



# PHILIPPINES SECURITY ANALYSIS REPORT

## AI-Assisted Open Source Intelligence Assessment

Analysis Period: March 05, 2026 - March 12, 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

- [Over 60k people have registered for 2026 BSKE, BARMM polls - Comelec](#) (2026-03-12 05:50)

The number of Filipinos who registered to vote for the 2026 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections (BSKE) and the first-ever parliamentary elections in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) has soared to over 60,000, according to the latest data from the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

- [ACT opposes DepEd '4+1' learning plan, calls for greater classroom funding](#) (2026-03-12 05:45)

The Alliance of Concerned Teachers Philippines (ACT) on Thursday opposed the proposed “4+1” blended learning model of the Department of Education (Philippines), saying the plan would not solve the country’s worsening classroom shortage and could instead shift the burden to students, families, and teachers.

- [Estrada camp questions PHDO before Manila court](#) (2026-03-12 05:23)

Senator Jinggoy Estrada has asked a Manila court to lift the precautionary hold departure order (PHDO) issued against him amid the plunder complaint he is facing with the Department of Justice, with his spokesperson saying that he is not a flight risk.

- [Lawmaker pushes for P7K monthly subsidy for low income sectors](#) (2026-03-12 05:12)

Lawmaker pushes for P7K monthly subsidy for low income sectors

- [DOE: Sale of petroleum in fuel-grade drums allowed for legit use](#) (2026-03-12 04:54)

The Department of Energy (DOE) on Thursday said the sale of petroleum products in fuel-grade drums or containers is allowed for “legitimate operational use.”

- [Atin Ito to hold 4th West Philippine Sea civilian mission in April](#) (2026-03-12 04:06)

Atin Ito to hold 4th West Philippine Sea civilian mission in April

- [LOOK: Jinggoy Estrada arrives at DOJ for flood control mess probe](#) (2026-03-12 03:55)

Senator Jinggoy Estrada arrived Thursday at the Department of Justice (DOJ) for the preliminary investigation on the plunder complaint filed against him and others in connection with the questionable flood control projects.

- [Baligod, ex-Marines face NBI for probe into cash delivery claims](#) (2026-03-12 03:10)

Lawyer Levito Baligod and the alleged former Marines who claimed to deliver cash from former lawmaker Zaldy Co to various public officials appeared before the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on Thursday.

- [Marcos back in PH after 'productive' working visit in New York](#) (2026-03-12 02:13)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. is back in the Philippines after a "very productive" working visit in New York, United States.

- [Diokno asks House panel to take custody of Madriaga pending VP Sara impeach proceedings](#) (2026-03-12 02:12)

Diokno asks House panel to take custody of Madriaga pending VP Sara impeach proceedings

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(March 12, 2026\)](#) (2026-03-12 01:19)

LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East (March 12, 2026)

- [Sandiganbayan junks appeal of ex-DOE execs vs Malampaya scam graft raps](#) (2026-03-11 17:34)

The Sandiganbayan Third Division on Wednesday denied the motion for reconsideration filed by several former Department of Energy (DOE) officials that sought to dismiss the graft case against them in connection with the Malampaya fund scam.

- [PNP: Energy-saving initiatives won't affect police operations](#) (2026-03-11 17:04)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Wednesday vowed that its police operations and frontline services won't be affected by its energy conservation measures due to recent surges in oil prices.

- [SSS launches online facial verification for pensioners" confirmation](#) (2026-03-11 15:03)

The Social Security System (SSS) has launched an online facial verification portal to allow pensioners to comply with the Annual Confirmation of Pensioners (ACOP) requirement without having to visit SSS branches.

- [Cardinal David asks, Is PH tax system fair, serve human dignity?](#) (2026-03-11 15:00)

Kalookan Bishop Pablo Virgilio Cardinal David on Wednesday said the Philippine government should ensure that the burden of the country's tax system is distributed fairly among taxpayers and used for the common good as the armed conflict in the Middle East affect the livelihood of thousands of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs).

- [No jackpot winners for March 11 major lotto draws, says PCSO](#) (2026-03-11 14:22)

No one won the jackpot prizes in the major lotto draws of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) on Wednesday, March 11.

- [Vice President Sara Duterte criticizes use of son's photo for fake news](#) (2026-03-11 13:45)

Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday called out the unauthorized use of her minor son's photo for spreading false information.

- [San Pedro College-Davao City grad tops medical technologists licensure exam](#) (2026-03-11 12:48)

A graduate of San Pedro College-Davao City achieved the top score in the licensure examination for medical technologists given earlier this month.

- [NBI: No record of flight with Zaldy Co as claimed by ex-Marine](#) (2026-03-11 12:42)

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) reported that air taxi flight logs show no record of former lawmaker Zaldy Co and a former Marine making a trip to deliver cash to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s residence in Ilocos Norte.

- [Some gas stations could close due to lack of diesel; PUV drivers feel pinch of higher fuel cost](#) (2026-03-11 12:38)

On the second day of the mega price hike, some gasoline stations are facing another blow due to the limited diesel supply as drivers of public vehicles complain of the higher price of fuel.

- [Vegetable price hike looms as rising fuel costs may force farmers to stop harvests](#) (2026-03-11 12:37)

Amid recent oil price surges, prices of vegetables may also increase if farmers halt their harvests of produce due to rising fuel costs.

- [House bill allowing Marcos to suspend excise tax OKd on 2nd reading](#) (2026-03-11 11:53)

The House of Representatives on Wednesday approved on second reading a bill granting emergency powers to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to suspend or cut excise tax on fuel amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

- [Duterte's supporters, critics stage rallies, 1 year after ICC arrest](#) (2026-03-11 11:19)

Human rights groups and supporters of former President Rodrigo Duterte held separate protest actions Wednesday on the first anniversary of his arrest and detention at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, Netherlands.

- [Sotto: Senate to push back passage of IPC bill](#) (2026-03-11 10:49)

Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III on Wednesday admitted that the Senate will not be able to pass the bill creating the powerful Independent People's Commission (IPC) before the Senate suspends session next week.

- [VP Sara's lawyers enter appearance on impeachment proceedings](#) (2026-03-11 10:48)

The Fortun Narvasa & Salazar law office and other lawyers have entered their appearance as counsel for Vice President Sara Duterte in the impeachment proceedings in the House Justice panel.

- [Comelec facing 'complications' in Marcoleta's case -- Garcia](#) (2026-03-11 10:33)

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) on Wednesday said it is facing “complications” in resolving the case involving Senator Rodante Marcoleta's May 2025 statement of contributions and expenditures (SOCE) after the Office of the Ombudsman referred a related complaint on the same issue.

- [VP Sara slams gov't 'lack of preparation' for Middle East conflict fallout](#) (2026-03-11 10:23)

Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday criticized the administration of President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. for what she described as a lack of preparation for the possible

impacts of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

- [Too early to say when current US-Israel-Iran conflict will ease, say analysts](#) (2026-03-11 10:22)

Analysts say it is too early to say that the conflict involving the US, Israel, and Iran is nearing its end, urging a “wait and see” approach amid hostilities across parts of the Middle East.

- [Higher cigarette taxes, larger warnings may push 5.5M Filipinos to quit smoking - study](#) (2026-03-11 10:15)

A new study suggests that increasing cigarette taxes and expanding graphic health warnings on cigarette packs could encourage millions of Filipinos to quit smoking.

- [Senate passes bill to protect rights of persons with autism](#) (2026-03-11 09:45)

The Senate has unanimously approved on third and final reading a measure which establishes a national plan to improve care, services, and inclusion for persons with autism spectrum disorder.

- [NBI subpoenas bishop who witnessed affidavit of 18-ex Marines](#) (2026-03-11 09:17)

National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Director Melvin Matibag on Wednesday said the bureau issued a subpoena to Bishop Efraim Tendero, who witnessed the affidavit of the 18 alleged former Marines.

- [Comelec expects 65% voter turnout for Antipolo special polls on March 14](#) (2026-03-11 09:10)

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) said Wednesday it is expecting a high voter turnout for the March 14 special elections in the second district of Antipolo City.

- [Senate panel OKs 'in principle' emergency powers for Marcos on fuel excise taxes](#) (2026-03-11 09:02)

The Senate Committee on Ways and Means on Wednesday approved “in principle” the proposals allowing President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. to suspend or reduce excise tax on fuel amid escalating tensions in the Middle East.

- [ERC: 'Full impact' of Middle East conflict on electricity prices to be felt April, May](#) (2026-03-11 08:59)

Electricity consumers in the country should brace for the “full impact” of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East on power bills in the coming months, the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) said Wednesday.

- [SC upholds DOJ circular raising standards of evidence](#) (2026-03-11 08:48)

The Supreme Court (SC) has upheld the validity of a circular of the Department of Justice (DOJ) that raised the standards of evidence in preliminary investigations and inquest proceedings.

- [CA panel refers reso on removal of Marcoleta's 'give-up' Kalayaan remark to other committee](#) (2026-03-11 08:32)

The Commission on Appointments" (CA) committee on national defense has referred to another panel a resolution seeking action over remarks by a lawmaker suggesting that the Philippines should give up the Municipality of Kalayaan in Palawan.

- [Sotto backs work-from-home option for some Senate staff](#) (2026-03-11 05:22)

Senate President Vicente Sotto III on Wednesday expressed support for allowing some Senate employees to work from home as part of efforts to conserve energy amid tensions in the Middle East.

- [BuCor denies scabies outbreak at NBP, other prison and penal farms](#) (2026-03-11 04:58)

The Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) on Wednesday denied that there is a scabies outbreak in the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) or any other prison and penal farm nationwide.

- [UV Express drivers' alliance urges provisional fare hikes for all PUVs](#) (2026-03-11 04:58)

An alliance of UV Express drivers on Wednesday called for provisional fare increases for all types of public utility vehicles (PUVs) amid rising pump prices triggered by the escalating conflict in the Middle East.

- [Marcos orders release of P5K fuel subsidy for public transport drivers](#) (2026-03-11 04:39)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. ordered the immediate distribution of P5,000 fuel subsidy for public transport drivers affected by the oil price hike due to the tension in the Middle East.

- [Marcos says PH has edge in bid for UN Security Council seat](#) (2026-03-11 03:54)

Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday (Manila time) expressed confidence that the Philippines has an advantage in its bid for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

- [Año: PH will not be involved in Middle East conflict](#) (2026-03-11 03:38)

National Security Adviser Eduardo Año on Wednesday assured the public that the country will not be involved in the conflict in the Middle East, adding that Iran's missiles will not be able to reach the Philippines.

- [DepEd mulls '4+1' blended learning model to ease classroom congestion](#) (2026-03-11 02:58)

The Department of Education (DepEd) is considering to implement a "4+1" blended learning model--four days of in-person classes and one day of online learning--to help decongest classrooms amid a daunting infrastructure shortage.

- [Año files cyberlibel, perjury complaint vs. 18 'ex-Marines,' Baligod](#) (2026-03-11 02:52)

A week after filing his first complaint, National Security Adviser Eduardo Año on Wednesday filed a cyberlibel and perjury complaint against the 18 alleged former Marines and lawyer Levito Baligod for implicating him in the controversy over alleged cash deliveries from former lawmaker Zaldy Co.

- [When Rodrigo Duterte was arrested for crimes against humanity](#) (2026-03-11 02:21)

March 11, 2025, began with anticipation of what would happen in the next several hours as talk grew louder about a warrant of arrest issued by the International Criminal Court, set to be served on former President Rodrigo Duterte. He had traveled with loved ones to Hong Kong a few days earlier for a thanksgiving event with overseas Filipino workers, and even told his audience about the news he had received.

- [VP Sara calls for vigilance on dad Rodrigo's arrest anniversary](#) (2026-03-11 01:55)

On the first year since the arrest and transfer of former president Rodrigo Duterte to The Hague, Vice President Sara Duterte urged the people to remain vigilant against any attempt to bend the law for political gains.

- [Marcos: PH continues coordination with Portugal to bring Zaldy Co home](#) (2026-03-11 01:23)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. said Wednesday (Manila Time) that the government continues its coordination with Portuguese authorities to bring former lawmaker Zaldy Co back to the Philippines.

- [Marcos on ICI: Their brief has been fulfilled](#) (2026-03-11 01:01)

"Their brief has already been fulfilled." This was the response of President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. when asked about what would happen to the Independent Commission for Infrastructure, the body tasked to investigate anomalous flood control projects.

- [PH oil supply in 'good shape' amid Middle East conflict --Marcos](#) (2026-03-11 00:29)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Wednesday (Manila time) said that the Philippines' oil supply is in good shape amid the continuing tension in the Middle East.

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(March 11, 2026\)](#) (2026-03-10 23:02)

Conflict in the Middle East (March 10, 2026)

- [2K jobs expected with medical gloves factory investment, says Marcos](#) (2026-03-10 18:10)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said the planned investment of the US Medical Glove Company (USMGC) in the Philippines could create 2,000 jobs for Filipinos.

- [Marcos to UN: PH is a voice for principled peace](#) (2026-03-10 16:17)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday made a personal pitch for the Philippines' candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations (UN) Security Council, saying the country is ready to contribute as a voice of balance among the world's nations and as a "voice for principled peace."

- [PCSO: No jackpot winners for Mar. 10 major lotto draws](#) (2026-03-10 14:34)

No one hit the jackpot prizes in the major lotto draws of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) on Tuesday, March 10.

- [Baguio, far-flung areas hit by higher fuel prices](#) (2026-03-10 14:03)

Diesel prices have climbed to around P90 per liter in Baguio City and other places across the country, as far-flung areas usually have higher cost when it comes to petroleum products.

- [Ombudsman to seek writs to place Revilla, Discaya properties under court custody](#) (2026-03-10 13:38)

The Office of the Ombudsman will request writs of preliminary attachment to place the properties of former Senator Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr. and contractor Sarah Discaya under the custody of the courts hearing the cases against them.

- [Some jeepney drivers stop plying routes due to high fuel prices](#) (2026-03-10 13:05)

Some public utility jeepney drivers have decided to stop plying routes due to the mega price hike on fuel products that took effect on Tuesday.

- [CPJ backs Filipino journalist vs Chinese Embassy online attacks](#) (2026-03-10 12:19)

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) on Monday called on the Chinese Embassy in the Philippines to stop its online attacks targeting a Filipino investigative journalist and questioning the credibility and independence of her news outlet.

- [Shift to online classes amid oil crisis not viable for public schools -- Gatchalian](#) (2026-03-10 11:08)

Senator Sherwin Gatchalian on Tuesday emphasized that it would not be feasible to shift to online classes, especially in public schools, amid soaring fuel prices resulting from the Middle East conflict.

- [Australian travel advice: Terror risk may escalate amid Middle East crisis](#) (2026-03-10 10:54)

Australia on Tuesday updated its travel advisory for the Philippines, warning that the risk of terrorism could spill over to other countries due to heightened tensions in the Middle East.

- [TIEZA wants travel tax abolition pushed to January 2027](#) (2026-03-10 10:35)

The Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) on Tuesday asked lawmakers to set the proposed abolition of the travel tax starting January 2027.

- [LRT shifts to 4-day on-site work to save energy](#) (2026-03-10 10:34)

The Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) has adopted a four-day on-site work arrangement in support of the government's efforts to conserve energy amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle

East.

- [Sandiganbayan denies bail bids of Zaldy Co's co-accused in flood control mess case](#) (2026-03-10 09:54)

The Sandiganbayan has denied the petition for bail of nine ex-officials of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) who are facing malversation charges along with ex-Ako Bicol Party-list Rep. Zaldy Co over an alleged substandard P289 million flood control project in Oriental Mindoro.

- [WPS operational data, modernization plans leaked by spies --PH Navy](#) (2026-03-10 09:53)

Operational data for the West Philippine Sea as well modernization plans were among the information compromised in espionage involving some Filipinos, the Philippine Navy said Tuesday.

- [Health experts push controls on sugary foods, drinks](#) (2026-03-10 09:46)

Health experts on Tuesday called for stronger measures to limit the consumption of sugary foods and beverages as part of efforts to curb rising obesity rates in the Philippines.

- [Lacson says Marcoleta 'obsessed' with defending China](#) (2026-03-10 09:30)

Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo "Ping" Lacson on Tuesday slammed Senator Rodante Marcoleta for the latter's supposed "ego-driven provocations," alleging that he has become "obsessed" in defending China.

- [House OKs bill postponing BARMM polls to Sept. 2026 on final reading](#) (2026-03-10 09:20)

The House of Representatives has approved the bill postponing the first-ever elections in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) to the second Monday of September this year.

- [DOF employees to work from home on Fridays](#) (2026-03-10 09:07)

The Department of Finance (DOF) on Tuesday ensured the continuous delivery of public service even with the adoption of special work arrangements in line with the government's energy conservation efforts amid the global uncertainties.

- [Suntay faces colleagues in House ethics panel hearing over Anne Curtis comments](#) (2026-03-10 09:02)

Quezon City 4th District Rep. Jesus “Bong” Suntay on Tuesday faced his fellow lawmakers before the House committee on ethics hearing over his statements concerning actress Anne Curtis.

- [DepEd taps LGUs to help close 165,000-classroom gap](#) (2026-03-10 08:03)

The Department of Education (Philippines) is seeking the help of local government units (LGUs) to address the country's 165,000-classroom shortage as Education Secretary Sonny Angara urged more than 1,300 municipal mayors to accelerate school construction through faster and more flexible building programs.

- [Navy: WPS ops unaffected by oil crisis amid Middle East crisis](#) (2026-03-10 07:43)

The Armed Forces of the Philippines' operations in the disputed West Philippine Sea are unaffected even with the surge in fuel prices due to the tensions in the Middle East, the Philippine Navy said on Tuesday.

- [DepEd refines Lifelong Learning Law to count work, life skills for school credits](#) (2026-03-10 07:33)

The Department of Education (DepEd) is refining the implementing rules of the country's Lifelong Learning Development Framework (LLDF) Act to allow Filipinos to convert skills gained from work and community training into formal education credits and certifications.

- [Imee urges Executive to reveal all details on Rodrigo Duterte arrest](#) (2026-03-10 07:17)

Senator Imee Marcos on Tuesday filed a resolution, calling on the Executive department to fully disclose all communications and directives in its cooperation with the International Criminal Court (ICC) in relation to the arrest of former president Rodrigo Duterte.

- [DBM: Calamity fund can cover fuel subsidies amid oil hike](#) (2026-03-10 05:42)

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) on Tuesday said a portion of the P39.8-billion calamity fund under the 2026 national budget can be used to provide fuel subsidies to affected sectors amid rising fuel prices caused by the Middle East conflict.

- [House panel OKs bill allowing Marcos to suspend or cut excise tax on fuel](#) (2026-03-10 05:25)

The House ways and means panel on Tuesday approved an unnumbered substitute bill allowing

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos, Jr. to suspend or reduce excise tax on fuel amid the conflict between the US-Israel forces and Iran.

- [PhilHealth: Frontline services uninterrupted amid 4-day workweek](#) (2026-03-10 05:14)

Frontline and hospital services will remain uninterrupted despite the adjusted work arrangements of government agencies to conserve energy, the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) said on Tuesday.

- [Customs remits P102.5M from Discaya car auctions to Treasury](#) (2026-03-10 05:02)

The Bureau of Customs (BOC) has turned over more than P102 million in proceeds from public auctions of seized vehicles linked to contractors Sarah and Curlee Discaya to the Bureau of Treasury.

- [UN's Guterres sends well wishes for PH's UN Security Council bid](#) (2026-03-10 03:50)

United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres wished the Philippines good luck in campaigning for the Philippines' bid for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

- [Jinggoy asks court OK for trip abroad amid graft case](#) (2026-03-10 03:40)

Senator Jinggoy Estrada has asked the Sandiganbayan to allow him to travel to Hong Kong, Macau, and Japan while the court is still resolving the 11 graft charges filed against him over the alleged misuse of his Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF) during his previous term as senator.

- [Speaker Dy: House to prioritize bills for relief amid rising fuel prices](#) (2026-03-10 03:37)

Speaker Faustino "Bojie" Dy III vowed Tuesday to prioritize the passage of bills that would protect the public from the impact of soaring fuel prices amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

- [Comelec will not adopt 4-day workweek amid poll preparations](#) (2026-03-10 03:25)

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) will not adopt the four-day workweek due to the ongoing preparations for three elections scheduled for this year.

- [Malacañang says no need for panic buying amid Middle East crisis](#) (2026-03-10 02:36)

Malacañang on Tuesday allayed fears regarding the impact of the Middle East crisis on the

country's supply of fuel and basic consumer goods, saying there is no reason for the Filipino public to panic buy at retail outlets.

- [30 Chinese ships spotted in WPS in early March -- PH Navy](#) (2026-03-10 02:20)

The Philippine Navy on Tuesday said 30 Chinese ships were spotted near some features in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) in early March.

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(March 10, 2026\)](#) (2026-03-10 00:38)

LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East (March 10, 2026)

- [Marcos awaits report on power to cut oil excise tax before certifying it urgent](#) (2026-03-10 00:10)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. will wait for the committee report on the proposed measures seeking to give him emergency powers to reduce excise tax on oil products amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East before certifying it as urgent.

- [Marcos meets with UN's Guterres during New York visit](#) (2026-03-09 21:02)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday met with United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres to tackle various issues, including the Philippines' bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

- [Palace: Marcos still not keen on having PH rejoin ICC](#) (2026-03-09 20:49)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is still not inclined to have the Philippines rejoin the International Criminal Court (ICC) despite the appeals of some opposition lawmakers for the country to do so.

- [DSWD vows continuous aid services amid 4-day work week](#) (2026-03-09 20:16)

Even as government agencies began observing a four-day work week, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on Monday assured the public of the continuous delivery of services and assistance for Filipinos in need.

- [PNP rolls out security for Filipinos' safety during summer break](#) (2026-03-09 19:20)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Monday vowed to ensure the safe travels of Filipinos during the summer break as it launched its "Ligtas SUMVAC 2026," a nationwide security

operation from March 29 to May 31, 2026.

- [Marcos to UN body: Educating women strengthens families, nations](#) (2026-03-09 16:28)

Educating women should be a priority for every country, as it strengthens families and nations, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said on Monday as he paid tribute to Filipino women as the “cornerstone of nation-building.”

- [AFP: Chinese national handled 3 alleged Filipino spies](#) (2026-03-09 14:41)

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has identified the handler of the three Filipinos who were recently arrested for their alleged involvement in foreign-backed spy activities.

- [DOST to enforce 4-day workweek for energy conservation](#) (2026-03-09 14:18)

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) on Monday announced it will implement a four-day workweek as part of government's energy conservation efforts amid the continuous conflict in the Middle East.

- [De Lima: VP Sara's 'silence' on allies' recent remarks about women speaks volumes](#) (2026-03-09 14:17)

"Ang hindi natin gets ay kung bakit si VP Sara ay naaatim na manahimik kahit inaalipusta na ang mga babaeng gaya niya," Rep. Leila De Lima said.

- [Negros Occidental bettor wins P45M jackpot in Grand Lotto 6/55](#) (2026-03-09 14:16)

A bettor who bought a ticket in Negros Occidental won the jackpot prize in Monday night's Grand Lotto 6/55 draw, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said.

- [Marcoleta questions Lacson for not probing cash delivery claims of 'ex-Marines'](#) (2026-03-09 13:37)

Senator Rodante Marcoleta on Monday questioned Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo Lacson on why the Blue Ribbon Committee did not hold a hearing on the claims of the 18 alleged former Marines, who claimed to have delivered suitcases of cash from former Congressman Zaldy Co to various government officials.

- [DOJ implements 4-day onsite workweek amid oil price spike](#) (2026-03-09 11:46)

Department of Justice (DOJ) Secretary Fredderick Vida has ordered the agency to implement a

four-day on-site workweek as part of its energy conservation efforts amid rising oil prices driven by the conflict in the Middle East.

- [DOF shifts to 4-day on-site workweek to save energy](#) (2026-03-09 11:43)

The Department of Finance (DOF) on Monday announced a four-day on-site workweek as part of the government's energy conservation efforts amid the conflict in the Middle East.

- [Sandro Marcos wants to find out effectiveness of flexible work hours in gov't offices](#) (2026-03-09 11:37)

House Majority Leader and Ilocos Norte 1st District Rep. Ferdinand Alexander “Sandro” Marcos has sought a congressional inquiry into the effectiveness of implementing flexible work hours in government offices.

- [NUP: We won't back a weak impeachment complaint vs. VP Sara](#) (2026-03-09 11:30)

The National Unity Party (NUP) on Monday said it won't support a weak impeachment case against Vice President Sara Duterte.

- [Risa Hontiveros questions 'delay' in endorsing cancellation of Joseph Sy's birth certificate](#) (2026-03-09 10:31)

Senator Risa Hontiveros on Monday questioned the time it took for the Philippine Statistics Office to endorse the cancellation of the birth certificate it issued to businessman Joseph Sy.

- [PNP gears up for March 11 protests marking 1st year of Duterte's arrest](#) (2026-03-09 09:58)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) is preparing for protests on Wednesday, March 11, which marks one year since former President Rodrigo Duterte was arrested on orders by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity.

- [Senate OKs bill abolishing Optical Media Board](#) (2026-03-09 09:52)

The Senate on Monday approved on third and final reading a measure seeking to abolish the Optical Media Board (OMB) and transfer its powers and functions to the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPPL).

- [NTC ensures compliance with Marcos' free calls order for Middle East OFWs](#) (2026-03-09 09:31)

The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) on Monday ensured the swift and full compliance of telecommunication companies to the directive of President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. to provide free communication services for overseas Filipino workers in the Middle East.

- [Cops deployed to markets to prevent profiteering, hoarding incidents](#) (2026-03-09 09:14)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has intensified its police visibility in local markets, groceries, and commercial centers to prevent incidents of hoarding and profiteering as the tensions in the Middle East affected oil prices, which in turn are impacting the prices of basic goods.

- [BuCor's Catapang files perjury, cyberlibel complaints vs 18 alleged ex-Marines, Baligod](#) (2026-03-09 09:00)

Bureau of Corrections Director General Gregorio Catapang Jr. on Monday filed perjury and cyber libel complaints against the 18 alleged former Philippine Marines and their legal counsel, Levi Baligod.

- [Palace defends Marcos' trip to US amid Middle East tension](#) (2026-03-09 08:33)

Malacañang on Monday defended the working visit of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. to the United States amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, which is affecting oil prices in the Philippines.

- [BOC to inspect oil depots, monitor fuel imports vs hoarding](#) (2026-03-09 08:22)

The Bureau of Customs (BOC) will inspect oil depots and monitor fuel importations to prevent hoarding and supply manipulation as tensions in the Middle East raise concerns about possible disruptions in global oil supply.

- [PH can't cap pump prices due to deregulation law, DOE says](#) (2026-03-09 07:34)

With pump prices posting a record weekly increase, the Department of Energy (DOE) on Monday said it has no authority to impose a cap due to the Oil Deregulation Law.

- [House panel OKs bill scrapping travel tax](#) (2026-03-09 06:12)

The bill to abolish the travel tax moved forward another stage in the House of Representatives on Monday after the House ways and means panel approved the unnumbered substitute bill,

endorsing it for plenary debates.

- [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' destabil 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 Bicol 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 Bicol 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. Discaya, 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 Suintay over Anne Curtis remark](#) (2026-03-05 03:05)

Women's rights advocates on Thursday filed an ethics complaint against Quezon City Rep. Bong Suintay 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.

## Source: PhilStar Global

- [Probe on vs gas stations raising prices 50% above caps](#) (2026-03-12 04:53)

The Department of Energy is investigating about 500 complaints against gas stations for possible fuel price violations.

- [Fishing hub in Lake Lanao aims to boost aquaculture industry, Marawi recovery efforts](#) (2026-03-12 03:35)

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) announced it has commenced work to develop an Integrated Cold Hub Complex in Marawi City, aiming to harness the riches of Lake Lanao and boost the livelihood of local fishers.

- [Fuel price hikes seen to hurt MSMEs most](#) (2026-03-12 02:42)

Even small increases in energy and logistics costs can threaten the viability of MSMEs, the chamber says.

- [4 ex-cops wanted for robbery nabbed](#) (2026-03-11 16:00)

Four of the eight dismissed police officers accused of robbing a retired teacher have been arrested in Imus, Cavite.

- [Final monsoon strength felt tomorrow; cooler weather seen](#) (2026-03-11 16:00)

Strong winds brought by the final strength of the northeast monso

- [Comelec ready for Antipolo special polls](#) (2026-03-11 16:00)

Preparations for the conduct of a special election in the second legislative district of Antipolo City are proceeding smoothly, with no major challenges reported so far, the Commission on Elections said yesterday.

- [Bomb threat disrupts classes in UP-Baguio](#) (2026-03-11 16:00)

A bomb threat disrupted classes at the University of the Philippines in this city yesterday, prompting students, workers and faculty members to evacuate.

- [P5.9 billion shabu found in abandoned boat](#) (2026-03-11 16:00)

Shabu with an estimated street value of P5.9 billion was found in an abandoned speedboat in Paluan, Occidental Mindoro on Monday, according to the Philippine Army.

- [Graft raps filed vs Mindoro lawmaker](#) (2026-03-11 16:00)

A graft complaint has been filed before the Office of the Ombudsman against Rep. Leody Tarruela of the lone district of Occidental Mindoro for allegedly receiving kickbacks from contractors of anomalous projects implemented in the province.

- [5 killed in Cebu road mishaps](#) (2026-03-11 16:00)

Five people were killed while two others were injured in separate collisions involving motorcycles and wing vans in Cebu on Tuesday.

- [Skyway Project 3 done by 2027 – DPWH](#) (2026-03-11 16:00)

After six years of delay, the Metro Manila Skyway Stage 3 Project-Section 2A in Pandacan, Manila will be completed by the first quarter of 2027, Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon said yesterday.

- [Shorter workweek to reduce traffic congestion – Zamora](#) (2026-03-11 16:00)

Traffic congestion in Metro Manila will be reduced by the four-day workweek arrangement, San Juan Mayor Francis Zamora said on Tuesday.

- [DILG probes VIP treatment for Revilla](#) (2026-03-11 16:00)

The Department of the Interior and Local Government has launched an investigation into allegations that former senator Ramon Revilla Jr. is getting special treatment at the Quezon City Jail.

- [BARMM peace process takes center stage as Palace expands global partnerships](#) (2026-03-11 06:00)

Malacanang has intensified efforts to expand global partnerships as the Office of the Special Assistant to the President (OSAP), through the Inter-Cabinet Cluster Mechanism on Normalization (ICCMN), engaged the Philippine Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York for coordinated efforts in implementing the Bangsamoro comprehensive agreement and the peace process.

- [2 bodies found in torched car](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

Two charred bodies were found in a vehicle torched by unidentified men in Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija on Monday.

- [Marantan assumes Calabarzon police post](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

A day after his appointment, Highway Patrol Group director Brig. Gen. Hanzel Marantan yesterday assumed as acting chief of the Calabarzon police.

- [Extreme rain, shrinking green spaces blamed for Cebu flooding](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

Extreme rainfall and fully saturated ground caused the massive flooding during the onslaught of Typhoon Tino in Central Visayas, particularly in Cebu City last year, according to a study conducted by the University of the Philippines.

- [Mindoro substandard flood control project: Former DPWH execs' bail pleadings junked](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

The Sandiganbayan has denied the petitions for bail filed by nine former officials of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in Mimaropa region in connection with a malversation case involving a P289.5-million substandard flood control project in Oriental

Mindoro.

- [Another suspect in student's hazing death surrenders](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

Another member of the Tau Gamma Phi fraternity has surrendered to police in connection with a hazing incident that resulted in the death of a freshman maritime student.

- [90-day suspension of Porac mayor starts](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

The mayor of Porac in Pampanga on Monday started serving the 90-day suspension imposed against him by a local court for allowing the operation of a Philippine offshore gaming operator or POGO hub in his jurisdiction.

- [BOC remits P102 million from Discaya car auctions](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

Over P102 million collected from the auctions of nine luxury cars of the detained Discaya contractors have been turned over by the Bureau of Customs (BOC) to the Bureau of the Treasury.

- [Comelec opts out of 4-day workweek](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

The Commission on Elections will not enforce a four-day workweek, Comelec Chairman George Garcia announced yesterday.

- [More LGUs adopt shorter work days](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

Following a directive from President Marcos to adopt energy-saving protocols amid soaring oil prices, several local government units in Metro Manila have implemented a four-day workweek schedule and other power conservation measures. In Quezon City, the local government said it would adopt a four-day workweek to conserve energy.

- [Jinggoy seeks travel permit; DOJ opposes](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada has asked the Sandiganbayan to allow him to travel abroad despite the 11 graft charges filed against him.

- [Another suspect in student's hazing death surrenders](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

Another member of the Tau Gamma Phi fraternity has surrendered to police in connection with a hazing incident that resulted in the death of a freshman maritime student.

- [2 estranged Basilan political leaders reunite](#) (2026-03-10 11:14)

Political leaders in the Bangsamoro region welcomed the reconciliation of two influential figures in Basilan, Gov. Mujiv Hataman and Lamitan City Mayor Roderick Furigay, after their political differences during the May 12, 2025 elections.

- [LGUs adopt 4-day workweek](#) (2026-03-09 16:00)

Beginning yesterday, the provinces of Basilan and Bohol as well as some cities and towns in Negros Occidental and Pangasinan adopted a four-day weekly work schedule, in response to the national government's initiative to promote energy efficiency amid rising oil prices due to the conflict in the Middle East.

- [Bong Go visits, aids fire victims in Davao City](#) (2026-03-09 16:00)

Sen. Bong Go visited families displaced by a fire in Lower Dampa in Barangay Magtuod, Davao City on Saturday, and distributed relief items and cash aid to 89 families.

- [PSA: Cancel mining exec's birth certificate](#) (2026-03-09 16:00)

The Philippine Statistics Authority has recommended the cancellation of the birth certificate of mining executive Joseph Sy after a three-month delay that drew sharp rebukes from lawmakers.

- [Marina OKs 20% ferry fare hike](#) (2026-03-09 16:00)

As the crisis in the Middle East continues to affect the supply and price of oil, the Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) has allowed shipping companies to increase their passenger fare rates by a maximum of 20 percent.

- [6 Tau Gamma members surrender, charged](#) (2026-03-09 16:00)

Six members of the Tau Gamma Phi fraternity have surrendered to police in connection with the hazing that led to the death of 19-year-old maritime student Mark Kenneth Alcedo in Cavite on March 1. Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla said four of the suspects – John Lee Tuliao, Archie Rosil, Kenneth Ompod and John Rey Torrecampo – voluntarily surrendered to Cavite police on Sunday with the assistance of their lawyers, representatives of the fraternity's national council and police intelligence officers.

- [Senate OKs OMB abolition](#) (2026-03-09 16:00)

Recognizing that the era of physical discs has ended, the Senate yesterday passed on third and final reading a bill abolishing the Optical Media Board.

- [Parañaque condo faces probe](#) (2026-03-09 16:00)

Security lapses at a Parañaque condominium will be probed following last week's shooting incident.

- [PNP to monitor rallies for Duterte's arrest anniversary](#) (2026-03-09 16:00)

The Philippine National Police has heightened monitoring in key areas following online calls for protest actions, including a motorcade rally expected to pass through EDSA, ahead of planned mobilization on March 11 to mark the first anniversary of the arrest and detention of former president Rodrigo Duterte.

- [Manila, Makati enforce 4-day workweek](#) (2026-03-09 16:00)

As part of national energy-saving efforts, the local governments of Manila and Makati as well as the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) have implemented a four-day workweek. Manila city hall employees and MMDA personnel yesterday started working from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Workdays are shortened from Monday to Thursday.

- [Permanent in-city relocation for Quezon City fire victims eyed](#) (2026-03-09 16:00)

The Quezon City government is considering a permanent in-city relocation for the thousands of families left homeless in a massive fire along NIA Road in Barangay Pinyahan last week.

- [Army intervenes to de-escalate clash between rival Moro groups](#) (2026-03-09 09:45)

Guns have been silent for two days along the border of Nabalawag and Midsayap towns in Cotabato, the site of deadly clashes last week between heavily armed Moro groups vying for control of strategic areas.

- [Socio-economic programs for MILF camps pushed](#) (2026-03-09 09:00)

The Office of the Special Assistant to the President (OSAP) is advancing coordination efforts to support socio-economic assistance in BARMM under Malacanang's normalization program.

- [PAF restructures reserve force](#) (2026-03-09 05:00)

The Philippine Air Force (PAF) has reorganized its reserve force as part of a major transformation aimed at implementing a Total Defense Force development concept.

- [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)

At 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.

## Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer

- [P26.9-M worth of shabu intercepted at Naia – PNP](#) (2026-03-12 13:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Suspected shabu (crystal meth) worth P26.9 million was intercepted from a supposedly abandoned inbound parcel at a cargo area at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) complex, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Thursday. The parcel was flagged during a routine x-ray screening and inspection by Bureau of Customs and Philippine

- [295 grenades seized from terror group arms cache in Lanao Sur](#) (2026-03-12 13:17)

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Government troops recovered 295 grenades from an arms cache believed to be hidden by remnants of the Dawlah Islamiya-Maute Group (DI-MG) in the hinterlands of Lanao del Sur, the military said Thursday. Maj. Gen. Yegor Rey Barroquillo Jr., 1st Infantry Division commander, said troops of the Army's 55th Infantry Battalion (55IB) discovered the

- [Pangilinan, Tulfo grill BFAR chief over absence, delays at hearing](#) (2026-03-12 12:28)

MANILA, Philippines — Sens. Francis Pangilinan and Erwin Tulfo on Thursday grilled the chief of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) over his absence and the agency representatives' "delays" and "unpreparedness" during a previous committee hearing. In the hearing of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform, the senators questioned the

- [Priority bills on education, digital push inch closer to House final OK](#) (2026-03-12 12:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The priority bills on education and push for digitalization are inching closer to being passed before the House of Representatives. This comes as the House on

Wednesday approved on second reading two priority education measures and a measure pushing government offices to digitize payment channels, which are included in the Legislative-Executive Development

- [P50,000 reward up for info on kidnapping in Bohol](#) (2026-03-12 11:56)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — The provincial government in Bohol has offered P50,000 in reward money for anyone who can provide information on an alleged kidnapping here on Wednesday. Police authorities are investigating an incident captured on video near the Dao Integrated Bus Terminal in Barangay Dao here on Wednesday afternoon. The video, which has circulated on

- [Zambales' mango fest shortened, some events canceled to save fuel](#) (2026-03-12 11:45)

OLONGAPO CITY — Amid rising fuel costs, the Zambales Tourism office announced on Wednesday an adjustment to the schedule of activities for the annual mango festival in Zambales province. READ: DEPDev warns: Worst-case scenario sees diesel hitting P96 per liter Originally scheduled from April 9 to 12, the four-day celebration has been shortened to three days, now taking place on April 10 to

- [Police eye P2.5-M debt in Nueva Ecija car burning deaths](#) (2026-03-12 11:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Police investigators are looking into an alleged P2.5-million debt owed by a suspect to a woman and a male driver who were found dead inside a burning car in Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija, the town police chief said. A police report from the Peñaranda Municipal Police Station previously identified the woman as Regine

- [Diokno asks House justice panel to take custody of Madriaga](#) (2026-03-12 11:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives' committee on justice should take custody of Ramil Madriaga to ensure his safety and availability while the panel discusses the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte, Akbayan party-list Rep. Chel Diokno said. Diokno wrote a letter to the committee chairperson and Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro last March 5

- [Ex-cop, aide arrested for killing Bulacan policeman](#) (2026-03-12 11:15)

CAMP GEN. ALEJO SANTOS, Bulacan—Authorities arrested on Tuesday night a dismissed policeman and his cohort in the killing over the weekend of a police officer assigned in the Bulacan Provincial Police Office (PPO). Brig. Gen. Jess Mendez, Region 3 police director, presented to the media here on Wednesday, former Patrolman Marvin Salim, 43, the alleged gunman,

- [Defensor receives info that Orly Guteza is in the country](#) (2026-03-12 11:10)

MANILA, Philippines — “Where is Orly Guteza?” Former Congressman Mike Defensor said on Thursday that he received information that Orly Guteza is still in the Philippines, but does not know his exact location. “That is what I know,” he said while nodding, when asked in an

ambush interview if Guteza is still in the Philippines.

- [LOOK: Cavite fisher shows diesel he bought amid oil price hike](#) (2026-03-12 10:42)

MANILA, Philippines — A fisherfolk leader in Cavite displayed a four-liter container of diesel he bought for his fishing trip, noting the impact of the staggered oil price hikes. The photo posted on Facebook by fisher group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) was captioned: “This four-liter container of diesel had a 60%

- [16 of 18 alleged ex-Marines appear before the NBI](#) (2026-03-12 09:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Sixteen of the 18 alleged former Marines—who claimed to be “bagmen” of former Ako Bicol Partylist Rep. Zaldy Co—on Thursday appeared before the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) to comply with a subpoena issued to them. They arrived around 9:40 a.m., accompanied by their counsel Atty. Levito Baligod. READ: NBI subpoenas 18

- [PNP to deploy cops during rollout of P5,000 cash aid for drivers](#) (2026-03-12 09:51)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) will be deploying police officers to oversee security for the rollout of the P5,000 cash aid for public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers starting this coming Tuesday, March 17. “Our officers are trained to ensure the process is orderly and that every beneficiary is protected,” PNP Chief Gen.

- [LIST: Canceled flights on March 12 due to Middle East war](#) (2026-03-12 09:24)

MANILA, Philippines — More Philippine flights to and from the Middle East countries have been canceled due to disrupted airspace and security concerns amid a war in the region. Following is the list of flights canceled by Cebu Pacific and Philippine Airlines: March 12, 2026 (Thursday)  
Cebu Pacific Philippine Airlines Meanwhile, in their latest advisories,

- [Magnitude 5 earthquake hits Surigao del Sur](#) (2026-03-12 08:49)

MANILA, Philippines — A magnitude 5 earthquake jolted Surigao del Sur on Thursday morning, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said. According to Phivolcs, the earthquake occurred at exactly 8:06 a.m. The quake was located 40 kilometers north, 86° east of Marihatag town. It was tectonic in origin, with a depth of focus

- [Pagasa warns heat index under ‘extreme caution’ alert in some areas](#) (2026-03-12 08:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Several areas in the country may experience “extreme caution” heat index level on Thursday, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa). Pagasa warned heat indices reaching the “extreme caution” level of 33 to 41°C may cause heat cramps and heat exhaustion while prolonged exposure can lead to heat

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of March 12, 2026](#) (2026-03-12 08:10)

MANILA, Philippines — Fuel price increases are expected to hound motorists and the general public anew on Thursday, March 12, 2026 as the war in the Middle East rages on. Recent oil price adjustments have been among the steepest in years. Diesel prices rose between P17.50 and P24.25 per liter, with oil companies staggering increases across

- [DPWH seeks fund for Tacloban’ s ‘Grand Canal’ amid 2026 budget halt](#) (2026-03-12 07:13)

TACLOBAN CITY — The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is pushing for funding for the P3.2-billion Tacloban-Palo Diversion Road in 2027. This comes after the release of outlay for the ongoing construction was affected by the agency’ s major overhaul of its 2026 project lineup. In a media interview Wednesday, DPWH Eastern Visayas Regional Director

- [Surigao, Dinagat residents warned vs. worship group’ s Ponzi scheme](#) (2026-03-12 06:51)

BUTUAN CITY — The Securities and Exchange Commission – Butuan City Extension Office (SEC-Butuan) has warned residents in Surigao City and the province of Dinagat Islands against engaging in an unauthorized investment scheme being promoted by JFunds Business Center, an official announced Friday. In an advisory, SEC-Butuan said JFunds Business Center is not registered with the

- [Marcoleta calls basis of WPS defenders mere ‘satsat’](#) (2026-03-12 05:48)

Don’ t dismiss them as mere “satsat” (chatter). Senators Rodante Marcoleta and Risa Hontiveros clashed on Wednesday over a term he used to describe the way some government officials and maritime experts had been defending the country’ s position in its maritime dispute with China. The issue was over a single word, but it was the latest

- [Experts call for early diabetes checks as youth cases rise](#) (2026-03-12 05:44)

Health experts are urging the public to undergo regular screening for diabetes amid rising cases of the chronic disease, which has already affected even younger individuals. In a press conference on Tuesday, endocrinologist Dr. Elaine Cunanan said those who are 35 years old and above should ideally take a fasting blood sugar test at least

- [Comelec: Complications delaying Marcoleta’ s case](#) (2026-03-12 05:42)

Commission on Elections (Comelec) Chair George Erwin Garcia said on Wednesday they could not yet release their findings in the election campaign contributions case of Sen. Rodante Marcoleta because of “legal complications” arising from a similar case that was recently referred to its legal department by the Office of the Ombudsman. He said the Comelec’ s

- [Tropical Storm Nuri shifts direction outside PAR](#) (2026-03-12 05:41)

MANILA, Philippines – Tropical storm Nuri shifted its direction and maintained its strength outside the Philippine area of responsibility early Thursday morning, according to the state weather bureau. In its 4 a.m. update, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and

Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) reported that Nuri was tracked some 1,415 kilometers east of Eastern Visayas, with

- [Marcos: ICI done with assigned tasks but . . .](#) (2026-03-12 05:40)

As far as President Marcos is concerned, the Independent Commission for Infrastructure (ICI) has done its task although he is adopting a wait-and-see stance at the moment. “For now, their brief has already been fulfilled,” he told reporters on Wednesday (Manila time) in New York City, shortly before his scheduled return to Manila at the

- [Jeepney group: Halt fuel tax or raise fare by P2](#) (2026-03-12 05:30)

Jeepney drivers, now reeling from oil price aftershocks that have so far cut their take-home pay in half, are urging the government to either suspend the excise on fuel or grant a P2 increase in the minimum fare. The transport group Manibela told the House of Representatives on Wednesday that it prefers the tax suspension

- [5 dead, 20,000 displaced in clashes in BARMM town](#) (2026-03-12 05:04)

COTABATO CITY—Nearly 5,000 families or more than 20,000 people were displaced from their homes in Nabalawag town in the Special Geographic Area of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) following days of clashes that killed five people. Sajed Mamalampa, Nabalawag municipal information officer, said the displaced families come from the villages of Damatulan,

- [In Baguio, village ordinance regulates use of ‘gong’](#) (2026-03-12 05:02)

BAGUIO CITY—The summer capital’s largest barangay has imposed new rules that would require an indigenous Filipino elder’s approval before the sound of “gangsa” (hand-held gong) rings out through neighborhoods in the village. An ordinance passed late last year by the barangay council of Irisan prescribes the appropriate occasions when gongs and other indigenous musical instruments

- [Malaybalay City chooses open, green governance](#) (2026-03-12 04:35)

On a typical bidding day in Malaybalay City, anyone with internet access can watch the entire procurement process unfold live on the local government’s Facebook page. For Mayor Jay Warren Pabillaran, livestreaming government processes was not a trend to follow but a principle to establish—it was his very first administrative order, his opening move toward

- [CHED to educators: Work together to boost higher education in PH](#) (2026-03-12 04:10)

MANILA, Philippines — Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Chairperson Shirley Agrupis on Wednesday stressed the importance of various educators working together to strengthen higher education in the country. Agrupis made the pronouncement after leaders and representatives from various state universities and colleges (SUCs), local universities and colleges (LUCs), and private higher education institutions (HEIs) gathered

- [Sara Duterte slams use of son’ s photo in online disinformation](#) (2026-03-11 23:37)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday denounced online posts using her son’ s photograph to spread false information to the public. According to a statement released by the Office of the Vice President, Duterte was made aware of online posts containing a photo of her son telling people to “take care” of his

- [P6 M allegedly smuggled cigarettes seized in Zamboanga City](#) (2026-03-11 23:16)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur – Authorities intercepted a closed van transporting allegedly smuggled cigarettes worth an estimated P6 million during an operation in Zamboanga City late Monday afternoon. The truck driven by Randy Tan was flagged down by operatives of the Police Regional Intelligence Division 9 (RID-9) in a bypass road between Boalan and

- [‘Pinoy Book Characters’ parade promotes reading among children](#) (2026-03-11 23:05)

ALAMINOS CITY, Pangasinan– “Darna,” “Maria Makiling,” “Dyesebel,” “Princess Urduja,” “Tikbalang,” and other mythical figures were among the colorful characters that paraded through the streets of this city on Monday morning. But behind the larger-than-life characters were 37 pupils from Grades 1 to 3 of public and private elementary schools who transformed themselves into personalities from

- [BOC: P382 M illicit cigarette manufacturing materials seized in Pampanga](#) (2026-03-11 22:20)

MANILA, Philippines — An estimated P382 million worth of illicit cigarette manufacturing materials were seized in Pampanga, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) announced on Wednesday. The BOC, in a statement, said the materials were seized during an enforcement operation inside a warehouse in Apalit, Pampanga on March 5, 2026 through coordinated efforts between the commission

- [Rep. Brian Poe presses OWWA, DMW on mobilizing ₱21.3B trust fund for OFWs](#) (2026-03-11 22:15)

MANILA, Philippines — During a hearing of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Rep. Brian Poe raised questions on how the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) can better mobilize its ₱21.3 billion trust fund to support overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), particularly those facing uncertainty overseas. At the hearing, Poe first raised concerns about the financial

- [Manila Water sets direction for sustained, multimarket growth](#) (2026-03-11 22:12)

MANILA, Philippines — Manila Water has detailed a strengthened Growth Strategy Framework that sets the direction for the company’ s long term expansion and value creation. The multi year roadmap focuses on sustaining growth in its core business, improving operational efficiency, and developing new sources of revenue across domestic and international markets, supported by a disciplined

- [No jackpot winners in Grand, MegaLotto draws on March 11](#) (2026-03-11 22:02)

MANILA, Philippines—No jackpot winners were recorded for either Grand Lotto 6/55 or MegaLotto 6/45 in the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) draws held Wednesday, March 11. PCSO said the winning combination for Grand Lotto 6/55 was 50-24-34-21-45-03 for a jackpot worth ₱45 million. No ticket matched the six-number combination. READ: No jackpot winners in PCSO lotto

- [Suspend apprehension of traffic violators amid fuel price surge – solon](#) (2026-03-11 21:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Swerte party-list Rep. Arlyn Ayon on Wednesday asked the Land Transportation Office (LTO) to suspend the apprehension of traffic violators amid rising fuel prices triggered by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. Ayon made the suggestion during the House committee on transportation briefing on the Department of Transportation’ s fuel subsidy program

- [Bojie Dy urges mayors to use technology to serve constituents better](#) (2026-03-11 21:26)

MANILA, Philippines — House Speaker Faustino ‘Bojie’ G. Dy III has urged local government leaders to harness modern technology and digital tools to improve public service delivery and strengthen communities amid emerging global challenges. Speaking at the general assembly of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines, Dy encouraged local officials to support the administration’ s

- [Senate urges Executive to create national contingency plan in 15 days](#) (2026-03-11 20:35)

MANILA, Philippines – Amid the current and looming effects of the tensions in the Middle East, the Senate on Wednesday urged the executive branch of government to create within 15 days a National Contingency Plan. Authored by 23 senators and co-sponsored by the senate president Senate Resolution No. 343 was adopted with no objections. Under

- [7,838 pass March 2026 Medical Technologists licensure examination](#) (2026-03-11 20:22)

MANILA, Philippines — A total of 7,838 out of 9,317 passed the March 2026 Medical Technologists Licensure Examination, said the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) on Tuesday. The results were released in three working days after the Medical Technology board exams took place in March across testing centers in Metro Manila, Baguio, Butuan, Cagayan de Oro,

- [FDA oversees disposal of infant formula recalled by Nestlé](#) (2026-03-11 19:47)

MANILA, Philippines—The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Wednesday said the controlled destruction of infant formula products, earlier recalled by Nestlé Philippines, began this week, marking the final step of the recall process. In a statement, the agency said the disposal of recalled products started on Monday, March 9, and was witnessed by an FDA

- [Tropical Storm Nuri forces class suspensions in Eastern Visayas](#) (2026-03-11 19:35)

ILOILO CITY — More than 43,000 learners and over 2,400 school personnel in Eastern Visayas have been affected by class suspensions as Tropical Storm “Nuri” continues to influence weather conditions in parts of the country, according to officials of the Department of Education (DepEd). As of 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 11, a total of

- [Iloilo gov nixes local fuel subsidies due to budget constraints](#) (2026-03-11 19:24)

ILOILO CITY—Iloilo Governor Arthur Defensor Jr. has admitted that the provincial government cannot implement fuel subsidies despite the rise in oil prices due to tensions in the Middle East. Defensor acknowledged the immediate relief and practicality that fuel subsidies could provide but said that implementing them would require significant financial resources that the province currently

- [House approves travel tax abolition bill on 2nd reading](#) (2026-03-11 19:14)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives approved a proposal to abolish the travel tax on second reading, easing the burden on Filipino travelers. At the plenary session on Wednesday, House Bill No. 8464 was approved via viva voce, or voice vote. House Committee on Tourism Chairperson and Romblon Rep. Eleanandro Jesus Madrona sponsored the bill,

- [ACT urges gov’ t to aid teachers, education workers amid oil price hike](#) (2026-03-11 19:07)

MANILA, Philippines — The government should also consider providing immediate relief and assistance to teachers and other education workers over the skyrocketing prices of fuel as this will directly impact their commuting expenses and even the rising cost of other commodities, the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) said on Wednesday. ACT Chair Ruby Bernardo pointed

- [Experts urge action as diabetes, obesity hit younger Filipinos](#) (2026-03-11 18:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Health experts have noted that cases of diabetes and obesity are affecting younger and younger Filipinos, prompting calls for a more “aggressive intervention” from the government as well as the public. During a press conference on Tuesday, endocrinologist Dr. Elaine Cunanan urged those who are 35 years old and above to take

- [8 of 18 ‘ex-Marines’ not assigned to Zaldy Co — NBI](#) (2026-03-11 18:48)

MANILA, Philippines — Eight of the 18 alleged former Marines who recently claimed to be “bagmen” of resigned Ako Bicol Rep. Elizaldy Co were found to be “not assigned” to the former congressman, National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Director Melvin Matibag said. In an interview at the NBI headquarters in Pasay City on Wednesday, Matibag

- [PNP looking for 6,178 recruits in 2026](#) (2026-03-11 18:23)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) is looking for 6,178 recruits this year. In a statement on Wednesday, the PNP said there are 1,700 slots under the regular quota in 2026, while 4,478 slots fall under the attrition quota, or the number of police officers needed to replenish the force from retirees and

- [Jeffrey Soriano returns to House as ACT-CIS party-list representative](#) (2026-03-11 18:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Former lawmaker Jeffrey Soriano has returned to the House of Representatives as ACT-CIS party-list representative, replacing former Rep. Edvic Yap, who resigned last February. During Wednesday’s session, Soriano took his oath of office before House Speaker Faustino “Bojie” Dy III. Last March 4, the Commission on Elections proclaimed Soriano as Yap’s resignation. Currently, the ACT-CIS

- [Old woman dies trying to save church funds from burning house](#) (2026-03-11 17:54)

PAOMBONG, Bulacan — A 75-year-old woman and member of a church choir was killed when a fire destroyed four houses in her family’s compound in Poblacion on Tuesday. SFO1 Jennifer Salamat, administration chief of the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) in Paombong town, said Josephine Pineda, the lone fatality, died after returning to the burning

- [PNP to review deployment for 2026 summer season](#) (2026-03-11 17:49)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. ordered the agency to review its plans to deploy officers for the 2026 summer season. In a statement, the top cop said their security measures must take into account the heat index and personnels’ health condition, ordering the strict monitoring of officers’

- [Senate panel finalizing details on fuel excise tax suspension](#) (2026-03-11 17:43)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate committee on ways and means is still in the process of finalizing its version of a bill that aims to suspend excise taxes for petroleum products, amid the fuel price hike, the committee’s chairperson Sen. Pia Cayetano said on Wednesday. Cayetano told the press that the committee still lacks details, such

- [House OKs bill suspending excise tax on fuel on second reading](#) (2026-03-11 17:38)

MANILA, Philippines — A bill that seeks to give President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. the power to suspend excise taxes on fuel products during emergencies has been approved on second reading. During the session on Wednesday, House Bill No. 8418, which seeks to make amendments to the National Internal Revenue Code, was approved via viva voce or voice

- [All municipalities to receive direct support under expanded LGSF](#) (2026-03-11 17:36)

MANILA, Philippines — For the first time in Philippine history, every municipality in the country will receive support from a national grassroots development program. The League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) thanked President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. for launching what it described as a landmark initiative under the Local Government Support Fund (LSGF) that will

- [BOC intercepts P1.2B marijuana at Manila Port](#) (2026-03-11 17:33)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) on Wednesday said P1.2 billion worth of marijuana—initially declared as plasticware—was intercepted at the Manila International Container Port (MICP). According to the BOC, the shipment was discovered during a physical examination at the MICP on March 7, conducted in collaboration with the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA)

- [PNP warns against vacation scams ahead of 2026 summer season](#) (2026-03-11 17:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police Anti-Cybercrime Group (PNP ACG) on Wednesday warned the public against vacation scams ahead of this year's summer season. Commonly advertised on social media, the schemes promise accommodations but end up being non-existent or inaccurate compared to their online posts, ACG spokesperson Lt. Wallen Mae Arancillo told reporters in

- [PNP chief tells cops: Don't be rude](#) (2026-03-11 17:17)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. told officers not to be rude after a Migrant Workers Office (MWO) employee in Bahrain was ordered to be investigated for reportedly “disrespecting” Filipinos abroad seeking assistance. In a statement on Wednesday, Nartatez said PNP personnel found to be “rude and mishandling

- [PNP orders energy-saving measures in offices](#) (2026-03-11 16:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) has ordered its offices to implement energy-saving measures amid rising energy costs driven by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. In a statement on Wednesday, the PNP said its national headquarters had issued a memorandum ordering units to switch off lights and electrical equipment when not

- [Anti-dynasty bill to displace 5,000 execs from families — Adiong](#) (2026-03-11 16:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Lanao del Sur Rep. Zia Alonto Adiong said the current version of the anti-political dynasty bill at the House of Representatives will displace around 5,000 officials from political families, following allegations that it is a weak bill. In a statement on Wednesday, ahead of the expected debates on the bill, Adiong said a

- [Lacson: 4 of required 9 senators sign partial flood control report](#) (2026-03-11 16:26)

MANILA, Philippines – Only four out of the required nine senators have signed the partial Senate blue ribbon committee report on the flood control inquiries, Sen. Ping Lacson who heads the committee said on Wednesday. The draft report recommends an investigation into individuals, including three former senators, linked to the alleged anomalous flood control projects.

- [Oil price hike won't delay infrastructure projects — Dizon](#) (2026-03-11 16:12)

MANILA, Philippines — The construction of government infrastructure projects will not be delayed despite oil price hikes caused by tensions in the Middle East, Public Works Secretary

Vince Dizon said on Wednesday. This was Dizon's response when asked if the rising cost of fuel would slow down infrastructure projects. However, he acknowledged that the oil

- [Sotto reminds senators: Follow rules instead of acting tough](#) (2026-03-11 16:08)

MANILA, Philippines — Just follow the rules, instead of acting tough or pretending to be nice, Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III reminded his colleagues on Wednesday. His reminder came as Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo Lacson and Sen. Rodante Marcoleta quarreled over the Senate blue ribbon's investigation into anomalous flood control projects and the

- [DepEd urges learners: Drive national progress through innovation](#) (2026-03-11 15:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Education Secretary Sonny Angara on Wednesday encouraged learners to pioneer technology-driven solutions to pressing local and global challenges as he officially opened the 2026 National Science and Technology Fair (NSTF). With this year's theme, “Harnessing the Unknown: Powering the Future Through Science and Innovation,” the annual competition organized by the Department of

- [Terry Ridon warns: 2 Duterte lawyers could become witnesses](#) (2026-03-11 15:24)

MANILA, Philippines — There may be a potential conflict of interest for Vice President Sara Duterte's defense panel for the impeachment hearing as two of her lawyers may be potential witnesses, Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon said. Ridon on Wednesday showed to reporters a copy of the Duterte camp's entry of appearance for the impeachment

- [2.2 tons of meth worth almost P15 billion found in Mindoro](#) (2026-03-11 15:19)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Authorities recovered on Tuesday afternoon some 2.2 tons of suspected meth from a beached speedboat in a coastal village here, the Army said. Troops from the 76th Infantry Battalion said they discovered the illegal drugs around 3 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10, after receiving information from a concerned citizen about

- [OP meets with over 1,000 local execs for rice aid amid rising costs](#) (2026-03-11 15:14)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the President (OP) has met with over 1,000 mayors and governors to discuss the provision of free rice as part of the Local Government Support Fund, the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) said. The initiative is part of the government's measures to assist Filipinos amid rising fuel prices

- [Push grows to raise vape, tobacco age limit to 25](#) (2026-03-11 15:12)

MANILA, Philippines — A coalition of health and child rights advocates backed Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa's call to raise the age restriction for vape and tobacco products to 25. “We strongly support increasing the legal age restriction for vape and tobacco products from 18 to 25,” the Philippine Tobacco Control Coalition said in a statement.

- [Over 700 former rebels in Bicol apply for gov' t amnesty program](#) (2026-03-11 15:04)

LEGAZPI CITY – A total of 719 former rebels in the Bicol Region have applied for the government amnesty program, according to the Local Amnesty Board Secretariat of the National Amnesty Commission (NAC) on Wednesday. Philipp Listanco, NAC regional director, urged eligible former and active rebels to apply before the deadline on Friday, March 13. “When

- [Dizon: Skyway 3 segment set for 2027 finish; right-of-way issue resolved](#) (2026-03-11 14:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The construction of the stalled interconnection segment of the Metro Manila Skyway Stage 3 is expected to be completed by the middle of next year after right-of-way issues have been resolved, Public Works and Highways Secretary Vince Dizon said on Wednesday. Dizon made this statement as he, together with Transport chief Giovanni

- [Marcos says PH looking for other oil supply sources](#) (2026-03-11 14:46)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said the Philippines is now looking for other sources for its oil supply amid price crunches driven by the ongoing Middle East conflict. “In terms of supply, we are in good shape. And not only do we have inventory in the Philippines, we also are awaiting some supplies

- [LOOK: Evacuation of students, teachers at UP-Baguio due to bomb threat](#) (2026-03-11 14:39)

Students, teachers, and employees at the University of the Philippines-Baguio were evacuated to the Baguio Convention Center at past noon on Wednesday due to a bomb threat. A social media post of the UP Baguio University Student Council said the evacuation was ordered at around 12:15 p.m. “after a bomb threat was received by several

- [Mindoro lawmaker says infra-related rap against him is harassment](#) (2026-03-11 14:35)

MANILA, Philippines — Occidental Mindoro Rep. Leody Tarriela said on Tuesday that a complaint linking him to anomalous projects is mere harassment, as he is neither a contractor nor involved in budget-making processes. In a statement, Tarriela said he has informed the Independent Commission for Infrastructure (ICI) that he is not involved in discussions of the

- [Marcoleta, Hontiveros clash; remark vs WPS advocates stricken off record](#) (2026-03-11 14:35)

MANILA, Philippines — Sens. Rodante Marcoleta and Risa Hontiveros clashed on Wednesday over a word uttered against outspoken government officials and maritime experts speaking on West Philippine Sea matters. Marcoleta, who noted that the resource speakers he invited for a supposed March 12 hearing begged off over national security concerns, used the confirmation hearing of

- [Troops seize P5.8B suspected shabu in Occidental Mindoro](#) (2026-03-11 14:29)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Army recovered about 876 kilograms of suspected shabu from an abandoned speedboat that ran aground along the coast of Occidental Mindoro, military and law enforcement officials said Wednesday. Maj. Gen. Ramon Zagala, commander of the 2nd Infantry Division, said soldiers and civilian militia responded Tuesday afternoon after a resident reported

- [Sugar farmers wary of Senate bill suspending mandatory use of biofuels](#) (2026-03-11 14:13)

MANILA, Philippines – Local sugar farmers bared before the Senate on Wednesday their concerns on the impact of suspending the mandatory use of locally-sourced biofuels amid the looming price hikes. Ethanol Producers Association of the Philippines (EPAP) President Renato Cabati spoke before the Senate Committee on Energy led by Sen. Pia Cayetano on the effects

- [Lopez: Toll discounts for trucks, buses carrying agri, essential goods](#) (2026-03-11 14:08)

MANILA, Philippines — Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez on Wednesday said the country's toll operators have agreed to give discounts for buses and trucks carrying agricultural and essential goods. The measure is part of the government's efforts to mitigate the impact of rising fuel costs driven by the Middle East conflict apart from cash assistance. READ:

- [Soccksargen, Bangsamoro gov't adjust work schedules](#) (2026-03-11 14:07)

KORONADAL CITY – All four provinces in Region 12, or the Soccksargen region, have adopted a four-day workweek as austerity and conservation measures amid the energy crunch triggered by the Middle East conflict. The neighboring Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), whose seat of government was in Cotabato City, which used to form a

- [WFH scheme for Senate workers pushed](#) (2026-03-11 14:06)

MANILA, Philippines — Employees in the Senate may work from home (WFH) as part of the chamber's initiative to conserve energy, and help reduce power and fuel costs. A 4-day workweek has been place in the Senate even before the war erupted in the region on February 28. This time though, there was a suggestion

- [Pangilinan calls for justice reforms, cites 'system crisis'](#) (2026-03-11 13:54)

MANILA, Philippines — Senator Francis Pangilinan on Wednesday stressed the urgent need to reform the country's justice system, saying stronger coordination between the legislative and judicial branches could help prevent another large-scale corruption scandal. Pangilinan said the “corruption scandal of 2025 is not just a crisis in corruption...It is really a crisis of the justice

- [Dy: Local Government Code amendment will help LGUs address role better](#) (2026-03-11 13:48)

MANILA, Philippines — House of Representatives Speaker Faustino “Bojie” Dy III has admitted that there is a need to amend the Local Government Code of 1991, so local government units (LGUs) can address their roles better amid changes in their responsibilities. In a speech delivered at the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) General Assembly

- [DOTr chief says fare hike looms, but asks LTFRB to ‘recrunch numbers’](#) (2026-03-11 13:47)

MANILA, Philippines — Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez on Wednesday said his department is nearing a decision on petitions to increase the passenger fare for public utility vehicles amid oil price hikes driven by the ongoing Middle East conflict. “The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board submitted a recommendation to the Department of Transportation (DOTr). I

- [Rollout of P5,000 cash aid for PUV drivers to start on March 17 – DSWD](#) (2026-03-11 13:17)

MANILA, Philippines — Cash assistance worth P5,000 will be given to public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers, starting with tricycle drivers in Metro Manila on March 17, to help cushion the impact of fuel price increases. This announcement comes from Social Welfare and Development Secretary Rex Gatchalian. The move comes after a meeting between Gatchalian, the

- [Butuan mayor forms task force vs illegal price hikes](#) (2026-03-11 13:13)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Butuan City Mayor Law Fortun has created a task force to crack down on illegal price increases after reports that some businesses in the city raised prices of goods and fuel ahead of official adjustment schedules. Fortun said he issued an executive order creating “Oplan Bantay Presyo,” a composite

- [BARMM adopts compressed workweek with Ramadan schedule](#) (2026-03-11 13:02)

COTABATO CITY – All government offices, ministries, and bureaus in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) have begun adopting energy conservation protocols, including transitioning to a four-day on-site work arrangement, officials said. In a memorandum circular, Bangsamoro Interim Chief Minister Abdulraof Macacua ordered all personnel to implement the new schedule, which also accommodates religious

- [Sotto suggests livestream of bicam anti-political dynasty talks](#) (2026-03-11 12:30)

MANILA, Philippines—Like the national budget, Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III is proposing that discussions on the controversial anti-political dynasty bills be live streamed at the congressional bicameral conference committee level. “People are interested in that, aren’ t they? The public is interested in that. I will now suggest that the bicameral conference committee also be live-streamed,”

- [Group: Jeepney drivers losing P400 a day, subsidy won’ t suffice](#) (2026-03-11 12:18)

MANILA, Philippines — A day after a massive fuel price hike, transport group Manibela has informed a House of Representatives panel that jeepney drivers on average lost half of their daily income — P400 of the usual P800 generated from 12-hour trips. At Wednesday’ s hearing of the House committee on transportation, Manibela chairperson Mar Valbuena said

- [Are you Catholic? Lacson asks Vatican envoy Lotilla](#) (2026-03-11 11:29)

MANILA, Philippines — “Are you Catholic?” Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo Lacson on Wednesday posed this apt question to Raphael Perpetuo “Popo” Mercado Lotilla, who has since hurdled the Commission on Appointments (CA) panel as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Holy See, the central governing body of the Catholic Church, with concurrent jurisdiction over

- [No classes in Cotabato City public schools for last 10 days of Ramadan](#) (2026-03-11 11:22)

COTABATO CITY – Face-to-face classes in all levels in public schools here are suspended starting today, Wednesday, until the fasting month ends, Mayor Bruce Matabalao announced Tuesday. Matabalao said in a statement that the suspension of classes takes effect during the last 10 days of Ramadan. READ: Feb. 19 start of Ramadan is not a

- [P142.8-M shabu seized, 2 nabbed in Quezon City drug bust](#) (2026-03-11 11:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Suspected shabu (crystal meth) worth P142.8 million was confiscated, and two male motorcycle taxi drivers were arrested in a buy-bust operation in Quezon City early Wednesday morning, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) said. Identified as Eli, 28, and Rolando, 42, the two suspects were entrapped, and the drugs were seized by

- [More Filipino men now open to women working full time, says analyst](#) (2026-03-11 11:13)

MANILA, Philippines — A new Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey shows that fewer Filipino men now worry that family life would suffer if a woman has a full-time job. Dr. Alicor Panoa, an Inquirer data scientist and associate professor at the University of the Philippines, pointed this out based on results of the survey conducted

- [Businessman with multiple arrest warrants for estafa nabbed in Pasay](#) (2026-03-11 11:11)

MANILA, Philippines — A businessman was arrested by the police in Pasay City on multiple estafa (swindling) warrants, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Wednesday. The arrested suspect — whom the PNP identified as Mark Steven Freeman — was caught in the basement parking lot of a mall in Barangay 76, Zone 10 on

- [Sara Duterte on dad’ s ICC arrest: Law not for political, personal gain](#) (2026-03-11 10:59)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte said that the first anniversary of the International Criminal Court (ICC)’ s arrest of former President Rodrigo Duterte is a serious reminder that the law must not be used for personal or political interests. Duterte claimed the incident tested the country’ s democratic institutions and commitment to due process, noting

- [DOTr finalizing release of fuel subsidies amid rapid oil price hikes](#) (2026-03-11 10:36)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Transportation (DOTr) is now completing the documentation for the issuance of fuel subsidies to public utility vehicle (PUVs) operators and drivers. This comes amid the oil price hike, as the tension in the Middle East continues, the agency's chief said on Wednesday. Transport Secretary Giovanni Lopez gave this update

- [DILG to report next week on talks with Portugal about Zaldy Co's return](#) (2026-03-11 10:19)

MANILA, Philippines — Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla will give a report next week on his department's communications with Portugal on the manhunt for former House appropriations chairperson and resigned Ako Bicol party-list Rep. Zaldy Co. He confirmed this in a text message to the Inquirer on Wednesday, after President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

- [Marcos to certify emergency powers bill as urgent](#) (2026-03-11 10:03)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will declare as urgent a bill granting him emergency powers to lower excise taxes on fuel amid rising prices driven by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. However, both the Senate and the House must first complete their committee reports and begin plenary debates on the proposal,

- [Zubiri seeks Senate probe into stalled bid to build P2.5 billion PCG ship](#) (2026-03-11 09:56)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate should investigate what happened to the stalled plan to locally-build a 60-meter Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) vessel, which already had an allocated budget, but the fund was later sent back to treasury due to “bureaucratic incompetence.” Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri made this appeal to his fellow senators. Zubiri, in his

- [ICI's job is done, but 'let's see what else they can do' – Marcos](#) (2026-03-11 09:44)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday (Manila time) said the Independent Commission for Infrastructure (ICI) has finished its mandate, but added that he will “see what else they can do.” Created by Marcos in an executive order last September to investigate anomalies in flood control and other infrastructure projects, the ICI is

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of March 11, 2026](#) (2026-03-11 09:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Local diesel prices will soar by up to P24.25 per liter this week, as announced by the Department of Energy in a media briefing. Some oil companies will implement the hike on staggered basis. This development comes as motorists bear the brunt of the impact of the Middle East war. Here are

- [Mayon Volcano spews lava anew amid 65th day of minor eruptions](#) (2026-03-11 08:29)

MANILA, Philippines — Small bursts of lava and flowing molten rock were seen from Mayon Volcano in the province of Albay as it entered its 65th consecutive day of eruptions, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said. The two eruptions recorded Tuesday night and early Wednesday were small and short-lived, a type of

- [LTO suspends 12 driving schools for alleged certification irregularities](#) (2026-03-11 07:58)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Office (LTO) has temporarily suspended 12 accredited driving schools and their instructors in Metro Manila over alleged irregularities in issuance of certifications. In a statement on Tuesday, the LTO said it issued show cause orders to the driving schools where they are expected to submit their written explanations after

- [Amihan, trough of storm outside PAR to bring rains over parts of Mindanao](#) (2026-03-11 07:44)

MANILA, Philippines — Parts of the country may experience rains due to the northeast monsoon and the trough of a tropical storm with international name “Nuri” hovering outside the Philippine area of responsibility (PAR). This is according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Association (Pagasa) during its morning forecast. The northeast monsoon or

- [Next oil crunch impact: prices, cargo, air travel](#) (2026-03-11 05:55)

A war almost half a world away has begun to exert pressure on Filipinos at the gas station and beyond. After the joint American-Israeli attack on Iran on Feb. 28, global markets almost immediately reflected the shock. In the Philippines, the peso plunged to a record low of 59.5 to the US dollar, while stock

- [House bill suspending fuel tax passes committee level](#) (2026-03-11 05:50)

A committee of the House of Representatives has approved a bill co-authored by President Marcos’ son proposing the suspension of the excise on fuel as a way to cushion the spike in oil prices due to the Middle East conflict. Malacañang earlier said the President would ask Congress for emergency powers to take such mitigation

- [It’s all about coping now for public transport drivers](#) (2026-03-11 05:45)

For jeepney driver Ryan Mendoza, the latest fuel price increase means spending nearly double for his diesel requirements—P1,000 a day as of Tuesday—and a smaller take-home pay for the family. Before the adjustment, P600 to P700 would suffice. “But now there’s an additional P300 [for fuel] that should otherwise go to putting food on the

- [SC asked: Acquit Rappler CEO, staffer of cyberlibel](#) (2026-03-11 05:30)

The Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) has asked the Supreme Court to clear Rappler CEO and executive editor Maria Ressa and a former staffer of cyberlibel charges, as the case against them was filed beyond the one-year prescription period. In a statement on Tuesday, the OSG

headed by Darlene Berberabe said that it filed

- [US manufacturer to invest initial \\$200-M for gloves factory in PH](#) (2026-03-11 05:23)

NEW YORK CITY – A United States (US)-based medical glove manufacturer is investing an initial USD200 million to build a production facility in the Philippines, with plans to expand operations once the first phase becomes successful, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. said Tuesday (New York time). In a press conference at The Pierre A Taj

- [Gov’ t raises P102.47M from sale of Discaya vehicles](#) (2026-03-11 05:20)

The government has raised over P100 million from the public auctions of luxury vehicles seized in the high-profile smuggling case involving private contractors Pacifico Discaya II and his wife, Sarah. The proceeds, which will be used to fund infrastructure and social service projects, were turned over to the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr) by the

- [House bill protects women in politics](#) (2026-03-11 05:15)

House Senior Deputy Minority Leader and Mamamayang Liberal party list Rep. Leila de Lima, along with 41 other lawmakers and women’ s organizations, filed a bill seeking to define and penalize violence against women in politics (VAWP). De Lima, Iloilo Rep. Julienne Baronda, Manila Rep. Joel Chua, and Deputy Speaker Paolo Ortega V were present for

- [How’ s Maharlika doing? Senate probe pushed](#) (2026-03-11 05:10)

Sen. Mark Villar has asked the Senate to look into the investment activities of the Maharlika Investment Corp. (MIC), including its purchase of shares in port operator Asian Terminals Inc. (ATI), to ensure the proper management of the country’ s sovereign wealth fund. In Senate Resolution No. 334, Villar sought a probe into the investments and

- [Labor coalition pushes for 6-hour workday](#) (2026-03-11 04:45)

A labor coalition on Tuesday urged the government to study the implementation of a six-hour workday under a compressed or four-day workweek, saying that longer work hours do not always result in increased productivity for workers. In a statement, the Nagkaisa Labor Coalition said the government should “rethink” traditional work arrangements as it navigates the

- [Think tank to gov’ t, MILF: Mend ‘broken’ trust](#) (2026-03-11 04:40)

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A global think tank has urged the Philippine government and the erstwhile rebel group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to rebuild trust to prevent the collapse of the Bangsamoro peace process. In a report titled “Peace in the Philippines: The Bangsamoro’ s Moment of Truth,” the International Crisis Group (ICG) called on the peace

- [Baguio asks for full audit of John Hay structures, profits](#) (2026-03-11 04:35)

BAGUIO CITY—The city council on Monday called for a full audit of the operations of Camp John Hay as it pressed the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) to disclose a new

master plan that would guide the future of the former American recreational base land. The council unanimously passed a resolution urging the city

- [NIA solar irrigation sees stable Bicol rice output amid fuel crisis](#) (2026-03-11 04:35)

LEGAZPI CITY—Rice production in the Bicol region is expected to remain stable despite rising fuel prices as more farms shift to solar-powered irrigation, the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) said. Engineer Gaudencio John De Vera, NIA Bicol regional manager, told the Inquirer in a phone interview on Tuesday that around 60,000 hectares of rice fields in

- [Palace hits Imee Marcos over reso on probe into Duterte’ s ICC arrest](#) (2026-03-11 03:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacanang on Tuesday criticized Senator Imee Marcos and told her to be fairer and neutral to Filipinos after she filed a resolution seeking to further investigate former President Rodrigo Duterte’ s International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest over his alleged crimes against humanity. In a message to reporters late Tuesday evening, Presidential Communications Office

- [Muntinlupa opens Mayor’ s Action Center at OsMun hospital](#) (2026-03-10 23:27)

MANILA, Philippines — The Muntinlupa City government has opened a Mayor’ s Action Center (MAC) inside the Ospital ng Muntinlupa (OsMun) to allow patients and their families to access government services without leaving the hospital. The facility, inaugurated on March 10, integrates services from the Kalingang Munti Action Center, the Local Civil Registry, and the Social

- [Philippine Eagle Foundation announces adoption of ‘Chick #32’](#) (2026-03-10 23:07)

DAVAO CITY – The Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) on Tuesday announced the adoption of its three-month old Philippine Eagle, Chick #32. PEF named it “Bayani,” the Filipino word for hero. It was adopted by Nico Herth, CEO of Procon-Grumbach, a German manufacturer of high-precision electronics systems. PEF relies heavily on donations, corporate partnerships and private

- [Bureau of Customs launches new e-certificate of payment system](#) (2026-03-10 22:49)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) has launched a new electronic certificate of payment (e CP) system that significantly boosts service delivery for both government agencies and stakeholders. The e CP System is an online application platform that facilitates the submission, processing, and transmission of motor vehicle, components, and parts information, together with the corresponding

- [No jackpot winners in PCSO lotto draws for March 10](#) (2026-03-10 21:55)

MANILA, Philippines—No bettor won the jackpots for the major Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) lotto games drawn Tuesday, March 10. According to PCSO, the winning combination for Ultra Lotto 6/58 was 42-58-35-02-51-26 for a jackpot prize of ₱87.4 million. No

ticket matched all six numbers. Super Lotto 6/49 also produced no jackpot winner. The winning

- [Lacson says Marcoleta Soce ‘admission’ could be ‘indirect bribery’](#) (2026-03-10 20:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate Pro Tempore Panfilo Lacson on Tuesday said Sen. Rodante Marcoleta’s “admission” pertaining to campaign contributions could fall under “indirect bribery.” Lacson made the remark during his privilege speech zeroing in on Marcoleta’s controversies in yet another heated exchange between two senators. Marcoleta did not directly address this issue during his interpellations,

- [LRTA implements 4-day workweek arrangement](#) (2026-03-10 19:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) on Tuesday announced that it will be adopting a four-day onsite work arrangement to conserve energy due to rising fuel prices caused by escalating military conflict in the Middle East. According to the operator of the Light Rail Transit Line 2 (LRT-2) in a statement, non-frontline

- [Makabayan says fuel cost spike shows failure of oil deregulation law](#) (2026-03-10 19:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The spike in petroleum products’ cost and concerns that companies are selling old stock bought at cheaper prices are proof that the oil deregulation law has failed, lawmakers from the House of Representatives’ Makabayan bloc said on Tuesday. Makabayan, made up of ACT Teachers party-list Rep. Antonio Tinio, Gabriela party-list Rep. Sarah Elago,

- [Some gasoline stations in Cagayan Valley run out of stock](#) (2026-03-10 19:15)

TUGUEGARAO CITY – While premier gasoline stations make a killing with the higher prices ranging from P70 to P90 a liter of gasoline and diesel, some gasoline stations have run out of stock due to the heavy queue of clients on Monday until Tuesday dawn. In a random tour among the major gasoline stations in

- [DILG issues warning vs scammer posing as Jonvic Remulla to solicit funds](#) (2026-03-10 19:13)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) on Tuesday issued a warning against an alleged scammer using the name and photo of Secretary Jonvic Remulla. In a statement, the DILG said the purported scammer had reached out to several public officials to request “financial assistance… for a foundation allegedly affected

- [Bukidnon offices still eyeing 4-day workweek amid fuel price hike](#) (2026-03-10 19:10)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — Several government offices and agencies in Bukidnon are still assessing whether to adopt a compressed four-day workweek, opting in the meantime to implement energy-saving measures as global fuel prices rise due to tensions in the Middle East. The temporary four-day onsite workweek for government offices nationwide took effect on Monday, March

- [Iloilo City prepares aid, livelihood support for repatriated OFWs](#) (2026-03-10 18:35)

ILOILO CITY — The Iloilo City government is preparing financial assistance, livelihood opportunities and psychosocial support for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who may be repatriated amid escalating tensions in the Middle East. Mayor Raisa S. Treñas on Tuesday, March 10, directed the city’s Public Employment Service Office (Peso) to mobilize available programs to assist returning

- [Sara Duterte warns against fake emails ‘not connected to our office’](#) (2026-03-10 18:34)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte on Tuesday warned the public against fake emails falsely claiming to be from her or her office. Duterte issued the warning after her office received reports of individuals receiving emails claiming to be from the vice president or her office. READ: OVP alerts public on cash aid scam

- [Gatchalian: Gov’ t may tap contingency funds if oil prices stay elevated](#) (2026-03-10 18:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian, chairperson of the Senate’s committee on finance, said the government could tap billions of pesos from existing disaster and contingency funds if elevated global oil prices persist due to geopolitical tensions, provided that the country be declared under state of economic calamity. In a press briefing at the Senate

- [Sandiganbayan denies bail petition of Zaldy Co’ s co-accused](#) (2026-03-10 18:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan on Tuesday denied the bail petition of nine former Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) officials and co-accused of resigned Ako Bicol Rep. Zaldy Co over a malversation case. The non-bailable charge of malversation of funds through falsification of public documents stemmed from a Sunwest project — or the

- [Graft raps filed vs Mindoro solon over alleged anomalous projects](#) (2026-03-10 17:59)

MANILA, Philippines – A graft complaint has been filed before the Office of the Ombudsman against Occidental Mindoro Rep. Leody Tarriela over his alleged involvement in supposedly anomalous projects in the province. Radamalyn Cardoza, who hails from Brgy. Pagasa in Occidental Mindoro, accused Tarriela of violating the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, and based it

- [Solons laud panel approval of excise tax suspension bill](#) (2026-03-10 17:54)

MANILA, Philippines — Several ranking lawmakers from the House of Representatives have expressed support for the committee on ways and means’ approval of a bill that seeks to suspend excise taxes for fuel, saying that the measure is badly needed amid rising prices of petroleum products. In a statement on Tuesday, Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry

- [NBI: P15.6M counterfeit footwear seized in Pasay](#) (2026-03-10 17:52)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) confiscated more than P15.6 million in counterfeit footwear in Pasay City. In a statement on Tuesday, the NBI said its Intellectual Property Rights Division seized 13,058 pairs of counterfeit Havaianas in various sizes and designs. READ: NBI raids in Binondo yield over P237-M fake goods The

- [Rains trigger flooding, landslide in Caraga; some roads barely passable](#) (2026-03-10 17:49)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Persistent rains triggered flooding and a landslide in parts of the Caraga region on Monday (March 9), disrupting road travel and classes as authorities warned residents to stay alert for possible flash floods and additional landslides. In Lanuza, Surigao del Sur, a landslide hit a section of the national

- [Publishing house siege in QC: 10 security guards arrested for takeover](#) (2026-03-10 17:42)

MANILA, Philippines — Ten security guards were arrested after allegedly taking over a publishing house in Quezon City, the police said on Tuesday. “At 5 p.m. on March 9, 2026, the group forcibly entered the compound of Vibal Publishing House and took control of the security post, denying entry to anyone, including the company president.

- [House OKs bill moving 1st BARMM parliamentary polls to September](#) (2026-03-10 17:42)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives has approved on third and final reading a measure that sets the first parliamentary elections in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) on the second Monday of September 2026. During Tuesday’s plenary session, lawmakers passed House Bill (HB) No. 8220, which proposes amendments to Republic Act No.

- [Napolcom adopts four-day on-site workweek set-up](#) (2026-03-10 17:38)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Police Commission (Napolcom) has adopted a four-day on-site workweek set-up for its personnel. In a public advisory on Tuesday, the commission said personnel in its central and regional offices are expected to report for duty on site from Mondays to Thursdays, then work from home on Fridays in its bid

- [Mayon logs 80 weak explosions, 133 volcanic quakes — Phivolcs](#) (2026-03-10 17:37)

LEGAZPI CITY — The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) recorded more than 80 weak explosions and 133 volcanic earthquakes at Mayon Volcano over the past 24 hours. Doreen Abelinde, officer in charge of the Mayon Volcano Observatory, said the agency logged over 80 very weak explosions or bursts caused by pressurized gases and

- [Implicated cops in sabungeros case want to stay in Camp Crame — CIDG](#) (2026-03-10 17:27)

MANILA, Philippines — The 14 cops in government custody over the disappearance of at least 34 cockfighting aficionados (sabungeros) have asked the courts that they be kept in detention in Camp Crame, according to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG). “It’s not

that we want them to remain here. We actually want to transfer

- [Only Bam Aquino so far signs draft panel report on flood probe](#) (2026-03-10 17:09)

MANILA, Philippines — Only Sen. Bam Aquino has so far signed the draft partial report, recommending a preliminary investigation on certain individuals, including three incumbent senators, implicated in the anomalous flood control projects. Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo Lacson made this revelation when he addressed in a privilege speech on Tuesday all the issues raised against

- [BOC eyes 4-day workweek for some staff](#) (2026-03-10 17:04)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) on Tuesday said it is considering implementing the four-day workweek for some of its staff. “Our personnel who are not connected directly to the collection of taxes and duties, we can give them the four-day workweek privilege,” BOC Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno said in Filipino. “However, those in

- [Lacson, Marcoleta trade barbs on floor over WPS, Discaya](#) (2026-03-10 16:58)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate Pro Tempore Panfilo “Ping” Lacson and Sen. Rodante Marcoleta on Tuesday figured in yet another heated exchange, now on the Senate floor, over matters including the West Philippine Sea and the Discaya couple who were linked in flood control anomalies. Lacson took the floor in response to Marcoleta’s privilege speech on

- [BOC: Gov’t should be ‘creative’ if excise tax on fuel suspended](#) (2026-03-10 16:48)

MANILA, Philippines — Bureau of Customs (BOC) Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno said the government should be “creative” with its sources of funds if the excise tax on petroleum products is suspended amid fuel price increases brought by the Middle East conflict. Although he could not immediately provide exact estimates of how much revenue would be lost if the

- [DOJ’s Gutierrez highlights access to justice for women during 2026 forum](#) (2026-03-10 16:39)

MANILA, Philippines – Department of Justice (DOJ) Undersecretary Margarita Gutierrez underscored the importance of expanding access to justice for women, saying that legal protections mean little if people cannot actually reach the system meant to protect them. Speaking at the Spark! Philippines #Women2026 Ladies Who Lead Forum, held March 7 in celebration of National Women’s

- [2 gas stations in Malolos probed for hoarding](#) (2026-03-10 16:38)

MALOLOS CITY, BULACAN—At least two gasoline stations in this capital city of Bulacan province are facing possible revocation of business permits due to complaints of hoarding, Mayor Christian Natividad said on Tuesday. Natividad said they were completing the investigation into the reported hoarding activities by the gasoline stations based on complaints from many

motorists. According

- [Maybe it's time to revisit oil deregulation law — Quimbo](#) (2026-03-10 16:35)

MANILA, Philippines — Concerns on how oil companies are selling petroleum products — like allegations that fuel purchased before the Middle East conflict is now being sold at high prices — might be a signal to revisit the oil deregulation law, according to Marikina Rep. Miro Quimbo. Quimbo, chairperson of the House of Representatives' committee on ways

- [Legarda moves to ease household burden with VAT reform package](#) (2026-03-10 16:27)

MANILA, Philippines – Senator Loren Legarda has filed three complementary measures aimed at easing the burden on Filipino households by reforming the country's value-added tax (VAT) system. The proposals lower the general VAT rate, exempt basic goods and services, and correct distortions in electricity billing to ensure fairness and fiscal responsibility. “Relief must be responsible,”

- [House ethics panel starts looking into complaints against Bong Suntay](#) (2026-03-10 16:19)

MANILA, Philippines — The House committee on ethics and privileges has started tackling the complaints filed against Quezon City Rep. Bong Suntay, who recently came under fire for his sexually charged comments about actress Anne Curtis. The House panel's hearing followed the lower chamber's authorization and direction for the committee to “conduct a thorough assessment”

- [DepEd taps LGUs to bridge 165,000 classroom gap; eyes faster builds](#) (2026-03-10 16:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Education Secretary Sonny Angara rallied over 1,300 municipal mayors to address the persistent classroom crisis, unveiling a multi-channel roadmap to bridge the nationwide 165,000-classroom deficit. Emphasizing that traditional procurement alone is insufficient, Secretary Angara detailed a strategic roadmap designed for faster, more flexible and more transparent school buildings construction. “We are no

- [JV Ejercito calls out housing execs for skipping Senate hearing](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. JV Ejercito demanded an explanation from heads of the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) and the National Housing Authority for snubbing a Senate hearing on Tuesday. At the start of the hearing of the committee on urban planning, housing and resettlement, Ejercito noted the absence of DHSUD Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling in the

- [Customs deploys teams to inspect oil depots in bid vs hoarding](#) (2026-03-10 15:51)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) on Tuesday said it has deployed teams to inspect oil depots as part of a bid to combat hoarding and profiteering amid fuel price increases brought on by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. Speaking to reporters in Manila, Customs Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno said the initial

- [Protest over fuel hike erupts in Quezon City](#) (2026-03-10 15:44)

MANILA, Philippines — A coalition of rural groups staged a protest at a gasoline station in Cubao, Quezon City, on Tuesday as fuel prices surged anew, prompting fisherfolk and farmers' organizations to call on the government to suspend fuel taxes and intervene in the rising cost of petroleum products. The protest, led by rural groups

- [Lawyer says he notarized '18 ex-Marines' affidavit for free](#) (2026-03-10 15:41)

[Updated March 10, 2026, 5:13 p.m.] MANILA, Philippines — Atty. Charlie Pascual, the lawyer who notarized the affidavit of the 18 alleged former Marines who claimed to be “bagmen” of former Ako Bicol party-list Rep. Elizaldy Co said on Tuesday that he did not charge them any notarization fee. Pascual said this in an ambush

- [Mark Villar seeks Senate probe into activities in Maharlika investments](#) (2026-03-10 15:19)

MANILA, Philippines — Senator Mark Villar filed a resolution seeking a Senate inquiry into the investment activities of Maharlika Investment Corporation (MIC), including its purchase of shares in Asian Terminals Inc. (ATI), to ensure the proper management of the country's sovereign wealth fund. In Senate Resolution No. 334, Villar sought probe into the investments and

- [P102.46M from Discaya car auctions turned over to Treasury](#) (2026-03-10 15:16)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) on Tuesday turned over P102.46 million, proceeds from the successful public auctions of nine of 13 luxury cars seized by authorities from controversial government contractors Sarah and Curlee Discaya, to the Bureau of the Treasury. Treasury investigation chief Jerekko Cadorna, representing National Treasurer Sharon Almanza, received the

- [Oil firms admit: Excise tax suspension won't be felt immediately](#) (2026-03-10 15:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Any suspension of excise taxes on fuel would not be felt immediately by the public since oil companies have to exhaust their remaining products that have been taxed already, a representative from independent industry players said on Tuesday. During the hearing of the House of Representatives' committee on ways and means, panel head

- [OSG asks SC to acquit Maria Ressa, researcher in cyber libel case](#) (2026-03-10 14:49)

MANILA, Philippines—The Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) has asked the Supreme Court for the acquittal of Rappler CEO and Executive Editor Maria Ressa and former researcher Reynaldo Santos, Jr., as the filing of the case went beyond the allowed time frame. In a statement on Tuesday, the OSG, headed by Darlene Berberabe, said that

- [Leyte governor mulls whether to adopt a 4-day workweek](#) (2026-03-10 14:33)

TACLOBAN CITY — Leyte Gov. Carlos Jericho Petilla said the provincial government has yet to decide whether to adopt a four-day workweek following a directive from Malacañang encouraging government offices to implement energy-saving measures amid rising global fuel prices. Petilla said he planned to meet with provincial department heads to assess the possible policy impact

- [Butuan City forms task force vs oil price manipulation](#) (2026-03-10 14:13)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — The Butuan City government has intensified monitoring prices as it formed a multi-agency task force to prevent oil price manipulation following recent fuel price increases linked to global supply concerns. Mayor Law Fortun convened an emergency meeting with local officials and partner agencies on Tuesday to assess the possible

- [WATCH: 18 ex-Marines notarized affidavits on flood-control kickbacks](#) (2026-03-10 13:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Lawyer Charlie Pascual on Tuesday confirmed that 18 alleged former Marines visited his office to have affidavits notarized, in which they accused various government officials and personalities of receiving kickbacks from flood-control projects. This followed Pascual's appearance before the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on Tuesday to comply with a subpoena issued

- [Panel OKs bill giving Marcos powers to suspend excise tax on fuel](#) (2026-03-10 13:18)

MANILA, Philippines — The consolidated version of a bill that seeks to suspend excise taxes on petroleum products amid the Middle East conflict has been approved by the House of Representatives committee on ways and means. During the panel's hearing on Tuesday, Manila Rep. Rolando Valeriano moved to approve the still-unnumbered substitute bill, subject to style

- [Escudero: Gov't housing data adjusted to look good, to fool ourselves](#) (2026-03-10 13:15)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) housing data was “reworked” to correct a “misconception” on the backlog, a move Sen. Francis “Chiz” Escudero said was made “just to make the books look good.” Escudero raised this during the hearing of the Senate committee on urban planning, housing and resettlement,

- [Iloilo transport group eyes provisional fare hike amid oil price surge](#) (2026-03-10 13:05)

ILOILO CITY—Commuters traveling between Buenavista, Guimaras, and Parola in Iloilo may soon face higher transportation costs as the Bamosa Marina Transport Corporation serving the area is considering a provisional fare increase amidst the continuous spike in global fuel prices. Kenneth Solon, Bamosa port supervisor for operations, revealed that the relentless rise in crude oil prices,

- [List of March 10 flights canceled due to bad weather condition](#) (2026-03-10 13:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Several flights to and from Siargao were canceled on Tuesday, March 10, due to continuing adverse weather conditions, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (Caap) said. According to Caap, about 1,140 passengers were affected with at least 25 passengers staying the night since Monday at Siargao Airport’s pre-departure area because of

- [Sultan Kudarat revives price council amid rising costs](#) (2026-03-10 12:47)

COTABATO CITY— To help ensure consumers’ protection amid rising fuel prices and their effects on prime commodities, Sultan Kudarat Governor Datu Pax Ali Mangudadatu reactivated the Provincial Price Stabilization Council (PPSC) on Monday. Mangudadatu signed Executive Order No. 112, reactivating the PSPC “as a proactive measure to address the rising concerns over increasing prices of fuel and

- [Driver arrested for alleged rape of 11-year-old girl in Cebu](#) (2026-03-10 12:46)

MANILA, Philippines — A habal-habal (informal motorcycle taxi) driver was arrested for the alleged rape of an 11-year-old girl in Cebu, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) said on Tuesday. After receiving information from the Philippine Coast Guard that the suspect was en route by boat to Manila, the police intercepted the suspect in

- [Olongapo jeepney drivers, operators reel from diesel price surge](#) (2026-03-10 12:30)

OLONGAPO CITY—Jeepney drivers and operators are struggling to stay afloat as diesel prices continue to climb, forcing many to consider alternative jobs or even leaving public transport altogether. Drivers say their daily earnings have been sharply reduced as fuel costs eat up most of their income. Jomar Santos, 34, a jeepney driver with one daughter,

- [Oriental Mindoro tourism offices adopt new 4-day workweek hours](#) (2026-03-10 12:06)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The provincial government of Oriental Mindoro has announced new operating hours for key tourism offices and facilities starting Monday in line with energy conservation directives from Malacañang and the provincial capitol. In an advisory, the Oriental Mindoro Tourism Office said the changes comply with Memorandum Circular No. 114 issued by

- [Puno: No meeting with House leadership on impeachment](#) (2026-03-10 11:53)

MANILA, Philippines — Deputy Speaker Ronaldo Puno has clarified that there were no meetings between him and the House of Representatives leadership regarding the impeachment of Vice President Sara Duterte, claiming that such media reports are not true. In a statement on Tuesday, Puno said he has not met and that there are no plans for

- [I’ m not bogus, says lawyer who notarized affidavit of ‘18 ex-Marines’](#) (2026-03-10 11:43)

MANILA, Philippines — The lawyer who notarized the affidavit of the 18 alleged former Marines, who claimed to be “bagmen” of former Ako Bicol Partylist Rep. Elizaldy Co, emphasized that

he is a legitimate lawyer and not a “hao xiao (fake).” Atty. Charlie Pascual said this in an ambush interview on Tuesday after complying with

- [Bohol tourist transport providers adjust rates amid oil price hike](#) (2026-03-10 11:43)

TAGBILARAN CITY — Tourist transport operators in Bohol have decided to adjust their service rates following the recent surge in fuel prices. The Bohol Confederation of Tourist Transport Providers (BCTTP) held an emergency meeting on Monday to discuss how rising gasoline and diesel prices are affecting their operations. READ: Rising fuel prices strain farmers, small

- [Senators push bills allowing president to cut oil taxes amid crisis](#) (2026-03-10 11:10)

MANILA, Philippines — Senators Francis Pangilinan and Francis Escudero have filed bills seeking to authorize the president to suspend or reduce taxes on petroleum products in response to global crises driving up oil prices. Both bills come as the Department of Energy recently announced fuel price hikes this week: P7 to P13 per liter for

- [De Lima, 41 others file House bill seeking to criminalize VAWP](#) (2026-03-10 11:01)

MANILA, Philippines — House Senior Deputy Minority Leader and Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima, along with 41 other lawmakers and women’s organizations, filed a bill seeking to define and penalize violence against women in politics (VAWP). De Lima, Iloilo Lone District Rep. Julienne Baronda, Manila Rep. Joel Chua, and Deputy Speaker Paolo Ortega V

- [Estrada asks Sandiganbayan to allow him to travel overseas](#) (2026-03-10 11:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Jose “Jinggoy” Ejercito Estrada on Tuesday appeared before the Sandiganbayan to secure a travel clearance to go abroad. In a motion filed before the 5th Division of the anti-graft court, Estrada notified that he will be traveling to China’s special administrative regions Hongkong and Macau, as well as in Japan from

- [Lawyer who notarized 18 ex-Marines’ affidavit appears before the NBI](#) (2026-03-10 10:38)

MANILA, Philippines — The lawyer who notarized the affidavit of the 18 alleged former Marines appeared before the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on Tuesday to comply with a subpoena. Atty. Charlie Pascual arrived at the NBI’s Special Action Unit on Tuesday morning. In an ambush interview after his appearance at the bureau, Pascual confirmed

- [High HPV awareness, but barriers stall PH vaccination](#) (2026-03-10 09:59)

MANILA, Philippines — Cervical cancer is one of the few cancers that can largely be prevented. Yet in the Philippines, thousands of women still die from it every year. Official nationwide health data show that about 7,897 Filipino women are diagnosed with cervical cancer annually, and about 4,052 die from the disease. It is the

- [Cavite trader, pal yield 3 kilos of shabu in Lanao Sur drug bust](#) (2026-03-10 09:52)

COTABATO CITY – Authorities arrested two businessmen on Monday and confiscated over P20.7 million worth of illegal drugs in Picong, Lanao del Sur, police said Tuesday. In a report, Brig. Gen. Jaysen de Guzman, director of the Police Regional Office – Bangsamoro Autonomous Region (PRO-BAR), said the drug sting operation was conducted on Monday morning along

- [Alcedo hazing case: 7 in custody as 1 more frat member surrenders to CIDG](#) (2026-03-10 09:49)

MANILA, Philippines — Another member of a fraternity surrendered, this time to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group National Capital Region (CIDG NCR), in connection with the alleged fatal hazing of 19-year-old maritime student Mark Kenneth Alcedo. In a text message on Tuesday, CIDG NCR Director Col. John Guiagui confirmed to the Inquirer that a

- [Torre on wife’ s traffic violations: No special treatment from MMDA](#) (2026-03-10 09:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) General Manager Nicolas Torre III said the agency enforces traffic rules equally, following his wife’ s receipt of multiple violation notices. Torre said he isn’ t only the MMDA’ s general manager but also joked that he was the “general payor” for his wife Patricia Jane Torre’ s fines. “At the

- [Palace to consumers amid Middle East conflict: Refrain from panic buying](#) (2026-03-10 09:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang has urged consumers not to engage in panic buying, saying there is a sufficient supply of fuel and basic commodities despite tensions in the Middle East. At a press briefing in New York City on Monday (New York time), Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said there have been no movements in the

- [More Zambales towns adopt 4-day workweek](#) (2026-03-10 09:25)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales — More towns in this province have begun adopting a four-day workweek for government employees as part of efforts to conserve fuel and electricity amid rising global oil prices. Local government units (LGUs) in the municipalities of San Antonio, Masinloc, and Candelaria announced on Monday the implementation of a compressed workweek. San

- [Stray firework hurts 8, including child, at Panagbenga closing rites](#) (2026-03-10 09:16)

BAGUIO CITY — Eight people, including a child, were injured after a stray pyrotechnic device exploded during the closing ceremony of the Panagbenga Festival 2026 at Burnham Park on Sunday evening, March 8. The Baguio City Police Office (BCPO) said the incident happened at 7:55 p.m. at the park’ s skating rink area, where a fireworks

- [Marcos waits for Congress’ report on bills granting him emergency powers](#) (2026-03-10 08:56)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will wait for the congressional committee report on the proposed bills seeking to grant him emergency powers to lower excise taxes on fuel before certifying the measures as urgent, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said on Monday (New York time). This came after Castro earlier said Marcos would formally

- [Amihan, LPA trough to bring rains over PH](#) (2026-03-10 07:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The northeast monsoon or “amihan” and the trough of a low-pressure area (LPA) outside the Philippine area of responsibility (PAR) is bringing cloudy skies with scattered rains over the country, the state weather bureau said Tuesday. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), the amihan is influencing the

- [Baguio Health Office expands services to include eye test](#) (2026-03-10 07:07)

BAGUIO CITY — The 16 district health centers covering 128 barangays in this city will now offer eye screening as an additional service, an official said Monday. “We want to ensure that no one struggles because they cannot see,” Dr. Celia Flor Brillantes, City Health Services Office (CHSO) head, said in an interview. “That is why

- [Warning to profiteers: Gov’ t will run after you](#) (2026-03-10 05:55)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday warned profiteers exploiting the worsening situation in the Middle East that the government will pursue legal action against them. “If you take advantage of the situation, there will be consequences. You may face charges and could even lose the opportunity to continue doing business,” Palace press

- [De Lima, priest sue Baligod, ‘ex-Marines’ for cyberlibel](#) (2026-03-10 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima and 2025 Ramon Magsaysay awardee Fr. Flaviano “Flavie” Villanueva on Monday filed cyberlibel complaints against lawyer Levito Baligod and 18 alleged former Marines who claimed to be “bagmen” of former Ako Bicol Rep. Elizaldy Co and who implicated their names in a supposed bribery scheme. In

- [FTI to start stocking onions to prevent price collapse](#) (2026-03-10 05:20)

MANILA, Philippines — State-run Food Terminal Inc. (FTI) will begin purchasing onions from farmers in Occidental Mindoro by the third week of March to prevent a potential price collapse at the peak of harvest season. “With this intervention, we expect to limit the role of middlemen in determining onion prices and help growers obtain better

- [Sandiganbayan seizes Zaldy Co’ s 16 properties](#) (2026-03-10 05:15)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan has seized 16 properties worth over P215 million owned or co-owned by resigned Ako Bicol Rep. Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co, who faces graft and malversation charges over a P289.4-million road dike project in Naujan, Oriental Mindoro. In a resolution dated March 4 but released on Monday, the Sandiganbayan’ s Fifth Division granted

- [6 frat members in alleged hazing death already in police custody](#) (2026-03-10 05:10)

MANILA, Philippines — Five more members of the Tau Gamma Phi fraternity, believed to be involved in the alleged fatal hazing of 19-year-old maritime student Mark Kenneth Alcedo, have surrendered to authorities. One of those who surrendered was a 19-year-old teenager who gave himself up to Dasmariñas City Mayor Jenny Barzaga on Sunday, Philippine National

- [Rising fuel prices strain farmers, small businesses – peasant group](#) (2026-03-10 04:40)

LUCENA CITY, QUEZON, Philippines — Rising fuel prices triggered by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East are beginning to ripple across several sectors, affecting farmers, public transport drivers and small businesses, while raising concerns about higher food costs and economic pressure on ordinary Filipinos. A national peasant group on Monday warned that continued increases

- [Koronadal mayor, environmental champion, dies at 72](#) (2026-03-10 04:35)

KORONADAL CITY, SOUTH COTABATO, Philippines — Mayor Eliordo Ogena, who shepherded the passage of an environment code banning open-pit mining in South Cotabato while he was vice governor, has passed away, the city government announced on Monday. He was 72. In mourning the loss of the mayor, the city government flew the Philippine flag at

- [Rare Rafflesia flower found in Apayao forests](#) (2026-03-10 04:30)

TUGUEGARAO CITY, CAGAYAN, Philippines — Environmentalists recently discovered the rare endemic parasitic plant *Rafflesia lagascae* in Barangay Eva, Calanasan town, Apayao, during a slash-and-burn validation and biodiversity survey, according to the Calanasan Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (Menro). “A cluster of *Rafflesia lagascae* was confirmed in Barangay Eva, after Green Guards reported its presence

- [Probe on feasibility of telecommuting amid rising fuel prices sought](#) (2026-03-10 00:03)

MANILA, Philippines — A resolution asking appropriate House panels to check on the feasibility of a telecommuting system and other flexible work arrangements amid a surge in fuel prices has been filed by Majority Leader Ferdinand Alexander “Sandro” Marcos. In a statement on Monday, Marcos confirmed that he has filed House Resolution No. 885, asking

- [Metro Manila LGUs adopt 4-day workweek to conserve energy](#) (2026-03-09 22:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Several local government units (LGUs) in Metro Manila have started implementing four-day workweeks as part of energy-saving measures to curtail the effects of increasing fuel prices caused by escalating military conflict in the Middle East. This comes after President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. announced a four-day workweek beginning March 9 for executive branch

- [House leaders seek to grant president power to suspend fuel excise tax](#) (2026-03-09 22:13)

MANILA, Philippines — Speaker Faustino “Bojie” Dy III and House Majority Leader Ferdinand Alexander “Sandro” Marcos have filed a bill seeking to grant the president the authority to suspend excise taxes on fuel products during national or global emergencies. Marcos confirmed on Monday that he has filed House Bill No. 8292 which seeks to amend Section

- [PCSO’s Grand Lotto 6/55 jackpot won in March 9 draw](#) (2026-03-09 22:12)

MANILA, Philippines — A bettor won the Grand Lotto 6/55 jackpot in Monday night’s Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office draw. The winning combination for Grand Lotto 6/55 was 38-32-08-20-19-09, which carried a jackpot prize of P45 million. PCSO said one ticket holder matched all six numbers to claim the top prize. READ: No jackpot winners in

- [Labor group: Certify as urgent bill removing 12% electricity VAT](#) (2026-03-09 22:03)

MANILA, Philippines — The Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) on Monday urged President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to certify the urgency of House Bill No. 6740, seeking to scrap the 12 percent VAT on electricity due to surging petroleum and rising power costs amid the ongoing Middle East conflict. “Mr. President, now more than

- [DILG sets guidelines for 4-day workweek](#) (2026-03-09 20:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) has released guidelines for its adoption of the four-day workweek set-up ordered by Malacañang to save costs amid fuel price increases driven by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. The guidelines were issued through Circular No. 2026-005 dated March 6. A copy

- [Senate to prioritize emergency powers for Marcos amid oil supply crisis](#) (2026-03-09 20:45)

MANILA, Philippines – Amid the oil supply crisis triggered by the Middle East tensions, the Senate will prioritize proposals granting President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. emergency powers, Senate leaders said Monday. Senate President Vicente Sotto III and Senate President Pro Tempore issued the remarks less than two weeks before the Senate goes on break

- [Navy spox: 3 Filipino spies were fresh grads looking for jobs](#) (2026-03-09 20:20)

MANILA, Philippines – Three Filipinos working in the Armed Forces of the Philippines who were allegedly recruited by foreign espionage were fresh graduates looking for jobs when they were approached online, Philippine Navy Rear Admiral Roy Vincent Trinidad revealed on Monday. At the Senate hearing of justice and human rights committee, Trinidad told lawmakers that

- [Female lawmakers unite against Santay’s lewd remarks on Anne Curtis](#) (2026-03-09 20:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Marking the International Women’s Month, female lawmakers on Monday voiced solidarity against Rep. Jesus “Bong” Santay’s lewd remarks and highlighted other pressing issues affecting roughly half of the world’s population. Santay’s lewd comment about actress Anne Curtis last week has already drawn flak from fellow lawmakers

and prompted a House ethics complaint.

- [Muntinlupa implements energy-saving measures amid fuel price hike](#) (2026-03-09 20:06)

MANILA, Philippines — The Muntinlupa government on Monday announced the implementation of various energy-saving measures amid rising fuel prices, worsened by the escalating conflict in the Middle East. In a statement, Muntinlupa Mayor Ruffy Biazon said that one of these measures is the implementation of a compressed workweek for local government employees, running Monday to

- [Solons ask DOE: Why not stop fuel price hikes when firms use old stock?](#) (2026-03-09 19:47)

MANILA, Philippines — Two lawmakers questioned the Department of Energy (DOE) on why it cannot stop oil companies from imposing fuel price hikes due to the Middle East conflict, even when their current supply was purchased before the crisis. During Monday’s House committee on ways and means hearing, Manila Rep. Rolando Valeriano asked DOE Director Rino

- [Manila Water rolls out ₱24B in 2025 Capex to strengthen water security](#) (2026-03-09 19:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Manila Water continued to accelerate its long term infrastructure program in 2025, deploying nearly ₱24 billion in capital expenditures for its East Zone operations. This forms part of the company’s ₱28.2 billion group wide Capex, 84% of which was dedicated to the East Zone, underscoring Manila Water’s sustained commitment to building resilient and future

- [DILG urges LGUs to expand fitness spaces to fight obesity](#) (2026-03-09 19:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) on Monday urged local government units (LGUs) to promote healthier lifestyles amid rising overweight rates in the country. The agency recommended expanding public fitness spaces, organizing community exercise programs, and implementing Car-Free Sundays. Citing the 2023 National Nutrition Survey, the DILG said four

- [Romero leads Northern Luzon Reserve Wing as PAF reorganizes force](#) (2026-03-09 19:03)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Air Force (PAF) has begun a sweeping reorganization of its reserve commands following an order from Air Force leadership to align reserve units with the structure of regular forces under the military’s Total Defense Force development concept. Leading one of the newly reorganized units is Col. Michael “Mikee” Romero, former

- [De Lima: Is Sara Duterte silent on misogynistic remarks because it benefits her?](#) (2026-03-09 19:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima asked Vice President Sara Duterte whether she remains silent on misogynistic remarks because the individuals involved are her allies and their narrative serves to defend her. In a privilege speech on Monday, during an all-women session commemorating International Women’s Month at the House of

Representatives, de Lima

- [Legarda pushes bill granting benefits, protection to unpaid care workers](#) (2026-03-09 18:51)

MANILA, Philippines — As the country observes National Women’s Month, Sen. Loren Legarda is urging support for a proposed law that will extend tangible benefits and protections to unpaid care workers, many of whom are women who perform long hours of household and caregiving work without pay. Legarda’s Senate Bill No. 161, or the Unpaid

- [Palace: VP Duterte’s ‘not that difficult’ repatriation claim unrealistic](#) (2026-03-09 18:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Palace Press Officer Claire Castro on Monday criticized Vice President Sara Duterte for saying it “was not that difficult” to send aircraft to repatriate Filipinos affected by the conflict in the Middle East, calling her remarks out of touch with reality. Duterte made the comments during an interview on Ibalik ang Tapang at

- [NBI willing to provide safe house for 18 alleged ex-Marines](#) (2026-03-09 18:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) is willing to provide a safe house for the 18 alleged former Marines, who claimed to be bagmen of former Ako Bicol Partylist Rep. Zaldy Co, to secure their safety amid the investigation, Melvin Matibag, bureau director, said on Monday. This followed reports that the 18

- [LRMC probes passenger for priority lane misuse](#) (2026-03-09 18:24)

MANILA, Philippines — The Light Rail Manila Corporation (LRMC) on Monday said it is investigating a viral video online showing a passenger misusing the priority lane at a Light Rail Transit Line-1 (LRT-1) station to purchase train tickets more quickly. The LRMC made the pronouncement after condemning a circulating video showing an individual abusing the

- [Cagayan de Oro adopts 4-day workweek schedule](#) (2026-03-09 18:22)

CAGAYAN DE ORO – Following other local government units in Mindanao, Cagayan de Oro Mayor Rolando Uy has ordered the implementation of a four-day compressed workweek for all City Hall employees and offices to help conserve energy amid rising fuel prices. Jade Adecer, the city information officer, said Uy directed the implementation of the still

- [No special treatment: Sabungeros’ families want cops in regular jail](#) (2026-03-09 18:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Families of the missing sabungeros (cockfighters) called on Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief General Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. to transfer detained police suspects to a regular jail facility. They also urged judicial authorities to consolidate the cases pending in various courts. The families, including state witness Julie Patidongan, appeared before the Department

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of March 9, 2026](#) (2026-03-09 18:15)

Global oil price shocks from the escalating conflict in the Middle East are set to trigger one of the biggest fuel price hikes in recent years. Here are the prevailing fuel prices around Metro Manila and other parts of the country as of Mar 9, 2026, based on monitoring conducted by the Inquirer team: READ:

- [Castro defends Malacañang concert amid criticisms over timing](#) (2026-03-09 17:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Palace Press Officer Claire Castro on Monday defended a recent concert at the Goldenberg Mansion in Malacañang, which drew criticism for its timing amid ongoing tensions in the Middle East. Former Duterte administration presidential spokesperson Harry Roque was among those questioning the March 5 event, saying, “The celebration continues even amid war.” READ:

- [4 ‘basag-kotse’ suspects point to organized groups in modus — police](#) (2026-03-09 17:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Four suspects involved in the “basag-kotse” modus, where vehicle windows are smashed to steal valuables from inside, have pointed to organized groups in carrying out the scheme, the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) said on Monday. This came after four suspects were arrested in Quezon City last week for allegedly stealing P75,000

- [Cop killed amid homeowners election caucus in Bulacan](#) (2026-03-09 17:38)

GUIGUINTO, Bulacan — A police officer was killed and another person wounded in a gun attack by an unidentified armed man in this town on Sunday night, March 8. Col. Librado Manarang Jr., Guiguinto police chief, identified the victim as PMSg. Jose Uring, 50, an operative assigned to the Bulacan Provincial Intelligence Unit at Camp

- [3 nabbed in QC over ‘drunken’ shootout stemming from alleged grudge](#) (2026-03-09 17:36)

MANILA, Philippines — Three men were arrested in Quezon City for allegedly exchanging gunfire over a supposed grudge, police said on Monday. Cecilio, 64, and Wenceslao, 42, reportedly ganged up on Christopher, 30, along Kaligtasan Extension in Barangay Holy Spirit on March 4, Quezon City Police District (QCPD) public information chief Maj. Jennifer Gannaban told

- [A General’s grief: Catapang sues 18 ‘waylaid’ troops](#) (2026-03-09 17:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) Director General Gregorio Pio Catapang Jr. expressed a sense of betrayal regarding the involvement of former subordinates. He believed that, assuming all 18 are former soldiers, they may have encountered him before he retired from service in 2015. Catapang was a former Chief of Staff of the Armed

- [P200,000 bounty out for soldier in DPWH exec slay](#) (2026-03-09 17:28)

MANILA, Philippines — A Philippine Army personnel who allegedly shot his live-in partner, a Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) engineer in Northern Samar, is now the subject of a P200,000 bounty for his arrest. Karen Corsino Del Valle of the DPWH Northern Samar 1st District Engineering Office, along with her brother, was shot

- [Claire Castro tells Edgar Erice: It's your peers who rejected you](#) (2026-03-09 17:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Palace press officer Claire Castro on Monday denied Malacañang's involvement in the replacement of Caloocan Rep. Edgar Erice as House senior deputy minority leader, saying the lawmaker should simply accept that his peers rejected him from the post. This came after the lawmaker claimed that his “legitimate criticism” of Marcos was the reason for his

- [Man shoots ex-partner dead in Quezon; police probe 'crime of passion'](#) (2026-03-09 17:12)

MANILA, Philippines — A man allegedly shot his ex-partner dead in Quezon Province in what police are now investigating as a “crime of passion,” the Philippine National Police (PNP) said. The suspect reportedly killed the victim at his workplace, a clothing shop in Lucena City, on Thursday morning, PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño said

- [BuCor chief hits back at Baligod, ex-Marines with criminal raps](#) (2026-03-09 16:56)

MANILA, Philippines — Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) Director General Gregorio Pio Catapang Jr. has filed criminal complaints against the 18 former Marines and Atty. Levito Baligod for linking him to a multi-million-peso kickback scheme. Catapang filed complaints before the Department of Justice for libel under the Revised Penal Code in relation to the Cybercrime Prevention Act

- [Zamboanga del Sur adopts 4-day workweek to save energy](#) (2026-03-09 16:43)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur – The provincial government of Zamboanga del Sur has begun implementing a compressed four-day workweek starting Monday, in a bid to conserve energy amid rising petroleum prices. Gov. Divina Grace Yu issued Administrative Order No. 5-A, Series of 2026, directing provincial offices to adjust their schedules in support of Memorandum

- [Four-day workweek imposed in Nueva Vizcaya](#) (2026-03-09 16:36)

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—As a preemptive measure, the Nueva Vizcaya provincial government would impose a four-day work week to cushion the anticipated effects of rising petroleum prices linked to ongoing tensions in the Middle East. READ: Four-day workweek starts in some gov't offices Nueva Vizcaya Gov. Jose Gambito said during the flag-raising ceremony at the provincial

- [Iloilo City, DSWD sign pact to strengthen anti-poverty programs](#) (2026-03-09 16:19)

ILOILO CITY — The Iloilo city government and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on Monday renewed their partnership to strengthen social protection programs and reduce poverty in the city. Under a unified memorandum of agreement (MOA), Iloilo City Mayor Raisa S. Treñas-Chu and Joselito G. Estember, regional director of DSWD Western Visayas, vowed

- [Michelle Dee files counter-affidavit, perjury complaint vs Alias Totoy](#) (2026-03-09 16:17)

MANILA, Philippines — Beauty queen-actress Michelle Dee has filed a perjury complaint against alias “Totoy,” the personal driver of her friend and co-actress, Rhian Ramos. Aside from this, Dee also submitted her counter-affidavit over the physical injuries and illegal detention allegations filed by Alias Totoy against her, Ramos, and fellow beauty queen Samantha Panlilio. Dee was

- [Teachers should not be ‘burdened’ with feeding program tasks — solon](#) (2026-03-09 16:05)

MANILA, Philippines — Teachers should no longer be “burdened” with non-teaching tasks such as activities related to the government feeding program, a lawmaker said on Monday. Pasig City Rep. Roman Romulo, chairperson of the House Committee on Basic Education and Culture, made the remarks during the hearing of bills seeking to convert the National Feeding

- [PH may lose P136-B in 2026 if excise tax suspended starting May](#) (2026-03-09 16:03)

MANILA, Philippines — The country could see a P136 billion decline in revenues in 2026 if the excise tax on petroleum products is removed, the Department of Finance (DOF) said at a House of Representatives hearing on Monday. Finance Undersecretary Karlo Fermin Adriano told the House committee on ways and means, which was discussing proposals to

- [PSA cites irregularities in Joseph Sy’ s citizenship](#) (2026-03-09 16:01)

MANILA, Philippines – Several irregularities were found regarding mining tycoon Joseph Sy’ s Filipino citizenship, the Philippine Statistics Authority revealed before the Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights on Monday. The PSA first confirmed irregularities in the late registration of Sy’ s birth certificate in the 2025 hearings regarding the businessman’ s citizenship. This time around, PSA

- [PNP bares hold-up attempt in Taguig drug sting, nabs 2 cops](#) (2026-03-09 15:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The two police officers and three civilians arrested during a Taguig City buy-bust operation allegedly tried to hold up operatives during the drug sting, the Philippine National Police Drug Enforcement Group (PNP DEG) revealed on Monday. One of the suspects, Desiree Nebrao, reportedly sold the suspected shabu (crystal meth) to a poseur

- [Cops, Gabriela clash over ‘maximum tolerance’ in March 8 protest scuffle](#) (2026-03-09 15:33)

MANILA, Philippines — The Manila Police District (MPD) on Monday maintained that it exercised “maximum tolerance” during a scuffle with protesters marking International Working Women’s Day, but women’s group Gabriela condemned the law enforcers’ response. Rallyists gathered at Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila on Sunday to call for the abolition of the value-added tax and for

- [Police intel officer shot dead in Bulacan town](#) (2026-03-09 15:18)

MANILA, Philippines — An officer assigned to the provincial police’s intelligence unit was shot dead by an unidentified male perpetrator at the basketball court of a Guiguinto, Bulacan subdivision, the local police said. Identified as Police Master Sgt. Jose Uring, 50, the officer supposedly met with the homeowners’ association to discuss the election of their

- [Sandigan orders attachment of Zaldy Co’s 16 properties valued at P215M](#) (2026-03-09 15:12)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan has granted the prosecution’s ex-parte motion for the issuance of a writ of preliminary attachment, temporarily placing 16 properties—including condominium units and land—owned by former lawmaker Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co under court custody, with a total value of over P215 million. An ex-parte motion is a formal request asking the court

- [NBI: Up to 38 may testify as alleged ‘bagmen’ of Zaldy Co](#) (2026-03-09 15:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Aside from the 18 alleged former Marines, 20 more individuals may come forward to testify as alleged “bagmen” of former Ako Bicol Rep. Elizaldy Co, National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Director Melvin Matibag said. In an ambush interview on Monday, Matibag said 103 individuals were reportedly recruited, of whom 38, including the

- [JV Ejercito talks with LTO on aftermarket pipes, modification rules](#) (2026-03-09 15:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Motorcycle advocate and Senate Deputy Majority Leader JV Ejercito raised before officials of the Land Transportation Office (LTO) the concerns of motorcycle riders regarding the implementation of rules on aftermarket vehicle modifications. The meeting comes after several motorcycle organizations approached Ejercito to express their complaints over the allegedly inconsistent enforcement of regulations

- [Stranded Risso’s dolphin in Ilocos Norte dies despite rehab efforts](#) (2026-03-09 14:53)

CALASIAO, Pangasinan – A stranded sub-adult Risso’s dolphin (*Grampus griseus*) in Paoay, Ilocos Norte, has died, authorities reported Monday morning. The marine mammal was rescued on March 6 off the coast of Barangay Masintoc, Paoay, after observers noted “unstable buoyancy and difficulty breathing.” Local authorities closely monitored and cared for it, even calling for volunteers

- [Pampanga mayor suspended over Pogo case; daughter takes over](#) (2026-03-09 14:39)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga— Vice Mayor Jen Capil began serving as mayor of Porac, Pampanga, on Monday, after her father, Jaime “Jing” Capil, was suspended for 90 days due to graft related to operating a Philippine Offshore Gaming Operator (Pogo) in the municipality. Myra Soriano, provincial director of the Department of the Interior and

- [Hontiveros eyes P52.8B emergency budget amid oil supply disruption](#) (2026-03-09 14:23)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Risa Hontiveros on Monday called for an emergency supplemental budget of P52.8 billion amid the expected rise in petroleum prices due to crude oil market disruptions. The price surge is anticipated as a result of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. “It is necessary to discuss, prepare, and pass an

- [House panel OKs travel tax abolition bill](#) (2026-03-09 13:59)

MANILA, Philippines — A substitute bill consolidating proposals to abolish the travel tax has been approved by the House of Representatives’ committee on ways and means after two hearings on its potential effects and impact. During Monday’ s hearing, Manila Rep. Ernesto Dionisio Jr. moved to approve Sections 1 and 2 of the still-unnumbered substitute measure covering

- [Palawan town vice mayor bares alleged violations of mining firm](#) (2026-03-09 13:53)

MANILA, Philippines – A mining firm in Brooke’ s Point, Palawan has allegedly been noncompliant, and destructive in its operations, the town’ s vice mayor said on Monday. Brooke’ s Point Vice Mayor Jean Feliciano aired her concerns in regards to Iplan Nickel Corporation (INC) during the Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights hearing on the abuse

- [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 of the

- [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) had 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 the Inquirer 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 slain Dawlah Islamiya-Hassan Group sub-leader as Emarudin Kulaw, alias “Alpha King,” who once

- [P640M 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 P640 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 shortly after

- [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 Pano 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 as 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 Suintay 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 Suintay, 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 a public 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 family life, 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 Rolan 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 they now face growing threats from industrialization, exploration, mining, quarrying, and illegal human 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 Suintay’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” Suintay 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. Suintay’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 Trefñas 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,

- [Marcos signs law extending Edcom 2 for two 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,

- [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

- [‘Mt. Kamuning’ replaced with pedestrian-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

- [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 of understanding (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

- [Eric says he lost House post after ‘legit criticism’ of Marcos](#) (2026-03-05 05:38)

Caloocan Rep. Edgar Eric 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.” Eric 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

## Source: The Manila Times

- [More Filipinos flee conflict, arrive in Manila](#) (2026-03-12 05:24)

MANILA, Philippines—The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) announced that several Filipinos from Qatar, Israel, and the United Arab Emirates have returned to the country amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. On Wednesday afternoon, 20 Filipino workers from Qatar arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 3. At 9 p.m., the first batch of Filipinos arrived at NAIA Terminal 1 from Israel. They traveled there from Cairo, Egypt via Muscat, Oman, through the cooperation of the Philippine Embassy, DMW, the Migrant Workers Office in Israel and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration. Not long after, 25 Filipinos and one dependent from Dubai arrived in the country via Emirates Airlines flight EK 334.

- [DOLE expands access to livelihood and emergency employment](#) (2026-03-12 03:34)

MANILA, Philippines—More vulnerable Filipino workers are expected to gain access to livelihood support, skills training, and emergency jobs after the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) updated the guidelines for its Kabuhayan and Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged Workers (Tupad) programs. Labor Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma introduced the changes through Department Order (DO) 239-B, Series of 2026, which amends the earlier guidelines under DO 239-2 governing the Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Program. The update supports the administration's efforts to broaden Filipinos' access to livelihood and job opportunities. Under the new guidelines, beneficiaries will be linked to skills training and job opportunities to help them transition to more sustainable sources of income. Coverage has also been expanded to include guardians of child laborers and micro-entrepreneurs who have undergone DOLE Technical and Advisory Visits. Other beneficiaries include indigenous peoples, Tesda graduates, workers from micro-establishments who completed productivity improvement training, and labor organizations under the Workers Organization Development Program. The guidelines also clarify that only one eligible member per family may avail of Tupad assistance per year, except during natural or human-induced calamities. Pregnant beneficiaries and persons with disabilities must submit certification of fitness to work. Wages will be released through remittance centers, digital payment platforms, or authorized paymasters, with direct payouts allowed only in areas without access to these channels.

- [‘Weak’ amihan continues to prevail over Luzon, Visayas](#) (2026-03-12 01:24)

MANILA, Philippines—The northeast monsoon or amihan prevails in Luzon including Metro Manila and the Visayas but the cool and dry winds it brings were no longer that strong, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said on Thursday. Weather specialist Loredin Dela Cruz-Galicia said the tropical storm with international

name Nuri was unlikely to enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR). Estimated to be some 1,415 kilometers east of Eastern Visayas, “Nuri” would not directly affect the weather conditions in the country but its trough or extension would bring cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms over Dinagat Islands and Surigao del Norte, she said. She said Batanes and Babuyan Islands have been experiencing overcast skies with rains due to the northeast monsoon, which is also affecting the rest of Cagayan Valley, Aurora, Apayao, and Kalinga where cloudy skies with light rains would prevail in 24 hours. The rest of Mindanao, Eastern Samar, Leyte, and Southern Leyte would likely have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms due to the localized thunderstorms, Pagasa said.

- [Tree kills rider in Muntinlupa](#) (2026-03-12 01:17)

MANILA, Philippines — A motorcycle rider died after a large tree along the national road in Putatan village, Muntinlupa City fell, hitting several vehicles and disrupting traffic near the city hall late Wednesday night. The incident, which happened in front of a restaurant, forced the temporary closure of a section of the road, according to the Muntinlupa City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO). Initial reports said the rider was pinned beneath the tree when it collapsed. Rescuers rushed him to the Muntinlupa City Medical Center. MDRRMO head Dr. Erwin Alfonso said the victim suffered severe chest injuries after being directly struck by the tree, which also damaged a vehicle, a truck and another motorcycle. City disaster responders and other personnel immediately conducted clearing operations to restore traffic flow along the busy road.

- [Magnitude 5.0 earthquake rocks Surigao del Sur](#) (2026-03-12 01:11)

MANILA, Philippines — A magnitude 5.0 earthquake shook the province of Surigao del Sur on Thursday morning, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said. Phivolcs director Teresito Bacolcol said the tremor happened at 8:06 a.m. some 40 kilometers (kms) northeast of Marikhatag. Tectonic in origin, the quake had a depth of 10 kms, Phivolcs said. Although damage to infrastructure was unlikely, Bacolcol said aftershocks were expected.

- [Marcos back in PH after working visit to US](#) (2026-03-12 01:02)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. returned to Manila late Wednesday night from what he described as a “very productive” working visit to the United States. The plane carrying Marcos, first lady Liza Araneta-Marcos and the rest of the Philippine delegation landed at Villamor Airbase in Pasay City at 11:29 p.m. “I am happy to report that the outcomes of this visit call for peace amidst tensions in the Middle East and other parts of the world, and of course, to campaign for our UN Security Council candidature,” Marcos said. On Monday, the President said he delivered the Philippine National Statement at the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, where he shared that the nation's true progress is measured by the status and empowerment of its women. Marcos also had “very good” discussions with the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, conveying the

Philippines' enduring commitment to the UN and multilateralism. In his address at the special session of the UN General Assembly, the President stressed the importance of the rule of law, multilateralism, and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Marcos also pushed the Philippines' request for a candidature for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the term 2027 to 2028, highlighting that the Philippines could give voice to the Indo-Pacific, including developing countries, climate-vulnerable nations, and middle-income countries. On the sidelines of the visit, the President said he met with business leaders and investors, among them officials of the US Medical Glove company to discuss their plans to build a manufacturing facility in the country. If realized, the project could create more than 2,000 jobs in the Philippines, he said. Marcos also met with senior leaders at J.P. Morgan to discuss ongoing economic cooperation and the global issues affecting financial markets. The conversation covered heightened geopolitical tensions and their impact on global oil prices, as well as the broader implications for both advanced and emerging nations. "Our engagements in the UN and other multilateral fora complement our efforts to enrich bilateral relations with countries around the world. We do as well want to enhance regional solidarity, chiefly through Asean," Marcos said.

- [PUV drivers to get P5,000 fuel subsidy](#) (2026-03-11 16:16)

PUBLIC utility vehicle (PUV) drivers in Metro Manila will receive a P5,000 fuel subsidy from the government beginning Tuesday, March 17, the Palace announced on Wednesday as authorities moved to cushion the impact of a sharp rise in oil prices triggered by war in the Middle East. The subsidy will be implemented across the country shortly after that, officials said. The announcement was made after Executive Secretary Ralph Recto met with Metro Manila mayors and the heads of various departments and agencies. "As mayors, you are the ones who know best the real situation and the number of tricycle and jeepney drivers in your cities," Recto said in Filipino. "That is why our cooperation is important. With good coordination and simultaneous action, we can deliver assistance faster to every driver in need." San Juan Mayor Francis Zamora, who was at the Palace meeting, said another round of cash aid would be distributed if the crisis persists. Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez said the Department of Transportation (DOTr) has been coordinating with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and local government units for the rollout of the subsidy. Lopez said tricycle drivers in Metro Manila would be the first to receive the assistance, followed by drivers of jeepneys, taxis, transport network vehicle service units and buses. The DOTr and DSWD are also working with the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), the Department of Information and Communications Technology, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government to validate the list of beneficiaries. Social Welfare Secretary Rex Gatchalian said drivers in the provinces would also receive assistance once the program is rolled out in Metro Manila. "We will just kick it off in Metro Manila, but the payouts will quickly follow in other areas. One after the other, these will happen because the DSWD has nationwide offices that can conduct simultaneous payouts," Gatchalian said. The cash aid, amounting to P5,000 per beneficiary, will be released under the agency's Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations program, which has a budget of P62 billion. Gatchalian said at this point, they

consider public utility drivers to be individuals in crisis situations because their jobs have been affected. Meanwhile, Lopez said he had also spoken with toll operators about granting discounts to Class 3 vehicles, such as buses and trucks, to help reduce operating costs amid the continued rise in diesel and gasoline prices. He said the proposed discounts could allow bus operators to save between P5 and P7 per liter, which could translate to about P7,000 in savings for every 100 liters of fuel consumed. “These are some of the noncash interventions and other measures being implemented by the national government,” the transport chief said. Lopez also confirmed that fare increases for some public transportation modes are being considered to help drivers and operators cope with higher fuel costs. However, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board is still studying how much the increase would be. He said LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II was expected to complete the review of fare hike petitions within the week. “I told the LTFRB to carefully study their initial recommendation because we have to treat this very carefully and with an abundance of caution. Instead of helping the majority, we might end up worsening the situation,” Lopez said. The DOTr is also studying, together with the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines, the possible reduction of aircraft landing and takeoff fees ahead of Holy Week, when a surge of passengers traveling to the provinces is expected. The Palace also announced on Wednesday that the president has asked local chief executives nationwide to use their Local Government Support Fund (LGSF) to ease the burden on vulnerable sectors affected by the war in the Middle East. The Presidential Communications Office (PCO) said Marcos issued the call as part of the national government’s efforts to cushion the possible economic and social impact of the crisis, particularly on families of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). “Under the instruction, local government units (LGUs) may use the LGSF to assist communities affected by international crises, including families of OFWs impacted by the Middle East conflict, through financial aid, social services and emergency response programs,” the PCO said. The LGSF is a national government fund transferred to provinces, cities, municipalities and barangay to finance priority development programs and urgent local needs. In the 2026 national budget, the LGSF allocation was about P57.88 billion to support projects and programs of LGUs nationwide. The fund provides financial assistance and flexibility, enabling local governments to implement programs that address local economic and social concerns. While the LGSF is usually used for development projects, LGUs may redirect or prioritize programs to help OFWs and their families affected by overseas conflicts. Among the possible assistance programs are emergency financial aid for returning OFWs, financial support for families whose income was disrupted and subsidies for displaced workers. Metro Manila mayors, including Francisco “Isko Moreno” Domagoso of Manila and Zamora of San Juan, joined Lopez and Gatchalian in a press conference in Malacañang on Wednesday to discuss the government’s preparations. Domagoso thanked the president for increasing the LGSF allocation, saying the move would help local governments respond quickly to the needs of affected families. Also present at the briefing were the mayors of Pasay, Las Piñas, Mandaluyong, Valenzuela, Pateros and Malabon. Marcos earlier announced several government measures to alleviate the impact of the expected surge in fuel prices triggered by the ongoing crisis in the Middle East, including possible tax adjustments on petroleum products, fuel subsidies and energy-saving steps across government offices. In other developments:– President

Marcos said he intends to certify as urgent a bill that would grant him emergency powers to reduce excise taxes once global oil prices reach a specific threshold. The House of Representatives on Wednesday started tackling at the plenary level its version of the bill. House Bill 8418 was referred to the plenary on Tuesday evening after the House Committee on Ways and Means approved the measure earlier that day.— Sen. Erwin Tulfo on Wednesday called for swift government action to cushion the impact of rising global oil prices, proposing the automatic suspension of fuel taxes once crude prices breach a set threshold. During a hearing of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means on March 11, Tulfo said the Philippines must prepare for the economic impact of escalating tensions in the Middle East, particularly the intensifying hostilities between Israel and Iran.— Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian urged the government to expedite the transition to electric vehicles (EVs) in the Philippines, warning that the nation is significantly vulnerable to global oil price fluctuations. “The ongoing hostilities in the Middle East should serve as a wake-up call. We desperately need to reduce the country’s vulnerability to oil price volatility. Filipinos have repeatedly borne the brunt of rising oil prices,” Gatchalian said in a statement. “Accelerating our transition to the adoption of EVs would help insulate the local economy from fuel shocks,” he added.

- [‘Cost of govt infrastructure will go up’](#) (2026-03-11 16:13)

THE cost of government infrastructure projects will rise significantly as the war in the Middle East drives up oil prices worldwide, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) said Wednesday. Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon said on Wednesday the rising oil prices would have an inevitable domino effect on construction, because almost everything from equipment to materials is dependent on fuel. “Our projects that need to be completed — such as roads, bridges and other infrastructure — are highly dependent on fuel, especially for operating heavy equipment,” Dizon said. “Higher oil prices could also increase the cost of essential construction materials such as steel, cement and asphalt, which are often affected by fluctuations in global energy prices and transportation costs,” he added. Crude oil prices have climbed to about \$120 per barrel, driving up the cost of gasoline, diesel and kerosene in recent days. Despite the possible cost pressures, Dizon assured the public that the government has mechanisms in place to manage price increases and ensure that infrastructure projects continue without major disruptions. He said infrastructure contracts already include price escalation clauses and variation orders, which allow project costs to be adjusted when there are unexpected increases in the prices of fuel or construction materials. “Prices can be adjusted or variation orders can be issued when implementing new projects this 2026,” Dizon said, but added that such measures must be applied properly and should not be abused. Under his watch, Dizon said, the DPWH will implement only quality projects, using the right specifications of materials at the right price, he said. “That’s possible — the price can be right, it can be fast, it can be quality,” Dizon said. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has directed government agencies to continue pursuing infrastructure development despite global economic uncertainties and geopolitical tensions, he said. The DPWH is also processing payments to contractors for completed project milestones even stressed that the release of funds depends on cash

allocations from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). Dizon said only about half of the expected payments for some projects have been released during the first quarter of the year as the agency awaits additional cash releases from the DBM. But Dizon assured contractors that once the funds are released and project accomplishments are verified, payments will proceed without delay.

- [Marcos confirms Zaldy Co in Portugal](#) (2026-03-11 16:12)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said the government is working with Portuguese authorities to facilitate the return of former lawmaker and fugitive Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co to the Philippines. In a media interview in New York on Tuesday, Marcos said the Philippine government has filed a request for a Red Notice from the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) to trace Co’s movements. “You cannot bring him home because that is not the way it works. We have to ask the assistance of the country where he is in, which is presently Portugal. So, that’s what we have done,” Marcos told reporters before returning to Manila. The president said the Philippine National Police has no jurisdiction over Portugal, but said the host country should assist Philippine authorities in locating Co. “We already requested a Red Notice before the Interpol and we continue to coordinate with Portuguese authorities so he can be brought home,” Marcos said. “That’s the process. You do not send your own police to go and pick him up because our police officers have no jurisdiction over other countries. So, they cannot arrest anyone,” he added. A Red Notice is a request to law enforcement worldwide to locate and provisionally arrest a person pending extradition, surrender or similar legal action. It is based on an arrest warrant or court order issued by the judicial authorities in the requesting country. In November 2025, arrest warrants were issued against Co and others, including officials of the Department of Public Works and Highways, and directors of Sunwest Corp., over alleged anomalous flood control projects. The Ombudsman earlier filed corruption and malversation of public funds charges against Co and others with the Sandiganbayan in connection with the alleged anomalous P289-million flood control project in Oriental Mindoro. Co, formerly the House appropriations committee chairman, has denied the allegations but fled the country in August 2025, and has since accused the president and his cousin, former speaker Martin Romualdez, of accepting billions in bribes. No record of flight to Ilocos The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) said Wednesday it has found no evidence that one of Co’s former bodyguards, an ex-Marine, had delivered money to the president’s residence in Ilocos Norte. NBI Director Melvin Matibag said on Wednesday the agency subpoenaed an air taxi company to inspect its flight logs after claims that Sgt. Belnard Tubid and Co traveled to Ilocos Norte in 2025 to deliver bribes to the presidential household. “Neither Zaldy Co nor Sergeant Tubid appears in the air taxi’s flight logs. It is clear that Sergeant Tubid’s statement about delivering money to President Marcos’ residence is false,” Matibag said. He added that the air taxi company confirmed that even with court resolutions and notarized documents covering 2023 to 2025, no flights were recorded for the individuals on any chartered aircraft. Drawing from his experience as former general manager of Manila International Airport, Matibag emphasized the reliability of flight records. “Whether

it's a helicopter or a private plane, all passenger names are strictly recorded. These records cannot disappear," he said, noting that the NBI review casts serious doubt on the allegations. In a parallel development, the NBI subpoenaed Bishop Efraim Tendero, ambassador for the World Evangelical Alliance, in connection with his role as a witness in an affidavit submitted by the alleged ex-Marines. The affidavit, notarized by lawyer Charlie Pascual, is reportedly connected to the law firm of Levi Baligod. "Pastor Tendero is also considered a person of interest. We issued a subpoena for him, and he appeared before us, providing photographs and video recordings related to the notarization at the office," Matibag said. He added that the NBI is verifying whether the notarization was indeed conducted in Las Piñas, as claimed, given that Baligod's office is in Makati and the press conference linked to the affidavit took place in San Juan. Matibag noted that while joint affidavits are common legal instruments, the document in question contains serious allegations affecting multiple individuals and matters of national interest. The investigation has also uncovered connections between Pascual and Baligod, including social media interactions tied to former representative Mike Defensor. "These networks and relationships are important in our investigation," Matibag said, emphasizing that the NBI's primary focus remains on the verification of facts and witness statements. 103 bodyguards Matibag also said a retired general recruited 103 individuals, including 18 alleged former Marines, who served as security aides of Co. "There are 103 bodyguards assigned to Zaldy Co. There is a retired general who recruited them, and we have already identified him," Matibag said. Matibag said lawyer Levi Baligod, counsel of the 18 alleged former Marines, confirmed that the men were assigned as bodyguards to Co and were initially hired for a two-year period. Their employment, however, ended abruptly after Co went missing. As a result, the security personnel — including those claiming to be former Marines — were left without work or pay. "These bodyguards, including the retired Marines, no longer received their salaries and lost their jobs," Matibag said. The NBI chief added that investigators are examining whether the group's financial difficulties may have influenced their decision to execute sworn statements. "One angle we are looking at is that these people no longer have a livelihood. They may have agreed to execute statements because they need compensation," Matibag said. Authorities are also ensuring that those who executed affidavits were not subjected to threats or intimidation in providing their testimonies. The NBI said its investigation into the matter is ongoing.

- [ICC prosecutors question role of 6 Filipino lawyers](#) (2026-03-11 16:11)

PROSECUTORS from the International Criminal Court (ICC) have asked judges to order the defense team of former president Rodrigo Duterte to clarify the status of six Filipino lawyers who have been publicly associated with his case, citing concerns over witness protection and the integrity of confidential proceedings. In a filing made public on Wednesday, the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) expressed alarm over public statements made by Duterte's lead defense counsel during last month's confirmation of charges hearing. The defense team introduced Salvador Medialdea, Salvador Panelo, Martin Delgra, Silvestre Bello, Alfredo Lim and Cesar Dulay as supporters seated in the gallery. According to the prosecution, subsequent media

interviews suggested the involvement runs deeper. The defense counsel was quoted as saying that two of the lawyers had been “working with [us] all along,” while another, Panelo, reportedly indicated that the team was set to meet with the “Filipino legal team” to discuss strategies. The prosecution argued that these statements have created a public impression that the six lawyers are formal members of the defense team before the ICC. This ambiguity, the OTP argued, poses a significant problem for prosecutors who are legally obligated under Article 68 of the Rome Statute to protect victims and witnesses. “The prosecution has a duty to take appropriate measures to protect the safety, physical and psychological well-being, dignity and privacy of victims and witnesses,” the filing said. “This includes knowing which individuals work for Mr. Duterte’s defense team, as these individuals have access to highly sensitive confidential information.” The OTP noted that the named individuals have deep ties to the former president, having worked on his presidential campaign and held high-level positions in his administration during the period in which the alleged crimes took place. The prosecution stated it requires clarification to conduct thorough risk assessments and potentially oppose their formal appointment if necessary. Prosecutors claimed they attempted to resolve the matter privately, stating that defense counsel informally advised them that the six men are not team members. However, the OTP argued this representation is inconsistent with the lawyers’ public statements. After defense counsel reportedly refused to clarify the matter on the public record, the prosecution escalated the issue to the chamber. ‘Serious reminder’ Meanwhile, on the anniversary of the arrest of her father, Vice President Sara Duterte said his “extraordinary rendition or kidnapping” served as a “serious reminder.” In March 2025, the former president was brought to the Netherlands after his arrest based on a warrant from the ICC, which had investigated him in connection with the drug war that was carried out during his presidency. Vice President Duterte said in a statement on Wednesday that the “extraordinary rendition or kidnapping” of former president Duterte “is a serious reminder that the law should not be used as a weapon for politics or personal interest.” Another Duterte supporter, Sen. Robinhood Padilla, on Wednesday called on the Supreme Court of the Philippines to act swiftly on pending petitions questioning the legality of the arrest and detention of the former president at the ICC.

- [Razon leads 15 Filipinos on Forbes billionaires list](#) (2026-03-11 16:10)

FIFTEEN Filipinos have earned spots on the Forbes 2026 World’s Billionaires List, highlighting the country’s continued presence among the world’s wealthiest individuals. The list, which features a record 3,428 billionaires worldwide with a combined estimated wealth of over \$20 trillion, includes Filipino business leaders from diverse industries, including logistics, property, retail, education, and food and beverage. Topping the Filipino roster is Enrique Razon Jr., chairman of International Container Terminal Services Inc. and major stakeholder in Bloomberry Resorts Corp., who ranks 175th globally with an estimated net worth of \$16.5 billion, making him the highest placed Filipino this year. Following Razon are 14 other Filipinos. The list includes Ramon Ang, president and chief executive officer of Top Frontier Investment Holdings Inc., the largest shareholder of San Miguel Corp., ranked 1,189th with a

net worth of \$3.6 billion; Lucio Tan, founder and chairman of the LT Group conglomerate, ranked 1,223rd with \$3.5 billion; and Manuel Villar Jr., chairman of Vista Land & Lifescapes, ranked 1,376th with \$3.1 billion. Henry Sy Jr., co-vice chairman of SM Investments, was ranked 1,676th with \$2.5 billion, while Hans Sy and Herbert Sy both ranked 2,274th with \$1.8 billion each. Harley Sy and Andrew Tan were ranked 2,386th, each with \$1.7 billion, while Lucio Co and Teresita Sy Coson were ranked 2,481st with \$1.6 billion each. Elizabeth Sy and Susan Co were ranked 2,600th, each with \$1.5 billion. Tony Tan Caktiong, founder and chairman of Jollibee Foods Corp., was ranked 3,185th with \$1.1 billion, while Eusebio Tanco rounded out the list at 3,332nd with \$1.0 billion. The composition of this group highlights both the enduring influence of family conglomerates, such as the Sy Group, and the success of entrepreneurial ventures across the Philippines, reflecting the country's growing footprint in the global wealth landscape.

- [US medical company investing \\$200M in PH](#) (2026-03-11 16:09)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said a United States-based medical glove company has pledged to invest \$200 million to build a manufacturing facility in the Philippines. In a media interview in New York City on Tuesday, Marcos said the US Medical Glove Co. (USMGC) has sent representatives to the Philippines to begin preparations for building its first plant and expanding operations further. "The prospective amount is \$200 million in the beginning," Marcos told reporters before returning to Manila. "They have already started it. They sent representatives to the Philippines. They're already starting to build their first plant, and they even want to expand. They already have found the local partner," he added. Marcos met with officials of USMGC on the sidelines of his United Nations engagements in New York City on Monday. The president said the project would create over 2,000 jobs and pave the way for the local production of essential medical supplies. He said the initial phase would involve a smaller investment, but discussions are already under way for a much larger expansion once operations begin. Once operational, the president said the facility would help ensure a stable domestic supply for various sectors. "This is going to be to our advantage; we will have a supply not only for our health care workers but also for the military and others who need it," he said. Marcos said the government was open to exploring more opportunities if the manufacturing venture performs well. He also said USMGC wanted to expedite the construction of the facility. "The construction of this kind of facility is actually quick. They said that once the building is completed, and once their machinery arrives, they can start the process within 48 hours," Marcos said. USMGC is the leading American manufacturer of nitrile and polyisoprene surgical and exam gloves, headquartered in a 1.8-million-square-foot facility in Harvard, Illinois. It has 10 nitrile-glove production lines in operation and produces over 2 billion gloves annually. The company uses eco-friendly, energy-efficient machines that are 90 percent lighter than conventional machines and recycles 100 percent of production water. Meanwhile, Marcos said his administration was committed to improving the country's investment climate and making it easier for companies to do business. This comes as he invited American investors to explore opportunities in the Philippines, saying the country is open for business. "We are ready to work

with you. The Philippines is open — and I mean that not as a slogan, but as a commitment from my administration,” the president said during a dinner reception hosted by LT Group Inc. in New York.” We have been working hard to improve our investment climate, cut red tape, make it easier to do business and build something lasting in our country. We are also at a moment of real opportunity,” he added. Marcos said shifting global supply chains have created new opportunities for countries like the Philippines as companies diversify production beyond a single location. He said the Philippines offers advantages such as a skilled and English-speaking workforce, improved infrastructure, and one of the youngest and fastest-growing populations in Asia.” We have a government that is actively investing in industrial zones and manufacturing corridors, and that is serious about making the Philippines a reliable node in global supply chains,” he said. The president said opportunities exist across multiple sectors, including electronics, aerospace components, medical device manufacturing, food processing and other high-value manufacturing industries. Marcos also highlighted opportunities in financial services, noting that a large portion of the Philippine population remains underserved by traditional banking. He said the rapid expansion of fintech, digital payments, microfinance and mass-market insurance products makes the sector ripe for innovation and investment. The government is working to deepen the country’s capital markets and attract global technology firms, data center operators and hyperscalers as the digital economy continues to expand, Marcos said.” We are not waiting to be discovered. We are making the case, actively and deliberately, that the Philippines is where you want to be,” he added. Those who attended the reception included members of the US-Philippines Society, the US-Asean Business Council and the Philippine-American Chamber of Commerce, as well as US businessmen and the Philippine business delegation.

- [PH urges law-based South China Sea Code](#) (2026-03-11 16:08)

FOREIGN Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro said the Philippines has always advocated that the formulation of the Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea (SCS) should be consistent with international law and effectively govern behavior at sea. Lazaro referred to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos), which defines and codifies the standards and principles of international maritime law. The Philippines, as chairman of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in 2026, is working overtime to finalize the COC, which will govern the actions of concerned parties in the SCS to maintain peace, stability and economic growth in the region. The atolls, islets and other features in the SCS are claimed in whole by China and in part by Asean member states Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam and the Philippines. Taiwan also has a stake in the Spratly Islands in the SCS. In a statement on Wednesday, Lazaro said the Philippines has also advocated that the COC should “not carve out a special regime” and “not diminish the rights and interests of third-party states.” She issued the statement in reaction to remarks by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi concerning the situation in the SCS and the consultation on the completion of the COC this year. Wang said China is hoping that as this year’s Asean chairman, the Philippines will “recognize and fulfill its responsibility, resist the pull of self-interest and play a positive role for peace and stability in the region.” The Department of

Foreign Affairs (DFA) chief said that as Asean chairman in 2026, the Philippines approached this issue “with a clear sense of responsibility to the region and to the international community.”

” As such, the Philippines is committed to ensuring that the South China Sea remains a sea of peace, stability and cooperation,” the DFA chief said.” Likewise, lasting peace and stability in the South China Sea requires all countries, whether big or small, to meet their obligations and responsibilities under international law, particularly Unclos,” Lazaro said.” Countries have to exercise self-restraint and avoid actions that could complicate the situation or increase tensions at sea,” she added.The Philippines, she said, “is committed to working constructively with all Asean member states and China to conclude an effective, substantive and legally binding COC within the year in line with the agreed guidelines.” Guided by the theme “Navigating Our Future, Together,” the Philippines is “committed to take credible, professional and steady stewardship of the Asean chairship this year as we seek collective solutions to regional concerns, including in the maritime domain,” she said.” To this end, we welcome practical cooperation among all Asean member countries and China in essential areas such as maritime safety, marine environmental protection, search and rescue, and the well-being of seafarers, as well as in upholding freedom of navigation and overflight,” Lazaro said.The Philippines “will firmly uphold Asean unity and centrality in addressing regional maritime issues, even as we are unequivocal in protecting our sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction,” she added.

- [PH, US to boost defense ties for 'stable, secure' Indo-Pacific](#) (2026-03-11 16:07)

THE Philippines and the US have agreed to boost their defense cooperation to ensure a stable and secure Indo-Pacific region.The commitment was made during President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s meeting with US Undersecretary of War for Policy Eldridge Colby and his delegation in New York on Monday.In a statement on Wednesday, the Presidential Communications Office (PCO) said Marcos and US defense officials discussed efforts aimed at accelerating the two countries' defense partnership amid growing security challenges in the region."The meeting focused on strengthening deterrence in the Indo-Pacific and improving interoperability between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the United States military through joint operations such as Exercise Balikatan, which will begin next month," the PCO said."Both sides also reaffirmed their mutual commitment to the Mutual Defense Treaty and to continue working together for a stable and secure Indo-Pacific region," it added.Exercise Balikatan is the largest annual, bilateral military drill between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the US military, which is scheduled to begin next month.The exercise aims to enhance the readiness and coordination of both forces while reinforcing their ability to respond to various security challenges in the region.The US Department of War is now officially the Department of Defense. Its mission is to provide military forces necessary to protect the security of the United States.Meanwhile, Marcos reiterated the country' s adherence to multilateralism and commitment to the United Nations Charter, underscoring the importance of the rule of law and respect for human rights. “All our efforts will mean little nor will they endure without the rule of law and respect for human rights,” Marcos said in a special address to the UN General Assembly in New York City on Tuesday. “The Philippines has consistently affirmed its resolute commitment to the rule of law

and the promotion, protection and respect of human rights,” he added. The president said the decision of the Philippines to join the United Nations 80 years ago was anchored on the belief that the rule of law is the beacon that guides the journey toward peace, security and shared prosperity. With its commitment to multilateralism and the UN Charter, Marcos said the Philippines, as a responsible State Party, abides by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. “We are steadfast in our dedication to diplomacy, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the constructive management of differences to prevent escalation of disputes,” Marcos said. “We remain faithful to the principles of territorial integrity and the sovereign equality of all states,” he added. Marcos is in New York to rally support for the country’s candidature for a non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council. “In the midst of mounting challenges and uncertainties, our United Nations need steady, committed, experienced hands; and we humbly offer ours — to serve in the UN Security Council from 2027 to 2028,” Marcos said. “We lodged our candidature, mindful that a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council is not a right of any State, but a privilege earned through consistent, dedicated, meaningful and concrete partnership in the service of the United Nations, and so of humanity,” he added. The president expressed the Philippines’ readiness to contribute and help calm voices of division, provide a voice of balance for service, and ventilate views for principled peace. “And thus, I stand before you to humbly petition for your support for the Philippines in the elections on the 3rd of June 2026,” he said.

- [Año sues Baligod, 18 ex-Marines](#) (2026-03-11 16:06)

NATIONAL Security Adviser Eduardo Año on Wednesday filed cyberlibel and perjury complaints before the Department of Justice (DOJ) against lawyer Levito Baligod and 18 alleged former Marines, accusing them of issuing false statements meant to discredit him and the National Security Council. The complaints stemmed from affidavits submitted by the 18 individuals, which allegedly claimed that millions of pesos in cash were delivered in suitcases to certain high-ranking officials. Portions of the affidavits reportedly mentioned Año and other officials as recipients, even though Año said his name was inserted without any attribution to witnesses. “I want to make it clear. I don’t care about the other things they are saying. What concerns me are the malicious imputations and publications directed against me,” Año told reporters. “I filed this so we can determine who was really responsible for the publication.” Año said the affidavits appear to have been jointly prepared, with several paragraphs specifying who supposedly witnessed each event. However, the section mentioning him contained no attribution, raising concerns that his name was added to damage his reputation and that of a government institution. “They made a joint affidavit. If you look at the affidavit, each paragraph states who saw the allegations. But there’s nothing on the allegations against me,” Año said. He added that someone had “obviously” directed the inclusion of his name to smear him and discredit the National Security Council. “I have to protect my name and my honor. I have served the Armed Forces for 38 years. Regardless of any corruption or moral turpitude cases, I have never been involved, much less during my tenure as DILG secretary, and now as national security adviser,” he said. He emphasized that he was not involved in any flood control project,

despite allegations linking him to purported cash deliveries connected to flood control corruption. Año also accused Baligod of publicly admitting to manipulating the contents of the affidavit. “Atty. Baligod admitted in public that he manipulated the contents of the affidavit. He also admitted that it was an oversight or error on his part. So, according to my legal counsel, that constitutes perjury,” he said. The complaints filed Wednesday are separate from a previous complaint Año lodged against Baligod, the alleged former Marines, and former representative Mike Defensor. That earlier complaint was based on violations of Article 154 of the Revised Penal Code, or unlawful use of means of publication and unlawful utterances, in relation to the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012. Año described the earlier complaint as more about “fake news,” while the new filings are “more personal,” focused on damaging his honor and reputation. The allegations revolve around a joint affidavit by the 18 alleged former Marines, who claimed that cash was delivered to high-ranking officials, including Año, after meetings with former lawmaker Zaldy Co, former speaker Martin Romualdez, and Mamamayang Liberal party-list Rep. Leila de Lima. According to Año, the affidavits were carefully prepared to indicate witnesses for nearly every claim — but the portion referencing him contained none. Año said he believed two individuals were behind the inclusion of his name but declined to reveal their identities. The Philippine Navy previously stated that four of the 18 alleged former Marines were never members of the Navy or Marine Corps. The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has also started looking into the credibility of the former Marines and the claims in the affidavit. Besides Año, former senator Antonio Trillanes IV, de Lima, Father Flavie Villanueva, and Bureau of Corrections Director General Gregorio Catapang Jr. have filed complaints against the same group of alleged ex-Marines and Baligod. Año also noted that his office is monitoring for possible coordinated destabilization efforts. “Our intelligence community is conducting investigations because it is suspicious why these kinds of incidents are happening all at the same time,” he said.

- [Mindoro lawmaker denounces complaint as ‘harassment’](#) (2026-03-11 16:05)

OCCIDENTAL Mindoro Rep. Leody Tarriela on Tuesday denounced as “harassment” the complaint filed against him before the Office of the Ombudsman. “Like I have said at the ICI (Independent Commission for Infrastructure) when I voluntarily faced it on November 26, 2025, my primary obligation as a lawmaker is to help by passing laws. I am not a member of the Committee on Appropriations of the Bicameral Conference Committee,” Tarriela said in a statement. “I do not meddle in the implementation of projects by the Department of Public Works and Highways. I do not join procurement and biddings. I do not order anyone to meddle in these things,” he said, adding that he was not a contractor. The complaint against the lawmaker was filed by Radamalyn Fernando Cardoza, who claimed that the complaint was submitted in good faith, “with full regard for the constitutional rights of the respondent and the presumption of innocence.” “It is not intended to harass, malign, or prejudice any party, but solely to seek a lawful determination as to whether probable cause exists,” Cardoza said. Tarriela said that the case was filed after Cardoza requested copies of public documents at the DPWH office in Mindoro. However, his request was not acted upon. “How can it be my fault

if his request was not granted? And what is the basis of his complaint?” the lawmaker said. Tarriela has denied Pacifico Discaya's statements before the Senate that he received money from the latter. Tarriela said that his lawyers are studying what case can be filed against Cardoza.

- [DOH urges LGUs to pass anti-cigarette ordinances](#) (2026-03-11 16:05)

THE Department of Health (DOH) on Wednesday urged local government units (LGUs) to enact ordinances banning the use of vapes and cigarettes within their jurisdiction. In a statement, the DOH said that while there are efforts from the national government to ban vapes, if unimplemented at the municipal level, the country will “be in danger.” Currently, 86 cities and municipalities in the Philippines have established smoke-free environments, including Baguio City. Through its Ordinance 34, series of 2017, or the Comprehensive Anti-Smoking Ordinance, the use, sale, distribution and advertisement of cigarettes and other tobacco products — including e-cigarettes — are prohibited. In an exclusive interview with The Manila Times, Karl Jon Pagoda of the Public Information Office of Baguio City said the enactment of the ordinance led to a decline in smoking and its harmful health effects. “On a public health lens, we already know the effects of smoking and vaping, which prompted the city to enact this ordinance. Since then, we have seen a significant decrease in smoking in the city,” he said. According to the 2023 Global Youth Tobacco Survey in Baguio City, 44.74 percent of cigarette users obtained cigarettes by buying them from a store, shop, or vendor — despite such sales being illegal under the ordinance. Pagoda said the city government continues to crack down on establishments selling vape and cigarette products, but the growing number of online sellers has made enforcement more difficult. “Now the challenge is online selling because we cannot track. At the same time, the hidden or underground stores where they sell their vape [items] are in their homes,” he said. Because of this, Pagoda called for a nationwide ban on vapes. “It would be more powerful if the national government would push through with this (ban),” he said. Moreover, Pagoda said the Baguio city government is strengthening its communication campaign by partnering with major universities in Baguio. “In our communication campaign, we are partnering with the main universities here in Baguio City, including the University of Baguio, St. Louis University, and the University of the Cordilleras — and they have signified their commitment to banning vaping and smoking in schools,” he said.

- [Philippine Eagle protection plan launched](#) (2026-03-11 16:05)

THE Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) and its partners launched the Philippine Eagle Species Action Plan (Pesap) 2024–2030 to protect the critically endangered bird and its forest habitat. The action plan serves as a national road map outlining priority strategies to address major threats to the species, including habitat loss, hunting and human-wildlife conflict. Conservation leaders, government officials, scientists and partner institutions gathered for the initiative, underscoring a shared commitment to safeguarding the country’s national bird through science-based conservation and collaboration. The Pesap identifies key areas of action such as research and monitoring, rescue and rehabilitation, habitat protection and restoration, and stronger law enforcement against wildlife crimes. It also highlights the role of

local communities, education programs and sustainable conservation financing in ensuring the long-term survival of the Philippine eagle in the wild. Officials emphasized that protecting the raptor also helps preserve forest ecosystems, watersheds and biodiversity that support communities and wildlife across the country. The foundation announced the successful hatching of Philippine eagle chick No. 32, named “Bayani,” a milestone under its conservation breeding program. Bayani is the offspring of Philippine eagles Dakila and Sinag, and represents another step forward in the effort to increase the population of the critically endangered species. Felicia Atienza, chairman of the PEF Board of Trustees, stressed the need for sustained cooperation in protecting the bird and its habitat. “We need what conservation has always demanded from us: unity, persistence and accountability, and we must work together across agencies, regions and sectors until the Philippine eagle is safe in the wild, and its forests and nesting territories are secure,” Atienza said.

- [DSWD launches ‘e-Panalo’ digital initiative](#) (2026-03-11 16:05)

THE Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has launched a digital initiative aimed at making the delivery of financial grants under the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) more efficient. Social Welfare Secretary Rex Gatchalian led the ceremonial distribution of mobile phones to 4Ps beneficiaries in Infanta, Quezon, as part of the “e-Panalo ang Kinabukasan” Digital Financial Inclusion program. The activity aligns with the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to accelerate government transactions, particularly in delivering financial assistance to Filipinos. A total of 150 beneficiaries from the municipalities of Infanta, Real and General Nakar received mobile phones that will enable them to access their cash grants through GCash. “The president told me and the other Cabinet secretaries to make sure that government transactions, such as the distribution of grants or assistance, become faster,” Gatchalian said. “And to achieve that, we must shift these processes to digital systems.” Gatchalian said that with their grants registered on GCash, beneficiaries will no longer need to travel to payout sites to receive their assistance. “Now that you are registered on GCash, you no longer need to physically go to different places just to claim your grants,” Gatchalian said. He also assured beneficiaries that the agency is working to shorten the waiting time for the release of 4Ps grants. “Before the end of the year, your grants will no longer take 60 days or two months to be released because the plan of the DSWD is for you to receive them within the same month,” he added.

- [Lotilla confirmed as Holy See envoy](#) (2026-03-11 16:04)

THE Commission on Appointments (CA) on Wednesday approved the ad interim appointment of Raphael Lotilla as the Philippines’ ambassador to the Holy See, clearing the way for the former Cabinet secretary to return to government service in a key diplomatic role. The CA plenary confirmed Lotilla’ s nomination following the endorsement of the Committee on Foreign Affairs after deliberations earlier in the day. Lotilla, a veteran public servant with more than two decades of experience in government, previously served as secretary of the Department of Energy and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. His new posting to the

Vatican places him at the center of one of the Philippines' most historically significant diplomatic missions, given the country's deep ties with the Catholic Church and the Holy See's influence in global diplomacy. During the confirmation hearing, Lotilla emphasized the strategic importance of maintaining strong Philippine representation at the Vatican, particularly in advancing global issues aligned with the country's foreign policy. "These include the promotion of international law and multilateral institutions, peaceful resolution of conflicts, interfaith dialogue, migration, sustainable development, and the protection of migrant workers' rights," he said. Lotilla added that he intends to continue promoting the Philippines' diplomatic priorities at a time of heightened global tensions, including ongoing instability in the Middle East. In the same hearing, Sen. Risa Hontiveros sought Lotilla's advice on how the government could cushion the impact of rising oil prices linked to geopolitical conflicts. Hontiveros noted Lotilla's extensive experience in the energy sector, particularly during his tenure as energy secretary at the onset of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, which triggered global fuel price spikes. Lotilla said that during the 2022 crisis, the government focused on ensuring adequate power supply and generation to mitigate the impact of higher fuel costs. "But now this is an extraordinary case of price increases, especially in the fuel sector and the possibility of supply constraints," he said. He added that, in the short term, allowing price increases to pass through the economy can limit prolonged inflationary effects if the shocks are temporary. "As much as possible, the cushion afforded by the economy will allow it to adjust to the increase in prices, and as soon as they normalize, prices can also revert," Lotilla said. Looking ahead, he said rising fuel prices could accelerate the country's transition to cleaner energy. "In the long term, this will encourage the use of renewable energy, electric vehicles, and efforts to hasten the shift to renewable sources found in the Philippines itself," he said. "This will increase our energy security and therefore be advantageous to all of us."

- [BuCor denies scabies outbreak in PH prisons](#) (2026-03-11 16:03)

THE Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) on Wednesday denied reports of a scabies outbreak at the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) and other prison facilities in the Philippines, saying the last recorded incident occurred two years ago. In a statement, BuCor said Acting Director for Health and Welfare Services CT/Supt. Ma. Cecilia Villanueva clarified that no outbreak of the skin disease has been monitored in any operating prison or penal farm nationwide. Villanueva said the last case of a scabies outbreak in BuCor facilities was recorded two years ago, when the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in coordination with BuCor, conducted an "Alis Galis" activity to address the problem. Villanueva's remarks came after the non-governmental organization Kapatid raised concerns about a possible outbreak of scabies inside the national penitentiary, citing severe overcrowding and water shortages in the facility. Kapatid also alleged that it encountered difficulties coordinating with BuCor and NBP officials regarding its humanitarian request related to the issue. Responding to the concern, Villanueva said the bureau has established protocols governing the entry of medicines into correctional facilities to ensure accountability, safety and prevent the entry of contraband. Under BuCor procedures, medicines brought by relatives or other parties must first

be deposited with the Directorate for Health and Welfare Services before being turned over to the prison pharmacy or camp infirmary for distribution to the concerned person deprived of liberty (PDL). Relatives are also required to provide an itemized list of the medicines, with containers properly labeled with the PDL's name. Then, the pharmacist on duty issues a receipt upon submission. Villanueva added that a valid doctor's prescription must accompany the medicines before they can be approved for use inside prison facilities. Medical officers or pharmacists are authorized to examine the medicines and determine their proper disposition. According to her, the BuCor remains capable of addressing health-related concerns in correctional facilities and assured the public, as well as families of persons deprived of liberty, that appropriate measures are in place to respond to potential health issues.

- [CFO to help Makati tap OFs for investment opportunities](#) (2026-03-11 16:02)

MAKATI City Mayor Nancy Binay wants to adopt one of the programs of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) to encourage overseas-based Filipinos (OFs) to invest in the country's major economic hub. According to the CFO, Binay wants to use the agency's BaLinkBayan (BLB) Portal, a digital gateway for overseas Filipinos, to offer local investment opportunities. During the recent meeting with CFO Secretary Dante Ang II, Binay expressed her intention to coordinate with the agency to encourage OFs to invest in Makati. Ang said that while many overseas Filipinos are eager to invest in their home cities, they often lack access to verified, real-time information. The BaLinkBayan project addresses this by providing local government units (LGUs) with dedicated microsites. "These portals allow cities like Makati to showcase specific investment opportunities directly to their constituents abroad," Ang said. The CFO said Makati City aims to tap into the vast investment potential of the agency's overseas-based residents, localize diaspora engagement, and streamline capital flow from returning overseas Filipinos. It is aligned with the CFO's core mandate to serve as the primary link between the motherland and its permanent migrants. By localizing this effort in Makati, the CFO aims to transform the city's diaspora from a source of occasional remittances into a pillar of local economic development. Binay, noting her experience with retired Filipino professionals vacationing in the city, recognized the untapped potential of the OFs' demographics. Beyond financial capital, the partnership seeks to facilitate "brain gain," connecting Makati with professional migrants in technology and innovation who can transfer critical skills and expertise to aid the city's modernization. The discussions also touched upon the *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* program, the CFO's flagship initiative for diaspora philanthropy. While the city is familiar with overseas donations, Ang highlighted the CFO's role in vetting beneficiaries and monitoring projects. This ensures that philanthropic efforts — ranging from health care equipment to educational grants — result in sustainable, long-term impact rather than one-time distributions. The Makati LGU is considering placing the partnership under the oversight of the Economic Enterprises Management Office to maximize its commercial and revenue-generating potential. "This is about recognizing our overseas Filipinos as active partners in our city's progress," Binay said.

- [Post Office seeking opinion on artifacts](#) (2026-03-11 16:01)

THE Philippine Postal Corp. (PHLPost) has filed a complaint before a Manila Regional Trial Court seeking judicial clarification on the handling and custody of archaeological artifacts reportedly discovered within the grounds of the historic Manila Central Post Office complex. According to PHLPost, the court filing aims to determine whether proper procedures were followed in the excavation and handling of materials allegedly uncovered within the compound of the fire-damaged iconic building. Based on the affidavit submitted to the court, archaeological excavation activities were reportedly carried out in parts of the complex in November 2023, when the building remained unoccupied following the fire that damaged the structure earlier that year. PHLPost said the work was reportedly conducted by a group of archaeologists and researchers in coordination with certain individuals. The excavations allegedly yielded materials believed to date from the 15th to the 20th century, including biological remains, ceramic fragments, glass and metal objects, masonry materials, shells, and other items that may provide insight into Manila's historical past. However, the postal agency said that it was not formally informed of the reported discoveries at the time. It added that the materials have to be turned over to the corporation or deposited with the appropriate cultural institutions. Under the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009, archaeological discoveries must be properly documented and coordinated with cultural authorities, including the National Museum of the Philippines and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. The law also prescribes procedures governing excavation, custody, preservation, and eventual public access to unearthed artifacts. PHLPost asked the court to determine whether the provisions of the law, particularly those governing archaeological excavations and the required reporting and turnover of materials, were properly observed. The agency said it remains committed to working with cultural agencies, academic institutions, and other stakeholders to protect and promote the historical and cultural heritage associated with the Manila Central Post Office. PHLPost added that the court action was intended to help ensure that any artifacts found within the complex are properly documented, preserved, and eventually made accessible to the public.

- [Musk leads list of Forbes' richest people](#) (2026-03-11 13:49)

MANILA, Philippines—American billionaire Elon Musk is the world's richest person according to Forbes magazine on Wednesday. With a net worth of over \$839 billion, Musk, known for SpaceX and as the owner of Twitter or X, topped the list of over 3,000 people. Former Alphabet CEO Larry Page is in second place, with a net worth of \$257 billion, while their former president, Sergey Brin, is in third place with \$237 billion. Amazon's Jeff Bezos is in fourth place with \$224 billion, while Meta's Mark Zuckerberg rounded up the top 5 with \$222 billion. Rounding up the top 10 are Oracle's Larry Ellison (\$190 billion), Louis Vuitton's Bernard Arnault and family (\$171 billion), Nvidia's Jensen Huang (\$154 billion), investor Warren Buffett (\$149 billion), and clothing retailer Amancio Ortega (\$148 billion). In the Philippines, Enrique Razon Jr. of ICTSI led the list of 15 Filipino billionaires, with a net worth of \$16.5 billion. "There has never been a better time to be a billionaire. Thanks to AI's explosion, sizzling markets and favorable fiscal policies, a record 3,428 entrepreneurs, investors and heirs made this year's World's Billionaires list, 400 more than in 2025," Forbes said

- [Filipino woman files rape case vs foreigner who assaulted her](#) (2026-03-11 13:46)

MANILA, Philippines — A 24-year-old Filipino woman has filed a rape complaint against a Singaporean man she met through an online chat platform. In a sworn statement submitted to the Pasay City Prosecutor's Office on March 5, 2026, the complainant said she was 18 years old at the time of the incident. She named Ricky Ravin Narwani as the respondent, noting that he was temporarily in the Philippines from Jan. 24 to Jan. 28, 2020. According to the complainant, she and Narwani began communicating online in 2019 and later through voice calls. "As our conversations went on, I became comfortable talking with him and came to trust that he was a good person," the woman said in her affidavit. She said she agreed to meet Narwani in January 2020, believing it would be a casual encounter. On Jan. 27, 2020, they met for the first time in Makati City and spent most of the day together. Later, Narwani allegedly asked her to accompany him to the Mall of Asia in Pasay City, saying he planned to meet a female friend there. During the taxi ride, the complainant said she noticed Narwani repeatedly touching her hands and legs, prompting her to clarify that accompanying him did not indicate consent to any intimate activity. Upon arriving at the mall, Narwani allegedly told her that his friend could not come and instead asked her to accompany him to a condominium unit in Pasay City, saying he needed to check some belongings. The complainant narrated that upon entering the unit, Narwani locked the door and began making sexual advances. She said she tried to leave the room, but he allegedly restrained her and forced her onto the bed. The woman said she did not immediately pursue a legal action due to shame, fear of being blamed, and emotional trauma. She noted that the incident was recorded in a barangay blotter on the same day, but she was not emotionally ready to file a formal complaint at the time. "It took me years to find the courage to seek justice," she said in her affidavit, saying that the emotional weight of the incident persisted until she decided to come forward in 2026. The complaint was lodged under the Revised Penal Code provision on rape, with the barangay blotter entry dated Jan. 27, 2020, submitted as supporting evidence. Narwani was identified in the complaint as having an address in Barangay San Antonio, Parañaque City, and another listed address at 7 Tanjong Rhu Road #09-02 Waterside, Singapore 436887.

- [Nearly 8K pass MedTech exam](#) (2026-03-11 10:47)

The Professional Regulation Commission on Wednesday announced that 7,838 out of 9,317 (84.13 percent) examinees passed the March 2026 Medical Technologists Licensure Examination. Results were announced five days following the exam's final day. The top two passers were from San Pedro College-Davao City. The top 10 are: 1. Reisz Werner Gaudicos Camasin - San Pedro College-Davao City (93 percent) 2. Dexter Alvarez Masongsong Jr. - San Pedro College-Davao City (92.90 percent) 3. Marc Ian Bunagan Tuddao - Cagayan State University-Andrews Campus (92.80 percent) 4. Raphael James Rubio Bullecer - Velez College (92.50 percent) 5. Joseph Okay Davalos - Our Lady of Fatima University-Laguna; Shekinah Psalm Punla Sangalang - Angeles University Foundation (92.40 percent) 6. Keith Karylle Cruz Fernandez, Kyian Crista Leonardo Salvatierra - Far Eastern University-Manila; Clarc John Madayag Waje - Our Lady of Fatima University-Pampanga (92.30 percent) 7. Angeline Labajanan Soriano -

University of Pangasinan (92.20 percent)8. Kirsten Zham Gilot Ocladina - Velez College (92.10 percent)9. Darren Nichole Cordova Ocampo, Matthew Rafael Garcia Reantillo - FEU-Manila; Zynth Genebago Sullano - Adventist University of the Philippines (91.90 percent)10. Sherwin Von Laberinto Palad - Adventist University of the Philippines; Leonardo Meracap Pates IV - Doña Remedios Trinidad Romualdez Educational Foundation (91.80 percent)The MLE was held from March 5 to 6 in testing centers in the National Capital Region, Baguio, Butuan, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, Davao, Iloilo, Legazpi, Lucena, Pagadian, Pampanga, Rosales, Tacloban, Tuguegarao, and Zamboanga.

- [Gov' t to roll out P5,000 fuel subsidy for PUV drivers starting March 17](#) (2026-03-11 08:45)

MANILA, Philippines—Public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers in Metro Manila will receive a P5,000 fuel subsidy from the government beginning Tuesday, March 17, as authorities move to cushion the impact of a steep rise in oil prices triggered by tensions in the Middle East. Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez said the Department of Transportation (DOTr) has coordinated with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and local government units for the rollout of the subsidy. Lopez said tricycle drivers in Metro Manila would be the first to receive the assistance, followed by drivers of jeepneys, taxis, transport network vehicle service (TNVS) units, and buses. The DOTr and DSWD are also working with the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) to validate the list of beneficiaries. DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian said drivers in the provinces would likewise receive assistance once the program is rolled out in Metro Manila. “We will just kick it off in Metro Manila, but the payouts will quickly follow in other areas. One after the other, these will happen because the DSWD has nationwide offices that can conduct simultaneous payouts,” Gatchalian said. Lopez said he asked toll operators to consider granting discounts to Class 3 vehicles, such as buses and trucks, to help reduce operating costs amid the continued rise in diesel and gasoline prices. He said the proposed discounts could allow bus operators to save between P5 and P7 per liter, which could translate to about P7,000 in savings for every 100 liters of fuel consumed. “These are some of the non-cash interventions and other measures being implemented by the national government,” the transport chief said. Lopez also confirmed that fare increases for some public transportation modes are being considered to help drivers and operators cope with higher fuel costs. However, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board is still studying how much the increase would be. He said LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II was expected to complete the review of fare hike petitions within the week.

- [Retired general recruited 103 security aides for Zaldy Co — NBI](#) (2026-03-11 08:42)

MANILA, Philippines—The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on Wednesday said a retired general recruited 103 individuals, including 18 alleged former Marines, who served as security aides of resigned Ako Bicol party-list representative Zaldy Co. NBI Director Melvin Matibag said investigators have identified the retired officer responsible for the recruitment. “There are 103

bodyguards assigned to Zaldy Co. There is a retired general who recruited them, and we have already identified him,” Matibag said in an interview. Matibag said lawyer Levi Baligod, counsel of the 18 alleged former Marines, confirmed that the men were assigned as bodyguards to Co and were initially hired for a two-year period. Their employment ended abruptly after Co went missing. As a result, the security personnel — including those claiming to be former Marines — were left without work or pay. “These bodyguards, including the retired Marines, no longer received their salaries and lost their jobs,” Matibag said. The NBI chief added that investigators are examining whether the group’s financial difficulties may have influenced their decision to execute sworn statements. “One angle we are looking at is that these people no longer have a livelihood. They may have agreed to execute statements because they need compensation,” Matibag said. The NBI said its investigation into the matter is ongoing.

- [238,000 Filipinos sign petition for Duterte’s return](#) (2026-03-11 08:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Senator Robinhood Padilla on Wednesday called on the Supreme Court to act swiftly on pending petitions questioning the legality of the arrest and detention of former president Rodrigo Duterte at the International Criminal Court (ICC), saying that 238,000 people have signed a petition for the former leader’s return. Padilla led the filing of a petition before the high court seeking Duterte’s return to the Philippines so he could face legal proceedings in local courts. The senator said that the petition has gathered more than 238,000 signatures from supporters of the former president. The senator said the group expects more Filipinos to support their campaign in the coming weeks. Duterte has been detained for a year in The Hague, Netherlands. The ICC recently held confirmation of charges hearings but Duterte refused to attend the proceedings. Padilla said Duterte should not be tried at the ICC. “We do not recognize the ICC. Former president Rodrigo Duterte should not have been brought there,” he said. “It hurts us because we have a functioning court here.”

- [PH govt expands efforts for BARMM peace](#) (2026-03-11 08:31)

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippine government has intensified its efforts to expand global partnerships as the Office of the Special Assistant to the President (OSAP) engaged the Philippine Permanent Mission to the United Nations for coordinated efforts in implementing the Bangsamoro comprehensive agreement and the peace process. The pivotal meeting with the Inter-Cabinet Cluster Mechanism on Normalization (ICCMN) and UN agencies focused on updates and coordination work supporting the implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) and advancing the peace process in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). In a statement, Special Assistant to the President Antonio Lagdameo Jr. said the delegation’s visit sought to enhance collaboration with the UN and its member states. The goal is to accelerate programs under the CAB, the landmark accord that guides the normalization process between the government and former Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) combatants, Lagdameo said. The Palace official said the engagement was part of the government’s continuing initiative to strengthen coordination with international partners. It also aims to identify areas of support from the UN system and

member states in promoting key deliverables under the Bangsamoro peace process. One of the activities during the visit was a briefing with the Philippine Permanent Mission to the United Nations, Lagdameo said. The OSAP provided detailed updates on the status of the Bangsamoro peace process, including priority deliverables under the normalization track. Lagdameo said the discussions explored practical avenues for UN-system support in peacebuilding initiatives in Mindanao, including potential technical assistance, strategic partnerships, and resource mobilization efforts that align with the Philippines' national peace and development priorities. The Palace official said that the engagement was intended to harmonize policy messaging and reinforce international support for the Bangsamoro peace process. He noted the importance of advancing normalization measures that include socio-economic support, security transitions, and community development in former conflict-affected areas. The meeting was organized by the OSAP through the ICCMN, which functions as the government's platform for coordinating inter-agency efforts. It specifically supports the implementation of normalization commitments under the CAB, under the administration of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Palace officials underscored that sustained international cooperation is vital to maintain the gains achieved in the peace process. Such partnerships are seen as key in assisting BARMM communities in their transition toward long-term stability and inclusive development, the OSAP said. The OSAP said it seeks to enhance capacity-building, resource mobilization, and technical assistance to boost peace and development efforts in Mindanao.

- ['A year without Duterte is a victory'](#) (2026-03-11 05:42)

Opposition-led groups on Wednesday marked former president Rodrigo Duterte's first year in detention at the International Criminal Court (ICC), saying his arrest was a "milestone." In a statement, Akbayan party-list said it was "a historic milestone in the fight for justice where a mass-murdering tyrant was silenced by the people." Akbayan president Rafaela David said that their victory "was not the result of the dynastic war between the Marcoses and the Dutertes, but the product of years of courage and persistence from ordinary Filipinos." "This did not fall from the sky. It was not handed to us by warring political dynasties... It was won through the relentless struggle of families who lost loved ones, communities who demanded truth, justice and accountability, and ordinary Filipinos who insisted that no one, no matter how powerful, is above the law," she said. David said that Duterte's first year in detention was a "moral victory." "For one year now, the Filipino people have been spared the daily spectacle of Duterte's authoritarian bluster, misogynistic remarks, and violent rhetoric that normalized cruelty and killing in our public life," she said. "In many ways, a year without Duterte, who thrived in the limelight and glorified mass violence, is already a victory," David added. Meanwhile, Tindig Pilipinas also played a video of Duterte's former spokesman, Harry Roque, himself a fugitive in Europe, wishing then senator Leila de Lima a "happy anniversary" in detention. De Lima, now the party-list representative for Mamamayang Liberal, was released in November 2023.

- [Switching to e-cigarettes after heart procedure linked to lower cardiovascular risk—study](#) (2026-03-11 05:36)

MANILA, Philippines — A study found that smokers recovering from major heart procedure may face a lower risk of further cardiovascular complications if they switch to e-cigarettes such as vapes rather than continuing smoking. This was the finding of a large-scale study titled “Prognosis after switching to electronic cigarettes following percutaneous coronary intervention” conducted in South Korea. The researchers tracked the smoking habits of patients with coronary artery disease (CAD) who underwent percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI)—a treatment that clears blocked heart arteries. “Among smokers with CAD undergoing PCI, switching to e-cigarettes was associated with a significantly lower risk of Major Adverse Cardiovascular Events (MACE) than continued combustible cigarette use, similar to quitting smoking,” the researchers led by Danbee Kang at Samsung Medical Center and Sungkyunkwan University said. The study showed that switching to e-cigarettes offered benefits similar to those achieved by quitting smoking. It underscored evidence from recent clinical trials showing that switching from smoking to vaping can restore blood vessel health to a level similar to complete smoking cessation because of the removal of harmful byproducts of combustion, including tar and carbon monoxide. “Patients who completely switched to e-cigarettes experienced a greater reduction in the risk of MACE than dual users. These findings suggest that switching to e-cigarettes could be a viable alternative for patients who find it challenging to quit combustible cigarettes after PCI,” the researchers said. “The best lifestyle change for smokers is to stop smoking. However, if this is not possible, it is worth considering switching to e-cigarettes,” they added.

- [US medical glove firm to invest \\$200M in PH](#) (2026-03-11 04:57)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said that a United States-based medical glove company will invest \$200 million to expand its operations in the Philippines by establishing a manufacturing facility in the country. In a media interview in New York City on Tuesday, Marcos said that US Medical Glove Company (USMGC) has sent representatives to the Philippines to begin preparations for building its first plant and expanding operations further. “The prospective amount is \$200 million in the beginning,” Marcos told reporters before returning to Manila. “They have already started it. They’re already starting to build their first plant and they even want to expand. They already have found the local partner,” he added. Marcos met with the officials of the USMGC on the sidelines of his United Nations engagements in New York City on Monday. The President said the project would create over 2,000 jobs and pave the way for the local production of essential medical supplies. USMGC is a leading American manufacturer of nitrile and polyisoprene surgical and exam gloves.

- [ICI's job is done - Marcos](#) (2026-03-11 04:53)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday (Manila time) said the Independent Commission for Infrastructure (ICI) has fulfilled its mandate but he would still like to see “what else they can do” in the coming days. Speaking with reporters following his address at the Special Plenary Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York, Marcos said he is waiting for the panel’s final report. “Right now, what the ICI is doing is

that they are collating all of their findings. They are also writing their final report. I think it's finished," he said. The next step is for the ICI to submit their collated information to the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Office of the Ombudsman, depending on the nature of the case to be filed against parties tagged in the flood control scandal. "Let us see what else that they can do but for now their brief has already been fulfilled," the President said. Created in September 2025 through Executive Order (EO) No. 94, the ICI was tasked to investigate, receive, gather, and evaluate evidence, intelligence reports, and information on irregularities in government flood control and infrastructure projects.

- [ICC prosecutors seek clarity on Duterte's 'Filipino legal team'](#) (2026-03-11 02:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Prosecutors from the International Criminal Court (ICC) have formally requested that judges order the defense team of former president Rodrigo Duterte to clarify the status of six Filipino lawyers who have been publicly associated with his case, citing concerns over witness protection and the integrity of confidential proceedings. In a filing made public on Wednesday, the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) expressed alarm over public statements made by Duterte's lead defense counsel during last month's confirmation of charges hearing. The defense team introduced Salvador Medialdea, Salvador Panelo, Martin Delgra, Silvestre Bello, Alfredo Lim, and Cesar Dulay as supporters seated in the gallery. According to the prosecution, subsequent media interviews suggested the involvement runs deeper. The defense counsel was quoted saying that two of the lawyers had been "working with [us] all along," while Panelo reportedly indicated that the team was set to meet with the "Filipino legal team" to discuss strategies. The prosecution said that these statements have created a public impression that the six individuals are formal members of the defense team before the ICC. This ambiguity, the OTP argued, poses a significant problem for prosecutors who are legally obligated under Article 68 of the Rome Statute to protect victims and witnesses. "The Prosecution has a duty to take appropriate measures to protect the safety, physical and psychological well-being, dignity and privacy of victims and witnesses," it said. "This includes knowing which individuals work for Mr. Duterte's defense team, as these individuals have access to highly sensitive confidential information." The OTP noted that the named individuals have deep ties to the former president, having worked on his presidential campaign and held high-level positions in his administration during the period in which the alleged crimes took place. The prosecution asked the Pre-Trial Chamber I to order the defense to officially confirm that the six lawyers are not members of the official defence team; have not and will not receive any disclosure or non-public filings; have not received any other non-public case information; and are not entitled to privileged meetings with Duterte at the detention center.

- [Quezon City employees to work from home Mondays](#) (2026-03-11 02:14)

MANILA, Philippines — As most local government units (LGUS) have adopted a four-day workweek scheme, the Quezon City government announced that City Hall personnel would have a work-from-home arrangement every Monday in compliance with the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Mayor Joy Belmonte said on Wednesday that despite the adjusted work

arrangement, all basic and essential services would be available from Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The operations of essential, vital, and frontline offices, including those responsible for health services, law and order, social services, and business and tax assessment and collection, will continue without disruption, Belmonte said. All meetings would be conducted virtually while onsite seminars and training activities will be temporarily postponed. “We understand that the city government’s services should never be impeded. Even with the implementation of a one-day work-from-home arrangement for administrative and clerical employees, our programs and services will remain fully available to our residents,” the mayor said. A monitoring mechanism to ensure that employees under the work-from-home arrangement would continue to fulfill their duties and maintain productivity would be established, according to the city’s Human Resource and Management Department. Belmonte encouraged her constituents to maximize the city government’s digital platforms. “It is also high time for the public to fully utilize the digital services we have put in place to make government transactions faster, easier, and more accessible,” she said. Residents may access a wide range of city services including scholarship applications, financial assistance, and permit applications 24/7 through the QC E-Services portal.

- [PH, US to boost defense cooperation for 'stable, secure' Indo-Pacific](#) (2026-03-11 01:21)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines and the US have agreed to boost their defense cooperation to ensure a stable and secure Indo-Pacific region. The commitment was made during President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s meeting with US Undersecretary of War for Policy Eldridge Colby and his delegation in New York on Monday. In a statement on Wednesday, the Presidential Communications Office (PCO) said Marcos and US defense officials discussed efforts aimed at accelerating the two countries' defense partnership amid growing security challenges in the region. "The meeting focused on strengthening deterrence in the Indo-Pacific and improving interoperability between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the United States military through joint operations such as Exercise Balikatan, which will begin next month," the PCO said. "Both sides also reaffirmed their mutual commitment to the Mutual Defense Treaty and to continue working together for a stable and secure Indo-Pacific region," it added.

- [Marcos to certify as urgent bill that would grant him oil emergency powers](#) (2026-03-11 01:13)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said he intends to certify as urgent the bill that would grant him emergency powers to temper skyrocketing petroleum costs. In an interview following his address at the Special Plenary Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York on Tuesday, Marcos said the government may reduce excise taxes on fuel but only after legislation and once global oil prices reach a specific threshold. Malacañang is awaiting the committee reports from the Senate and the House of Representatives to be completed. “What we ask of the legislators is very simple. It’s that when the price of oil – at least this is the original version – when the price of oil has breached

USD80 per barrel on average for a month, then the emergency powers can be exercised,” Marcos said. The crisis in the Middle East caused pump prices to spike. Last Tuesday saw a double digit rise on fuel with gasoline prices up by as much as P10.20 a liter, diesel by as much as P24.25 a liter, and kerosene by as much as P38.50 a liter. The President clarified that reaching or surpassing the threshold does not mean an automatic excise tax reduction. “The real problem here that everybody is having to deal with is we don't know how long it's going to last. We don't know where the price is going to go. How long is that increase? Is it long-term? Is it permanent? What's going to happen?” Marcos said.

- [32 Filipinos return from Oman](#) (2026-03-11 01:03)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) on Wednesday announced the return of 32 Filipinos from Oman who sought repatriation amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. The DMW said the 32 repatriates consist of 24 overseas workers and eight family dependents. All Filipinos arrived at Terminal 1 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport via Oman Air Flight WY 843. “The airspace in the country they came from is very limited, so we found a way to cross the border into another country where they could take a flight, and now they’re here,” DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac said in Filipino. The DMW said that the government, through the cooperation of Philippine embassies and consulates, its migrant workers offices, and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration implemented various measures that included arranging land transportation to safer exit points and alternative airports that remain open for international travel.

- [Marcos confirms Zaldy Co in Portugal](#) (2026-03-11 00:56)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said the Philippine government is working with Portuguese authorities to facilitate the possible return of former lawmaker Zaldy Co to the Philippines. In a media interview in New York on Tuesday, Marcos said the Philippine government has filed a request for a Red Notice from the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) to trace Co’s movements. “You cannot bring him home because that is not the way it works. We have to ask the assistance of the country where he is in, which is presently Portugal. So, that’s what we have done,” Marcos told reporters before returning to Manila. “That’s the process. You do not send your own police to go and pick him up because our police officers have no jurisdiction over other countries. So, it will have to be the assistance of the hosting country,” he added. A Red Notice is a request to law enforcement worldwide to locate and provisionally arrest a person pending extradition, surrender, or similar legal action. It is based on an arrest warrant or court order issued by the judicial authorities in the requesting country.

- [CICC, CWC sign deal to boost online protection for children](#) (2026-03-11 00:26)

The Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center (CICC) and the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) on Tuesday signed a partnership agreement to boost the country’s online protection for children. In a phone interview on Tuesday, CICC head of communications Aya

Macalma said the memorandum of agreement (MOA) signed by the two agencies is mutually beneficial, especially in helping the CICC flag criminal cases like scams or modus against children. “That’s the purpose of the MOA, to help each other out, to improve digital safety for Filipinos, particularly for children,” Macalma said. In a statement, the CICC said the partnership seeks to scale the “Makabata Program,” particularly on the promotion and operational integration of the Makabata Helpline 1383 with the CICC hotline 1326. “This 24/7 national reporting mechanism serves as a direct lifeline for children in need of special protection, particularly those facing threats of online violence, sexual abuse, and exploitation,” it said. Under the MOA, the CICC will lead online and community-based information campaigns to help inform the public about the functions of the Makabata helpline. In addition, it will provide technical support to the CWC in addressing child protection-related reports, ensuring prompt investigation and quick response to digital threats. “We are integrating our technical proficiency with the CWC’s deep expertise in child welfare to ensure that no call for help goes unanswered,” it said. Moreover, the CICC will create a “seamless referral pathway” between the Makabata Helpline 1383 and the CICC Action Center Hotline 1326. “We are committed to defending the rights of the Filipino youth. We encourage the public to be our eyes and ears on the ground. If you see something or suspect abuse, do not hesitate,” it said. The MOA was signed by CICC Executive Director, Undersecretary Aboy Paraiso, CWC Executive Director, Undersecretary Angelo Tapales, and other executives of the agencies at the CWC office in Quezon City.

- [BFP roadshow educates children on fire safety](#) (2026-03-11 00:23)

The Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) on Tuesday kicked off its Fire Square Roadshow here at the Silliman University, aimed at familiarizing elementary students with fire safety, preparedness and response at an early age. BFP-Negros Island Region (NIR) director Chief Supt. Rodolfo Denaga, who was guest of honor at the event, said in an interview that the roadshow was a “way of awakening the fire safety consciousness and resiliency of the children as to their safety and security” given the unpredictability of emergencies and disasters. Approximately 700 pupils from Grades 1 to 6 and teachers participated in the activity, which included lectures and demonstrations on first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wound bandaging, and the use of fire extinguishers. Denaga said the roadshow will visit various schools even as he assured the public that the roadshow will be held not only during Fire Prevention Month in March but also throughout the year when necessary, without disrupting classes. Meanwhile, Fire Senior Inspector Joebert Sanao, Dumaguete fire marshal, said they are coordinating with the local government unit of this capital for the establishment of two additional substations. Sanao said the city currently has only one substation located in Barangay Daro. He said the substations will enhance the fire station’s response abilities, particularly in areas outside the city proper. The locations of the two new substations have yet to be determined, Sanao added.

- [Tropical depression outside PAR turns into tropical storm called ‘Nuri’](#) (2026-03-10 22:05)

MANILA, Philippines – The tropical depression outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) has developed into a tropical storm with an international name ‘Nuri,’ the state-run weather agency said on Wednesday. Nathaniel Servando, Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Service Administration (Pagasa) chief, maintained that Nuri has a slim chance to enter PAR and would not have direct effect in the weather conditions in the country. But the trough or extension of Nuri has already been affecting Dinagat Islands, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, and Davao Oriental at which cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms would prevail, Servando said. Flash floods or landslides due to moderate to at times heavy rains would be possible in these areas, the Pagasa chief warned. Meanwhile, the northeast monsoon locally known as ‘amihan,’ would be experienced over Batanes, Cagayan, Isabela, and Aurora where overcast skies with light rains would occur in 24 hours, the national weather bureau said. It said that the same weather system would be likely over Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, and Visayas at which partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated light rains would be possible. The rest of Mindanao, on one hand, would be experiencing partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms owing to the effect of the localized thunderstorms, Pagasa’s 5 a.m. advisory said.

- [Marcos makes biggest pitch for UN Security Council seat](#) (2026-03-10 17:01)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday faced his fellow leaders at the Special Plenary Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) as the Philippines ramped up its campaign for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council (UNSC). Underscoring the Filipino people’s aspirations for peace and solidarity, Marcos said the country’s candidature is about giving the Philippines, and other developing countries, a voice in the highest forum of global peace and security. “We of the Philippines offer a voice from this region, the voice of developing countries, the voice of climate, vulnerable nations and the voice of middle-income countries facing competing challenges and priorities. All this was persevering to achieve the well-being and security of our peoples,” he said. “As a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or Asean, a bridge between global north and global south, the Philippines understands dialogue, partnership and coalition building,” he added. Citing pages in history where the Philippines took in Jewish refugees who fled the holocaust, aided in the Korean War, and joined the peacekeeping mission in Congo, among others, the president noted how the country has never hesitated to work “not only for peace but also for the progress of local communities.” “When the UN demands the Philippines responds. At a time when the UN diplomats thought little of social issues and considered them unworthy of UN time, the Philippines insisted that social issues were the equal of economic ones. We spoke for vulnerable people of the world, bringing their views to the halls of the United Nations and inviting attention to their needs and their concerns,” he said. “The Philippines stands ready once again to contribute to help calm voices of division, provide a voice of balance, to shun ambition for service and always as a voice for principled peace,” he added. Marcos likewise called for a rules-based resolution to conflicts in different parts of the world and urged warring nations “to take resolute steps to address the root causes of these

conflicts.” “Our own experience has shown that peace is possible despite several decades of conflict. Guided by the 1982 Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes, our relentless pursuit for peace achieved an alloid success with the signing of the comprehensive agreement on the Bangsamoro in 2014 after many years of negotiations,” he said. “Excellencies, our contributions across the whole spectrum of UN work since its inception are born up by history. Always ready to be part of the solution, the Philippines has regularly proven itself to be an independent, trusted partner, an innovative pathfinder and a committed peacemaker,” he added. “And thus, I stand before you to humbly petition for your support for the Philippines in the elections on the 3rd of June, 2026. Thank you and Mabuhay,” he concluded. The UNSC is a primary UN body charged with maintaining international peace and security, authorized to impose sanctions, authorize force, and dispatch peacekeepers. It consists of 15 members: 5 permanent (China, France, Russia, UK, US) with veto power, and 10 non-permanent members elected for two-year terms. The Philippines actually served as a non-permanent member in the UNSC previously: 1957, 1963, 1980-1981, and 2004-2005. It was in 2022 when Marcos, in his first visit to the United States as president and during the 77th UNGA, renewed the country’s bid for a non-permanent seat.

- [Marcos makes biggest pitch for PH’s bid for UNSC seat](#) (2026-03-10 16:44)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday faced his fellow leaders at the Special Plenary Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York as the Philippines ramps up its campaign for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council (UNSC). Underscoring the Filipino people’s aspirations for peace and solidarity, Marcos said the country’s candidature is about giving the Philippines, and other developing countries, a voice in the highest forum of global peace and security. “We of the Philippines offer a voice from this region, the voice of developing countries, the voice of climate, vulnerable nations and the voice of middle-income countries facing competing challenges and priorities. All this was persevering to achieve the well-being and security of our peoples,” he said. “As a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or Asean, a bridge between global north and global south, the Philippines understands dialogue, partnership and coalition building,” he added. Citing pages in history where the Philippines took in Jewish refugees who fled the holocaust, aided the Korean War, and joined the peacekeeping mission in Congo, among others, the president noted how the country has never hesitated to work “not only for peace but also for the progress of local communities.” “When the UN demands the Philippines responds. At a time when the UN diplomats thought little of social issues and considered them unworthy of UN time, the Philippines insisted that social issues were the equal of economic ones. We spoke for vulnerable people of the world, bringing their views to the halls of the United Nations and inviting attention to their needs and their concerns,” he said. “The Philippines stands ready once again to contribute to help calm voices of division, provide a voice of balance, to shun ambition for service and always as a voice for principled peace,” he added. Marcos likewise called for a rules-based resolution to conflicts in different parts of the world and urged warring nations “to take resolute steps to address the root causes of these conflicts.” “Our own experience has

shown that peace is possible despite several decades of conflict. Guided by the 1982 Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes, our relentless pursuit for peace achieved an alloid success with the signing of the comprehensive agreement on the Bangsamoro in 2014 after many years of negotiations,” he said. “Excellencies, our contributions across the whole spectrum of UN work since its inception are born up by history. Always ready to be part of the solution, the Philippines has regularly proven itself to be an independent, trusted partner, an innovative pathfinder and a committed peacemaker,” he added. “And thus, I stand before you to humbly petition for your support for the Philippines in the elections on the 3rd of June, 2026. Thank you and Mabuhay,” he concluded.The UNSC is a primary UN body charged with maintaining international peace and security, authorized to impose sanctions, authorize force, and dispatch peacekeepers. It consists of 15 members: 5 permanent (China, France, Russia, UK, US) with veto power, and 10 non-permanent members elected for two-year terms.The Philippines actually served as a non-permanent member in the UNSC previously: 1957, 1963, 1980-1981, and 2004-2005.It was in 2022 when Marcos, in his first visit to the United States as president and during the 77th UNGA, renewed the country’ s bid for a non-permanent seat.

- [Electricity rates to rise in March](#) (2026-03-10 16:25)

THE Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) on Tuesday said it will increase electricity rates by P0.6427 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) this March, bringing the overall rate for a typical household to P13.8161 per kWh this month from P13.1734 per kWh in February.The distribution utility said that for residential customers with a typical consumption of 200 kWh, this adjustment translates to an increase of around P129 in their total electricity bill.Meralco said the increase was driven by the transmission charge, which went up by P0.2880 per kWh due to a 70 percent hike in ancillary service charges incurred by the National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP) from the Reserve Market. Costs from the Reserve Market accounted for almost half of the total transmission charge this billing month.The generation charge also went up by P0.2209 per kWh because of the second extension of the power purchase agreement (PPA) with First Gas-Sta. Rita. Meralco said these increases offset a P1.0952 per kWh reduction in charges from the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM) during the period.This month’ s generation charge also included the P0.2817 per kWh contract price adjustment of ACEN Corp., Panay Energy Development Corp., South Premiere Power Corp. (SPPC) and Sual Power Inc. (SPI), as they were allowed by the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) to recover some of their costs due to changes in circumstance.Meanwhile, other charges that include taxes registered a net increase of P0.1338 per kWh for the given period, and also reflected the implementation of the new uniform national lifeline subsidy rate of P0.01 per kWh in accordance with a recent ERC directive.Pass-through charges for generation and transmission are paid to the power suppliers and the grid operator, respectively; while taxes, universal charges, and renewable energy subsidies are all remitted to the government.Meralco’ s distribution charge, on the other hand, has not moved since the P0.0360 per kWh reduction for a typical residential customer in August 2022.Meralco clarified that these increases in both the transmission and generation charges did not reflect the current conflict in the Middle East and that its effects will be felt in the April

billing period, depending on how the situation will develop. On a related note, Meralco Executive Vice President Ronnie Aperocho also said in a statement that Meralco is actively implementing all necessary measures to shield customers from possible supply disruptions and upward pressure on electricity prices due to the effects of the Middle East conflict. “We are closely coordinating with our power suppliers to keep generation at least-cost while prioritizing reliability across our system. We are also optimizing our energy mix and fully leveraging cost-efficient sources, regardless of technology. In addition, we are carefully managing our exposure to the WESM where price volatility is high. We also secure replacement power at the lowest cost, if needed,” Aperocho said.

- [Marcos firm: PH won't rejoin ICC \(2026-03-10 16:24\)](#)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has not changed his position on keeping the Philippines out of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Malacañang said Tuesday. “The president’s stance has not changed. We will still not rejoin the ICC,” said Palace Press Officer Claire Castro in an interview with reporters in New York. Asked for a reason, the Palace official said, “That’s the only statement the president told me.” The Philippines cut its ties with the ICC on March 17, 2019, a year after the country formally notified the United Nations of its withdrawal from the Rome Statute. Former president Rodrigo Duterte ordered the withdrawal in 2018 following the international tribunal’s preliminary investigation into his drug war. Duterte is currently at the ICC Detention Center in The Hague, Netherlands, awaiting trial for crimes against humanity in connection with his bloody war on drugs in which thousands of suspects were killed. In 2024, Marcos said that the Philippines was studying whether it could rejoin the ICC and what the country’s options were. However, since then, there has been no further discussion on the matter. ACT Teachers party-list Rep. Antonio Tinio, Gabriela party-list Rep. Sarah Elago, and Kabataan party-list Rep. Renee Co earlier filed House Resolution (HR) 809 urging the Philippine government to rejoin the ICC and sign the Rome Statute again. The Makabayan lawmakers said such a move would send a “clear and strong message that the Philippines honors its international obligations, respects the sanctity of life, and is committed to breaking the cycle of impunity and state violence.” “Re-engagement with the ICC would strengthen the country’s global reputation as a rights-respecting democracy, restore international confidence in the Philippines’ legal system and bolster partnerships rooted in justice, good governance, and the rule of law,” the Makabayan bloc said. The opposition party-list Akbayan hit the president’s “reluctance” to rejoin the ICC. In a statement, Akbayan president Rafaela David said it was a “policy of trying to appease everyone.” “On the ICC, Marcos Jr. is trying to appease both (Rodrigo) Duterte loyalists at home and the international community abroad. But this double game will fail. His attempt to please everyone comes at the expense of justice and will end up pleasing no one,” David said. “There is only one true side on this matter; the side of justice,” she added. David also said that the president cannot claim to “respect justice,” while also refusing the country’s membership in the ICC. “That contradiction is becoming clearer by the day,” she said.

- [Pinoys stranded in Middle East to be flown home soon \(2026-03-10 16:23\)](#)

FILIPINOS who requested to be repatriated from several Middle East countries are set to safely return home to the Philippines in the coming days, Malacañang announced. In a media interview in New York late Monday evening, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro said the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) has arranged chartered flights for Filipinos wanting to flee the hostilities. “Today, 16 OFWs from Tel Aviv (Israel) traveled by land to the southern Israel town of Eilat, which borders Egypt via the Taba border crossing. These 16 OFWs cross the Egyptian border and will take the Cairo to Muscat to Manila flight with ETA Manila on March 11, 9:30 p.m., Philippine time,” Castro said on the sidelines of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s engagements at the United Nations (UN) Headquarters. “We have 20 OFWs (from Dubai) with nine OFW dependents who travel from Dubai to Oman via the Khatmat-Malaha border crossing in northern Oman. Upon crossing the Omani border, they go to Muscat and take the Muscat to Manila flight with ETA Manila on March 10, 9:30 p.m. Philippine time,” she added. In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Philippine government also booked commercial flights for overseas Filipino workers and their dependents coming from Dubai, while flights are now also being arranged for citizens in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia with the earliest departure on March 14. This repatriation operation will be funded through the Emergency Repatriation Fund of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), an attached agency of the DMW, Castro further noted. More than 400 Filipinos have returned to the Philippines since the conflict in the Middle East began on Feb. 28.

- [House panel OKs bill enabling president to cut fuel excise tax](#) (2026-03-10 16:22)

THE House Committee on Ways and Means on Tuesday approved a substitute bill that would authorize the president to suspend or cut fuel excise taxes during national or global economic emergencies. The unnumbered measure, which consolidated 15 bills, seeks to amend the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC). “This is simply a delegation of a legislative power, which Congress has done many, many times. In fact, in that very same provision on Section 148 [of the NIRC], there’s already a delegation there,” Marikina 2nd District Rep. Miro Quimbo, the chairman of the committee, said. “There is one standard [in the substitute bill], which is the price of MOPS (Mean of Platts Singapore). Second, the exercise of that power cannot last more than six months. It can be extended for a year, and in fact, that exercise cannot go beyond 2028,” Quimbo said. “Third, the president can only mandate the suspension if there is a specific recommendation, not just by one, not just by two, not just by three, but by six Cabinet members all joined together declaring that there is a need to suspend [the tax],” he said. The bill says the president “may, upon the recommendation of the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC), in coordination with the secretary of the Department of Energy (DOE), suspend the imposition of, or reduce the excise taxes on fuel” subject to conditions. The DBCC is composed of the Department of Budget and Management; Department of Finance; Department of Economy, Planning, and Development; and Office of the President. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas serves as adviser to the DBCC. The conditions are when the average Dubai crude oil price based on the MOPS has reached or exceeded US\$80 per barrel for a month “immediately preceding the issuance of the suspension or reduction order,” or the

president has declared a state of national emergency or calamity, and such condition has resulted in extraordinary increases in domestic pump prices of petroleum products as certified by the DOE secretary. Under the bill, the suspension may cover specific petroleum products. It allows full suspension or partial reduction of the excise tax rates. The suspension or reduction can only last for up to six months unless Congress extends it or ends it earlier through a joint resolution. The total suspension period shall not exceed a year. The bill grants the president the power to temporarily suspend or cut fuel excise taxes until Dec. 31, 2028. Leyte 1st District Rep. Martin Romualdez welcomed the approval of the substitute bill. “An excise tax suspension or reduction will be a big relief to our people at this time of soaring fuel prices. A suspension would mean a retail price reduction of P6 to P10 per liter,” said Romualdez, whose House Bill (HB) 5779 was among the proposals consolidated by the substitute bill. His proposal was to permanently remove the excise tax on fuel. “That would have been the ideal measure, but I also understand the need for the government to continue relying on billions in excise tax collections for vital social services,” he said. Bicol Saro Rep. Terry Ridon also welcomed the committee’s passage of the substitute bill. “It ensures that government can immediately intervene when global crises threaten to drive up fuel prices and worsen the economic burden on ordinary Filipinos,” Ridon said. Ako Bicol Rep. Jan Chan also welcomed the committee approval of the substitute bill. “Amid oil price volatility in the world market, it is important that the government has a swift way to ease the additional burden borne by motorists and ordinary Filipinos,” Chan said in Filipino and English in a statement. The substitute bill still has to go through plenary consideration.

- [TUCP and business groups urge Marcos to scrap 12% VAT on electricity](#) (2026-03-10 16:21)

THE Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP), the nation’s largest confederation of labor federations, renewed its call to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to certify House Bill 6740 as urgent. The measure seeks to abolish the 12-percent value-added tax (VAT) on electricity amid warnings from the Energy Regulatory Commission that prices could rise further due to increases in international coal, oil, and liquefied natural gas prices, as well as tightening supply conditions in global energy markets. Meanwhile, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), the Employers Confederation of the Philippines, and the Philippine Exporters Confederation echoed the TUCP’s call in a joint statement. “Unlike other countries in the region, the Philippines not only does not subsidize fuel and electricity but also taxes these industries. Removing excise taxes temporarily will benefit all sectors, rich and poor alike, which is a better solution than providing ‘ayuda’ only to the poor,” said PCCI Chairman Emeritus Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr. The business groups noted that high power costs remain one of the country’s biggest barriers to competitiveness, particularly in manufacturing. Removing VAT on electricity would reduce operating costs, helping factories expand production, attract new investments, and increase the sector’s contribution to GDP and job creation. The groups added that the measure would safeguard existing jobs and support the creation of new ones. The TUCP noted that it has been 24 years since Republic Act 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act, promised reliable and affordable electricity. However, only four years later, RA 9337

amended the National Internal Revenue Code and imposed the 12-percent VAT on electricity, including the sales of generation, transmission, and distribution companies. “We are not only paying VAT on electricity we actually consume, but are even charged VAT on system losses or the electricity we never used in the first place. Mr. President, now more than ever, we should put an end to this extremely excessive taxation imposed on our extremely expensive power by certifying as urgent House Bill 6740,” the group added. TUCP President Raymond Democrito Mendoza said it is a rare occurrence that both labor and business — which often clash on issues such as wages and contractualization — stand shoulder to shoulder for a common cause. “When both workers and employers raise the same urgent call, the government must listen,” Mendoza said. TUCP Vice President Luis Corral said exempting electricity sales from VAT would provide immediate relief to workers and consumers while triggering more quality job opportunities. “This is the better approach than the age-old palliatives and ayuda (aid),” Corral added.

- [Marcos reaffirms PH partnership with UN](#) (2026-03-10 16:20)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. met with United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres to tackle various issues, including the Philippines’ bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, Malacañang said Tuesday. Marcos and Guterres held a bilateral meeting at the UN headquarters in New York on the sidelines of the president’s working visit to the United States, the Presidential Communications Office (PCO) said. The PCO said the two leaders’ meeting reaffirmed the “long-standing partnership between the Philippines and the global body.” “The meeting is a strong testament to the Philippines’ long-standing partnership with the UN and reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening multilateral cooperation, as reflected in the country’s Security Council candidature,” the PCO said. The president was accompanied by Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro, Philippine Permanent Representative to the UN in New York Ambassador Enrique Manalo, Philippine Ambassador to the United States Jose Manuel Romualdez, and acting Presidential Communications Secretary Dave Gomez. Marcos last met Guterres in October 2025 at the sidelines of the 47th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit and Related Summits in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Guterres expressed his appreciation for Marcos’ efforts in promoting peace and democracy in the Philippines, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said. Castro said Guterres expressed hope that the Philippines’ voice would continue to be heard in the UN, as he described the country as a “bridge-builder.” The Philippines is vying for a non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council, with the elections to be held on June 3. The UN Security Council, composed of 15 members (five permanent and 10 non-permanent), is primarily responsible for maintaining international peace and security. A non-permanent member serves temporarily on the council to help make decisions regarding international peace and security and is elected by the UN Member States. The five permanent members are China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Ten non-permanent members are elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly. Guterres also expressed the UN’s full support for the Philippines’ chairmanship of the Asean, noting

the regional bloc's crucial role in strengthening global cooperation. He commended Asean for upholding the primacy of international law and respecting the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. In response, Marcos reaffirmed the Philippines' commitment as a "proud partner" and one of the founding members of the UN.

- [Lacson slams Marcoleta for interference](#) (2026-03-10 16:19)

SEN. Panfilo Lacson on Tuesday slammed fellow Sen. Rodante Marcoleta for "targeting" him and interfering with his job as chairman of the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee investigating anomalies in government. The Senate president pro tempore defended the committee's procedures from Marcoleta's "pagbibida-bida" (know-it-all actions) on the panel's investigation of the flood control scandal. In a privilege speech, Lacson refuted what he called Marcoleta's "tirades and prevarications in and out of the Senate" targeting him. "Much as I would like to abide by what my elders had taught me, that 'silence is the best response to nonsense,' I am constrained to take the floor to set the record straight and correct the prevarications spewed on this very floor by one of our colleagues, namely Senator Rodante Marcoleta," he said. "Like on many past occasions, I could have effortlessly dismissed Senator Marcoleta's statements, as I refuse to dignify his ego-driven provocations," Lacson said.

"But when the attacks shift from professional to obsessively personal, I must shut the whole political circus down — firmly, completely, and without ambiguity." Lacson maintained that Marcoleta's release of the so-called "minority report" by the minority bloc and its contents was an affront to the Blue Ribbon Committee and to him as its chairman. The minority report claimed that the Blue Ribbon Committee cannot compete with national prosecution services and the judiciary in disposing of the cases. "Out of line. Out of place. So, is it any surprise that my reaction is that this report belongs to nowhere else but the trash bin?" Lacson asked. He also dismissed Marcoleta's complaint that he has yet to receive a copy of the draft partial committee report. He pointed out that his office furnished an advanced copy of the report to Blue Ribbon members' offices as early as Feb. 11. Lacson said that his office followed up with the other senators if they wished to sign the report, even if they intended to dissent or interpellate. Yet, only Sen. Bam Aquino signed it, he noted. "Why is he now looking for a Blue Ribbon Committee report that had been in his office for a month?" Lacson stressed. As for Marcoleta's dare to name 67 so-called "cong-tractors," Lacson said he was informed about it by a congressman-friend and that he does not have such a list. Lacson said Marcoleta may have become obsessed with him to the extent of stalking his interviews and social media updates and nitpicking every statement he uttered. "I don't know. Since I shut down Marcoleta on the floor, he appeared to hold a grudge against me," he said.

- [Imee Marcos urges Palace to seek Duterte's release](#) (2026-03-10 16:18)

SEN. Imee Marcos on Monday urged the government to seek the immediate release of former president Rodrigo Duterte from detention at The Hague, the Netherlands. She filed Resolution 340 on the eve of Duterte's first year in detention. The International Criminal Court (ICC), in coordination with the International Police, arrested Duterte on March 11, 2025 to face the

charges. The ICC conducted the confirmation of charges hearing from Feb. 23 to Feb. 27 related to Duterte's case. The pre-trial chamber granted Duterte's request to waive his right to attend the hearing. The senator said one year has passed since the Executive department "carried out the extraordinary rendition" of Duterte. "Yet, to this day the government has failed to provide accountability or meaningful redress for the ongoing impairment of FPRD's (former president Rodrigo Duterte's) constitutional and statutory rights," she said. The senator asked Malacañang to "redress the continuing violation" of his rights and file "appropriate representations to the International Criminal Court for his immediate return to the country." Marcos also asked the Senate to urge the Executive department to "fully disclose all communications, agreements, authorizations, requests and operational directives relating to cooperation with the ICC" in connection with the arrest and transfer of Duterte. She pressed the Marcos administration to "issue a categorical clarification of the official policy of the Philippine government regarding present and future cooperation with the ICC." Marcos said the government should "acknowledge the violations of Duterte's constitutional and statutory rights and hold accountable the officials responsible." She asked the government to "refrain from bypassing the Philippine judiciary and engaging in unconstitutional acts in relation to future ICC arrest warrants, if any." Marcos said that the circumstances surrounding the arrest and surrender of Duterte and the government's dealings with the ICC "are matters of the highest public interest and under the settled jurisprudence, not even the executive privilege can be invoked to conceal wrongdoings or shield acts that constitute violations of the Constitution." "The Executive department's persistent lack of transparency, its grave violations of the Bill of Rights, and its circumvention of the Philippine judicial system now give rise to serious and imminent concerns that similar actions may again be undertaken against the political opponents of the administration and retired police officials — thereby threatening to normalize the erosion of constitutional safeguards and the rule of law," she added.

- [Income tax and minimum wage exemptions of Barangay Micro Business Enterprise](#)  
(2026-03-10 16:17)

Dear PAO, I am a retired policeman and I am planning to put up a water refilling station in our house. I watch Facebook reels stating that barangay-level businesses such as sari-sari stores are exempted from paying income taxes and are not required to pay the minimum wage to employees. Is this true? If yes, how can I apply? IbramDear Ibram, The answer to your query is governed by the provisions of Republic Act (RA) 9178, otherwise known as the Barangay Micro Business Enterprises (BMBEs) Act of 2002, which was approved on Nov. 13, 2002. The declared policy of the State under this statute is to accelerate national economic development by encouraging the establishment and growth of barangay micro business enterprises, and by granting them incentives and benefits designed to generate employment opportunities and alleviate poverty. Pursuant to Section 3 of RA 9178, a Barangay Micro Business Enterprise (BMBE) is defined as "any business entity or enterprise engaged in the production, processing or manufacturing of products or commodities, including agro-processing, trading and services, whose total assets including those arising from loans but exclusive of the land on which the

particular business entity’ s office, plant and equipment are situated, shall not be more than Three Million Pesos (P3,000,000.00).” Section 7 of the same Act expressly provides that duly registered BMBEs shall be exempt from income tax on income derived from the operations of the enterprise. Moreover, local government units (LGUs) are encouraged either to reduce or exempt such enterprises from the payment of local taxes, fees, and charges. In addition, Section 8 of RA 9178 states that BMBEs shall be exempt from the coverage of the Minimum Wage Law, provided, however, that employees of such enterprises shall remain entitled to statutory benefits accorded to regular employees, including, but not limited to, social security and health care benefits. With respect to registration, an applicant seeking to avail of the benefits granted to BMBEs may file an application through any of the following modes: (1) by submitting online application through the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) electronic BMBE portal; or (2) by personally filing the application with the nearest DTI Negosyo Center or the Office of the City or Municipal Treasurer having jurisdiction over the business. The application shall be subject to evaluation by the DTI. Upon a finding of compliance with the statutory qualifications, a Certificate of Authority shall be issued, which shall remain valid for a period of two years, and may be renewed for another two years. We hope that we were able to answer your queries. This advice was based solely on the facts you have narrated and our appreciation of the same. Our opinion may vary when other facts are changed or elaborated. Thank you for your continued trust and support. Editor’ s note: Dear PAO is a daily column of the Public Attorney’ s Office. Questions for Chief Acosta may be sent to [dearpao@manilatimes.net](mailto:dearpao@manilatimes.net)

- [Senators push for budget reform to boost transparency, fiscal discipline](#) (2026-03-10 16:16)

SENATORS on Tuesday pushed for sweeping reforms in the country’ s national budget process to ensure greater transparency and stronger fiscal discipline. During a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Finance chaired by Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian, lawmakers discussed several measures aimed at overhauling the budgeting system and institutionalizing reforms in public financial management. The proposed reforms aim to expand the participation of local government units and civil society organizations in the budget process, make budget documents more accessible for public scrutiny, and clarify technical budget terms such as “unprogrammed funds” and “special accounts.” The measures also propose the full digitization of the budgeting process — from data gathering and preparation to the final signing of the spending plan — to improve efficiency and accountability. Gatchalian said the proposals were prompted in part by controversies surrounding the 2025 budgeting process, which drew scrutiny following corruption allegations linked to Department of Public Works and Highways flood control projects. “2025 was a tumultuous year for the budgeting process,” Gatchalian said. “We implemented various reforms during the deliberations on the 2025 budget. We introduced transparency measures to help the public better understand the budget process and to provide a clearer view of how the budget is deliberated, debated and eventually enacted.” However, the senator noted that many transparency initiatives were introduced on an ad hoc basis and were not yet embedded in law. The proposals aim to institutionalize such reforms to ensure consistency in future budget cycles. Among the measures discussed was Sen.

Erwin Tulfo's Senate Bill 1358, which seeks to strengthen the country's public financial management system and reinforce Congress' constitutional power over government spending. Tulfo stressed that the national budget — formally known as the General Appropriations Act — is the most significant piece of legislation passed by Congress each year, as it determines how government funds are allocated across key sectors such as infrastructure, health, education and social services. “The national budget, also known as the General Appropriations Act, is widely regarded as the most important piece of legislation that Congress passes each year,” Tulfo said in Filipino. “It sets out how we allocate government funds to programs and projects that affect the lives of our people.” He added that the existing budgeting system remains fragmented and vulnerable to inefficiencies due to limited transparency and public participation. “To address these concerns, we need to strengthen public financial management and institutionalize reforms that will make the process more accountable and transparent,” Tulfo said. He cited reforms introduced during deliberations on the 2026 national budget, when bicameral conference committee meetings between the Senate and the House of Representatives were livestreamed for the first time, allowing the public to observe negotiations on the final allocation of funds.

- [‘Ban political violence vs women’](#) (2026-03-10 16:14)

FORTY-TWO lawmakers on Tuesday filed House Bill 8393, which seeks to define and punish violence against women in politics, or VAWP. “While existing laws address gender-based violence, they nonetheless fail to capture the political dimension of these attacks,” the lawmakers said in the bill's explanatory note. They said the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act “is limited to violence within intimate or domestic relationships.” The Safe Spaces Act, they said, “addresses sexual harassment in public and online spaces, but treats these as general offenses.” The Cybercrime Prevention Act “penalizes online crimes but lacks a gender-sensitive and political lens,” they added. “When a woman is attacked in politics, it is not merely an interpersonal dispute; it is a systemic attack intended to dismantle democratic participation,” the note read. “Addressing VAWP is therefore not only a matter of protecting women's rights but also of safeguarding our democratic institutions and ensuring inclusive governance.” The bill defines VAWP as “any act or omission directed at, or affecting a woman in politics, which can be done in public or private, and which can occur online or offline, that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological, economic, institutional, or symbolic harm or suffering to women in politics.” This includes threats, harassment, coercion, intimidation, discrimination, or deprivation of rights committed on account of gender. Under the bill, the penalty for economic violence against a woman in politics is imprisonment of six months to six years, a fine of P100,000 to P500,000, or both. “Any public officer, political party officer, or responsible official of a political organization who commits institutional violence shall suffer the penalty of imprisonment of not less than one (1) year but not more than six (6) years, and a fine of not less than P200,000 but not over P1 million,” the bill stated. “If the offender is a public officer, the penalty shall further include perpetual disqualification from holding public office and forfeiture of retirement benefits, without prejudice to administrative

sanctions.” Acts constituting physical violence would be punished by a penalty one degree higher than those provided under the Revised Penal Code or other applicable laws when committed to prevent or punish a woman’s political participation. The penalty for psychological violence is imprisonment of one to six years and a fine of P100,000 to P500,000. For doxxing, the penalty is imprisonment of two to six years and a fine of P200,000 to P1 million. The penalty for “technology-facilitated violence or online political abuse” is imprisonment of two to six years and a fine of P200,000 to P1 million, “without prejudice to prosecution under the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012 and other applicable laws.” The penalty for semiotic violence is imprisonment of six months to three years, a fine of P100,000 to P300,000, or both. Sexual violence “shall be punished by the penalty one degree higher than that provided under the Revised Penal Code, the Anti-Rape Law, the Safe Spaces Act, and other applicable laws, when committed against a woman in politics by reason of or in relation to her political participation, candidacy, or exercise of public office,” the bill read. Any “analogous act” resulting in VAWP would be punished by the penalty corresponding to the most analogous prohibited act. The bill stated that if a candidate or nominee is the offender, a final conviction shall include disqualification from public office and deprivation of the right to vote. The bill also listed aggravating circumstances, including the use of public resources and “disinformation and falsification with gendered intent.” The bill was filed by Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima, La Union 1st District Rep. Francisco Paolo Ortega V, Laguna 1st District Rep. Ann Matibag, Dinagat Islands Rep. Arlene Bag-ao, Surigao del Norte 2nd District Rep. Bernadette Barbers, Iloilo Rep. Julienne Baronda, Quezon City 6th District Rep. Ma. Victoria Co-Pilar, Bulacan 5th District Rep. Agatha Paula Cruz, Quirino Rep. Midy Cua, Negros Oriental 3rd District Rep. Janice Degamo, Cebu City 1st District Rep. Rachel Marguerite del Mar, Iloilo 1st District Rep. Janette Garin, Albay 1st District Rep. Cielo Krisel Lagman, Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro, Ilocos Sur 2nd District Rep. Kristine Singson-Meehan, 4K Rep. Iris Marie Montes, Cagayan 2nd District Rep. Baby Aline Vargas-Alfonso, Leyte 3rd District Rep. Anna Victoria Veloso-Tuazon, Bulacan 4th District Rep. Linabelle Ruth Villarica, San Juan City Rep. Ysabel Maria Zamora, 4Ps Rep. JC Abalos, Lanao del Sur 1st District Rep. Ziaur-Rahman Alonto Adiong, Laguna 4th District Rep. Benjamin Agarao Jr., Zamboanga del Norte 3rd District Rep. Adrian Michael Amatong, Lanao del Sur 2nd District Rep. Yasser Alonto Balindong, Negros Occidental 3rd District Rep. Javier Miguel Benitez, Manila 3rd District Rep. Joel Chua, Northern Samar 1st District Rep. Niko Raul Daza, Manila 1st District Rep. Ernesto Dionisio Jr., Caloocan 2nd District Rep. Edgar Erice, Muntinlupa Rep. Jaime Fresnedi, Eastern Samar Rep. Christopher Sheen Gonzales, Zambales 1st District Rep. Jefferson Khonghun, Pusong Pinoy Rep. Jernie Jett Nisay, Cebu City 2nd District Rep. Eduardo Rama Jr., Bicol Saro Rep. Terry Ridon, Ilocos Sur 1st District Rep. Ronald Singson, Cagayan de Oro 1st District Rep. Lordan Suan, Oriental Mindoro 2nd District Rep. Alfonso Umali Jr., and Akbayan Reps. Dadah Kiram Ismula, Percival Cendaña, and Jose Manuel Diokno.

- [Philippine senators push to revamp Labor Code for modern work setups](#) (2026-03-10 16:13)

SENATORS on Tuesday sought to update the 50-year-old Labor Code of the Philippines to address modern work setups, safeguard workers and promote economic growth. Sens. Risa Hontiveros and Francis Pangilinan raised the need to address the challenges both employers and workers face with the rise of artificial intelligence (AI), online jobs and even during times of war. The Senate Committee on Constitutional Amendments and Revision of Codes, led by Pangilinan, tackled the proposed Revised Labor Code and Revised Government Auditing Act. Pangilinan said the proposed Revised Labor Code “makes workers’ rights easier to understand, easier to claim, and easier to enforce.” The senator also said the nearly 50-year-old Audit Code should be modernized to allow the Commission on Audit to monitor digital, public-private partnership and off-budget transactions. Hontiveros raised the need to update the labor law following the emergence of contractual work, subcontracting, freelancing, platform-based jobs, online work and the gig economy. She said the updated Labor Code should “integrate international labor standards and plug policy gaps in worker protections — including those addressed by jurisprudence and executive issuances.” Hontiveros said war, pandemics, the rise of AI, increasing oil prices and other issues contribute to workers’ problems. “It is time for our labor laws to catch up,” she said. The senator said the Labor Code should be synchronized with the recently enacted Expanded Maternity Leave Law, Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Law and Anti-Pogo (Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators) Act, among others. “The snail-like resolution of thousands of labor cases, which helps perpetuate labor injustices, must end,” Hontiveros said. Pangilinan sought to protect Filipino workers and ensure government accountability amid rising oil prices and other economic challenges. He warned that without an updated code, workers would face gaps in protections. “A modernized code strengthens COA’s power to disallow irregular spending, recover lost funds and pierce the veil of so-called private implementers in corruption scandals,” he said.

- [Marcos orders action vs MWO staff](#) (2026-03-10 16:13)

A VIRAL video showing the mistreatment of overseas Filipino workers in Bahrain by a Migrant Workers Office (MWO) staff member has drawn the ire of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., Malacañang said. In a press briefing, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro said Marcos immediately ordered Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac to take action against the MWO personnel, identified as Anthony Allermo. “President Marcos Jr. did not let pass the incident between MWO Bahrain employee Anthony Allermo and overseas Filipino workers there. The president was not happy about it. He was angry for our OFWs because of the mistreatment they received from some public servants,” Castro told reporters in Filipino on the sidelines of Marcos’ engagements at the United Nations Headquarters late Monday night. “A public servant should not abuse their power. There is no reason to brag or ignore our countrymen,” she added. The official was referring to a video shared across social media platforms where Allermo was seen shooing away Filipinos from the consulate. The OFWs were seeking assistance as they were affected by the recent hostilities in the Middle East. Allermo could also be heard saying that nothing could be done, no matter where or to whom they aired their grievances. “When the president saw the viral video showing Allermo

mistreating OFWs, he immediately ordered DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac to investigate and take action on the incident,” Castro said. She added that anyone who lacks a genuine desire to serve the public has no place in government, and that erring employees and officials should resign or be terminated. Castro also addressed criticisms that the government has neglected Filipinos asking to be flown back to the Philippines amid the volatile situation in the Middle East. The official noted that the DMW has processed flight bookings for those wanting to flee the hostilities. “Today, 16 OFWs from Tel Aviv, Israel, traveled by land to the southern Israel town of Eilat, which borders Egypt via the Taba border crossing. These 16 OFWs crossed the Egyptian border and will take the Cairo-to-Muscat-to-Manila flight with an ETA in Manila on March 11, 9:30 p.m. Philippine time,” Castro said. “We have 20 OFWs from Dubai, with nine OFW dependents, who traveled from Dubai to Oman via the Khatmat-Malaha border crossing in northern Oman. Upon crossing the Omani border, they will go to Muscat and take the Muscat-to-Manila flight with an ETA in Manila on March 10, 9:30 p.m. Philippine time,” she added. In the United Arab Emirates, the Philippine government also booked commercial flights for OFWs and their dependents coming from Dubai. Flights are also being arranged for citizens in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, with the earliest departure set for March 14. This repatriation operation will be funded through the Emergency Repatriation Fund of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, an attached agency of the DMW, Castro noted. More than 400 Filipinos have returned to the Philippines since the conflict in the Middle East began.

- [Villanueva seeks social media ban for minors](#) (2026-03-10 16:12)

CITIZENS’ Battle Against Corruption (Cibac) party-list Rep. Eddie Villanueva filed a bill aiming to ban minors aged 16 and below from creating social media accounts. House Bill 8262 was filed on March 3. “Protecting minors from unfiltered and harmful social media exposure is a moral and national responsibility,” Villanueva said. He added that the unchecked impact of social media on the youth “poses long-term risks not only to individual well-being but also to social cohesion and civic life.” Under the bill, no one aged 16 and below “shall be permitted to create, maintain, or access an account on a social media platform. This prohibition shall apply regardless of whether access is obtained directly, indirectly, or through third-party tools.” The measure mandates that parents and guardians shall exercise reasonable supervision and parental authority to ensure that those aged 16 and below “under their care do not access or use social media platforms in violation of this Act.” In cases of gross negligence and repeated violations, parents and guardians will be required to attend digital safety, responsible technology use, or parenting support programs to be crafted by the Department of Information and Communications Technology in coordination with the proper agencies. Under the bill, it “shall be unlawful for any social media platform operator to allow those aged 16 and below to create and maintain active accounts.”

- [OSG recommends acquittal of Maria Ressa](#) (2026-03-10 16:11)

THE Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) asked the Supreme Court (SC) for the acquittal of Rappler Chief Executive Officer Maria Ressa and former researcher Reynaldo Santos Jr. in their

cyberlibel case. In a statement, the OSG said it made the recommendation in a Manifestation and Motion filed with the high court on March 9, 2026. The OSG argued that the filing of a cyberlibel case against Ressa and Santos in 2019 for an article republished in 2014 was already time-barred. It cited the SC ruling in *Berteni Causing v. People*, which shortened the prescription period for cyberlibel offenses to one year. “In *Causing*, the Supreme Court re-examined the interplay of the cybercrime statute and the Revised Penal Code’s provisions on prescription. The Court adopted a limiting principle that fixes a definite, predictable period, reckoned from discovery by the offended party, the authorities, or their agents,” the OSG said. “The Court held that cyber libel prescribes in one year, consistent with Articles 90 and 91 of the Revised Penal Code,” it added. The cyber libel charged stemmed from a May 2012 article, which linked a businessman to the late Chief Justice Renato Corona, who was then facing an impeachment trial. The 2012 article was then republished in 2014 to correct a typographical error, and a cyberlibel case was filed in 2019. Santos was found liable as author of the article and Ressa as then-executive editor of Rappler. Ressa has since given up the post. In 2022, Ressa and Santos lost their appeal against a conviction for cyber libel at the Court of Appeals. “The OSG however underscored that cyber libel is not protected speech. Its penal sanction under existing law remains important, particularly in the digital environment where reputational injury, invasions of privacy, and harm to dignity may be amplified in reach and velocity,” the OSG said. “The OSG reaffirmed the government’s respect for the independence of the Judiciary and emphasized that it will abide by the Supreme Court’s final disposition of the case,” it added.

- [DepEd seeks to fix classroom congestion](#) (2026-03-10 16:10)

The Department of Education (DepEd) said Tuesday it is exploring more options to advance classroom decongestion efforts in public schools nationwide. Education Secretary Sonny Angara reiterated his call for a closer collaboration between the national and local governments to expedite resolutions for classroom shortage during the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) General Assembly on Monday. In a statement, the education chief said the department is now looking into various strategies to address campus congestion. “We are no longer content with the old system. We are changing the way we deliver to make it faster, more efficient, more effective, and more transparent,” he said. Included in the strategies is the potential pilot launch of a “4+1” blended learning model. “(It will be) four days onsite and one day online,” Angara said. The DepEd is also considering the expansion of vouchers in primary education, the leasing or acquiring of foreclosed private properties, as well as the mobilization of private sector donations for 2,000 learning spaces. Angara said by accessing foreclosed properties, the DepEd can immediately use 1,000 classrooms. He also cited the use of pre-fabricated Learning Continuity Spaces (LCS), which were already piloted in Masbate and Davao del Norte, saying 2,571 units are slated for installation across 1,017 municipalities within the year. Angara, meanwhile, led the ceremonial signing of the memorandum of understanding with the LMP to accelerate classroom constructions in the country. “Education is a shared responsibility, and our LGUs are the best-positioned partners to ensure these funds are translated into actual, usable classrooms for our learners,” he said. Earlier, the DepEd signed a

memorandum of agreement with provincial and city governments to impose special provisions on school building construction. The DepEd seeks to build 30,000 classrooms through 2028 through conventional procurement; and 16,000 classrooms in high-congestion areas through Public-Private Partnerships under the recently approved PPP for School Infrastructure Project Phase III.

- [Nominations open for award promoting Philippines-China relations](#) (2026-03-10 16:09)

THE Association for Philippines-China Understanding (APCU) opened nominations Tuesday for the 2026 Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU), its Chairman and President Raul Lambino said. Lambino said that this will be the sixth APPCU event organized by the group in coordination with the Chinese Embassy. APCU Director Mafee Cai said that, in addition to the APCU website, nominations can be submitted via email. “All Filipinos are qualified to nominate fellowmen who are fostering better understanding with China,” Cai said. Lambino thanked the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc. for providing the venue for the event. The awards were first organized in 2020 by then-Education secretary Alejandro Roces and former president and current Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. “We are fostering better relations between China and the Philippines through education and people exchange, or in the field of medicine,” he said. Lambino, former presidential adviser for Northern Luzon, reiterated that APCU recognizes and awards government officials for fostering China-Philippines understanding. He stressed that China has provided aid by donating 100 tons of rice through the APCU and Chinese businessmen. “The people-to-people exchange continued until diplomatic relations were established in 1976,” Lambino said. Meanwhile, the APCU head noted that under the One China policy, issues in the West Philippine Sea or South China Sea are best resolved by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). “I am sure in the capability of DFA Secretary Teresa Lazaro and the DFA personnel in establishing good diplomatic relations with China,” Lambino said.

- [Telcos told: Allow free calls to OFWs in Mideast](#) (2026-03-10 16:08)

THE National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) has swiftly acted on President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s directive to order telecommunications companies to connect overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in conflict-stricken Middle East and their families in the Philippines, free of charge. NTC Commissioner Ella Blanca Lopez said the “Libreng Tawag (free calls)” program has been activated to cover OFWs in Iran, Iraq, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. Lopez said in a statement that the NTC ensured telecommunications companies’ compliance with the order. The NTC official reiterated that the commission is ready to carry out the president’s order, which seeks to help affected OFWs and their families stay connected without worrying about expensive international call, text and data charges. “As the regulatory body overseeing the telecommunications sector, the NTC commends Globe Telecom, PLDT/Smart, and DITO Telecommunity for their swift and compassionate response to the president’s directive,” Lopez said. “Through these efforts, we want to ensure that our kababayan (countrymen) can remain connected with their families, offer comfort to one

another, and confirm their safety without additional financial burden,” she added. To ensure full compliance with the president’s order, Lopez said call stations in selected mall-based business centers where families can place calls to their loved ones in the Middle East have also been established. “The commission stands ready to monitor implementation of the president’s directive, facilitate any necessary coordination, and ensure that all OFWs and their families benefit fully from this vital support initiative, underscoring the government’s unwavering priority of their welfare and peace of mind,” Lopez said.

- [Winnie the pooh marking 100 years](#) (2026-03-10 16:07)

BURBANK, United States — Winnie the Pooh, the self-described bear of “very little brain” who has charmed generations with his homespun and heartfelt wisdom, is turning 100. The beloved children’s character ambled into the world in 1926 in a book written by English author A.A. Milne, and illustrated by E.H. Shepard. Now Disney, which acquired the rights to Pooh and his pals from Hundred Acre Wood in the 1960s, is holding a year-long celebration of the slow-witted bear, whose image is found all over the planet, from Azerbaijan to Zimbabwe. “Winnie the Pooh is all of us,” said Kevin Kern, senior manager of research at the Walt Disney Archives in Burbank, California, where all kinds of Pooh paraphernalia are neatly catalogued. “He shows all the emotions that we show. He sees the things that we see. He struggles like we do; whether he’s trying to get up a tree to get honey or understand his friends. “He’s so steeped in wisdom that he himself does not always think he’s giving, and that’s so timeless.” Pooh for President Milne’s first book -- published in Britain and the United States in October 1926 -- was inspired by the author’s son, Christopher Robin, and his collection of stuffed animals: Pooh, Piglet, Eeyore, Owl, Rabbit, and Kanga and her baby Roo. Two years later, the effervescent Tigger joined the gang for the second book, “The House at Pooh Corner.” When Disney’s first animated short appeared in 1966, Pooh’s signature look -- a too-short red t-shirt and nothing down below -- was set. Over the decades, there have been books in dozens of languages, plush toys, backpacks, lunchboxes, watches and feature films, most recently the live-action “Christopher Robin” in 2018, starring Ewan McGregor as an adult Christopher Robin who reunites with Pooh. But the lovable bear’s adventures did not stop there: he even ran for US president, with Disneyland holding a ticker tape parade in 1972 as a lighthearted alternative to the battle between Richard Nixon and George McGovern. In the 21st century, Winnie made another -- albeit unintentional -- foray into politics when Chinese critics of Xi Jinping noted what they said was a resemblance between the country’s leader and the portly bear. Communist Party censors worked to scrub the internet of any reference to the character. And in 2023 after US copyright protections lapsed, Winnie found himself advising children how to avoid a school shooter when a Texas school district pressed him into action for a leaflet to warn them to “Run, Hide, Fight.” That same year, he became a knife-wielding villain in a low-budget slasher film called “Winnie-the-Pooh: Blood and Honey,” which recouped its budget many times over with a theatrical run that surprised industry watchers. Mark Henn, an animator who worked on the altogether more family-friendly 2011 Disney film “Winnie the Pooh,” said he had been thrilled to be able to draw a character he had grown up

watching. “He definitely is a bringer of joy,” he told AFP. “He’s very calm. Even when he does get upset, there’s a calmness to his demeanor, which I think most people really gravitate to.”

- [Cayetano wants tax amnesty extended](#) (2026-03-10 16:07)

SEN. Pia Cayetano on Tuesday expressed support for extending the estate tax amnesty program until June 30, 2028, saying the measure would help ease the financial burden on families seeking to settle the tax liabilities of deceased relatives. During the March 10 Senate Committee on Ways and Means hearing, Cayetano emphasized the importance of the proposed extension in giving heirs more time to settle estate taxes without being weighed down by accumulated penalties and surcharges. “We have to emphasize what the benefit is. The amnesty, basically, is that interest, penalties and surcharges will not be imposed on you. And interest penalties and surcharges accumulate — every year it goes up,” Cayetano said. The estate tax amnesty program was originally introduced under Republic Act (RA) 11213, or the Tax Amnesty Act of 2019, to encourage heirs to settle long-unpaid estate taxes by offering significantly reduced financial obligations. Under the program, heirs may pay a flat estate tax rate of 6 percent of the net estate without the additional interest, penalties, or surcharges that normally would accrue over time under the National Internal Revenue Code of the Philippines. Lawmakers noted that many families struggle to transfer ownership of inherited property due to unpaid estate taxes, resulting in large numbers of untitled or informally held properties nationwide. Data from the Department of Finance and the Bureau of Internal Revenue previously indicated that the amnesty program has helped generate billions of pesos in revenue while enabling thousands of families to transfer inherited assets legally. Under the proposed extension, qualified heirs would also be allowed to pay the estate amnesty tax in installments within one year, provided that at least 50 percent of the amount due is paid upon filing. The remaining balance can be settled without additional penalties or interest. Supporters of the measure said extending the amnesty period would encourage more taxpayers to avail themselves of the program, improve tax compliance, and help unlock idle or disputed properties that cannot be sold, transferred, or developed due to unsettled estate taxes. Cayetano said the extension would ultimately benefit both the government and the public by making tax compliance more accessible while generating additional revenue. “This gives families a chance to settle obligations that may have accumulated over decades while helping the government collect revenue that might otherwise remain unpaid,” she said. If approved, the extended estate tax amnesty program is expected to continue facilitating the legal transfer of inherited properties and reducing longstanding tax liabilities faced by Filipino heirs.

- [AFP: Military operations to continue despite oil crisis](#) (2026-03-10 16:06)

THE Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Tuesday assured the public that all scheduled military operations and exercises will proceed as planned despite the global oil crisis due to tensions in the Middle East. “All AFP activities for this year that are operational in nature will continue. We could not afford to have a letdown in performing our mandate,” Rear Admiral

Roy Vincent Trinidad, AFP spokesman for the West Philippine Sea (WPS), told reporters in a press briefing at Camp Aguinaldo. Also, the Salaknib (shield) and Balikatan exercises with the United States and Japanese forces will push through as planned from April to May. Last year, Balikatan, an annual large-scale joint military exercise between the Philippines and the United States, mobilized over 14,000 Filipino, American, Japanese and Australian forces. The AFP, however, said that the number of US troops and military assets is up to the American military to determine. As the offensive party, the United States has deployed over 50,000 troops for the Iran conflict. Since the armed confrontation began in late February, critics have warned of depleted US weapon stockpiles. Likewise, Arab states in the Persian Gulf are reportedly running dangerously low on interceptors to take down Iranian retaliatory attacks. US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth called this claim a “bad miscalculation” and assured American forces that their stockpiles of defensive and offensive weapons “allow us to sustain this campaign as long as we need to.” The Philippines and the United States plan broader security engagements in 2026, including the deployment of US missiles and uncrewed systems to deter aggression in the West Philippine Sea.

- [Philippine Army repels 'enemies' in simulated attack](#) (2026-03-10 16:06)

THE Philippine Army (PA) on Tuesday said that its armor and artillery units repelled a simulated enemy attack during a “littoral defense live fire exercise” in Burgos, Pangasinan, last March 9. PA spokesman Col. Louie Dema-ala said the drill was part of the Army’s ongoing “Catex Katihan,” which started on Feb. 26 and is expected to end late this month. “Catex” is short for combined arms training exercise. “The 701st Combined Arms Brigade utilized its armor and artillery assets, which included remote control weapons systems (RCWS) mounted on armored infantry fighting vehicles and 105mm towed howitzers,” he said in a statement. Aside from these military assets, Dema-ala said reservists also deployed combat drones at targets strategically placed near the coastline of Burgos. A total of 4,222 PA soldiers are currently participating in the unilateral exercise, with drills being held at various training areas in Pangasinan and Ilocos Norte. “The littoral defense drill is one of the key highlights of the ongoing third iteration of Catex ‘Katihan,’ which tests the Army’s Land Defense Concept in support of the external security operations,” the PA spokesman said. Dema-ala also said PA chief Lt. Gen. Antonio Nafarrete personally witnessed the live fire drill and commended the participating troops. He added that the Army chief capped his visit by directing PA units to train hard to meet the challenges of the fast-changing global and regional security landscape.

- [Troops guard Bangladesh gas depots](#) (2026-03-10 16:05)

THE oil price spike caused by the war in the Middle East has sparked unrest in Bangladesh and exasperation at gas pumps around Asia, where many economies are heavily dependent on fossil fuel imports. Even as governments move to limit the impact on fuel prices, lines have formed at petrol stations in countries including Vietnam, Pakistan and the Philippines, although the situation remains stable elsewhere. In Bangladesh -- which imports 95 percent of its oil and gas needs -- the military has been deployed at major oil depots, as police patrol in and around

filling stations. “We haven’t received supply from the depot, but the bike riders weren’t convinced and vandalized the station,” said petrol station worker Ashrafuzzaman Dulal told Agence France-Presse, describing violence on Sunday. On Tuesday his station Shahjahan Traders, one of the oldest in the capital Dhaka, had hung a banner apologizing because its stock had run out. The South Asian nation of 170 million people has started fuel rationing, sent students home and scrapped celebratory light displays over the energy crunch. One man was killed on Saturday night in the southern Bangladeshi district of Jhenaidah after an altercation over refueling with staff. Following the 25-year-old’s death, angry crowds torched three buses and vandalized a filling station, police said. So, so angry’ On Tuesday, queues stretched for 1.5 kilometers (nearly one mile) through Dhaka’s city centre. “My boss left the car here and took a rickshaw to reach his destination,” Kamrul Hasan, who was waiting in a vehicle almost at the end of the queue, told AFP. Filling station worker Akhtar Hossain said he had not stopped for hours. “Even during the Gulf War, we didn’t experience this sort of rush,” Hossain told AFP. Oil prices fell Tuesday after US President Donald Trump said the US-Israel war on Iran could end “very soon”. The previous day, the price of benchmark crude had rocketed past \$100 a barrel -- its highest level since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The market instability came as Iran targeted the crude-rich Gulf with missile and drone barrages. Maritime traffic in the Strait of Hormuz -- a key Gulf waterway through which a fifth of global crude passes -- has also all but halted since the war broke out. Thousands of motorbike riders queued for fuel Tuesday in Vietnam, where prices for unleaded gasoline have surged more than 20 percent. Vietnam has so far avoided mass shortages, with the government scraping duties on many imported petroleum products. A 57-year-old who gave his name as Tuan told AFP at a Hanoi gas station that he was “so, so angry.” “I have been waiting in line for almost one hour. Then my turn came, and they said their system is down,” he said as dozens of drivers waited but others gave up. Myanmar price spike Vehicles also lined up in scorching heat at Philippine petrol stations this week, as officials warned against hoarding fuel, with similar scenes unfolding in Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Enrico Guda, a gas station attendant in Metro Manila, said the station had double its usual daily workload as people rushed to fuel up before prices jumped. In Myanmar, which imports 90 percent of its fuel oil and has long suffered from a fragile energy supply chain owing to the civil war consuming the country, traffic curbs are in place. From Saturday, half of private vehicles have been ordered off the roads each day to preserve oil stocks. “Some drivers depend on their vehicles for work and survival... the new system has made it harder for them to run their businesses,” said Hla Htay, 56, a car rental business owner. In the Myanmar frontier town of Tachileik, an AFP reporter saw signs cross-border supplies from Thailand had been cut -- with some petrol stations shut last week after an up-to threefold price spike the day before. In several other Asian countries, from Japan to Indonesia, as well as China, India and Afghanistan, panic appears not yet to have hit, apart from a few sporadic queues for petrol. “I used to fill up regularly once a week, but now I try to fill up whenever I find a cheaper gas station,” South Korean businessman Lee In-tae, 42, told AFP in Seoul.

- [Muntinlupa creates task force vs fuel overpricing](#) (2026-03-10 16:04)

THE Muntinlupa City government will form a task force to monitor possible fuel overpricing and hoarding as part of energy conservation measures being implemented amid rising oil prices. Mayor Ruffy Biazon announced the move in a post on his official Facebook page on Monday evening, March 9, saying that the task force will lead efforts to enforce energy-saving measures in the city government and safeguard consumers. “Amid rising oil prices and in line with the president’s directive, we will implement cost-saving measures in the city government,” Biazon said. He said the task force will also oversee monitoring of fuel use in city government operations, including limiting fuel allowance to ensure vehicles are used only for official duties. Biazon added that a separate fuel allocation will be maintained for essential and responder offices to ensure unhampered delivery of critical public services. The city will also implement a compressed workweek from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday to Thursday, in some offices, and frontline and essential offices will continue operating under their regular schedules. On Tuesday, March 10, Biazon said he approved a resolution of the Local Finance Committee authorizing the implementation of cost-saving measures in anticipation of further increases in oil prices. Biazon also said the city government will implement energy-saving measures for electricity use in government buildings and encourage virtual meetings to help reduce travel and operational expenses.

- [Expert: Ozempic safe but not for everyone](#) (2026-03-10 16:03)

A HEALTH expert on Tuesday said that Ozempic, a medication primarily used to treat diabetes, can be safely used for weight loss but only for individuals who are overweight or obese and under medical supervision. During the “8 Billion Reasons to Act on Obesity: Stronger Heart, Healthier Kidneys, Better Diabetes Control” event held in Manila, Dr. Elaine Cunanan, vice president of the Philippine College of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism, Inc. (PCEDM), explained that semaglutide — the generic name of Ozempic — has been proven effective in helping individuals lose weight, even those without diabetes. “Ozempic was originally developed to lower blood sugar levels in diabetic patients, but it was later discovered to have a side effect of weight loss. This led to further studies, which confirmed its effectiveness in helping overweight and obese individuals shed pounds,” Cunanan said. She noted, however, that the drug should not be taken without medical supervision. “These drugs are good for diabetes and particularly for those who are obese. But it’s better to be supervised by a physician because we have criteria to determine the needs of the patient who is obese,” she explained. Cunanan said Ozempic may be prescribed for those without diabetes or other comorbidities if they meet certain criteria. She added that the drug may also be recommended for people with a body mass index (BMI) of 27 or higher, who already have related conditions such as fatty liver, cardiovascular disease, heart attack, or stroke, as these patients are likely to benefit the most from the treatment. She warned the public against using unregulated versions of Ozempic, which are often sold online. While acknowledging its effectiveness, Cunanan urged the public not to rely solely on the drug but also to adopt healthier lifestyle habits. “Eat healthy, exercise. Don’t just rely on the medication,” she said.

- [LGUs adopt four-day week in austerity bid](#) (2026-03-10 16:02)

SEVERAL local government units in the National Capital Region (NCR) have adopted a four-day workweek in compliance with the national directive to conserve energy and reduce fuel consumption amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. The adjustments follow Memorandum Circular 114 issued by Malacañang, which directs government agencies and local governments to implement energy conservation measures. Marikina, San Juan, Makati, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Mandaluyong and Malabon have adjusted work schedules while assuring residents that essential public services will continue uninterrupted. In Marikina City, Mayor Marjorie Ann “Maan” Teodoro signed Executive Order 05, Series of 2026, implementing a four-day workweek in city government offices. Under the order, offices will operate Monday to Thursday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., allowing employees to complete their required 40-hour workweek. Government facilities will remain closed every Friday to cut down on electricity consumption. Teodoro said that essential services and field operations, including the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, public safety units, and street maintenance teams, will remain fully operational. San Juan City also adopted a four-day onsite workweek through Administrative Order FMZ-075 signed by Mayor Francis Zamora, with eligible offices shifting to a work-from-home arrangement every Friday while hospitals, health centers, and other frontline units continue regular operations. In Makati, Mayor Nancy Binay said City Hall will implement the arrangement beginning March 16, with extended service hours from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday to Thursday, to ensure continued access to city services. Las Piñas City, under Mayor April Aguilar, has adopted a schedule of 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday to Thursday, while offices handling health services, disaster response, engineering and traffic management will maintain regular operations. Meanwhile, Muntinlupa Mayor Ruffy Biazon said some city offices will follow a 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. compressed workweek, alongside stricter monitoring of government vehicle fuel use as part of broader energy conservation measures. The Parañaque City government, led by Mayor Edwin Olivarez, will implement a four-day workweek with work-from-home arrangements every Friday, while Mandaluyong City, under Mayor Menchie Abalos, ordered offices to operate 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday to Thursday, under Executive Order 2, Series of 2026. The Malabon City government has also started implementing a four-day workweek schedule for its employees. “We are expecting that all concerned employees and City Hall personnel would cooperate since the directive came directly from the president owing to the rapid fuel increases as a result of the ongoing Middle East conflict,” Mayor Jeannie Sandoval said. Under the new arrangement, employees will have longer work hours from Monday to Thursday, ensuring the continued delivery of essential public services. To initially comply with the 40-hour workweek required for employees, City Administrator Alexander Rosete said the work schedule for the second week of March will be as follows: March 10–11, 2026, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.; March 12, 2026, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and March 13, 2026, is a non-working day. After March 13, the regular work schedule will be from Monday to Thursday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday will be a non-working day. Rosete said offices that provide frontline services — such as the City Health Department, Ospital ng Malabon, City Social Welfare and Development Department, City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, City Environment and Natural Resources Office, City Engineering Department, and the Public Safety and Transport Management Office — are exempted from the new scheme. “They will continue their regular

shifting schedules to ensure the continuous delivery of services to ‘Malabueños,’ ” he told The Manila Times. With a report from Arlie Calalo

- [Cebu shipping firms raise fares amid oil price shock](#) (2026-03-10 16:00)

TALISAY CITY, Cebu — Shipping companies and ferry operators in the Visayas are imposing temporary fare and cargo surcharges as global oil prices surge as a result of the expanding war in the Middle East. While one local ferry operator has canceled selected routes due to rising fuel costs, others continue operations but adjusted passenger fares, freight rates, and cargo tariffs to manage rising expenses. Lite Shipping Corp. will implement a temporary fuel surcharge on all passenger fares and freight rates starting March 11, 2026. The company said, “This measure is necessary to help offset the rising fuel costs and to ensure the continued safe and reliable operation of our vessels.” Management assured passengers that it will lift the surcharge once fuel prices stabilize. Medallion Transport Inc. will impose a temporary fuel surcharge on passenger fares and cargo rates starting March 10. The company described the measure as a difficult but necessary step to sustain operations during volatile times. Trans-Asia Shipping Lines will apply a 20 percent fuel surcharge on passenger fares effective March 9 and on cargo rates starting March 11. The company said rates remain fluid due to market volatility and cited escalating tensions in the Middle East, which have limited fuel availability and increased maritime operating costs. Gabisan Shipping Lines Inc. announced additional temporary surcharges after local diesel prices rose. The company said it will implement a temporary “fuel crisis charge” on freight and passenger services starting March 11. The advisory detailed increases of P120 on all passenger fares, P1,000 on RORO service, P200 on motorcycle fares, and 20 percent on each loose cargo tariff. It added that the adjustments aim to sustain regular operations amid expected further fuel cost increases. Earlier this week, Roble Shipping Inc. and Super Shuttle Ferry raised fares on March 9. Roble Shipping said, “Our main priority is to keep serving the riding public safely and reliably,” while Super Shuttle Ferry implemented a 20-percent adjustment across all branches to maintain safe and dependable service amid rising fuel costs. OceanJet temporarily suspended several passenger trips connecting Cebu City with parts of Leyte and Bohol from March 6 to March 20, including routes between Cebu and Palompon, Palompon and Cebu, and Cebu and Getafe, citing the ongoing fuel crisis. The company has not indicated when normal operations will resume. Last week, the Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) authorized domestic shipping companies and maritime stakeholders to implement contingency measures to address the potential impact of the escalating Middle East crisis on the maritime industry. Marina Administrator Sonia Malaluan said the measures are intended to ensure that domestic maritime transport remains stable despite global disruptions. “Marina is closely monitoring the evolving situation in the Middle East and its potential effects on global fuel prices and shipping operations. Through these contingency measures, we aim to ensure the continued movement of passengers and essential goods across the country while providing necessary support to the domestic shipping industry during this period of uncertainty,” Malaluan said. Under the advisory, shipping companies may implement operational adjustments, subject to Marina approval, including the consolidation or reduction

of trips to optimize vessel capacity and fuel consumption. Shipping operators may also implement fuel surcharges or fare adjustments of up to 20 percent of the base fare, while any increase beyond this threshold will remain subject to Marina's evaluation. Once the crisis is over, operators must remove any fuel surcharge and revert to pre-crisis passenger and cargo rates, Marina said. Profiteers warned

As the country grappled with rising fuel prices, the Palace warned that the government would take legal action against profiteers and hoarders taking advantage of the crisis in the Middle East. In a briefing in New York on the sidelines of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s engagements in the United Nations (UN) late Monday night, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro reiterated that the government will not hesitate to go after those who are found guilty of unscrupulous practices, especially in the middle of skyrocketing oil and fuel prices. "There is a law against hoarding and profiteering," Castro told reporters in Filipino. "If you are caught violating the law, caught hoarding or taking action or engaging in profiteering, the government will not spare you because you will be sued and charged." Pump prices on Tuesday rose by double digits with gasoline prices up by as much as P10.20 a liter, diesel by as much as P24.25 a liter, and kerosene by as much as P38.50 a liter. Castro earlier reported that the Department of Energy (DOE) issued a show-cause order to 54 gasoline stations for allegedly hiking prices prematurely. "The president's call is for us to unite. Amid what is happening now in the Middle East, we should unite and work together.... If you take advantage, you will be in trouble. You will be sued and you may be deprived of the opportunity to do business," she said. She said the Palace is in close coordination with the Department of Energy (DOE) and Department of Finance (DOF) for the next steps regarding Marcos' request to Congress to grant him emergency powers to reduce the excise tax on fuel and ease the burden of consumers. Castro appealed to the public to not panic and assured them that the country has adequate supplies of fuel and essential goods despite rising oil prices amid the ongoing war in the Middle East. Sen. Francis Escudero, meanwhile, called for the strict enforcement of laws against fuel hoarding and profiteering, warning that opportunists must not be allowed to exploit the ongoing crisis. Escudero urged government regulators to intensify monitoring of petroleum supply and prices to protect consumers from artificial shortages and unjustified price increases that could worsen the financial burden on Filipino families. "Enforcement must be swift, decisive, and unforgiving to send a strong message that economic sabotage will not be tolerated," Escudero said. The lawmaker emphasized that fuel hoarding and profiteering are forms of economic sabotage that weaken the country's ability to withstand external shocks and disproportionately harm vulnerable sectors such as public transport drivers, market vendors, and low-income households. Petroleum supply, he said, should be treated as a matter of national security, especially during periods of geopolitical instability that could affect the global energy market. Sen. Mark Villar expressed concern over the recent surge in global oil prices, warning that a sharp increase in domestic fuel costs could place additional strain on Filipino households and key sectors of the economy. Villar said the government must explore additional measures to cushion the impact of rising fuel prices, particularly on the transportation and agriculture sectors, which are highly dependent on petroleum products.

WITH KRISTINA MARALIT AND JAVIER JOE ISMAEL

- [Marcos woos US investors: PH open for business](#) (2026-03-10 15:54)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. invited American investors to explore opportunities in the Philippines, reaffirming the country’s openness to business and the government’s commitment to improving the investment climate. “We are ready to work with you. The Philippines is open—and I mean that not as a slogan, but as a commitment from my administration,” Marcos said during a dinner reception hosted by the LT Group, Inc. (LTG) in New York on Monday. “We have been working hard to improve our investment climate, cut red tape, make it easier to do business, and build something lasting in our country. We are also at a moment of real opportunity,” he added. Citing manufacturing as an example, Marcos said that, with changes in the global supply chain, businesses no longer concentrate their operations in a single location and are now actively seeking trusted, capable, and strategically located alternatives. He said the Philippines was an option, given its skilled, adaptable, and English-speaking workforce and its continuously improving infrastructure. The country also has one of the youngest and fastest-growing populations in Asia, the President said. “I encourage you—talk to each other; find the opportunities; and when you do, know that you have a partner in the Philippines who is serious about making it happen,” he added. Attendees include members of the US-Philippines Society, US-Asean Business Council, Philippine-American Chamber of Commerce, US businessmen and the Philippine business delegation. The LT Group, Inc. is a leading diversified holding company in the Philippines, founded in 1937 with major interests in banking, tobacco, distilled spirits, beverages, and property development.

- [No winner in Ultra lotto 6/55, Super lotto 6/49 draws for March 10](#) (2026-03-10 15:13)

MANILA, Philippines — There were no winners in the Ultra lotto 6/55 and Super lotto 6/49 draws on Tuesday night, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said. The winning combination for Ultra lotto 6/55 was 42-58-35-02-51-26 which had a jackpot prize of P87,396,535.70. There was also no winner for the Super lotto 6/49 draw, which drew a winning combination of 42-46-32-19-44-16 for a jackpot prize of P99,658,844.67.

- [Lacson: Marcoleta liable for indirect bribery over undeclared campaign donations](#) (2026-03-10 14:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Rodante Marcoleta may be liable for indirect bribery over his alleged undeclared campaign funds in the 2025 midterm elections, Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo Lacson said Tuesday. Lacson said Marcoleta’s attempt to explain his failure to disclose his campaign contributors in his Statement of Contributions and Expenditures (SOCE) “smacks of an admission against interest.” According to Lacson, Marcoleta claimed he received the contributions before he became a senatorial candidate. However, Lacson noted that Marcoleta was already a public official at the time, serving as a representative of the SAGIP party-list. Marcoleta served as SAGIP party-list representative from 2016 to 2025. Lacson also pointed out that after the Commission on Elections (Comelec) issued Marcoleta a show cause order, the senator allegedly tried to backtrack on his earlier argument by saying he received the contributions when he was not yet considered a candidate, based on a Supreme Court

ruling. “Why has the Comelec not issued a resolution on Marcoleta’s SOCE case up to now?” Lacson asked. In a privilege speech, Lacson said Marcoleta and his legal team may have believed they were being “smart” by focusing on the technical timing of the contributions. “But the funny thing is that he admitted receiving contributions, so he would have a debt of gratitude to the contributors. This is a clear admission against interest, as lawyers say,” Lacson added.

- [Marcos: US firm eyes building medical glove factory in PH](#) (2026-03-10 14:09)

MANILA, Philippines — American manufacturer US Medical Glove Company (USMGC) has expressed interest in building a medical glove manufacturing facility in the Philippines, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. announced Tuesday. In a social media post, Marcos said the company’s planned investment could create more than 2,000 jobs for Filipinos. “I met with the US Medical Glove Company to discuss their plans to build a medical glove manufacturing facility in the country. The project could create more than 2,000 jobs for our kababayans,” Marcos said. “It will also allow us to produce essential medical supplies locally and open new opportunities in the growing global medical manufacturing industry,” he added. The President met with USMGC officials on Monday on the sidelines of his participation in a United Nations event in New York, where he delivered the country’s national statement at the Commission on the Status of Women. Malacañang said the American company’s investment would help strengthen local capacity to produce medical-grade supplies, with the government expressing support for industries that enhance health security and supply chain stability. The Philippines is well positioned to benefit from the planned investment due to its young workforce and expanding industrial base, it added. .

- [LOOK: Farm Fresh def. Choco Mucho \(3-2\)](#) (2026-03-10 13:11)

PVL All-Filipino Conference 2026 Farm Fresh def. Choco Mucho (3-2) Trisha Tubu Player of the Game #PVL2026

- [LPA outside PAR intensifies into tropical depression](#) (2026-03-10 12:09)

MANILA, Philippines — The low pressure area (LPA) outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) has intensified into a tropical depression, the state-run weather agency said on Tuesday. Weather specialist John Manalo of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said the weather disturbance was estimated to be some 1,325 kilometers east of Eastern Visayas (outside PAR). Pagasa maintained that the tropical depression would not be directly affecting the weather conditions in the country as it was also not expected to enter PAR. However, its trough or extension is being experienced over Eastern Visayas, Northern Mindanao, Caraga, Davao Oriental, Davao de Oro, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi at which cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms would prevail. Other parts of the archipelago, including Metro Manila, have been affected by the northeast monsoon or “amihan” which brings partly cloudy to overcast skies with isolated light rains in 24 hours, the national weather bureau said.

- [Court denies bail petitions of 9 Zaldy Co co-accused](#) (2026-03-10 11:57)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan Sixth Division on Tuesday denied the bail petitions of nine people charged along with former lawmaker Elizaldy Co. The Office of the Ombudsman filed the case—for alleged malversation of public funds through falsification of public documents—before the Sandiganbayan last November in connection with a road dike construction project in Oriental Mindoro. In a 41-page resolution promulgated on March 10, 2026, the court said it found that Gene Ryan Altea, Ruben Santos Jr., Dominic Serrano, Montrexis Tamayo, Dennis Abagon, Juliet Calvo, Lerma Cayco, Gerald Pacanan, and Felisardo Casuno were "not entitled to bail." "It must be emphasized that the Courts ruling herein is not a prejudgment of the guilt of the said accused. The Court merely determined the weight of evidence for the purposes of bail," it said.

- [CAAP aids stranded passengers at Siargao Airport after bad weather cancels flights](#) (2026-03-10 11:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) assisted passengers stranded at Siargao Airport on March 9, 2026 after bad weather forced multiple flight cancellations. At least 25 travelers were accommodated overnight at the airport's Pre-Departure Area. According to CAAP, the cancelled flights were attributed to unfavorable weather conditions associated with a low-pressure area (LPA) affecting parts of Mindanao, compounded by the prevailing Northeast Monsoon. Airlines also announced additional flight cancellations on Tuesday, March 10, due to continuing adverse weather conditions. The affected flights are as follows: Cebgo DG6851 (Cebu-Siargao) DG871 (Siargao-Cebu) DG6863 (Cebu-Siargao) DG6864 (Siargao-Cebu) DG6872 (Davao-Siargao) DG6850 (Siargao-Cebu) DG6759 (Clark-Siargao) DG6760 (Siargao-Clark) Sunlight Air 2R989 (Clark-Siargao) 2R858 (Siargao-Cebu) 2R857 (Cebu-Siargao) 2R990 (Clark-Siargao) PAL Express PR2374 (Cebu-Siargao) PR2876 (Siargao-Clark) PR4351 (Cebu-Siargao) PR4352 (Siargao-Cebu) Passengers are advised to coordinate with their respective airlines for updates on flight schedules, rebooking arrangements and other travel assistance, as flight operations will resume once weather conditions improve and it is deemed safe to proceed.

- [Authorities intercept P6.1M in drugs from unclaimed parcels](#) (2026-03-10 11:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Government agents have intercepted another shipment of illegal drugs at the Central Mail Exchange Center (CMEC), involving abandoned parcels worth P6.1 million. Port of NAIA District Collector Yasmin Mapa on Tuesday said that approximately 795 tablets of MDMA (Ecstasy), 1,096 grams of powdered ecstasy, 8 grams of cocaine, 14 grams of ketamine, and 11 grams of an undetermined substance were discovered on March 6, 2026. The items were found inside eight inbound parcels arriving from the Netherlands, France, and Spain. The illegal substances were reportedly consigned to several individuals across the country. The shipments were falsely declared as ordinary items in an apparent attempt to evade Customs inspection. As of March 2026, the Bureau of Customs-Ninoy Aquino International Airport (BoC-NAIA) has intercepted at least 21 parcels containing a significant volume of illegal drugs at the CMEC in Pasay City.

- [Marcos angered by mistreatment of OFWs in Bahrain, orders probe](#) (2026-03-10 11:01)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. was angered by reports that Filipinos were mistreated in Bahrain by a staff of the Department of Migrant Workers based in that country, Malacanang said on Tuesday. In a press briefing in New York, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro said Marcos immediately ordered DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac to take action against the MWO personnel identified as Anthony Allermo. “President Marcos Jr. did not let pass the incident between MWO Bahrain employee, Anthony Allermo, and overseas Filipino workers there. The president was not happy about it. He was angry for our OFWs because of the mistreatment they received from some public servants,” Castro told reporters in Filipino at the sidelines of Marcos’ engagements at the United Nations (UN) Headquarters late Monday night. The official was referring to a video shared across social media platforms where Allermo was seen shooing away Filipinos from the consulate who were seeking assistance as they, too, were affected by the recent hostilities in the Middle East. Allermo could also be heard saying that nothing can be done no matter where or who they air their grievances to. “When the president saw the viral video showing Allermo mistreating OFWs, he immediately ordered DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac to investigate and take action on the incident,” Castro said. She added that any one who has no genuine desire to serve the public has no place in the administration and erring employees and officials should resign or be terminated from their posts.

- [DMW: Family of missing Pinoy seafarer to receive assistance](#) (2026-03-10 10:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) on Tuesday assured full support to the family of a Filipino seafarer who went missing, after a tugboat assisting a distressed ship was attacked near the Strait of Hormuz. DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac said the agency, along with the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) and relevant regional offices, contacted the seafarer’s family to provide help. “Our team a few days ago had already visited the family’s home and assured them of our full support during these difficult times while we await the results of the search and rescue at sea,” Cacdac said in a statement. The seafarer, who was not named, was a tugboat crew member, who responded to assist another vessel attacked over the Strait of Hormuz. Cacdac said while the seafarer’s fellow colleagues were all reported safe, that lone seafarer remains unaccounted for. Around 6,400 Filipino seafarers on vessels in the Middle East were monitored and marked safe, while the DMW keeps track of ships carrying Filipino crew members near the Strait of Hormuz.

- [Renault aims to stop selling fuel-only cars in Europe by 2030](#) (2026-03-10 09:08)

PARIS — French carmaker Renault said Tuesday it aims to end selling simple internal combustion engine vehicles in Europe by 2030 and plans to develop its new electric car platform with Google. Unveiling its new multiyear strategic plan, it targeted a nearly 23 percent increase in sales of Renault brand vehicles by 2030 to two million per year. “By 2030, the brand is aiming for... 100 percent electrified sales in Europe and 50 percent outside Europe,” the company said, which includes hybrid vehicles. Some 40 percent of the vehicles the carmaker

sold in Europe last year were still equipped with purely fossil fuel-powered engines. It said it also intended to have achieved a shift towards electric mobility at its budget brand Dacia by then as well, increasing the number of electric vehicles in its range from one to four. Renault's strategy is in stark contrast to that of its rival Stellantis, which stunned investors last month with a massive 22-billion-euro (\$25-billion) write-down of its EV operations, saying it had misjudged buyers' willingness to shift to cleaner vehicles. Renault chief executive Francois Provost said the company's ambition for the coming years is "to design and produce in Europe products that are best in class in terms of desirability, technology and competitiveness." The group envisages releasing 22 new models in Europe, including 16 electric ones, and 14 models on international markets. The company said it plans to develop its new electric car platform together with Google. "It will also be the first carOS co-developed with the partner Google, based on Android," the company said. Renault said the aim is to have 90 percent of the vehicle functions able to be updated remotely, cutting time to deploy updates, and able to handle ultra-fast charging in as little as 10 minutes. Renault makes less money on electric vehicles than those with fossil fuel-powered engines. Its operating margin fell from 7.6 percent in 2024 to 6.3 percent last year and is set to fall further to 5.5 percent next year. The carmaker said it aims to keep operating margin between five and seven percent.

- [Iran vows to fight 'as long as needed' as Trump says war will end 'soon'](#) (2026-03-10 08:24)

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Tuesday his country would keep fighting as long as necessary, casting doubt on US President Donald Trump's insistence that the conflict would be over "soon." The remarks from one of Iran's top leaders, who also ruled out negotiations with Washington, came as Tehran launched a new wave of attacks on US-allied Gulf nations hours after Trump's assurances of a swift end to the rapidly widening conflict. Trump's comments helped reverse the stock market slumps and oil price jumps of a day earlier, with markets in Tokyo and Seoul opening strongly, and oil prices down as much as five percent, a day after benchmark crude rocketed past \$100 a barrel. "It's going to be ended soon, and if it starts up again they'll be hit even harder," Trump told a news conference in Florida on Monday, after telling lawmakers that the campaign would be a "short-term excursion." "We've already won in many ways, but we haven't won enough," Trump said. He threatened an attack of "incalculable" size if Tehran blocks oil supplies. "We will hit them so hard that it will not be possible for them or anybody else helping them to ever recover that section of the world, if they do anything." However, in an interview Araghchi told PBS News "the firings continues, and we are prepared. We are well prepared to continue attacking them with our missiles as long as needed and as long as it takes." Iran's Revolutionary Guards also responded to Trump that they would "determine the end of the war." And Araghchi effectively ruled out negotiations with Washington, saying Tehran had "a very bitter experience of talking with Americans." Recalling previous US attacks during earlier negotiations, he said: "I don't think talking with Americans anymore would be on our agenda." Some oil sanctions waived Early Tuesday, Iranian attacks again targeted Gulf nations. The United Arab Emirates said it was "currently responding to incoming missile and drone threats from Iran," while in Bahrain citizens were told to take

shelter as sirens sounded. Both Saudi Arabia and Kuwait also said they had intercepted and destroyed drones. In Iran, local media reported fresh attacks in the capital and Khomein, and Israel said it had struck an Iranian missile launcher shortly after an Iranian barrage that triggered warnings in several parts of Israel. The ongoing fire laid bare the uncertainty that has roiled markets globally, prompting fuel shortages and raising the specter of inflation. In a bid to calm prices, Trump announced he would waive some sanctions on oil, following talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Iran has targeted vessels traveling through the Strait of Hormuz, through which nearly 20 percent of the world's crude oil usually transits. French President Emmanuel Macron said Monday his country and its allies were working on a "purely defensive" mission to reopen the strait, aiming to escort ships "after the end of the hottest phase of the conflict." But it was far from clear when that might come. Iran's new supreme leader is hardliner Mojtaba Khamenei, who replaces his father who was killed in the first day of US-Israeli strikes. Trump has called Khamenei a "lightweight" and said he should be involved in choosing Iran's leader. The appointment was welcomed by some in Iran however, with state media carrying images of tens of thousands of people celebrating in central Tehran on Monday, many carrying the new leader's picture. 'Just a bit of bread' The war has spiraled far beyond Iran's borders, dragging in not only its Gulf neighbors but also Lebanon, where Israel carried out fresh strikes on Tuesday. Lebanese authorities said Monday that Israeli attacks since March 2 have killed at least 486 people and wounded at least 1,313. AFP has not been able to carry out a detailed breakdown of the figures. Lebanon was drawn into the Middle East war when Iran-backed Hezbollah attacked Israel after the killing of Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun has accused Hezbollah of working to "collapse" the state, while the head of the group's parliamentary bloc said it had "no other option... than the option of resistance." Syria too criticized the group, saying it had fired artillery shells into its territory from Lebanon overnight, and warning its army "will not tolerate any aggression." Israeli strikes and ground incursions have pushed hundreds of thousands of Lebanese from their homes, with more than 660,000 registered as displaced, according to government figures. Among them is Zainab El Masry, 40, who was sleeping with her husband and children on the grimy pavement of a Beirut square. "We have nothing to eat or drink, just a bit of bread," she told AFP. The conflict comes as Muslims mark the fasting month of Ramadan, and in Iran residents said they were grappling with the war and its impact on prices. "What amazes me the most is that people insist on sitting out on the terrace to watch the bombardments, as if it were a show," said cafe manager Reza, 36, in the northeastern city of Boukan. "The real problem is money: banks no longer distribute cash and many bank cards are blocked," he said. "So in my cafe, I made a simple decision: for those who can't pay for their coffee, it's on the house."

- [House panel okays bill authorizing president to suspend, cut fuel excise tax in economic emergencies](#) (2026-03-10 08:15)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives' Committee on Ways and Means on Tuesday approved a substitute bill that aimed to authorize the country's president to suspend or cut fuel excise taxes during national or global economic emergencies. The bill stated that the

president "may, upon the recommendation of the Development Budget Coordination Committee, in coordination with the" secretary of the Department of Energy (DoE), "suspend the imposition of, or reduce the excise taxes on fuel, "subject to conditions. The conditions were: when the average Dubai crude oil price based on the Mean of Platts Singapore has reached or exceeded \$80 per barrel for a month "immediately preceding the issuance of the suspension or reduction order;" or the president has declared a state of national emergency or calamity, "and such condition has resulted in extraordinary increases in domestic pump prices of petroleum products as certified by the" DoE secretary. Under the bill, the suspension may cover specific petroleum products. It allows full suspension or partial reduction of the excise tax rates. Also under the bill, the suspension or reduction can only last for up to six months unless Congress extends it or ends it earlier through a joint resolution. The total suspension period, the bill stated, shall not exceed a year. It also stated that "any suspension or reduction shall be lifted when the conditions that warrant the suspension or reduction no longer exist". Also under the bill, the president has the power to temporarily suspend or cut fuel excise taxes only until Dec. 31, 2028. Under the bill, the president must submit, through the Finance secretary, to Congress a report within 15 days from the suspension order's issuance and every month afterward on the "factual basis for the suspension or reduction of excise taxes;" the estimated foregone revenues; and the "expected impact on inflation, fuel prices, and other economic activity."

- [Mayor: Offensive language vs women demands apology](#) (2026-03-10 06:09)

MUNTINLUPA City Mayor Ruffy Biazon said on Monday that public officials should apologize rather than justify remarks that offend women, as he weighed in on the controversy sparked by Quezon City Rep. Bong Suintoy. Biazon made the remarks on Monday, March 9, during the city government's flag-raising ceremony, where he stressed that respect for women must be reflected not only in policies but also in the words people choose to say. "It doesn't matter if you say in your mind you are innocent, that you only imagined it, or that you were just joking," Biazon said. "It is how it is received by the person. If we commit a mistake, let's say sorry. Let's not justify it. If you offended someone, then you really have fault. Just simply say sorry and not do it again," he added. Biazon, who said he voted in favor of the Safe Spaces Act when he was still a member of Congress in 2019, said men in particular should think twice before making remarks that may objectify or offend women. He said the issue highlights the need to strengthen a culture of respect and gender equality, adding that a progressive society should recognize the role and dignity of women. The mayor explained that Republic Act 11313, or the Safe Spaces Act, penalizes unwanted or unsolicited remarks or actions that may offend others in public and online spaces, emphasizing that intent does not excuse statements that may be harmful to the person concerned. Biazon said the law was crafted precisely to address situations where people dismiss offensive remarks as jokes or harmless imagination, stressing that the standard is how the statement is perceived by the person at the receiving end. He also noted that the discussion comes at a timely moment as the country observes National Women's Month, which highlights the long-standing struggle of women worldwide to gain recognition and equal rights. According to the mayor, women historically faced social and

cultural limitations, including being confined to traditional roles, which prompted global movements such as the campaign for women's suffrage and broader gender equality. Biazon said a truly progressive society recognizes women's role in society and ensures respect is reflected in everyday behavior and public discourse. "If we are saying that we are respecting women in the same manner, and we regard them as our equals, that is why it says gender equality," Biazon said. "It goes to say that it is not only women, but also the members of the LGBT community who also deserve the same respect that we give to others. Everyone deserves the same respect that we give to another person."

- [Customs task force to monitor country's oil inventory level](#) (2026-03-10 06:09)

THE Bureau of Customs (BOC) has created a special task force to monitor the country's oil inventory level amid uncertainties over the expanding war in the Middle East and allegations of widespread hoarding of petroleum products even before scheduled fuel price increases take effect. Customs Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno said Monday he has instructed all 17 Customs ports in the country to strictly comply with the president's directive to track oil importations and assess the inflow of fuel imports. Nepomuceno said Oil Inventory Level (OIL) Task Force will ensure data accuracy and strengthen coordination between Customs and the Department of Energy (DOE), the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), and other concerned government agencies. The task force will be headed by Allen Dela Cruz, with Victor Pablo Trinidad of the Customs Legal Service as member. Nepomuceno said oil import flows need to be monitored to ensure that government authorities receive accurate information "given the current geopolitical developments." The task force will inspect and oversee the monitoring of oil depots, bulk storage terminals, and other petroleum storage facilities. The group's reports will provide the Office of the Commissioner with situational updates and guide policy or operational responses. The creation of the task force is also expected to strengthen the bureau's implementation of the Fuel Marking Program, a key measure in detecting fuel smuggling, ensuring transparency in fuel distribution, and promoting fair competition in the oil industry. In 2025, the bureau was able to mark 21.102 billion liters of fuel and generated P247.12 billion in tax revenue. The Fuel Marking Program, jointly implemented by the BOC and the BIR, monitors all locally refined finished oil products to ensure correct payment of corresponding excise taxes and value-added tax (VAT). It covers all petroleum products that are refined, manufactured, or imported into the Philippines that are subject to duties and taxes. Petroleum products that do not have the official marker or have the marker but are diluted beyond the acceptable percentage will be presumed to have been withdrawn to avoid paying taxes.

- [Marcos firm: PH won't rejoin ICC](#) (2026-03-10 02:09)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has not changed his position on keeping the Philippines out of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Malacañang said Tuesday. In an interview with reporters in New York, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said that the President's stance on rejoining the ICC remained unchanged. "The President's stance has not changed. We will still not rejoin the ICC," Castro said. The Philippines formally cut its ties with

the ICC on March 17, 2019, a year after the country formally notified the United Nations of its withdrawal from the Rome Statute.

- [Marcos renews pitch for UN Security Council seat in talks with Guterres during US visit](#) (2026-03-10 01:45)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. met with United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres to tackle various issues, including the Philippines' bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, Malacañang said Tuesday. Marcos held a bilateral meeting with Guterres on Monday at the UN headquarters in New York on the sidelines of his working visit to the United States, the Presidential Communications Office (PCO) said. The PCO said the two leaders' meeting reaffirmed the "long-standing partnership between the Philippines and the global body." It added that the Philippines' candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council "will be a manifestation of a further reaffirmation of this long-term partnership." The President was accompanied by Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro, Philippine Permanent Representative to the UN in New York Ambassador Enrique Manalo, Philippine Ambassador to the United States Jose Manuel Romualdez, and Acting Presidential Communications Secretary Dave Gomez.

- [Pagasa announces end of La Niña](#) (2026-03-10 01:30)

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) on Monday announced the end of La Niña. Pagasa Administrator Nathaniel Servando said this signals the return of El Niño. He said that El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)-neutral conditions will likely persist until August this year. Despite the end of La Niña, other weather and climate systems may still influence rainfall distribution in the country, Pagasa said. Rain-bearing weather systems may bring occasional heavy rainfall that could lead to flash floods and landslides, Servando said.

- [Metro Manila LGUs adopt four-day workweek](#) (2026-03-10 01:05)

MANILA, Philippines — Several Metro Manila local government units announced late Monday that they would adopt a four-day onsite workweek in government offices following a national directive aimed at conserving energy and reducing fuel consumption amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. Marikina, San Juan and Makati adjusted work schedules while assuring residents that essential public services would continue uninterrupted. In Marikina City, Mayor Marjorie Ann "Maan" Teodoro signed Executive Order 05, Series of 2026 in which offices would operate from Monday to Thursday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., allowing employees to complete their required work hours and would be closed every Friday to help reduce electricity consumption. Teodoro said essential services and field operations would remain fully operational, including the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, public safety units, street maintenance teams and other frontline services to ensure continuous emergency response and delivery of public services. Meanwhile, San Juan City adopted a four-day onsite workweek through Administrative Order FMZ-075, Series of 2026, signed by Mayor Francis

Zamora. Under the arrangement, city government employees will report onsite from Monday to Thursday, while some offices will implement a work-from-home setup every Friday, with hospitals, health centers, emergency response units and other frontline offices continuing regular operations. Makati City will implement a four-day onsite workweek schedule starting March 16 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday to Thursday, Mayor Nancy Binay said. City officials said the adjustment follows Memorandum Circular 114 issued by the Office of the President directing government agencies to adopt energy conservation measures while maintaining accessible services for the public.

- [Government eyes 'exit agreement' with MILF by 2028](#) (2026-03-10 00:46)

MANILA, Philippines—The government aims to sustain coordination efforts to support socio-economic assistance in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and move toward the eventual signing of an Exit Agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) by 2028, the Office of the Special Assistant to the President (OSAP) said. In a statement, the OSAP said it was working to complete a clear and accurate baseline report on socio-economic assistance provided under the government's normalization program in BARMM within the first quarter of 2026. The OSAP said this would serve as the basis for setting targets from 2026 to 2028 and for drafting a Joint Roadmap moving forward. Special Assistant to the President Anton Lagdameo Jr. recently convened a coordination meeting with key agencies to review the status of initiatives under the normalization program, particularly the Camps Transformation Plan, which aims to improve living conditions in communities located in Moro Islamic Liberation Front camps. The program also provides economic support for former combatants and their families. There are 26,145 decommissioned combatants under the normalization program who are being provided education and livelihood support. Present during the meeting were officials from the Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Agriculture and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity. DPWH Secretary Vince Vizón, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Opapru Senior Undersecretary Isidro Purisima, Presidential Assistant for Bangsamoro Transformation David Diciano, ICCMN Secretariat co-head Wendell Orbeso, Joint Normalization Committee Chairman Ariel Hernandez, Joint Task Force on Camps Transformation co-chairman Baintan Ampatuan and others discussed the validation of project submissions and clarified coverage, targets, and data gaps to determine follow-up actions. "On behalf of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr, allow me to reaffirm this administration's full support for the continued implementation of the Peace Agreements and the normalization process," Lagdameo Jr. said. "We remain committed to ensuring that the hard earned and deeply meaningful [gains] are protected, expanded and carried into the next generation," he added. OSAP emphasized that stronger coordination among agencies is crucial to ensure the timely completion of projects in BARMM.

- [Marcos meets with UN chief Guterres](#) (2026-03-10 00:22)

MANILA, Philippines—President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. met with United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres to tackle various issues, including the Philippines' bid for

a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, Malacañang said Tuesday. Marcos held a bilateral meeting with Guterres on Monday at the UN headquarters in New York on the sidelines of his working visit to the United States, the Presidential Communications Office said. The PCO said the two leaders' meeting reaffirmed the "long-standing partnership between the Philippines and the global body." It added that the Philippines' candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council "will be a manifestation of a further reaffirmation of this long-term partnership." The President was accompanied by Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro, Philippine Permanent Representative to the UN in New York Ambassador Enrique Manalo, Philippine Ambassador to the United States Jose Manuel Romualdez, and Acting Presidential Communications Secretary Dave Gomez.

- [LPA outside PAR now has high chance to intensify into tropical depression](#) (2026-03-09 22:03)

MANILA, Philippines — A low pressure area (LPA) outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) now has a high chance of developing into a tropical depression within 24 hours, the state-run weather bureau said Tuesday. Weather specialist Veronica Torres of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said, however, that the weather disturbance is unlikely to enter PAR. "It would not directly affect any part of the archipelago, but its trough or extension has already been bringing cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms over the Visayas, Mindanao, and Masbate," Torres said in a 5 a.m. briefing. Meanwhile, the Cagayan Valley, Cordillera Administrative Region, Aurora, Quezon, and the rest of the Bicol Region will experience cloudy skies with light rains due to the northeast monsoon, locally known as "amihan." Pagasa said the same weather system will also prevail over Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon, where partly cloudy to overcast skies with isolated light rains are expected. In its heat index outlook, Pagasa said Metro Manila is likely to experience heat index levels of 31°C to 32°C on Tuesday. The highest heat index, however, could reach 40°C in Coron, Palawan, which falls under the "extreme caution" category.

- [Senate passed bill promoting national autism care](#) (2026-03-09 19:20)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate on Monday passed on third and final reading a bill that would integrate autism detection and screening into primary health care, as well as maternal and child health programs. Senators approved Senate Bill (SB) 1822, or the proposed National Autism Care, Support, and Inclusion Act, which seeks to promote the welfare of persons with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). A report by the Second Congressional Commission on Education showed that there are about 5.1 million children with special needs in the country. Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri said the bill recognizes people with ASD as persons with disabilities (PWDs), making them entitled to the benefits accorded to them under existing laws. The measure also institutionalizes a national framework to strengthen health care, education, and social services for persons with autism, while recognizing the vital role of parents and caregivers. Zubiri, the bill's principal author, said the measure aims to address the "scattered assistance" available to people with ASD so that "families are no longer forced to

navigate services on their own.” Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito, who co-sponsored the bill, emphasized the importance of ensuring stronger government support for persons on the autism spectrum and their families. “Autism should never be seen as a burden. Rather, it is a different way of viewing and experiencing the world,” Ejercito said. Sen. Joel Villanueva also stressed the need to strengthen access to diagnosis, intervention, and support services for persons with ASD and their families. He said the measure would help families of children with special needs gain access to more trained specialists for timely diagnosis, intervention, and long-term care.

- [Lacson: Senate to give 'utmost priority' to President's emergency powers request](#) (2026-03-09 16:29)

MANILA, Philippines -- The Senate will give "utmost priority" to the request of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. for emergency powers to reduce excise tax on petroleum products amid the war in the Middle East, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said. Lacson on Monday said only those who did not want to help "alleviate the suffering of ordinary Filipinos brought about by the uncontrolled increase in the prices of oil in the aftermath of the raging Iran war would refuse to grant such emergency power." "In fact, the Senate is giving utmost priority to tackle the measure toward this end," the Senate president pro tempore said in a statement. Senate President Vicente Sotto III said that since this weekend, they were "in constant coordination with the office of the Executive Secretary regarding the bills needed to suspend the implementation of excise tax on fuel and the bill allowing the importation of biofuel to address the effects of the surge in fuel prices." Senators Bam Aquino and Joel Villanueva last week filed separate bills which authorized 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. Aquino filed Senate Bill (SB) 1923 to cushion Filipinos from the impact of sudden spikes in fuel prices. Villanueva filed SB 1922 which mandated 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 granting the President the authority to suspend the excise tax on petroleum products during national or global economic emergencies.

- [Marcos reaffirms PH's support for women's rights, empowerment in UN forum](#) (2026-03-09 16:14)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. pushed for women's rights to education, employment, and protection from violence as he faced the United Nations' 70th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70) in New York. CSW70 is one of the UN-related events Marcos has in his agenda on his two-day working visit to the United States. His participation in the event, the chief executive stated, signaled the strong commitment of the Philippines to gender equality and women empowerment. He highlighted how Filipino women "have always stood at the center" in the Philippines' way of life "as leaders in government and business, as innovators, educators, health workers, entrepreneurs, and as the steady strength within families and communities." "Their contributions continue to shape our

democracy, our economy, and our national character. Our country has worked consistently to translate this belief into policy — strengthening protections for women, expanding opportunities for education and employment, and promoting women’s leadership across all sectors of society,” he said. “But even as we take pride in this progress, we recognize that the journey toward full equality — both in our country and around the world — is far from complete,” he added. The president, however, pointed out that no matter how hard the push for equality and empowerment, if women’s rights to be “educated, safe, able to work, able to lead, able to decide the course of their own lives” were not acknowledged and protected, “then no level of prosperity can truly be called progress.” “Across many societies, women still face barriers that limit their opportunities. Too many continue to experience discrimination and violence. Too many girls are still denied the education that will allow them to shape their own futures. And that is why the work of this Commission remains as vital today as it was seventy years ago,” he said. “Economic empowerment is equally essential. Women must have access to employment, to finance, to entrepreneurship, and to leadership. Societies that fully include women in economic life are not only more just — they are stronger, they are more resilient. And we must remain united in confronting violence against women in all its forms. Violence erodes dignity, weakens communities, and undermines the very foundations of our justice,” he added. Beyond all these, Marcos called for all stakeholders to address factors which limited women’s roles in many parts of the world and reassured that the Philippines “stands ready to work with all nations to advance this cause.” “We cannot hope to solve the great challenges of our time if half of our humanity is excluded from shaping those solutions. Women must be present wherever decisions are made – in government, in business, in science, in diplomacy, and in peace building,” he said. “Because when women rise, societies rise with them. When women lead, nations move forward. And when every girl – no matter where she is born – can stand with confidence and say that her future is truly her own, and then we will know that we have built not only a more equal world...but a better one for all of humanity,” he added.

- [Crude prices spike near \\$120 a barrel](#) (2026-03-09 16:14)

OIL prices spiked near \$120 per barrel before falling back Monday as the Iran war intensified, threatening production and shipping in the Middle East and pummeling financial markets. The price for a barrel of Brent crude, the international standard, surged to \$119.50 per barrel early in the day but later was trading at \$107.80 per barrel. West Texas Intermediate, the light, sweet crude oil produced in the United States, spiked at \$119.48 per barrel but fell back to \$103 per barrel. The war’s toll on civilian targets grew as Bahrain accused Iran of striking a desalination plant vital to drinking water supplies, and oil depots in Tehran smoldered following overnight strikes by Israel. Oil prices have surged as the war, now in its second week, ensnares countries and places that are critical to the production and movement of oil and gas from the Persian Gulf. Prices moderated after the Financial Times reported that some members of the Group of Seven industrial nations were considering releases of strategic oil reserves to alleviate pressure on the markets. The unconfirmed report cited unnamed people familiar with the talks. On

Saturday, President Donald Trump downplayed the idea of turning to America's Strategic Petroleum Reserve, saying US supplies were ample and prices would soon fall. Roughly 15 million barrels of crude oil — about 20 percent of the world's oil — typically are shipped every day through the Strait of Hormuz, according to independent research firm Rystad Energy. The threat of Iranian missile and drone attacks has all but stopped tankers from traveling through the strait, which is bordered in the north by Iran, carry oil and gas from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Iran. Iraq, Kuwait and the UAE have cut their oil production as storage tanks fill due to the reduced ability to export crude. Iran, Israel and the United States also have attacked oil and gas facilities since the war started, exacerbating supply concerns. The surge in costs for oil and natural gas is pushing fuel prices higher, cascading through other industries and jolting Asian economies that are especially vulnerable due to the region's heavy reliance on imports from the Middle East. The last time Brent and US crude futures traded near the current level was in 2022, after Russia invaded Ukraine. Higher energy costs push inflation higher, straining household budgets and denting the consumer spending that is a main driver of many big economies. Tokyo's benchmark Nikkei 225 index shed 5.2 percent on Monday while other markets also foundered. US futures were down more than 1.5 percent. On Friday, the S&P 500 dropped 1.3 percent and the Dow plunged as many as 945 points before finishing with a loss of roughly 450. The Nasdaq composite sank 1.6 percent. In the US, a gallon of regular gasoline rose to \$3.45 on Sunday, about 47 cents more than a week earlier, according to AAA motor club. Diesel was selling for about \$4.60 a gallon, a weekly increase of about 83 cents. Energy Secretary Chris Wright, speaking on CNN's "State of the Union," said US gas prices would be back under \$3 a gallon "before too long." "Look, you never know exactly the time frame of this, but, in the worst case, this is a weeks, this is not a months thing," Wright added. If oil prices stay above \$100 per barrel, some analysts and investors say it could be too much for the global economy to withstand. Iranian authorities said strikes by Israel on oil depots in Tehran and a petroleum transfer terminal early Sunday killed four people. Israel's military said the depots were being used by Iran's military for fuel to launch missiles. Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, the speaker of Iran's parliament, warned that the war's impact on the oil industry would spiral. Iran exports roughly 1.6 million barrels of oil a day, mostly to China, which may need to look elsewhere for supply if Iran's exports are disrupted, another factor that could increase energy prices. The price of natural gas also has climbed during the war, though not by as much as oil. It was selling for about \$3.33 per 1,000 cubic feet late Sunday. That's 4.6-percent higher than its Friday closing price of \$3.19, after rising about 11 percent last week. Dollar gains The safe-haven US dollar took another leg higher on Monday, rising to a three-month peak versus the euro as oil surged past \$110 a barrel and stocks slid on worries about the effects of a protracted Middle East war on global energy supplies. "Oil remains the transmission channel into inflation expectations, rates and currency markets, with the dollar's resurgence echoing the 2022 energy crisis," said Bob Savage, head of markets macro strategy at BNY. "The week ahead will test whether markets continue to treat the current conflict as a contained shock or begin to price a more durable supply disruption." The dollar, which notched its sharpest one-week rise in 15 months on the breakout of war last week, has been the most consistent safe-haven asset, as gold has faltered amid

broad selling in anything that has lately made sharp gains. The conflict has already led to the suspension of around a fifth of global crude and natural gas supply, as Tehran targets ships in the vital Strait of Hormuz between its shores and Oman, and attacks energy infrastructure across the region. Qatar's energy minister told the Financial Times on Friday he expects all Gulf energy producers to shut down exports within weeks, a move he said could drive oil to \$150 a barrel. High energy prices act like a tax and can also stoke inflation, leaving investors worried that central bankers may be reluctant to cut interest rates. Asian stocks plunge Asian stock markets plunged Monday as oil prices soared 30 percent on fears about supplies from the Middle East as the US-Israeli war against Iran continued into a second week with no sign of letting up. Investors, already spooked by concerns over extended tech valuations and the huge spending on AI, ran for the hills as crude rocketed to its highest level since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Fears grew that the Middle East conflict could last for some time after US President Donald Trump said only the "unconditional surrender" of Iran would end the war. He added at the weekend that the spike in prices was a "small price to pay" to eliminate Iran's nuclear threat, reiterating the White House's insistence that the rise is temporary. Attacks on oilfields were reported in southern Iraq and in the northern autonomous Kurdistan region, which forced a US-run oilfield to cease production, while the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait have started reducing output. That came with maritime traffic in the Strait of Hormuz — through which a fifth of global crude and gas passes — halted since the war began on Feb. 28. 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 preventing central banks from cutting interest rates to support growth. With the prospect of the global economy taking a blow from the crisis, equity markets extended last week's losses, though they pared some of the early retreat. Seoul, which had been the best performer this year thanks to a tech rally, tumbled more than 8 percent at one point before closing 6 percent down, while Tokyo shed more than 5 percent and Taipei fell more than 4 percent. Hong Kong, Shanghai, Sydney, Singapore, Manila, Bangkok, Mumbai, Jakarta and Wellington were also sharply lower. "Stocks continue to face stiff headwinds, with markets in Europe and Asia, specifically Japan, more vulnerable in the short-term given that those are heavy energy importers, and with those markets having vastly outperformed the US year to date, until the Iran war began," wrote Pepperstone's Michael Brown. Futures for all three main indexes on Wall Street were down more than one percent, while the dollar jumped against its peers as traders sought out its safe haven status. The prospect of interest rates being kept elevated, or even raised to combat inflation, saw gold prices sink more than 1 percent to around \$5,100 an ounce. "The deeper shock is spreading across the production chain," said SPI Asset Management's Stephen Innes. "Gulf producers are scaling back output because storage hubs are filling up and export flows are seizing. Qatar has halted liquefaction at key gas facilities, a move that will take weeks to reverse even if the conflict cools tomorrow. "In other words, the market is not dealing with a headline shock. It deals with a physical disruption of oil molecules. "Oil above \$100 is not just a commodity rally. It becomes a tax on the global economy." However, Trump sought to offer reassurance that the spike in crude would not last long. "Short term oil prices, which will drop rapidly when the destruction of the Iran nuclear threat is over, is a very small price to pay for USA, and World,

Safety and Peace,” he wrote on social media Sunday evening Washington time. But Michael O’Rourke at JonesTrading warned that the pain for investors could last for some time. “The worst is yet to come in the stock market reaction” he said. “I would expect more of a risk-off mood until we get some tangible positive news.”

- [Mojtaba Khamenei: son and son to Iran's supreme leader](#) (2026-03-09 16:13)

MOJTABA Khamenei, the son of late Iranian supreme leader Ali Khamenei who has been appointed as the new head of the Islamic republic, is a discreet figure who offers continuity of his father’s hardline leadership. The 56-year-old had no official post during his father’s rule, but was speculated to be acting behind the scenes to pull strings at the heart of power in Iran. He is regarded as close to conservatives, notably because of his ties with the powerful Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, which swiftly pledged allegiance to the new leader. The Islamic republic’s third supreme leader also received endorsements from President Masoud Pezeshkian, the armed forces and the judiciary within hours of his appointment. Because of his discretion at official ceremonies and in the media, Khamenei’s true influence has been the subject of intense speculation for years among the Iranian population as well as in diplomatic circles. He was named supreme leader by Iran’s top clerical body, the Assembly of Experts, in a statement published shortly after midnight on Monday (2030 GMT Sunday). Even though the Islamic revolution had put an end to a multi-century royal dynasty headed by the shah, the council opted for the kind of hereditary transition that Ali Khamenei had rejected on principle in 2024. Born on Sept. 8, 1969 in the holy city of Mashhad in eastern Iran, Mojtaba Khamenei is the only one of the late supreme leader’s six children to hold a public position. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed aged 86 during the first wave of US-Israeli air strikes on Tehran that triggered the war in the Middle East on Feb. 28. Security force links Mojtaba Khamenei, a cleric who has a salt-and-pepper beard and the black turban of the “seyyed” — descendants of the Prophet Mohammed — is a veteran of the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s. The United States imposed sanctions on him in 2019 during President Donald Trump’s first term, saying Khamenei represented his father “despite never being elected or appointed to a government position aside from work in the office of his father.” Ali Khamenei had “delegated a part of his leadership responsibilities” to his son, “who worked closely” with Iranian security forces “to advance his father’s destabilizing regional ambitions and oppressive domestic objectives,” the US Treasury said at the time. Opponents have accused the younger Khamenei of playing a role in the violent crackdown that followed the reelection of ultra-conservative president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2009, which triggered a vast protest movement. According to an investigation by the Bloomberg news organization, which cited anonymous sources and Western intelligence agency reports, Mojtaba Khamenei has amassed wealth estimated at more than \$100 million. Money from oil sales had been channeled into investments in luxury British real estate, hotels in Europe and property in Dubai through shell companies in tax havens, according to the investigation. On the religious front, Mojtaba Khamenei studied theology in the holy city of Qom, south of Tehran, where he also taught. He had attained the rank of Hujjat al-Islam, but was presented as ayatollah — a higher rank held by his father and by

revolutionary leader Ruhollah Khomeini — upon his appointment as supreme leader. Mojtaba Khamenei's wife, Zahra Haddad-Adel, died in the US-Israeli strikes that killed the former supreme leader, according to Iranian authorities. Israel has issued a stark warning to the new supreme leader and whoever selected him, saying “the hand of the State of Israel will continue to follow any successor and anyone who seeks to appoint a successor.” The Assembly of Experts has 88 members who are elected every eight years. It has overseen two leadership transition processes to date — this week, and when Ali Khamenei was selected in 1989 following the death of Khomeini.

- [Marcos set to ask Congress for powers to cut fuel taxes](#) (2026-03-09 16:12)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is set to issue a 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 will 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 earlier said he is considering exercising emergency powers to reduce the excise tax on petroleum products if oil prices reach or exceed \$80-per-barrel mark. Oil prices have since breached the \$100-per-barrel mark as the war in the Middle East widened. The proposed measure would be temporary and would be authorized by Congress. Castro also said the Palace has been made aware of the 54 gasoline stations that prematurely raised their fuel prices despite the DOE's earlier 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. The official warned profiteers seizing the opportunity to jack up oil prices that the law will go after them for their fraudulent actions. “The president's call is for us to unite [given what is] happening in the Middle East. We must unite and work together. We do not need to tear each other down,” Castro said. “And to those people, you should not take advantage (of the situation). What the president wants is for us to work together. If you take advantage, you will be in trouble. You will be sued and you may lose the opportunity to do business,” she added.

- [Eala wins, reaches Indian Wells 4th round as Gauff retires](#) (2026-03-09 16:11)

FILIPINO tennis ace Alex Eala advanced to the fourth round of the WTA 1000 BNP Paribas Open after World No. 4 Coco Gauff retired due to an injury at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden Stadium 1 in California. Eala was leading 6-2, 2-0 when Gauff retired after receiving treatment on her left arm during a medical timeout late in the final set. Eala is expected to hit a new career-high 28th at the WTA rankings with her third round win, leaping four places from last week's 32nd rank and three notches higher than her previous best of 31st. The 20-year-old Eala got back at the 21-year-old Gauff, who defeated her at the Dubai Tennis Championships quarterfinals nearly

three weeks ago, 6-0, 6-2. “I really didn’t wanna win this way but this is still really a big moment for me to be able to play in Stadium 1 of Indian Wells against such a great competitor,” said Eala after the 58-minute match. “I’m really grateful to be here and I’m super happy,” added Eala, who once again drew a huge Filipino crowd that she addressed in Filipino during the post-match court interview. “Mabuhay mga kababayan nandito tayo sa California. Maraming salamat sa suporta at magkita tayo sa next round (Long live my countrymen, we’re here in California. Thank you so much for the support and see you in the next round).” While Gauff’s injury played a part in Eala’s win, the lefty Filipino netter played well and even broke the American’s serve four times. Eala’s service and return game was working well against Gauff, who started nursing her injury in the latter part of the first set. “I felt it, like, the second game of the first set. I guess a simple way to put it, it felt like a firework was going off inside of my arm, and then my whole arm felt like it was on fire,” said Gauff. “And then as the match played, it got progressively worse, even on shots that I wasn’t even using my left arm for. It was a scary feeling,” she said. Seeking a quarterfinal berth, Eala faces World No. 14 Czech Linda Noskova in the fourth round likely on Wednesday. Noskova defeated Romanian Sorana Cirstea in their round of 32 clash, 6-7 (5), 6-4, 6-4.

- [Marcos in New York for UN engagements](#) (2026-03-09 16:10)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is in New York to participate in high-level discussions in the United Nations, including the situation in the Middle East and women’s rights. The chartered plane carrying Marcos and his delegation touched down at the Newark Liberty International Airport at 2:45 p.m. on Sunday (New York time). During his two-day working visit, he will attend 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. “My participation in the CSW signals the strong commitment of the Philippines to gender equality and women’s empowerment,” the president said in his departure statement. “It is an opportunity to share the best practices of the Philippines, the challenges we face on women’s rights, and the lessons that can be learned from our own journey towards peace,” he added. Marcos will meet with UN Secretary General António Guterres, where he will highlight the country’s commitment to multilateralism and international cooperation, and reiterate his administration’s call for rules-based international order. The president will take the floor at the special session of the UN General Assembly to push the country’s bid for a nonpermanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2027 to 2028. “This candidature is about shared responsibility. It is about ensuring that the voice of the Philippines — and of developing countries — is heard at the highest forum of global peace and security,” he said. Marcos will also address the General Assembly special session to be convened by Guterres just for the Philippines. Apart from his UN-related activities, Marcos will also have meetings with American business leaders. With the president on the trip are First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, Foreign Affairs Secretary Maria Theresa Lazaro, Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac, Presidential Peace Adviser Carlito Galvez Jr.; and PCO Acting Secretary Dave Gomez. This is Marcos’ sixth visit to the US since 2022. He designated Executive Secretary Ralph

Recto, Education Secretary Sonny Angara, and Agrarian Reform Secretary Conrado Estrella III as caretakers of the government while he is away. Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro said that being a council member would benefit not just the Philippines but the entire Southeast Asian region. The Security Council is a primary UN body charged with maintaining international peace and security, authorized to impose sanctions, authorize force, and dispatch peacekeepers. It is made up of 15 members. Five of them — China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and the US — are permanent members with veto power, with the rest being nonpermanent members elected for two-year terms. The Philippines was a nonpermanent member of the council in 1957, 1963, 1980-1981, and 2004-2005. It was in 2022, when Marcos first visited the US as president, that he renewed the country's bid for a nonpermanent seat. All 193 UN member states will participate in voting for council seats in June.

- [De Lima sues for libel over cash delivery claims](#) (2026-03-09 16:09)

REP. Leila de Lima on Monday filed complaints for libel, cyberlibel and perjury against lawyer Levito Baligod and 18 individuals who introduced themselves as former Marines, accusing them of spreading false allegations that she received billions of pesos from former congressman Zaldy Co. De Lima, the representative of the Mamamayang Liberal party-list and a deputy minority leader in the House, filed the cases before the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and the Department of Justice (DOJ). The cases stemmed from sworn statements and public remarks by Baligod and the other respondents that she and other personalities received cash supposedly delivered by Co to support the building of cases against former president Rodrigo Duterte. De Lima told reporters after filing the cases that the allegations were “lies” intended to damage her reputation. “It’s very clear to me that these are being done to besmirch my reputation and smear my name,” she said. De Lima also filed a perjury complaint against the 18 individuals over what she described as untruthful statements in their sworn affidavit. The allegations circulated after a press conference organized by Baligod in February, where the group presented a joint affidavit claiming they had served as Co’s security personnel and “bagmen.” They claimed that large sums of money were delivered to several officials, including de Lima. De Lima denied receiving such payments. She pointed out inconsistencies in the accusations, saying the claim shifted from money allegedly delivered in suitcases to cash supposedly placed in a paper bag. Baligod later acknowledged in media interviews that naming de Lima as one of those who received the money may have been an error. He said he and his co-respondents were “ready and willing to face all accusations against us.” De Lima suggested that the allegations could be intended to distract from developments involving Duterte, who has been detained for a year in a facility of the International Criminal Court in the Netherlands while facing charges of crimes against humanity linked to thousands of deaths during his anti-drug campaign. “It could only be the handiwork of the Duterte camp. Just look at the timing,” de Lima said. Catholic priest Flavie Villanueva, who joined de Lima in filing the complaints, said the allegations were also an attempt to discredit witnesses and victims of killings linked to the anti-drug campaign. Villanueva, founder of the shelter program Bahay Kalinga for families of drug war victims, said the accusations were meant to undermine

testimony related to the killings. “This is a scare tactic and a smear campaign,” he said. Several officials named in the affidavit have denied the allegations. The Philippine Navy has also said that at least four of the 18 individuals identified in the affidavit were never members of the Navy or the Marine Corps. The controversy has also drawn legal action from Gregorio Pio Catapang Jr., director general of the Bureau of Corrections, who accused the group of falsely linking him to the alleged cash deliveries. The group said Catapang delivered “walong maleta” — eight suitcases containing millions of pesos — to Co at the basement parking area of a hotel in Bonifacio Global City. The accusations were later circulated online after the press conference was streamed on several platforms and discussed in a podcast episode hosted by broadcast journalist Jessica Soho. “I did not deliver eight suitcases of cash to Zaldy Co at BGC Shangri-La or anywhere else, and I did not participate in any kickback scheme,” Catapang said in his complaint. He also filed a perjury case against the 18 individuals before the Las Piñas City Prosecutor’s Office, and a disbarment complaint against Baligod before the Supreme Court. Catapang said the claims in the affidavit were “mathematically impossible.” He said large suitcases could hold between P50 million and P70 million in cash, while medium-sized ones could contain P30 million to P40 million. Based on those figures, the alleged eight suitcases would contain several hundred million pesos. Catapang said the accusations surfaced after he allowed several prisoners to testify before a House Quad Committee inquiry investigating extrajudicial killings linked to the previous administration’s anti-drug campaign. He said a complaint had earlier been filed against him before the Office of the Ombudsman by Manases Carpio, husband of Vice President Sara Duterte, in connection with his cooperation with the congressional inquiry. Catapang also accused Baligod of resorting to “trial by publicity,” saying the lawyer chose to present the accusations during a press conference rather than filing a case before the courts.

- [Stricter citizenship verification system urged](#) (2026-03-09 16:08)

SEN. Erwin Tulfo raised the need to tighten the country’s citizenship verification system amid questions on the nationality of detained mining executive Joseph Sy. Tulfo batted for a stricter process for granting citizenship during the hearing of the Committee on Justice and Human Rights on the misuse of government-issued identification documents and visas that enable foreigners to circumvent laws and engage in illegal activities in the country. Sy, chairman of Global Ferronickel Holdings Inc., was arrested in August 2025 after immigration authorities linked his biometric records to a Chinese national. The Bureau of Immigration (BI) said Sy and a Chinese national named Chen Zhong Zhen or Shi Zhenzong are one and the same person. Sy went to court to seek release from BI custody despite questions over his citizenship. His passport is under review while deportation proceedings are ongoing. “This case shows gaps in how citizenship is granted. If Sy’s citizenship is valid, there is no issue. But if it was obtained illegally, it must be revoked, and those responsible be held accountable,” Tulfo said. Sen. Risa Hontiveros slammed the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) for delaying an endorsement of the cancellation of Sy’s birth certificate. Hontiveros said she was “mystified” that it took PSA almost three months to endorse the cancellation of Sy’s birth certificate to the Office of the

Solicitor General (OSG). The OSG files a petition for the cancellation of birth certificates after it receives an endorsement from the PSA. She expressed concern that the PSA's delayed endorsement to the OSG would expose a legal loophole that those with questionable birth certificates can exploit. "That should not be what PSA will do. That should not be what PSA will allow. PSA should not deny OSG to be able to do their duty because of this delay," Hontiveros said. Sen. Raffy Tulfo pointed to abuses in the late registration of births and misuse of government-issued identification documents. "Until when will this so-called late registration stop? Because we always have people slipping through," Raffy Tulfo said. He proposed a temporary moratorium to allow citizens to register without penalties. "Let's open late registration for one year, from June 2026 to June 2027, without fines; free registration; and after that, require those registering late at age 10 or older to go to court for careful scrutiny," he said. Raffy Tulfo also called for closer monitoring of local civil registrars to ensure strict compliance with the rules. "We have to find a system where both the Philippine Statistics Authority and local civil registrars work together to make the process more accountable," he added.

- [Globe backs stronger protection for OFWs](#) (2026-03-09 16:07)

THE Global Anti-Scam Alliance (GASA) and the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) aimed primarily at strengthening digital safety programs for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). Globe, which serves as GASA Philippines Chapter chair, said the partnership was expected to deepen cross-border intelligence sharing and widen access to practical tools and resources that would help migrant workers recognize, prevent and respond to scams before real damage is done. DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac said the partnership would strengthen the agency's ability to protect OFWs through better information sharing, stronger digital literacy, and coordinated action across borders. "For our overseas Filipino workers, every peso they earn represents sacrifice, discipline and love for their families. We cannot allow criminals to take that away through deception," Cacdac said. Derick OhmarAdil, Globe's head of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Privacy Governance, noted in a statement that online scams are becoming more sophisticated and increasingly borderless. For millions of overseas Filipino workers and their families, the risks are real and often personal, especially when it comes to cross-border financial transactions and digital communication, OhmarAdil said. He said that through GASA, which brings together Globe, Gogolook, Meta, Google, Mastercard, ScamwatchPilipinas, and other partners with the Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center, public awareness campaigns could further expand, digital literacy would be strengthened, and more joint training sessions and advanced research initiatives would be carried out. "Overseas Filipino workers make tremendous sacrifices for their families and for the country. They should not have to worry about falling victim to scams while working abroad," OhmarAdil said. "Through this partnership with the Department of Migrant Workers, we are strengthening digital literacy and promoting responsible use of technology so that protection keeps pace with evolving threats," he reiterated. Globe emphasized that the partnership between GASA and DMW would equip OFWs and their families with clear, practical

guidance and accessible tools to spot warning signs, verify suspicious messages or transactions, and protect the income they work so hard to earn. Reinforcing Globe's broader commitment to digital safety, cybersecurity and responsible AI governance, the initiative would also highlight the importance of public and private sector collaboration in combating cyber-enabled crimes that do not respect geographic boundaries, OhmarAdil said.

- [Court grants plea to attach Zaldy Co properties](#) (2026-03-09 16:06)

THE Sandiganbayan's Fifth Division granted the prosecution's motion to issue a writ of preliminary attachment against certain properties pending a graft case filed against former lawmaker Elizaldy "Zaldy" Co. The Office of the Ombudsman last November filed the case against Co and other persons — including former officials of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Mimaropa — before the Sandiganbayan in connection with a road dike construction project in Oriental Mindoro. The Fifth Division said in a resolution promulgated on March 4, it found "sufficient grounds" for issuing the writ to attach Co's properties in the Philippines as part of the Ombudsman's demand that Co pay P215,331,394.47 for "the alleged injury or damages suffered by the government" in connection with the case. Attached to the Ombudsman motion were copies of original certificates of title, transfer certificates of title and condominium certificates of title over the prosecution-enumerated properties "with accused Co, his wife [...], or both spouses, as the registered owners." The court said that during the hearing on Feb. 11, the prosecution asked that a property included in its motion be excluded because it had already been sold last July. It added that Co still has "an adequate and fair opportunity to contest the issuance of this writ."

- [LTFRB reviews fare hike bid amid soaring fuel prices](#) (2026-03-09 16:04)

THE Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said it was reviewing its earlier recommendation for a provisional fare increase for public utility vehicles (PUVs) amid fluctuating fuel prices. LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said the agency needed to recalculate its previous proposal because the fuel price assumptions used when the recommendation was first made had already changed. "We will revise our recommendation. When we made that recommendation, the numbers were different," Mendoza said in an interview on Monday. The LTFRB earlier considered recommending a 50-centavo increase in the minimum jeepney fare when diesel prices were projected to reach between P61 and P65 per liter. However, Mendoza said the agency would review the figures again to determine the appropriate adjustment amid the changing fuel price environment. Under the LTFRB's rule of thumb, every P10 increase in diesel pump prices could justify a P1 adjustment in minimum fares for jeepneys to help operators absorb higher fuel costs. The same benchmark could also apply to buses operating in Metro Manila, while provincial buses may see a proposed adjustment of about 30 centavos per kilometer. Despite possible adjustments, Mendoza said a provisional fare increase remained the government's last option as authorities continued to examine other forms of assistance, such as fuel subsidies and service contracting. Mendoza said the agency had been consulting transport groups on possible measures to assist jeepney and bus operators who were grappling

with rising diesel prices. He said the government's first option was to release fuel subsidies for operators, followed by service contracting if needed. "We have been waiting for the green light as far as fuel subsidy is concerned," Mendoza said. The LTFRB has also instructed its regional directors to identify routes that could benefit from service contracting while other possible interventions are being reviewed. The agency is also studying bus operators' requests for toll fee reductions to help offset operating costs. LTFRB data show there are 136,980 traditional jeepneys and 9,183 modern public utility jeepneys nationwide, or roughly 146,000 units. The agency has proposed a fuel subsidy of P10,500 to P12,500 per unit for modern jeepneys, and about P5,000 for traditional units. Officials estimate the subsidy could cover fuel expenses for around 10 to 14 days. Funds would be distributed through operators' LandBank cards once released by the government. Mendoza said authorities were also studying whether buses should be included in the fuel subsidy program. Transport groups have warned that some provincial bus companies have already begun reducing trips due to higher fuel costs, raising concerns about possible disruptions in passenger services. The LTFRB said it has submitted recommendations to the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and other concerned agencies, with discussions ongoing on possible assistance measures. Despite the options, Mendoza acknowledged that a provisional fare increase could become unavoidable if fuel prices continue to climb. "We hope the fuel subsidy and other measures can be implemented first," he said. "But if those are not enough, the provisional fare increase is there as an option." Free LRT, MRT rides Akbayan Rep. Perci Cendaña on Monday urged the Transportation Department to offer the public free rides on the Light Rail Transit (LRT) and Metro Rail Transit (MRT). Cendaña made the call, fearing increases in fuel prices amid the conflict in the Middle East. "If the DOTr was able to provide free MRT rides as a Christmas gift to commuters, we can very much also make it free while we are facing a crisis," he said in Filipino and English in a statement. "Commuters will bear the brunt of the rise in fuel prices. If there are free rides, it would ease the effect of the increase in the prices of petroleum and goods," he said. Cendaña also pushed for quality mass transportation. The statement said Akbayan would file measures seeking "a stronger" government response on issues stemming from the conflict, including proposals to expand and increase the Pantawid Pasada program and encourage local government units to explore service contracting of public utility vehicles. with a report from Reina Tolentino

- [Govt agencies begin conserving energy](#) (2026-03-09 16:03)

GOVERNMENT offices and institutions have heeded President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s directive to adopt energy conservation protocols in response to looming massive oil price increases amid the widening conflict in the Middle East. In issuing Memorandum Circular 114, s. 2026, the president expects government agencies and instrumentalities, including State Colleges, to implement a four-day onsite work setting beginning March 9, 2026. In compliance with the directive, the University of the Philippines Manila (UPM) has implemented a four-day compressed workweek and designated Mondays as a no-onsite workday starting March 9. UPM Chancellor Michael Tee said on March 8 that Mondays will 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. The personnel may choose among three work schedules: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., or 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Unit heads will coordinate with staff to determine which schedule ensures continuous work. Meanwhile, Tee noted that classes will proceed as scheduled. “Teaching and learning remain the university’s primary priority and will not be disrupted by these austerity measures,” the statement reads.

Manila LGU response On Monday, Manila Mayor Isko Moreno signed Executive Order (EO) 8, mandating a four-day workweek for city government offices. In a live address on his Facebook, Moreno said that on-site work will be from Monday to Thursday, under two schedules: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., and on Fridays, office operations will be suspended. “It is the policy of the city government to adopt flexible work arrangements that enhance employees’ welfare while ensuring uninterrupted delivery of essential public services,” Moreno said. Moreno emphasized that “No reduction in pay or statutory benefits shall be imposed without lawful authority and proper consultation.” He clarified that essential and frontline workers are exempted from the mandate. These include emergency response units such as police, fire, ambulance and disaster response teams; health and sanitation services, including public health centers, clinics, solid waste management and markets; as well as utilities and other operations that must remain continuously staffed. “Agencies providing essential services shall prepare staffing rosters and shift arrangements to ensure uninterrupted operations and public service availability; where necessary, rotational schedules shall be applied to ensure on-site coverage,” he added. Uninterrupted services despite 4-day workweek For its part, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) assured the public that the delivery of its programs and services will remain uninterrupted despite the implementation of a four-day compressed workweek across government agencies. DSWD Secretary Rexlon Gatchalian subsequently issued a memorandum ordering the adoption of a compressed workweek in the department’s central and field offices nationwide. Under the compressed workweek setup, the usual 40-hour workload spread over five days will instead be completed in four days, with personnel required to render 10 hours of work per day. Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlao assured the public that the department’s programs and services will not be disrupted by the new arrangement. “You can be assured that our department’s programs and services will not be delayed,” Dumlao said. Dumlao explained that all DSWD offices providing immediate assistance will remain open five days a week to ensure that the public continues to receive timely support. “This includes our Disaster Response Command Center monitoring weather disturbances and other disasters, satellite offices processing Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations, outreach for families in street situations, clearance for minors traveling abroad, the Walang Gutom Program and Kitchen, and all DSWD centers and residential care facilities,” she said.

Work arrangement at judiciary The Supreme Court has also adopted flexible work arrangements and energy conservation measures in the Judiciary, including a four-day on-site and one-day work-from-home scheme for most of its personnel. In a memorandum circular, the Court ordered that all officials and employees of the Supreme Court shall maintain a five-day workweek, rendering eight hours of work per day from Monday to Friday, consistent with the

40-hour workweek requirement. Under the new arrangement, Fridays shall generally be observed as a work-from-home (WFH) day, “provided that, at least, 25 percent of the employees in each office or division shall report on-site every Friday, as determined by the head of office or division, to ensure continuity of operations.” Personnel on WFH shall remain reachable during office hours through official communication channels and shall attend required meetings, hearings, conferences, or on-site work when directed. “The WFH arrangement shall not be used to justify delay, inaccessibility, neglect of duty, or failure to meet required outputs,” the circular stated. Workers’ welfare

Meanwhile, a group representing government workers and unions has warned that the president’s directive for strict energy conservation measures may compromise workers’ welfare, occupational safety and health, and quality of public services. The Public Services Labor Independent Confederation, or PSLINK, issued the warning in response to the energy conservation protocols. In a statement, the group said that the energy-saving measures — such as reduced air-conditioning, limited lighting, or restricted equipment use — must comply with workplace safety standards and ensure offices remain safe and conducive for both workers and the public. “Many government offices already suffer from poor ventilation, overcrowded workspaces, outdated infrastructure, and limited natural light. Inadequate cooling may increase heat stress, fatigue, and decreased concentration, affecting employee health and productivity,” it said. It pointed out that senior citizens, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, and other vulnerable sectors seeking government services are already at risk under the present situation. The group also noted that the circular’s proposed four-day workweek is already part of existing policies on flexible work arrangements, which remain underutilized or poorly implemented. It also raised concern for job order (JO) and contract of service (COS) workers, who may face income loss if work hours are reduced or schedules altered during the implementation of the four-day workweek without safeguards. It claimed further that the memorandum circular demands sacrifices from ordinary employees even as those at the highest levels of government have long engaged in energy-intensive excesses — costly official trips, lavish activities, and other expenditures funded by public resources — with little consequence.

with reports from Allen Limos, Moises Cruz,

- [QCitizens told: Maximize online services, free bus rides](#) (2026-03-09 16:02)

QUEZON CITY Mayor Joy Belmonte on Monday called on QCitizens to take advantage of the local government’s digital services and mobility programs amid soaring fuel prices. Belmonte advised residents to use the city’s E-Services portal to access government services and to save time and transportation expenses. “We understand that rising fuel and transportation costs can put additional pressure on many families. That is why we encourage our QCitizens to maximize our online services so they can transact with the city government quickly and conveniently, without the need to travel,” she said. Accessible via [qceservices.quezoncity.gov.ph](http://qceservices.quezoncity.gov.ph), the city government said QC E-Services now offers more than 160 individual services across 34 programs, making it one of the most comprehensive local government digital platforms in the country. Through the portal, residents can apply for business, occupational and building permits; scholarship grants; and burial and medical

assistance, including property tax payments — all through a single, streamlined online platform. Belmonte said that those who prefer in-person assistance may visit their nearest District Action Office, where frontline personnel are ready to assist with various service requests. To cushion the impact of potential fare increases, the city government, meanwhile, continues to operate the QCity Bus “Libreng Sakay” (Free Ride) program, which currently serves commuters on eight routes throughout the city, providing free and reliable public transportation. Residents may also take advantage of the city’s growing network of protected and shared bike lanes, offering a safe, healthy, and cost-efficient option for daily travel, according to the city’s chief executive. “We will continue to find innovative ways to ease the burden on our residents, especially during times when global events affect everyday expenses,” Belmonte said. She reiterated that through its digital services, district action offices, free bus rides, and bike-friendly infrastructure, residents would have practical and accessible options to save on transportation while staying connected to essential city services.

- [MMDA distributes tents to QC fire victims](#) (2026-03-09 16:01)

THE Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) distributed 100 modular tents to residents displaced by a massive fire in Quezon City’s Pinyahan district. MMDA General Manager Nicolas Torre III led the distribution on Sunday, March 8, a day after the blaze that burned for about nine hours before it was brought under control. The fire swept through a densely populated residential area on Friday, destroying several houses and forcing hundreds of families to evacuate to nearby shelters. Torre said the tents were provided to give temporary shelter to displaced families staying in evacuation centers while they recover from the fire. “In times like these, we see the true strength of our communities — the bayanihan, compassion, and cooperation of everyone,” Torre said. The agency said it will also conduct fogging and misting operations in evacuation centers to help prevent possible health risks among displaced residents. The initiative was also joined by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), led by General Manager Mel Robles, which distributed 2,000 “ChariTimba” (charity buckets) containing basic food items to affected families. Torre also spoke with several residents during the visit to listen to their concerns and assess the needs of families affected by the fire. Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte expressed gratitude to the MMDA and PCSO for the immediate assistance extended to residents displaced by the blaze. 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 relief activity was conducted at evacuation sites where families from the affected community are temporarily staying, as authorities continue to assess the damage and coordinate further assistance for those who lost their homes.

- [Pump prices rise sharply this week](#) (2026-03-09 16:00)

(UPDATE) THE Department of Energy (DOE) on Monday announced that fuel prices will rise sharply over the next few days starting Tuesday, March 10, as the Middle East conflict continues

to disrupt global oil supply and prices. Over this period, oil companies will raise gasoline prices by as much as P10.20 a liter, diesel by as much as P24.25 a liter, and kerosene by as much as P38.50 a liter. Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said the increases would be imposed on a staggered basis over the next several days. Meanwhile, a Palace official said President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. was set to ask Congress for emergency powers to reduce the excise tax on fuel to cushion the impact of the latest price increases. In all this week, Shell will raise gas prices by P8.75 a liter, diesel by P24.25 a liter, and kerosene by P36 a liter. Among the oil companies, its increase in the price of diesel is the highest. Petron, on the other hand, will raise gas prices by P8.80, diesel by P19.20 and kerosene by P32. Total will raise the price of gas by P10.20 and diesel by P20.20. Its price increase for gasoline is the highest among the oil companies. Chevron (Caltex) will hike gas by P7, diesel by P19.20 and kerosene by P38.50. Among the oil companies, its increase in the price of kerosene is the highest. Jetti Petroleum will raise gas prices by P9 and diesel by 19. Seaoil will increase the price of gas by P8.80, diesel by P21.85 and kerosene by P35.95. Unioil will raise the price of gas by P7, and diesel by P19.50. The DOE said the companies would follow the following schedule for their price hikes: Shell will raise gas prices by P5.25 on March 10, P2.65 on March 11 and P0.85 on March 12. It will raise diesel prices by P14.55 on March 10, P7.30 on March 11, and P2.40 on March 12. It will hike kerosene prices by P21.60 on March 10, P10.80 on March 11 and P3.60 on March 12. Petron will increase gas prices by P5.20 on March 10 and P1.80 on both March 11 and March 12. Diesel will go up by P11.60 on March 10, and P3.80 on both March 11 and March 12. Kerosene will go up by P19 per liter on March 10, and P6.50 per liter on both March 11 and March 12. Total said that it will increase its gasoline prices by P5.10 per liter on both March 10 and March 11, and hike its diesel prices by both P10.10 per liter on both March 10 and March 11. Caltex will raise gas by P1 each day starting March 10 to March 16, diesel by P2.50 each day over the same period, and kerosene by P5.50 each day, also from March 10 to March 16. Jetti Petroleum already raised its gas price by P2 on March 8 and P1 on March 9, and will continue to increase gas prices by P2. On March 10 and March 11, and then by P1 on March 12 and March 13. Diesel prices were increased by P3 starting March 8 and will continue going up by this amount until March 13. Seaoil will increase gasoline by P5.20 on March 10 then by P3.60 on March 11. Diesel will go up by P13.95 on March 10 and by P7.90 on March 11. Kerosene will go up by P20.95 on March 10, and P15 on March 11. Unioil, it said that will increase gasoline prices by P3 on March 10 and March 11, and then by P1 on March 12. For diesel, Unioil said that it will hike by P12.00 per liter on March 10, P4.00 per liter on March 11, and P3.50 per liter on March 12. This is the eighth consecutive week that all fuel prices increased. Last week, gasoline prices increased by P1.90 per liter, diesel prices went up by P1.20 per liter, and kerosene prices were raised by P1.50 per liter. Marcos to issue formal request to Congress for emergency powers to reduce fuel excise tax. Excise tax relief In New York, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro said President Marcos is set to request Congress to grant him emergency powers to reduce the excise tax on fuel as part of the government's efforts to cushion the public from the impact of rising oil prices. The president earlier said he is considering such a move if oil prices reach or exceed \$80 per barrel. On Monday, they spiked close to \$120 a barrel. Castro also said the Palace has been made aware of the 54 gasoline stations that prematurely raised fuel prices ahead of the DOE

announcement. “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. The official warned profiteers that the government would go after them. One of these was a gas station in Pasig City that raised the price of gasoline from P51.98 to P79.93 per liter, an increase of more than 54 percent, said Energy Undersecretary Felix William Fuentebella, who led the inspection of the establishment. Fuentebella said the gas station was given 24 hours to submit a written explanation on why it allegedly violated the DOE’s fuel pricing and loading policies. “Based on the reports we received, on March 6 and March 7, they did not follow these orders, so they must explain within 24 hours,” Fuentebella said during the inspection. The inspection determined that the establishment failed to comply with a DOE advisory issued on March 6 directing oil companies and gasoline stations to strictly follow the agency’s price directives on petroleum products. Under the advisory, gasoline stations are required to comply with authorized fuel price adjustments, including any staggered price increases ordered by the Energy secretary. The DOE also reiterated that gasoline stations are not allowed to prematurely implement price increases, engage in profiteering, or assist in any form of illegal price manipulation. The agency said it continues to closely monitor fuel retailers to ensure compliance with government pricing policies and to protect consumers from possible overpricing amid the ongoing missile exchanges and escalating conflict in the Middle East. The Manila Times reached out to the gas station involved for comment but has yet to receive a response. Police to monitor gas stations The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Monday mobilized nationwide tracker teams to inspect gas stations all over the country to help the DOE monitor possible profiteering and gas hoarding. “That includes [monitoring of gasoline stations, as we are already on] Day Seven of the crisis in the Middle East. Since Day One, that has been the directive of the chief PNP to the Directorate for Intelligence of the CIDG (Criminal Investigation and Detection Group),” BGen. Randulf Tuaño, PNP Public Information chief, said in a press briefing at Camp Crame. On Saturday, the DOE ordered all oil companies, gasoline stations and downstream oil industry participants to strictly comply with existing fuel pricing and anti-hoarding regulations. Under the directive, gasoline stations are not allowed to implement unscheduled or unauthorized price increases outside established pricing adjustments.

- [Lone bettor wins P45M in Grand lotto 6/55 draw for March 9](#) (2026-03-09 15:21)

MANILA, Philippines — A lone bettor won the ₱45,000,000.00 jackpot prize in the Grand lotto 6/55 draw on Monday, March 9, 2026, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) announced. The winning combination was 38-32-08-20-19-09. According to PCSO, the winning ticket was purchased at a lotto outlet in Negros Occidental. Meanwhile, no bettor won the Mega lotto 6/45 jackpot worth ₱15,000,000.00. The winning combination for the 6/45 draw was 23-24-03-38-04-21.

- [Filipinos race to fill tanks ahead of petrol price jump](#) (2026-03-09 06:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Queues formed at Philippine petrol stations and officials warned against hoarding Monday as residents raced to fill their tanks ahead of an expected surge in prices driven by the US-Israeli war against Iran. Fuel costs will tick up between 17 and 24 pesos (29 to 40 US cents) per litre this week, Energy Secretary Sharon Garin told a congressional committee on Monday, as oil prices soared on fears about supplies from the Middle East. The expected increase, which was not broken down by specific product, will be spread out over several days, she said. "Some companies have volunteered not to impose the increase in one day. They're staggered over three days or five days, depending on the company," Garin explained in a televised interview. "We have to remember these are not regulated prices. They just have to inform us what the increases are and justify it," she said. At a petrol station in Metro Manila, AFP journalists saw motorcycles, taxis and private cars queuing in scorching heat. Gas station attendant Enrico Guda, 31, said the normal number of vehicles the station handled in a day had doubled to about 1,000 as customers sought to fuel up before prices jumped. "The line started 24 hours ago. Morning, afternoon, even at dawn," he said. Francis Aranda, a 25-year-old university student, told AFP the spike "hurts". "I'm planning to use half my (weekly) fuel allowance so I won't have to worry in the coming days in case the war in Iran continues," he said. Police, meanwhile, have been instructed "to inspect gasoline stations in their localities... and gather evidence of profiteering or hoarding", Philippine National Police spokesman Brigadier General Randolph Tuano told a news briefing Monday. The ferries that tens of thousands rely on each day to traverse the archipelago nation of 116 million were also in the process of hiking fares. Starlite Ferries, a relatively small operator in the central Philippines, announced that a 25 percent increase would take effect Tuesday for both passengers and cargo. Montenegro Shipping Lines, which operates a fleet of 48 vessels, said its prices would go up 10-20 percent from March 23. President Ferdinand Marcos last week cited the rocketing price of fuel in announcing a shift to a four-day work week for non-essential government employees while ordering agencies to cut their fuel and power consumption by 10-20 percent. He also called on Congress to authorise him to reduce excise taxes on petroleum products if the price of crude oil breached \$80 per barrel, a request an administration spokeswoman said Marcos would formalise on Monday. West Texas Intermediate, the main US oil benchmark, and Brent crude prices both sit north of \$110 a barrel.

- [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 penalty),” 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 the 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 parts THE 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 milestones

The 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 COC

Geopolitical 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 region Lazaro 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 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.

- [Marcos 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.

- [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 solidarity In 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 babaylans Last 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 BBM VLOG, 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 reconditioning 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 3 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 Calambacan 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 experience short power outages on March 12 between 1 a.m. and 1:30 a.m. due to line reconstruction work along Capt. M. Sarino St. in Brgy. Mabolo 1. In General Trias, Cavite, some areas in Il Giardino Subd. Phase 1 and Phase 2, and some parts of Buenavista Townhomes Subd. Phase 1 and Phase 2, together with Sitio Julugan, in Brgy. Buenavista 1, will have short power outages on March 12 between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. and between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m., respectively, due to line reconstruction work. Lastly, some parts of Brgy. Cuyambay in Tanay, Brgy. San Jose, Antipolo City, and Brgy. Pinugay, Baras in Rizal, will have no power on March 12 between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. due to line reconditioning 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 Panlungsod (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, Fieri 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 questioned. At 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 fallout The 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 losses Meanwhile, 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 energy In 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 Suintay'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 Suintay, 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 Suintay 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 Suintay 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. Advisory The 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 used The 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 spending The 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 gaps Go 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 uses Under 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 steps The 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. “Pasigüeños, 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 QC citizens 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. PGen. 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 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 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 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 Immigration 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 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 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 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.

- [ICC confirms Duterte detention, rejects health grounds for release](#) (2026-03-06 16:54)

(UPDATED) MANILA, Philippines — 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 Jan. 26 ruling of the Pre-Trial Chamber I ordering Duterte to remain in custody while he faced 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 Jan. 9. Prepared by external practitioners, the defense 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. Respecting the court’s decision It was previously stated by the defense team of former president Duterte that they would not oppose the ICC’s decision for his continued detention while awaiting a ruling from the Appeals Chamber on its challenge to an earlier 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 next During 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 president. The 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](mailto: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’y 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 or 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 Cavite. Secretary 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. The 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 spokesman 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 MTPB 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 technology service provider pushed back against graft allegations linked to its transaction with the Land Transportation 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," he said. Aragon said KSMBPI is not opposing adult-oriented content but maintained that such material should be restricted to platforms that are inaccessible to minors. "If they want to do adult content, they should provide themselves an exclusive and secured adult site that is safe and cannot be accessed by children," he said. He added that freedom of expression has limits when it harms others, particularly minors. "Freedom of expression is not absolute. Your right to free speech stops when it starts to cause harm to your fellowmen, most especially our innocent children," Aragon said. Aragon also said the group is pushing for the passage of a law creating a National Social Media Regulatory Board to address what it described as the dangers posed by unregulated online platforms. He said the current mandate of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board, created in 1985, covers only mainstream media and does not extend to 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 EK336 from 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, Suintay 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. Suintay 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. Suintay 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 conference Trillanes filed before the Department of Justice in Manila, targeting Baligod and the 18 self-confessed former security

aides of resigned Ako Bicol 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 (PCSO) 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 EK336 from 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 that 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 luggage. National 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.