Rep. Zia Alonto Adiong, the committee chairman, in a press conference.House Bill 6671 was principally authored by Speaker and Isabela 6th District Rep. Faustino Dy III and Majority Leader and Ilocos Norte 1st District Rep. Ferdinand Alexander Marcos."For nearly four decades, the Constitution has directed Congress to prohibit political dynasties. Today, we move closer to fulfilling that mandate," Dy said in a statement on Tuesday after the substitute bill was approved."At the national level, spouses and second-degree relatives are barred from simultaneously holding any national elective position, including President, Vice President and Senator," the statement read. The prohibition under the committee-approved bill "applies within the same provincial government, the same city or municipality, and the same barangay," it said.Barangay means village.

- PH, South Korea sign 10 deals (2026-03-03 11:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines and South Korea on Tuesday signed 10 agreements covering digital innovation, economic and development cooperation, defense, agriculture, trade, education, culture and law enforcement. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and South Korean President Lee Jae Myung witnessed the exchange and presentation of signed agreements following their bilateral meeting in Malacañang. During their meeting, Marcos said he and Lee covered a wide range of areas in their countries' bilateral partnership, including defense and security, maritime cooperation, economic and development cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges."We agreed that we have made significant strides in advancing and deepening our bilateral cooperation towards the attainment of our mutually beneficial goals," Marcos during the joint press statement with Lee. "We acknowledged the efforts of both sides to enhance bilateral trade and investment and we looked forward to realizing the full potential of the PH-ROK Free Trade Agreement for the benefit of both our peoples," he added.

- Middle East tensions won’t affect US support for PH military - AFP (2026-03-03 09:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Tensions in the Middle East will have no effect on US military support to the Philippines despite ithe US' ongoing war against Iran, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said on Tuesday. “There's been no marked observed downscale in the support of our treaty ally or even other like-minded nations when it comes to West Philippine Sea activities especially MMCAs (Multilateral Maritime Cooperative Activities) even maybe forthcoming exercises,” Rear Admiral “The MMCA recently conducted is a classic example of that. So there's been no marked dip in the support of our treaty ally,” Trinidad said. Trinidad cited recent MMCAs with other allies in the West Philippine Sea that showed US’ full commitment to the joint naval drills despite ongoing war with Iran. US President Donald Trump pronounced that “Operation Epic Fury” could last up to five weeks but assured that the American military was prepared for extended strikes against Iran for up to five months. Officials and analysts warned that certain US missile and air-defense interceptor inventories have been severely downed by relentless operations.

- Israel assures lifelong assistance to family of slain Filipina caregiver (2026-03-03 09:14)

MANILA, Philippines — The Israeli government assured comprehensive assistance, including lifelong livelihood support, to the family of Filipina caregiver Mary Ann Velasquez de Vera who was killed in an Iranian airstrike in Tel Aviv, according to Israeli Ambassador to Manila Dana Kursh.Speaking during a media briefing on Tuesday, Ambassador Kursh said Israel would extend the same type of support provided to families of individuals harmed in war or terrorist attacks under Israeli law.“I can guarantee that the government of Israel will have this family and will provide everything that's necessary to provide as much comfort to this family as possible,” Kursh said.She explained that Israeli law provided benefits for individuals—whether Israeli citizens or foreigners—who are harmed in incidents related to war or terrorism, including livelihood assistance for their families for life.Kursh said the assistance package would be administered through Israel’s national security system, which provides long-term support to affected families.“It will not bring back Mary Ann. It will not take away the pain from this family, the husband and the rest of the family. But it will try to ease at least a bit the day-to-day [burden] of the family,” she said.The ambassador also said she would personally represent the Israeli government when De Vera’s remains were repatriated to the Philippines.“I will be there once her body will be brought back. I will be there at the airport, and I will be with the family,” Kursh said, adding that the gesture is meant to convey Israel’s solidarity with the bereaved family.De Vera was among the Filipinos caught in the escalating conflict in the Middle East, where tensions have intensified following exchanges of attacks between Israel, Iran and the US.

- PHLPost suspends international outbound mail to 35 countries amid Middle East airspace closures (2026-03-03 09:08)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Postal Corporation (PHLPost) announced on Tuesday that it was suspending all international outbound mail services to 35 countries across Europe, the

Middle East, Africa, Asia, and South America due to airspace closures in key transit hubs.The suspension, outlined in an operational advisory, affects all classes of mail, including letters, parcels, and Express Mail Service (EMS).PHLPost said the precautionary measure responded to regional airspace closures in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and Doha, Qatar, following recent military escalations in the Middle East. These closures have disrupted the primary air transport routes used by PHLPost and its airline partners.“PHLPost continues to prioritize the security of customers’ mail while implementing necessary measures to minimize service delays,” the agency said.The postal corporation is coordinating closely with international postal administrations and customs authorities to ensure the safe handling of mail items and facilitate the gradual restoration of services.The suspension applies to the following countries:Middle East & Africa: Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia (Dammam, Jeddah, Riyadh), South Africa, UAE (Dubai), Israel, IranEurope: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, SwitzerlandAsia: Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Sri LankaSouth America: Colombia, BrazilPHLPost said it would provide updates as the situation evolves and services are gradually restored.

- Marcos welcomes SKorean President Lee Jae Myung to Malacañang (2026-03-03 09:02)

MANILA, Philippines – President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos on Tuesday afternoon welcomed South Korean President Lee Jae Myung and First Lady Kim Hea Kyung to Malacañang who arrived in Manila for a two-day State Visit.Marcos, members of his Cabinet, and other officials accorded them arrival honors in the Palace.Marcos and Lee are scheduled to have a bilateral meeting, followed by the presentation of signed agreements and their joint press conference.It is the first visit of a Korean leader to the country since the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the two countries came into effect on December 2024 and also coinciding with the 77th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Philippine and South Korean in March 1949.This is the first face-to-face meeting between Marcos and Lee since they last met at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit in Gyeongju, South Korea last November.

- Fears of retaliatory attacks on EDCA sites unfounded, says DND chief (2026-03-03 05:18)

MANILA, Philippines – Department of National Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. on Tuesday tagged as unfounded concerns that Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) sites around the country are potential targets for Iran’s retaliatory attacks due to the Philippines being a military ally of the United States.“No. That is unfounded because we cannot compare the situation in the Middle East here in the Philippines. Our bilateral and multilateral alliances are for defensive purposes and deterrent purposes only,” Teodoro said in Filipino in an interview with Malacañang reporters.The United States and Israel launched airstrikes against Iran on Feb. 28, which triggered Tehran to strike back and attack American bases across the Middle East, including Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Jordan, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.In the Philippines, there are nine EDCA sites: the Cesar Basa Air Base in

Floridablanca, Pampanga; Fort Magsaysay Military Reservation in Nueva Ecija; Lumbia Airport in Cagayan de Oro; Antonio Bautista Air Base in Puerto Princesa, Palawan; Benito Ebuen Air Base in Cebu; Naval Base Camilo Osias in Santa Ana, Cagayan; Lal-lo Airport in Lal-lo, Cagayan; Camp Melchor Dela Cruz in Gamu, Isabela; and Balabac Island in Palawan.Teodoro echoed earlier statements from the DND and the Armed Forces of the Philippines that the military installations are not US-controlled bases and remain under the full ownership, control and management of the Philippine military.“These concerns, I will repeat, are baseless. Right now, I will repeat what the Armed Forces said: There is no direct threat to the security of the Republic of the Philippines in the military sense of what is happening in the Middle East right now,” he said.

- Marcos: 1,460 Pinoys seek repatriation as Middle East conflict continues (2026-03-03 04:38)

(UPDATE) MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday said that at least 1,460 Filipinos have reached out to the government for repatriation from different countries in the Middle East amid regional conflict.In a press conference in Malacañang, Marcos urged Filipinos in the Middle East to follow local advisories and stay put for now, as repatriation efforts were not possible at the moment."We will slowly try to find ways, for those who want to be repatriated, we will find ways to get you out safely," Marcos, addressing those seeking repatriation. "Stay indoors, stay away from areas of danger," he added. As of Tuesday, around 586 OFWs from Dubai have asked for repatriation, 297 from Israel, 270 from Abu Dhabi, 231 from Bahrain, 22 from Jordan and 10 from Iran.In the same press briefing, Marcos Jr. also called for a stop to hostilities in the Middle East, expressing hope the crisis ends “as quickly as possible.” Marcos said that although the Philippines was not directly involved, it is hoping “for the fighting to stop."“We are only involved tangentially, if you want to call it that, because of our people who are there. We have expressed support for the countries who have come under attack and we have made our feelings known that we hope that this crisis ends as quickly as possible,” he said.“Let’s hope that there is a ceasefire and we, the Philippines, ask for all parties to show restraint and to bring this to a close,” he added.To date, one fatality has been confirmed — 32-year-old Mary Anne Velasquez De Vera, a Filipina caregiver based in Israel. She died from a bomb shrapnel following Iran’ airstrike on Tel Aviv.

- Marcos: 1,416 Pinoys seek repatriation as Middle East conflict continues (2026-03-03 04:38)

(UPDATE) MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday said that at least 1,416 Filipinos have reached out to the government for repatriation from different countries in the Middle East amid regional conflict.In a press conference in Malacañang, Marcos urged Filipinos in the Middle East to follow local advisories and stay put for now, as repatriation efforts were not possible at the moment."We will slowly try to find ways, for those who want to be repatriated, we will find ways to get you out safely," Marcos, addressing those seeking repatriation. "Stay indoors, stay away from areas of danger," he added. As of Tuesday, around 586 OFWs from Dubai have asked for repatriation, 297 from Israel, 270 from Abu Dhabi, 231 from Bahrain, 22 from Jordan and 10 from Iran.In the same press briefing, Marcos Jr. also called for a stop to hostilities in the Middle East, expressing hope the crisis ends “as quickly as

possible.” Marcos said that although the Philippines was not directly involved, it is hoping “for the fighting to stop." “We are only involved tangentially, if you want to call it that, because of our people who are there. We have expressed support for the countries who have come under attack and we have made our feelings known that we hope that this crisis ends as quickly as possible,” he said. “Let’s hope that there is a ceasefire and we, the Philippines, ask for all parties to show restraint and to bring this to a close,” he added.To date, one fatality has been confirmed — 32-year-old Mary Anne Velasquez De Vera, a Filipina caregiver based in Israel. She died from a bomb shrapnel following Iran’ airstrike on Tel Aviv.

- Petroleum products excise tax suspension pushed (2026-03-03 04:33)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito renewed his call for the immediate passage of a bill mandating the automatic suspension of excise taxes on petroleum products if the Dubai crude oil price exceeds $80 per barrel.The senator made the appeal amid conflict in the Middle East involving the United States, Israel and Iran, which might lead to oil price hikes.Industry players have warned of an oil price adjustment next week if the conflict in the Mideast continues following the bombing of Iran by Israel and the United States.Under current law, excise taxes add 10 pesos per liter on gasoline, 6 pesos per liter on diesel and 3 pesos per liter on kerosene, as imposed under Republic Act 10963, or the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law.There were reports that local oil firms will implement another round of fuel price increases, marking the 10th straight week of diesel hikes.Ejercito filed Senate Bill 5, which seeks to automatically suspend the imposition of excise tax on regular gasoline, unleaded premium gasoline and diesel fuel oil when the average Dubai crude oil price based on Mean of Platts Singapore reaches $80 per barrel.In a statement, the Senate deputy majority leader said oil price hikes have a domino effect on food prices, public transportation fares and other prime commodities."It is clear that the first to feel the effect of oil price increase are the ordinary citizens — our [jeepney and bus] drivers, our farmers, small businesses, and each family which rely on everyday earnings," he said in Filipino. “Our kababayans (fellow Filipinos) need a practical and immediate solution when faced with unforeseen events such as the recent developments in the Middle East that impact their daily lives and livelihood,” Ejercito said.

- 2 killed, 3 injured in Rizal helicopter crash (2026-03-03 04:17)

MANILA, Philippines — Two people died and three others were injured on Tuesday when a Bell 505 Jet Ranger X helicopter went down in Rizal, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) reported.The crash occurred in Upper Barak, Barangay Quisao, Pililia near a residential area where high-tension wires pose a risk to low-flying aircraft. One victim was declared dead on the scene, while the second was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital."The aircraft (with registry RP-C3138) was en route from Manila to Quezon Province when the incident occurred," the aviation regulator said.CAAP added that its Aircraft Accident Investigation and Inquiry Board (AAIIB) was currently investigating the cause of the crash.The crash site is known for zero visibility and thick fog-conditions that previously forced an emergency landing for Senator Bong Go's helicopter in December 2024. The senator was en route to Mabitac, Laguna

to attend an official event at the time.The Bell 505 Jet Ranger X is a modern five-seat, single-engine light turbine helicopter featuring a fully integrated glass cockpit and a Safran Arrius 2R engine.

- Marcos assures sufficient oil supply amid Middle East conflict (2026-03-03 04:17)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday assured Filipinos that the country has enough oil supplies amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.In a press conference at Malacañang, Marcos said the Philippines has enough stocks of gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, and kerosene to last over a month.He said the government would also provide targeted fuel subsidies to affected sectors, such as agriculture and transport, if oil prices reach $80 per barrel."We have sufficient supply of oil. We have a stockpile of 50-60 days in terms of gasoline, fuel oil, kerosene," Marcos said.

- Govt prepares fuel subsidy for public transport drivers if oil hits $80 per barrel (2026-03-03 02:29)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) are preparing the necessary documentation for the possible release of fuel subsidies to public utility vehicle (PUV) operators and drivers once global oil prices reach $80 per barrel, Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez said.Lopez said the agency had instructed the road transport sector to begin processing the requirements so the assistance could be distributed immediately once the price threshold is met.The preparation follows the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to ensure that government aid for PUV operators and drivers was ready amid tensions in the Middle East that could drive up global oil prices. “What is more interesting right now is we have a fuel subsidy. I instructed the road sector to start the documentation, the processing of the fuel subsidy so that if we meet the threshold of $80 per barrel, what we will basically do is to give the subsidy,” Lopez said.The transportation chief said the government had earmarked about P2.5 billion for the fuel subsidy program intended to cushion the impact of rising fuel costs on the public transport sector.Lopez also said the LTFRB was currently evaluating pending petitions seeking fare increases for public utility vehicles. “Even without the problem now in the Middle East, the LTFRB has already been studying the possibility of a fare hike. They have a pending petition with that,” he said.

- Foreigner, accomplices in 5 illegal recruitment cases in Batangas faces 2 more (2026-03-03 01:54)

MANILA, Philippines — Two Filipino event coordinators filed a joint complaint-affidavit before the Department of Justice (DOJ)-Office of the City Prosecutor in Tagaytay City accusing several foreigners, including a London-based Italian, of illegal recruitment and estafa.The complaint, filed by Sheryl Lopez and John Michael Umali, named Italian Adel En Nouri and several others as respondents. It came just days after similar charges were leveled against En Nouri in Batangas, bringing to seven the total number of criminal complaints lodged against him.In their seven-page affidavit dated Feb. 27, 2026, Lopez and Umali alleged that they were recruited by

respondents with promises of high-paying jobs in Singapore, only to be detained, intimidated, and defrauded of significant amounts of money.The complainants said they first met the local respondents—Clarence Co Quilop, Brian James De Jesus So, Micheangelo Tang Co, Jacqueline Sio, and Krizzria Ann Geronda Loyang—at an event at Balay Dako in Tagaytay City. The group allegedly represented themselves as personnel of Tamber International Placement Agency and offered overseas employment.The complainants stated that on Dec. 1, 2024, and again on Dec. 7, 2024, the respondents assured them of jobs in Singapore with a monthly salary of SGD 2,000. During a meeting on Dec. 12, the suspects allegedly demanded P100,000 from each complainant as placement fee, which they paid and were issued acknowledgment receipts.On Dec. 14, the complainants were instructed to proceed to a coffee shop in Tagaytay and were told to bring personal belongings for a five-day orientation. Upon arrival, their mobile phones were confiscated and they were allegedly prohibited from leaving the premises. They were subjected to an orientation via video call by En Nouri and Narwani Ricky Ravin.The complainants further claimed that Ravin, acting under En Nouri's instructions, threatened them with document destruction and blacklisting if they failed to comply. They were also allegedly pressured by two other foreigners—Prerna Giani and Nisha Deepak Khelmani—to sign blank employment forms.On the morning of Dec. 20, the complainants escaped when they noticed the main door unguarded and immediately sought assistance from authorities.Previous Cases MountingThe complaint against En Nouri and his alleged cohorts is the latest in a series of criminal cases filed against the Italian. Last week, two female victims from Batangas—Samantha Corpuz and Fatima de Vera—filed a separate complaint before the Office of the City Prosecutor in Santo Tomas City, accusing En Nouri and seven others of large-scale illegal recruitment and estafa over bogus caregiver jobs in Canada and the United Arab Emirates.In that complaint, Corpuz and de Vera alleged they were persuaded to pay P120,000 each for supposed immediate processing and deployment, only to discover that the respondents were not licensed to recruit workers for overseas employment.The Manila Times reported that En Nouri has been the subject of multiple criminal complaints for his alleged involvement in fraudulent recruitment schemes. As of November 2025, he reportedly faced at least five criminal cases in various Philippine courts, including in Bacoor City and Tanauan City.With the addition of the Batangas and Tagaytay complaints, the Italian now faces a total of seven criminal complaints filed by Filipino jobseekers accusing him and his associates of illegal recruitment, serious illegal detention, and estafa. A verification with the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) attached to the Tagaytay complaint confirmed that Tamber International Placement Agency was not licensed or authorized to recruit workers for overseas employment.The complainants are now seeking the filing of criminal charges for Illegal Recruitment in Large Scale under Sections 5 and 6 of Republic Act 8042 (as amended by RA 10022), and for Estafa under Article 315 of the Revised Penal Code.The case is undergoing preliminary investigation before the Office of the City Prosecutor in Tagaytay City.

- Cool weather from ‘amihan’ returns to extreme Northern Luzon (2026-03-02 23:01)

MANILA, Philippines—As expected, the northeast monsoon, locally known as ‘amihan’, has resurfaced, affecting extreme Northern Luzon, particularly Batanes and Babuyan Islands, the state weather bureau said on Tuesday.Weather specialist Chenel Dominguez of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said in a 5 a.m. briefing that the cool winds brought by amihan would no longer be as strong as in previous months.She said that the weather bureau Pagasa has not monitored any low-pressure area forming within or outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility over the next 24 hours.Meanwhile, Metro Manila and the rest of the country would have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms due to the easterlies—winds that pass through the Pacific Ocean and carry warm, humid weather, according to the Pagasa forecaster.“Hot and humid temperatures would be expected, especially during late morning until mid-afternoon in most parts of the archipelago due to the effects of the easterlies,” she said.

- PH maintains crisis alert levels in 8 Mideast countries amid escalating conflict (2026-03-02 18:38)

MANILA, Philippines -- The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said it was maintaining existing crisis alert levels in at least eight countries in the Middle East affected by the armed conflict involving Iran, and Israel and the United States.In a statement on Monday, the DFA said it had coordinated with Philippine embassies and consulates over the past 72 hours, which remain “on the ground and vigilant” in their respective jurisdictions.The department said concerned officials continued to monitor security developments and assess the condition of thousands of Filipinos living and working in the region.The DFA urged Filipinos to heed local authorities and comply with travel advisories as instability persists in several areas.It urged Filipinos in affected areas to follow the advisories of their host governments, remain vigilant, and observe all relevant travel advisories.Under the current framework, the highest alert — Level 4, or mandatory evacuation — remains in effect for Syria and Yemen, as well as in Gaza.At this level, Filipinos are urged to evacuate and join government-led repatriation efforts, and travel to those areas is prohibited.Alert Level 3, which calls for voluntary repatriation, remains in place for Iraq and Lebanon.The designation reflects significant unrest or the threat of imminent external attack. Filipinos in these countries are advised to consider relocation or returning to the Philippines, and nonessential travel is strongly discouraged.Several other areas are under Alert Level 2, or the restriction phase, including Iran, the Kurdish region of Iraq, the State of Israel and the West Bank.Under this level, Filipinos are urged to shelter in place, avoid high-risk areas and limit nonessential movement, as embassies activate contingency plans.Jordan remains under Alert Level 1, the precautionary phase, indicating limited or localized threats. Filipinos there are advised to exercise normal caution and avoid affected areas.The department said crisis management teams and contingency plans had been activated as required under each alert level.

- Pinay caregiver killed in airstrike in Israel found running to shelter 'tiring' but stayed with ward (2026-03-02 18:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Mary Anne Velasquez De Vera, the Filipina killed in the Iranian airstrike in Tel Aviv, Israel over the weekend, posted on her Facebook page that it was exhausting to seek safety in a selter.It was to be her final post before de Vera, a caregiver, died from injuries caused by a shrapnel after an Iranian missile struck her apartment in Tel Aviv while she was assisting her ward to safety on Saturday.In a now expired Facebook story, the 32-year-old from Basista, Pangasinan said in Filipino: “Every minute. It’s tiring to run to the shelter.” "She reportedly refused to leave her patient behind and was “injured while selflessly assisting her patient to safety during Operation Roaring Lion on March 1, 2026,” according to the statement released by the Israeli embassy in the Philippines.Her identity was confirmed through biometric records at the Abu Kabir Forensic Institute, where her husband, also a migrant worker in Israel, positively identified her remains, the embassy added.It said the Filipina caregiver "exemplified resilience, compassion, and quiet strength" and joined De Vera's family and the Filipino people in "profound sorrow" over her death."We mourn together and honor Mary Ann’s memory with dignity and respect," the embassy said.The Philippine Embassy in Israel said de Vera had been working in Israel since 2019.Meanwhile, Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) Secretary Hand Leo Cacdac disclosed he has spoken to De Vera’s husband and the agency was now making necessary arrangements to bring her remains back to the Philippines.“We will wait for the right time to do this. The family also understands that. As I said the husband is also in Israel. So, we will wait for the appropriate time for the remains of OFW Mary Ann to be brought home,” Cacdac said in Filipino in a briefing in Malacañang.“But we're in good hands because, as I said, the Israeli government is fully backing us in these endeavors. So, in due time, the remains of OFW Mary Ann will be home safely,” he added.Personnel from the DMW and Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) have also been deployed to be with De Vera’s family in Pangasinan and her husband in Tel Aviv, Cacdac said.Philippine Ambassador to Israel Aileen Mendiola called the husband to convey the embassy’s condolences and assured him of the Philippine government’s full assistance.

- Iran war spreads across Middle East, US embassy in Kuwait burns (2026-03-02 16:17)

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iran and Iranian-backed militias fired missiles at Israel and Arab states, apparently hitting the US Embassy compound in Kuwait, while Israel and the United States pounded targets in Iran as the war expanded on Monday with statements of defiance and increasing casualties.Fire and smoke rose from inside the embassy compound in Kuwait City and an alarm wailed after the Iranian attack, which came not long after the US issued a warning to Americans there to take cover and for others to stay away. There were no immediate reports on damage or casualties.Meantime, as the American and Israeli airstrikes continued, top Iranian security official Ali Larijani vowed defiantly on X that “we will not negotiate with the United States.”In Iraq, a pro-Iranian militia claimed responsibility for a drone attack targeting US troops at the Baghdad airport, the day after it said it fired at a US base in the city of Irbil in the north, and Cyprus said a drone attack targeted a British base on the Mediterranean island nation.Israel and the US bombed Iranian missile sites and targeted its navy, claiming to have destroyed its headquarters and multiple warships. More than 200 people have been killed since

the start of the strikes, according to Iranian leaders.Also on Monday, Israel bombarded Lebanon, expanding conflict across the region after the massive Israel-US attack on Iran that President Donald Trump launched to topple Tehran’s ruling clerics.Israeli forces pounded targets across Lebanon including Beirut, after Hezbollah, the Tehran-backed armed Shiite Muslim movement, fired rockets towards Israel in retaliation for the killing of Iran’s supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.The Israeli strikes in Lebanon killed at least 31 people and wounded 149 others, Lebanon’s Health Ministry said. About two-thirds of the dead were in the country’s south.Following its initial strikes on Beirut, Israel urged civilians in nearly 50 villages in eastern and southern Lebanon to evacuate ahead of more possible attacks, sending people fleeing. Lebanon’s government said it was holding an emergency meeting after Hezbollah’s attack on Israel triggered the Israeli airstrikes. “Large-scale strikes” were also ongoing in the heart of Tehran, Israeli forces said, as the US military widened its targets across Iran on Sunday.Retaliating against the heavy strikes that Washington said destroyed the headquarters of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), Iranian forces fired missiles and drones across the Middle East, claiming lives in Israel and the United Arab Emirates.Fresh explosions were heard across Doha, Dubai and Manama on Monday morning.Trump vowed to avenge the first US deaths, telling the New York Times that the United States and Israel could keep up the same level of attacks for four to five weeks. “It won’t be difficult. We have tremendous amounts of ammunition,” he said, adding he had a shortlist of three unnamed people he favored to lead Iran after the war.But Ali Larijani, the powerful head of Tehran’s Supreme National Security Council, voiced defiance.Iran “will not negotiate with the United States,” he wrote on X, adding that “Trump plunged the region into chaos with his ‘delusional fantasies’ and now fears more American troop casualties.”Iranian responseIran has been firing missiles at Israel and Arab states in a counteroffensive since the joint America-Israeli attack Saturday that killed Khamenei and many top Iranian officials.Gulf Arab states have warned that they could retaliate against Iran after strikes that hit key sites and killed at least five civilians.Trump has urged Iranians to “take over” their government and, while he has also signaled he would be open to dialogue with new leadership there following the death of Khamenei, suggested Sunday there was no end in sight to the military operations. “Combat operations continue at this time in full-force, and they will continue until all of our objectives are achieved,” he said in a video message. “We have very strong objectives,” he added, without elaborating.The US military said B-2 stealth bombers struck Iran’s ballistic missile facilities with 2,000-pound bombs. Trump said on social media that nine Iranian warships had been sunk and that the Iranian navy’s headquarters had been “largely destroyed.”In an indication the conflict could draw in other nations, Britain, France and Germany said they were ready to work with the US to help stop Iran’s attacks, and a group of Gulf Arab countries said it reserved the right to respond to Iranian strikes.The weekend attacks were the second combined strikes in eight months from the US and Israel against Iran. In the 12-day war last June, Israeli and American strikes greatly weakened Iran’s air defenses, military leadership and nuclear program. But the killing of Khamenei, who ruled Iran for more than three decades, creates a leadership vacuum, increasing the risk of regional instability.Also Monday, the World Health Organization called for sparing civilians and health care facilities in the Middle East amid the escalating conflict. “The

protection of civilians and health care must be absolute," Hanan Balkhy, regional dietitian at WHO wrote on social media. "All parties must ... ensure medical facilities remain protected."Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have urged Iranians to overthrow the government in Iran, the sworn foe of Israel and the United States since the 1979 Islamic revolution toppled the pro-Western shah.In a video address, Trump urged Iranian security forces "to lay down your arms and receive full immunity or face certain death." "It will be certain death," he repeated. "It won't be pretty."The Pentagon said that three US service members were killed in the operation and five seriously wounded in the operation it has called "Epic Fury." "Sadly, there will likely be more before it ends," Trump said. "That's the way it is." "But America will avenge their deaths and deliver the most punishing blow to the terrorists who have waged war against, basically, civilization."Trump, who campaigned denouncing foreign interventions, has done little to explain the case for war to the US public.Attacks across Middle EastExplosions rocked Beirut before dawn and southern Lebanon residents fled, according to Agence France-Presse (AFP) journalists, after the Israeli military announced it was striking both parts of the country.In the city of Sidon, cars of families escaping from further south packed roads. Hezbollah, which was weakened by an earlier Israeli offensive, said it had fired rockets and drones at Israel "in retaliation for the pure blood" of Khamenei — the first time it has claimed such an attack since a November 2024 ceasefire agreement following a year of war between them.Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, whose government has pushed for Hezbollah's disarmament, called Monday's rocket fire "irresponsible."Such action "endangers Lebanon's security and safety, and gives Israel pretexts to continue its attacks on it," Salam said on X.In Israel, an Iranian missile attack killed at least nine people and injured dozens more in the central city of Beit Shemesh, after a death the previous day near Tel Aviv.Three people were also injured on one of the main roads of Jerusalem.Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian, whose elected role is subordinate to that of the supreme leader, called Khamenei's killing a "declaration of war against Muslims." "Iran considers it its legitimate duty and right to avenge the perpetrators," Pezeshkian said.Rise upIsrael and the United States attacked Iran weeks after authorities ruthlessly crushed mass protests, killing thousands.The demonstrations, initially sparked by economic anxiety but also including calls for greater social freedoms, were considered one of the most serious threats to the religious state.Trump called on Iranians to rise up and said, "America is with you."Reza Pahlavi, the son of the late shah, cautioned Iranians to stay vigilant in the face of air strikes and await the right moment to return to the streets.But he also urged "nightly chants" against the Islamic republic.Cheers were heard as some Iranians celebrated reports of the death of Khamenei, but after state media confirmed his killing, pro-government demonstrations also formed, chanting "Death to America!"Iran named Ayatollah Alireza Arafi to join Pezeshkian on an interim leadership council to lead the country while a permanent successor is found for the supreme leader.Mixed supportWhile many in the Iranian diaspora cheered Khamenei's death, anger was seen on the streets of Iran's neighbor Pakistan where officials said 17 people were killed and protesters tried to storm the US consulate in Karachi.World leaders have given a mixed reaction to the attack, which came two days after Iran and the United States held talks on Tehran's nuclear program.British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said Sunday that he would let

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- 80 Filipinos ask to fly home amid airstrikes (2026-03-02 16:16)

(UPDATE) AT least 80 Filipinos in Dubai have requested to be repatriated to the Philippines as Iranian missile attacks damaged a luxury hotel and the airport, the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) said on Monday.In a briefing in Malacañang, DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac said they are now preparing for repatriation assistance but this could take a while as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) airspace remains closed.“The airspace in Dubai and the airports are closed, we know that there was an attack in Dubai. So, we have preparations in terms of giving the 80 who need repatriation assistance — temporary basic needs assistance and shelters are available. And, then, at an appropriate time they will be evacuated,” Cacdac said in Filipino.The official said the UAE is under Alert Level 2. Mandatory repatriation would only be in effect should the alert level be raised to 4.For now, the government is giving priority to in-country assistance to Filipinos, mostly overseas workers, including basic needs such as food, water, and shelter.“We have the necessary funds, an action fund, and the OWWA (Overseas Workers Welfare Administration) funds are ready to provide the necessary basic needs assistance, especially to those who have lost their jobs, stopped working or are in a distressed situation,” Cacdac said.“We have transport services available onsite for those who want to — we think they are in a vulnerable area and want to move to another place, we have shelters. Now, the shelters are a combination of the host country-provided shelters, that’s also specific to some of the countries mentioned and we have our own Migrant Workers Office or OWWA shelters onsite,” he added.Although there is no order yet for a mass repatriation of the 2.5 million Filipinos in the Middle East amid the ongoing crisis there, Cacdac said the Philippine government is “ready for such an eventuality, with the proper public and private resources.” “We have coordination with the Department of National Defense and Secretary Gibo (Teodoro) in terms of the possibility to use the proper military assets at the proper time,” he said.“We are also in touch with private companies that will provide land, sea and air options for repatriation. Everything is waiting and ready,” he added.Meanwhile, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. continues to closely monitor developments in the Middle East following the series of airstrikes over the weekend.Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro reiterated the president’s directive to concerned government agencies to provide all necessary assistance to Filipinos affected by the hostilities.Marcos also ordered an inter-agency mobilization to guarantee that Filipinos in the Middle East are properly assisted and supported.Apart from the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), DMW, and OWWA, the Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Information Communications and Technology (DICT) were also tapped to assists Filipinos in need.The DOH would consolidate medical responses, including online medical consultations and psychosocial support services, while the DICT would ensure all telecommunications companies remain online.“Secretary Henry Aguda gave a directive to ensure that all telcos will do everything to make sure connectivity with OFWs in the Middle East is maintained and instructed the regional offices to

provide free connections to anyone who would like to reach out to their family members and loved ones in affected areas,” Cacdac said.On the other hand, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) are also onboard to provide aid to returning Filipinos.Flight disruptionsAirspace restrictions in the Middle East due to the war continued to cause flight disruptions for local and foreign airlines operating to and from Ninoy Aquino International Airport.As of Monday, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) reported that at least 45 flights have been disrupted since Feb. 28 due to the ongoing conflict.Cebu Pacific (CEB) has extended its Manila-Dubai flight cancellations through March 3. The airline said it will continue to assess operations to and from the Middle East, noting that “further schedule adjustments may be necessary” as the situation develops.Philippine Airlines (PAL) has already canceled or diverted over 10 flights — including routes to Doha, Riyadh, and Dubai — saying that safety remains their highest priority.Several foreign carriers, including Emirates, Etihad, Kuwait Airways, and Qatar Airways, have also suspended multiple Manila services.The New NAIA Infra Corp. (NNIC) announced over the weekend that passengers with scheduled flights to or from Middle East destinations are advised to check their flight status before proceeding to the airport.Travelers are encouraged to contact their airlines directly for the latest updates, confirm bookings before travel, and ensure their contact details are updated to receive notifications.NNIC said it continues to coordinate closely with airlines and aviation authorities to ensure safe and orderly operations.Emergency response measuresGiven the volatility and unpredictability of the situation in the Middle East, the labor sector called on President Marcos to activate all emergency response measures to ensure the safety and security of overseas Filipino workers in the Middle East.The Trade Union Congress of the Philippine (TUCP), the largest national trade union center in the country, on Monday issued the call amid repeated threats from US President Donald Trump that they will strike with a force that has never been seen before “if Tehran retaliates very hard against the US.” The largest concentration of overseas workers is in the Middle East with an estimated population ranging from 2 million to 3 million. Roughly 90 percent of OFWs are in Saudi Arabia (898,000 to 1 million), United Arab Emirates (650,000 to 700,000), Qatar (250,000 to 264,000) and Kuwait (200,000 to 250,000). Others are Bahrain (50,000 to 55,000) and Oman (45,000 to 48,000).There are an estimated 4,000-6,000 OFWs working inside several US bases in the Middle East, located in Bahrain, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. These bases have been attacked by Iran with ballistic missiles and drones in retaliation to the US-Israel bombing of Tehran which killed Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and members of his family.There are seven large US bases in the Middle East situated Bahrain, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Jordan which have been attacked by Iran.The TUCP called on the government to immediately heighten and activate all emergency response measures that would keep OFWs in the Middle East safe if the war further escalates. “We urge all relevant authorities to work triple-time and activate 24/7 rapid response systems. Clear, consistent, and real-time communication must be established with our kababayan on the ground, especially on critical matters such as their right to refuse unsafe work, access to emergency shelters, updated travel advisories, and verified hotline numbers,”

the group said in a statement.In other developments:– The Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) on Monday said that all Philippine Schools Overseas (PSOs) in the Middle East affected by the escalating conflict in the region remain safe and operational. The CFO said PSOs are duly registered educational institutions operating outside the Philippines. A total of 27 PSOs are located in the Gulf region. Some schools have shifted to online classes following directives from their respective host countries, the CFO said in a statement. “We’re closely monitoring the situation of our PSOs and we have advised them to heed the advisories of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW), especially those concerning safety and security,” CFO Secretary Dante Ang II said.– The Department of Education (DepEd) on Monday affirmed that it is ready to support Filipino teachers who may return to the Philippines from the Middle East. The DepEd said that it, in coordination with the Department of Migrant Workers, “provides a reintegration pathway for licensed Filipino teachers employed overseas to transition into the public school system.” Qualified applicants may be hired and appointed as Teacher I under permanent status, subject to compliance with established qualification standards and existing hiring guidelines, the department said.– Manila Archbishop Cardinal Jose Advincula implored the faithful to pray for those who face adversity due to the conflict. The statement echoed an appeal from Bishop Paolo Martinelli, Apostolic Vicar of Southern Arabia, who urged Catholics to remain united in prayer and to pray the rosary daily for peace and reconciliation. Martinelli also appealed for prayers for the safety and security of all people affected by the war in the region.

- 2 impeachment complaints vs VP Sara sufficient in form (2026-03-02 16:15)

THE House Committee on Justice on Monday declared the third and fourth impeachment complaints filed against Vice President Sara Duterte to be sufficient in form, setting the stage for a debate on their sufficiency in substance on March 3.The third impeachment complaint, endorsed by Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima, was filed on Feb. 9, 2026. The complainants, which included priests and lawyers, alleged, among others, that Duterte committed culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayed public trust in connection with confidential funds allocated to the Office of the Vice President (OVP) for 2022 and 2023 and confidential funds allocated for 2023 to the Department of Education (DepEd), which Duterte led as secretary before she resigned in 2024 from that post.At the start of the panel’s review of the impeachment complaints, Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro on Monday corrected claims that the Supreme Court already dismissed the accusations filed earlier this year against the vice president.“The Supreme Court did not rule on the merits of the allegations. It did not conduct a trial. [...] It did not absolve anyone of wrongdoing,” Luistro, chairman of the House Committee on Justice, said.“The court itself clarified that its ruling was limited to the constitutional one-year bar rule. It emphasized that it did not absolve the vice president from any of the charges. Those are not my words. Those are the Supreme Court’s own clarifications. To suggest, therefore, that the allegations have already been resolved on the merits is legally incorrect,” she said.The fourth complaint was filed on Feb. 18, 2026 by lawyer Nathaniel Cabrera and was endorsed by Manila 6th District Rep. Bienvenido Abante Jr.,

chairman of the House Committee on Human Rights, and Deputy Speaker and La Union 1st District Rep. Francisco Paolo Ortega V.Cabrera said Article II of the complaint alleged that Duterte “betrayed the public trust and committed acts of graft and corruption by grossly abusing discretionary authority over confidential funds appropriated to the” OVP and DepEd.The complainant also alleged culpable violation of the Constitution and other high crimes.Earlier in the day, the panel set aside the first of four impeachment complaints filed earlier this year against Duterte, saying it violated the constitutional ban on more than one complaint filed against an official within a year.The Makabayan bloc — composed of ACT Teachers Rep. Antonio Tinio, Gabriela Women’s Party Rep. Sarah Elago, and Kabataan Rep. Renee Co — endorsed the complaint, which was filed on Feb. 2, 2026, by former lawmakers France Castro and Arlene Brosas, who alleged betrayal of public trust in connection with confidential funds.That was less than a year from the day the House impeached Duterte for the misuse of confidential funds. But the Supreme Court declared the articles of impeachment to be in violation of the one-year ban.Meanwhile, concerned citizens who had filed the second impeachment complaint against the vice president withdrew it.Akbayan Rep. Percival Cendaña and de Lima, who endorsed the complaint, told the committee they would withdraw it “in the interest of procedural expediency and to obviate any needless delay.” New impeachment bidThe daughter of former president Rodrigo Duterte, Sara Duterte recently announced her candidacy for the 2028 presidential election. She was impeached by the country’s House of Representatives last year only to see the Supreme Court toss the case out over procedural issues.The revived impeachment bid leans heavily on allegations that the vice president misused public funds while in office.Duterte also stands accused of making a death threat against her former ally and current President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., with whom she is engaged in an explosive political feud.Under the Constitution, an impeachment triggers a Senate trial. A guilty verdict would result in Duterte being barred from politics and sidelined from the 2028 presidential race.The latest impeachment bid faces a changed environment with the vice president ahead in recent polls, analysts said. “The political context will be very different, especially now that Sara declared her candidacy,” University of the Philippines political science professor Jean Franco said. “It’s definitely going to weigh on the minds of the members of the House of Representatives,” Franco said, adding that a vote for impeachment would effectively see a lawmaker’s career “marked for death.” Anthony Lawrence Borja, an associate professor of political science at De La Salle University agreed, saying: “It is ultimately a question of whether the patronage of the current administration outweighs their fear of Duterte’s condemnation.” The same committee hearing the case against Duterte last month tossed out a pair of impeachment complaints against Marcos, ruling that allegations of corruption over a scandal involving bogus flood control projects lacked substance.Michael Wesley Poa, spokesman for Duterte’s defense team, said they were closely monitoring deliberations and trusted “the same standards” used in the Marcos hearing would be applied.

- QCGH among Newsweek's top PH hospitals (2026-03-02 16:14)

THE Quezon City General Hospital (QCGH) has been recognized as one of the country’s top hospitals by the New York City–based weekly news magazine Newsweek, Mayor Joy Belmonte said Monday.The QCGH has been ranked 24th nationwide and standing out as the only Level 3 local government unit (LGU) hospital with 10 fully accredited departments and a fellowship training program included in the Top 33 hospitals in the Philippines, Belmonte said.“This is a testament to our commitment to providing our residents with quality health care services. We continue to improve our facilities and upgrade our services to address health concerns effectively and to ensure that QCitizens receive the exceptional medical care they deserve,” Belmonte said.Conducted in partnership with global data-as-a-service company Statista, the ranking evaluated 2,500 hospitals across 32 countries, according to the city’s Public Affairs and Information Services Department (PAISD).Hospitals were assessed based on recommendations from medical experts — including doctors, hospital managers, and other health care professionals — along with hospital quality metrics, existing patient experience data, and Statista’s Patient-Reported Outcome Measures Implementation Survey.With a 250-bed capacity, the tertiary hospital located in Barangay Bahay Toro has been delivering modern health care services since its establishment in 1968.The PAISD said that QCGH currently offers 10 fully accredited training programs in Internal Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics-Gynecology, Pediatrics, Family Medicine, Anesthesiology, Pathology, Radiology, Otolaryngology, and Ophthalmology — ensuring high-quality, safe, and standardized patient care.The hospital is also the first LGU-run hospital in the Philippines to offer a fellowship training program in geriatric medicine, highlighting its commitment to providing specialized care for senior citizens. It is also the pioneer hospital in North Metro Manila to offer fellowship training in ultrasound and CT-MRI through its Radiology Department.In 2025, the hospital was granted its first unqualified opinion by the Commission on Audit, reflecting sound fiscal management and ethical hospital governance.Meanwhile, QCGH’s Human Milk Bank and the Quezon City Protection Center were recognized by the Philippine Commission on Women as Gender and Development Local Learning Hubs for their innovations in promoting women’s rights and eliminating gender discrimination, it added.QCGH Medical Director Josephine Sabando said the recognition would surely inspire them to continue improving their programs and further enhance the quality of medical care they provide.In Newsweek’s top 10 were St. Luke’s Medical Center-Global City, Makati Medical Center, Asian Hospital and Medical Center, St. Luke’s Medical Center-Quezon City, The Medical City, UP General Hospital, Cebu Doctor’s University Hospital, Cardinal Santos Medical Center, and Chong Hua Hospital.

- Asean seeks safety amid war (2026-03-02 16:13)

THE Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) remains committed to strengthening inter-regional cooperation in ensuring the safety of nationals from region caught in the conflict in the Middle East.Social Welfare and Development Secretary Irene Dumlao made the remark when asked whether the Asean Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) will tackle the situation in the Mideast.The Philippines, through the ASCC Pillar, is hosting this week the 40th Senior Officials Committee for the Asean Socio-Cultural Meeting and the 35th ASCC Council Meeting.“The

Asean Socio-Cultural Community is actually closely monitoring the evolving situation in the Middle East," Dumlao said in briefing on Monday."We will be coordinating closely with relevant partners to ensure that Asean nationals, even [non] member states who would be affected by the current turmoil will receive the appropriate support and assistance," Dumlao said."Again, for the ASCC, the family is an important factor that we need to protect. So, yes, it will be one of the discussions or it will be one of the priority areas in the discussions of the age," she added.Dumlao said the Philippines, through the Department of Social Welfare and Development as chairman of the ASCC Pillar, is championing "people empowerment" guided by the theme "RISE Asean."She said RISE stands for "R - Resilient and Empowered Families, I - Inclusive Development, S - Smart Youth and Innovation, and E - Environmentally Sustainable and Food Secure Future."Dumlao said the RISE Asean agenda aligns with the Asean Community Vision 2045, adding that this agenda "reinforces our shared aspiration for a people-oriented and people-centered Asean." "It is guided by three core priorities: peace and security, prosperity, and people empowerment. These are pillars that affirm that our collective future rests on the strength and resilience of the communities we nurture today," Dumlao said.

- PH pitches Asean unity on socio-cultural issues (2026-03-02 16:12)

THE Philippines, in hosting the 2026 Asean Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Pillar, will highlight the country's "RISE Asean" agenda, which supports "a truly 'One Asean, One Response' region" or unity in addressing common concerns.The Philippines, as the 2026 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) chairman, is taking an active role in engaging in high-level dialogues that are shaping cooperation in security, economic integration, and social development.The meetings aim to strengthen family resilience, empower young people, and advance inclusive development for marginalized and vulnerable communities across the region."The forum affirms that empowering individuals, families, and communities is both the means and the measure of Asean's success," said Social Welfare and Development Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlao.She said RISE stands for "R - Resilient and Empowered Families, I - Inclusive Development, S - Smart Youth and Innovation, and E - Environmentally Sustainable and Food Secure Future."The Philippines, through the ASCC Pillar, is hosting this week the 40th Senior Officials Committee for the Asean Socio-Cultural Meeting and the 35th ASCC Council Meeting."Beyond these high-level meetings, the richness of the Filipino culture will also be highlighted through our curated gastronomic and heritage tours, and performances of traditional music and dance," Dumlao said in a briefing.In the 40th SOCA Meeting, she said senior officials will review and harmonize key frameworks in support of the Philippines' people empowerment agenda.The high-level ASCC Council Forum will bring together ministers, senior officials, experts, youth leaders, and development partners to place people empowerment at the forefront of Asean's forward trajectory.Dumlao said at the 35th ASCC Council Meeting regional ministers will adopt key frameworks and finalize priority social policies for Southeast Asia."The Philippines welcomes our Asean family not only with a strong pro-people agenda, but with the spirit of unity and partnership. As we navigate our future together, may we continue shaping a resilient, dynamic, and truly people-centered Asean," she

added.

- Overseas voter registration continues in Middle East (2026-03-02 16:11)

AMID the escalating tension in the Middle East, overseas voter registration in the region continues, according to the Commission on Elections (Comelec).Comelec Chairman George Erwin Garcia said on Monday that Philippine embassies and consulates, which serve as registration centers in the Middle East, remain open for consular services, including overseas voter registration.At the same time, Garcia advised Filipino workers to stay alert and keep updated on the situation in their areas."Be vigilant against misinformation/disinformation and trust only reliable sources of information, take heed of the notice and adviser from the Department of Foreign Affairs as well as the Philippine Embassy or Consulate, and contact help lines if in distress," he said.The overseas voters registration is part of the Comelec's preparations for the 2028 presidential election.Registration started last Dec. 1 and will end on Sept. 30, 2027.Garcia said the Comelec is looking forward to signing up more overseas voters. There are only 1.67 million registered overseas voters out of 10 million Filipinos abroad, he said."With our internet voting, we are looking forward to increasing the number of our overseas Filipino voters by 3 to 4 million," he said.All Filipino citizens abroad, including dual citizens, can register as overseas voters, provided they are not disqualified by law and are at least 18 years old on election day, which is May 8, 2028.The following are qualified to register:– First-time voters based overseas– Registered voters in the Philippines who have moved overseas– Registered voters in the Philippines who will be overseas during the voting period– Registered overseas voters who have changes to their personal details– Overseas voters whose registrations were deactivated, transferred, or with multiple registrations.Local and overseas absentee voters can only vote for candidates running for national positions — president, vice president, 12 senators, and one party-list group.

- Party-list groups eyed in political dynasties ban (2026-03-02 16:10)

SEN. Francis Pangilinan wants to prohibit members of political dynasties from becoming or substituting as a party-list representative or nominee.Pangilinan filed Senate Bill 1907 which aims to amend Republic Act (RA) 7941 or the Party-List System Act.Pangilinan said his proposal “strengthens the statutory framework of the party-list system to align its implementation with its constitutional purpose of sectoral representation.” Under SB 1907, “no person may become or substitute for a party-list nominee or otherwise become a party-list representative” if they are a spouse or relative within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity of an incumbent president, vice president, senator, district or party-list representative, governor, vice governor, mayor, or vice mayor.The bill also states that the spouse or relative within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity of a nominee of any party-list organization in the same election should be included in the prohibition.Pangilinan said he recognizes the role of party-lists in proportional representation.But he raised the need for “legislative clarification” in the implementation of the law, particularly in standards of sectoral representation, safeguards against conflicts of interest, voter clarity, and accountability mechanisms.It bans a

party-list nominee or representative, or party-list organization from directly or indirectly holding contracts or subcontracts to supply the government or any of its divisions, subdivisions, or instrumentalities with goods, services, construction, and other works.Nominees or representatives and their spouse or relative within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity cannot serve as a partner, director, officer, member, or stockholder of any corporation or partnership that holds such contracts.Under the proposed measure, the Commission on Elections may motu propio or upon verified petition, remove or disqualify the party-list nominee if they do not have any of the qualifications of a party-list nominee, or that they possess any of the prohibitions.

- Guidelines out on night court duty for judges (2026-03-02 16:09)

THE Supreme Court has approved new guidelines on assigning judges for night court duty in judicial regions outside the National Capital Region (NCR).In a resolution dated Feb. 27, the court en banc adopted the Guidelines on the Assignment of Branches and Presiding Judges for Night Court Duty.Night courts are tasked with handling urgent matters, including bail petitions arising from nighttime arrests, and facilitating the swift disposition of criminal cases involving tourists.Under the guidelines, all branches of multi-sala courts designated as night courts must render duty on a weekly rotation.The presiding judge and two court personnel assigned by rotation must be physically present from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. for one night each week, preferably on Fridays.For the remainder of the week, the designated branch will operate on an on-call basis and maintain a hotline number where personnel can be reached immediately.If the presiding judge of the assigned branch is unavailable, the paired court must assume night court duties. The paired court’s own scheduled night duty will then be taken over by the branch it substituted.If the assigned judge and the paired court judge are unavailable, the executive judge will appoint another branch to handle the duty.For single-sala courts, the designated courts will likewise operate on an on-call basis except for one night each week when the presiding judge and two court personnel must report for duty from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m.If the presiding judge of the designated court is unavailable, the judge of its paired court must substitute.If both judges are unavailable, the executive judge of the Regional Trial Court with territorial jurisdiction over the area must designate a first-level judge within the administrative supervision area, taking into account geographic and logistical proximity.Judges assigned to night court duty will receive an incentive allowance of P1,000 for every night of service rendered.Court personnel assigned to night court duty will receive overtime pay under applicable rules.Designated branches must perform functions required under guidelines issued by the Office of the Court Administrator, including assigning a cash clerk who will be on call to receive payments for court fees, fines and cash bail deposits.Judges are also required to ensure security during night court operations and coordinate with local law enforcement agencies.The branch clerk of court or officer-in-charge must inform the Philippine National Police (PNP), the city or provincial prosecutor’s office, and other relevant offices of the night court schedules.In the same resolution, the Supreme Court designated several courts as night courts, including municipal trial courts in cities of Baguio, Tuguegarao, Angeles, Tagaytay, Batangas, Puerto

Princesa, Legazpi, Iloilo, Bacolod, Cebu, Tagbilaran, Tacloban, Zamboanga, Surigao, Davao, and General Santos.The court retained the designation of the municipal circuit trial courts in San Juan-San Gabriel, La Union, and Malay-Buruanga, Aklan, as night courts.It revoked the designation of several branches previously assigned as night courts, including courts in the cities of Angeles, Cavite, Lipa, Legazpi, Iloilo, Bacolod, Cebu, Cagayan de Oro, and Surigao.The Office of the Court Administrator will implement the guidelines.

- Warning against ATM scam that targets elderly (2026-03-02 16:08)

THE Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has reinforced the warning of the National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC) against false claims involving ATM card distribution and illegal deductions from cash gifts intended for senior citizens.The NCSC, a supervised agency of the DSWD, is mandated to promote and safeguard the rights and welfare of elderly Filipinos, including the implementation of centenarian cash gifts.The advisory was issued following the circulation of an online video claiming that ATM cards had been approved for indigent senior citizens nationwide.Authorities said the NCSC has not issued any ATM or bank cards to senior citizens for the purpose of claiming assistance, pension, or cash gifts.The commission also debunked claims that a pilot bank transfer system would involve the distribution of bank cards to beneficiaries.DSWD Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlao echoed the NCSC’s call for vigilance, stressing the importance of protecting elderly beneficiaries from misinformation and financial exploitation.“We stand with the NCSC in this reminder, and it is crucial that information regarding the benefits of our senior citizens is clear because many of them rely on these programs for their needs, and we must not allow them to be deceived by false news or baseless collections,” Dumlao said.The commission clarified that the bank transfer system currently being implemented in selected regions is only an optional mode of claiming the P10,000 or P100,000 cash gift under the Expanded Centenarians Act for milestone ages 80, 85, 90, 95, and 100.It emphasized that the P10,000 cash gift must be received in full without any deduction, and that any form of collection or request for payment in exchange for the benefit is illegal and punishable by law.

- Co-ownership by same-sex partners ruling lauded (2026-03-02 16:07)

THE Commission on Human Rights (CHR) welcomed the decision of the Supreme Court recognizing co-ownership of property in same-sex cohabitation.CHR Chairman Richard Palpal-latoc said in a statement emailed to The Manila Times that while development strengthens the visibility of LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex and Asexual/Aromantic/Agender) relationships, fuller legal protection remains necessary to achieve substantive equality.“This decision of the high court affirms that diverse forms of intimate relationships exist and cannot be rendered legally invisible,” said Palpal-latoc.He said that by recognizing that same-sex partners may be considered co-owners under Article 148 of the Family Code, the court acknowledged “lived realities often disregarded in formal legal discourse and moves away from treating same-sex partners as legal strangers.”Palpal-latoc said the ruling aligns with constitutional guarantees of equal protection

and the Philippines’ obligations under international human rights law.“Recognizing property relations affirms the dignity, agency, and family life of LGBTQIA individuals and upholds the State’s duty to prevent discrimination and recognize the equal dignity of all, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity and expression (Sogie),” Palpal-latoc pointed out.The CHR called for a sustained legislative and policy action to close the remaining protection gaps.Moving from visibility to full equality requires comprehensive reform grounded in the Constitution’s promise of equal protection of the laws, it added.Under the Magna Carta of Women, the CHR acts as the Gender and Development Ombudsman that promotes and protects women’s rights. ARLIE O. CALALO

- Manila OKs ordinance cutting fuel use by 50% (2026-03-02 16:06)

(UPDATE) MANILA Mayor Isko Moreno signed Executive Order (EO) 7 on Monday, mandating the city government to reduce fuel consumption by 50 percent.In a Facebook live address, Moreno said this move was to anticipate the reduction of fuel supply due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, particularly the reported blockade of the Strait of Hormuz following attacks by the United States and Israel on Iran.The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world’s most critical oil trade routes, and its blockade would disrupt the flow of 20 percent of the world’s oil, triggering higher fuel prices.“The ongoing armed conflict in the Middle East with the Operation Epic Fury in full effect is the joint US-Israel strike against Iran, which will eventually contribute in the significant global oil market volatility, supply disruption, upward pressures, and fuel prices with adverse effects on the national and local economy, and the fiscal position of the city of Manila, very particular position of the City of Manila,” Moreno said.Under the EO 7, city departments and offices are mandated to reduce fuel use for vehicles, generators, heavy equipment, and other fuel-powered machines.The move is said to maintain essential public services and limit the city’s exposure to fuel supply and price increases.Under Section 5 of the said EO, all non-essential travel by city officials and staff will be prohibited.“All Lakbay Aral (educational trip) activities and foreign trips will likewise be suspended unless deemed essential and of critical importance to the city government’s operation,” Moreno said.He added that all offices, except health care facilities, are directed to conserve electricity by switching off lights by 5 p.m. daily.The mayor added that meetings with village officials and health workers will be conducted online when feasible.He further noted the shifts and work arrangements will be recalibrated, urging employers to “implement staggered shifts, compress workweeks, or remove work arrangements where feasible to reduce commuting and official travel.”Exempted from the order are police, fire and ambulance services; public health and disaster risk reduction operations; garbage collection and hauling; and traffic management, among others.Violations of the travel and fuel-use provisions will be subject to administrative investigation and penalties.Moreno said the order takes effect immediately and will remain in effect until emergency fuel conditions stabilize.“This is our own little way to join the National Government in its effort, advice and directives to save as many as we can concerning fuel consumption or dependency on fuel,” Moreno concluded.

- Fuel prices spike for 7th straight week (2026-03-02 16:05)

(UPDATE) LOCAL oil companies on Tuesday hiked all fuel prices again this week due to the recent conflict in the Middle East.Shell, Seaoil, PetroGazz, Cleanfuel, Caltex, Unioil, Jetti Petroleum, PTT Philippines, and Flying V raised their gasoline prices by P1.90 per liter and their diesel prices by P1.20.Also, the price of kerosene has gone up by P1.50 per liter.This was the seventh consecutive week of fuel price increases.Local oil industry sources said the recent conflict in the Middle East was the main driver of the increases, following attacks on Iran by the United States and Israel.They added that local fuel prices are expected to be volatile in the next few weeks as the market monitors developments. They warned that if this conflict does not settle soon, it could push global oil prices to $100 per barrel. “We have yet to see any clarity on where the latest developments in the Middle East will lead or for how long. Given the current situation, we expect high volatility in oil prices in the near term. In terms of supply, I also believe most oil companies are compliant with the minimum 15-day inventory requirement, and are actually probably closer to 30 days’ worth of stocks,” Jetti Petroleum President Leo Bellas said in an online message. “But if disruption is prolonged, crude oil prices could reach and breach the $100 mark, despite the possibility that countries like China would draw from their reserves to support supply in Asia,” he added.Meanwhile, the Department of Energy also announced that starting next week, it is considering staggering the increase in local fuel prices similar to last year, if they reach a P3-per-liter spike in a single price adjustment. “We have been meeting with local oil companies, and one of the things being considered is staggering the increase in local fuel prices again, just like last year, if the conflict does not de-escalate and price adjustments reach that level, or around P3 per liter. We hope it will not go that far,” Department of Energy-Oil Industry Management Bureau Director Rino Abad said in an online message.Last week, local oil companies increased gasoline prices by P0.60 per liter and diesel prices by P1.20.On a year-to-date basis, gasoline now has a net increase of P6.70 per liter, diesel has a net increase of P9.50, and kerosene has a net increase of P7.50.

- BOC seizes P112M worth of illegal drugs at NAIA (2026-03-02 16:04)

THE Bureau of Customs (BOC) intercepted over P112 million worth of illegal drugs from Malaysia at Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 1.The methamphetamine hydrochloride, or shabu, was concealed inside checked-in luggage brought by a Malaysian on Feb. 28, 2026.According to BOC-NAIA, BOC personnel flagged the passenger for inspection, which led to the discovery of approximately 16.5 kilograms of a white crystalline substance suspected to be shabu. The illegal drugs have an estimated standard price of P112,376,800.Port of NAIA District Collector Yasmin Mapa said the operation was spearheaded by the BOC through its Customs Anti-Illegal Drugs Task Force, in close coordination with the NAIA Inter-Agency Drug Interdiction Task Group (NAIA-IADITG).The suspect was subjected to inquest proceedings for violating Section 4, Article II of Republic Act 9165, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.Customs Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno said the bureau is tightening its watch over all airports and seaports.He noted that recent successful operations prove the agency is working hard to stop illegal goods from entering the country. “Alinsunod sa malinaw na direktiba ni Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. na paigtingin

ang kampanya laban sa ilegal na droga, patuloy nating pinatitibay ang ating pagbabantay sa mga paliparan at pantalan (In line with the clear directive of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to intensify the campaign against illegal drugs, we continue to strengthen our vigilance at airports and seaports),” Nepomuceno said.

- Muntinlupa inaugurates road safety park (2026-03-02 16:03)

THE Muntinlupa City government has inaugurated its Road Safety Park in Tunasan village as part of the city’s 31st Cityhood Anniversary celebration, marking what officials described as a long-term investment in safer and more disciplined road use.Established in partnership with the Department of Transportation, the facility is a learning space where children can learn proper road use through simulations and traffic signage.The park features a mini road network, pedestrian lanes, cycleways, training areas, and road sign installations designed to teach students and young road users the fundamentals of traffic discipline in a controlled environment.“Together with our 31st Cityhood Anniversary, we inaugurated the Muntinlupa Road Safety Park in partnership with the DOTr. This is a dedicated learning space where children can learn the proper use of the road through actual road simulations and traffic signage,” Mayor Ruffy Biazon said.The mayor described the project as personal, recalling that while he was still in Congress in 2019, he filed a proposal to integrate road safety into the basic education curriculum.“I believed then, and I believe even more now, that discipline on the road does not start when getting a driver’s license — it starts while one is still young,” he said.He added that teaching children at an early age about proper road use, respect for traffic laws, and understanding of road signs would help prevent future accidents and tragedies.“Roads are a shared responsibility — whether you are a motorist or a pedestrian,” he said.Biazon said the city immediately proposed the project when funding from the DOTr became available, emphasizing that the park allows children to learn through experience — not only from books but also through actual simulation.Acting Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority General Manager Nicolas Torre III attended the inauguration along with other transport and local officials.Mayor Biazon also thanked advocacy partners AltMobility PH, Commuters 4 Change Convenor, and the Barangay Organization of Persons with Disabilities for their support.

- Senior citizens get nod as Intramuros guides (2026-03-02 16:02)

THE Department of Tourism (DOT), in partnership with the National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC), has implemented the Tourism Legacy and Livelihood Program to train and accredit senior citizens as community tour guides in Intramuros, Manila.The initiative aligns with the government’s inclusive tourism agenda by creating opportunities for senior citizens to join community-based, elderly-friendly tourism programs.Under the program, qualified senior citizens undergo interviews and complete a week-long training, lectures and mock tours before receiving DOT accreditation.As of Feb. 23, the DOT has accredited 15 senior citizen tour guides, including four former overseas Filipino workers who have found renewed purpose in guiding after retirement.Among them is 68-year-old Edgardo “Tatay Ed” Satira, a retired

broadcaster who now shares his passion for history and storytelling with visitors exploring the historic walled city.Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco personally met with the newly accredited guides to hear their experiences and gather insights to enhance the training program. “I’m so impressed by the variety of professions and backgrounds of those that have successfully passed our senior citizens community tour guide training, but even more impressed by the overarching purpose that drives you to be here, not just for leisure, not to address boredom perhaps, but more importantly, to serve our country,” Frasco said.She emphasized that the department’s priority is to create more livelihood and advancement opportunities while recognizing the vital role of tourism workers as keepers of the nation’s stories. “Our priority has been to provide opportunity for advancement, opportunity for livelihood, and to imprint in both our stakeholders as well as our tourists and the Filipino populace in general that our tourism workers matter, for you are the ones who are the repositories of our stories,” she added.The program is part of the DOT’s broader effort to professionalize tour guiding nationwide through accreditation standards and continuous training under the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence initiative.

- DFA maintains alert levels in some parts of the Middle East (2026-03-02 15:04)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on Monday said it is maintaining existing crisis alert levels in at least eight Middle Eastern countries affected by the armed conflict involving Iran, Israel, and the United States.In a statement, the DFA said it has coordinated with Philippine embassies and consulates over the past 72 hours, noting that these posts remain “on the ground and vigilant” in their respective jurisdictions.The department said concerned officials continue to monitor security developments and assess the condition of thousands of Filipinos living and working in the region.The DFA urged Filipinos to heed local authorities and comply with travel advisories as instability persists in several areas.Under the current framework, the highest alert level — Alert Level 4, or mandatory evacuation — remains in effect for Syria, Yemen, and Gaza.At this level, Filipinos are urged to evacuate and join government-led repatriation efforts. Travel to these areas is prohibited.Alert Level 3, which calls for voluntary repatriation, remains in place for Iraq and Lebanon.This designation reflects significant unrest or the threat of imminent external attack. Filipinos in these countries are advised to consider relocating or returning to the Philippines, and nonessential travel is strongly discouraged.Several other areas are under Alert Level 2, or the restriction phase, including Iran, the Kurdish region of Iraq, Israel, and the West Bank.Under this level, Filipinos are advised to shelter in place, avoid high-risk areas, and limit nonessential movement, as embassies activate contingency plans.Jordan remains under Alert Level 1, the precautionary phase, indicating limited or localized threats. Filipinos there are advised to exercise normal caution and avoid affected areas.The department said crisis management teams and contingency plans have been activated as required under each alert level.

- Lone bettor wins ₱17M in Mega Lotto 6/45 draw (2026-03-02 14:22)

MANILA, Philippines — A lone bettor won the ₱17,977,214.41 jackpot prize in the Mega Lotto 6/45 draw on Monday March 2, 2026, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office announced.The winning combination was 12-25-45-40-33-27.According to PCSO, the winning ticket was purchased at a lotto outlet in Rizal province.Meanwhile, no bettor won the Grand Lotto 6/55 jackpot worth ₱45,000,000.00.The winning combination for the 6/55 draw was 05-07-18-33-38-27.

- Marcos continues to monitor Mideast situation; 80 Filipinos from Dubai seek repatriation (2026-03-02 08:01)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. continues to closely monitor developments in the Middle East following the series of airstrikes which occurred over the weekend, Malacañang said on Monday.The Palace gave the assurance as 80 Filipinos in Dubai have requested to be repatriated to the Philippines, the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) said on the same day.In a press conference, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Claire Castro likewise reiterated the president’s directive to concerned government agencies to provide all necessary assistance to Filipinos affected by the hostilities which erupted on Feb. 28, 2026.“President Marcos Jr. directed agencies to continue and intensify monitoring of the situation of Filipinos in affected areas,” she said in Filipino.Marcos also ordered an interagency mobilization to guarantee that Filipinos in the Middle East were properly assisted and supported.Apart from the DMW, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), the Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Information Communications and Technology (DICT) were also tapped to assists Filipinos in need.The DOH would consolidate medical responses, including online medical consultations and psychosocial support services, while the DICT would ensure all telecommunications companies remain online.“Sec[retary]. Henry Aguda gave a directive to ensure that all telcos will do everything to make sure connectivity with OFWs in the Middle East is maintained and instructed the regional offices to provide free connections to anyone who would like to reach out to their family members and loved ones in affected areas," DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac said in the same briefing.80 Filipinos for repatriationCacdac said that the DMW was preparing for the repatriation of at least 80 Filipinos from Dubai but that this could take a while as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) airspace remained closed.“The airspace in Dubai and the airports are closed, we know that there was an attack in Dubai. So, we have preparations in terms of giving the 80 who need repatriation assistance — temporary basic needs assistance and shelters are available. And, then, at an appropriate time they will be evacuated to the country,” Cacdac said in Filipino.The official added to date, the UAE is under Alert Level 2. A mandatory repatriation would only be in place should the alert level is raised to 4.For now, in-country assistance to Filipinos, mostly overseas workers, is being prioritized. They include basic needs such as food, water, and shelter.“We have the necessary funds, an action fund, and the OWWA (Overseas Workers Welfare Administration) funds are ready to provide the necessary basic needs assistance especially to those who have lost their jobs, stopped working or are in a distressful situation,” Cacdac said."We have transport services available onsite for those who

want to—we think they are in a vulnerable area and want to move to another place, we have shelters. Now, the shelters are a combination of the host country-provided shelters, that's also specific to some of the countries mentioned and we have our own Migrant Workers Office or OWWA shelters onsite," he added.

- Manila city govt to cut fuel consumption by 50% (2026-03-02 03:28)

MANILA, Philppines—Manila Mayor Isko Moreno on Monday signed Executive Order 7, which mandates the city government to reduce fuel consumption to 50 percent.In a Facebook live address, Moreno said this move was to anticipate the reduction of fuel supply due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. “The ongoing armed conflict in the Middle East and Operation Epic Fury in full effect will eventually contribute in the significant global oil market volatility, supply disruptions and upward pressure on fuel prices with adverse effects on the national and local economy and the fiscal position of the City of Manila,” Moreno said.Under the EO, city departments and offices were mandated to reduce fuel use for vehicles, generators, heavy equipment, and other fuel-powered machines.

- Second Duterte impeach complaint withdrawn to speed up process, avoid delays — lawmakers (2026-03-02 01:52)

MANILA, Philippines — The second impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte has been withdrawn "in the interest of procedural expediency and to obviate any needless delay," lawmakers who have endorsed it said."We respectfully manifest the withdrawal of our endorsement before the Committee considering that the complainants previously issued a statement on their withdrawal of said complaint on 01 March 2026," Akbayan Rep. Percival Cendaña and Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima said in a March 2 letter to Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro.Cendaña and de Lima, instead, expressed support for the third impeachment complaint, which was filed by, among others, priests and lawyers, and "the contents and import of which are very similar to the" second complaint.

- PAL, Cebu Pacific cancel 10 Middle East flights March 2 (2026-03-02 01:35)

MANILA, Philippines — Local carriers Philippine Airlines (PAL) and Cebu Pacific (CEB) canceled 10 flights scheduled for Monday due to rising tensions in the Middle East.In an advisory, PAL said the cancellations were made to ensure the safety of passengers, crew and ground personnel.PAL flights PR 684 Manila-Doha, PR 685 Doha-Manila, PR 658/659 Manila-Dubai-Manila, and PR654/655 Manila-Riyadh-Manila were cancelled.CEB cancelled flights 5J 14/15 and 5J 18/19 Manila-Dubai-Manila."The safety and well-being of our passengers, crew, and teams on ground remain our highest priority," CEB said in an advisory.Free rebooking and travel fund options are available for CEB passengers.Refund and rebooking options are offered to PAL passengers.Meanwhile, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines said Sunday it was closely monitoring flight operations following heightened tensions in the Middle East. “We are closely monitoring the situation in the Middle East and are in constant coordination with airlines, airport authorities, and international aviation partners," CAAP Director General Raul del

Rosario said.

- Venezuela opposition leader Machado to return in coming weeks (2026-03-02 01:28)

CARACAS, Venezuela — Venezuelan opposition leader and winner of the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize María Corina Machado said on Sunday that she will return to Venezuela in the coming weeks and that elections will be held in the South American country.Machado did not set a date for her return but said that one of the objectives will be to prepare "for a new and gigantic electoral victory." In a message shared on social media, the politician called on her supporters to "strengthen the unity of Venezuelans that began with the primaries," a reference to the 2023 process in which she won the vote aimed at establishing a single candidate to compete at the polls against former President Nicolás Maduro.Acting President Delcy Rodríguez – in power since Maduro and his wife were captured in a U.S. military operation in January — has warned that Machado "will have to answer" if she returns to the country.U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said that change in Venezuela must go through phases of stabilization, economic recovery and transition. He has not indicated that elections could be held in the short term.The 58-year-old politician, a key figure in the Venezuelan opposition, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize last year for her fight for democratic transition in Venezuela.She controversially later presented her medal to US President Donald Trump after the military intervention that deposited Maduro, who now faces drug-trafficking-related charges in US courts. He has pleaded not guilty.After Maduro was declared the victor of the July 2024 elections, protests erupted which sparked widespread repression. The opposition claimed it had credible evidence that the real winner was Edmundo González, who replaced Machado after she was barred from participating.

- Philippine Cardinal urges prayers for peace (2026-03-02 01:10)

MANILA, Philippines—A Cardinal urged Filipinos to pray for peace amidst the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.In a statement on Sunday, Manila Archbishop Cardinal Jose Advincula implored the faithful to pray for those who face adversity due to the war."We pray for those who suffer because of the scourge of war that peace may be granted to them soon, and may every people live in tranquility and freedom," the statement reads.On February 28, the United States and Israel launched an attack on Iran, which led to the death of Iran's Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

- No winner in Ultra lotto 6/58, Super lotto 6/49 draws for March 1 (2026-03-02 01:06)

MANILA, Philippines — There were no winners in the Ultra lotto 6/58 and Super lotto 6/49 draws on Sunday night, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said.The winning combination for Ultra lotto 6/58 was 33-57-47-07-31-23 which had a jackpot prize of P75,000,000.There was also no winner for the Super lotto 6/49 draw, which a adcombination of 19-23-06-17-12-37 for a jackpot prize of P79,105,520.2.